

The Kakure Kirishitan and Their Place in Japan's Religious Tradition

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For more than two hundred and fifty years, while Japan was relatively isolated from the Western world and Christianity was strictly forbidden by the Tokugawa Bakufu, a small group of Japanese Catholics tried to keep the faith alive underground. Despite persecution and bloodshed, they sustained Christian teachings and practice through seven generations. When Catholic missionaries were once again permitted to enter Japan in the 19th century, they discovered small pockets of Christianity in Kyushu and immediately looked toward wooing these descendants of Japan's first Christians back to an orthodox practice of Roman Catholicism. Some Christian descendants accepted the teachings of the newly arrived Catholic missionaries. Others, however, numbering about 35,000 refused and they continued to live their own brand of Christianity, practicing what they believed to be the true faith as communicated to their ancestors between 1549 and 1639. Although there are several names applied to this latter group, I will use the term *kakure* ("hidden") Kirishitan in this paper.

The emergence of this Christian remnant in the 19th century raises many questions. How were these people able to transmit their religious beliefs over seven generations without detection? Why did they not accept with joy the return of Catholic missionaries? Why did they choose to continue to practice their faith in secret even after the ban on Christianity had been lifted? A partial answer to these questions is found when one tries to answer the larger question of what place the *kakure* have in Japan's religious

tradition. By looking at elements of the religious practice among the *kakure*, it will become clear that the *kakure* do find a place within this tradition, while at the same time showing a remarkable similarity to the practices taught them by the first Christian missionaries in the period from 1549 to 1639.

The *kakure* "discovered" in the 19th and 20th centuries lived for the most part in poor farming and fishing villages in the southern part of Japan, in Kyushu and its offshore islands. The largest population of *kakure* lived in Ikitsuki, a small island off the northwest coast of Kyushu. There were also *kakure* villages in Hirado, a larger island southwest of Ikitsuki; in the Gotō Islands, located in the Japan Sea, directly west of Nagasaki; and in Kyushu proper, in the Kurosaki area, (now encompassed by Sotome-mura), about 15 miles northwest of Nagasaki. In this paper, I will concentrate on four elements of religious practice found in Ikitsuki, namely, the central focus of worship, the officials and organization, the administration of baptism, and funeral services.

Central focus of worship. The *nandogami* ("closet gods") or *nando-sama* as they were referred to by the people, constituted the central focus of religious practice for the *kakure* of Ikitsuki. They can be grouped in six categories. The first group called *gozensama* consisted of hanging scrolls or banners depicting Christ, his mother, Mary, martyrs officially recognized by the church, special martyrs from Ikitsuki, and saints. Molten images of the Virgin Mary and woodblock prints of Christ on the cross also fall within this category (Tagita 1954a, pp. 264-265). The *gozensama* resembled objects given to the early Christians by the missionaries, but for the most part they had been so disguised that they would not readily be recognized as Christian.

The second group of *nandogami* consisted of holy water (also called San Juan-sama), the container used to collect the water, and the stick used to sprinkle it on persons, on food or in homes to bless or cleanse. The stick, called *izuppo*, got its name from the biblical passage "There was a jar there full of common wine. They stuck a sponge soaked in this wine on some hyssop and raised it to his lips" (John 19:29) (Tagita 1954a, p. 265). This reverence for the baptismal water goes back to the era of the first Christians in Japan. They believed that the water effected cures, and even non-Christians would send for the holy water when ill, believing it had medicinal and spiritual value (Lopez-Gay 1966, pp. 217-218).

The third type of *nandogami*, called *otenpensia* (from the Portuguese *penitência*), originally referred to an object used by the Christians to inflict pain on themselves as a means of self-discipline. It consisted of a bundle of hemp rope. The Christians began making these *otenpensia* during the season of Lent, adding one piece of hemp rope each day, so that at the end of Lent, they had a bundle of 46 ropes (Tagita 1954b, p. 196). This item, also called *odōgu* ("tool"), came to be used to cure the sick and to expel demons from the sick and from the home. Obviously of Christian origin, its use by the 19th century *kakure* resembled that of the *onusa*, a wooden pole with hemp rope and paper attached, used by Shinto priests in purification ceremonies.

Omaburi constituted the fourth category of *nandogami*. The *omaburi* were small pieces of paper cut in the shape of a cross and used as charms to protect homes, fields and people. For the purification of the fields, the *kakure* put paper crosses in hollow poles at the side of the fields (Tagita 1958, p. 446). The cross is obviously of Christian origin and the pole and paper, again, probably related to the *onusa*. Tagita Kōya believes that the *omaburi* may have had some connection with the eucharist (sometimes called *osuchia*

by the *kakure*) when he noted that these were treasured in small, unusual boxes not unlike the container used by Catholic priests to carry the eucharist to the sick, or to persons at a distance.¹ Tagita's observation becomes more meaningful when one realizes that one of the major festivals celebrated in Ikitsuki involved removing the *nandogami* from the usual storage places, and assembling them at one location,² reminiscent of the Catholic eucharistic procession held on the feast of Corpus Christi, fifty days after Easter. On this day, the eucharist was placed in a decorative container (monstrance) and carried through the streets.

Next, the *tamoto kami* ("sleeve gods"), objects of worship that the *kakure* tucked unobserved, in the sleeve of a kimono, sometimes were cut out of paper. Rosaries also served as sleeve gods (Tagita 1954a, p. 275). Because the *kakure* carried these objects with them, the *tamoto kami* probably were not related to the eucharist but rather to the medals and other blessed objects given to the early Christians by the missionaries. The early Christians had strong devotion to the cross and the rosary (Lopez-Gay 1966, pp. 220-224).

Finally, the last category of *nandogami*, the *ofuda* ("charms") were small pieces of wood, about 1" or 1-½" in size, with a cross, a number from one to five, and some simple characters on the front. On the reverse side, Japanese characters indicated whether the piece was joyful (*oyorokobi*), sorrowful (*okanashimi*) or glorious (*gororiya-sama*). These pieces of wood represented the fifteen mysteries in the life of Christ and his mother, Mary,

1. 1954a, pp. 274-275. According to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, the eucharist is the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the form of bread and wine.

2. This festival is called Osejo Matsuri, see Tagita 1954a, pp. 287-289.

which Catholics meditated on during the recitation of the rosary. The mystery was written in whole or in part on the respective wooden piece, but very few of the *kakure* could read what was written there. The sixteenth piece ordinarily had the joyful symbol on it, and the word *amen* written in the Japanese syllabary, *kana* (Tagita ND, pp. 128, 131, n.2). In order to understand the use of the *ofuda*, we must look at the officials and the organization of the *kakure* religious practice.

Officials and organization. The religious officials of the *kakure* (all male) were responsible for the many festivals celebrated during the year, along with the administration of baptism and the performance of funeral services. The highest official among the Ikitsuki Kirishitan, the *sazukeyaku*, headed all religious groups in his area. The term *kakeuchi* (or *kakiuchi*) referred to all groupings under his jurisdiction (see table 1), and all the households for whom he filled the role of baptizer. When he had to travel to other areas, he carried a staff as the symbol of his office. His followers called him *ojisama* or *ojiisama* to indicate respect and to hide his official role. In some areas this post was hereditary, and a man served for a period of ten years. However, if the *sazukeyaku*'s spouse died during his term of office, he had to give up the post (Furuno 1959, pp. 124-128).

The taboo connected with death mentioned here has no place in Christianity; instead it is related to the notion of pollution due to contact with death which goes back to proto-historic times and is found among much Shinto practice. Taboos in earlier times forbade mourners from entering the Shinto shrine, and the leaders of festivals, in some cases, were not allowed to attend the funeral of relatives (Yanagita 1957, pp. 305-306).

In the event that a *sazukeyaku* had to be chosen, the people of the area assembled to choose his successor. The

TABLE 1
Religious Organization
Among the Kakeuchi in Ikitsuki

Religious Groups*	Officials*	Functions
Tsumoto		
Uwayado	Gobanyaku	House the <i>nandogami</i>
Nakayado	Nibanyaku	House the <i>nandogami</i>
Shitayado	Sanbanyaku	House the <i>nandogami</i>
Compania	Mideshi	House the <i>ofuda</i> and host monthly prayer meetings

*Listed in order of importance

person selected had to know the words of the prayer for administering baptism, and he had to be deemed a holy and religious man. When a man was selected, he was given the instruments for the administration of baptism. He then took rice and sake to the home of his predecessor, and returned home in such a way as to meet no *erenja* ("heretics," from the Portuguese *heresia*), meaning he was not to meet anyone who was not of his faith (Furuno 1959, p. 128).

The office of *sazukeyaku* was not a full-time occupation, and the man holding the post was ordinarily either a fisherman or a farmer. Because his official duties took time away from his work, the people of the area showed their appreciation by offering him such things as wheat and rice, and sometimes donations of money (Furuno 1959, p. 128).

Under the jurisdiction of the *sazukeyaku* were the *tsumoto*, or homes which contained the *nandogami*. The head of the *tsumoto* was called *gobanyaku*. His followers called him *ottosama* or *oyajisan*, again, terms of respect. When there was more than one *tsumoto* under a *sazukeyaku*, the residences were called from highest to lowest *uwayado*, *nakayado* and *shitayado*, their rank depending on the year

that their home became a *tsumoto*, the first rank going to the house first selected as the *tsumoto*. The head of each *tsumoto*, accordingly was called, from highest to lowest, *gobanyaku*, *nibanyaku*, and *sanbanyaku* (Tagita 1954a, pp. 256-257).

The origin of the word *tsumoto* is not clear but it referred to a place of lodging. It was also called *oyaji*. Since it was the home that contained the *nandogami*, it was the most important meeting place and it corresponded to a church. The homes chosen as *tsumoto* rotated every few years in some areas but in other areas the post was permanent. The head of the *tsumoto*, because he presided over festivals, had to memorize a number of prayers (Furuno 1959, pp. 130-131).

Finally, each *tsumoto* was composed of a number of *compania* (from the Portuguese *companhia*, also called *kumi* or *kōgumi*), each of these headed by a *mideshi* ("disciple"). The number of *compania* under a *tsumoto* varied in the different areas. For example, there might be three *tsumoto*, comprising six or seven *compania*. The number of households in a *compania* likewise varied from two to twelve. The rank of each *mideshi*, as above, was determined by the year of his appointment. The *compania* were responsible for providing the living expenses of the *sazukeyaku* and funds for the festivals held in the *tsumoto* (Furuno 1959, pp. 125-132).

The *compania* were almost certainly related to the various religious organizations started by the missionaries in the 16th and 17th centuries,³ but this type of group meeting

3. Sodalties (in Portuguese, *companhia*) were started by the missionaries as a means of maintaining Christian beliefs and practices in the absence of priests. The Jesuits started the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Santa Maria no gumi*), the Franciscans the Confraternity of the Cord (*Obi no gumi*), and the Dominicans the Confraternity of the Rosary (*Rosario no gumi*). See Jennes 1973, p. 132.

also was prevalent in Japan from medieval times in the *kō* system (“fraternity” or “religious association”). Hori Ichirō points out that *kō* was originally a term for a Buddhist lecture meeting but gradually came to “indicate those present at a Buddhist lecture meeting and the members of a religious fraternity.”⁴ These organizations might well have coincided with the *goningumi* system enforced under the Tokugawa Bakufu.

In many villages of Ikitsuki, the members of the *compania* met at the home of the *mideshi* on the first Sunday of every month. Each *mideshi* had at his home a bag containing sixteen *ofuda*. At the monthly meeting, the assembled members of the *compania* drew out a wooden piece and saw this as their fortune for the month. Drawing one of the joyful *ofuda* was considered the most desirable. The practice of drawing out *ofuda*, called *oshikae* (Furuno 1959, pp. 149–150; Tagita ND, pp. 128–131), bears strong resemblance to the practice of drawing a fortune at a Shinto shrine.

The wooden pieces undoubtedly came into existence as a mode for concealing the fact that the group was assembled to recite the rosary, so popular among the early Christians. However, rosary beads were also a popular item in Buddhism.

The term of office of the *mideshi* varied. In some areas he served five or six years, in others, the post rotated yearly. The *mideshi* was expected to be able to recite simple prayers, but if he was unable, anyone in the *compania* who knew how could do so (Furuno 1959, pp. 132–133).

The men who performed religious services for the *kakure* can be traced directly to the early christian period when the *dōjuku*, *kanbō* and catechists assisted the priests. These

4. 1968, p. 38, n.34. There is also some similarity between the *compania* and the *za*, a group of parishioners attached to the shrine and responsible for offering food to the kami. See Herbert 1967, p. 172.

men were authorized to instruct, to baptize, to conduct religious prayer meetings, to assist the sick and dying in sorrow for their sins—in brief, to act as substitutes when the priests were not available. The *kakure* performed these same tasks without ever having tried to perform eucharistic services, confirmation and confession, Christian rites that were forbidden to them without the assistance of a priest or bishop.

Tagita notes that the official hierarchy was similar to Catholicism, where the *sazuke-yaku* corresponded to a bishop (he carried a staff), and the *gobanyaku* to a priest (1954a, p. 256). Furuno Kiyoto, on the other hand, sees a correspondence with the Buddhist hierarchy. The *sazuke-yaku* he likens to the *chōrōkaku* (“superior” or “elder”), the *tsumoto* to the *dannadera* (“head temple”), and the *mideshi* to the *danto sōdai* (the representative of the temple supporters) (1959, p. 125). Because the *kakure* never in any way tried to perform the tasks reserved for bishops or priests, it would seem that Furuno is more accurate in his observations. However, since the relationship of the *kakure* officials to the *kanbō* the *dōjuku* and the catechists of the early period is evident, any further comparisons seem superfluous.

The ranking of the various officials based on their year of appointment, while it existed somewhat in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, was not church custom. But in Japan, “in contrast to other societies, the provisions for recognition of merit are weak, and institutionalization of the social order has been effected largely by means of seniority” (Nakane 1970, p. 29).

Now let us look at two practices common to all *kakure* groups, baptism and funeral services as they were practiced in Ikitsuki.

Baptism. One of the most important practices among the

kakure was the administration of baptism. The request for baptism usually was made two weeks in advance and the *sazukeyaku* then had to observe various taboos. For example, he was not allowed to touch the night-soil bucket or cattle. For one week before the baptism, he was not allowed to work and for several days before the event, he could not have sexual relations (Furuno 1959, p. 126).

The first and last taboos here are directly related to Shinto, because they are sources of defilement. All three of these taboos can be found in Japanese folk customs.⁵ The only one that might also have had some connection with Christianity is the taboo against work. This could well have come from the Christian teaching that one must not work on Sundays and special holy days during the year.

At baptism, the child (or the adult) was given a baptismal name called *arima no namae* (from the Latin *anima* or the Portuguese *alma* meaning "soul," the Japanese *namae* meaning "name"), and a godparent was required. By custom, the godparent (*heko-oya*), was of the opposite sex of the person baptized.⁶

A similar ceremony in southern Japan, called *nakae shiki* ("name changing"), occurred when young men (and sometimes young women) reached the age of physical and social maturity, usually around the age of fifteen. The person who presented the loin-cloth (*heko*) to the young man was called the *heko-oya* (Wakamori 1963, pp. 292-293). This ceremony could well have served initially as a camouflage for the administration of baptism.

Officials obtained the water for baptism from a small island off the coast of Ikitsuki called Nakae no shima, the scene of a number of martyrdoms in 1622 and 1624. The water from Nakae no shima was called San Juan-sama for

5. See Yanagida 1957, pp. 305-306 and Bownas 1963, p. 145.

6. See Furuno 1959, p. 139 and Furuno 1957, pp. 79-88.

the two men named Juan or Johannes who died on the island, and whose deaths were believed to have conveyed miraculous powers to the water (Furuno 1959, pp. 143-144).

Baptism was the only church sacrament administered with any regularity during the first Christian period, and its importance is evident. Seeing the waters of baptism as miraculous also dates back to the early Christian period, when Christians believed that the blessed waters not only had the power to remove sin, but also to heal the sick, a belief not discouraged by the missionaries.

The stress placed on baptism and the powers of the baptismal waters found easy company with the Shinto stress on ritual cleanliness. Cleansing ceremonies began in early Japan and were required after childbirth, menstruation, contact with death or illness. In Buddhism also, and perhaps more directly, we can see how Japanese Christians would have found it easy to relate to baptism. Carmen Blacker says: "The final and culminating stage of Buddhahood is suitably expressed by the baptismal *seikanjō*, water poured on the head, which figures so prominently in the initiation of the orthodox sects of esoteric Buddhism" (1975, p. 212).

Funeral ceremony. A second important practice observed among the *kakure* Kirishitan was the funeral ceremony and the observance of the death anniversary. During the period of persecution, all Japanese had to register at a Buddhist temple. The *kakure* of Ikitsuki, for the most part, maintained that membership, so their funeral service was a combination of their own personal religious beliefs and the official Buddhist ceremony.

When a person died, the *ojisan* and *ottosan* were notified immediately, and a monk from the head temple was also notified and invited to perform a Buddhist service. Prior to the arrival of the monk, the *kakure* chanted a series of prayers and holy songs lasting forty to fifty minutes, most

of which were unintelligible to the *kakure* and outsiders. Then they placed a small paper cross under the kimono of the deceased, next to the skin. They left the remainder of the ceremony in the hands of the temple (Furuno 1959, pp. 143–144).

The *kakure* commemorated the death anniversary on the 3rd day after death, and then on the 7th, 35th, and 49th days. Special prayers were offered for the deceased during the entire 449 day period. The *kakure* observed the death anniversaries on the 1st, 3rd, 7th, 13th, 25th, 33rd, and 49th years. These anniversary day observances usually combined Buddhist and Christian elements (Furuno 1959, p. 144).

The missionaries had stressed proper burial ceremonies accompanied by prayers for the eternal salvation of the deceased. But once again, this was an important practice in Japanese folk religion and Japanese Buddhism. Hori points out that the funeral ceremony and memorial services continue to be “the most significant social function of Japanese Buddhism” (1968, p. 16). Even for Japanese who have little or no need for Buddhism in their everyday life, the Buddhist funeral and memorial services are important at the time of death.

Hence, the practices of the *kakure* in dealing with death and burial, while showing a continuity with their Christian heritage, also show how they were able to combine their own religious beliefs with religious elements important to the Japanese people as a whole.

The kakure and Japan's religious tradition. Let us now look at some general characteristics of Japanese religious practice to see how well the *kakure* fit into this tradition.

Japanese for centuries have rejected the notion that religions must be mutually exclusive. Shinto is indigenous to Japan and its emphasis on ritual cleanliness, respect for

nature and respect for ancestors has been extremely influential throughout Japanese history. The introduction of Buddhism into Japan via Korea around 550 A.D. did not precipitate a major religious clash because the Japanese were able to reconcile the two beliefs, seeing Shinto *kami* as manifestations of the Buddha. So thoroughly did the two religious beliefs meld at the popular level that, Blacker has argued, there is a large area of religious practice "in which the worshipper is scarcely aware whether the deity he is addressing is a Shinto *kami* or a bodhisattva," and this aspect of Japanese religion "has either been ignored or relegated to various snail patches with pejorative labels such as superstition, syncretism or magic" (1975, p. 33).

The Japanese adaptation of Buddhism differs enough from Buddhism practiced in China that it merits study in its own right. The same holds true for Confucianism, never popular as a religious belief in Japan, but rather as a code of ethics the Japanese have adapted through the years to fit their changing government and society. It served as a religious and ethical rationale for the governmental and social structures. Religious Taoism, likewise, never became a separate religion in Japan, but was incorporated into many of the festivals and rituals on the folk level.

It is understandable, given this tradition, that the *kakure* would have found it natural to incorporate aspects of their Shinto, Buddhist and folk past into the practice of Christianity. One might argue that the *kakure* were exclusive, forbidding marriage outside the religion and allowing only *kakure* into their religious observance. But this exclusivity was one aspect of their religious practice that came from Christianity, especially since, during the Tokugawa period, secrecy was imperative for survival. By the 19th century, secrecy and exclusivity had become a part of *kakure* religion as it was taught by their ancestors. Hence, the *kakure* did what Japanese had been doing for centuries, incorporating

elements from an already rich tradition into their Christianity. Their exclusivity barred outsiders but it did not bar their religious heritage.

Byron Earhart has found at least six other characteristics in the traditional Japanese approach to religion (1969, pp. 5-8), and in each case religion as it was practiced by the *kakure* remained within the tradition. First, he sees the harmony between man, the gods and nature as the basis of Japanese religion. The *nandogami* were simple, everyday objects such as hanging scrolls, San Juan water, the *ofuda*, the *otempensia*, paper crosses. The Christian saints, martyrs and their own ancestors were all worshipped as gods. But the idea of a god set off, apart and above them, did not seem to be part of their belief structure. The importance of nature was evidenced in a number of festivals concerned with planting, harvesting, the wind, rain and insects (Tagita 1954a, pp. 309-322).

Second, Japanese religion has stressed the importance of the family and family members, both living and dead. We see this exemplified in the stress which the *kakure* placed on proper burial ceremonies, the importance attached to the observance of the death anniversaries, and the fact that they refused to rid their homes of the *kamidana* and the *butsudan* at the request of the 19th century missionaries.⁷ Living members were drawn together through the religious meetings and festival celebrations.

Third, throughout Japanese history, great significance has been attached to purification, rituals and charms. Each of these was important to the *kakure* practice. The *kakure* purified homes and fields. In addition, they used *omaburi*, *ofuda* and *otempensia* much as charms had been used in traditional Japan.

7. See *Société des Missions-Etrangères de Paris, Compte Rendu des Travaux* (Paris), 1886, p. 23.

A fourth characteristic of Japanese religion is the prevalence of festivals and the pride taken in local cults or celebrations. Although not discussed in this paper, festival celebrations were of the utmost importance among the *kakure*. One can find festivals celebrated in one area which contained elements not found in another. For example, there was the *San Juan no uta*, a song unique to one area in Ikitsuki (Tagita 1954a, p. 295).

The fifth common element cited by Earhart, the weaving of religion into everyday life, is exemplified in the above four points. It has never been tradition in Japanese religion to demand weekly attendance at a temple or shrine. Rather the believer worshipped in the home or the field, and made formal visits to the local temple or shrine only at certain times in life (after the birth of a child, funeral or memorial services, to seek some special favor or blessing). For the *kakure* of Ikitsuki, the regular meeting of the *compania* reflected both the teaching of the missionaries and the voluntary religious associations (*kō*) dating back to medieval Japan.

Finally Earhart sees a relationship between Japanese religion and Japanese nation. The *kakure*, living in a relatively remote area, did not seem to exemplify so much a consciousness of the Japanese nation as they exemplified the desire to maintain their Japanese traditions. The importance of their ancestors, and the duty to carry on their teachings appeared to be uppermost in their minds. But because the notion of Japanese nation was tied so closely to a respect for Japan's ancestral tradition, beginning with the emperor, one might argue that this last characteristic of Japanese religion was exemplified, at least indirectly, by the *kakure* Kirishitan.

On the other hand, one cannot help but be struck by the degree of continuity which existed between the religious life of the *kakure* Kirishitan and Japan's early Chris-

tians. The *kakure* maintained all of the practices stressed by the 16th and 17th century missionaries. They continued to rely on unordained men to perform services denied them in the absence of priests, an absence that was the rule rather than the exception in the early period. They therefore continued to administer baptism, to assist the dying in praying for salvation, to conduct funeral services, and to meet in homes to pray together. Each year, they determined the important feast days, many of which were clearly related to Christian feasts.

The members of the *compania* met monthly, in some places more often, for a religious ceremony directly related to the recitation of the rosary, a practice encouraged by the priests as they formed the various confraternities. The *kakure* also continued to see religious articles as important in their practice as evidenced in the *nandogami* and *omaburi*.

There is continuity in the fact that these *kakure* did not consider themselves Buddhists or Shintoists but Kirishitan. They lived for the most part the way their ancestors were taught to live by the missionaries as the persecutions mounted. Considering that the persecutions began in earnest as early as 1597, one can conclude that many of those who went underground had lived most of their Christian life hiding and camouflaging their religious practice. Secrecy became part of being Christian. Those Japanese who were converted in the earliest years of the mission when there was little reason for fear would have been very old or dead by 1639. Those elements of the Christian life which are lacking in the *kakure* practice are precisely those things which time and circumstances made impossible for the missionaries to stress—the sacraments, church law, and the notion of an institutional church.

Despite the remarkable continuity of form or practice, the *kakure* possessed but a minimal understanding of Chris-

tian doctrine. Some of the central notions of Christianity were lacking or misunderstood, such as the Trinity, one all-powerful creator-God, and the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The *kakure* did not understand the majority of the prayers they recited, and all festivals of Christian origin were commemorated without any cognizance of their original meaning.

Thus, the *kakure* Kirishitan came into the 20th century practicing their religion as they had learned it from their Christian ancestors, and much the same as it had been practiced during the first Christian period. At the same time, they had melded it into the traditional Japanese approach to religious life. They were not willing to let go of the Christian elements, nor were they willing to give up their Japanese traditions. What they had done, over the years, was to make their Christian religion Japanese.

GLOSSARY

compania コンパニヤ
dōjuku 同宿
erenja エレンジャ
gobanyaku 御番役
goningumi 五人組
gozensama ごぜん様
Gotō 五島
Hirado 平戸
Ikitsuki 生月
kakeuchi 垣内
kakure 隠れ
kanbō 看防
kō 講

Kurosaki 黒崎
mideshi み弟子
nandogami 納戸神
nibanyaku 二番役
ofuda お札
omaburi おまぶり
oshikae おしかえ
otenpensia おテンペンシヤ
sanbanyaku 三番役
San Juan-sama サンジュアン様
sazukeyaku 授け役
tamoto kami たもと神
tsumoto つもと

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