

The Dominican Missions in Northern Taiwan 1880 -1949
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Introduction

In recent years a great interest was stirred up on the history of the evangelization of Taiwan mainly due to recent publications to commemorate the 150 years of the second evangelization of the island during the last years of the Qing dynasty in the XIX century as well as private or commemorate publications of various parishes who began to be interested in their own particular histories.

Aside from dated documents, much of the Dominican work in Northern Taiwan had been lost in memory as new congregations assume the task of preaching in the district thus forgetting the work and toil of our missionaries. Political changes as well as shifting ecclesiastical policies has also added to this as the presence of the Dominicans especially the old missionaries began to move down to the center and eventually having a foothold in Southern Taiwan, specifically in the Kaohsiung and Ping tung area. In fact today, aside from the Missionaries of Saint Dominic and the small presence of the friars in Taipei (Chilin Road) and S. Albert Priory in Xinzhuang, there are no Dominican presences from the Diocese of Chiayi to the north.

Today's conference would be about the Dominican evangelization in Northern Taiwan specifically in the Taipei area. It is not only to commemorate the brothers and the sisters who had worked to plant the seeds of the faith and establish the Order's presence, but to celebrate their dedication in behalf of the Church in Taiwan.

For many of us even Dominicans, we know little of our own history. We might read and heard our old sisters speak about what took place; but sadly the work of these missionaries, the men and women Dominicans as well as their collaborators the lay catechists and beatas would only appear as a short footnote or perhaps even a few lines at the beginning when speaking about the missionary endeavors of the Church here.

We ought to remember that the second period of evangelization of the island of Taiwan was closely linked to the Opium wars between the West and the Qing dynasty. Here we do not enter into the dynamics of the war and its ethical problems

but yes the result was that China was forced to open ports along the coastlines in order to satisfy the Western world's avaricious desire for Chinese goods and to impose trade on China. This development was a great help in the Protestant evangelization since the Catholic Church had already entered China since the late Ming and well into the Qing dynasty, despite the fact that it was always under the threat of being expelled, suspended or even violently suppressed.

The Holy See, observing that this development as something positive would like to restore the work of evangelization in the Island and was hoping that it would also reap the success of Japan with the discovery of hidden Christians in the empire. And thus respecting the historical link between the Province of the Holy Rosary in the Philippines and the island, it was once again entrusted to the Dominicans.

The reason of entrusting the mission to the Dominicans were the following: the proximity of the island to Fujian province which was under the Dominicans. It should be remembered that Taiwan at that time was under the civil jurisdiction of Fujian. Secondly, the centuries of migration had greatly Sinicized the island, thus the culture and religious beliefs are predominantly Chinese although the aboriginal population were displaced; they were nonetheless thriving. Thirdly resilience and dedication of the Province in the missions had been tested through the years. In the same period the success and the bloody persecutions in Tonkin (Northern Vietnam) were closely followed by the Holy See and they knew that despite many problems and many upheavals, the Dominicans continue to do the work with great love.

Thus the re-evangelization was realized in 1858 with the arrival of Fernando Sainz and later joined by Angel Bofurrul.

While the port of Takao was opened for the Catholic Church and from there began the slow but steady growth of the Catholic Church in the island, the northward development was slow. In the meantime, the Protestants represented by the Canadian Presbyterians arrived in 1871 and fixed their headquarters in Tamsui. It should be remembered that the first Protestant missionary in Taiwan is Dr. George Leslie Mackay, memorialized in the now famous Mackay Hospitals in Northern Taiwan.

The first attempt of the Dominican missionaries to extend their work to the north began in 1880 with various exploratory visits. The pioneers were hoping to find lost or straggling pockets of Christian communities as what took place in Japan, as they tried to retrace the ancient foundations and possible Christian settlements of the XVII century but nothing was found.

The push to the North

In 1884 something strange and somewhat providential took place, a resigned protestant catechist invited the Catholic missionary in Central Taiwan to come to the north and preach the Catholic faith. How did this happen? According to our annals the somewhat disappointed Protestant catechist and a good number of protestant converts were unhappy with the Protestant pastors and realized that the Catholic Church might be the answer to their search for the true religion.

By May 1884 two Christians from Luo-chu to the North to make sure of such an invitation and for a possible evangelization. They were later joined by Fr. Celedonio Arranz OP 何安慈 and the catechist known as Tiu Le shan 張立山.

By 1886 Fr Arranz 何安慈 made a 5 day exploratory trip to the North to see how the residents would react and welcome the Catholic missionaries.

By 1886, 27 September, the Vicar Provincial Fr Herce 良雅師 sent Peter Tiu Le san 張立山 to begin the evangelization work and by February of 1887 Fr. Celedonio Arranz 何安慈 was officially sent to do mission work in the North. In March of the same year, Fr. Arranz 何安慈 reached a place called Luzhou accompanied by another catechist Tan Shi ran 陳事染.

Thus the first Catholic presence in Northern Taiwan was in the locality of Luzhou 蘆洲 known to most of us as it is now part of the 新北市 New Taipei city ; before it was a locality of the Taipei County 台北縣. Its original name is known as He Shang Zhou 和尚州, and is about an hour's travel from old Taipei.

On 19 March, 1887 the Catholic Church of Luzhou 蘆洲 was inaugurated. It was in honor of Saint Joseph. After Easter, Fr Vicar Fr. Francisco Herce 良方濟 visited the place and was heartbroken to see the sad state of the place and how the young missionary and the catechists were living.

But the difficulties did not end there. By June 22 of the same year (1887), the local official known as the Daotai 道台 were unhappy with the presence of the Foreign missionary in the area and ordered a lesser official to confiscate the door sign of the Church. Fr. Arranz 何安慈 was forced to give up the mission alleging that his passport was illegal.

Fr Arranz 何安慈 had to seek the help of the British consul hoping that he would continue to stay in the area with the same conditions as the protestant minister and thus he was able to continue his work. But to evade the constant molestation from the local officials he decided to rent a house from the European chamber of commerce in Taipei and from there continue his work. This place which was a windowless house was in the district known as Toatiutia 大稻埕.

By December of 1887 another young Dominican was sent to be with Fr. Arranz 何安慈, he was Fr. Pedro Aguirre OP 吳義利 but his stay was shortlived due to his failing health.

In 1888, The first Church of S. Joseph of Luzhou 蘆洲 was built. This Church was destroyed during a heavy flood that took place in 1898. The new church was rebuilt under the direction of Fr. Manuel Prat 馬守仁.

Despite the efforts and dedication of the missionaries, the Christian community in Luzhou 蘆洲 did not grow and develop as expected. The reasons are many; among them: The conflict between the government officials and the missionaries; 2) the exodus of Christians to the Parish community of Toataotia 大稻埕.

Albeit, by 1890 Fr Blas Saez Adana 雷賽逸 was assigned to the Luzhou 蘆洲 mission and from there it became an important mission station towards the evangelization of Tamsui 淡水 and Kilung 基隆. By 1895 Luzhou 蘆洲 did not have a permanent missionary resident. This became a sad pattern until 1950 and most of the pastoral work came from the more important mission of Toataotia 大稻埕.

Evangelization of Taipei

Toataotia 大稻埕 mission was founded by Fr. C. Arranz on March of 1887. This was done as he was able to buy a property and was able to build a small church there.

He was helped by Fr. Francisco Pitach 周芳濟 who arrived on the same year but had to leave Taipei and eventually Taiwan after contracting tuberculosis.

1887 19 December, another newcomer Fr. Pedro Aguirre 吳義利 was assigned here but he too had to leave the mission in 1890 due to the same reasons.

By 1890, Fr. C. Arranz 何安慈 was elected Vicar Provincial and as such he would regular visit the various missions in Southern Taiwan. But he continued to live in Taipei. He assigned Fr Blas Saez Adana 雷賽逸 to Taipei.

1881 -1895 can be characterized with the slow but sure development of the Catholic Church in the north.

Fr. Arranz 何安慈 was very particular in the formation of the Christians. Catechesis was prolonged if there was any doubt in the sincerity or the perseverance of the catechumen. For this reason a very committed crop of Christians were formed although the number would not be many.

1892: The Northern missions was further strengthened with the presence of a missionary veteran. Fr. Isidro Clemente OP 黎克勉. His missionary experience was a great boost to the evangelization in the area. But he was elected Vicar Provincial in the place of Fr. Arranz 何安慈 and soon left to take other responsibilities in the mission.

Fr. C. Arranz 何安慈 returned to Taipei to resume his work after ending his term.

1895 Fr. Jose Alvarez 白若瑟 was assigned to Tansui 淡水 but soon had to return to Luo Chhu 羅厝 and eventually left the mission to be the Vicar Apostolic of the newly restored Dominican mission in Japan in the island of Shikoku 四國.

1897 Fr. Tomas Masoliver 鐘立默 worked in the North for two years and also left the mission.

Conclusion:

The foundation of the Catholic mission was difficult due to the animosity of the government leaders, and strong presence of the Protestants who availed of great resources in their evangelization work and the constant transfer of personnel due

to other pressing needs of the mission or personal reasons of the missionaries (mostly due to health reasons).

The work of evangelization continued the pattern of the work done by the Dominican missionaries in other places of the island: collaboration with lay catechists and importance given to catechetical instruction and the founding/building of catechetical halls for preaching the faith.

II Taiwan under Japanese Rule (1895-1947)

1895 July After the infamous Sino Japanese War, the Chinese army dismally lost to Japan ushering a new era in the political balance in Eastern Asia. The treaty of Shimonoseki was signed as indemnization. Among its stipulation, the island of Taiwan was ceded to Imperial Japan.

There was strong opposition to the Japanese invaders from the part of the Taiwanese populace and it took the Japanese two more year to quell the rebels (both loyalists to the Qing dynasty and those who wanted to establish an independent republic) and eventually subjugate the whole island.

The Japanese occupation brought about a new order in Taiwanese society and also brought about a great change in the organization of the Catholic missions in the North. It was decided that it would be divided into two districts:

The district of Toataotia 大稻埕: this mission would consist of the mission stations of Xintian 新店, Shulin 樹林, Shihlin 士林, Nuannuan 暖暖 and Dingnai 碇內

The district of Tansui 淡水: this mission shall extend to the mission stations of Botou 埔頭, Xinghuadian 興化店 and Da chuiku 大嘴骨.

A new and interesting development took place during the Japanese occupation for it brought about a good number of Japanese catholics into the island, some of them government functionaries or migrants... They either had received their faith in the home country or were baptized in the island. Thus there grew a thriving Japanese Catholic community centered in the Toataotia 大稻埕 mission. A catechist was even appointed to serve their needs.

1899 a new Church was built in Toataotia 大稻埕 by Fr. Manuel Prat 馬守仁.

1906: A catechism hall was opened in Bangka or 萬華 Wanhua district. On the other side of the Taipei city.

1907: In Toataotia 大稻埕 a new Church was built in honor of its patrons SS. Peter and Paul.

But after completion it was soon declared by the urban planning council of the colonial government to be illegal for the church and the property was in the middle of a new street to be opened. The government ordered the new church demolished and the property seized.

Fr. Clemente Fernandez 林牧才 sought help from Japanese functionaries to no avail and had to seek the help of the Spanish Ambassador in Tokyo, Don Ramiro Gil to intercede in behalf of the Catholic missions and the interests of the Spanish missionaries.

And thus in 1911 a contract was signed between the Japanese governor and Fr. Clemente Fernandez 林牧才 on the property of Toataotia 大稻埕: It stipulated that the government will pay 40,000 pesos for the reconstruction of the Church and mission house and that the Catholic mission could recover whatever can be recovered from the debris for reconstruction.

1912 18 January: the demolition of the Church was completed. And 24 April of the same year, the cornerstone of the new Church was blessed and the following year, 4 May, 1913 the Church was blessed and consecrated.

1913 September, the Holy See established the Apostolic Vicariate of Taiwan separating it from the Apostolic Vicariate of Xiamen.

The new Church and mission house at Toataotiu became the Curia of the Apostolic Vicariate.

The first Vicar Apostolic was Rev. Fr. Clemente Fernandez OP. 林牧才

The foundation of the Apostolic Vicariate not only confirmed the work of the brothers through all these years but also strengthened the presence of the Catholic Church in the island especially in the North.

1915-1920: the period of foundation of Blessed Imelda School

The establishment of a Catholic school in the missions had always been the dream of the missionaries in the Vicariate of Taiwan.

We ought to remember that the protestant mission in Taiwan became very popular and received acceptance due to their educational ministry as well as health care. As early as the late Qing dynasty, the Presbyterians had opened western style schools for boys and girls in Tansui 淡水 and thus their presence among the upper middle class and the local intelligentsia became very evident in the coming decades.

Despite the great desire for such an institution that would rival the Protestants, the constant movement of personnel and the dearth of funds made it nearly impossible for a foundation of such scale. Although primary schools and Schools to form catechists were established in the missions in the south and center of the island, they were never officially recognized as such but as institutions “ad intra”. That is why, a formal and recognized institution of learning was needed to show the cultural contribution of the Church in Taiwanese society.

Fr. Clemente 林牧才 was able to purchase a winery beside the Church property and invested all the funds of the mission. With the building and its machinery as collateral. He was able to sell the machineries and transformed the beautifully constructed winery into a Catholic Institution of learning. He then asked the Dominican sisters to come and take over this ministry and called the school “ Blessed Imelda”. It became one of the iconic symbols of the Catholic missions in the island, and eventually gaining great prestige as one of the premiere schools for women in the island.

The first sisters to come to Taipei and assume the project were: M. Mercedes Oliver, M. Rosario Armendariz and M. Margarita Moret. Other sisters were to follow like Clemencia Mas, Berta Roy and Carmen Biurrun.

Two months after the foundation of the school, it coincided with the first canonical visitation of the Master of the Order, Fr. Louis Theissling OP and was followed by

the visitation of the Provincial of the Holy Rosary Province 1918: Fr. Serapio Tamayo OP in the following year.

Both superiors lauded the initiative of the missionaries and greatly supported it. In the most generous act of the province was to assume the Blessed Imelda School as a foundation of the Province, and assuming the collateral of the debts incurred thus ensuring its growth in the following decades. This detail is very important as there had always been a question about the ownership of the School pertain to whom the Vicar Apostolic or the Province. This was the bone of contention with the Apostolic Vicar of Taipei in the early 50s against the Order and the school. And this became more complicated when the Spanish missionaries retreated from Taipei and sold the school to the sisters now an independent congregation in a measly sum.

Foreseeing future problems of the sisters at Blessed Imelda, with regards to observances and internal regime as he saw in the communities of Santa Infancias in Xiamen, 林牧才 Msgr. Fernandez gave the consent of establishing a formal house (“casa formada”) of the religious women. This took place on 23 May, 1919. Thus it became the first community of religious women in Taiwan and antedated other communities of women missionaries of the province prior to the separation and the foundation of the Congregation itself. This decision was accepted by the Province as a house or “domus” of the Province.

I need not evoke the history of the School here but it was a typical school for women of the era especially in the East Asian milieu: women’s education consisted of manual labors, good manners, housekeeping, languages and music. But since it was recognized by the colonial government, a Japanese headmaster was hired who supervised the curriculum according to the Japanese standard of education. Religion was not allowed to be taught and the sisters’ despite their goodwill and example, would only speak to the students about the faith through religious festivals like Christmas and Easter as well as the lives they led in the College. There were some conversions but were not numerous. Despite the small and insignificant number of conversions, many lives were touched by the good example and services done by the sisters.

Most of the students were daughters of middle class families living in the vicinity now known as “Fenglai teng” 旺萊町, daughters of Japanese functionaries (some of

them Catholic) and also talented girls sent to Taipei by the missionaries from the south or even some from the Santa Infancia of Takao 打狗.

The community of sisters would usually number around seven to eight sisters. The sisters (at that time still members of the Province) were intellectually and professionally prepared to assume the work since most of them were either trained as teachers in Madrid and had practiced doing the same ministry in Philippines notably at the College of Santa Catalina which was attached to the centuries old Beaterio or to the Schools.

The community was led by prominent women Dominican missionaries of the era: like Clemencia Mas who had been the superior of the Santa Infancia of Takao, Amada Olea and Candelaria Goicoechea, etc...

By 1921 the first graduates of the Blessed Imelda terminated their studies.

It should be noted that around this time, the project of founding a similar institution in the newly restored mission of Japan was realized. The now famous Bizen Women's University 美善女子大學 or the University of Saint Catherine of Ehime. Although the Japanese foundation was due to the largesse of the prioress of the Beaterio Rev. Mother Catalina Osmeña OP who gave part of her vast inheritance for the foundation, the founding sisters were from Blessed Imelda (Sor Teresa Suarez and Sor Patrocinio Armendariz) and they were joined by the a Japanese sister from the Beaterio (Sor Anunciacion Yamaguchi).

Establishment of the corporation:

Another form of supporting the mission from the part of the Province was to send a friar to help in the temporal administration of the mission. Through the years, a good number of properties had been purchased by the Province and now by the Catholic mission represented by the Apostolic Vicariate. Such an arrangement was in line with the modernization of the Dominican missions and it became a great help to legalize purchased of properties which would be pivotal in the coming years till our times. The first syndic of the Vicariate /Mission was Fr. Gabriel Ormaechea OP 嘉備厄爾.

It should be by this time where we can trace the origin of the Corporation Sole of the Catholic Church recognized by the Japanese Imperial government. This

corporation sole continues to this day as the business name of the Dominicans of the Vicariate of Saint Joseph. And it takes the name of the original patrons of the Church of 大稻埕 Toataotiu: SS. Peter and Paul. And thus everytime we use the name, we evoke the missions in Taipei which we have transferred to the local clergy.

Msgr Clemente Fernandez 林牧才 left Taiwan in 1920 and before his resignation, assigned Fr. Buenaventura Gordaliza 吳達查 as his Vicar who was concurrently the Vicar Provincial of the mission.

In December of 1921, Fr. Tomas de la Hoz 楊多默 was appointed Vicar Apostolic and continued to fix his residence at Toataotiu 大稻埕. During the 20s, the pastoral care of the Toataotiu 大稻埕 parish was assumed by Fr. Felipe Villarubia 白翡立 (1920-1922) and by Fr. Toribio Tobar 陶道斌(1922-1930).

In 1930, the parish priest was Fr. Felix Sanchez Munoz 山繼慈 until his transfer to Kilung 基隆 in 1933. He was succeeded by Fr. Rodriguez 洪羅裂. In 1937, the indigenous Tu mingzheng 杜敏正 became the Parish priest until 1940 when the Spanish missionaries like Fr. Constantino Montero 戴剛德, Jose Arregui 陳若瑟 and Tomas Pascual Allende 多馬斯 continued the work.

III Tansui mission

The direction of the missionary expansion was westwards towards the tip of the island.

埔頭 Po tao

Also known as little 小雞籠 or 小基隆. It is a small village about 6 kms from 興化店 Xinghuatian. In 1890 a catechism hall was established on a rented house. But unfortunately there has been no mention of this place afterwards in the annals.

淡水:

There is no written record of the beginning of the evangelization in 淡水 Tansui, although there might have been conversion, the number were not significant to be recorded by the missionaries.

In 1905 Fr. Clemente Fernandez 林牧才 was assigned to take the Tansui 淡水 mission, but his stay there was shortlived as Fr Arranz 何安慈 was transferred to

Xiamen 廈門 and he had to assume the organization of the missions in the North. That is why, he had to return to Toataotia 大稻埕.

The presence of the Catholic Church was due to a certain Joaquin Kim Kui, son of a Filipino known as Mariano Cuarentino. Due to a personal favor made by Fr. Clemente Fernandez, to solve a family problem, so grateful was he to the priest that he always welcomed the missionary into his hospice.

1906 a house in Tansui 淡水 was brought by the Catholic missions thanks to the help of Joaquin Pit Kim Kui 金貴. The money was paid by the Vicar Apostolic of Xiamen.

In 1907 28 April the blessing and inauguration of the Church at Tansui 淡水 and Fr. Juan Beovide 孟義德 was assigned as the resident missionary, but soon after his reassignment, Tansui 淡水 was ministered from the Toataotia 大稻埕. 1911. Fr. Toribio Tobar 陶道斌 came to minister to the area and by 1915 it was reported that there were about 50 catholics.

興化店 Xinghoa tian

The mission was from the old catechism hall of 埔頭 Po tao. As early as 1893 there was a certain hopefulness that the mission would flourish. But due to the long absence of a the missionary here the mission station lost its importance and fell drastically leaving only two Christian families.

大嘴骨 Toa chui kut

It was established in 1893 consisting of a Christian community of 50 catechumens and a resident catechist.

番社 Huan xia

This refers to a lowland aboriginal settlement although there were also many immigrants from the Chinese mainland.

新莊 Simcheng

This mission began in 1892.

新店 Xintiam

1905-1909 Christianity was introduced to this district.

1910 a Catechism hall was established . The catechumens were mostly aborigenes.

1914 The mission was closed and the Christians and catechumens were incorporated ot the Taitaotia Church.

1933 Evangelization was revived with a catechist resident known as Png Un sien 方安先 but this ministry was suspended as the result of the Pacific war.

新竹 Xinchu also known as Koroton

1907 some inhabitants from 新竹 Xinchu can to Taipei and asked to be instructed in the faith.

In 1908 Fr. Felipe Villarubia 白斐立 sent 2 catechists to explore in the possibilities of the area but returned without finding a suitable place.

華山 Huasan

The Vicar Apostolic of Formosa established a parish for the thriving Japanese community in 1928.

The Church was inaugurated on 4 August, 1928 and became the Huasan Catholic Church in honor of Saint Dominic.

The parish was serving about 50 families. The Dominican Sister Sakamoto served this parish for a time.

Fr. Faustino Rodriguez Garcia 包羅琳 dedicated his missionary work serving the Japanese community.

Bangka 萬華

Bangka was notorious district infamous for its low life and the district where the European businessmen and transients lived. Many missionaries believed that it was not a propitious place to do mission work.

In 1906 a Catechism hall was established with 200 catechumens and this mission was under the guidance of the catechist: Tomas Khia Khe phio 謝熙彪

石碇 Chioh teng

This village is found near the hillslopes of Xintian. It is a tea plantation region and most of the residents were laborers.

1925. Fr. Toribio Tobar 陶道斌 began to minister in this district.

1933 Fr. Angel Maria Rodriguez 洪羅烈 built a Church and a beata Hien Ko 興姑 worked in the district.

士林 Sulim

also known as Pachena or Surim in Japanese

It was so named to evoke the multitude of schools around the area...

1925 A Catechism hall was established with 20 converts.

The pacific war brought about a halt in the development of the Catholic Church as the movement of the foreign missionaries were greatly contained.

By 1941 the Holy See appointed Fr. Joseph Asajiro Satowaki 里協淺次郎, a Japanese secular priest to be the Vicar Apostolic of Taiwan. He arrived in Taiwan but instead of assuming his post in Taipei, moved his seat to Kaohsiung. But after the end of the war, he returned to Nagasaki.

The Taiwanese priest, Tu Minzheng 杜敏正 a secular priest of the Apostolic Vicariate served as Apostolic Vicar from 1946- 1948.

In 1947, Taiwan returned to the Republic of China and soon the island was raised as an independent province. Thus began the process of Sinicization of the island in order to do away with the Japanese influence in the daily lives of the people.

With the loss of the KMT to the Communists, they began the mass exodus of mainland refugees to the island; men and women religious began to arrive in droves and soon even the army and finally the government in exile.

1949, 19 December, the Holy See divided Taiwan into two Apostolic Vicariates:

North or Taipei Apostolic Vicariate. This was entrusted to the Congregation of the Disciples of the Lord. With Fr. Joseph Kuo CDD 郭若石 as the first Chinese Vicar Apostolic.

South of the Kaohsiung Apostolic Vicariate. To the Spanish Dominican missionaries. Fr. Jose Arregui OP 陳若瑟 was appointed as the new Vicar Apostolic.

Conclusion:

The Taipei missions was established with great difficulty compared to the missions in the south and in the center of the island. This is due to the following reasons: 1) the great influence of the Presbyterians and the resources they had used for their ministry. 2) The northern part of the island is more vulnerable to new social and cultural trends than in the south, that is why the more static ministry used by the missionaries in the South was not very successful to sustain the work of evangelization. 3) The lack of personnel. The constant transfer of personnel not only of the clergy but also of the lay catechists was a bane in the stability of the missionary work. The need of personnel in the South and Central part of the island could be one of the reasons aside from the fact that it was a period of great difficulty for the province in sending missionaries to the island. 4) the social changes hindered the peaceful development of the missions, the change of political regime and eventually the cultural changes; the wars and the eventual return of Taiwan to China.

Appendix

The Misioneras who were assigned in Taipei.

Although the misioneras (women members of the Province who were sent by the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary) came to Formosa in 1903 to assume the work of the Santa Infancia of Takao. The foundation of the Blessed Imelda School had been envisioned with them in mind. It should be remembered that while the misioneras were generally working in the Santa Infancia of the missions, these women had been dedicating themselves to education in the Philippines specifically at the Colegio Beaterio de Santa Catalina and the College of Lingayen and the College of Sagrada Familia in Santa Rita. The Novitiate of Madrid would also establish a College known as “Colegio del Santisimo Rosario”, making the educational ministry something innate in the work of these misioneras.

Here is the gist of the sisters assigned to BIS since the beginning according to the cited documents of Rascon.

1916: Sor Mercedes Oliver OP, first superior; Sor Rosario Armendariz (hermana de obediencia).

1917: Sor Clemencia Mas OP, Sor Modesta Arguello (from Takao Santa Infancia).

1918: Carmen Biurrun OP, Mercedes Landa OP.

1921: Clemencia Mas assumed the directorship of the BIS. Previous to her it was the founder Fr. Clemente Fernandez OP.

1921: Rosario Razon OP, Candelaria Goicoichea OP

1922: Sor Amada Olea OP, the transfer of Sor Rosario Armendaiz to Takao and in exchange, Sor Rosa de los Remedios came to Taipei. The latter was perhaps a hermana de obediencia.

Sor Amada Olea would assume the office of superior but the Director of the School was to return to the hands of the Vicar Apostolic, now Fr. Tomas de la Hoz.

1923 Sor Teresa Suarez OP and Sor Rosario Armendariz OP (Takao) came to Taipei. Later Sor Clemencia Mas and Sor Mercedes Landa were transferred to Takao.

1924: Sor Rosario Armendariz OP returned to Takao ; Rosa de los Remedios OP died in Taipei (+8 November, 1924) She was the first to die in Taipei among the misioneras. Two more sisters were assigned by the Province to BIS: Rosa Pando and Angeles Alonso.

1925: The founding community of the Misioneras to Shikoku left from the BIS community: Sor Teresa Suarez, Patrocinio Armendariz and the Japanese Anunciacion Yamauchi¹.

Death of Sor Rosario Armendariz (hermana de obediencia) (+5 March 1925)

¹ It should be noted here that Sister Anunciacion Yamauchi or Yamaguchi was a lay teacher when BIS was founded and was in charge of the Japanese students. A year later she decided to follow the sisters and was sent to be formed and professed at the Beaterio de Santa Catalina of Manila. She became instrumental in the foundation of misioneras in Matsuyama and was a key character in the subsequent foundation of the Novitiate in Japan. She also dedicated much of her life as teacher and formator of lay catechists throughout the island. Another Japanese who entered the Province was a certain Maria Rosa Sakamoto who would later dedicate herself to the ministry to the Japanese community in Huasan and would also figure in the suppression of the Santa Infancia of Takao by Fr Jose Satowaki.

Arrival of Sor Asuncion Iriarte OP, Sor Modesta Arguello OP as the superior of Taipei and of Sor Angela Diez.

1926: Sor Amada Olea OP and Sor Maria Rosario Razon OP leave for Manila; Sor Candelaria Goicoechea OP is reassigned to China; the arrival of Sor Begona Aguirre OP and Sor Mercedes Miguel OP.

1931: Sor Asunta Ferrero.

When the Congregation was established by the Archbishop of Manila, the Province ceded the property and the land where the BIS stood, which excluded the land opposite the School which was sold to the new Congregation of Dominican Sisters. This was recorded in the Acts of the Council of the Province of 1928².

On March 1934 the newly organized Congregation established the Council for the community of Blessed Imelda: Sor Candelaria Goicoechea OP, Directress and Superior, Sor Gloria Diez OP, Vice Directress, Sor Camino Martinez OP, Procuratrix, Sor Asuncion Ferrero OP, Secretary and Councilor, Sor Asuncion Iriarte OP, Sor Maria Rosa Sakamoto OP.

From this year onwards (which coincided with the first General Chapter of the Congregation), the superior/directress is now appointed not by the Province but by the Superior General of the new Congregation.

1940: Sor Camino Martinez OP, Director.

1943: Sor Candelaria Goicoechea OP, Director.

1947: Sor Candelaria Goicoechea OP, re-elected/ reappointed. Sor Asuncion Ferrero was appointed Vice Director instead of Sor Maria Cruz Arzoz.

The end of the World War/ and the Pacific War impelled BIS to assume a new cultural direction. The Japanese sisters had to leave Taiwan and soon BIS had to assume Chinese as the medium of instruction, accept the Chinese system of education as imposed by the Nationalist government.

² Cfr. 15 February, 1928 folio 92 v.

By this time, the HK born religious Sor Catalina Hung³ was assigned to BIS as director /superior.

1952: Sor Catalina Hung resigned as directress and the office was assumed by Sor Joaquina Diez OP.

This year saw the assignation of a large group of Filipina sisters to BIS. Sor Enriqueta Gonzalez, Sor Leonor Flores, Sor Lourdes Rodriguez, Sor Rosalia Sison and Sor Ana Maria Tosau⁴.

Sor Catalina Hung was appointed as Assistant Director.

1953, Sor Catalina Hung renounced her position as assistant Director and in her place, Sor Amparo Alonso was appointed.

³ Sor Catalina Hung and Sor Ana Maria Tosau were from HK recruited by the Procurator of the Missions to join the newly established Congregation with the hope of bringing the sisters to work in Hong Kong. Their entrance to the Congregation was providential as Sor Catalina Hung became instrumental in the process of Sinicization of Blessed Imelda School which would have a great repercussion in the role of the institution in the coming years for the Church in Taiwan especially in the formation of exiled religious women from mainland China. Sor Ana Maria Tosau on the other served as an important personage for the foundation of the Novitiate in Kaohsiung in the 1950s.

⁴ The assignment of this group of young Filipina sisters was a consequence of the bitter struggle between Mgr Joseph Guo with the Congregation concerning BIS. It should also be remembered that the Dominican missionaries were asked to leave Taipei for the CDD and eventually would retreat to the South.