body of mostly Portuguese and Jesuit material also still exists, through which quite different questions can be addressed and approaches adopted. The Jesuits in particular, who learned much about the Mughals through their mission to the courts of Akbar and Jahangir, and subsequently in their continuing roles as diplomats and observers, made invaluable contributions to European knowledge of this remarkable “other.” In *Unwanted Neighbours*, Flores has taken full advantage of this invaluable literary heritage.

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Martin Nogueira Ramos

La foi des ancêtres: Chrétiens cachés et catholiques dans la société villageoise japonaise XVII^e–XIX^e siècles. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2019. Pp. 416. Pb, €25.00.

This extremely well-researched book is the first comprehensive publication on the history of the so-called Japanese *hidden Christians*—not only in Western language, but also in Japanese. It is well known that Francis Xavier, one of the first Jesuits, brought Christianity for the first time to Japan in 1549. The Catholic denomination quickly succeeded in spreading widely there during the latter half of the sixteenth century. However, Christianity was banned and Catholic missionaries were expelled by the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi—who united Japan after the Warring States period—and the Tokugawa regime, which overthrew the previous rulers (edicts issued in 1587, 1612, and 1614). Under the Tokugawa government (1603–1868), the Christians—especially ordinary civilians in Kyushu—kept their faith clandestinely despite the official interdiction without any contact with Western priests. They are called by historians *hidden Christians*, *Crypto-Christian*, or *Senpuku* or *Kakure Kirishitan* in Japanese. Their existence stepped into the spotlight after a famous “discovery” (1865) by a French missionary from the Paris Foreign Missions (MEP), Bernard-Thadée Petitjean (1829–84). Ramos focuses precisely on this part of the history of Christianity in Japan, from the late eighteenth century to 1889, and he provides the first study on this crucial—and mostly neglected by previous scholarship—period, which he calls the “second evangelization.”

Given the material upon which it deals, this book also tackles the difficulties of describing such history. The outlaw character of the hidden Christians

mostly prevented them from writing, keeping, and otherwise preserving records of their own activities. The trace of their faith remains in few devotional objects and official records of their arrest by local authorities, which mostly disappeared by the end of the seventeenth century. Most of the previous studies, therefore, depend on anthropological fieldwork and do not pay as much attention to the historical documents as Ramos does.

In fact, Ramos uses a variety of both Japanese and European primary sources, uncovering several previously ignored documents in the process. Mentions of the presence of hidden Christians—or rather, people perceived as having curious beliefs—can indeed be found in Japanese administrative documents, with a higher frequency during the Meiji period, as well as texts written by the French missionaries who arrived in Kyushu during the 1860s. These documents (handwritten manuscripts in French) have been rarely consulted and mentioned in current research conducted both in Japanese and English thus far. Ramos's study deals with both of them, demonstrating the religious panorama of history of the hidden Christian communities: the way they conducted their ceremonies, their internal networks, etc. This book thus brilliantly succeeds in describing the ordinary life of such hidden Christians.

The history of the hidden Christians is often described as a lamentable tragedy from the Christian apologetic point of view: the merciless Tokugawa regime persecuted the poor Christians incessantly, and the victims were executed cruelly to die heroically as martyrs (a perception recently popularized by Martin Scorsese's film, *Silence*). However, this book dismantles such stereotypes through a meticulous examination of sources in the "longue durée." First, it was not the martyrs who became objects of worship among the descendants, but those who could survive without being executed and successfully transmit their faith to the next generation. Second, control over the common people by local government officials was not so thorough and constant, because their major object was not torturing the Christians, but maintaining the social order within local society. In fact, political intervention was not limited to Christian communities, but also included contemporary alleged "heresies" such as *Fuse-fuju*, a subsect of Nichiren Buddhism, or *Kakure nenbutsu* (literally meaning hidden recitation of the Buddha's name) derived from Pure Land Buddhism. The author concludes that the nature of the faith of the hidden Christians does not reflect the universal nature of what we consider as Christianity; instead, it reflects the same faith of the common people at the time, based on the worship of ancestors (this is the major reason why contemporary Western missionaries tried to re-convert the descendants of the hidden Christians to Catholicism).

One of the most striking accomplishments of this book is that, thanks to the author's mastery of the Japanese language, it convincingly integrates the subject of the hidden Christians and their rediscovery into the field of Japanese history. This subject has been studied for a long time by Christian scholars, and the survival of the alleged "Christian" faith all through the Tokugawa persecution has been recognized as a pure miracle. However, Ramos puts this into perspective by displaying comparative points of view with other above-mentioned social movements as well as local traditional religions. Just like other religious systems during the Tokugawa period, hidden Christianity operated as a connector of local networks based on families, clans, and villages among ordinary people. In demonstrating this, Ramos's study not only brilliantly dispels the myth of a heroic, hidden faith fighting against constant aggression from the Japanese authorities but also succeeds in describing an authentic popular history, following the example of a major historical trend in Japan, and especially the work of Ohashi Yukihiro (*Kirishitan Minshūshi no Kenkyū* [Tokyo: Tōkyōdō shuppan, 2001]).

As a whole, this remarkable study represents a major milestone in both religious and social history of Japan, providing a completely novel view of an often-misunderstood subject grounded in primary sources. This book's integration to both the Western and Japanese academic tradition also represents an impressive achievement. As a Japanese scholar, I deeply appreciate that the author thoroughly covers the scholarly achievements in Japanese, which tend to be ignored in studies dealing with Christianity, from the earliest through the latest: works by Anesaki Masaharu (*Kirishitan Shūmon no Hakugai to Senpuku (Zōteiban)* [Tokyo: Kokushokankōkai, 1976, 1926]), Furuno Kiyoto (*Kakure Kirishitan* [Tokyo: Shibundō, 1959]), Kataoka Yakichi (*Urakami Yonban Kuzure* [Tokyo, Chikuma shobō: 1991]), Miyazaki Kentaro (*Kakure Kirishitan no Shinkō Sekai* [Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 1996]), Kanda Chisato (*Shimabara No Ran: Kirishitan Shinkō to Busō Hōki* [Tokyo: Chūōkōronshinsha, 2005]), Kawamura Shinzo (*Sengoku Shūkyō Shakai Shisō-shi: Kirishitanjirei kara no Kōsatsu* [Tokyo: Chisen shokan, 2011]), etc. This book thus also possesses the merit of providing a broad view of the recent trends of Japanese scholarship on this subject, as well as of social history as a whole.

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