

Chapter I

ENCOUNTER

THIS CHAPTER ANALYZES how Catholic missionaries, primarily Jesuits based in Japan, considered the people of the Joseon kingdom as a target of missionary endeavours in Europe's later sixteenth century. It explores how varied masculinities performed by Jesuit men in their written texts informed missionary endeavours related to Joseon, not only in the context of other faith groups operating in the region, but as they experienced relationships with others in the Society. Collectively, these discussions circulating in the Jesuit correspondence across Asia and Europe produced assessments, conceptualized in gendered terms, of both the kingdom's people and its relationship to surrounding powers such as Japan and China. In their encounter with Korean people, Jesuit men utilized existing pathways of trade and communication among peoples in the region but also the opportunities opened up by contemporary political and military events.¹ These assessments were thus produced in a context of violence inflicted on Korean populations that profoundly shaped the Jesuit encounter with Joseon, created conflicting perspectives and narratives among Jesuits about the nature of their activities and ambitions, and about the perceptibility of Koreans to the Christian message. This determined both the nature of missionary work and the identification of specific Korean cohorts for missionary endeavours. Among them were Korean women, who, as this chapter examines, were perceived by Jesuits to be exposed to specific vulnerabilities but who also presented opportunities for the mission as a discrete cohort holding key values.

The Joseon Kingdom: "The Treasure Kept for the Man who Most Merits It"

Despite the Joseon kingdom's trading and diplomatic ties with Japan and tributary relationship with Ming China, and the circulation of enslaved Korean peoples in the region, Catholic sources that documented knowledge of the kingdom in the later sixteenth century tended to suggest that its population was almost entirely closed to external contact other than that controlled by the kingdom itself. This narrative offered both a call to arms for its authors as well as a rationale as to why specific resources would be required to support efforts to extend communication to the kingdom. Jesuit information conveyed from Japan appeared to come from the Society's local hosts as well as from European traders who had encountered Korean populations in shipwreck events. Together, by the 1590s these sources had established two competing images of Joseon—one of a masculine culture dominated by violence and another, perhaps more

¹ For a recent survey of the vast scholarship on the Society of Jesus' mission in Japan, see Fujikawa, "Studies on the Jesuit Japan Mission."

attractive, of a king already subordinated to the Ming emperor. Importantly, in both depictions, the kingdom was unexposed to the Christian faith or Christian peoples.

In November 1571, the Portuguese Jesuit Gaspar Vilela wrote to General of the Order, Francisco Borja, from Goa, having only recently left Japan after a period of over ten years' expansive proselytizing across different territories there during what had been a period of intense conflict among the Japanese states. He narrated how around 1565 he had been selected to instigate the Society's first mission to Joseon: "Five years ago it seemed good to Father Cosme de Torres to send a father there to find out what could be done."² Although the many wars in Japan had prevented him from carrying out what he personalized as "my wishes," Vilela wrote optimistically of his hopes for proselytizing in the Joseon kingdom.³ The reports he had been able to gather while living in Japan framed Joseon society through descriptions primarily of the skills and attributes of higher status Korean men, those whose activities were most visible to Japanese and Chinese eyewitnesses involved in trade and diplomacy. Vilela considered the communication pathways that could be used, noting that, although the Korean language was distinct, "they write with Chinese characters, and so are understood by the Chinese easily."⁴ Contemporary accounts, however, also suggested Joseon's reputation for violence. Among them was the report of the Calabrian Jesuit Antonio Prenestino made in 1578 who had his own narrow escape off the coast of the Joseon kingdom and relayed the opinions of the vessel's Portuguese crew that it was an "island of Tartars" containing "barbaric and violent people."⁵ In Vilela's text, Joseon violence was re-framed instead as implicitly masculine spirit and skill: "They are a spirited people, expert with the bow, well accustomed to fight on horseback with all kinds of weapons, but chiefly with arrows."⁶ Vilela's account created a Joseon inhabited by men not dissimilar to those with whom the Jesuits already interacted in a Japan that was then embroiled in war.

Perhaps with more optimism than certainty, Vilela reported that Koreans "they say are a friendly people" and that a large population could be exposed to the Christian

2 Goa, November 3, 1571; ARSI, JapSin 7-III, fol. 80v: "Avera 5 anos *que* pareseo bon ao *padre* cosme de tores mandar ali algum *padre* a descubrir ho *que* se podia fazer." For readability, abbreviated letters are included, noted in italics. Wong presents a detailed analysis of this text in the wider perspective of Jesuit letter-writing and Vilela's mission activities, in his "Jesuits, Korean Catholics, and the State," 23–45.

3 ARSI, JapSin 7-III, fol. 81r: "meus desejos." A brief account of Vilela's itinerary in these years is provided in Pacheco, "The Founding of the Port of Nagasaki." For further discussion of Vilela's text, see Ruiz-de-Medina, *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 36–38.

4 ARSI, JapSin 7-III, fol. 80v: "tem as letras de *que* os chinos usão, com as quais *fácilmente* se entendem huns a outros."

5 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 1:505, 512: "Corea, que hé huma ilha de tartaros," "gente barbara e inhumana"; Gompertz, "Some Notes on the Earliest Western Contacts with Korea," 47; Pak Cheol 박철 / 박철, "Seoguini bon imjinwaeran." 서구인이 본 임진왜란 [The Imjin War as seen by westerners], 79.

6 ARSI, JapSin 7-III, fol. 80v: "he jente animosa, grandes frecheiros, exsercitados *muito* a pelear a cavalo *come* todas as armas, maxime *come* frechas."

message: “the Japanese, who trade with them and go there every year, say that the kingdom is very large.”⁷ Utilizing these same trading and diplomatic networks, Vilela envisaged how support could be provided to a mission from Japan.⁸ More ambitiously still, he reflected how the Joseon kingdom’s tributary status with the Ming dynasty could provide a pathway to the emperor of China. Vilela’s proposal encouraged a sense of urgency with its possibilities, although it also recognized that the mission would require specific resourcing. Thwarted by the violent conflicts then raging within Japan, he recounted, “I could not carry out my wishes because of the many wars that I saw along the way, Japanese against one another.”⁹ Tellingly, Vilela’s expression of humility at his personal failure to achieve the mission was balanced against the self-evident importance and self-confident viability of the Company’s mission. The Joseon populace, he conceptualized, was a passive cohort, a “treasure,” waiting to be won by the (Society) man “who most merits it.”¹⁰

The prize that was the conversion of the Joseon population would indeed await another man, for Vilela’s correspondent, Borja, died in 1572. However, by the 1580s a new pathway to the Joseon kingdom was beginning to emerge, opened up by the man who had established himself as the most powerful military and political leader within Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Jesuit texts wrestled with what Hideyoshi’s increasingly aggressive international ambitions meant for their authors as individuals embedded in complex and specific relations with Japan’s leading men, and for the Society in Japan. In 1586, Luís Fróis, a Portuguese Jesuit who had by then spent more than twenty years in Japan and whose many works documented not only the country’s recent past but also his perceptions of its social customs and behaviours, was responsible for a key account of an important interview that his fellow countryman, Vice Provincial Gaspar Coelho, and several other Japanese and European members held in Osaka with Hideyoshi in early May. Hideyoshi proposed that the Jesuits might provide material assistance in his planned military campaigns, which, Fróis reported, he suggested might lead to an expansion of Christianity in the region: “And then he would build churches everywhere and order everyone to conform to our law [...] Adding further, that he wished half or most of Japan to become Christian.”¹¹ Gneccchi-Soldo Organtino, a native of Astro near Brescia, and another long-term resident in Japan whose missionary work for the Society had brought him into contact with many of its great lords, was also a witness to the same audience. He raised concerns about Fróis’s bold claims that Coelho had “all of Shimo at

7 ARSI, JapSin 7–III, fol. 80v: “dizem que he jente conversavell”; “Dizem os japõens que come elles ten comersio e cada ano la vão, que he *muito grande* aquele reino.”

8 ARSI, JapSin 7–III, fol. 81r.

9 ARSI, JapSin 7–III, fols. 80v–81r: “partido não pude efectuar meus desejos por causa de *muitas guerras que no caminho avia, japõens huns com outros.*”

10 ARSI, JapSin 7–III, fol. 81r: “tisouro,” “*quem mais ho mereça.*”

11 ARSI, JapSin 1, transcribed in Ruiz-de-Medina, *Origenes de la Iglesia Católica Coreana*, 30: “Y que entonces levantaría Iglesias en todas partes y mandaría que todos se hiciesen de esta nuestra ley.[...] Diciendo más, que todavía tenía que hacer Cristiana la mitad o la mayor parte de Japón.”

his command," and were Hideyoshi to "require one or two [armed] ships, the said Father could provide it all, as well as provide guidance with the Portuguese."¹² Organtino's Neapolitan colleague Alessandro Valignano, a provocative and charismatic interlocutor who, as Visitor, held considerable influence over the direction of the mission in Japan, voiced strong opposition to Coelho's enthusiastically militaristic vision, which included an offer to try to convince *Kirishitan* lords to participate in Hideyoshi's military campaign. The Superior of the residence at Sakai, the Bolognese Francesco Pasio, suggested that the militaristic show of Coelho and Fróis had perhaps even increased persecutions of Christians.¹³ Whatever Hideyoshi had told the audience, by the year following the interview, he ordered the expulsion of missionaries in an edict limiting the propagation of Christianity.

When Hideyoshi sent an embassy to the *Kirishitan* lord Takayama Ukon, baptized as Dom Justo, he voiced fears that the "Christians were more united among each other than brothers by blood; and he feared that they would rise up and rebel against the lord of Japan."¹⁴ Yet the letters of the Society's men at least suggest there were deep divisions among the Jesuits in Japan, reflecting different cultural influences and differing experiences and education in varied missionary locales as well as status in the Society's organizational hierarchy. The Jesuit archive records how its members were assessing each other in practice and in their correspondence, jostling for communicative priority and assessing others' aptitude for aspects of mission work. Organtino, for example, emphasized to the General of the Order Claudio Acquaviva the challenges faced in the volatile Japanese environment by the lack of unity of purpose among the Society's men: "Insofar as the Jesuits who congregate here [in Japan] hail from different nations, it is difficult to maintain unity amongst ourselves on account of the natural diversity of customs that mark the differences between one group and another." The Japanese mission's next Superior would need to be, he argued, a man "who will know how to temper [divisions] and unite all into one."¹⁵ This task would fall to a Jesuit scholar originally from Malaga, the theologian Pedro Gómez, who took up the position of Vice Provincial in 1590. Gómez had enjoyed the dynamic intellectual environment teaching in the Jesuit Colégio das Artes in Coimbra before travelling to Japan where he had been charged with developing the curriculum of the Society's college at Funai in 1583.¹⁶

¹² Cited in Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 193. See earlier analysis of this meeting and its consequences in Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 139–42. On Organtino, see Cieslik, "Soldo Organtino"; Álvarez-Taladriz, "Apuntes sobre la fusta del P. Gaspar Coelho."

¹³ Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 195–98. López-Gay, "Father Francesco Pasio," 29; Álvarez-Taladriz, "La persecución de 1587."

¹⁴ Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 198.

¹⁵ Cited in Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 192. On the complicated leadership negotiations and arrangements of the Society in the Asian region at this period, see Wicki, "Die Ernennung der Provinziale."

¹⁶ Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 39–40.

By 1592, Hideyoshi, having subordinated the remaining feudal lords known as *daimyōs* and unified Japan under his control, launched the first step in his campaign to dominate the wider East Asian region, with the invasion of the Joseon kingdom. Society men had long feared that an outcome of any invasion would be the destruction of the Christian network that they had cultivated among Japan's great lords. Pasio reported in 1587 that he had been told that Hideyoshi was determined to undertake the Korean invasion at least in part to dissolve the network of *Kirishitan* lords and Jesuits whom he feared were seeking to gain control themselves over Japanese lands.¹⁷ Valignano offered his own interpretation of Hideyoshi's motivations in a letter to the General, Acquaviva: "It is clearly understood that his plan is not so much to pass into Korea and China as to expel from Japan all the lords with their people, so that dead or alive they remain in Korea, and he will remain absolute master."¹⁸

Hideyoshi's military action conflicted the Society's men on the ground. Their enthusiasm about the opportunities it offered for evangelical work in Joseon was tempered by the risks that it could pose to the—if not apolitical at least not explicitly interventionist—identity that they saw themselves as having worked hard to establish with their *Kirishitan* networks.

Korean Women's Bodies and *Kirishitan* Masculine Performance

Korean women had not yet featured as a specific cohort of interest in the Society's discussions about evangelizing the Joseon kingdom's people. However, with the advent of the first Japanese invasion, women's experiences of violence entered the Christian records, primarily as indicators of praiseworthy *Kirishitan* masculinity. Women's bodies, more than any others in Joseon, were to be enlisted in the Christian archives as the site upon which this masculinity could be performed and distinguished from that of other Japanese men. *Kirishitan* lords constituted an important contingent of those involved in Hideyoshi's invasion of the Joseon kingdom. Among the most senior Japanese military officials in the campaign, leading the First Division, for example, was the evangelized general, Konishi Yukinaga, baptized Augustin, in 1583, lord of Uto.¹⁹ It was he who led the initial invasion into southern Korea in 1592, taking Japanese troops as far as Pyeongyang, and he later participated in the second invasion in 1597. Alongside him was the Castilian Jesuit Gregorio de Céspedes who had been appointed by Gómez to undertake pastoral care of the *Kirishitan* lords and their troops. Céspedes and Gómez had long enjoyed a working relationship, for Céspedes, who could speak Japanese, had earlier been appointed to assist Gómez. In that role, however, Céspedes was the subject

¹⁷ Üçerler, *The Samurai and the Cross*, 198.

¹⁸ Nagasaki, March 13, 1592, ARSI, JapSin 11-II, fol. 288: "se entiende claramente que su determinacion no tanto es passer a Coray y a la China como echar de Japón todos los señores del consu gente, para que muertos o vivos queden en Coray, y el quedar señor absolute."

¹⁹ For a brief recent assessment of Konishi Yukinaga, see Petrucci, "In the Name of the Father."

of a complaint written to the General from the former Rector of the College of Nagasaki, Antonio López, in 1588, which suggested Céspedes had colluded with Macanese merchants to export enslaved Japanese.²⁰ López furnished further details, including that Céspedes had attempted to smuggle a Japanese woman out by hiding her in a box in order to avoid detection of the illegal activity by the city authorities. Acquaviva demanded Céspedes be punished, but what consequences he faced are obscure in the surviving archives.²¹ Despite this damage to his reputation, several years later, Céspedes, commissioned by Gómez, arrived in December 1593 in the Joseon kingdom, increasing swathes of which fell under Konishi's control as he advanced towards the capital. Here Céspedes passed more than a year.

It was not only in providing succour to *Kirishitan* troops that Jesuits were ostensibly attached to the campaign to conquer the Joseon kingdom. The Japanese “wives,” as the Jesuit records termed them, of *Kirishitan* lords engaged in the conflict were reported to have accompanied these lords abroad. This offered another potential means for Jesuit men to reach Joseon, following elite *Kirishitan* women to whom they provided spiritual care. Thus, in his memoirs, Francisco Pires recalled that “in 1597 Francisco Laguna travelled to Korea, for the wife of the lord of Arima [who was shortly to give birth]; both she and the infant died. He returned in 1598.” This was a *Kirishitan* woman known as Lúzia, who was the wife of Arima Harunobu, baptized as Protásio.²² Such pastoral activities, however, suggested little wider attention to the Korean population.²³ Céspedes, for example, appeared to remain largely within the lands that Konishi controlled, and his letters focus upon his interactions with the campaign's elite men there.²⁴ In their role as spiritual care providers to *Kirishitans* on campaign, the invasions seemingly presented few opportunities for Jesuits to encounter Korean people.

20 See ARSI, JapSin 12-II, fol. 202v, translated in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 71: “Father Pedro Gómez stayed in my place, who, being old and not knowing the language, they gave him a Castilian Father as helper, named Gregorio de Céspedes, and so they loaded the ship of China with Japanese, so that there were on it more than a thousand souls.”

21 See further discussion of this episode in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 71–74.

22 *Monumenta Historica Japoniae*, 1:410: “Neste anno 97 foi a P^a Laguna ao Corai, porque pario a molher de Arimadono, e morreo ella e a criança. Tournou o de 98.” On the challenge for Jesuits to encourage male sexual continence among Japanese Christian men with wives and concubines, see Ward, “Jesuit Encounters with Confucianism,” 1046–48.

23 As Bang documents, there has been some debate about the nature of the services Céspedes provided to the Japanese Christian soldiers, see “An Assessment of the Role of Gregorio de Céspedes, S. J.”

24 See Cory, “Some Notes on Father Gregorio de Cespedes”; see also Kim Yang Seon 김양선, “Imjinwaeran jonggunsinbu seseupedeseuui naehan hwaldonggwa geu yeonghyang.” 임진왜란 종군신부 세스페데스의 내한활동과 그 영향 [Céspedes's visit to Korea and its influence]; Pak Cheol 박철 / 박철, *Seseupedeseu – hangukbangmun choecho seoguin* 세스페데스 – 한국방문 최초 서구인 [Céspedes: The first westerner to visit Korea]. A review of some of Pak's arguments is provided in Bang, “An Assessment of the Role of Gregorio de Céspedes S. J.”

A small number of men connected to the Society, perhaps as few as four in total, were thus embedded among the Japanese invading forces in Joseon. Other missionary men though had taken note of the potential of the invasion. The Franciscans had for some time been active among the mendicant orders operating out of Manila in pursuing diplomatic and trade relations with Hideyoshi.²⁵ Although they had not yet received papal authority to evangelize in Japan, which was finally granted in 1608, they had nonetheless begun to establish their own relationships with Japan's *Kirishitan* elite, including with Konishi. In his first *Relación*, Martín de la Ascensión, who had previously proselytized in Mexico and Manila, lamented the lack of robust Franciscan presence then in Japan, for "if there had been ministers now they could have been sent to Korea, because Don Augustin, general of Korea, is a great Christian and would have accommodated them there."²⁶ Mirroring the view of Hideyoshi, he suggested that the invasions opened up prospects not only for Joseon but the bigger prize that lay beyond: "The door to China is also open here."²⁷

Céspedes's letters indicated little sense of the violence by which he was surrounded in Joseon. However, other Society sources as well as contemporary Joseon and Japanese sources, drew attention to the widespread violence borne by Korean people.²⁸ The highly crafted letter written by the Joseon government official Song Jemin, designed to encourage fellow countrymen to join the defence of the kingdom, left little to the imagination of the horrors of the conflict: "they abducted our wives and sisters and by tens these beasts took turns in raping them, leading to the deaths of many."²⁹ The violence suggested in Song's strategic call to arms was reflected in works that did not share his motivations, such as Fróis's detailed narrative of the Japanese invasions. This offered an equally graphic account of the actions of Japanese soldiers:

Noble and honourable women, covering up their good looks, thinking that with this they could escape the hands of the Japanese soldiers, some of them smeared their faces with the fumes of pots and pans; others disguised themselves in poor clothing [...] the

²⁵ On these relations, see Henri Bernard and S. J. Tientsin, "Les Débuts des relations diplomatiques entre le Japon et les Espagnols"; Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 240–41, Reis Correia, "Alessandro Valignano's Attitude"; Arcos, "The Philippine Colonial Elite"; Tronu, "The Rivalry between the Jesuits and the Mendicant Orders"; Vu Thanh, "The Role of the Franciscans."

²⁶ Alvarez-Taladriz, ed. *Documentos franciscanos de la cristiandad de Japón (1593–1597)*, 104: "y si ahora hubiera habido ministros se podían haber enviado a Corea, porque don Augustín, general de Corea, es gran cristiano y los hubiera acomodado allá." See also Pérez, ed., "Cartas y Relaciones del Japón."

²⁷ Alvarez-Taladriz, ed. *Documentos franciscanos de la cristiandad de Japón (1593–1597)*, 104: "También por acá esta abierta la puerta a la China."

²⁸ Missionary men had also recorded views about violence towards Japanese women in the fighting within Japan that had preceded the Joseon campaigns. See the analysis in Nishimura Hiroko 西村汎子, ed. *Sensō bōryōyoku to josei* 戦争・暴力と女性 [War, violence, and women], 96–115.

²⁹ Song Jemin, *Exhortation Letter Sent to the People of Cheolla Province* [August 1592] recorded in Jo Gyeongnam 趙慶男, *Nanjungjamnok* 亂中雜錄 (1618), vol. 1, part 92: 然言之取人妻子姊妹十夫争淫漲斃相總繼屠. Translation from Kim Haboush, ed. *Epistolary Korea*, 133.



Map 1.1. Key cities in the Joseon kingdom and sites of evangelizing activities involving Koreans in Japan at the turn of Europe's seventeenth century. Map created by the author from the Open Historical Map Project (openhistoricalmap.org).

pretence was immediately understood by the Japanese, and they did not hesitate to take them to make use of them.³⁰

The key purpose of Fróis's account was to highlight the contrasting conduct of *Kirishitan* soldiers, those to whom Jesuits provided spiritual care, carefully describing their conduct as Christian men, highlighting praiseworthy performances of masculinity. Of particular note for these authors was the sexual continence and conduct of *Kirishitan* men towards women in an environment in which the vulnerability of the Korean population to sexual crimes of war was extreme and well documented by contemporaries. Portuguese Jesuit Alfonso de Lucena praised the *Kirishitans* engaged in Joseon; for the "last three years that they have been in Korea they have given a very great example of chastity."³¹ Lucena numbered among those who had been selected to go to Korea, when one of the *Kirishitan* lords engaged in the campaign, Ōmura Yoshiaki, baptized as Don Sancho, fell

30 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 5:549–50: "As mulheres nobres e honradas, por encubrirem seo bom parecer, cuidando que com isto poderião escapar das mãos dos soldados japões, humas untavão os rostos come as felugens das panelas e tachos; outras se disfarçavão em vis e baixos vestidos; [...] Porem entendido logo dos japões o fingimento, não deixavão de os tomar para se servir delles."

31 ARSI, JapSin 12–I, fol. 1r: "tres anos que estem no Coray tem dado mui grande exemplo de castidade."

ill and called for Lucena's presence. However, Ōmura recovered before Lucena set sail and the Jesuit's opportunity to reach the warzone disappeared. It was indeed Ōmura Yoshiaki upon whose sexual continence Fróis's narrative elaborated:

Don Sancho [Ōmura Yoshiaki] and the elite of Ōmura are especially noteworthy in observing of the word of God and in the example they set, especially in their attention to purity and chastity. [...] with so many and so frequent occasions as there were in this respect, with the many women of all kinds whom they captured, all were amazed to see with what strength and constancy the Christians of Ōmura were guided, many of them taking a vow of chastity while at war away from home.³²

Fróis's positioning of *Kirishitan* lords as both men of war and men of honour was telling. He had to insist that they were faced with opportunities for sexual misconduct, in order for their sexual control to be powerful, demonstrable evidence of their faith.

“Fruit Well Taken from This War”: Evangelizing Koreans in Japan

One of the apparent advantages of the war not only for its Japanese leaders but also for other traders in the region was the capture of Korean people, many of whom became enslaved. As Lucena reflected in later years from exile in Macao, the Japanese “ran all over the kingdom and stole the most precious of it, capturing countless people to bring to Japan, and most of them became Christian, this fruit, well taken from this war.”³³ In his second *Relación*, the Franciscan Martín de la Ascensión reprised his reflections on the potential of the invasions for evangelizing Koreans, and observed

in Japan a large number of Korean Christian slaves, to whom the *kampaku* [Hideyoshi, chief advisor to the Emperor] orders to give freedom and send them to their lands and [they] run the risk of turning back there being no minister in all that kingdom.³⁴

In early 1599, Valignano wrote to Acquaviva his assessment of Hideyoshi's latest instructions for the great lords to secure peace in the regions that they held or withdraw to Japan. Konishi, he argued, unlike his counterparts, had succeeded in doing so in the region he held with the other *Kirishitan* lords, and had brought back to Japan “hostages” given to

³² Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 5:463: “Dom Sancho e os mais fidalgos de Vomura se assinalarão particularmente tambem na guarda da ley de Deos e no exemplo que derão, especialmente na guarda da limpeza e castidade. [...] com tantas e tão frequentes occasziões, como nesta parte houve come a infinidade de nulheres que cativarão de toda a sorte, ficavão admirados de ver com quanta Fortaleza e constancia se guiavão os christãos de Vomura, dos quaes muitos, por estarem mais fortes, se obrigarão com voto de castidade emquanto andassem na Guerra for a de suas cazas.”

³³ Macao, ARSI, JapSin 22, fol, 134e [sic], cited in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 102n53: “posto que correrão todo reyno e roubarão o mais precioso delle e cativarão infinidade de gente que trouxerão a Japão e os mais delles se fizerão cristãos, que este fruto e bem se tirou desta guerra.”

³⁴ Alvarez-Taladriz, ed. *Documentos franciscanos de la cristiandad de Japón (1593–1597)*, 136: “en Japón gran número de esclavos coreas cristianos, a los cuales manda el *kampaku* darles libertad y enviarlos a sus tierras y corre riesgo de que se vuelvan atrás no habiendo en todo aquel reino ministro alguno.”

him as part of the compact, “to his great honour.”³⁵ Thus was Konishi’s role in the captivity and forced exiling of Korean people from their homeland recorded within the Jesuit archive.

Society men interacted with captive Korean peoples as subjects for evangelizing, and as the possession of *Kirishitan* lords. Slavery was already part of the social system within the Joseon kingdom and in Japan, but the invasions brought substantial numbers of Korean women and men, adults and children, into the forced circulations occurring in the wider Asian region.³⁶ The Jesuits were themselves involved in practices of unfree labour.³⁷ In the East Asian region, the Society had a role in managing aspects of the slave trade, allocating slave certificates to those they determined to be legitimate slaves.³⁸ Hideyoshi’s earlier conflicts within Japan had already produced Japanese slave populations and caused the Jesuits to reflect upon their theological position regarding slavery.³⁹ In 1593, from Ōmura, Lucena wrote of Céspedes’s return and current activities working with captured Korean on the lands of the *Kirishitan* lords, baptizing Koreans “*de servicio*,” a term that echoed the Jesuits’ favoured euphemism for enslaved individuals.⁴⁰ As M. Antoni J. Üçerler has suggested, it was possible that “many had been forcibly converted by overzealous Christian warlords.”⁴¹ In his second *Relación*, written between the two invasions, Franciscan eyewitness in Japan Ascensión was highly critical of baptisms that were taking place in large numbers, with “little sufficiency to delimit the consciences of those who come to baptism from the impediments they have, to declare the obligations that the law of God brings with it, so they baptize them without examining them,” including, he suggested, without looking into the circumstances of “unjust slaves.”⁴²

Geography played a determining role in conversions for more than those Koreans who were taken to the lands of *Kirishitan* lords. Nagasaki was a town with strong

35 Nagasaki, February 22, 1599, ARSI, JapSin 13–II, fol. 260r: “los refenes,” “*con mucha su honrra*.”

36 Peterson, “Slaves and Owners; or Servants and Masters?,” both Turnbull and Boxer emphasize the role of Wako raids in enslaving people that preceded the invasions sanctioned by Hideyoshi. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, chap. 6; Turnbull, *Pirates of the Far East*.

37 Indeed, by the time of the Society’s suppression in 1773, as Nathaniel Millett and Charles H. Parker observe, it had become the largest corporate slave holder in the Americas. Millett and Parker, “Introduction: Jesuits and Race from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries,” in *Jesuits and Race*, eds. Millett and Parker, 6. See also Rothman, “The Jesuits and Slavery.”

38 Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 270, 280, 285, 334, 336, 342, 358; and Brockey, “Jesuits and Unfree Labour in Early Modern East Asia,” in *Jesuits and Race*, eds. Millett and Parker, 75–96.

39 López Gay, “Un document inédit,” 137 and 143; for Japanese Christian community perspectives, see Kataoka, *A vida e a acção pastoral*, 208n204. Similar assessments and accommodation of, as well as opposition to, slavery were taking place in other cultural contexts in which Jesuit encountered enslavement during these centuries. See, for example, essays by Brockey, Andrew Redden and J. Michelle Molina in *Jesuits and Race*, eds. Millett and Parker.

40 Ōmura, 1593, ARSI, JapSin 12–I, fol. 1v: “corais de servicio.”

41 Üçerler, “The Jesuit Enterprise,” 165.

42 Alvarez-Taladriz, ed. *Documentos franciscanos de la cristiandad de Japón (1593–1597)*, 78: “tengan poca suficiencia para deslindar las concinecias de los que vienen al bautismo de los impedimentos que tienen, para declararles las obligaciones que trae la ley de Dios consigo, así a bulto los bautizan sin examinarlos,” “de esclavos injustos.”

connections to the Jesuits, who had been able to expand the urban precinct with lands given to them by Ōmura Sumitada.⁴³ The strength of the Korean and Christian communities almost certainly offered newcomers with few resources much needed forms of support in the city.⁴⁴ A register of inhabitants of the Hirado-machi, one of the old town wards in Nagasaki, which was made in *Kan'ei* 19 (1642–43) listed a series of people who had been born in the Joseon kingdom. Where it was documented, the years of arrival of almost all coincided with the period of the invasions. All but one had converted to Christianity in Japan.⁴⁵ More specifically, the register suggests that a number of the Koreans had long been living in Japan before their conversion to Christianity, which occurred when they arrived in Nagasaki. For example, the ninety-five-year-old servant woman identified as Uba, had arrived in Chikugo in 1598 and then, in 1621, had come to Nagasaki where she became a Christian.⁴⁶ Nagasaki was noted as the place of conversion of most of the Koreans who were recorded or referenced in the register.

43 Pacheco, “The Founding of the Port of Nagasaki”; Schütte, Joseph. “Nagasaki no sōritsu to hatten ni okeru Iezusu no ‘konpania’” 長崎の創立と発展におけるイエズスの「コンパニア」 [The Jesuit company in the founding and development of Nagasaki]; Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki*; Tronu, “Sacred Space and Ritual.”

44 As Nakamura Tadashi notes for Christianity; see Nakamura Tadashi 中村 質, “Jinshin teiyū yamato ran no hiryonin no kiseki: Nagasaki zaijū-sha no baai.” 壬辰丁酉倭亂の被虜人の軌跡-長崎在住者の場合 [The trajectory of Korean captives in the Imjin War: Focusing on Nagasaki settlers], 180.

45 The exception was a sixty-two-year-old Korean woman, whose brief declaration indicated her arrival in Hirado as a seven-year-old, where she became a member of the Jōdo sect, before the Japanese invasions. See Yanai Kenji 箭内健次, ed., “Nagasaki Hiradomachi ninbetsuchō” 長崎平戸町人別帳 [The Kan'ei 19 Register of Hirado-machi, Nagasaki], 124: 生國高麗之者。(天正十五年)七歳のとし平戸ニ参、淨土宗ニ罷成、寛永十三年ニ男同前ニ参、同宗同寺を頼申候。右之女房高麗之者ニ而御座候間、町中吟味仕之上造成請人立させ、請狀取組中ニ召置申候。See also Hesselink, “An Anti-Christian Register from Nagasaki,” 58; Nakamura Tadashi 中村 質, “Jinshin teiyū yamato ran no hiryonin no kiseki: Nagasaki zaijū-sha no baai.” 壬辰丁酉倭亂の被虜人の軌跡-長崎在住者の場合 [The trajectory of Korean captives in the Imjin War: Focusing on Nagasaki settlers], 182. On the early modern Nagasaki registers, see Nakamura Tadashi 中村 質, “Ninbetsuchō yori mita kinsei shoki no Nagasaki Hirado-machi.” 人別帳よりみた近世初期の長崎平戸町 [Nagasaki's Hiradomachi in the early modern period as seen from the registers], where Nakamura notes (p. 20) the strong presence of women, especially young women, in Nagasaki. See also Ikegami Takayoshi 池上 尊義, “Nagasaki Hiradomachi ni miru shūkyō jijō: Kanei jūkyūnen ‘Hiradomachi Ninbetsuseishoran’ o moto ni shite.” 長崎平戸町にみる宗教事情 — 寛永十九年「平戸町人別生所乱」をもとにして [Religious circumstances in Hiradomachi, Nagasaki: Based on the Hiradomachi Register of Kanei 19]; Nagamori Mitsunobu 長森美信, “Jinshin teiyū (bunroku keichō) ran ni okeru Chōsen ‘piroin’ no Nippon teijū: Chōsenin kirishitan o chūshin ni.” 壬辰・丁酉(文禄・慶長)乱における朝鮮被虜人の日本定住: 朝鮮人キリシタンを中心に [The settlement of Korean captives of the Imjin War in Japan with a focus on Christian Koreans].

46 Yanai Kenji 箭内健次, ed., “Nagasaki Hiradomachi ninbetsuchō.” 長崎平戸町人別帳 [The Kan'ei 19 Register of Hirado-machi, Nagasaki], 107: 生國高麗のもの、慶長三年ニ筑後え参。元知七年ニ長崎本興善町ニ参。則きりしたんニ罷成候へとも、竹中采女様御代ニ當町ニ而ころひ、淨土宗ニ罷成、大音寺ヲ頼申候。See also Nakamura Tadashi 中村 質, “Jinshin teiyū yamato ran no hiryonin no kiseki: Nagasaki zaijū-sha no baai.” 壬辰丁酉倭亂の被虜人の軌跡-長崎在住者の場合 [The trajectory of Korean captives in the Imjin War: Focusing on Nagasaki settlers], 184–85.

Jesuit sources continued to report the success of their mission among these new communities. Emphasizing the commitment of the Fathers to such efforts, in March 1594, Gómez reported to Acquaviva that the previous Christmas some one hundred individuals had been baptized in Nagasaki, “most of them captives from Korea” after “the Fathers went off to various houses.”⁴⁷ In 1596, Fróis could celebrate the arrival and conversion in Japan of this wave of captive Koreans as “these first fruits of that kingdom of Korea brought now by this war, for the greater good of their souls.”⁴⁸ A letter to the General of the Order from Fróis in 1596 described how a group of evangelized Koreans in Nagasaki had independently practised self-mortification to share in the Passion.⁴⁹ The Fathers, hearing a noise outside the church,

opened a window, asking who was there. They responded on their knees, with great humility: “We are only Koreans, and because we are captives, we could not participate in yesterday’s procession. Now we are all here together to ask God’s mercy and forgiveness of our sins.” They shed so much blood that those who saw and heard them were moved to tears.⁵⁰

The Spanish Jesuit Pedro Morejón was responsible for a series of hagiographic publications that documented the lives of martyrs, many of whom he had known personally, in the years after his exile from Japan. Here, he reinforced the positive view of the invasions that was widely circulating in the Jesuit archive, that one of their results was that “innumerable were those taken captive, and almost all, or most of them, became Christians.”⁵¹ Morejón’s equation of cause and effect obscured explicit consideration of the challenging contexts in which these conversions took place, given the acute vulnerability of a Korean population wrenched from its usual support networks.

Despite the celebration of successful evangelizing among the captured Koreans in Japan, the ambiguous practices of the Society with regard to slavery were under

⁴⁷ March 15, 1594; transcribed in Ruiz-de-Medina, *Origenes de la Iglesia Católica Coreana*, 52n148: “a mor parte erão dos cativos do Corai,” “se repartirão os padres por diversas casas.”

⁴⁸ December 3, 1596, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 203v: “primicias de aquel reino de Coray con la captividad desta guerra para major bien desus almas.”

⁴⁹ In using the term “evangelized Koreans” in this work, I encompass a range of common terminologies found in the contemporary sources, such as baptized, convert, or Christian, with recognition that the precise contours of what they implied to individual Korean people and to the Catholic authors who wrote about them may have varied.

⁵⁰ December 3, 1596, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 203v: “abriendo una ventana y preguntando quicram responderam detrodillas con grande humildad somos Corays solamente y porque somos cautivos y no teniamos a paresse para ayer yr enlaprocession agora uenimos aqui todos Juntos apedir a dios misericordia y perdon de nostros peccados losquales derramavan tanta sangre que mouieron a lagrimosa los que los oyeron y vieron.” As Sousa observes, flagellation was a sign of fervour common to the Passion practice of Japanese Christians. Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 118.

⁵¹ Macao, March 31, 1627, BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462r: “fueron innumerables los que truxeron captiuos y quasi todos, o la mayor parte se hizeron christianos.” On Morejón, see Alonso Romo, “Pedro Morejón” and, relatedly, Kawamura, “El viaje de Pedro Morejón a Japón.”

increasing pressure.⁵² In 1598, the newly arrived Bishop of Japan, Luís Cerqueira, drew up a clear statement of the Society's position of excommunication, reiterating that issued under his predecessor Pedro Martins, which had encompassed both women and men, Korean and Japanese. Cerqueira's document elaborated that "Koreans, of whom a large number have been going in the ship to China for six years now, since the Japanese began their conquest, are not legitimately captives, for the war that the Lord of Japan is waging is unjust."⁵³ This work, copies of which were sent to the King of Portugal, the Viceroy of India and the Archbishop of Goa, was signed by fourteen Jesuits in Japan. The Jesuit archive recorded accounts of this period produced by captured Koreans themselves of their hardships. Thus, a Korean man known as Jinkurō Pedro narrated how he had been taken as a thirteen-year-old, "serving pagans for seventeen years and suffering many toils" before he came to Kuchinotsu where he was baptized a Christian.⁵⁴ Yet, despite knowledge of the realities of slavery, the Society continued to rely upon an enslaved labour force for its operations in Japan.⁵⁵

Jesuit accounts made oblique reference to the contexts in which Korean women sought out Christian teachings, their texts embedding evidence of some of the particular challenges women faced in the choices that they appeared to make in approaching Christian sources of support. In the Jesuit archives, an anonymous marginal comment, accompanying a letter by an evangelized Korean woman who was known in mission records as Julia, described how

This Julia was born on the island of Korea, and from there she was taken to Japan; to defend her modesty from her *tono* [master, or lord] she fled to a Christian *tono*, and there she was baptized by Father Morejón.⁵⁶

This text reiterated the distinct sexual continence of the Japanese lords as an important part of their performance of *Kirishitan* masculinity, as had earlier been suggested of their activities as invaders in the Joseon kingdom. It also suggested the vulnerability of captive Korean women and a potential reason for their willingness to approach celibate Society men. Oblique references to women's experiences pepper the mission archive.

52 There is considerable debate about the number of Koreans who were taken from Joseon, see Sousa for a recent analysis, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 934.

53 Nagasaki, September 4, 1598, BRAH, MS Jesuitas, 9/2666, fol. 273r-v: "moços ou moças," "coreas, dos quais uai na nao da China grande numero de seis años a esta parte, *que e o tempo que ha que os Jappões começarão aquella conquista não são legitimamente catiuos pois a guerra que o Señor de Jappão lhe faz he injusta.*" On the ambiguous usage of the term *moço*, see Brockey, "Jesuits and Unfree Labour in Early Modern East Asia," 77–78.

54 Carlo Spinola to Claudio Acquaviva, Nagasaki, March 18, 1615, ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 78v: "E levado pera Japão, servio entre gentios desasete annos padecendo muitos trabalhos."

55 Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 226; Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 358–59.

56 December 1613, Munich, Archiv der Zentraleuropäischen Provinz der Jesuiten (APECESJ), Abt. 43, Nr. 53, fol. 22r: "Nata est haec Julia in Insula Corai, captiva in Japonia delata, ad tuenda pudicitia a dono suo per fugit ad tonon Christianus, ibiq. baptizata est a P. Morejon."

that God had brought him from Korea to make him a Christian [...] Blessed man! The Lord took him, at the time of *Taicosama's* [Hideyoshi's] war, from his land so closed to all foreigners, to receive the Holy Gospel and brought him to Japan so that he might receive with many others the faith.⁶⁰

Similarly, Morejón's account of the conversion of a young adolescent, written much later in Macao in 1627, identified Kaun (later to be known by his baptismal name Vicente) as the son of a nobleman from the Korean court. In this account, the invasions did not directly put Kaun in danger, for the king "retreated from the court into the mountains, and Vicente's father and his whole family, were with him; and the Japanese took possession of the palace and the city."⁶¹ Morejón emphasized the boy's independence of action, at least from human influence, in approaching Konishi:

although he was free and safe, seeing the Japanese army from afar, he felt in himself a great impulse from God, who had predestined him for such glory, that he went off with them. And his guardian angel led him to the lands of don Augustin, general of the army, and a relative of his took the boy, who was like an angel.⁶²

Morejón's detailed accounts of the experiences of these converts were evidence that showcased the fruit of his pastoral work in Japan and linguistic proficiency in Japanese. He knew many of these individuals about whom he wrote personally, including Kaun, whom he had encountered when Kaun was taken to Japan and offered to the church on the island of Shiki, where Morejón baptized him in 1592. A letter written later by Kaun, now known to Jesuits as Vicente, provided a slightly different narrative of his first encounter with Augustin and Christianity, as

a native of Korea, born in the metropolis of that kingdom. At the age of thirteen, I came to Japan with an assistant of Tçunocami Agostinho, called Konishi Heiemon. That same year, on the island of Shiki, he made me a Christian, and entering the Church I served in many places.⁶³

60 Morejón, *Relacion de los martyres*, fol. 43v: "diziendo que Dios le truxo de la Coria para hazerle Christiano [...] Dichoso varon! Aquien sacò el Señor, en el tiempo de la guerra de Taico-sama, de su tierra tan cerrada para todos los estranferos, y por consiguiente para receibir el sancto Euanglio, y le truxo à Iapon para que con otros muchos recibiese la Fee."

61 Macao, May 31, 1627, BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462v: "retirose de la Corte a las montañas y fue con el e el padre de Vicente con toda su familia y los Japones se apoderaron del Palacio y Corte."

62 BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462v: "y aun que estaua libre en saluo viendo de lexis el exercito de los Japones sintio en si grandes impulsos de Dios que le tenía para tanta gloria suya predestinado, que se fue con ellos y lleuole su Angel custode al Real de Don Agustin General del exercito, y un pariente suyo tomó al niño que era como un Angel."

63 Recorded in João Rodrigues Giram's account to the General, Muzio Vitelleschi, Macao, March 24, 1627, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 107r: "Sou natural da Coreia, nascido na metropoli daquelle Reino. De 13 annos vim a japão com hum criado de Tçunocami Agostinho chamado Conixi Feiyemon. No mesmo anno na Ilha do Xiqi me fez christão, e entrando na Igrja servi em muitas partes."

Vicente's more passive account of his introduction to Christianity may have been a strategic response to interrogation by Japanese authorities, although in the same text Vicente did not shy away from his later activities and commitment to the Christian faith.

Jesuit opportunities for contact with the Korean people in Japan came almost exclusively through events mired in violence, but we cannot rule out that for some individuals, perhaps especially women, Christian evangelization also offered protection from violence. These were encounters made through long-held practices of enslavement of Korean peoples operating in the region, through the invasions of the Joseon kingdom, and by the forced removal to Japan of captive Korean people. If there were reasons why some Korean people, who were isolated from the local population and their own networks in Japan, might have been attracted to the network of practical and emotional support that the Christian missions may have offered, missionary authors did not foreground them, although they were embedded in their descriptions of evangelized experiences. Instead, as noted above, Fróis wrote to Acquaviva in 1596 celebrating the opportunity that presented this population to Christian influence. He looked forward to the role of Korean people in furthering the mission through East Asia, assuring his reader that "the common talk" was that if "the law of the Gospel is preached in Korea (which does not seem difficult by the way of Japan), they will receive the faith readily and it will spread greatly in those kingdoms."⁶⁴

Gender and Mission Strategy

The different experiences and activities of Korean women and men, as well as people of different status, shaped how they could encounter Christian teachings. Fróis's account of the Church in Nagasaki in 1593 documented that women's access to hearing the mass was limited, because the local authorities "still do not allow them to come to the church." Thus, at Christmas the missionaries had "divided into different houses where the women gathered" to provide services, at which time they "also baptized one hundred gentiles who were already catechized, of whom the majority were Korean captives, because a large number of them came to Japan; and by which all those women were very consoled."⁶⁵

Jesuit authors recounted how, during the invasion, Korean men had been integrated (willingly or otherwise) into the military personnel of *Kirishitan* lords, as

⁶⁴ December 3, 1596, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 203v: "la comun platica," "la predicacão de la ley Euangelica en Coray (loqueparece no sera dificultoso por via de Japão) que recibira la fee com facilidad y se poder mucho dilatar em aquellos Reinos."

⁶⁵ Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 5: 457: "poes ainda não lhes permitem os ministros de Terazava que possam vir à igreja, se repartirão os Padres por diversas cazas onde as mulheres se ajuntavão; [...] e bautizarão-se também 100 gentios que estavam já catequizados, dos quaes a mayor parte erão dos cativos de Corai, dos quaes vierão grande soma a Japão: com que ficurão todas aquellas mulheres muy consoladas."

had the evangelized Korean man baptized as Miguel. Jesuit accounts also documented the displacement and circulation of Korean children within the *Kirishitan* network. In his account of the war, Fróis recorded that Itō Sukekatsu, baptized Dom Jerónimo, “brought with him many Koreans whom he had captured in war, men and women,” giving the men to the Jesuits “to do as they wished, and the women given to his wife.”⁶⁶ Fróis insisted that the latter were not to be held

as captives but to have them in her home, until they knew how to communicate and talk, and could have means of living in Japan and then she would give them freedom; but not let them go too soon, because as foreign people who could not speak, they would be soon lost and [held] captive.⁶⁷

The use of passive constructions in relation to the description of these individuals’ gender-segregated fate highlighted Fróis’s intention to foreground the actions of elite *Kirishitans*. This act of paternalism separated women and men into distinct environments that created different kinds of exposure to Christian teachings.

The Jesuits could have generated new mission strategies to cope with the arrival of a very large mass of people of varied social status, which included educated courtiers and skilled workers, agricultural labourers and household attendants, who were now operating between what remained of their homeland networks and the necessary forging of new ones among the Korean community and with the Japanese. However, consistent with their mission approaches elsewhere in the region, the Society’s men retained the methods that had formed the foundations of their endeavours in Japan, exploiting the high literacy among higher status Korean men.⁶⁸ Both Gayo and Vicente were men of status and learning, able to engage with the Jesuits through the shared tradition of Chinese scripts that both Korean and Japanese communication systems employed. Of Vicente, Morejón described how he “learned the language of Japan, which is totally different, though the letters are the same as in China.”⁶⁹ This immediately and implicitly focused attention within the Korean mission strategy on adolescent and adult male converts who could readily integrate into the Society’s existing institutional structures in Japan, of seminaries and residencies, and into an institutional, racialized hierarchy of Asian men under the direction of European fathers.

⁶⁶ March 15, 1594, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 39v, translated in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 99: “porque traxia tambem consigo diversos corais que cativava na guerra honems e molheres,” “deles fazer o que lhes parecesse e que os molheres se entrasse a sua molher.”

⁶⁷ ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 39v, translated in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 99: “não pera as fer por cativas mas pera as fer en sua caza sustendan doas alhe que ellas soubeçem negocearce e falar e pudesem fer algum remedio en Jappao e então lhe dece liberdade e não as largage loguo porque como gente estrangeira e que não ser bião falar serião logo perdidas e cativas.”

⁶⁸ See, for example, by comparison, Standaert, “Jesuits in China,” 172.

⁶⁹ Macao, March 31, 1627, BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462v: “aprendio la lengua de Japon que es totalmente diuersa, aunque las letras son las mismas de la China.”

How other cohorts of Koreans, by contrast, could access the Christian message in Japan was more complicated, requiring intermediaries. In 1594, Francesco Pasio reported to Acquaviva a plan devised by the Vice-Provincial that

they look for some skilled Koreans who know how to read and write their own handwriting, which is the same as the Chinese use, and also in Japan; who, after learning the Japanese language, were very well instructed in the catechism, making a good summary of it in their language, and they are also translating the prayers into the language of Korea so as to more easily catechise their fellow countryfolk.⁷⁰

Lucena praised the decision of Gómez to send to Ōmura as an assistant “a Korean *dōjuku*” to work with Koreans there.⁷¹ By late 1595, a letter from Fróis to the General observed the very large number of captured Koreans in Arima, Ōmura and Nagasaki. He too spoke of Gómez’s plans for a seminary to prepare Korean men as *dōjukus*.⁷² Jesuit biographies of Korean men who converted as adolescents emphasized the role of such training as an important pathway for evangelizing the captive Korean community in Japan. Morejón recognized the value to the mission of men such as Vicente who had “turned out a good teacher of catechism [...] and in this way he greatly helped fellow natives, who later said that their becoming Christians and persevering in the faith was thanks to Vicente.”⁷³ In 1596, Fróis rejoiced in his letter to Acquaviva that “many captives from Korea, men as well as women and children,” had been baptized in the past two years at Nagasaki.⁷⁴ He noted positively that most were accessing the Christian message through Japanese: “most of them pick up the language of Japan so easily that almost none need to confess through an interpreter.”⁷⁵

However, Korean households also appeared to act as important sites of evangelization, as Fróis’s letter describing the conversions of Christmas 1593 suggested. From Portugal,

70 ARSI, JapSin 45, fol. 196r: “que se buscasen algunos corais habiles y que supiesen leer y escriuir su propia letra que es la misma que los chinos vsan, y tambien corre en Japon: los quales despues de aprender la lengua japonica fueron instruidoes muy bien en el cathecismo haciendo un buen Sumario del en su lengua, y letra trasladando tambien las orations en la lengua de corai para desta manera poder mas facilmente catequizar sus naturales.” Also found October 20, 1594, ARSI, JapSin 31, fol. 157v, as noted in Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 117n110.

71 Ōmura, 1593, ARSI, JapSin 12-I, fol. 1v: “hum dojucu coraj.” The word *dōshuku* 同宿, meaning “fellow resident,” was adopted from Buddhist practice for use by the Christian orders as “dogico” or “dojucu.” In the Christian context discussed in this work, it is spelled as *dōjuku*. See Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 88–89, Cieslik, “Laienarbeit in der alten Japan-Mission,” 186–89; Brockey, “Jesuits and Unfree Labour in Early Modern East Asia,” 83.

72 Nagasaki, October 20, 1595, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 94v.

73 Macao, March 31, 1627, BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462v: “salio buen predicador del Cathecismo,” “y assi ayudo grandemente a sus naturales, que despues dezian que ser *cristianos* y perseuerar en la fee era beneficio de Vicente.”

74 December 3, 1596, ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 203v: “muchos cautivos de Coray assi hombres como mugeres y ninos.”

75 ARSI, JapSin 52, fol. 203v: “la mayor parte dellos toma la lengua de Japão con tanta facilidad que quasi ninguns tiene necessidad de fe confessar per interprete.”

the Jesuit historian Fernão Guerreiro made available to the wide readership of his work the global Jesuit activities based on the letters of missionaries in the field. Foregrounding the work of Paulo over that of his wife Ana, he nonetheless recorded the key role of one Korean Christian couple who lived in the Gotō islands. Paulo, he wrote,

had such good understanding, with his wife, of the things of God, that it is astonishing to see the fervour and zeal and devotion that both have; and it is so much that all other men who know him, given his reputation, will visit him: if they are Christians, they become devout with his advice, and if pagans, they are ordinarily baptized, he being the godfather of the men, and his wife, Ana, of the women.⁷⁶

Later, Guerreiro recounted the experiences of another Korean women, Ursula, whom he noted “became a Christian, by persuasion, of this Paulo.”⁷⁷ Other accounts by Jesuit authors suggested that Korean women’s language skills enabled them to mediate across cultures in their proselytizing. João Rodrigues Giram, whose series of annual letters from Japan in Europe’s early seventeenth century offered Guerreiro and his readers many valuable insights into the conversion of Koreans, described to Acquaviva a growing group of converts supported by a Korean woman married to a Japanese man in Bitchu. She was “a Korean by birth, who had a marvellous grasp of the things of God because she knew very well the language of Japan, and with her a daughter of hers and six or seven other maids were baptized.”⁷⁸

Even if, in reaching out to Korean populations in Japan, Jesuit men primarily looked to Korean men and adolescents as conduits and mediators who could be easily trained and accommodated within their existing structures, or in ways that conformed to their existing assumptions about patriarchal family and household dynamics, they did not ignore the potential of Korean women as converts. Jesuit sources speak to the relationships of Society men with very different cohorts of Korean women—powerful and influential women, as well as lower-status women. The writings of Jesuit men suggest that these distinct cohorts offered different possibilities for mission strategy, and opportunities for access to wider audiences for their messages than those created by evangelized Korean men.

76 Guerreiro, *Relação anual*, 3:156–57: “Entre muitos Coreas christãos, que por aquelas ilhas lá cativos dos japões, está um, chamado Paulo, com sua mulher por nome Ana, cativo do Tono e seu hortelão. Êste, pôsto-que há pouco, que se fêz cristão, fêz todavia tão bom entendimento, come sua mulher, das coisas de Deus, que é espanto, ver o fervor e zêlo e devoção que ambos têm; e tanto é isto, que todos os demais homens que o conhecem, out endo fama dêle o vão visitor: se são cristãos, se fazem devotos come seus conselhos; e se gentios, de ordinário se baptizam, sendo êle padrinho dos homens, e a mulher, Ana, das mulheres.”

77 Guerreiro, *Relação anual*, 3:157: “Uma mulher, de casta Coreia, que servia ao Tono, se fêz cristã, por persuasão dêste Paulo, Coreia, acima dito.”

78 Nagasaki, March 14, 1609, ARSI, JapSin 56, fols. 55v–56r: “sua molher que com ser Coreia de naçam pormou marauilhoso concerto das cousas de Deus por saber muito bem alingoa de Japam, e com elle se bautizarão huma filha sua e outras seis ou sete criadas.” Giram’s name is sometimes written in modern scholarship as Girão.

The Jesuit archive celebrated the presence of Korean women who rose to positions of power in Japan. One was Pak Marina who converted in 1606 “as the faith and the love of Jesus Christ had taken deep root in her soul,” wrote the Italian Jesuit Francisco Colín. He encountered Marina in Manila where she had later been exiled and was then living as a nun.⁷⁹ Marina appeared to have accrued considerable wealth since her arrival in Japan, enough that when she determined to “consecrate herself to the divine Majesty with the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience,” she “handed over her estate to be used for the support of the community.”⁸⁰ Colín’s account did not document Marina’s life in Joseon or how she had achieved such wealth, events long before the period when he was writing his account. Indeed, that Marina was Korean did not appear particularly relevant to Colín’s objectives. He was writing a history showcasing the Society’s activities in the Philippines, a religious and political project that responded to a request from Philip IV of Spain, and in which Marina featured because of her presence among the community of exiles from Japan who were supported in Manila.⁸¹ What was important for this aspect of Colín’s biography of Marina was her personal repudiation of her fortune, and the benefits that this had accrued for the community of religious women in Miyako (present-day Kyoto) whom she had joined. This group of women were led by a Japanese woman, baptized Julia, a member of the well-known *Kirishitan* family, Naitō (a member of whom had served alongside Konishi in the Joseon invasion). This group of women enjoyed a close relationship with the Jesuits then in Japan.⁸² Marina served as an exemplar of the power of Christianity, perhaps via the work of the Jesuits, to inspire not only lower-status Korean women and men to Christian conversion, but also influential women who appeared, on the surface at least, to have had the means to prosper in Japan.

Similarly, Jesuit texts foregrounded the potential of a series of Korean women converts who were present within elite courtly environment. One was Máxima who had become embedded at the heart of power at the court of Arima. Her situation was described by the Portuguese Jesuit Sebastián Vieira in a letter to the General in March 1614.⁸³ In the early years of Europe’s seventeenth century, however, another Korean woman known as Julia, seemed to provoke particular interest for the Society’s men, as attested by the large array of letters and texts reporting upon her activities. As

⁷⁹ Francisco Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:503: “auiendo echado profundas raizes en su alma la Fé, y amor de Iesu Christo.” On Marina, see Ruiz-de-Medina, “The First Korean Catholic Nun in History”; Wong, “Marina Pak (c. 1572–1636).”

⁸⁰ Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:503–4: “se consagró a la Diuina Magestad con los tres votos do pobreza, castidad, y obediencia [...] y entregó su hazienda para que se gastasse en el sustento de la Comunidad.”

⁸¹ On Colín, see Arcilla, “Jesuit Historians of the Philippines,” 381–83, and also Roldán-Figueroa, *The Martyrs of Japan*.

⁸² For an analysis of the *Kirishitan* Naitō Julia’s activities, see Ward, *Women Religious Leaders*, chap. 3.

⁸³ Nagasaki, March 16, 1614, ARSI, JapSin 57, fols. 268v–269r.

had so many others, Julia arrived in Japan as a result of the invasion of her homeland, where she had converted and been baptized by Pedro Morejón. Later, she had been taken into service in the residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu, where missionaries hoped she might influence Japan's most powerful political figure, although he was not, as the Jesuits' terminology often suggested, Japan's monarch. Thus, in 1609, Giram claimed to the General of the Order: "Julia is now higher than before and serves His Highness directly."⁸⁴ A transcribed letter purportedly composed by Julia to Morejón in 1613 was accompanied by textual annotations in the hand of Morejón and of an unknown colleague, which identified particular qualities that implied what was seen as of interest to their readers. Prefacing his transcription and translation, Morejón explained that it was a "letter from Julia, from the palace of the emperor."⁸⁵ This drew out a key feature of her biography that was seen to be significant: that she had been in proximity to the height of power—that of the "emperor." Ieyasu was of course not the emperor, but these authors regularly used this term to refer to Ieyasu whom they perceived, rightly, as the most powerful figure in Japan. The letter text was subsequently annotated in another anonymous hand, adding: "She later went to the emperor's palace serving his wife."⁸⁶ Jesuit writers also reported descriptions of Julia's identity claimed to be made by Ieyasu himself, who had observed

the many favours and benefits she had received from him [...] a poor foreigner, taken captive in the Korean war, risen so high as to be a lady of the palace of the lord [Ieyasu]. And more than others, one of those he trusted the most, always taking her with him wherever he went.⁸⁷

Despite her lowly origins, authors repeatedly described not only that Julia had become a lady-in-waiting in Ieyasu's residence but also foregrounded the emotional proximity that she had established there, where she might serve as a conduit to Ieyasu's wife, the female household, and even to Ieyasu himself. It would perhaps be a Korean woman who could bring the Society's men and message closest to the most powerful man in Japan. Moreover, Morejón's archive of documentation directly from Julia and its inclusion in the Jesuit archive also helped to highlight his own proximity to this potentially influential woman, to whom he might serve as a key spiritual advisor.

84 Nagasaki, March 14, 1609, ARSI, JapSin 56, fol. 13v: "Julia esta agora melhor que primeiro e serue immediatamente a S. A."

85 APECESJ, Abt. 43, Nr. 53, fol. 22r: "ex aula imperatoris japonis." See also Ruiz-de-Medina, "History and Fiction of Ota Julia."

86 APECESJ, Abt. 43, Nr. 53, fol. 22r: "deinde ad aula imperatoris uxori ejj seruiens."

87 Mateo de Couros to Claudio Acquaviva, Nagasaki, January 12, 1613, ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 244r: "*que* deuera de selembrar das muitas e avatajadas merces *que* delle tinha reçibio [...] huma pobre estrangeira catiua na guerra de Corea, veo amontar tanto, *que* chegou a ser Donzela do paço do *senhor* da Tenca de Japam. E nam qual quer, senam das principais de quem mais fiaua, leuandoa sempre consigo onde quer *que* fosse."

While in Ieyasu's household, Jesuits considered how Julia might play an active and important spiritual role among the court ladies. Giram reported that she had a hidden oratory where she encouraged other ladies to uphold their faith.⁸⁸

There, she counsels her fellow Christian to keep and persevere in the faith, for which she has already suffered some troubles, with great courage and constancy, and she does not let the opportunity to conciliate pagans pass and if she cannot persuade them to become Christians, she strives that at least they do not feel or speak ill of our holy law.⁸⁹

Four years later, he still held broadly similar views about Julia's value as a conduit to further female converts in Ieyasu's entourage:

to see how well these ladies of the palace are doing, and with what edification to the pagans and principal ladies of the *Kubō* [Ieyasu], among whom they live and whom they serve, I baptized a lady of the palace whom they had converted.⁹⁰

In a later account of 1613, Mateo de Couros also praised Julia's leading role among the ladies in Ieyasu's household: "The names of the chief among them were Julia, Lucia, and Clara and there were others of lesser rank."⁹¹ Julia, he noted, was "zealous at bringing other nobles to hear the preaching of the catechism."⁹²

Individual women as well as men could be perceived by Jesuit writers to hold valuable potential for their mission strategy: men such as Vicente, the courtly, educated adolescent, Gayo, the former monk, and Julia, a potential communicator of Christian beliefs and practices to Ieyasu himself. The qualities that made Korean men particularly worthy of note in the Jesuit archive were found in forms of cultural capital that they carried from the Joseon kingdom and which could translate into power and access for themselves and for the Society, in Japan. By contrast, women such as Máxima and Julia accrued status through their experiences as captured Koreans and its consequences as they found themselves residents of elite households in Japan. The story of women's lives in Joseon and the skills and knowledge that they had developed there, did not appear to form part of Jesuit narratives of their conversion or to be of their particular interest for the Society.

⁸⁸ March 10, 1605, ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 283v.

⁸⁹ ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 283v: "ali aque a conselha as companheiras Christãos que tenham não e perseuere na fé, polla qual tambem padeceo ja alguns trabalhos com grande animo e constancia, e não deixa passar occasião de abrandar as gentias, e ja que não pode persuader lhes que se faça christãos procura pello menos que não sintam nem fallem mal de nossa santa ley."

⁹⁰ Nagasaki, March 14, 1609, ARSI, JapSin 56, fol. 13v: "pera dargracas a N. *Senhor* verquam bem procedem a quellas molheres do paço, e com quanta edificaçam daquellas gentias e molheres principaes de Cubo entra quem estam et aquem seruem: bautizei huma molher do paço que esas tinham conuertido."

⁹¹ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 243v: "As principais se chamavum Iulia, Luzia, e Clara, com outras de menos calidade."

⁹² ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 243v: "zelosa de trazer outras pessoas nobres a ouvir as pregações do cathecismo."

Conclusions

Gender shaped the perception of what was at stake in a Joseon mission. Until the 1580s, the Korean people who awaited the Christian message were understood in the Jesuit archive through their menfolk, a society inhabited by literate and skilled warriors, perhaps not unlike that with which the Jesuits were familiar in Japan. A spirit of personal competition, among the Society's men and with other orders, infused discussions in the Jesuit archive about how to access the spiritual treasure that was the Joseon population. Joseon was cast as a prize for the taking by the man who "merited" it, oriented as an individual achievement accrued for the right Society man. Vilela, who had been tasked with the mission, reconciled his lack of success as a sign of God's alternative purpose for him. The increasing evidence of hostile intent among Japan's leaders towards Joseon exposed further these fault lines of individuality that governed aims, ambitions and activities among the Society's men, and the alternative political interpretations of different Jesuit correspondents, which were circulated through the letters of individuals not only back to Rome but also to other Society members in the region.

In the end, it would be violence and the vulnerability that it produced in an invaded Joseon and among Korean people held captive in Japan that formed not only the backdrop to Jesuit mission encounters with Korean women and men but the very circumstances in which it was carried out. How this could be reconciled with the Society's apparent success in evangelizing Koreans shaped the manner in which this mission work was presented and celebrated. The Jesuit archive embedded insights into some of the precarious situations in which Korean women (and men) found themselves as they encountered Christian teachings. The invasions allowed the Society's men to foreground a vision of *Kirishitan* masculine conduct that emphasized sexual continence, and which could play a part in explaining the influx of captive Korean people to Christianity, particularly Korean women whose sexual vulnerability Jesuit writers could acknowledge in the context of providing them protection. Indeed, this would become an important dimension of the way evangelized Korean women's experiences were recorded in the Jesuit archive.

Finally, the institutional structures and mission strategies already embedded in the Japanese mission were activated to extend evangelizing to captive Korean communities. This assumed an engagement predominantly by Korean men with the Society's structures and personnel and as mediators within the Korean community. Jesuit writers recognized the value of cultural capital accrued in Joseon for men in developing the mission but did not document equivalent skills or knowledge among Korean women. While women, of any social level, did not appear to be discussed as a targeted cohort for mission activities, this did not mean that evangelized Korean women could not be valuable assets in the eyes of Society's men. Problematically but never quite problematized, it was through Korean women's experiences as captives that they were perceived to open opportunities for the Christian message to reach exclusive communities, including that of the most influential man in Japan himself, Tokugawa Ieyasu.

