



Chapter 3

Justification for Inscription

Chapter 3 Justification for Inscription

3.1.a Brief synthesis

The property ‘Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region’ is a unique testimony to the history of people and their communities who secretly transmitted their faith in Christianity during the time of prohibition spanning more than two centuries in Japan. Located in very remote areas including small islands at the westernmost edge of Japan, the property represents how the Christian communities survived in the midst of the conventional society and its religions, gradually transforming, ultimately ending their religious traditions and being assimilated into modern society after the prohibition was lifted.

The nominated property is located in the Nagasaki region in the westernmost part of Japan, which lies at the far eastern edge of the area within Asia in which Christianity was introduced during the Age of Exploration. It comprises 12 components sited along the seacoast or on remote islands to which Hidden Christians migrated during the ban on Christianity. These include the Remains of Hara Castle, where there occurred a historic event that gave rise to the cultural tradition of the Hidden Christians as confirmed by archaeological evidence; the villages (Kasuga Village and Sacred Places in Hirado, Sakitsu Village in Amakusa, Villages of Shitsu and Ono in Sotome) that contain secret objects of worship representing various ways in which Hidden Christians maintained their faith; villages that Hidden Christian migrants established on remote islands, adapting to the environment of each location and demonstrating the efforts to maintain their communities through migration; Oura Cathedral, where an event occurred that led to the end of the Hidden Chris-

tian tradition and which therefore has a close association with Hidden Christian villages in the region; and Egami Village on Naru Island in which the transformation and end of the Hidden Christian tradition is marked by the church design, demonstrating traditional techniques adopted to deal with the climate of the area combined with the strong desire of local communities for conventional Catholic and Western architectural styles.

Since the Nagasaki region served as Japan's gateway for exchange with foreign countries and missionaries who had settled there in the latter half of the 16th century, people in the region could receive missionaries' guidance directly over a long period of time. As a result, Catholic communities took root more firmly there than anywhere else in Japan, under the protection of Catholic feudal lords. In the 17th century, however, Japan firmly prohibited Christianity and established a strict national seclusion policy after the battles at Hara Castle during the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion. Following this, not a single

missionary remained in Japan, and Catholics in the Nagasaki region were left to maintain their faith and small religious communities by themselves, becoming Hidden Christians while outwardly behaving as Buddhists and Shinto followers and ostensibly venerating Shinto shrines in their villages. Over the ensuing two centuries, each Hidden Christian community gave rise to a distinctive religious system that was seemingly vernacular yet which maintained the essence of Christianity.

The religious structure that developed in the Hidden Christian villages centred on local leaders, who took the place of missionaries in conducting baptisms, funerals, and other rituals based on the Catholic Church's liturgical calendar. The Hidden Christians secretly venerated icons and statues that had originated in the Christian faith and kept them in altars that were set up in their leaders' houses, where their rituals mainly took place. These households were also the sites for transmission of characteristic devotional tools, the catechism and the liturgical calendar transcribed in Japanese. The Hidden Christians made graves that appeared to be Buddhist, while burying their dead in their own way. In the absence of physical churches, the Hidden Christians secretly venerated their ancestors' martyrdom sites as sacred places, and they offered prayers at traditional places of worship shared with different religious communities, such as Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines and mountains.

At the end of the 18th century, some of the Hidden Christians migrated to remote islands

due to population increases in the region. They opened up new land in harsh environments and secretly maintained their own religious system by building a relationship of mutual cooperation or tacit acceptance with the pre-existing Buddhist and Shinto communities.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the Hidden Christians secretly contacted missionaries in Oura Cathedral who had come to Japan after its opening up to foreign trade. This event is called the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians'. After the lifting of the ban on Christianity in 1873, most Hidden Christian communities rejoined the Catholic Church under the guidance of missionaries, but there were some who would not abandon their distinctive beliefs and practices (the *Kakure Kirishitan*), as well as some who converted to Buddhism and Shinto. In villages in which Hidden Christians rejoined the Catholic Church, villagers volunteered to help construct churches in the places of memory dating back to the period of the ban, such as the houses of former Hidden Christian leaders, or in characteristic locations such as small flatlands to which Hidden Christians had migrated during the ban and in places that could be clearly viewed from the sea.

Thus, to reiterate the salient points, the nominated property bears testimony to the distinctive way in which the Hidden Christians practised their faith during the ban on Christianity. As witness to the origin, formation and end of this unique cultural tradition, nurtured during the long ban on Christianity, the nominated property has Outstanding Universal Value.

3.1.b Criteria under which inscription is proposed

Criterion (iii) : *'bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared'*

The nominated property bears unique testimony to the distinctive religious tradition nurtured by the Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region while they secretly continued their Christian faith during the ban on Christianity.

Testimony to the Hidden Christians' unique system formed while they secretly transmitted the Christian faith by themselves

In the Nagasaki region, located at Japan's westernmost edge, the arrival of Portuguese ships and the establishment of a missionary base there by Francis Xavier and his successors who settled in the region meant that nearby communities there could receive catechetical instruction directly over a long period of time. As a result, Catholicism took root among the communities in that region more deeply than in any other region of Japan.

Japan's ban on Christianity began at the end of the 16th century, and it was thoroughly enforced during the 17th century, with the result that all missionaries were expelled and all churches were destroyed. Due to the persecution and torture of missionaries who were continuing underground activities and those who refused to renounce their Christian faith, a large number of Japanese Catholics were forced to apostatise or be martyred. The Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion, in which Japanese Catholics were besieged at Hara Castle from 1637 through to the following year, revealed the existence of those who had continued their Christian faith in se-

cret. This rebellion triggered the establishment of Japan's national seclusion policy by the Tokugawa Shogunate, which prohibited the arrival of Portuguese ships that could smuggle missionaries into Japan. After the last missionary in Japan had been martyred in 1644, the remaining Japanese Catholics could only continue their faith by themselves in secret.

Hidden Christian communities in the Nagasaki region managed to secretly maintain their religious organisations, such as the Misericordia and Confraternity de Misericordia, which had been established before the issuance of the ban on Christianity, under the guidance of Japanese leaders. In place of missionaries, Hidden Christian leaders called *Chokata* and *Mizukata* managed rituals, the catechism and the liturgical calendar, administering the sacrament of baptism and performing the *Okuri* prayer ceremony for followers on their deathbeds. In the baptismal ceremony known as *Omizu-sazuke*, several Hidden Christian leaders who had purified themselves prayed in Latin and baptised followers with holy water specially gathered from places venerated as sacred places. When a follower died, the Hidden Christians would ask the Buddhist temple with which they were outwardly affiliated to perform a funeral in what

was the standard manner at that time in Japan, following which they secretly offered a Hidden Christian prayer to countervail the Buddhist funeral. Hidden Christians' tombs look like those of Buddhists, but they buried the dead in their own way, which differed from the Buddhist tradition in terms of the direction and positioning of the body.

Furthermore, each Hidden Christian village formed a religious system that outwardly resembled those of the existing religions of Japan. In Hirado, Hidden Christians kept icons called *Nandogami* in their own altars that were set up in their leaders' houses separately from common Buddhist and Shinto home altars. They venerated a neighbouring mountain that had been a sacred site for Buddhists and Shinto practitioners since before the introduction of Christianity to Japan. At the same time, they also venerated the graveyards of Catholics established prior to the issuance of the ban on Christianity as sacred places and martyrdom sites, as well as an island on which Catholics had been martyred during the early period of the ban. In Amakusa, Hidden Christian leaders kept devotional tools in their houses. These were specific to the fishing village, such as abalone shells, which had special significance because their mother-of-pearl patterns were likened to representations of the Virgin Mary. They would secretly chant Christian prayers even in the Shinto shrine that was regarded as the seat of the village's guardian deity. In Sotome, Hidden Christian leaders passed down the catechism and the liturgical calendar transcribed in Japanese, as well as an icon of the Virgin Mary painted by a Japanese devotee.

At the end of the 18th century, owing to an increase in Sotome's population, feudal lords promoted migration from Sotome to remote islands. As a result, Hidden Christian communities spread to such islands, where they hid their faith by building a relationship of mutual cooperation or tacit acceptance with the pre-existing Buddhist and Shinto communities. Hidden Christians on Hisaka Island worked together with Buddhist communities in activities such as fishing and farming, both for sustenance and to camouflage their secret religion. On Kashiragashima Island, which was deserted at the time, migration was initiated by a leader who professed Buddhism, but Hidden Christian communities were soon formed by migrants who followed him. On Nozaki Island, which was regarded as a sacred place by Shinto practitioners, Hidden Christian migrants outwardly practiced Shinto for concealment. Hidden Christian migrants on Kuroshima Island were accepted by the local Buddhist community, and at their temple they could pray secretly to *Maria Kannon* (a statue of the Virgin Mary in the shape of a Buddhist deity).

As explained above, the villages in which the Hidden Christians lived bear testimony to their unique religious system, which was cloaked in the outward appearance of Buddhism and indigenous Japanese religions. These villages included secretly venerated locations, Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines shared by Hidden Christian communities and other religious communities, specific places that evidenced relationships and collaboration with those of other faiths, graveyards indicating the existence of

Hidden Christians, and the homes of leaders in which secret altars and devotional tools were kept.

The transitional phase following the lifting of the ban on Christianity and the end of the Hidden Christians' unique religious system

Following Japan's opening to foreign trade in the latter half of the 19th century, foreign settlements were established and missionaries returned to Japan after an absence of over two centuries. Missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society came to Nagasaki in 1863 with the intention of searching for any Christians that might still exist in Japan. In 1864, the missionaries built Oura Cathedral within the Nagasaki Foreign Settlement and dedicated it to the Twenty-six Martyrs of Japan, who had been killed in 1597 and canonised in 1862. Soon after the dedication ceremony, a group of Hidden Christians secretly visited the cathedral and revealed their faith to a missionary there. The news of this event (which in the West came to be known as the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians') quickly spread among Hidden Christians throughout the Nagasaki region. Hidden Christian leaders successively visited the cathedral in secret to tell the missionaries about the faith that they had maintained during the ban on Christianity. These leaders received catechetical and sacramental instruction from the missionaries to transmit to their own communities.

In Hidden Christian communities, there were various reactions to this first encounter with the missionaries after such a long interval.

Some communities immediately reaccepted Catholicism under the guidance of the missionaries; however, in some of those villages many people were captured and brutally persecuted by the authorities for professing their faith since the ban on Christianity had not yet been lifted. Other communities hesitated to change the practices they had nurtured during the ban, even after contact with the missionaries. Faced with this new situation, there were differences of opinion in some Hidden Christian communities, and even disputes about which group would inherit the devotional implements kept hidden during the ban. Persecution of Hidden Christians by the Meiji Government after the opening of Japan to foreign trade attracted strong protests from Western countries, finally leading to the lifting of the ban on Christianity in 1873.

Most of the Hidden Christian villages received guidance from missionaries and rejoined the Catholic Church. Houses of former Hidden Christian leaders or simple new structures were used as temporary churches. These churches were located in places of memory dating back to the period of the ban on Christianity, such as leaders' houses, or beside Shinto shrines that the Hidden Christians had outwardly venerated in order to hide their real faith. In selecting the location of these churches, consideration was also given to the natural environment, with preference given to small flatlands surrounded by valleys and places that were clearly visible from the sea and easy to access by ship. Due to the effects of aging on the temporary churches and increasing numbers of Catholics in the villages, villagers gathered funds to construct full-fledged

churches by cutting into their already minimal living expenses and using revenue obtained from fishing and other work. The churches were designed by missionaries or Japanese who learned from them, and they were built with local materials. Many Catholics in each village volunteered to help construct the churches. These small churches represent one aspect of the end of a distinctive religious system during the transitional phase following the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians'.

On the other hand, there were some Hidden Christian communities that refused to submit to the authority of the missionaries and

instead continued to practice their faith under the guidance of their own leaders, maintaining the beliefs and practices that they had nurtured during the lengthy period of the ban on Christianity. These people came to be referred to as *Kakure Kirishitan*. Over time, their tradition deviated from that of the Hidden Christians, and some *Kakure Kirishitans* still exist today, although they are becoming increasingly rare. There were also some communities that converted to Buddhism and Shinto after the lifting of the ban on Christianity, representing yet another aspect of the end of the Hidden Christians' unique religious system.

3.1.c Statement of Integrity

The nominated property consists of 12 components which bear testimony to the history of the tradition nurtured by Hidden Christians, ranging from (I) the initial stage when Hidden Christians first came about, (II) the following stage in which various modes of faith developed, (III) the stage of ensuring continuity of the religious communities by moving to remote islands, and (IV) the stage in which a new period of history emerged and in which the traditions consequently underwent transformation and eventually came to an end.

These components were selected following a process of detailed comparative study. As a result, this group of component sites expresses its Outstanding Universal Value as a whole, including all elements necessary to represent the features and processes which convey the property's

significance. The components are of adequate size and all are well preserved.

Whether or not the property includes all elements necessary to express the value of the property as a whole:

The nominated property consists of a total of 12 components, carefully selected by means of comparative study, that are necessary to express the history and the continuity of the tradition of the Hidden Christians. They include the Remains of Hara Castle, where the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion took place, marking the historic event that gave rise to the tradition of the Hidden Christians; four villages which represent the different ways in which the continuity of the religious traditions was maintained; another four villages that represent the way in

which some communities survived by moving to remote islands; Oura Cathedral, which was the scene of the event that became the turning point leading to the new phase of the Hidden Christian religion; and Egami Village, which was eminently representative of the period of transformation and the ultimate end of the Hidden Christian tradition.

The villages include sites of Hidden Christian leaders' houses, graveyards of Hidden Christian communities, places that bear testimony to the strategies that such communities adopted to hide their inner faith, and physical evidence of their unique religious system formed during the ban. Examples include secretly venerated places and churches that stand on places of memory dating back to the period of the ban, as well as those in characteristic locations to which Hidden Christians migrated during such times. Within the component areas of these villages, land use patterns have been maintained ever since, bearing integral testimony to the unique cultural tradition of the Hidden Christians.

The Remains of Hara Castle, where the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion took place, preserve relics and artefacts such as castle walls and siege outposts used during the rebellion. Dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, they indicate the scale and key features of the castle. The historic value of these relics and artefacts has been verified through academic research after careful excavation, while others remain protected underground.

The component area of Oura Cathedral, where Hidden Christians visited and secretly revealed their faith to a priest after an interval of

over two centuries, includes a series of buildings constructed in close association with the cathedral, in addition to ruins within the cathedral's precincts.

Furthermore, another component, Egami Village on Naru Island (Egami Church and its Surroundings) most clearly showcases how the Hidden Christians' religious tradition transformed and eventually came to an end. Egami Church well retains both traditional local architectural features and the western architectural features that the former Hidden Christians strongly desired for their new Catholic church building, in its location, design and structure.

As a whole, the villages, the castle remains, and the cathedral represent Outstanding Universal Value.

Whether or not the property is intact and faces no threats:

Most of the components are situated on remote islands, in farming villages in the suburbs of the mainland cities, or in similar rural areas. In addition, all of them have been appropriately protected and managed. As a result, they have not suffered from any adverse effects of development or neglect. The components have been conserved together with their surrounding landscapes.

The components are surrounded by buffer zones of adequate size, which are delineated on the basis of the areas visible from each component. The buffer zones for the components located on remote islands also extend into the sea, to prevent any development that might take place in the future. Although the urban area around Oura Cathedral is becoming a tourist at-

traction, the surrounding landscape has been conserved by legal regulations such as the Landscape Act and the City Planning Act. Within the buffer zones of the components, any action that could have a negative impact is legally restricted in an appropriate manner. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Preservation and Management Plan (Appendix 6a) clearly specifies measures for the conservation and improvement of the nominated property.

Table 3-001

What triggered the tradition of Hidden Christians (establishment of Japan's national seclusion policy and the beginning of the Hidden Christians' unique religious system)		The site of the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion that led to the establishment of the national seclusion policy and Hidden Christians' transmission of their beliefs by themselves	Remains of Hara Castle
The religious tradition of handing down the Hidden Christian faith while surviving under restrictive circumstances and coexisting with conventional Japanese society and its religions	Various ways to maintain and conceal the Hidden Christian faith	The village in which Hidden Christians concealed their faith by venerating the mountain and island in a manner that overlaps with pre-existing nature worship	Kasuga Village and Sacred Places in Hirado
		The village in which Hidden Christians concealed their faith by substituting everyday items that were used in daily life and work for Christian devotional objects	Sakitsu Village in Amakusa
		The village in which Hidden Christians concealed and handed down their faith by secretly revering sacred icons and keeping the Catholic liturgical calendar and catechism	Shitsu Village in Sotome
		The village in which Hidden Christians camouflaged their faith by combining it with common Shinto practice	Ono Village in Sotome
	Various efforts to continue the Hidden Christian communities through migration (the locations to which they migrated)	The villages in which Hidden Christians maintained their faith after their migration to former clan pasturelands in need of redevelopment	Villages on Kuroshima Island
		The villages in which Hidden Christians handed down their faith after their migration to an undeveloped island regarded as sacred by Shinto practitioners	Remains of Villages on Nozaki Island
		The villages in which Hidden Christians handed down their faith after their migration to an island that was used to quarantine smallpox patients and which other communities therefore avoided	Villages on Kashiragashima Island
		The villages in which Hidden Christians handed down their faith after their migration to undeveloped land in accordance with a migration policy established by feudal lords	Villages on Hisaka Island
What triggered the end of the Hidden Christians' tradition (the beginning of the transitional phase of religious identities)		The site of the Discovery of Hidden Christians (an encounter with returned Catholic missionaries after an absence of over two centuries) that triggered the transitional phase of religious identities among Hidden Christian communities	Oura Cathedral
What physically demonstrates the end of the Hidden Christians' tradition (the transformation and end of the tradition)		A representative village in which the combination of traditional techniques applied to deal with the climate of the area and the strong desire of local communities for conventional Catholic and Western architectural styles is physically demonstrated by its church	Egami Village on Naru Island (Egami Church and its Surroundings)

3.1.d Statement of Authenticity

Each of the components of the nominated property maintains a high level of authenticity. In accordance with paragraph 82 of the ‘Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention’, five or six out of the eight attributes specified in the guidelines can be applied to the nominated property.

Spirit and Feeling

These are the most important of the eight attributes for assessing the authenticity of cultural heritage for the nominated property; each of the components effectively bears testimony to the religious and historical background of its location, although the historical background of some components might not be readily understood due to their nature.

Use and Function

With the exception of the now almost uninhabited villages on Nozaki Island, having lost their original function, the nominated property has continued to maintain its original function, and thus it possesses a high degree of authenticity. Although Hara Castle was destroyed after the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion, the act of destruction itself contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. The castle remains are now a historic site that evokes the situation at that time.

Location and Setting

All of the components bear direct testimony to the history of the nominated property, and together with the significance of their location as a whole, they constitute a high level of authenticity.

Form and Design, and Materials and Substance

Original materials are still used in most of the components; thus a high degree of authenticity is retained. When original materials must be replaced because of weathering, due consideration has been given to keeping replacements to a minimum, and detailed records have been kept. Although some buildings have been renewed as part of daily life in the villages, the historical land use has continued, and the constituent elements of these villages and their landscapes remain unchanged overall. Therefore, the authenticity of the villages has not been impaired. Furthermore, legislative systems as well as technical and specialised support frameworks have been established to ensure that the current high degree of authenticity of the nominated property will be maintained well into the future.

Traditions, techniques and management systems

As necessary repair works to ensure preservation of the components have been conducted by using traditional techniques, a high level of au-

thenticity in terms of ‘traditions and techniques’ is retained. In addition, the preservation and management plan for each of the components includes guidelines for repair works, and thus a high level of authenticity in terms of ‘management systems’ is retained.

The authenticity of each component is analysed below, based mainly on those attributes that are most relevant to the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

Authenticity of the Remains of Hara Castle

Although the component, Remains of Hara Castle (Component 001) has lost its authenticity related to ‘use and function,’ as it is an archaeological site, it retains its authenticity in regard to the other five attributes described below.

Form and Design

The castle remains have maintained their original layout of stone walls and land structures. Archaeological excavations and other academic surveys have been conducted on the castle remains over a period of many years, making it clear that the original 17th century design has been retained. Based on the archaeological data obtained from these surveys, restoration and maintenance work has been and will be performed in an appropriate manner, so as not to compromise the form or design of the castle remains.

Materials and Substance

The materials and substances comprising the underground structures within the castle remains have been preserved under stable conditions. During restoration of structures based on academic surveys, due consideration has been given to the minimisation of any alterations. The stone walls have been partly modified, but such modifications were carried out using the original stones.

Traditions, Techniques and Management Systems

The original 17th century stone walls that constitute the castle remains have been repaired as necessary, based on the traditional techniques that were originally used.

Location and Setting

Archaeological excavation and academic surveys indicate that the castle remains retain their original layout and relationship with their setting, as they were in the 17th century.

Spirit and Feeling

The castle remains constitute a historic reminder of the event that triggered the national seclusion of Japan for over two centuries, which in turn resulted in the thorough imposition of the ban on Christianity. A requiem mass is still held in the castle remains for those who were killed in the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion, conveying a sense of the religious and historical background of the location to this day.

Authenticity of the villages

The villages in Hirado (Components 002, 003), in Amakusa (Component 004), in Shitsu (Component 005), in Ono (Component 006), on Kuroshima Island (Component 007), on Nozaki Island (Component 008), on Kashiragashima Island (Component 009) and on Hisaka Island (Component 010) have maintained their authenticity, based on the five attributes described below.

Form and Design

The villages retain their original basic structures composed of natural landscapes, roads and houses, as revealed through comparative studies of historical materials.

Use and Function

A comparison of information derived from historical materials with the land use still evident today shows that the terraced paddy fields, houses, places of worship and other features found in the villages still retain their original use and function. Although the component on Nozaki Island has lost its function as inhabited villages as the villagers have all moved away, the land use pattern with its characteristic landscape is well maintained as a cultural landscape of historical importance.

Traditions, Techniques and Management Systems

All necessary repair work has been carried out using traditional methods, based on the histori-

cal backgrounds and livelihoods of the villages.

In addition, repair and maintenance work is controlled by guidelines that are proactively laid down in the preservation and management plans. This serves to safeguard the historical and traditional value of the villages. Therefore, there are no foreseeable problems with future management systems.

Location and Setting

The land use pattern, the layout of cultivated land, residences, roads and other features found in the villages, as well as the natural environment (such as topographical features and rivers), remain unchanged.

Spirit and Feeling

In these villages, places of worship and land use patterns that express the Hidden Christian cultural tradition remain in place and are properly maintained. In many villages, the coexistence of Buddhism, Shinto and Christianity is still observed, giving an insight into the spiritual conditions during the ban on Christianity. Many of the churches built in the villages after the lifting of the ban stand on places of memory dating back to the period of the ban or in characteristic locations that evoke images of the Hidden Christians' lives under harsh conditions, bearing testimony to their historical background.

Authenticity of Egami Village on Naru Island (Egami Church and its Surroundings)

Egami Village has maintained authenticity based on the six attributes described below.

Form and Design

Research and surveys have revealed the initial state of the Egami Church and confirmed that it retains its original form and design. The surroundings retain the original topography at the time when the Hidden Christians migrated, as revealed through comparative studies of historical materials.

Materials and Substance

When necessary repair work has taken place, the restoration of damaged portions or the removal of materials added after the original construction has always been properly conducted.

Use and Function

As revealed by literary materials and analysis of land use pattern, the layout of cultivated land, residences, places of worship and other features that compose the village, as well as the natural environment (such as topography), remains unchanged. The church is still used as a Catholic facility by the local Catholic community.

Traditions, Techniques and Management Systems

All necessary repair work has been conducted using the original traditional methods, as appropriate for the materials and substances. In addition, no problems are foreseen with future management systems, as the traditions and tech-

niques required have been transmitted to next-generation experts through the process of continuous repair work.

In addition, repair and maintenance work is controlled by guidelines that are proactively laid down in the preservation and management plans. This serves to safeguard the historical and traditional value of the villages. Therefore, there are no foreseeable problems with future management systems.

Location and Setting

Egami Church remains in its original location. The topography in the village also has remained unchanged since the period of the ban on Christianity, as revealed through comparative studies of historical materials.

Spirit and Feeling

The church symbolises the ultimate end of the Hidden Christian tradition and is still in use as a religious facility. The village is a representative example of the topographies to which the Hidden Christians migrated, bearing testimony to their historical background.

Authenticity of Oura Cathedral

Oura Cathedral has maintained authenticity based on the six attributes described below.

Form and Design

Research and surveys have revealed the initial state of the cathedral and have confirmed that it retains its original form and design. Although

partial extension and renovation work has been carried out, such activities have been part of academic surveys conducted during conservation projects in later years.

Materials and Substance

When necessary repair work has taken place, the restoration of damaged portions or the removal of materials added after the original construction has always been properly conducted.

Use and Function

The cathedral is still used for religious rituals, such as Mass commemorating the ‘Discovery of Hidden Christians’ and Christmas; therefore it retains its original function.

Traditions, Techniques and Management Systems

All necessary repair work has been conducted using the original traditional methods, as appropriate for the materials and substances. In addition, as the traditions and techniques have been transmitted to the next-generation experts through continuous repair work, there are no foreseeable problems with future management systems.

Location and Setting

The cathedral has remained in its original location and has been preserved as an integral part of its surrounding environment.

Spirit and Feeling

The cathedral is important as a place for Christian rituals and as a symbol of the resilient power of the faith that local people have inherited over generations. It is also a place of spiritual support for Japanese Catholics and it still bears testimony to a profound religious and historical background.

3.1.e Protection and management requirements

All of the components have been protected in good condition under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties and other national laws. Buffer zones have been properly established for appropriate conservation in accordance with various laws, regulations and systems, including the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, the Landscape Act and the Natural Parks Act. To ensure the preservation and management of the components, individual preservation and management plans have been formulated, laying down specific methods and policies for enhancement and utilisation of the components. The correct preservation measures are in place, based on these plans, and they are upheld by the owners and managers of the components. Furthermore, the relevant municipalities have formulated a 'Comprehensive Preservation and Management Plan' (Appendix 6a) in order to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property as a whole. As part of a framework for implementing this plan, they have organised a World Heritage Preservation and Utilisation Council with cooperation from the owners of the components and other stakeholders. The Council shares information, providing a venue for the stakeholders to consult with each other and reach consensus on the appropriate means of protection, enhancement and utilisation of the nominated property. The Council receives guidance from and consults with ICOMOS members and other experts com-

prising an academic committee (the Nagasaki World Heritage Academic Committee), as well as the Agency for Cultural Affairs, which is the agency in charge of the protection of Japan's cultural properties.

1. Framework for the protection and management of the property

The basic policy for the protection of the nominated property is proper and strict protection based on the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Each of the components is at present in a good state of conservation, and the enhancement of historic sites and the repair of buildings only take place after regular and systematic monitoring and acquisition of academic justification. This ensures that the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property will not be compromised. The preservation and management plans formulated for each of the components define the basic policies for safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value, in addition to methods of management, enhancement, and utilisation that entail consideration of the existing state of each component. Preservation and management of the components are appropriately implemented by owners of the components and other stakeholders, based on such plans. A risk management system has been established so as to prepare for natural disasters and other

risks. In case any abnormalities are observed, the necessary information is immediately shared among all parties concerned, and appropriate measures are taken.

2. Protective measures within the buffer zones

To ensure a protective environment for the nominated property, buffer zones have been delineated around each component with due consideration given to visual integrity from the various vantage points of the components and the historical background associated with their historic value. Within the buffer zones, conservation of the landscape and the excellent natural environment surrounding the components is implemented in accordance with the Landscape Act, the City Planning Act and the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. These laws and regulations help to control development and other threats that may negatively affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property, and they also aim at the creation of favourable landscapes that can help integrate such components.

3. Strategy for long-term challenge

While the decline in population and its progressive aging are urgent challenges throughout

Japan, particularly in farming and fishing communities, such tendencies are even more pronounced in the areas in which the components of the nominated property are located. As this demographic change may negatively impact the preservation of the components and the maintenance of the local communities, measures will be taken to revitalise the economy and community in each area and to strengthen the foundations of the regional societies. While inscription of the nominated property on the World Heritage List is expected to help increase the number of visitors to each component, proper frameworks for accepting visitors will be established through cooperation among the public sector, owners of the components, non-profit organisations and local residents. Measures will also be taken in collaboration with other regional promotion initiatives so as to increase the resident population in each area as a means to support the preservation and management of the components.

3.2 Comparative Analysis

This section makes national and international comparisons with cultural properties that are similar in background and nature to the nominated property. The aim is to highlight the outstanding value of the nominated property that distinguishes it from other properties, to justify the selection of its components, and to determine the appropriateness of inscribing it on the World Heritage List.

In order to justify and confirm the value of the nominated property, several comparison items have been selected for detailed comparison.

- A) Comparison with World Heritage properties, especially those directly associated with religious suppression
- B) Comparison of histories of acceptance of Christianity in Asian countries
- C) Comparison with Hidden Christian sites throughout Japan (from the latter half of the 17th century to the first half of the 19th century)
- D) Comparison with Hidden Christian villages in the Nagasaki region
- E) Comparison with Catholic churches built in villages in the Nagasaki region during the phase that followed the lifting of the ban on Christianity

A. Comparison with World Heritage properties, especially those directly associated with religious suppression

The nominated property deals with the secret transmission of the Christian faith during its ban in Japan. From a global perspective, there are many examples of religious suppressions in world history caused by friction between different religions or due to political and ideological factors. Among the 1,052 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List (as of October 2016), a total of 10 were selected for this comparative analysis, as indicated in Table 3-002, because of their direct focus on or indirect association with religious suppressions.

A-1 Inscribed World Heritage properties directly associated with religious suppression

Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura (Italy and the Holy See)

Vatican City (the Holy See)

Both of these World Heritage properties have a long Christian background dating from very early periods in their history. Their histories include the martyrdom of Saint Paul and Saint Peter in the 1st century and sporadic persecutions of Christians that occurred until the legalisation of Christian worship and the establish-

ment of the state church of the Roman Empire in the 4th century. Roman emperors such as Nero, Domitian, Decius, and Diocletian are known to have persecuted Christians, and the suppression of Christianity continued for centuries (as in the case of the Nagasaki region). However, the persecution by these emperors, except for Diocletian, did not take place on a very large scale, and even the severity of persecution under Diocletian is a point of contention. Furthermore, the persecution was rarely intended to eradicate Christian communities. The apostles and missionaries spread Christianity without interruption within the Roman Empire, expanding its influence to such an extent that Christian worship was legalised with the Edict of Milan in 313.

On the other hand, during the ban on Christianity in Japan, the Tokugawa Shogunate clearly aimed at the complete suppression of Christian communities and strictly limited any exchange with foreign countries. As a result, no missionaries remained in Japan, Christian communities gradually declined, and a unique Hidden Christian culture was nurtured, but only in the Nagasaki region. Therefore, the historical backgrounds of Rome and Nagasaki are clearly different.

Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs (Sopianae) (Hungary)

Archaeological remains of early Christian activities in Pécs can be dated to the period following the legalisation of Christianity in the Roman

Empire in the 4th century. Mural decorations on tombs depicting biblical themes are important artistic artefacts. This World Heritage property bears testimony to the historical continuity of the Christian faith through the stormy era of the great migrations beginning at the end of the 4th century and the subsequent collapse of the Western Roman Empire, up to Charlemagne's campaign against the Avars at the end of the 8th century.

Although this property can be viewed as similar to Nagasaki's case in terms of the transmission of the Christian faith for centuries under difficult situations, there was still traffic along the commercial routes in Hungary, and thus contact among Christian communities and with the clergy is believed to have been maintained. Furthermore, the barbarian rulers did not intend to eradicate Christianity. Therefore, the historical backgrounds of Hungary and Nagasaki are quite different.

Ouadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz el-Rab) (Lebanon)

The slopes of the Qadisha Valley form natural ramparts, and their steep cliffs contain many caves. Since the early centuries of Christianity, the valley served as a refuge for those in search of solitude. From the late 7th century onwards, Syrian Maronites fled there after religious persecution following conflict with the Byzantine Empire and the advance of the Arabs. Ever since, they have kept their unique faith, despite the

subsequent suppressions carried out by various Islamic dynasties.

Although this property can be viewed as similar to Nagasaki's case, as they both involve the transmission of the Christian faith under difficult situations, the Maronite communities developed because the clergy settled together in the valley to such an extent that the seat of the Maronite Patriarch was established there in the 15th century.

On the other hand, Christian communities in the Nagasaki region had no contact with the Vatican due to the ban on Christianity and the national seclusion policy implemented by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Instead, they nurtured a vernacular Hidden Christian culture in the complete absence of priestly guidance. Therefore, Nagasaki's case is essentially different from that of Lebanon. Furthermore, Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region coexisted and got along with communities of different religions in various ways even during the ban, whereas the Maronite communities lived in caves while taking refuge from attacks by Muslims. From this perspective, Nagasaki's case can be seen to have a different historical background from that of Lebanon.

Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia (Turkey)

Located on the central Anatolia plateau, the Göreme valley has a spectacular landscape entirely sculpted by erosion. As early as the 4th century, Christian communities inhabited cells

hewn into the rock. In later periods, in order to resist Arab invasions, they began banding together into cave-dwelling villages or subterranean towns.

Although Cappadocia's case is also an example of the transmission of the Christian faith under difficult situations, it is thought that the clergy remained in the communities and that contact was maintained with the geographically close city of Constantinople and other centres of Christianity. However, Nagasaki's case is different because Japanese laypeople transmitted the Christian faith by themselves, in the complete absence of priestly guidance. There is one further difference in its historical background. The Christian communities in Cappadocia physically hid in caves to take refuge from attacks by different religious groups. In contrast, the Hidden Christian communities in the Nagasaki region coexisted in relative harmony with local people of other faiths, despite the severe threat posed by the ban on Christianity.

Wartburg Castle (Germany)

Wartburg Castle is famous as the place where Martin Luther composed his German translation of the New Testament. Excommunicated by Pope Leo X and treated as a heretic by Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire, he took refuge in the castle from persecutions by Catholics. By the end of the 16th century, the memory of Luther was already attracting a large number of pilgrims, and the castle became both religiously and culturally important. Although the castle

bears witness to the important event that marked the birth of Lutheranism, against the backdrop of conflict with Catholics, the castle itself has been abandoned and had become almost totally dilapidated by the end of the 18th century. Nagasaki's case also relates to Christianity in the 16th century and subsequent religious persecutions, but its uniqueness lies in the transmission of the Christian faith under difficult situations by ordinary people rather than the achievements of one very prominent figure. Therefore, Nagasaki's case differs from that of Germany.

Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica (Poland)

These two Lutheran churches are found in Silesia. Following the principle upheld after the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, the faith professed by the Habsburg monarchy became obligatory for all its subjects, and Protestants were persecuted. Protestant communities in Silesia were given a special exemption and allowed to erect their own churches from 1651 to 1652, but under conditions that were difficult to comply with in terms of location, construction materials, and time limitations. These churches were intended to be as inconspicuous as possible in the townscape and to be a refuge for a legally disadvantaged minority that was only reluctantly tolerated. Poland's case is similar to that of Nagasaki in that the religious minorities kept their faith during persecutions and despite political duress.

However, Nagasaki's case is significantly different in that the Hidden Christians could not obtain even the most reluctant degree of tolerance from the authorities, and they transmitted their faith by themselves for over two centuries, completely without either physical churches or priestly guidance.

Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee (Israel)

The Bahá'í faith originated in Iran with its Prophet-Herald, the Báb, and his follower Bahá'u'lláh in the 19th century. The rapid spread of the new creed among young Muslims and the general public was met by savage persecution by the Qajar Dynasty and the execution of the Báb in 1850. Bahá'u'lláh was successively banished from one part of the Ottoman Empire to another, until in 1868 he arrived in Western Galilee. There he spent the remaining 24 years of his life developing a spiritual and administrative centre for his religion, which came to be followed by several million people worldwide. This World Heritage property shares similarities with Nagasaki's case in that followers experienced severe persecutions by national governments. However, there is a significant difference between the two cases. The Bahá'í faith developed under the guidance of religious leaders in Haifa, as well as in the Western Galilee, associated with Bahá'u'lláh, to such an extent that it became a major world religion. On the other hand, Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region had to keep their faith over two centuries as religious

minorities and without any contact with priests. Therefore, the two cases are essentially different.

Masada (Israel)

Masada is the ruins of a palace complex and fort built by Herod the Great, King of Judaea, in the 1st century B.C. At the beginning of the Jewish Revolt against the Roman Empire in 66 A.D., a group of Zealots occupied Masada. After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple there in 70 A.D., the last survivors of the Jewish revolt gathered at Masada. Attacked by a large Roman army, nearly a thousand besieged Jewish people chose death rather than slavery. After the fall of Masada, the fort came under the control of the Roman Empire and the Jewish people began to suffer from a difficult period in their history that came to be known as the Diaspora. Masada is a symbol of the suppression of Jewish people and their subsequent dispersion. Therefore, it has some similarities with the history of Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region, who were forced into hiding after the thorough suppression of the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion at Hara Castle. However, Nagasaki's case is different in that it also includes villages of Hidden Christians who maintained their faith over two centuries after the initial suppression, while the site of Masada merely has a direct association with history until the related suppression.

Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) (Poland)

Auschwitz-Birkenau is a camp established by Nazi Germany on the basis of a racist and anti-semitic ideology with the aim of carrying out the mass murder of the Jewish people and other ethnic groups considered inferior. It is inscribed in the World Heritage List as evidence of an inhumane, cruel, and methodical effort to deny human dignity, as well as vivid testimony to the strength of the human spirit, which resisted such efforts. Nagasaki's case has some similarity in that it also bears witness to spiritual strength. However, Nagasaki's case is also totally different from the case of Auschwitz in that the Tokugawa Shogunate aimed at the expulsion of Christianity, which had been brought from abroad, while Nazi Germany embraced an extreme ideology that called for the annihilation of the Jewish people and other races.

Table 3-002 World Heritage properties selected for comparative analysis

No.	World Heritage property	Criteria	Country	Religious person/community who suffered hardship	Period of religious suppression	Contact between the clergy and followers	Intensity of religious suppression	Hiding of the suppressed religious communities
1	Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (vi)	Italy and the Holy See	Christians	From the 1st century to 313	Maintained	Sporadic	No
2	Vatican City	(i) (ii) (iv) (vi)	Holy See	Christians	From the 1st century to 313	Maintained	Sporadic	No
3	Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs (Sopianae)	(iii) (iv)	Hungary	Christians	From the 4th to the 8th centuries	Maintained	Racial conflict rather than suppression of a specific religion	No
4	Ouadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz elRab)	(iii) (iv)	Lebanon	Maronites	From the late 7th century	Maintained	Followers fled from Syria due to severe persecution.	Physically hiding in caves
5	Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia	(i) (iii) (v) (vii)	Turkey	Christians	From the 7th century	Maintained	Racial conflict rather than suppression of a specific religion	Physically hiding in caves
6	Wartburg Castle	(iii) (vi)	Germany	Martin Luther	For about a year from 1521	Excommunicated by the Vatican	Condemned as an outlaw	The castle served as the place of exile
7	Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica	(iii) (iv) (vi)	Poland	Protestants	From 1648	Maintained	Only reluctantly tolerated	No

No.	World Heritage property	Criteria	Country	Religious person/community who suffered hardship	Period of religious suppression	Contact between the clergy and followers	Intensity of religious suppression	Hiding of the suppressed religious communities
8	Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee	(iii) (vi)	Israel	Bahá'ís	From the middle of the 19th century	The religious heads were imprisoned until 1908	Followers fled from Iran due to a severe persecution.	No
9	Masada	(iii) (iv) (vi)	Israel	Jewish people	First Jewish Roman War from 66 to 73 A.D.	The rebels were besieged in Masada.	Suppression of a rebellion rather than persecution of a specific religion	No
10	Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945)	(vi)	Poland	Jewish people and other communities	From 1942 to 1944	Those in the camp were under strict surveillance.	Genocide that continued for almost three years.	No
	Nagasaki	(iii)	Japan	Christians	From the end of the 16th century to 1873	No contact for over two centuries	Thorough ban for over two centuries	Socially hiding while behaving as non-Christians

A-2 Christianity-related properties in Asian countries inscribed on the World Heritage List

Within the same regional group as Japan, there are five World Heritage properties that include Christian elements: Churches and Convents of Goa (India), the Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications (Sri Lanka), the Historic Centre of Macao (China), Melaka and George Town, the Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca (Malaysia), and the Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Philippines).

However, all of these properties were established against a backdrop of colonial rule by Christian countries in Europe. They rarely experienced Christian persecutions, and thus their historical background is clearly different from the case of Nagasaki, where Japanese Christians experienced no colonial rule but had to endure a thorough prohibition of Christianity by their own national government.

A-3 Christianity-related sites on the tentative lists of Asian countries

According to the tentative lists from countries in the area ranging from Eastern to Southern Asia, as of January 2016, it seems that ‘Historic Monuments and Sites of Ancient Quanzhou (Zayton)’ (China) and ‘Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Extension)’ (Philippines) both have an association with Christianity. Although ‘Ancient Quanzhou’ mentions an association with the spread of Nestorianism in the south-eastern coastal area of China in criterion vi, its main

theme is its role as important hub for the navigation and trade routes. Thus, its association with Christianity can be considered limited. ‘Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Extension)’ were constructed during Spanish rule, as is the case with other churches already inscribed on the World Heritage List. Therefore, this site does not include religious persecution as a theme.

The following countries do not have any Christianity-related properties, except for the property being nominated in this dossier, on their tentative lists: Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Vietnam, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

Conclusion of comparison item A

All of the World Heritage properties compared above have a different historical background to that of Nagasaki. Among them, ‘Ouadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz el-Rab)’ (Lebanon) and ‘Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia’ (Turkey) have some similarities in that Christians there also kept their faith while in hiding from religious suppression. However, the case of Nagasaki is essentially different in that Christians there did not physically hide from the outside world but were socially in hiding, meaning that they maintained their Chris-

tian faith while outwardly behaving as Buddhists and Shinto practitioners. Therefore, no property in the World Heritage List or any in the Tentative Lists are equivalent to the nominated property.

B. Comparison of histories of acceptance of Christianity in Asian countries

This section examines how Christianity was disseminated and what kind of responses it received in Asia, the region in which the nominated property is located. Specifically, comparisons are made among Japan, China, Korea, Vietnam, and Malaysia. Items selected for comparison include those points in history at which Christianity's dissemination began and situations relating to persecution and hiding among Christians.

Today, the country in Asia with the largest Christian population is the Philippines, due to its history of Spanish colonial rule. As a result, its process of Christianisation was radically different from that in other Asian countries, and therefore it is not subject to comparison in this section.

China

Although Christianity had been introduced to China intermittently since the 8th century, full-scale missionary work was only initiated in the 1580s, a bit later than in Japan, by Jesuits such as Matteo Ricci. Placing importance on maintaining good relations with Beijing (the central gov-

ernment), the Society of Jesus helped manage the astronomical observatory and matters related to the national calendar. It also accepted and participated in Confucian rituals in China. However, these missionary policies were criticised by other Christian orders that were mainly active in rural parts of China. This disagreement led to what has become known as the 'Chinese Rites Controversy' (which concerned the question of whether or not the observance of certain Chinese ritual practices was compatible with Catholic belief). This dispute eventually led Pope Clemens XI to condemn missionaries' practice of Chinese rites and caused the emperor of the Qing Dynasty to issue a ban on Christianity.

Although Christianity was banned in China for roughly a century (from the first half of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century), thorough enforcement of the ban was impossible in such a vast country, and violations were treated with leniency until the 1810s. Moreover, missionaries continued to reside in Beijing even during the ban, and they secretly sent native Chinese priests to rural areas, maintaining at least some of the Church's organisational structure in China.

On the other hand, Japan implemented a strict ban on Christianity for two and a half centuries, beginning in the 17th century. Although all missionaries were expelled from Japan and there was no priestly guidance in the Nagasaki region, where the nominated property is located, Hidden Christians passed down their faith by

themselves, giving birth to their unique cultural tradition. Therefore, China's case significantly differs from that of Nagasaki.

Korea (Joseon Dynasty)

Although some knowledge of Christianity and related books were introduced to Korea from Japan in the 16th century, and from China in the 17th century, actual missionary work within Korea was not carried out at that time. In 1784, Yi Seung-hun, who visited China on a diplomatic mission and was baptised there, established the first church in Korea. In other words, the introduction of Christianity to Korea was voluntarily promoted by intellectuals from the traditional Yangban ruling class who had been exposed to Western education during their visits to China. Therefore, the introduction of Christianity to Korea was not the direct result of missionary work, as was the case in both Japan and China.

Persecution of Christians in Korea began in 1801, and four major waves of persecution swept through the country until the ban on Christianity was lifted at the end of the 19th century. During the ban, some 10,000 Christians were martyred, suggesting a level of severity on a par with that in the Nagasaki region. However, in Korea, the ban lasted for a much shorter period than in Japan, and missionary work continued even during the ban, conducted by native Koreans as well as members of the Paris Foreign Missions Society.

In the Nagasaki region, Hidden Christians

maintained their faith on their own during the centuries-long ban despite the total absence of missionaries, giving birth to their unique cultural tradition as a result. Therefore, the case of Nagasaki possesses different historical significance than that of Korea.

Vietnam

Christianity was first introduced to Vietnam on a large scale by Franciscans who travelled there from the Philippines in the late 16th century. After Japan's strict implementation of the ban on Christianity and its national seclusion policy, the Society of Jesus saw Vietnam as a new target for missionary activity that could take the place of Japan. It started missionary work in Cochinchina in 1615 and in Tonkin in 1626, with the participation of both European and Japanese missionaries sent from Macao. In the latter half of the 17th century, missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society also commenced activities in Vietnam.

Missionary activities brought about significant changes to Vietnamese society. For example, the transcription of the Vietnamese language using the Western alphabet (the Quoc Ngu) was devised by the missionaries, and it was subsequently adopted as the official writing system of Vietnam. Furthermore, severe persecutions of Christians by the Nguyen Dynasty led to French military intervention and resulted in Vietnam being colonised by the French in the latter half of the 19th century.

The cases of Vietnam and Japan have

much in common in terms of the historical context in which Christianity was introduced, but there are also significant differences. Although Christians were persecuted in both countries, those in Vietnam experienced an absence of missionaries for only thirty years. Moreover, French colonisation in the 19th century had a great impact on the subsequent construction of churches.

In contrast, Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region maintained their faith without priestly leadership for over two centuries during the ban on Christianity, and after the lifting of the ban they built small churches by themselves in their own villages. The nominated property is testimony to this unique history.

Malaysia

Arab Christian traders are considered to have arrived on the Malay Archipelago as early as the 7th century, but no full-scale missionary activity commenced until the arrival of the Portuguese, who conquered Melaka in 1511 and built churches there. Francis Xavier visited Melaka in 1545 to carry out Catholic missionary work. Although the Portuguese continued such activities, no more than 8,000 people had converted to Catholicism by the beginning of the 17th century, almost a century after the conquest of Melaka. In 1641, the Portuguese surrendered to the Dutch, who were more interested in trade than in religion. Christianity continued to spread under Dutch control, and both Catholic and Protestant churches were built. At the end

of the 18th century, Holland was defeated by France, and the Dutch king had to take refuge in England, and England ultimately took over Melaka and other possessions in Malaysia. The British gradually extended their control over the Malaysian peninsula, and European missionaries spread Christianity further in tandem with this colonial expansion.

While Christianity was being disseminated during this period of European rule, people from different ethnic communities each lived in their own sections, where they were allowed to continue certain local traditions. Against this historical background, a distinctively multi-cultural townscape gradually developed, thanks to exchanges among Malay, European, Chinese, and Indian cultures.

The current situation in Malaysia has some similarity with that of Nagasaki in that Christianity coexists alongside other Asian religions. However, the case of Malaysia, where Christianity was spread under colonial rule and with the protection of European countries, is significantly different from the case of Nagasaki, where Hidden Christians maintained their faith independently and completely without contact with European missionaries.

Conclusion of comparison item B

Comparisons were made among Asian countries from the perspective of the introduction of Christianity and its impact on each society. Except for the Philippines and Malaysia, where Christianity was introduced under European

colonial rule, all the other nations selected banned Christianity, suggesting that this was a common response to Christianity in Asia at that time. However, the intensity and length of such a response varied from nation to nation, and Japan's negative reaction (which lasted over two and a half centuries) was much longer and more severe than that of any other Asian countries. In addition, Japan's case is particularly exceptional in that Hidden Christians secretly passed down their faith by themselves through many generations, completely without missionary contact.

C. Comparison with Hidden Christian sites throughout Japan (from the latter half of the 17th century to the first half of the 19th century)

In this section, comparisons are made with similar sites elsewhere in Japan to clarify how the nominated property in the Nagasaki region is representative of Hidden Christian sites throughout the country.

During the period when Christianity was thoroughly suppressed by the Tokugawa Shogunate, there were several large-scale crackdowns on Hidden Christians (called *Kuzure*), demonstrating how Hidden Christian communities gradually became disorganised in various parts of Japan. Historical documents record the following *Kuzure* crackdown incidents.

- 1657: Kori Kuzure (today's Omura City, Nagasaki Prefecture)
- 1650s–1680s: Bungo Kuzure (today's Oita Prefecture)
- 1660s: Nobi Kuzure (today's Gifu and Aichi Prefectures)
- 1790s: Urakami Ichiban Kuzure (today's Urakami, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture)
- 1805: Amakusa Kuzure (today's Sakitsu, Amakusa City, Kumamoto Prefecture)
- 1842: Urakami Niban Kuzure (today's Urakami, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture)
- 1856: Urakami Sanban Kuzure (today's Urakami, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture)
- 1867–1873: Urakami Yonban Kuzure (today's Urakami, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture)
- 1868: Goto Kuzure (today's Goto City, Nagasaki Prefecture)

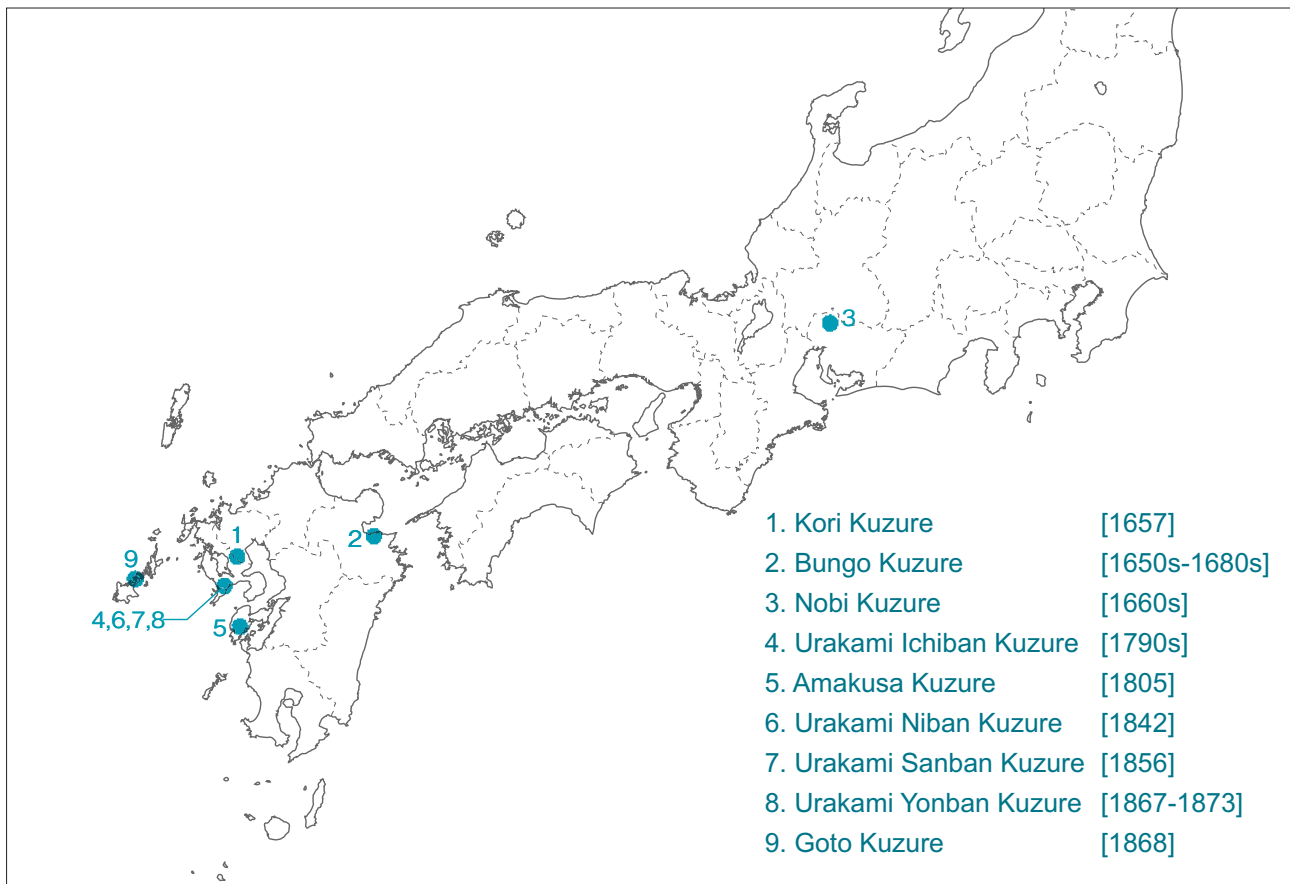
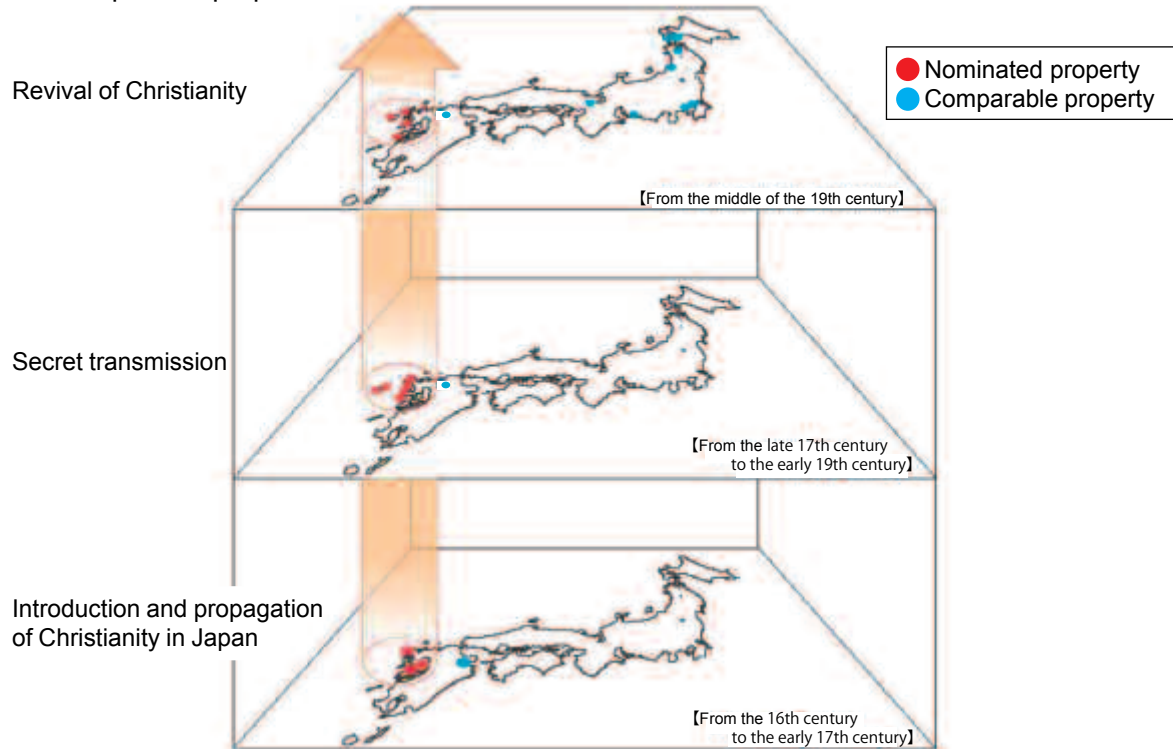


Figure 3 - 001 Map of locations of *Kuzure* crackdowns on Hidden Christian communities

Distribution of the components of the 'Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region' and comparable properties



The Nagasaki region is the only area in Japan where physical evidence still exists demonstrating that Christianity has been transmitted in an organised manner, without interruption since its initial introduction in the 16th century.

Figure 3 - 002 Distribution of the components of the nominated property

Conclusions of comparison item C

In the late 17th century, when half a century had passed since the imposition of the ban on Christianity, *Kuzure* crackdowns occurred in today's Nagasaki, Oita, Gifu, and Aichi Prefectures, suggesting that several Hidden Christian communities still remained in some parts of the country. However, there are no records of *Kuzure* crackdowns in the early 18th century, and towards the end of the 18th century and in the 19th century, *Kuzure* crackdowns only occurred in the Nagasaki region. This means that Hidden Christian communities had diminished nationwide from the end of the 17th century through the 18th century, and remained only in the Nagasaki region. Today, traces of Hidden Christian villages and other physical evidence are found only in the Nagasaki region. Therefore, there are no villages comparable with the nominated property other than those found in the Nagasaki region.

D. Comparison with Hidden Christian villages in the Nagasaki region

Hidden Christian villages to be compared

Catholicism was introduced into Japan for the first time in the middle of the 16th century and reached its zenith in the early 17th century, with about 370,000 Japanese followers. However, the number of Japanese Catholics declined significantly due to the ban on Christianity imposed

by the Tokugawa Shogunate. In the 18th century their distribution came to be limited to the Nagasaki region and its neighbouring areas where, based on reports written by missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society who came to Japan at the end of the Edo period, they numbered twenty to thirty thousand. According to academic research conducted by Tagita Koya around 1950 and published in 1954, Hidden Christian villages are thought to have been distributed in the following areas during the period of the ban on Christianity.

Area I: Urakami in the suburbs of the town of Nagasaki

Area II: Villages around Shitsu and Ono in Sotome on the Nishisonogi Peninsula

Area III: Islands ranging from Kuroshima Island to the Goto Islands (including Nozaki Island), to which Hidden Christian villagers migrated from the aforementioned Area II in the 18th century

Area IV: Western coast of Hirado Island and Ikitsuki Island

Area V: Oe, Sakitsu and other villages in Amakusa

Area VI: Tachiarai Imamura in Fukuoka Prefecture **1**

A total of 214 Hidden Christian villages can be identified in the six areas mentioned above: 15 villages in Area I, 19 in Area II, 146 in Area III, 30 in Area IV, and 4 in Area V. This distribution is summarised in Table 3-002.

1

It is known that there were some Hidden Christian villages outside of the Nagasaki region dating to the period of the ban on Christianity and the subsequent transitional phase, such as Imamura Village in Fukuoka Prefecture, Madara Island in Saga Prefecture, Koshiki Island in Kagoshima Prefecture and Sendaiji Village in Osaka Prefecture. However as explained in the previous section, it is only in villages of the Nagasaki region that Hidden Christians maintained their faith in an organized manner and nurtured the distinctive cultural tradition from the 17th to 19th centuries without interruption.

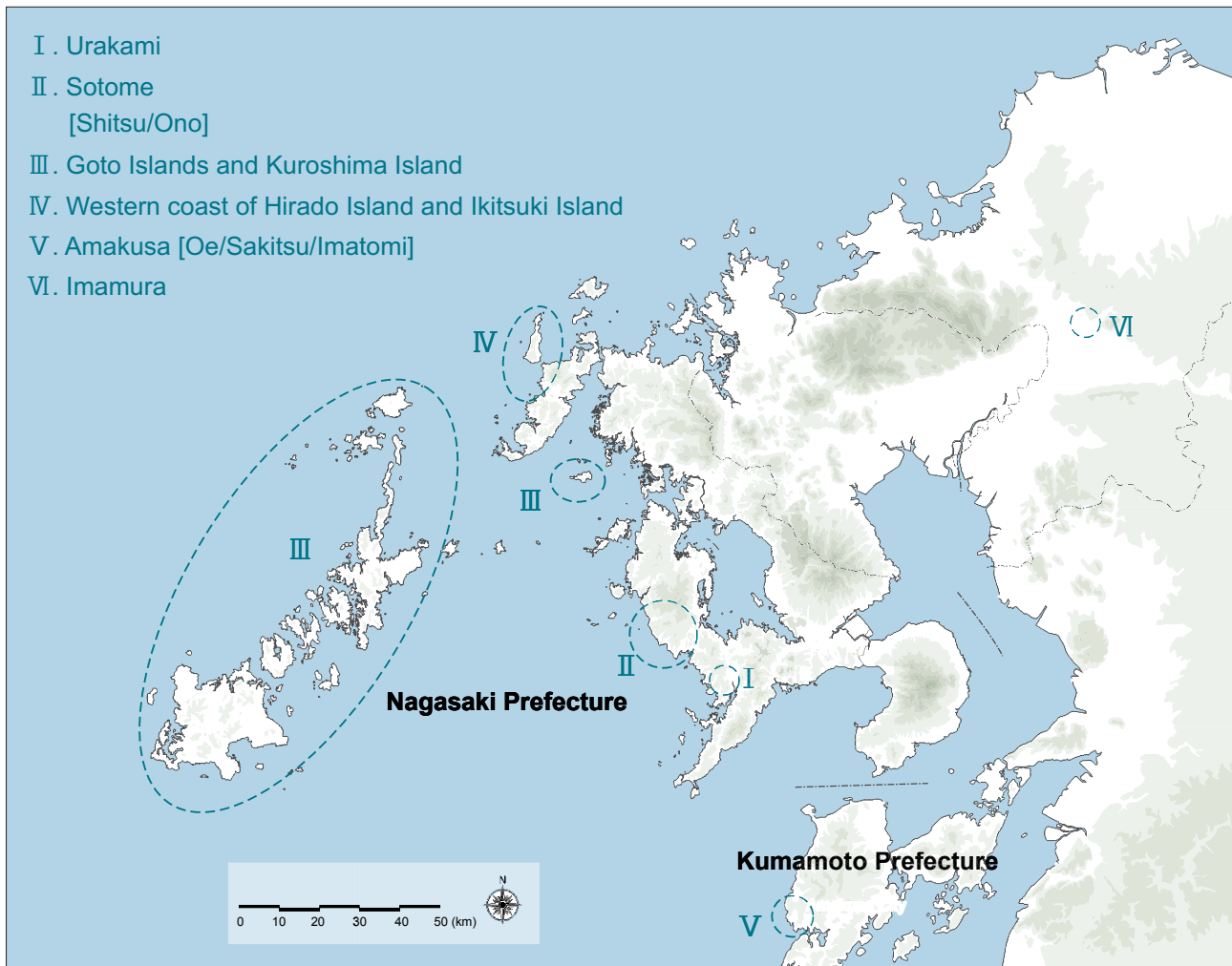


Figure 3-003 Map of Hidden Christian villages

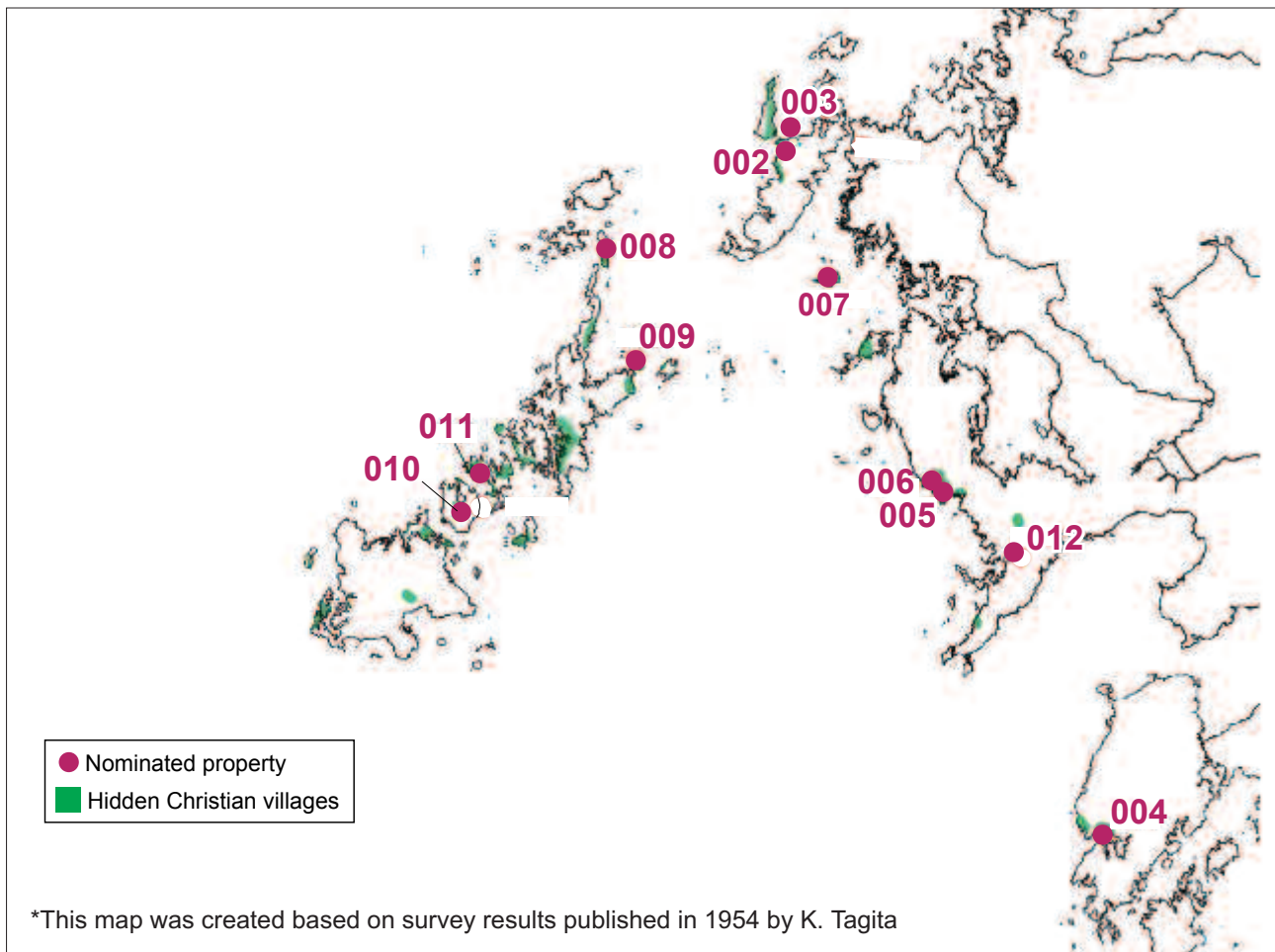


Figure 3-004 Distribution of Hidden Christian villages during the ban and the components of the nominated property

Selection of items for comparison

The following four factors were considered when comparing these villages:

Comparison Item 1

The following attributes related to criterion (iii) were considered from the perspective of the contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

- Is the village in question a Hidden Christian village that dates back to the arrival of Christianity in Japan (i.e., a non-migrant village) or is it a Hidden Christian village that was formed through migration from another non-migrant site (migrant village)?
- In the case of non-migrant villages, what sort of concealment strategies were adopted? More specifically, what did they choose as substitute places or objects on which to focus their veneration in order to hide their true Christian faith?
- In the case of migrant villages, in what sort of locations did they settle for the purpose of ensuring their survival through their migration strategy?

Comparison Item 2

As noted in the section on authenticity, the villages were examined to determine whether they meet the conditions of authenticity in terms of 1) form and design; 2) use and function; 3) traditions, techniques, and management systems; 4) location and setting; and 5) spirit and feeling.

Comparison Item 3

The state of conservation of both the constituent elements and the overall structure of the villages

was verified, including remains from the period during which Christianity was banned and from the subsequent transitional phase.

Comparison Item 4

In addition, consideration was given to whether or not the protective measures available under the legal framework are being applied.

Of the 214 Hidden Christian villages, 43 were non-migrant villages and 171 were migrant villages. Most of the villages situated on the Nishisonogi Peninsula and other areas on the mainland side of Kyushu were non-migrant villages, while the migrant villages were concentrated in island areas such as the Goto and Ojika Islands. The migrant villages also include Daimyoji, which is situated on Iojima Island near central Nagasaki City, and Hoki, located on Hirado Island.

Comparison between non-migrant villages (See details in Appendix 3b)

The Hidden Christian villages shared several common characteristics: as noted in section 2.b 'History and Development', a) the entire populace was registered with Buddhist temples under the *Terauke* policy imposed by the Tokugawa Shogunate; b) although the graves of Hidden Christians seemed, at first glance, to be the same as those of Buddhists, there were unique customs and practices involved in the burial of their deceased, such as changing the direction in which the body was facing when interred, and c) under the direction of religious leaders known

as *Mizukata* or *Chokata*, they formed small faith communities through which they practiced and passed on their beliefs to others. A close examination of each village's concealment strategies and the objects of worship offers an accurate picture of the different strategies adopted by each village. Also, particularly in migrant villages, a detailed analysis of the types of locations chosen for these settlements sheds light on the migration strategy of each village.

The 43 non-migrant villages can be categorised into four groups: I. villages that revered sacred sites such as mountains and other natural sacred locations or sites related to martyrdom; II. villages that used existing sites of worship, namely Shinto shrines, that could serve as places for Hidden Christian worship as well, and that could be shared with the ordinary community; III. villages that venerated Catholic devotional items; and IV. villages that chose to avoid the risk of secretly using such Catholic devotional items and instead venerated substitute items. These can also be divided into villages that worshipped the land, as in cases I and II, and villages that venerated devotional items, as in cases III and IV. Also, only III can be categorised as the type of village that venerated items that, if exposed, would immediately identify them as being Hidden Christians while the others were villages that venerated things customarily seen in Buddhist and Shinto communities as well.

The results of comparisons among the above-mentioned four categories are as follows.

Among the non-migrant villages, 16 were

confirmed to have concealed their faith through the worship of sacred sites (category I). Of these, the only village to which comparison items 2 to 4 apply is Kasuga Village in Hirado (Village No.185 in Appendix 3b). There were other villages situated along the western coast of Hirado Island—such as Neshiko (Village No.188) and Shimonakano (Village No.183)—that similarly concealed their Hidden Christian faith by secretly worshipping sacred sites, for example, venerating Mt. Yasumandake. However, it has been determined that of these, Kasuga is the most representative, particularly in terms of authenticity, given that the way in which the village was structured, from the period when Christianity was prohibited up until the present, is clearly known. There are also well-preserved objects of worship such as the 'Nandogami' (or 'closet icons'). There are also villages on Ikitsuki Island, including Ichibuzai (Village No.203) and Motofure (Village No.206), that worshipped sacred sites in a manner similar to Kasuga. However, it was determined that these sites did not have the same level of authenticity that Kasuga holds—e.g., there is no remaining evidence of how these villages were structured during the prohibition period, there is no system for preserving village land use for the future, and there has been a lack of protective measures.

It has been confirmed that there were seven villages that concealed their faith by having their place of veneration overlap with existing sites of worship, namely Shinto shrines (category II). Of these, the only one to which

comparison items 2 to 4 apply is Ono Village (Village No.24 in Appendix 3b), where Hidden Christians became parishioners of the Ono Shrine, the seat of the village's guardian deity, while at the same time secretly enshrining a Christian deity and worshipping at the Kado Shrine and the Tsuji Shrine, which were more familiar to the villagers.

It has been confirmed that there were 23 villages that venerated Catholic devotional items, such as sacred images and rosaries (category III). Of these, comparison items 2 to 4 apply to three villages, Kamishitsu, Nakashitsu, and Shimoshitsu (Village No.26 to 28 in Appendix 3b), in that each faith community handed down numerous devotional items such as images of the Virgin Mary, Japanese-language catechisms, and the Catholic liturgical calendar. In Imatomi Village (Village No.213), located in the city of Amakusa, an angel figurine called Umanterasama was uncovered in the mountains, and it is thought to have been used in religious ceremonies during the ban on Christianity, but exactly how it was used and how it was passed on as a means to conceal and maintain the community's faith is not known, and thus it was determined that the village was not comparable to the three villages of Shitsu in terms of authenticity.

A total of 23 villages were found to have avoided the risk of detection by not using Catholic devotional items, instead using everyday items that they had on hand as substitutes in order to conceal their faith (category IV). Of these, the only village to which comparison

items 2 to 4 apply was Sakitsu (Village No.212 in Appendix 3b), where Hidden Christians venerated statues of the traditional gods of fishermen as Deus, and made devotional items from the shells of abalone and fan-mussel clams, because their mother-of-pearl patterns were likened to the image of the Virgin Mary, thereby allowing the adherents to conceal their faith using objects that were strongly connected to their work. There were some villages, including those in Urakami (Ieno, Motohara, Nakano, and Sato: Village No.1 to 4), and Kamikurosaki in Sotome (Village No.29), where people used devotional items called 'Maria Kannon' during the ban on Christianity. They used images of the Buddhist deity Kannon, likening it to the Virgin Mary, but it is not clear what function these images had in the faith communities, and their authenticity has not been verified. Therefore, it was determined that they are not comparable to Sakitsu.

In addition, 11 villages were confirmed to have been Hidden Christian villages during the ban on Christianity, but as in the case of villages such as Nishikashiyama in Nagasaki (Village No.17 in Appendix 3b), and Takahama in Amakusa (Village No.214), due to the limited documentation and other historical materials, we know absolutely nothing about the type of faith communities that existed in these places at the time, the structure of the villages, and so on.

Comparison between migrant villages (See detail in Appendix 3b)

Among the 171 migrant villages, the most strik-

ing characteristic of the concealment strategies adopted is the way in which destinations were chosen when migrating. If the move was made to a pre-existing village, it would be a Buddhist or Shinto village, and thus settling into that community incurred a high risk of their faith being exposed. For that reason, the migrants cleverly avoided establishing new settlements in pre-existing villages. The 171 migrant villages can be divided into four categories: I) places where there were no pre-existing villages because the location was considered by adherents of Buddhism or Shinto to be sacred ground; II) places where there were no pre-existing villages because the location was being used to isolate those suffering from infectious diseases from the rest of the population; III) places where there were no pre-existing villages because of steep terrain, poor soil conditions, or harsh climate; and IV) places that were once used for some purpose, such as pasturelands belonging to a clan, but that had since been abandoned, to which migration was invited as a way of bringing the land back into cultivation. Numbers I) and II), in particular, can also be categorised as land that was shunned or avoided, while III) and IV) were simply uninhabited areas.

Regarding the migrant villages, the only ones that fall into category I), sites where there were no pre-existing villages because the location was considered by the adherents of Buddhism or Shinto to be sacred ground, were the villages of Nokubi and Funamori on Nozaki Island (Village No.35 and 36 in Appendix 3b). Be-

cause the village structure is clear, dating back to the period of the ban on Christianity and the subsequent transitional phase, and because they remain in good condition, comparison items 2) to 4) apply to both of these villages and the protective measures based on the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties are being implemented.

It has been confirmed that there are four villages where people settled in locations (category II) where there were no pre-existing villages because the area was being used to isolate those suffering from infectious diseases from the rest of the population (smallpox was a particular concern during the period when Christianity was banned): the village of Akabae on Nakadori Island (Village No.43 in Appendix 3b), and the villages on Kashiragashima Island in Kamigoto (Village No.57), the village of Maeshima on Naru Island (Village No.114), and the village of Nangoura on Fukue Island in Shimogoto (Village No.151). Of these, comparison items 2) to 4) apply only to the villages on Kashiragashima Island. The Hidden Christians migrated there under the guidance of a Buddhist but later invited a leader of their own faith and finally rejoined the Catholic Church. For the villages of Akabae, Maeshima, and Nangoura, the historical characteristics, including the process by which they were settled during the ban on Christianity, and the process during the transitional phase when they returned to Catholicism, are not altogether clear, and thus, in terms of their authenticity, it was determined that they are not

comparable with the village on Kashiragashima Island.

The overwhelming majority of the Hidden Christian migrant villages fall into category III), where people migrated to sites that had remained undeveloped for geographical reasons; 142 villages were established in this way. Given that the policy of the feudal lords was to encourage people to migrate as settlers, and since their settlements were unequivocally on undeveloped land, it is understandable that this category covers the vast majority of cases. Among them, the villages to which comparison items 2) to 4) apply are Kodomari, Gorin, Sotowa, Origami, Obiraki, Eiri, Takeyama, Zazare, Uchikamihira, Sotokamihira, Kojima, and Hamadomari on Hisaka Island (Village No.125 to 136 in Appendix 3b). These villages were created when Hidden Christians from the Sotome area, an area where they had developed techniques to create terraced fields by building stone walls on sloping terrain, migrated to the island—a location where strong winds, scarce water and steep slopes made it appear unsuitable for farming.

There are seven villages that are recognised as belonging to category IV), land that had previously been used for some purpose but that was subsequently abandoned, and migration was thus promoted to bring the land back into cultivation. Of these, the only villages to which comparison items 2) to 4) apply are those on Kuroshima Island in Sasebo City (Village No.175 to 180 in Appendix 3b), where pasturelands that had been managed by the Hirado clan had been

deliberately abandoned, and so migrants could settle there and begin cultivating the land for farming. Kozaki, Village in Hirado City (Village No.181), is not comparable with the villages on Kuroshima Island in terms of authenticity, state of conservation, or status of application of domestic laws. Therefore, it can be determined that only the villages on Kuroshima Island are representative of villages to which people migrated in order to redevelop the land and pass on their faith..

Conclusion of comparison item D

Comparisons were made among 214 Hidden Christian villages that existed during the ban on Christianity in the Nagasaki region, assessing them in terms of: 1. contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property; 2. satisfactory authenticity; 3. state of conservation; and 4. protective measures in place. As a result, the following villages have been found to fulfil all of these four perspectives: Shitsu Village (including Kamishitsu, Nakashitsu, and Shimoshitsu); Ono Village; those on Kuroshima Island (including Nakiri, Warabe, Hikazu, Todobira, Tashiro, and Neya); those on Nozaki Island (including Nokubi and Funamori); those on Kashiragashima Island; those on Hisaka Island (including Kodomari, Gorin, Sotowa, Origami, Obiraki, Eiri, Takeyama, Zazare, Uchikamihira, Sotokamihira, Kojima, and Hamadomari); Kasuga Village (including Mt. Yasumandake and Nakaenoshima Island); and Sakitsu Village.

E. Comparison with Catholic churches built in villages in the Nagasaki region during the phase that followed the lifting of the ban on Christianity

Churches to be compared

The news of the Discovery of Hidden Christians in 1865 quickly spread to Hidden Christian villages in the Nagasaki region. After various conflicts among the Hidden Christian villagers, some elected to rejoin the Catholic Church while others continued the religious system they had formed during the ban on Christianity. There were also some who converted to Buddhism or Shintoism instead. As a result, Hidden Christians' cultural traditions were gradually transformed. In particular, in the villages where Hidden Christians were reintegrated into the Catholic Church, their cultural traditions underwent a complete semantic and visual transformation with the construction of physical church buildings. Therefore, these churches are the most obvious testimony to the transitional phase and the end of the Hidden Christians' traditions after making difficult religious identity choices.

At present, there are 137 Catholic churches in the Nagasaki region. Of these, 73 are located in villages where Hidden Christians used to live during the ban on Christianity. (See Appendix 3c)

Selection of comparison items

The following factors were considered when

comparing these churches:

Comparison Item 1

When was the first church constructed in the village? .

Comparison Item 2

Also, in terms of their authenticity, the churches were examined as to:

- when the existing church structure was built;
- the type of location in which the church stands; and
- the type of construction method used.

Comparison Item 3

Also examined was whether the entire construction area, including the church grounds, has been well preserved or not.

Comparison Item 4

In addition, the analysis examined whether protective measures provided by the legal framework have been put in place or not.

Of the 73 church buildings examined, if we leave aside Oura Cathedral, the earliest were built just over a decade after the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians'. By the end of the 19th century, a total of 36 churches had been constructed, including the Oura Cathedral, throughout the entire Nagasaki region. Indeed, over the roughly 30-year period that followed, church construction flourished in this area as church buildings began to be built in quick succession.

The timing of the construction of church buildings differed from village to village, in general progressing slowly over a relatively long period of time. Setting aside the questions of

whether there were any economic reasons for this or whether this was due to complex conflicts related to faith during the transitional phase, it is important to note that for the villages which did not have church buildings for a long time, churches were the ultimate symbol of their final return to Catholicism. There are some villages in which the first churches were not built until after World War II. In these cases, instead of concluding that the transition phase itself took such a long time, as much as 80 years up until the postwar period, these villages can be considered to have needed new churches to accommodate the increasing population of Christians (in most cases, this accompanied a natural increase in the population).

With regard to the location of the churches, many of them were built in central locations or on high ground along the coast so that they were visible from anywhere in the village, or they were built in easily accessible locations. Building in central locations was a typical way in which Catholic churches were usually built. There are also examples of churches being built on places of memory where significant events had occurred during the period when Christianity was banned. These include sites where people were forced to stamp on sacred images in the ‘Efumi’ ceremony, sites where Christians were persecuted and martyred for their beliefs, or sites connected to the Hidden Christian leaders during the period of the religious ban.

On the other hand, some villages chose sites for their churches based on the same logic

used when building residences—e.g., protection from the wind, avoiding moisture, etc. The village wisdom applied in the selection of the site was unique to each area and reflected the experience of the villagers connecting back to the era of the ban on Christianity.

The 73 churches reflect a variety of construction methods, depending on the period when they were completed. Some adopted a highly-developed Western style of construction under the guidance of missionaries, some were built solely by Japanese carpenters using indigenous methods similar to those used in building ordinary structures, and others were built using a mixture of Japanese and Western construction methods. In terms of the materials used in their construction, many churches, starting with Oura Cathedral, are either brick masonry construction or wood-frame brick construction. It is considered that when the parishioners called for a church to be built as a symbol of their return to Catholicism, they wanted it to be built from brick in order to clearly differentiate it visually from the wooden structures that characterised the rest of the village. Also, among those churches that were constructed or rebuilt relatively recently, there are many that were constructed with reinforced concrete.

Of particular note are the churches built with indigenous construction methods and locally produced materials. For example, the Kashiragashima Church on Kashiragashima Island (Component 009) is constructed using locally produced sandstone. Of course, this con-

struction method is itself patterned on the Romanesque style, so it clearly stands apart from the surrounding buildings, but the sandstone is also used in many of the other buildings and structures in the vicinity, and thus the church is in perfect harmony with the overall landscape of the village. Similarly, wood-frame churches using locally produced lumber in the same manner as the surrounding buildings also create harmonious village landscapes while still asserting their presence and expressing their identity as churches.

Based on these comparisons, it was determined that, among the churches that are indicative of the end of the transitional phase, those that most strongly demonstrate cultural, social, and technical continuity with the period of the ban on Christianity are those built after a relatively long transitional phase, located in sites chosen for their suitability in relation to the local climatic conditions, and constructed using indigenous materials. The following three churches meet these criteria:

Zenchodani Church (Church No.30)

This church is a single-story wooden building constructed in 1895 on the slopes above a valley. It was built on ground that had been leveled using stone retaining walls, with a grove of trees in front serving as a windbreak, thereby appropriately responding to the characteristics of the climate of the area. However, the form of the original church is not clearly known, and the church that is currently standing on that site was

rebuilt in 1952. For that reason, while the state of preservation is excellent, it does not meet the requirements for being designated and protected as a cultural property under Japanese law.

Egami Church (Church No.37)

This church is a wooden building constructed in 1917 on a valley floor. It was built on a site that had been leveled using stone retaining walls, and a grove of trees planted in front of the church serves as a windbreak against the sea winds that come from the southwest. To deal with the problems of moisture exposure, it was built with a raised floor, and there are vents in the soffits, that were designed to resemble, a common flower in that region. The church is thus a good expression of the typical response to the climatic conditions that prevail in the area. Before the current church was built it is known that there was an earlier church on the site, but the original structure is presumed to have been a temporary building since it lasted only 10 years until the construction of the current building. The Egami Church has been well preserved as an Important Cultural Property and there are adequate measures in place in keeping with the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties.

Kaitsu Church (Church No.54)

This church is a single-story wooden building constructed in 1924 on a plateau, with a grove of trees serving as a windbreak, and this building also shows the typical response to the prevailing climatic conditions. Although the original

church still stands, there are a number of conspicuous renovations that were made in later years—in particular, the front windows have been replaced with aluminum sash windows—and so the status of the church's preservation is not good. For that reason, it does not meet the requirements for being evaluated and designated as a cultural property under Japanese law.

Conclusion of comparison item E

Comparisons were made among the 73 churches that visually symbolise the transformation and the end of the traditions of the Hidden Christians, assessing them in terms of: 1. duration of the transitional phase; 2. satisfactory authenticity; 3. state of conservation; and 4. protective measures that have been put in place. As a result, it can be concluded that the Egami Church in Egami Village fulfils all of these criteria.

Conclusion of this comparative analysis

Based on comparative analysis of similar national and international properties, the following five points were concluded:

- A) Regarding World Heritage properties directly associated with religious suppression, no other properties have been found to be equivalent to the nominated property.
- B) Regarding other Asian countries and their history of acceptance of Christianity, only in Japan was the Christian faith passed down se-

cretly through many generations in the complete absence of missionaries and despite a two-century ban. Furthermore, Japan's ban was much longer and more severe than any such ban in other Asian countries.

- C) Regarding similar Christian sites within Japan, Hidden Christian communities across Japan gradually became disorganised throughout the 18th century due to the ban, remaining intact only in the Nagasaki region.
- D) Regarding all 214 Hidden Christian villages in the Nagasaki region, it has been clarified that the 10 areas included in the nominated property are representative in terms of their contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value and the state of protective measures being implemented.
- E) Regarding the 73 Catholic churches in the Nagasaki region, it has been concluded that the Egami Church is a representative example in terms of duration of the transitional phase of religious identity, authenticity, and protective measures in place.

Together, these comparisons have identified the nominated property as having Outstanding Universal Value and have distinguished it from the other cultural properties within Japan and from other countries which are similar in terms of their historical background and context. These comparisons have also demonstrated that the components of the nominated property have been properly selected and that it is therefore appropriate to include the nominated property on the World Heritage List.

3.3 Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a. Brief synthesis

The nominated property, ‘Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region’, bears unique testimony to the history of people and their communities who secretly transmitted their faith in Christianity during the time of prohibition spanning more than two centuries in Japan, from the 17th to the 19th century. Located in very remote areas including small islands at the westernmost edge of Japan, the property represents how the Christian communities survived in the midst of the conventional society and its religions, gradually transforming and ultimately ending their religious traditions and being assimilated into modern society after the prohibition was lifted.

The nominated property is comprised of 12 components located in the Nagasaki region of Japan, which lies at the far eastern edge of the area within Asia in which Christianity was introduced during the Age of Exploration. Since the Nagasaki region served as Japan’s gateway for exchange with foreign countries and as a place where missionaries settled from the latter half of the 16th century, people in the region could receive missionaries’ guidance extensively over a long period of time, and as a result, Catholic communities took root more firmly there than anywhere else in Japan. In this context, even after Japan banned Christianity in the 17th century and not a single missionary was allowed to remain in Japan, some Catholics in the Nagasaki region were left to maintain their faith and small religious communities by themselves, becoming Hidden Christians.

Hidden Christians survived as communi-

ties that formed small villages sited along the seacoast or on remote islands to which the Hidden Christians migrated during the ban on Christianity. Hidden Christians gave rise to a distinctive religious tradition that was seemingly vernacular yet which maintained the essence of Christianity, and they survived continuing their faith over the ensuing two centuries.

The nominated property as a set of the 12 different components provides a clear understanding of the tradition of Hidden Christians. The nominated property thus bears testimony to the distinctive way in which the Hidden Christians continued their faith during the ban on Christianity. As witness to this unique cultural tradition nurtured during the long ban on Christianity, the nominated property has Outstanding Universal Value.

b. Justification for Criteria

Criterion (iii)

The nominated property bears unique testimony to the distinctive religious tradition nurtured by the Hidden Christians in the Nagasaki region while they secretly continued their Christian faith during the ban on Christianity.

The Hidden Christians’ unique religious tradition, from its origin and formation while they secretly transmitted the Christian faith by themselves during the ban, to the new phase following the lifting of the ban on Christianity and the consequent transformation toward the ending of the tradition, is well demonstrated in the 12 components.

c. Statement of Integrity

The nominated property consists of 12 components, all of which bear testimony to the unique cultural tradition nurtured by Hidden Christians who secretly practised their Christian faith in the Nagasaki region despite a ban on Christianity. These 12 components not only include all of the elements necessary to express the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property but are also of adequate size and in a good state of conservation.

Thorough and complete protection measures have been taken for each of the components in accordance with all relevant national laws and regulations—including the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Within the buffer zones of the nominated property, appropriate protection is provided not only by the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, but also by the Landscape Act and other relevant laws and regulations. Therefore the nominated property does not suffer from any adverse effects of development or neglect, and it has been effectively conserved together with its surrounding landscape.

d. Statement of Authenticity

Each component of the nominated property maintains a high degree of authenticity based on the attributes selected according to its nature. The villages possess a high degree of authenticity based on their attributes of ‘form and design’, ‘use and function’, ‘traditions, techniques and management systems’, ‘location and setting’, and ‘spirit and feeling’. The component, ‘Remains of Hara Castle’, has lost its authenticity related to ‘use and function’, as it is an archaeological site,

but it retains a high degree of authenticity in regard to the other attributes. Oura Cathedral and the Egami Church in Egami Village on Naru Island possess a high degree of authenticity in terms of ‘materials and substance’ in addition to the other attributes as they are architectural works.

e. Requirements for Protection and Management

The nominated property and its buffer zones are properly conserved under various laws and regulations including the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Furthermore, Nagasaki Prefecture, Kumamoto Prefecture and relevant municipalities have formulated a robust Comprehensive Preservation and Management Plan from the perspective of safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property as a whole. As a framework for implementing this plan, they have organised a World Heritage Preservation and Utilisation Council in cooperation with the owners of the components and other stakeholders. The Council is operated for the appropriate protection, enhancement and utilisation of the nominated property. The Council receives guidance from and consults with experts comprising an academic committee (the Nagasaki World Heritage Academic Committee), as well as the Agency for Cultural Affairs, which is the principal agency in charge of protection of Japan’s cultural properties.

‘blank page’