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Early Japanese Christian Thought Reexamined Confucian Ethics, Catholic Authority, and the Issue of Faith in the Scholastic Theories of Habian, Gomez, and Ricci

Many late sixteenth/early seventeenth century Japanese Christian texts worked directly within arguments that could be found concurrently in Confucian, syncretist, and other traditions in Japan at this time. Japanese Christian thought has often been characterized as an example of the “non-Japanese” other, or as playing a primary role of “importing Western thought” during this period. This article argues, on the contrary, that the importance of many of the major currents of Japanese Christian thought actually lies precisely in the way they interacted with and within arguments which were not particular to, the Christian tradition.

KEYWORDS: Habian/Fabian — *Myōtei mondō* — *Hadaius* — Early-modern Japan — Tokugawa rule — Confucianism — Christianity — Scholasticism — Matteo Ricci — *Tianzhu Shiyi*

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I also saw the [Jesuit] text *Myōtei mondō* by Fukan [Habian]... It discusses Buddhism (the ten sects as well as Ikkō and Nichiren, so twelve sects), Confucianism and Shinto. It is not worth looking at. It is all verbose ranting strung together in vulgar Japanese.

Hayashi Razan, Secretary to the Tokugawa Shogunate
and Anti-Christian Polemicist (1606 or 1650s) (HRB, 673)¹

The extent of Habian's understanding of Christianity [as seen in *Myōtei mondō*] ends with the concept of a sentient creator God. His shallowness of faith meant that he was not able to grasp the core doctrine of salvation through the crucifixion. I think this was the determining reason that he became an apostate.

Ebisawa Arimichi, Christian historian (1991) (KKRS EA, 512)

HABIAN ハビアン (1565–1621), also known as Fabian, Fukansai Habian 不干齋巴鼻庵, Hapian ハピアン, Habiyan ハビヤン, and Fukan 不干, was a prominent Jesuit apologist, public speaker, and author of the famous Japanese Jesuit text *Myōtei mondō* 妙貞問答. Through these activities he came to be identified as the most influential of all Japanese Christian thinkers of the so-called first period of Christianity in the Japan of the late sixteenth/early seventeenth centuries.² As the most competent Japanese Jesuit rhetoricist of his time, Habian was dispatched in 1603 to the “Jesuit Temple” in the Japanese capital, Kyoto. While in this prime position in Kyoto Habian not only authored *Myōtei mondō*, but moreover became widely known in the city as a charismatic orator and representative of the Jesuits in debates against notable Buddhist and Confucian figures. By 1608, however, Habian seems to have left the Jesuits. Notably, this was before the active persecution of Christians by the Tokugawa shogunate began in 1613–1614. By 1620, seven years into the active suppression of Christians

1. On doubts over the dating of this document see PARAMORE 2006b.

2. According to Jesuit records, Habian entered the society in 1586, and studied Latin and scholastic philosophy in the Jesuit colleges in Japan. He is recorded as also having developed his knowledge of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto at the same time. This may have been related to one of his main tasks at the college, the teaching of Japanese language and culture to the European priests as well as the young Japanese Jesuits. Habian was responsible for editing a version of *Heike monogatari* 平家物語 (KAMEI 1966) for use as a Japanese language text book, in addition to also supervising a range of other publishing projects. I use the name Habian because this is the way Habian himself spelt his name in the last work we have by him—*Hadaius*. In *Myōtei mondō* he called himself Fukansai Habian, which Elison and others have translated as Fukan Fabian. Obviously Habian was derived from the Portuguese/Latin rendering of the name of the third century pope and martyr St. Fabian. In Japanese Jesuit records extant from the early seventeenth century the name was also spelt this way in Roman script. However, given that by the end of his life he seems to have not been a Christian, and that we have no sources extant where he himself gives a version of his name in Roman letters, I have preferred to simply use a phonetic transcription of the Japanese name he himself last used.

by the Tokugawa government, Habian was back in Nagasaki, but seemingly not on the Christian side. He is ascribed as having participated in the suppression of Christianity, most notably through his authorship of *Hadaius*, a text which went on to become the most famous anti-Christian text of this period.³

After Habian's death, this dramatic story of his life, in particular his so-called "apostasy," appeared as a theme in a range of different literary works.⁴ Thenceforth, Habian's Jesuit and post-Jesuit period ideas, together with the story of his life, came to be presented through a virile anti-Christian discourse as an example of the intellectual and political clash between "Japan" and the "the West." In other words, his ideas and actions came to be understood in terms of an imagined conflict constructed between images of "Japaneseness" and "non-Japaneseness."⁵ Interestingly, this same framework, constructed by anti-Christian polemicists in the Tokugawa period, has also been the one through which most historians of the twentieth century have analyzed not just Habian's works, but indeed the Japanese Christian thought of this period in general.

In nearly all of the twentieth-century research on this period, although Japanese Christian writing like Habian's Jesuit period work *Myōtei mondō* has been highly valued as a source of Japanese intellectual history, that value has been discussed in terms of its role in "challenging traditional Japanese thought" by "introducing Western thought" to Japan (EBISAWA 1964, 117–18; IDE 1995, 258–59). In other words, in modern research Japanese Christian writings like Habian's have been examined in terms of a historiography that assumes as an a priori a set of mutually exclusive categories called "Eastern thought" and "Western thought." Rather than treating Habian's Christian thought as original work, previous scholarship has often approached it as some kind of "translation" of something called

3. On Habian's general biography including anti-Christian activities and reference to Jesuit records see IDE 1995, 186–90 and ELISON 1991, 142–57. This article concentrates on Habian's Christian ideas and therefore does not deal with *Hadaiusu*. Analysis of *Hadaiusu* by this author can be found in PARAMORE 2006a, 82–88.

4. Habian was portrayed as a caricatured example of the treacherous Christian in a number of Tokugawa-period works. A notable example is the famous anti-Christian work *Kirishitan monogatari* 吉利支丹物語. First published in 1639, this work became popular when reprinted by disciples of Suzuki Shōsan in the 1660s and continued to be influential throughout the Tokugawa period. Although the Habian represented in *Kirishitan monogatari*, along with most of the other contents of the work, is clearly fictitious, this has not stopped this representation affecting the way modern scholars portray Habian in their academic writing. See for instance, Ebisawa Arimichi's treatment of Habian's apostasy in NST 25, 602–603. As time went by the portrayal of Habian in literature became increasingly monstrous; see for instance, *Nanbanji kōhaiki* 南蛮寺興廢記, in EBISAWA 1964.

5. This discourse is not only seen in more literary works like *Kirishitan monogatari*, but can also be observed in more intellectually inclined texts from the mid seventeenth century, particularly those of Hayashi Razan. A famous example is the short text *Haiyaso* 排耶蘇 (HRB, 672–73).

“Western thought.” Habian’s “apostasy” has thereby inevitably been portrayed as a reaction against this “Western thought.”

Habian, as a characterization of a clash between “East” and “West,” became a tool in Japanese historiography for making value judgments over the highs and lows of “Eastern” and “Western” thought, and by extension politics and culture. In pre-World War Two fascist period research, Habian’s apostasy was seen as a “return to the true [non-Christian] path” (SHINMURA 1926, 96–97). Conversely, in the post-World War Two period a whole genre of so-called “Christian history research” led by Ebisawa Arimichi emerged in reaction. In this postwar writing, Habian’s apostasy was historicized as a representation of the shogunate’s “irrational” reaction against the “good teachings” of Western philosophy and Christianity. The political inclination changed, but the East-West framework remained the same. Even in much later scholarly criticisms of this kind of “Christian history research,” a good example being George ELISON’s *Deus Destroyed*, the same image of Habian’s Jesuit period work as a representative of “Western thought” was retained. Elison’s work, while being at times more nuanced, and providing a range of impressive new research, in the end presents an argument that is basically just an inversion of the “Japanese Christian history” approach championed by Ebisawa, which itself was an inversion of the nationalist historiography of the likes of Shinmura and before him Inoue Tetsujirō.⁶

Today, the dominant historical views on this period, represented either by Ebisawa and his followers or by Elison, continue to analyze Habian’s ideas in terms of categories that present “Japanese” and “Western” thought traditions as mutually exclusive opposites engaged in conflict. They thereby continue to work in frameworks which are clearly derived from Tokugawa period anti-Christian discourse itself, and which also potentially support the historically inaccurate and politically dangerous “clash of civilization” type arguments which have been so in vogue through the late 1990s and early 2000s.

There is ample evidence, however, to suggest that the reality of the world of intellectual and religious discourse in late 1500s/early 1600s Japan was far from the polarized image of mutually exclusive “Western” and “Eastern” thought discussed above. For instance, one of the most important terms used in *Myōtei mondō* is Confucian (*Jingireichishin* 仁義礼智信, benevolence, justice, custom, knowledge, and faith) and much of the logic of the argument relies on a Buddhist paradigm adopted by Song Confucians, the *tiyong* 体用 (Jp. *taiyō*) dichotomy.⁷ Furthermore, significant trends of Confucian thought popular in Japan at this time

6. Elison’s writing inverted the value judgment of the Christian historians to describe Habian’s apostasy in terms of a natural loss by Christianity in a “clash of dogmas” (ELISON 1991, 252–54).

7. While a similar paradigm also exists in scholastic philosophy, Habian presents his argument using the Chinese terms familiar from the Buddhist/Confucian texts.

had many elements in common with what was identified as Christian thought. In fact the content of texts which later came to be labeled as part of separate “Western” and “Eastern” thought traditions often overlapped to such an extent that 1970s research on some Japanese *Tentō* Confucian texts of the early seventeenth century mistakenly claimed that these texts were written by Christians.⁸

This fascinating and highly politicized background of writings on this topic informs us of the complexities inherent in any examination of Japanese Christian thought, and also of the broad array of fields with which such an examination is capable of interacting. Overlaps in the histories of Confucian and Christian thought in Japan demonstrated by the mistaken 1970s theories on *Tentō* thought inform us of the difficulty of looking at these traditions in isolation. In short, it directs us towards considering these intellectual currents in the area context of their production and utilization.

This article revisits a range of Christian thought from Japan’s so-called first Christian period of the late-sixteenth/early-seventeenth centuries through such a contextualized approach. The diverse array of Japanese Christian intellectual writings from this period, often referred to generically as “Christian thought,” are referenced in much secondary literature to show the currency of “Western thought,” “Christianity,” or “Catholic doctrine” in late Warring States to early Tokugawa Japan. Conversely, this article enquires into the significance of the presence in this Japanese Christian thought of ideas that diverged from Catholic doctrine. In other words, rather than focusing on the cohesion of Japanese Christian thought and its differences with non-Christian Japanese thought, this article enquires into the overlaps of ideas between Christian and non-Christian thought traditions, and into the diversity within what is often identified as “Christian thought.”

In comparison with previous research which has tended to focus on Japanese Christian thought in comparative religion or philosophy terms, this article takes an area-studies-influenced approach, concentrating on the broader intellectual and social context of the production of so-called Christian texts in Japan instead of on their simple sectarian identification as “Christian” or “Catholic.” In common with much previous research, this article looks at how tensions between elements of scholastic philosophy and revealed religion in the Catholic Christianity of this time were dealt with by Japanese thinkers. Instead of basing that examination in terms of the norms of Christian theological argument, however, this article rather attempts to look at these issues from the broader intellectual context of debates on the nature of human ethics which were being played out in East Asia at this time.

8. See the *Tentō* texts from this period *Shingaku gorinsho* 心学五倫書 and *Honsaroku* 本佐録 in NST 28, 257–301. Discussion on the relationship between Confucianism and Christianity in these texts can be found in the same volume (NST 28, 490–94).

Examining Japanese Christian thought in the broader context of other Japanese thought of the same period recommends a focus on those Japanese Christian texts that had the most currency in general society. So although this article examines a wide array of Japanese Christian texts designed for use both inside and outside the Jesuit order, and by both Christians and non-Christians, I pay particular attention to texts that had the most impact outside of the purely religious communities. *Myōtei mondō* 妙貞問答, *Dochirina Kirishitan* ドチリナ・キリシタン, and *Tianzhu shiyi* (Jp. *Tenshu jitsugi*) 天主實義 seem to have been the three most popular Christian texts in early seventeenth century Japan written in Japanese or Chinese. All three texts were written to promote Christianity to non-believers or recent converts, with an agnostic or non-Christian Japanese (or in the case of *Tianzhu shiyi*, Chinese) readership in mind. All three texts ended up being deployed not only within Christian communities, but in the wider Japanese community.

These three texts were not only the most referenced and popularly disseminated Christian texts of the early Tokugawa period, they also fortuitously happen to represent the three major kinds of Jesuit texts read in Japan. *Myōtei mondō* is a completely original piece full of in-depth references to Asian intellectual/religious traditions. It was written in Japanese and was authored by a Jesuit brother who was Japanese. *Dochirina Kirishitan* espouses a rather conservative, one might even say superstitious, doctrine. It was also written in Japanese, but was derived from a European text. The Japanese edition was edited by a Jesuit who was European. *Tianzhu shiyi* was authored by a China-based Jesuit of European origin, in fact one of the most famous Jesuits in history, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). *Tianzhu shiyi* was written in Chinese. It shows a depth of references to Chinese thought traditions, and even an overt attempt to integrate Christianity into the Confucian tradition.

Of these three examples, *Myōtei mondō* is the best example of how so-called “Christian thought” developed indigenously in Japan during this period. It is the only of the works authored by a Japanese. It is also the only one authored completely within the context of the Japanese Christian movement as the sixteenth turned into the seventeenth century. Partly for that reason, and partly because of its contents, which will be examined presently, I believe it should be regarded as the best example of indigenous Japanese Christian thought extant from this period. Interestingly, it is also the work which has been most misinterpreted, abused, and willfully manipulated over the centuries. It is also the only major Christian text written in Japanese which is linked directly to significant anti-Christian arguments, not only through Habian’s own anti-Christian writings after his own apostasy, but also in the arguments of other key anti-Christian figures of the early Tokugawa period such as Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657) and Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三 (1579–1655).

Indigenous Japanese Christian Thought: Myōtei mondō, Syncretism, and Knowledge

Myōtei mondō is an excellent text for examining the interaction between different intellectual and religious traditions in early seventeenth century Japan because its structure revolves around a systematic examination of different traditions. The text consists of three sections or chapters. The first section systematically analyzes different teachings of Buddhism sect by sect, the second section discusses Confucianism and Shinto, and the third section deals with Christianity.

Of course, being a Jesuit text, *Myōtei mondō* tends to argue the weaknesses of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto and point to the comparative superiority of Christianity. This is done primarily by asserting that Christianity gives the best hope of an afterlife. The narrative of *Myōtei mondō* is based around the premise of a discussion between two female seekers, both widowed by war and both former Buddhist nuns. Myōshū, a newcomer, asks questions of Yūtei, a confirmed Christian believer, who explains to her the truth of Christianity in comparison to the other religious traditions they had experienced. Both Myōshū and Yūtei present as women with a broad knowledge of a range of religious traditions, sympathetic characters who through personal tragedy, brought on by the violence during that period of Japanese history, have become truth seekers (KKRS MT, 290).⁹

The longest, most positive, and most articulate section of *Myōtei mondō* is the third and last section where Habian explains the nature of “the teachings of the Christians.” Previous research has referred to this section mainly in order to point out its use of scholastic philosophy and Christian creation theory (IDE 1995, 264; KKRS EA, 512). But this section is actually anything but a simple recommendation of Catholic doctrine. In addition to creation theory, this section of *Myōtei mondō* also lays out what Habian sees as the ethical system of Christianity; in other words, the teachings of Christianity which relate to how the person created by God should act in the created world.¹⁰ This is in fact the dominant argument presented in this section and indeed throughout the text. It is also this key argument of *Myōtei mondō* which most obviously overlaps with humanist ethical traditions that were contemporaneously being presented in new Japanese Confucian writings of this period. Previous research has not mentioned the human ethics argument of *Myōtei mondō* directly, yet the emphasis on “rationality” and “knowledge” mentioned by EBISAWA (1991, 117), and the text’s

9. Interestingly, this theme of personal loss also figures in the careers of many historically verifiable intellectual figures of this period, including Habian himself, the contemporary Confucian Fujiwara Seika 藤原惺窩, and Soshin 祖心, the Buddhist charismatic and a figure in the shogunate of the mid-seventeenth century. All of these figures were orphaned as a result of wars of the late sixteenth century.

10. For further discussion of Habian’s approach to human ethics see PARAMORE 2004.

political nature, mentioned by ELISON (1991, 158, 169), both revolve around this key feature. Habian's explication of these human ethics are built on his scholastic mediated Aristotelian explication of creation theory.

Habian's explication of creation theory is central to the overall thesis of his work not only because of its support of his argument about human ethics, but also because it stands at the center of his criticism of each of the intellectual traditions of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto. He argues that because all three of these traditions are incapable of explaining the foundations of existence (creation), they are thereby intellectually deficient and unlikely to lead to salvation. This thesis is explicated most clearly at the end of the first section where Habian summarizes the underlying problem that all the Buddhist sects share in common: Habian argues that seeing as in Buddhism the original Buddha is held to be nothingness, Buddhism thereby provides no explanation for the cause (creation) of existence.¹¹

Firstly, they hold that in the far distant past, this not discernable far off thing called Buddha was the same as emptiness, in other words that it wasn't anything at all. In Zen they call this *honbun* 本分 or *bushhō* 仏性, and in Tendai they call it *shimnyo* 真如. The heart/mind of Buddha, if such a thing is said to exist, is in all cases said to have come from emptiness (*kū* 空)...the Buddha of old is in other words "emptiness," it is nothing at all. (MMRS MT, 301)

In the second section of *Myōtei mondō* Habian criticizes Confucianism and Shinto using a similar argument to that used against Buddhism: Confucianism and Shinto possess no sentient force to cause creation. Habian concentrates on the fact that the metaphysical systems of both Confucianism and Shinto explain the basis of existence in terms of Yin and Yang (*inyō* 陰陽).¹²

The Yin and Yang has no sentience and no wisdom, its [prime creative] function of fusion and division is not something which can be initiated by the Yin and Yang itself. (KKRS MT, 357)

In this manner, Habian alleges that the explanation of creation offered by the Neo-Confucian theory of the Supreme Ultimate is based in a substance (Yin and Yang) which lacks the capacities required to originate a causation: mind/heart (intent) and knowledge. The main line of Habian's criticism of Shinto also mirrors his criticism of Buddhism and Confucianism, resting on the lack of ability of Yin and Yang to originate causation. (KKRS MT, 370–75)

11. Detailed development of this argument, including the emphasis on causation (*sakuin* 作因) can be seen at KKRS MT, 294–96.

12. In the metaphysics of Song Confucianism (sometimes referred to as Neo-Confucianism in English), creation is explained through reference to the Supreme Ultimate 太極 (Ch. *taiji*, Jp. *taikyoku*) and begins with the initial division of Yin and Yang.

In the third book of *Myōtei mondō*, Habian directly integrates these representations of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto into his own version of a scholastic metaphysical framework derived from Aristotelian categories. Habian's criticism of the creation theories of Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism were not simple negations of those theories. Rather, he integrated elements of the non-Christian traditions into a system of scholastic metaphysics at the head of which lay the sentient, willful, Christian God.

Buddhism, Shinto, and so on, as should be abundantly clear by now from the discussion above, are all false and cannot be relied upon to deliver our wishes in this world or the next. That is because the base of Buddhism is a return to emptiness, and Buddha itself is thereby emptiness. Also, lying behind the basis of Shinto is Yin and Yang. That is why the Shinto Gods, like Yin and Yang, are nothing more than what I said [empty]. In other words, as emptiness is nothingness, and thereby nothing, the Buddha is nothing to be revered. It does not amount to a Lord or anything like that. Moreover, what is called Yin and Yang is what we in our religion call *materia prima*, which is the base substance or matter from which the true Lord of our religion, God, created the multifarious things of this world. This *materia prima* is a substance, the nature of which has no sentience and no will. (KKRS MT, 386)

Habian employed Aristotelian *anima* categories in a scholastic representation of creation which allowed the existence of Yin and Yang as substance, but emphasized the need for something with will and thought as the initial creator of substance. The root of Habian's arguments against non-Christian religions was thereby tied to the root element of the scholastic theory of creation advanced by him: that sentience and knowledge are prerequisites for the act of creation.

Once you have comprehended the existence of God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth and all the multifarious things, then you should be able to see the division of the various categories in his/her creation. The wide array of all the multifarious things of the past and present we can see stem, in the Christian books, from four general categories. Firstly there is the category of *substantia*, secondly there is the category of *anima vegetabilis*, thirdly there is the category of *anima sensibilis*, fourthly there is what has *anima rationalis*. (KKRS MT, 394–95)¹³

Habian's explication of *anima* categories, however, was not only related to his explanation of creation. Much more importantly it was related to his explanation of the nature of the afterlife. In *Myōtei mondō*, as in many other texts of popular religious argumentation in this period, the accessibility of an afterlife

13. My use of the Latin terms instead of English in these translations follows Habian's original text which uses Japanese phonetic renderings of the Latin terms instead of translating the meanings into Japanese.

was of central concern. *Myōtei mondō* posits the human capacity for an afterlife as being directly related to the nature of the Aristotlian *anima* category of *anima rationalis*. The text explains the road to the attainment of an afterlife in terms of developing the nature inherent in *anima rationalis*. This begins with Habian's description of the natures of each *anima* category, where he describes *anima rationalis*.

The ones possessing *anima rationalis* have hunger and thirst and feel warm and cold [as do those possessing *anima sensibilis* — animals], but above that they also understand the nature of things, and possess the knowledge to debate over matters of right and wrong. In other words they are human beings. (KKRS MT, 395)

The centrality of the possession of this *anima rationalis* as a mark of humanity which thereby endows the possibility of an afterlife in heaven is repeatedly made clear by Habian throughout the third section of *Myōtei mondō*.

The life immanent in people as *anima rationalis* is what distinguishes each of us from others. It is what lives on individually into the afterlife. (KKRS MT, 399)

The reason why *anima rationalis* lives on into the afterlife and other (non-human) souls (*anima*) do not is explained in terms of the logic of the *anima* classification. The *anima* category is seen as residing in the nature (Habian uses the word *seitai* 性体) of a thing. In *Myōtei mondō* Habian directly relates the existence of this nature to the thing's function (*sayō* 作用):

In terms of all things we see and know the change in their nature (*seitai*) through its representation in their function (*sayō*). (KKRS MT, 397)

The nature of an object, which determines its *anima*, is known to us only through its function. In other words, whether something has the capacity to an afterlife is known by its function. The reason why the category closest to the human category of *rationalis*, the *anima* category of *sensibilis*, does not attain the afterlife is explained in terms of the bestial function of the members of this category:

The category of *anima sensibilis*, birds and animals, have senses and thereby know and feel things. But if one then asks does this mean that they have an afterlife, the answer to this is that they do not. The reason being that the category of the nature of a thing, as stated earlier, is known by ascertaining its function. Looking at the function of the object of the senses that the beasts and grubs of this category are directed towards, we see that all these objects of sense are of the flesh. By which I say, that they are simply directed towards food in wanting to eat, towards water in wanting to drink, towards sleep in wanting sleep, towards copulation in wanting to copulate. Their making of nests, digging of holes, running, flying, crying, howling, these actions are all functions of the flesh [physical needs] and nothing more. (KKRS MT, 389–99)

Because the “function” of animals does not go beyond physical concerns and concerns of the flesh, the lives of their souls are bound to the lives of that physicality, that flesh. Human beings, however, have the potential for an afterlife due to their functionality beyond the physical.

People also eat and drink, wake and sleep, breed, and these are all functions. If we look at where these functions reside, we see they are all of the body. But this is not the function [which is peculiar to people]. This other function is that which knows the principle of things, which directs the mind/heart towards commitment to the principles of benevolence, justice, custom, knowledge and faith, and to know the enduring Name. To pray for the afterlife in Heaven, and to consider the right and wrong and good and bad of things, this is also a function. And this function must reside in the nature. (KKRS MT, 399–400)

In other words, because the function of a person extends beyond mere physical concerns and reaches to the abstract issues of principle, right and wrong, good and bad, Heaven, and the Confucian virtues of benevolence, justice, custom, knowledge and faith, a person’s nature transcends the simple existence as flesh and attains the potential of an afterlife. It is important to note that this conception of *anima rationalis* is not only concerned with overcoming the physical existence of the body as flesh. Moreover it also stresses *anima rationalis* as defined by a function of thought which gives human beings the ability to know abstract truth through consideration. According to Habian, humans “discuss” and thereby “know” principles, right and wrong, good and bad. This is the function of human beings, the purpose of human beings, the human way of living. This is the root of Habian’s conception of the centrality of human ethics.

This conception of human ethics is intimately related to Habian’s conception of “knowledge.” The reference to the Confucian virtues of benevolence, justice, custom, knowledge, and faith seen in the above quote is repeated a number of times in *Myōtei mondō*, but the prevalence of the phrases “know the principle” and “discuss right and wrong, good and bad” in the text is striking. From the very first explanation of the division between different *anima* categories in *Myōtei mondō* it is emphasized that *anima sensibilis* “thinks and feels but does not know the principle,” whereas *rationalis* “knows the principle of things, and possesses the wisdom to discuss right and wrong” (KKRS MT, 395).¹⁴

Confucian and Buddhist influence in this aspect of Habian’s ethical thought is strongly alluded to not only by his use of overtly Confucian terms like “benevolence, justice, custom, knowledge, and faith,” and “know the principle” (the

14. Similar references can be found throughout the text, see for instance, KKRS MT, 301–303, 354, 374, 367. In the reference in KKRS MT, 367, Habian praises Confucianism in terms suggesting that Confucian ethics acknowledge the God-given attributes of *anima rationalis*.

Neo-Confucian *li* 理), but also by the language with which he explicates his arguments about nature and function, or what in Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism is called the theory of form and function 体用説 (Jp. *taiyōsetsu*; Ch. *tiyongshou*).

That importance of human beings individually discerning the knowledge of principle, right and wrong, good and bad, is a dominant theme that runs through *Myōtei mondō* from beginning to end. In the first and second sections of the text the human capacity for discernment of knowledge is an important underlying precept of Habian's criticism of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto. Habian's systematic explication of "Christian teachings" in the third section of the text, and his promise of the Christian afterlife, both rely on a differentiation between *anima sensibilis* and *anima rationalis* which emphasizes above all else the human capacity for ethical thought.

Habian's views on the function of human ethical thought developed in this manner are integrated into his argument over creation through his use of *anima* categories and his emphasis on the differentiation between God and *substantia*. They are thereby intimately linked to his criticism of other traditions. This argument is also central to the main motivation of the text in propagating Christianity. That is because the human capacity for the discernment of knowledge is directly linked to the attainment of the afterlife, which is the main carrot being offered through Christianity.

At first glance, *Myōtei mondō* seems to be dominated by discussion of creation, but the core argument of the text, certainly in terms of its primary function as a text aimed at conversion, is its discussion of human ethics. That is the discussion revolving around the subjective nature of human beings and their capacity for ethical thought, which gives them the capacity for afterlife. This discussion, while relying *a priori* on God's sentient creation of the world, nevertheless focuses on the nature of the individual's ethical thought in attaining the afterlife. In this sense, Habian's "Christian thought" focuses more on what we might call the humanist ethical side of Christianity emphasizing subjective thought, and focuses less on the more superstitious side of that thought which emphasizes action by externalized forces like God, angels, and the church hierarchy.

Other Populist Japanese Christian Texts: Heirarchy, Faith, and Sin

So, can we assume that what we have seen in Habian's work is fairly representative of the general nature of "Japanese Christian thought" in the Japan of this time? The answer of most modern specialists to date, particularly those who represent the dominant "Christian history" school who have done most of the groundbreaking work in this area, is a very firm no. In fact, these scholars have been rather merciless in arguing that elements of Habian's thought which diverge with what they regard as "Christian doctrine" simply expose the foundations of

his later apostasy by showing Habian's "limits of understanding," caused by his "shallowness of faith" (KKRS EA, 512).

Together with *Myōtei mondō*, printed in 1605, probably the most referenced and contemporaneously most widely distributed Japanese printed Christian text was *Dochirina Kirishitan*. This text was printed in two different versions, one in 1591 and one in 1600. *Dochirina Kirishitan*, particularly the later version, shared much in common with *Myōtei mondō*, not only in terms of its production period, but in terms of purpose and style: propagation of Christianity through comparison to other religions. Like *Myōtei mondō*, *Dochirina Kirishitan* is a dialogue. An interesting difference, however, is that while the dialogue in *Myōtei mondō* is between two equals, in *Dochirina Kirishitan* it is between a "master" and a "disciple." Also, because *Dochirina Kirishitan* was produced under the supervision of the Jesuit Inspector General of the East Indies, Alexandro Valignano (1539–1606), it is often held up in contrast to *Myōtei mondō* (particularly by "Christian historians"), as an example of a more "orthodox" and thereby representative Japanese Christian text.

When we start speaking of what is "truly representative" in terms of what is "orthodox," however, we move onto dangerous ground. Simply accepting the fact that both these texts and others operated in the same context and were identified with and produced by the same organization is probably a more grounded basis upon which to begin our examination of the relationship between these texts. Indeed, looking at the differences and similarities between Christian texts of this period in an open manner is the best way to grasp any totality which may have existed in what has come to be referred to as "Japanese Christian thought."

There is no doubt that *Dochirina Kirishitan*'s approach to knowledge and human discernment is markedly different to that seen in *Myōtei mondō*.

This object that we have faith and reverence for is a righteousness that rises above the reach of human knowledge and reason, it is the goodness which we call *fides* ヒイデス. (KKRS DC, 15)

Dochirina Kirishitan emphasizes "faith" above all else. As *Myōtei mondō* uses Japanized renderings of the original Latin terms rather than translation in order to render words like *substantia*, so too *Dochirina Kirishitan* uses a Japanese phonetic representation of the Latin *fides* (ヒイデス) to represent faith. The importance of *fides* as the core of Christian teachings is emphasized repeatedly throughout *Dochirina Kirishitan*.

Disciple: What is a Christian?

Master: Someone who not only accepts *fides* by committing his/her heart to the holy teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, but who also manifests *fides* in their words and deeds. (KKRS DC, 18)

In *Dochirina Kirishitan*, the core of “being Christian” is faith and action in accordance with *fides*. In *Myōtei mondō*, action in accordance with *anima rationalis* was instead emphasized. There is, however, a discussion of an exclusively human *anima* in *Dochirina Kirishitan* also. But the characteristics of this *anima* seem quite different to those outlined in *Myōtei mondō*. In *Dochirina Kirishitan*, as in *Myōtei mondō*, *anima rationalis* is presented as a part of the process by which human beings gain the possibility of salvation. But the nature of that “Christian *anima*” is quite different to the nature of the *anima rationalis* described by Habian.

In *Myōtei mondō*, *anima rationalis* is identified in terms of “discerning wisdom” (*funbetsu chie* 分別知恵) and “knowing the principle” (*ri o shiru* 理を知る), whereas in *Dochirina Kirishitan* the same *anima* is identified in terms of a “faith and reverence” which “transcends human knowledge” (the exact definition of *fides* in the same text). Whereas *Myōtei mondō*’s definition of *anima rationalis* emphasizes abstract knowledge, in *Dochirina Kirishitan* *anima* is seen as what transcends human knowledge by displacing it with faith. Moreover, the nature of the role of faith is described squarely in terms of the function of the “Holy Church,” the Church hierarchy, in mediating the will of God.

Disciple: What is *fides*?

Master: As God’s will is indicated to us through the Holy Church, our firm faith and reverence, the Good illuminated by the shining light of Grace which transcends human knowledge has been given us by God through the Christian *anima* [*rationalis*].
(KKRS DC, 38)

The concept of faith is also linked closely in *Dochirina Kirishitan* to an emphasis on the role of Grace, which although in the above quote is translated into Japanese as *go’on* ご恩, is represented through most of the text by the word *garasa* ガラサ, a Japanese phonetic rendering of the Portuguese rendering (*graça*) of the Latin *gratia*. Although “grace,” like “faith,” is a word that appears repeatedly as a point of emphasis throughout *Dochirina Kirishitan*, it appears on only one occasion in *Myōtei mondō*. The concept of grace is introduced in *Dochirina Kirishitan* as, like faith, an indispensable prerequisite to becoming a Christian.

Master: Now let me ask you a question. Do you know what kind of person’s actions allow them to become a Christian?

Disciple: One becomes a Christian with the Grace of God.

Master: What does “with the Grace of God” mean?

Disciple: I have not yet learnt this, would you please teach me?

Master: One does not attain the Grace of God by the power of your own or your parents’ works. One becomes a Christian by the mercy of God shown through the triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ.
(KKRS DC, 17)

In other words, one does not become a Christian through one's own or other peoples' actions, but only through the historical action of God himself in the person of Jesus Christ. Salvation is made possible through the agency of God in the created world (the forgiveness of sin through crucifixion), not simply through creation. In *Myōtei mondō* salvation is mentioned, but generally in terms of salvation from death by Christian faith. *Dochirina Kirishitan* emphasizes the idea of original sin. "Salvation" is not simply salvation from death, it is primarily salvation from sin (*toga* 科) and the devil (*tengu* 天狗). The overall presentation of the role of human beings in *Dochirina Kirishitan* does not see them as subjectively "debating over good and evil" (as in *Myōtei mondō*), but rather sees them as objects being acted upon by the major sources of interventionary agency in the world: God and Satan. Human beings can do little more than hold on tight to their charms and crucifixes as they are buffeted by these superhuman forces.

Master: There is nothing more important than to respect the Light of Our Lord Jesus Christ by revering the Cross and bringing our mind entirely to the heart of faith. Because we humbly wish sin to be forgiven, there is nothing for it but to humbly try to hold up the Cross.

Disciple: What is meant by "making ourselves free"?

Master: We who have become the prisoners of the devil [can become free by] being pardoned from the place of slaves [hell].

Disciple: Why do you say [we are] prisoners?

Master: We and the devil are the slaves of sin. The Lord declared us to be the slaves of the devil after we sinned against his Word. Thereby, when we commit a mortal sin, because we have submitted to the devil [by sinning] we become his slave. But, by following the path of raising up the cross, by taking baptism and reverently taking the sacrament of confession, people may by the grace of God be forgiven all sins, and thereby through the power of the cross our Lord Jesus Christ takes back [takes on for us] the thing that made us slaves of the devil. By taking back what made us slaves, [He] made us free. This is the true greatness [of Jesus].

(KKRS DC, 19–20)

In this manner, rather than emphasizing human beings' own thought and actions in the created world, *Dochirina Kirishitan* presents not only a more superstitious view, but also one which places less emphasis on ethics and knowledge and more on individual faith. Interestingly, considering the time of writing, *Dochirina Kirishitan*, despite being regarded as the more "orthodox Catholic" text in comparison with *Myōtei mondō*, seems rather Protestant in its promotion of purely religious practice at the expense of ethical thought and action. *Dochirina*'s general tendency towards emphasis on original sin and a negative view of the world and the body also follow this trend.

Disciple: What kinds of things are our enemy?

Master: The world, the devil, the body, these things. (KKRS DC, 23)

Here *Dochirina* makes it abundantly clear that the world and the body are enemies. Conversely, although *Myōtei mondō* argues that if a thing possesses a worldly function and no other, then that thing cannot attain the afterlife, it does not thereby argue that worldly things are inherently evil. In *Dochirina Kirishitan*, however, there is no doubt:

Due to the first sin inherited from Adam the flesh (physical body) is born with sin. (KKRS DC, 24)

Myōtei mondō's reference to the question of original sin, however, is much more ambivalent. While stating that because of Adam's sin human beings do not automatically "receive the help" of God in attaining the afterlife, it does not say that human beings are born with sin, nor does it categorically state that human beings cannot attain the afterlife without the help of god (KKRS MT, 407).

Dochirina Kirishitan's explanation of the nature of salvation, however, relies completely on the concept of original sin. Human beings attain the afterlife only by forgiveness as the action of God. The only things they can do to attain this action relate to the sacraments of the Church, in particular baptism and confession. Influenced by their varying approaches to the role of original sin and salvation, the approaches of *Myōtei mondō* and *Dochirina Kirishitan* to the centrality of the sacraments is also different. *Myōtei mondō*'s approach to the sacraments verges on relativism.

To enter the road to assistance [in salvation], in Christian teachings you take what is called baptism. If you take just this sacrament, follow the ten commandments of this religion, and respect and revere God, then you can relax now and be sure of an afterlife in Heaven. (KKRS MT, 408)

If you follow "just this sacrament" you can "be sure" of the afterlife. There is no mention, and indeed the tone of the text suggests in no way whatsoever, that you will surely burn in hell if you do not do these things.

To sum up, there are three key points where *Dochirina Kirishitan* and *Myōtei mondō* disagree. Firstly there is the issue of original sin and the resultant negative view of the world and the body. This is emphasized in *Dochirina Kirishitan* and central to its main argument about the nature of salvation. In *Myōtei mondō*, on the other hand, this argument is hardly present. Secondly, the basic road to the afterlife relies on different things in each text. In *Dochirina Kirishitan* it is all about Christ's crucifixion as the act of salvation, and the sacraments of the church as the representation of that salvation in the contemporary world. *Myōtei mondō* conversely emphasizes the nature of *anima rationalis* as attributed to human beings by God in creation. This almost represents an argument of original good versus one of original evil. Thirdly, *Dochirina Kirishitan* empha-

sizes above all else “faith,” faith to God, through Jesus Christ, through the Church hierarchy and its sacraments. “Faith” is the key word in that text. Conversely the key word in *Myōtei mondō* is “knowledge,” knowledge of abstracted ethical rightness as truth, the attainment of which is the function of human beings attributed by God through *anima rationalis*.

Other Japanese *Kirishitan* texts authored by the European hierarchy in Japan and used there for propagation of the religion show similarities to this emphasis on the role of faith, the church hierarchy and the sacraments seen in *Dochirina Kirishitan*. For instance, in *Kirishitan kokoroegaki* 吉利支丹心得書, we can see a negative view of the world and the human body which is particularly similar to *Dochirina*.

There are three enemies that pull us towards evil: the world, the body, the devil. (KKRS KE, 179)

A negative view of knowledge in comparison with faith is a theme that can also be seen in this text, and in other texts printed in 1605, the same year as *Myōtei mondō*, for instance *Sakaramenta teiyōfuroku* サカラメンタ提要付録 (KKRS KE, 184; NST 25, 183–84). Other texts of this kind published around this time, for instance *Gopashon no kannen* 御パシヨンの観念 of 1607, are not necessarily as negative about either the world or knowledge as *Dochirina Kirishitan*, but they nevertheless tend to emphasize the role of grace rather than *anima* in salvation, and thereby the agency of God over human beings (NST 25, 232).

In this way it can be seen that within a range of Japanese printed Christian texts produced for the purpose of propagation of the faith in the first years of the 1600s, there was a diversity of opinion offered over the central issue of salvation. The major difference lay between opinions which emphasized human agency and action by relying on *anima*, of which *Myōtei mondō* is the clearest example, and others, comprising the majority, which emphasized interventionary action by God.

The arguments presented within this latter group of texts, however, also demonstrated some diversity. In the highly influential yet extreme example of *Dochirina Kirishitan*, human knowledge, indeed almost human existence, is treated so negatively that human ethics or the possibility of good action arising from human thought are all but totally negated. Other texts like *Gopashon no kannen* emphasized grace and God’s agency, but did not necessarily negate human thought or mysticism.

Internal Japanese Jesuit Texts: Scholasticism and Humanism

If this is the diversity of what appeared in the texts written by Jesuits in Japan for propagation of the faith, and therefore for outsiders, what about texts written for use inside the Order at the same time for education of the brothers? These

texts were written or translated by European Jesuits in Japan. It could possibly be argued, therefore, that these texts should not really be considered “Japanese Christian texts,” not only because they were written by Europeans, but also because they only functioned (were read and used) in social structures completely controlled by them (the Jesuit academies). Nevertheless, reference to these texts can be of great assistance in understanding the nature and meaning of the diversity seen in the public Japanese Christian texts examined above. That is because through these texts we can see how elements of Christian theology and indeed scholastic philosophy were linked, developed, and explained in the education which the likes of Habian underwent.

The best example of this kind of text we have extant is the Head of the Japanese sub-province of the Jesuits, Pedro Gomez’s (1535–1600) *Compendium of Catholic Doctrine* (Lat. *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*; Jp. *Kōgi yōkō* 講義要綱).¹⁵ Ide Katsumi has identified this text together with Valignano’s edition of *Japan’s Catechism* as texts probably read by Habian during his time as a seminarian (IDE 1995, 284). Furthermore, Gomez’s *Compendium of Catholic Doctrine* stands as the most extensive Jesuit text in Japanese we have extant, and was seemingly the basis for theological education in the Japanese Jesuit colleges.

An examination of this text reveals how theological issues of revealed religion were related to scholastic concepts like *anima rationalis* and the importance of human knowledge in the orthodox discourse carried on inside the Japanese Jesuit schools. This relationship between Christian doctrine and *anima* theory was established in these texts in a particular way which attributed to them a particular political meaning. In the *Compendium* there is a passage where Gomez makes perfectly clear the relationship between *anima rationalis* and *fides* that was taught at this time:

What makes a human being is the possession of three illuminations [*anima*]. The first is the illumination of *sensibilis*, which can also be said to be weak, it is what is communicated by our senses, it is the illumination of sight, hearing, smell and taste... This is possessed by beasts, animals, insects, fish, and humans. The second is the illumination of *rationalis*. Because this allows us to discern spiritual things which *sensibilis* cannot, it is better than *sensibilis* in many respects. Things which this illumination can well discern include: God, angels, right and wrong, and so on. The third is the illumination of *fides*. With *fides* we believe in things outside the realm of nature, things which cannot be discerned by human beings. The trinity, and so on. Therefore, someone who

15. Gomez served in this position from 1590. Today Jesuit “Provinces” often lie along national boundaries. At this time, however, the Jesuit Order in Japan constituted a “sub-province” within the larger East Indies province. Thus, although a provincial inspector (like Valignano) ranked above Gomez, within the permanent members of the order in Japan Gomez held the supreme position.

possesses only the illumination of *sensibilis* is the same as a beast. Someone who possesses illumination beyond *sensibilis*, the illumination of discernment [*anima rationalis*], and by this does good deeds in the world of men, should be called a good person. Seneca or Plato were examples of this kind of person. A person who beyond this reveres the illumination of *fides* is a Christian. Only Christians receive the grace of God. For this reason, there is a hierarchical relationship between these three illuminations. *Fides* is the top illumination. The illumination of discernment [*rationalis*] is in the middle. The illumination of *sensibilis* is at the bottom. (OHARA 1998, 29–30)¹⁶

This division and explanation of the *anima* relations is similar to Habian's, with one big exception, the role of *fides*. Gomez introduces *fides* as a category above *anima rationalis*, thereby subjugating human thought to faith in a hierarchical relationship. But he does more than that. He also clearly identifies the content of this highest category as relating to the "mysteries of faith," like the trinity, for which (it was contemporaneously argued, as we saw in *Dochirina Kirishitan*) there was no basis of explanation other than the Church hierarchy. Furthermore, he grades human existence in terms of the possession of these three categories. So he not only emphasizes faith over human knowledge, he also defines faith in a manner which subjugates the humanist elements to hierarchy-determined doctrine.

This means that the ideas of the trinity, and forgiveness, two issues emphasized by Ide as "cores of Christian faith and Christian theology overlooked by Habian" are presented in *Compendium* in such a way as to seriously slant their meanings (IDE 1995, 284). Gomez does not primarily use the concept of the trinity to emphasize the inherent potential sanctity of the human being, nor does he use the concept of forgiveness to emphasize the virtue of human sympathy. Instead the mysteries of faith are used for exactly the opposite purpose, to argue against the potentiality of human sanctity and rather for subjugation of the humanist or "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" type of teachings inherent in the mysteries of faith. The aspects of these "mysteries of faith" which emphasize the sacred or Godly within the human being are skipped over, the mysteries instead being used to subjugate the human soul to a hierarchically-determined, rule-based doctrine.

Looking from the position of humanist ethics, this means that Gomez's use of *anima* categories works in almost exactly the opposite way to Habian's. Habian delineated human beings as a category from other animals to emphasize their

16. I have chosen to focus on examining *Compendium* instead of *Japan's Catechism* here for a range of reasons. Firstly, as mentioned, *Compendium* is more thorough. More importantly, however, there are significant problems with the consistency of certain elements of *Japan's Catechism* as it has come down to us which make it difficult to consider it authentic as a unified text. For more on this see PARAMORE 2006a, 44–46 (footnote 65).

shared ability to think about ethical issues. Gomez divided human beings, presenting three groups of higher, lower, and middle. The basic conflict between Habian and Gomez could be characterized as a conflict between two different conceptions of ethics. Habian's ethical position emphasizes the potential of human good (one which today might be called a "Christian humanist ethics"), while Gomez instead takes a negative approach to humanity, emphasizing original sin to uphold church hierarchy.

Of course, from a modern theological perspective it is easy to see that the mysteries of faith, with their inherent emphasis on human sanctity and sympathy, could have been employed by Habian to argue his own side in this conflict. But given the way Habian himself had been taught about the mysteries of faith by the likes of Gomez, it is no wonder that Habian did not see the mysteries of faith as something that he could use to support his argument.

The *Compendium* thereby goes some way to explaining the issues of theological interpretation lying behind the diversity seen in the Japanese Christian thought of this time.¹⁷ The question of how the Aristotelian *anima* categories and the logic behind them should be fused with aspects of biblical revelation, and the political and ethical consequences of that question, lay at the heart of the differences seen within that diversity. The political and ethical consequences of this conflict related back to whether ethical action was determined by thought based on individual knowledge and discernment, or rather on obedience to socio-politically (hierarchically) determined rules.

Ricci's Tianzhujiao Christian Thought from China

Another place that this conflict could be seen was in the discourse surrounding another text which, although written and published in China, came to be an influential representative of Christian thought in Korea and Japan.¹⁸ It was written by a figure famous for his attempt at a synthetic resolution of the Christian and Confucian traditions, an attempt which also ultimately engaged, or at least came to be argued in terms of, issues related to the role of Church hierarchy in determining Christian truth.¹⁹ The Italian-born Chinese Jesuit priest Matteo

17. The fact that in previous research this passage does not seem to have been used in explaining the "anomalies," or what I would rather call diversity, in Japanese Jesuit thought of this period is probably due to the fact that the discovery of *Compendium* in archives was a fairly recent occurrence. It was only transcribed from manuscripts and printed into book form in the late 1990s.

18. The influence of Ricci's *Tianzhu shiyi* on anti-Christian thought in Japan is discussed in PARAMORE 2006a, 49–62. The influence of *Tianzhu shiyi* on anti-Christian thought in Korea is discussed in KANG 1990, 87–89.

19. From the 1620s right through into the eighteenth century, the Ricci approach to Christianity, usually favored by the Jesuits in China, repeatedly came under attack from doctrinaire

Ricci is remembered today for his major role in the introduction of Christianity and elements of European/Middle Eastern science and philosophy to China, for his introduction of Confucian thought to Europe, and for his attempt to integrate Christianity and Confucianism.²⁰

The effects of Ricci's work, however, were not restricted to China and Europe. In 1603 he authored what would become his most famous religious text, *Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義 (Jp. *Tenshu jitsugi*). This text was imported to Japan around 1605, and though seemingly not immediately propagated widely, had at least by the 1640s become the most referenced Jesuit work in Japan. In the mid-seventeenth century, at least in terms of the discourse of the reception of Christian thought, *Tianzhu shiyi* was a central text which was considered part of the same Christian discourse as *Myōtei mondō* and *Dochirina Kirishitan*.²¹ It is important to note, however, that while in mid-seventeenth century and later Japanese anti-Christian discourse, *Tianzhu shiyi*, *Myōtei mondō*, and *Dochirina Kirishitan* were represented as part of the same "Christian thought" category, they were in actual fact not. *Tianzhu shiyi* was not only produced in a separate country to *Myōtei mondō* and *Dochirina Kirishitan*, it was not actively propagated by the European Jesuits in Japan because they generally disapproved of Ricci's approach.²²

Tianzhu shiyi became popular in Japan only after the suppression of Japanese Christianity. As texts like *Myōtei mondō* and *Dochirina Kirishitan* became less available due to the eradication of the Jesuit presence in Japan and the suppression of Japanese Christian objects (including texts), conversely *Tianzhu shiyi*, still being printed in China, became the more readily available representative text of Christianity in Japan. As the seventeenth century progressed, *Tianzhu shiyi*'s role in anti-Christian discourse became increasingly central. Because most early Tokugawa anti-Christian discourse was written after the 1630s, when *Tianzhu shiyi* had become the most readily available Christian text, anti-Christian writers like Hayashi Razan or Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725) consistently identi-

Catholics. In the eighteenth century Rome directly ruled against the pro-Ricci camp. A thorough examination of the historical conflict between the Ricci approach to Christianity and its opponents through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be found in the first two thirds of RULE 1986, 88–100.

20. In addition to being the main focus of histories of Christian-Confucian interaction in European languages, references to Ricci can be found in such sources as the official Chinese histories of the Ming Empire (ZHANG 1974, 339, 359, 528, 2438, 6493, 8459–8461).

21. A concrete example of this is Hayashi Razan's *Haiyaso* (NST 25, 415), where *Tianzhu shiyi* and *Myōtei mondō* are mentioned together by Razan.

22. It was particularly in the early years of the seventeenth century (the years directly after the publication of *Tianzhu shiyi* and *Myōtei mondō*) that conflict arose between Ricci supporters in China- and Japan-based Jesuits. For more on this see RULE 1986, 85–87; IDE 1995, 338–39.

fied “Christian” thought through reference (sometimes exclusively) to Ricci texts. Indeed, by the mid-Tokugawa period, with the ban on Christian books in place, and after a long period of suppression of Christian activity in Japan, clandestine copies of Ricci imported from China and Korea were the closest thing present to any real source of what “Christians” thought.

It seems fairly clear that Habian never saw *Tianzhu shiyi* before he produced *Myōtei mondō*, nor does it seem he had even seen it by 1620 when he produced his anti-Christian text *Hadaiusu*.²³ But there are nonetheless similarities between *Myōtei mondō* and *Tianzhu shiyi*, many shared by other Christian texts discussed above: question and answer format, use of scholastic philosophy, and so forth. The centrality of *anima* categories to the argument of *Tianzhu shiyi* is obvious from the very beginning of the text. In explicating the universal teachings of the Catholic religion, Ricci primarily emphasizes the reason that humans and beasts are different.

There is no greater cause of the difference between human beings and beasts than the soul. The soul is what discerns right and wrong and differentiates between true and false. It is difficult to deceive it with anything that lacks rationality. The stupidity of animals is such that although they are capable of sense and movement in much the same way as humans, they are incapable of understanding the principles of causality.

(GOTŌ 1971, 41; MALATESTA 1985, 68–69 [paragraph 23])²⁴

What I have translated here from Ricci’s Chinese term 靈才 (Ch. *lingcai*, Jp. *reisai*) to the English *soul* of course stands for the *anima* of *Myōtei mondō*. As in *Myōtei mondō*, *Tianzhu shiyi* also describes the *anima* of animals as having the capacity for “sense and movement” (GOTŌ 1971, 41; MALATESTA 1985, 68–69 [paragraph 23]). As in *Myōtei mondō*, the capacity of human beings is described as exceeding that of animals. The reason given for the superiority of human

23. For more on this see PARAMORE 2006a, 49–50, footnote 67.

24. I have translated from *Tianzhu shiyi* using the original Chinese language text printed in Gotō Motoki’s 後藤基巳 annotated Japanese edition (GOTŌ 1971), as well as the Chinese printed in the Chinese-English edition *The True Meaning of The Lord of Heaven*, edited by MALATESTA, S. J. (1985). Both these texts have errors and omissions but they are also both so well established that those errors are by now common knowledge among specialists and are taken into account in the one case where the text is inaccurate in a translation I use in this article. I have referred to, but usually not followed, Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-Chen, S. J.’s English translation contained in the latter text. Most differences between their translations and mine arise from the fact that Lancashire and Kuo-Chen are clearly trying to communicate the Christian meaning of the text in contemporary philosophical/religious terms, whereas I translate sometimes more literally in order to demonstrate the cross-overs between other Scholastic and Confucian texts at the time of writing. For instance, in this quote I have translated *lingcai* (Jp. *reisai*) 靈才 as “soul/*anima*.” This differs from Lancashire and Kuo-Chen’s translation as “intellect.”

beings is related to the capacity for judgment given through their *anima*. But although *Tianzhu shiyi* agrees with *Myōtei mondō* here in terms of the importance of *anima*, the two texts disagree sharply in terms of the way they see *anima* being imparted to human beings. *Myōtei mondō* portrays *anima* as being imparted to human beings in a single act by God during the reproductive process.

In the womb of the mother the father's seed is received. It is within this physicality that God creates people's *anima rationalis*. The *anima rationalis* then becomes the master of this physicality (body) and directs the body in line with reason, hoping to then live on into the afterlife. (KKRS MT, 401)

In *Tianzhu shiyi*, however, the process through which God, human beings and their souls are related is much more complex. As in *Myōtei mondō*, the *anima* of *Tianzhu shiyi* is given by an externalized God to an internalized human self. In *Tianzhu shiyi*, however, the external and internal are related through the use of Aristotle's doctrine of four causes:

If we are to speak of the causes of things we must see that there are four. What are these four? There is maker, form, matter and end. The maker is what creates the object, turning it into the thing it should be. The form shapes a thing, giving it its fitting category, differentiating it from other kinds of things. Matter is the substance that the object is made from. That which takes on the form. The end is the determined function the object is made for... Within the four, form and matter, these two are internal to things. They are the basis of things, what is called yin and yang. Maker and end, these two are external to the thing. They exist prior to the thing.

(GOTŌ 1971, 43–44; MALATESTA 1985, 84–85 [paragraphs 45–46]²⁵)

If we look at the problem of *anima* in terms of this interpretation of the doctrine of four causes we see that the creator is an externalized God, and that the form is an internalized soul (*anima*). As Ricci continues his explication of the doctrine of four causes we can see that, unlike in *Myōtei mondō* where after the act of birth *anima rationalis* acts independently of creation, in *Tianzhu shiyi* it remains tied to God:

In terms of the causes of things, there are those included which are internal to things, like yin and yang. There are also those which are external, like the maker category. God's creation of things therefore, as it is the Lordly Creation, is external. So God can be "in" a thing, but He is not part of the thing. Being "in" a thing is like something being "in" a place. Like someone's garden being

25. I have translated the four causes literally from the Chinese as maker, form, matter, and end. Standard English terms accepted today from Aristotle would be active, formal, material, and final.

“in” their house. Or like how some objects have components to them. Like how arms and legs are parts of the body is like how people are made up of yin and yang. Dependant things rely on something else which is autonomous to exist. Like how a white horse is comprised of a horse which is white, and cold ice comprised of ice which is cold. For a thing to exist something must precede its existence to cause it to exist. The sun light must shine to create refractions in a crystal, there must be fire to make metal glow red.

(GOTŌ 1971, 150; MALATESTA 1985, 222–23 [paragraphs 234–35])

In other words, while “God” and “Soul” are not the same, they are related in a relationship such as “dependant” and “autonomous,” or the sun and reflected light. This is the theoretical basis of the link in *Tianzhu shiyi* between God’s “creation of Heaven, Earth, and all things” and his “periodic intervention in and control of this” created world (GOTŌ 1971, 44; MALATESTA 1985, 70–71 [paragraph 28]). In this way *Tianzhu shiyi* portrays God’s presence and action in the created world in a way not seen in *Myōtei mondō*. In *Tianzhu shiyi*, God is present and acting.

So although *Tianzhu shiyi* and *Myōtei mondō* are similar to each other in their emphasis on the role of knowledge and their refusal to base their explication of Christianity on a concept of faith reliant on Church authority, the two texts differ on the key issue of where they see God acting in the universe. This is related to differences in the way they explicate the systems of Scholastic-mediated Aristotelian philosophy through which they describe creation and its outcomes.

But there are further important differences and similarities to be found in the way both texts employ Confucian philosophy. As mentioned earlier, in *Myōtei mondō* Habian uses Confucian terms, comments favorably on Confucianism’s ethical outlook, and uses logical structures and terms which were current in contemporaneous Confucian writing. These notable aspects of Habian’s work clearly show similarities with Ricci’s use of Confucianism. But Ricci’s use of Confucianism was more overt and central. For instance, both Habian and Ricci employ quotations from the Confucian classics to criticize elements of Song metaphysics. But Ricci goes further than that by employing quotes from the Confucian canon to prove his own arguments relating to the existence of the Christian God.²⁶

Not only does he argue that the original works of the Confucian canon do not support the metaphysics taught by Confucians in the contemporary China of the Ming dynasty, he further argues that the Confucian texts actually refer to the Christian Creator God. For instance, Ricci attacks the basis of the Song

26. For instance, in the GOTŌ text (1971), such quotes can be found on p. 89 (from *The Doctrine of the Mean* and *The Rites of the Zhou*), p. 90 (from *The Book of Changes* and *The Book of Rites*), p. 124 (from *The Book of Odes* and *the Book of Documents*), p. 128 (from *The Spring and Autumn Annals*), p. 183 (from *The Book of Documents*), p. 295 (from *Mencius*), among others.

metaphysical thesis of creation, the concept of the “Supreme Ultimate,”²⁷ by mentioning the importance of a more ancient term in the Confucian canon, *Shang Di* 上帝.

Although I arrived in China late in life, I have assiduously studied the (Chinese) Classics. I have heard that the superior men of ancient times worshipped and revered The Lord of Heaven [*Shang Di*], but I have never heard of them worshipping and revering the Supreme Ultimate. If the Supreme Ultimate was the Lord of Heaven and origin of all things, why did the ancient sages not say so?

(GOTÔ 1971, 70–71; MALATESTA 1985, 106–107 [paragraph 78])

Ricci paid attention to the role of the term *Shang Di* in the more ancient Chinese texts and argued that *Shang Di* was the name used by the Chinese ancient sages for what the Jesuits called *Tianzhu* 天主 (Jp. *Tenshu*) “God.”

What in my country is called the Lord of Heaven (*Tianzhu*), is in Chinese called *Shang Di*. . . . Our *Tianzhu* [God] is what the ancient [Chinese Confucian] canonical texts call *Shang Di*. In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, Confucius says, “The rites of sacrifice are meant to serve *Shang Di*. . . . [Ricci then goes on to quote many other examples from a range of Confucian Classic texts before concluding] Reading the ancient texts, it is clear that the only difference between *Shang Di* and *Tianzhu* is the name.

(GOTÔ 1971, 89–90; MALATESTA 1985, 120–25 [paragraph 103])²⁸

Ricci’s use of *Shang Di*, however, represented more than a simple equivalent to God in Chinese Confucian literature. Ricci also used this concept to emphasize the agency of *Tianzhu* touched on earlier. On a number of occasions in *Tianzhu shiyi* Ricci uses references to *Shang Di* in the Classics to argue that *Tianzhu*/God is an active agent in the lives of people. For instance, in the following passage Ricci uses Confucius’ Analects passage, “If you sin against *Shang Di*, there is nowhere to (turn to) pray,” to posit the agency of *Tianzhu* through its ability to offer rewards and punishments in this world and the next.²⁹

27. The Supreme Ultimate 太極 (Ch. *taiji*, Jp. *taikyoku*) is considered in Song metaphysics to be what existed before the initial division of Yin and Yang giving birth to the universe. Most modern scholars agree that the use of the Supreme Ultimate theory to systematically explain the origins of the universe is an attribute of so-called “Neo-Confucian” thought. In other words, it is a product of trends in Confucianism which were systematized at the end of the twelfth century, rather than being part of older kinds of ancient Confucianism.

28. There is an omission of the word *guo* 國 (country) here in the Malatesta Chinese text although Lancashire and Kuo-Chen’s English translation correctly includes the word. I follow the Chinese here printed in the Gotô text. The source of *The Doctrine of the Mean* quotation can be found in zx, 27.

29. The Analects reference can be found in zx, 65.

To commit a crime against *Shang Di* is the most serious crime.... *Tianzhu* grasps the actions of every person in the world, and there has never been an occasion when virtues or crimes have not received their just rewards.

(GOTŌ 1971, 194; MALATESTA 1985, 324–25 [paragraph 384])

Through both his exposition of the connection of the *anima* categories, and in his direct discussion of the agency of God as presented through the Confucian Classics as *Shang Di*, Ricci links the action of God to the world of human affairs. Whereas in *Myōtei mondō* this connection is demonstrated primarily through the act of creation and the attribution of *anima* at birth (the creation of each human being), in the case of *Tianzhu shiyi* God's continued agency in the created world is explained in terms of Aristotle's doctrine of four causes. God's power both in this world and the next is further emphasized through the explanation of God as *Shang Di*.

Ricci and Habian's manner of explaining Christianity share many aspects. They both use a question and answer format to promote Christianity. They both systematically address the teachings of other religious traditions. They both integrate elements of Confucian thought into their own explanation of scholastic philosophy. But they differ primarily in terms of the way they address the key question of how to deal with God's agency in the Scholastic system.

But of course, this was not an interpretive problem unique to Christianity in Japan. In contemporaneous Catholic theology in the Western hemisphere, indeed since at least Ibn Rushd's treatment of similar problems in Islamic theology and Thomas Aquinas's utilization of Rushd in the foundation of so-called "Scholasticism" in the thirteenth century, theological conflicts had been centered around questions related to the integration of these two traditions. These questions continued to arise in the late sixteenth century, and indeed in the early seventeenth century were related to conflicts in Europe over how to integrate philosophy and science with Christian theological teachings. Jesuits were also centrally involved in these controversies, a good example being one of Ricci's teachers at the Collegium Romanum, the astronomy professor Cristoph Clavius, S. J. (1537–1612) (MUNGELLO 1989, 25–28).

This was thereby a problem inherent in the scholastic fusion of Christian doctrine and Aristotelian philosophy, the discussion of which was ongoing in contemporary Europe. One might liken this problem to an intellectual landmine lying at the heart of the religious tradition that it was the Jesuit Habian's job to promote. For Habian, this problematic lay embedded but hidden in the scholastic system as he had been trained in it by the European Jesuits in Japan. As we saw from some of the Japanese Christian texts examined above, Jesuits in Japan like Valignano and Gomez tended to answer the questions arising from this problem by emphasizing authority and doctrinal ortho-

doxy justified through faith, rather than by providing comprehensive rational explanations. Habian had been told simply to “believe” by a small group of European Jesuits on the periphery of the Catholic world whose main aim was to preserve their authority over the perhaps threateningly intelligent and erudite Japanese brothers like Habian. Understandably, given the clear thirst for knowledge and ability in argument present in Habian, this answer did not do.

Ricci, on the other hand, had been offered rational tools for addressing this problem during his education in Italy. As a young man Ricci had been educated at the Collegium Romanum, not only in philosophy and theology to the highest level, but in subjects like astronomy by teachers like the above-mentioned defender of Galileo, Christoph Clavius. Ricci had experienced more than a decade of this kind of education at places like Rome, in environments where issues relating to how to integrate Church teachings and academic advances were constantly being debated (MUNGELLO 1989, 25–28). Ricci thereby had access to a range of arguments which had already been extrapolated in Catholic theological paradigms, and he was also used to working within this kind of discourse. His use of the doctrine of four causes to synthesize *anima* theory with the idea of an interventionary God justified in terms of *Shang Di* is an example of his employment of this early European education in his later writings in Chinese.

The fact that Habian did not deal with these problems in the same way is very understandable given not only the particular slant of the scholastic education he underwent, but moreover his generally more diverse and assumedly more self-taught and self-motivated intellectual development. Although we cannot be sure of his early intellectual development, judging from *Myōtei mondō* we can see that by the age of 25 or so Habian had acquired a wide array of knowledge of a range of traditions including Buddhism, Confucianism, and of course Jesuit mediated Christianity and Scholastic Philosophy. But knowledge of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto seems to have been primarily acquired through self-led study.³⁰

30. In *Myōtei mondō* Habian demonstrates a wide knowledge of Buddhist, Song Confucian, and Shinto thought. Some commentators have assumed he acquired this knowledge in a Buddhist seminary before he joined the Jesuits at the age of eighteen. There is, however, no documentary evidence attesting to Habian’s training before he joined the Jesuits at eighteen. Nevertheless, I would agree that given Habian’s literacy, it is likely he had some education before joining the Jesuits and that would likely have been (Buddhist) Temple supplied. However, given Habian’s age when he entered the Jesuits, and his erudition in Song Confucian thought in particular, there is good cause to think that he acquired much of his knowledge of East Asian thought through self study while with the Jesuits. Given that one of his main duties as a young Jesuit was as an instructor of Japanese language and culture, it is likely that he continued to read and work on Japanese and Chinese texts while in the Jesuit Order as part of his duties. His publication of an annotated version of *Heike monogatari* while a Jesuit is an example of his work on East Asian literature while with the Jesuits (KAMEI 1966).

Habian was also working in a late sixteenth/early seventeenth century Japanese society which not only had great religious diversity, but where there was no accepted politico-religious orthodoxy. In this respect, Japan, where Habian spent his entire life, was quite different to both of Ricci's homes in Southern Europe and Ming China. Both these latter places possessed set intellectual orthodoxies that were intimately related to the political orders. Ricci had for the first thirty-four years of his life learnt in one integrated system of thought in Europe. Then even after his arrival in China, Ricci could afford to concentrate on the teachings of just one other tradition, Confucianism, which in Ming China possessed an accepted systematized orthodoxy shaped by the state examination system. Habian did not have this luxury. I would argue that Ricci's background of dealing in a concentrated form with just two doctrinal orthodoxies, compared with Habian's experience of having to imbibe a range of traditions simultaneously, was critical—as was the fact that Ricci's educational background in scholastic philosophy was more diversified, giving him the capacity to take more nuanced critical approaches to issues like the mysteries of faith.

The fact that Ricci was used to operating in intellectual environments in both Europe and China where one tradition of knowledge was held up as doctrine meant that he was also perhaps better equipped for the task of integrating ideas into a doctrinal framework. Perhaps the reason that up until now Ricci's work has attracted such praise while Habian's work has usually been described as "flawed" is that the more established doctrinal categories that Ricci used—"Confucianism," "Scholasticism," and "Christianity"—are closer to the ones that academics still operate within today. Ricci used categories, the traditions of which have survived. His work thereby demonstrates continuity with past and present discourses that were often institutionalized doctrinally in both Church and academy. Modern readers can thereby comparatively easily understand the categories of "Scholastic Philosophy" and "Confucianism" which Ricci uses.

Conclusion

The examination above has demonstrated that the range of texts generally identified as early period "Japanese Christian thought" possessed a high degree of diversity. Quite different approaches were taken to a wide array of key questions of philosophy and faith. The comparative and contextualized examination of these different approaches presented above demonstrates the nature of the conflict between these different positions, both among different texts authored in Japan, and between these texts and those imported from China. That examination has also shown a range of places where some Japanese Christian thought, and indeed some Chinese Christian thought popularized in Japan, overlapped and interacted with Confucian intellectual arguments current in these areas.

As pointed out in previous research, the Habian of *Myōtei mondō* did indeed place less emphasis on the idea of faith, aspects of revealed religion, and the construct of the mysteries of faith than did some other writers of Japanese Christian thought. But what this article has argued is that the representation of these ideas in those other competing Japanese Christian thought texts, for instance Valignano's *Dochirina Kirishitan*, was also slanted. These texts equated faith in God to faith in the Church hierarchy alone. The general arguments of these texts negated the sanctity of both created nature and human beings, thereby removing the doctrinal elements which supported a positive view of human thought, knowledge, and discernment.

Through Gomez's *Compendium of Catholic Doctrine* we saw that the doctrinal education carried out within the Jesuit academies in Japan presented a particular approach to the idea of faith, the mysteries of faith, and the consequent philosophical issues of human ethics, freedom, and autonomy which backed up the kind of authoritarian approach seen in *Dochirina Kirishitan*. In *Compendium, anima* categories as the basis for a scholastic creation theory are presented in a manner which emphasizes the division between different categories of people and the subordination of human thought and knowledge to church hierarchy. Reference to *Tianzhu shiyi*, by showing the more nuanced, integrated, and open approach of Ricci, further demonstrated the conservatism and particularism of the approach of the European Jesuits in Japan. The approach of the European leadership of the Jesuits in Japan, in particular through their definition of "faith," in effect limited the capacity of figures like Habian to conceive of solutions in the manner Ricci did. The definition of "faith" preferred by the European leadership of the Jesuits in Japan eliminated the mysteries of faith as a possible means of bridging the gap between Confucian and Aristotelian philosophies on the one hand, and Christian-revealed religion on the other.

What both Ricci and Habian did possess, and the European leadership of the Jesuits in Japan lacked, was a real understanding of non-Christian thought, of other conceptual frameworks functioning in their environment (in particular Confucian thought). This understanding gave Ricci and Habian the potential to relativize their positions, not to become relativists, but to place their ideas within a contextual relationship to the intellectual currents of the places they were in. Because Ricci had control, both of the texts and of the political direction of the Jesuit order in the part of China he was in, he was able to realize this potential. He was able to present Christianity not in any relativist manner, but as absolute truth, although presented in relation to the intellectual context of his time and place. Habian did not have any control of the policy direction of the Jesuits in Japan and had to function without even the most basic authority of ordination. In effect, his writings, even when he was a Jesuit, stood not so much alongside the conservative Japanese Jesuit works like *Dochirina Kirishitan* as in some

respects in competition with them, in other words, in competition with thought that was much less integrated with contemporary arguments. The conflict then inherent within “early period Japanese Christian thought” was certainly not a cultural or philosophical conflict between West and East. If it could be described at all in terms of a duality it might perhaps be described then as a political conflict between doctrinaire authoritarians and socially integrated realists.

The fact that Habian did not deal with knowledge by shaping it to doctrinal norms has often been blamed on Habian’s “lack of ability to grasp” Christian truths (KKRS EA, 512). However it is difficult to understand the logic of such attacks on Habian. When examining the way a young intelligent seeker in the Japan of the late 1500s and early 1600s reacted to a huge diversity of religious and philosophical thought that he was digesting during the climax of a long-running civil war, judging the level to which his ideas conformed to an artificially created doctrinal orthodoxy authenticated in Rome should surely not be our priority.

Unlike Ricci, Habian had no choice but to attempt to understand the intellectual traditions he was dealing with in a culture of complete religious, intellectual, and political diversity and multiplicity. For much of Habian’s life the continuing civil war meant there was no center of political authority, never mind a center of religious, intellectual, or other doctrinal authority. It should therefore be no surprise that the intellectual direction of *Myōtei mondō*, and indeed of much other Japanese Christian thought, does not conform perfectly to accepted doctrinal orthodox descriptions of “Christianity,” nor indeed of “Scholastic Philosophy,” “Neo-Confucianism,” or any other such doctrinal category.

But that certainly does not mean that Habian’s ideas as expressed in *Myōtei mondō* were “verbose rantings” or by any means “shallow.” Rather, it makes Habian’s ideas an important key to understanding the way people thought in the socially and intellectually dynamic place and period into which Habian was born and lived. Habian’s ideas represent a moment, a spark during which in the Japanese archipelago of Habian’s time there very briefly existed together in competition and syncretism a wide range of intellectual religious traditions, many of them operating outside hierarchical authority and doctrinal orthodoxy and in a society where order was momentary. Perhaps this might lead us to consider whether rather than Japanese Christian thought being considered a characterization of something called “Western thought,” it should instead be viewed in terms of the reality of the intellectual and religious diversity present in Japan at that time.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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- KKRS EA Kaidai 解題, Ebisawa Arimichi 海老沢有道. In *Kirishitan kyōrishi* キリシタン教理書, ed. Ebisawa Arimichi. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1993.
- KKRS KE *Kirishitan kokoroegaki* 吉利支丹心得書. In *Kirishitan kyōrishi* キリシタン教理書, ed. Ebisawa Arimichi. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1993.
- KKRS MT *Myōtei mondō*, by Fukansai Habian (1605). In *Kirishitan kyōrishi* キリシタン教理書, ed. Ebisawa Arimichi. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1993.
- HRB *Hayashi Razan bunshū* 林羅山文集. Hayashi Razan 林羅山. Tokyo: Perikansha, 1979.
- NST 25 *Kirishitansho/Haiyasho* キリシタン書・排耶書, Nihon Shisō Taikei 日本思想大系, vol. 25. ed. Ebisawa Arimichi. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- NST 28 Fujiwara Seika/Hayashi Razan 藤原惺窩・林羅山, Nihon Shisō Taikei, vol. 28. ed. Ishida Ichirō 石田一郎, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975.
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