



Cátedra Humanismo Latino

Humanism, Pedagogy, and Language:

Alessandro Valignano and the Global Significance of Juan Bonifacio's Work

Printed in Macao (1588)

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Introduction

In 1588, in Macao, was published a monumental book entitled *Christiani pueri institutio* (Instruction for Christian Youth).¹ The author was Juan Bonifacio (1538-1606), a modest but very important Spanish humanist from Salamanca. This book was of great significance in the history of printing, because it was the first printed material in East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea) to be produced by the European-type movable printing press.² The project of publishing a new edition of Juan Bonifacio's work in Macao was initiated by the Italian Jesuit Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), who had been appointed Visitor (Visitador)³ of

the Society of Jesus in Asia. Valignano is well known for his insistence that Christian mission work in China and Japan should be adapted to the cultures of those countries, thus fostering harmonious relations between the Christianity brought in by the Europeans and the native religions and local customs that preceded the advent of Christianity. Unfortunately, Valignano was almost alone in advocating such a revolutionary missionary method: he is truly a unique figure among the missionaries of his time.

Valignano could have chosen any of a wide range of works to be the first printed book in East Asia. Why did he choose Juan Bonifacio's work? In this paper I would like to show how well Juan Bonifacio's work accorded with Valignano's missionary strategy.⁴

Valignano in Macao: 1588-1590

Alessandro Valignano set foot on the soil of Macao on August 11, 1588. He was on his way back to Japan with the four Japanese "Youth Ambassadors" after a successful European tour in which they had even been granted a papal audience in 1585.⁵ When they sailed into the harbor of Macao, their diplomatic mission was to enter its final stage. The objective of this project, of which Valignano was the initiator and leader, was twofold: (1) to demonstrate to European Christendom, shaken by the upheaval of the Protestant Reformation and the growing

¹ *Christiani pueri institutio, adolescentiae que perfugium: autore Ioanne Bonifacio Societatis Iesu. Cum libri unius, & rerum accessione plurimarum. Cum facultate Superiorum apud Sinas, in Portu Macaensi in Domo Societatis Iesu. Anno 1588.* I use its facsimile version (1978) reprinted in Japan.

² About History of Jesuit Printing, see, Johannes Laures, *Kirisitan Bunko: A Manual of Books and Documents on the Early Christian Mission in Japan* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1957) pp. 4-26.

³ J. F. Schütte explains the role of "visitor" of the Society of Jesus, saying "Valignano had the task of visiting the entire Indian province, of forming as accurate as possible a picture of its spiritual and material state, and of promoting as efficiently as might be its life and work in accordance with the Constitutions of the order. His duty was to remove abuses wherever found, trace difficulties to their root and resolve them, smooth out differences.) Josef F. Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles for Japan*, Volume I. *From His Appointment as Visitor until His First Departure from Japan (1573-1582) Part I: The Problem (1573-1580)* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), p. 47.

⁴ See, Sophia University (Tokyo), Kirishitan Bunko, Laures Database, (<http://133.12.23.145:8000/html>).

⁵ See, Matsuda Kiichi, *Tensho Ken'ou Shisetsu* [テウショケンオウシセツ] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1999).

secularization of society, that missionary efforts in Japan had borne fruit; and (2) to persuade Catholic prelates of Europe and secular Christian lords to provide, on a more permanent basis, the financial support needed for developing and maintaining the Japanese Church.⁶ Since the end of his first tour of inspection of the Japanese mission, from 1579 to 1582, Valignano did everything he could to help that mission, and he continued to do so until his death in Macao in 1606.

On his way to Europe with the Japanese “Youth Ambassadors” in 1582, they had a stopover in Goa in India, where Valignano learned that Father General of the Society of Jesus had appointed him Provincial of the Indian Province, thus placing him in charge of the entire Jesuit missionary activity in Asia. Since he now had to take office in Goa, he was unable to accompany the four youths to Europe. During the years of his stay in India (1582-1588), he was able to further refine his missionary theory, especially the so-called “adaptation method,” and prepare for his future work in Japan.

One can imagine Valignano’s surprise and disappointment when, upon arriving in Macao, he received the news from Japan that in June of the previous year, the new supreme ruler of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, had issued decrees restricting the practice of Christianity and expelling the missionaries from the country. The Christian Church in Japan had now entered the age of persecution. Valignano had no choice but to prolong his stay in Macao; he remained there until June, 1590. It was during this time of crisis, which he had not expected,

⁶ J. F. Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles for Japan*, Volume I. *From His Appointment as Visitor until His First Departure from Japan (1573-1582) Part II: The Solution (1580-1582)* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985) pp. 263-265.

that he decided to bring out a new edition of Bonifacio’s work on the new printing press that had been put together by Constantín Dourado (?-1620), a Japanese Jesuit who had acquired the skill of printing in Goa and had come to Macao on the same ship as the Four Youths and Valignano.

Christiani pueri institutio

Juan Bonifacio was a man whose name is inscribed in the history of Iberian Humanism and Spanish Literature.⁷ He was a man of many talents. Although he wrote several plays and short works of fiction, his greatest talent is to be found displayed in the field of pedagogy. He studied grammar at the *collegio* in Santiago de Compostela, and rhetoric in Salamanca. After receiving his basic education, he entered the Society of Jesus in 1557, when he was nineteen years old. His spiritual and academic formation was according to the Jesuit educational program, which combined the traditional scholastic method based on *modus parisiensis* (the curriculum of the University of Paris) with the humanistic approach to education which had come to the fore with the Renaissance.⁸ In the *Ratio Studiorum*⁹ of 1599, the well-known prospectus of Jesuit education, we can discover the nature of the pedagogical innovations introduced in the sixteenth century. The sixteenth century can truly be called a revolutionary century for pedagogy, and the Jesuits were at the center of that revolution.

As an educator, Juan Bonifacio taught

⁷ See, Félix G. Olmedo, S. J., *Juan Bonifacio 1538-1606: Y la Cultura Literaria del Siglo de Oro*. (Santander: Publicaciones de la Sociedad de Manénde Pelayo, 1939), pp. 21-28.

⁸ John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), Chapter 6, esp. pp. 215-227.

⁹ *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu*.

grammar at Medina college (*Collegium Metinense*) in Castilla. Among his pupils was Fuan de Yepes, the future St. John of the Cross. The writing style of that great sixteenth-century Spanish mystic was very much influenced by his young Jesuit teacher from Salamanca.

Juan Bonifacio began work on *Christiani pueri institutio* as early as 1565. At the time of the Third General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in Rome in 1573, a number of the leading Jesuits taking part in the Congregation had already read a draft of *Christiani* and approved of its contents.¹⁰ The first edition was published in Salamanca in 1575, and the second edition, in Burgos in 1588.¹¹ Valignano's Macao edition also appeared in 1588. The book is an anthology consisting of passages from the Bible, extracts from Roman philosophers and orators, and from the writings of Church Fathers such as Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine.

Bonifacio's basic purpose was to improve the Latin skills of students who had already mastered grammar and had now entered the class of rhetoric. But Bonifacio saw another objective for his book besides that of mastering Latin: it could also be an instructive guide to virtue and morality. This latter objective appears clearly in his choice of topics to be taken up and in the systematic order in which these topics were arranged, as can be seen in the book's table of contents below:¹²

¹⁰ F. G. Olmedo, *ibid.* pp. 99-107.

¹¹ The Burgos edition's full title is *Christiani pueri institutio, adolescentiae que per fugium: autore Ioanne Bonifacio Societatis Iesu. Cum libri unius, & rerum accessione plurimarum. Cum privilegio. Burgis. Apud Philippum Iuntam. 1588.*

¹² (1) *De honesta educatione*, (2) *De praeclara pueritia novae que aetatis defensione*, (3) *De necessitate religionis tum in omniaetate tum*

Chapter 1: On education, its goodness and value

Chapter 2: On problems that the young usually face

Chapter 3: On the necessity of religion for everyone, especially the young

Chapter 4: On sincerity and moral righteousness

Chapter 5: On chastity

As I shall mention again later, it was part of the humanist creed that there was an essential connection between growth in language skills and the development of a good character (*vir bonus*). The humanistic ideal of "vir bonus dicendi peritus" was also Bonifacio's. His book followed closely the path marked out by the humanists of his time.

The Macao Edition (1588)

As we noted above, two editions of Bonifacio's work were published in the same year, in Burgos and Macao. Valignano managed to get hold of a handwritten copy of the Burgos edition. He may have found it in India, or he may have asked Bonifacio himself to send him a copy. Valignano's original plan had been to print it in Japan, but news of the persecutions made him change his mind and decide to print it at once in Macao. In any case, he had time to add a few modifications to the original text. By inserting several anecdotes involving pious Japanese boys, it is clear that he expected that this would make the book more accessible to the young in Japan.¹³

Bonifacio's work was actually used by

maxime in prima puerorum, (4) De verecundia et morum urbanitate, (5) De castitate.

¹³ For example, Valignano shows a story about the brave Boys in Japan in *Liber secundus*, pp. 53-55.

seminarians in Japan. But it was not long before the book's very existence was forgotten, and the name Juan Bonifacio sank into oblivion. There are only two copies of the book extant today, one in the Biblioteca da Ajuda in Lisbon, and the other in Copenhagen (Det Kongelige Bibliotek)¹⁴. In a sense, *Christiani* is the rarest of rare books. The Ajuda copy was not known until Dr. Sousa Viterbo introduced it to historians in 1893. It is not clear why Bonifacio was so completely forgotten in Asia. The fact that the persecution of Christians in Japan made it impossible for the Jesuits to continue their educational efforts there accounts in part, perhaps, for the later neglect of him. But one wonders if a greater reason for this neglect is not that the book itself failed to touch the hearts of its Japanese (Asian) readers. An even greater reason for its falling into oblivion is undoubtedly the fact that it was written in Latin. (I will discuss this at greater length later in this paper.)

Valignano's Primary Aim in Publishing the Book

Valignano chose Bonifacio's book for publication. His reason for doing so is clearly stated in the preface of the Macao edition.¹⁵ He believed that the book would be useful in helping to accomplish the twofold aim of inculcating virtues in the young and of improving their skills in Latin. From this it is

¹⁴ See, J. Peterson, "A Copy of Bonifacio's *Christiani Pueri Institutio* in Copenhagen." *Monumenta Nipponica* XV-no.1 (1959).

¹⁵ "Cogitanti mihi semper de vestro in virtute, & Latina Lingua progressu praeclarae expectationis alumni, & aduestram patriam magno animi ardore redeunti in mentem venit, ea mecum exportare, quae ad vestrum profectum maxime essent accommodata. Cum ergo Latinarum literarum prototypus characteres non paruo labore comparassem: vt facile in Iaponicis infulis nostri Libri excudi possent: [...]" *Christiani pueri institutio* (Macao, 1588), A2.

clear that Valignano intended to use the book as a Latin textbook for Japanese candidates to the priesthood. He expected the book to serve both ends, but improving Latin skills was particularly emphasized in Japanese seminaries.

Already in 1580, the importance of teaching Latin in Japan was discussed at the first congregation of the Japanese Province of the Society of Jesus. The majority of the participants in the congregation agreed that "it is necessary for priestly candidates to learn Latin, using good and instructive material."¹⁶ Valignano, who chaired the meeting, also accepted this view when he had to make the final decision the following year. Thus, we can see that Valignano had already made up his mind to publish a "good and instructive book." However, eight years passed before the Macao edition saw publication.

In that same congregation of 1580, there seem to have been a number of interesting discussions on education in Japan, as we learn from the following report of Valignano:

In the beginning, some of the participants thought that Japanese seminarians should study only Latin and *casus conscientiae* [case studies as a preparation for hearing confessions], and they should not be involved in higher learning. [...] At the end, all the delegates agreed that seminarians should be taught Latin, and after that could be granted the opportunity to acquire other higher learning, according to their abilities.¹⁷

¹⁶ "[...] con tal que assi el Latin, como todo lo de mas seles enseñasse por libros Buenos y apurados." ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 2, 50.

¹⁷ "Acerca del qual aunque en el principio a unos parecia que no se devian enseñar mas que Latin y casos, sin los meter en otras ciencias mayores pareciendoles inconveniente meter los

In this discussion, several issues were probed, and various possible curricula were considered. But, from the first to the last, nobody had doubts about the importance of learning Latin. Teaching and studying Latin was always regarded as a basic and absolute requirement in Jesuit education in Japan. Why did Valignano emphasize the importance of the teaching of Latin for the Japanese? What was Latin for the Europeans? What was Latin for the Japanese?

The Background of Bonifacio's Work: vir bonus dicendi peritus

Valignano was brought up in the atmosphere of the humanistic tradition of the Renaissance. He studied civil law at the University of Padua, one of the important centers of the Renaissance movement. After entering the Society of Jesus, he attended lectures on theology and the natural sciences at the Collegio Romano (now the Pontifical Gregorian University).¹⁸ There he met quite a few extraordinary scholars, such as Christopher Clavius (1537-1612), a mathematician who contributed to the introduction of the Gregorian solar calendar. Valignano may well be called a child of the Renaissance. He knew very well the great value of a humanistic education along Renaissance lines.

One of the most important elements in such a humanistic education is the ability to speak and write language well. Without exception, the

en cuestiones difíciles y arduos siendo aun tan flacos y nuevos en la fee. Todavía despues convenieron todos en la Segunda opinion que se enseñasse latin y despues a cada uno las sciencias de que fuesse capaces y que el tiempo y la experiencia mostrasse que se las huiesse de enseñar, con tal que assi el Latin [...]" ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 2, 50.

¹⁸ J. F Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principle for Japan*, vol. 1, p. 34-35.

humanists of the time were all masters of language, and made much of the ancient Roman oratorical tradition. Quintilian (35/40-100) in his book *Institutio oratoria* states that "vir bonus dicendi peritus", which means that only a virtuous person (*vir bonus*) can make a good speech (*dicendi peritus*).¹⁹ This maxim aptly expresses the aim of humanistic education. The scholastic system of education (*modus parisiensis*)²⁰ had considered the mastery of Latin (grammar and rhetoric) to be the important starting point for getting an education. Similarly, the humanistic system of education also emphasized the importance of learning languages (not only Latin, but also Greek and

¹⁹ Quintilian says, "Sit ergo nobis orator quem constituimus is que a M. Catone finitur vir bonus dicendi peritus, verum, id quod et ille posuit prius et ipsa natura potius ac maius est, utque vir bonus." In English, "so let the orator whom we are setting up be, as Cato defines him, 'A good man skilled in speaking': but ---and Cato put this first, and it is intrinsically more significant and important---let him at all events be 'a good man.' [...]" Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, Books 11-12, ed. and trans. by Donald A. Russell (Cambridge MA. & London: Harvard University Press, 2001, Loeb Classical Library), pp. 196-197.

²⁰ On the relations between *modus parisiensis* and sixteenth century education, see, John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 215-217. O'Malley writes, "the model of this pyramid culminating in theology ['arts,' or 'philosophy'---logic, metaphysics, ethics, mathematics, and physics, according to the texts of Aristotle for the most part---and, finally, theology, considered the apex of the curriculum] was the University of Paris that the architects of the Jesuit system knew so well. The pyramidal structure was only one element, however, in the complex reality of the *modus parisiensis* that that the Jesuits introduced into their schools in Italy and thence exported, as modified by their Italian experience, to their schools elsewhere in the world. [...]" (p. 216)

Hebrew). Acquiring skill in speaking was a central concern for humanists. After the languages were learned, all efforts were concentrated on acquiring skill in speaking (rhetoric) and on the pursuit of other humanistic studies (*studia humanitatis*).

To better understand the meaning of “*vir bonus dicendi peritus*”, it is necessary to consider the role of rhetoric. Rhetoric, for humanists, is the art of persuading.²¹ Persuasion is not just a matter of words. The nature of the person who is speaking has more to do with the art of persuasion than the words he uses. It is only a good person who can speak the truth persuasively.²² Thus, good character

²¹ About importance of rhetorical tradition, see, W. J. Bouwsma, “Humanism: I. The Spirituality of Renaissance Humanism” in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. by Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1989), pp. 236-251. See also, John Monfasani, “Humanism and Rhetoric” in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, vol. 3, *Humanism and the Disciplines*, ed. by Albert Rabil, Jr. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), pp. 171-235. J. Monfasani says, “At the same time [the time of Renaissance], they [humanists] proposed a new educational program, the *studia humanitatis*, which focused on classical literature and made rhetoric, not logic, the chief art of discourse. Classical rhetoric was central to the enterprise because, humanists believed, it held the key to classical eloquence.” (p. 171)

²² As to moral and speaking, Quintilian also says, “Quando igitur orator est vir bonus, is autem citra virtutem intellegi non potest, virtus, etiam si quosdam impetus ex natura sumit, tamen perficienda doctrina est: mores ante omnia oratori studiis erunt excolendi atque omnis honesti iustique disciplina pertractanda, sine qua nemo nec vir bonus esse nec dicendi peritus potest [...]. In English: “So, since the orator is a good man, and the concept of a good man is unintelligible apart from virtue, and since virtue, though it derives some impulses from

and persuasive words are but two sides of the same coin; humanists did not separate rhetoric from life.²³ Their models were the Roman orators such as Cicero, Cato, and Virgil: these were the true masters of rhetoric.²⁴ They were morally good people as well as extraordinary masters of language. The humanists held the view that only a good man can acquire the art of persuasion. Speaking and writing well was linked essentially with being a man of character. Moreover, European humanists of the sixteenth century were convinced that the study of Latin was an essential means for achieving excellence in rhetoric.

nature, has none the less to be perfected by teaching, the orator must above all else develop his moral character by study, and undergo a thorough training in the honourable and the just, because without this no one can be either a good man or a skilled speaker.” Quintilian, *ibid.* p. 221.

²³ See, J. D. Tracy, “II. Ad Fontes: The Humanist Understanding of Scripture as Nourishment for the Soul,” in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. by Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1989), pp.252-267. J. D. Tracy explains relations among humanists, rhetoric and the Bible. “[...] Rhetoric was the other great preoccupation that provided the diverse and multifarious humanist movement with a common framework, and rhetoric, too had special implications for the understanding of Scripture. The reason that humanists so admired the fathers as expositors of the Bible was that the fathers, themselves products of an education centered on the art of persuasion, understood the expositor’s task as homiletic rather than speculative in character; its purpose was to make God’s word come alive in the hearts of readers and listeners [...]. (p. 256-7).

²⁴ W. J. Bouwsma says, “The ancient texts that chiefly inspired the humanists were not the works of the ancient Greek philosophers but those of the Latin orators (above all Cicero and Quintilian), and of the ancient poets and historians.” W. J. Bouwsma, *ibid.* p. 236.

Ancient Church Fathers such as Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine were praised for the consistency of their words and deeds. It was this consistency that persuaded the hearer (or reader) of the truth of their words. “The Imitation of Christ” (*Imitatio Christi*) was, for the humanists, one of the best expression of how a man should live. Augustine, in the following words, expresses very much the same notion as Quintilian, when he writes “sit eius quasi copia dicendi, forma vivendi” (“his manner of living speaks eloquently”).²⁵

Desiderius Erasmus (1466/9-1536) expresses a similar view in his words “Philosophia Christi” (Philosophy of Christ). For him, true piety is to be found in the consistency between thought and action. To speak the truth persuasively, the speaker should be rooted in piety. He concludes that theology is piety joined with skill in speaking on sacred subjects. (“Theologia est pietas cum ratione de divines rebus loquendi coniuncta.”)²⁶

Juan Bonifacio’s *Christiani* also follows the above line of thought. In this work, too, persuasive speech cannot be separated from virtuous living. Valignano must have been drawn to this element in Bonifacio’s book, and he must have chosen it for re-printing because it was excellent material for educating the young. By introducing the work of Bonifacio to Japan, Valignano was also introducing the humanist ideals of the Renaissance to Japan. Thus, the work of Bonifacio was of great significance as marking an in-depth encounter between East and West.

²⁵ Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, 4, 29, 61.

²⁶ Cited. J. W. O’Malley, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol.66, p. xi. Note 5. Originally in *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* (J. Leclerc ed., *Desiderii Erasmi Roterodam opera omnia*, vol. IX, 90A).

Latin as a Basic Requirement

Valignano’s principal reason for insisting that the Japanese seminarians learn Latin was that Latin was an indispensable tool for uniting the Japanese Church and her priests with the Universal Church. Therefore, he made the study of Latin compulsory for Japanese candidates for the priesthood.

Valignano was also responsible for the opening of seminaries (*seminario*) and colleges (*colegio*) in Japan. *Seminario* was an educational institution for young men who might later become candidates for the priesthood. In the *colegio*, on the other hand, were many youths who had no intention of becoming priests. The *seminario* was not a school of theology, but more like today’s high school. Higher institutions of theology, such as the ones in Goa (St. Paul College) and Macao (St. Paul College), had not yet appeared in Japan. Valignano judged that the time was not yet ripe for establishing such institutions in Japan.

In Europe, besides Latin, Greek and Hebrew usually formed the core curriculum for basic education. But Valignano could see no good reason for Japanese students to learn Greek and Hebrew, inasmuch as those classical languages sprang from a culture that had nothing in common with the Japanese. On the other hand, he attached importance to learning Japanese classical literature.²⁷ In the near future,

²⁷ See, Antoni J Üçerler, S. J. “Alessandro Valignano and Jesuit Humanist Education in Japan.” in *St. Francis Xavier: An Apostle of the East* vol. 2. (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 2000), p. 77. “Valignano opted for a selection of literary and Patristic Latin texts. Another key innovation was to replace Greek with the study of classical Japanese and Chinese texts, including literary works such as the *Heike monogatari* 平家物語, the *Wakan Rōei-shū* 和歌集, and the *Kinkushū* 金草子.”

Japanese priests would have to treat with Japanese intellectuals, whose culture had as its basis a knowledge of Chinese & Japanese classical literature. No matter how much Greek and Hebrew the Japanese student learned, this would be of no use for him in dialogue with Japanese intellectuals. Here we see the keenness of Valignano's insight.

In accordance with Valignano's instructions, the Japanese seminaries made up their own unique curriculum on three levels.²⁸ On the introductory or elementary level, Latin grammar was mainly studied. On the intermediate level, the students continued to improve their Latin grammar. It is probably here that Bonifacio's *Christiani pueri institutio* was used. On the highest or advanced level, the students began to study Japanese classical literature.

Learning Latin proved to be a painful experience for the Japanese. Most of the students were forced to stay at the lowest level for a long time. After hard study, only a few students were permitted to go up to the second level. One of those was Hara Martino (ハラ マルティノ c.1569-1629), one of the four youth ambassadors who had gone to Europe, who had remarkable talent for assimilating Latin. According to the Jesuit Catalog of 1593, Hara had already finished the intermediate course and had begun to study in the class of Japanese literature. But his case was very exceptional. Almost all of the Japanese students had to struggle with the language. Two of the other "youth ambassadors," Ito Mantio (伊藤 マンティオ c.1569-1612) and Chijiwa Miguel (千住 米格 c.1569-?) had difficulty completing the

intermediate course; their progress was slow. Their difficulties in learning Latin did not spring from lack of ability, but from the difference between systems of language. For a sixteenth-century Japanese to speak and write good Latin would be like a modern European reading and writing classical Chinese.

Latin: Tool for the Unity with the Universal Church

Valignano, as we have seen, after a careful consideration of the situation in Japan, chose not to introduce the European study curriculum as a whole into Japan. After eliminating Greek and Hebrew from the Japanese curriculum, why then did he persist in emphasizing the importance of teaching Latin? To be consistent in his method of adaptation to Japan, why did not he eliminate Latin as well as Greek and Hebrew, and substitute for it something inherent in Japanese culture? His reason for not doing so is clear: knowledge of Latin would enable the Japanese to maintain unity with the Universal Church, by providing them with a common language.²⁹ Certainly Latin was a classical language and an effective means for realizing the educational ideal of European humanists. By acquiring skill in Latin, they were able to develop their *vir bonus*. Latin was part of their culture, and it was natural for them to discover something universal in it. But the Japanese, Lacking the same cultural roots, could never do this.

Latin: Cause of Antagonism

The introduction of Latin into the curriculum was the cause of still another problem. Ability to speak and write good Latin was considered by Europeans to be a means for developing good character, for producing *vir bonus*. This idea was not wrong, but it was wrong to judge a person

²⁸ See, Hubert Cieslik, "Seminariyo no kyoiku seishin ni tsuite [On the educational spirit in Japanese Seminario]" *Kirishitan Bunka Kenkyukai Kaiho* VIII-1 (1964), pp. 1-27.

²⁹ Hubert Cieslik, "Seminariyo no kyoiku seishin ni tsuite," p. 11.

who had not mastered Latin to be an imperfect or bad person because of this. This would seem to be obvious, but it is a fact that some of the Jesuits responsible for the selection of candidates to the priesthood were influenced, if perhaps unconsciously, by this criterion. In the Jesuit Catalog is a list of Jesuit seminarians, and next to the name of each seminarian is noted his Latin grade as well as a grade for character, such as “mediocre” or “excellent.” It is clear that quite a few students were not accepted as candidates for the priesthood because of their low grade in Latin, and, therefore, their correspondingly low grade in character. Thus, far from being a means to unity, Latin became the source of antagonism between the European missionaries and the Japanese, a key point in their mutual struggles.

Epilogue

In conclusion, it seems to me that Valignano’s introduction of the work of Bonifacio into Japan was highly significant. Valignano proved himself to be an extraordinary leader when he implemented in Japan and China his missionary strategy of cultural adaptation. He urged his missionary colleagues to consider the needs of the people they wished to convert and to adapt themselves accordingly. In this sense, he was truly a “global” person, rather than a man of one country and one culture. In introducing to Japan the work of Bonifacio, he prepared the way for effectively educating young Japanese. In this, too, he evidenced his genius as a leader. The humanism of the European Renaissance reached Japanese shores through that work: through the work of Bonifacio, the Japanese were given an opportunity to come to know the essence of this humanism. That few availed themselves of this opportunity was due undoubtedly to language barriers. For Europeans, Latin was at the very core of their rhetorical and educational tradition; it presented a kind of universal standard. But outside of

Europe, Latin was merely the classical language of a certain place. In Japan, Latin did not become a tool for developing the *vir bonus*. For the young Japanese struggling to assimilate it in their colleges and seminaries, Latin as a classical language was always a handicap in the attempt to capture the essence of the humanistic ideal which Juan Bonifacio attempted to inculcate in his book. Consequently, the Japanese failed to come to an understanding of that ideal, or even of the intention of Juan Bonifacio in writing the book.

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