

Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year

December 2019

Dear friends,

Thanks to the god the season to exchange greetings has come again for me, now over eighty years of age. I wish you and your family have been well for the past year.

In June this year I tripped to Indonesia to see my old friends and visit around historical sites in Jawa once more. The sightseeing was an especially enjoyable one as three of my old close friends were together. Some pictures have been included in my homepage, viz, in History of Java and Photo Album. In September I tripped to Osaka to see three Dutch friends who visited there and discussed a variety of topics but “the purpose of life” was left unconcluded.

The submission of an article on the “Identification of ancient Tarumanagara kingdom in West Java with reference to old Chinese annals and domestic documents”, which I had mentioned in my card last year, was withdrawn as the refereeing was too slow and the manuscript is now in the hand of the editorial board of another journal in America—a hard experience. A new manuscript on the history of gutta percha, the only thermoplastic polymer of botanical origin which used to be indispensable for the insulative covering of submarine cables, etc., has been submitted to a German journal.

For this Christmas, I have written a story about “Ryunoshuke Akutagawa’s Kirishitan Series Novels” which will be hopefully intriguing for you.

Hoping that 2020 will be a peaceful year for you and everyone,

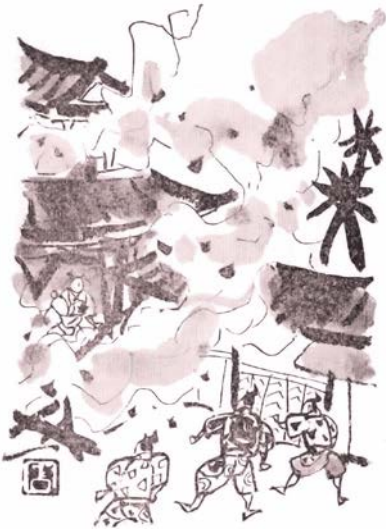
Yours sincerely,

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Left: A scene of fire in which Lorenzo appeared holding the baby from the blazing umbrella-maker's house. An illustration by Tadao Yoshimura, in: Ryunosuke Akutagawa, *Death of a Disciple*, Obunsha Paperback 1967. **Right:** Saint Christopher stained glass at St Peter's London Docks Church, Photographed by M. Iguchi, April 2017.



Left: A portrait of Ryunosuke Akutagawa. From: <https://bookvlogger.com/akutagawaryunosuke>. **Right:** A Maria Kwannon and Bible of Akutagawa. Held by Museum of Modern Japanese Literature. <http://blog.livedoor.jp/sawarabiblog/archives/2007-10-07.html>