# Silk, porcelain and lacquer : China and Japan and their trade with Western Europe and the New World, 1500-1644. A survey of documentary and material evidence

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[Chapter IV]

# Trade in Japanese Lacquer to Western Europe and the New World

*c.1580–1644*

As Hidaka has recently noted, the Japanese lacquer traded by the Europeans, unlike the Chinese silk and porcelain discussed in the previous Chapters, appears to have been almost all made to order and mostly after European or Indo-Portuguese shapes.[1] Therefore the structure of this Chapter differs from that of the two previous Chapters. It relies on primary and secondary sources, which contain scattered information relating to the varied types and quantities of lacquer produced in Japan specifically for export to Western Europe and the New World via the trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific sea trade routes in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[2]

Japan was renowned throughout Asia for its high quality lacquer, considered by some technically superior than that produced in China and Korea. This was probably due to the fact that Japanese lacquer, called ***urushi***, was decorated using a technique developed by local craftsmen known as ***makie*** (sprinkled picture),[3] which consisted in drawing the decorative motifs with ***urushi*** lacquer in colours that contrasted with the polished lacquered surface, and when the ***urushi*** was still wet and adhesive it was sprinkled with fine gold or silver particles, which technique was well established by the twelve century. Lacquer, however, was a material unknown in Europe before the Portuguese arrival in Asia at the turn of the fourteenth century.[4] Japanese lacquer,[5] as will be shown in the following pages, appears to have been first brought to Europe via the Portuguese trans-Atlantic trade route in the late sixteenth century. Textual evidence of the trade in lacquer by the Iberians is exceedingly rare. Treatises, dictionaries, accounts and letters written by Jesuit missionaries that lived in Japan at the time are of particular importance, as they provide some personal comments praising the beauty and high quality of the ***urushi*** lacquer produced for the domestic market and give us an insight on its manufacturing processes and uses in Japan. Moreover, they demonstrate that lacquers were highly appreciated by them and thus were sent as diplomatic gifts to the King of Spain/Portugal and the Pope with the first Japanese embassy that went to Europe in the late sixteenth century. Textual evidence of the trade by the European trading companies, the VOC and EIC, is more abundant, but still scant. Excerpts from ships registers, probate inventories, accounts and letters written by Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and English merchants, and clerics, provide information regarding the material qualities, decorative techniques and schemes, and sometimes even the purchase price, of the various types of lacquer made to order for the Christian missionaries, Iberians, VOC and EIC servants, as well as private individuals, imported into Western Europe and the New World as merchandise, private consignments or sent as gifts. Moreover, they give an idea of the commercial networks through which the imported lacquers circulated, and the way in which they were acquired, used and appreciated within these different societies. Visual sources, including paintings and prints, serve to illustrate the models for the European shapes and/or motifs copied by the lacquer craftsmen, as well as to compare the lacquer production for the Japanese domestic market which influenced the decorative style of the hybrid lacquers made to order for the Europeans during the Momoyama and early Edo periods.

A number of extant lacquer objects housed in monasteries and convents, as well as in public and private collections in Japan and the rest of the world, provide tangible evidence of the lacquers made to order for the European market during this period, for both religious and secular use. These lacquer objects are clearly hybrid as they combine local (or Asian) raw materials, construction methods and decorative techniques mostly with shapes of objects brought by the Europeans from Renaissance Europe. They are also combined with shapes and/or decorative styles of objects brought from settlements established earlier in Asia where local workshops produced furniture and smaller objects made to order for them for use locally or to be imported into Europe, as well as with European motifs. These pieces also help us visualize the differences between the lacquers made to order for the Iberian market, for both religious and secular use, during the early period of trade in the late sixteenth century, with those made for the Dutch and English markets in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Although out of the scope of this doctoral dissertation, a brief discussion of a small number of extant pieces decorated in lacquer of very high quality with European figures, most probably made for the Japanese domestic market rather than for export, in section 4.1.3 of this Chapter, will serve to illustrate the profound influence that the continuous presence of the Portuguese and their culture exerted on the Japanese daily life and the arts made during the Momoyama and early Edo period for the warrior elite and wealthy merchant class.

1 Kaori Hidaka, 'Maritime trade in Asia and the circulation of lacquerware', in Shayne Rivers, Rupert Faulkner and Boris Pretzel (eds.), *East Asian Lacquer. Material Culture, Science and Conservation*, London, 2011, p. 7.

2 The trade in Japanese lacquer made for export to Europe was previously discussed by the author in Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh (eds.), *After the Barbarians. An Exceptional Group of Namban Works of Art*, exhibition catalogue, London and Lisbon, 2003; Teresa Canepa, 'Namban Works of Art for the Japanese, Portuguese and Dutch markets', in Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh (eds.), *After the Barbarians II. Namban Works of Art for the Japanese, Portuguese and Dutch Markets*, London and Lisbon, 2008, pp. 15–29; and Teresa Canepa, 'Namban Lacquer for the Christian Missionaries', *Bulletin of Portuguese/Japanese Studies*, Vols. 18/19, June/December 2009 (published December 2011), pp. 253–290.

3 Miyeko Murase, *Bridge of Dreams. The Mary Griggs Burke Collection of Japanese Art*, New York, 2000, p. 222; and Hidaka, 2011, p. 5.

4 Julia Hutt, 'Asia in Europe: Lacquer for the West', in Jackson and Jaffer, 2004, p. 236.

5 Unless otherwise specified, the Japanese lacquer made for the European market will be referred to as lacquer throughout this doctoral dissertation.

# European influence on Japanese Lacquer [4.1]

## Lacquer made to order for the Iberian market [4.1.1]

### Lacquer for the Portuguese and Spanish missionaries [4.1.1.1]

When the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier (1506–1552), accompanied by a Japanese convert called Anjiro and two Jesuit companions, arrived at the port of Kagoshima in the southern part of Kyūshū Island in August 1549, he brought with him engravings, paintings and statuettes of the Virgin Mary and Jesus for assistance in preaching and catechizing.[6] Christianity spread rapidly among the elite and commoners across the country, which at that time was in civil war (*sengoku*) under divided rule by local feudal warlords.[7] In 1567, the Christian *daimyō* Omura Sumitada (1533–1587) wrote to the Jesuit Cosme de Torres (1510–1570) offering the port of Nagasaki as a centre of Portuguese trade and Christian activity.[8] By 1582, the Italian Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), Visitor of the Society of Jesus to the Asian missions, concluded that there were 150,000 Christians in Japan.[9] Three years later, Japan was consecrated as an exclusive area for the Jesuits of the Portuguese *Padroao* by the brief *Ex pastoralis officio* issued by Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585). However, the Jesuit mission in Japan was struggling despite being sponsored by the Portuguese Crown. The Jesuits were isolated from Europe and the Portuguese settlements in Macao, Malacca and Goa, and thus required a regular supply of a variety of religious objects for their devotional practices and evangelical work.[10]

From an unfinished manuscript by the Portuguese Jesuit João Rodrigues (1561–1633), entitled *História da Igreja do Japão*, we learn that he was captivated by the exotic nature, beauty and intrinsic qualities of lacquer objects, especially its hardness and lustre. The detailed description of the lacquer manufacturing process by João Rodrigues, who was *procurador* of Nagasaki from 1598 to 1610, reveals that he considered it to be an artistic activity that had something in common with the art of painting. It reads: 'Throughout the whole kingdom they practise an art which has something in common with painting; this is the art of varnishing, which we call over here urushar from the word urushi, the varnish made from the gum of a certain tree. They tap the trunk of this tree at a certain time of the year a draw off an excellent gum, which is used as varnish; this tree is also found in China, the Caucasus, Cambodia and Siam. But of all these nations the Japanese stand supreme in this art, for they are so skilful that they can make a varnished object look as if it were made of smooth glittering gold. The art is practised throughout the entire kingdom because their tableware, such as bowls, and tables and trays from which they eat, as well as tables, ornaments and other vessels are all varnished. The varnish is so hard and well applied that water, however hot it may be, falling on these dishes and bowls does not do any damage, just as if the bowls were made of glazed earthenware. They also varnish the scabbards of katana and daggers, the handles of lances and the sheaths of their blades, and a multitude of other things, and for this reason it is the most universal art of the kingdom because it is used practically in everything. It has a certain affinity to the art of painting because among these craftsmen there are some who gild in a special way the finest examples of this kind in the whole world. Using pure gold powder they paint various objects in which they set flowers made of gold and silver leaf and mother-of-pearl. There is nothing more splendid than such things, but they are so costly that only lords and wealthy people can afford them. There is, it is true, a cheaper kind of this work which more or less looks the same, but it is vastly different as regards workmanship, gloss and price; the gentry of the kingdom make much use of this second type. Some escritoires and dishes of this kind were taken to Europe, but they were very inferior to the best sort of this second kind. There are also fakes, which can easily deceive someone who does not know much about it. Although the Chinese have a large variety of gilded things and use a great deal of varnish, they highly admire and value the gilt and varnish work of Japan, for however skilful they may be they cannot equal the Japanese in this art. The tree from which this varnish is taken bears a fruit that the Japanese boil to obtain a kind of wax from which they make their candles and there is great abundance of this in the kingdom'.[11] Father João Rodrigues was also captivated by the skills of craftsmen who made the wooden objects that were subsequently covered with lacquer, as he states 'they are such masters of their art, in all kinds of woodcraft, joining, adjusting, … and join and fit the wood or boards in such a way that in the manufacture of a chest, or box that it seems to have been crafted without joints, as though it was made from a single block of wood or board'.[12] It is clear from these excerpts that the close relations between the *daimyō* and Father João Rodrigues, the *Tçuzu*,[13] who had an excellent comprehension of the Japanese language and culture and served as trade representative of the *shogūn* Toyotomi Hideyoshi and later of the *shogūn* Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) until he left Japan in 1610,[14] gave him the opportunity to view not only the finest quality of lacquer, but also of the wooden objects produced at the time.

The earliest extant lacquer objects displaying European influence, as Kawamura has noted, appear to have been first made to order in the early Momoyama period (1573–1615) for Jesuit missionaries residing in Japan to be used for Christian devotional practices and evangelical work, rather than for export to Western Europe.[15]

6 Bailey, 1999, p. 6.

7 For a brief account on Francis Xavier's arrival and missionary work in Japan, see João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, 'São Francisco de Xavier e o Japão', in Tobu Museum of Art, *St. Francis Xavier - His Life and Times*, exhibition catalogue, Tokyo, 1999, pp. 37-39. For more information on the Jesuit missionary strategies and the conversion of the Japanese ruling elite, see Madalena Ribeiro, 'The Christian Nobility of Kyūshū. A Perusal of Jesuit Sources', *Bulletin of Portuguese/ Japanese Studies*, vol. 13, December 2006, pp. 45–64.

8 Charles R. Boxer, *Fidalgos no Extremo Oriente. Factos e Lendas de Macau Antigo*, Macao, 1990, p. 52.

9 By the beginning of the seventeenth century there were about 320,000 Christian converts. For this opinion, see Kiichi Matsuda, *Kirishitan Shijitsu to Bijitsu*, Tokyo, 1969, p. 54. An estimate of 750,000 Christians, however, has been given in Boxer, 1951, p. 187.

10 The demand for religious objects is clearly stated in a letter written in 1566 by the Jesuit Luís Fróis, where he mentions that local Christians 'persistently ask for blessed rosaries, relics, a bead of St. Thomas wood, veronicas, images and other related things to have at home'. *Cartas que los Padres y Hermanos de la Compañia de Jesus, que andan en los Reynos de Iapon escrivieron a los de la misma Compañia, desde el año de 1549, hasta el de 1571*. Alcalá: Iuan Iñiguez de Iequerica, 1575, 248v. Cited in Moura Carvalho, 2013, p. 40.

11 *História da Igreja do Japão… iniciada em 1575*, Macao, 1622, vol. II, pp. 21–23. Cited in Oliver Impey and Christiaan Jörg, Japanese *Export Lacquer 1580–1850*, Amsterdam, 2005, p. 234. The English translation of the excerpt given by Impey and Jörg is taken from Michael Cooper (ed.), *They Came to Japan: An Anthology of European Reports on Japan, 1543–1640*, Ann Arbor, reprint 1995, pp. 258–259.

12 *Jesuítas na Ásia, Japão*, fl. 145 v. Cited in Leonor Leiria, 'The Art of Lacquering According to the Namban-jin written sources', *Bulletin of Portuguese/Japanese Studies*, Vol. 3, December 2001, p. 13.

13 The term *Tçuzzo*, derived from the Japanese word *tsuji*, means 'translator'. Mentioned in Ibid., p. 61, note 41.

14 Alexandra Curvelo, 'Introduction', in Maria Manuela d'Oliveira Martins (ed.), *Encomendas Namban. Os Portugueses no Japão da Idade Moderna – Namban Commissions. The Portuguese in Modern Age Japan*, exhibition catalogue, Museu do Oriente, Lisbon, 2010, p. 17.

15 Yayoi Kawamura, 'Laca japonesa *urushi* de estilo *Namban* en España. Vias de su llegada y sus destinos', in Yayoi Kawamura (ed.), *Lacas Namban. Huellas de Japón en España. IV Centenario de la Embajada Keichô*, exhibition catalogue, Museo de Artes Decorativas, Madrid, 2013, p. 257.

Figs. 4.1.1.1.1a and b  Pair of six-panel folding screens of Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons
Ink, colour, and gold on gilt paper
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Dimensions: 176.2cm x 377.2cm
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no. 1987.342.1, .2)



16 Tokugawa was named *shogūn* in 1603, and the emperor moved the capital to Edo.

17 Initially, the Jesuits resided in houses that were lent to them, usually by the poor. Later they were given some Buddhist temples (*varelas*), which they transformed into churches. When the situation became more favourable, Christian churches were built with a quadrangular plan and with interiors laid out in a similar manner to traditional Japanese houses. A number of churches were built in Miyako. The first was built soon after the *daimyō* Oda Nobunaga assumed control of the city, but it was burned in a fire in 1573. In 1576, a second church, dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady was built; another was built by permission of Ieyasu in the Keicho era (1596–1615). One of these churches (with an unusual three-story construction) is depicted on a fan painting in the Kobe City Museum. It forms part of a series of sixty-one fans mounted in an album of famous sites in and around Miyako, which is thought to be by the artist Kanō Soshū (1551–1601). Another church with a traditional Japanese-style roof and an adjacent teahouse is depicted in a *Namban* screen (one of a pair) in the Sairenji temple in Anjō, Aichi prefecture. See Money L. Hickman (ed.), *Japan's Golden Age: Momoyama*, exhibition catalogue, Dallas Museum of Art, New Haven and London, 1996, p. 151, no. 42; and Murase, 2003, pp. 256–57, no. 124, respectively.

18 The Jesuits arrived in the viceroyalty of New Spain in 1572, and until their expulsion by King Charles III (r. 1759–1788) in 1767, they played a crucial role in many aspects of life. The Jesuits focused on missionary work among the indigenous population in remote areas, far from the viceroyalty's capital of Mexico City, which had been untouched by the Franciscan, Dominican and Augustinian missionaries who had arrived earlier. They were also dedicated to the education of its own members of the Society and of other young men in the cities. For this opinion, see John W. O'Mailey, S.J. Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris and T. Frank Kennedy (eds.), *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, Toronto, 1999, p. 680.

19 For this opinion, see Sofia Diniz, 'Jesuit Buildings in China and Japan: A Comparative Study', *Bulletin of Portuguese/Japanese Studies*, Vol. 3, December 2001, p. 116.

20 Mentioned in Alexandra Curvelo, 'Nagasaki. An European artistic city in early modern Japan, *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, Vol. 2, June 2001, p. 28.

21 Canepa, 2008/1, p. 22; and Canepa, 2011/2, p. 259.

22 The term *Nambanbijutsu* was first used by Japanese historians in the early twentieth century. Important publications on the history of *Namban* art include: Y. Okamoto, *The Namban Art of Japan, The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art*, vol. 19, trans. R. K. Jones, New York and Tokyo, 1972; Mitsuru Sakamoto et al., *Namban Bijutsu to Yōjūga [Namban Art and Western-Dtyle Painting], Genshoku Nihon no Bijutsu [Japanese Art and Colour]*, vol. 20, Tokyo, 1970 (revised 1980). Mentioned in Alexandra Curvelo, 'I contesti dell'arte Namban', in Morena, 2012, p. 245–246, note 20 (pp. 512–513, note 20, English text).

23 Kyoto National Museum, *Special Exhibition: Kano Eitoku, Momoyama Painter Extraordinaire*, exhibition catalogue, Kyoto, 2007, pp. ii, v, vi and vii.

24 Published in Ibid., pp. 182–186, no. 54.

Lacquer craftsmen working in and around Miyako (present-day Kyoto), the imperial capital of Japan until 1615,[16] made a variety of liturgical objects for the Jesuits in this durable material, which were intended for use in personal devotion and Jesuit churches in Japan,[17] and most probably also for use in their missions in Asia, Europe and the New World.[18] A few descriptions of the interiors of Jesuit churches in Japan found thus far in textual sources indicate that they had a high altar and religious images (sculptures and paintings), altarpieces and all the necessary liturgical objects.[19] By 1583, the year the Italian Jesuit Giovanni Nicolao or Niccoló (*c.*1558–1626) arrived in Nagasaki, the Jesuit evangelical work had included the foundation of educational institutions, including a noviciate in Usuki, two Seminars in Arima and St. Paul's College in Funai.[20]

In order to fully understand the extent of the influence exerted by the missionaries on the liturgical objects made to order for them by the lacquer craftsmen it is imperative to consider not only the physical and aesthetic qualities of the extant pieces that display an evident European influence, but also the decorative style and manufacturing techniques of the lacquer that was made at workshops in Miyako for the Japanese domestic market at the time. Initially, all the liturgical objects made for the Jesuits were decorated in a new style developed by the local lacquer craftsmen, most probably to speed up the production process and to reduce the cost, which consisted in reducing or omitting the textile layers on the base or edges, and the use of relatively simple lacquer techniques. The exterior black lacquer ground of each object was decorated in *makie* (gold and/or silver powder) and with rather thick fragments of iridescent mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*), sometimes cut in random shapes, depicting dense naturalistic compositions of Japanese flowering and fruiting plants, exotic birds, both real and mythical animals, and insects, all within a variety of geometric borders.[21] These liturgical lacquers belong to a group of artistic objects and paintings made to order in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, known as *Namban* art or *Nambanbijutsu*.[22]

In the Momoyama period, seasonal flowers and plants became the focus of painting compositions, reflecting the Japanese people's keen attentiveness to seasonal changes. A close examination of the images of nature depicted on *Namban* liturgical lacquers, as will be shown in the following pages, reveals that they were largely based on paintings created by the renowned painters of the Kanō school. Kanō Eitoku (1543–1590) was appointed official painter of two powerful feudal warlords, the *daimyō* Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) and his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who commissioned him to produce paintings on decorative folding screens, or *byôbu* in Japanese, and sliding doors (*fusuma*) of monumental size to furnish their new castles and palaces, which served to display both their authority and magnificence. Kanō Eitoku made paintings richly embellished in bright colours on a gold background, first for Nobunaga's Azuchi Castle, constructed on the eastern shore of Lake Biwa in 1576, and later for Hideyoshi's castle in Osaka and the palace of Jurakudai in Miyako. Kanō Eitoku's sumptuous painting style became the established painting style of the period.[23] A pair of six-panel screens painted in ink, colours and gold on gilded paper with a composition of flowers in seasonal progression (from spring to winter) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, dating to the second half of the sixteenth century, serves to illustrate the type of painting of the Kanō school that may have served as model for the early *Namban* liturgical lacquers (Figs. 4.1.1.1.1a and b).[24] Textual sources indicate that the Jesuits not only had the opportunity to admire the

splendor of the screens that adorned the interiors of some of the newly built castles, but also received some as gifts. In 1581, Oda Nobunaga received Father Alessandro Valignano, accompanied by the Portuguese Jesuit Luís Fróis, during his first visit to Miyako. Oda Nobunaga subsequently invited them to Azuchi Castle, and at the end of their month-long stay he gave a pair of folding screens to Father Alessandro Valignano, which were described as 'Made a year before … it was covered with gold, and depicted those things that were closest to [Nobunaga's] heart. He had ordered the greatest artist in Japan to produce them, depicting the town where the castle was situated, and its topography, with the lake, the mansions, the castle, streets, bridges, and all manner of things exactly as they appeared in reality. Much time was required to complete it. The attachement Nobunaga felt toward this painting only added to its great value. The emperor had wished to see it, and requested that Nobunaga present it to him, but Nobunaga declined'.[25] After visiting Azuchi, Father Luís Fróis wrote in his *History of Japan* that 'Inside the walls there are many beautiful and exquisite houses, all of them decorated with gold and so neat and well fashioned that they seem to reach the acme of human elegance. In the middle there is a donjon decorated with designs richly painted in gold and different colours. In a word, the whole edifice is beautiful, excellent and brilliant'.[26] It is unclear whether the Jesuits requested that the lacquers made to order for them were decorated with images of nature similar to those depicted in some of the screens and sliding doors made by Kanō Eitoku and other artists of the Kanō school, or if the lacquer craftsmen incorporated them into their artistic vocabulary to emulate their painting style that had become popular among the feudal warlords. The compositions of such paintings are somewhat crowded, but those seen on the *Namban* liturgical lacquers are very dense and usually cover the entire surface of the object, a *horror vacui* that is contrary to traditional Japanese aesthetics, and most probably the result of multiple influences from Chinese, Indian and Islamic art.[27]

The use of *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlays in Japanese lacquer can be traced back to at least the late tenth century,[28] but it was in the fifteenth century that the Kōami family of Miyako, under patronage of the Ashikaga *shōguns* and the court of the *shujō* (emperor), developed a sumptuous type of lacquer with inlays of metal foil and mother-of-pearl on a plain black lacquer ground.[29] An engraved inscription with the name Kōami and a date corresponding to the year 1596, appear on a lacquered door of Hideyoshi's shrine at Kōdaiji in Miyako, created by his widow as a mausoleum for her husband and herself.[30] The interior of the building known as Spirit House (*Mitamaya*), lavishly decorated in gold and silver *makie* on black lacquer, was allegedly constructed in 1606 from materials removed from Fushimi Castle, the final residence of Hideyoshi, built between 1594 and 1597 (Figs. 4.1.1.1.2a and b).[31] By the end of the sixteenth century, the Kōami and other lacquer workshops in Miyako were producing large quantities of lacquer with a simpler, less time-consuming technique, known as *Kodaiji makie*, depicting large-scale flowers and autumn grasses executed in flat applications of metallic dust (*hiramakie*) on a plain black lacquer background, and with details incised by needle drawing (*harigaki*).[32] *Kodaiji makie* decoration was applied on architectural interiors, personal objects, as well as on arms and armour, made for the domestic market. The naturalistic scenes of the liturgical lacquers made in the early Edo period, as will be shown later, began to change and were made in the so-called Transition style, which imitated the *Kodaiji makie* style in both manufacturing techniques and colour palette.

Opposite page left
Fig. 4.1.1.1.2a Shrine of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Inner Room of Otama-ya (sanctuary)
Exterior side of front doors
Kodaiji Temple, Miyako (present-day Kyoto)

Opposite page right
Fig. 4.1.1.1.2b Shrine of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Inner Room of Otama-ya (sanctuary)
Interior side of front doors
Kodaiji Temple, Miyako (present-day Kyoto)

25 Cited in Mathew P. Makelway, *Capitalscapes: Folding Screens and Political Imagination in Late Medieval Kyoto*, Honolulu, 2006, p. 165.
26 Cited in Cooper, 1995, pp. 134–135.
27 For this opinion, see Hutt, 2004, p. 237.
28 According to Hidaka, evidence suggests that *makie* decoration may have had its origins in China. By the mid-to-late Heian period (794–1185) new forms of lacquer emerged in indigenous Japanese styles. See, for example, a handbox decorated with a design of wheels in a stream dating to the eleventh century in the Tokyo National Museum, published in Kyoto National Museum (ed.), *Makie: The Beauty of Black and Gold Japanese Lacquer*, Kyoto, 1997, pp. 56–57, no. 22. Japanese lacquer decorated with *makie* and mother-of-pearl is recorded as having been given as gifts to the Chinese court and temples, as well as to the Korean court during the late tenth and eleven centuries. For more information, see Yoshino Tomio, 'Kōrai no raden ki' (Korean nacre inlay works of the Koryŏ period), *Bijutsu kenkyū*, no. 175 (May 1954), pp. 1-13. Mentioned in Watt and Brennan Ford, 1991, p. 9.
29 Murase, 2000, p. 222.
30 Murase, 2003, p. 13.
31 Tokugawa Ieyasu provided funding for its construction. For further information and images of the shrine, see Mizuno Katsuhiko, *Kodaiji Zen Temple*, Osaka, 2004, English text and figs. 50, 53, 54 and 56: and Kyoto National Museum, 1997, pp. 128–136. Mentioned in Canepa, 2008/1, p. 17. For further images of the interior, see Mizuno, 2004, figs. 44, 49–51, 53–54 and 56–58.
32 In the previous Muromachi period (1333–1573) the subjects of gold lacquer decoration had been taken primarily from classical literature. Murase, 2000, p. 222.
33 Mentioned in Kawamura, 2013, p. 257.
34 The first anti-Christian edict, issued in 1587 by the *shogūn* Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), was not strictly enforced. In 1597, Hideyoshi proclaimed a more serious edict and ordered the execution of 26 Japanese Christians and Franciscan missionaries (twenty Japanese, four Spaniards, one Mexican and one Indian, who were later known as the 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki) for preaching Christianity.
35 Christianity was officially banned in 1637, following a Christian uprising by some Kyūshū peasants due to economic desperation and religious oppression, which ended in the massacre of 37,000 samurais and peasants (many of them Christian) by the shogunate at Shimabara Fort. A group of missionaries and converts devised ways of secretly continuing their Christian practices with astonishing devotion. They were called *Kakure Kirishitan* (*Kirishitan*, from the Portuguese word, *cristão*), which means concealed or hidden Christians. Under the threat of torture or social shame, a considerable number of converts eventually turned to Buddhism. Although *Kakure Kirishitan* were spread throughout the country, a great number were concentrated in the Nagasaki and Amakusa regions in Kyūshū. For more information on the *Kakure Kirishitan*, see Stephen Thurnbull, *The Kakure Kirishitan of Japan: A Study of Their Development, Beliefs and Rituals to the Present Day*, Richmond, 1998.
36 The Dutch presence in Japan and their trade in lacquer will be discussed in section 4.1.2 of this Chapter.

It is generally accepted that liturgical lacquers were first made in about 1580. According to a letter written in 1577 by Father Luis Fróis, however, Christian funerary objects were already being made by then in lacquered wood, including a coffin and a cross.[33] Their production must have ended sometime after 1614, when Tokugawa Ieyasu issued an edict that officially banned Christianity.[34] Tokugawa shogunate's fierce determination to destroy Christianity led to the persecution of missionaries and Japanese converts, the confiscation and destruction of religious symbols and the demolition or transformation of churches. A few extant liturgical lacquers, decorated in the so-called Transition style, demonstrate that despite the severity of this persecution, the Jesuits and missionaries of other religious orders (Franciscans, Augustinians and Dominicans) present in Japan at the time continued to order liturgical lacquers in the early Edo period up until about 1639, when the country was closed to all Europeans (*sakoku*)[35] with the exception of the Dutch, who were allowed to stay because they did not proselytize the Christian faith.[36]

Only a small number of liturgical lacquers made to order for the Jesuits and missionaries of other religious orders have survived to present day. The vast majority was probably destroyed in iconoclastic practices during the period of Christian persecution. Extant examples dating to the Momoyama period include pyxes or host boxes (*seiheibako*), folding lecterns or missal stands (*shokendai*) and portable oratories (*seigan*), which were made after European or Indo-Portuguese models brought by the missionaries and richly decorated in the lacquer style known as *Namban*. They usually bear a medallion enclosing the 'IHS' monogram of the Society of Jesus surrounded by a crown of thorns, or combined with the Jesuit symbols of the Passion (the cross and


ALCVNE LETTERE
DELLE COSE
DEL GIAPPONE.
Dell'anno 1579. infino
al 1581.
IN ROMA,
Appresso Francesco Zannetti.
M. D. LXXXIIII.
UNIVERSIDAD CENTRAL
BIBLIOTECA

Fig. 4.1.1.1.3 *Alcune Lettere delle cose del Giappone …, Roma, Appresso Francesco Zanetti,* 1584
Biblioteca Histórica de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (BH FLL 10397)

Fig. 4.1.1.1.4 *Namban* pyx (*seiheibako*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Height: 9cm (with lid); diameter: 11.2cm
British Museum, London
(museum no. 1969,0415.1)



Fig. 4.1.1.1.5 Silver pyx chased on the lid 'IHS'
Sixteenth century, *c.*1500–1525
Height: 2.6cm; diameter 7.6cm
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
(acc. No. M.5-1936)

37 For another 'IHS' medallion depicted on the title page of a report published by Iean Bogart in 1589, entitled *Novveaux Advertissementz Des Choses Qvi Se Sont Passées En La Chine, Et Av Iapon, Et Dv retour des Princes Iaponois, qui l'an 1585. vindrent à Rome, & de leur arriuée aus Indes [sic]*, see Adriana Boscaro, *Sixteenth Century European Printed Works on the First Japanese Mission to Europe. A Descriptive Bibliography*, Leiden, 1973, pp. 144–145, pl. 69. Also published in Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, p. 264, ill. 1.

38 For a discussion on surviving *Namban* pyxes, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 32–37, no. 2; Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 262–267, nos. 30 and 31; and Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 260–261, fig. 1.

39 Mentioned by Conceição Borges de Sousa, 'Pyx for Communion Hosts [seiheibako]', in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, p. 81.

40 In the *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam* published by the Jesuits in 1603, the manufacturing process used to make the wooden structure of pyxes was wood turning (*hikimono*), described as '*Fiqimono.* Work done on a lathe'. Biblioteca da Ajuda (hereafter cited as BA), Lisbon, cod. 46–VIII–35, fl. 175. *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam com a declaraçao em Portugues, feito por alguns Padres, e irmãos da Companhia de Iesu com a licença do Ordinario, e Superiores em Nagasaqui no Collegio de Iapam sa Companhia de Iesu.* Anno 1603. *Supplemento deste vocabulario.* Anno 1604 (copy from 1747 by João Álvares), Cited in Leonor Leiria, 'Namban Art. Packing and Transportation', *Bulletin of Portuguese/Japanese Studies,* Vol. 5, December 2002, p. 14; and Canepa, 2011/2, p. 260, note 22.

41 Also compare a silver, partially gilded pyx made by the master goldsmith Willem Geverts in the Southern Netherlands in 1555–1556, housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum (museum no. M.41–1952).

42 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: '… hasta agora nunce he mostrado a V.P. ninguna senal de gratitid polas muchas charida/des que me hizo El tiempo que Estuvo En essa Sancta casa, per tanto Embio a V.P. una estante/de Atar pintada delas boenas que hay En el Miyako de donde me vjne, y una bucęta/con algunas hostias echas y de Arina de Japón, y con una forma que poco ha labr[ado] aquí un nostro hermano Japón porque se

the three Crucifixion nails piercing the Sacred Heart) within a radiant sunburst, inlaid in mother-of-pearl or painted in *makie*. This latter 'IHS' medallion was commonly used on the title page of printed works concerned with the Christian doctrine, as well as on letters and reports of Jesuits who lived in Japan, such as *Alcune Lettere delle cose del Giappone*, published in Rome in 1584 (Fig. 4.1.1.1.3).[37]

A few extant pyxes or Host boxes (*seiheibako*) of tall, cylindrical shape with a tight-fitting flat lid that is about one third of the total height bearing the 'IHS' monogram are found in Japan and Europe (Fig. 4.1.1.1.4).[38] Although small cylindrical lacquer boxes were used in Japanese temples to store incense (*cobaco*),[39] it is likely that the pyxes discussed here were made to order after European silver and gold models intended to contain the consecrated Hosts used in the Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist during the Catholic Mass.[40] An early sixteenth century silver example engraved with the 'IHS' monogram on its hinged lid, though of shallow cylindrical shape, is in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (Fig. 4.1.1.1.5).[41] Textual evidence of the Jesuits being directly involved in an order made in Miyako of pyxes of a particular shape, most likely the cylindrical shape of extant examples, is found in a letter sent from Nagasaki in February 1599 by the Portuguese Jesuit Diogo de Mesquita (1553–1614) to Claudio Aquaviva, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in Rome. It reads 'So far I have never shown Your Paternity any sign of gratitude for the many charities you did me whilst I was in that holy house, so I send your Paternity a painted missal lectern of the good ones there are in Miyako whence it came to me and a box with some hosts made of Japanese flour and in a shape made here recently by one of our Japan brothers because if they arrive intact they will be thankful to your Paternity, forgive the audacity'.[42] Extant pyxes are mostly decorated in the *Namban* style with dense designs of flowering plants, and more rarely with geometric designs.[43] A pyx in the Kanagawa Tōkei-ji Temple in Kamakura is decorated on its sides with twisting grape vines, perhaps evoking autumn, or more probably symbolizing the Eucharist. If so, this would be an example of lacquers ordered with motifs that had a profound

Fig. 4.1.1.1.6 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Length: 50.3cm; width: 30.8cm
Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales, Madrid
Patrimonio Nacional (00613189)

Fig. 4.1.1.1.7 *Namban* lectern (shokendai)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Length: 49.5cm; width: 29cm
Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon

symbolic meaning in the Catholic liturgy. This latter pyx is the only known example kept secretly in Japan during the period of persecution.[44] Another example, formerly housed at Chiddingstone Castle in Kent, suggests that pyxes (or at least some of them) originally had an inner tray made of black lacquered wood.[45] The presence of lacquer pyxes in Goa in the early seventeenth century is documented by the 'host box from Japan' listed among the donations received by the Augustinian Brother Pedro dos Santos from 'Reverend Provincial Father Fray António Morais' for the Gorgistan mission in 1628.[46] *Namban* boxes of oval form bearing the 'IHS' monogram on the lid and related floral decoration may have been made to order for the Jesuits to hold the Holy Oils rather than the Holy Host.[47]

Folding lecterns or missal stands (*shokendai*) were most likely ordered by the Jesuits for use in the altars of churches in Japan to hold the Holy Bible or texts used during the Catholic Mass. The front panel was usually decorated with a large circular medallion enclosing the 'IHS' monogram, sometimes including leafy stems growing from the letter 'H' and the Sacred Heart as seen in some pyxes,[48] reserved on a ground with dense or loose compositions of flowering plants (Fig. 4.1.1.1.6) or geometric designs, executed solely in *makie* or with accents inlaid in mother-of-pearl all done in the *Namban* style (Fig. 4.4.1.1.7).[49] Lecterns were also decorated with the 'IHS' emblem within an oval medallion, sometimes combined with Japanese motifs, such as family crests or personal insignia (*mon*) used by *daimyō*, as seen in an example in the Church of Santiago el Real (a former Jesuit convent) in Medina del Campo, Spain (Fig. 4.1.1.1.8).[50] It is unclear whether lecterns decorated with *mons* would have been made to order for some of the *daimyō* who had converted to Christianity, or if they

llegaren incurruptas seron gratas a V.P. perdone el atrevime[n]to…'. Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Jap.Sin 13–II, Carta de Diogo de Mesquita a Claudio Aquaviva, de Nagasaki, 20 de Fevereiro de 1599, fls. 294–294v. Cited in Curvelo, 2010, p. 23.

43 For an example decorated on the sides and lid with endless pearl (*shippōtsunagi*) and narrow chequer borders (*ichimatsu*) in the Namban Bunkakan Museum in Osaka, see Andrew J. Pekarik, 'Lacquer and Metalwork', in Money L. Hickman (ed.), *Japan's Golden Age: Momoyama*, exhibition catalogue, Dallas Museum of Art, New Haven and London, 1996, p. 253, pl. 123.

44 For this opinion, see Meiko Nagashima, 'Japanese Lacquers Exported to Spanish America and Spain', in Pierce and Otsuka, 2009, p. 115. The pyx is illustrated in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 169, no. 385.

45 For an image of this example, now in a private collection, see Kyoto National Museum (ed.), *Maki-e/ Maki-e: The Beauty of Black and Gold Japanese Lacquer*, exhibition catalogue, Kyoto, 1995, p. 107, no. 138.

46 These excerpts are taken from a document transcribed by Father A. Silva Rego in *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português no Oriente*, Vol. 12, Lisbon, 1958. Cited in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 32, note 65; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 234.

47 For this example in a private collection in Lisbon, showing traces of three interior divisions, see Europália 91 Portugal, 1991, p. 197, pl. 168.

48 See, for instance, the example in the Namban Bunkakan Museum illustrated in Hickman, 1996, p. 253, no. 123.

49 For a discussion on *Namban* lecterns with both floral and geometric designs, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 38–41, no. 3; Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 268–273, no. 32; and Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 262–265, figs. 2 and 3.

50 I am indebted to José Manuel Casado Paramio, Fundación Museo de las Ferias, for providing me with images and information on the *Namban* objects in the Church of Sta. María in Aguilar de Campos and the Church of Santiago el Real in Medina del Campo, both in Valladolid, Spain. During the Momoyama period, Japanese family crests (mon) were often incorporated into the decorative repertoire of *makie*, functioning simply as part of the design. In the Edo period, however, the use of family crests was strictly regulated for political reasons. For this opinion, see Barbara Brennan Ford, 'The Momoyama Flowering: Kōdai-ji and Namban Lacquer', in Watt and Brennan Ford, 1991, p. 166. The combination of motifs related to Christianity and a Japanese family crest also occurs on the lacquer wooden stock of a matchlock gun (*teppo*), dating to the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century, which may have been ordered for a member of the Arima family sometime before 1612, when the *daimyō* Arima Naozumi abandoned the Christian faith. For images and a discussion on this gun, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 254–261, no. 29.

51 The wooden structure of lecterns, as well as that of coffers, cabinets and chests, was constructed using joints (*shashimono*). These objects were described as '*Saximono*. Box, or container, or any similar object that trunk makers and some carpinters commonly manufacture'. The original text in Portuguese reads '*Saximono*. Boceta, ou caixa, ou qualquer obra semelhante que commummente fazem caixeiros, ou alguns carpinteiros'. BA, *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, fl. 433 v. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 14.

52 Compare, for instance, a late sixteenth century *rahl* made to hold a Qur'an with an Indian seventeenth century carved wood example in the Church of S. Roque. Published in Stuart Cary Welch, *India Art and Culture 1300–1900*, exhibition catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1993, p. 284, cat. 189; and Nuno Vassallo e Silva (ed.), *No Caminho do Japão. Arte Oriental nas Colecções da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, exhibition catalogue, Lisbon, 1993, pp. 54–55, pl. 11, respectively.

53 At the time it was common to refer to Japanese objects as 'from China'. This inventory is now housed in the Archivo Histórico da Santa Casa da Misericórdia in Lisbon. Published in Ibid., pp. 84–85, no. 32

54 Cited in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 32, note 65; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 234.

55 Published in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 63.

56 Another Transition style lectern, decorated with a design of autumn foliage in gold with some of the leaves and flowers inlaid in mother-of-pearl, can be found in the Casa Colombo-Museu do Porto Santo in Porto Santo Island. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 175, nos. 409a and b.

57 For a discussion on extant *Namban* oratories, also called retables or travelling shrines, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 46–55, nos. 5 and 6; Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 246–253, no. 28; and Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 267–270, figs. 5 and 7. An Example of a triptych made in wood in Bruges, dating to *c.*1500, can be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum (museum no. P.39–1937).

58 Compare, for instance, the seventeenth century examples found in Portugal in the Museo Nacional de Arte Antiga (inv. no. 1412) and Viana do Castelo (inv. no. 1043), illustrated in XVII Exposição Europeia de Arte, Ciência e Cultura, *Os Descobrimentos Portugueses e a Europa do Renascimento: A Arte na Rota de Oriente*, Lisboa, 1983, p. 276, no. 272 and p. 275, no. 270, respectively.

59 Peacocks in cages, or opening their tails, alongside other exotic birds appear depicted in various *Namban* folding screens, such as those in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (inv. no. 1640 Mov and 1641 Mov) and the Namban Bunkakan Museum in Osaka. Mentioned in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 81, note 38. The exotic birds brought from Brazil included macaws and

were only included as abstract decorative motifs. Future research on Japanese written sources might shed light on this question. The shape and method of construction of the folding lecterns[51] almost certainly derived from carved wooden models made in Goa or in Portuguese settlements in Southeast Asia (Fig. 4.1.1.1.9); but it is probable that the folding system, formed by two crossed boards, was in turn based on Islamic models.[52] The earliest textual evidence of a lectern made in Miyako being sent to Europe is found in the extract from a letter sent in 1599 by Father Diogo de Mesquita to the Superior General of the Jesuits in Rome cited above. This letter proves that by the late sixteenth century the Jesuits were not only sending lacquer objects made for the Japanese domestic market as diplomatic gifts to the royalty and clergy in Western Europe, but also lacquers made to order for them as gifts to important representatives of the Society of Jesus. Thus far the earliest known reference to the presence of lecterns in Portugal dates to 1620. An inventory of the Fundo Jesuítico taken that year, lists 'quatro estantes da China', which referred to a group of four *Namban* lecterns, of which only one survives today.[53] In the 1620s, lacquer lecterns were also found in Goa as indicated by 'a missal holder from Japan' listed among the donations collected in 1628 by the Augustinian Pedro dos Santos mentioned above.[54] Lecterns bearing the 'IHS' monogram were also decorated in the so-called Transition style, as demonstrated by an extant example in the Colégio da Companhia de Jesus in Coimbra, which is decorated in *makie* with the 'IHS' monogram and the Marian monogram (*Avé Maria*),[55] replacing the heart and crucifixion nails of the Passion, within a floral scroll.[56]

Oratories (*seigan*) of shallow rectangular form with a pair of hinged half-width doors closed by a latch and pediments of triangular, scalloped or arched shape bearing the 'IHS' monogram within a radiant halo, or reserved on a floral or geometric ground, were made after fifteenth or sixteenth century European portable triptychs, which in turn were influenced by Byzantine icons (Fig. 4.1.1.1.10a).[57] Their shape and proportions (ranging from 37 to about 69.5cm in height) related closely to the Indo-Portuguese oratories made in carved wood in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[58] Their doors were usually decorated with dense naturalistic compositions of flowering trees, animals, birds and insects. As seen in this example, bird motifs occasionally included peacocks (Fig. 4.1.1.1.10b), one of the exotic birds brought to Japan by the Portuguese merchants as gifts from India and Brazil, which were much appreciated by the *daimyō* and *shogūn*.[59] The depiction of the peacocks relates closely to that shown on a six-panel folding screen, one of a pair, painted by Kanō Eutoku's younger brother, Kano Shōshū (1551–1601), in the Osaka Municipal Museum of Art.[60] Oratories bearing the 'IHS' monogram were also decorated with naturalistic compositions within lobed cartouches on a black lacquer ground (Fig. 4.1.1.1.11). The oratories were ordered by the Jesuits to frame and protect a sacred oil painting, mostly representing the Madonna and Child, the Crucifixion, saints and apostles, produced on wood or copper by seminary painters of the Academy of St. Luke in Nagasaki.[61] Some extant oratories still preserve the removable lacquer frame intended to secure the sacred painting.[62] Visual sources attest to the use of oratories by the Jesuits residing in Japan. Oratories, most probably made of lacquer, are shown on the church altars depicted in *Namban* six-panel folding screens by the artist Kanō Naizen (1570–1616), such as the examples in the Kobe City Museum and the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC (Fig. 4.1.1.1.12).[63]

*Namban* style oratories were also made to order with pediments bearing Christian iconography, which would not have been immediately recognizable by the Tokugawa


Fig. 4.1.1.1.8 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Length: 35.5cm; width: 31.5cm
Church of Santiago el Real,
Medina del Campo

Fig. 4.1.1.1.9 Lacquered and gilded wood lectern
Goa or Southeast Asia
Sixteenth/seventeenth century
Length: 47cm; width: 27cm
Mário Roque Collection

Fig. 4.1.1.1.10a *Namban* oratory (*seigan*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Height: 69.5cm; width: 44cm; depth: 9cm
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Opposite page
Fig. 4.1.1.1.10b *Namban* oratory (*seigan*)
(detail)

Fig. 6.1.1.1.11 *Namban* oratory (*seigan*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Height: 65.1cm; width: 37.8cm; depth: 7.8cm
Museu do Oriente, Lisbon (inv. no. FO/0637)

Fig. 4.1.1.1.12 Six-panel folding screen, one of a pair (detail right-hand side screen)
Kanō Naizen (1570–1616)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Height: 154.5cm; width: 363.2cm (each screen)
Kobe City Museum, Kobe

Fig. 4.1.1.1.13 *Namban* oratory (*seigan*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Height: 45.4; width: 32; depth: 4.7cm
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts
(inv. no. AE85752)

Fig. 4.1.1.1.14 *Namban* oratory (*seigan*), pyx (*seiheibako*) and coffer
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Length oratory: 27.5cm
British Museum, London
(museum no. 1974,0513.6)

shogunate. Four extant oratories of this type have been recorded thus far. Two of them bear a Christian cross with fish-like arms,[64] and the other two bear a single or a pair of confronted doves, which symbolize the Holy Spirit (Fig. 4.1.1.1.13).[65] In addition there are a few oratories, lecterns and oval boxes most probably intended to hold the Holy Host or Holy Oils, which bear no Christian iconography at all. It seems reasonable to believe that the Jesuits ordered some of these liturgical lacquers after the anti-Christian edict of 1597, which caused the execution of missionaries for preaching Christianity.[66] Examples of such oratories are known with triangular, arched or scalloped pediments, mostly decorated in *Namban* style.[67] A few other Momoyama oratories, dating to *c.*1580-1620, are known with a slightly convex horizontal panel, instead of a pediment (Fig. 4.1.1.1.14).[68] The interior of the doors of two of these oratories, now housed in the Kyoto National Museum and the Tsukumi City Collection, are decorated with a design of twisting grape vines, as noted earlier probably symbolizing the Eucharist, which relate closely to that seen in the pyx bearing the 'IHS' monogram in the Kanagawa Tōkei-ji Temple discussed above.[69] At this point it is important to mention that the oratory in the Kyoto National Museum, and that in the Tsukumy City Collection, are believed to have originally been shipped to New Spain and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, respectively, via Manila.[70] A few oratories of shallow rectangular shape surmounted by a low, arched pediment bearing no Christian iconography were made in the early Edo period, probably in *c.*1630–1635, with a distinctive flat gold and silver *hiramakie* decoration which can be stylistically related to the *Kodaiji makie* decoration of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's shrine in Miyako discussed above.[71] Extant lecterns and oval boxes made to order bearing no Christian iconography are more rare. Lecterns of this type, made in the early seventeenth century, were decorated in the *Namban* or the so-called Transition style.[72] A *Namban* example in a private collection in Japan is decorated with geometric designs (Fig. 4.1.1.1.15),[73] while another in the Casa Colombo-Museu do Porto Santo in Madeira is decorated with a sparse design of autumn foliage in the so-called Transition style (Fig. 4.1.1.1.16), closely resembling the *Kodaiji makie* decoration of the interior sides of the front doors of Hideyoshi's sanctuary (Fig. 4.1.1.1.2b).[74] Two boxes of oval shape, both decorated with dense floral designs in *Namban* style, are believed to have been intended to hold the Holy Host or Holy Oils. One example housed in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, of almost identical proportions to that bearing the 'IHS' monogram discussed above, has an internal division.[75] The other, in a private collection in Japan, has the same width, but is slightly taller.[76]

The Jesuits also ordered lacquer objects that could have been used in both religious and secular contexts. This is not surprising because the religious and secular spheres of life of the Europeans were not separated at the time, neither in Japan nor in Western Europe or the New World.[77] These objects included writing boxes that combined a traditional Japanese shape and decorative lacquer techniques with the 'IHS' monogram. An example of low, square shape with a flat lid in the Namban Bunkakan in Osaka, dating to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, is finely decorated in gold and silver *nashiji*, *hiramakie* and *takamakie*. Its delicate and simple decoration is Japanese in style.[78] Finely decorated lacquer writing boxes, or *suzuribako*, were used in Japan to hold an inkstone, water dropper, brushes and other writing implements from as early as the twelve century.[79] A detailed description of such boxes and their use is found in Jesuit textual sources. A document published in *Jesuitas na Ásia* mentions that 'When a guest receives a letter or another business document which requires a quick reply he asks for appropriate apparatus to write with. In a place in the same room it is customary to have a beautiful box, enameled [decorated] with gold and silver roses on very richly adorned lacquer and it contained all the instruments necessary for writing … the box was divided into five partitions inside; in the central, larger one is the inkwell, in the other compartments there is a small gilt copper disk with water to fill the inkwell, there are quills to write with and ink and a small knife for cutting, rather than scissors,

60 For images of this six-panel screen, see Kyoto National Museum, 2007, pp. 198–200, no. 59.
61 The Italian Jesuit Giovanni Niccolao or Niccoló founded the Academy of St. Luke where he taught Japanese converts the Western style of painting and printmaking. It is beyond the scope of this doctoral dissertation to discuss the sacred paintings enclosed within the oratories. For more information and bibliographical references on this subject, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, p. 253.
62 Oratories with such frames include the examples in the church of Santa Casa da Misericórdia in Sardoal, the Ricardo Espírito Santo Foundation in Lisbon, the Museum Catherijneconvent in Utrecht, and the Nagoya City Museum. For images of these oratories, see Mendes Pinto, 1990, pp. 66–67 (also fold out pages); and Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 186-187, ill. 442 and 448.
63 Published in Kobe City Museum, *Namban Arts Selection*, Kobe, 1998, pp. 9 and 15, pl. 2 (detail); and Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, p. 16, fig. 1 and p. 251, ill. 1 (detail); respectively.
64 These examples, both with triangular pediments, are found in the Musée Guimet in Paris and the Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich. The Musée Guimet example, dating to *c.*1580–1620, was originally owned by a Spanish family related to a former Governor of the Philippines and thus may have arrived to Europe via the Spanish trade route through Manila and New Spain. The Völkerkunde example, dating to *c.*1600–1620, was part of the Wittelsbach family collection before 1789. Published and discussed in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 186, ill. 433 and p. 189, ill. 453, respectively. Also see Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 270–271.
65 Both examples date to *c.*1580–1620. They are found in the Museum Catherijneconvent in Utrecht and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem (illustrated here). The Catherijneconvent example varies slightly from the rectangular pediment examples, as it has a low, overhanging pediment and a base with a drawer. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 186, ill. 442 and p. 187, ills. 449a and 449b. Also see Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 270–271, fig. 6.
66 See notes 34 and 35.
67 *Namban* examples are published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 188, ills. 451a and b; p. 186, ill. 445; and p. 187, ill. 447. For another example, see Sezon Museum of Art and Shizuoka Prefecture Museum of Art, 1993, pp. 204–206, no. 184.
68 Other examples can be found in the Tokyo National Museum, Museu do Oriente, Kyoto National Museum, the Namban Culture Museum in Osaka, and Tsukumi City Collection in Oita Prefecture. Published in Murase, 2000, p. 232, fig. 43; João Calvão (ed.), *Presença Portuguesa na Ásia: testemunhos, memória, coleccionismo*, exhibition catalogue, Museu do Oriente, Lisbon, 2008, pp. 127–128, cat. 100; Tobu Museum of Art, 1999, p. 164, no. 196; Yamazaki Tsuyoshi, *Nihon no Bijyutsu No. 426 Umi wo Watatta Nihon Shikki I, 16–17th century*, Shibundo, 2001, p. 33, no. 41; and J. Okada, *Namban Kgei*, Tokyo, 1973, pls. 51 and 52; respectively. The latter example, which was discovered in Puerto Rico by Chisaburo Yamada, is also published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 188, ill. 452a and b. As discussed earlier, lacquer oratories usually enclose a removable sacred painting, but in the aforementioned examples in the Kyoto National Museum and Tsukumi City Collection, the sacred image is painted directly onto the black lacquered surface. For more information on these latter oratories and bibliographical references, see Canepa, 2011/2, p. 273, note 78.
69 See note 44.
70 For this opinion and further bibliography, see Nagashima, 2009, pp. 113 and 115.
71 See note 31. Thus far two oratories of this type have been recorded. One example, part of the Wittelsbach collection at the Staatliches Museum für Volkerkunde (inv. no. 26–N–31), has its original sacred painting removed and replaced by a fitted mirror. Published and discussed in Toshio Watanabe, 'Namban Lacquer Shrines: Some New Discoveries', in William Watson (ed.), *Lacquerwork in Asia and Beyond*, Colloquies on Art & Archaeology in Asia No. 11, Percival David Foundation, London, 1981, pp. 209–210, pls. 5, 6a and b. For images and a discussion on the other example, enclosing a tempera painting on vellum of Saint

Fig. 4.1.1.1.15 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Early seventeenth century
Height: 37cm
Private collection, Japan

Fig. 4.1.1.1.16 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Early Edo period (1615–1868)
Early seventeenth century
Height: 42.5cm; width: 26cm
Casa Colombo-Museu do Porto Santo,
Ilha Porto Santo

Fig. 4.1.1.1.17 *Namban* table
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Late sixteenth century
Height: 50.4cm; length: 113cm; width: 59.3cm
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and a bodkin to close the letters, and everything else required, such as seals'.[80] It seems likely that the Jesuits would have ordered such writing boxes, which would have been much more expensive than one made in the *Namban* style, for their personal use or to give as gifts to powerful *daimyō*, who had converted to Christianity and supported their mission in Japan. There are also a few extant *Namban* low tables of rectangular shape (ranging from 36 to 50cm in height) without Christian iconography dating to the Momoyama period (Fig. 4.1.1.1.17).[81] The rectangular tops of these tables are decorated with cartouches of flowering plants and birds or animals. These sometimes include mythical animals, such as Chinese Buddhist Lions with curling manes, which resemble closely those depicted in a six-panel folding screen painted by Kanō Eitoku in the Sannomaru-Shozokan (The Museum of the Imperial Collections) in Tokyo.[82] These tables, as Impey and Jörg have noted, were most likely ordered by the Jesuits to be used as portable altars in Japan.[83] Although the shape and construction of their bases varies, they closely follow Iberian and Indo-Portuguese models.[84] Low tables such as these, with either two pairs of legs and stretchers that dismantle, or two pairs of legs joined by stretchers that fold inwards, would have been easily transportable by the Jesuits, who were constantly travelling from one congregation to another. Lacquer tables as well as lecterns and chalice boxes, appear to have been first recorded in August 1616, when the Jesuit Father Manuel Barreto (*c.*1563–1620) listed 'ten Japanese tables …five lacquered lecterns [?] … nine *urushi* chalice boxes …' among the goods he was leaving in Japan to his successor, Father Manuel Borges (?–1633). In addition, 'one hundred Japanese tables' are mentioned in the list of liturgical ornaments lent to the Seminar.[85] From these excerpts it is clear that a large number of tables were made for the Jesuits. The mention of 'nine *urushi* chalice boxes' by Father Manuel Barreto is interesting, as no lacquer objects that could be described as chalice boxes appear to

Francis of Paola (1416–1507), see Vinhais and Welsh, 2009, pp. 164–69, no. 17.

72 One other such lectern will be discussed in the following pages of this Chapter.

73 Published in Sezon Museum of Art, 1993, p. 208, no. 187; and Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 89–90, fig. 10. I am grateful to Katsura Yamaguchi, Christie's International Director, Japanese and Korean Art, for providing me with an image of this lectern and of a standing shrine or retable from this private collection.

74 Published in Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 42–45, no. 4; and Canepa, 2011/1, pp. 90–91, fig. 11.

75 Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 109, ill. 193.

76 Ibid., p. 109, ill. 194.

77 Mentioned in Curvelo, 2012, p. 246 (p. 512, English version).

78 Published in Jackson and Jaffer, 2004, p. 114, pl. 8.13.

79 Large boxes of rectangular shape, known as paper case (*ryōshi-bako*), were made in the Heian period (794–1185) to hold writing utensils and paper, as evidenced by the example depicted in a handscroll entitled *The Tale of Prince Genji*, dating to the eleventh or twelve century, illustrated in Masako Shôno-Sládek, *The Splendour of Urushi. The Lacquer Art Collection at the Museum of East Asian Art*, Cologne, 1994, p. 280, fig. 41. According to Earl, the evolution of writing box types reached a high point in the Muromachi period (1333–1573). Joe Earle (ed.), *The Toshiba Gallery: Japanese Art and Design*, London, 1986, p. 64.

80 Jesuitas na Ásia-Japão. B. A. ms. 49–IV–53, leaves 100 and 155. Cited in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 51.

81 For a detailed discussion on these tables, and the only extant full-size table of European proportions also dating to the Momoyama period in the National Museum in Warsaw (formerly in the Wilanów Castle, Poland), see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 78–83, no. 11; Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 195, ill. 467 a, b, c and d; and Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 284–288, no. 36. The Wilanów Castle table was included in the 1993 exhibition *Japan und Europa*, 1543–1929 in Berlin.

82 Published in Kyoto National Museum, 2007, pp. 230–233, no. 67.

83 The use of *Namban* tables as altars was first suggested by Oliver Impey in 2003. See Oliver Impey, 'Introduction', in Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 14 and 82. Their use as altars was again mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 196.

84 Portuguese tables of comparable shape dating to the seventeenth century are published in Teresa Pais and Armândio de Sousa, *Quinta das Cruzes – Museu*, Madeira, 1996, p. 37, no 59; and Fernanda Castro Freire, *50 dos Melhores Móveis Portugueses*, Lisbon, 1995, pp. 30–31. For a Spanish table in the Museo de Artes Decorativas in Madrid of similar date, see Alberto Cottino, *Mobiliário do século XVII – França, Espanha, Portugal*, Lisbon, 1989, p. 63. An Indo-Portuguese table in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga is published in Maria Helena Mendes Pinto, *Os Móveis e o seu Tempo. Mobiliário Português do Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga Séculos XV–XIX*, Lisbon, 1985, p. 52, no. 35.

85 BA, cod. 49-V-5, fl. 196 a 206 v. *Memorial das couzas da Procuratura desta Prov.a, e o Padre M.el Barreto entregou, hindose pa Japão em Agosto de 1616 ao P.e M.el Borges seo successor na Procuratura*. This document, as noted by Curvelo, has not been published in its totality. In the extracts cited by Mendes Pinto, are listed '130 Japanese tables'. See Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 32, note 65. In the extracts cited by Curvelo, which are also cited here, are listed 'ten Japanese tables' and 'one hundred Japanese tables', which is only a total of 110 Japanese tables. Curvelo, 2001, pp. 32–33.

86 Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon (hereafter cited as BNL), Res. Cod. 1986. *Relação dos bens de Dom Francisco da Gama, Conde da Vidigueira, 17° Vice-Rei da Índia, e entre os Governadores 25°, quinto do nome, terceiro do apelido e dos Condes quinto (…), 1628*. Cited as dating to 1627 in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 69. A transcription of the document made by Lina Maria Marrafa de Oliveira for the project 'A Casa Senhorial em Lisboa e no Rio de Janeiro (séculos XVII, XVIII e XIX). Anatomia dos interiores' (PTDC/EAT-HAT/112229/2009), dates it to 1628. For more information, see httpp://www.casaruibarbosa.gov.br/acasasenhorial/index.php/fonts-documentais/inventarios. Accessed May 2015. It is important to note that Mendes Pinto mentions that the inventory listed daistables (presumably a type of table to be placed on a dais or platform) from Japan and large tables from Japan decorated in gold and mother-of-pearl, but these objects are not listed in the recent transcription made by Marrafa de Oliveira.

87 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: 'Das mais cousas levão tirados as q se mandão pera Roma a N.P. nas qaes não se ha de bolir em nhuna man.a [maneira], farão consulta com entrevir nella o P.e Gabriel Afonso procurador, pera ver se convem dar algu brinco de Japão da parte dos meninos a S. M.de y ao Cardeal, y ahi mesmo … verão o que convem dar a outros q hão de ajudar no despacho com sua mj.de de considerando o tpo [tempo] quando iho han de dar, pera q se dem a tôo …'. Archivum Storico Compagnia de Gesù (hereafter cited as ASCG), Japonica Sinica 22, fl. 51. Padre Alessandro Valignano, S.J., *Regimento e Instrução do q hadi fazir o Padre Nuno Rois q vay por Procurador à Roma*, 1583. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 51, note 6.

88 The Japanese envoys, Miguel Chijiwa, Mâncio Ito, Julião Nakaura and Martinho Hara, were sponsored by the three *daimyō* of Kyūshū: Arima Harunobu (Arima), Ômura Sumitada (Ômura) and Ôtomo Sorin (Bungo). Mentioned in Ibid., p. 50; and Curvelo, 2001, p. 27. For more information on the Tenshô Embassy and the gifts brought with them, see Y. Okamoto, 'Kyûshû sankô keno shisetsu no zôtôhin', in Y. Okamoto, *Momoyamajidai no Kirisutokyô Bunka*, Tokyo, 1948, pp. 155–206; R. Yûki, *Shinshiryô. Tennshô shônen shisetsu, Kirisitan Kenkyû*, no. 29, Tokyo, 1990; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 266–267 (pp. 52–53 English version).

have been recorded. This type of chalice box would most probably have been ordered to protect, perhaps when travelling, a copper or silver-gilt chalice used to serve the consecrated wine during the Catholic Mass. This suggests that there might have been a number of other liturgical lacquers made to order for the Jesuits that have not yet been identified. An inventory taken in 1628 of the belongings of Viceroy Don Francisco da Gama in Goa, listing 'small boxes from Japan' and 'circular boxes from Japan', indicates that small circular boxes were also made to order for Portuguese individuals, which were intended for secular use.[86]

The involvement of the Jesuits in the cultural and artistic exchanges that first occurred between Japan and Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century is undeniable. The Jesuits, who were well aware of the high quality and artistic value of Japanese lacquer objects, referring to them as '*brincos* do Japão', were responsible for both introducing Japanese lacquer and spreading a taste for it among the royalty, clergy and nobility in Renaissance Europe. From the instructions given by Father Alessandro Valignano to Father Nuno Rodrigues, when organizing the first official Japanese mission to Europe in 1583, known as the *Tenshô* Embassy, we learn that lacquer objects were not only sent by the Jesuits as diplomatic gifts to the King of Spain/Portugal and the Pope in Rome, but also to other individuals. He wrote: 'Amongst the things that they are taken, are those items that are being sent to Rome to the Pope, which should not be tampered with in any way. Father Gabriel Afonso procurador, will seek information as to whether it is convenient to take some *brincos* from Japan on behalf of the boys to offer to His Majesty and to the Cardinal, and will also … see what would be convenient to give to the others who will help in this matter, keeping in mind the occasion when they will be offered, so that everyone is given something…'.[87] In November 1584, Philip II received the gifts offered by the four young Japanese envoys representing the Christian clans of Kyūshū, who had travelled to Europe via Macao, Malacca and India.[88] Father Luís Fróis in his *Tratado dos Embaixadores Iapões que forão a Roma no anno de 1582* describes the gifts as 'pieces from Japan, one desk made of cane with its drawers, beautifully arranged, one vase for washing hands made of wood very well gilded with ground gold, which is put underneath the varnish; one delicate basket which contained many items, and His Majesty was astonished to see so many pieces stored in such a small space, especially a small liquor flask that was very well lacquered. The basket was the most talked about thing, and it was shown to all the Dukes and Grandees present, all of whom praised their invention, painting and artifice; and one long rectangular box for letters from Japan, well worked and gilded. His Majesty … remarked, looking again and again, that the work was quite different from that made in China'.[89] According to Hidaka, the lacquer pieces were a basin or *aquamanile* (*suiban*), a set of food storage boxes stacked up in a basket (*sagejū*) and a long document box (*fubaco*).[90] These lacquer objects, as Kawamura has noted, appear to have been made for the Japanese domestic market, rather than for export. One cannot fail to wonder if the long document box would have been similar to the box that contained the letter sent by Toyotomi Hideyoshi to the Viceroy of India in 1591, after receiving the Embassy upon its return from Europe, which was described by Father Luís Froís as '…a kind of box, that in Japan is used only for letters, and this box is a marvelous and very rich piece, that without doubt if anyone in all of Europe saw it, they would admire the delicacy and perfection of that object; because it is entirely covered inside, and outside, by a kind of varnish, that in Japan is called *urushi*; sprinkled with gold ground as fine as sand; it is a very laborious masterpiece,

and is decorated with flowers and roses of thin sheets of silver, and gold, that are inlaid in that *urushi*'.[91] The lacquer 'desk made of cane with its drawers' given to Philip II, however, was probably made in the Ryûkyû Islands, or in Southeast Asia.[92] As Impey and Jörg have remarked, Philip II's comments suggest that he was not familiar with Japanese lacquer, but he knew well Chinese lacquer.[93] The instructions given by Father Alessandro Valignano to Father Nuno Rodrigues in 1583 indicate that folding screens[94] were also brought to Europe by the Embassy, and that specific measures were taken to avoid damage of the valuable lacquer objects during their transportation in the long sea journeys to Europe. The folding screens most probably included the pair given by Oda Nobunaga to Father Allessandro Valignano when he visited Azuchi Castle. According to Cabañas Moreno, two pairs of folding screens were taken for Philip II, and another two pairs for Pope Gregory XIII.[95] The folding screens, for instance, were packed in wooden boxes: 'if possible, the folding screens should be taken inside the big box that I bought in Cochin for this purpose, because it seems that under the deck or in the hold, we have bought space for this purpose and they should be stored in a place where the rain does not enter or where they can get wet by water'.[96] Father Alessandro Valignano instructed that 'the boxes and other things that are taken to Portugal should be all marked with our emblem so that they can be recognized in Portugal'.[97] Some of the small lacquer pieces, as mentioned in the excerpt from Father Luís Froís, were packed in baskets.[98]

Recent research by Kawamura indicates that the posthumous inventory taken between 1598 and 1607 of Philip II's possessions prior to their dispersal lists 21 pieces of lacquer that were decorated in the *Namban* style. These pieces, described as being decorated with black lacquer and gold depicting scenes with grasses, birds and animals, consisted of two 'round boxes of tray with lid', another similar round box, one 'round box as wafer box', thirteen large trays, three other trays, and a table.[99] There are also listed two lacquer cabinets of square shape with 'two doors like a shrine' lacquered in black, which may have been among the gifts sent by the *shogūn* Tototomi Hideyoshi to the Viceroy of India with Father Alessandro Valignano in 1591, and subsequently sent to Philip II in 1594.[100]

Documentary and material evidence indicates that liturgical lacquers with or without Christian iconography were also made to order for other religious orders present in Japan at the time, or even for private individuals. It is known that until 1624, a small trade was conducted between the Japanese and Spanish merchants, who were based in the Philippines. A few Spanish ships, while sailing from Manila to New Spain, entered Japanese ports. In 1592, despite the first anti-Christian edict of 1587, several Spanish Franciscan friars were sent from Manila to Japan as ambassadors. The Franciscans were allowed to stay as missionaries and began to build churches and hospitals in Miyako and Osaka. Their arrival meant the end of the evangelization monopoly of the Jesuits in Japan, who were sponsored by the Portuguese Crown. This together with the fact that the Franciscans were under the patronage of the Spanish Crown (united with the Crown of Portugal since 1580) aggravated their mutual antagonism, which in turn caused suspicion to the Japanese rulers.[101] The shipwreck of the Spanish galleon *San Felipe* off the coast of Japan in 1596 was decisive in Toyotomi Hideyoshi's policy against the Christian faith.[102] Friars from two other Mendicant Orders, the Augustinians and Dominicans, soon followed the Franciscans. The first Augustinian friars reached Japan in 1602. In May 1606, a report from the Council of the Indias in Valladolid recommended that members of religious Orders from the

89 J.A. Abranches Pinto, Y. Okamoto and H. Bernard, S.J., *La Première Ambassade du Japon en Europe, 1582–1592. Première partie: Le Traité du Père Frois, Monumenta Nipponica Monographs*, Sophia University, no. 6, Tokyo, 1942, p. 88. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 285.

90 Kaori Hidaka, *Ikoku no Hyôshô*, Tokyo, 2008, pp. 37, 68–69; and Hidaka Kaori, 'Ikoku e okurareta shikki. Tenshô ken'ô shisetsu no miyagemono', *Koruritsu Rikishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan Kenkyû Hôkeku*, no. 140, Sakura, 2008, pp. 97–116. Mentioned in Kawamura, 2013, p. 267 (p. 53, English version).

91 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: '… uma feição de caxa, q serve em Japão somente para cartas, a qual he mui rica, e de tão maravilhoza obra, q sem duvida em todas as partes de Europa q a virem se hão de admirar da delicadeza, e primor daquella obra; porq he toda cuberta por dentro, e for a de hũa maneira de verniz, que em Japão se chama uruxi; semeada de ouro moido á maneira de area, q he obra de muito custo, e lavrada cõ aquelle uraxi'. Father Luís Froís, Apparatos para a Historia Ecclesiastica do Bispado de Japam do anno de 1588 (1589–1594), *Jesuítas na Ásia*, B.A., cod. 49–IV–57, fl. 187 v. – 188 f. Cited in Leiria, 2002, pp. 55–56.

92 For this opinion, see Ibid.

93 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 285.

94 Japanese folding screens are beyond the scope of this study.

95 Cabañas Moreno, however, notes that the list of objects brought by the Japanese Embassy included 'Thirty boxes with folding screens in fine gold, each box with two folding screens', some of which were probably intended for sale. Pilar Cabañas Moreno, 'Huellas del Arte Japonés en Nueva España: Biombos, Enconchados y Maques', in Kawamura, 2013, p. 298 (p. 86, English version).

96 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: 'hos biombos se for possivel se levarão metidos no caixão grande q pera ysso deixey comprador in Cochim, porq parece q onde bayxo da cuberta ou na parte da solda q compramos aucra comodidade pera ysso e pondoos em lugar onde não possão sover [chover] ne sere molhados de agoa'. Valignano, 1583. ASCG, Japonica Sinica 22, fl. 51. Cited in Leiria, 2002, pp. 52–53.

97 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: '… e as caixas e mais cousas q leva pera Portugal os façã mutrar [marcar] todas com nossa marca peraq se possão conhecer em Portugal…'. Valignano, 1583. ASCG, Japonica Sinica 22, fl. 51. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 53.

98 An extant rattan case bearing a coat of arms and an inscription with the owner's name will be discussed in the following pages of this Chapter.

99 According to Kawamura, these pieces correspond to the inventory numbers 4496, 4497, 4499, 4508, 4509, 4510, 4511 and 4538. Kawamura, 2013, pp. 267 and 293, note 23 (pp. 54 and 80, note 23, English version). The inventory, as noted by Kawamura, lists many other objects described as lacquered or '*laqueados*' from *'la China', 'la India', 'las Indias' or 'la India de Portugal'*.

100 These pieces, corresponding to the inventory numbers 4.900 and 4.901, are discussed in Maria Paz Aguiló Alonso, *El mueble en España. Siglos XVI y XVII*, Madrid, 1993; Maria Paz Aguiló Alonso, 'El interés por lo exótico. Precisiones acerca del colleccionismo de arte namban en el siglo XVI', in Centro de Estudios Históricos, Actas de las IX Jornadas de Arte, *El arte en las cortes de Carlos V y Felipe II*, Madrid, 1999, pp. 151–168; and Yayoi Kawamura, 'Discurso de la recepción de la Dra. Kawamura sobre 'Laca japonesa en la época Namban: Sevilla abierta a Oriente a través del mar'', *Temas de Estética y Arte*, no. XXXIX, Academia de Bellas Artes de Santa Isabel de Hungría, Sevilla, 2011, pp. 75–94. Mentioned in Kawamura, 2013, p. 268 (p. 55, English version).

101 Javier Villalba Fernández, 'Las primeras visitas de los viajeros del Lejano Occidente a Japón', in Kawamura, 2013, p. 15.

102 Mentioned in Father Adriano di St. Thecla, *Opusculum de Sectis apud Sinenses et Tunkinenses. A Small Treatise on the Sects among the Chinese and Tokinese. A Study of Religion in China and North Vietnam in the Eighteenth Century*, Ithaca, 2002, p. 224, note 44. On December of that year, Hideyoshi issued an edict in which he stated 'I will that there be no more preaching of this law hereafter'. Cited in Jurgis Elisonas, 'Christianity and the Daimyo', in John Whitley Hall (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume 4: Early Modern Japan*, Cambridge, 1991, p. 364.

103 Blair and Robertson, 1905, Vol. XIV: 1606–1609, pp. 226–227.

104 See, for instance, a pair of six-panel screens attributed to Kano Naizen (1570–1616), made in *c.*1600, in a private collection, illustrated in Weston, 2013, pp. 92–93, nos. 1a and b.

105 I am greatly indebted to Father Lázaro Sastre for providing me with an image of the lectern and for granting me permission to include it in this doctoral dissertation. Although the lectern was formerly housed in the Carmelite community of San José de Medina de Rioseco (dismantled in 2006), it is believed to have belonged to the nearby Dominican convent of San Pedro Mártir in Toledo, until 1836 when the friars were expelled under the Mendizábal disentailment laws (1836). For a discussion and images of this lectern, see Eloisa Wattenberg, *Medina de Rioseco Ciudad, Catálogo monumental de la provincial de Valladolid, vol. XVIII*, Valladolid, 2003, p. 158, fig 721; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 408–409, no. 29.

Fig. 4.1.1.1.18 Six-panel folding screen, one of a pair (detail right-hand side screen)
Kanô Naizen (1570–1616)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Height: 154.5cm; width: 363.2cm (each screen)
Kobe City Museum, Kobe

Philippines should be allowed to go to preach in Japan via Manila, but in Japanese ships rather than Spanish ships.[103] The Augustinians built the Church of the Holy Spirit in Nagasaki, and soon after more churches. In 1636, the Dominican friars from the Philippines organized a missionary expedition to Japan, but were arrested and condemned to death by the tribunal of Nagasaki. Visual sources attest to the presence of friars from these Mendicant Orders in Japan. They appear depicted, alongside Jesuits, in a number on *Namban* folding screens (Fig. 4.1.1.1.18).[104]

Only a few extant examples of liturgical lacquers made to order for the Mendicant Orders who were present in Japan, or believed to be associated with such an Order, have been recorded thus far. These pieces are all found in Spain. An apparently unique lectern decorated in the *Namban* style with *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlays, dating to *c.*1580–1614, now in the Dominican convent of San Esteban in Salamanca, was undoubtedly made for the Dominican friars (Fig. 4.1.1.1.19).[105] As Kawamura has noted, the oval medallion of its front panel instead of bearing the Jesuit monogram, bears the monogram of the Order of Saint Dominic within a rosary crowned with a cross, which represents the province of Nuestra Señora del Rosario with its headquarters established in the Philippines at the end of the sixteenth century.[106] Another lectern decorated in the *Namban* style with a large-scale floral design, but bearing no Christian iconography was formerly in the convent of Santa María Magdalena, Medina del Campo (Fig. 4.1.1.1.20).[107] It is likely that this lectern was made to order at the end of the Momoyama period, or sometime after the 1614 edict officially banning

Fig. 4.1.1.1.19 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Height: 35cm; width: 31cm
Museo San Esteban PP Dominicos, Salamanca

Fig. 4.1.1.1.20 *Namban* lectern (*shokendai*)
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Dimensions: 31.5cm x 50cm
Convent of Santa Maria Magdalena,
Medina del Campo, Valladolid

Christianity. According to Casado Paramio, the lectern may have been taken or sent as a gift to this convent of Augustinian nuns by one of the chaplains from the Philippine Augustinian Order.[108] There is also a small oratory that instead of a sacred painting has a Sicilian silver crucifix inlaid with coral attached to the back panel in the Monasterio de las Trinitarias Descalzas in Madrid, which was most likely given to the monastery by the benefactress María de Villena y Melo, or by a family member of Juana Manuel de Portugal.[109]

Six liturgical lacquers made to order in the *Namban* style during the Momoyama and early Edo periods are of particular interest to this study. All appear to be unique examples of their types. These include a small hanging oratory of shallow almost square shape, dating to the late sixteenth century, now in a private collection in Oporto, which has an opening at the top for inserting a religious oil painting and a sliding panel that opens to the right.[110] A hexagonal domed tabernacle in the Peabody Essex Museum, constructed with a panelled base and six angled plinths on which stand pairs of pillars, all supporting a hexagonal dome surmounted by a tall finial, appears to have been made after an Indo-Portuguese model (Fig. 4.1.1.1.21).[111] The shape of this type of tabernacle, dating to *c.*1580–1615, may have in turn derived from that of silver tabernacles of large size made by Iberian silversmiths in the early sixteenth century, which served to hold the monstrance containing the Holy Host carried in procession on Corpus Christi day.[112] A comparable example similarly made in the manner of a hexagonal temple by Juan de Orna in Burgos in 1526, called a *custodia* in Spanish, can be found in Santo Domingo de Silos in Barcelona.[113] This suggests that the lacquer tabernacle could have been intended to hold a monstrance containing the Holy Host, or perhaps a sacred statuette. A standing shrine or retable of deep rectangular form with a tall triangular pediment in a private collection in Japan has an unusual

106 Ibid., pp. 408–409.

107 It was founded in 1552 by Rodrigo de Dueñas, a rich merchant and important finance minister of Charles I (r. 1519–1556), and his wife D. Catalina Cuadrado, as an Augustine Foundation to cater for young people in difficulties and to supply basic education for the children of poor families. The lectern, now in the Museo de Arte Oriental of Valladolid, is published in José Manuel Casado Paramio, 'Atril Namban', in Vv. Aa., *Clausuras: el patrimonio de los conventos de la provincial de Valladolid. 1 Medina del Campo,* Valladolid, 1999, pp. 116–117; José Manuel Casado Paramio, 'Atril Namban', in Alfredo J. Morales Martínez (ed.), *Filipinas, puerta de Oriente: de Legazpi a Malaspina*, exhibition catalogue, Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior-Lunwerg, Madrid and Barcelona, 2003, p. 249, no. 123; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 282–283, ill. 48.

108 Casado Paramio, 2003, p. 249.

109 The monastery was founded in 1602 by San Juan Bautista de la Concepción (1561–1613), under the patronage of Sancho de la Cerda y Portugal, I Marquis de la Laguna de Camero-Viejo (?–1575) and his second wife María de Villena y Melo, who was a Lady of the House of Braganza. Sancho de la Cerda y Portugal was the son of Juan II de la Cerda y Silva, 4th Duke of Medinaceli (1556–1564) and Juana Manuel de Portugal (1520–1568), daughter of Sancho I de Noronha Portugal, 2nd Count of Faro. The crucifix may have been acquired during the time Sancho's father was Viceroy of Sicily (1556–1564). The oratory is published in Yayoi Kawamura, 'Obras de laca del arte namban en los Monasterios de la Encarnación y de las Trinitarias de Madrid', *Reales Sitios,* vol. XXXVIII, No. 147, 2001, p. 6. For a discussion of the crucifix, see J. M. Cruz Valdovinos, *Platería europea en España, 1300–1700*, Madrid, 1997, pp. 292–293.

110 The metal suspension ring at the top was intended both for hanging the oratory and securing the painting. A comb-case with a mirror in black lacquered wood inlaid in mother-of-pearl showing



Fig. 4.1.1.1.21 *Namban* tabernacle
Momoyama period (1573–1615), *c.*1600
Height: 60.1cm; width: 29.8cm
Peabody Essex Museum,
Salem, Massachusetts (inv. no. E76704)

Opposite page left
**Fig. 4.1.1.1.22 *Namban* standing shrine or retable**
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1630
Height: 67.5cm; width: 27.5cm; depth: 13cm
Private collection, Japan

Opposite page right
**Fig. 4.1.1.1.23 Indo-Portuguese oratory or shrine**
Seventeenth century
Museo de Arte e Arqueologia, Viana do Castelo
(inv. no. MAAVC 1043)

Right
**Fig. 4.1.1.1.24 Lacquered oratory or shrine**
Probably Indo-Portuguese
Sixteenth/seventeenth century
Height: 43.3cm; width: 24.8cm; depth: 12.8cm
Real Monasterio de la Encarnacion, Madrid
Patrimonio Nacional (00620040)

combination of *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay in the *Namban* style lacquer with carved Indo-Portuguese decoration (Fig. 4.1.1.1.22).[114] This hybrid liturgical shrine, dating to *c.*1600–1630, would most probably have served to hold a sacred statuette. The relief carved decoration of the interior frame, frieze, base and cornices is almost identical to that seen on a seventeenth century Indo-Portuguese oratory made in teak, lacquer and mother-of-pearl housed in the Museu de Arte e Arqueologia in Viana do Castelo, which bears the emblem of the Order of Saint Dominic on the interior of the doors (Fig. 4.1.1.1.23).[115] It seems likely that the carved decoration was a later addition made at one of the workshops working under Portuguese patronage in India. Moreover, the gold oval sunburst painted on the black lacquered back panel may also be of Indo-Portuguese influence or manufacture, as sunbursts were frequently carved or painted on seventeenth century Indo-Portuguese oratories, serving as background for a sacred statuette or crucifix.[116] It is important to note that an oratory in the Real Monasterio de la Encarnación in Madrid was formerly believed to be another hybrid liturgical lacquer combining *Namban* and carved Indo-Portuguese decoration of *c.*1620–1630, but Kawamura has recently noted that it is probably Indo-Portuguese with lacquer and mother-of-pearl decoration that could have been made both in India or the Ryûkyû islands (Fig. 4.1.1.1.24).[117]

The fact that some unique liturgical lacquers are found in convents of Mendicant Orders provides further evidence of special orders made for them. Such and example is a large crucifix decorated with *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay in *Namban* style with an ivory figure of Jesus Christ made in Manila, which is housed in the convent of San Esteban in Salamanca, Spain (Fig. 4.1.1.1.25).[118] The supposed Hispano-Philippine origin of the ivory Christ suggest that the crucifix was ordered by a Dominican friar who was at some point in Japan, who could have brought the ivory figure with him to Japan or taken the crucifix to Manila where it was added. It would then have arrived at the convent via the Spanish trade route through New Spain. One cannot fail to wonder if the 'Eight crosses from Japan' listed in the 1628 inventory of the belongings of Viceroy Francisco da Gama mentioned earlier would have been like the extant *Namban* lacquer crucifix discussed here.[119] There is also a Host receptacle decorated in *Namban* style of deep, almost square shape with a triangular pediment bearing a Christian cross inlaid in mother-of-pearl, and a hinged front door that opens to the side, in the Santiago Apóstol parish church in Gáldar, Gran Canaria (Fig. 4.1.1.1.26).[120] It is probable that the simple temple-like shape of this Host receptacle derives from a European or Indo-Portuguese model. According to an inscription on a silver lamp, also used for the Eucharist, this Host receptacle was given to the parish by doña María de Quintana, a benefactress who sent it with other objects made of silver from New Spain in 1626.[121] This example further demonstrates that liturgical lacquers circulated via the Spanish trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade routes to Spain. The *Namban* style crucifix and Host receptacle discussed above would have had an evident Christian association in Japan and thus were probably made prior to the 1614 edict banning Christianity.

Perhaps the most unusual liturgical lacquer recorded thus far is a Host receptacle in the Franciscan convent of San Juan de la Penitencia (better known as Las Juanas) in Alcalá de Henares in Madrid, dating to *c.*1580–1630, which has a hybrid form that is neither European nor Japanese (Fig. 4.1.1.1.27).[122] Recent research by Kawamura has shown that it was originally a cabinet of rectangular form with a fall front door, which had later additions of a crown-like support for a cross at the top, four small cubic candlestick holders at the corners, and a protruding candlestick holder on either side of the base, to be adapted to serve as a Host receptacle of the Baroque style.[123] The interior was originally fitted with four rows of small drawers, which were removed and their traces on the sides, top and back (the original back lacquer panel was replaced by a wood panel painted in black) were then covered with silk lining. Kawamura has

a related system is found in the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. A similar type of sliding system to the one seen on this oratory, although in smaller scale, is recorded in a backgammon board in which a small compartment with a sliding panel, possibly to hold dice, is placed at either side of the wooden frame. For a discussion on these comparative pieces and images of this oratory, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 56–59, no. 7 and pp. 72–77, no. 10. Also see Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 278–279, fig. 12.

111 Published in Impey and Jörg, p. 194, ill. 466; and Canepa, 2011/2, p. 282, fig. 14. Compare, for instance, an ebony and ivory Indo-Portuguese oratory of related form, dating to the seventeenth century, published in Soares da Cunha, 1998, p. 322, no. 88.

112 For a discussion on silver custodias made by Spanish silversmiths in the early sixteenth century, see Juan F. Riano, *The Industrial Arts of Spain*, London, 1890, pp. 26–28.

113 Published in Oman, 1968, pl. 59, fig. 101.

114 See note 58. Discussed and illustrated in Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 285–287, fig. 17.

115 I am grateful to Salomé Abreu, conservator of the Museu de Arte y Arqueologia in Viana do Castelo, for providing me with an image of this oratory. Published in Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 285 and 287, fig. 18.

116 See, for instance, an Indo-Portuguese oratory in the Museu de Évora. Sunbursts of this type continued to appear in the eighteenth century, as seen in another example formerly in the collection of Commander Ernesto Vilhena. Published in Soares da Cunha, 1998, pp. 322–325, no. 89 and p. 324. Mentioned in Canepa, 2011/2, p. 287.

117 In the past several scholars, including Kawamura and the present author, considered this oratory as a *Namban* example. For this revised attribution, see Kawamura, 2013, pp. 257–258, pl. 18 and pp. 291–292, note 8.

118 For a recent discussion on this crucifix and further bibliographical references, see Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 281 and 283, fig. 15; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 414–415, no. 31.

119 See note 86. The crosses appear listed on the transcription of Francisco da Gama's inventory made by Marrafa de Oliveira for the project 'A Casa Senhorial em Lisboa e no Rio de Janeiro (séculos XVII, XVIII e XIX). The transcription also lists '..an empty writing cabinet from Japan', which most probably referred to a *Namban* writing cabinet. The original texts in Portuguese read: 'Oito cruzes de Japão', and '… hum escritorio de Japão vazio'.

120 The tall, protruding base of the Host receptacle is a later addition. I am grateful to Fernando Rodriguez Suarez for providing me with images and information on this Host receptacle. For more information refer to Maria de los Reyes Hernández Socorro, *Arte Hispanoamericano en las Canarias Orientales, siglos XVI–XIX*, Gran Canaria, 2000, pp. 184–86; Yayoi Kawamura, 'Reflexion on namban lacquers in Spain: collection and use', *Arts of Asia*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (2009), p. 105; Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 283–285, fig. 16; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 416–417, no. 32.

121 The inscription in Spanish reads: 'ESTA LÁMPARA DA DOÑA MARYA DE QVINTANA A LA YGLESYA DE LA PARROQVIA DE SANTIAGO DE LA VYLLA DE GVALDAR [sic] AÑO DE MYLL Y 626'. It appears documented for the first time during the pastoral visit that Bishop Cristóbal de la Cámara y Murga made to Gáldar on 31st December 1628, as a 'caja da china'. Years later, on 22 September 1639, Luis Ruiz de Alarcón wrote that it had been donated by María de Quintana. This information was added in 1655 by canon Marcos Verde de Aguilar to the 1638 inventory: 'Un Sagrario nuevo que puso en dicha Iglesia el Sr. Canónigo, grande y otro de carey en la sacristía'. In the inventory of 18th September 1658 it is mentioned as a 'sagrario pequeño de carey'. In those of 1821 and 1830, it is described as being used as a 'Sagrario de carey para el Jueves Santo'. After this Holy day (that commemorates the last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles and falls on the Thursday before Easter) it is kept in the sacristy for the rest of the year. Cited in Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 284–285, note 110.

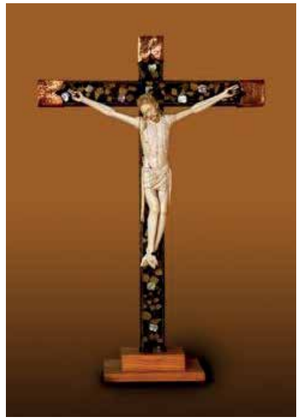

Fig. 4.1.1.1.25 *Namban* crucifix
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Height: 73cm; width: 52cm
Museo San Esteban PP Dominicos, Salamanca
(inv. no. SA.E.50)

Fig. 4.1.1.1.27 *Namban* cabinet, converted into a Holy Host receptacle
Momoyama/early Edo period, c.1580–1630
Original cabinet: height: 33.3cm; width: 44.4cm; depth: 30.2cm
Convent of San Juan de la Penitencia, Alcalá de Henares, Madrid

noted that the fine lacquer layers of the original back panel and drawers were split and then pasted onto the new wooden additions, and that this extensive and meticulous alteration work, as well as the addition of three silver lock-plates enriched with red, blue and green semiprecious stones, may have been made in New Spain, sometime after the mid-seventeenth century. There is no documentary evidence concerning the arrival of this liturgical lacquer to the convent.

Friars of these Mendicant Orders also participated in establishing diplomatic relations between the rulers of Japan and Europe, as well as those representing the Spanish Crown in New Spain. In 1613, the Spanish Franciscan Luis Sotelo (1574–1624) was appointed ambassador for another Japanese delegation, known as the *Keichô* Embassy, which was sent via New Spain to the royal court in Madrid and the Vatican. Hasekura Tsunenaga (1571–1621), a *samurai* from the fief of Sendai, was sent to Europe by his feudal warlord, Date Masamune (1567–1636), who organized the diplomatic mission. In January 1615, Philip II received the Japanese delegation in Madrid. In November of that same year, they were granted an audience with Pope Paul V in Rome. The main goals of the mission were to request Franciscan missionaries to be sent to a region of Japan controlled by the Date clan and to finalize a treaty that would have established direct Japanese trade relations with New Spain.[124] Textual sources attest to the presence of Japanese lacquered objects in the King's residence in Madrid, the Alcázar, in the early decades of the seventeenth century. In a description of the New Room or Mirror Room made by the Italian antiquarian Cassiano del Pozzo 1588–1657) during his visit in 1626, at the time Philip IV was reigning, he states that 'In the same room, before entering, there was one of those paintings from Japan that is folded one [panel] against the other in the manner of their books, which, standing on their feet, serve to divide rooms and to screen doors. They are called '*biombos*'. They are made with long panels, one attached to the other, and unfold together. It was

122 Recently published as a Host receptacle in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 185, no. 441; and Canepa, 2011/2, pp. 279–281, fig. 13.

123 For this opinion and further bibliographical references, see Kawamura, 2013, pp. 382–387, no. 20. *Namban* cabinets of this shape will be discussed in the following section of this Chapter.

124 For more information on this mission, see Javier Villalba Fernández, 'Japón, Date Masamune y la embajada Keichô', in Kawamura, 2013, pp. 47–92 (pp. 9–12, English version).



Fig. 4.1.1.1.26 *Namban* host receptacle
Momoyama period (1573–1615)
Height: 35.5cm; width: 25.5cm; depth: 24cm
Santiago Apóstol Parish Church, Gáldar, Gran Canaria

125 Cassiano del Pozzo, untitled journal of Cardinal Frncesco Barberini's legation to Spain in 1626, Biblioteca Apostólica Vaticana, Ms. Barb. Lat. 5689, unpaginated. Transcribed by S.N. Orso, *Philip IV and the Decoration of the Alcázar of Madrid*, Princeton, 1986, p. 188. Cited in Krahe, 2014, Vol. I, p. 122.

126 For a discussion on the folding screens imported into New Spain as early as 1607 and their influence in the local production of folding screens, see Sofia Sanabrais, 'The Biombo or Folding Screen in Colonial Mexico', in Pierce and Otsuka, 2009, pp. 69–106.

127 For a discussion on the Japanese folding screens taken by the first Japanese Embassy and their influence in the decorative arts of New Spain, see Cabañas Moreno, 2013, pp. 297–319 (pp. 85–106, English version).

constructed from the aforesaid standing paintings [and made] a small room, which takes up little space when it is in use. They can be carried conveniently, they make a very charming show of painting, and they can quickly form a room in whatever shape is desired'.[125] The object described as 'paintings from Japan that is folded' is in all probability a folding screen, perhaps one of the two pairs brought by the first Japanese embassy to Philip II in 1582. Although such folding screens, which appear to have been imported in considerable quantities to New Spain,[126] are beyond the scope of this study, they are important in demonstrating the continuous use of Japanese lacquer objects, even if only in small quantities, by the royal court of Madrid.[127]

To sum up, the Jesuits played a very important role in the cultural and artistic exhanges that occurred between Japan, Western Europe and the New World in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Jesuits, as textual sources have shown, were well aware of the high quality and artistic value of lacquer objects made in the Momoyama period for the domestic market, and this led them to send pieces of Japanese lacquer as gifts and thus spread a taste for it among the royalty, clergy and nobility of Renaissance Europe in the late sixteenth century. Isolated from Europe, Macao, Malacca and Goa, and with the rapid spread of Christianity, the Jesuits of the Japan mission required a regular supply of religious objects for their devotional practices and evangelical work. This necessity, and the opportunity they had to observe the fine lacquer manufacturing techniques as well as the sumptuous lacquer paintings made by reknown artists of the Kāno family for the interiors of the newly built castles of some of powerful feudal warlords, prompted the Jesuits to order liturgical lacquers to their specific requirements from local lacquer craftsmen working in, and around Miyako, which were intended for use in personal devotion and Jesuit churches in Japan, and most probably also in their missions in Asia, Europe and the New World. The lacquer craftsmen ingeniously adapted their traditional lacquer manufacturing

techniques, which had been influenced by objects imported from China and Korea, and developed a new style of *urushi* lacquer for export, known as *Namban*, most likely to speed up the production process and to lower the cost, which consisted in reducing or totally omitting the textile layers on the base or edges, and the use of relatively simple lacquer techniques.

The Jesuit textual sources and extant liturgical lacquers discussed above demonstrate that the lacquer craftsmen made a wide variety of hybrid objects for the Jesuits, which combined a European or Indo-Portuguese shape, and the 'IHS' monogram of the Society of Jesus or other motifs embedded with Christian symbolism, with a new *urushi* lacquer style depicting dense compositions of Japanese flowering or fruiting plants, birds, animals (both real and mythical) in gold and silver *makie* most probably based on paintings made by the Kanō school, but with a *horror vacui* and lavish use of mother-of-pearl inlay (*raden*) which were alien to Japanese aesthetics. In addition, the Jesuits ordered laquer objects that could have been used both in religious and secular contexts, some with the 'IHS' monogram. These included objects such as writing boxes that combined a traditional Japanese shape and finest lacquer techniques with the 'IHS' monogram. Such fine and expensive liturgical lacquers would most probably have been intended for personal use or to give as gifts to powerful *daimyō*, who had converted to Christianity and supported their mission in Japan. It also included low, rectangular tables that were most probably used as portable altars in Japan. It seems reasonable to believe that the extant liturgical lacquers with Christian iconography that would not have been immediately recognizable by the Tokugawa shogunate, or no Christian iconography at all, began to be made to order for the Jesuits after the anti-Christian edict of 1597, which caused the execution of missionaries for preaching Christianity.

The lacquer decoration of the liturgical lacquers made to order with the 'IHS' monogram in the early Edo period, as shown earlier, was also executed in the so-called Transition style with an even simpler, less time-consuming technique depicting large-scale flowers and autumn grasses in flat gold and silver *hiramakie* on a plain black lacquer ground, and details incised by needle drawing (*harigaki*), which imitated the *Kodaiji makie* style introduced by the workshops of the Kōami family of Miyako for the domestic market in the late sixteenth century. The liturgical lacquer objects decorated in the hybrid *Namban* or the so-called Transition styles discussed above, and a considerable number of others that are still found today in churches, monasteries and convents in both Portugal and Spain,[128] demonstrate that the majority of the liturgical lacquers were made for the Jesuits. This is not surprising as they were not only the first Christian missionaries to arrive in Japan, but also those who being sponsored by the Portuguese Crown were able to remain there for a longer period of time. Jesuit textual sources and these extant objects attest to the direct involvement of the Jesuits in such liturgical lacquer orders, unlike those made to order for them in Chinese porcelain at the same time discussed in Chapter III, which reflect the indirect nature of orders placed through Chinese junk traders who acted as middleman between the Jesuits and porcelain potters.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century a small number of liturgical lacquers were also made to order for friars of the Agustinian and Dominican Mendicant Orders, or even for private individuals, who may never have actually served in Japan, to be sent as gifts to these religious institutions or to members of the nobility in the Iberian Peninsula and/or New Spain. Only a few extant liturgical lacquers made to order

128 A number of other liturgical lacquers in religious institutions in Portugal are discussed in Mendes Pinto, 1990; and d'Oliveira Martins, 2010. Others in religious institutions in Spain are discussed in Kawamura, 2013.



for the Mendicant Orders, or believed to be associated with such and order, have been recorded thus far. These pieces are all in monasteries and convents in Spain. The most important example, providing tangible evidence of an order made for the Dominicans, is a lectern bearing the monogram of the Order of Saint Dominic decorated in *Namban* style and dating to the Momoyama period. Friars of these Mendicant Orders, as shown above, also helped in further establishing diplomatic relations between Japan and the rulers and clergy of Western Europe, as well as those representing the Spanish Crown in New Spain, in the early seventeenth century. A Franciscan friar, for instance, was appointed ambassador of the second Japanese delegation to Europe, which was sent via New Spain to the royal court of Madrid and the Vatican.

The extant liturgical lacquers decorated in the so-called Transition style with the 'IHS' monogram still found in monasteries or convents in Portugal and Spain demonstrate that despite the severity of the Christian persecution, the Jesuits and missionaries of the Mendicant Orders (Franciscans, Augustinians and Dominicans) present in Japan at the time continued to order liturgical lacquers in the early Edo period up until about 1639, when the country was closed to all Europeans (*sakoku*). It is not possible to ascertain exactly how all these liturgical lacquers arrived at their destinations in the Iberian Peninsula and New World. It is clear, however, that they circulated via the Portuguese trans-Atlantic trade route through Macao and Goa, or via the Spanish trans-Pacific trade route through Manila to Acapulco, and subsequently the trans-Atlantic trade route through Veracruz to Seville. Other extant liturgical lacquers housed in public and private collections around the world suggest that a number of such lacquers were taken from Japan by Christian missionaries as well as by Japanese converts who sought refuge abroad.

**Lacquer for the Portuguese and Spanish markets** [4.1.1.2]

It is well known that Portuguese merchants brought with them a variety of European models of portable furniture to the Far East. By the time of their arrival in Japan in 1543, the Portuguese were already familiar with the mother-of-pearl objects from the coastal region of Gujarat in western India,[129] as well as with lacquer objects from China, which had been imported in small quantities to the Iberian Peninsula, since the early sixteenth century.[130] The Portuguese merchants, whose commercial activities in Hirado and later Nagasaki supported the Jesuit mission, noticed that Japanese lacquer for export was of superior quality and thus began to order lacquer objects intended for the Portuguese secular market, which would have been useful for private use in a European context or in their settlements in Asia that had hot and humid climates. Some of the portable furniture they took to Japan served as models to the lacquer craftsmen, particularly those working in and around Miyako, who made new types of furniture and utilitarian objects using both local materials and decorative techniques.[131] The exact date when such lacquers were first made proves difficult to ascertain. It is likely that they were being made by the early Momoyama period, possibly shortly after *c.*1580 when liturgical lacquers are believed to have been first made, and that production continued until the expulsion of the Portuguese and Christian missionaries from Japan in 1639, in the early Edo period. Initially all these pieces of portable furniture and utilitarian objects were decorated in the *Namban* style created by the lacquer craftsmen for the liturgical lacquers made for the Jesuits, with had a rich mixture of Japanese and European and/or Indo-Portuguese influences. By the early Edo period, as occurred with the liturgical lacquers discussed in the previous section of

129 By the early sixteenth century, Gujarat was the centre of production of mother-of-pearl objects, either inlaid entirely with pieces of mother-of-pearl or with black lac (generally known as black mastic or Gujarat lac) and mother-of-pearl overlaid decoration, for both the local and export markets, including Turkey, the Middle East and Europe. For a discussion on the objects made in Gujarat for the Portuguese market and two examples of black mastic and mother-of-pearl objects, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2009, pp. 54–75, nos. 3 and 4.

130 The lacquer mentioned in Portuguese and Spanish written sources of the early to mid-sixteenth century, including inventories and letters, was most likely Chinese or Indo-Portuguese. Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 11 and 284. As Moura Carvalho has noted the furniture brought to Japan by the Black Ship depicted in *Namban* folding screens appears to be all of Chinese origin. Moura Carvalho, 2013, p. 39.

131 The region of Miyako, as Curvelo has noted, appears to have been one of the main production centres of lacquer made to order for the Portuguese. Curvelo, 2010, p. 23.

Figs. 4.1.1.2.1a and b *Namban* coffer
Momoyama/early Edo period
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Height: 85.2cm; width: 116.5cm; depth: 45cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. FE.33-1983)



Fig. 4.1.1.2.2 Group of mother-of-pearl objects
Gujarat
Early seventeenth century
British Museum, London
(museum nos. OA+2643, 1–2; OA+2644; OA+2642)

this Chapter, lacquer pieces were also being decorated in the so-called Transition style. These lacquers came to be much admired in Portugal and the rest of Europe and thus lead to an enormous number of orders for secular use. Some of these lacquers, as will be shown, were also adapted for religious use.

Although documentary evidence of specific lacquer orders made in Japan remains scarce, there are numerous extant lacquer pieces in convents and monasteries in Spain and Portugal, as well as in public and private collections around the world, which provide material evidence of the varied typologies of portable furniture and utilitarian objects ordered by the Portuguese and Spanish at the time. The shapes of the furniture, as will be shown in the following pages, were mostly based on those of pieces made to order for the Portuguese at various workshops in India, in turn copying European models from Germany, Italy and Spain, which circulated throughout Europe.

A clear example of such hybrid influences is seen in some of the *Namban* lacquer coffers of rectangular form with a half-cylindrical lid hinged at the back, fitted with metal carrying handles on the sides, which appear to have been among the earliest furniture made to order for the Portuguese in the Momoyama period (Figs. 4.1.1.2.1a and b).[132] The shape copied faithfully a domed chest, one of the most important pieces of furniture in Renaissance Europe, commonly used to store clothing. Renaissance domed chests, like those made in Italy (*cassone*), were richly decorated with carvings and intarsia, often combined with ivory, mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell.[133] Jesuit textual sources attest to the presence of European coffers in Japan in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. A letter written in Miyako by Father Luís Fróis to Father Belchior de Figueiredo in July 1569, inform us that the poweful *daimyō* Oda Nobunaga had so much clothing and objects from Europe and India that 'some twelve or fifteen trunks like those of the kingdom [Portugal], [were] full'.[134] In a treatise written that same year, Father Luís Fróis compares European and Japanese chests, saying that 'Our houses [are furnished] with leather trunks and Frandes [Flanders] coffers or cedar wood trunks; those from Japan having black baskets made from cow hide …'.[135] The use of chests by the Jesuits residing in Japan is attested by the 'seven small lacquered chests, three bought by Father Barreto himself, having the other two given to him by Father Baltasar Correia' listed among the belongings left by Father Manuel Barreto to his successor Father Manuel Borges, in 1616.[136]

132 For a discussion on all types of coffers with domed lids with solid ends, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 304–331, nos. 40–45.

133 See, for instance, the examples published in Franz Windisch-Graetz, *Möbel Europas, Renaissance – Manierismus*, Munich, 1983, pp. 180 and 188, pl. 6, figs. 25–27.

134 Cited in William Watson (ed.), *The Great Japan Exhibition. Art of the Edo Period 1600–1868*, exhibition catalogue, The Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1981, p. 242; and Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 78, note 36.

135 *Treatise in which is contained a very succinct and brief account of some of the contradictions and differences of customs between the people of Europe and this province of Japan. 1585.* Cited in Ibid.

136 See note 85. Cited in Curvelo, 2001, p. 32.

Lacquer craftsmen made domed coffers with slight variations on the shape (such as the addition of front drawers in the base, of raised wooden bands across on the half-cylindrical lid, or of a broad base protruding on all sides) in a variety of sizes.[137] At first the *Namban* style lacquer decoration, regardless of the size of the coffer, was divided into rectangular panels (ranging from one to up to five) enclosing a dense design of birds and/or animals among flowering and fruiting plants, each divided and framed by geometric borders.[138] From the beginning of the seventeenth century, coffers were also decorated with bird or animal scenes within diamond or multi-lobed cartouches reserved on grounds of geometric designs inlaid in mother-of-pearl, of tiny particles of mother-of-pearl (*aogai*), or of a material of animal origin: painted/pasted fish skin from ray or shark (*samegawa* or *samekawa*), in addition to *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay. In Japan, pasted skin of rays and sharks had been used in a variety of decorative objects from at least the Nara period (710–794).[139] Jesuit reports attest to the use of fish skin on lacquer objects in the early seventeenth century.[140] At this point it is important to note that the majority of extant *Namban* coffers with this decoration do not have pasted fish skin. Instead, they have the 'sprinkling denticle' technique that appears to have been developed by the local lacquer craftsmen to best suit the decoration of objects made to order in large quantities for the Portuguese.[141] More rarely coffers of relatively large size were decorated with rectangular panels covered entirely in the 'sprinkle denticle' technique,[142] or with an all-over design of small scales of mother-of-pearl forming an overlapping lappet motif, each secured by a gilt-copper rivet and separated by narrow strips of black and gold *hiramakie* lacquer, all framed by broad geometric borders, as seen in this example dating to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century in the Victoria and Albert Museum.[143] This latter style of decoration, as noted by Jaffer, was undoubtedly copied by the local lacquer craftsmen from the coffers or other smaller objects brought by the Portuguese from Gujarat, where workshops produced objects in a meticulous technique of mother-of-pearl inlay for the local market as well as for export to the Middle East, the east coast of Africa and Western Europe (Fig. 4.1.1.2.2).[144] The interior of the coffers of this shape was covered in black lacquer, and the interior of the lid was sometimes decorated in gold and brown *makie* with Japanese figures or birds surrounded by a dense design of scrolling *kudsu* (*kusu*) vine, as seen in the Victoria and Albert example illustrated in Fig. 4.1.1.2.1b. This example serves to illustrate the strong influence exerted by the Portuguese merchants in some of the lacquer objects made to order for them, most likely through direct involvement in such orders, which combine elements of three very different and distant cultures: a shape brought by the Portuguese from Europe and a decorative style brought from their settlements in India, with a decorative style created in Japan to suit European demand.[145]

Textual sources attest to the presence of domed chests and other objects made of lacquer in Portugal in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. In 1564, Catherine of Austria purchased 'five black lacquer tables; three square lacquer writing desks, each with a large drawer in the middle for paper; two domed lacquer chests, one larger that the other; 178 folding fans…'.[146] The folding fans, as shown by Jordan Gschwend, were Japanese.[147] Thus, as noted by Impey and Jörg, it is possible that these lacquer pieces, or at least some of them, were also Japanese.[148] A large *Namban* domed coffer, dating to the Momoyama period, kept in the Reliquary room of the Monastery of las Descalzas Reales in Madrid is among the earliest extant pieces of Japanese lacquer recorded in Europe. It is believed that the coffer was given to the monastery by the Empress Maria of Austria (sister of Philip II), who, when returning to Spain from Germany after becoming the widow of her first cousin Emperor Maximilian II, settled in the monastery, which had been found by her sister Princess Joanna.[149] The coffer is most probably that mentioned in the book *Relacion historica de la Real fundacion de las Descalças de S. Clara de la villa de Madrid …* , published by the Franciscan Friar Juan de Carrillo in 1616. In Chapter XVIII, Carrillo states that 'Her Majesty the Empress [Maria] sent from Germany, four reliquaries with six heads of different saints and with them arrived a large chest embroidered [decorated] with gold and pearls [mother-of-pearl], inside of which are the head and body of St. Valerio, Bishop of Treueris [Treverís], disciple of saint Peter'.[150] If Carrillo's book is considered as a reliable documentary source, as noted by Kawamura, this coffer would date prior to 1582, the year the Empress Maria returned to Spain. It is possible that Empress Maria acquired the coffer that same year in Lisbon, where she purchased a number of curiosities for the *Kunstkammer* of her son, Emperor Rudolf II, in Prague.[151] Recent research, however, suggests that the coffer arrived to the monastery shortly before the Empress's death in 1603 and that it already contained the relics of Saint Valerio.[152] This is one of a considerable number of coffers, together with chests and cabinets, still preserved today in monasteries and convents in Spain and Portugal, which demonstrate that lacquer objects made to order for secular functions were also used for Christian devotional practices in the Iberian Peninsula. In Spain, other extant *Namban* lacquer coffers used to contain the relics or holy remains of saints in reliquary rooms,[153] can be found in the Monastery of Santa María de Guadalupe in Cáceres, Monastery of Santa Paula in Seville, Convent of Corpus Christi in Murcia, Church of San Antolín in Medina del Campo, Convent of la Purísima Concepción in Toro, Church of Artajona in Navarra and the Diocesan Museum in Pamplona (formerly in the Church of Cortes).[154] A further coffer in the Museo de Arte Sacro of Vilanova de Lourenzá parish church in Lugo (a former Benedictine monastery), may had been given by Antonia María de Córdoba, Marchioness of El Villar de Granjero, to the Benedictine Brother Mauro Villaroel, who in turn donated it containing relics to the monastery in August 1632.[155] Another coffer, but not containing relics, is in the Milles de la Polvorosa Church in Zamora.[156] In Portugal, a coffer is in the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Mártires in Arraiolos.[157] Material evidence of a lacquer domed chest made to order for a private Portuguese or Spanish individual for secular use in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century is provided by an example now housed in the Itsuo Art Museum in Osaka, which still preserves its corresponding rattan case bearing a coat of arms and the inscription with the owner's name: 'DOÑA ANA ARZ [Alvarez?] GIRON' (Figs. 4.1.1.2.3a and b).[158]

The shape of *Namban* lacquer coffers with a semi-cylindrical lid that has no solid ends and a body following its curvature at each side, and a metal carrying handle on top of the lid, was not known in Japan before the arrival of the Portuguese (Fig. 4.1.1.1.14). This shape of coffer, known in Japan as fish sausage (*kamaboko-bako* or *kamabokogata*) because of the similarity in shape to the traditional fish sausage (*kamaboko*), may have been adapted from the Indo-Portuguese mother-of-pearl coffers made in Gujarat in the mid-sixteenth century.[159] Such coffers were made in various sizes, sometimes with a horizontal drawer at the bottom of the front panel or an interior tray with fitted boxes, and were probably used to hold personal valuables while travelling.[160] Jordan Gschwend and Pérez de Tudela have suggested that it was probably Ferdinand Cron (1559–1637), the agent of the Habsburg in Goa, who gave

137 See, for instance, a coffer in the Peabody Essex Museum with front drawers published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 150, no. 333. For examples with raised wooden bands on the lid and a protruding base, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 310–315, no. 42.

138 Extant coffers with a single panel can be found in the Museum Schloss Fasanerie in Fulda, the Náprstek Museum in Prague, and the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 150, no. 333; Filip Suchomel and Marcela Sucomelová, *A Surface Created for Decoration. Japanese Lacquer Art from the 16th to the 19th Centuries*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery in Prague, Prague, 2002, pp. 58–59, no. 1; and Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 79. Other examples with a varying number of rectangular panels are in the Kyoto National Museum, the Gifu City Museum of History, and the Florence and Herbert Irving Collection. Published in Kyoto National Museum, 1995, p. 113, no. 146; Gifu City History Museum, *Namban*, exhibition catalogue, Gifu, 2003, p. 78, no. IV-10; and Murase, 2003, p. 294, no. 137. Mentioned in Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, p. 309.

139 Examples dating to the Nara period include the hilt of a Chinese sword in the Shōsōin repository, and the sheath of a knife, which was dedicated to the Hōryū-ji Temple. For this opinion, see Kanako Morinaka, 'Samé Nuri techniques in the Seventeenth Century. Lost techniques of Japanese lacquer art', unpublished English article, 2004. Mentioned in Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, p. 197, and note 2.

140 The *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam* describes ray or shark skin as '*Same*. A certain kind of fish such as ray or dogfish. Item. The skin of this fish, that serves to cover the hilts of *catanas* [swords], or the scabbard'. It also describes the use of fish skin as '*Mazame*. Skin of sea fish, that is used for scabbards of *catanas*, or *vaquizaxis*'. The original texts in Portuguese read 'Same. Hum certo peixe como raya, ou lixa. Item A pelle deste peixe, que serve de cobrir os punhos da *catana*, ou bainha' and '*Mazame*. Pelle de hũ peixe do mar, que serve pera bainhas de catanas, ou vaquizaxis'. BA, *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, fls. 423f. and 424v; and fl. 295v; respectively. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 21.

141 This technique consisted of extracting the tiny dermal denticles of numerous ray skins, by soaking them until the soft parts became rotten, and subsequently washing and passing the denticles through a sieve to be separated into several sizes. Finally thousands, or in some cases even hundreds of thousands, of the tiny denticles were sprinkled and adhered onto the surface of the object imitating the skin of the shark or ray before the lacquer (*urushi*) was painted. For a detailed discussion on this subject and *Namban* cabinets decorated with this technique, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 194–199, no. 16.

142 For an example of large size, see Ibid., pp. 326–331, no. 45. Another example, but of considerable smaller size, is published in Europália/89, *Japon. Art Namban. 'Les Portugais au Japon'*, Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, 1989, p. 149, no. 64.

143 For a discussion on this type of lacquer coffer combining an all-over mother-of-pearl decoration with *makie* decoration in the *Namban* style, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 60–65, no. 8.

144 Amin Jaffer, 'Asia in Europe: Furniture for the West', in Jackson and Jaffer, 2004, pp. 253–254. For a coffer completely covered in almost identically shaped mother-of-pearl scales held by silver pins from Gujarat, housed in the Museu do Tesoro da Sé in Lisbon, see Felgueiras, 2001, p. 111, cat. 18. Mentioned in Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, p. 62.

145 For a fall-front cabinet showing this particular type of hybrid influences in the Kobe City Museum in Kobe, combining a European shape, with Gujarati style mother-of-pearl decoration on the exterior and *Namban* lacquer decoration on the interior, see Ibid., p. 253, pl. 19.2.

146 The document is published in Jordan Gschwend, 1998, p. 227.

147 Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, 'Exotic Renaissance Accessories. Japanese, Indian and Sinhalese Fans at the Courts of Portugal and Spain', *Apollo* 150 (November 1999), p. 28. However, in a more recent article Jordan Gschwend has stated that the fans were from the Ryūkyū islands (present-day Okinawa prefecture, Japan), which then was a separate kingdom. Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, 'Los primeros abanicos orientales de los Habsburgo', in Mola and Martínez Shaw, 2003, p. 270.

148 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 284.

149 In the last decades of the sixteenth century, Maria of Austria had sent Chinese porcelain and other Asian curiosities to her son, Emperor Rudolf II, in Prague. For a discussion on these gifts, see section 3.1.2 of Chapter III. The lacquer coffer, inv. no. 00612585, is discussed and published in Ana García Sanz, 'Relicarios de Oriente', in Mola and Martínez Shaw, 2003, pp. 132–133 and p. 138, cat. VII–5; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 110–113, no. 1. Another coffer inventoried this same year, 1616, will be discussed in section 4.1.2 of this Chapter.

150 The transcription of the original text in Spanish is 'La Majestad de la Emperatriz embio de Alemania, quarto relicarios con seis cabeças de diversos santos, y cuando vino de allà, traxo a este mismo convento una grande arca bordada de oro y perlas, dentro de la qual esta la cabeça, y el cuerpo santo de san Valerio Obispo de Treueris discipulo de san Pedro'. Juan de Carrillo, *Relacion Historica de la Real Fundacion del Monasterio de las Descalças de S. Clara de la villa de Madrid …*, Madrid, 1616, p. 50. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 286–287; and Kawamura, 2013, p. 112.

151 Trnek, 2001, p. 46.

152 For this opinion, see Trnek and Vassallo e Silva, 2001, p. 230.

153 The Counter-Reformatory cult of saints gave a renewed impetus to the production and veneration of the Holy vessels that would store, protect and sometimes also display the bodily relics associated with the intercession, the votive offering, the annual calendar and other ecclesiastical functions. Mentioned in Canepa, 2011/2, p. 288, note 118.

154 For a discussion on these pieces and images of a 'reliquary' room, see Kawamura, 2009, pp. 92–105, nos. 2, 4, and 11–13.

155 According to research by Kawamura the relics were kept in the coffer from the moment Brother Mauro donated it in 1632 until 1680, when the large reliquary retable was finished. For more information on this donation, see Yayoi Kawamura, 'Arca japonesa del arte Namban en el Museo de Lorenzana', *Boletín del Museo Provincial de Lugo*, tomo IX, Lugo, 2000, pp. 81–85; and Kawamura, 2013, pp. 132–135, no. 9.

156 I am grateful to José Manuel Casado Paramio for providing me with images of this example. Mentioned in Canepa, 2011/2, p. 290, note 119.

157 Published in Paulo Valente, 'Cofre', in Artur Goulart de Melo Borges (coord.), *Arte Sacra na concelho de Arraiolos: Inventário Artístico da Arquidiocese de Évora. Évora*, Fundação Eugénio de Almeida, 2007, pp. 84–85.

158 For further information on this rattan case, see Martha Boyer, *Japanese Export Lacquers from the 17th Century in the National Museum of Denmark*, Copenhagen, 1959. Also published in Leiria, 2002, pp. 54–55, figs. 2 and 3; Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 150, nos. 235a and b; Canepa, 2008/1, p. 24, figs. 11 and 12.

159 Compare, for instance, the shape of an example in the Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales in Madrid, which has also a lid with no solid ends but of an angular instead of semi-circular form, illustrated in García Sanz, 2003, p. 137, no. VII.4.

160 For a discussion and examples of coffers of this shape, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 296–305, nos. 38 and 39.


Fig. 4.1.1.2.3a *Namban* coffer
Momoyama/early Edo period
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Dimensions: 33.5cm x 51cm x 24cm
Height: 33.5cm; width: 51cm; depth: 24cm
Itsuô Art Museum, Osaka

Fig. 4.1.1.2.3b Rattan case
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Height: 38.5cm; width: 60cm; depth: 32cm
Itsuô Art Museum, Osaka



as gifts the *Namban* lacquer coffer of this shape (*kamaboko*) and the chest still preserved today in the Reliquary room of the Monastery of the Encarnación in Madrid[161] to Queen Margaret of Austria (1584–1611), to thank her for the lucrative business of selling the licenses for two commercial expeditions to Japan, which had been given by Philip III to his wife in order to finance the construction of the monastery. Although there is not enough documentary evidence, textual sources suggest that Cron supplied Japanese lacquers to the royal courts of both Lisbon and Madrid.[162] The chest with a flat lid in the Monastery, which was financed by Queen Margaret of Austria and finished in 1616, may have been made to order as an altar and Eucharist coffer. This is suggested by the lacquer decoration of its front side, consisting of scrolling grape vines probably symbolizing the Eucharist,[163] which relates stylistically to that of the pyx in the Kanagawa Tōkei-ji Temple in Kamakura, and the two oratories now housed in the Kyoto National Museum and the Tsukumi City Collection, mentioned earlier, as well as of a cylindrical box with a flat lid in the Pallazo Pitti in Florence.[164]

Another example of hybrid influences is the lacquer cabinet made after a European writing desk, known as *escritório* in Portuguese and *vargueno* in Spanish, which is of wide rectangular form or of small cubic form with small drawers of varying sizes concealed behind a fall front door with a lock, with a metal carrying handle on top of the lid or on the sides (Fig. 4.1.1.2.4).[165] The cabinets of wide rectangular form appear to have been the most commonly produced, showing great differences in height, width, and door and drawer arrangement.[166] It is not known whether the Portuguese provided the lacquer craftsmen with a European or Indo-Portuguese model, such as the example veneered with various woods and inlaid with ivory dating to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 4.1.1.2.5). Some of the cabinets, made without the fall front door, had a central drawer of architectural form like that on many examples with fall front doors, which resembled that of cabinets made in Flanders (present-day Belgium) in the sixteenth century.[167] Others, such as the extant example now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, have three rows of drawers, the upper row with one full width drawer, and the other two with three smaller drawers each. This cabinet, dating to *c.*1580–1600, is one of the earliest pieces of lacquer recorded in Europe. It is believed that the cabinet may have been listed in the inventory of the *Kunstkammer* of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague in 1607.[168] An apparently unique cabinet of relatively small rectangular shape without a fall-front, but made soley with a row of three horizontal drawers, is of particular interest to this study because its *Namban* style decoration includes an inscription written in Portuguese. The top of this cabinet, now in a private collection in Japan, is decorated in *makie* with two rows of three almost square-shaped sections, each containing two letters, which are thought to read: NOSA PENA FOGUE [Writing flies as Quickly as thought]. The odd placement of the pairs of letters within the six sections making the sentence difficult to read may indicate that the lacquer craftsmen would have not been able to understand the Portuguese text, most probably provided by the individual who ordered the cabinet in printed form, and thus made a mistake when copying it. The inscription suggests that the cabinet was intended to keep writing implements, and perhaps also paper.[169]

Cubic cabinets with a front door hinged to open downwards, typically fitted with nine drawers, occupied only a small space on the table where writing was performed,[170] or were placed on a carved stand that was specially made for it at the time it arrived at its destination. These cabinets were mostly decorated in the *Namban* style with dense

161 Published in García Sanz, 2003, p. 139, pls. VII.8 and VII.7, respectively.
162 Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and Almudena Pérez de Tudela, 'Exotica Habsburgica. La Casa de Austria y las Collecciones Exóticas en el Renacimiento Temprano', in Mola and Martínez Shaw, 2003, pp. 32–34. I am grateful to Annemarie Jordan Gschwend for this information.
163 For this opinion, see Kawamura, 2013, p. 272.
164 Published and discussed in Francesco Morena (ed.), *Di Linea e di Colore. Il Giappone, le sue arti e l'incontro con l'occidente – Line and Colour. Japanese Arts and the European Connection*, exhibition catalogue, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, 2012, pp. 356–357, no. II.52.
165 For a discussion and three examples of these cabinets and further bibliographical references, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 212–225, nos. 20-22.
166 Most cabinets have a fall front door, but a few examples of wide rectangular form with either a single or a pair of side opening doors are known. For examples of these latter types in the Museu do Oriente in Lisbon and the Tranekær Castle on the Danish island of Langeland, see Alexadra Curvelo, in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, pp. 107–108, no. 24; and Boyer, 1959, pls. XXX and XXXI, nos. 26, 26a and 26b; respectively.
167 Mentioned in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 81. For examples of this type in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga and the Museum do Oriente, both in Lisbon, see Ibid., p. 80 and Curvelo, 'Contador-Cabinet', in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, pp. 112–114, no. 26.
168 Trnek and Vassallo e Silva, 2001, p. 228, cat. 106. Discussed in Impey and Jörg, pp. 79 and 120–123, ill. 225.
169 Published in Ibid., p. 123, ill. 227.
170 Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 87.

Fig. 4.1.1.2.4 *Namban* cabinet
Momoyama/early Edo period
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Height: 57cm; width: 85.5cm; depth: 44cm
British Museum, London
(museum no. 1977,0406.1)



Fig. 4.1.1.2.5 Fall-front cabinet
Gujarat or Sind
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Height: 25cm; width: 39cm; depth: 28cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 569–1890)

Fig. 4.1.1.2.6 *Namban* cabinet (*ventó*)
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1630
Height: 34cm; width: 30cm; depth: 45.5cm
Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem
(inv. no. OMII-3057)

designs of flowering and fruiting plants, animals and/or birds in *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay, sometimes within large cartouches (usually of ovoid or lozenge forms) reserved on geometric patterns.[171] Cabinets were also made of deep rectangular form with a door hinged at the side, fitted with drawers on the interior and with a metal carrying handle on top, which were called by the Portuguese *ventó* or *bentó* because it had similar features to the Japanese *bento* box, which were usually decorated on the exterior with large lozenge or lobed-shaped cartouches of flowering plants and birds reserved on geometric grounds (Fig. 4.1.1.2.6).[172] From the beginning of the seventeenth century such cabinets (*ventó*), like the coffers discussed above, were also decorated with bird and/or animal scenes framed within cartouches reserved on panels of the 'sprinkle denticle' technique,[173] or were covered entirely in this technique, which imitates ray skin.[174] *Namban* chests of rectangular shape with flat lids hinged to open upwards, fitted with side metal carrying handles, were made after Indo-Portuguese writing chests or boxes made in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[175] These chests, made in both small and large size, were typically fitted with one, two or four drawers at the base of the front side.[176] Some of them were made with cushion-shaped lids and no drawers.[177] All the easily portable cabinets and chests of relatively small size discussed above were most probably used by the Portuguese to hold documents, jewels or other small objects of value. António Bocarro, writing in 1635, describes the lacquer goods taken from Japan to Goa as 'much giltwork, which comes from Japan and which is much better than that from China … and many small items like circular boxes and writing cabinets of chorão [lacquer], all extremely fine'.[178]

Spanish written sources suggest that a number of lacquer cabinets, described as *escritoires* and/or writing desks, were sent to Spain as gifts from male and female

171 For images and a discussion on this type of cabinet, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 212–215, no. 20.

172 This type of cabinet was recorded in the *Hōyaku Nippo jisho* (Modern Japanese Translation of a Japanese-Portuguese Dictionary), dating to about 1603, with the Japanese term *ventó* or *bentó* (from bento). For a discussion and examples of these cabinets, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 188–199, nos. 15 and 16.

173 For examples of this type, see Sakai City Museum, *Namban-Shikki – Cultural Exchange between East and West through Lacquer Craft*, exhibition catalogue, Osaka, 1983, p. 48, no. 47; and Gifu City History Museum, 2003, p. 81, no. IV–17.

174 An example is discussed and illustrated in Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 194–199, no. 16.

175 Compare, for instance, an Indo-Portuguese lacquered wood writing box dating to the sixteenth century illustrated in Pedro de Moura Carvalho, 'A group of early lacquered furniture for the Portuguese market and its probable origin in the Bay of Bengal and Coromandel Coast', in Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, *The World of Lacquer, 2000 Years of History*, exhibition catalogue, Lisbon, 2001, p. 148, no. 72. Two further examples are published in Bernardo Ferrão, *Mobiliário Português. Dos Primórdios ao Maneirismo, Índia e Japão*, vol. III, Oporto, 1990, p. 161, nos. 420–421. For an example dating to the seventeenth century, formerly in the convent of S. José in Évora, see Mendes Pinto, 1985, p. 50, no. 28.

176 For a discussion and an example of a *Namban* chest, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 242–245, no. 27.

177 An example in a private collection in Portugal is published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 144, no. 301.

178 António Bocarro, *Livro das Plantas e de todas as fortalezas, cidades e povoados do estado da Índia Oriental*, 1635, ms B.P.A.D, Évora – cod. CXV/2–1. Cited in Mendes Pinto, 1990, p. 32.



Fig. 4.1.1.2.7 *Namban* bed
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1650
Dimensions: 157cm x 195cm x 122cm
Private Collection, Portugal

members of the elites and clergy living in the Philippines and New Spain in the early seventeenth century. In 1615, for example, Martin de la Cueva, *regidor* in Manila, sent to his sister Doña Maria de la Cueva in Úbeda, a consignment of 2 Japanese *escritoires*.[179] Three years later, Don Alonso Fajardo, Governor of the Philippines between 1618 and 1624, sent several *escritories*, writing desks and beds from Japan to Seville.[180] That same year, in 1618, the Count of Santiago sent from New Spain to his wife who lived in Spain, a consignment that included 2 folding screens, 2 writing desks from Japan, and 1 chest from Japan, as well as several pieces of woven and raw silks from China.[181] It was also that year, that the Marchioness of Guadalcázar, vicereine of New Spain, sent to her sister in Madrid a consignment that included an *escritoire* and a chest from Japan, and several little boxes.[182] In 1619, the Jesuit Martin de Orujas from New Spain sent 3 *escritoires* from Japan (alongside 9 pieces of satin) as a gift to Father Jacobo Tirino in Antwerp.[183] The mention of beds from Japan sent as gifts in 1618 by Governor Alfonso Fajardo from the Philippines to Seville is of particular interest to this study. We learn from Jesuit textual sources that folding beds were brought to Japan at least as early as 1563. In a letter written by Father Luís Fróis at the port of Hirado in November of that year, he states that 'Approximately one month after we had been in this port Dom Bartolomeu [the recently converted Omura Sumitada] arrived to see the priest and the Portuguese. We immediately went with the captain to visit him and gave him some seahorse beads I had brought from India with a holy bead set in gold, which he greatly appreciated and placed round his neck … Dom Pedro [Captain-General Dom Péro da Guerra] had given us a present that we took to him because for them it is a new thing, we went to his house, brother João Fernadez and myself and he thanked us very much for what we took which was a gold folding bed and a silk

179 AGI, Contratación, 1831, pp. 131–132. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 63.

180 AGI, Contratación, 1849, pp. 204–208. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 56.

181 AGI, Contratación, 1852A, pp. 505–508. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 57.

182 AGI, Contratación, 1847, pp. 112–117. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 73.

183 AGI, Contratación, 1853, pp. 181–185. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 66.

Fig. 4.1.1.2.8 *Namban* writing box
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1630
Height: 9.2cm; width: 24.5cm; depth: 15.8cm
Erzog Anton Ulrigh-Museum, Braunschweig
(inv. no. Chi 913)

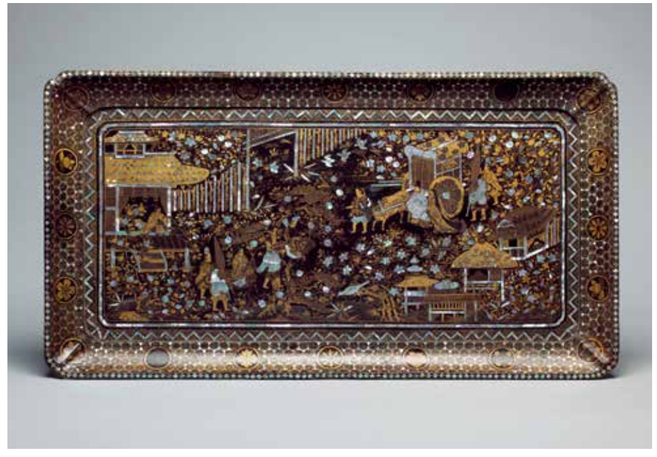

Fig. 4.1.1.2.9 *Namban* tray
Momoyama period (1573–1615), *c.*1600
Height: 41cm; width: 76.5cm
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
(acc. no. 2002.2)

mattress and a rich bedspread and a velvet pillow and other smaller ones, a fine Borneo mat and another four or five good pieces that the same dom Pedro gave him'.[184] The gold folding bed mentioned in the letter, as noted by Curvelo, was probably of Asian origin. In 1596, the Dutchman van Linschoten noted that at Goa were sold 'all sorts of Bedsteads, Stooles and such like stuffe, very cunningly covered over with Lacke, most pleasant to behold, and they can turne the Lacke into any colour that you will desire'.[185] This extract suggests that the folding bed taken to Japan may have been made in India, in lacquered wood rather than in gold. Beds lacquered in gold, however, were also made in Canton.[186] Thus far only one lacquered bed frame has been recorded, which is likely to have been made in Japan in the early Edo period, probably in the first half of the seventeenth century (Fig. 4.1.1.2.7). This bed frame, which was taken from Goa to Portugal in the late nineteenth century and is now in a private collection, is incomplete. The canopy supports at the feet, some pieces of the headboard, and all the boards supporting the mattress, are missing. This bed frame is another example that serves to illustrate the hybrid objects made to order in Japanese lacquer. As Curvelo has noted, it combines a shape that is probably Indo-Portuguese,[187] a wood core of unknown source, and lacquer from Thailand (*Melanorrhoea usitata*) with Japanese lacquer techniques and decorative motifs.[188] Its decoration, consisting mostly of floral and geometric motifs executed in gold and silver *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay, relates closely to that of pieces of *Namban* lacquer made to order for the Portuguese. It also includes Japanese family crests or personal insignia (*mons*) on the upper part of the bed head, as it occurred in the lectern bearing the 'IHS' emblem in the Church of Santiago el Real in Medina del Campo discussed above (Fig. 4.1.1.1.8). It is unclear whether such lacquer bed frames would have been intended for the personal use of individuals residing in the Portuguese settlements in Macao, Malacca or India, or in Portugal.[189] Evidence of Portuguese acquiring lacquer bed frames in the early decades of the seventeenth century, though apparently only in small numbers, is found in Dutch textual sources. The Dagregister of Batavia of 11 October 1636, only three years before

184 BA, *Jesuítas na Ásia*, cod. 49–IV–50, fl. 537. *Copia de huma do Jappão do Padre Luis Frois pera os Padres E Irmãos da Companhia de Jhus da india e Europa de 14 de Novembro de 1563*. Cited in Alexandra Curvelo, 'Bed', in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, p. 156.

185 This extract is published in Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or, Purchas His Pilgrimes. Containing a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Lande Travels by Englishmen and Others*, Vol. 10, Cambridge, 1905, p. 249.

186 The cargoes from Macao to India in *c.*1600 included 'a great quantity of gilded beds, tables, and writing-boxes … Some of the gilded beds are generally sold for 300 or 400 cruzados'. Boxer, 1963, p. 182. Father Gaspar da Cruz described the bed richly inlaid in ivory that he bought in Canton as 'There are also many bedsteads very pleasant and very rich, all close round about, of wood finely wrought. I being in Cantam, there was a very rich one made wrought with invory, and of a sweet wood which they call Cayolaque and of sandalwood, that was priced at four hundred crowns'. Boxer, 2004, p. 125.

187 For two extant beds dating to the early seventeenth century bearing some resemblance in shape to the example discussed here, see J. F. da Silva Nascimento, *Leitos e Camilhas Portugueses. Subsídios para o seu estudo*, Lisbon, 1950, pls. XXVI and XXV, fig. 9. For an extant bed dating to the sixteenth century made in teak with similar configuration of the feet, see Pedro Dias, *O Contador das Cenas Familiares. O quotidiano dos portugueses de Quinhentos na Índia na decoração de um móvel indo-português*, Oporto, 2002. Mentioned in Curvelo, 2010, p. 158.

188 For a discussion and images of this bed frame, now partially assembled with wood pieces replacing some of the original parts, see Ibid., pp. 155–161, no. 40; and Curvelo, 2013, pp. 75–76, fig. 5, and p. 134, pl. 49.

189 Curvelo, however, has suggested that this type of bed was probably intended for the Luso-Asian market. Curvelo, 2010, p. 158.

190 H. T. Colenbrander, *Dagh-Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passeerende dear ter plaetse als over geheel Netherlandts-India, Anno 1636*, The Hague, 1899, pp. 58–59. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 235.

191 Another example with a short central drawer on the front, and another slightly wider and three times longer on the side of the box, fitted on the interior with two removable square boxes to contain an inkwell and a sander, now in a private collection in Portugal, is discussed in Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 204–207, no. 18.

192 Compare, for instance, the examples published in Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, *Portuguese expansion overseas and the art of ivory*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, 1991, p. 195, nos. 571 and 572.

193 See, the examples published in Ibid., p. 195, no. 574.

194 Published in Museé Cernuschi, 1980, no. 25.

195 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: '… estas bandejas irião com o prezente sem se tornar a quem os offerece servindo só aquella vez, couza por certo de muita policia, e urbanidade, e digna de ser louvada a seu modo …'. Father João Rodrigues, SJ, *História da Igreja do Japão, 1549–1570, Jesuítas na Ásia*, BA, cod. 49–IV–53, fl. 87v. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 62.

196 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: '… quando alguas vezes se offerecem em bandejas acharoadas com verniz de arvore muy fino onde não hà copia das outras, estas se tornão a dar ao que trouxe …'. *Jesuítas na Ásia*, BA, cod. 49–IV–53, fl. 87v. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 63.

the Portuguese were expelled from Japan, reports that the cargo of the Portuguese ship, the *Santa Maria*, captured by the Dutch off Ceylon included 24 spears with lacquered shafts (*verlackte pieken*) and one lacquered frame for a bed (*katel*).[190]

In the early seventeenth century, the Portuguese also commissioned a wide variety of *Namban* lacquer objects of smaller size to serve different purposes in daily life in Europe or in their Asian settlements. These included writing boxes of shallow rectangular shape with a removable lid, fitted with either one or two short front drawers, and/or a side drawer and two removable boxes to hold an inkwell and a sander. An example with a single front drawer, and traces of having had a tray that extended the full width of the writing box fitted behind the removable containers (now missing), is found in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Braunschweig (Fig. 4.1.1.2.8).[191] Considering the description of Japanese writing boxes published in *Jesuitas na Ásia* cited earlier, it seems likely that the shape of the *Namban* writing boxes derived from a model made to order for the Portuguese in a workshop in India. Indo-Portuguese writing boxes, made in teak and ebony inlaid in mother-of-pearl, had similar interior compartments to hold and inkwell and a sander,[192] or a small drawer fitted to the side of a front drawer that occupied the entire width of the box.[193]

Utilitarian pieces also included trays of rectangular shape. Only a few extant rectangular trays decorated in the *Namban* style are known, including an example with indented corners in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Fig. 4.1.1.2.9) and another with lobes sides in the Namban Bunkakan Museum in Osaka.[194] Father João Rodrigues described in his *História da Igreja do Japão* the use of trays in Japan for ceremonial gift exchanges as '… These trays would go with the present without being returned to the person who offered the gift, being utilized just that one time, a practice that is undoubtedly refined and pure, and praiseworthy in its own way'.[195] He continued to explain the use of lacquer trays as '… When, sometimes, the gifts are offered in trays lacquered with the very fine varnish obtained from a tree, of which no copies exist, these are returned to the person who brought it …'.[196] It seems likely

that rectangular lacquer trays with slight differences in their shape and *Namban* style decoration were primarily made to order as exotic gifts to be sent to Western Europe, perhaps as a way of following the protocol rules of Japan.[197] Visual sources attest to the use of lacquer trays by the Portuguese and their attendants in Japan to carry imported gifts for important people or as portable tables in a domestic context. A pair of *Namban* folding screens, housed in the Museu Nacional de Arte Artiga, serves to illustrate these latter functions.[198]

Textual sources concerning the trade of Japanese lacquer made to order for Portuguese and Spanish merchants to Western Europe and the New World are exceedingly scarce. The following excerpts from accounts, reports and letters written by Jesuit missionaries, and European merchants who were present in Japan, or in other European settlements in Asia, provide some further information on the commercial networks through which the lacquer objects circulated, and the ways in which they were transported, either via the Portuguese trans-Atlantic or Spanish trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade routes, at the end of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

From an entry of the diary of the Englishman Richard Cocks, dated 31 January 1616, we learn that Jacques Specx had informed him that Hasegawa Gonroku had warned the Dutch and the English that 'they should take heed they did not meddell with the greate ship of Amacon, for that the Emperour had much adventure in her'.[199] As noted by Impey and Jörg, this excerpt proves that at this time the shogunate was not only supporting the trade carried out by the Portuguese in Japan, but also was investing in it.

Jesuit textual sources, as shown earlier, provide information concerning the methods of packing the various types of lacquer objects for shipping from Nagasaki to Lisbon via Goa, a sea journey that took about two years. The lacquers, with their *makie* decoration and mother-of-pearl inlay, could have easily deteriorated during their transportation, as they were exposed not only to the salty sea water and shocks inherent to sea travel but also to climatic changes (humidity and temperature).[200] Individual or groups of lacquer objects were packed in wooden boxes or chests made of hard woods from India, or in baskets or rattan cases, such as the example in the Itsuō Art Museum discussed above (Fig. 4.1.1.2.3b).[201] As noted earlier, the instructions given by Father Allesandro Valignano in 1583 inform us that folding screens were packed in large boxes, and the excerpt from Father Luís Froís indicates that many pieces of lacquer were packed inside a basket. A manuscript written by the Danish Captain Claus Ritter, who commanded a trade ship from 1639 to 1644, proves that the practice of packing small lacquer objects inside chests, whether made of Japanese lacquered wood or of plain hard woods from India, continued into the early seventeenth century. Ritter refers to chests used to pack lacquers as 'These chests were probably Japanese ones, as such were regularly used at the time as packing cases for Oriental goods to be sent to Europe, such as textiles, spices and small lacquered objects'.[202] The Japanese also used oilpaper to wrap the lacquered or wooden boxes and chests to protect the lacquer and other objects packed inside from humidity. In the *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, published by the Jesuits in 1603, this oilpaper is described as 'Yutan. oiled paper, or something else that they place on top of the goods, or box, etc., so that it is not treated badly or damaged'.[203] The various types of packing cases, as stated in Father Valignano's instructions, were marked with religious emblems, coat of arms, or labels belonging to the owners in order to avoid confusion during the unloading of the cargo at the final port of destination.[204] In the bills of lading and cargo manifests

197 For further information, see Ibid., pp. 60–64.

198 This pair of screens, inv. nos. 1638 and 1639, are discussed and illustrated in Alexandra Curvelo, 'Namban folding screens: Between knowledge and power', in Dejanirah Couto and François Lachaud (eds.), *Empires éloignés. L'Europe at le Japon (XVIe–XIXe siècle)*, Paris, 2010, p. 214, fig. 2.

199 Edward Maunde Thompson (ed.), *Diary of Richard Cocks, Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan, 1615–1622,* 1883, vol. I, p. 70. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 237.

200 Leiria, 2002, pp. 49 and 51.

201 Ibid., p. 52.

202 Cited in Boyer, 1959, pp. 92–93; and Leiria, 2002, p. 60.

203 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: 'Yutan. Papel azeitado, ou qualquier outra coisa que botam por cima do fato, ou caixa etc. p.a Que não se trate mal ou dane'. BA, *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, fl. 650v. Cited in Leiria, 2002, p. 55.

204 Mentioned in Ibid., 2002, p. 53.



of Portuguese ships that made the return voyage from India, the lacquer furniture and other objects would have been listed, alongside porcelain, fans, amber and jewellery, under the designation *miudezas* (trifles).[205]

In July 1609, three years after the Council of the Indies recommended that missionaries from the Philippines were allowed to go to Japan via Manila, Philip III issued a law in Segovia which stated that 'The trade, commerce and navigation from the Philippines to Japan shall be made by the citizens of the former islands, and the Japanese shall not be allowed to go to the islands'.[206] António de Morga in his *Sucesos de las Filipinas* published in Mexico that year (1609) inform us that lacquer objects were brought from Nagasaki to Manila by both Japanese and Portuguese ships. The goods included 'very smart screens painted in oil, and gilt, fine and well fitted up; all sorts of cutlery … small writing boxes, boxes and caskets of wood, varnished [lacquered] and of curious workmanship, other baubles pretty to look at'. He continues to say that the 'greater part of these goods are used in the country, and some serve for cargoes to New Spain. The price is chiefly paid in reals, though they are not so set upon them as the Chinese, as they have silver in Japan'.[207] It was that same year that Rodrigo de Vivero y Velasco (1564–1636), former Governor-General of the Philippines, in his *Relación y noticias de el reino de Japón*, mentioned that 'paintings, biobos [folding screens], escritos [cabinets], and other items that I have formally taken back with me are unusual merchandise, a fact that explains why I insist on the necessity of opening trade [between Japan and New Spain]'.[208] It is clear from this excerpt that Vivero y Velasco recognized the possibility of a profitable trade in lacquer from Japan to New Spain.

From a letter written from Bantam in December 1612 by Pieter Segers, Chief Merchant (*Opperkoopman*) of the VOC in Japan, to the Gentlemen Seventeen we learn that some Spanish merchants were trading in lacquer objects in considerable quantities. He states that 'The twenty three cases of lacquer sent with this fleet is, to my pleasure, very well made, according to the instructions sent by your Hon. Gentlemen Masters. It was made on favourable terms for a Castilian who went bankrupt and came thus into our hands. It can be washed in warm water without coming off'.[209] The comment on the lacquer being washed in warm water, as noted by Impey and Jörg, suggests that the lacquer objects may have been tableware rather than furniture pieces. In September of the following year, in 1613, the English Captain John Saris wrote to the EIC in London informing that he 'tooke boate from Edo to Oringe Gaue [Uruga, Tokyo harbour] to pervse the harbour and to haue bargained with Mr. Addams … also to looke vpone cetane wares of Meaco, which he had there of the Spanyards to sell, wheareof we bought for the Company, viz. 1 Case of Trunkes, two greate Scritoryes, Eight Beobs [folding screens], two smalle scritoryes and a Trimming box'.[210] From a letter written from Hirado by Richard Cocks to the EIC in London in February 1616, we learn that 'For varnisht (or makare) worke, yt is heare curiously made, of all sorts, contors, tronks, cups & other fations whatsoever; but deare, & much carid into New Spain contynewally per way of Manillia'.[211] Spanish textual sources indicate that Japanese furniture, presumably made of lacquer, was shipped from Manila as private consignments or as gifts to relatives living in New Spain or Spain from as early as the late 1610s. In 1618, as noted by Gasch-Tomás, the vicereine of New Spain, Marchioness of Guadalcázar, sent to her sister Doña Maria de Córdoba in Spain, a consignment that included a Japanese *escritoire* and a Japanese chest.[212] That same year, the Count of Santiago sent his wife in Spain, several pieces of Chinese silk as well

205 Vieira de Castro, 2005, p. 16.

206 *Recopilación de leyes*, lib. Ix, tit. Xxxxv, 'Concerning the navigation and commerce of the Filipinas Islands, China, Nueva España, and Perú'. Law II. Blair and Robertson, 1905, Vol. XVII: 1609–1616, p. 53.

207 The English translation of the original text in Spanish cited here is taken from Morga, 2009, p. 341.

208 Naojiro Murakami, *Don Rodorigo Nihon Kenbunroku; Bisukaino Kingintou Tanken Houkoku (Don Rodrigo de Vivero's Relación del Japón; Sebastián Vizcaino's Account of the Search for the Gold and Silver Islands)*, Ikokusousho, Yushodoschosten, 1966. The English translation cited here is taken from Nagashima, 2009, p. 112.

209 Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 242.

210 Satow, 1967, p. 79. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 236.

211 Anthony Farrington, *The English Factory in Japan, 1613–1623*, London, 1991, p. 382. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 237.

212 AGI, Contratación, 1847, pp. 112–117. Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 73.

213 AGI, Contratación, 1852 A, pp. 505–508. Mentioned in Gasch-Tomás, 2014, p. 209.

as two folding screens, two writing desks from Japan, and one chest from Japan.[213] In 1636, Doña Ana María de Birués, the wife of the commercial agent Ascanio Guazzoni, shipped from Manila an order valued in 1,000 pesos to the rich merchant Santi Federighi, which included an *escritoire* from Japan.[214] An account book of the wholesale shop of Gaspar de Castro in Mexico City lists folding screens, *escritoires* and beds among the goods he purchased from merchants from Acapulco, including Santi Federighi, that presumably were to be sold between 1630 and 1639.[215] The booty taken by the Dutch privateer and captain Piet Heyn of the WIC when he seized the Spanish Treasure fleet anchored at Matanzas Bay (east of Havana) in September 1628, while en route from New Spain to Spain, is said to have included two small comptoirs, and 'a Japanese tabletop plus table legs all lacquered', which would most probably have been a folding table.[216] These textual sources provide evidence of the Spanish trade in lacquer furniture, folding screens, and most possibly also in tableware objects, which were imported into New Spain, and subsequently re-exported to Spain. An inventory of the belongings of the Marquise of Masibradi, taken in 1656, lists 'seven small red trays from Japan; a small casket from Japan; a round box of mother of pearl and gold from Japan; another box from Japan; a small box from Japan; two trays and a small wicker box, all from Japan'.[217] This inventory, although dating to twelve years after the period concerning this study, serves as an example to show that by the mid-seventeenth century lacquer objects imported from Japan into Spain were not only available to the royalty but also to the high-ranking nobility.

Dutch textual sources inform us that the Portuguese merchants were still purchasing in Nagasaki a wide variety of lacquer objects in 1630, during the early Edo period. In September of that year, a staff member of the VOC factory in Hirado named Coenraedt Cramer, who visited Nagasaki as secretary of a mission headed by Willem Jansz, noted in his journal that the Portuguese purchased 'all kinds of lacquerwork, Japanese beobies or screens, porcelain dishes, small boxes and all kinds of similar curiosities'.[218] By the end of 1637, however, a document written in Macao stated that the trade with Japan was 'in a very perilous condition and in danger of ceasing, and that of Manila in a like condition'.[219] Two years later, in 1639, the trade activities of the Portuguese and Spanish merchants as well as the missionary work and trade activities of the Portuguese and Spanish missionaries came to an end, when they were all expelled from Japan and the country entered the period of *sakoku*.

From the textual sources and extant pieces of lacquer discussed above it is possible to conclude that a variety of lacquer portable furniture and utilitarian objects were made to order in considerable quantities for the Portuguese in lacquer workshops in and around Miyako after models they brought with them from both Europe and their settlements in India, which in turn copied European models from Germany, Italy and Spain. Furniture pieces included coffers, chests and writing cabinets of various shapes and sizes, and beds. Utilitarian objects of smaller size included writing boxes and trays. These furniture and utilitarian objects would have been useful for private use in a European context or in their settlements in Asia, which had hot and humid climates. It is likely that they were first made in the early Momoyama period, shortly after liturgical lacquers began to be made to order for the Jesuits. The furniture and utilitarian objects made to order for the Portuguese displayed various degrees of such hybrid influences. Initially, they combined a European or Indo-Portuguese shape with the *Namban* style decoration developed by the lacquer crafsmen to suit the Jesuit orders. By the early seventeenth century, the decoration also included a traditional Japanese lacquer technique that involved the use of a material of animal origin, painted/pasted ray skin (*samegawa* or *samekawa*), in addition to *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay. Material evidence indicates that the majority of such objects were made using the 'sprinkling denticle' technique. At about the same time, some of the furniture began to be decorated with an all-over design of small scales of mother-of-pearl forming an overlapping lappet motif, secured by metal rivets, which was undoubtedly copied from coffers or other objects brought by the Portuguese from Gujarat in India, again in addition to *makie*. The *makie* decoration of the furniture and smaller objects made for the Portuguese appears to have rarely included European motifs. An apparently unique cabinet proves that the European motifs, such as a Portuguese inscription, were ocassionally painted on the lacquers. It seems that the naturalistic scenes of Japanese flowering plants, birds and/or animals as well as Japanese traditional motifs, such as the family crests or insignia (*mons*), were much appreciated by the Portuguese as being examples of the exotic Orient.

As noted earlier, textual sources that document the Portuguese and Spanish trade in Japanese lacquer to Western Europe and the New World are exceedingly scarce. From accounts, reports and letters written by Jesuits and European merchants who were present in Japan, or in other settlements in Asia, we have an idea of the commercial networks through which these lacquer objects circulated and the ways in which they were transported, either via the Portuguese trans-Atlantic or Spanish trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade routes at the end of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They inform us that in order to protect the lacquer objects from damage when shipping from Nagasaki to Lisbon, the Portuguese packed individual or groups of objects in wooden boxes or chests made of hardwoods from India, or in baskets or rattan cases. These were then wrapped in oilpaper by the Japanese to protect the lacquer objects from humidity. We know that both Portuguese and Japanese ships were bringing lacquer objects from Nagasaki to Manila by the first decade of the seventeenth century. Thus it is likely that the same packing methods were used to transport the lacquer objects to be sold to the Spanish merchants there, who in turn would have shipped them to New Spain, some of them to be re-exported to Seville in Spain.

It is possible that lacquer furniture from Japan reached the royal court of Lisbon as early as the mid 1560s. By the late sixteenth century such lacquer furniture would have been available for purchase in Lisbon, and subsequently taken by members of the nobility to Spain. Some of the furniture pieces, such as coffers, chests and cabinets, were adapted for religious use, and served as reliquaries in monasteries and convents of both Portugal and Spain. Furniture cabinets, described as *escritoires* and/or writing desks, were sent to Spain as gifts from male and female members of the elites and clergy living in the Philippines and New Spain in the early decades of the seventeenth century. From the early 1610s, to the late 1620s, textual sources indicate that Spanish merchants were trading in lacquer objects in considerable quantities, which included tableware as well as furniture and screens. By this time lacquer furniture and objects of smaller size were available not only to the royalty but also to the high-ranking nobility. The Portuguese were still purchasing a variety of lacquer objects in the early 1630s. By 1637, however, the trade in lacquer carried out by both the Portuguese and Spanish was in danger of ceasing. Their trade activities ended two years later, in 1639, when they were expelled alongside the missionaries from Japan and the country was closed to all Europeans (*sakoku*) with the exception of the Dutch, who were allowed to stay because they did not proselytize the Christian faith.

214 AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja-exp.: 5056–050. Consulado. Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 71.

215 AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja-exp.: 0898–025. Consulado. Gasch-Tomás, 2012, p. 79.

216 S.P. L'Honoré Naber, *Documenten uit het Archief van den Luitenant-Admiraal Piet Heyn*, Werken Historisch Genootschap, 3rd series, no. 53, Utrecht, 1928, pp. 132 and 134. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 236.

217 The transcription of the orginal text in Spanish reads: 'siete bandejillas del Japón coloradas; un cofrecillo del Japón; una cajita redonda del Japón de nácar y oro; otra cajeta del Japón; una cajita del Japón; dos bandejas y una cajilla de mimbre, todo del Japón'. AHPM, 6952, fol. 489. Inventario de Bienes de la Marquesa de Masibradi, 1656. Cited in Amaya Morera, *El Escaparate, un mueble para una dinastía*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Madrid, 2010, p. 274, note 460; and Krahe, 2014, Vol. I, p. 156.

218 Cited in C.R. Boxer, 'Portuguese Commercial Voyages to Japan. Three Hundred Years Ago (1630–1639)', *The Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society of London*, XXXI, 1934, p. 40; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 234.

219 The document, dated 30 December 1637, is signed by Domingos Dias Espinhel, Liuz Pais Pacheco, Matheus Ferreira de Provença, Antonio da Silveira Aranha, Estevaõ Pires, and Francisco de Aranjo de Barros. Richard Carnac Temple (ed.), *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia 1608–1667*, Vol. III, Travels in England, India, China, Etc. 1634–1638, Cambridge, 1919, Part II, Appendix 2, p. 501. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 235.

## Lacquer for the Dutch and English Markets [4.1.2]

In 1609, nine years after arriving by chance in Kyūshū, the Dutch obtained permission from the *shogūn* at Edo to trade in Japan. Although trade with the Japanese developed slowly after establishing the VOC factory in Hirado, the Dutch merchants recognized the potential of Japanese lacquer, mainly made in Miyako, as a profitable trade good to be imported into Europe. They thought that the material qualities and exotic designs of the lacquer would appeal to the new class of rich merchants and burghers of the Dutch Republic, and that these rare and expensive imported objects would serve to enhance the social status of the owner.[220] As Impey and Jörg have noted, the fact that wares imitating Oriental lacquer were being made in the Dutch Republic prior to the arrival of the first shipment of Japanese lacquer imported by the VOC, proves that there was both an interest and a ready market for lacquer.[221] All instructions and orders for lacquer sent by the Gentlemen Seventeen from the Dutch Republic, as we saw earlier with the orders for Chinese silk and porcelain, arrived via Batavia. The Opperhoofd in Hirado, and later in Deshima, reported to the Governor-General and his Council in Batavia. The Dagregisters, commercial papers and letters of the VOC factory in Japan, most of which are preserved in the *Nederlandse Factorij Japan* archive, give us a fairly accurate idea of the lacquer trade, particularly the methods of ordering, purchasing and shipping the lacquer goods to the Dutch Republic via Batavia.

The earliest textual evidence of the importation of Japanese lacquer by the VOC into the Dutch Republic dates to 1610. From a report sent that year by Jacques L'Hermite the Younger, the VOC representative in Bantam, to the Gentlemen Seventeen, we learn that the Dutch were familiar with lacquer from both China and Japan. This is clear in an excerpt from the report, in which he states that 'the lacquerware from China is usually of very poor quality and therefore it is not very useful to send it; it is also very expensive. I have seen some lacquer in the ship that came from Japan, the *Leeuw met Pijlen*, which is very beautiful and of good quality and from that country one can easily obtain and also have made those items that one might wish to trade'.[222] Undoubtedly, Jacques L'Hermite knew about the lacquers that were being made to order for the Iberian market from the last decades of the sixteenth century, and thus thought to take advantage of ordering objects to the specific requirements of the VOC customers in the Dutch Republic.

As mentioned earlier, a letter sent in December 1612 by Pieter Segers to the Gentlemen Seventeen, indicates that VOC servants also purchased lacquer that had been made to order for the Iberians.[223] The 23 cases of lacquer purchased from a Spanish merchant were shipped from Bantam on the *Vlissingen*, a ship of the Zeeland Chamber of the VOC, which arrived in Middleburg at the beginning of October 1613, where the lacquer cargo was valued at fl. 500.[224] In March of the following year, the Gentlemen Seventeen resolved to sell the lacquer in three different sales that took place in May and June. Although the sales in Middleburg were disappointing, most probably for the high sale price, some of the lacquer was sold in Amsterdam.[225]

A letter sent in January 1613 by Hendrik Brouwer, who had replaced Jacques Specx as Ooperhoofd in Hirado, to the Governor-General in Bantam, confirms that at least a small quantity of the lacquer objects made to order in Miyako for VOC servants, as well as for the Spanish as suggested by Segers's comment on washing, consisted of tableware. Brouwer writes 'I have delivered to Captain Dirck Mertensz. A small case with Japanese lacquerware for Your Honour, in which are packed three small chests each costing 25 maes or *schellingen*, also six half-sized *camelscoppen* [cups], six butter dishes and six saucers, which I ordered in Meaco for six maes or *schellingen* each; they total, including two maes for the case in which they were packed, one hundred and eighty-five maes, in guilders 55–10–11 … This stuff is very expensive, but it is exceptionally beautiful and the process of making it is very protracted, as I have seen from experience. One can put water in it without being damaged. Such saucers and cups have never been made in Japan. When it suits you I should like to hear that Your Honour will show them to the Honourable Gentlemen Masters to see if their Honours would like to order a batch. Which I hope will happen in due course in spite of the price because of the beauty of work, which would be to my honour. For now, I am not sending any more because I am afraid that they will be too dear and I have also not been able to get more ready, for each piece takes more than a month to finish'.[226] Interestingly, the lacquer pieces mentioned by Brouwer are of the same shapes as pieces of Chinese porcelain listed in the VOC documents discussed in Chapter III. It seems that although Brouwer was excited by the beauty of this apparently new type of lacquer tableware, he was not certain if there would be a regular supply of such lacquer in Japan because of its lengthy process of production, and moreover, if there would be a demand for it in the Dutch Republic due of its high cost.[227]

By this time, the States-General of the Dutch Republic had already begun presenting consignments of lacquer as diplomatic gifts to rulers of other European countries.[228] That year, in 1613, a gift of 'Indian lacquer' that might have included some lacquer from Japan was presented to Elizabeth, daughter of James I, who had recently married Fredrik V, Elector of the Pfalz (d. 1632), during her visit to Amsterdam. The gift comprised 'an exceedingly large rich furniture for a cabinet of china-worke, blacke and golde, containing a bedstead, a cupboard, a table, two great chests, one lesser chest, five small chests, two voyders [trays], twenty-four dishes, twenty-four lesser dishes, twelve fruit dishes and six saucers, all being valued at Lb 10.000'.[229] The 'bedstead', as shown earlier, could have been made in Japanese or Chinese lacquer. In June 1616, the States-General presented a lacquer coffer from Japan as gift to the King of Sweden, Adolf Gustav II (1594–1632). Anthonius Goeteeris, treasurer of the Dutch Embassy, sent to Castle Tre Kronor with several gifts for the King on behalf of the States-General, describes the coffer given as 'After the meal Their Honours presented on behalf of the States-General to His Majesty and delivered to him … a Japanese chest of lacquer, inlaid with mother-of-pearl … which was kindly received by His Majesty and was brought into his Cabinet'.[230] This coffer, one of the earliest documented pieces of Japanese lacquer to arrive in Europe, is now housed in Gripsholm Castle near Stockholm (Fig. 4.1.2.1).[231] It is a large coffer with a domed lid decorated in the *Namban* style with naturalistic scenes depicting bird and animals amongst flowering plants within cartouches reserved on geometric grounds of randomly cut mother-of-pearl and square latticework. Impey and Jörg have pointed out that the fact that both Batavia and Amsterdam had stocks of unsold lacquer that year may have motivated the States-General to give such an expensive piece of lacquer as a diplomatic gift.[232]

In November 1614, the Gentlemen Seventeen had sent instructions to Jacques Specx not to order more lacquer because it was too expensive and did not sell quickly in the Dutch Republic.[233] By the time these instructions reached Hirado in August 1616, Specx not only had ordered and shipped more lacquer to the Dutch Republic, but also had placed additional orders. From a letter sent by Woutersen from Osaka in

220 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 27.

221 In 1609, William Kick obtained an eight-year patent to make all kinds of lacquer work in Amsterdam in the 'manner as the pieces brought here from the Indies'. Ten years later, in 1619, Kick applied for a new patent stating that he had 'invented some years ago the art to lacquer and gild all kinds of objects in the Chinese manner'. G. Doorman, *Octrooien voor uitvindingen in de Nederlanden uit de 16e–18e eeuw*, The Hague, 1940, pp. 118 and 141. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 341.

222 W. P. Groeneveld, *De Nederlanders in China. De eerste bemoeiingen om den handel in China en de vestiging in de Pescadores (1601–1624)*, The Hague, 1898, p. 52. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 27–28.

223 Cited in Ibid., p. 242.

224 Ibid., p. 243.

225 Ibid.

226 VOC 1056. Letter-book received from Batavia 1614. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 243.

227 Ibid.

228 The VOC also made diplomatic gifts of lacquered objects in the East in the early seventeenth century. These included gifts presented to Sultan Ahmed Khan of Turkey in 1612; to the Persian court in 1623, to the Sultan of Johore in 1636, to the Queen of Cambodia the following year, and to the King of Golconda in 1639. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 28.

229 Boyer, 1959, p. 33. Some of the pieces listed, like the dishes and the bedstead, were probably imitation lacquer made by Willem Kick. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 28.

230 Anthonius Goeteeris, *Journael der Legatie gedaen inde jaren 1615 ende 1616 … afghesonden aan de … coninghen van Sweden en Denemarcken …*, The Hague, 1619, p. 126. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 323.

231 Published in Ibid., p. 28, ill. 14; p. 147, ill. 317 and p. 321, ill. 623.

232 Ibid., p. 245.

233 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 242.

Fig. 4.1.2.1 *Namban* coffer, 'The Gripsholm Coffer'
Momoyama/early Edo period, c.1600–1615
Height: 64cm; width: 131cm; depth: 55cm
Gripsholm Castle, Stockholm

November 1615, we learn that although precise instructions for each order of lacquer were given in a contract, sometimes the Japanese lacquerers did not fully comply with them. It reads: 'The small comptoir that Luisdonno made is not as specified in your Memorandum for the ordered lacquerware, for in it you specify that the middle drawer-front should be arched and the other drawers should be panelled, and that the outside also be panelled. But in his signed contract for the lacquerware it is as annexed, for he says that the fashion first shown to you was thus, and because the five remaining pieces of the type have been already blackened, I have struck an agreement with him that I shall take 2 of this fashion and 3 as you demanded in the Memorandum'.[234] The reasons behind the VOC instructions to discontinue shipments of lacquer have been subject to some debate. Impey and Jörg, as well as Hutt, have suggested that the dense decoration of the lacquer made in the *Namban* style for export at the time did not appeal to Dutch tastes, and thus the customers in the Dutch Republic were not willing to pay high prices for it.[235] Viallé, however, argues that VOC records indicate that the 1614 orders were issued because the Gentlemen Seventeen considered that 'the lacquerwares and other Japanese wares' were 'of no use' and that they could not 'be sold with any profits'.[236] It seems likely that the difficulty to sale the lacquer had more to do with its high sale price rather than with its decoration, which would have been considered without a doubt rich and exotic.

The lacquer shipments sent to Batavia in 1616 included a new type of furniture, tables. Tables of at least three sizes were shipped that year. In February Woutersen sent a large group of lacquer objects to Specx, which included '1 large table' for the cost of T. 23, and '4 ditto of the 2nd kind at T. 14 each'. Two months later, in April, Woutersen sent '2 tables of the 2nd kind at T.14 each', and '4 ditto of the third kind at 75 *maes* each'. The lacquer sent by Woutersen from Kyoto in September included '4 of the largest tables at T.23 each', and '1 of the smallest ditto at T. 7:5:'. [237] A shipment

234 Cited in Ibid., p. 243.
235 Ibid., p. 28; and Hutt, 2004, p. 239.
236 Cynthia Viallé, 'From Namban shikki to Kōmō shikki: Japanese export lacquer, trade and taste', in Couro and Lachaud, 2010, p. 233.
237 *Netherlandse Factorij Japan* (hereafter NFJ) 276. Letter-book Deshima 1614–16. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 244.



sent by Specx to Batavia in October included '3 large lacquered and gilded tables on raised feet, at T. 24 each', '3 ditto middle size, at T. 15 each', and '3 ditto small, at T. 8 each'.[238] In November, Woutersen sent more lacquer from Kyoto to Specx, including '1 table of the largest type T.23'.[239] One cannot fail to wonder if the '4 of the largest tables' and '1 table of the largest type', sent in September and November respectively, were like the only full-sized table of European proportions known thus far, which was formerly in Wilanów Palace in present-day Warsaw. If so, it would have been a *Namban* style table that dismantled into nine major sections.[240] Considering the dimensions of other extant *Namban* lacquer tables dating to the Momoyama period, it seems safely to assume that the tables of smaller sizes listed in these shipments were all low tables with their heights ranging from 36 to 50cm, such as the example illustrated in Fig. 4.1.1.1.17. Coincidentally, the earliest documentary evidence of the presence of tables among the belongings of Jesuits in Japan dates to this same year, 1616.

VOC instructions not to order more lacquer were repeated in 1618, and again in 1619. The Dutch were forbidden from trading in Hirado for five years as a consequence of the so-called Taiwan Incident of 1628.[241] The VOC trade in lacquer prior to the embargo was carried out on only a small scale, and the same can be assumed regarding the private Dutch trade.[242] Textual evidence of private trade in lacquer at the time is scant. The earliest reference to a private order dates to 1626. It is found in a letter sent from Miyako in September of that year by Coenraad Cramer, a Dutch merchant sent as envoy to the *shogūn*, to Cornelis van Neyenrode, who was Opperhoofd of the Hirado factory from 1623 to 1633. In this letter, Coenraad Cramer states that the goods ordered by Van Neyenrode were being procured.[243] A letter sent some weeks later by Van Neyenrode to the senior envoy Isaacq Bogaert in Miyako, suggests that the goods ordered included lacquer, as he requests that Bogaert should ask the lacquerer if his goods were ready, and if they were, the lacquerer should be paid.[244] In October, Cramer wrote again to Van Neyenrode, informing him that Bogaert ordered various goods including 200 taels' worth of lacquer before he died during the trip.[245] The next reference, dating to 1631, proves that private Dutch orders were still being fulfilled despite the trade embargo. In November of this year, Van Neyenrode sent a letter to the governor of Formosa, Hans Putmans, informing that the lacquer that he (Putmans) ordered through Commander Willem Jansz, the VOC enjoy to the *shogūn* court with the intent to solve the Taiwan incident, was almost finished.[246] Further evidence of lacquer traded privately at the time is provided by an inventory of the possessions of Van Neyenrode, taken shortly before his death in 1631. This inventory is of particular importance, as noted by Viallé, because it shows that even though Van Neyenrode served as Opperhoofd of the Hirado factory for ten yeas, he owned only a few pieces of lacquer. The pieces included a writing desk, five small coffers, some boxes, four cups, two chests, one cabinet and a table.[247] It can be argued, however, that the reason for Van Neyenrode not acquiring much lacquer when he was at Hirado may have related to his personal taste. In any case, the inventory informs us that he owned both lacquer furniture and tableware.

A letter written in 1633, the year that the embargo on all Dutch official trade was lifted, by Steven Barendts, one of the private outfitters of the ship *Warmound*, to his associates in Batavia indicates that about 350 taels' worth of lacquer were on board the ship when she departed from Hirado that year.[248] Viallé has noted that this lacquer must have been purchased ready-made and could not have been ordered. The letter of 1631 mentioned above, however, informing Putmans that the lacquer he ordered was

238 Letter-book received from Batavia 1617, VOC 1063. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.
239 NFJ 276. Letter-book Deshima 1614–16. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.
240 This table, inv. no. 986 Wil, was included in the exhibition *Japan und Europa, 1543–1929* held in Berlin in 1993. For a discussion and images of this table, see Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 195, ills. 467a, b, c and d.
241 Mentioned in Ibid., p. 245.
242 Viallé, 2011, p. 26.
243 Sweers Collection 5. F. 235. Miyako, 28 September 1626. Letter from Cramer to Van Neyenrode in Hirado. The Sweers Collection, a private archive, is kept in the Nationaal Archief (hereafter cited as NA) in The Hague. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, pp. 27 and p. 29, note 3.
244 NFJ 482. Archive of the Dutch factory in Japan (hereafter NFJ) 482. Hirado, 17 October 1626. Letter from Van Neyenrode to Bogaert in Miyako. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 27.
245 Sweers Collection 5. F. 235. Miyako, 10 October 1626. Letter from Cramer to Van Neyenrode in Hirado. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 27.
246 NFJ 482. Hirado, 19 November 1631. Letter from Van Neyenrode to Putmans in Tayouan. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 27.
247 VOC 1110. ff. 386–91. Hirado, 19 January 1633. Inventory of the goods belonging to Cornelis Van Neyenrode. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 27.
248 VOC 1110. f. 374. Hirado, 14 February 1633. Letter from Barendts to the outfitters of the Warmond. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 27.

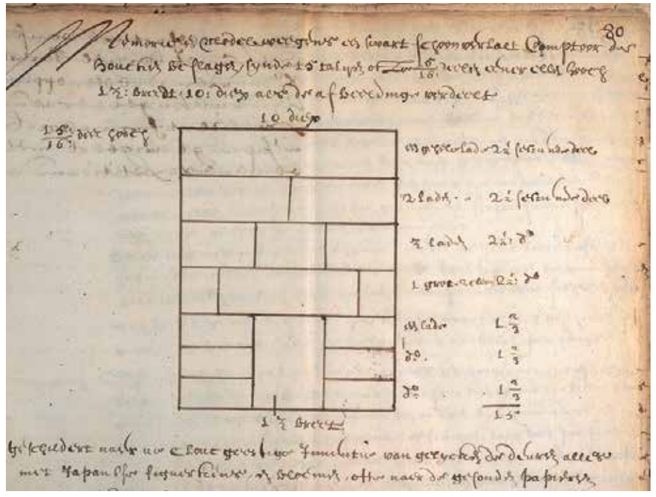

Fig. 4.1.2.2 Drawing of a comptoir with the division of drawers, part of a letter from Hendrik Hagenaer to François Caron, dated 26 March 1639
VOC 1132, Letterbook from Batavia 1640, fol. 80
VOC Archive, General State Archives, The Hague

almost finished, proves that at least part of the lacquer loaded on the ship could have been ordered privately.

The VOC had a renewed interest in lacquer and began placing orders on a larger scale at this time. In 1634, Batavia sent the first official order of lacquer after the Taiwan incident, requesting nest of coffers and comptoirs of all kinds, priced between 3000 and 4000 taels. This letter specifies that no compartmented boxes for bottles, most probably like the extant example in the Kyoto National Museum that will be discussed in the following pages, or tableware should be ordered, as there was no demand for these in the Dutch Republic.[249] About 127 pieces of lacquer were shipped in November of that year from Hirado to Batavia on the *Grol*, including one of a number of nests of coffers covered in ray skin.[250] In June of the following year, Batavia ordered more lacquer specifying that it should be the 'same as last year'.[251] In the month of November, a large shipment was sent from Hirado on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, consisting mostly of coffers, nests of coffers, *kisten* (chests) and *cantooren* (comptoirs), some of them described as being covered in ray skin and with lacquered ovals.[252] More of such pieces were sent in December on the *Wassenaer*, but this time also including some *kisten* with rayskin only and '8 comptoirs with side doors covered in ray skin and lacquerwork throughout'.[253] It seems likely that these pieces were decorated with the 'sprinkle denticle' technique rather than with pasted ray skin, like those made to order for the Portuguese discussed earlier.

One of the largest shipments of lacquer was sent to Batavia on the *Wassenaer* in November 1636. It consisted of some 603 coffers, nests of coffers, *cantooren* and *kisten*, with a total cost of T. 4356.[254] Cost prices did not vary according to lacquer or ray skin decoration, but only by size. In June of the following year, and again in June of 1638, Batavia instructed Hirado to cancel further lacquer orders, because there was still some in stock. That year, Hirado was instructed not to send any lacquer for the

249 NFL 277. Letter-book Deshima 1633–39. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.
250 NFJ 762. Shipping lists Deshima 1633–34. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.
251 Ibid., p. 246.
252 NFJ 763. Shipping lists Deshima 1635–37. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.
253 NFJ 763. Shipping lists Deshima 1635–37. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.
254 NFJ 763. Shipping lists Deshima 1635–37. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.



Fig. 4.1.2.3 *Namban* basin
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1620
Diameter: 49.3cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. W.13–1957)

Dutch Republic until further instructions.[255] Thus it is possible that the lacquer chests presented as gifts, together with Chinese porcelain, by the Gentlemen Seventeen to Maria de Médicis, Queen Mother of France, a few days after she visited the East India House of the VOC in Amsterdam in September 1638, were originally part of the large lacquer shipment sent to Batavia in 1636. According to Kasper van Bearle, they were 'the most magnificent chests from Japan, decorated and coloured in a lovely manner, of lacquer, gold, and mother-of-pearl'.[256] An order of lacquer was sent from Batavia in June of the following year, in 1639, requesting *comptoiren*, *kisten* and coffers with their interiors lacquered in black, red and green, a third of each, for the Dutch Republic.[257] In 1640, Batavia informed Hirado that no more lacquer with red and green interiors should be sent because it was not in demand in the Dutch Republic. Two years later, however, Batavia sent a letter to Deshima requesting square *kisten*, some comptoirs and *cantooren*, as before, a third with green interiors, a third with red, and a third with black, with a total value of 3500 to 4000 taels.[258] The letter specifies that 1500 taels was to be spent on 'extraordinarily rare and costly' pieces, with the lacquer ground to be mixed with gold and silver (*nashiji*).[259] This order was repeated in 1643, but it is specified that no nests of coffers were to be ordered and that tables were not wanted in the Dutch Republic, as it had been informed earlier in June 1639.[260]

A letter written on 26 March 1639 by Hendrick Hagenaer in the Dutch Republic to François Caron (1600–1673), a French Huguenot who served the VOC in Japan from 1633, and was Opperhoofd in Hirado from that year (1639) to 1641, is of particular importance to this study. This letter provides both textual and visual evidence of an order of lacquer made by a private Dutch individual, through a VOC servant in Japan, at the time. In the letter, Hendrick Hagenaer not only requests François Caron to order for him an unusually taller *contoor* (comptoir) with two doors, but also includes a drawing with the specific arrangement of drawers he wanted to have on the interior of the comptoir (Fig. 4.1.2.2).[261] After the letter was intercepted in Batavia, as noted by Impey and Jörg, François Caron responded to the reprimand that arose from his involvement in such a private order saying that it was too trivial to bother about and that he deserved some recompense for all the pains he had taken in earlier years.[262]

From a letter sent from Japan to Batavia in October 1643 we learn that lacquer craftsmen from Osaka, Miyako and Nagasaki went to Deshima to complain that all the orders made by the Dutch the previous year had been placed with only one lacquer worker, and they insisted that the work should be distributed more evenly among themselves. The lacquer worker was Mackina Sinsemondonne, who most probably made lacquer of high quality and responded well to specific orders in terms of shape, decoration and time of production.[263] The 278 pieces of lacquer shipped via Fort Zeelandia, the VOC fortress in Dayuan (present-day Anping in south Taiwan), to Batavia on the *Orangienboom* that same month, included nests of coffers and compoirs, half of them lacquered in gold with figures and the other half covered in ray skin with lacquered ovals. Eight comptoirs, described as *extraordinarij schoon* (extraordinarily beautiful), the large ones with a high cost price of 63 taels and the small of 27 taels, each. Batavia placed an order 'as before' the following year. The shipping list of October 1644 of the ill-fated *Swaen*, includes 388 pieces of lacquer. These included some coffers in nests, comptoirs and *kisten* of red lacquer, *comptoiren* with green, red

255 Lacquer, however, continued to be shipped to Siam and other destinations in south Asia. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.
256 The transcription of the original text in Dutch reads: 'Vereerden Hare majesteit in alle nedrigheid eenige fraeyingheden van porcelainen, en Kostelijcke Japonsche kisten, kunstig met lack, goud, en parlemoer ingeleit'. In the French version of Van Baerle's book, however, the *kisten* (chests) are described as 'coffres' (coffers). Cited in Viallé, 2010/1, p. 189, note 4. The porcelain gift is briefly discussed in section 3.2.1 of Chapter III, and note 410.
257 VOC 863. Letter to Hirado, Copy-book of letters sent by Batavia 1639. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.
258 VOC 866. Letter to Deshima, Copy-book of letters sent by Batavia 1642. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 247.
259 Cited in Ibid., p. 247.
260 NFJ 280. Letter-book Deshima 1642–43. Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 247 and 246, respectively.
261 VOC 1132. Letter-book received from Batavia 1640, fol. 80. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 246–247, ill. 555.
262 Ibid., p. 247.
263 NFJ 280. Letter-book Deshima 1642–43. Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 247.

Fig. 4.1.2.4 *Namban* tankard
Momoyama/early Edo period, c.1600–1620
Height: 18.5cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London (museum no. FE.23-1982)

or black interiors, one third of each. The red lacquered comptoirs had two doors. Some of the comptoirs, coffers and *kisten* are again described as *extraordinarij schoon* and very expensive.[264]

A small number of extant lacquer objects, some of them unique, housed in public and private collections around the world demonstrate that a number of new lacquer shapes were made to order for Dutch and English merchants after European models in the early decades of the seventeenth century. A variety of utilitarian lacquer objects suited for European daily life and pastimes, including ewer and basin sets, tankards, comb cases, and backgammon boards are mentioned in documents of both the VOC and the EIC, despite the fact that the presence of the English in Japan lasted only ten years, from 1613 to 1623. English textual sources indicate that although the EIC established a factory close to the VOC factory in Hirado, the Company made only one official purchase of lacquer. VOC documents also mention boxes for collars and shaving bowls. The extant lacquer pieces discussed in the following pages together with textual sources of both the VOC and EIC serve to visualize the types of lacquer objects that were made to order for these European trading companies and for private trade. In 1617, the Englishman William Adams writing from Sakai to Richard Wickman in Hirado informed him that he had '… bin at Meaco [Miyako] and talked w'th the makeman who hath promysed that in short tym [time] hee will a-dooun [have done]. He hath 50 men that woourketh [worked] night and day, that, so far as I see, hee douth his indevor [endeavor] …'.[265] It is clear from this excerpt that the lacquer workshops in Miyako were of relatively large scale and that the lacquer craftsmen worked hard to fulfill the orders made for the English and other European merchants.

264 NFJ 768. Shipping lists Deshima 1644. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 247.
265 Farrington, 1991, p. 648. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 238.



Lacquer basins of considerable large size with raised rings around narrow wells and raised central mounds, such as the example decorated in *Namban* style in the Victoria and Albert Museum, dating to *c.*1600–1620, were most probably made after a pewter model which in turn copied a European silver or gold basin that together with an ewer formed part of a set used for washing the hands after dinner (Fig. 4.1.2.3).[266] Visual sources attest to the use of such sumptuous sets in Western Europe in the early seventeenth century. For example, see the silver gilt set depicted in the painting *Allegory of Fire* by the Antwerp artist Adriaen van Utecht, dated 1636, illustrated in Chapter III (Fig. 3.1.3.7). Pewter basins of varying large size were commonly used throughout Europe at the time.[267] The raised central mound, like that of the metal prototypes, would have served to steady the foot of the matching ewer. We do not know the exact shape and decoration of such lacquer ewers, as no example appears to be recorded. The pieces listed as '1 *waterlampet met de schotel* (water ewer with its saucer)' among the shipment of lacquer sent by Woutersen from Miyako to Specx in November 1616, may have referred to an ewer and basin set.[268] Basins with ewers were mentioned frequently in documents of the EIC factory in Japan. In a letter written from Hirado by William Eaton in December 1617, he informs Sir Thomas Smythe in London that he '… sent the last yeare by the Thomas for your Worshipe one cattan in a case & 2 basins and yewers, the one of make work, the other of blake varnish, & 24 smale frute dishes of make work, being put into 2 boxes, w'ch I sent to your good ladey'.[269] In November 1616, the head of the English factory Richard Cocks, wrote in his diary 'I received a bason [basin] and ure [ewer] from our *makey* man at Miaco; cost 4ta. 5m. 0co'.[270] In January 1618, Richard Cocks wrote in his dairy 'I made up the *maky* ware for my Lady Smith this day, for her contor rec. in the *Adviz*, rated at 40 mark str., is 106:6:7 and packed it up in 5 parcelles in chists, viz.: …No. 5, divers matters, viz.: …03 basons and spout pots, greate 1050, 03 ditto lesser sort, cost 0750'.[271] Sir Thomas Dale writing from Batavia in March 1619 informed his brother or brother-in-law in London that he had 'sent hom in the ship [the Little James], … one voyder, one trencher knife, two broad bassons & 2 ewers sutable unto them [en suite], one hand bassoon, & one spout-pot ewer, & one cabinet, to my wife; all thes are of Japan worke'.[272] It is clear from these excerpts that EIC servants in Japan sent lacquer basins and ewers on various occasions as gifts to relatives or as consignments to private consignments to private individuals in England, such as the wife of the Governor of the Company.

Tankards are also listed a few times in VOC and EIC textual sources. The only lacquer tankard that appears to have survived is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 4.1.2.4).[273] This tankard, also dating to *c.*1600–1620, is decorated in *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay with a dense design of flowering and fruiting branches arranged vertically in the *Namban* style. The shape of the tankard, with a tall, tapering cylindrical body, spreading foot, loop handle with a curved terminal and stepped lid with a ball finial, faithfully copies a Dutch pewter or tin-glazed earthenware model commonly used in the Dutch Republic in the early seventeenth century, such as the models discussed in Chapter III (Figs. 3.4.2.1.12 and 3.4.2.1.14).[274] Lacquer beer beakers appear to have been first made to order for the Dutch in 1615. In November of that year, Woutersen who travelled between Miyako and Osaka, sent to Jacques Specx a number of lacquer pieces, including '20 bierbeeckers (beer beakers) at 15 *maes* for 5 pieces'.[275] The invoice of the ship Rotterdam, for the Rotterdam Chamber, dated 1 January 1616, states that among the lacquer brought by the VOC ship *Oud Zeeland* from Japan included '148 bierbekers at 5 maes each'.[276] In February of that year,

266 Discussed and published in Ibid., pp. 162–163, ill. 373; and Canepa, 2008/1, p. 27, fig. 16. For two further examples in the Tokyo National Museum and the Gifu City History Museum, see Sakai City Museum, 1983, p. 51, no. 51; and Gifu City History Museum, 2003, p. 36, no. II–24, respectively.
267 For two examples, measuring 51.5cm and 44.5cm in diameter, see J.F.H.H. Beekhuizen, *De schoonheid van het oude Tin*, Amsterdam, 1998, pp. 124–125, figs. 184–185, respectively.
268 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.
269 Farrington, 1991, p. 648. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 239.
270 Thompson, 1883, vol. I, p. 208. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 238.
271 Thompson, 1883, vol. II, p. 9. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 238–239; and Canepa, 2008/1, p. 27.
272 Farrington, 1991, p. 752. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 240.
273 Published in Ibid., p. 197, ill. 473; and Canepa, 2008/1, p. 27, fig. 17.
274 By the late sixteenth century, mugs with hinged lids, generally called tankards, had become common in England and in German-speaking countries. Compare, for instance, the form of a silver-gilt example made in London, hallmarked 1602–1603, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (museum no. LOAN: GILBERT, 534–2008).
275 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 243.
276 VOC 1063. Letter-book received from Batavia 1617. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 244.

Left
Fig. 4.1.2.5 *Namban* comb case or toilet box
Momoyama/early Edo period, *c.*1600–1620
Height: 17cm
National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen
(inv. no. EAc 139)

Right
Fig. 4.1.2.6 Moulded leather comb case with lid
Italy
Fifteenth century
Height: 12cm; width: 12cm; depth: 3cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 15–1891)

Woutersen sent to Specks another shipment of lacquer that included '1 *bos bierbeeckers* of 5 pieces'.[277] The beer beakers, sent along with other lacquer by Specks to Bantam on the VOC ship *Enckhuysen* just a few days later, are described in the invoice as nests of five, fitting into each other.[278] This indicates, as noted by Impey and Jörg, that the beer beakers did not have handles and were probably of tall, cylindrical shape with and everted rim made after European pewter and silver models, such as the Dutch examples illustrated in Figs. 3.4.2.1.21 and 3.4.2.1.23.[279] Lacquer tankards are first mentioned in an entry of the diary of Richard Cocks dated 14 July 1617, which reads: 'I rec. a letter from Magazemon Dono, our host in Miaco, with a box of 20 ordenary fans, for a present, in it. Also an other from the *maky* dono, with 3 boxes or chistes *maky* ware, which were opened, viz.: In one chist, 20 tankards…'. In December of this same year, he wrote 'I sent Jno. Derickson Lamb [Jan Dirckz. Lam], the Dutch general, a present, viz.: …1 tankard *maky* work, 4 beakers *maky* work'.[280] The lacquer acquired by Richard Cocks for 'my Lady Smith' in January 1618, to be subsequently shipped via Bantam to England, also included '02 tankareds, cost 0160' and '20 beakers, cost 0600'. These excerpts indicate that both lacquer tankards and beakers were ordered by the English, some to be sent as gifts to the VOC representatives or sent among private consignments of lacquer to individuals in England. Interestingly, the shape of this extant *Namban* lacquer tankard with a loop handle with curved terminal closely resembles that of one of the models of porcelain tankards made to order for the Dutch after a European model at the Jingdezhen kilns in China in the late 1630s (Fig. 3.4.2.1.16). Related handles were previously used on mother-of-pearl ewers made to order for the Portuguese in Gujarat in the mid-sixteenth century (Fig. 4.1.1.2.2).

Another lacquer example of this date that appears to be unique is a comb case or toilet box of rectangular form with a removable lid and a concealed side drawer at the base, decorated with fruiting branches in the *Namban* style. The comb case

277 NFJ 276. Letter-book Deshima 1614–16. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 244.
278 Mentioned in Ibid.
279 Ibid., p. 206.
280 Cited in Ayers, Impey and Mallet, 1990, p. 76; Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 238–239; and Canepa, 2008/1, p. 27.



was inventoried in the Royal Danish *Kunstkammer* in 1690, and is now housed at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen (Fig. 4.1.2.5).[281] A comb case or toilet box like this example, intended to protect a hair comb and a removable framed mirror, would have been a valuable object to attend personal hygiene and comfort while at home or travelling.[282] The shape of the comb case, having a removable lid that was originally secured with a string running on a channel at either long side of the rectangular body, was most probably made after comb cases that were usually moulded and stitched in leather used throughout Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Fig. 4.1.2.6).[283] The earliest reference of the shipment of lacquer comb cases appears to be that of the invoice listing the lacquer sent by Jacques Specks to Bantam on the VOC ship *Enckhuysen*, on 28 February 1616, which included 4 lacquered *camdoosen* (boxes for combs).[284] Another reference is found in an entry written by Richard Cocks in his diary, dated 15 October 1617, in which he states 'I paid Maky Dono, for 20 comb cases, 6 *taies* bars'.[285] This diary entry informs us that Richard Cocks, as he had done earlier in the month of July, ordered lacquer pieces made after European shapes in sets of twenty. The following year, in 1618, Richard Cocks placed a very large order of comb cases. A diary entry of 15 December states that the lacquer 'Maky Dono' was to deliver within five months, included '100 comb cases, at 5 ½ mas. peece'.[286]

The vertical arrangement of the flowering and fruiting branches of the *Namban* tankard and comb case discussed above relates closely to that seen on a small number of extant lacquer bottles of tall square section with rounded, sloping shoulders and narrow cylindrical necks, known as *tokkuri*, decorated in the *Namban* style (Fig. 4.1.2.7).[287] It was previously suggested that the body of the bottles was made in both wood and metal,[288] but all the extant examples appear to be made of lacquered wood. The sides are decorated with flowering trees framed by scrolling vines in *makie* or a border of sprinkled particles of mother-of-pearl inlay (*aogai*). Storage boxes of rectangular shape with a flat lid were made to order in lacquer to store and transport a set of six of these bottles. A storage box that appears to be a unique example of this type decorated with naturalistic compositions of flowering trees, birds and animals in the *Namban* style, still containing six bottles, is now housed in the Kyoto National Museum (Fig. 4.1.2.8).[289] The bottles, as well as the storage box, have been dated to the Momoyama or early Edo periods, *c.*1580–1620. This dating seems to be associated with the fact that the square-sectioned shape resembles closely that of porcelain bottles first made to order for the Portuguese after European glass prototypes at the kilns of Jingdezhen in China in the late sixteenth century discussed in Chapter III (Fig. 3.4.1.2.5).[290] The earliest textual evidence of orders of lacquer bottles and storage boxes, however, dates to 1616. In July of that year, Richard Wickham writing from Osaka informs Richard Cocks at Hirado that 'I have r'c'd of the maky dono, sent me per Coe Jno unto Osacay, your 2 cases of bottles w'ch Mr Eaton bespake, alsoe 10 bekers or drinking cupps w'ch he made for mee, for as the 100 that Mr Eaton bespoke he hath not done one of them. Nevertheless, yf they like you, take them …'.[291] In a letter written on 17 September of that same year from Sakai, Richard Wickham informs John Osterwick at Hirado that the lacquer he was sending included '2 cases of bottles, 24 gopas & 24 spones, 3 saltseles & ten bekers; all w'ch I pray dd Capt' Cock [Ricard Cocks] at this coming downe'.[292] Among the lacquer acquired by Richard Cocks in 1618 for 'Lady Smith' was a chest 'No. 2 containing 1 case botelles, cost 10 0 0'.[293] These excerpts suggest that bottles were made to order for the EIC servants in sets of an unknown number (most probably six) alongside boxes in which they were stored. Thus it can be argued

281 Published in Bente Dam-Mikkelsen and Torben Lundbaek (eds.), *Ethnographic Objects in The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1650–1800*, Copenhagen, 1980, pp. 228–230, cat. Eac 139; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 158–159, ill. 361.
282 Double-edged hair combs made in a variety of materials, including ivory, boxwood and tortoiseshell, seem to have been fashionable personal accessories for both men and women from about 1400 well into the seventeenth century. In the early years of the century, flat mirrors were scarce and expensive, and were mostly made of speculum, a highly polished alloy often called steel, rather than glass. These were small and usually in the form of hand-held looking glass. Jill Turnbull and Alexander Shepherd, *The Scottish Glassmaking Industry, 1610–1750: The Serve the Whole Nation with Glass*, Edinburgh, 2001, p. 51.
283 The leather example illustrated here, probably made for an ivory comb, has two integral loops at either side for a cord or thong.
284 VOC 1063. Letter-book received from Batavia 1617. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 244.
285 Thompson, 1883, vol. I, p. 323. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 238.
286 Thompson, 1883, vol. II, p. 103. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 240.
287 For a discussion on these bottles and images of a pair of these bottles (including the bottle illustrated here), unusually decorated with the edges of the shoulders and sides with randomly shaped fragments of mother-of-pearl instead of the scrolling vine (*karakusa*) seen on the Bunkakan examples, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 200–203, no. 17.
288 For this opinion, see Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 102.
289 The box containing the six bottles and the set of six bottles in the Kyoto National Museum, formerly in a private collection in Crewkerne, Dorset, are published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 100–101, ills. 158a and b. The box with the bottles was also published in Canepa, 2008/1, p. 23, fig. 9. A pair of bottles with flaring copper mounts at the neck similarly decorated to those in the Kyoto National Museum can be found in the Namban Bunkakan in Osaka. Published in Sakai City Museum, 1983, p. 50, no. 49.
290 For a discussion on these bottles and the European glass prototypes, see section 3.4.1.2 of Chapter III.
291 Farrington, 1991, p. 440. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 237.
292 Farrington, 1991, pp. 479–480. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 238.
293 Thompson, 1883, p. 9. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 239.

Opposite page
Fig. 4.1.2.7 *Namban* bottle (*tokkuri*)
Momoyama/early Edo period
Height: 30.6cm; width: 11.8cm
Private Collection, Portugal
© Jorge Welsh, London-Lisbon

Fig. 4.1.2.8 *Namban* storage box containing six bottles
Momoyama/early Edo period
Height: 33.5cm; width: 41.5cm; depth: 28.8cm
Kyoto National Museum, Kyoto

Fig. 4.1.2.10 Games board
Oak with marquetry of ebony, coloured woods and ivory inlay
Spain (probably Granada)
Sixteenth century, *c.*1525–1575
Length: 56.3cm; width: 34cm; height: 13cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 154–1900)

Fig. 4.1.2.9 Transition style backgammon board
Early Edo period, *c.*1630-1650
Length: 44.2cm; width: 42.7cm; height: 9cm (closed)
Private Collection, Portugal
© Jorge Welsh, London-Lisbon

Opposite page
Figs. 4.1.2.11a and b Games board
Wood veneered with ebony, and bone inlay
Germany (probably Augsburg)
Late sixteenth century, *c.*1580–1600
Length: 41.5cm; width: 42cm; height: 6.6cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 567–1899)

Fig. 4.1.2.12 *The Cardsharps*
Oil on canvas
Michelangelo Merisi Carvaggio (1571–1610), *c.*1595
Dimensions: 94.2cm x 130.9cm
Kimbell Art Museum, Texas (inv. no. AP 1987.06)

Figs. 4.1.2.13a and b *Namban* box with domed lid
Momoyama/early Edo period
Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century
Diameter: 50cm; height: 20cm
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts
(inv. no. TD2001.2.1)

that the dating of this type of bottle and storage box could be early seventeenth century rather than late sixteenth century, probably *c.*1615–1620.

Thus far only a few lacquer backgammon boards have been recorded (Fig. 4.1.2.9). Two of these examples are decorated in the *Namban* style. Their shape consists of two hinged rectangular sections, that when open form a playing surface for backgammon framed by raised borders, and when closed form a shallow portable box. The lacquer craftsmen most probably copied the shape from a European wooden box made specifically for playing games (usually with a board for chess on one side and backgammon on the other) that was taken to Japan, such as those made in Venice and southern Spain with the external and internal surfaces inlaid with luxury materials in the sixteenth century, which in turn derived from Islamic models (Fig. 4.1.2.10).[294] Decorative game boards were popular among the royalty and high-ranking nobility of Renaissance Europe and frequently served as diplomatic gifts, despite religious strictures imposed against game playing and gambling.[295] The *Namban* backgammon boards, dating to *c.*1600–1630, are decorated on the exterior with various motifs of distinguishable Japanese character. One example in the Namban Bunkakan in Osaka depicts Japanese fans on a floral ground,[296] while the other in the Katsumi Yamagata Collection in Tokyo or the Kanenosuke Itō, Hiogo Prefecture, depicts landscape scenes depicting Japanese figures.[297] As noted by Impey and Jörg, it is possible that Richard Cocks was referring to this latter type of backgammon board when he wrote in his diary of September 1621 that he paid the '*maky* man' for '6 peare playing tables with men, at 7 *tais* peare'.[298] Backgammon boards are rarely mentioned in VOC records. A reference is found in the shipping list of a large consignment of lacquer sent on 13 November 1635 from Hirado to Batavia, on the VOC ship *New Amsterdam*, which

294 Published in M. Rosser-Owen, *Islamic Arts of Spain*, London, 2010, p. 89. Although the game of backgammon originated in Asia, it spread westwards through Persia (present-day Iran) and Turkey to Europe. See, for instance, the 1537 carved wood backgammon board made for King Ferdinand I by Hans Kels the Younger in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Published in J. C. Smith, *German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance, c. 1520–1580: Art in an Age of Uncertainty*, Princeton, 1994,, pp. 342–345, fig. 305.

295 Sixteenth century inventories attest to the significance of chess and backgammon sets among the royalty and high-ranking nobility. Playing board games was a popular pastime, considered serious as well as entertaining, which allowed men and women to compete against each other on the semi-public sphere of the court. For more information on this subject, see Dagmar Eichberger, 'Playing Games, Men, Women and Beasts on the Backgammon Board for King Ferdinand I and Queen Anna of Bohemia and Hungary', in Dagmar Eichberger, Anne-Marie Legaré and Wim Hüsken (eds), *Women at the Burgurdian Court: Presence and Influence*, Brepols, 2010, pp. 123–139. Also see, Laurie Winters, *A Renaissance Treasure. The Flagg Collection of European Decorative Arts and Sculpture*, New York, 1999, pp. 94–96.

296 Published in XVII Exposição Europeia de Arte, Ciência e Cultura, 1983, p. 203, pl. 165; Ferrão, 1990, Vol. III, p. 295, pl. 524; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 98, ill. 150. For an illustration of the backgammon board open, see Musée Cernuschi, 1980, pl. 35.

297 Martha Boyer published in 1957 this backgammon board as belonging to the Kanenosuko Itō, Hiogo Prefecture, while Yoshitomo Okamoto published it in 1972 as belonging to the Katsumi Yamagata Collection in Tokyo. See Boyer, 1957, and Okamoto, 1972.

298 Thompson, 1883, vol. II, p. 192. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 240.

299 NFJ 835. Account-book Deshima 1635. Cited as '10 Stx Verker Borden' in Oliver Impey, 'Japanese Export Lacquer of the 17th Century', in Watson, 1981, p. 137. The citation used here is taken from Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246.

300 Discussed and illustrated in Vinhais and Welsh, 2003, pp. 72–77, no. 10; Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 97–98, ill. 151; and d'Oliverira Martins, 2010, pp. 142–145, no. 37.

301 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 98, ill. 153.

302 Published in G.R. Diesinger, *Ostasiatische Lackarbeiten sowie Arbeiten aus Europa, Thailand und Indien*, Braunschweig, 1990, no. 239; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 98, ill. 152.

303 Cited in Ibid., 2005, p. 243.

304 NFJ 276. Letter-Book Deshima 1614–16. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 244.

305 NFJ 835. Account-Book Deshima 1635. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 246. Material evidence of orders of shaving basins continuing into the following century is provided by a few extant examples of circular or oval form decorated in the so-called Pictorial style, dating to the early eighteenth century. Examples of round shaving basins can be found in the Peabody Essex Museum and the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm; and a pair of oval examples is in the National Museum of Japanese History in Sakura. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 192, ills. 458–460.

306 VOC 1063. Letter-book received from Batavia 1617. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 245.

307 Published in Ibid., 2005, pp. 110–111, ill. 198; and Canepa, 2008/1, p. 22, fig. 8.

mentions ten '*verkeerborden* [gaming boards]'.[299] Backgammon boards were also decorated in the later, so-called Transition and Pictorial styles. All extant examples decorated in these styles are of square shape, and thus may have been made after a European squared-shaped model such as the veneered games boards made in Italy or southern Germany (Figs. 4.1.2.11a and b). Visual sources attest to the popularity of such wooden square-shaped backgammon boards in Europe in the late sixteenth century. One appears depicted in the oil painting *The Cardsharps* by the Italian artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, dating to *c.*1595 (Fig. 4.1.2.12). The shape of all the lacquer backgammon boards, whether decorated in *Namban*, Transition or Pictorial styles, differs from the European models in that the exterior sides are not meant to serve as a games board and thus have a flat surface (omitting a raised border) decorated with various motifs. It is not known whether this was a request made by the English and/or Dutch, or if it was a liberty taken by the lacquer craftsmen to embellish the exterior with lacquer techniques and decorative motifs of hybrid Japanese-European origin used in other lacquer objects made to order for the Europeans. The backgammon board illustrated here appears to be a unique example decorated in the so-called Transition style, dating to *c.*1630–1650. Its exterior is decorated with two flying geese in *makie* on a plain black lacquered ground, while its interior playing surface is alternately painted with red lacquer and sprinkled particles of mother-of-pearl inlay (*aogai*).[300] Two backgammon boards decorated in the so-called Pictorial style with an even simpler or plain decoration are known. One example, dating to *c.*1640–1670, is decorated on the exterior with two boys flying a kite in *takamakie* and on the interior with the playing surface with triangles of inlaid plain wood alternating with others that include mother-of-pearl inlay.[301] The other, dating to *c.*1640–1660, in the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Brunswick, has a plain lacquered exterior and an interior playing board with alternating gold and striped gold-and-black triangles, within a wide border finely painted with landscapes, animals and birds in raised gold lacquer and chrysanthemum insignia (*mons*) on the corners.[302]

It appears that VOC servants were responsible for ordering shaving bowls and boxes for collars. Shaving bowls appear listed in VOC documents as early as 1615. That year, Woutersen sent to Specx a shipment of lacquer that included shaving bowls of two sizes, listed as '2 *scheerbeckens* [shaving bowls] at 15 *maes* each' and '2 ditto somewhat smaller at 12 ½ *maes* each'.[303] In February of the following year, Woutersen sent more lacquer to Specx. This time the shipment included '4 large *scheerbeckens* at T.3 each' and '4 ditto smaller at T. 2½ each'.[304] Although no example decorated in the *Namban* style appears to have survived, it is likely that the lacquer craftsmen copied the shape of pewter or earthenware models taken to Japan. Shaving bowls continued to be ordered by the VOC after 1634. In November 1635, for instance, 10 shaving bowls were among the large consignment of lacquer shipped from Hirado on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*.[305] Boxes for collars appear to have been first shipped to Batavia in 1616. In October of that year, Specx sent a consignment of lacquer on the ship *Oude Sonne*, via Bantam, which included '2 round, lacquered and gilded raised *lobbedoosen* [boxes for collars], the space for the neck inside filled with small boxes fitting into each other, at T. 13 each'.[306] The description of the collar boxes, being round and raised, seems to somewhat match an extant box of cylindrical shape and exceptionally large size with a shallow domed lid decorated in the *Namban* style with a dense design of flowering plants in *makie* and mother-of-pearl inlay, which is in the Peabody Essex Museum (Figs. 4.1.2.13a and b).[307] This cylindrical box, as well as a few other extant *Namban*

Left
Fig. 4.1.2.14 Transition-style chair
Early Edo period, *c.*1630–1650
Height: 67cm; width: 36cm
Current whereabouts unknown

Fig. 4.1.2.15 Engraved plate with designs for nine chairs
Crispijn van de Passe the Younger (1593–1670), *Oficina Arcularia in Qua sunt ad spectantia diversa Eximia exempla ex varijs autoribus collecta,* Amsterdam, 1642
Dimensions: 30.9cm x 21cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 20357:1)

Right
Figs. 4.1.2.16a and b Dutch rosewood and ebony chair
Early seventeenth century, *c.*1620–1650
Height: 72.5cm; width: 37.5cm
Buil & Brandsma, Amsterdam




Figs. 4.1.2.17a and b Document box, the 'Van Diemen Box'
Early Edo period, *c.*1636–1639
Height: 16cm; width: 48.3cm; depth: 36.7cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. W.49-1916)

examples of similar large size but of shallow, cylindrical shape with a flat base, may have been used to store a ruff collar or a wide-brimmed hat.[308]

In the early Edo period, the Dutch also had folding chairs with lacquer decoration made to order for them after models they brought to Japan. An apparently unique extant example, formerly in a private collection in Japan, has an X-frame, curved legs of square cross-section and two rows of arcaded rails joined by balusters in the back (Fig. 4.1.2.14).[309] The shape copies that of small folding chairs made in rosewood and ebony which were carried by women to the church in the Dutch Republic in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, such as an example in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.[310] The popularity of this type of church chair at the time is attested by an example depicted in an engraved plate with designs for nine chairs published by Crispijn van de Passe the Younger (1593–1670) in his *Oficina Arcularia in Qua sunt ad spectantia diversa Eximia exempla ex varijs autoribus collecta* in Amsterdam, in 1642 (Fig. 4.1.2.15).[311] The arcaded rails in the back, as well as the front and back stretchers of such Dutch church chairs were decorated with low relief carving of floral motifs, and they usually had floral carved finials at the top of the back legs and twist-turned balusters. A Dutch church chair like the example found during this research study with finials carved in the shape of lions and small ball knobs inserted between balusters in the back, may have served as model for the lacquer chair discussed here (Figs. 4.1.2.16a and b).[312] The lacquer craftsmen would have transformed the lion finials into Buddhist Lions and turned them around to look backwards. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that the model taken to Japan could have been a church chair of similar shape made for the Dutch in southern India, which in turn copied the Dutch model.[313] Small folding chairs were used in the Calvinist churches of southern India, and were hung up on the wall after use.[314] Thus, the Japanese lacquer chair, dating to *c.*1630–1650, combines a Dutch shape with fine *makie* decoration and mother-of-pearl inlay, which consists of cash and scrolling foliage patterns, and long-tailed birds in flight, on the sides and front of the legs, which are not usually found in *Namban* or the so-called Transition style lacquers. The arcaded rails, however, are decorated with scrolling foliage and typical *Namban* scrolls, and the cresting on the top-rail has eight chrysanthemum *mon*. This chair was most probably a private order.

In February of 1640, François Caron, the Opperhoofd in Hirado, sent on the VOC ship *Castricum* to Batavia via Formosa 'one costly *camerstoel*, lacquered, for His Honour the Governor-General', valued at 100 taels.[315] In October of that same year,

308 Two examples can be found in the Palazzo Pitti in Florence (*hiramakie* and mother-of-pearl inlay) and the Kynžvart Castle in the Czech Republic (inv. no. KY 9930). Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 110, ills. 196 and 197, respectively. The use of these boxes to hold a hat, as noted by Morena, is suggested by the fact that the earliest reference of the box in the Palazzo Pitti is found in the inventory of the estate of Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici (1617–1675). Francesco Morena, 'Scatola', in Morena, 2012, pp. 356–357, no. II.52 (p. 558, English version).

309 Published and discussed in Namiko Takeuchi, 'Two Examples of Japanese Lacquer Chairs', in Michael Kühlenthal (ed.), *East Asian and European Lacquer Techniques, Arbeitshefte des Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege*, 112, Munich, 2000, pp. 57–60; Jan Veenendaal, 'Furniture in Batavia', in Titus Eliëns (ed.), *Domestic Interiors at the Cape and in Batavia 1602–1795*, Zwolle, 2002, p. 27, fig. 10; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 141 and 143, ill. 292.

310 The Rijksmuseum example, and one other formerly in the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, are published in Jan Veenendaal, *Furniture from Indonesia, Shri Lanka and India during the Dutch period*, Delft, 1985, p. 73, pls. 67 and 68; respectively. The Rijksmuseum chair is also published in Veenendaal, 2002, p. 27, fig. 9. It is important to note that the Gemeentemuseum chair later proved to be mostly a replacement, made in the nineteenth century, which must have been based on a seventeenth century original. I am grateful to my supervison Prof. Dr. Christiaan Jörg for bringing these chairs and publication to my attention, and to Jet Pijzel-Dommisse, curator of Decorative Arts at the Gemeentemuseum, for the information on the church chair formerly in the museum collection.

311 I am indebted to Jan Veenendaal, specialist on furniture and the applied arts made for the VOC and WIC, for bringing this engraved plate to my attention.

312 I am grateful to Rob Bruil, Bruil and Brandsma Works of Art, Amsterdam, for granting me permission to include images of the chair in this doctoral dissertation.

313 Veenendaal, 2002, p. 27.

314 Ibid., pp. 27–28.

315 The transcription of the original text in Dutch reads: '1 costelijcke camerstoel die verlakt is voor den edelen Hr. Gouverneur Generael'. NFJ 839, Account-book Deshima. 1639. Cited in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 44. The English translation is taken from Viallé, 2010/1, p. 192.

François Caron sent on the VOC ship *Breda* to Batavia a table made after a Dutch model of exceptional quality. The table is described in a letter written on 30 November 1640 by the Governor-General Van Diemen to the Gentlemen Seventeen, saying that he was sending on the VOC ship *Salamander* 'an extraordinarily beautiful lacquered table, Dutch fashion, and a *sekreet kelderken* [close-stool], very rare and no less costly, most suitable as gifts and to gain favors; the decoration in the lacquer being finely filed gold and silver, the table costing two hundred seventy-two taels in Japan and the *kelderken* one hundred taels at fifty-seven stivers per tael, marked with the sign of the General Company VOC'.[316] Viallé has shown that the *camerstoel* and the *sekreet kelderken* shipped by François Caron were the same piece, a close-stool, and that the mark of the VOC was on the packing crate rather than on the lacquer pieces.[317] This lacquer table may have been one of the three tables presented together with nests of large lacquer coffers and cabinets, as well as Chinese silk and porcelain, as gifts by the Gentlemen Seventeen to Henrietta Maria of France, Queen consort of Charles I of England, her daughter Princess Maria Henrietta and Amalia van Solms in November 1642.[318] The close-stool, as Viallé has noted, was most likely the one presented as gift to Queen Henrietta Maria in that same occasion.[319]

A small number of extant pieces of exceptional quality decorated with expensive and elaborate lacquer techniques depicting scenes from Japanese literature in combination with inscribed European names or monograms attest to orders made by private Dutch individuals in the 1630s and early 1640s. Unlike the majority of lacquer pieces made to order for the Europeans discussed thus far, a number of these pieces of outstanding quality were made for the Dutch in traditional Japanese shapes. One of the earliest known examples of this type is a rectangular box, known as the 'Van Diemen box', now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figs. 6.1.2.17a and b).[320] In the shape of a Japanese document box (*bunko*) with a suspended inner tray, its exterior decoration is finely executed in relief with gold and silver *hiramakie* and *takamakie* on a black ground depicting scenes from the *Genji Monogatari* (*Tale of Genji*), the early eleventh century classic of Japanese literature. The inside of the lid bears the misspelled inscription 'MARIA, UAN, DIEMEN' inlaid in thick gold foil (*kimpaku*) on a black ground. Thus it has been assumed that the box was made between 1636 and 1639 for Maria van Diemen, wife of Antonio van Diemen, who served as Governor-General in Batavia from 1635 until his death in 1645.[321] This box relates closely to a dismantled box of this date and similar high quality, known as the 'Buys Box', now housed in the Elton Hall Collection in Elton, Peterborough.[322] The interior of the lid of the latter box is inscribed 'PIETERNELLAE BUYS' in thick gold.[323] Pieternella Buijs (also known as Pietronella or Petronella Buys)[324] was the wife of Philips Lucasz, who was Director-General in Batavia from 1635, and Van Diemen's right-hand man until his death in 1640.[325] There is also a smaller rectangular box with a lacquer decoration of slightly lesser quality dating to *c.*1635–1640, now in the Weston Collection in the United States, which bears the initials FC or CF in thick silver on the inside of its lid. The initials may be those of François Caron.[326] Thus it is possible, as noted by Impey and Jörg, that François Caron ordered the box for himself.[327]

In the past it was suggested that the aforementioned lacquer boxes presented to the wives of the two highest ranking officials of the VOC serving in Asia at the time may have been gifts from an unknown Japanese official or a VOC servant in Japan.[328] Although Van Diemen received lacquer as gifts from Japanese officials in 1636 and again in 1640,[329] it seems unlikely that a Japanese official would have ordered lacquer objects inscribed with the names of these women because this did not accord with protocol.[330] More recently, two VOC servants that also traded privately in Japan have been suggested as possible commissioners of these lacquer pieces to be given as gifts. François Caron is one of them, but it is unlikely that he ordered the boxes to the wives of his superiors after having been reprimanded for sending a number of packages to private individuals in Formosa and Batavia. The other is Philips Lucasz, who could have ordered the boxes through François Caron after his return to Batavia as Director-General in September 1635. The fact that a VOC document dated August 1641 mentions that 'two balustrades which the late Director-General Philips Lucasz had ordered for the Princess [of Orange] in Japan', that the VOC directors agreed to present the balustrades to Amalia van Solms, and that the Amsterdam Chamber was authorized to take care of the presentation, indicates that Lucasz would have had the opportunity to order the boxes inscribed with the names of his wife and of the powerful wife of his superior, in addition to the balustrades.[331]

In October 1639, a lacquered balustrade had been shipped from Hirado to Batavia via Formosa.[332] In November of the following year, Batavia wrote to the VOC directors informing that they were sending them the 'balustrade which the Princess of Orange had ordered through the late Director-General Philips Lucasz' aboard the *Salamander*, which arrived in Amsterdam in August 1641.[333] Another balustrade had been shipped from Hirado earlier that month aboard the *Witte Olifant* for 'the deceased director Philips Lucasz. in a large crate bound with straw mats and ropes'.[334] Considering that the value of the latter balustrade was a little over 90 *taels*, and that of the other shipped ten days later was 822 *taels*, it must have been only a section of a larger balustrade.[335] There was no place to install this costly lacquered balustrade at the time of its arrival in the Dutch Republic, but it was eventually placed in Amalia's state bedchamber at Huis ten Bosch, her summer residence near The Hague, which began to be built in 1645.[336] In an inventory of Huis ten Bosch, taken in 1654, is listed 'An elegant Indian balustrade with two doors, consisting of six parts, mostly of eight pilasters each; in between a somewhat larger part supported by six iron posts, guilded and painted as the aforementioned balustrade'.[337] A sale catalogue of the belongings of the royal household auctioned at Huis ten Bosch Palace in July 1797 lists 'a costly Chinese lacquered fence inlaid with pearlshell, length 28 feet, height 2.5 feet, with its plinth', which was unsold.[338] It is unclear when or how a model for the princely balustrade, most likely made out of wood, intended to keep visitors at distance, was sent to Japan.[339] Nevertheless, the pilasters and possibly some of the top rail that formed part of Amalia's balustrade, now incorporated into several pieces of furniture, show that the balustrade was made up of tall, turned, tapered pilasters finely decorated with pictorial cartouches enclosed by *nashiji* and geometric borders, and that the top rail was inlaid with small pieces of mother-of-pearl, as described in the aforementioned sale catalogue.[340]

Textual sources demonstrate that the Orange court already had an interest in Japanese lacquer by the early 1630s. The 1632 inventories of the palaces of Frederick Henry and Amalia van Solms in The Hague, Noordeinde and the Stadholders's Quarter discussed earlier in Chapter III, list in the closets of both the prince and princess, objects decorated in red lacquer as well as in the *Namban* style.[341] It seems possible that the idea of having Japanese export lacquer coffers, cabinets and boxes, along with mother-of-pearl objects, dismantled and then mounted the pieces on the walls of a small closet at Huis ten Bosch, presumably in accordance with a design by Pieter Post,

316 VOC 1133. 60v–61r. Incoming letter-book from Batavia 1640. Cited in Impey and Jörg, p. 44; and Viallé, 2010/1, p. 193.
317 Ibid., pp. 193 and 200.
318 The Chinese silk and porcelain presented as gifts to these three ladies are discussed in Chapters II and III, respectively.
319 For more information on the lacquer presented, see Viallé, 2010/1, pp. 190–194, and Appendix, pp. 205, 207 and 208.
320 The box was formerly in the collections of Madame de Pompadour in France and William Beckford in England. Discussed and illustrated in Joe Earle, 'Genji meets Yang Guifei: A Group of Japanese Export Lacquers', *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, Vol. 47, 1982–1983, pp. 25–27; Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 36–37, ills. 17 a, b, c and d; and pp. 85, 89–90, ills. 132a and b; and Julia Hutt, 'Document box known as the Van Diemen Box', in Morena, 2012, pp. 344–346, ill. 45, and English text pp. 552–554.
321 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 35; and Cynthia Viallé, 'Two boxes and two balustrades: private orders for fine Japanese export lacquer', in Rivers, Faulkner and Pretzel, 2011, p. 26.
322 The box and its suspending tray were dismantled in 1803 by orders of William Beckford (1760–1844), who had the parts set into two *secrétaries*. Discussed and illustrated in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 35–37, ills. 18 a and b; and pp. 85–90, ills. 133a, b, c and d.
323 The names 'ANTON: VERNATTY' and 'WILL: DRINKWATER' were added later in gold paint rather than gold inlay. Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 37.
324 Viallé, 2011, p. 26.
325 Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 37; and Viallé, 2011, p. 26.
326 Discussed and illustrated in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 37, ills. 19a, b and c; and p. 93.
327 Ibid., p. 37.
328 Earle, 1982–1983, p. 67; Earle, 1986, pp. 7–8; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 85.
329 The 'Daikan' or 'superintendent' of Nagasaki sent him first a lacquered chest and then a large lacquered comptoir in these years. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 37.
330 Hutt, 2011, p. 553.
331 VOC 101. f. 381. Amsterdam, 24 August 1641. Resolutions. Two years earlier, in 1639, the VOC directors had written to Batavia informing that it had come to their attention that Amalia van Solms had asked Lucasz to obtain certain goods for her. VOC 316. f. 282. Amsterdam, 10 September 1639. Letter from Heren XVII to Batavia. It is likely that this request was made during his stay in the Dutch Republic between June 1634 and May 1635. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 28.
332 NFJ 839. Hirado, 29 October 1639. Journal. Mentioned in Viallé, 2011, p. 28.
333 VOC 1133. ff. 60-61. Batavia, 30 November 1640. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 41.
334 Cited in Ibid.
335 VOC 1133. ff. 60–61. Batavia, 30 November 1640; and NFJ 840. Hirado, 20 November 1640. Journal. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 41; and Viallé, 2011, p. 28.
336 Fock, 1997, p. 78.
337 The balustrade was first discussed in T.H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'De woonvertrekken in Amalia's Huis in het Bosch', *Oud Holland*, vol. 84, 1969, pp. 48–49. For the inventory, see Drossaers and Scheurleer, 1974, p. 261, cat. 672 and p. 265, cat. 807. Mentioned in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 41.
338 Cited in Ibid., p. 44.
339 The model may have copied the balustrade, consisting of a railing with gilt balusters, placed around the bedstead in Amalia's state bedchamber in the Stadholder's Quarters.
340 Three pieces of furniture are known to include parts of the balustrade. Five are fitted to a French side-cabinet, four to a French fall-front *secrétaire* and to others to an upright piano by John Broadwood & Sons, London, both supplied to Lady Hertford in 1829 for the Blue Chinese Drawing Room at Temple Newsam House, Leeds. Discussed and illustrated in Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 94–95, p. 92, ills. 141–143, and pp. 98 and 101, ills. 154a, b and c; 155 and 156a, b and c.
341 Fock, 1997, p. 83.

Fig. 4.1.2.18a  Transition style chest,
the ‘Mazarin Chest’
Early Edo period, *c.*1640
Height: 59cm; width: 101.5cm; depth: 63.9cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 412:1, 2-1882)



Fig. 4.1.2.18b  Transition style chest,
the ‘Mazarin Chest’
(silver rivets detail)

Figs. 4.1.2.18c  Transition style chest,
the ‘Mazarin Chest’
(silver metal foil and mother-of-pearl inlay detail)

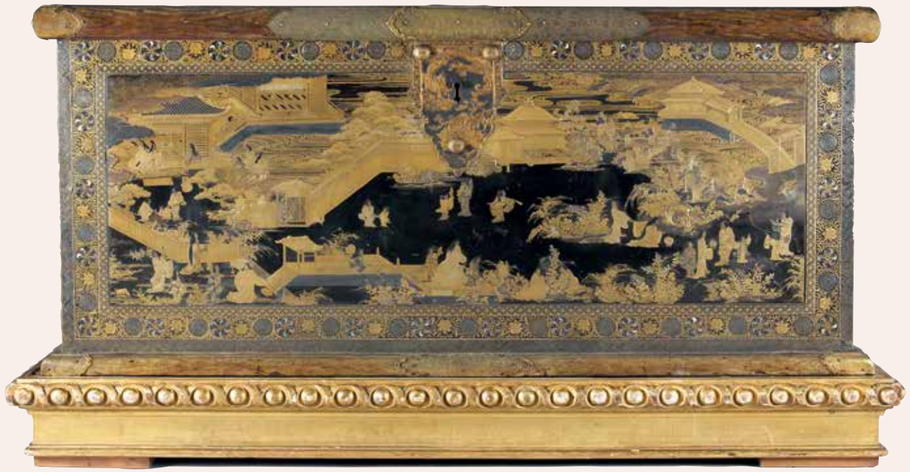

Fig. 4.1.2.19a Transition style chest, formerly the 'Lawrence Chest'
Early Edo period, *c.*1640
Height: 66cm; width: 142cm; depth: 71cm
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
(museum no. AK-RAK-2013-3)



Fig. 4.1.2.19b Transition style chest, formerly the 'Lawrence Chest'
(detail)

Fig. 4.1.2.20 Boulle-work cabinet with Transition style lacquer panels
Lacquer panels: Early Edo period, *c.*1640
Height: 92.2cm; width: 86.3cm; depth: 49.5cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. 1084-1882)

was from Amalia herself. This lacquer closet is the earliest example known in Europe of the use of Oriental lacquer as a form of interior decoration.[342]

Lacquer pieces of extraordinary high quality decorated in the so-called Transition style were also made to order after European shapes at about this time. A large rectangular chest with a flat lid with an extremely refined lacquer decoration known as the 'Mazarin Chest' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figs. 4.1.2.18a, b and c) and another of larger size previously known as the 'Lawrence Chest' and now housed in the Rijksmuseum (Figs. 4.1.2.19a and b),[343] belong to the so-called 'superlative group' of lacquers, which were made to order between the early 1630s and early 1640s.[344] Both combine the shape of a European chest that was made to order earlier for the Iberian market in the *Namban* style,[345] with a wide range of very complex and expensive lacquer decorative techniques, including *hiramakie*, *takamakie* and the use of small silver rivets (*ginbyō*) (Figs. 4.1.2.18b and 4.1.2.19b), and silver metal foil and mother-of-pearl inlay (Fig. 4.1.2.18c) on a black lacquer ground. Their decoration is wholly Japanese, with rectangular panels and oval complex cartouches incorporating mythical beasts depicting scenes taken from the *Tale of Genji* and the *Eight Views of Ōmi (Ōmi hakkei)*, all within various geometrical borders.[346] Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602–1661), who ruled France as first minister of the regent Anne of Austria, purchased this chest together with the example of slightly smaller size in Amsterdam in 1658. Research by Hutt has shown that a third chest of this shape and comparable lacquer quality, but inferior in terms of workmanship to that of the Mazarin chests in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Rijksmuseum, was also made. This chest was dismantled, and then its panels and geometrical borders were cut to form part of two cabinets made in French boulle-work marquetry in the early nineteenth century.[347] One of these cabinets, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, serves to illustrate the close similarities of its front lacquer panel to that of the Rijksmusem chest (Fig. 4.1.2.20). An entry in the VOC archives dated 15 October 1643, as noted by Hutt, mentions '4 extraordinary large square chests, all lacquer, with gold [lacquer] ground at 144 taels each', which in total would have been the large sum of 576 *taels*.[348] Considering the fact that four chests are listed, although described as square rather than rectangular, and the very high purchase price of each one, it seems likely that the VOC document referred to the three chests discussed above. As Hutt has pointed out, the lesser quality of workmanship of the chest that was dismantled raises some questions. Was it made at a slightly later date? Was it the last one of the group of four to be made, and thus the lacquerer had to take some shortcuts to fulfill the order in time to be shipped with the others? Future research might shed light on these questions. It has been suggested that the chests were made in the lacquer workshop of the Kōami family of Miyako, who as mentioned earlier began producing *Kodaiji makie* in the late sixteenth century, under the headship of the tenth generation master Kōami Chōju (1599–1561). The fact that there was a seven-year gap between orders of wedding sets received by the Kōami workshop for the Japanese elite, between 1637 and 1644, as argued by Hutt, shows that it would have been possible to make the four chests as a special order for the Dutch.[349]

Recent research by Lacambre has shown that the high quality Transition style lacquer close-stool inventoried as a *chaise d'affaire* at the Petit Trianon in the Château de Versailles once formed part of the magnificent collection of Cardinal Jules Mazarin. Considering the stylistic similarities of the lacquer decoration of the Versailles close stool, especially the geometrical borders, with the Mazarin chests in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Rijksmuseum, it seems possible that Cardinal Mazarin had acquired the close stool in Amsterdam together with the lacquer chests in 1658.[350] One other close stool, as noted by Lacambre, was confiscated from the Château de Chantilly, which housed the collection of Prince de Condé.[351] No documentary evidence has been found thus far indicating that the close stool given as gift by the Gentlemen Seventeen to Queen Henrietta Maria in 1642 could have ended up in France.

Extant examples of high quality lacquer, though not of the extraordinary high quality of the Mazarin chests discussed above, made to order for the Dutch after a European shape include chests of small size with a cornice around the slightly domed lid, dating to *c.*1630–1640 (Figs. 4.1.2.21a and b). An example in the Victoria and Albert Museum is finely decorated in gold and silver *hiramakie* and *takamakie*, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, gold, gold foil and *kirikane* on a black lacquer ground, also depicting scenes from the *Tale of Genji*.[352] The decorative borders of the base of the chest resemble those of the small box bearing the initials CF or FC discussed above. This type of chest may have been made to order as a marriage casket, as its shape resembles closely the *knottekistjes* commonly used in the Dutch Republic in the early seventeenth century, which were usually made of richly engraved silver, and symbolized a proposal of marriage (Fig. 4.1.2.22).[353] In addition, Dutch merchants in Japan not only placed special orders for lacquer but also purchased high quality lacquer made for the domestic market from their Japanese lacquer suppliers, and European merchants in other parts of Asia purchased domestic lacquer originally exported from Japan by Chinese merchants.[354]

To sum up, the VOC documents discussed above indicate that lacquer from Japan was initially believed to be a profitable trade good to be imported to the Dutch Republic, but the sales proved to be disappointing. Although there was a ready market for lacquer, their customers were not willing to pay such high sell prices for the imported lacquer. Despite the repeated instructions sent to stop purchasing lacquer

342 Ibid., p. 84.

343 This chest came to light at a public auction in France in June 2013. For a brief discussion and further images of the chest, see Jan van Campen and Menno Fitski, 'Nieuwe Aanwinst: De Mazarin Kist in het Rijksmuseum', *Aziatische Kunst*, Jargang 43, Nr. 3/4, October 2013, pp. 81–84, figs. 1–4.

344 For a recent discussion and images of the 'Mazarin chest' and the chest formerly known as the 'Lawrence Chest', now in the Rijksmuseum, see Julia Hutt, 'How many 'Mazarin Chests' were there?', in Rivers, Faulkner and Pretzel, 2011, pp. 10–25, figs. 1–5, 18 and 24.

345 For examples of comparable shape, but made with front drawers at the base, see Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 143–144, ills. 298 and 299.

346 Hutt, 2011, pp. 11 and 22.

347 The front and sides of this chest were used to make a boulle-work cabinet, known as the 'Vitel Cabinet', now housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and another boulle-work cabinet sold at auction in 2007 in Sotheby's Paris. For a discussion and images of these cabinets and the stylistic comparison of their lacquer panels with the two Mazarin chests, see Hutt, 2011, pp. 10–25.

348 The transcription of the original text in Dutch reads: '4 stx groote viercante kisten extrordinarie van geheel lackwerk met gemalen gout à T144 yder'. NA, de Nederlandse factorij in Japan inv. no. 767, Nagasaki, 15 October 1643. Cited in Hutt, 2011, p. 23.

349 Ibid.

350 Geneviève Lacambre, 'Les non-dits du japonisme. Des chaisses d'affaire aux estampes érotiques', in Patricia Plaud-Dilhuit (dir.), *Territoires du japonisme*, Rennes, 2014, p. 43. For images of the Versailles close-stool, inv. no. T 552, see Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 93, ill. 144; and Viallé, 2010/1, pp. 220–221, figs. 9–10.

351 Lacambre, 2014, pp. 42–43.

352 For further images and information, see Julia Hutt, 'A Japanese lacquer chest in the V&A; A seventeenth-century wedding casket for the Dutch market', *Apollo*, Vol. CXL VII, No. 433, March 1988, pp. 3–9; Julia Hutt, 'A Japanese export lacquer chest in the Victoria and Albert Museum; Some further observations', *Apollo*, Vol. CXLIX, No. 445, March 1999, pp. 22–24; and Impey and Jörg, 2005, pp. 92–93, ill. 140. A comparable example was sold at auction at Christie's South Kensington, sale 8822, 15 May 2013, lot 281.

353 Examples of silver marriage caskets of almost identical shape are published in J. W. Frederiks, *Dutch Silver. Wrought Plate of North and South-Holland from Renaissance until the end of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 3, The Hague, 1960, p. 74, no. 225, pls. 184 and 187. Three further examples are published in Mees, 1997, p. 80.

354 Kaori Hidaka, 'Maritime trade in Asia and the circulation of lacquerware', in Rivers, Faulkner and Pretzel, 2011, pp. 7–8.

Figs. 4.1.2.21a and b  Transition style chest
Early Edo period, *c.*1630–1640
Height: 8cm; width: 15.3cm; depth: 7.2cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(museum no. FE.63-1997)

for the Dutch Republic because it was too expensive and did not sell quickly, VOC servants in Japan not only had ordered a small quantity of lacquer objects for them, but also purchased lacquer that had been made for the Iberians, as well as for the domestic market. By the early 1610s, the States-General was presenting lacquer consignments as diplomatic gifts to rulers of other European countries, perhaps as a way of using the large stocks of unsold lacquer that the VOC had in both Batavia and Amsterdam. Various types of furniture and small utilitarian objects were made to order for the VOC at this time. Tables, for example, appear to have been made in at least three sizes. Those of the two smaller sizes may have been of low, rectangular shape like the extant examples decorated in *Namban* style, while the largest size may have been a full-sized table of European proportions, such as the only recorded example dating to the Momoyama period. Chests and cabinets were also made. Although specific instructions were given in a contract for each specific order, the lacquer craftsmen sometimes did not fully comply with them. Private trade was also carried out at the time, but on a small scale.

Although the Dutch were forbidden from trading in Hirado as a consequence of the so-called Taiwan incident, some VOC and private orders were still fulfilled during the trade embargo, including both furniture and tableware. When the embargo was lifted in 1633, the VOC had a renewed interest in lacquer and began to place orders on a large scale, especially of coffers, chests and comptoirs, some of them decorated with ray skin, most probably made with the 'sprinkle denticle' technique. Cost prices did not vary according to the decoration, *makie* or ray skin, but only by size. No compartmented boxes for bottles or tableware, however, were to be ordered because there was no demand for such lacquers in the Dutch Republic. In June 1638, Hirado was once again instructed not to send any lacquer to the Dutch Republic until further instructions. Orders for some furniture with green, red or black interiors were made again in 1642. The following year, the instructions stated that no nests of coffers were to be ordered and that tables were wanted in the Dutch Republic, as had been informed earlier in 1639. It is clear that the Dutch had a preference for some specific lacquer craftsmen, for those working in Osaka, Miyako and Nagasaki complained in



Fig. 4.1.2.22  Dutch silver marriage casket or 'knottekistje'
Frisian
Seventeenth century
Width: 7.6cm
© Christie's Amsterdam

1643 that the work was given to only one and insisted in that it should be distributed more evenly among themselves.

The extant lacquer objects discussed above have demonstrated that a number of new shapes were made to order for the Dutch and English merchants, despite the fact that the latter stayed only for ten years in Japan, in the early decades of the seventeenth century. A variety of utilitarian objects are mentioned in both VOC and EIC documents suited for European daily life and pastimes. These objects were mostly modelled directly after European models that must have been provided, including ewer and basin sets, tankards, comb cases, square-shaped bottles and backgammon boards. VOC documents also mention boxes of collars and shaving bowls, but only few extant examples of these shapes appear to have been preserved. These were hybrid objects combining a European shape and the relatively simple decorative technique of *Namban* lacquer that had been developed to suit the demand of the Jesuits and later the Iberians. The lacquer tankards can be considered as precursors of those made to order for the Dutch in porcelain at the kilns of Jingdezhen in China discussed in in section 3.4.2.1 of Chapter III. New lacquer furniture shapes appear to have been introduced by private Dutch merchants, including folding chairs that copied faithfully a Dutch church chair model. The Dutch influence on such early pieces of furniture, as with the smaller objects used daily or in pastimes, was limited.

VOC servants and private Dutch merchants began to order objects of very high quality decorated in expensive and elaborate lacquer techniques in the 1630s and early 1640s. The Dutch influence on these pieces is clearly more obvious. Some of the objects combined Japanese shapes and scenes taken from Japanese literature with the names or monograms of the wifes of the two highest ranking officials of the VOC serving in Asia, as well as of some of the VOC servants in Japan. Other objects, such as the balustrades ordered for the wife of the third Stadholder of the States General in the Dutch Republic, were made after European models but decorated in the so-called Transition style that imitated the *Kodaiji makie* style of lacquer made for the domestic market. This type of balustrade was intended for use in the interior decoration of their residences. The inventories of their palaces in The Hague, Noordeinde and the Stadholder's Quarter list in the closets of both the prince and pricess, objects in red lacquer as well as *Namban* lacquer. Lacquer pieces of extraordinary high quality decorated in the so-called Transition style were also made to order after European shapes at about this time. Two extant chests of this high quality, and two cabinets made in French boulle-work marketry with panels from one other chest of comparable quality that was dismantled and cut, belong to the so-called 'superlative group' of lacquers. The fine and complex lacquer techniques and decorative motifs, however, are wholly Japanese depicting scenes taken from Japanese literature. These chests, together with one other chest presumably of the same high quality, appear to have been ordered by the VOC in 1643. It is believed that these chests were made at the lacquer workshop of the Kōami family of Miyako. Such high quality and expensive pieces of lacquer would most probably have been intended to give as gifts.

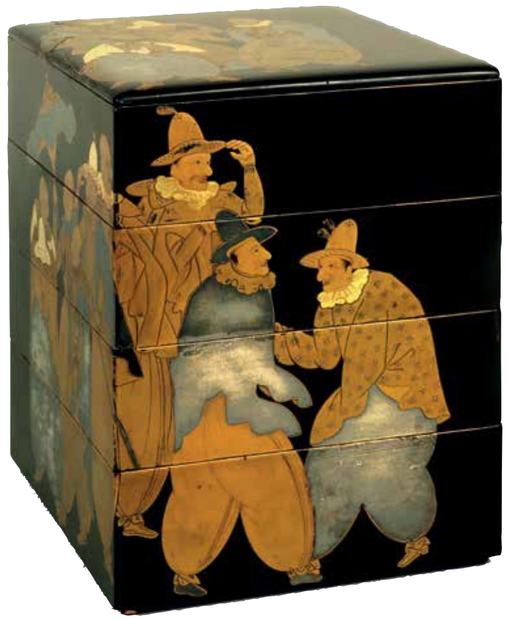

Fig. 4.1.3.1 Tiered lacquer box (*jubako*)
Momoyama/early Edo period
Height: 27cm; width: 24; depth: 22cm
Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon
(inv. no. 68 cx)

## Lacquer for the Japanese domestic market [4.1.3]

To finalize the discussion of the European influence on Japanese lacquer it is imperative to mention briefly a variety of *Namban* objects decorated in lacquer of very high quality with European figures, which were made during the period of Portuguese presence in Japan, from 1542/1543 to 1639, most probably for the Japanese domestic market rather than for export to Western Europe or the New World. The strange physical features of the Portuguese merchants and officials, and their attendants (sailors, African slaves, Indians and Malays), dressed with their voluminous breeches (*bombaxa*), doublets, cloaks, collars, ruffs and tall hats, who came to Japan every year in the Black Ship (*kurofune*), called the *Namban-jin* in Japan, were so fascinating to the Japanese craftsmen that they were portrayed with a high degree of detail on various objects, mostly made in traditional Japanese shapes, all finely decorated in lacquer. These include wooden objects, such as saddles (*kura*),[355] food boxes (*jubaco*), writing boxes (*suzuribako*),[356] letter boxes (*fumibako*),[357] chairs[358] and powder flasks;[359] as well as metal objects, such as stirrups (*abumi*).[360]

Although these lacquer objects fall out of the scope of this study, they deserve some attention because they provide further material evidence of the profound influence that the continuous presence of the Portuguese and their culture exerted on the Japanese daily life and the arts made during the Momoyama and early Edo period for the warrior elite and wealthy merchant class. A tiered food box (*jubako*) dating to the first quarter of the seventeenth century in the Museu Nacional de Arte

355 For a discussion and images of an example, which forms part of a matching set of horse trappings, see Canepa, 'Matching set of horse trappings, see Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 92–103, no. 1.

356 For a discussion and an image of an example in the Fundação Abel e João de Lacerda – Museu do Caramulo (inv. FAL 372), see Alexandra Curvelo, 'Writing Box [*suzuribako*]', in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, pp. 187–188, no. 49.

357 Examples can be found in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, the Tokyo National Museum and the Kobe City Museum. For an image of the latter example, see Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 81, ill. 123.

358 A chair of X-frame construction after a Chinese model decorated in *makie* with Portuguese figures, dating to the second half of the sixteenth century, is found in the Zuikō-ji Temple in Kyoto. This chair closely resembles those imported from China into Japan by the Portuguese, which often appear depicted in *Namban* folding screens. Published in Impey and Jörg, 2005, p. 80, ill. 121.

359 For images of an example decorated on its interior with *Namban-jin* figures in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, see Mendes Pinto, 1990, pp. 49–50.

360 Metal stirrups depicting Portuguese and *Namban-jin* figures were also decorated in brass and silver inlay (*nunome zōgan*). For a discussion and images of these pieces, Vinhais and Welsh, 2008/1, pp. 124–133, nos. 6 and 7.



Fig. 4.1.3.2 *Icones Habitus Getusque Indorium AC Lusitano Veventium*
Jan Hyugen van Linschoten (1563–1611), 1604
Atlas Van Stolk, Rotterdam (inv. no. 46332-46362)

361 The *samurai*, as noted by Curvelo, was a warrior class that consisted of warrior vassals of a military chief (*daimyō* or *shōgun*). Curvelo, 2012, p. 245 (p. 512, English text).

362 The taste for the exotic among the *daimyō* is clearly reflected in a Jesuit report of 1594, which notes that Hideyoshi 'has a great liking for Portuguese clothing, and the members of his retinue, in emulation, are often attired in the Portuguese style. The same is true even of those *daimyōs* who are not Christian. They wear rosaries of driftwood on their breasts, hang a crucifix from the shoulder or waist, and sometimes even hold a handkerchief. Some … have memorized the Our Father and the Hail Mary, and recite them as they walk in the streets. This is not done in ridicule of the Christians, but simply to show off their familiarity with the latest fashions'. Cited in Okamoto, 1972, p. 77; and Rupert Faulkner, 'Personal Encounters: Europeans in East Asia', in Jackson and Jaffer, 2004, p. 186. Also see a detail from a pair of six-panel folding screens in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, The Avery Brundage Collection (inv. nos. B60D77+ and B60D78+) depicting two Japanese wearing *Namban-jin* clothes, published in Ibid., p. 187, pl. 14.9.

363 Published and discussed in Maria da Conceição Borges de Sousa, 'Caixa para Alimentos [jukakō] – 'Tiered Food Box [jukakō]', in d'Oliveira Martins, 2010, pp. 189–191, no. 50; and Maria da Conceição Borges de Sousa, 'Portavivande', in Morena, 2012, pp. 280–281, no. II.6 (p. 527, English text).

364 Published in Canepa, 2008/1, p. 26, fig. 14.

365 The transcription of the original text in Portuguese reads: 'hum Jubaco de sinco sobrados'. Cited in Curvelo, 2001, p. 32.

Antiga in Lisbon not only serves as an example to illustrate such influence, but also attests to the curiosity and taste for the exotic that aroused among the *shōgun*, *daimyō* and *bushi* or *samurai*[361] throughout Japan with the annual arrival of the *Namban-jin*, the Portuguese and their multitude of foreign attendants, to Nagasaki from what was then an unknown world (Fig. 4.1.3.1).[362] This food box is also a hybrid lacquer as it combines a traditional Japanese shape and decorative techniques, including *makie*, *takamakie* and *kirikane*, with European motifs. Its decoration is configured by two groups of Portuguese merchants and their attendants, each realistically depicted in large-scale on the sides disregarding its four overlaid trays, and of one other group on the lid. The group with seven people is particularly interesting as it depicts a Portuguese figure, possibly a Captain-major, walking beneath a parasol held by an attendant, and watching a Japanese boy who is ahead of them. The gestures and appearance of the figures depicted on the food box, as Borges de Sousa has noted, appear to indicate that the Japanese lacquer craftsmen had direct contact with these foreigners and thus would have been able to observe carefully their distinct facial features (big noses and large bulging eyes), the exotic clothes they wore and their daily customs.[363] One has to consider the possibility, however, that in fact, the representation of such figures may have been based on a European printed source, such as a print from Jan van Linschoten's *Itinerario*, first published in Amsterdam in 1596 (Fig. 4.1.3.2).[364] Jesuit sources, as discussed earlier, show that the Jesuits living in Japan acquired this type of food boxes. One wonders if the five-tiered food box listed as 'a five store jûbako' among the goods left by Father Manuel Barreto to his successor in 1616, would have been a lacquer example decorated with European figures.[365]

# Discussion [4.2]

The present study of textual sources concerning the trade in Chinese porcelain and Japanese lacquer by the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and English in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and of extant porcelain and lacquer objects from public and private collections around the world, has brought to light an interesting and important historical fact that had been previously overlooked. This historical fact relates to the influence the Europeans exerted in the goods made to order for them in both Japan and China. It has been shown that Japanese lacquer objects were made to order in European shapes for the Dutch and English trading companies earlier than in Chinese porcelain. This was a totally unexpected find, and something of a revelation, which could only occur because the research was not restricted to the study of only porcelain or lacquer. However, it also raised some concrete questions relating to the material qualities of the goods made to order, and the way in which the European demand and Japanese/Chinese production/supply was conducted at a personal level.

In order to fully understand this historical fact it is important to remember that exactly the opposite occurred in the case of the Portuguese and Spanish. The earliest extant Japanese lacquer objects modelled directly after European shapes appear to have been made in Miyako (present-day Kyoto) for the Jesuits in about 1580, and shortly after for the Portuguese and Spanish. Porcelain in European shapes, as shown in section 3.4.1 of Chapter III, was first made to order at the Jingdezhen kilns in China for the Portuguese about forty years earlier, in the early 1540s.

Textual sources concerning the trade in lacquer by both the VOC and EIC and extant lacquer objects demonstrate that a number of new shapes suited for European daily life and pastimes were first made to order for the Dutch and English trading companies in Japan in the early 1610s. The apparently unique extant lacquer tankard decorated in *Namban* style made after a Dutch pewter or tin-glazed earthenware model, dating to *c.*1600–1620 (Fig. 4.1.2.4), together with the lacquer tankards first mentioned in an EIC document dated July 1617, and the beer beakers first mentioned in a VOC document dated November 1615, can be considered as precursors of the tankards and beer beakers that began to be made to order for the Dutch in porcelain decorated in the so-called Transitional style at the Jingdezhen kilns in the mid-1630s (Figs. 3.4.2.1.11 and 3.4.2.1.20). At this point it is important to note that this study did not find evidence of any influence exerted by the English in porcelain made to order during this period. One cannot fail to wonder why the English ordered lacquer in European shapes, but not porcelain in European shapes, despite the fact that their presence in Japan lasted only ten years, from 1613 to 1623. A few possible reasons come to mind. The English, and perhaps also the Dutch, may have considered that the material qualities of Japanese lacquer were better than those of Chinese porcelain. They may also have thought that there would be a regular demand for such expensive imported lacquer if made in European shapes, which would have served to enhance the social status of the owner, whether in England or the Dutch Republic. English and Dutch textual sources have shown that some of the lacquer tankards and beer beakers ordered by EIC servants were sent as gifts to VOC representatives or as private consignments of lacquer to individuals in England; and that although lacquer was too expensive and did not sell quickly in the Dutch Republic, the States-General presented lacquer objects as diplomatic gifts to rulers of other European countries, perhaps as a way of using the large stocks of unsold lacquer that the VOC had in both Batavia and Amsterdam.

However, it is also possible that the main reason why the Dutch first ordered small utilitarian objects in European shapes in lacquer rather than in porcelain was more practical and related to the ways in which the VOC and private Dutch merchants conducted trade with Japan and China. The Dutch first arrived to Japan in 1601, but it was only in 1609 that they opened a VOC factory in Hirado. The following year, Jacques L'Hermite the Younger, the VOC representative in Bantam, sent a report to the Gentlemen Seventeen, stating 'I have seen some lacquer in the ship that came from Japan … which is very beautiful and of good quality and from that country one can easily obtain and also have made those items that one might wish to trade'. It is clear from this excerpt that the Dutch, who undoubtedly knew about the lacquers that were made in European shapes for the Jesuits, Portuguese and Spanish since the 1580s, thought to take advantage of ordering objects to the specific requirements of the VOC customers in the Dutch Republic. The presence of the Dutch in Japan and their direct contact with the lacquer craftsmen facilitated the placing of such orders, the supply of European models, and the control of the production. In sharp contrast to the situation in Japan, the Dutch had been unable to establish a permanent VOC trading post in China or in a nearby location like the Portuguese had done in Macao and the Spanish in Manila. Thus the Dutch were forced to acquire porcelain through the Chinese junk traders that came to trade with them at Bantam, and then at Batavia. As was shown in the preceding pages, the VOC only began to order porcelain in European shapes or with specific decorative motifs after they established a trading post on Tayouan in 1624. The following year, the VOC servants in Batavia supplied Tayouan with models to be copied by Chinese potters in Jingdezhen. However, the earliest textual evidence of porcelain having been made in European shapes dates to 1635. These new, so-called Transitional porcelains in European shapes, made by the Chinese potters after models provided by the VOC, had to be painted in Chinese style and not with European motifs (apart from the specific 'Dutch paintings, flower or leafwork', which did not last long). Thus, a nice contrast was created between a familiar shape and the exotic Chinese designs, which apparently pleased the Dutch customers and was profitable for the VOC. It is interesting to note that almost at the same time the VOC began to request Japanese lacquer in a different, more Japanese and pictorial style. Here, too, a similar dichotomy was achieved, because the comptoirs, chests, boxes, garnitures and other European-shaped objects ordered soon were all decorated in this new Japanese pictorial style. European-style decorations on Japanese lacquer were only introduced much later, when the fashion had changed once again.

# Conclusions [4.3]

From the scattered information provided by the primary and secondary sources, and the extant lacquer pieces, discussed in this Chapter is possible to make several conclusions. Firstly, it is shown that the Jesuit missionaries helped to spread a taste for Japanese lacquer among the royalty, clergy and nobility of Renaissance Europe. They appear to have been the first Europeans to order lacquer objects from local craftsmen working in and around Miyako for use in personal devotion and Jesuit churches in Japan, and most probably also in their missions in Asia, Europe and the New World. This led to the development of a new style of *urushi* lacquer, known as *Namban*. From about 1580, the lacquer craftsmen made a wide variety of hybrid objects combining a European or Indo-Portuguese shape, and the 'IHS' monogram of the Society of Jesus or other motifs embedded with Christian symbolism, with dense naturalistic compositions of Japanese flowering plants, birds and/or animals most probably based on paintings made by the renowned Kanō school, but with a *horror vacui* and lavish use of mother-of-pearl inlay that was totally alien to Japanese aesthetics. In addition, they made objects combining a traditional Japanese shape and lacquer techniques with the 'IHS' monogram, most probably intended for the Jesuits personal use or as gifts to powerful *daimyō* who had converted to Christianity. Liturgical lacquers with Christian iconography that would not have been immediately recognizable by the Tokugawa shogunate, or no Christian iconography at all, most probably began to be made to order after the anti-Christian edict of 1597. Liturgical lacquers made with the 'IHS' monogram in the early Edo period were also decorated in the so-called Transition style, which imitated the *Kodaiji makie* style introduced by the workshops of the Kōami family for the domestic market. Initially, liturgical lacquers were exclusively made for the Jesuits, but by the beginning of the seventeenth century small numbers were also made for friars of the Mendicant Orders, or even for private individuals, present in Japan at the time to be sent as gifts to the Iberian Peninsula and/or New Spain. These included pieces bearing the monogram of the Order of Saint Dominic decorated in *Namban* style. Textual sources indicate that friars of these Mendicant Orders helped in further establishing diplomatic relations between Japan, Western Europe and New Spain. A few extant liturgical lacquers decorated in the later, so-called Transition style, including those bearing the 'IHS' monogram, demonstrate that despite the severity of the Christian persecution, the Jesuits and friars of the Mendicant Orders continued ordering liturgical lacquers in the early Edo period up until about 1639, when they were expelled and the country was closed to all Europeans (*sakoku*).

The Portuguese merchants ordered a variety of lacquer portable furniture and utilitarian objects in considerable quantities after models they brought with them from both Europe and their settlements in India, which would have been useful for private use in a European context or in their settlements in Asia. These objects, probably first made in the early Momoyama period, were decorated in the *Namban* style newly developed by the lacquer craftsmen to suit the Jesuit liturgical orders. Later, in the early seventeenth century, the decoration also included the traditional Japanese 'sprinkling denticle' lacquer technique imitating ray skin, or an all-over design of small scales of mother-of-pearl, which was undoubtedly copied from objects brought by the Portuguese from Gujarat in western India, in addition to *makie*. The exotic naturalistic scenes of Japanese flowering plants, birds and/or animals as well as Japanese traditional motifs, such as the family crests or insignia (*mons*), appear to have been much appreciated by the Portuguese, as the furniture and smaller objects made for them rarely included European motifs. Japanese lacquer furniture may have reached the royal court of Lisbon as early as the mid-1560s. By the late sixteenth century lacquer furniture would have been available for purchase in Lisbon. Members of the high-ranking nobility acquired pieces in Lisbon and then took them to Spain. Some furniture pieces, such as coffers, chests and cabinets, were adapted for religious use, and served as reliquaries in monasteries and convents of both Portugal and Spain.

The similarities of the lacquer imported by the Iberians is not surprising, as Japanese and Portuguese ships went to Manila with cargoes of lacquer and other trade goods for sale. By the early 1610s, Spanish merchants traded in lacquer objects in considerable quantities, which may have been tableware rather than furniture. Accounts, reports and letters written by Jesuits and European merchants who were present in Japan, or in other settlements in Asia, prove that lacquer objects reached the Iberian Peninsula via both the Portuguese trans-Atlantic, and Spanish trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade routes. Pieces such as *escritoires* and/or writing desks were sent to Spain as gifts from male and female members of the elites and clergy living in the Philippines and New Spain in the early decades of the seventeenth century. In the late 1620s, during the early Edo period, the Spanish were importing into Spain lacquer furniture, folding screens, and most probably also tableware, which would have been available not only to the royalty but also to the high-ranking nobility. By 1637, the trade in lacquer carried out by both the Portuguese and Spanish was in danger of ceasing. Two years later, in 1639, their trading activities ceased abruptly when they were expelled, alongside the Christian missionaries, and Japan was closed to all Europeans with the exception of the Dutch, who were allowed to stay because they did not proselytize the Christian faith.

VOC written sources provide a fairly good idea of the trade in lacquer, shipments to the Dutch Republic and purchase price of lacquer in Japan. Initially, it was believed

that lacquer was a profitable trade good to be imported into the Dutch Republic. The sales, however, proved disappointing because their customers were not willing to pay such high sell prices for the imported lacquer. Repeated instructions were sent to the VOC servants in Japan to stop purchasing lacquer for the Dutch Republic. Due to the time-lapse in communication, the VOC servants not only continued to order lacquer objects, but also purchased lacquer made for the Iberians, as well as for the domestic market. The States-General began to send lacquer as diplomatic gifts to rulers of other European countries in the early 1610s, perhaps to make use of large stocks of unsold lacquer that the VOC had in both Batavia and Amsterdam. Private trade was also carried out, but on a small scale. Although the Dutch were forbidden from trading in Hirado for five years as a consequence of the so-called Taiwan incident of 1628, some private orders of furniture and tableware were still fulfilled during this period. The VOC developed a renewed interest in lacquer at the time and began to place orders on a large scale after the embargo was lifted in 1633. Five years later, in 1638, Hirado was once again instructed not to send any lacquer to the Dutch Republic until further instructions but orders for furniture with green, red or black interiors and for other objects were made again in 1642.

A number of new lacquer shapes were made to order for the Dutch and English trading companies in the early 1610s, despite the fact that the latter stayed in Japan only from 1613 to 1623. These included a variety of utilitarian objects suited for European daily life and pastimes, which were made directly after European models. These were hybrid objects combining a European shape and the new style of lacquer known as *Namban* that had been developed to suit the demand of the Jesuits and later the Iberians, depicting Japanese naturalistic scenes largely based on paintings by artists of the Kāno school. As shown in the previous pages, both VOC and EIC textual sources demonstrate that these utilitarian lacquer objects were made to order in European shapes for the Dutch and English almost two decades earlier than in Chinese porcelain. Tankards are first mentioned in an EIC document of 1617, beer beakers are first mentioned in a VOC document of 1615, while an extant *Namban* lacquer tankard provides tangible evidence of such orders. They can be considered as precursors of similar objects made to order for the Dutch in porcelain decorated in the so-called Transitional style at the kilns of Jingdezhen in the mid-1630s. New lacquer furniture shapes appear to have been introduced by private Dutch merchants. These include folding chairs made in *c.*1630–1650 after a Dutch church chair model. The influence exerted on the lacquer craftsmen by the Dutch in the making of such early pieces of furniture, and the smaller objects used daily or in pastimes, was still limited. Although specific instructions were given in a contract for each specific order, it is clear that the lacquer craftsmen not always fully complied with them.

This changed between the early 1630s and early 1640s, when VOC servants and private Dutch merchants ordered objects of very high quality decorated in expensive and elaborate traditional Japanese lacquer techniques. The Dutch influence on these lacquer pieces is more obvious, not only in the variety of shapes, but also in the preference of the northern European customers for pictorial Japanese exotic decorations. Objects combined Japanese shapes and scenes taken from Japanese literature with Dutch names or monograms, or were made after European models decorated in the so-called Transition style that imitated the *Kodaiji makie* made for the domestic market. For instance, the balustrades, the objects in red lacquer and the *Namban* lacquer listed in the inventories of the Dutch Stadholder's palaces in The Hague attest to the taste for lacquer that developed amongst the elite of the Dutch Republic, who could have afforded such expensive imported lacquer. Lacquer made to order after European shapes at this time also included pieces of extraordinary high quality decorated in the Transition style with a wide range of very complex and expensive lacquer techniques. A small number of pieces, among them the Mazarin chest in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Rijksmuseum chest, all of extraordinary quality, appear to have been ordered by the VOC in 1643. In all probability such high quality and expensive pieces of lacquer, probably made at the lacquer workshop of the Kōami family of Miyako, would have been intended to give as gifts. They give testimony to the Dutch preference for fine quality lacquer made for the domestic market decorated with exotic Japanese motifs rather than the lacquer decorated in the *Namban* style.