

Chapter 3

SUFFERING



Map 3.1. Key locations in Japan where activities of evangelized Koreans were recorded in Europe's early seventeenth century. Map created by the author from the Open Historical Map Project (openhistoricalmap.org).

THE YEARS THAT had seen Korean women and men discover Christian teachings in Japan were also those during which the position of Christianity had grown increasingly fraught there. By the end of 1614, the Tokugawa leadership had proscribed the Christian faith, issuing a decree to expel missionaries and their local supporters, sending some Christians into hiding in Japan and others to new lands. Significant political changes in the years following, including the death of the military dictator Tokugawa Ieyasu, the abdication of his successor, Hidetada, and the rise to power of Iemitsu, did not alter the trajectory of intensification of state-sanctioned violence against Christians.¹ However,

¹ Ward, "Kirishitan Veneration of the Saints." For an overview of developments against Christianity in Japan, see Nosco, "Early Modernity and the State's Policies toward Christianity"; Ōhashi, "New Perspectives on the Early Tokugawa Persecution"; Martin Nogueira Ramos, "Neither Apostates nor Martyrs: Japanese Catholics Facing the Repression (1612–Mid-Seventeenth Century)," in *Interactions Between Rivals*, ed. Curvelo and Cattaneo, 361–92.

in the Jesuit archive as well as in wider Catholic textual traditions, violence offered new forms of spiritual expression for evangelized Koreans, just as it did for *Kirishitans* and Society men. Chief among these forms, Christian authors proposed, was the opportunity to participate in the most exclusive of communities, that of the Christian martyrs. Suffering as Christians could be understood as spiritually, and personally, productive. This chapter explores how authors conceptualized the gendered nature of the violence against the Christian community in Japan, an experience that had different contours for Korean-born women and men, and offered distinct meanings for expression of their faith identities and for those who beheld it, as eyewitnesses, authors, and readers.

Korean Women and Psychic Violence

The works of Christian authors attested to a wide range of measures undertaken by Japanese authorities to eradicate the possibility of their faith practices, both at the level of the community and for specific individuals. Destruction of the material culture of Christianity, for example, was described as a source of great communal suffering. Over the course of 1620, the governor of Nagasaki, Hasegawa Gonroku, ordered the destruction of key spiritual sites of the Christian community.² Christian churches, including that of the Korean community, Saint Lawrence, were demolished.³ No services had been performed in these buildings since the edict of 1614, but Mateo de Couros, writing from Nagasaki, identified these sites' intense affective meaning for the local community, "which just by seeing the faithful of this city were consoled."⁴ Almshouses and leper houses were also disbanded, leaving their former inhabitants to find support in more personalized relationships. Those buried in the three Christian cemeteries of the city were exhumed. Couros described how "for several days there was nothing but tears and cries," as the faithful sought to move these remains, including those of Society men, to the Christian cemetery outside the city, San Miguel.⁵ Couros's report balanced the terrible destruction of Nagasaki's Christian material culture with a powerful message about the ongoing commitment of Christians to survive as a community.

Although not specifically targeted by such measures, evangelized Koreans were certainly affected by them. From 1614, their experiences formed part of the growing

2 On the biography and career of Hasegawa Gonroku, see Shimizu Hirokazu 清水紘一, "Hasegawa Gonroku kō." 長谷川権六考 [Hasegawa Gonroku], 51–59. For interpretation of his character, in the context of the violence towards Christians, see the assessment of Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 345–46. On the Japanese administration of Nagasaki at this period more broadly, see Shimizu Hirokazu 清水紘一, "Kinsei shotō Nagasaki bugyō no ichi kōsatsu." 近世初頭長崎奉行の一考察 [A note on the *Nagasaki Bugyo* of the early Edo period], 33–36.

3 Annual Letter, 1620, ARSI, JapSin 59, fols. 240–243; and Mateo de Couros to Muzio Vitelleschi, March 20, 1620, ARSI, JapSin 35, fol. 138r.

4 March 20, 1620, ARSI, JapSin 35, fol. 138r: "que só com a uerem os fieis desta Cidade se consolauão."

5 ARSI, JapSin 35, fol. 138r: "por alguns dias não auia senão Pranto, e lagrimas pellas Casas."

Jesuit archive of Christian suffering in Japan. However, natal identity could shape how evangelized Koreans experienced the increasing violence. In Ieyasu's household, the Korean adherent Julia came under increasing pressure to renounce her faith. Jesuit writers emphasized the intense emotions that they suggested characterized her personal relationship with Ieyasu. Of the Christian women in his residence, wrote Couros,

the foremost of these three was Julia, a maiden Korean by nation, a person of singular prudence and discretion, and as such esteemed by the king and respected by his household, and so, knowing how resolute they were, full of anger and fury, he said that he cared little that Lucia and Clara would recant but that it was insufferable that Julia did not want to obey his commands, and that in this she showed herself to be ungrateful and without judgment.⁶

Julia's ingratitude was directly connected to her identity as a Korean, as articulated by Ieyasu in these Jesuit accounts, and he employed it to create a particular psychic pressure upon her, telling Julia

that she had to remember the many and great favours that she had received from him, and that being a poor foreigner, taken captive in the Korean war, she had risen so high as to be a lady of the palace of the Lord of *Tenka* [all under heaven; i.e. Japan], more than others, one of those he trusted the most, always taking her with him wherever he went, and she deserved to be whipped for such great ingratitude and stubbornness.⁷

Julia's status as an outsider upon whom generous gifts had been bestowed constituted a potential vulnerability. The affective dimensions that Jesuit writers seemed to have hoped might encourage an interest in Ieyasu for Christianity now took on very different and problematic resonances for an evangelized Korean woman.

Julia replied, with prudent restraint, that she never denied having received many favours from the king, whom she had always wanted to serve as these merited. However, she had a much greater obligation to God, from whom she had not only received life, but his divine Majesty had bestowed upon her such singular mercy that, being born in the midst of paganism in Korea, he had taken her from there and [...] given her news of himself and of his most holy law, in which alone salvation consisted.⁸

6 Nagasaki, January 12, 1613, ARSI, JapSin 57, fols. 243v–244r: “A principal das très era Julia, huma Donzela Coreia denaçam, pessoa de singular auiso e descriçam, e como tal estimada do Rey, e acatada dos de casa por onde sabendo da resoluçam em que estauam, cheyo de ira e furor, disse que pouco lhe daua de nam tornarem atrás Luzia e Clara, mas nam querer Julia obedecer a seu mandado, era cousa insofrúel, e *que* nisso mostraua ser huma ingrata, e sem juizo.”

7 ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 244r: “*que* deuera de selembrar das muitas e avatajadas merces *que* delle tinha reçibido, e *que* sendo ella huma pobre estrangeira catiua na guerra de Coreia, 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, *que* em todo caso merecia ser castigada por tam grande ingratidam e contumacia.”

8 ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 244r: “Aoque Julia com hum prudente comedimento respondeo, *que* nam negaria nunca auer reçibido Delrey muitas merces, ásquais sempre desejava seruir como ellas mereçiam: porem *que* em muito mor obrigaçam estaua a Deos, do qual alem deter reçibido o ser, usara S diuina Magestade *come* ella de tam singular misericordia, *que* com ser naçida no meyo da infidelidade da Coreia, de lá atirara, e [...] onde lhe dera notícia de sy, e de sua Santissima ley, naqual só consistia a saluaçam.”

Couros's account suggested that Julia had been punished more than others because she had been in the inner circle of power and indeed part of the social and emotional life of Ieyasu himself. Moreover, as in the case of Arizō Pedro discussed in [Chapter 2](#), her identity as a Korean could be activated by court ladies to isolate her from others. They "called her a barbaric foreigner, who clearly showed she had neither breeding nor education, all of which she heard but suffered in silence."⁹

For several authors, Julia's subsequent banishment from Ieyasu's residence was framed in terms of loss of both her influential status and material goods. The Spanish merchant and long-time resident in Japan, Bernadino de Ávila Girón, whose accounts now form part of the Jesuit archives, contrasted Julia's former life of luxury with her banishment to the obscure island of Ōshima, noting how "she did not carry with her the precious kimonos she wore in the palace, for she confided that she would not need them in the wilderness she was going to."¹⁰ Instead, she celebrated the "special kindness God our Lord gave her, the great wealth she had because they had let her take pictures, a rosary and other Christian things."¹¹ Thus she expressed it as a far greater spiritual suffering, these accounts reported, when her access to Christian material culture become restricted. An anonymous Jesuit author noted that, exiled to Kōzushima, Julia could not have mass or confession, and she had asked for a table to be painted with accoutrements in order to imagine the mass.¹² Couros likewise reported that, in her letters, Julia requested "some books with the life of the Apostles, Martyrs and Holy Virgins, an hourglass, a bell and two mass candles."¹³

Another Korean woman endured psychic torture carried out by the misuse of spiritual material culture. This is consistent with Haruko Nawata Ward's observation that "Jesuit texts and VOC captains' diaries show that inquisitors knew how important such objects as crosses, rosaries, reliquaries, and images were for Kirishitan identity, and that they continued to confiscate these to weaken the Kirishitan movement."¹⁴ Sebastião Vieira recounted to the General in 1614 how the wife of a powerful lord in Arima had invited a Buddhist monk to their court, with the aim to have her Christian attendants

⁹ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 244r: "lhe chamauam estrangeira barbara, e sem primor; que bemmostraua nam ter sangue nem criação, o *que* tudo elle ouuia calando com sofrimento."

¹⁰ Nagasaki c. 1615, ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 219r: "nollevo consigo bizzarros quemonos que usarva em palacio como quien confidencia queno los avia menester pera el yermo donde ira."

¹¹ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 244v: "auendo *que* era mimo particular *que* Deos N. S. lhe fazia; e *que* hia mui rica, pois lhe deixavam leuar as imagens, contas e outras cousas de *que* usam os christãos." On the importance of the rosary to *Kirishitan* devotion, see discussion in Ward, "Kirishitan Veneration of the Saints," 61–62.

¹² December 1613, APECESJ, Abt. 43, Nr. 53, fol. 22r: "petijt In tabula depicta sacerdote sacrificarte, et campanila ut missa fibi representaret."

¹³ Nagasaki, January 12, 1613, ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 245v: "algum liuro que contenha as vidas dos Apostolos, dos Martyres e das Santas Virgens, hum Relogio de area, huma campainha, e duas velas da missa."

¹⁴ Ward, "Kirishitan Veneration of the Saints," 66.

abjure their faith. The monk was to distribute Buddhist accoutrements to Christian men and ladies. Vieira noted the Christians' resistance, for "even if they were put into their hands, they would drop them straightaway."¹⁵ Most notable was the response of the evangelized Korean Máxima, who "full of zeal, picked them up and threw them in the monk's face."¹⁶ The devotional objects of the Christians were confiscated from them and Máxima was ordered to "be locked in a tower, tied with ropes to a column so that she could not move, and given no food or drink, so that she would either quickly die or stop being a Christian."¹⁷ These kinds of violence were described by Jesuit authors as providing Korean women such as Julia and Máxima who were living in the residences of powerful Japanese lords, with new opportunities to attest to their commitment to the Christian faith, by rejecting the security and protection that an elite household offered them in Japan.

The Threat of Sexual Violence

Jesuit authors' narratives also made clear that sexual violence was an ever-present aspect of Korean women's experiences of violence inflicted because of their Christian faith. This was a delicate topic. None of the accounts suggested that an evangelized Korean woman had been violated, but they did voice significant concerns about their bodily integrity. Sexual violence of various kinds not only affected Korean women, nor indeed only women. *Kirishitan* women were threatened with being sold to brothels if they did not recant, and in 1616, twelve women were.¹⁸

Descriptions of Korean women's experiences suggest that acts to renounce the sexual dimensions conveyed by their bodies were central to their acceptance of Christian identity in moments of confrontation. Sebastián Vizcaíno, writing from Mexico in 1614, described how when Julia was cast out from Ieyasu's residence for refusing to abjure her faith, "the good lady [...] cut off her hair rather than give up her faith and do the emperor's will."¹⁹ Similarly, Vieira's report about the experiences of Máxima within another elite household, described how "persevering always in her initial constancy, the

¹⁵ Nagasaki, March 16, 1614, ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 268v: "E ainda *que* lhas metião nas mãos adeixauão logo cair."

¹⁶ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 268v: "a quem deu o zelo tomando as atirou e deu *com* ellas no rosto do bonzo."

¹⁷ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 269r: "a mandou meter em huma torre, ordenando *que* con cordas a atassem a huma coluna de modo *que* se não podesse menear, e lhe não dessem de comer, nem de beber pera *que* assi ou acabasse a vida de pressa, ou deixasse de ser Christãa."

¹⁸ Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*, 198–200. Morejón describes Japanese women fleeing to the mountains in Arima and Kuchinotsu to avoid being raped, as noted by Ward, "Women in the Eyes of a Jesuit."

¹⁹ Mexico, 1614, BNE, MS 3046, fol. 110v: "la buena señora [...] corta do los cauellos que dejar la fee in hazer la voluntad de lemprador."

tono [lord] ordered that she be delivered to one of the governors, in whose house she cut off her hair as a sign that she was leaving the world.”²⁰ This was an act also undertaken by *Kirishitan* women, evidence of “a public profession of perpetual chastity,” suggested the Jesuit father Gregorio de Céspedes.²¹

Christian authors described acts of public shaming focused on rendering women’s bodies visible to onlookers. Francisco Colín detailed the treatment of the female spiritual community of which the Korean adherent Marina was a member. After rejecting the demands of the governor of Miyako (present-day Kyoto) to abjure their faith, “he ordered them all to be stripped and put out on the street again.”²² Public shaming of this kind, as Ward notes, was not an act exclusively inflicted upon on women.²³ Evangelized Korean and *Kirishitan* men were also stripped, with soldiers “mocking them, calling them brutes who were not ashamed to be seen naked in front of so many people.”²⁴ However, the sexual dimension of this act was emphasized in Colín’s account as he observed the high risk of the women’s steadfast refusal to abjure their faith:

many armed soldiers came to threaten them on behalf of the governor that, if they did not give up their faith, they would take them naked to the public place of bad women, so that they would be affronted, and stripped of their honour.²⁵

Colín ensured that readers could not be left in any doubt that the women equally saw their own sexual dishonour and potential violence as a terrible consequence. Indeed, he writes, “this threat caused great horror to the servants of God,” and their leader, “fearing that some of her younger companions might falter at the fear of losing such a precious jewel, advised them to get away.”²⁶ By this account, readers could understand that those

²⁰ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 269r: “*quem perseruando sempre em sua primeira constancia, o tono a mandou entregar a hum dos gouernadores em cuja casa, cortando os cabellos em sinal de deixar o mundo.*”

²¹ Report of Céspedes in *Iesus: cartas*, vol. 2, fols. 218–220, here fol. 220r: “*fez logo hum publico voto de guardar con toda sua vida castidade.*” See discussion in Boxer, “Hosokawa Tadaoki and the Jesuits, 1587–1645,” 88.

²² Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:501: “*les mandó desnudar a todas, y ponerlas otra vez en la calle.*”

²³ Ward notes the gender-inclusive nature of such punishments in Ward, “Women in the Eyes of a Jesuit.”

²⁴ Carlo Spinola to Claudio Acquaviva, Nagasaki, March 18, 1615, ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 72v: “*zombando delles com os chamarem brutos que não tinham pejo de estarem assi nus diante de tanta gente.*”

²⁵ Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:501: “*Vinieron despues muchos soldados armados a amenazarlas de parte del Gouernador, que sino dexauan la Fé, las auian de lleuar desnudas al lugar publico de las malas mugeres, para que alli fuessen afrontadas, y despojadas de su honestidad.*”

²⁶ Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:501: “*Causó esta amenaza gran horror a las sieruas de Dios; y temiendo Iulia, que algunas de sus compañeras de las mas moças, no flaqueassen con el temor de la perdida de joya tan preciosa, les aconsejo, que se ausentassen.*”

who remained steadfast risked a terrible cost. Reputational and bodily concerns, Colín suggested, shaped Christian women's decisions to protect other women, although it did not cause those who were his protagonists to abjure their beliefs.

The acute bodily vulnerability of women to sexual aggression that missionary authors perceived also gave Christian women the means to attest to exceptional fortitude in circumstances of violent torture. One such account was relayed by the Portuguese Jesuit Cristóvão Ferreira, a man who would later be unable to withstand his own torture by Japanese authorities, leading him to apostatize. From hiding, Ferreira recorded an account of the experiences of Isabel, an evangelized Korean from Nagasaki who was tortured during the heightened tensions of the governorship of Mizuno Kawachi in 1629. Ferreira narrated how Isabel was taken to the Mount Unzen hot springs and subjected to a range of violent acts by a large group of Japanese guards.²⁷ He evoked her vulnerability, "taking off the clothes she had on, and binding her feet and hands," "surrounded by about twenty men, one of them approached her, either to torment her or to do her some injury and affront."²⁸ However, Isabel was saved in this instance by the unusual behaviour of the water and the vision of a "very fair child of three or four years whom they saw just then coming out the pool." The sky "darkened so extraordinarily that giving up what they intended to do, with no less haste than fear, they all fled."²⁹ Ferreira's text never clarified the precise nature of the risk Isabel faced in this moment, although he detailed many other moments of physical torture inflicted upon her. The text suggested this was something that could not be named, so serious an offence that a supernatural force had intervened to save her.

If the sexual predation of evangelized Korean women was never realized in these texts, Jesuit authors left no doubt that it was a live possibility. In his narrative about the banishment of Julia to a series of remote islands, João Rodrigues Giram also recounted the experiences of her fellow *Kirishitan* exiles. One of these was Magdalena, who was separated from Julia and sent to Hachijōjima where the interest paid to her by a local

27 Mizuno Kawachi, governor in Nagasaki from 1626 to 1629, introduced water torture at Unzen. See discussion in Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 351–52. On Isabel, see also No Sung Hwan 魯成煥 / 노성환, "Nagasaki jiyeogui Joseonin choenjyudo," 나가사키 지역의 조선인 천주교도 [Korean Catholics in the Nagasaki region], in *Imnanporo: kkeullyeogan saramdeurui iyagi* 임란포로: 끌려간 사람들의 이야기 [The captives of the Imjin War and their stories], 149–92, here 164–67.

28 August 20, [1631], ARSJ, JapSin 62, fol 4r–v: "tendoa cercada mais de vinte homens, hum delles sechegou perto della, ou fosse pera atormentar, ou pera lhezazer alguma outra injurias, e afronta," "a despojarão dos uestidos que sobre si tinha, e amarrandoa de pes emãos."

29 ARSJ, JapSin 62, fol. 4r: "de hum menino muito aluo detres ou quatro annos que nomesmo tempo viram saíra daquelle tanque," "se escurecer tam extraordinariamente que disistendo doque pretendião fazer com não menor pressa que medo fugiarão todos."

official took a dangerous turn. Magdalena's continued rejection of the governor's sexual advances led to her bodily disfigurement and ultimately her death:

Annoyed, the governor ordered first to cut off her nostrils and ears, and then her head; and thus, that blessed soul was baptized in her own blood [...] such wonderful means gave her the crown of martyrdom, a thing rare and difficult in itself, and much more for being a young servant girl, raised all her life in paganism, without Christian example or conversation.³⁰

Christian authors presented women's best course of resistance and demonstration of agency in the face of sexual violence as to seek death.

Physical Suffering as the Vulnerable Christ

It was not only the loss of material culture, Christian or elite, and the threat of sexual violence that Jesuit authors highlighted in their descriptions of Korean women's experience of violence for their faith. The Christian archive also documented acts of suffering and the rationales that Korean women expressed for their willingness to persevere.

For Bernadino de Avila Girón, the bodily suffering of Julia was presented as a profound contrast to her previous lifestyle in Ieyasu's residence. On a series of remote islands, "courageous Julia" "took only one servant, who was in fact pregnant and gave birth on the island, where Julia had no other servant."³¹ As a result, Julia herself was obliged to carry out manual labour, forced to

fetch water for them both; and the holy woman writes with much grace that as the place to bring it was far away and she had nothing to keep it in but a poor vessel such that when they arrived at their poor hut there was little in it, and her clothes were all wet.³²

Girón reinforced the contrast of Julia's new lifestyle with her previous experiences by noting that even her maidservant was "also delicate, having been brought up like her mistress."³³ Girón's account though emphasized Julia's stated willingness to suffer such depredations: "she went on to say that despite the many trials and troubles she was very

30 Japan, January 10, 1620, Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 465r: "daqual agastado o Governador lhe mandou primeiramente cartar os narizes, o orelhas e depois acabeça, indo aquella ditosa alma baptizada em seu proprio sangue [...] tam marauilhosos meyo lhe deu a coroa do Martyrio, cousa na verdade rara e difficultosa em si, e muito mais porlo ser de huma mulher moça criada toda sua vida na gentilidade sem exemplo e conuersação de christãos."

31 Nagasaki c. 1615, ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 219r-v: "Valerosa Julia," "ueno solo una moça contigo y ella a certo ir preñada y pario en ala isla a donde no tenia Julia otro serviço."

32 ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 219v: "necessario yr por agua para ambas y escriue com mucha gracia la sancta muger que tambien allugar donde la mismas lejos y que no tenia en que tenerla sino una uassija tal que quando llegaron a la pobre cabana auisa que dado poca en ella y ne nia com los vestidos todos molados."

33 ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 219v: "ella tambien es delicada porque ser criado consu senora."

comforted and happier than ever to suffer for love of Our Lord.”³⁴ Couros’s account of Julia’s exile from Ieyasu’s household similarly focused on her embrace of bodily suffering, although narrated in more graphic and violent terms than had Girón. He described how at the port where she was to embark for Ōshima, she had rejected a litter and insisted upon walking barefoot on the rough road, as they made their way to the boat, “since, from a young age, she had been raised in great comfort, and the roughness of the road was great, so much blood flowed from her feet and they were so badly wounded, that although her great fervour gave her strength, she was scarcely able to go forward.”³⁵

Significant to our access to women’s voices, Couros included within his account a letter purported to have been written by Julia at the moment of her exile. In this context, Julia’s own words acted to verify Couros’s claims about her enthusiasm to suffer for her faith.

In these last few days, the Lord has shown me wonderful mercy. I was sentenced to exile on an island. Oh, how mysterious is divine Providence! Not having yet done any service to your divine Majesty, now you single me out for such favour and I am willing to suffer whatever labours and afflictions may occur to me.³⁶

Elsewhere Couros paraphrased other letters in which Julia lamented that she was unable to receive communion and hear mass but assured her recipient that she “was not troubled by these hardships, but felt herself, in that poverty and lowliness, richer than when she lived in the palace, and more favoured by her heavenly spouse than she was by the earthly king.”³⁷ A further letter written by Julia, which was addressed to Morejón and which entered the Jesuit archive, was understood to have been written from Kōzushima. This missive likewise emphasized Julia’s embrace of suffering in the cause of her faith.

I hope everything will happen according to God’s will. I think all will occur for the good of the Church, and you would better not be preoccupied at all about the things here. The place is a very suitable one to serve God while fulfilling his will, and you should not be anxious [about me].³⁸

34 ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 219v: “y dize muy que compascer muchos trabalhos y necessidades esta mui consolada y mas contenta *que* nunca per padecer per amor de *nuestro señor*.”

35 Nagasaki, January 12, 1613, ARSI, JapSin 57, fol 245r: “E como sempre desde minina foi criada *em* muito mimo, e a aspereza do caminho era grande, corrialhe tanto sangue dos pés, e estauam ja tam mal tratados, *que* posto *que* seu muito feruor lhe daua forças, todauia escaçamente podia dar posso.”

36 ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 245r: “Vsou o *Senhor* comigo de huma marauilhosa misericordia por occasiam do *que* estes dias socedeo. Eu fui condenada a degredo em huma Ilha. Ócomo a diuina prouidencia he oncomprensiuel! nam tendo eudantes feito algum seruico a S D Magestade, fazerme agora tam assinalada merce, o estimo *em* muito, e fico disposta pera soffrer quantos trabalhlos, e aflições se offerecerem.”

37 ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 245v: “Nam afrontou a deuota *Confessora* de *Christo* com estes trabalhos, antes naquella pobreza, e mingoa se tem por mais rica *que* quando no paço viuia. E por mais fauorecida do esposo celestial, do *que* era do *Rey* temporal.”

38 December 1613, APECESJ, Abt. 43, Nr. 53, fol. 22r. English translation of Morejón’s transcription in Ruiz-de-Medina, *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 244. See also translation in Spanish and Japanese reconstruction in Ruiz-de-Medina, “History and Fiction of Ota Julia,” 540, 543.

The inclusion of Julia's letter texts within the Jesuit archive and within Jesuit narratives appeared to confirm missionaries' claims about her intense fervour as well as her autonomy in the decisions and acts that she had undertaken as a Christian.

Francisco Colín's narrative of the trials faced by the group of nuns that included Pak Marina also emphasized the physical violence meted out on their bodies by Miyako's authorities. When "they protested in great unity that they would sooner lose a thousand lives," the governor ordered that they all be stripped: "There was Julia [Naitō] with her companions in the cold and ice, in only their undergarments, for decency, and much snow falling on them."³⁹ Later, the women were punished by *tawara-zeme*, bundled in straw sacks and taken to the banks of a frozen river, where they were left upon the ground.⁴⁰ Colín's narrative foregrounded how the women converted the would-be punishment into an expression of their faith. When they endured and were returned to the city, the "illustrious ladies, confessors of Christ, entered the streets of Miyako triumphantly in their sacks as if on triumphal chariots."⁴¹ Colín singled out the evangelized Korean Marina as the "most observant in devotion to her rule, and shared with the rest in the trials and ignominy of their sacks." He emphasized her particular fervour to express her faith as they returned to the town to be publicly shamed: "she proclaimed through the streets, in her half Japanese (which, being Korean, she did not speak well), that she remained firm and constant in the faith of Jesus Christ, for whom she was prepared to die."⁴² A 1639 anonymous anti-Christian propaganda chapbook, *Kirishitan Monogatari*, included a description of state-based punishments inflicted on those of Christian faith in Miyako, including on women in a nunnery. This text depicted the *tawara-zeme* punishment and mocked how "[f]rom morning until noon their tongues were capable enough to keep blabbing [...] and they kept telling one to the other: 'Well, now, how fortunate! [...] we'll obtain salvation from Deus and be born in *Paraíso*,'" until at last they recanted.⁴³ Although it was viewed through very different frameworks, both texts pointedly noted the significant presence of women's voices at these scenes of torture.

In a number of Christian accounts, Korean women not only endured suffering but embraced it. The role model expressed by these women, as they were articulated in these texts, was the suffering Jesus. This is not surprising, for martyrdom, about which a rich

39 Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:501: "Pero como ellas en mucha conformidad protestassan, que perderian antes mil vidas," "Allí estuuo Iulia son sus compañeras al frio, y yelo con solos los vestidos interiores, por la decencia, cayendo sobre ellas gran cantidad de nieue."

40 Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:502.

41 Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:502: "Entraron las ilustres señoras, y Confessoras de Christo, triunfando por las calles de Meaco en sus sacos, qual en otros tantos carros triunfales."

42 Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:504: "Y quando las boluieron a entre en la Ciudad de Meaco metidas en ellos, con su media lengua lapona (que por ser Corea, no la hablaua bien) pregonaua por las calles, que boluia firmer, y constante en la Fé de Iesu Christo, por quien deseaua morir."

43 Translated in Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 359.

Japanese-language literature circulated in Japan, was itself an imitation of Jesus's death, although without the redemptive powers of the latter.⁴⁴ Ward has argued that Morejón's depiction of Japanese women's experiences articulated "his theology of Christ as God-becoming-vulnerably-naked in the Passion, and Christian women's imitation of this Christ."⁴⁵ Morejón's work made a particular point of emphasizing "weak women" who, remarkably in his view, faced the challenge of physical and psychic violence wrought upon them.⁴⁶ This was not only the case for Morejón or for *Kirishitan* women: Jesuit presentations of evangelized Korean women likewise charged them with a virile energy that made them more than women, honorary men. Máxima, for example, had been locked away and refused sustenance for more than a week. "During all this time," wrote Vieira, "she had no other relief than prayer and the remembrance that it was for the love of God that she was in this state."⁴⁷ Vieira described how she had sustained herself with rain, a gift from God, that had enabled her to moisten her lips.

it seemed so bitter that she could not drink it but for thought of the vinegar Christ our Lord drank on the Cross, and by that she was so consoled that until the end of the twelve days that she was in this prison, she ate and drank nothing.⁴⁸

Likewise, Couros drew attention to Julia's active desire for physical suffering that would allow her to experience sufferings akin to Christ. Her rationale for leaving her litter and walking barefoot on the rough road, Couros reported, was that "since Our Lord Jesus Christ, when he went up Mount Calvary with the cross on his back, he was not in a litter nor wearing shoes but barefoot and shedding a lot of blood, she, who was his servant, wanted to imitate him on that path."⁴⁹ Such women described spiritual engagement with Christ through experiences that were, for them, universal rather than gender-specific bodily experiences.

In other accounts of state-sanctioned violence carried out on Korean women, Jesuit reports emphasized the steadfast determination of such women to remain faithful to their beliefs under extreme physical and mental pressure. Ferreira, for example, recorded how most adherents apostatized. Yet

⁴⁴ Rausch, "Choosing to Die," 88–89. On *Kirishitan* women's engagement with this literature, see Ward, "Women and Kirishitanban Literature."

⁴⁵ Ward, "Women in the Eyes of a Jesuit," 122; see also Ward, "Kirishitan Veneration of the Saints," 65.

⁴⁶ Ward, "Women in the Eyes of a Jesuit."

⁴⁷ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 269r: "não tendo ella em todo este tempo outro aliuio mais *que* a da oração, e lembrança *que* por amor de *Deos* se uia naquelle estado."

⁴⁸ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 269r: "a sentio tam amargosa *que* não pode levar pera baixo, senão com a consideração do fel e vinagre *que* Christo nosso *Senhor* na crus bebeo, e *com* ella ficou tam consolada *que* ate a cabo de doze dias *que* nesta prisão esteue sem comer, *nem* beber outra cousa."

⁴⁹ ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 245r: "*que* pois N.S. JESU X^o, quando hia ao monte Calvario *com* a Cruz áscostas, nam hia em andor ou liteira, né calçado se nam descalço derramando muito sangue, ella *que* era serua sua oqueria imitar naquelle caminho."

one among all of them held to her confession of faith, complying with the honour of God and his most holy law, named Isabel, Korean by nation, who should rightly be praised as a strong and brave woman, for neither the example of the others nor the weakness of her husband nor the persuasions of the infidels nor the cruelty of her torture were enough to move her from her constancy.⁵⁰

She had been bound, crushed with heavy stones, and drenched with boiling water. Ferreira marvelled that “it was very great torture but much greater was the spirit with which the brave woman suffered it and resisted the diabolical advice that they gave to her all the while.”⁵¹ Across days of torture, Ferreira emphasized how she “made so little of the torture, and the spirit with which she suffered it was such that her tormentors despaired of being able to conquer her with them.”⁵² When the Japanese officials threatened to keep up their verbal and physical violence for ten or even twenty years, Ferreira recorded what she had told him was her retort:

“Ten or twenty years,” answered the brave woman, “are very few. One hundred or more, if my life should last so long, I will suffer as much torture as you can inflict, not denying the law that I profess. That is enough for me, whether I stay alive or not. So cease your advice, because you will never have another answer from me.”⁵³

Ferreira framed his account of Isabel’s suffering for her faith in terms that drew attention to contemporary gender ideologies. He observed the particular nature of the Japanese authorities’ arguments for her abjuration, “to deny her faith following the example of her husband, for according to the laws and custom of Japan the woman follows him in all things and is not mistress of herself.”⁵⁴ But Ferreira emphasized Isabel’s own assertion of her spiritual autonomy above the authority of her husband.

50 Japan, August 20, 1631, ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 4r: “so entre todas ellas ficou tendo mão na confissão da fé, e aconodindo polla honra de Dios e desua santissima lei huma chamada Isabel Corea de nação a qual com rezam deue ser louuada de forte, e ualorosa molher pois nem o exemplo das outras nem, afraqueza domarido, nem as persuasões dos infieis nem acrueldade dos tormentos foram bastantes pera a mouer de sua constancia.”

51 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 4v: “era otormento mui grande, mas muito maior o animo com que aualeroza molher o sofria e resistia aos diabolicos conselhos que entre tanto lhe davão.”

52 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 5r: “Fazia a valeroza molher tam pouco cazo dos tormentos, e era tal o animo com que os sofria que desesperando osmesmos tormentadores deapoder vencer com elles.”

53 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 5r: “dez, evinte annos respondia a valeroza molher, he muito pouco. cento emais, sea vida tanto me durar, sofrerei quantos tormentos meder des, ou mematers com elles, não negar a lei que professo isso me basta, ou fique com uida, ou sem ella. pollo que cessai de nossos concelhos por que nunca terei de mim outra reposta.”

54 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 4r: “negasse a fé aexemplo domarido pois conforme o custume, e leis de Jappam a molher em tudo o segue, e não he senora desi.”

“Even though,” Isabel replied, “he has denied it, that is no reason for me to deny it too. Because even though in other things the wife follows her husband in everything, salvation does not depend on him, all the more so since I have another spouse [Christ].”⁵⁵

Suffering created a context that produced important accounts for the Christian archive of women's voices, demonstrating acts of resistance and resolve in their beliefs.

The context of torture also saw some adherents experience visions and prophetic states, including, in Ferreira's account, Isabel. Ferreira noted a series of visions that she experienced during her torture at this period. These includes a further example involving a young child, similar to others reported by Korean adherents.⁵⁶ During the period in which she was tortured, Isabel “spent the whole night in prayer, in which the Lord saw fit to appear to her as a boy three or four years old, exceedingly beautiful, the sight of whom left her greatly joyful and constant in her faith.”⁵⁷ Finally, however, when Isabel was returned to the governor in Nagasaki, she had been rendered

very weak from the injuries of the torture [...] resisting as much as she could, they seized her hand by force and putting ink to it, pressed it onto the paper, on which it was written that she had retracted her faith, as if she had signed it, and not allowing her to say a word they sent her home.⁵⁸

Isabel had in the end been defeated by her frail and damaged body, as Ferreira presented it, not by her spirit. Yet it was because of her survival that Ferreira was able to learn of her experiences and, through his account, Isabel was rendered a part of the record of Christian suffering in a way that might never otherwise have been visible. Through the Jesuit's writing, Isabel became part of a history of the Christian community.

Evangelized Korean women stood alongside their *Kirishitan* counterparts in suffering for their faith as Japan's authorities increased their steps to repress Christianity. On some occasions, Japanese authorities even tortured Christian women in the hopes that it might break the resolve of male adherents. Morejón provided the example of the evangelized Korean known as Akashi Jiemon Cayo and his wife Marta who had harboured missionary men in their home. Morejón described how Cayo had suffered as “they burned the face of his wife with candles,” but he did not

55 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 4r: “Ainda que elle respondeo Isabel a negou, não he isso bastante pera eu tam bem anegar, por que Ainda que nas outras cousas a molher siga omarido, com tudo no que toca, asalvaçam não deponde delle: quanto mais que eu tenho outro spoço.”

56 See [Chapter 2](#).

57 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 4v: “Aquella noite passou toda em oração, naqual o senor teue por bem vizitala com a vista dehum menino detres ou quatro annos deidade, sobre maneira fermoso cuja vista a deixou grandemente alegre, e constante nafé.”

58 ARSI, JapSin 62, fol. 5r: “mui fraca por causa das chagas dos tormentos [...] respugnando ella quanto pode lhe tomarão por pura força amão, e pondolhe tinta nella nelle lha chegarão ahum papel. em que tinha escrito retrocedia na fé, como seo assinara, e não consentindo que fallasse palaura alguma amandarão pera sua caza.”

reveal the whereabouts of hidden Christians.⁵⁹ Ferreira contextualised Isabel's actions as remarkable within the conventions of female behaviour in Japan, with authorities reportedly confounded to see "a woman overcome them and that the more they fought her, the more constant and strong they found her."⁶⁰ After more than a week of torture, Isabel endured "not without great astonishment from these same infidels who frankly confessed never to have seen such courage and spirit in a woman."⁶¹ Some years later, in 1658, the inquisitor Inouye Chikugo no kami, left a confidential report for his successors, named the *Kirishito-ki*. He had numbered among the key officials active in the campaign to eradicate Christian adherents. In his work, he observed that "Korean Kirishitans, once converted, are deeply dedicated, the men and the women. Especially the women, once persuaded, are deeply dedicated."⁶² Theirs were stories that circulated in the Christian archives.

However, another set of evangelized women featured less commonly in Christian sources. They had chosen, or were forced like Isabel, to apostatize. A register enumerating the residents of the Hirado-machi ward of Nagasaki made in Europe's 1642/3 listed a number of Korean women and men who had lived as Christians in Japan.⁶³ Perhaps unsurprising in a document that was prepared by the Japanese authorities to demonstrate compliance to state-sanctioned religious practices, all had since abjured their faith. The efforts of Nagasaki's governors had, over the course of the 1620s, included destruction of Christian sites under Hasegawa Gonroku and the introduction of water torture under Mizuno Kawachi. Mizuno was then replaced by Takenaka Uneme who held a distinct reputation for cruelty. The register's record of Uba, a ninety-five-year-old servant, documented that she had arrived in Nagasaki in 1621 where she became Christian. During the time of governor Takenaka, she had apostatized and become a member of the Jōdo sect, registered at the Daionji in Nagasaki.⁶⁴ Analysis

⁵⁹ Morejón, *Relacion de los martyres*, fol. 43v: "Y à su muger quemaron el rostro con candelas."

⁶⁰ Morejón, *Relacion de los martyres*, fol. 43v: "vendo huma molher os vencia, e que quanto mais a combatiam mais constante e forte a achavam."

⁶¹ Morejón, *Relacion de los martyres*, fol. 43v: "não sem grande espanto dos mesmos infiéis que claramente confessavão nunca verem tal ânimo e valor em molher."

⁶² Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 206. See also Anesaki, "Prosecution of Kirishitans After the Shimabara Insurrection"; Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 337, 340.

⁶³ Hesselink, "An Anti-Christian Register from Nagasaki." See also on the impact of anti-Christian policy reflected in Nagasaki's 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 Hirado-machi in the early modern period as seen from the registers], 21–23.

⁶⁴ 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: 生國高麗之もの、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.

of when these adherents had apostatized suggested that many, like Uba, had resisted multiple campaigns to eradicate Christian practice before they had complied, almost all under Takenaka.⁶⁵ Another entry specified that the Korean-born wife of Jinsuke had not apostatized under Governor Mizuno in the late 1620s, instead having fled to the mountains, and only later did so under Matsukura Bungo no kami in Shimabara.⁶⁶ However, by the early 1630s, all the register's remaining Korean-born residents, female and male, appeared to have determined that demonstrable conformity to state temple registration offered the best course for their future in Nagasaki.

Fatal Violence

The example of the evangelized Korean Isabel demonstrated one of the ways in which evidence of physical weakness shaped women's experience of suffering as part of their identification as Christians. Isabel was denied identification in the Christian community of martyrs, yet her survival and her later contact with Ferreira enabled her experiences to be recorded in the Society's archive. Jesuit authors recorded how Korean women as well as men desired to attest their faith by participating as martyrs.⁶⁷ Giram reported in 1620 how "a large number of Christians went to the prison to say goodbye to the imprisoned saints, congratulating them on their good fortune with great envy and desire to accompany them."⁶⁸ A literature on martyrdom circulated in Japan providing succour and practical instructions. The *Exhortations to Martyrdom* of 1615 opined that even "frail women and children, princesses and noble ladies rarely exposed to the wind" could endure martyrdom for God provided supernatural assistance to them.⁶⁹ Christian authors, however, presented different perceptions of the suitability of Korean women for martyrdom.

⁶⁵ Hesselink, "An Anti-Christian Register from Nagasaki," 14–15. See also the wider evidence matching this pattern drawn upon by Nagamori Mitsunobu 長森美信, "Jinshin teiyū (bunroku keichō) ran ni okeru Chōsen 'piroin' no Nippon teijū: Chōsennin kirishitan o chūshin ni." 壬辰・丁酉(文禄・慶長)乱における朝鮮被擄人の日本定住: 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], 8–9.

⁶⁶ 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], 123–24: 生國高麗之者、(文禄元年)五十一年以前二長崎今町ニ参、則きりしたんニ罷成、當町ニて水野河内様御代ニきりしたんころひ不申、山ニ入、嶋原ニて男同前ニころひ申、同宗同寺を頼申候。右之仁介切したんノころひ不山ニ入申、女房ハ高麗之者ニ而御座候故、町中吟味之上慥成請人立させ、請狀取中ニ召置候。

⁶⁷ The intense desire for martyrdom expressed by those evangelized in Japan is reported in a wide variety of mission sources. See, for example, Boxer, "The Dominican Mission in Japan," 52–60.

⁶⁸ Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 404r: "Concorreo tambien ao carcere grande numero de *christãos* a se despedir dos santos presos dando lhes os parabens de sua boa sorte come grandes enuejas e desejos de os acompanhar nella."

⁶⁹ Anesaki, "Writings on Martyrdom in Kirishitan Literature"; Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, 341; Ward, "Women in the Eyes of a Jesuit."

Jesuit authors recorded the strongly affective response of Korean martyrs to their fate. Giram relayed to the General the delight of Cosme Sōzaburō, who celebrated the news that he was to be burned alive, declaring

“Is it possible that God shows a great sinner like me so great and marked a mercy?” and, his eyes like fountains of tears, caused by the great joy he felt in his soul, he sang for thanksgiving *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*, recited the litanies, and offered himself most willingly to his Creator.⁷⁰

A letter composed by Vicente while awaiting his execution in 1626 was recorded in a letter from Giram to the General sent from Macao in 1627. There, Vicente reflected upon his emotional state at martyrdom.

At this time of persecution, seeing the valiant martyrs fight, I was often saddened, greatly fearing and wondering whether I could suffer similar torments. However, I reflected that, if the persecution ended and the time of Christendom’s peace flourished, having lived until then [...] perhaps I would feel pain and sorrow for not having accompanied them in martyrdom and given my life for Christ our Lord at so good a time.⁷¹

Another Korean adherent, Gayo, also met his fate, “unable to repress the jubilation and joy that he felt, as he knew how to write in Chinese and Japanese characters, composed and wrote a distich about how happy he was to see himself so close to the kingdom of paradise that he had so long longed for.”⁷² Indeed, Giram’s narrative emphasized in multiple ways the subordination of “good Gayo our *dojuku*” to the European missionaries. Over the course of his account, he described the adherent and soon-to-be martyr as “the good Korean,” “despicable in the eyes of the gentiles,” reiterating elsewhere that Gayo was “a Korean, quite despised in the eyes of the world.”⁷³ This account also evoked the tightknit nature of the Korean community that Gayo was leaving and the importance of the spiritual succour that those to be executed were able to draw from it in their final days: “there came to visit him at that time his old householder, a Korean like himself,

70 Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 402r: “he possível diz, *que* ahum tão grande peccador como eu faz *Deos* tão grande e assinalada merce? E *com* os olhos feitos fontes de lagrimas, causadas da grande alegria, *que* em sua alma sentia cantou in *gratium actionem* o *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*, rezou as ladainhas e se offereceo muy liberalmente a seu criador.”

71 Macao, March 24, 1627, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 104v: “Neste tempo do perseguição uendo pelejar aos Valerosos martyres muitas Vezes me intristeia, temedo muito e duuidando se poderia eu sofrer semelhantes tormentos; Porem, lembraume *que* se acabasse a perseguição, e tornasse o tempo florente da paz da Christandade, tendo eu Vida té então, acordandome do tempo em que ouue os santos martyres por uentura teria dor e sentimento polos não ter acompanhado no martírio e dado a Vida por *Christo N Senhor em tão bom tempo*.”

72 Macao, March 15, 1626, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 15r: “não podendo reprimir o jubilo e alegria *que com* elle sentia, como sabia os caracteres da China e Japão, compos e escreveo nelles hum distico, cujo sentido era: quancto se alegraua por se ver ja tão perto do Reino do Paraíso que tanto dantes dezejava.”

73 ARSI, JapSin 61, fols. 15v, 14v, 15v, 16r: “bom Gayo nosso *dojuco*,” “bom Corea pessoa,” “despreziuel nos olhos does gentios,” “hum Corea denação assaz despreziuel nos olhos dos homens.”

who found him very happy at the good luck that befell him.”⁷⁴ Gayo asked him, “now that he was at life’s end, to commend and have his friends commend him to God our Lord, that he might give him strength and courage to die for his love and his glory cheerfully and with constancy.”⁷⁵ Even in these celebratory accounts, Christian was never the only identity by which these authors perceived Korean martyrs.

Christian was also only one identity by which Japanese authorities understood adherents, it seems. As their fate was documented by Christian authors, women, especially as wives, appeared to be much less of a concern to the Japanese than their male counterparts.⁷⁶ In 1620, Giram reported how the Korean Arizō Pedro was beheaded for his faith while “his wife who was also a very good Christian, wanted to accompany her husband, but they merely threw her out of the house in only the dress she was wearing.”⁷⁷ This was similar to the outcome for the wife of the Korean Akashi Jiemon Cayo, investigated for harbouring Christians in their home. She endured the threats and torture of the authorities “with great spirit and courage,” following “the example of her good husband Cayo.”⁷⁸ Yet, while Cayo was eventually executed, she was entrusted to people of the neighbourhood, who were expected to account for her behaviour.⁷⁹ In 1626, Giram reported on the fate of fourteen Christians who had been brought from Uto and moved across prisons before they were executed. “Among the fourteen who came from Uto there was a girl whom some pagans asked to have, and so she was left without the crown of martyrdom.”⁸⁰

The gender ideologies and patriarchal social structures of Japan determined how the faith of women was perceived, and thus treated in official investigations. The anti-Christian text, the *Kirishitan Monogatari*, suggested that as “women are very easily

⁷⁴ ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 15r: “neste tempo visitar o seu caseiro antigo Corea como elle, e achouo contentissimo pola boa sorte que lhe cabia.”

⁷⁵ ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 15r: “pediolhe, *que* ja que aquelle era o fim de sua vida, o encomendase e fizesse encommendar aos amigos a Deos nosso *Senhor* pedindo lhe desse forcas e animo pera alegre e constatemente a dar por seu amor a gloria.”

⁷⁶ Compare to the Late Joseon dynasty *Kihae* persecutions, in Europe’s early nineteenth century, during which, Andrew Finch argues, the Confucian emphasis on the three special bonds shaped a pattern of arrests among inter-generational family groups. Finch, “The Pursuit of Martyrdom,” 107. A notable number of those executed in these events were women, see Rausch, “Choosing to Die,” 87–111.

⁷⁷ Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 418r–v: “A molher *que* tambem he muito boa christãa desejou de acompanhar a seu marido, mas não lhe fizerão mais *que* botala fora de casa com hum só vestido singelo.”

⁷⁸ Macao, March 24, 1627, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 112r: “Mas ella com muita animo e valor,” “a exemplo de seu bom marido Gaio.”

⁷⁹ Macao, March 31, 1627, ARSI, JapSin 63, fol. 75v, cited in Ruiz-de-Medina, *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 318. I have not been able to locate this in the original text.

⁸⁰ Macao, March 15, 1626, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 59r: “entre os quatorze que vierão de Uto, vinha huma menina, a qual certos gentios pedirão, e alcansarão, e assi ficou sem a coroa do martirio.”

cheated," they were easy targets of the Christian missionaries.⁸¹ At the same time, men were deemed head of their households, and responsible for actions within it.⁸² Ensuring their conformity was thus a particular focus of state-based violence. While in hiding in Japan, the Franciscan Diego de San Francisco reported in November 1629 that only men, as heads of household, were being sought to recant in Nagasaki.⁸³ He expressed ideas about women's pliability and dependency on male leadership and support to maintain their faith, concluding that after the apostasy of male heads of household, their wives, children, and servants would lose faith thereafter. The example of Isabel, however, who rejected both the example and the authority of her husband to determine her own faith, suggests that women thought otherwise. Authorities could not offer female adherents the kinds of enticements of positions of status, with which they tempted men to abjure. Giovanni Battista Zola described, for example, how authorities offered the Korean *dojuku* Vicente a position in "the *tono's* service, if he would be a pagan and not a Christian, and they worked very hard to get him to renounce his faith."⁸⁴

Rare then was the evangelized Korean woman who was executed in Japan for her faith. One was Catalina, the wife of fellow Korean Kuzaemon Sixto, from Uto, who was imprisoned with her husband and other Christian women and men. They were both beheaded in 1624.⁸⁵ However, many more were unable to share this final act of inclusion in the Christian community. The desire of Korean women to die for their faith was noted by several Jesuit authors. Francisco Colín described Pak Marina shouting in the streets of Miyako, that "she remained firm and constant in the faith of Jesus Christ, for whom she was prepared to die."⁸⁶ Mateo de Couros reported the Korean adherent Julia's intense desire to be "able to sacrifice her life to Our Lord by the way of martyrdom."⁸⁷ She had to be comforted by a Christian companion

⁸¹ Translated in Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 339.

⁸² Wakita, "Marriage and Property in Premodern Japan"; Wakita, "The Medieval Household and Gender Roles"; Goto, "The Lives and Roles of Women"; Berry and Yonemoto, eds, *What is a Family?*

⁸³ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, 352.

⁸⁴ Zola's account is relayed in Giram's letter to Vitelleschi, Macao, March 24, 1627, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 103r-v: "Tinhão os Governadores notícia que Vicente era bom escrivão, e sabia asletras sinicas desejaramno pera oseruico do tono mas gentio e não *christão* e trabalharão muito pera o fazerem retroceder na fé."

⁸⁵ Macao, March 15, 1626, ARSI 61, fol. 59r: "Cnª sua molher *tambem* corea." See also Ruiz-de-Medina, *El martirologio del Japón*, 531, no. 0737. On evangelized Korean martyrs, see Nagamori Mitsunobu 長森美信, "Jinshin teiyū (bunroku keichō) ran ni okeru Chōsen 'piroin' no Nippon teijū: Chōsennin kirishitan o chūshin ni." 壬辰・丁酉(文禄・慶長)乱における朝鮮被擄人の日本定住: 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], from 8.

⁸⁶ Colín, *Labor evangélica*, 3:504: "que boluia firmer, y constante en la Fé de Iesu Christo, por quien deseaua morir."

⁸⁷ Nagasaki, January 12, 1613, ARSI, JapSin 57, fol. 245r: "e *que* perdia quasi as esperanças de poder sacrificar sua uida a N.S. por uia do martyrio."

that to be exiled for the faith was also a type of prolonged martyrdom, and that dying there she would remain a kind of martyr, and as proof of this, the Church celebrates the feast of many martyrs who died in exile for the faith without shedding their blood by the sword. This pleased her so much that, showing an unusual pleasure, she immediately wrote her thanks to the Father who, through this Christian, had brought her such happy news.⁸⁸

Being unable to become a martyr, publicly witnessing their participation in the Christian community in this way, was, it seems, another kind of suffering for their faith that evangelized Korean women had to endure.

Giram celebrated the martyrdom of a series of Korean and Japanese men while observing that “those who showed the most marked desires to accompany these servants of God to their deaths were their wives.”⁸⁹ His report on the actions of Christian wives of prisoners preparing for execution voiced the lament of these women who,

with tears in their eyes, declared the sorrow they had not to be participants of the same fate, because they had hoped and wanted to sacrifice their lives and those of their children to the Lord God, and seeing themselves now frustrated of that and of the crown that they were so close to holding in their hands, they had no words to declare the sorrow of their souls. The imprisoned saints desired no less to take their wives and children with them for the sacrifice to be more perfect, but since martyrdom was denied them, they consoled them by promising them to intercede for them in heaven, commending them to persevere in faith and keeping the law of God.⁹⁰

Jesuit accounts reported Christian women’s desires to attest to their faith by martyrdom, but they made sense of the experiences of evangelized women and men in Japan in terms of local gender ideologies in which women’s spiritual commitments were perceived as far less dangerous to authorities than those of men, Korean or Japanese. The Jesuit archive did attest to women’s persistence, however. In 1623, Giram was able to report to the General how a series of executions in Nagasaki the previous year included

88 ARSI, JapSin 57, fols. 245r-v: “o desterro polla fé era tambem hum genero de martyrio prolongado, e que morrendo lá, ficaria verdadeira Martyr, e em proua disso *que* a Igreja çelebraua a festa de muitos martyres que morreram no degredo polla fé sem uerterem sangue a ferro. Agradoulhe tanto isto *que* mostrando hum desusado prazer, escreueo logo dali os agradecimentos ao padre que por Via do Christão lhe fizera dar tam alegre noua.”

89 Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 404v: “os que mais se assinalarão e mostrarão mais viuos desejos de acompanhar na morte os servos de Deos forão suas mulheres.”

90 Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Jesuitas, C-286, fol. 404v: “com as lagrimas nos olhos declarauão o sentimento *que* lhes ficava de não serem participantes da mesma sorte; porque como ja dantes estavam *com* speranças e desejos de sacrificarem a Deos N. *Senhor* suas vidas e de seus filhos, vendose agora frustrados do comprimento dellas, e *que* se lhes hia dante as mãos a coroa de *que* tam perto estauão, não tinham palauras *com* *que* declarar o sentimento de suas almas. Não desejavão menos os santos presos de as leuar comsigo a ellas, e a seus filhos pera o sacrificio ficar mais perfeito, mas ja que o martyrio lhes faltaua a ellas as consolauão com a intercessão *que* no ceo lhes prometião encommendandolhes juntamente a perseuerança na fee e na guarda da ley de Deos.”

the wives and sons of the four housekeepers of the religious who three years ago were burned to death in this place, these and the others dressed festively, and most particularly the holy wives, all of whom were so happy and merry.⁹¹

This included the Korean Christian Takeya Inés, the widow of Cosme, martyred in 1620.⁹² Unsurprisingly, the Christian archive recorded Korean women's joy at martyrdom in spiritual terms, but being left a widow in a rapidly diminishing evangelized community, Korean or otherwise, in Japan must have seemed a daunting prospect.

The low level of danger that evangelized women appeared to pose for Japanese society in the eyes of officials, at least as their experiences were reported by Jesuit authors, appeared to have a parallel in the perception of men living with impairments. Giram recounted the efforts of the convert Manoel from Suruga in 1614, the son of Korean-born parents, to remain in gaol with other prisoners, a sign of his commitment to his Christian faith. So determined was he, Giram reported, that when his mother, who did not share his faith, came to seek him, Manoel "hid inside the prison without wanting to see her."⁹³ However, he, like Isabel and Marta, was thwarted in his plans. His mother "made a petition to the governor, who, knowing that he was deaf and dumb by birth, ordered him released, saying that the law of the Lord of *Tenka* did not include that sort of people."⁹⁴

Finally, the Jesuit archive also embedded evidence of the competing pressures on Koreans in Japan, evangelized or otherwise, that involved them in inflicting fatal violence on others in their communities. The Jesuit Jerónimo Rodrigues recounted the experience of an enslaved Korean "girl" in the household of a Christian family, who was termed by the man in whose household she lived as "his captive." She had reported her master as a Christian to the authorities "to free herself from some years of service she was bound to."⁹⁵ This would result in the death of Japanese Father Sebastián Kimura, Antonio Korea his housekeeper, his wife Dominica, and their two young children

91 Macao, March 15, 1623, ARSI, JapSin 60, fol. 16r: "Chegarão tambem as mulheres e filhos dos quatro caseiros dos religiosos, *que* ha tres annos morrerão assados viuos nodito lugar, huns e outros uestidos de festa, e *muíto* mais particularmente as santas mulheres, todos tam alegres, e prazenteiros."

92 On Inés, see Nagamori Mitsunobu 長森美信, "Jinshin teiyū (bunroku keichō) ran ni okeru Chōsen 'piroin' no Nippon teijū: Chōsennin kirishitan o chūshin ni." 壬辰・丁酉(文禄・慶長)乱における朝鮮被擄人の日本定住: 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], 10.

93 ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 402v: "mas elle se escondio no mais interior do carcere sem aquerer ver."

94 ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 402v: "fez huma petiçam ao Gouernador, *que* sabendo como era surdo e mudo de nacimiento, o mandou soltar, dizendo *que* a ley do *senhor* da Tenca não comprehendia aquella sorte de gente."

95 Macao, October 4, 1622, ARSI, JapSin 59, fol. 328v: "la moça era sua captiva," "foi malsinado de huma esclava do caseiro que ter da emcasa, coria de nacão, [...] por se livrar do serviço aque estava por algu annos obrigaada."

baptized Juan and Pedro.⁹⁶ An account of the subsequent execution of the five-year-old Pedro in 1609 observed that Japanese soldiers were uncomfortable with the execution of a child, recording that because it was an “injustice of the tyrant, a foreigner from the kingdom of Korea executed him.”⁹⁷ Francesco Pasio reported of the same event how “a Korean servant whose heart was suffering, it seems, to see the boy waiting so long, took the *katana* [sword] but moved by compassion, it seems, he was so perturbed that the blow missed his neck, hitting him instead on the shoulders.”⁹⁸ Through their varied positions and status within Japanese society, Koreans in Japan could thus become part of state violence upon Christians.

Conclusions

Evangelized Korean women and men were both subject to varied forms of violence in Japan, some of which ultimately caused their deaths. This violence was perceived as distinct and different for Korean women and men, as victims, survivors, and witnesses. Christian authors saw new forms of agency in women’s responses to violence. Some claimed that, given the opportunity to suffer for their faith, women’s ordinarily weak and vulnerable bodies became supernaturally invincible. For others, suffering a martyr’s death became the ultimate form of belonging to the Christian community, experiences that the Christian archive suggested Korean women craved just as much as did Korean men and Japanese women. The realities of what remained for them in Japan might have heightened their desire for this outcome. Violence inflicted on evangelized Korean women, therefore, could be understood as not only spiritually, but also personally, productive both for its victims and for those who beheld it. Although the political assumptions of Japan’s authorities denied many evangelized Korean women the autonomy to determine their own forms of belonging by dying for their faith, knowledge makers and circulators in the region incorporated the experiences of many into the Christian archive, as part of the history of this turbulent period.

⁹⁶ The fate of the Korean Antonio and Kimura Sebastián are explored in Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki*, 192ff.

⁹⁷ Marco Ferrarao, Macao, 1614, ARSI, JapSin 16, fol. 113v: “l’executione della ingiustitia del tirano, l’executo un alienigena del regno di Corai.”

⁹⁸ Nagasaki, February 20, 1609, ARSI, JapSin 56, fol. 391r–v: “un moço de seruicio Coria de nacion parecer que nolesufriendo el coraçon ver estar el niño esperando tanto tiempo, puso mano ala catana, mas mouido de *com* passion, aloque parece, seperturbo de manera que erando elgolpe d’espescuejo ledio por los hombros.”

