

## Visual Bilingualism and Mission Art: A Reconsideration of “Early Western-Style Painting” in Japan

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This paper addresses the topics of artistic hybridity and visual bilingualism, through a critical analysis of Japanese “early Western-style painting,” a disputed genre of hybrid paintings from Azuchi Momoyama and early Edo that combine Asian and European traditions. The paper examines one such example of early Western-style paintings, a pair of Japanese folding screens that represents figures of European aristocrats in a European pastoral landscape. The paper shows that this pair of folding screens is a result of cross-cultural collaboration between Japanese painters and European missionaries, and analyzes the screens in view of Christian and Buddhist iconographies. The paper aims to demonstrate the way in which the anonymous painter successfully combined Japanese and European tradition to make the artwork “bilingual” aesthetically as well as religiously.

**Keywords:** Japanese art 日本美術, early Western-style painting 初期洋風画, mission art 宣教美術, Jesuits イエズス会, hybrid art 異文化混淆芸術

In the MOA Museum in Shizuoka, renowned for its outstanding collection of early modern Japanese art, is a curious pair of Japanese folding screens (*byōbu* 屏風) known as *Yōjin sōgakuzu* 洋人奏楽図 (Europeans Playing Music). The two six-panel screens depict European aristocrats in a panoramic landscape (Figures 1-a and 1-b); colorfully clad men and women enjoy conversation in a peaceful waterfront pasture, the mountains on the horizon are painted in a pale blue-green color against the golden sky, and the rims of white clouds are seen in the background. As such, the work reflects the popular taste of Japanese folding screens in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the representation of outdoor merrymaking in a panoramic landscape and a lavish application of gold in the background. What is curious about this painting, however, is the manner in which the figures and the details are rendered so convincingly European. Indeed, one might wonder whether a European painter played a role in the composition.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the interrelated topics of artistic hybridity and visual bilingualism through an iconographical analysis of *Yōjin sōgakuzu*. This artwork is



Figure 1-a. *Music Screen*



Figure 1-b. *Shepherd Screen*

Figure 1. *Yōjin sōgakuzu byōbu* (folding screens). Early 17th century. Ink and colors on paper, 93 x 302 cm. MOA Museum of Art, Shizuoka. (Reproduced with permission)

an example of “hybrid” art that combines a variety of traditions.<sup>1</sup> The artwork’s format (the folding screen) is common in East Asia, and its medium (Japanese paper and pigments) is local, while it represents a joyous pastoral landscape with European aristocrats playing music and enjoying conversation on the riverside. With regard to the topic of visual bilingualism, I will show that the folding screens “speak” in two ways and make sense in both Japanese and European contexts. Writing on the arts of colonial Latin America, Cecelia F. Klein argued that within the colonial context, visual bilingualism was a means of silent resistance, a tool for the colonized and oppressed people to express their own views against the colonizers.<sup>2</sup> This paper, however, demonstrates an entirely different view of visual bilingualism based on a cross-cultural partnership, and illuminates a kind of hybrid art that emerged as a product of the artistic exchange between Japanese painters and European missionaries.

To date, little is known of the historical background of *Yōjin sōgakuzu*. The MOA Museum confirms that it purchased the pair of screens from the collection of Count Matsudaira Naonori 松平直徳子爵 (1829–1931), who was the patriarch of the Harima Akashi 播磨明石 Matsudaira family; the artwork’s provenance before going to the Matsudaira collection is unknown.<sup>3</sup> In the last twenty years, art-historical research has identified *Yōjin sōgakuzu*

1 For the definition of hybrid art, see Bailey 1999, p. 3.

2 Klein 1990, pp. 108–09.

3 National Museum of Japanese History (hereafter NMJH) 1997, p. 154.

as a Japanese “early Western-style painting” (*shoki yōfuga* 初期洋風画), a mysterious corpus of hybrid paintings from the early seventeenth century that features European subject matter and incorporates European painting techniques into traditional Japanese frames, such as folding screens and hanging scrolls.<sup>4</sup> As I review below, art historians’ research on the European prototypes/models of these paintings indicates that the scenes represented in *Yōjin sōgakuzu* were copied from the European prints imported to Japan in the late sixteenth century by Catholic missionaries.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, researchers agree that *Yōjin sōgakuzu*, along with the other Western-style paintings with similar features, was created by artists who had been trained at the art workshop(s) run by the Catholic mission, the Society of Jesus.<sup>6</sup> The Jesuit records indicate that this unique workshop was auxiliary to the Jesuit school for Japanese youths (*seminario*), and it was established sometime before 1591 by the professional artist Giovanni Niccolò (also called Nicolao or Cola, 1560–1626), from Italy, who was himself a Jesuit missionary.<sup>7</sup> At the workshop, the Japanese apprentices learned European-style painting techniques and produced a variety of artworks needed for the churches in Japan. Through the years, some of these apprentices became skilled enough to combine the Japanese and European elements to create original hybrid paintings such as *Yōjin sōgakuzu*.

The painter of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* must have been well trained in both Japanese and European artistic traditions, since he was able to combine the two divergent traditions harmoniously. The leading scholar on early Western-style painting in Japan, Sakamoto Mitsuru 坂本満, discovered in 1973 that the painter had gathered fragments of Catholic devotional prints into *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and successfully composed a coherent, “original” European landscape.<sup>8</sup> The painter also attempted to create visual effects similar to those found in European painting (such as *chiaroscuro*) using local pigments.<sup>9</sup> Developing Sakamoto’s research from the point of view of Christian iconography, Grace A. H. Vlam suggests that the painter (or the designer) of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* was an educated Christian, working under the close supervision of Jesuit missionaries. Vlam identifies Christian symbols in the pastoral landscape, such as the figures of a shepherd, a Catholic priest, and a hermit, as well as the winepress motif symbolizing the sacrifice of Jesus.<sup>10</sup> She goes on to claim that there is an elaborate Christian “program” underlining *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and some other early Western-style paintings, through which the Jesuit patrons of the painting intended to send a didactic message to Japanese Christians in the disguise of a secular landscape.<sup>11</sup> While Vlam’s view is well supported by her intensive iconographical research, it is also important to see the paint-

4 *Shoki yōfuga* is usually called early Western-style painting in English, and it is a category established by Sakamoto Mitsuru through his 1973 book *Shoki yōfuga*. To designate the same category, Grace A. H. Vlam uses the phrase “Western-style secular paintings” (Vlam 1976 and 1977). Cf. Kang 2008, Cooper 1996. Some scholars prefer “early European-style painting” as the English translation, as in NMJH 1997. (Note that Sakamoto contributed to this issue as one of the editors.)

5 Kang 2008, pp. 25–30; Bailey 2005, p. 321 and 1999, p. 79; Vlam 1981, pp. 8–10; Sakamoto 1980, pp. 189–90; Ide 1979, pp. 143–44.

6 These artists are often described as members of the “Jesuit School of Painting” or イエズス会画派. NMJH 1997, pp. 13–14; Sakamoto 1979, p. 127; Sakamoto and Yoshimura 1974, p. 120; Boxer 1951, pp. xi and 198–202.

7 As far as we know, the *seminario* workshop was first mentioned in the Jesuit report on their mission activities in 1591–92 (NMJH 1997, p. 19; and Sakamoto 1979, p. 127). For the report, see INH 1987, p. 307.

8 Sakamoto 1973, pp. 78–80.

9 Ibid., pp. 44–45 and Figures 37–42.

10 Vlam 1981, pp. 9–11 and 1976, pp. 43–52.

11 Vlam 1977, p. 223 and 1976, p. 10.

ing from the point of view of the Japanese, since there are Japanese and European painting traditions combined in a single artwork. On this point, Japanese art historians remark that *Yōjin sōgakuzu* contains the double subjects of a European pastoral landscape and a Japanese “outdoor merrymaking scene” (*yagai yūrakuzu* 野外遊楽図); this artwork thus mirrors the parallel fashions of panoramic landscape paintings in Japan and Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>12</sup>

Building upon previous research, in this paper I re-examine primary documents related to early Western-style painting in Japan, and present an analysis of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* from the perspectives of both Christian and Buddhist iconographies in order to highlight the artwork as a representation of a visual bilingualism that developed in Japan through an encounter of two traditions: the Japanese art of the Azuchi Momoyama/early Tokugawa 徳川 periods and the art of Catholic Europe in the early modern period. So far, the art-historical scholarship on *Yōjin sōgakuzu* has focused on the meaning of the painting in view of Christian iconography, but its meaning as a Japanese outdoor merrymaking scene has not been fully explored.

In the first section, I review the state of research about *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and elucidate where and how this artwork came about. I also discuss two important primary sources from the 1580s, one in Portuguese and the other in Japanese, which deserve more attention. These sources reveal that the idea of painting European images on folding screens came from the Jesuit Visitor Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), who oversaw and directed Jesuit mission activities in Japan. I argue that early Western-style painting originated in the Jesuits’ intention to produce hybrid folding screens that appealed to both Japanese and European aesthetics and sensibilities.

In the second section, I present an analysis of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* by (1) examining how the two artistic traditions converged, and (2) articulating how this set of landscape screens is “bilingual” in its offering of different narratives to a Japanese audience and Catholic missionaries. I will show that *Yōjin sōgakuzu* includes an allusion for the Japanese audience to the threshold of the “other world” (i.e., the Buddhist paradise) that exists in “this world,” while the same painting communicates the Christian story of salvation to its European audience. Finally, in the conclusion of this paper, I reflect on the role of art as a middle ground for facilitating mutually gratifying interactions between cultures and religions.

### *Yōjin sōgakuzu* as Hybrid Art

Viewers familiar with Japanese painting will recognize that *Yōjin sōgakuzu* is a variation of the “mountains and water (*sansui* 山水)” theme, a major genre of ink painting that has flourished in East Asia since the great old masters of eleventh century China. Also, outdoor music making was a very popular theme for “genre painting” (*fūzokuga* 風俗画) and its sub-category “outdoor merrymaking scenes (*yagai yūrakuzu*).” If we compare *Yōjin sōgakuzu* with the well-known merrymaking scene painting *Takao kanpūzu* 高雄観楓図 (Maple Viewing at Mount Takao) by Kanō Hideyori 狩野秀頼 (d. 1576/7), it is apparent that the two paintings share such common themes as waterfront gathering and music making (Figure 2).

At the same time, viewers more familiar with European art will immediately recognize

12 NMJH 1997, p. 34; Sakamoto 1979, p. 130; and Ide 1979, p. 143.



Figure 2. (*Takao*) *kanpūzu byōbu* by Kanō Hideyori. Mid 16th century. Ink and colors on paper, 150 x 365.5 cm. Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo. (Reproduced with permission)

that the landscape depicted is rooted in the tradition of early Netherlandish painting. With regard to the depiction of a panoramic landscape and the characteristic blue-green mountain range in the background, Sakamoto points out a possible connection between *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and Joachim Patinir's (d. 1524) biblical paintings representing different scenes from the Bible against a panoramic landscape.<sup>13</sup> The similarities might suggest that the folding screens could be a Japanese copy of an unidentified European painting or tapestry. However, Sakamoto's research in the print archives in Europe has shown that the artist of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* did not copy an entire European painting, but assembled small scenes from prints and put them together like a patchwork to create a new image.<sup>14</sup>

### Early Western-style Painting in Japan

As already noted, *Yōjin sōgakuzu* is considered to be a work of "early Western-style painting," a unique category of Japanese painting associated with artists who were originally trained at a workshop located in the Jesuit *seminario*. In the academic discourse, however, the specific category is rather confusing, since there is another term, *Nanban bijutsu* 南蛮美術 ("southern barbarian" art), that overarches the early Western-style paintings and other artworks, which came about as a result of Japan's encounter with European culture in the late sixteenth century. As for the paintings in particular, within the *Nanban bijutsu* there are early Western-style paintings and *Nanban byōbu* 南蛮屏風 (southern barbarian screens), which represent such Western subjects as Portuguese ships and the figures of European missionaries and traders.<sup>15</sup> The difference between early Western-style paintings and *Nanban byōbu* depends on whether or not the painters adopted European painting techniques to

13 Kang 2008, pp. 24–25; and Sakamoto 1980, p. 188.

14 See my note 8 above. I would also like to note that Fernando G. Guitiérrez considers the result of gathering parts of different paintings into a landscape to be unsatisfactory. He writes that there is a certain crowding and an artificial note in the composition (Guitiérrez 1971, p. 172).

15 Kang 2008, pp. 21–23; and Bailey 2005, Fig. 10.11 and 1999, p. 79. Note that Bailey includes early Western-style folding screens in *Nanban byōbu*. Also see Cooper 1996 and Sakamoto 1979, pp. 131–33.

depict landscapes or figures of westerners, although art catalogues often include *Yōjin sōgakuzu* in the category of *Nanban byōbu* without this distinction.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, in his 1999 book on mission art in Asia and Latin America, Gauvin A. Bailey refrained from using the term “early Western-style,” supposedly because of the ambiguity of “Western-style” in the context of world art.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, it might be more appropriate to consider *Yōjin sōgakuzu* to be a “European-style Japanese painting.” I have, however, intentionally chosen to use this problematic term with a capitalized “W” here to recognize the indispensable value of the scholarship that has already been conducted in the study of this category.

Early Western-style paintings can be defined as Japanese paintings that incorporate Western painting techniques, produced during a ninety year period between 1549 (the arrival of Francis Xavier in Japan) and 1639 (the completion of what is still sometimes referred to as *sakoku* 鎖国, the closed country policy).<sup>18</sup> In particular, “early” Western-style paintings (that is, the first stage of Western-style paintings) developed through Japan’s early encounters and interactions with the traditions of Catholic Europe, while Dutch influence dominates the Western-style paintings after the exclusion of the Spanish and Portuguese.<sup>19</sup> Generally, we may recognize two types among the early Western-style paintings. Type 1, Christian icons, painted on paper, metal, or wood; and Type 2, “secular” images of European noble men and women, and graphic cityscapes and maps of the world painted on Japanese paper, often mounted in folding screens. *Yōjin sōgakuzu* belongs to the second type along with some thirty other scrolls and folding screens depicting Western themes,<sup>20</sup> such as *Repanto kassenzu* レパント合戦図 (The Battle of Lepanto) in the Kōsetsu Museum of Art 香雪美術館 (Figure 4), and another version of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* in the Eisei Bunko 永青文庫 (Figure 3), which is certainly a variation on the same prototype as our focus piece.<sup>21</sup> In summary, these paintings incorporate one or more of the following features: European subject matter, application of *chiaroscuro*-like shading on the figures, and an attempt to incorporate a European-style perspective (i.e., a single-point perspective).

### Jesuit-Affiliated Art Production

Scholars like Sakamoto, Ide, and Vlam established close connections between early Western-style paintings and the Jesuit mission. They have argued that not only the Christian icons (Type 1), but also the secular paintings (Type 2) were created by artists who had been trained by the Jesuits. Their reasoning is as follows; first, in the late sixteenth century, among the Catholic religious orders working in Japan, the Jesuits provided the best artistic resources to local painters, such as European instructors who taught Western

16 Kōdansha 1979 is a typical example.

17 Bailey 1999, pp. 52–81. In his 2005 article for *The Jesuits and the Arts*, however, Bailey uses the term “Western-style.”

18 Sakamoto 1973, p. 33.

19 Kang 2008, pp. 1–2.

20 NMJH 1997, pp. 39–40 and 377–79.

21 *Repanto kassenzu* is paired with a world map screen. For the reproduction of the world map screen, see for example, Kang 2008, p. 34, Figure 27. On the Eisei Bunko version of *Yōjin sōgakuzu*, see Proust 2002, pp. 100–07 and NMJH 1997, p. 158.



Figure 3. *Yōjin sōgakuzu byōbu*. Early 17th century. Ink and colors on paper, 93 x 302 cm. Eisei Bunko Museum (Hosokawa collection), Tokyo. (Reproduced with permission)



Figure 4. *Repanto kassenzu*. Early 17th century. Ink and colors on paper, 153.5 x 362.5 cm. Kosetsu Museum of Art, Hyogo. (Reproduced with permission)

painting techniques, and European prints used as models.<sup>22</sup> Second, the Jesuits were aware of the popularity of paintings depicting battle scenes and portraits of warriors among the Japanese, and asked their procurators in Rome to send secular paintings and prints of such themes.<sup>23</sup> Third, some of the early Western-style folding screens contain symbols and scenes that indicate the works of the Jesuits and the triumph of Catholic Church over the “pagan” world.<sup>24</sup> For example, in *Yōjin sōgakuzu*, there are figures of an elderly hermit and a black-robed Jesuit priest giving instructions to young aristocrats. Also, in *Repanto kassenzu*, while its model is a well-known Netherlandish print, *The Battle of Scipio versus Hannibal at Zama*, the painter added a background ocean and inscriptions in Japanese, which changed the

22 Besides the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinian missionaries were working in Japan. These three orders arrived in Japan after 1592, despite the effort of the Jesuits to keep the Japan mission to their own (Boxer 1951, pp. 160–3).

23 Kang 2008, pp. 26–27; NMJH 1997, p. 16; and Sakamoto 1979, p. 129.

24 Although I will not discuss it in this paper, there is a particularly interesting example in Sakamoto 1973, p. 66 and Figures 69–71, where the painters of the *Four Cities and World-Map Screen* (Kobe City Museum) emphasized the Jesuit Church in the cityscape of Rome in comparison with other famous Roman buildings. The example is also mentioned in Kang 2008, pp. 27–28; and NMJH 1997, pp. 58–62.

original image of a ground battle into that of the naval battle between the Roman Emperor (inscribed “ろうま乃王”) and the Turks (inscribed as Turkey “つうるこ”) at Lepanto in 1571, in which the Holy League triumphed over the Ottoman fleet.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, there are two important documents that have not been fully examined so far, though they strongly endorse the hypothesis that the Jesuits commissioned folding screens just like *Yōjin sōgakuzu* from local painters. One of them is a letter from Alessandro Valignano, written in Goa on December 12, 1583. Valignano wrote:

It would be good if the Pope ordained to have several screens made in the manner of those which I am sending. If they are gilded and painted at Rome with some brilliant designs and are well made, they will be very esteemed as gifts for Nobunaga. And I would like others to be made for the use in our houses. They will be greatly appreciated if they came from Rome. But so that what is painted will be to the Japanese taste, it will be necessary that Father Mesquita and the Japanese boys first see the sketches of what is to be painted, for in this manner one will proceed in a more assured way.<sup>26</sup>

The main subject of the letter is the embassy of Japanese Christians en route to Rome at the time, carrying a gift of Japanese folding screens that had been given to Valignano by Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (d. 1582).<sup>27</sup> The quote above is from the last part of the letter, when Valignano asks Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585), to instruct painters to create several sets of “Roman” folding screens in the manner of the Japanese piece the embassy was bringing. As we can see, Valignano writes that the folding screens with European images would be highly esteemed in Japan; he wanted to send some of them as return gifts to Nobunaga, while the others would be used for the decoration of local Jesuit residences. Valignano also remarks that the paintings on the screens had to be “to the Japanese taste,” and therefore their designs had to be approved by the Japanese boys (i.e., members of the embassy) before they were handed over to the painters. The Pope died soon after the arrival of the embassy in 1585, and Valignano’s wish was not realized, but this document informs us that the Jesuit mission inspector commissioned folding screens with European images in order to use them as gifts to the Japanese.

Another piece of evidence indicating Jesuit commissions of Japanese folding screens is a letter discovered in 1902 by Murakami Naojirō 村上直次郎 among the support papers of a set of old, disintegrated Japanese folding screens that had been kept in the storage area of an archival library in Evora, Portugal.<sup>28</sup> From the same folding screens, Murakami discovered many documents written by Japanese novices who lived in one of the Jesuit residences. According to Matsuda Kiichi 松田毅一 and Ebisawa Arimichi 海老沢有道, it is likely that they

25 The battle of Zama was fought between Rome and Carthage, and this ancient battle was a popular pictorial theme in Europe in the seventeenth century (Kang 2008, p. 28; NMJH 1997, pp. 66–69; Vlam 1979). Regarding the screen, see also Proust 2002, pp. 110–12.

26 English translation by Vlam (Vlam 1977, p. 222, n.10). The original letter is reproduced in *Monumenta Nipponica* 6 (1943), p. 402.

27 On Nobunaga’s gift to Valignano, see McKelway 2006, pp. 164–77. Regarding the embassy, and its impact on Japanese art, see Proust 2002, pp. 83–100.

28 Ebisawa and Matsuda 1963. Murakami’s primary report was published in 1943 as part of the anthology, *Nippo tsūkō ronsō* 日葡通交論叢 (Tokyo: Nippo Kyōkai).

stemmed from the Jesuit residence in the Kyoto area and date from the early 1580s.<sup>29</sup> The document of particular interest here is just a fragment, and its content is unclear; the last part is missing, and the name of the sender is not known. However, the surviving fragment contains seven items that deal with a commission of folding screens. From the transcription of the document created by Matsuda and Ebisawa, I introduce below the first and fifth items that are most relevant to this study and add tentative English translations.<sup>30</sup>

After the greeting 以雅良佐令申候 (In Grace we notify the following), the first item in the letter says,

We want the chief priest's folding screens (司Peの御屏風) to be mounted and delivered (to be kept in the house) immediately. We are going to make them gilt with gold and have already started painting one pair. (This pair) will be delivered here before long.<sup>31</sup>

The fifth item in the letter states,

For our church (当寺のため二), we have ordered two pairs of folding screens. Fr. Organtino (Peおるかん) wants to have their frames painted. The two pairs (...)<sup>32</sup>

The letter states that the sender—most likely a Japanese individual in the Jesuit residence—had ordered folding screens and was waiting for their completion. At least one pair was for 司 Pe (*tsukasa padre*; literally, the chief priest), and two pairs for 当寺 (Catholic church or the Jesuit residence). The letter also mentions that two priests were involved in the order of folding screens: 司 Pe, who could well be either the bishop of Evora or Valignano, and Pe おるかん, who was certainly the Jesuit Organtino Gneccchi-Soldo (1532–1609). It is not clear what kind of image was to be painted on the folding screens. However, the letter indicates that at least one pair was gilt with gold, and there was a Japanese artist in the Jesuit house who had the skill of paintings folding screens.

Art and images were extremely important for the Jesuit mission in Japan that began with the arrival of Francis Xavier (1506–1552) in 1549.<sup>33</sup> From the beginning of their mission activity, the Jesuits endeavored to meet the large demand for the religious and secular arts as gifts for Christians and non-Christians alike. Religious images were especially useful for evangelizing activity as the European missionaries struggled to overcome the language barrier. The director of Christian art production in Japan was the aforementioned Jesuit painter Giovanni Niccolò.<sup>34</sup> He was called to Japan in 1581 to deal with the growing demand for religious images at local parishes and also to teach painting to Japanese

29 Ebisawa and Matsuda 1963, p. 25.

30 Ibid., pp. 191–2 and Plate 8 (photographic reproduction of the original fragment). I would like to thank Ms. Tsutsui Suna for her kind help with reading the texts.

31 Ibid., p. 191.

32 The last sentence is not complete. Ibid., p. 192.

33 Kang 2008, pp. 8–9; Bailey 2005, p. 314 and 1999, pp. 65–66; NMJH 1997, pp. 15–17; and Vlam 1981, p. 7.

34 On the art workshops located in the Jesuit seminaries, see Kang 2008, pp. 12–14; Bailey 2005, pp. 316–20 and 1999, pp. 67–72; NMJH 1997, pp. 18–22; Sakamoto 1979, pp. 127–28; and Schurhammer 1933. Vlam's dissertation includes quotes from Jesuit documents in the original language (Vlam 1976, pp. 14–16).

Christians. When he first arrived via India in 1583 (the same year that Valignano wrote the letter above in Goa), Niccolò was the only person in Japan who had been professionally trained in European painting techniques. By 1591, the Jesuits had established a workshop in their *seminario*, and there were on average from ten to twenty students working there with Niccolò on the production of Christian art.<sup>35</sup> However, the student body at the *seminario* workshop was somewhat volatile, since the Jesuit schools were repeatedly forced to relocate owing to the local hostility toward Christianity.

The primary documents discussed above suggest that there were two groups of artists working for the Jesuits in Japan: those at the *seminario* workshop, and those at an affiliated local workshop, which can be considered to be the “inner” and “outer” circles of Jesuit art production.<sup>36</sup> Most likely, the inner circle of Niccolò and his students, focused on the production of religious art for the churches, and they were not directly involved in the production of the folding screens, especially those with secular images. Instead, the outer circle worked on the folding screens on commissions. The local artists in the affiliated workshop probably learned the basics of European painting techniques at the *seminario* workshop, and presumably some Europeans (Niccolò or others) helped them when they selected the Netherlandish prints for models and created the designs for the folding screens.

The religious proscription that continued for nearly 300 years destroyed almost all of the early Christian churches and Christian arts in Japan, and today there is no painting that can be surely identified as a work from Niccolò’s workshop.<sup>37</sup> Still, some of the individual names of the artists in the workshop appear in the European Jesuit records, but we know next to nothing when it comes to the individual painters of the affiliate workshop.<sup>38</sup> There is, however, an early Western-style painting in the collection of Yamato Bunkakan 大和文華館 museum in Nara with the seal of Nobukata 信方.<sup>39</sup> The painting is a hanging scroll, and depicts two secular European men, who look very similar to the figures in *Yōjin sōgakuzu*. Also, some Japanese documents describe a certain Yamada Emosaku 山田右衛門作 from Shimabara 島原, who had learned painting from the Portuguese.<sup>40</sup> The local chronicle, *Hizen Shimabaraki* 肥前島原記, from the seventeenth century, includes a document that says Emosaku had just completed folding screens for several patrons as the Shimabara uprising 島原一揆 broke out in 1637: “The folding screens are completed. They have been placed in ‘our storage’ (われわれ蔵).”<sup>41</sup> The document goes on to say that with the outbreak of the peasants’ uprising against the local authority, Emosaku packed and hid his painting

35 The first mention of the workshop in the Jesuit documents is from Luís Fróis’s mission report for 1591–92. However, Bailey believes it was already running several years before that, possibly as soon as when Niccolò arrived in Japan in 1583 (Bailey 2005, p. 316 and 1999, p. 66).

36 Bailey 1999, p. 14.

37 The *Salvator Mundi* painting in Tokyo University library is attributed Jacob Niwa, who was a member of Niccolò’s workshop.

38 For lists of individual students who worked at the *seminario* workshop, see Kang 2008, p. 14; Bailey 1999, pp. 71–72; NMJH 1997, pp. 24–25; Sakamoto and Yoshimura 1974, pp. 121–25; and Schurhammer 1933, pp. 3–7.

39 On Nobukata, see Kang 2008, pp. 14–15; Bailey 2005, Fig. 10.15 and 1999, pp. 75 and 79; NMJH 1997, pp. 26 and 216–17 and 224–25; Sakamoto 1979, p. 128; and Sakamoto and Yoshimura 1974, pp. 125–27 and Figures 33–36.

40 Bailey 1999, p. 79; NMJH 1997, p. 26; and Sakamoto 1979, p. 128. Above all, the most detailed biography of Emosaku is introduced in Takemura 1964, pp. 243–53.

41 I refer to the quotes in Takemura 1964, p. 243. The original of *Hizen Shimabaraki* (5 vols.) and its photographic reproduction are in Ōita Prefectural Library 大分県立図書館.

equipment away from the battle.

There were various pigments for painting, which I put in jars and buried in the mountain. Also, there were folding screens whose support papers had been mounted. They are now in the same place (with the jars of paints). The folding screens of Taga Shusui are already completed and in storage, as are the folding screens of Yokoyama Seizaemon.<sup>42</sup>

Another treatise on the artists written much later, *Gentō gatan* 阮塘画談 from the nineteenth century says Emosaku was a Christian who learned painting from the Portuguese, at first he earned his living painting Christian images.<sup>43</sup> In fact, Emosaku is also a well-known figure in the history of the Shimabara uprising, since he was one of the traitors within the group of Japanese Christians who were defending Hara castle against the Tokugawa troops.<sup>44</sup> The documents related to this aspect of Emosaku's life tell us little about the content of his paintings, but they agree that he was a core member of the Shimabara rebel group. When the rebels' army fell before the Tokugawa troops, Emosaku's life was spared because of his contribution as an informant. *Gentō gatan* states that after the end of the Shimabara uprising, he continued painting Buddhist subjects such as portraits of Zen masters using Western painting techniques.<sup>45</sup>

At present, there is not enough written evidence to know exactly how early Western-style painting came about in Azuchi Momoyama Japan. The "Jesuit School of Paintings" or the "Seminary of Painters" was short-lived, and most of their works were destroyed during the prohibition of Christianity that started in the late sixteenth century and lasted until the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>46</sup> It is certainly possible that there was a mastermind designer or an artist at the seminary who was solely responsible for the emergence of the hybrid style. It is equally possible, however, that the inventor of this unique style was someone at the affiliated local workshop, or the style could have gradually developed through communication between the Jesuits and Japanese artists.

What is especially important with regard to the hybrid aesthetics of early Western-style folding screens is the aforementioned 1583 letter of Valignano. It specifically states that the Jesuit inspector wanted folding screens with brilliant Western images that also appealed to Japanese sensibilities. In other words, the screens had to be "bilingual," appealing to the divergent aesthetic sensibilities of both Japanese and European audiences. There is also the fragment in the Evora document, which shows that the Jesuit community corresponded with local artists about the commission of folding screens. We may never know whether there was someone who single-handedly invented early Western-style painting, but these

42 Takemura 1964, p. 243.

43 Ibid, p. 250.

44 Ibid., p. 243. Primary records about Emosaku as informant are introduced in Tsuruta 1994, pp. 751 and 1049–52. However, they do not mention Emosaku as an artist.

45 Takemura 1964, p. 250. There are extant today several portraits of Zen masters that feature distinct Western-style. They are attributed to Nobukata because of the seal on the paintings (Kang 2008, pp. 15–16 and Figures 3–4; and Bailey 2005, Figure 10.15).

46 According to Bailey, the Jesuit documents refer to the art workshop at the *seminario* as the "Seminary of Painters" (Bailey 2005, p. 316 and 1999, p. 66). However, C. R. Boxer named it the "Jesuit School of Paintings." See note 6 above.

pieces of evidence seem to suggest that Valignano was the original mastermind for the production of the “bilingual” folding screens, while the hybrid style was experimented with and developed further by the local artists working with the Jesuits. It is also important to note that some of the local painters who were educated at the *seminario* workshop continued their Western-style painting individually beyond the expulsion of the missionaries and the closure of the *seminario* in 1614. As with Emosaku after the end of the Shimabara uprising, some applied their skill to paint Buddhist paintings.

### *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and Visual Bilingualism

In this section, I articulate the visual bilingualism attested to in *Yōjin sōgakuzu* through an examination of the artwork. First, in reference to Azuchi Momoyama and early modern Catholic traditions, I will clarify the convergence of Japanese and European styles. Second, I will consider how the landscape images on the folding screens accommodate disparate aesthetic sensibilities without conflict. As I will show, for the Japanese and European audiences in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the landscape images in *Yōjin sōgakuzu* conveyed significant religious meaning in different ways. On the one hand, the pastoral landscape images include an elaborate Christian iconography that symbolizes the sacrifice of Jesus and the heavenly city. On the other hand, however, the landscape also accommodates Azuchi Momoyama pictorial tradition and rich visual allusions to the Buddhist paradise.

*Yōjin sōgakuzu* consists of two folding screens. Hereafter, I will call one of them the Music Screen (Figure 1-a) and the other the Shepherd Screen (Figure 1-b). The sources of the European figures and landscape details were late sixteenth century Netherlandish prints; many of them were published in Antwerp and imported to Japan by the missionaries.<sup>47</sup> We know that the following prints were used as the models for *Yōjin sōgakuzu* (see Figures 5 and 6). The temple of Cupid seen on the upper right of the Music Screen and the old pilgrim on the left of the Shepherd Screen are taken from one image, a page from the album *Trophaeum Viatae Solitariae* (1598) by Maarten de Vos (1532–1603). From the engraving, the painter of the Music Screen copied the stone temple and the people gathering in front of it, and added a pointed top to the roof. Although the statue inside the temple is not easily distinguishable in the engraving, the painter interestingly depicted a statue of Cupid holding an arrow in color; which may suggest that the painter had other European images as models.

The small wine shed on the far left of the Music Screen comes from the background of another print designed by de Vos and engraved by Jerome Wierix (1553–1619), titled *The Blood of Christ*. Here, the wine shed, a figure of a young man tramping on grapes, and the people bringing in the harvest are all reproduced from the European original. Also, the grey stone building in the far left of the Shepherd Screen draws on the Babylonian palace depicted in the print titled *Pyramus and Thisbe* (ca. 1569) based on the design by Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574). On this motif, the painter made quite a few alterations, such as the shapes of the towers and the veranda. An apse-like structure has been also added to the building in place of a round, Roman-style terrace surrounded by pillars.

With regard to the overall composition of the two landscape paintings, while the

47 NMJH 1997, pp. 154–57 and 160. In addition to the references in note 8, see Vlam 1981, pp. 8–11 and 1976, pp. 43–45; and Sakamoto and Ide 1978, pp. 10–12. Note that in Vlam 1976, *Yōjin sōgakuzu* is called *Hakone Screen*.

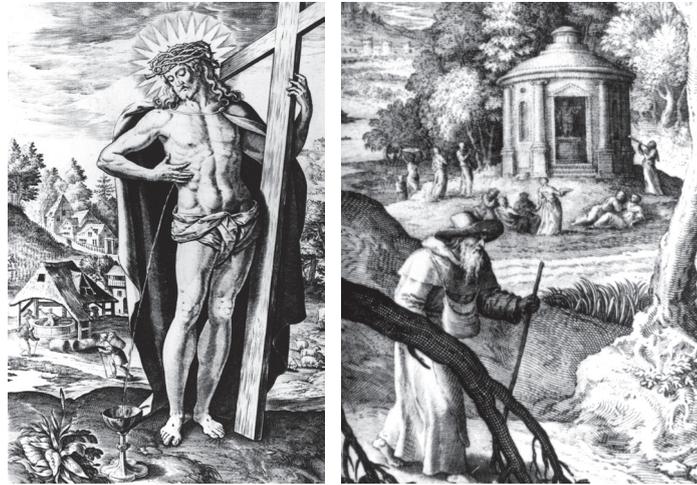


Figure 5. Models of the wine shed and the temple of Cupid.

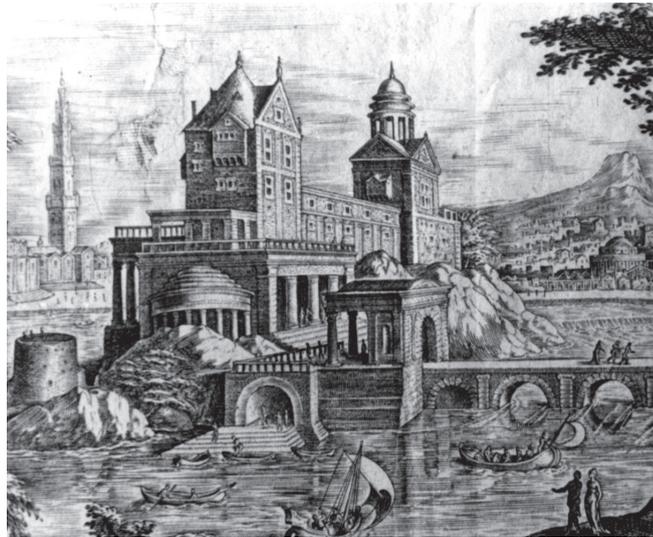


Figure 6. Model of the grey stone building

Music Screen adopts the European, one-point perspective, the Shepherd Screen follows the Japanese tradition, as its visual narrative flows from right to left in accordance with the way hand-scrolls are viewed in East Asia. (Notice that many human figures in the Shepherd Screen point toward the viewer's left.) The entire composition of the Shepherd Screen is well calculated to establish a sense of distance and perspective when the screens are properly “folded” and standing in front of an audience. Also, in the Music Screen, the artists managed effectively to combine the European perspective with the particular format of the folding screen. That is to say, when the line between the central two panels is folded, it dramatically enhances the sense of depth of the river receding into the far horizon. Moreover, the blue-green mountain range in the background of the landscapes seems to follow

the tradition of Netherlandish painting to enhance the sense of depth,<sup>48</sup> but the painters of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* combined this with the typical style of Azuchi Momoyama folding screen painting and painted the sky with gold.

Interestingly, there are also a couple of Japanese additions in the details that do not necessarily match the overall Western style of the painting: one is the red peony painted in the far right of the Music Screen, and the other is the red trail on the second story balcony on the grey stone building in the Shepherd Screen. Finally, the characteristic rendering of the waves on the river and the ocean, which Vlam called the “quilted sea,” may have been derived from the Japanese traditional pattern *seikaiha* 青海波 (blue ocean-wave).<sup>49</sup>

### The Meaning of the Landscape for Jesuit Missionaries

It is certainly reasonable to apprehend *Yōjin sōgakuzu* as a variation of a sixteenth century European pastoral landscape, an exotic offspring of the famous works by the Netherlandish painter Joachim Patinir, or the Italian painters Giorgione (ca. 1477–1510) and Annibale Carracci (1560–1609). However, given the historical background, our analysis turns now to focus on what these landscape paintings meant for the Jesuit mission. Indeed, nature and landscape were important for the early modern Catholics as a source of contemplation. Especially for the Jesuits, “landscape represented the created world, the natural reflection of divine glory in which the meditative viewer could meet God in this least creation.”<sup>50</sup> The illustrated book of meditation on the New Testament, *Adnotationes et Meditationes* (1595) by the Jesuit Jeronimo Nadal’s (1507–1580), represents the innovative use of the background landscape of the Bible illustrations for meditative practice.<sup>51</sup>

Although the two landscapes painted in *Yōjin sōgakuzu* appear to be secular at first glance, they are in fact loaded with religious symbols and mirror the reality of Jesuit mission activity in Japan. The keys to unpacking their Christian iconography are the details of the wine production in the Music Screen and the figures of youth being instructed by the elders in the Shepherd Screen. Vlam was the first to connect the detail of the wine shed in the Music Screen with the “Blood of Christ” theme, and her finding offered a critical clue for identifying the theological references included in *Yōjin sōgakuzu*. She rightly pointed out that the rustic wine shed and the scene of the winepress indicate the sacrifice of Christ, and the temple of Cupid on the opposite side of the river represents pagan worship.<sup>52</sup>

I would like to highlight some further details in the Music Screen that allude to the works of the Catholic missions. First, the musical aristocrats in the foreground remind us of the significance of music for Jesuit missions inside and outside Europe. Second, the background of the landscape calls to mind the symbolic meaning represented by the two cities on each side of the river, and the reason why so many of the ships on the river are headed for the city on the left. It must be noted first that, except for the singing of hymns,

48 This is known as “aerial perspective” or “color perspective.” Max Friedländer explains Joachim Patinir’s use of color perspective as follows: “To the fore the brownish tones are warm, with light grey rocks. Saturated greens and many shades of distant blue combine into luminous harmony. Pure pigments, in the manner of a glaze, are systematically used to create the illusion of aerial space ...” (Friedländer 1973, p. 105).

49 Vlam 1976, p. 242. Note that the “quilted sea” depiction also appears in *Repanto kassenzu*.

50 Bailey 2003, p. 184.

51 See Melion 1998.

52 Vlam 1981, pp. 10–11 and 1976, p. 50. The biblical reference of “Christ in the Winepress” is Isaiah 63: 2–3.

the Church Fathers considered music to be a distraction from contemplation. It is said that the founder of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola, was himself no lover of music and, in fact, there was an explicit prohibition of musical instruments in the early Jesuit community.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, Ignatius and his successors had to make concessions as they discovered the power of music to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries and attract a non-European audience to the church. According to John O'Malley, as early as 1553, the Jesuits founded a school of music in Brazil, where they taught children how to sing and play the flute in liturgies. The kind of liturgical music played in the remote mission locations was not limited to traditional monastic chants, but also used worldly instruments such as “kettledrums, trumpets, flutes, and violins.”<sup>54</sup> The Jesuit *seminario* and *collegio* in Japan were no exceptions to this general enthusiasm for music. Primary documents inform us that the European missionaries taught the Japanese seminarians how to play the viola (or the lute) depicted in the Music Screen, in addition to various other European musical instruments.<sup>55</sup>

With regard to the meaning of the two cities in the background of the Music Screen, I suggest that they represent the earthly city and the heavenly city in Augustine's *The City of God*. At the end of Book Eighteen of *The City of God*, Augustine describes the two cities as follows:

Of these, the earthly one has made to herself of whom she would, either from any other quarter, or even from among men, false gods whom she might serve by sacrifice; but she which is heavenly, and is a pilgrim on the earth, does not make false gods, but is herself made by the true God, of whom she herself must be the true sacrifice. Yet both alike either enjoy temporal good things, or are afflicted with temporal evils, but with diverse faith, diverse hope, and diverse love, until they must be separated by the last judgment and each must receive her own end, of which there is no end.<sup>56</sup>

When the Music Screen is viewed in light of Augustine's description, it is apparent that the city on the right represents the earthly city and the city on the left represents the heavenly city; while people in the far right are making a sacrifice to false gods, to the temple of Cupid, the people in the far left are partaking of the “true sacrifice,” symbolized by the scene of the grape harvest and the winepress. As for the ships on the river headed toward the city, another passage in *The City of God* helps us to understand that they carry on board the pilgrims who are gathering into the heavenly city from all quarters of the world. In Book Nineteen, Augustine wrote:

This heavenly city, then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions, whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same end of earthly peace. It therefore is so far from rescinding and abolishing these diversities that it even

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53 O'Malley 2005, pp. 8–12 and 1993, pp. 159–62.

54 O'Malley 1993, p. 161.

55 In particular, the Jesuit Juan de Torres was known as a viola player (Medina 1984, pp. 102–03).

56 Augustine 2000, p. 668.

preserves and adapts them, so long only as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme and true God is thus introduced.<sup>57</sup>

There is little doubt that the Jesuit missionaries had thoroughly studied *The City of God* and that they understood the significant implications of this passage for the missions outside Europe. After all, Augustine envisions a culturally egalitarian community, one that gathers together “a society of pilgrims of all languages” and unites different cultures under a universal Christian faith in the one true God.

Also, it is important to note here that in Eisei Bunko’s version of the Music Screen (Figure 3), the ships are lined up in a straight row and all headed away toward the horizon. I would suggest that this subtle alteration indicates that the Eisei Bunko version was copied from the original design by someone who did not understand the religious significance of these ships and the two cities on either side of the river. A similar mistake (or an intentional change) occurred in the companion Shepherd Screen; the sheep are turned into dogs and, as a result, the symbol of the Christian community is lost.<sup>58</sup>

It is apparent that the male pairs in the foreground of MOA Museum’s Shepherd Screen represent catechists and catechumens (a hermit and a youth on the left, and a priest and another youth on the right), and the flock of sheep and the shepherd represent the Christian community and its leader. Yet, I disagree with Vlam’s claim that the Shepherd Screen is a completely pure vision of Divine Love;<sup>59</sup> it is more likely that it offers a free mingling of the sacred and the profane. The smaller figures in the background, in particular, such as the group of people enjoying a picnic under the moonlight, or the man going hunting, seem to represent people enjoying a secular lifestyle. The young men in the middle of the foreground appear to be weighing options for their life paths. The grey stone building on the left probably represents a Jesuit seminary in Europe, for when the building on the screen is compared with the original print, it is evident that the painter modified the details in order to provide the appearance of Christian architecture (Figure 6). The painter eliminated the rounded, Roman-style terrace at the foot of the building found in the original, and changed it into a feature that looks like the apse of a church. The two towers on top of the building now have simplified triangular roofs, and they closely resemble the towers of European Jesuit seminaries illustrated in Mercantonio Ciappi’s biography of Pope Gregory XIII.<sup>60</sup>

### Landscape and Merrymaking

Thus far, we have seen that, in the form of pastoral landscape, *Yōjin sōgakuzu* conveyed a coherent visual and didactic message to Christians about the pilgrimage to the heavenly city and the spiritual education of the young. The next point to consider is how the folding screens can be understood in view of the artistic tradition of the Azuchi Momoyama period.

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57 Ibid., p. 696.

58 For the illustration of Shepherd Screen in the Eisei Bunko version, see for example Kōdansha 1979, p. 37, Figure 25.

59 Vlam 1981, p. 11 and 1976, p. 51.

60 The illustration can be viewed on line at page 0039 in <http://laures.cc.sophia.ac.jp/laures/pageview/id=JL-1596-KB6/>.

Indeed, *Yōjin sōgakuzu* can be considered a European version of the outdoor merrymaking scene, which was very popular in the folding-screen painting of the period.

Since the time of the early Chinese masters of landscape painting, the East Asian tradition had long considered landscape as a virtual reality to “go into.” An outdoor merrymaking scene provided the audience with a sense of experiencing the lively events and activities going on in the picture, such as making a pilgrimage trip to famous Buddhist temples under the cherry blossoms in the spring, or enjoying a waterfront picnic and dancing under maple trees in the fall. Moreover, to the viewers of Azuchi Momoyama Japan, the natural landscape with a river and secular merrymaking scene contained religious meaning, as there was a long-standing tradition of seeing the river as a symbol of the boundary between the living and the dead.

Sakamoto notes that there were parallel fashions of landscape paintings in Japan and Europe in the sixteenth century.<sup>61</sup> The Japanese equivalents of European pastoral landscapes were outdoor merrymaking paintings such as *Takao kanpūzu* by Kanō Hideyori, mentioned earlier (Figure 2).<sup>62</sup> In Kanō Hideyori’s painting, there are two maple-viewing parties: a group of women on the right and a group of men on the left. There is a river running across the screen and a bridge leading to the precinct of the Jingoji 神護寺 temple shown in the background on the right. There is a group of Buddhist clergy and youths by the bridge, about to walk over to the temple. The common elements between this screen and *Yōjin sōgakuzu* are apparent: a leisurely outdoor gathering, music making and conversation, a river, temple buildings in the background, and the figures of clergy.

Although the painting presents secular subject matter, there is significant religious meaning in *Takao kanpūzu* according to some art historians. Christine Guth states that the scenes of the Jingoji temple and Atago Jinja 愛宕神社 in the background “imbue the painting with religious overtones, since the region surrounding these two complexes was traditionally identified as a Buddhist paradise.”<sup>63</sup> Suzuki Hiroyuki 鈴木廣之 argues that the river alludes to the boundary between “this world” and the “other world,” and the bridge depicted in the center of the screen is the bridge connecting the two worlds. Suzuki interprets the meaning of the dancing and music scenes as an analogy to the music played in the paradise of Boddhisattva, and he considers the general theme of the painting to be an overlapping and interaction of the two worlds through the people’s music making.<sup>64</sup> This interpretation of the symbolism of the river is especially interesting because of its resonance with my earlier discussion of how the Jesuits would have appreciated *Yōjin sōgakuzu* in light of *The City of God*, with the river representing the division between the earthly city and the heavenly city.

It is generally agreed that one of the prototypes for the outdoor merrymaking scene is *meishozu* 名所図 (pictures of famous sites), which depict well known pilgrimage temples painted on hanging scrolls and folding screens.<sup>65</sup> Typically, these paintings capture an entire temple precinct from a bird’s eye view, demonstrate the wealth and the glory of the temple,

61 See note 12 above. Sakamoto’s first reference to the parallel appeared in Sakamoto and Yoshimura 1974, p. 141.

62 For information about this famous folding screen, I referred to Guth 1996; Suzuki 1994; Yamane 1983; and Takeda 1977.

63 Guth 1996, p. 114.

64 Suzuki 1994, pp. 57–62.

65 McKelway 2006, pp. 157–58; Yamane 1983; and Takeda 1977, pp. 115–17.

and also provide practical information about directions to the temple for those who might make a real pilgrimage someday. Some of them, such as the popular subject *Tateyama mandara* 立山曼荼羅, combined the temple view and the figures of pilgrims with vivid scenes of hell.<sup>66</sup> It was believed that viewing this image could substitute for the merit of making a real pilgrimage, and men and women were trained to explain the meaning of the mandala in local villages for the purpose of “pictorial proselytization.”<sup>67</sup>

Some of the outdoor merrymaking scene paintings still maintain the original religious meaning of the pilgrimage, for they depict figures traveling to a temple.<sup>68</sup> However, it is apparent that the painters were typically more interested in rendering the views outside the temple than in depicting religious worship inside. While the pilgrimage scene presents the temple’s main hall in the center of the composition, the outdoor merrymaking scene focuses on rendering the figures making merry on the road. The painters were particularly interested in the rich variety of people gathering at the temple from all social classes, a fascinating jumble of people from the “sacred” circle (Buddhist priests and monks) and the “profane” circle (street performers, vendors, and men and women on the road). Japanese religious tradition does not necessarily divide the “sacred” from the “profane,” or merrymaking from religious worship; the celebratory spirit was offered to the deities as these people were celebrating and giving thanks for their lives. According to Joseph M. Kitagawa, “Japanese religion has been singularly preoccupied with this world, with its emphasis on finding ways to cohabit with the *kami* (sacred) and with other human beings.”<sup>69</sup> In other words, it is possible to consider that the merry celebration establishes a free interaction between the “sacred” and the “profane,” or “this world” and the “other world.” While the sacred expresses itself through the profane, the profane reconfirms the meaning of life by making reference to the sacred.

Comparing the two pairs of folding screens, *Yōjin sōgakuzu* and *Takao kanpūzu*, it becomes evident that the former had two sources: the merrymaking scene paintings of the Azuchi Momoyama period and late sixteenth-century European art, especially the Netherlandish paintings and prints. The artists of the screens did a remarkable job combining these two traditions so distant from each other. What is even more remarkable is that the religious implications underlying both the Japanese and the Jesuit understandings of the screens do not conflict with each other. The Japanese viewers of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* would not have understood the symbolic meanings of the temple of Cupid, the wine shed, the shepherd, or the youth being instructed by the elders, but they did not have to be Christian in order to enjoy these images. The Japanese viewers could participate in the European experience of enjoying music and conversation on the waterfront, being on a boat on a sunny day, and being out on the grass or on the road with friends. *Yōjin sōgakuzu* was carefully designed to appeal to the Japanese sensibility in communicating the pleasures of living in this world and companionship through the depiction of a joyous mingling of the “sacred” and the “profane.”

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66 Hirasawa 2008, p. 32.

67 Kaminishi 2006, pp. 145–51.

68 Takeda 1977, pp. 116–17.

69 Kitagawa 1987, p. xii.

## Conclusion

Here I have explored the topic of visual bilingualism pertaining to Jesuit-affiliated art production in Azuchi Momoyama Japan. In the first section, I reviewed the historical context of *Yōjin sōgakuzu*. In the letter from 1583, the Jesuit Visitor Alessandro Valignano ordered the painters in Rome to create folding screens with some European images that would particularly appeal to Japanese sensibilities. Because of the Pope's death, the folding screens could not be made in Rome, but primary documents indicate that the Jesuits commissioned them from Japanese workshop(s) instead.

In the second section, the critical analysis of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* demonstrated that the two landscape paintings depicted on the screens accommodate multiple symbolic references to teach and entertain a mixed audience in different ways. To the Christian audience, the landscapes showed scenes of pilgrimage to the heavenly city and of youth being called to a priestly vocation. To the non-Christian, Japanese audience, they showed joyful scenes of an outdoor picnic and group leisure. Possibly, these merrymaking scenes expressed the presence of the sacred through the vision of the profane. In a single work of art, multiple meanings co-exist in concordance without overcoming each other, and the work "speaks" two different visual languages.

Because of the lack of textual information, we do not know the name of the painter who created *Yōjin sōgakuzu*; it could have been a primary Jesuit commission or a commission of a Japanese patron who favored European images. If the original patrons of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* were the Jesuits, the Buddhist allusion to paradise was something the missionaries had not intended. I would suggest that the *religious* bilingualism that appears in *Yōjin sōgakuzu* is a byproduct of *aesthetic* bilingualism, and it shows how visual art and religion are inseparably intertwined in the art of the early modern period. As viewers of *Yōjin sōgakuzu* today, we may enjoy this work of art by recognizing the convergence of cultures and the concordance of sensibilities. The hybrid folding screens reveal a mutual accommodation of what is Japanese and what is European and, as a whole, they encompass East and West in the realm of aesthetics. Whether one understands the images in a Japanese or a European manner, they equally communicate a message that our lives as pilgrims in this world would be well lived by celebrating the beauty of nature, music, and companionship. *Yōjin sōgakuzu* attests not only to the creative partnership between the Japanese and the Jesuits, but also to the role of art as the middle ground between different cultures and religious traditions.

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### Sources of Illustrations

Figures 1-a and b: Courtesy of MOA Museum of Art

Figure 2: TNM Image Archives, source : <http://TnmArchives.jp/>

Figure 3: Courtesy of Eisei Bunko Museum

Figure 4: Courtesy of Kosetsu Museum of Art

Figure 5: (left) Marie Mauquoy-Hendrickx, *Les Estampes des Wierix*, part 1 (Bruxelles: Biblioteque Royale Albert I, 1978), Figure 577 (detail).

(right) *Hollstein's Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts: 1450-1700*, vol. 46, plates, part 2 (Rotterdam, Sound & Vision, 1995), Figure 1032 (detail).

Figure 6: *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts*, vol. 10, part 3 (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision, 2001), Figure 397 (detail).