Becoming the City of Prayers

Christianity and the Formation of Local Public History in 20th Century Nagasaki

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Abstract

Founded in the late 16th Century as a centre of maritime commerce and Catholic proselytisation in Japan, the city of Nagasaki was transformed into a centre of anti-Christian persecution and state-monitored foreign trade by the policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603 - 1868). Even after the Meiji Constitution of 1889 guaranteed the religious freedom of the Christians, this history of early modern Nagasaki still caused a border of memory that divided the ways the Catholic and non-Catholic populations of Nagasaki perceived the city's origin well into the 20th Century. By looking at three specific episodes in Nagasaki during the period between the late 1920s and the late 1940s, this thesis analyses how this border of memory informed the formation of both the Catholic and the non-Catholic narratives regarding Nagasaki's Christian past through public anniversaries, religious feast days and the city's post-atomic bombing urban planning. In contrast to the contemporary official rhetoric which saw the early modern history of 'Christian Nagasaki' as one of cosmopolitanism cultural exchange and co-habitation, this thesis concludes that 'Christian Nagasaki' remained a fractured mnemonic landscape in the early to mid-20th Century which gave rise to a shifting political dynamic of confrontation and collaboration between Catholicism and the rise and fall of Japan's militant nationalism.

Introduction: Narrativised heritage over the border of memory

On 30th June 2018, the Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region were formally inscribed into the World Heritage list by the 42nd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. The final evaluation by ICOMOS, upon which the UNESCO decision was based, acknowledged that the nominated property bore 'unique testimony' to a 'distinctive religious tradition' that combined vernacular Japanese ritual practices with an 'essence of Christianity'. [1] In conclusion, the ICOMOS report acknowledged that the 'Hidden Christian story' as embodied by the nominated sites had exemplified the resilience of humans' belief in meanings under 'overt frameworks of existing cultures' in general, and thus satisfying the UNESCO criterion of possessing 'outstanding universal value'.[2]

Compared to the view of ICOMOS, the 'Hidden Christian story' as told in the final nomination text submitted by the Japanese government was more heavily focused on the theme of cultural exchange and adaption. The exceptional

[1] Evaluations of Nominations of Cultural and Mixed Properties for the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B1), pp. 116.

[2] Ibid. pp. 118.

resilience of the hidden Christian tradition in the Nagasaki region in comparison with other parts of Japan (where the early modern Catholic influence ceased to exist under persecution) was attributed to the 'mutual cooperation or tacit acceptance' between the hidden Christian communities and the surrounding communities of Buddhist and Shinto practitioners.[3] An earlier version of the nomination text submitted for ICOMOS evaluation in 2016 put even more focus on the 'cultural interchange between the East and the West since the 16th Century': instead of focusing on the hidden Christian tradition, the text saw the interchange of architectural techniques and the 'Christian culture' as the primary source of historical value for the properties nominated.[4]

The emphasis on the narrative of Nagasaki being a special place that is simultaneously 'Japanese' and 'Christian' as seen in the nomination texts reflects a general strategy pursued by the Prefectural government of Nagasaki since the early 2000s regarding cultural tourism. The reference to 'Christian culture' in the 2016 nomination text directly corresponds to the wording of a 2005 campaign launched by the prefectural government to 'discover' (*hakken*) and 'create' (*sōshutsu*) local 'stories' (*sutōrī*) out of the region's past[5], in which

[3] Ibid. pp. 210.

[4] Executive Summary of the Nomination Text for the Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki (2016), pp. 7 - 8. 'The Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki' was the original title of the nomination until ICOMOS suggested a major revision of the nomination text in February 2016, see Matsui (2018), pp. 255.

[5] Matsui (2018), pp. 93.

the theme of '*Kirishitan* culture' was seen as one of the first brand names that showcased Nagasaki's 'character' as a tourist destination.[6] This strategy of using narratives of local history for tourism development also reflects a nationwide tendency in Japan, as tangible and intangible traces of the local past (folklore, oral traditions, cultural properties) are increasingly seen as objects to be narrativised into 'stories', which would in turn be 'utilised' (*katsuyō*) for promoting local tourism and highlighting local 'identity'.[7]

Despite the focus on local traditions and memories, the production of local 'stories' in modern-day Japan typically depends on rubber-stamping by superior authorities, either the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, which certifies local stories as 'Japan Heritage', or in the case of World Heritage nomination UNESCO and ICOMOS.[8] These vetting procedures in turn invite political intervention and contestation over the way the past is narrated. The Japanese nomination of the Meiji Industrial Sites for UNESCO World Heritage inscription in 2015 constitutes an example of this tension at the international level, as the nomination was considered by the governments of South Korea and China as an attempt by Japan to 'universalise' its own interpretation of a

[6] Kimura (2007), pp. 127. The term *Kirishitan* here refers to the general history of early modern Christianity in Japan, including both the Catholic mission and its followers before the early 17th Century persecution, and the hidden Christians during most of the Tokugawa era and the first years of the Meiji period.

[7] Kolata (2020), pp. 159.

[8] Reader (2020), pp. 185.

contested past.[9] It was also in his analysis of this controversy that Edward Boyle proposed the concept of 'border of memory', upon which this thesis will draw for studying the memorialisation of the history of early modern Christianity in the city of Nagasaki.

'Border of memory' describes the situation in which a heritage site (or series of sites) becomes a theatre of 'affirmation and contestation' for different bodies of collective memories. A tangible site of cultural property, therefore, ceases to be a mere physical mark of the past, but a multifaceted symbol for an array of mnemonic communities that draw different meanings from it.[10] In the case of the Hidden Christian Sites and the 'hidden Christian story' behind their nomination, the two major institutions involved are the local civil authorities (at both the prefectural and the municipal levels) and the Catholic Church (the Archbishopric of Nagasaki and the national Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan). Analysing the narratives adopted by each of the two sides regarding the history of early modern Christianity in Nagasaki, Raluca Mateoc highlighted a divergence in focus as the civil authorities tended to stress the theme of intercultural exchange and a secularised understanding of Catholicism as a form of culture, while the Church narrative took a more spiritually-oriented stance that emphasised the religious meaning of martyrdom and pilgrimage.[11]

[9] Boyle (2019), pp. 295.

[10] Ibid. pp. 294.

[11] Mateoc (2023), pp. 131.

Mateoc thus concluded that a border of memory was present between the two memory-shaping institutions regarding Nagasaki's early modern Christian heritage, but also acknowledged that the Catholic Church and the local authorities shared greater interest in promoting the hidden Christian story as a celebration of openness (both of the Church and the region of Nagasaki). As a result, the two entities were able to maintain a largely conciliatory relationship while shaping the tourist branding rhetoric and in the everyday management of tourism-related infrastructure.[12]

Just as collective memories are not fixed bodies of experiences but rather a 'deeply political process' involving struggles amongst different memory-shaping actors striving to influence the public manifestation of the past, the border of memory should also be considered as a sequence of shifting patterns of political dynamics between at least two 'bordering' mnemonic institutions or communities.[13] In this regard, the collaboration between the Catholic Church and the civil authorities in Nagasaki in promoting the 'hidden Christian story' should be seen as but one episode within the long history of the border of memory between the Catholic community and the civil government in Nagasaki stretching back to the early 20th Century. In particular, the general consensus

[12] Ibid. pp. 124. Existing studies in Japanese have also provided accounts on the local response by former hidden Christian communities to the rising demand for heritage tourism: Ikeda (2016), pp. 166.

[13] Boyle (2019), pp. 300.

shared by the two institutions that the history of early modern Christianity was an inherent part of Nagasaki's local tradition does not only form the basis on which the conciliatory relationship between the Church and the local government rests but is also the product of various political dynamics between the Catholic and the civic official narratives on Nagasaki's local history from the late 1920s to the early 1960s. This thesis examines how these changing political dynamics came about, and how Nagasaki's history as a place in Japan with a specific link to Catholicism was formulated, institutionalised, and thus publicly remembered.

For Edward Boyle, the 'border of memory' thesis was primarily concerned with the heritage policies and heritage politics in the Asia-Pacific region as part of the so-called 'heritage boom' since the 1980s, a process further grounded in the specific geopolitical environment within the region during the same period.[14] This thesis will extend the timespan over which the 'border of memory' concept is applicable to the years between the late 1920s and the 1950s by focusing on the mnemonic political process in Nagasaki that forged, shaped and eventually perpetuated the local tradition of 'Christian Nagasaki' on which the contemporary 'hidden Christian story' was grounded. Illuminating this process will contribute to the existing literature on contemporary heritage politics in Japan and the Asia-Pacific region by deepening understanding of the historical

[14] Boyle & Ivings (2023), pp. 5.

context of the topic but will more directly come into dialogue with the body of academic literature regarding religion and public memory in Nagasaki in particular.

'The City of Prayers'? Reassessing the 'Christianisation' thesis

The main title of this thesis, 'Becoming the City of Prayers', is a direct reference to the discourse on the public memory of 9th August 1945 of Nagasaki, which remains the central topic within the existing literature on the memory politics of the city. By calling Nagasaki the 'city of prayers' (*inori no Nagasaki*), this discourse looks negatively upon the public commemoration of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki in comparison to Hiroshima, 'the city of anger' (*ikari no Hiroshima*). While the atomic bombing memories in Hiroshima supposedly stress the destruction caused by the bombing and has traditionally generated a more politically active stance for peace and against nuclear weapons, atomic bombing memories in Nagasaki are criticised for generating a spiritually-oriented version of pacifism over political activism, and for promoting a message of reconstruction and resilience at the expense of properly commemorating the damage the bomb caused to the city and the suffering the bomb caused to the residents.[15]

[15] Nishimura (2002), pp. 47. According to Nishimura, the earliest usage of this expression can

Nagasaki's politically passive approach toward atomic bombing commemoration was further attributed to the strong influence of the local Catholic community and the religious doctrine of sacrifice and endurance it allegedly upheld in the post-war years. Two episodes of interventions by the Catholic community of Nagasaki were considered particularly representative of this close association between Christianity and Nagasaki's atomic bombing commemoration regime. First, the publication of *Nagasaki no Kane* (The Bell of Nagasaki) by Catholic author Nagai Takashi (who experienced in person the atomic bombing of Urakami, Nagasaki) in 1949 laid out a theological interpretation which saw the bombing as a 'holocaust' (*hansai*) that brought about peace by Divine Providence, which soon gained nationwide popularity and in turn had long-term impact on the official atomic bombing memory of Nagasaki.[16] In 1958, the decision by the Municipal Government of Nagasaki (with advocacy from the Catholic community of Urakami, Nagasaki) to demolish the bombed ruins of the Catholic Church of Urakami and to build a new church on the same site was also seen by *hibakusha* (atomic bombing survivors) activists as a major setback that deprived Nagasaki of its most iconic tangible landmark of the atomic bombing, and therefore caused the

be traced back to Japanese commentaries in the 1950s. An alternative expression mentioned in Otsuki (2016a) and Diehl (2018) is 'Hiroshima rages, Nagasaki prays' (*ikaru Hiroshima, inoru Nagasaki*).

[16] Wetmore & Kevin (2002), pp. 109. The formulation also corresponds with Doak (2014), Miyamoto (2012), Diehl (2018) and Miwa (2019).

aforementioned divergence between Nagasaki and Hiroshima as the only two cities struck by atomic bombings.[17]

Given that the research focuses in this thesis is the narrativisation and institutionalisation of the history of early modern Christianity in Nagasaki, the academic discourse on atomic-bombing memories might not seem to be relevant at first glance. However, previous works by Richard Diehl and Otsuki Tomoe[18] regarding memories of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki provided systematic evaluations of the relationships between Catholicism, the local Catholic community, and Nagasaki's post-war official memory-making, with which this thesis engages critically.

Focusing on the immediate post-war years of the late 1940s and the 1950s, the studies by Diehl and Otsuki attributed the strong Catholic influence found in Nagasaki's post-war official memory of the atomic bombing to a collaborative relationship formed between the Catholic Church, the local government, and the US interest developed during Nagasaki's post-war urban reconstruction. To Diehl, the 1958 decision to demolish the ruins of the Urakami church exemplified the convergence between the urge for reconstruction held by the Catholic community in Urakami, who were amongst the residents closest to the

[17] Diehl (2018), pp. 173. See also Otsuki (2016a), pp. 182.

[18] All Japanese names in this thesis are written according to the Japanese format: the surname comes before the given name.

Ground Zero of the atomic bombing and thus the most severely and directly affected victims, and the interest in 'moving on' from the destruction caused by the bombing and reconfiguring Nagasaki's future as an 'international cultural city' held by the Municipal government headed by the then major Tagawa Tsutomu (incumbent 1951 – 1967). The abundance of US aid, preferentially provided by both the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (GHQ) during the Allied Occupation era (1945 – 1951) and religious organisations in the United States to the local Catholic community, was considered to have facilitated this collaboration.[19]

In Otsuki's work (2016b), the term 'international cultural city' (officially written into statute in August 1949) was even used interchangeably with '(exotic,) international *Christian* city'. The impact of the collaboration between the Urakami Catholics and the Municipality on the commemoration of the Nagasaki atomic bombing was termed 'the Christianisation of Nagasaki', which was further attributed to the pro-Christian policy pursued by GHQ under the command of Douglas MacArthur.[20] The spiritually-oriented approach to atomic-bombing commemoration endorsed by the Municipality of Nagasaki, together with the official re-imagination of post-war Nagasaki as the 'Mecca of Christianity' in the Far East, was also seen by Otsuki as an attempt to cover up

[19] Diehl (2018), pp. 105 – 106.

[20] Otsuki (2016b), pp. 395.

the city's feudal and imperial past as a site of stigmatisation against the *Burakumin* community, of persecution against the early modern Christians, and of Japan's wartime military industrial complex. As a result, the post-war celebration of 'Christian Nagasaki' was understood as the product of a one-sided power dynamic in which a conservative coalition dictated the mnemonic landscape of Nagasaki that brushed over the city's particular history of violence with a 'biblical and universalist' rhetoric. [21]

To both Diehl and Otsuki, the analysis of the Christian influence in post-war Nagasaki's memory politics was ultimately instrumental to their studies of the discourse on atomic bombing in Nagasaki that mostly revolved around the single event of the atomic bombing. Their articulation of the Christian (Catholic) view on Nagasaki's past and present is thus limited in scope and only constitutes a partial picture of the history of the 'border of memory' between the Catholic and the official narratives regarding what Nagasaki went through. Borrowing Eviatar Zerubavel's term, this thesis will argue that what is lacking in Diehl and Otsuki's conclusion regarding Christianity and the public memory of Nagasaki is a comprehensive grasp on the 'sociomental topography of the past' that regulates the way tangible spaces (individual sites) and intangible times (historical intervals, past events) were organised into history.[22] What is

[21] Otsuki (2016a), pp. 144.

[22] Zerubavel (2003), pp. 2.

crucial here is not how one single event reflected the thinking behind a single historical narrative, but how an event is understood within an epistemic structure that connects it with other events, intervals and spaces, and thus gives it meaning via a process of social construction. In the case of the border of memory over the history of early modern Christianity in Nagasaki, therefore, it is important to look beyond the theological, universalist rhetoric as seen in Nagai Takashi's writings, and investigate how this history and the collective memory it nurtured engaged in an array of real-world political situations in both the pre-war and the post-war eras through institutions, organisations, and informal social connections.

'Christian Nagasaki': From historiography to memory

Regarding the collective memory of the Nagasaki Catholic community prior to the atomic bombing, the research by Gwyn McClelland provides an important supplement. In his 2019 work *Dangerous Memory in Nagasaki: Prayers, Protests and Catholic Survivor Narratives*, McClelland argued that the atomic bombing was remembered by the Nagasaki Catholics as part of an intergenerational chain of communal memory that had been passing on since the last wave of state persecution in 1869. The site of Urakami church constituted a key memorial space for this continuation of memory, as it marked

the place where many of the community members suffered torture and forced apostasy in 1869. This memory was still living and fresh when the construction of the first Urakami church started in 1895 and was again revitalised in 1925 by its completion only to be directly channelled to the bombing victims exactly three decades later. To the Catholic bombing survivors, the reconstruction of the Urakami church in 1958 therefore represented not just a simple urge to brush over the trauma of the bombing with religion, but also a reconfirmation of their wider memory of survival, resilience, and hard-won autonomy.[23]

Contextualised thus, the role of the 'Catholic side' of the discourse regarding atomic-bombing memory can no longer be generalised under the framework of a one-sided power dynamic in which a rhetoric of passive endurance was imposed upon Nagasaki over a more thorough commemoration of its traumatic past brought by the atomic bombing. 'The Catholics', who supposedly remembered the bombing as a sacrifice under the 'Christianisation' thesis, naturally overlapped with the *hibakusha* group. The 'peace over politics' rhetoric thus only represented one way through which the Catholic collective memory was appropriated, and as McClelland revealed through interviews with surviving Catholic *hibakusha*, the general mnemonic framework of the local Catholic community with its traditional emphasis on martyrdom and resilience could co-exist with scepticism against the allegedly dominant 'Catholic'

[23] McClelland (2019), pp. 184.

interpretation mentioned above.[24]

The same possibility for further contextualisation can also be found in the case of Catholicism vis-à-vis 'international culture' (*kokusai bunka*), which is of more direct interest to the subject of this thesis. As summarised above, both Diehl and Otsuki interpreted the term 'international culture', which defined Nagasaki's post-war identity, in terms of a political dynamic favouring the representation of Christianity and the Catholic point of view. Otsuki even used the term 'international Christian city' to describe the post-war official narrative of Nagasaki, thus equating Christianity (in particular Catholicism) with the more politically conservative element within Nagasaki's post-war memorial regime.[25]

At this point, a conceptual explanation is needed for the seemingly interchangeable use of 'Christian'/'Christianity' and 'Catholic'/ 'Catholicism'. These terms feature in both the official nomination text for the Hidden Christian Sites and the academic literature concerning the public memory of modern Nagasaki, but this usage might seem problematic for it excludes the influence of the Protestant Dutch, who enjoyed two centuries (1639 - 1859) of monopoly over Japanese—European trade under the nationwide policy of

[24] Ibid. pp. 177.

[25] Otsuki (2016a), pp. 98.

foreign trade restriction instigated by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Within the context of this thesis, however, this common usage is deemed appropriate in describing the public memory of Nagasaki for two reasons. First, the Dutch trading post of Dejima was itself the consequence of a series of political negotiations between the Dutch East India Company and the Tokugawa Shogunate based on a shared Anti-Catholic stance, which in turn presumed a thoroughly areligious protocol of conduct on the Dutch part.[26] As a result, contact with the Dutch did not give rise to a separate 'Christian' tradition as long-standing or as salient as the Catholic or hidden Christian one.

The second reason for the interchangeable use of 'Christianity' and 'Catholicism' in analysing the local public memory in Nagasaki regarding the city's early modern Catholic/Christian past lies in the complexity of the term in the modern Japanese language. In Japanese, the word 'Christian' as used in 'hidden Christian', *kirishitan*, is different from *kirisutokyōto*, the common word for 'Christian' as a believer of the Christian religion. The former term had its origin in the Portuguese word *cristão* which was adopted into the early modern Japanese language to describe both the Catholics in the pre-persecution era and the hidden Christians, who inherited the clandestine religious practices of their

[26] Hesselink (2015), pp. 222 saw the expulsion of the Portuguese and their complete replacement by the Protestant Dutch as the end of the contemporary European accounts on the situation of Catholicism in Nagasaki. Nakamura (1989), pp. 148 mentioned a specific case in which the Dutch merchants in Hirado lobbied against the Portuguese and the Spanish by criticising the aggressive nature of their Catholic mission in Japan in 1622.

persecuted Catholic ancestors but neither received Catholic baptism nor necessarily followed a strictly Catholic or Christian teaching over the two centuries.[27] The 'hidden Christian' tradition as a belief system distinct from organised Catholicism is still in existence in certain parts of the Nagasaki prefecture, so to refer to the history of early modern Christianity in the Nagasaki region solely as 'Catholic' may risk overlooking these important nuances.[28] Such usage might also risk being misunderstood as an unquestioning acknowledgement of the Catholic narrative of Catholicism in Nagasaki as an unbroken continuity from the late 16th Century to the 20th Century, which is exactly what the following chapters of this thesis are intended to critically engage with. As a result, this thesis uses the term 'Christianity' not in its common connotation of the cross-denominational Christian religion, but as a general term for the history of early modern Christianity in Nagasaki that is equally defined by its roots in the 16th Century Catholic mission and the mnemonic ruptures caused by the subsequent centuries of persecution and hiding.

Within the historical narrative of Nagasaki's modern Catholic community, the

[27] Miyazaki (2014), pp. 9 – 10.

[28] Even the English term 'hidden Christian' is not free from overlooking the distinction between the *senpuku kirishitan*, the historical hidden Christians of whom most of the descendants have converted into Catholicism since the late 19th Century, and the *kakure-kirishitan*, the practicing hidden Christians who still carried on the Tokugawa-era practice without affiliating themselves to either mainstream Shinto-Buddhism or Catholicism: Mateoc (2023), pp. 114; Otsuki (2018), pp. 39.

tension between depicted continuity and actual discontinuity over a timespan of three centuries is most visible in the commemoration of the martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan on 5th February 1597. Gwyn McClelland revealed that the Catholic survivors' interpretation of the atomic bombing was embedded in a wider narrative of the community's two centuries of endurance under persecution, to which the martyrdom story of 1597 constituted its biggest symbol and its spiritual origin.[29] Beatified in 1627 and canonised by Pope Pius IX in 1862, the Twenty-Six Martyrs were also the first group of Catholic martyrs in Japan officially recognised by the Catholic Church.[30]

A peculiar feature of the 1597 martyrdom is the extensive attention it attracted across the early modern Catholic world *outside* Japan and its virtual non-existence in the historiography and oral traditions in Nagasaki until the mid-19th Century.[31] Even the very concept of 'martyrdom' in its modern form (*junkyō*) only entered Japan in the late 19th Century as the result of translations of 17th-Century French writings on Catholic martyrs in Japan and the arrival of Catholic missionaries in the 1860s. Bernard Thadée Petitjean (1829–1884), a

[29] McClelland (2019), pp. 39. Hesselink (2015), pp. 112 provided an account of the 1597 event based on first-hand Portuguese sources.

[30] Omata Rappo (2022), pp. 3.

[31] The discrepancy between the early modern European and Japanese historiographies on the 1597 Martyrdom is the subject of Omata Rappo Hitomi's studies in Omata Rappo (2017; 2019; 2022). Omata Rappo (2020) provides further elaboration on the beatification process of the Twenty-Six Martyrs and the exceptional interest in martyrological stories in Japan within the 17th Century Catholic Church.

French missionary of the Paris Foreign Mission Society (MEP) famous for 'rediscovering' the hidden Christians of Nagasaki in 1865, played a key role in introducing the veneration of the Twenty-Six Martyrs to Nagasaki, and proposed the first location of the site on which the 1597 Martyrdom took place.[32] Petitjean's proposal was later called into question by Urakawa Wasaburō, a priest from Nagasaki's indigenous Catholic community, who proposed the hill of Nishizaka as the real Martyrdom site in the early 20th Century based on Japanese records.[33] The new location eventually became the site of a memorial park in 1947, accompanied by a monument and the Twenty-Six Saints Memorial Museum in 1962.[34]

A gap can be found between existing studies of Catholic collective memory in post-war Nagasaki and the historiography of the 1597 martyrdom regarding how the veneration of the Twenty-Six Saints, a commemorative activity initially alien to the Nagasaki Catholic community, became the foundation of a local, communal Catholic memory. In the following chapters, this thesis will show that apart from drawing upon local historiography, the Catholic actors who shaped the historical narrative of the Nagasaki Catholics in the early 20th Century also operated within a sophisticated texture of social relationships at the local, national and international levels.

[32] Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 252.

[33] Omata Rappo (2022), pp. 24. See also Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 254.

[34] Omata Rappo (2022), pp. 24.

The 1597 martyrdom is a particularly interesting subject of study as it provided for the Catholic community a specific spatial-temporal location at which regular commemorative activities could be held and a tangible site of memory could be erected. Both consequences further opened possibilities for public gatherings, speeches and political processes of fundraising and urban planning, which constituted points of contact along the 'border of memory' between the Catholic and the official narratives of Nagasaki's early modern past. It will also be pointed out that in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, the spiritual origin of the 1597 martyrdom was publicly employed by the clergy in Nagasaki as a weapon against rising suspicion regarding Catholics' allegiance to the Japanese state, as the tension between Christianity and State Shinto nationalism intensified across Japan.[35] Although the Catholic voice of Nagasaki eventually adopted a collaborative attitude towards the second half of the 1930s, its reminder of the history of state-led suppression still constituted a counter-narrative to the official rhetoric of Nagasaki as the cosmopolitan hub of cultural interchange and enlightenment as forwarded by the narrative behind the celebration of the city's 'opening up'.

[35] Ion (2003), pp. 85.

Mapping the border of 'Christian Nagasaki': A research framework

Although Edward Boyle's concept of 'borders of memory' introduces the issue of concern, the way this thesis configures the case of 'Christian Nagasaki' still differs from his studies in two aspects. First, this thesis will not follow completely Boyle's view that sees the heritage politics in East Asia primarily as a field of active contention between 'antagonistic' collective memories.[36] Calling the Catholic narrative of the history of Nagasaki a 'counter-narrative' against the official narrative in the 1930s does not imply that the relation between the two and the mnemonic collectives they represented were marked only by open hostility. Catholic historians amongst both the clergy and the lay community in the early 20th Century were in close contact with non-Christian local historians, while the appreciation of Christianity-related Nanban art was also a popular theme within Nagasaki local history circles.[37] Moreover, both narratives were appropriated by Japan's wartime propaganda from 1937 to 1945 as the social actors behind each of them complied with the demand for political allegiance to Japan's imperial system and endorsement of Japan's overseas aggression.

This thesis therefore employs the term 'bordering' in a more basic sense, one

[36] Boyle (2019), pp. 295.

[37] Kotani (2010), pp. 4.

that describes the crossing-over of different narratives (as formulated through different memory-making processes) over the same spatial (the 20th Century city of Nagasaki) and temporal (1571 onwards) span, and sometimes over the same historical records. It also refers to the 'border' that did not only divide the traditional socio-mental map of Nagasaki into the Shinto-Buddhist downtown Nagasaki and the 'Christian' suburb of Urakami, but also ostracised the collective memory of the Catholic community into associations with mass executions and proximity to *Burakumin* communities that in a sense continued the early modern prejudices of Japan's Shinto-Buddhist worldview.[38]

It is based on this background that this thesis considers the site of Nishizaka a particularly important location in shaping the positioning of Christianity in Nagasaki's changing 'mind-map' of its own local history. Today the Twenty-Six Martyrs Memorial Museum and other memorial facilities are located in Nishizaka, which since the 17th Century was the official execution ground and a part of the Nagasaki traditionally considered unclean that marked the northmost margin of the downtown area. Apart from being the symbol of the localisation of the 1597 Martyrdom veneration within the Catholic collective memory of Nagasaki, Nishizaka also constituted a subversive alternative to Nagasaki's traditional sociomental topography by which the unclean space of killing became a place of holiness, and in the course of time even became

[38] Shimahara (2012), pp. 16.

recognised as one of the city's most significant public open spaces that fundamentally defined Nagasaki's mnemonic landscape.

Seeing Nishizaka as the main stage on which the key development the thesis discusses took place, the research is arranged into three main sections. The first section considers how the modern official narrative of the history of Nagasaki as a city of 'internationality' and 'culture' was formed in the 1930s because of the advocacy of the local business community. Using primary sources preserved in Nagasaki's Prefectural Library and Museum of History and Culture, this section analyses the establishment of the earliest public celebrations of Nagasaki's 'founding moment'. Drawing upon pre-war and wartime local history publications, this section demonstrates that the creation of the first official narrative regarding Nagasaki's history was inherently linked to the vision in the pre-war years of the maritime merchant community, who saw Nagasaki still as the oldest connection point between Japan and maritime East Asia. At the time, this meant a privileged access (compared to other Japanese destinations) to the regional tourist market sustained by demands from Western expats in the East Asian colonies and treaty ports.

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on the formation of a Catholic narrative of early modern history with the commemoration of the 26 Martyrs of Japan at its centre. The major primary source used in this chapter is *Katorikkukyō-hō*,

which in 1928 became the first official newspaper of the Nagasaki Diocese in Japanese with Urakawa Wasaburō as its founding editor. Reading this publication in the context of Nagasaki's religious politics in the 1920s and 1930s, this chapter analyses the chain of events in late 1920s and the 1930s that led to the first (and considered to be failed) serious initiative to build a memorial near Nishizaka. An episode of particular interest is the effort by the Nagasaki-born Catholic capitalist Hirayama Masajyū to promote his cinematic adaption of the 1597 Martyrdom story in the early 1930s, which eventually paved the ground for a Catholic notion of 'internationality' that later joined with the official rhetoric of 'international culture' because of the new power dynamic between the Catholic church and the local government in the post-war years.

The third and last chapters investigate the convergence of these two narratives at the site of Nishizaka in the immediate post-war years, with particular attention being paid to the Quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's first arrival in Japan in May 1949. Drawing upon media coverage from both local secular newspapers and Catholic publications, this section illustrates how the Christian narrative on early modern martyrdom was incorporated into and celebrated by the official narrative of Nagasaki in the immediate post-war years. In connection with the emphasis on business interest and historical narrative in Nagasaki as seen in the first section, this chapter argues that apart from the influence of GHQ and the US, the changing public narrative of Nagasaki that

was more open to the celebration the city's Christian heritage was also the product of a re-configuration of Nagasaki's post-war vision, in which both the civic authorities and the Catholic community of Nagasaki shared an interest.

As the end of WWII and the onset of the Cold War in East Asia disrupted and eventually brought to an end the traditional regional maritime network that connected Nagasaki to business interests in Shanghai and other parts of the Asia Pacific, the overseas network the Nagasaki Catholic community built in the 1930s became a potential tourism resource that could improve the city's international outreach, not only to the United States, but also to the Catholic communities in Iberia, Southeast Asia and Latin America. Although the push for religious tourism yielded only underwhelming results in 1949, the Nishizaka Martyrdom of 1597 remained a landmark in the mnemonic landscape of Nagasaki that fundamentally redefined how the history of Nagasaki was construed and left a long-lasting impact that formed the background to the nomination of the Hidden Christian Sites as UNESCO World Heritage.

1 Celebrating Nagasaki's founding at a time of (perceived) crises (1929-1930)

On 27th April 2021, the Municipality of Nagasaki celebrated the 450th anniversary of the opening of the port of Nagasaki (*Nagasaki kaikō*) amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. At the official ceremony held online, the then mayor Taue Tomihisa delivered the keynote speech celebrating the development of Nagasaki and thanked 'the port that is the mother of our city and the sea that extends beyond'.[39] His statement also included a brief but clear description of Nagasaki's founding moment: officially, Nagasaki was believed to have been established as an open port in 1571 'when the Portuguese ships first arrived'. [40]

The story of Nagasaki's founding in the year 1571, or more vaguely during the Japanese regnal era of *Genki* (1570-1573), has been extensively written about in the local historiography of Nagasaki since the Tokugawa era (1603 – 1868).

[39] The Municipality of Nagasaki, *Nagasaki kaikō 450 shūnen kinen shikiten* (450th Anniversary of the port-opening of Nagasaki): https://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp/syokai/710000/714001/p036765.html. Accessed 20th November 2023.

[40] Nagasaki Culture Telecasting Corporation, '*Nagasaki shi de nagasaki kaikō 450 shūnen kinen shikiten*' (450th Anniversary for the opening of the Nagasaki port held in Nagasaki Municipality): https://www.ncctv.co.jp/news/88667.html. Accessed 20th November 2023.

Despite the overwhelmingly anti-Christian tone of the time, the Tokugawa-era accounts generally acknowledged the arrival of the Portuguese (then termed *nanban*, 'southern barbarians') as the reason why the port town of Nagasaki came into being. [41] The date of 27th April, however, came from another historical moment in 1588, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537 - 1598) revoked from the Jesuits their overlordship over Nagasaki and put the city and its maritime trade under the direct administration of a centralised national government.

Based on primary sources regarding the preparation of the first official celebration of the modern-day port-opening anniversary in Nagasaki from 1929 to 1930, this chapter recounts the process through which the two separate events were forged into the official founding day of '27th April 1571'. Focusing on the discourse within the circle of local historians in Nagasaki regarding how the involvement of the Portuguese and the Catholic missionaries in the founding of the city should be remembered, this chapter argues that the official celebration of Nagasaki's port-opening comes from a historical context that was profoundly shaped by the broader political and economic situation of Nagasaki and Japan in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Despite the abolition of the ban on Christianity in 1873 and the guarantee of religious freedom in the 1889

[41] Koga (1957) (pp. 12 – 13) contains a comprehensive overview of the contemporary Jesuit records and Tokugawa-era Japanese materials regarding the beginning of the urban settlement in Nagasaki, with several quotes from Japanese writings from as early as the early 18th Century. A brief chronology of Tokugawa-era local historical writings in Nagasaki can be seen on Harada (2004) pp. 4.

Constitution, the idea of a 'Christian Nagasaki' in history was still kept away from the official narrative of the city by a border of memory when the first port-opening anniversary was celebrated.

Open or occupied? The forming of an official origin story for Nagasaki

On 27th April 1930, the first public ceremony celebrating Nagasaki's port-opening anniversary was held in the courtyard of Suwa Shrine, the most prestigious Shinto shrine of Nagasaki and a focal point of the city's public life since the 1630s.[42] Both the governor of the Nagasaki prefecture and the mayor of the Nagasaki municipality attended the ceremony, during which messages of celebration sent by the ambassadors of Germany, the United States, Brazil, Denmark, France, Britain, China, the Netherlands were read out in public.[43] Although two earlier initiatives were made to celebrate the opening of Nagasaki to international trade in 1909 and 1914, the 1930 celebration was the first commemorative event that received official backing from the municipality and the prefecture of Nagasaki, and was the first that made a serious effort to

[42] Hesselink (2015), pp. 222. Suwa Shrine was established in 1626. From 1634 onwards, it has served as the venue for the annual *Kunchi* festival which is traditionally participated by the entire traditional downtown. An overview of the history of Suwa Shrine and the *Kunchi* Festival can be seen in Hesselink (2012), in particular pp. 190.

[43] Dai'ikkai Nagasaki kaikō kinenkai kiroku, pp. 23.

determine the day of Nagasaki's port-opening based on the opinion of local historians.[44]

During the first meeting convened by the Nagasaki Port-Opening Commemoration Association on 7th March 1929 regarding the exact date of Nagasaki's founding moment, four commissioned historians expressed their opinion on the matter (as well as their opinion on each other's proposal). According to the briefings later published by the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce (the parent organisation of the Port-Opening Commemoration Association), the historians all agreed that Nagasaki's port-opening constituted a peculiar challenge: unlike the other 19th Century treaty ports and officially designated trading ports that could easily trace back their opening to clearly dated treaties, statutes or decrees, evidence on the beginning of urban settlement in Nagasaki was scattered across numerous Japanese and Portuguese sources that all pointed to the year 1571, but did not specify a date.[45] The key question thus became one concerning the possibility of identifying a

[44] Shinki (2021), pp. 35 provided a brief description of the two earlier initiatives to commemorate Nagasaki's port-opening. In 1909, the association of steam ship agencies of Nagasaki proposed to hold an industrial fair in the name of celebrating the 350th anniversary of the opening of Nagasaki, which was reportedly only an improvised strategy to lure visitors to the nearby city of Kumamoto where it was the 300th anniversary of Katō Kiyomasa (1562 - 1611), the early 17th Century lord who built the Castle of Kumamoto. A similar industrial fair was organised in 1914 by the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce in the same name of celebrating the 350th anniversary of the opening of Nagasaki but was criticised in the press for not giving any explanation on the year count.

[45] Dai'ikkai Nagasaki kaikō kinenkai kiroku, pp. 10.

date for the 1571 'founding' of Nagasaki, and if not, the best alternative event that was clearly dated in historical sources and could at the same time carry the weight of the anniversary.

During the first meeting, the focus of the discussion was the proposal made by Koga Jyūjirō (1879 - 1954), then a member of the editorial committee for Nagasaki's Municipal History and an amateur historian familiar with both Japanese and European historical sources. [46] Based on Japanese and Portuguese materials, Koga suggested 16th March as the date for the anniversary on the ground that it was on that day in 1570 that the first settlers of Nagasaki repelled an attack by the rival clan of Fukabori, thus laying down 'the foundation for the new Nagasaki' (*shin Nagasaki no kisoseki*). In an appendix he provided for the Association, Koga recounted in more detail the 1570 battle and stated the relevance of this battle to the Nagasaki of today:

> By putting [the Japanese and the Portuguese accounts] together, it will be clear that the new fortress built by the Christians of the village of Nagasaki as a necessary haven of safety in the face of the battle [i.e. the 1570 attack by the Fukabori clan] was what became the Nagasaki of today. … After negotiating with lord Ōmura, the missionaries and Christians started resettling in this new port … Some of them were expelled by their lords or were seeking refuge from war or

[46] Ibid, pp. 42. Koga's position at the time is mentioned in Nakajima (2007), pp. 122.

> persecution. According to various [Japanese] accounts of the history of Nagasaki, the urban settlement of Nagasaki was first laid out in 1571.[47]

In his final response to the Association on 5th February 1930 (in which he reiterated his proposal of using 16th March 1570 as the founding day of Nagasaki), Koga proposed three justifications of his choice of the date and the event. Apart from the more historically-minded reason of distinguishing the early modern port town of Nagasaki from an earlier inland settlement that gave Nagasaki its current name, Koga also highlighted how the battle against Fukabori reflected the idea of 'maritime Nagasaki' (*umi no Nagasaki*) and could remind Nagasaki's modern citizens of the 'hardship the founding of the city involved' (*sōken dōji no konnan*). [48] During the meeting, doubts were raised by other participants regarding the appropriateness of using a local battle in the age of civil wars as the founding event of the city, with particularly intense criticism coming from Nagayama Tokihide (1867 – 1935), the founding director of Nagasaki Prefectural Library and another historian commissioned to propose a date for the planned anniversary.

Equally well-learned in both Japanese and European sources, Nagayama Tokihide was an active member in the local historian circle of early 20th Century

[47] Nagasaki kaikō kinen kōen sankō shiryō, pp. 4 – 5.

[48] Nagasaki kaikō Nengappi ni tsuite no ikensho, pp. 2.

Nagasaki and a long-time acquaintance of Koga.[49] During the meeting of March 1929, however, Nagayama openly expressed his 'displeasure' (*fuyukai*) with Koga's proposed date as it marked the day when Nagasaki was 'occupied by foreigners' (*gaikokujin ga senryō shita*). As a specialist in the study of early modern cultural exchange between Catholic Europe and Japan, Nagayama did not use 'Portuguese', which would be more historically accurate, nor the historical term '*nanban'*, i.e. the 'southern barbarians', which was commonly used in contemporary Japanese writings to describe Catholic Europe and its maritime colonies.[50] Instead he used a modern term 'foreigner' (*gaikokujin*), making it apparent that he was intentionally making a connection between the history of Nagasaki and its present situation in this statement.

Instead of Koga's suggestion, Nagayama proposed 2nd April (directly transferred from the traditional Japanese calendar; he also suggested 27th April, which came from the Gregorian Calendar) to be the port-opening anniversary, which supposedly marked the day when Toyotomi Hideyoshi declared Nagasaki part of his own domain that would be directly administrated by his national regime.[51] In his formal response to the Association two days later, Nagayama further argued that the initial opening of Nagasaki on an unspecified date in

[49] Shinki (2021), pp. 13. In 1918, Koga helped Nagayama with the compilation of materials on the history and art of early modern Christianity (*Kirishitan*) in Japan, to which Nagayama expressed his gratitude in the final publication.

[50] Kotani (2010), pp. 2.

[51] Nagasaki kaikō Nengappi ni tsuite no ikensho, pp. 2.

1571 was based on the permission given 'arbitrarily' (*katte*) by the local ruling clan of Ōmura that did not receive the approval of a national authority. It was therefore the transfer of Nagasaki to the direct rule of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's national regime that marked the true beginning of Nagasaki's history as 'a foreign trading port publicly recognised by the state' (*kokka ga kōzen [Nagasaki] wo taigai bōekiko to mitometaru*).[52]

Nagayama's characterisation of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's takeover of Nagasaki in 1588 was also grounded in the legal status of the city that the 1588 takeover upended. In an article published in August 1928 in the second edition of *Nagasaki Dansō*, the main journal of *Nagasaki Shidankai* ('the Society of Nagasaki History'), Nagayama wrote about how the Christian ruler of the Ōmura clan 'endowed' (*gishin*) the Jesuit missionaries' with the 'surface rights' (*chijōken*) over Nagasaki in 1580, thus granting the Jesuits powers over the civil and religious administration in the city and its suburbs.[53] Later in the article, Nagayama recounted the process leading towards Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 1588 takeover of Nagasaki by citing his 1587 order which declared Christianity as an 'evil teaching' (*jahō*) that called for the destruction of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines and therefore unjustifiable on the 'divine land' (*shinkoku*) of Japan.[54] In the conclusion of the article, Nagayama did not cheer Toyotomi as

[52] Ibid, pp. 1.

[53] *Nagasaki Dansō,* Issue 2 (August 1928), pp. 34.

[54] Ibid. pp. 42 – 43. Nagayama did notice that the contemporary Portuguese account

the hero who stopped foreign incursion. Nevertheless, he did see the missionary work of the Jesuits in 16th Century Japan as a 'state endeavour' (*kokka-teki jigyō*) sponsored by the Kingdoms of Portugal and Spain and praised the ruler of the Shimazu clan in southern Kyushu for adhering to Confucianism and Zen Buddhism despite being one of the earliest recipients of Francis Xavier's preaching in Japan.[55]

It was based on this conception of history that during the meeting of 7th March 1929 Nagayama interpreted the early history of Nagasaki between 1571 and 1588 as being in a state of occupation. When Koga further defended his own proposal by suggesting that the Portuguese might have chosen another location for the new trading port if the battle of 16th March 1570 had not taken place, the discussion evolved into a debate on Christianity and the national interest of Japan in the history of Nagasaki:

> *Nagayama*: But the fortress as Mr. Koga mentioned was built mainly by the missionaries, and then occupied by the

understood the power endowed by Ōmura to the Jesuits as only a limited one concerning the jurisdiction, taxation and civil administration in Nagasaki, which did not amount to full property rights. The direct quotes of 'evil teachings' and 'divine land' were from Toyotomi Hideyoshi's original order cited in Nagayama's article, but the order itself was not fully enforced.

[55] Ibid. pp. 40. Nagayama mentioned the Shimazu clan as it was the defeat of the Christian Ōtomo clan (an ally to Ōmura) by Shimazu in 1586 – 1587 that triggered Toyotomi Hideyoshi's expedition to Kyushu, which eventually led to the first anti-Christian decree of 1587 and the takeover of Nagasaki in 1588. Another factor behind this reference was that Nagayama himself was born in Kagoshima (the centre of the former Shimazu domain).

Portuguese.

Koga: No, it was not built mainly by the missionaries. Also, as we now live in an age of religious freedom, we surely cannot blame the (early settlement of Nagasaki) just because the missionaries happened to be there, not to mention condemning it as 'occupation'.

Nagayama: It is occupation of some sort.

Koga: It is not occupation.

Nagayama: It would have been fine if it was an anniversary for the *kirishitan*.

Koga: We must think of Nagasaki from an international perspective.

Mutō: I agree. I am from the same hometown as Toyotomi Hideyoshi, but I can't agree with what Hideyoshi did in 1588 – that was the first step towards national seclusion (*sakoku*). Also, regarding Mr. Nagayama's emphasis on 'the state' 'the state'...[56]

Nagayama: It was not the first step towards national seclusion. Your disregard of the interest of the country (*kokka-teki ni minai*) exposes the degeneration of your thoughts. I am appalled that even you are possessing this way of thinking.

[56] Mutō Chōzō (1881 - 1942) was another historian commissioned to provide a founding date for Nagasaki in 1929. He was an economic historian from Nagoya who was at the time teaching at the Nagasaki School of Business, the preceding institution of the Faculty of Economics of the Nagasaki University: Harada (2004), pp. 4.

Apart from the obviously politically charged exchanges regarding the interpretation of Nagasaki's early history, Nagayama's use of the word '*kirishitan*' here is particularly of interest. In the historiography on Christianity (Catholicism) in early modern Japan, *kirishitan* was and still is widely used as a general term for the Catholic Church, Christians and Christian-related culture (e.g. '*kirishitan* art' for Christian artworks in Japan during the late 16th and the early 17th Centuries).[57] At the local level, however, *kirishitan* was widely used as a demeaning term that had its origin in the history of anti-Christian persecutions.[58] From Nagayama's original wording 'an anniversary for the *kirishitan*' (*kirishitan no kinenbi*), it is possible that what he meant was the living 'Christians', i.e. the Catholic residents of modern Nagasaki. However, even if Nagayama was only singling out the *kirishitan* in history as something that *could not* represent Nagasaki and could be at odds with Japan's interest as a nation (albeit in history), his statement still reflected a border of memory between 'the national' and the 'the international' that cut through not only the making of Nagasaki's first official historical narrative, but also the ongoing political discourse at the time between the local Catholic community and its critics.

[57] Kotani (2010), pp. 3.

[58] Ogawa (2007), pp. 179. Ogawa Shunsuke's field study on the local dialects of Kyushu revealed that *kirishitan* was used across the Nagasaki prefecture as a common swearing word as late as within the living memory of his interviewees.

History comes to the rescue: The port-opening anniversary as a response to the discourse of 'national crisis'

On 27th April 1930, Matsuda Seiichi (1875 – 1937), the founding chairman of the Nagasaki Port-opening Commemoration Association, declared the final resolution on the exact date of the city's founding:

> […]… It was in the Second Year of the Genki era [1571] that Nagasaki immediately emerged as a major port of Japan. During the age of nationwide seclusion [*sakoku*], Nagasaki remained Japan's only [international] trading port and the window through which overseas cultures flew eastward [into Japan], thus contributing greatly to the development of the culture of early modern Japan. It may seem that Nagasaki has lost its robust overseas connections as the opening of the treaty ports in the *Ansei* era [in 1859] deprived the city of its old privileges. However, Nagasaki's 360 years of uninterrupted existence as an international trading port since its opening remain unrivalled in the history of our nation.[59]

The final decision of the Association, which was made during the second meeting on 2nd April 1929, was a compromise between historical interpretations

[59] *Dai'ikkai Nagasaki kaikō kinenkai kiroku*, pp. 24. All the quotes are translated to English by the author.

and practical concerns. The relatively uncontroversial year of 1571 was designated as the founding year of Nagasaki, while the date 27th April was picked as the official founding date from Nagayama's proposal.[60] However, Matsuda's opening remark did not feature any of Nagayama's account on Toyotomi Hideyoshi's takeover of Nagasaki in 1588, but drew heavily upon Koga's story of the 1570 battle of Fukabori instead.[61] As the Portuguese missionaries established a church in Nagasaki, the former 'humble village' became a point of inter-civilisational contact that bore witness to the 'unprecedented maritime discoveries' (*kūzen naru kokaijyō no daihakken*) in early modern Europe. As a result, Nagasaki's historical role transcended the national history of Japan, but joined within a broader world-historical context in which the geographical barriers separating the East and the West were brought down to enable the emergence of 'global commerce' (*sekai-shōgyō*) and a 'true humanism' (*shin no jindō*) that attended to the welfare of the mankind in its entirety.[62]

The creation of Nagasaki's first and only official founding anniversary in 1929 and 1930 constitutes an example of what Eric Hobsbawm termed 'the invention

[60] A technical adjustment was applied to Nagayama's original proposal (2nd April) as it collided with 3rd April, which was a national holiday commemorating the death of Emperor Jinmu (the legendary founding emperor of Japan). The date 27th April was taken from Nagayama's alternative calculation based on the Gregorian Calendar.

[61] Ibid. pp. 16. Matsuda's reiteration of Koga's narrative came from the same opening remark on pp.24, which came before the section quoted above.

[62] Dai'ikkai Nagasaki kaikō kinenkai kiroku, pp. 24.

of tradition'.[63] The founding date of 27th April 1571 on which the entire commemoration was (and still is) based came from two separate historical events, thus does not in itself represent a concrete moment in the past. The commemorative practice itself was also the product of a series of institutionalised efforts through organised commissions and meetings over a relatively short interval and did not have its root in earlier and widely recognised local customs. As is characteristic in invented traditions, the 1930 port-opening commemoration in Nagasaki was also intended to be an answer to the present situation in reference to a factitious past.

For the Nagasaki Port-Opening Commemoration Association, which was founded by the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce, the primary objective of celebrating Nagasaki's port-opening was concerned with the local economy. A resolution passed at the Association's first meeting on 7th March 1929 (the same session during which the Koga-Nagayama debate took place) defined the mission of the organisation as 'to carry out necessary activities to develop the overseas trade, industries and commerce of the municipality of Nagasaki'.[64] The official rhetoric adopted by the Association, as illustrated in the opening

[63] A brief definition on the key features of 'invented traditions' can be seen on Hobsbawm & Ranger (Eds.). (2012), pp. 1 -2: " 'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past."

[64] Dai'ikkai Nagasaki kaikō kinenkai kiroku, pp. 21.

remarks by its founding president Matsuda, also constituted a response to the long-term decline of Nagasaki's economic and cultural importance in Japan since the signing of the Ansei Treaties by the Tokugawa Shogunate and the Western powers in 1858.

The term 'port-opening' (*kaikō*) in the modern Japanese context typically refers to two categories of international trading ports. The earliest 'open ports' were the treaty ports designated by the Ansei Treaties, which opened to international trade in the decade from 1859 to 1869. At the turn of the 20th Century, a new generation of 'open ports' (*kaikōchō*) was designated by the Meiji government at its own discretion, as Japan succeeded in recovering full autonomy over its trade through treaty revisions in the 1890s.[65] As both events became woven into a narrative of 'national-opening and progress' (*kaikokushinshu*) in early 20th Century Japan, Nagasaki became an anomaly amongst the trading ports of Japan: unlike other trading ports that owed their modern development to the opening of trade, the 'national-opening and progress' only deprived Nagasaki of its Tokugawa-era monopoly over international trade and started a process of irrevocable decline in its significance to Japan's national economy.

After being transformed into one of the first treaty ports in Japan in July 1859,

[65] The treaty ports of Nagasaki, Yokohama (then Kanagawa) and Hakodate were officially opened in 1859. The history of the 1899 designation of new 'open ports' by the government of Japan is recounted in Kasai (1997), pp. 82.

Nagasaki was soon overtaken by Yokohama and Kōbe (then Hyōgo) as the latter became two of Japan's most important nodes of foreign trade. By the 1900s, Nagasaki had become a port of merely regional importance with no substantial industrial hinterland behind its back.[66] This historical background thus explained why Matsuda's remark on Nagasaki's 360 years of 'uninterrupted' engagement in international trade was followed by a nostalgic nod to Nagasaki's Tokugawa-era 'old privilege'.

Regarding the behind-the-scenes discourse on the date and the narrative of the port-opening anniversary, on the other hand, the key participants were informed by a more immediate sense of emergency. In the case of Koga, whose proposal to the Association largely inspired the message of cosmopolitanism in Matsuda's opening remark, the initial intention of his work on Nagasaki's origin story was not to pin down the city's founding moment to a specific day, but to respond to another occasion concerned with the broader challenges facing Japan at that moment. As noted in the published record of the Nagasaki Port-Opening Commemoration Association, the materials submitted by Koga were originally prepared for a 'grand exhibition of the culture of nation-opening' (*kaikoku bunka dai tenrankai*) held by the newspaper *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*

[66] Kasai (1997), pp. 86. Customs record shows that Yokohama already surpassed Nagasaki in tariff incomes by a significant margin by 1860, one year after its opening (and Nagasaki's reorientation) as a treaty port. By 1909, Nagasaki was already surpassed in total trade revenue by the port of Moji in the Yamaguchi prefecture, which was connected to the industrial area in the northeastern part of the Kyushu Island and only opened after the Meiji Restoration.

in Osaka from 10th March to 10th April 1929, which coincided with the initial preparation for the port-opening anniversary in Nagasaki.[67] Focusing on the history of Japan's contact with the West before the mid-19th Century, the organisers of the exhibition highlighted the relevance of this theme to the 'stagnation in the economy' (*keizaikai no fushin*), the 'troubles regarding the China issue' (*shina montai no funkyū*) and the 'cumulative years of foreign trade deficit' (*ruinen yunyū chōka*) that had plunged Japan into an emergency that 'does not allow one day of hesitation' (*ichinichi mo yuru'u koto ga dekinu*).[68] It is therefore likely that Koga's reference to 'hardship' in his justification for making the 1570 battle against Fukabori as the founding episode of Nagasaki was not only paying a generic homage to Nagasaki's founding residents, but also a statement addressing a concrete sense of uncertainty and adversity that underpinned the rising interest in the history of Nagasaki and Japan's interaction with the West.

While Koga articulated an internationalist past for Nagasaki as an answer to Japan's present-day problems, the nationalistic tone adopted by Nagayama Tokihide in the 1929 debate was grounded in a sense of emergency concerning Japan's moral instead of economic decline. Hereby Nagayama's use of the word 'degeneration' (*akka*) of 'thoughts' (*shisō*) in his accusation of Koga and their

[67] Nagasaki kaikō kinen kōen sankō shiryō, pp. 7.

[68] Kaikoku bunka daikan, pp. 5.

peers deserves particular attention, as it corresponds to the same expression that frequently featured in the publications and meetings of Japan's Central Committee of Moral Suasion Entities (*Chūō kyōka dantai rengōkai*) and its regional branches. [69] Established in April 1928 as a subordinate body of the Ministry of Education, the Committee coordinated a semi-official propaganda campaign of moral suasion (*kyōka*) that promoted the values of frugality and diligence while condemning individualism, consumerism and any social force considered harmful to social cohesion nationwide. [70] Nagayama was a contributor to the journal of a local moral suasion organisation in his hometown Kagoshima from the 1910s. [71] In an article published in 1925 in another local moral suasion journal in Fukuoka prefecture, Nagayama directly addressed the issue of thought degeneration in modern Japan by calling it a side-effect of Japan's opening up towards the West: as the 'confusion of thoughts' brought down traditional monarchies and caused the proliferation of individualism in Europe, he argued, the Japanese nation must adhere to its true values as expressed in the 1890 imperial rescript on education issued by Emperor Meiji, which was widely accepted by the moral suasion organisations at the time as a foundational text of the movement. [72]

[69] Yamamoto (2011), pp. 106 – 107.

[70] Akazawa Shirō provided an overview on the main agenda of the nationwide moral suasion movement in the 1920s: Akazawa (1985), pp. 17 – 26. The English translation of *kyōka* into 'moral suasion' comes from Garon (1997).

[71] Izao (2019), pp. 85 mentioned Nagayama's contribution to the

[72] Gendai shichō no byōkon to gojin no kakugo, pp. 1.

The impact of Nagayama's understanding on degenerate thoughts and foreign influence in modern Japan on his historical writing can be seen in the speech he penned for the same 1929 grand exhibition organised by *Osaka Asahi Shimbun* as a guest speaker (he was unable to deliver it in person due to health issues). Titled 'Nagasaki and the *Kirishitan*' (*Nagasaki to kirishitan*), Nagayama's speech attempted to justify the anti-Christian policy enforced by the Tokugawa Shogunate with a comparison between a Europe plagued by chaos and differences and a Japan marked by social cohesion and political loyalty. Claiming that Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada (1579 - 1632) resolved to eradicate the influence of Christianity in Japan because of his knowledge of the ongoing religious wars in Europe, Nagayama argued that the anti-Christian policy was a necessary evil for the maintenance of Japan's state independence. As a result, the persecution of Christianity in Tokugawa Japan must not be seen a case of religious persecution that was common in other countries at the time, as the Shogunate did not see the teaching of the Christian religion (*shūshi*) as its enemy.[73]

As mentioned above, neither Koga nor Nagayama's proposal was fully reflected in the official rhetoric that defined the Nagasaki port-opening anniversary commemoration of 1930. However, the eagerness of both historians in

[73] *Kaikoku bunka*, pp. 70 – 71.

connecting their versions of Nagasaki's origin story to an ongoing sense of crisis regarding present-day Japan as shown in the March 1929 debate and their related writings points to a broader socio-political context that defined the process in which the first official narrative regarding Nagasaki's early history was formed in modern times. As will be elaborated in the next chapter, the difference between Koga and Nagayama's political views does not necessarily reflect a conflict between internationalism and nationalism in Japan at the time. Rather, both Koga's characterisation of Nagasaki as a historic city of openness and Nagayama's alertness against foreign influences stemmed from the same prevailing sense of 'national crises' (*kokunan*), which was coming into direct conflict with the local Catholic community of Nagasaki right at the moment when the early preparation for the port-opening anniversary in Nagasaki was underway. By analysing the process by which this conflict came about and the shifting response from the Catholic community to it, the next chapter argues that the evolving memorialisation of Christianity in Nagasaki exposed a border of memory that cut through not only the city's early modern past, but also the city's religious political landscape in the 1930s.

2 The holy, the national, the international: The mnemonic politics of Catholic martyrdom in pre-WWII Nagasaki (1929 – 1940)

Despite the behind-the-scenes debate regarding how much role should be assigned to Christianity in the official origin story of Nagasaki, the 1930 port-opening anniversary still provided an unprecedented opportunity for the local Catholic Church to open its door to the general public. As part of the anniversary celebration, an exhibition on the history of Catholicism in Nagasaki was held in the reception room of the episcopal palace near the Catholic Cathedral of Oura. Most of the objects exhibited came from the private collection of Uraoka Kuramatsu, a Catholic businessman in downtown Nagasaki, reflecting the lack of a systematic collection effort on the history of early modern Christianity in Nagasaki by the Church itself. Nevertheless, the exhibition reportedly attracted 'more than five or six thousand' visitors, which greatly exceeded the expectation of the Church.[74]

As the preparations for the first port-opening anniversary were underway, the Catholic Church in Nagasaki was faced with an increasingly hostile political environment. In October 1929, the Catholic Kaisei Middle School of Nagasaki

[74] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th May 1930. Uraoka's name can be seen in a list of donators from the west Nakamachi parish of Nagasaki to the famine-striken farmers in Japan's Tohoku region in the March 1906 issue of the Catholic journal *Koe* ('The Voice').

became the target of public outrage for failing to hold a student assembly for the remote veneration (y*ōhai*) of the Grand Shrine of Ise on the occasion of the ritual reconstruction of its inner shrine, for which a specific public holiday was designated. The decision was made by the parent body of the school, the French-based Catholic congregation Society of Mary, on the grounds that the remote veneration constituted a non-Catholic 'religious' activity that was inappropriate to be held in the campus.[75] This interpretation was in obedience with a joint directive issued by the Apostolic Delegate to Japan and the Archbishop of Tokyo addressing specifically the October national veneration, but went against the prevailing view within the political establishment, which saw official Shinto worship as a matter of civic duty above religious doctrines.[76] The incident eventually led to the intervention of both the prefectural bureau of education and the Special High Police (*Tokkō*), with the local newspaper *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* publishing a fiery report on 18th October titled, 'No remote veneration on religious grounds: the troublemaking middle school shows severe problems in national consciousness':

> Although the school is run by foreigners, the students who accepted the decision (of cancellation) are all Japanese. … To see the Grand Shrine of Ise, the ancestral shrine of our Imperial

[75] Hashimoto (1993), pp. 180.

[76] Miyoshi (2021), pp. 108.

> House as a site of religion (*shūkyō tekini miru*) can be a forgivable mistake if it was made by a foreigner; however, if the same mistake is being uttered by our fellow Japanese without hesitation, it constitutes a severe issue that must not be overlooked.[77]

The article mainly blamed the Japanese students and teaching staff in Kaisei Middle School for failing to uphold the Japanese 'national polity' (*kokutai*). Nevertheless, the root of the controversy was attributed to the dual allegiance the school owed to the Japanese state and the Catholic Church. On 26th November, the Kaisei Middle School incident was brought up again in the interpellation session of the Nagasaki prefectural assembly by Itsuwa Senuemon, then the deputy speaker of the Nagasaki municipal assembly:

> Itsuwa: … as for the Kaisei Middle School, the refusal of the school to remotely venerate the Grand Shrine of Ise for the ritual reconstruction is becoming a social trouble. As the cause of the issue seems to be that the headteacher, who is a Westerner, has a different view on religion from us Japanese, I would like to ask how the government will enforce its supervision upon schools that are founded by foreigners or have foreigners as headteachers.

[77] Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun, 18th October 1929.

> Itō Kihachirō (prefectural governor): … the headteacher of the Kaisei Middle School was ready preparing for the remote veneration and the decision to cancel was only made late by a command from the headquarters of the Church (*kyōkai honbu*). The procedure to make sure remote veneration assemblies can be duly held in future is already complete, but we are also consulting the Ministry of Education given the seriousness of the matter.[78]

Both the politicians in the prefectural assembly and the commentator of *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* evoked in their remarks the recent policy of 'moral suasion general mobilisation' (*kyōka sōdōin*) as the justification for the wariness particularly targeted at the Catholics. The 'moral suasion general mobilisation' referred to a nationwide campaign launched in August 1929 by the newly inaugurated Hamaguchi Osachi government as part of its plan to address the dual national crises (*kokunan*) that were supposedly facing Japan: one concerning the economy (*keizai kokunan*), and the other concerning thoughts and ideology (*shisō kokunan*).[79] Enlisting the help of existing moral suasion networks based on associations of religious figures (including Shinto priests), local veterans and educators at the local level, the 'moral suasion general mobilisation' campaign attempted to exert indirect influence over

[78] *Nagasaki gikai-shi* (History of Nagasaki Prefectural Asembly) Volume 4, pp. 515.

[79] Metzler (2006), pp. 204. Hereby Metzler used 'moral education general mobilisation' as the English translation for *kyōka sōdōin*.

private economic life by encouraging retrenchment in consumption, and to influence public life by demanding a more assertive attitude towards the upholding of Japan's 'national polity' (*kokutai*), which was centred on the idea of Japan being a Shinto nation united under the Imperial Family.[80] As participation in state-sanctioned Shinto worship became a litmus test of political allegiance, the Kaisei Middle School incident was seen by the public media and local politicians of Nagasaki as a confirmation of how bounded the local Catholic Church still was by foreign religious authorities, and how such dual obligations could cause disruption to the political establishment.

The Catholic Church in Nagasaki was willing to collaborate with the campaign at the local level from its early stages. The Nagasaki prefectural association of moral suasion organisations (*Nagasaki-ken kyōka dantai rengōkai*) was formed under the personal leadership of governor Itō Kihachirō in July 1929, and the Catholic youth organisation of Nagasaki became a member in the following month.[81] However, as the disagreement between the official Catholic teaching and the government position on Shinto worship remained unresolved, a political border persisted between the non-Catholic and Catholic opinion leaders in Nagasaki at the turn of the 1930s.

[80] Akazawa (1985), pp. 36. The reference to the 'national polity' (*kokutai*) comes from Yamamoto (2011), pp. 137.

[81] 'Overview of moral suasion entities' (*dantai sōran*) (1934), Research Institute of the Great Japan Imperial Federation of Industries (*Dainipponteikoku sangyō sō renmei dantai kenkyūjo*), pp. 102.

As already manifested in the remarks by Nagayama Tokihide cited in the previous chapter, this political border concerning Catholicism in modern-day Nagasaki could easily translate into a border of memory concerning Catholicism in the early history of Nagasaki. The purpose of this chapter, however, is to demonstrate how key actors in the local Catholic clergy and the laity utilised the collective memory within their community regarding the early modern history of Catholicism in Nagasaki in their response to the political challenges facing the Catholic Church in the 1930s. With a particular focus on the commemoration of the Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan within the local Catholic community, this chapter argues that it was the strategy of accommodation pursued by the Catholic opinion-leaders vis-à-vis the increasingly suppressive nationalism of the 1930s that laid the foundation for the 'Christian Nagasaki' rhetoric that would become prevalent in the official narrative on the history of Nagasaki after the end of WWII.

A Janus-headed memory: The martyrdom narrative and the politics of the Nagasaki Catholics

Amidst mounting scepticism of Catholic institutions in Nagasaki being too bounded by foreign influences, the Diocese of Nagasaki was witnessing a

number of decisive developments towards indigenisation in church governance and laity organisation by the end of the 1920s. In 1927, Hayazaka Kyūnosuke was ordained the bishop of Nagasaki, thus becoming the first clergyman of Japanese origin to be in charge of an episcopal see in the history of the Catholic Church in Japan.[82] The following year, the first official Japanese newspaper of the Diocese, the *Katorikkukyō-hō* ('the Catholic newspaper') was launched under the editorship of Father Urakawa Wasaburō, himself a descendant of the former hidden Christians in the Urakami area of Nagasaki and a scholar specialising in the history of Catholicism in Nagasaki.

By the early 20th Century, the Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki was still to a large extent defined by its peculiar early modern prehistory. The Nagasaki Diocese in 1930 had 53,611 believers under its episcopal governance, amounting to more than half of the Catholic population in Japan and by far the highest concentration of Catholic believers within the general population in Japan.[83] Within the Diocese and the broader Catholic populations of Kyushu, the geographical distribution of parishioners was still closely correlated to the presence of former hidden Christian communities: in the Nagasaki Bay area, Catholic believers in the urban parishes of Nakamachi and Oura were far fewer

[82] Miyoshi (2021), pp. 127.

[83] *Koe*, Issue 659 (December 1930), pp. 66. The statistics are representative of the Catholic community within Nagasaki prefecture at the time as the jurisdiction of the Diocese had been made congruent with the border of Nagasaki prefecture since 1927: Miyoshi (2021), pp. 223.

than the suburban parish of Urakami and the rural parish of Iōjima, which each had a history of being a former hidden Christian community.[84] History also granted the Nagasaki Diocese and the Catholic Church in the Nagasaki Municipality a special place within the Catholic Church in Japan as they kept the custody of Japan's only holy site, the place where the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan martyred on 5th February 1597.

The Twenty-Six Saints of Japan were a group of Catholic missionaries and laypeople executed by the command of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the ruler who took over the lordship of Nagasaki in 1588, as part of the first wave of nationwide persecution against Christianity in Japan. [85] Against the backdrop of the more comprehensive persecution of Christians by the Tokugawa Shogunate in the early 17th Century and the rising interest in priest and missionary martyrology across the Catholic Church worldwide after the Council of Trent (1545 - 1563), the Twenty-Six Martyrs received extensive attention in the Catholic writings of 17th Century Europe and Colonial Americas. [86] In 1627, the Twenty-Six Martyrs received beatification by Rome, thus becoming the first martyrs in Japan to be officially recognised by the Catholic Church.[87] In 1862, Pope Pius IX canonised the Twenty-Six Martyrs as Catholic saints, three year before the French

[84] According to *Koe* Issue 543 (February 1921), pp. 52 – 53.

[85] Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 251.

[86] Teather (2010), pp. 148..

[87] Omata Rappo (2022), pp. 3.

missionary Bernard Thadée Petitjean (1829–1884) 'rediscovered' the hidden Christians of Urakami in the Catholic Church of Oura. [88]

Despite the reports in contemporary Portuguese sources on the fervent worship of the Martyrs by the local Christians immediately after the execution, no Japanese account in direct reference to the martyrdom of 1597 survived through the Tokugawa era.[89] Both the beatification and the canonisation of the Twenty-Six Martyrs took place at a time when the Japanese hidden Christians were cut off from the official Catholic ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the history of the concept 'martyrdom' itself in the Japanese language was only as long as the history of the re-introduction of Catholicism in Japan in the 1860s.[90]At the local level, the devotion to the Twenty-Six Saints was only brought to Nagasaki by Bernard Petitjean two years before the 'rediscovery' of the hidden Christians: upon his first arrival in Nagasaki in 1863, Petitjean identified the hill of Tateyama to the northwest of downtown Nagasaki as the 'holy hill' on which the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan were supposedly executed.[91]

Into the 20th Century, Petitijean's hypothesis was increasingly called into question by the local believers as the terrain of Tateyama hill was apparently

[88] Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 252.

[89] Hesselink (2015) recounted the reaction of Japanese and Portuguese Christians to the 1597 execution on pp. 112 – 113.

[90] Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 252.

[91] Omata Rappo (2022), pp. 24.

too difficult for an execution of the scale as described in hagiographical writings to be carried out. In 1915, Urakawa Wasaburō proposed in *Nihon ni okeru kōkyōkai no fukkatsu* ('The resurrection of the Catholic Church in Japan') that a smaller slope between the hill Tateyama and Nagasaki Bay could have been the actual site of the 1597 Martyrdom. In his 1926 book *Kirishitan no Fukkatsu* ('The resurrection of *Kirishitan*'), Urakawa further named the location to be Nishizaka, literally meaning 'western slope', based on his reading of Tokugawa-era chorographical writings.[92]

Unlike Tateyama, which was designated by Petitjean solely based on his reading of 18th and 19th Century French martyrological writings, the slope of Nishizaka was well documented in Japanese sources.[93] In *Kirishitan no Fukkatsu*, Urakawa quoted a Tokugawa-era map calling Nishizaka 'the impure land of the Christian priests' to substantiate his hypothesis.[94] Apart from being better documented in Japanese sources, Nishizaka was also important to Urakawa's narrative because of its proximity to the main road connecting the traditional downtown area of Nagasaki and Urakami village to its north, upper stream

[92] Urakawa (1926), pp. 218.

[93] The 1720 *Nagasaki Yokagusa* ('Nagasaki Night-talk Sketches') noted Nishizaka to be the place where the severed head of the leader of the 1638 Shimabara Uprising was displayed to the public; as the area influenced by the Uprising was the former domain of the Arima clan, Nishizaka was also known as *Arimatsuka*, 'the tomb of Arima' amongst the local residents: *Nagasaki Yokagusa*, pp. 9. In the 1930s, the story of *Arimatsuka* was still cited repeatedly in the 1932, 1934, 1936 and 1938 editions of the official geographical guidebook to Nagasaki Prefecture *Nagasaki-ken An'nai* as part of the description for Nishizaka.

[94] Urakawa (1926), pp. 218.

along the Urakami River. In contrast to Tateyama, which divided the Tokugawa-era Shinto-Buddhist city centre of Nagasaki (the hill itself overlooks the site of Suwa Shrine from the northwest) from the wilderness, the Nishizaka slope marked the socio-geographical margins of Nagasaki the port town and Urakami the village of hidden Christians.[95]

To Urakawa, the repositioned 'hill of the martyrs' now marked the natural border between urban Nagasaki, which had been turned into a centre of anti-Christian persecution by the Tokugawa Shogunate, and the Urakami river valley populated by 'thousands of believers' waiting generation after generation in expectation of the return of missionaries over the sea.[96] A sense of continuity between the 1597 Martyrdom and the modern-day Catholic community of Nagasaki was thus construed, with the Twenty-Six Martyrs being a symbol of both the history of endurance under persecution and the special importance of Nagasaki to the Catholic Church of Japan.

Throughout the early 20th Century, the sense of continuity was woven by key opinion makers within the local Catholic community into their language of protest regarding the unsatisfactory state of episcopal governance or the

[95] According to Carla Tronu Montané, the Nishizaka slope might have been considered the periphery of Nagasaki even before the 1597 martyrdom: it was the site of a Catholic leper hospital, which probably formed the origin of the traditional taboo against Nishizaka in the subsequent local traditions even after the persecution of Christianity. See Tronu (2012), pp. 125.
[96] Urakawa (1915), pp. 145 – 146.

suppressive political situation in which they found their community. In 1904, a group of Catholic petitioners from Nagasaki succeeded in convincing the Vatican to terminate the monopoly of the Paris Foreign Mission Society over church governance in Japan by explicitly calling for the introduction of the Society of Jesus due to its historical link with the early modern Christians of Nagasaki.[97] In the 1st September issue of *Katorikkukyō-hō*, bishop Hayazaka cited again the history of persecution in Nagasaki in his comment on the coming prefectural assembly election and the political pressure facing the Catholic community following the Kaisei Middle School incident:

> For three hundred years our Nagasaki prefecture had been the epicentre of persecution. As a result, the prejudice against us Catholics and the ignorant hatred of the Catholic teaching were also virtually unrivalled in Japan. This prejudice sometimes even amounts to another form of persecution which not only goes against the rule of the Constitution, but also reflects the dark side of our civilised nation – which is barbarism.[98]

Hayazaka's depiction of the history of Christianity in Nagasaki as one marked by persecution in 1931 is in stark contrast to the rhetoric of co-existence so

[97] Yamanashi (2011a), pp. 239. The first Catholic order allowed to operate in Japan beside the Paris Foreign Mission Society was the Dominicans, but the initiative to invite Jesuits to carry out mission work in Nagasaki had gained currency within the local Catholic community since as early as 1902.

[98] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1 September 1931.

emphasised in the modern-day articulation of Hidden Christian Heritage. However, the intention of his comment was not to simply criticise the local politics of Nagasaki for the hardship facing the local Catholic Church. Lamenting the lack of success in evangelisation within the Diocese, Hayazaka urged the parishioners to see their religious life beyond prayers and mass attendance, and to extend the social reach of Catholicism by making their faith more concretely manifested in everyday life, and most importantly, to incorporate Catholic faith into their loyalty as 'nationals' (*kokumin*).

In the 1st December 1931 issue of *Katorikkukyō-hō*, the front page editorial titled 'Let us venerate the martyrs of Japan' (*Nihon junkyōsha o sūkei seyo*) provided another example of how the memory of martyrdom and persecution was evoked to respond to the delicate political situation facing the Catholics of Nagasaki:

> Looking back (at the stories of martyrdom in Nagasaki), it can be seen that we are the descendants of the martyrs. Most of those martyrs were Japanese people born on Japanese soil, breathed in the Japanese air, and grew up drinking Japanese water. … In any sense, they were our ancestors. Our country has the tradition of cherishing ancestors and one's family lineage, which constantly prompt us not to put our ancestors to shame and not to damage our family honour.

> And since the martyrs truly are our ancestors, shouldn't we strive to live up to their fame by upholding their faith with the same valour, endurance and the same determination to sacrifice by relinquishing everything without hesitation for our Lord, including life? Aren't we Catholics still facing the challenge of being scorned at, even though we are no longer facing the risk of losing our property, families, brothers or our own lives? Do we have the courage to refuse when Shinto worship is being imposed upon us?[99]

Compared with the pro-Shinto rhetoric of *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* (i.e., Grand Shrine of Ise being the ancestral shrine of the Imperial House), the wording of the *Katorikkukyō-hō* editorial can also be seen as an attempt to bridge the Catholic identity with the allegiance to the Japanese nation as defined by the prevailing *kokutai* ideology without breaking with the Church doctrine.

Hereby the theological concept of martyrdom as defined in the Catholic orthodoxy provided particularly flexible room for manoeuvre. The Catholic Catechism defines 'martyrdom' as 'the supreme witness' given to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine by enduring death through an act of fortitude.[100] Based on the principle of *non fit poena, sed causa* ('not by the

[99] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1 December 1931.

[100] Catechism of the Catholic Church (1993), No. 2473: https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P8J.HTM. (Accessed 6th May 2024.)

punishment, but by the cause of accusation') as articulated by Augustine of Hippo, Catholic teaching also sees the absence of resistance against the persecutor with violence as one of the criteria for the certification of martyrdom. [101] The Catholic martyrdom in Nagasaki could therefore be remembered as the embodiment of two seemingly opposite messages: while being firmly defiant against persecution by refusing to apostatise, the martyrs of Japan were also being fully obedient to the earthly power as they did not resort to violent resistance.

In an address on 30th October 1931 titled 'On *Actio Catholic*' (*Akushyo katorikku ni tsuite*), bishop Hayazaka of the Nagasaki Diocese based his argument on the duality of the martyrdom memory so as to dissociate the Shinto worship controversy from the political duty of his parishioners as subjects of the Japanese Empire:

> We, the Catholics, who were resurrected from three hundred years of persecution through bloodshed and death, are small in numbers and weak in strength. However, we still have the determination to live up to our glorious past and strive for the great mission of redeeming humankind. We still have the confidence and spiritual power to uphold Japan's glorious national polity and pioneer the moral improvement of the

[101] Satō (2004), pp. 13.

nation.

> Today, Japan is truly in the midst of a national crisis of thoughts (*shisō kokunan*). This is because the Catholic faith and its spiritual power have not penetrated into the souls of our fellow nationals and have comprehended, understood, and embraced by the majority of the Japanese people through their reason or in their minds. [102]

Making direct references to terms like 'national polity' and 'national crisis of thoughts' that featured heavily in the prevailing official rhetoric, bishop Hayazaka articulated a strategy of accommodation for his parishioners by encouraging them to engage more actively in the ongoing moral suasion movement, and to instil into this allegedly non-religious campaign a Catholic core. The martyrs of Japan in this sense were also considered to be not only the spiritual ancestors of the modern-day Catholic community in Nagasaki, but also an example of reconciling religious faith with national allegiance:

> This year marks the 382nd year since Catholicism first came to Japan; between now and then, there was also a three-hundred-year history of cruel persecution unmatched anywhere else across the world. However, as the Japanese soul, already so stiffened by the way of the samurai (*bushidō*), was now further purified by the true faith and the eternal life offered by

[102] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th November 1931.

> Catholicism, it gave in to neither the physical threat of life nor the material threat against properties. Tens of thousands of noble martyrs, the holy martyrs whose names shall be remembered by ten thousand generations, had also emerged from we the Japanese people. However, in the modern day the time of the persecution has come to an end, and the brutal blades wielded by the persecutors have dropped onto the ground.[103]

In stark contrast to the interpretation of the 16th and 17th Century persecution as an inevitable struggle between Catholicism as a fundamentally foreign force and the Toyotomi and Tokugawa regimes as guardians of Japan's integrity as articulated by Nagayama Tokihide, Hayazaka's account saw the persecution as a transient phase in history that had to be endured rather than confronted. Furthermore, the martyrs of Nagasaki showed such heroic endurance was possible *because of* rather than *in spite of* their Japanese origin, and the international nature of Catholicism and the Catholic Church became rather a platform on which the national pride of Japan could be vindicated, as now the nobleness of the 'Japanese spirit' became an object of global veneration, thanks to the canonisation and beatification of the Japanese martyrs.

[103] Ibid.

A pilgrimage from the New World: The Twenty-Six Saints and Japan's overseas propaganda (1931 – 1940)

By the beginning of the 1930s, the Catholic Church had canonised Twenty-Six Saints and the other 205 beatified martyrs in line for canonisation since 1867 who died during the early modern anti-Christian persecution of Japan.[104] In contrast to bishop Hayazaka's emphasis on their 'Japaneseness', a significant number of the venerated martyrs in Japan were from non-Japanese origins. Amongst the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan who were martyred in 1597 in Nagasaki, six were Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries from Southern Europe, India and Mexico; within the 205 named martyrs in Japan beatified by the Catholic Church in 1867, more than a fifth were also from countries other than Japan. [105] In combination with the duality of defiance and obedience as illustrated above, this duality of being simultaneously 'national' and 'international' deeply influenced the way the early modern Catholic martyrdom in Nagasaki was remembered by the local Catholic community, and caused the communal memory of the Catholics of Nagasaki to be deeply interwoven with Japan's international propaganda appeal as the country's image suffered from

[104] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1 December 1931.

[105] The nationalities of the Twenty-Six Saints can be seen on the main website of the Twenty-Six Saints Memorial Museum: http://www.26martyrs.com. Accessed on 11th May 2024. Tornu (2019) provided a thorough account on the origins of all the Catholic saints and martyrs venerated by the Catholic Church of Japan for their martyrdom under the early modern anti-Christian persecution by the Toyotomi and Tokugawa regimes: Tornu (2019), pp. 29.

its ongoing pursuit of overseas aggression.

Amongst all the martyrs explicitly recognised by the Catholic Church, the Twenty-Six Saints received the most attention and commemoration both locally and globally. By 1931, the veneration of the Twenty-Six Saints on their feast day of 5th February (or the following Sunday) had become an established event in the annual routine of the Catholic community in Nagasaki. According to reports from the *Katorikkukyō-hō*, the typical veneration activity involved the gathering of Catholic believers from the parishes of Urakami, Nishi-nakamachi and Akuno'ura of the municipality of Nagasaki in front of the memorial pole of the 'assumed site of the martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan' (*Nihon nijyūroku sei-chimei kateichi*), followed by a ritual of Benediction in the nearby church of Nishi-Nakamachi.[106] As Nishizaka was not yet accepted as the new alternative site of the 1597 martyrdom, the pole still marked the location designated by Petitjean in 1863 on the top of Tateyama hill. The report of *Katorikkukyō-hō* was also explicit about the uncertainty regarding the 'true' location of the martyrdom by including quotes of local parishioners wondering where the site 'actually' was.[107]

During the veneration of the Twenty-Six Martyrs of 1933, bishop Hayazaka

[106] Ibid, 1 March 1931.

[107] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st March 1932.

finally called for the construction of a permanent memorial marking the 'true' location of martyrdom:

> Just as some part of our modern society is retrogressing towards persecution, the government has designated the Cathedral of Oura, a church dedicated to the Twenty-Six Saints, as a national treasure. This decision eloquently speaks of the protection (from the government) of the Martyrs. [...] We as Catholics wish to confirm the true site of the martyrdom of the Saint, and to erect on it a church or monument for permanent commemoration by our own hands as soon as possible.[108]

To Hayazaka, the erection of a monument for the Twenty-Six Saints was simultaneously a Catholic endeavour ('we as Catholics... by our own hands') and a way to manifest the spirit of Catholicism to the general public, which at the time was being again subjected to 'slander' from the 'newspapers, magazines and radio stations of Tokyo'. Hereby bishop Hayazaka was apparently referring to the Sophia University incident of 1932, in which the Catholic students of the Jesuit institution caused national criticism for refusing to worship (*sanpai*) at Yasukuni Shrine of Tokyo, the shrine of the Japanese Imperial Army and another major shrine enjoying state-backed status.[109] The monument for the

[108] Ibid, 15th February 1933. The Oura Cathedral was deignated National Treasure of Japan by the Ministry of Education decree no. 14 on 23rd January 1933: *Kokuhō kenzōbutsu ryakusetsu mokuroku* (Abbreviated catalogue of National Treasure buildings), pp. 188.

[109] Ion (2003), pp. 85. Nakai (2012) systematically recounted the 1932 Sophia University

Twenty-Six Saints was thus seen as a public testament to the 'true' meaning of Catholicism that would help clarify the 'lack of understanding' (*ninshiki fusoku*) that allegedly drove the ongoing hostility against the Catholics in Japan.

'O, 5th of February when the knees bleed – the site of martyrdom on Tateyama', photo of the 1933 Twenty-Six Saints veneration led by Bishop Hayazaka (centre). *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th February 1933.

Bishop Hayazaka would not be able to oversee the beginning of the implementation of the plan to construct the monument during his episcopal term. Nevertheless, by the time he issued the call for engagement and accommodation to his parishioners amidst the aftermath of the Kaisei Middle School controversy, the flow of events that led to the confirmation of Nishizaka as the official site of the 1597 martyrdom had already started, in which Hirayama Masajyū, a Catholic businessman in colonial Korea and a direct

Incident and briefly discussed its similarity with the 1929 Kaisei Middle School incident.

descendant to the hidden Christians of the Urakami community would play the key role.

Born in 1880, Hirayama Masajyū was a graduate from the predecessor of Kaisei Middle School and studied from 1905 to 1910 in Marseille, France, before returning to Japan and inheriting his father's husbandry business in Keijō (Seoul), then the capital of Korea under Japanese rule.[110] A politically active figure in the Japanese Catholic community in colonial Korea, Hirayama worked with the film company Nikkatsu to produce a film in 1929 based on the 1597 martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan. Although no direct reference to the Kaisei Middle School incident was made, Hirayama did express his intention for the film to be a personal contribution to the ongoing movement of national moral education that could help clarify the prevalent 'misunderstanding' amongst the Japanese public regarding Catholicism and promote 'international fraternity' (*kokusai shinzen*) by showcasing 'the unique virtue of the Japanese nation' to the world.[111]

Titled *Junkyō kesshi: Nihon nijyūrokuseijin* ('The bloody history of

[110] The royal confirmation of Hirayama Masajyū as the honourary consulate of Belgium to Keijō, 21st December 1931, archived in *Kōbun zassan* (Miscellaneous Official Document Compilations) (1931) Volume 20 (Foreign Ministry Volume 3), accessed via the National Archive of Japan Digital Archive (call number *San* 01938100).

[111] The description of Hirayama's intention comes from Yamanashi (2010), pp. 185 where an excerpt from Hirayama's 1934 speech to a Catholic church in Osaka.

martyrdom: The Twenty-Six Saints of Japan'), the film came into production in June 1930 and premiered in September 1931.[112] To avoid trouble with either the Catholic or the non-Catholic side of public opinion, Hirayama sought public endorsement from the both the Church and the political leadership of the time, in particular via his acquaintance with Saitō Makoto, then the governor of Korea.[113] Supposedly adapted from French missionary Aimé Villion's book *Yamato hijiri chishio no kakioki* (The last words in blood by the Saints of Japan), the plot of the film was also toned down to make the story of martyrdom less politically controversial: unlike Villion's original work which described Toyotomi Hideyoshi as an inherently anti-Catholic tyrant, the film *Junkyō kesshi* attributed the mass execution of 1597 to the malice of Buddhist monks, whose rumours against Catholicism misled the otherwise sympathetic Toyotomi into making the brutal decision.[114]

Apart from seeing *Junkyō kesshi* as a vehicle for intervening in the public discourse regarding Catholicism in Japan, Hirayama had also been eyeing the film's international outreach from the initial stage of production. As soon as the production decision was made in June 1930, Hirayama and Nikkatsu agreed to make the film with subtitles in English, French and German.[115] In August 1930,

[112] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st October 1931. The first screening in Tokyo was attended by the then Archbishop of Tokyo Jean-Baptiste-Alexis Chambon on 15th September.

[113] Yamanashi (2010), pp. 188.

[114] Ibid. pp. 194.

[115] *Kinema shūhō* (The Cinema Weekly) Issue 19, June 1930, pp. 9.

Hirayama travelled to Italy for the location shooting of the 1862 Canonisation ceremony of the Twenty-Six Saints in the Vatican, which he described optimistically in his later correspondence with the *Katorikkukyō-hō*:

> … We dared to travel ten thousand miles to Rome for the location shooting. Fortunately, we received special assistance from the Holy See, the enthusiastic help of Duce Mussolini and the overwhelming support from the citizens of Rome, which almost amounted to a general mobilisation. As a result, we were able to bring back to Japan an achievement several times greater than what we initially expected. I believe this national honour must be made fully public both inside and outside Japan: for Japan, this will serve as the material of national moral suasion that can help resolve the two-century-long tradition of misunderstanding [against Catholicism]; to other countries, this shall also help to promote the character of the Japanese nation. This is the sole motivation of mine to make the story of the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan into a movie.[116]

Citing contemporary accounts by Japanese seminarians in Rome who volunteered for Hirayama's location shooting, Yamanashi Atsushi suggested that Hirayama's visit was far less successful than he claimed: he did not obtain the permission to film inside the St. Peter's Basilica, and the meetings with Pope

[116] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st April 1931.

Pius XI and Mussolini were only arranged out of diplomatic courtesy.[117] Nevertheless, the intentional exaggeration still reflected Hirayama's expectation for the film to achieve international influence that would in turn enhance its reception at home.

After overseeing the premiere of *Junkyō kesshi* in Japan, Hirayama embarked on a screening tour to the United States and Europe in February 1932 with blessing from senior figures within the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Army.[118] By the time Hirayama arrived in California, his intention of enhancing the world's 'understanding' of the Japanese national character through retelling the 1597 martyrdom story had taken on a more concrete meaning as the establishment of Manchukuo in March 1932 caused major turmoil regarding Japan's international standing. Hirayama also acknowledged himself that the worsening public opinion in the US regarding Japan had an adverse influence on the reception of the film in the United States.[119] Nevertheless, Hirayama received an unexpected offer from Francisco Orozco y Jiménez, then the archbishop of Guadalajara, Mexico, who was in exile in the United States to help

[117] Yamanashi (2010), pp. 191.

[118] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st April 1932. A group photo taken for the farewell banquet on 17th February featured Tani Masayuki the chief of the Asia Bureau of the Foreign Ministry, Sugiyama Gen the Under-sectretary of Army Oiso Kuniaki the chief of the Military Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Army.

[119] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st November 1932: 'Due to the intensification of the Manchu-Mongolia issue this March [the establishment of Manchukuo], the hostile feeling towards Japan has been worsening by the day, which also caused some adverse impact on my film.'

fund the construction of a memorial church near the martyrdom site of 'Tateyama'.[120]

Unlike the 1930 location shooting tour to Rome, the meeting between Hirayama and archbishop Jiménez yielded concrete results, and Hirayama's report could largely correspond with historical records from the Mexican side.[121] In contrast to the *national* character of the Twenty-Six Saints that Hirayama was eager to promote to the Western audience, the main appeal of the 1597 martyrdom story turned out to be its *international* aspect. Both Hirayama's correspondence and sources from the Mexican side suggested that the main motivation behind archbishop Jiménez's offer was to venerate St. Felipe de Jesús, a Franciscan friar amongst the Twenty-Six Saints who became the first Catholic saint born in Mexico. This motivation also defined the initial plan Jiménez drew up for the Nishizaka site, as his proposal was centred on the construction of a memorial church dedicated to this Mexican saint, accompanied by a nearby building for the local seminary. [122]

[120] Ibid. The newspaper published the name of the archdiocese as 'sunadarajara' (スナダラジャラ), which should have been a misprint of Guadalajara (グアダラハラ, or グアダラジャラ if pronounced in English). The meeting reportedly took place after the screening of the film in Los Angeles on 23rd June 1932. A brief biography of Francisco Orozco y Jiménez can be seen on *El Paso Times*, 19th February 1936 ('Mexican "Fighting Archbishop" Dies in His Guadalajara Home').

[121] Arimura (2014), pp. 112.

[122] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st November 1932: 'In particular, it was mentioned that Brother Felipe de Jesús who was amongst the Twenty-Six Saints was from Mexico. Also, the archbishop himself seemed to have the backing of some American patrons who were very resourceful.' The Mexican

As Jiménez died in 1936, the initial plan to build a memorial complex on the site of Nishizaka also came to a temporary halt. In February 1937, however, the commemoration of the Twenty-Six Saints in Nishizaka received renewed attention from the representatives of the United States to the 33rd International Eucharistic Congress in Manila, the Philippines.[123] By the pre-arrangement of the Foreign Ministry of Japan, the American mission to the Manila International Eucharistic Congress led by John Mitty, the Catholic archbishop of San Francisco joined the Japanese delegation for a visit to Japan.[124] Both groups attended a screening of *Junkyō kesshi* during their voyage to Japan, and the Japanese delegation was able to make the acquaintance of Frederick Vincent Williams, a San Francisco-based Catholic journalist in charge of the media affairs for the American delegation to the Manila Eucharistic Congress.[125]

In May 1938, Williams personally visited Nagasaki to propose his initiative of

side of the same story can be seen in Arimura (2014), pp. 114.

[123] A eucharistic congress is a meeting of ecclesiastics and laymen for the purpose of venerating the Holy Eucharist, which was believed to be the real presence of Jesus Christ according to Catholic teaching. The first International Eucharistic Congress was held in France in 1881, and the 1937 Manila International Eucharistic Conference was the first time the event was held in Asia: Meehan, T. (1909). Eucharistic Congresses. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05592a.htm (accessed 14th May 2024).

[124] Yamanashi (2011b), pp. 85.

[125] Miyazaki (2022), pp. 21.

organising a pilgrimage mission from the United States to Japan, with Nagasaki as the starting point. The report by *Katorikkukyō-hō* on this visit made explicit the political nature of the planned pilgrimage with a large subtitle describing Williams as not only a 'heavyweight figure of the US Catholic media', but also a 'defender of Japan who keeps reporting the righteousness of the Japanese Imperial Army to the world' (*Kōgun no tadashī tachiba o sekai ni hōdō shitsutsu aru Nihon bengo-sha*).[126]

The new bishop of Nagasaki Yamaguchi Aijirō (who succeeded Hayazaka in 1937) soon sent an official invitation to archbishop John Mitty, marking the beginning of the preparation for the incoming US pilgrimage mission. The report by *Katorikkukyō-hō* also discussed how this pilgrimage mission would serve as a chance to disseminate the understanding of 'Japan as the just party' (*seigi Nippon*) to the American audience, and thus had attracted attention from wider society. [127] The news of the US pilgrimage mission indeed attracted attention from non-Catholic public opinion: On 2nd April 1939, *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* published a report on the US pilgrimage mission from a non-Catholic perspective. Titled 'A sightseeing invitation to the Catholic Church' (*Katorikkukyō e kankō no jōtaijō*), the report provided a forthright analysis of

[126] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st June 1938. In September 1938 Williams was accused of acting as a foreign agent of influence in the US on the payroll of the Japanese government to disseminate pro-Japanese propaganda: "106 Register as Foreign Agents Here," *Washington Post*, October 11, 1938, X1.

[127] Ibid. 1st January 1939.

the economic potential of the pilgrimage plan: apart from boosting Japan-US relationship through the channel of Catholicism, the pilgrimage mission was expected to bring at least 200,000-yen worth of tourist consumption to Nagasaki.[128]

Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun was the major local newspaper that had led the public outrage against the Catholic Church during the Kaisei Middle School incident a decade earlier. By 1939, however, the political stance of the Catholic Church in Japan and the political climate surrounding it had already undergone fundamental changes. In April 1935, a joint letter signed by all the episcopal leaders of the Catholic Church in Japan declared the worship at state and Emperor-related Shinto shrines as an expression of 'patriotic sentiment' (*aikokushin*), called on the Japanese Catholic community to dedicate themselves to the cause of 'patriotism', and promised to speed up the training of Japanese clergymen within the church hierarchy.[129] As the Sino-Japanese conflict escalated into full-scale war in 1937, The Catholic Church of Japan adopted an openly pro-war stance by justifying Japan's military aggression in China as a 'holy war against Communism', and helped to create and disseminate propaganda materials in defence of Japan's war in China within international Catholic circles by the request of the Japanese military and the government.[130]

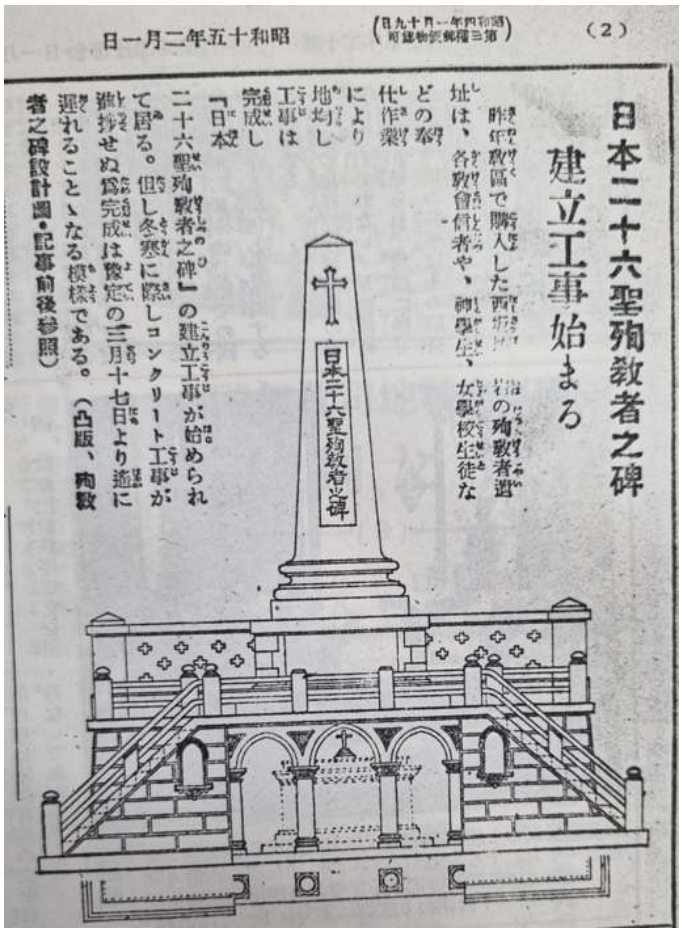
[128] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 2nd April 1939.

[129] Miyoshi (2021), pp. 122.

[130] Miyoshi (2020), pp. 169 – 170.

The expectation of a large-scale pilgrimage mission from the US and its implication beyond the realm of religion caused the Nagasaki Diocese to revive its plan for the commemoration of the Twenty-Six Saints at Nishizaka. In contrast to the original idea of archbishop Jiménez and bishop Hayazaka in the early 1930s, which largely revolved around the construction of a memorial church and a seminary, the new plan for Nishizaka in the 1939 was centred on the erection of a permanent monument made of concrete. A plot of farmland in a place named Bōzuiwa was purchased by the Nagasaki Diocese in March 1939 as one step towards materialising its plan to build a monument for the Twenty-Six Martyrs for the US pilgrims. The decision was fully based on Urakawa Wasaburō's analysis, but the land purchased was still several hundred metres uphill from the estimated site of Nishizaka as the 'actual' site was then occupied by the national broadcast corporation NHK and not for sale. [131]

[131] *Katorikkukyō-hō*. 1st April 1939. Arimura (2014), pp. 116 mentioned that the plot of land bought by the Church is today's *Gosha Kōen*, a small park in the resiential area between the current memorial site of Nishizaka and the former commemorative pole of the hill Tateyama.



日本二十六聖殉教者之碑
建立工事始まる

昭和十五年二月一日 (2)

日本二十六聖殉教者之碑

The designer's sketch of the planned monument for the Twenty-Six Saints in 1939. Source: *Katorikkukyō-hō*. 1st February 1940.

Another plan that was underway within the Nagasaki Diocese concerned the construction of a museum dedicated to objects related to the history of Catholicism in Nagasaki. The morning issue of *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* on 6th April 1939 reported a proposal by bishop Yamaguchi to assemble objects related to the history of early modern Catholicism in Nagasaki from across the prefecture within one assembly in expectation of not only the incoming pilgrimage mission from the US, but also the quatercentenary of Francis

Xavier's arrival in Japan several years later.[132]

On 13th July, bishop Yamaguchi led in person the ground-opening ceremony on the purchased land slot near Nishizaka for the erection of the monument.[133] The following September, however, the planned pilgrimage from the US was abruptly cancelled due to 'the sudden eruption of turmoil in Europe and the resulting changes in the political situation'.[134] The changing geopolitical environment did not deter the Diocese from establishing firmly the memorial site of the Twenty-Six Martyrs at *Nishizaka* instead of *Tateyama*: the construction of the monument began officially in January 1940, and on 11th February 1940, the Diocese of Nagasaki for the first time celebrated the Feast Day of the Twenty-Six Saints in the new memorial site of 'Nishizaka' (i.e. Bōzuiwa).[135]

As the holy site marking the martyrdom of 1597 moved from the old location suggested by the French missionaries to the new location based on the prevalent belief amongst the local Catholics, the double celebration of the spiritual founding moment of the Catholic community of Nagasaki and the national-mythical founding moment of Japan also marked the inauguration of a new

[132] Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun, 6th April 1939.

[133] Ibid. 1st August 1939.

[134] The ground-breaking event was reported in *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 1st August 1939; for the cancellation of the US pilgrimage mission, see *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th September 1939.

[135] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th February 1940.

regime of Catholic communal memory in the city of Nagasaki that would eventually become further integrated into the official narrative of Nagasaki's urban history in the post-war years.

3 Becoming a 'Holy Metropolis': Christianity and the re-orientation of Nagasaki's post-WWII official memory (1946 – 1949)

In August 1945, the atomic bombing of Nagasaki permanently changed the way the city's local memory and history were remembered as much as it altered its urban landscape. Apart from causing tremendous loss of lives and inflicting residual trauma and injuries on tens of thousands of survivors (*hibakusha*) that needed to be documented, addressed and publicly remembered, the atomic bombing combined with Japan's subsequent surrender to the Allied forces had broad implications for how Nagasaki and its history were to be re-defined within the new context of the post-war era. [136]

Within the development in the public memory of Nagasaki in the post-war era, a defining feature was the rising importance of Christianity. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, previous studies by Robert Diehl and Otsuki Tomoe argued that a Christian-sounding vocabulary of sacrifice, rebirth, and cosmopolitanism was instilled in the official rhetoric of post-war Nagasaki, both in public remembrance of the atomic bombing and in the city's rebranding as a city of 'international culture'. The Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki (Archdiocese

[136] Diehl (2018), p. 9 provided an overview on the statistics of the casaulties caused by the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima both immediately and over time (until 1950).

since 1959) was believed to have exerted great influence over this process as the local Catholic community enjoyed a favourable position in the local politics of reconstruction during the beyond the period of US military occupation.[137]

However, the event of 'defeat' had wider implications for Japan than the physical devastation caused by the war and being politically vanquished under a regime of military occupation. In the case of Nagasaki, the politics of reconstruction in the immediate post-war years were also driven by concerns over the city's conceptual re-orientation that would guide its long-term development beyond meeting the short-term needs to restore basic urban life. It is in this regard that history, being re-appropriated to fit in the new post-war condition, came in as a major point of reference for the public discourse of post-war Nagasaki; it was also through this new development that the element of Christianity represented by the Catholic veneration of the Twenty-Six Saints ascended in significance within the city's official narrative.

Nevertheless, as will be shown, the decision-makers and the local public opinion in Nagasaki during the late 1940s also saw the situation facing the city as one that was fluid, developing, and defined by the structural loss of its pre-

[137] Otsuki Tomoe used the term 'Christianisation' in her work [Otsuki (2016a), pp. 110] to describe the influence of the GHQ's religious policy on Nagasaki's atomic bombing memorialisation. Robert Diehl cautioned aginst using the term to describe any systematic US policy regarding the occupation of Japan, but acknowledged that Christian missionaries and institutions enjoyed extensive privileges under GHQ administration: Diehl (2018), pp. 212.

war geo-economic endowments and the short-term lack of financial resources for urban reconstruction. Christianity and the Catholic narrative of martyrdom might help sow the conceptual seed for Nagasaki's re-orientation as a city of 'international culture' instead of 'international peace' (as seen in the case of Hiroshima), but the actual incorporation of the Catholic narrative into the official narrative required direct involvement by the local government in facilitating the commemoration thereof. The following chapter argues that such direct involvement by the municipality of Nagasaki first took place during the celebration of the quatercentenary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan in May 1949, which served as a turning point beyond which the Catholic memory of Nagasaki was formally and tangibly integrated into the city's official narrative that influenced both its inward self-identification and its outward image-projection in the post-war era.

Claiming Nishizaka: The Catholic advocacy and the reconstruction of Nagasaki (1946 – 1948)

More than two kilometres away from the epicentre to its north and shielded by the westward wedge of Tateyama hill, the Nishizaka area was heavily stricken by the blast caused by the atomic bomb on 9th August 1945 but escaped total obliteration. At the planned memorial site for the Twenty-Six Martyrs there was

not much to be destroyed, as the construction of the cement monument was never completed after construction began in 1940, and the funds provided by the Archdiocese of Guadalajara lost all their value during the wartime and post-war economic upheaval. [138] Approximately three hundred metres downhill, however, a Buddhist temple that served as the local headquarters of the Higashi-Hongwanji sect of the Jōdo Shinshū School of Buddhism in Nagasaki was badly damaged: a photo taken at the time showed the main building of the temple was partly struck down by the blast, but the main structure remained standing.

Photo of the Higashi-Hongwanji sect temple in Nishizaka, Nagasaki after the atomic bombing. Photographed by Ogawa Torahiko.[139]

[138] The permanent suspension of the monument construction work can be confirmed in Arimura (2014), pp. 122 and Hara & Ishikawa (2010), pp. 1250.

[139] The photo is published on the official website of the Kyushu District Office of the Higashi-Hongwanji Sect: http://otaniha-kyushu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/9d67ca160dd4f3198869d59fa6990a15.pdf (accessed 19th May 2024). According to the website, the original photo is currently held by the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum.

A 2009 article by newspaper *Chōsyu Shimbun* reported how the damaged temple bore a unique witness to the aftermath of the atomic bombing. As the Allied occupation force arrived in Nagasaki and started clearing the ground for a new airfield right next to the epicentre near River Urakami, local residents used the courtyard of the temple to store and if possible, cremate the remains of at least 20,000 people killed by the atomic bombing they collected from the riverbank throughout the winter of 1945. The land occupied by the temple was later acquired by the municipal government for urban reconstruction, but what caused controversy was the subsequent use of the land itself: the small butte behind the NHK Nagasaki bureau that the temple used to occupy was turned into the Nishizaka Park, which instead of commemorating the numerous victims of the atomic bombing, was dedicated to the Catholic Twenty-Six Saints:

> One local citizen said, 'The real place where the Twenty-Six Saints were executed was higher up the hill, but the memorial was still decided thus (to be built at today's Nishizaka) because they want to add more Christian element to Nagasaki's image and chose the place that was the most visible.[140]

[140] *Chōsyu Shimbun*, '*Amari shira renu 2-man karada no ikotsu Nagasaki-shi Chikugo-chō no Higashihonganji Nagasaki kyōmu-sho*' (20,000 little-known remains at Higashi Hongwanji Nagasaki District Office in Chikugo-cho, Nagasaki City), 18th May 2009: https://www.chosyu-journal.jp/heiwa/2754, Accessed 17th May 2024. 'Memorial tower' (*kuyō-tō*) hereby refers specifically to the Buddhist memorial tower used for commemorating the deceased.

The words of the first interviewee correspond to the fact that the memorial for the Twenty-Six Saints used to be on top of Tateyama hill and then was relocated to Bōzuiwa, both were several hundred metres uphill from the current site of Nishizaka Park. The claim that Nishizaka was chosen by the Catholics only because of its visibility is not completely fair, as the site was already designated by Urakawa Wasaburō in 1926 as the *true* location of the martyrdom site, and the Bōzuiwa site was known to be a compromise since 1939. Nevertheless, the narrative articulated in the interviews fits with Richard Diehl's interpretation that the official narrative in post-war Nagasaki sidelined the politically sensitive memory of the atomic bombing by drawing heavily on the rhetoric upheld by the local Catholic community.[141] A combination of events in May 1949 was considered to be particularly important to this process: the visit of Emperor Hirohito to Nagasaki, the quatercentenary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan and the passing of special legislation that designated Nagasaki as a city of 'international culture' reportedly silenced the voice of the atomic bombing survivors, who wanted a more politically active remembrance for the trauma caused by the *genbaku*, and instead established the dominance of a Christian-sounding message in the official commemoration of the atomic bombing.[142]

[141] Diehl (2018), pp. 76.

[142] Ibid, pp. 254. Otsuki Tomoe raised the same argument in Otsuki (2016a), pp. 97 – 98 (which will be engaged later in this chapter), and both Diehl and Otsuki hereby based their interpration on the personal recollection of Akizuki Tatsuichirō, a Catholic doctor who survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki and later became a peace activist.

At the local level, the Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki was also given greater say over the planning of Nagasaki's urban recovery and reconstruction. The Catholic Church was already incorporated into the local wartime regime of social mobilisation in 1941 along with other religious entities.[143] Under the post-war Municipal Committee of Reconstruction (*Nagasaki-shi fukkō iinkai*), bishop Yamaguchi became the only religious leader who participated in the subcommittee of culture and welfare.[144]

However, neither the acquisition of the *true* site of Nishizaka by the municipal government nor the participation of the reconstruction policymaking by the local bishop automatically brought about the decision to build Nishizaka Park as a memorial site for the Catholic martyrs. During the 11th September 1946 session of the sub-committee of culture and welfare, bishop Yamaguchi only vaguely expressed the wish to build a new memorial site for the Twenty-Six Saints, and admitted that the actual location of the martyrdom site was 'still being considered'.[145] The first official plan for the construction of public parks as part of the overall blueprint for the reconstruction of Nagasaki was published on 6th March 1947 with the personal approval of then Prime Minister Yoshida

[143] *Yokusan shisei kensetsu-shi* (1941), pp. 31.

[144] The list of sub-committee members is included in *Nagasaki ken senji jigyō sengo toshi fukkō shiryō* (Nagasaki prefecture collection of wartime projects and post-war urban reconstruction-related documents) accessed via the Nagasaki Prefectural Library Local Materials Center.

[145] List of members of the municipal sub-committee of culture and welfare, *Nagasaki ken senji jigyō sengo toshi fukkō shiryō*. It is also worth noticing that bishop Yamaguchi was the only religious figure in the sub-committee of culture and welfare.

Shigeru. Nishizaka was not mentioned.[146]

As happened with the port-opening anniversary in 1930 and the annual feast day of the Twenty-Six Saints, anniversaries again played a key role in the eventual transformation of Nishizaka into a memorial site that was simultaneously 'Catholic' and 'official'. The first anniversary that had an impact on the process was the 350th anniversary of the 1597 martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints in 1947. On 14th May, the anniversary was celebrated by the Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki, whose parishioner base was particularly hard stricken by the atomic bombing, with the help of the municipal and the prefectural governments.[147] The anniversary provided the occasion for bishop Yamaguchi to announce the decision to build a memorial park at Nishizaka, which in turn prompted the municipal sub-committee of culture and welfare to establish a special committee in July to work out a final location for the future memorial site.[148] On 25th July, the special committee finally reached the conclusion that the former site of the Higashi-Hongwanji sect temple was the historical site of the 1597 martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints, and would duly be turned into a memorial park when possible.[149]

146 *Nagasaki ken senji jigyō sengo toshi fukkō shiryō*.

147 *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 15th May 1947. No published account in the Catholic media exists, as *Katorikkukyō-hō* didn't return into print until 15th April 1948.

148 *Asahi nenkan* (1948), pp. 308.

149 *Nagasaki Dansō*, issue 35 (August 1949), pp. 8.

Another side-product of the 350th anniversary of the 1597 martyrdom was the founding of the Society for Preserving the Martyrdom Site of the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan (*Nippon nijūrokuseijin junkyō-chi hozon-kai*). Established in the name of preparing for the 350th anniversary of the martyrdom, the Society involved a number of influential figures in national and local politics including Tanaka Kōtarō, then the minister of education under the then Yoshida Shigeru cabinet and a devout Catholic convert.[150] The connections the Society provided between the local government of Nagasaki and the Catholic Church at both the local and the national level would prove crucial for the preparation of another more prolific anniversary two years later – namely the 1949 quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan.

Courting the saint and the emperor: 'International culture' and its limitations

Francis Xavier was the first European Christian missionary to arrive and proselytise Catholicism in Japan in recorded history. Arriving in southern Kyushu in 1549, Francis Xavier embarked on a journey to and from Japan's traditional capital Kyoto from 1550 to 1552, visited several important maritime settlements in Western Japan before setting sail for the last time in his life to

[150] *Kiroku to Inshō*, pp. 11.

China. He was known to have stayed briefly in Hirado on the northern coast of modern-day Nagasaki prefecture, but no evidence shows that he ever set foot in the contemporary area of Nagasaki.[151]

Nevertheless, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan decided in May 1948 that the quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan should be grandly celebrated, and that the city of Nagasaki should host the most important ceremonies alongside Tokyo. The decision gave mayor Ōhashi Hiroshi a timely opportunity to implement what he laid out in his annual budget speech in March: in order to earn foreign currency and enhance the image of Nagasaki as a 'city of culture', Ōhashi proposed that the municipality should invest in 'the attraction of inbound tourists' by showcasing the city's history as a place of 'cultural fusion between the East and the West' and 'the base for the Christian mission in the Far East'.[152] In July the preparation for the quatercentenary celebration was formally launched by the prefecture, the municipality of the Nagasaki, and the representatives of the local Commerce of Trade and the sightseeing industry association. The municipal museum director Hirayama Kunisaburō was dispatched to Tokyo in September to discuss the details of the upcoming celebration with Bruno Bitter, a German Jesuit representing the Holy

[151] Golwark (2020), pp. 251 provided a brief account of Francis Xavier's journey in Japan based on both early modern sources and modern-day studies.

[152] *Nagasaki shigikai-shi shiryō-hen* (History of the municipal council of Nagasaki: Collection of historical materials), pp. 1059.

See in occupied Japan who was also in charge of the overseas liaison between the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan and the Catholic Church worldwide.[153]

According to Hirayama's recollections, the meeting with Bitter was facilitated by Tanaka Kōtarō, the cabinet minister of education and the founding chairman of the Society for Preserving the Martyrdom Site of the Twenty-Six Saints. What Bruno Bitter promised to Hirayama was a large-scale pilgrimage from all over the world that would bring Nagasaki immense economic benefits: no fewer than 3,000 inbound visitors would embark on a three-day journey to Nagasaki, with at least 30,000 domestic pilgrims coming from all over Japan. He also mentioned the possibility for some of the pilgrims to go on excursions to Hirado (where Francis Xavier actually stopped by) the spa resort of Unzen, which was also famous for being an early modern martyrdom site.[154]

Soon after Hirayama's return from Tokyo, a special 'committee of sightseeing event organisation' (*kankō-gyōji iinkai*) overseeing the preparation for the quatercentenary commemoration was formed jointly by the prefecture and the municipality of Nagasaki on 24th September 1948.[155] Encompassing issues from

[153] The flow of events from July to September 1948 was recorded in *Kiroku to Inshō*, pp. 63. Takenaka (2017), pp. 162. Bitter's role in the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan was mentioned in *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th January 1949.

[154] *Kiroku to Inshō*, pp. 10.

[155] Ibid, pp. 64.

the cleaning of sewages, roads and the harbour area to the training of interpreters and receptionists, the overall plan for the quatercentenary was nothing short of a grand project to renovate Nagasaki's international tourism infrastructure. It was also assigned a budget of 10 million yen, of which 70% was supplied by the municipality and the prefecture. [156] The costs of flattening the land at Nishizaka and erecting a temporary monument for the Twenty-Six Saints were also covered in the budget, as the most important ceremony of the quatercentenary celebration, the Liturgy of Eucharist, was planned to be held there.[157]

Despite the increased public investment in the construction of the memorial site of Nishizaka, the general rhetoric adopted by the civic authorities for the quatercentenary anniversary was heavily marked by an emphasis on tourism and exoticism, of which the history of Christianity in Nagasaki was considered only one of the flavours. An official leaflet published by the Committee in December 1948 (penned by Hirayama Kunisaburō) called the quatercentenary ceremony a 'watershed' moment for the future development of 'Nagasaki for tourism' (*Kankō Nagasaki*); it also declared the 'exoticism' of Nagasaki a time-honoured 'geographical advantage' (*chiriki*) of the city, which will be the key to the future success of Nagasaki as a tourist destination.[158] The understanding of

[156] Ibid, pp. 67.

[157] Ibid. pp. 63.

[158] *Kiroku to Inshō*, pp. 67.

Nagasaki's Christian past as being somewhat alien to Japan therefore still persisted in the post-war conception of 'international culture'. The local Catholic community also treated the quatercentenary with a sense of distance: Francis Xavier was surely an important saint to the history of Catholicism in Japan and Nagasaki, but the veneration of him was never as deep-rooted in the local Catholic minds as the Twenty-Six Saints. In January 1949, this subtle sense of distance was betrayed in the New Year message by bishop Yamaguchi:

> Instead of Kagoshima, Yamaguchi, Kyoto or Oita that were historically associated with the Saint (Francis Xavier), the national Bishops' Conference decided that the opening ceremony shall be held in our Nagasaki. We the Catholics of the Nagasaki prefecture must raise our spirits in return to this goodwill. Unfortunately, due to the long history of being persecuted and rejected, many of us had been called 'uncultured' and were even ourselves feeling demoralised. However, as an age is coming in which bigotry and restrictions have ended, we are free to breathe the air of liberty. As believers of the world's biggest religion, we no longer need to feel besieged, and can enjoy more space for living.[159]

The statement celebrated the rising profile of Catholicism in the post-war society, but also mentioned the other potential alternatives to Nagasaki as the

[159] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th January 1949.

hosting city for the quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival. Bishop Yamaguchi apparently took pride in the international influence of the Catholic Church which had supplied Nagasaki with foreign missionaries, but his tone remained sober as he reminded his parishioners of the traditional stigma they bore, as well as the urgency of addressing the personnel shortage troubling the local clergy under the wartime condition. In other words, instead of using the public celebration of quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival as a stepstone towards the 'Christianisation' of Nagasaki, the healing of the wartime wounds was the first priority in 1949.[160]

As promised in Hirayama Kunisaburō's pamphlet, the combination of the quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival and the promotion of Nagasaki as a city of 'international culture' turned the Catholic anniversary into a bandwagon for various local interests. Outdoor stage plays based on the life of Francis Xavier and the martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Martyrs were planned alongside events showcasing the traditions of net-fishing and kite-flying, which were initiated by local fisheries businesses and the tourist industry.[161] In the nearby area of Shimabara, the local authorities also planned a tourism exhibition for

[160] Ibid. The wartime loss of clergymen in Nagasaki was not only caused by the atomic bombing of 9th August 1945. The Catholic Church of Japan was subjected to the Religious Groups Law from April 1940 to the end of the war which demanded the Church sever its financial connection with foreign entities and remove foreign missionaries from posts of authority: Miyoshi (2021), pp. 142 – 143.

[161] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 29th November 1948.

the National Park of Unzen in the hope of recovering its glory as one of Japan's most famous international tourist destinations in the pre-war era.[162] When the international pilgrimage mission first arrived on the evening of 28th May 1949 with the holy right arm of Francis Xavier, they were greeted with a shopping tour that showcased traditional Japanese clothes, toys and artisan products made of tortoiseshell.[163]

As the inbound pilgrims arrived, it became obvious that the quatercentenary would fall far short of the original expectation. The latest development in regional geopolitics was particularly inauspicious to the organisers: the advance of the Chinese Communist army into China's south-eastern coastal areas caused the cancellation of most of the planned pilgrimage voyages due to insecurity in the East China Sea, and the fall of Shanghai on 27th May meant the loss of Nagasaki's biggest traditional trading partner to the opposing side in the nascent Cold War in East Asia.[164] The editorial of *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* on 5th June stated that in contrast to the estimated number of three thousand, the international pilgrimage mission that actually landed in Nagasaki was a group of mere seventy, the majority of whom were clergymen representing the Catholic Church of their respective countries. The editorial admitted that the

[162] Ibid, 13th January 1949. For the pre-war history of Unzen as an international tourist resort, see Sunamoto (2006), pp. 149; Nishikawa et al. (2016), pp. 1163.

[163] Ibid, 29th May 1949.

[164] Ibid. 28th May 1949.

quatercentenary could still count as 'the first international event in Japan since the end of the war', but the underwhelming result in economic terms would not serve the cause of building a 'City of International Culture' at the point when the special legislation had already passed the National Diet and was pending for local plebiscite in the following July.[165]

For the Catholic community in Nagasaki, the opening ceremonies of the quatercentenary celebration on 29th May provided a rare opportunity to openly profess their Catholic faith in the Nagasaki's traditional city centre, nevertheless. Following an outdoor solemn Mass in front of the bombed ruins of the Urakami Cathedral in the morning, the celebration in the afternoon involved a procession venerating the holy right arm of Francis Xavier, one of the most important holy relics symbolising this Catholic saint, that marched from Oura Cathedral northward to the Nishizaka Park.[166] The number of Catholic participants was estimated to be between twenty to thirty thousand, with the vast majority coming from within the Nagasaki prefecture, which would have amounted to a participation rate of nearly 30% or 40%.[167]

[165] Ibid. 5th June 1949.

[166] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th June 1949. *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 30th May 1949.

[167] The figures of twenty thousand and thirty thousand came from *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* and *Katorikkukyō-hō* respectively. The total number of Catholic believers in the Nagasaki Prefecture in the late 1940s was estmimated to be around 68,000: *Nagasaki-shisei Rokujugo-nen shi*, pp. 1112.

‘The Holy Arm being paraded through the city of Nagasaki’, Photo of the 29th May holy relic procession, published on *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th June 1949.

The large-scale outdoor Catholic procession was not without precedent in the municipality of Nagasaki. *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* had reported the Eucharist procession held by the Catholic residents in the Urakami area as early as in 1930. Described as a regular event in the Catholic community, the procession nevertheless started only from Urakami Cathedral to the north of downtown Nagasaki, and only went further northwards until it reached the Urakami Seminary; the reporter also saw the procession primarily as a ‘photograph opportunity’, and did not go further into the Catholic belief and its

practices.[168] In comparison, the 29th May procession openly penetrated the socio-geographical border between the traditionally Shinto-Buddhist downtown area and the 'Christian' outskirts of Urakami, and therefore constituted a tangible embodiment of 'Christian Nagasaki' in the eyes of the general citizenry.

Equally important to the public recognition of Catholicism of Nagasaki was emperor Hirohito's four-day visit to Nagasaki prefecture from 24th to 27th May 1949 as part of his post-war nationwide tour. Before arriving in the city of Nagasaki, Hirohito visited the *Seibo no Kishi* ('Knights of Our Lady') Kindergarten in the municipality of Ōmura in the Nagasaki prefecture on the 25th.[169] On 27th May, the emperor finally arrived in the city of Nagasaki and was greeted by a grand welcoming ceremony on the newly cleared plaza of Nishizaka. The location was convenient for the emperor's convoy as it was located right in front of the newly renovated Nagasaki train station. The next day, the close-up photos of the emperor planting a camphor tree in Nishizaka Park and waving his hat to the welcoming crowd in front of the newly erected memorial pole for the Twenty-Six Saints appeared on the front page of the local newspapers.[170]

[168] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 15th July 1930.

[169] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 26th May 1949.

[170] Both *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* and *Nagasaki Minyu Shimbun* (another major local non-Catholic newspaper) on 28th May 1948 published large photos on the emperor's visit to Nishizaka on their front pages.

Emperor Hirohito greeting the crowd in front of the memorial pole for the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan. Source: *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 28th May 1949.

Emperor Hirohito planting a camphor tree in the Nishizaka Park. Source: *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 28th May 1949.

Considering how the tension between Catholic teaching and Shinto worship of the Imperial House had plunged the local Catholic Church into political trouble in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, the emperor's endorsement of local Catholic organisations run by a foreign missionary and his personal presence at a Catholic memorial site in 1949 did mark a symbolic turning point in the history of the Catholic Church in 20th Century Nagasaki. Nevertheless, the editorial in *Katorikkukyō-hō* after the ceremony expressed euphemistically a sense of suspicion from the official celebration of the quatercentenary:

> It is natural for people around the world to pay attention to this event. Here in Japan, we the Japanese people have also shown special interest in this ceremony out of a sense of gratitude to St. Francis Xavier's contributions, for he was the person who brought to Japan the new culture from Europe and taught us the meaning of life based on the Christian worldview. He was a great social reformer who pioneered the campaign for moral improvement and correction based on the Christian ethics, and the most famous Japanophilic foreigner who introduced the Japanese culture to the world and caused people all over the world to take a kind interest in Japan. Nevertheless, I cannot help but feel that the ceremony was (too) centred on showing hospitality to the foreign pilgrims…[171]

Apart from expressing its reservations about the tourism focus of the

[171] *Katorikkukyō-hō*, 15th June 1949.

quatercentenary ceremony, the editorial also subtly distanced the correct Catholic view on Francis Xavier from the prevailing official rhetoric: instead of heralding Francis Xavier as just another 'Japanophilic foreigner' (*chinichi-gaijin shinnichi-gaijin*), the editorial urged the parishioners to take the extra step of identifying with the spirit of the saint as Catholics, as 'the real work' only began after the ceremonies and the pilgrimage ended.

To Kataoka Yakichi, an expert in the history of Christianity in Nagasaki and an active voice in both the local Catholic and the local historian circles, the celebration of 'Christian Nagasaki' in the quatercentenary ceremony did not mean the history of anti-Christian persecution would be forgotten. Rather, the pompous procession across downtown Nagasaki reminded him of the heyday of pre-Tokugawa Nagasaki when it was called 'little Rome' for being predominantly and openly Catholic, until the early 17th Century persecution forcefully replaced the Catholic processions with 'heathen' (*ikyō*) rituals. Regarding the historical implication of Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan, Kataoka also highlighted how this saint 'did not shy away from point out to we the Japanese people our shortcomings', and therefore was more than a mere messenger of cultural interchange.[172]

Instead of unreservedly celebrating the public recognition their religion

[172] Ibid.

received through the emperor's visit, the grand processions across the traditional downtown, and the increased media exposure of Christianity-related topics in general, Catholic opinion in Nagasaki still tried to keep the *Catholic* memory of recurring persecutions and resilience apart from the 'international culture' rhetoric. By reminding the parishioners of their special duty of pursuing spiritual redemption and highlighting the gap between Catholic teaching and the 'Japaneseness' that might come with 'shortcomings', Catholic opinion leaders further maintained a fine line between Catholicism as an international religion and the more profane notion of internationality.

The 'Mecca of peace'? The aftermath of the Francis Xavier quatercentenary in Nagasaki and Nishizaka

The Catholic media was not alone in showing reservations regarding the Francis Xavier quatercentenary in Nagasaki. An editorial of *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* on 5th June 1949 also criticised the excessive focus on tourism in the courting of international pilgrims as mundane and distractive:

> The true reason [of holding the Francis Xavier quatercentenary in Nagasaki] should have been to win the sympathy of the international pilgrimage mission for Nagasaki, which was devastated by the atomic bomb, so that they will spread the

> story [on the plight of our city] widely to the rest of the world… The true purpose [of the quatercentenary] was nothing but to make Nagasaki widely known as a City of International Culture, the Mecca of peace […] Instead, the pilgrims were invited to tea parties in Suwa Park, only to be served by young girls with traditional Japanese hairstyles and wearing traditional costumes of *furisode*, who were mistaken as *geisha*.[173]

The conceptual ambiguity in the association between 'international culture' and Catholicism in the official rhetoric of the Francis Xavier quatercentenary was also pointed out in the early stages of the preparations. Another *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun* editorial titled 'Nagasaki, the holy site' (*Seichi Nagasaki*) questioned whether the idea of Nagasaki as a 'holy site' had been properly understood by the public:

> Regardless of the Catholic believers and the specific memorial sites for martyrdom including the 'great martyrdom of the Twenty-Six Saints', the idea that the municipality or the prefecture of Nagasaki [as a whole] can be called 'holy' without hesitation may seem vague to people from our own prefecture, and to people from outside our prefecture, virtually incomprehensible.[174]

[173] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 5th June 1949.

[174] *Nagasaki Nichinichi Shimbun*, 26th August 1948.

The conclusion of the editorial did not suggest that the image of Nagasaki should be dissociated from Catholicism; instead, the editorial argued that long-term effort should be taken to investigate, preserve and promote Catholicism-related historical sites (sites of martyrdom or former Catholic churches), and to embrace the fact that 'to our prefecture, Catholicism and the Catholics do not exist just in history' (*honken no katorikku wa tanni shiteki-sonzai de nai*).

In retrospect, the 1949 Francis Xavier quatercentenary did mark the beginning of a long-term effort to institutionalise Nagasaki's Christianity-related historical sites into a body of Christian heritage. In 1954, the prefectural government of Nagasaki announced a plan to establish a 'holy site pilgrimage route' for early modern Christianity (*kirishitan*) related destinations across the prefecture. A prefectural association for promoting *kirishitan* historical sites was established under the then governor Nishioka Takejirō in April 1957, who announced in his new year address the plan to preserve '48 historical sites related to *kirishitan*'. He also planned to hold commemoration ceremonies for Christian 'martyrs' of the early modern persecution, including those who died rebelling against the Shogunate in 1637 and 1638.[175]

[175] Ohira (2021), pp. 36. The dead rebels in the 1637 – 1638 Shimbara rebellion were referred to in Nishioka's remark as 'martyrs' (*junkyōsha*), which was a common perception in the Japanese use of the term [Satō (2004), pp. 37] but was (and still is) not recognised by the Catholic Church.

To the Catholic community in the city of Nagasaki, the quatercentenary marked the conclusion of the decades-long effort by the local Catholic community to erect a permanent memorial for the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan and set a precedent for the joint management of the memorial facilities that were built in the park afterwards. Nishizaka Park remained public land held by the municipality, and the martyrdom site was designated as a prefectural cultural property in April 1956; in the meantime, the park was also the place where the annual Catholic veneration of the Twenty-Six Saints on the feast day of 5th February was held.[176] In 1957, the Society for Preserving the Martyrdom Site of the Twenty-Six Saints restarted its operation to erect a new, permanent monument for the Twenty-Six Saints in celebration of the upcoming centenary of their canonisation in 1962. The initiative eventually attracted the attention of the Society of Jesus of Japan, which later took over the project and proposed the addition of a memorial museum. The museum was originally planned to be built on the site of the present-day Gosha Park, i.e., the land slot in Bōzuiwa that was already purchased by the Church in 1939. But the location was later moved to Nishizaka Park as the municipal government offered to lend part of the land it owned on the site to the Jesuits.[177] A memorial church named after St. Felipe de Jesús was also built nearby with substantial funding coming from the Catholic Church in Mexico, which echoed the original plan made by

[176] *Nagasaki-ken no Bunkazai*, pp. 152.

[177] Arimura (2014), pp. 123.

archbishop Jiménez and bishop Hayazaka in 1932.[178]

As the facilities officially opened in 1962, Nishizaka Park became the memorial complex that exists today. The interweaving of Catholicism and the official regime of heritage management continued: the memorial museum of the Twenty-Six Saints, which still occupies municipal land today, has been put under the management of the Society of Jesus, and enjoys greater curatorial freedom than other properly registered museums as an 'institution equivalent to museum' (*hakubutsukan sōtō shisetsu*) under Japan's Museum Law. The layout of the exhibition was thus made to reflect the concept of a reliquary, where the relics of the canonised and beatified martyrs were not displayed as mere objects, but were solemnly enshrined.[179] The monument of the Twenty-Six Martyrs was visited respectively by Pope John Paul II in 1981 and Pope Francis in 2019, thus providing a stage for religious diplomacy that also defined Nagasaki's public image as a Japanese city with a distinctly Christian past. Nevertheless, if the historical process of the creation of the modern-day image of 'Christian Nagasaki' is viewed in its entirety, it shall be seen that the interweaving between the two phrases 'Christian' and 'Nagasaki' is truly built upon a bordered memory of a city that was equally shaped by the early modern influence of Christianity and the subsequent persecution thereof. 'Christian

[178] Ibid. pp. 126.

[179] Omata Rappo (2017), pp. 269.

Nagasaki' might have been a tactical alliance across the border, but the border itself is never overwritten.

Conclusion

The construction of the monument and the memorial museum to the Twenty-Six Saints of Japan began in the same year as another controversy over local public memory took place in Nagasaki. In 1958, the municipal government made the decision to demolish the remains of the old Urakami Cathedral on the request of the Catholic Diocese. The decision was argued to have deprived Nagasaki of one of the most important symbols of its traumatic past as the target of the US atomic bombing of 1945 but was also deemed by the then Catholic bishop of Nagasaki Yamaguchi Aijirō as necessary for the Catholic mission of 'the salvation of souls'.[180]

Combined with the 1949 quatercentenary of Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan in Nagasaki and its forward-looking message of 'international culture' that allegedly overwrote the trauma of the atomic bombing, Richard Diehl and Otsuki Tomoe argued that an alliance between the local Catholic rhetoric and

[180] Diehl (2018), pp. 224.

the official narrative hindered the development of a more politically proactive approach to atomic-bombing memorialisation in Nagasaki. Citing the writings by the Catholic author Nagai Takashi, both scholars also pointed out a continuity between the rhetoric of collaboration employed by the Catholic Church under Japan's wartime regime and the post-war *Catholic* interpretation of the atomic bombing as a sacrifice for divine peace, and attributed it to the failure of the American occupation regime to take the war responsibility of the Catholics into account due to its pro-Christian policy.[181] Otsuki's study went further to argue that by connecting the atomic bombing to previous waves of anti-Christian persecutions, the Catholic narrative of spiritual resilience and rebirth served to conceal a 'rupture' between the community's earlier history as the persecuted and their wartime complicity in Japan's military occupation of much of the Asia-Pacific region.[182]

Critical engagement with these arguments is not the primary purpose of this thesis. However, as the preceding chapters have indicated, the post-war rhetoric of Cosmopolitanism in Nagasaki's inward and outward self-identification was the product of a continuous historical process from the late

[181] Chapter 4 of Diehl (2018) discussed the wartime symbolism of Urakami Cathedral to the local Catholic community based on an analysis of wartime Catholic publications and writings (including *Katorikkukyō-hō*) and pointed out how the US occupation authorities were only impressed by the 'resilience' of the local Catholic community and did not pursue their collaboration with the Japanese wartime regime.

[182] Otsuki (2016a), pp. 88.

1920s to the late 1940s. At one end of this period, the last wave of anti-Christian persecution in 1868 – 1869 was still a living memory, and at the other the dropping of the atomic bomb and the defeat of the Japanese empire in WWII threw the perception of the past and the future of the city into unprecedented turbulence. It was also a process embedded with tension between what counted as being 'Catholic' and what counted as being 'Japanese', which was proved to be not totally resolvable even when Catholicism was legally protected by the Meiji Constitution.

It is in this regard that Edward Boyle's 'border of memory' has been chosen as the conceptual foundation of this thesis. Described as 'the communication of practices' and 'stories narrated by some and contested by others', the 'border of memory' allows a more dynamic view of the tension hidden within the post-war rhetoric of 'Christian Nagasaki' beyond the discourse of the atomic bombing memory. [183] What is more important hereby is therefore no longer the determination of a static dichotomy between the silenced and the hegemonic (and the complicit) over a single issue, but a deeper mnemonic landscape that provided the context for a series of political negotiations between shifting sides and fluid narratives over a longer time span.

The emphasis on dynamism and fluidity, however, does not necessarily invite

[183] Boyle (2019), pp. 294.

relativism. From the controversy over the 'foreignness' of the local Catholics at the turn of the 1930s to the 'international culture' rhetoric in the late 1940s, the public discourse over how the Christian past of Nagasaki should be remembered was underlined by a structural dilemma that comes from Nagasaki's three centuries of difficult early modern history: it was simultaneously a city profoundly influenced by the influx of Western Catholicism and one fundamentally defined by the subsequent centuries of anti-Christian persecution. Unlike the other streams of Western influence that feature in modern-day Nagasaki's prevailing image as an 'exotic' city (the Dutch trade, the treaty-port era foreign settlement), this dilemma has been proven to be more difficult to reconcile as it involved two narratives that came from two distinct living communities. On one side, the local business community focused on the image of cosmopolitanism and exoticism that could be projected from Nagasaki's historical openness towards the Christian West; on the other side, the local Catholic community venerated the Twenty-Six Saints as their common spiritual ancestor and saw the subsequent history as a continuum of martyrdom and resilience under persecution.

The two communities in turn constituted what Boyle called 'memory collectives', i.e., different social groups that hold and are separated by their mutually distinct collective memories over the same mnemonic landscape. In the case of Nagasaki and its early modern Christian past, the definition of distinct memory

collectives can be difficult. As seen in the case of Hirayama Masajyū's active participation in Japan's overseas propaganda campaign in the early years of the Sino-Japanese War, Catholic believers in 1930s Nagasaki could be sincerely 'patriotic' by supporting the militarist ideology and Japan's war of overseas aggression, and at the same time be sincerely 'Catholic' by obeying the teachings of local clergymen. As a result, a 'border of memory' drawn solely along the demographic line would fail to take into account the overlapping allegiances amongst the local Catholic believers that were at least as visible in the contemporary materials as defiance and contestation, and therefore lead to a misreading of the political reality facing the Nagasaki Catholic community in the 1930s.

In consideration of this challenge, this thesis instead focused on the organisational aspect of the memorialisation of 'Christian Nagasaki', particularly in the context of historical anniversaries. Eviatar Zerubavel argues that anniversaries, especially the ones that symbolise a spiritual beginning, are crucial for the 'emplotment' of historical events that enable the bridging of mutually non-contiguous historical intervals into a single imagined entity.[184] For the non-Catholic official narrative, the port-opening anniversary of 27th April 1571 was a combination of two historical moments out of technical expediency, and the political concern over the representation of Christianity

[184] Zerubavel (2003), pp. 40.

and the West in making Nagasaki's first official origin story. For the Catholic narrative of the centuries-long resilience and sacrifice of the indigenous Christian community in face of persecution, the feast day of the Twenty-Six Saints on 5th February was also not immune from imagination. The feast day and the concept of canonised martyrs themselves were only imported into Nagasaki by French missionaries in the late 19th Century, and the uncertainty over the *true* location of the martyrdom was only resolved in 1947 by the intervention of the non-Catholic civic authorities.

As both dates carried a sense of origin and spiritual ancestry to their corresponding memory collectives, they were at the same time confronted with the same challenge that defined what Eric Hobsbawm termed 'invented traditions'. As relatively recently inaugurated public (or communal) events that embodied different historical narratives over a long time span, the temporal (date) and spatial (site) positioning of the aforementioned anniversaries must be justified and proven to be of public relevance within a framework of tangible *and* intangible references, which was in turn embedded in a wider political process in Nagasaki concerning the relationship between Catholicism and the prevailing nationalist ideology from the late 1920s to the 1930s. Although this process eventually led to collaboration between the Catholics and the Japanese regime under wartime condition, the situation was still *informed* by the political negotiations that resulted from the border of memory concerning the

anti-Christian persecution in early modern Nagasaki and did not *overwrite* it.

The political process resulting from the border of memory within the idea of 'Christian Nagasaki' also illustrated the potential for connections that went beyond the geographical scope of the city of Nagasaki. As indicated in the history of the Nishizaka memorial site from Hirayama Masajyū's 1931 film on the Twenty-Six Saints to the completion of the present-day memorial complex in 1962, the international Catholic memory of martyrdom in Nagasaki was repeatedly proven to be no less powerful than its implications for Nagasaki or Japan. It also reflected some difficult aspects in the history of the Nagasaki Catholic community, which was still typically given the impression of being the *persecuted*. The political connections of Hirayama Masajyū that enabled the making of his martyrdom film indirectly facilitated the determination of Nishizaka as the site of the 1597 martyrdom, for instance, was grounded in his close collaboration with the Japanese colonial authorities in early 20th Century Korea.

The statue of St. Lorenz Ruiz at the entrance of the Twenty-Six Saints Memorial Museum, Nishizaka, Nagasaki. Photo taken by the author on 3rd March 2023.

However, the international connectivity on the Catholic side of the border of memory also manifests a potential for facilitating reconciliation and intra-faith dialogue beyond the official narrativisation of the 'hidden Christian story' as one about cultural interchange and co-habitation *in* Japan. At the time of writing, the Twenty-Six Saints Memorial Museum in Nishizaka Park also venerates St. Lorenz Ruiz, the protomartyr of Philippines who was martyred in Nagasaki in 1637 and canonised as the first saint of Philippine origin in 1987, and Kaiyo, a Korean captive during Japan's 1592 – 1597 invasion of Korea and a Catholic martyr who was executed in Nagasaki in 1627 and beatified in 1867.[185] After taking on various roles in the mnemonic politics of Nagasaki

[185] Christian Daily, *Nihon nijūroku seijin kinenkan ni nikkan junkyōsha no kenshō-hi ga konryū* (Memorial for Japanese and Korean martyrs erected in the Twenty-Six Saints Memorial Museum), 31st March 2016, https://www.christiantoday.co.jp/articles/20203/20160331/26-martyrs-japan-korea.htm(Accessed on 28th May, 2024).

throughout the 20th Century, the Catholic memory of martyrdom still retains the possibility of turning Nagasaki into a supra-national site of memory.

Appendix: A map of Christian Nagasaki

The understanding the 'border of memory' in Nagasaki requires an understanding of Nagasaki's urban geography. An interactive map is therefore made based on Google My Map (https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1DuS8dWbnsTeqaaK8OAm02MjQteK-2lA&usp=sharing) to help illustrate the spatial aspect of the memorialisation of 'Christian Nagasaki' during the historical period covered by this thesis. The following appendix will explain the basis on which some of the historical sites that have lost their current function are located.

The earliest memorial pole for the Twenty-Six Saints, which marked the site of Tateyama designated by Bernard Petitjean to be the martyrdom site of the saints, was located at the former House of Contemplation of the Society of Jesus based on the 1st February 2020 issue of *Katorikkukyō-hō* which reported the closure of the facility and provided a brief introduction to its earlier history. By the time the author visited the site in February 2024, the building of the House of Contemplation was not in use but was still standing. The second Catholic memorial site for the Twenty-Six Saints and the first site

marking 'Nishizaka', i.e., the 1939-1940 memorial site of Bōzuiwa is now replaced by the Gosha Park, as mentioned in Arimura (2014).

The São Paulo Church was not only the first known Catholic church in early modern Nagasaki, but also the landmark of the earliest urban settlement of Nagasaki that later became the focus of the Koga-Nagayama debate in 1930. The location of its former site today is marked by a memorial panel erected by the municipal government of Nagasaki.[186]

The former Catholic seminary of Urakami was the main institution of theological training in the Nagasaki Diocese. Its location is now inherited by the St. Francisco hospital, a Catholic hospital that recorded its pre-history on its official webpage. The Urakami seminary used to mark the ending point of the annual Eucharist procession by the Catholic community in Urakami, and the sense of distance between their regular route and the traditional city centre of Nagasaki (marked by Suwa Shrine, the Nishi-Nakamachi Church and the former site of the São Paulo Church) can be clearly seen on the map.[187]

[186] https://www.nagasaki-tabinet.com/junrei/1077. Accessed on 2nd June 2024.

[187] https://sfh.or.jp/s-gaiyou. Accessed on 2nd June 2024.

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