論文

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Kakure Kirishitan Gravestones in Nagasaki Settings

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This study provides an anthropological analysis of the most salient features of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones and landscapes in Nagasaki settings. The specific focus is on local patterns mirrored in the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' social contingencies, reinforcement history, and dynamically lived contexts. The synthesis suggests that Kakure Kirishitan survivors produced fundamental faith-practices, symbols of common cultural and religious identity, and cherished memories that have long established their gravestones as secondary sacred spaces of remembrance. The analysis, thus, reinforces the significance of the material and immaterial aspects highlighting the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' quintessential quest to idealize, establish, and maintain the human-divine harmony in their present localities. In general, therefore, this study has provided a refined interpretive tool for demonstrating how Kakure Kirishitan gravestones represent a specific sub-culture, often unspoken, but fully understood within a Christian and Japanese tradition.

Keywords

Kakure Kirishitan survivors, gravestones, sacred spaces, religious experiences, deceased predecessors, Nagasaki Christians

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I Introduction

Ethnographic-historical traces of Kakure Kirishitan survivors in Japan demonstrate at least three broad types of religious sites.[1] These include gravestones, Kirishitan shrines, and private ritual settings (Masaki 1973; Tagita 1978; Kataoka 1997; Turnbull 1998; Whelan 1996; Filus 2003; Miyazaki 2014; Nakazono 2018; Munsi 2013, 2018, 2019, 2020; Sandvig 2020). While these religious phenomena have long received a good deal of attention, there has been relatively little discussion of their significant characteristics in more recent developments. This study offers a further contribution to the ethnographic analysis of the chief and most salient features of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones and landscapes. The specific focus is on local patterns of the Kakure Kirishitan gravestones mirrored in the practitioners' social contingencies, individual's reinforcement history, and dynamically lived contexts. The synthesis is based on more than a decade (2004–2020) of field research, including direct observations, visual sources, semi-structural and conversational-style interviews, and analysis of archival and secondary sources, and some objective and factual data about processes and practices gleaned from Nagasaki settings, namely Hirado, Ikitsuki, Shimo-Kurosaki, and Wakamatsu. Given the nature of the research aims, I decided that research participants (20 Kakure Kirishitan practitioners and 10 long-term residents) should be over 18 years of age to assure meaningful responses[2].

Within the sampling strategy adopted, I particularly tried to understand the subject from the practitioners' own interpretations and lived religious experiences. In the observation of participation, I used their "everyday social skills in simultaneously experiencing and observing their own and others' interactions within various settings" to produce this narrative ethnography in which "both Self and Other are presented together within a single multivocal text focused on the character and process of the human encounter" (Tedlock 1992, xiii). The term "religious experience" is used deliberately to denote an appropriation of a symbolic place (Chivallon & Belorgane 2001). Thus, combined ethnographic narratives and analytic considerations in this article productively highlight the intersection between religion as a social psychological commitment evidenced through embodiment, practice, and memory (Bielo 2012) and spirituality as "being intimately related to religion in people's search for significance" (Kloos & Moore 2000, 121; see also Pargament 1997 for further details). I argue that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones ultimately represent Christian sacred sites which orient individuals and communities vertically and horizontally in respect to their fundamental faith-practices, cherished memories, religious identities, and socio-historical resources. It is precisely the subliminal influence of these grave-

1 The present-day remnants of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners are descendants of Japanese Catholics who were persecuted in the early 1600s and subsequently went underground, practicing their faith secretly for approximatively 250 years. Left without priests and scattered throughout Japan—especially Nagasaki prefecture, they developed their own rituals, liturgies, symbols, and a few texts, adapting them from remnants of 16th century Portuguese Catholicism and often camouflaging them in forms borrowed from the surrounding Buddhism and Shinto. In a sense, this implicit dialogue with other religious traditions subsequently returned them to a primal state in the form of themes and symbols. Today these faith-based communities constitute a very small, marginalized minority of the local populace, and their survival is in question. However, my sense from the field is that the current decline in membership does not necessarily mean the end of the religion. That view might mistake 'decline for transformation', particularly when many religiously committed Kakure Kirishitan survivors think that faith should be more about 'personal spirituality' than 'objective beliefs.' In this respect, I rather seek whether 'subjective spirituality' will be a step towards the overall decline in religious identity or whether it will represent a new form of religious identity.

2 "The term Kirishitan refers to sixteenth and seventeenth century Roman Catholic Christianity in Japan, used to refer to both the religion itself and its adherents. The term is derived from the Portuguese Christão/Cristão (Christian) with various historical and contemporary Chinese character renderings including 幾利紫旦, 貴理志端, 鬼利至端, 貴理死貪, and most commonly 吉利支丹, 切死丹, きりしたん, or キリシタン (Shinmura 2008, 591, quoted by Morris 2018, 410)." Throughout this article I will use the terms Kakure Kirishitan survivors, Kakure Kirishitan believers, and Kakure Kirishitan followers interchangeably to denote the present-day remnants of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners (かくれキリシタン, hidden Christians). These are the Japanese people who continued their unique form of Christianity even when the need to hide their faith had been eliminated. Today they constitute religious minorities seemingly integrated into Nagasaki settings. On the other hand, the term "early Japanese Crypto-Christians" will be used to specifically refer to underground Christians (潜伏キリシタン) or all the Japanese Christians of the Edo period. In this perspective, the notion of "Christians" particularly denotes Catholics found before (1549–1614), during (1614–1873), and after (from 1873–onwards) the persecution of Christians.

stones which, I further suggest, inherently articulates and lends the legacy of socio-spatial legitimacy to Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' seemingly integrated minority organizational structures.

II Location and Landscapes of Kakure Kirishitan Gravestones

Kakure Kirishitan gravestones can be found in many areas throughout Japan, but particularly in remote areas of Kyushu and its offshore islands (Nagasaki Prefecture), where Kakure Kirishitan survivors nurtured a distinctive religious system and were confined to practice their secret faith in various ways. The first important element regarding Kakure Kirishitan gravestones then is that of their location and landscapes. Some of them are seemingly among the oldest and most revered places in the region. They are geographically distributed either in the center or near the dwelling areas, and diverse with regards to physical elements and size. We may be assured, however, that other marked gravestones in the area are even scattered thinly across the layered landscapes experienced and lived in. These are usually Kakure Kirishitan graves where the identity of the deceased has long been forgotten or the location of offering activities can no longer be pinpointed. The Kirishitan (Christian) gravesites that appear significantly germane to this study include the Murakami family gravestone and San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine with its related communal gravestones which I closely observed (see case studies discussed below), as well as many other gravestones found in Kashiyama, Kakiuchi, Miyata [Sako], Matsumoto, Kōchi, Takao (remote areas of Nagasaki city; see Figure 1–1 & Figure 1–2), Kasuga and Ikitsuki (Hirado city).

Perhaps the most striking is the 2011 discovery of 64 'Senpuku Kirishitan gravestones' (*nagabaka*) by the Sotome Christian Research Group in Kakiuchi—a remote part of the Taira district northwest of Nagasaki city. As Burke-Gaffney (2017) underlined in his online essay, "The event was hailed as the first time that such a large cluster of underground Christian gravestones had been discovered intact. Located at the edge of a burial site of some 120 square meters in area thought to date back to the middle of the 17th century, the rectangular gravestones lie in an orderly formation some 40 to 50 centimeters apart, all flat stones with no inscriptions. The largest grave measures about 1.8 meters long and 1 meter wide, and has a stone pillar next to it, probably in the shape of a cross, which is characteristic of Christian graves in the early Edo period. A representative of the Sotome Christian Research Group (2011) surmised that the gravestones had been overlooked during the Edo Period because of the location of Kakiuchi, a detached territory of the relatively lenient Saga Domain." Thus, the discovery of these gravestones sparked scholarly research to connect the Kakiuchi district to the history of Underground Christians in and around the area

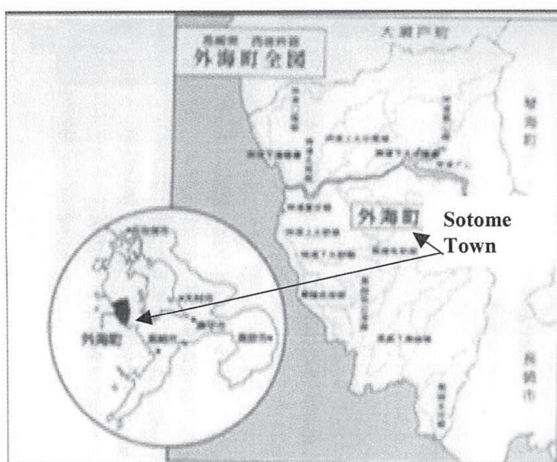

Figure 1–1 Map of Former Sotome Town

Source: Munsi 2012a, 22; 2019, 16

Figure 1–2 Map of the Present-day Kurosaki Town
(1) San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine
(2) Kurosaki Catholic Church

Source: Munsi 2012a, 22; 2019, 16

Figure 2–1　Map of Kakiuchi showing the location of Early Christian Gravestones, marked in the Japanese katakana syllabary "ハカ [haka] or grave" during the Edo period

Source: Ōishi 2012, 326

Figure 2–2　Underground Christian graves, all marked with flat natural stones, and were found recently at Kakiuchi near Nagasaki

Photo by the Author, November 4, 2013

during and after the Edo period.

Thereafter Prof. Kazuhisa Ōishi and Research Group Members from the Nagasaki Cultural Museum (see Figure 2–1 & Figure 2–2) carried out empirical research (2012) in the case study site, using primarily descriptive-interpretative method to identify characteristics, correlations, and categories of these early Japanese Crypto-Christian gravestones.[3] Alongside Nagasaki TV (NCC 長崎文化放送) programs, Nagasaki Newspaper of December 24, 2011, and Asahi Newspaper of January 20, 2012 subsequently summarized the facets of these gravestones in Kakiuchi. For the workshop I was fortunate to attend at the Nagasaki Cultural Museum in November 2013, this event became the focus point of Prof. Kazuhisa Ōishi's input and the reflections that followed on that day and after. To this extent I later developed a keen interest in the aspects of this historical site and thereby was privileged to become pro-active regarding some cleaning activities organized by the local community and interested parties in 2013. In this gravestone cleaning, I promptly tried to adopt sociological approaches which tend to take the collective behavior of groups as the unit of analysis and believe the motivations for collective actions could be mobilized at the group level through social networks, organizations, and even ideology (White and Runge 1995). Throughout this gravestone cleaning work, volunteer-based participants and I were literally walking on history, as the various aspects of those collective gravesites in Kakiuchi marked the presence of the early Japanese Crypto-Christians.[4]

The second recurring element is that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones, which are often embellished with crosses and inscriptions in the Roman alphabet, represent multiple members of a family line regrouped together with a larger family plot. A further ethnographic point of interest is that Kakure Kirishitan practitioners have over decades taken care of them as informal protected areas, passing on their socio-historical and religious memories with embedded meanings. Moreover, it would be profitable to draw out how some Kakure Kirishitan gravestones display striking similarities framed in terms of Christian and Japanese inscriptions, offerings, pictorial images, decoration, devotional items

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3　It is recognized that the findings of the cases studies were discussed by researchers using theoretical and research perspectives drawn from fields of history, anthropology, and archeology (Ōishi 2012, 351–638; see also Ōishi 2011; Kataoka 2012).

4　In the light of what "Jesuit Provincial Matheus de Couros, who concealed himself in Nagasaki, reported in a letter dated March 20, 1620, these early Christian gravestones were generally thought to be destroyed by 1639 after local authorities ordered the exhumation of corpses from all of the Christian cemeteries within town, that of Misericordia brotherhood in the inner town, of Santa Cruz and Santa Maria, and of San Miguel outside town. Among others, these included the remains of Bishop Luis Cerqueira and the Jesuits burned in the compound of the San Paulo *Colegio*, which had been transferred to the cemetery of the Misericordia when the Jesuit compound had been demolished in 1614" (Pacheco 1977, 69; quoted by Montane 2012, 226; see also Burke-Gaffney 2017). In outlying areas, however, [several] Christian gravestones escaped the purge, often lost under growing vegetation, reused as building materials, or simply overlooked. In a wider sense, the discovery of the early Japanese Crypto-Christina gravestones in Kakiuchi district and elsewhere definitely encouraged further investigation in the region.

(medals and crucifixes), miniscule stones (used for rosary and crosses carved into gravestones), while others are religiously segregated as they locate between the Buddhist and Catholic cemeteries with little variations across the country. This is seen most clearly in Ikitsuki where gravestones of households from different religious denominations stand in one cemetery. Other slight distinctions here could also be found between the Buddhist and Catholic gravestones in terms of styles, historical depth, connection to the past people and events, situational sacredness, the landscape's social and cognitive aspects, and age-related patterning.

A third and final striking aspect is the direction of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones. Most of them appeared to be facing east. That of course could present "a problem in existing Western cemeteries, which have been planned without taking into account this need" (Scalenghe & Pantani 2020, 3). Equally remarkable, however, is the fact that Kakure Kirishitan followers not only interpret it as a sacred direction where the sun rises, but mostly associate it with the traditional Christian belief that, at the end time, Jesus would return from the east (Mt 24, 27). It thereby signifies the "road towards heaven" (see section IV below).

This subtle pattern renders less surprising Turnbull's (1998, 194) observation that during the period of persecution "the design of the gravestone" in Kakure Kirishitan society "would always be completely Buddhist, but on Ikitsuki [Island] attempts were always made to have the grave facing Nakae no shima (Kataoka 1997, 287) and research by Miyamoto (1992, 4–11) and others has shown the wide range of secret Christian symbols that could be cut into a gravestone." The interesting account of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners implies the sacred meanings they ascribed to Nakae no shima, an uninhabited islet (400 m long and 50 m wide) lying between Hirado and Ikitsuki Islands and oriented to the east.[5] This is merely because it is linked closely with a group of Catholics who were murdered in1622—during the early period of the ban. Moreover, it is believed that their actual sublime status as Christian martyrs—decapitated on rocks sprayed with the white foam of waves, their heads stuffed into sacks and tossed into the sea—make them act as divine intermediaries for Kakure Kirishitan believers. It is reported that their fellow Christians (Catholics), facing the island to send them off, passed down the tragic story of their martyrdom. In the course of time, therefore, Nakae no shima came to be highly regarded as the holiest place in the entire region by local Crypto-Christians, as practised in Ikitsuki Island and along Hirado's west coast in places like the Kasuga village discussed below.

Most Kakure Kirishitan believers then act upon those meanings by gathering periodically the holy water (*San Jiwan water)* for the baptismal ceremony and other rituals from this site, after reciting and chanting intensely for about one hour a set of distorted Catholic-based prayers called *Orash*o (from the Latin *Oratio*). Nevertheless, *Orasho* still remains "unintelligible" in content. This is so because it consists of "an amalgam of printed 16th century Portuguese, Latin and Japanese texts and a number of undecipherable words, of which formal leaders of Kakure Kirishitan communities hitherto had no knowledge (see Figure 3–1 & Figure 3–2).[6] This special "water-drawing ceremony" (*omizutori*) appears to be a solemn religious event as framed by Miyazaki (2001, 126–27) and illustrated in Minagawa's (2004) video footage clips. It could be suggested that Kakure Kirishitan practitioners display a firm belief that this site is infused with the divine and healing power of the Christian martyrs' continued holy presence through the "holy and healing" water that bubbles or seeps out from the rock crevice within it, just as contemporary Christians/Catholics do in Lourdes (France) and else-

5 Among the Kakure Kirishitan survivors this unpopulated small island is often called *San Jiwan-sama*after the Portuguese reading of St. John (the reference in this case is to St. John the Baptist) and *omukae-sama*.

6 During the period of fieldwork in Nagasaki settings, I was given access to many sacred relics including the *Orasho* (a collection of ancient prayers modeled after the Oratio and chanted by the congregation) that have been orally handled down for more than 450 years in the region. Not only was the *Orasho* traditionally held secret; even when publicly shared today it remains unintelligible in content, consisting as it does of an amalgam of Latin, Portuguese, Japanese and a few indecipherable words. Evidence from this research reveals that the content of these unpublished spiritual writings and the value of communities' resources and relics of veneration, all vary within the specific context.

Figure 3–1　Nakae no shima, located 2 km off the northwest coast of Hirado

Photo by the author, July 20, 2004

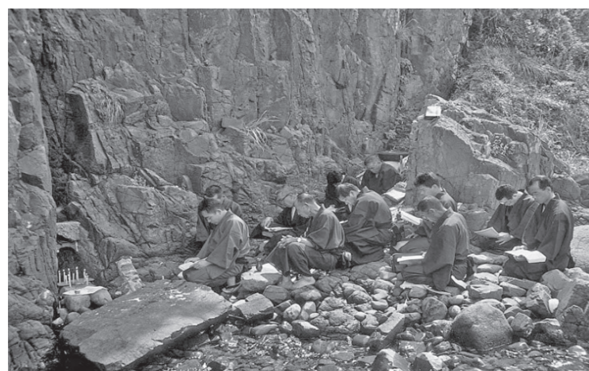

Figure 3–2　Kakure Kirishitan believers performing the Omizutori ceremony [“water-drawing ceremony”] on Nakae no shima

Source: 平戸市文化交流課, Nagasaki Prefectural World Heritage Division, 2018. Accessed on August 28, 2020

where. Today this water-drawing ceremony continues to be performed regularly by Kakure Kirishitan followers.

III　Design and Material Items of Kakure Kirishitan Gravestones

Ōishi (2009, 67–108; 2010, 20–23) has divided Kakure Kirishitan gravestones into two major types: (1) gravestones which are raised vertically from the ground (more similar in shape to traditional Japanese gravestones and can be mostly dated before the year 1600), and (2) gravestones which are placed horizontally on the ground (伏碑). Among the horizontal stones, there is a specific typology, called semi-cylindrical stones (半円柱型), which are usually of high-quality and appeared only from the year 1600 onwards. However, recent ethnohistorical records from the cemetery attached to Gorin Church—which sits on the mountain slope on cultivated land (Hisaka Island in the Goto Islands)—suggest that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in the region have various shapes. Some are rectangular-shaped stone tombstones that have had crosses engraved into them, while others are little more than a pile of pebbles (Figure 4–1). In other remote areas, such as Sotome (dissolved municipality in Nishisonogi district, Nagasaki prefecture), however, many Kirishitan graves were marked by a large, flat stone stacked on top of each other as gravestones, with teacups set on top by someone (Figure 4–2).

One could also find the presence of semi-circular

Figure 4–1　A silent Kirishitan cemetery overlooking the sea

(It tells of the Christian belief in the resurrection of the body)
Source: Website of Churches and Christian Historical and Cultural Heritage of Nagasaki, 2014. http://oratio.jp
Accessed on August 28, 2020

Figure 4–2　Kirishitan graveyard in Sotome

Photo by the author, July 19, 2004

Figure 4–3　Ink rubbing from the side of a semicircular Christian gravestone found at Shōkakuji Temple in Amakusa, Kumamoto Prefecture. The letters IHS are embellished with a cross and flanked by inscriptions in Japanese

[In the Latin-speaking Christianity of medieval Western Europe (and so among Catholics and many Protestants today), the most common Christogram became “HIS” or “IHC”, denoting the first three letters of the Greek name of Jesus Christ, ΙΗΣΟΥΣ, iota-eta-sigma, or ΙΗΣ (Iesus hominum salvatory = Jesus, the Savior of men). In 1541 Saint Ignatius adopted the monogram to represent his newly founded order, the Society of Jesus. The symbol now permeates Christian art all over the world (Author’s comments).]

Source: Ōishi 2012, 170. See also Burke-Gaffney 2017

tombstones in cemeteries, and other Christian imagery such as that of little crosses and Christian names (Ōishi 2009). Particularly, Christian artifacts associated with the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners have been excavated, including little crosses, medals, and rosary beads. Moreover, some of the quintessentially Japanese stone lanterns, which are a focal point in many community cemeteries, have the figure of the Virgin Mary and the Greek monogram IHS carved into the base part that is not visible because it is buried (Figure 4–3). But even more cogent in this respect is the depth of the graves. It is surmised that the deceased person’s family members dug a hole of about 1.50m, whereas one meter would be sufficient. The reason they added the depth was simply because animals used to come in the middle of the night and dig up the grave. That is perhaps why our key informants and social networks postulated that digging 50 cm deeper appeared to be more reasonable in spatial terms. In Sotome, moreover, “some graves made by piling up stone rubble for Kakure Kirishitan burials can also be found on slopes of the mountain, northeast of the Tsuji Shrine” (Kataoka 2012, 50).

It is noteworthy that most early Kakure Kirishitan families used their own graveyards to bury their dead in withered pine caskets which were decidedly simple in design and construction. Such caskets were made of wood that naturally decomposes, as opposed to metal that would prevent the natural process of the body’s return to earth. But it must be realized that where material items were available, members of the immediate family often used to make—almost entirely by hand, in the backyard of the neighbor’s house—a sustainable, earth-friendly, natural burial caskets of large boards of cedar wood. This is simply because the scented, decay-resistant cedar-wood appeared to them quite durable. Similarly, Kakure Kirishitan mourners did not use any nails, screws, or metal hardware on the caskets. Instead, they tied up all burial caskets with hemp-palm ropes—which used to have superior water resistance and durability. The lid was also tied up with a rope without using a nail. Furthermore, a clearer difference in praxis appears in several narrative sources. It is widely acknowledged that the burial custom and tradition of the region required at that time that individual families wrap tightly ordinary ropes on the right side of the casket containing the body. But early Kakure Kirishitan families, on the contrary, were particularly notable in praxis because they first distinctively used hemp-palm ropes and then nicely tied them up on the left side of the casket. It is thought that this task was often the most difficult part of their burial ceremony. Even though, they were so thoroughly convinced that it should be done in that way. In the same feeling, they spiritually did not understand how it could be possible otherwise.

Direct observations showed that several Kakure Kirishitan cemeteries are generally of moderate size, each being occupied with rarely more than 150 to 200 graves. Moreover, research conducted in recent years by Kazuhisa Ōishi and colleagues (2011, 2012) in some prefectures revealed 192 Christian gravestones (146 in Nagasaki, 4 in Oita, 14 in Kumamoto, 8 in Osaka, and 20 in Kyoto) remaining from the period leading up to the ban on the foreign religion. Typically, multiple patterns were present in a single Kakure Kirishitan gravesite. In Horie (Matsuyama district, Ehime Prefecture), for example, Kakure Kirishitan gravestones were reportedly discovered in 1975 "on the southeast side of a small hill actually quite close to the main highway bypass coming into Matsuyama from the north, along the coast." The stone monuments are neatly arranged in a set of three, with the stone cross in the middle, a "church" stone on the left, and "five-ringed tower" (*gorinto*) on the right (Bogdan & Fukuda 2014, 142). This background information leads us to consider one of our three case studies that bring to light the range of issues that form the substance of this article.

Case Study 1 Kasuga Shrine and Hidden Christian Graveyard

Kasuga Village (Figure 5–1) and Sacred Places in Hirado are located on the western coast of Hirado Island, on the northwestern tip of Nagasaki Prefecture. There is a twofold importance to this example. Firstly, Kakure Kirishitan practitioners concealed their faith in this village by venerating sacred places, such as the Mt. Yasumandake (Figure 5–2)—situated to the east of Kasuga—that had been worshiped since before the introduction of Christianity to Japan. Secondly, a single early Japanese Christian graveyard from the sixteenth century was excavated in the area. Interestingly, the 'Kirishitan shrine' (Figure 5–3) in Kasuga is still seen today in the form of a small stone shrine venerated because of its inherent spiritual qualities in various ways, the very process to be observed in Christianity and some other religions. But the most immediately visible encircling element in this gravesite is the cross. Erected on this site against the backdrop of the large cluster, the cross inherently reflects the extent to which Kakure Kirishitan communities of Hirado continued to perform baptisms and funerals during the early days of the Shōwa period. Moreover, it is surmised that some remains of Catholic graves (Figure 5–4) found on "Maruoyama Hill in Kasuga Village date back to the period of the initial introduction of Christianity to Japan in 1550" (*Nagasaki Prefectural World Heritage Division* 2018, 113).

Previous research (Munsi 2012b, 2019; Nakazono 2018; Miyazaki 2018; Ohashi 2014; Filus 1997, 2003, 2009; Turnbull 1998; Kataoka 1997; Nosco 1993; Tagita 1978; Furuno 1959) has clearly demonstrated

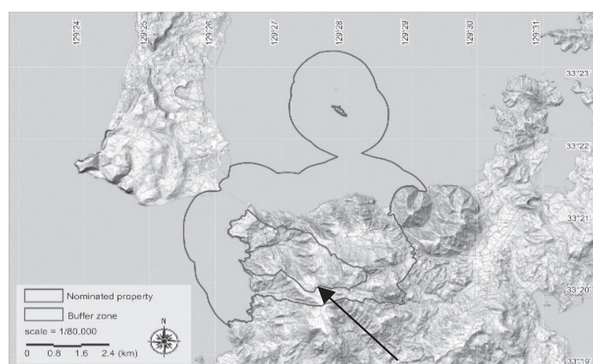

Figure 5–1 Geographical location of Kasuga in Hirado, showing its nominated territory (marked in red) and buffer zone (marked in blue)

A nominate territory is an area named by local authorities to be considered for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List. While a buffer zone can be defined as an area surrounding the property, which has restrictions placed on its use to give an added layer of protection to the designated sited.

Figure 5–2 Kasuga Village and Sacred Places (Kasuga Village and Mt Yasumandake) in Hirado

Source: Nagasaki Prefectural World Heritage Division, 2018. http://kirishitan.jp. Photo by Higurashi Yuichi, accessed on October 1, 2020

Figure 5–3　Kasuga Shrine in Hirado

Source: Nagasaki Prefectural World Heritage Division, 2018. http://oratio.jp, accessed on April 7, 2020

Figure 5–4　Hidden Christian graveyard in Kasuga Village (Hirado)

Source: Nagasaki Prefectural World Heritage Division, 2018. http://kirishitan.jp, accessed on October 1, 2020

that the kind of religious syncretism set in motion by the early Japanese Crypto-Christians and present-day Kakure Kirishitan practitioners was partly foreseen in the camouflage strategy for religious gatherings or natural sacred sites and partly to perpetuate the indigenous ancestor veneration. In this respect, however, narrative analysis points to the trajectory of their story. “In 1609 the companions of Gaspard Nishi were allowed to bury his body on Kurose no Tsuji, but as persecution increased the martyrs of Nakae no shima had their bodies thrown into the sea, partly so that their fellow Christians could not obtain relics but also so that they not claim them for Christian burial. The numerous victims of the Shōho persecution in 1645 were buried in mass graves probably by the surviving Christians, but with no memorial other than what secret believers were able to give them in the years to come” (Turnbull 1998, 193). It must be remembered that the Kakure Kirishitan faith fundamentally considered burial to be the only acceptable form of disposal of the corpse, something that used to be common in Confucianism.

During the period of study in Shimo-Kurosaki and Ikitsuki towns, I was fortunate to visit some restricted graves of Kakure Kirishitan children who were reportedly murdered by their own parents. The following excerpt from interviews briefly explains the dire circumstances:

> The Tokugawa Shogunate (*Bakufu*) issued an execution order for all newborn babies of Kakure Kirishitan families during the period of persecution. But such an order, for Kakure Kirishitan practitioners, went against the will of God, as in the fifth commandment which states, “You shall not kill: and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.” That is the reason why many early Kakure Kirishitan practitioners tried to hide their newborn babies. But whenever babies cried out Kakure Kirishitan families were arrested by the *Bakufu* officials who instantly used the swords (*yaiba*刃) to execute the babies in front of their own parents. This happened many times; as a result, many Kakure Kirishitan families resolutely decided to start killing themselves their own babies out of fear of being persecuted. Those Kakure Kirishitan families secretly climbed up the cliff, called *Kasutego*, from where they threw their babies onto the rocky shore. After the deed, Kakure Kirishitan survivors stayed on the top of the cliff for a while until they were convinced that the babies were really dead, and finally put their hands together and prayed intensively, asking God to receive their souls in heaven. From the top of the cliff to the rocky shore was a drop of about 50 meters. The name of the mountain where the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners confirmed their babies’ death and prayed for them was Nizaki in Shimo-Kurosaki Nagata (Murakami Shigenori [Formal Leader of Kakure Kirishitan Community in Shimo-Kurosaki], Personal Communication, November 3, 2019).

The aspects of the above example reflect the acknowledgement that “religion was understood to be hereditary and as such the authorities believed that the children of Kirishitan were in some way tainted” (Laver 2011, 150, reviewed by Morris 2018, 421). The focus of

memory thus remains above all on the murder of the newborn babies by their own Kakure Kirishitan parents, a practice that sounded abhorrent to casual observers. However, Kakure Kirishitan informants' reflections suggested, explicitly, that this action never reflected an "intentional murder" as was once thought. It was instead partly foreseen in the camouflage strategies set in motion by individual families and communities to survive government persecution. Above all, these burial grounds are considered by most to be a silent family historical memory, but they also remain controversial in the attempt to hide the pain of the past. My analysis of conversational-style interviews, for example, makes it clear that some Kakure Kirishitan families are often reluctant to talk about this religion related issue, while others just discuss it in a cursory manner. To establish stability and certitude about their future, they avoid therefore the tremendous mistakes of the past. There is also presumably a warning to recall the old trauma of persecution and memories of their family tragedies. As oral tradition kept alive the memory of long-term ferocious and systematic persecution, succeeding generations of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners therefore retained an awareness of the dangers associated with their ancestry or family lines. According to the respondents, such dangers were given new meaning in the nineteenth century during the so-called Urakami Yonban Kuzure (1868–1873).

A final clear insight from the field was the tension between wanting to invite new trends and developments into these graves, while wanting to keep the old style of them without any change of reforms. On the Fukue of Goto Islands, for example, we learn how "Kakure Kirishitan communities have demonstrated their ancestral filial piety through a recently constructed cemetery within a remote area of Kusahara that is dedicated to their Hidden Christian ancestors" (Sandvig 2019, 90). Recent empirical evidence, moreover, shows that authentic Kakure Kirishitan gravestones have been preserved to establish that only some burials were purposely relocated to be reconstructed in new styles. Given below are two extant examples of the reconstructed ones.

Case Study 2 Murakami Family Gravestone

Murakami community is one of the two surviving Kakure Kirishitan faith-based communities in Shimo-Kurosaki town (Sotome), the setting of Endō's seminal novel *Silence* (2009 [1966]) about persecuted Christians in Japan.[7] This place, "where followers of thirteen religions now coexist" (Filus 2009, 22), was Christianized rapidly in the sixteenth century through the conversion of the Feudal lords, namely Ōmura Sumitada (1533–87) and Arima Harunobu (1561–1612), partly in expectation of the potential benefits from the economic and military support of Portugal (Miyahira 2008, 112). Sotome is north of Nagasaki bordering the sea, surrounded by a pretty scenic view with the Goto Islands in the very far distance. In fact, it is said to be the cradle of the early Kakure Kirishitan survivors who secretly migrated by boat to remote islands, including Goto Islands to seek religious freedom and better life, aiding the spread of Kakure Kirishitan faith-based communities in such settings.

Members of Murakami community have been often gathering at regular intervals in their formal leader's house to share meals, along with the veneration of the Blessed Virgin, saints, Christian martyrs, and deceased predecessors or righteous ancestors in faith, while honoring God and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit with simplicity, or simple 'pure soul'. In line with this, their most important ritual practices include the recital of prayers (*Orasho*) and the celebration of the age-old ritual practice of *Ohatsuhoage*—a symbolic equivalent or ritual substitute of the Eucharist in which the concenaled and

7 It is surmised that Shūsaku Endō, a Japanese novelist, came up to Sotome himself to ask at the time Michael Kinshichi Murakami (former leader/Chōkata 帳方 or the grandfather of the current leader, Shigenori Murakami) if he could visit certain places to contextualize the setting for *Silence.* Many observers acknowledge that Martin Scorsese's 2016 film "Silence" keenly understands Shūsaku Endō's novel and challenges believer and nonbeliever alike. During the ban on Christianity, Sotome (a rural, coastal area on the peninsula north of central Nagasaki) was home to communities of "Hidden Christians," many of whom migrated there from other parts of Nagasaki as the remote region allowed them to practice their religion in secret. On January 5, 2005, former Sotome district's country towns were incorporated into Nagasaki city under the names of Kami-Kurosaki, Shimo-Kurosaki, and Nagata towns.

Figure 6–1　A Bird view of Murakami Family Gravestones

Photos by the author, November 3, 2007; May 18, 2008
(See Munsi 2012a, 161)

shared meal was wholly transformed into a symbolic ritual focused exclusively on *rice* and *sake* as tropes for the flesh and blood of Christ (Munsi 2019).

What must be kept in mind, however, is that the Murakami family gravestone in Sako district is especially perched up above the Shimo-Kurosaki town on a small hill like terraced fields as if it is looking over the community below (see Figure 6–1). But the fact remains that in Kakure Kirishitan society, as Sandvig (2019, 90) rightly observed, such an image indeed “corresponds with the understanding of the ancestors functioning as protecting spirits that watch over their living descendants in the community.” Thus, a clear line of the Murakami family gravestone’s development can be discerned in all its aspects that have been implicit in the available literature. Here I would like instead to report on salient features which are consistent with observations made during the excavation of the grave of Michael Kinshichi Murakami, the fourth formal leader of Kakure Kirishitan community in Shimo-Kurosaki town (Nagasaki city).

Kinshichi was the father of Haru, the wife of the late Shigeru Murakami (the seventh formal leader).[8] In this connection, he was highly regarded as the father-in-law of Shigeru and the grandfather of Shigenori (current formal leader). Thus, he was especially understanding, tolerant, patient, friendly to local people, and well-liked by his Kakure Kirishitan followers. Not only the expertise and knowledge of Kakure Kirishitan practices that marked Kinshichi but also the personal qualities that led to his being esteemed and admired by his peers and community members. Admittedly all of them had benefited from his wisdom and experience. Kinshichi died on December 15, 1992 at the age of 99, and he was immediately replaced by Shigeru Murakami, who was fortunate enough to work closely with him over many years in Shimo-Kurosaki town. Strikingly, in October 2008, barely 19 years later, Kinshichi’s tomb was excavated by Shigenori Murakami and family members behind the rationale of re-organizing the Murakami family graveyard (See Figure 6–2).

Direct observations and photographs from the excavation site showed that the burial of Kinshichi and other deceased relatives was done by inhumation. Preliminary analysis of the single deposit of Kinshichi, moreover, suggests historical details pertaining to at least four distinctive burial items. First, it was found that the grave especially contained a white wooden casket, and the coffin was marked with a Christian name. Second, it was understood that at the time of closing the casket, the family members ritually included a piece of camellia wood taken from the “sacred wood of Bastian” (*Bastian*

8　Shigeru Murakami (1919–2005) took over the leadership of the Kakure Kirishitan community in 1982 after the death of Kinshichi Murakami. He unprecedentedly converted to Catholicism shortly before his death in 2005 (Munsi 2012a).

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Figure 6–2　Murakami Family Gravestones

Photos by the author, November 3, 2007; May 18, 2008
(See Munsi 2012a, 161–162)

no seiboku) as a souvenir.[9] Third, it was plausible that participating family members did not use nails on the casket. Instead, they made holes in each of the arrows on the three plates and tied them through a white rope made from the bristles of palm (see Figure 7–1), presumably against the backdrop of the body's resurrection highlighted in Christian teaching. This rope was said to be very durable and came, in a variety of thicknesses, from thin to thick. In this case, however, things were prepared according to the regulations such as using a thin one with a diameter of 0.8 cm. Much research is needed here to decipher the message inherent in this measuring. Fourth, it was clear that the grave was dug about 1.5 meters deep. The white rope was then dropped on Kinshichi's casket wrapped in transparent thick vinyl sheet. These details of Kinshichi's burial ultimately indicate family members' deliberate intentions of protecting his bones.

Fifth and finally, direct observations showed that the participating family members put a cover stone on it. It is indeed necessary to consider that the cover stone was a stone cut out from the mountain according to the size of the casket and placed on the casket using a crane. Then they covered it with dirt and built a tombstone, thus providing *prima facie* evidence that the late Kinshichi was buried according to old burial methods of Kakure Kirishitan followers. In this sense, his grave was an old Kakure Kirishitan grave adjacent to that of the Murakami family. Since it was excavated in October 2008, it has therefore become a vacant lot, what people would label today as a ground zero (see Figure 7–2).

Looking back at the duties in relation to the excavation work of Kinshichi's grave and the religious symbolism involved, Shigenori Murakami especially recalled in 2008 the extent to which he worked hard and experienced four strange things:

> I first removed the tombstone. Then I removed the soil and pulled up the stone. At this time, several men pulled it up manually without using a crane truck. When pulling up the casket, I finally pulled it up

9　Bastian [distorted Japanese for Sebastian] was reportedly a Japanese disciple of San Jiwan, a Portuguese missionary venerated by Kakure Kirishitan practitioners during the period of persecution. He is credited in the Nagasaki region with passing on the calendar of Kirishitan observances that San Jiwan himself taught him. In the past, there was a camellia tree at the foot of the mountain Akadake in Higashi-Kashiyama. Bastian is stated to have marked out the sign of the cross with his fingertips on the bark of the trunk. The mark remained vivid and Kakure Kirishitan survivors tended the tree as a sacred one. In 1856, however, the third Urakami Persecution spread to Kashiyama, causing frequent riots. Kashiyama officials then decided to cut down the trees of Akadake for timber. When the rumors reached the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners they quickly rushed to the place at night, cutting down the sacred tree, and distributing its pieces to members from different households. Pieces of that tree are to this day carefully preserved and used as "sacred wood of Bastian" (*Bastian no seiboku*) by Kakure Kirishitan families in Nagasaki settings. During the funeral rite, for example, Kakure Kirishitan practitioners separated "the sacred wood of Bastian bit by bit into pieces, wrapped it in white cloth, and fixed it on the forehead of their deceased member, as a passport for heaven. Whether understood as a medium for remembering Bastian and recapturing his spirit, or as a protection against evil spirits, or simply as an art of traditional ancestor veneration, it is readily apparent that the act of wrapping the sacred wood of Bastian had a profound meaning in the religious beliefs and practices of Kakure Kirishitan survivors" (Munsi 2019, 9).

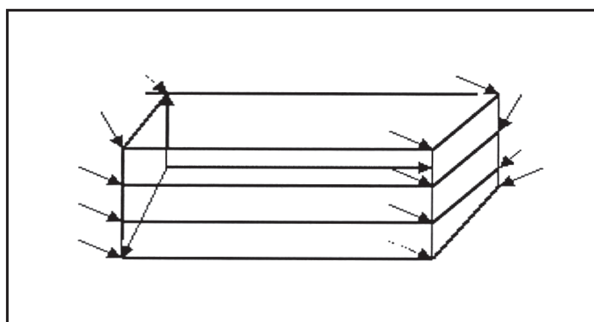

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Figure 7–1　Illustration of Murakami Kinshichi's Old Grave

Exerted from the author's field notes, May 18, 2008
(See Munsi 2012a, 163)

Figure 7–2　Excavation of Murakami Kinshichi's Old Grave in October 2008

Photo by the author, May 18, 2008
(See Munsi 2012a, 164)

again using the white rope that had been dropped on the casket during the burial. In the process, however, some strange things happened. In this specific context, I would prefer to call them "mysteries." The first mystery is that, even after 19 years, the white rope did not rot. Instead, it was strong enough to pull up the coffin. The second mystery is that I peeled off the vinyl sheet and untied the white rope and when I opened the lid, a white smoke-like water vapor suddenly flew into it. The third mystery is that the dead body was completely skeletonized and beautiful. I picked up Kinshichi's bones (remains) starting from his leg to his head and then placed them into a wooden box, and finally cremated it. The fourth and final mystery is the realization that I really dealt with a 19-year-old casket, which was in good condition and in the same position of its burial. Even though it appeared to be natural that it was worn out, it was still not as easy to destroy it like fresh wood. This is partly because it kept the humidity. Finally, I returned to the dug grave and poured some kerosene into the grave to set it on fire. Still, I could not burn it up easily. Later I decided to add some more burned wood and finally, I succeeded in burning it up. It really took me a long time to burn it out. What I eventually realized was that I had been placing my faith in the thing. For me, Kinshichi symbolizes everyone and everything that is accounted for in our Kakure Kirishitan faith-based community. He was a very devout Kakure Kirishitan practitioner and is sacred for me. I asked everyone to treat his remains as sacred. The more I thought about what I observed during excavation work of his grave the more it became clear to me that he was one of the prominent figures in Kakure Kirishitan society (Murakami Shigenori, Personal Communication, April 15, 2020).

It was under the rubric of these efforts that Shigenori reported to the local community that he and his family members had made a successful excavation operation, which allowed them to delve (although without self-awareness) into the revision of their Kakure Kirishitan faith—inspired sense of awe. However, as we may notice, there is a certain specification of this excavation work: the understanding of the nature of Kinshichi's remains indeed requires more sensitive and probing ethno-archeological investigation. Alongside the direct evidence of physical remains whose importance was obviously associated with archeological material, the remains of entire meals and other burial offerings (sure signs of belief in the afterlife) could also be recovered. Intriguingly, they were still on plates and bowls as at the times of burial rituals, which involved the efficacy of ritual actions based on what Searle (1969, 57–61) called their "conditional rules and aspects—those aspects that cannot be changed if the ritual is to have any efficacy". When we look at some prototypical characteristics of ritual actions here much can be said about the communicative and demonstrative actions unfolded in the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' testimonies in Kurosaki. My sense from the field is that their perspective seemed interesting just because their voice is mostly silenced, and the selected testimonies that created the raw material of this study somehow tried to unveil some of their hidden memories.

Figure 8–1　A Small Shrine (hokora)-Karematsu Sama placed behind the actual Karematsu Shrine

Photo by the author, November 3, 2019

→

Figure 8–2　Front view of Karematsu Shrine

Photo by the author, November 3, 2003
(See Munsi 2012a, 96, 2012b, 371, 2013, 91)

Another point of view, however, is glimpsed by the whole story's inclusion of Kinshichi's grave whose striking facets of excavation rendered him a more spiritually prominent figure and thereby reinforced the common perception of Kakure Kirishitan leaders as "possessing religious powers much like the local *honin*, Shinto and Buddhist priests" (Kataoka 1997, 152). Although these individual deposit features and records emerged from a single amateur activity, they somehow help researchers gain insights into the early funeral attendance, burial selection, and preparations among the Kakure Kirishitan survivors. From a single perspective –that of those submitted to this religious phenomenon, I would like to suggest that the idea of interacting with the dead, whether fleshed or skeletal, is in many important respects the same in other devout Kakure Kirishitan households studied. Thus, a micro-analysis of his human remains points to a significant conclusion: that he represented a typical formal leader of Kakure Kirishitan community in Shimo-Kurosaki town, as might be found today in areas across Nagasaki prefecture.

Case Study 3　San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine and Kakure Kirishitan Gravestones

A third striking feature that emerged from our analysis emphasizes the convergence of old and new Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine, built on the mountaintop of weathered pine trees (*karematsu*) in Shimo-Kurosaki town. The shrine, one of the so-called Kirishitan shrines found in Japan, is dedicated to San Jiwan (distorted Portuguese for St. John)—the local Patron saint—who is reportedly enshrined there (for further details, see Munsi 2012a, 2013, 2018, 2020).

The general view is that San Jiwan was an unidentified foreign Catholic missionary Priest who was active and took care of Kakure Kirishitan survivors in Sotome (present-day Kurosaki) town after the ban on Christian activities. The peculiarity of San Jiwan, who died at a young age under tragic circumstances, is that he had conveyed to Kakure Kirishitan survivors his vehement desire to be buried one day in this place such that he could properly protect the entire Sotome region. However, this version of the interview narrative is often contradicted by that which can only be described as the 'popular' account according to which "a non-Kirishitan local shaman (*kitōshi*祈祷師) apparently ordered the shrine to be built to appease San Jiwan's spirit, which had allegedly become a *muen-botoke* —literally Buddha with no relatives (Filus 2009, 19)". The observation has a strong surface plausibility. In the beginning of the Meiji period, the Kakure Kirishitan survivors erected a very small shrine (*hokora*) on the ground of the initial tomb of San Jiwan in his memory (Figure 8–1). The actual shrine building (Figure 8–2) only dates to 1938.

Not until the 1930's, however, was this shrine thought of as a sacred place, where soldiers going off to war would pay their respects. It is important to see that "the spot has been a sacred place for Kakure Kirishitan [survivors] since the death of San Jiwan, most likely in the 1640's" (Filus 2009, 19). Thereafter, Kakure Kirishitan

Figure 9–1 Interior view of Karematsu Shrine (The Symbols of "XX" denote small crosses)

Photo by the author, August 19, 2004
(See Munsi 2012a, 102, 2012b, 371, 2013, 89)

Figure 9–2 A piece wood of Tsubaki tree being exhibited inside of Karematsu Shrine

Photo by the author, November 3, 2009
(See Munsi 2012a, 102)

survivors and many other residents longed for "Karematsu-sama" and "San Jiwan-sama," and visited the shrine every time for veneration before undertaking their daily tasks. When the fishermen left the port, for example, they joined hands in the direction of Karematsu and wished for safety and good fishing. Essentially, this Kirishitan shrine—with its heritage values, authenticity, and integrity that have indured over time—represents today a sacred site denoting both a striking religious phenomenon and significant place of pilgrimage. In a similar vein, visitors come from within and outside of Japan to pay their respects to San Jiwan, asking his intercession for their good fortune or blessings in life.

Dougill (2012, 140) is deeply committed to the position that through this Kirishitan shrine the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners in Shimo-Kurosaki and the surrounding areas have long displayed "a sense of San Jiwan as having entered into the pines that marked his grave, and the trees were accordingly treated as sacred—much like the *shinboku* (divine trees) of Shinto shrines." Not uninteresting either, in this context, is the symbolism of its interior. Inside there are venerated relics, such as pieces of the original weathered pine trees, pieces of martyrs' clothes stained with their blood, a Japanese flag placed in front of the altar, and a grave marked with the inscription "San Jiwan, papa confesoru"—a 'Latin tribute' to their ancestor's priest-confessor. A written symbol of the moon, sun, clouds, and two signs of little crosses (disguised in the form of "XX" for the sake of camouflage) can also be seen on the restored shrine's altar door. However, very near to the entrance of this sacred precinct, several *origami* paper cranes called *orizuru* have been beautifully hung (see Figure 9–1 & Figure 9–2).

A cursory look at both Kakure Kirishitan ethnography and Christian tradition shows that the moon and the sun are indeed most eloquent symbols for Christ (The Light of the world). Significantly enough, all these venerated relics (including the small stones which are in the Shrine and often used as a charm) are also, if somewhat secretly, believed to possess supernatural or divine properties, such as healing powers. Intriguingly, the religious practitioners of Kurosaki share with other individual members of communities in Nagasaki settings a very strong belief that simply by being inside this shrine during their specific visits and prayers (*omairi)*, one might indeed experience divine power, a sacred time that gets them in touch with something in both *liminal* (transitional) and *liminoid* (creativity/innovation) spaces/times as turning point in the ritual practice.[10] At the same time, the San Jiwan Karematsu shrine relies

10 According to Turner (1974), liminal phases allow individuals to act without being bound to routines, social structures, and other day-to-day business activities. It would be fair then to suggest that for a liminoid invitation to be offered it must be done so within a liminal space.

Figure 10 New Gravestones of Kakure Kirishitan families located near the Karematsu Shrine
Photos by the author, July 19, 2004

heavily on the enthusiasm and energy of its annual festival (Munsi 2013, 2018, 2020) which brings Kakure Kirishitan practitioners, Catholics, and Buddhists together through participation in interfaith gatherings or religious activities.

It is necessary to recognize that while there have been fundamentally Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in the aftermath of San Jiwan's death, many non-Kakure Kirishitan followers were also buried around the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine. Reasons for this choice are varied. It is likely that they admired San Jiwan intensely. Therefore, they said, "If we die, please bury us near his grave or around the mountain valley." Some participants even went so far as to employ the term 'authentic' as they referred to the supernatural power of the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine and the long-term Kakure Kirishitan tombs found around it. There is no doubt that numerous Kakure Kirishitan informants, however elderly the ones in our study may be, wish to be buried in this situational sacred site. My inclination had been to assume that people's connection to San Jiwan and ancestral identity is quite mystical, as they are committed to fill the sacred site with cosmic symbolism and thereby anticipating their own human salvation.

Later, when San Jiwan Karematsu shrine was completely rebuilt in 2003 the same location and design was retained. At that time rice and salt were sprinkled on the area by the Buddhist priest, Hidemi Shioya, from the nearby Sōtō-Zen Temple (*Tempukuji*) in Higashi-Kashiyama. Specifically, a cave assumed to be San Jiwan's tomb was revealed far beneath. Similarly, pieces of wood peeled from the original weathered pine tree (*karematsu*) were subsequently found in San Jiwan's tomb and thereby rendered it more spiritually significant. It must be stressed that the bringing together of such apparently distinct entities was regarded as a time-honored foundation confirming not only cherished memories associated with it but also Kakure Kirishitan tradition that has crystallized around it over three centuries. As a matter of fact, the devotion to San Jiwan's human remains and related relics survived and was reinvigorated when some excavated pieces of weathered pine tree were taken away by Kakure Kirishitan believers to be used as sacred woods, while others have significantly been dedicated to and exhibited within the shrine. It is precisely in this religious setting, in my own understanding of the clues, that we can see the degree to which the newly constructed and blessed building once again purified the site by the infusion of heavenly grace and heralded the minimal survival of Kakure Kirishitan faith in a very urban world.

Obviously, from my point of view, the shared cultural, religious, and historical resources of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners were brought again into life when many early Kakure Kirishitan tombs were found near the old Karematsu shrine and subsequently partially excavated by the relatives of the deceased persons. Kakure Kirishitan families then resolutely placed their deceased' cremated human remains in a newly built ossuary in a communal cemetery relocated to the right side of San Jiwan Karematsu shrine (see Figure 10). Typically, the Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in Shimo-Kurosaki consisted of piled crystalline and flat natural stones placed on top of them. But it bears observing that the aforemen-

Figure 11 Old Grave of Kakure Kirishitan Family located near the Karematsu Shrine

Photo by the author, November 6, 2005
(See Munsi 2012a, 104)

Figure 12 Sacred grove for prayer located near the Karematsu Shrine

Photo by the author, August 19, 2004
(See Munsi 2012a, 65, 2013, 95)

tioned relocated gravestones were specifically built on the basis of the contemporary Japan's Cemetery Rules and Regulations. During the period of fieldwork in 2004, I had the opportunity to systematically identify the new Kakure Kirishitan graves and register the Christian and family names inscribed there. In fact, this Kakure Kirishitan identity is similarly suggested by other details (i.e., location, burial goods, small stones and crosses, etc.) of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones, at first sight trifling but which become eloquent once connected—especially with practitioners' outlook of death and attitudes towards their deceased predecessors.

There is also a communal graveyard below it, on the left side of the lane. In addition, one finds a single tomb built on the lawn near the new communal cemetery with three stones (see Figure 11). More recent investigations, however, have revealed that it is apparently an empty tomb intentionally built as a model of a Kakure Kirishitan tomb—made by piling up stone rubble, a way in which they carved out their own paths of spirituality. It is nevertheless worthwhile to note that the old Kakure Kirishitan tombs distributed on the left side of the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine are quite ruined, partly because practitioners have no longer memories to identify their relatives properly. Despite this, it transpired that Kakure Kirishitan believers in Kurosaki can still sense the sacredness of these burial grounds and act according to the respect they demand. Equally noteworthy, however, is that a large rock used for prayers (*Inori no iwa*) occupies the land near the old communal cemetery and the actual shrine (see Figure 12). It is surmised that early Kakure Kirishitan survivors from Kurosaki district secretly used a large space beneath this rock to recite the sequences of *Orasho* (prayers) during their *kanashimi* season (denoting the season of Lent in Christian terms). Closely related to the site is also a pocket of pine forest, combined with medium-size, hardy, deciduous broad leaf trees, whose symbolism tallies with other gravesites inherently converging to the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine.

The nature of the spatial relationship between Kakure Kirishitan survivors and Japanese Christian martyrs was brought out more clearly when a great number of their gravestones were subsequently grouped around the sacred places such as the San Jiwan Karematsu shrine. As the years went by, this came to reflect a symbol of and testimony to their faith-practices. In cultural and religious aspects, moreover, this practice is closely like that of the "Monads of south Persia, where they take their prominent men to be buried near a Shrine" (Barth 1965, reviewed by Taha 2018, 144). Thus, it would not be wrong to connect the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine and its attendant beliefs to all these tombs and their surrounding landscape (small forest of weathered pine trees), including the nearby Bastian's grave which would seem to be its defining characteristics (See Figure 13 & Figure 14). Many of the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners I spoke with in Kurosaki and Shitsu told me that such socio-cultural and psycho-religious constructs allow them to share the hope and promise he and their

Figure 13 Landscape of Karematsu Shrine, with small forest of weathered pine trees.

Photo by the author, November 3, 2014

Figure 14 Front view of Bastian's grave

Photo by the author, August 19, 2010

(For the old shape of this Bastian's grave, see Munsi 2012a, 115–117)

righteous ancestors in faith bring. It could be argued that they ultimately represent "natural sacred sites," which Putney (2005, 132) has aptly defined as "part of a broader set of cultural values that different social groups, traditions, beliefs or value systems attached to places and which 'fulfil humankind's need to understand, and connect in meaningful ways, to the environment of its origin and to nature."

IV Posture and Orientation of the Dead

Ethnographic and historical studies show that all gravestones erected during the persecution of Christians had to adhere strictly to the Buddhist style, with an inscription showing a *kaimyo* (posthumous Buddhist name). In this respect, it was required that funerals be conducted by a Buddhist priest. Later the remains of the deceased must be placed in a fetal sitting position in a ceramic cask. In several cases, at least, the early Japanese Crypto-Christians living in remote locations, with great pain and risk, nevertheless managed to resist the decree, just to ensure that the deceased received as much of a Christian burial as was possible. The posture and orientation of the deceased appeared to be the criterion which basically translated their concerns for the afterlife of the deceased. In this vein, they then tried to bury the deceased lying with the head facing up and thereby, for the sake of camouflage, intelligibly placed rectangular gravestones without inscriptions called *nagabaka* (lit. "Long grave"), a style originated in Rome. It was reportedly introduced to Japan by European missionaries in the sixteenth century.

When asked about the positions of limbs, one Kakure Kirishitan leader cogently indicated that "if I am a sleeping casket, I will have my head facing north, so that my legs face the south. However, it is evident that if you have a casket like in the past, you will bend your feet (gymnastic sitting) and put the casket in, so that your feet can be down. Either hand is combined with the chest. At the end, the formal leader (*Chōkata*) makes sure that the body is placed in the coffin along with a Christian symbol, such as an *omaburi,* paper crosses popular on Ikitsuki Island (For further details on the subject, see Harrington 1980, 319–321; Turnbull 1998, 87–89, 194). In Higashi-Kashiyama, Kurosaki, and Shitsu, for example, the leader inserted a small piece of Bastian's sacred wood (*Bastian no seiboku*) into a piece of small white paper which he has cut off in the form of a little cross. Then, he assembles this pious item by folding it in half both ways and placing it in the coffin. Finally, he either fixes it on the forehead of the deceased or inserts it beneath him, or even places it in the hands of the deceased, depending on circumstances. In this respect, moreover, Kataoka (1997, 289) noticed a slight difference in "the custom on Ikitsuki Island being that of placing an *omaburi* in the right ear of a dead man, and in the left ear of a woman" (Kataoka 1997, 289). In Goto Islands especially, the corresponding custom was to place a piece of cloth called Bastian's *kimono* (Kataoka 1997, 269 reviewed by Turnbull 1998, 194). In any case, it is precisely the context where the Kakure Kirishitan leader's intriguing ritual gesture points to the members'

acute awareness of sending off the deceased to heaven with a proof of the Kakure Kirishitan faith, translating an eschatological symbol of hope, protection, and salvation.

It is interesting to note that “Kirishitan graveyards in Shitsu village look like ordinary Buddhist sites. However, while Buddhist laid the bodies of the deceased in the coffin in a sitting position (*zakan*), early Kakure Kirishitan practitioners bent the knees of the deceased and laid their bodies on the side, with their head towards the south. They also buried a piece of camellia wood with the deceased, as this was regarded as sacred by the Kakure Kirishitan communities” (Nagasaki Prefecture Research Report 2013, 328). Indeed, one of the fundamental principles of the burial ritual here was to place the body in the ground directly, so that the person’s physical remains were returned to Mother Earth while their soul travels to the spirit world, suggestive of paradise.

In the Christian practice, however, the deceased person is laid on his back, with the face turned towards the east. This sacred direction, which at first glance appears to signify a way of peering into Paradise, which God had “planted in the East” (Gen. 2, 8), also symbolizes the direction of Heaven as the eternal home. According to this reading, all Kakure Kirishitan believers in effect desire to be there after death, as they constantly grasp its insights and spatial images from the basic tenets of their Bible-like narrative called “The Beginning of Earth and Heaven” (*Tenchi hajimari no koto*, consisting of 16000 Japanese characters divided into 15 chapters), which was probably written from memory in 1823 (Tagita 1978, 36, 77–78; see also Whelan 1996), and as such this ‘sacred book’ is particularly associated with the Kakure Kirishitan communities in Sotome (present-day Kurosaki) district and Goto Islands.[11]

From the standpoint of theological anthropology, we learn just how Christian faith insists that our earthly present is not the last word on human experience. This is wholly consistent with Ladd’s (1974, 333) Christian depiction of our reality: “In the present, we see the presence of the future. In the present, we see the unfolding of God’s eternal Kingdom. The eternal destiny, the glorious future, calls us on.” There is, of course, reason why most Kakure Kirishitan informants indicated that their burial practice is reminiscent of Christian practice where “the head should be placed to the west and feet to the east so that, according to folklore at least, the rising body faces east at the time of the Last Judgment. In line with this, Ucko’s synthetic review (1969, 272) informs us that in Christian practice also, orientation of this kind is used to differentiate certain categories of people, for a Roman Catholic priest and bishop is not only buried in a specially reserved part of the cemetery but is also laid with his feet to the west so that in death, as in life, he faces his flock”.

Such a deliberate emphasis on cardinal corners therefore contrasts greatly with the wide ethnographically recognized burial practice of other societies which lay so much stress upon the relation to the river, up which the spirit will travel to the land of the dead. Moreover, ethno- historical records from the cemetery attached to former Gorin Church revealed that the deceased were buried with their feet facing towards the large crucifix—known locally as a “*kurusaado*” and hitherto regarded as an ‘altar’—which was erected in 1931 within the higher part of the open space in the Gorin district located on the east side of Hisaka Island (Goto Islands). This was behind the rationale that when the resurrection of the dead occurs, they will be able to stand up and immediately see the cross. Note in passing

11 It is recognized that the hidden Christians from Urakami who confessed their faith in 1865 to the French Missionary Priest, Bernard Thaddée Petitjean that “the hearts of all of us here are the same as yours,” also submitted several types of religious books to him. Three of which are known titled as: “The Power of Contrition” (*Konchirisan no Riyaku*); “Prayers of Luzon” (*Luzon no Orasho*); and “The Beginning of Heaven and Earth” (*Tenchi Hajimari no Koto*). Although the early Japanese Crypto-Christians and their descendants (present-day Kakure Kirishitan practitioners) did secretly recite these books, they did not really understand the core meanings of the Christian doctrine. However, it is worth noting, in the light of Fr. Petitjean’s insightful letter (handwriting manuscript)—which I was fortunate to access and transcript in 2014, that early Urakami hidden Christians especially were equipped well with the sacraments of the Catholic Church and prayers. In many ways, this maintenance of a minimum knowledge and culture of the Christian faith for 250 years comparatively translates their uniqueness in Nagasaki settings.

that belief in the resurrection of the body is one of the essential elements of the Christian faith. However, just as early Japanese Crypto-Christians secretly sidestepped the *fumie* ritual hitherto initiated by the *Bakufu*, some Kakure Kirishitan practitioners also managed to camouflage gravestones by making burial sites with natural stones or by placing the side of the stone with the inscription facing down. This focus of position perhaps recognizes in the first place that the deceased person is placed in such a way that the head faces up to the clouds to make him existentially relevant.

From the archeological and anthropological lenses, we can therefore assume that one of the most characteristic traits of the Kakure Kirishitan gravestones is the position of the deceased person whose grave becomes a symbolic sacred space, and so a real territory. Yet, it bears observing that a readily apparent pregnant shift from inhumation to cremation in Kakure Kirishitan society was not equated with an associated change in religious beliefs. But it should be rather understood as one of "the influences [of modernity and environmental policies] which have shaped and moulded the Kakure Kirishitan faith through its past history and present expression" (Turnbull 1998, 210). This leads us to a final key element that bears heavily on this narrative.

V　Attachment and Devotion of Practitioners to the Gravestones and Dead

Kakure Kirishitan practitioners strongly hold the beliefs associated with the journey of the dead to the afterlife (the abode of the righteous ancestors) and thoughts about their souls. Thus, their attachment and devotion to gravestones (as an integrated part of the local community setting and places whose elements have supernatural significance) is particularly manifest in periodic pious visits and the kinds of ritual practices and ceremonies conducted around them to seek luck or to repel misfortune. When I questioned members of Kakure Kirishitan hierarchy in Wakamatsu town (Shinkamigoto) about this, they indicated that: "The obligation to visit the graves is part of our religious duties in Kakure Kirishitan tradition. To us it appears useful and necessary to do so regularly. When visiting a family gravestone, we offer a little prayer for our deceased relatives and offer to them water, tea, incense, and candles. Then we perform specific rituals, such as the recital of prayers (*Orasho*), much in the way we frequently do on our Buddhist altars (*butsudan*) all over Japan. Such routine ritual activities are performed for the well-being of the family and community, but we are also persuaded that our communion with our deceased predecessors can bring us to the port of eternal salvation" (Sakai Yoshihiro and Suzuki, Personal Communication, Personal communication, November 5, 2017).

Other research participants emphasized that "the traditional knowledge about these gravestones incorporates some unwritten rules for visiting them. These include, for example, good intent, respect, and belief in the sanctity of these sacred sites, as well as the Kakure Kirishitan protocols' precept of observing sexual abstinence or conducting beforehand some ablution and purification of heart and spirit. Thus, it is absolutely clear in the common awareness of Kakure Kirishitan communities that practitioners intending to visit gravestones should refrain from polluting and littering them to avoid any future misfortune." I shall conclude, for the present, remarking that the Kakure Kirishitan believers' experience in showing proper respect for their respective gravestones is almost mystical. In the background, there is, among other things, the important insight of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners that such mystical characters are also justice-making, since righteous ancestors punish the person who made mistakes.

The off-handedness of the above comments suggests how it is not just a mere matter of relation to the dead—voiced here by faith-practices. Such narratives of pious visits thus dovetail with other stories about the historical contexts in which Kakure Kirishitan believers are tied to their gravestones. Here the periphery is made the center, as these Kakure Kirishitan gravestones connect the religious minorities with the main-stream society. More generally, as Scalenghe & Pantani (2020, 9) rightly point it out: "For Catholics, visits to graveyards are frequent and socially acceptable, almost mandatory both from a social and religious perspective. The recycling of graves is generally permitted, with a resi-

dence time of 10 to 30 years. The expectancy of an afterlife would seem to preclude cremation as an option, even if it is gaining popularity in Western countries."

Deeply reflective in nature, specific feast days scheduled in the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' well-known liturgical calendar (*Bastian reki* or *Bastian no koyomi*) call upon them to consider the status of their minority communities and to pay homage to saints and their deceased predecessors. But the intriguing point to our purposes here is the reciprocal remembering that is explicit in this practice set up between families, ancestors, and saints (mostly the local Christian martyrs). A later image, however, illustrates how the profound meaning of these righteous ancestors in faith remain vivid, rekindled anew each time they visit such gravestones for prayer and remembering. Seemingly, such pious visits, combined into religious beliefs, and expressive symbolic values, appear to directly reflect the intersection between religion and spirituality in this spatio-temporal setting. Nielsen and Groes (2014, 109–110) have made a similar point that frequent visitors to a gravesite have a somewhat stronger emotional attachment to the space, shaped by their socio-cultural, psycho-religious and spiritual experiences of "bereavement, grief and possibly comfort and closeness to the ones they lost… [It would seem, then, that] the more everyday activities a bereaved person could relegate to the cemetery, the better they often felt, because it gave them a sense of still including their lost loved ones in their everyday lives."

A similar sentiment appears in numerous other experiences. For example, it transpired in the lives of some individual families and communities studied that authentic pious visits to the gravestones often occur when the details of those distinct pious visits are so precious that they implicitly create an authentic Kakure Kirishitan identity. It is easy to see why Kakure Kirishitan leaders in Nagasaki settings had considered such regular pious visits as the archetypal foundations of their religious leadership. In this context, moreover, they highly regarded gravestones as their potentially individual spaces for mourning and performing daily rituals of remembering the dead. Kakure Kirishitan survivors and interviewed long-term residents in Wakamatsu town (Shinkamigoto) further expressed the view, almost without exception, that they involve themselves in a devout recital of a series of the unpublished Kakure Kirishitan prayers (*Orasho*) from books based on crumbling eighteenth century scrolls that they still own. Among the Kakure Kirishitan believers in Ikitsuki, such recital also involves singing hymns of *Orasho* which contain part of a hymn called "*O Gloriosa Domina*", which was sung in churches in the Andalucía region of Spain during the sixteenth century (for a fuller description, see Minagawa 2004).

Reciting a set of *Orasho* in front of the graves seemingly requires Kakure Kirishitan leaders to impose a certain self-discipline and seriousness in the memorization of them. Thus, it is clear, even from casual observation, that any attempt to neglect this psycho-spiritual behavior, or even to exhibit a simplistic recital and memorization of *Orasho* at this sacred time and space would connote not solidarity with the deceased predecessors but rather disrespect towards them. At the basis of this lies the fact that neglect of such ritual principles is gauged as an offence (Shinto equivalent of sin of omission and commission) to the Christian martyrs or righteous ancestors in faith who became *Kami* and hence may cause misfortune on the entire community. In this case, heavenly punishment upon the wrongdoer will be incurred (*bachi kaburu*), hindering, of course, a future ritual to function properly. In some instances, people hold that the *tatari* (warnings or curses) from the righteous ancestors in faith may take the shape of destructive occurrences, unhappiness, and even death. In such conditions, we are informed that "members need to perform specific [Shinto] rituals of *harai* and *misog*i [cleaning/purification of the body/mind/spirit] to restore the human-divine harmony" (Turnbull 1998, 179).

VI Discussion: Relics of Persecution and Immaterial Memorial of the Dead

This ethnographic narrative has shown that different aspects of the Kakure Kirishitan survivors' religiosity and spirituality are independently associated with the facets and contours of their longstanding communal burial grounds in Nagasaki settings. At one level, this

may simply be to note the archetype of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones as 'situational sacred sites', a concept which is foundational to many ancient and contemporary religious societies (Davies 1994, 33–61; King 1986, 288–289; for a further review, see Gaskill 2019, 103–123). At another level, we might suggest that they have long become Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' precious relics of persecution (imbued with holiness, or the presence of the divine), and thereby lively physical witnesses of the immaterial memorial of their righteous ancestors in faith. By heightening these sacred sites as key constructs of community psychology and increasingly important resources in their social world, Kakure Kirishitan practitioners have then implicitly displayed a form of "religious regime," echoing the reciprocal relation between "consecration" and "insignation" in the employment of fulsome symbolic meanings (Riis and Woodhead 2012, 102–108, 118–119, 121–122).

We can equally infer the weight of objects from not only the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' substantive religious behaviors towards their sacred gravestones, but also the local community's acknowledgement, expressive reverence, and actions connected with their shared (remembered and perhaps idealized) past and protection of heritage. This amounts to the field-observation that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in Nagasaki settings take on value that we could describe analogically as 'secondary sacred landscapes. Following up on Kilde's (2008, 8) viewpoints, I will suggest that these patterns delineate the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' contextual negotiation of the substantive and situational aspects of sacred places cogently observed by Eliade and Smith, respectively. At least for anthropology, the defining features of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones and landscapes, furthermore, reflect the major importance of funerary practices and sacred spaces as witnesses of human invariants and cultural particularities (Godelier 2015).

The relevance of this to our discussion is that the specific features of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones underline some striking local forms of historical and religious production, of course rooted in both Japanese ethos and Catholic faith whose overlapping and interlocking relationships have not yet been much explored in the restricted field of Kakure Kirishitan studies. But even more cogent in this respect is the practitioners' very conception of their righteous ancestors in faith as divine intercessors who need to be remembered, honored, and venerated. This assumption certainly proved the case in the context of Goto Islands. "By altering the style through combining individual graves into an assembled family grave, the living descendants were effectively renewing the old decaying tombstones that have been worn down over time, while also making it easier to venerate their ancestors at a single location" (Sandvig 2019, 90). In this regard, I concede with Toyama (2014, 155) that the esoteric words and phrases of *Orasho* significantly strengthen the religious power to enhance the compatibility of the two worlds: *gokuraku* (Buddhist *Tengoku*) and *Paradiso* (Catholic *Paradise)*. No wonder, therefore, that Kakure Kirishitan practitioners found them consonant with the principles of their religion, which Filus (2009, 24) coined as "Japanese Catholicism," translating a kind of indigenous Catholicism (through a melding of Catholic, Buddhist, Shinto, and Japanese folk practices) in a strict sense. This aspect of practitioners' concealed religious identity is indeed articulated in the same way that "Crypto-Jews from outwardly Catholic families on the Iberian Peninsula and in the New World have preserved certain practices that come from Judaism" (Bogdan & Fukuda 2014, 145).

Much more can be said on the facets of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones, but for the purposes of the present analysis two features in particular stand out. First, the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners' veneration of righteous ancestors in faith and by extension, the cult of the dead and communion of saints, is manifested in the construction of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones and the practice of frequent pious visits to seek for health or luck on a particular undertaking. It seems to me that the attendant beliefs pertaining to them and the San Jiwan Karematsu Shrine reflect the practitioners' deep spirituality, sense of prayer, and way of speaking out of the depths of silence with their deceased predecessors out of their interior union with them. Hence, the picture clearly emerges of practitioners in whose psycho-religious/spiritual behaviors, concerns, and constructs show

forcefully one startling assumption: “People are connected to their myths, beliefs, society and environment in a variety of ways that have resulted in the veneration of numerous tangible and intangible expressions. In that sense, they constantly draw benefit from these expressions, which have gone through a dynamic process of evolution, reinterpretation, and modification, reflecting changes occurring in society” (Wijesuriya, Nishi & King 2006, 18). In this respect, it may, of course, be claimed that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones are made meaningful through their own visibility in Nagasaki areas and through the invisibility of ritual offerings and the deceased buried within (Johnson et al. 2015).

Second, and more importantly, is the striking observation of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones as places where practitioners display socio-historic experiences of cherished memories through specific symbols and rituals, in much the way Green (2011, 101) describes, but suggestively echoed in Sutton’s (2001, 29) comment on “prospective memory [remembrance]”, when precisely the future merges with the remembered (and perhaps idealized) past. There are two possible reasons for this socio-religious phenomenon. First, the individual safety helps to place the religious practitioner in a captive position. Second, experience has shown that the family or community security offers a major advantage that few are willing to lose. As a result, Kakure Kirishitan practitioners will seek outside support through the intercession of their righteous ancestors in faith whose sanctity and deeds have remained engraved in their cherished memories. However, I have witnessed during fieldwork that the survival of Kakure Kirishitan culture in Japan is also “expressed through the privatization of religious practices that have been preserved primarily, although not exclusively, by women in the families,” a lived-religious experience similar to that of the Mexican female descendants of Crypto-Jewish families in twentieth century American society (Jacobs 1996, 98).

Evidenced by this discussion is that proximity to the dynamically unified three-fold power (divine/supernatural, social, and personal power) embedded within Kakure Kirishitan gravestones are “deemed to yield authority and spiritual empowerment” (Kilde 2008, 4) to Kakure Kirishitan survivors. My sense from the field is that these sacred sites have long become areas of spiritual commons and shared resources for the local community where all kinds of empirical characters come into action. In this regard, Adams (1968, 203) may be correct when he aptly points out that, “other factors being equal, it is probable that continuity of tradition depends largely upon frequency of activity.” It is precisely in terms of this continuing legacy that this article builds. Taken together, the triangular findings from this study therefore articulate my conviction on the virtue of Kakure Kirishitan gravestones in constantly linking memory (the contemporized past), culture, and the Kakure Kirishitan communities to each other in their present localities. Both these physical and socio-cultural features thus hinge around an emphasis on “points of contact and encounter, what Homi Bhabha calls the “third space,” a space that highlights each side of the encounter simultaneously, the global and the local (glocal), hegemony and hybridity” (Prior 2020, 106). Following upon the formulation of Gaultier, Dietrich, and Corrochano (2013), I can therefore assuredly argue that Kakure Kirishitan gravestones remain “within ancient and present societies, significant sacred places of remembrance and as subtle part of heritage in the contemporary landscapes.”

VII Conclusion

This synthesis has tried to give Kakure Kirishitan gravestones a far more sensitive and dynamic treatment that reconfigures our understanding of their most significant aspects and the unique kind of the phenomenological world they represent. One of the most consistent findings is that Kakure Kirishitan survivors produced faith-practices, symbols of common cultural and religious identity, and cherished memories which have long established their gravestones as situational sacred spaces of remembrance. It is precisely upon such collective knowledge (for the most part of the shared past) that Kakure Kirishitan practitioners base today their awareness of unity and particularity. On a more religious note, however, analysis ultimately hinges upon the significance of the material and immaterial aspects highlighting the Kakure Kirishitan practitioners’ quintessential

quest to idealize, establish, and maintain the human-divine harmony in their present localities. In general, therefore, this study has provided a refined interpretive tool for demonstrating how Kakure Kirishitan gravestones represent a sub-culture, often unspoken, but fully understood within a Christian and Japanese tradition. In their position and perception as 'secondary sacred landscapes' they have arguably a profound impact on the Kakure Kirishitan individuals' constructs and thereby remain a living reality for them.

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