which she could very easily do. And if this was not enough, she would rather let them cut her into a thousand pieces than consent to it.\textsuperscript{50}

This account, which foregrounded Julia’s assertion of agency, even to the point of bodily defilement, reinforced the evangelized Korean’s exceptionality against other women’s apparently more typical acquiescence to sexual importuning.

\textbf{Articulating Christian Belonging}

The general emphasis in these Christian accounts was on bodily expressions and practices of faith, with very few detailed records of how Korean Christians understood or articulated tenets of their belief. State-sanctioned torture and execution became occasions when the thoughts and commitment of mainly Korean men to their faith were recorded, for only a handful of Korean women were subject to comparable forms of violence, as will be explored in the following chapter. In this context, descriptions of evangelized Koreans’ dreams and visions that were recorded by Christian authors provide significant insights, albeit mediated, into Korean understandings of Christian belonging.

Both Giram and Morejón relayed accounts about the series of dreams and visions that Gayo had experienced. He had been a Buddhist monk in Japan before his conversion to Christianity. His dreams appeared to support a narrative about his pre-destination for Christian adherence that would eventually entail his death. Giram’s account, for example, suggested how animals could sense Gayo’s particular and inherent spiritual purity. He recounted how, while Gayo was living as a hermit in a cave in Joseon before the invasion, “one day a tiger (or wolf) came to the cave where he was, and lying down beside him for some time, got up and went without doing him harm.” Giram reasoned, “God our Lord was keeping the crown [of martyrdom] for him.”\textsuperscript{51} Later, Morejón wrote, “he told us in Osaka that while a pagan in his land he had had insights and inspirations that he could not help but understand as there being a Lord of the whole world who was greater than his idols.”\textsuperscript{52} Among these was “a dream in which a venerable old man told him that this year he would cross the seas with great trouble and

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{50} Osaka, February 1607, BL, MS Harley 3570, fol. 390v: “el temor de qué seria manjaba del Emperador como lo son laso tias Damas de quien se aprovechaua enbiando las allamar como y quandole da gusto dixo que si el Emperador lallomase su aposento como suele llamr alas otras damas que es escusaria loqual podia hazer muy façilm en te quando esto nobastase dejaria hazer mill pedaços antes que consenter enello.”

\textsuperscript{51} Macao, March 15, 1626, ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 16r: “vir huem uez hum Tigre, ou Lobo a dita Coua a on desstaua, e deitandose junto delle por algum espaço, se Leuantou, e fui sem lhe fazer mal,” “Como Deos Nossor a guardaua pera a Coroa”

\textsuperscript{52} Macao, March 31, 1627, BRAH, MS Jesuitas 9/2666, fol. 462r: “el qual nos dezia en ozaca que tuuo en su gentilidad y tierra algunos luezes u inspiraciones de que no podia a dexar de auer un senor universal del Mundo mayor que sus Idolos.”
\end{flushright}
effort, and achieve the fulfilment of his desires.”53 The identity of Gayo’s prophetic dream interlocutor appeared to be revealed when Gayo later received baptism in Japan. As Giram recounted, “one of our Brothers giving him a [holy] image, he said he knew it. And asking why he said that, he replied that this image was the one who had appeared to him in the mountains and wilderness of Korea and had told him he would cross the sea with great trials and at last achieve his desires.”54 However, the identity of the interlocutors in the Korean convert’s dream visions were not determined only by Gayo himself. Giram’s record of these experiences was strongly inflected by the commentary of others that offered alternative interpretations of Gayo’s own perceptions. For example, regarding one experience which occurred while Gayo was dangerously ill, Giram wrote, “he saw in a dream, as he related it, a boy of extraordinary beauty; or as others relate, one of our Fathers, who told him that he would soon accomplish his desires. After this dream, he soon began to feel well.” Giram concluded that the dream “acted like medicine.”55 Gayo’s dreams appeared to be employed in these accounts to serve a strong narrative purpose that included, among other aspects, the importance of the Jesuits themselves as spiritual conduits.

By contrast, an account recorded by Giram of another intense corporeal and affective vision experienced by an evangelized Korean, suggested far more interpretive control by its narrator, Clara, a woman living in Arima. The story of Clara’s vision would be conveyed to multiple readers beyond the intended recipients of Giram’s account through its inclusion in Fernão Guerreiro’s five-volume account of the Jesuit missions and in an Italian translation of Giram’s letter.56 Mistaken for dead, having first been pricked by needles, Clara was being shrouded when she stunned those preparing her body by reviving and sharing a vision. She recounted the following: “First, that she had been taken to Hell, and had seen many souls suffering miserably” and many pots and boilers “in which the many souls were roasting and frying, and in front of these pots passed a river of very cold water, taking the said souls from the pots or hot boilers, putting them in and taking them out again, back into the same boilers, moving them from the one

53 ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 16r–v: “vio huma uez em sonhos ahum velho veneraue, o qual lhe dissa que a quelle anno passaria omar com muito risco e trabalho, e alcansaria o comprimento de seus desejos.”

54 ARSI, JapSin 61, fols. 16v–17r: “dando lhe hum firmaõ nosso huma imagem disse que a conhecia, e perguntanda lhe, perque dizia a quello, Responde, que a quella ymage, erado velho que nas montanhas, e hermo de Corea lhe a pareçera, e dissera, auia depassar mares com trabalho, e finalmente ter o comprimento de seus desejos.”

55 ARSI, JapSin 61, fol. 16v: “vio em sonhos, segundo elle contaua a hum menino de extraordinaria belleza e fermoosura; ou como outros contaõ, ahum P° Nosso, oqual lhe disse, que logo lhe comprinia seus desejos. Passado este sonho, come coulogo a acharse bem, seruíndo lhe ao que parece de meizinha.”

56 Guerreiro, Relação anual, 3:165–66 and in Giram, Lettera di Giappone dell’anno M. DC. VI, 38–40. The latter does not mention that Clara is Korean.
extreme of heat to another of intolerable coldness.” There, Clara met a woman she had known, who informed her that she was being punished for dying without confession, after aborting a child. The soul addressed Clara by name (in fact the first time in Giram’s account that Clara was identified by her name) about which “Clara was astonished, to see herself called by her name, and also that the soul was speaking to her and telling her the cause of her torments, what had actually happened in this women’s life.”

The woman’s soul “told her further that she knew and had seen in that place many other people, both men and women, who were in torments for their particular sins.” Clara added “that when she remembered what she had seen there, her flesh trembled and her hair stood on end.” Clara then passed from this place to another, “very dark, where no one could be seen, but many could be heard, crying and screaming, as if to say, ‘Pray for us,’ which place, she said, must be Purgatory.”

Then Clara found herself in another place that was “very spacious, pleasant and beautiful, all carpeted and covered with rich tapestry.” Here, “coming closer; she saw a very beautiful gate enamelled all over with gold and silver, and steps also of gold and silver leading up to the top.” The steps here were lit by “many lamps, and on both sides there were many children, very beautiful, beautiful in the extreme, all with books open in their hands, praying for them.” Among these children was a boy Clara recognized,
“who had died at the age of five, it being three years since he had died.” This boy “had spoken to her and taken her up the steps.” As she was guided up the steps, “three robed priests appeared to her, and asked her, ‘Who is this?’” To which the boy replied who the woman was. The priests said, ‘No dirty and filthy people can enter this place.’” It was then that Clara felt upon her face one of the needles with which her attendants were verifying her death, and she recovered sufficiently to recount her experiences. She insisted, the attending priest heard her say more than once, that this was no dream “but a vision that she had had, after which she said she felt her heart completely changed.”

Recovering quickly, Clara “now goes about more devoutly than before,” Giram reported.

Significantly, while Christian male authors tended to emphasize women’s bodies as a site for demonstration of Christian feeling and practice, Clara’s vision occurred beyond her corporeal form. It took place as, and because, she entered a state in which her senses were cut off from the earthly world. In her illness, she was “completely out of herself, with all senses lost.” The text noted explicitly how she did not respond to haptic cues of pricking needles over various parts of her body; “no matter how many tests they did on her, she did not feel anything.” It is in this liminal state in which she was disengaged from the corporeal world that Clara was able to apply her senses to a different kind of perception, spiritual perception. It was through her senses and feelings that Clara made sense of the vision experience. Significantly, in this non-corporeal but nonetheless sensory and emotionally perceptive experience, Clara did not appear to display any obvious markers of gender identity.

Clara saw these souls as firmly corporal entities, to which various punishments were rendered. However, she witnessed the haptic nature of the torture as an empathetic connection; the miserable suffering of the souls made her experience “utmost pain and compassion.” As Clara entered Purgatory, by contrast, she engaged different senses and practices. Vision was replaced as a mode of perception by hearing. It was an

---

65 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 321r: “Vira hu minino, que ella conhecera o qual morres de idade de cinco annos e avia tres que era morto.”
66 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 321r: “e que este minino lhe fallara e metera para dentro dos de graos pellos quaes subindo lhe apareceram tres sacerdotes reuestidos, e lhe perguntaram quem era.”
67 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 321r: “aoque respondendo o menino quem era adita molher disseram os Sacerdotes, Este he hum lugar aonde não entra pessoa suja e immunda.”
68 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 321r: “senão como Visam que tiuera; depois do qual dizia que sintia seu coraca totalmente mudado doque era dantes.”
69 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 321r: “sarando logo da duenca procede agora e anda muito mais deuota que primeiro.”
70 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 320r–v: “que ao terceiro dia da duenca ficou totalmente fora desì com os sentidos todos perdidos.”
71 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 320v: “mas por mais experiencias que nella fizera mào sentia aduente nada.”
72 Scholars have observed that contemporary descriptions of Hell and Purgatory were rather vague about their distinctions and Kathryn A. Edwards has noted that “the debate about whether purgatory was a place or a state” was one firmly underway in theological works. Edwards, “Purgatory.”
experience defined by what Clara could hear and what she could do. Here, the cries and screams of the souls was arresting but more so still was their demands of Clara: namely, that she pray for them. A third site sharply contrasted these previous experiences. Clara perceived it primarily as a visual experience; it was colourful, richly decorated with tapestries, gold, silver and enamel finishes, and brightly lit. Although Clara experienced this third space as “pleasant,” it was also where she was confronted by Church officials and rejected as “dirty and filthy,” an emotional disjuncture that also coincided with (or caused her to sense) the pricking of her mortal flesh and revival into her earthly corporeal form. None of these sensory and emotional interlocutions appear to be framed through a female corporeal form. It seems that it was not Clara’s body that sensed and felt in the vision state, but rather her soul, a soul that had no limitations shaped by contemporary gender ideologies and assumptions to its engagement with spiritual matter and interpretive capacity.

However, by contrast, Clara’s living gender identity as a woman did shape other aspects of her vision and her understanding of the Christian community. Throughout the text, various kinds of interactions and networks were identified, which highlighted ways of thinking about the fate of the soul, about relationships between the living and the dead, and about the relationship between communal and individual pious practice. Clara experienced three different kinds of encounter with the dead in her vision. In each case, the dead or their souls engage her in action: first as a woman who shared her story and those of others with Clara, as souls begging for her intercession through prayer, and as the dead child guided her up the staircase, presumably towards Heaven. In at least the first and third cases, Clara identified the individuals whose souls she encountered as people she knew from her own local community. In Hell, “she met a woman, whom she knew in this world,” and in the last case, a boy “who had died at the age of five, three years ago.” Moreover, it was made explicit that both these dead individuals knew and recognized Clara by name. Clara noted her surprise, naming a specific emotion of astonishment that seems to relate to two aspects of the encounter, one of which was her personal identification by the woman. In her second set of interactions with the young boy, the child likewise identified her to the priests. Clara realized, it seems, that she was not anonymous before God and others in the Christian community. She was instead an object of attention and care.

These individuals interacted with Clara, although in the case of the child, it was not made explicit what they discussed. Clara’s meeting with the woman’s soul, though, was framed as both a personal and personalized encounter between the women, in which the woman shared intimate information with her. Clara’s second source of astonishment was “the soul speaking to her and telling her the cause of her torments, what had really happened in that woman’s life.” Clara was not only singled out as a named individual;

---

73 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 320v: “Ali dizia ella, que se encontrou com huma Molher que conhecera neste mundo.”

74 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 320v: “Clara ficara atonita, por se ver nomear por seu nome.”

75 ARSI, JapSin 55, fol. 320v: “e tambem por lhe fallar aquella alma, e dizer a causa de seus tormentos; o que na Verdade assi passara em Vida daquella Molher.”
she was the privileged recipient of intimate information of another in her community. Furthermore, these figures appeared to act as guides to Clara. They provided different sorts of experience and perception to her to shape the edification she could draw from the vision. In all three ways, Clara herself was rendered special by the encounter, worthy of attention and care within and by the Christian community, as a Christian.

It is noteworthy too that Clara’s guides to Christian edification were not Church officials but rather people from her own community. Church officials, in the shape of the three robed priests, neither know Clara nor accept her (yet) as worthy of entering Heaven. They were literally the gatekeepers of Christian achievement. Although three figures were mentioned, the Holy Trinity or God, Jesus and Mary were not referenced in the text by these names, and the mother and a child mentioned were firmly identified as local individuals. This might suggest how Clara experienced Christian practice—as a faith that was sustained within and among her neighbourhood rather than through mediation of the more distant figure of a priest.

At the same time, Clara’s compassionate response, in feeling and practice, to the suffering of others also defined her membership of this Christian community. Clara’s time in Purgatory revealed an understanding of the intercessory role of the prayers of the living in preparing souls in Purgatory before their encounter with the divine. The living and the dead remain connected. The living were obliged to remember the dead, as indeed did Clara in remembering the woman and the young boy who once lived in her community. There was no explicit articulation of the context in which these prayers should be offered, such as masses, indulgences, and almsgiving that appeared to have preoccupied contemporary European Catholic communities. Perhaps in the marginal, dispossessed world in which Clara lived, individual prayers were the most achievable engagement with the dead that was in her own control. In the end, however, Clara’s Christian community guides help to focus her on the need to prepare for a good death in her lifetime by her own behaviour, an individual responsibility. Communal practices played a part but so too did individual action and disposition of the heart. Thus, Giram’s discussion of Clara’s story concluded with her own edifying example to her community and readers, that she “now goes about more devoutly than before.”

Significantly, the interpretation of all the visionary experiences were presented as Clara’s own, interpretations that came from her sensory and emotional perception of the spiritual. No external mediator was claimed as a guide to her interpretation or identified in the role of spiritual director. The priest who heard her tell of her vision was mentioned only as a recipient of information, “she recounted all this, which a priest heard her tell more than once.” Clara herself was certain what she had experienced: it was “not like a dream, which she said it was not, but as a vision she had.” Ultimately,
Clara determined both the nature and meaning of her spiritual experience, made from her perceptions and concerned with her own future behaviours.

Clara’s vision provides an important, rare perspective of a Korean convert’s spiritual world. She understood its meaning for her faith and its practices as a perceptive experience of the senses and emotions, experienced not in the corporeal gendered form of the earthly world, but of her soul, an entity not limited by gendered expectations and assumptions. In this mode, Clara engaged with souls that she encountered through emotional, compassionate, responses to their suffering that identified her as part of the contemporary Christian community. In another way, though, Clara’s earthly gender identity informed the nature of her visionary experience and those who formed the guides on her spiritual journey. It is significant that Clara’s vision affirmed her faith through connections to, and interpretation by, deceased people whom she recognized as part of her local community. Neither figure was an adult male faith leader nor God, Jesus, or Mary. Clara’s faith guides, a parturient woman, and a young child, were among the most marginal within the Christian community in Japan.

**Contributing to the Christian Community**

Clara’s vision suggested one way in which an evangelized Korean woman understood her faith and the Christian community of which she was part. Christian literature also provided multiple accounts of how evangelized Korean women and men could participate in the wider Christian community, primarily but not exclusively in Japan, by their practical contributions. These accounts highlighted different ways in which their authors perceived Christian action and engagement of women and men with their faith.

Apart from embracing a life of poverty for themselves, both women and men were praised by authors for their work among the less fortunate in the Christian community. Spinola described, for example, the contribution of Miguel:

Miguel had great charity for the poor, although he was also poor himself. And because he could not give them alms, when he was hired to work on Fridays and Saturdays, on which days he always fasted, the food they gave him in the afternoon he took and gave to the poor. And he often called lepers to his home without any repugnance, having them sit with him by the fire, offering them hot water, which was all he could do. And if they were ashamed to come, he said to them: “Do not be ashamed, for we are all brothers, and if I had your illness, I would be like one of you.”

---

79 Nagasaki, March 18, 1615, ARSI, JapSin 58, fol. 76v: “Teve Miguel muita charidade com os pobres sendo o elle em grande maneira, e porque não podia dar lhes esmola, quando era alugado para trabalhar sesta feira e sábado, nos quaes dias sempre jeiuaua, o comer que lhe davão depois do meio dia o tomaraua e dava aos pobres: E os leprosos chamaua muitas vezes a sua casa sem nenhum asco, e os fazia assenter a par de si ao fogo, conuidando os com agoa quente pois com outra cousa não podia, e tendo elles pejo de se chegarem, lhes dizia, não tenhais pejo, pois todos somos irmãos, e se eu tiuera esta doença, seria como hum de vos outros.”