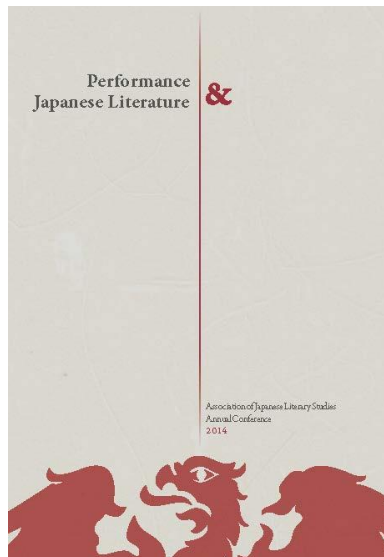


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Jan Leuchtenberger 

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## The Kirishitan Expulsion As Ritual Performance In Early-Modern Japanese Texts

Jan Leuchtenberger  
University of Puget Sound

A wide range of Japanese texts that circulated from the early seventeenth century through the nineteenth century feature a Kirishitan (Christian) villain who uses money and his magico-religious teachings to try to take over Japan for his “Nanban” king.<sup>1</sup> The plots of the *kanazōshi*, *jitsuroku*, *jōruri* and kabuki texts featuring the villain differ, but they all include a foreign invader who is recognizably Kirishitan and who is ultimately discovered, conquered and either killed or expelled. The image of the Kirishitan evolved over the years, but common to all of the representations was the threat he posed to Japanese sovereignty and identity, and the constant repetition of the cycle of penetration and expulsion. Despite the insistence at the end of each tale on Japan’s victory over the barbarian, the next variation inevitably recounts again the story of his arrival and extermination, with the ironic result that the Kirishitan were never actually expelled from the discursive space and the imagination of Edo-period Japan. Circulating decades and even centuries after the expulsion of the Western missionaries, the persistence of these expulsion narratives points to a deep anxiety about Japan’s vulnerability to influences and powers from outside of its borders. However, the narratives also work to allay that anxiety by repeatedly performing an expulsion that takes place on two levels: in the repetition of the act within the plot of a variety of narratives, and in the re-production of the texts in writing and on stage.

Western missionaries were active in Japan primarily between 1549 and 1614, when they were ordered to leave by the Tokugawa government. Though the Jesuits and other orders had initial success in gathering converts, they soon encountered opposition first from Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and later from the Tokugawa bakufu. Even before the expulsion of 1614, however, the figure of the Kirishitan invader had begun to appear in narratives that would go on to influence *jōruri* and kabuki plays. The three narratives examined here are *Baterenki* (History of the Padres) likely produced between 1607 and 1614, *Kirishitan monogatari* (Tale of the Kirishitan) of 1639, which was also reprinted as *Kirishitan taiji monogatari* (Tale of the Defeat of the Kirishitan) in 1665, and *Kirishitan shūmon raichō jikki* (A True Account of the Arrival of the Kirishitan Sect in Japan, hereafter *Raichō jikki*) which probably originated in the early

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<sup>1</sup> Though Nanbanjin (or Southern Barbarians) was originally a term applied to Western missionaries and traders who came from the south (Macao and Manila) and from outside of the Sino-centric sphere of civilization, in these later works of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Nanban represents an indistinct but very wealthy Western kingdom bent on the conquest of Japan.

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eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

*Baterenki* appears to be the earliest extant chronicle of an arrival and expulsion of the Kirishitan. The author and date of production are unknown. Several factors, however, including a reference to a 1607 event, a lack of references to the expulsion and government persecution of converts beginning in 1614, as well as the inclusion of relatively accurate information on stories and practices of the Catholic Church, all indicate it was produced before or just around the expulsion. Similarly, the comparatively large number of accurately glossed Portuguese and Latin words still being used in the context in which they were introduced by the missionaries indicates it was written close to the time when the missionaries were still active, and certainly well before the 1639 printing of *Kirishitan monogatari*.<sup>3</sup> Though the author is anonymous, the relatively accurate description of the sacraments and story of St. Lucy point to either a former convert or someone transcribing the account of one. There is no extant information about how widely the text circulated or how well known it was, but there is reason to believe that Sessho relied on it when he wrote *Taiji jashūron* in 1648.<sup>4</sup>

The text is an odd collection of disjointed vignettes that includes a description of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church, stories of St. Lucy

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<sup>2</sup> 伴天連記 *Bateren* was the Japanese pronunciation of “padre” and originally referred to the missionary priests. Unannotated versions of *Baterenki* have been reproduced in three modern collections: *Zokuzoku gunsho ruijū*, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Kokkusho kankōkai, 1907); Shinmura Izuru, ed., *Kaihyō sōshō*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Kōōseikaku shoten, 1927); and Hiyaue Antei, ed., *Kirishitan monogatari hoka sanpen*, Kirishitan Bunkō vol. 1 (Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1926). An English translation of *Baterenki* is in Jan Leuchtenberger, *Conquering Demons: The ‘Kirishitan,’ Japan and the World in Early Modern Japanese Literature* (Ann Arbor: The Center for Japanese Studies Publications, 2013). Modern printed versions of *Kirishitan monogatari* can be found in *Zokuzoku gunsho ruijū*; Hiyaue, *Kirishitan monogatari*; and in Washio Junkei, *Nihon shisō tōsō shiryō*, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Meichū kankyōkai, 1969). An English translation of *Kirishitan monogatari* is included in George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 321-74. A copy of the *Kirishitan shūmon raichō jikki* variant is reproduced in Hiyaue Antei, ed., *Kirishitan monogatari hoka sanpen*, 83-131. An early, anonymous English translation of the text that was first printed in the Japan Herald in 1864 is included in M. Paske-Smith, ed. *Japanese Traditions of Christianity, Being Some Old Translations From the Japanese, With British Consular Reports of the Persecutions of 1868-1872* (Kobe: J.L. Thompson & Co, 1930), 6-48. Other variants of the tale include *Nanbanji monogatari*, reprinted in Washio Junkei, ed. *Nihon shisō tōsō shiryō*, vol. 10, 1-52. An English translation of *Nanbanji monogatari* is in Jan Leuchtenberger, *Conquering Demons*. Also *Nanbanji kōhaiki*, which is available both in Hiyaue Antei ed., *Nanbanji kōhaiki hoka nihen*, Kirishitan Bunkō vol. 2 (Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1926), and in Ebisawa Arimichi, ed., *Nanbanji kōhaiki, jakyō tai’i, myōtei mondō, hadaiusu*, Toyo Bunko vol. 14 (Heibonsha, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> As might be expected, a survey of extant fiction on the Kirishitan shows a diminishing number of foreign Kirishitan terms and a marked distancing from the original meanings of the terms the further the origination date of the text is from the time of the missionaries’ expulsion. *Baterenki* has the most Portuguese and Latin terms, followed by *Kirishitan monogatari* (1639). By the time of the *Raichō jikki* narrative of the early eighteenth century, most of the few remaining Portuguese terms form part of a mantra chanted by the Kirishitan converts.

<sup>4</sup> Ebisawa Arimichi points out that some portions of Sessho’s work include information that was available in *Baterenki*. Ebisawa, *Nanbanji kōhaiki*, 88, n. 10.

and the origins of the Church in Rome, and a longer narrative about the Church's repeated attempts to conquer Japan. Unlike later Kirishitan texts that paint an exotic picture of a physically grotesque and culturally inferior foreign invader, *Baterenki* confines its criticism of the Kirishitan to their desire to conquer other lands. As a result, there are no physical descriptions or references to magical powers, and only a small part of the text describes their activities in Japan, while a much larger portion is given over to accounts of the waves of increasingly large fleets of soldiers and padres sent by the Pope to conquer Japan. These would-be conquerors repeatedly fail to defeat Japan through military means, and the first Kirishitan padre to stay in the country does so only because he is alone and claims that his ship was driven off course. That padre's conversion efforts are successful at first, and the church in Kyushu grows rapidly until a Japanese convert learns of a secret meeting of the padres in which they discuss their plot to take over Japan by first gaining control of Nagasaki. He reports their plans to the daimyō of Ōmura, who initially had converted to Christianity as well, but who now immediately expels them and himself returns to the "true path." Of note in this earliest text is that the Kirishitan presence and their expulsion are performed only at the regional level—they are expelled from Ōmura's domain, and the narrator assures the reader of their eventual decline, but there is no mention of their expulsion from Japan. As the earliest narrative to depict the Kirishitan as a foreign, would-be conqueror that gains access only through deception, *Baterenki* can be seen as the seminal text in the formation of the Edo-period figure of the Kirishitan Other. However, because information about its authorship or dissemination is lacking, and only one manuscript copy appears to be extant, it would be difficult to describe the text itself as an influential one in the performance of the expulsion.

Of the three narratives that helped construct the image of the Kirishitan villain and set up the narrative of expulsion, *Kirishitan monogatari* is perhaps the most well known because it was printed. The text of *Kirishitan monogatari* is dated Kan'ei 16 (1639), and likely was printed in the same year in Kyoto, where most of the action in the narrative takes place. A second printing with newly added illustrations in 1665 under the title of *Kirishitan taiji monogatari* is attributed to Nakano Tarōzaemon of Kyoto.<sup>5</sup> However, that printing was stopped by authorities, presumably because of its Kirishitan topic. From that time until the Meiji period, no text about the Kirishitan would make it into print, though

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<sup>5</sup> The *Kokusho sōmokuroku* lists three extant copies of the 1665 printing, including one at Tokyo University Library and another at Kyoto University Library. A facsimile edition in three kan of the original woodblock printed text was put out by the *Kisho fukuseikai* in 1928 and 1929. The text is also reproduced in *Kanazōshi shusei*, volume 25, and in *Kaihyō sōsho*, Volume 2. Asakura Haruhiko, ed., *Kirishitan taiji monogatari*, *Kanazōshi shūūsei* vol. 25 (Tokyo: Tokyodō shuppan, 1999); Shinmura Izuru, ed., *Kaihyō sōsho* vol 2 (Kyoto: Kōseikaku shoten, 1927). Elison points out that the information on the printer is not in the extant copy he examined in the Kyoto University Library, but that the library includes it in the record. Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 475.

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many would circulate as *shahon*.<sup>6</sup>

Though *Baterenki* is the first to present the Kirishitan villain as a devious would-be conqueror, *Kirishitan monogatari* makes him a more despicable character who pollutes himself by eating meat and lures converts into similar practices or blatantly pays them money to join him. His religion is represented as a laughable mixture of conflicting and illogical beliefs that only attracts the most gullible and the outcasts of society who are promised medical treatment, money, or exotic gifts from abroad. But it is also dangerous precisely because it empowers and mobilizes these uneducated masses, who the Kirishitan tries to manipulate into helping him conquer Japan. Most importantly, the Kirishitan is no longer the more regional potential threat of the *Baterenki*, but rather a national threat that comes close to realizing his goals of conquest before he is found out just in time and destroyed. The narrative also differs from *Baterenki* in the way it works to defeat the Kirishitan in two ways—by telling of his punishment and banishment by the authorities, and by portraying him as a cultural and intellectual inferior.

Sometime in the early eighteenth century (Kyōho era 1716-1736), a new Kirishitan villain appeared in a narrative that promised a record of the Kirishitan arrival and expulsion in Japan. *Kirishitan shūmon raichō jikki*, or “True Account of the Arrival of the Kirishitan sect” (hereafter *Raichō jikki*), is perhaps the most common of the more than sixty-five different titles under which the narrative survives in manuscript copies at libraries throughout Japan. As the majority of the titles suggest, the *Raichō jikki* narrative was an example of the *jitsurokutai shōsetsu*, or “true account” genre, also sometimes referred to as *kakihon* or *kashihonyamono*, because of their prevalence and popularity at lending libraries. Their claims to truth notwithstanding, most *jitsuroku* were elaborate fictional versions of historical events. *Raichō jikki* took the basic expulsion narrative of *Baterenki* and *Kirishitan monogatari* and embellished it with a scheming Nanban king, uncanny magician priests, and corrupt Japanese leaders who very nearly give the country away to the foreigners.

Like the villains of *Kirishitan monogatari*, to which the narrative clearly owes a debt, the *Raichō jikki* padres are grotesque, uncouth and conniving, but in this text they are also possessed of magical powers that allow them to fly, to transform things and to divine the future. Yet even as they have become more transgressive, the ways in which they transgress fall into more familiar tropes of Otherness from traditional Japanese literature. Exotic in their difference but also reminiscent of the wicked Buddhist priests of *setsuwa* literature, the

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<sup>6</sup> Though there is no extant record of the reason for banning *Kirishitan taiji monogatari*, most scholars agree it was probably the topic. See Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: Cultural History From the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 332. Booksellers took notice of these actions against texts and often self-censored to prevent the same from happening again. The Kyoto Guild's 1771 *Kinsho mokuroku* includes a list of twelve forbidden topics, of which Kirishitan ranks as first. See Munemasa Isō and Wakabayashi Seiji, eds., *Kinsei Kyōto shuppan shiryō* (*Nihon kosho tsūshinsha*, 1965).

padres come to Japan as servants of the Nanban king who has ordered them to use their religion to deceive the people into giving up their country to him. In this narrative, the Kirishitan are just a tool of this Nanban king, whose wealth and power loom ominously to the west of Japan, and much space is given to descriptions of how he convinces the Kirishitan padres to do his bidding and also how he gets them into Japan. When the padres' plot is finally discovered by Hideyoshi, there is much discussion about how they should be punished, but the leader warns that killing them might invite retaliation and instead sends them back to their country. It is in the *Raichō jikki* text that the narrative of penetration and expulsion is given its fullest treatment.

Because it was about a topic that was forbidden in print, the *Raichō jikki* narrative circulated only in manuscript until it was first printed in the Meiji period.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, there are more than 150 manuscript copies extant. That number would be remarkable under normal circumstances even for a popular printed text from the early eighteenth century, but it is extraordinary considering the fact that the text and its topic were both subject to censorship. The numbers suggest a wide diffusion of the text during the eighteenth century and the likelihood that the image of the Kirishitan villain and the enhanced expulsion narrative were very familiar in Edo culture.

The figure of the Kirishitan villain and the narrative of penetration and expulsion that is perpetuated in the works above is also repeated in more than ten *jōruri* and kabuki plays of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Keisei Shimabara kaeru kassen* and Tsuruya Nanboku's *Tenjiku Tokubei ikoku banashi*.<sup>8</sup> The origins of the villains and their true identities vary from play to play, but the two most commonly used characters of Nanagusa Shirō and Tenjiku Tokubei are one way that they were recognizable as Kirishitan. The first is a rather thinly disguised reference to Amakusa Shirō, the name by which the purported leader of the Shimabara Rebellion is most commonly known. In the plays featuring Nanagusa Shirō, the name is used as a cover in one case for a member of a disgraced Fujiwara branch, and in other cases for high-ranking retainers and spies for the Ming dynasty and the king of the Ryukyus. Similarly, Tenjiku Tokubei was the name of a historical figure of the seventeenth century who wrote memoirs of his travels to India (*Tenjiku*) and countries in Southeast Asia, but in the plays it is a cover for the sons of disgraced families or for disgruntled Koreans seeking revenge for Hideyoshi's invasion.<sup>9</sup> While the Nanagusa Shirō name creates a historical association with

<sup>7</sup> The narrative was printed for the first time as *Nanbanji kōhaiki* in 1868. A list of the different titles under which the manuscripts survive is in Leuchtenberger, *Conquering Demons*, 199.

<sup>8</sup> A list of the plays is in Leuchtenberger, *Conquering Demons*, 111. Chikamatsu Monzaemon, "Keisei Shimabara kaeru kassen," *Chikamatsu zenshū*, vol. 11 (Iwanami shoten, 1989); *Tenjiku Tokubei ikoku banashi* is extant under a different title, *Tenjiku Tokubei banri no irifune*, in *Tsuruya Nanboku zenshū*, vol. 1, Gunji Masakatsu, ed. (*San'ichi shobō*, 1971).

<sup>9</sup> The memoirs of the historical figure are called *Tenjiku tokai monogatari* (Tales of a Crossing to Tenjiku).

the Kirishitan, the use of Tenjiku Tokubei places greater emphasis on the foreign aspect of the villain. However, the Tenjiku Tokubei plays also feature the most spectacular demonstrations of magic, and since the image of the Kirishitan as magician was firmly in place by the middle of the eighteenth century, that provided another strong association with the Kirishitan.

The villains of the plays have different names and origins, but they have several common characteristics that were also shared by the Kirishitan in the narratives: they are often not the upstanding citizens they pretend to be, but rather disguised foreigners or members of disgraced Japanese families; they are always plotting to take over Japan for themselves or their foreign ruler; and they possess magical powers that are in some way linked to the Kirishitan and the *gama sennin* of Chinese folklore. In fact, many of the characters represent a kind of composite foreigner, combining Kirishitan, Dutch and even Ainu identities in one enemy.<sup>10</sup> Though only one of the plays explicitly refers to the villain as Kirishitan, others refer to *yaso shūmon* or *tenshūkyō*, or Deus, and in all of the plays the villain's magical incantations resemble a dharani chanted by the priests in the *Raichō jikki* narrative which contained the words, *dei* (for Deus), *paraiso* (for paradise) and *zensumaru* (for Jesus—or Yesu—Mary). The plot and the details may be different, but the tale of deceit, penetration and eventual expulsion or, in some cases death, are still there.

There are many levels at which the expulsion of the Kirishitan can be seen to be performed over the more than two centuries that these narratives and plays circulated. Certainly the kabuki and *jōruri* plays are the most obvious of these, in which the incursion and ultimate expulsion of the Kirishitan is performed on stage. Because *jitsuroku* are thought to have originated as the scripts of storytellers, it is also possible that the *Raichō jikki* narrative was performed orally, though no record of that has been found.<sup>11</sup> But the reproduction of the same tale over and over is a form of performance as well. The Kirishitan villain was clearly a compelling figure, but why did he not appear in any other storyline? Why the need to perform over and over the story of his arrival and ultimate expulsion or extermination?

Historically, after Christianity was outlawed in Japan, the hunt for Kirishitan believers was a national campaign that was felt at the local level, as thousands were arrested and punished in various towns and cities starting in 1614 and continuing through the years of the Shimabara Rebellion and beyond.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The Nanagusa Shirō of Chikamatsu's *Keisei Shimabara kaeru kassen* has characteristics of the Kirishitan, the Chinese (*gama sennin*) and the Ainu. Similarly, in Tsuruya Nanboku's *Tenjiku Tokubei ikoku banashi*, the hero also has the "toad magic" that combines the powers of the Kirishitan and the Chinese *gama sennin*, but stage directions have him wearing a Dutch captain's coat in one scene and an Ainu coat in another.

<sup>11</sup> For more on *jitsuroku* and their origins see Leuchtenberger, *Conquering Demons*, 71-77.

<sup>12</sup> Though the number of those arrested had fallen off in the years before the rebellion and was also low immediately after it, arrests picked up again in the late 1650s and 1660s. Of those arrests, the majority took place in parts of Kyushu and in the Gokinai region. For details on the arrests and



Also, by 1635, the temple registration that began in Kyoto to keep track of former Kirishitan was extended to become a practice required by all Japanese people, making every person in the country a participant in the search for members of the outlawed sect.<sup>13</sup> And many continued to be found. Between 1614 and 1643, over one hundred missionaries tried to enter Japan secretly to continue proselytizing to the converts, but most were easily distinguished as foreigners and quickly imprisoned or killed. More alarming, perhaps, were the hidden Japanese converts who continued to be caught and subjected to torture. Unlike the foreign padres, these converts often lived and worked in their communities showing no outward sign of difference, and observers may have been forgiven for wondering how to distinguish a Kirishitan from a law-abiding citizen, and whether the Kirishitan would ever, finally, be expelled from their midst. In view of this, it is clear that the Kirishitan “trauma” of the seventeenth century did not end with the expulsion or the Shimabara Rebellion, but continued to be felt in the everyday lives of people around the country for decades after.

The fact that the representation of the Kirishitan in *Kirishitan monogatari* and *Raichō jikki* conflates them with all Nanbanjin also indicates that the Kirishitan Other became the repository of a broader anxiety caused by Japan’s encounter with the West or, as Ronald Toby calls it, the “Iberian irruption.”<sup>14</sup> In his study on representations of Other in Japanese visual media of the seventeenth century, Toby stresses the importance of Japan’s engagement with the early Portuguese and Spanish missionaries and traders in changing the way Japan viewed itself and Others.<sup>15</sup> According to Toby, while Japan had many Others prior to the arrival of the first Westerners in the sixteenth century, in visual media those Others were consistently represented as “Chinese,” and they were always “out there.” By this he means that in visual representations of these Others, they were rarely shown on Japanese soil, and usually in their imagined places of origin. But with the arrival of the Iberian traders and missionaries, the first “new” Other in almost a thousand years was suddenly “in here,” and began to appear in art depicting the Westerners on Japanese soil.<sup>16</sup> But Toby goes on to note that not long after the final expulsion of the Iberians, the Westerners disappeared from representations of the Other “in here,” and were replaced by the more traditional Others of China, Korea and the Ryukyus.

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punishments see Anesaki Masaharu, *Kirishitan shūmon no hakugai to senpuku* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1925).

<sup>13</sup> Ikuo Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 147.

<sup>14</sup> Ronald P. Toby, “The ‘Indianness’ of Iberia and Changing Japanese Iconographies of Other,” in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 323.

<sup>15</sup> Toby, “Changing Japanese Iconographies,” 344-45.

<sup>16</sup> Toby, “Changing Japanese Iconographies,” 324.



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Though the Westerner may have been displaced by Asian Others in visual media after the expulsion, we can see in the narratives that the Iberians did not disappear from the written text, and in fact survived in the figure of the Kirishitan/Nanbanjin that was perpetuated in texts like *Kirishitan monogatari* and *Raichō jikki*, and in the composite foreigner so prevalent in kabuki and *jōruri*.<sup>17</sup> Despite the chronicle of the various Kirishitan defeats and the claims of final victory at the end of each narrative or play, clearly the Kirishitan—and Nanbanjin—were still “in here.” In the narratives we can see the lasting trauma of the “Iberian irruption” and deep anxiety over the seeming failure of the expulsion and repeated attempts to exterminate the Kirishitan. As a result, the expulsion is enacted over and over in a kind of ritual performance that takes place not only on stage and in the re-production of a similar narrative, but also in the most basic act of copying and disseminating texts that were forbidden from print and could only be re-produced by hand.

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<sup>17</sup> The Kirishitan also are depicted on Japanese soil in one set of illustrations that were included in the 1665 reprint of *Kirishitan monogatari*. None of the extant *Raichō jikki* manuscripts examined by this author included illustrations.