



The First Episode of Formosa Church: Robertus Junius (1629-1643)

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摘要

尤羅伯牧師（1629-1643）為荷蘭改革宗教會派駐台灣宣教師當中，成果最為豐碩的一位。他在 1606 年誕生於充滿自由和寬容思想的鹿特丹市，在 19 歲時進入萊登大學當中，專門為培養服事於東印度地區的「印度學院」（*Seminarium Indicum*）就讀畢業之後經由鹿特丹中會派遣，前往東印度地區服事，他在 1629 年來到福爾摩沙。在 1643 年時約滿回歸祖國。歸國後在台夫特（Delft）教會服事一段時間，後來前往阿姆斯特丹教會，他在該城設立一間專門訓練前往東印度神職人員的訓練學校。在台灣 14 年的服事期間，建立教會，為 5400 人洗禮，並且設立學校教導原住民孩童，也設立一間「師資訓練班」栽培 50 名原住民作為小學校的師資。荷蘭人來到台灣以前，西拉雅原住民有強制墮胎的習俗，這樣的風俗可能是千百年來流傳下來的風俗，原住民本身不以為意。但是，對宣教師來講，殺害無辜嬰孩的行為是干犯《十誡》的嚴重罪行，不是歸咎於風俗習慣就可以視而不見。於是尤羅伯牧師認為要解決這個問題，必須雙管齊下，首先是透過行政的力量阻止西拉雅的女祭司繼續進行殺嬰的行為，再來透過教育的方法，編撰相關的教理問答，讓原住民改掉這個風俗習慣，而他所編撰的教理問答也可以算是荷蘭教會「脈絡化神學」（*contextual theology*）在台灣的實現。由



於在台灣的宣教成果極為卓著，因此在 1650 年代的英國有人撰寫一本小書讚揚他為 5900 人洗禮的偉大成果，而台灣的宣教也成為荷蘭改革宗教會在東印度地區宣教的模範。

Keywords: Dutch East India Company, catechisms, contextualization, Zeelandia





In 1624, Dutch East India Company¹ established a colony in Formosa, at the same time Christian clergymen start their service in the island thus mark the genesis of Formosan church. During East India Company's administration in the island from 1624 till 1662, more than 30 ministers came to served there. Amongst them, the greatest missionary of Dutch Reformed Church was Rev. Robertus Junius. He was not the first minister served in Formosa, however due to missionary zeal as well as linguistic talent, he was able to baptized 5400 native inhabitants, established schools for Formosan children and youth during his 14 years of service in Formosa. Beside these establishments, Junius also compiled several contextualized versions of Formosan catechisms to teach native Christian, and his method can be defined as the first contextualization endeavor in Taiwan church history, a significant step for Taiwan theological reflection. Because of such an achievement, a certain English author published a pamphlet entitled *Of the Conversion of Five Thousand and Nine Hundred East Indians in the Isle Formosa neere China to the profession of the true God, in Jesus Christ by means of M. Ro. Junius, a Minister lately served in Delph in Holland.*² Because of this, great mission history scholars including J. A. Grothe, and David Bosch praised Formosan mission as a 'shinning beacon of Dutch Reformed Church's missionary endeavor' during the 17th century. All this reputation was due to Robertus Junius arduous labor in this island.

a. A Brief Biography

Robertus Junius (or de Jonghe) was born in Rotterdam in 1606. When he was 19, he enrolled as a student³ under the supervision of Professor Walaeus in the Seminarium

¹ Or Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) was chartered by the Netherlands government and established in 1602. The purpose of this company was to obtain Asian spice as well as luxury good either from Maluku island or China. In 1603 a fleet from the company first visited Pescadores (now Ponhu Islands) as an attempt to built an entrepot for Chinese trade and mark the very beginning of Taiwan contact with European.

² The pamphlet was in fact a letter written in 1649 in Latin by Junius friend Rev. M. C. Sibellius fromb Delph and latter translated into English and published in 1650 by H. Jessei in London, please see William Campbell, *An Account of Missionary Success in the Island of Formosa*, Vol. 1, London: Trubner & Co. 1889, pp. 15-46.

³ C.A.L.van Troostenburg de Bruyn, *Biographish Woordenboek*, 220.





Indicum. After graduating from the seminary, he was ordained as a minister by the Classis of Rotterdam and departed for the East Indies. He arrived in Batavia on February 22, 1629, and departed that same year for Formosa,⁴ thus becoming the second Dutch missionary to serve on the island. At the beginning of his service, he lived in Fort Zeelandia and then, after a brief time of learning the Sirayan language, moved to Sinckan and became the minister of the local congregation.

Blussé argues that the Formosan missionaries were protagonists for VOC territorial expansion in Formosa since the facts, to a certain degree, show that mission expansion in Formosa was indeed linked with military expansion.⁵ From my point of view, this assumption is correct insofar as it concerns the VOC expansion before 1636. Afterwards, however, the territorial expansion resulted from the search for resources⁶. The most significant expansion of missionary work took place in 1636 after a punitive expedition against Mattauw and the lower Tamsui territory in southern Formosa. Before and during the expedition, Junius was active in coordinating the military, ecclesiastical, and administrative aspects of the campaign. He also acted as Governor Putmans' envoy to arrange a transfer of sovereignty with the hostile village elders.⁷

After this expedition, the Formosan church expanded so rapidly, both in terms of the number of churches and the number of members, that mission work became more than the limited number of clergymen could handle. Because of this, Junius took two important steps to solidify the growth of the Christian church in Formosa. First, he implored the VOC administration to exempt ministers from the judicial duties assigned to them. Second, he also requested the administration to allow native youths to study theology in

⁴ Ibid., 220.

⁵ Leonard Blussé, "Dutch Protestant Missionaries as Protagonists of the Territorial Expansion of the VOC on Formosa," 155-184.

⁶ 1635 expedition played a significant role for VOC administration in Formosa, before that time the governor on the island see Formosa as an factory of trade between Dutch government and China or Japan, however after the punitive expedition the VOC administration decide to establish colonial administration on the island started to collect poll tax from local people and altered the social structure of native society and thus started the Landdag system. Under landdag system, village headman was no longer elected by local people but by VOC administration in Formosa.

⁷ Robertus Junius to the Director of the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce of the East Indies Company, September 5, 1636; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 116-144.





the Dutch Republic.⁸ The reason for the first request was that “there are so few persons here who possess the necessary qualification, so few who have a thorough knowledge of the language, and who also lead a sober and virtuous life.”⁹ He made the second request several times from 1636 until 1643, the year he left Formosa. Unfortunately, the administration turned down both requests.

During his fourteen years of service in Formosa, Junius baptized 5400 Formosans (not including children) and performed Christian marriage ceremonies for 1000 couples.¹⁰ He opened schools in the villages for up to 600 native children and trained fifty teachers for those schools. He also compiled new catechisms for use in the churches and schools in Formosa instead of the official catechism of the Netherlands Reformed Church, namely, the Heidelberg Catechism. In 1650, an article (translated from Latin) appeared in London that acclaimed the successful missionary activity in Formosa by the pioneering minister Robertus Junius.¹¹

Junius’ achievements in Formosa during the fourteen years of his service indicate that a comprehensive scheme or vision for mission work lay behind his activities. The focal point of his missionary activities was not merely to baptize a great number of converts but to establish a church that was equipped with a solid Christian faith and was also self-sustaining, independent, and on an equal footing with the churches in the Dutch Republic. In other words, Junius attempted to plant a church in Formosa that could communicate as an equal with its European mother church. For this purpose, he established schools, compiled contextualized catechisms, arranged programs for training native schoolteachers, implored the VOC administration to send native youths to study theology in the Netherlands, and established a native Soulang Consistory. All these activities were intended to achieve his overall mission vision.

⁸ Ibid., 116-144.

⁹ Extract from paper by H. Putmans, which he handed to Governor Van der Burg before leaving for Batavia; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 153.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ The pamphlet is entitled *Of the Conversion of Five Thousand Nine Hundred East Native Indians in the Isle Formosa, near CHINA, to the Profession of the True God, in JESUS CHRIST by means of M. Ro: Junius, a Minister lately in Delph in Holland. Related by his Good Friend, M. C. SIBELLIUS, Pastor in Davenport there, in a Latin letter, translated to further the faith and joy of many here, by H. JESSIE, a Servant of Jesus Christ*, in William Campbell, *The Missionary Success in the Island of Formosa*, Vol. 1 (London: Trubner & Co., 1889).





b. Junius' Missionary Activities

In 1632, Governor Putmans wrote a letter to the Amsterdam Chamber of VOC reporting on the progress of the church in Sinckan Village in which he states: "The propagation of the Christian Faith in Sinckan goes well and in a desirable manner. The council of this village has agreed with the Reverend Junius that village people who are not yet converted will no longer be tolerated among them."¹²

The next year, the entire population of Sinckan village decided to cast off their traditional religion and embrace the Christian faith as their religion.¹³ It is therefore obvious that in a comparable period of time, Junius made much greater progress than Candidius had made during the latter's ministry there. The reason for such good progress might be attributed to the favorable political atmosphere at the time.¹⁴ In reality, Junius' flexibility in administrative matters, his missionary zeal, and his mission vision were the primary attributes that enabled him to overcome the vexing VOC administrative obstacles and hostile aboriginal traditions.

Generally speaking, Junius' 14 years of missionary career can be divided into roughly two periods, with the dividing point as 1635-1636, when the punitive expedition against the Mattauw village and lower Tamsui district occurred. Before the expedition, Junius' chief missionary field was Sinckan and surrounding villages, while his work afterwards extended from Sinckan to central and southern Formosa. Despite the very different circumstances and attitudes of the people, Junius' missionary method is always the same, that is, struggle against native religion and culture and at the same time establish a church whenever or wherever he could.

Candidius and Junius were confronted with similar difficulties, because both of them served in the Sirayan cultural context, including the traditional religion and the customs

¹² Original missive from Governor Hans Putmans to the Amsterdam Chamber of VOC. October 14, 1632, Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 202.

¹³ Missive from Governor Hans Putmans to Governor-General Hendrick Brouwer. Tayouan, January 18, 1633, Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 205.

¹⁴ Putmans was more supportive of mission work than his predecessor Pieter Nuyts. The Japanese threat was long gone, and more importantly, the Sinckandians realized that their security relied heavily on Dutch protection due to their more aggressive and hostile enemy in Mattauw village.





derived from that religion. The Sirayan traditional religion consisted of beliefs and religious practices, dominant priestesses, and their religious taboos that villagers zealously followed. The customs derived from their religion were various; the most notorious custom was mandatory abortion, a peculiar practice not found elsewhere in the East Indies. In such an environment, Candidius and Junius attempted to persuade the inhabitants to accept the Christian faith and to do away with their traditional religion and customs. It was an uphill battle and challenge to both ministers.

c. The Problem of Mandatory Abortion

Mandatory abortion was a notorious custom of the Sirayan religion. Candidius describes it as follows:

Because their law, manners, or customs are such that they are not allowed to produce any children before they are 35, 36, or 37 years of age, when they are pregnant they kill the fetus in their body. This is done as follows: they call one of their priestesses who upon arrival, makes them lie down on the bed or someplace else. They then push and press until the fetus is released, which causes more pain than giving birth to a living baby. They do not do this out of lack of natural feelings of love for their children, but because this is what is taught by their priestesses. And were they to bring their children into the world, they would have to bear the imputation of this being a great sin and therefore a disgrace. That is why many fetuses are destroyed in this way. For several women confessed to me that they had aborted 15 or 16 fetuses and that they were now pregnant with the 17th, which they were going to deliver. Only when they have reached the age of about 37 or 38 years do they let the children see the light of day without killing them in their mother's womb.¹⁵

Candidius' description highlights three aspects of this problem: the mortal crime of

¹⁵ Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 126.





killing a fetus, which goes against the Ten Commandments, the natives' peculiar marriage customs and taboos as a social norm, and the heathen religion. These were the things the ministers had to tackle if the Gospel was going to spread beyond the Dutch community. Candidius mentions this Sirayan custom but never found a way to solve this problem. He states:

And should I ever be able to bring them so far by reason that they abandoned such superstitions and idolatries, still I would not be able to persuade them or bring them to the point that they would not kill the babies. Because that is as common among them as the baptizing of babies is with us; that is to say, by people who are not older than thirty, thirty-three or thirty-five years old. They garner fame when they have killed many fetuses, as several women confessed to me, one already having killed eight, the other twelve, another fifteen. Yea, their female teachers even instruct them that it would be a sin and a shame not to kill their babies, which is the reason why they themselves are called upon and fetched to perform the killings.¹⁶

When Junius arrived in Formosa, he inherited this grave challenge. He observed that the core issue of the practice of mandatory abortion¹⁷ was deeply rooted in the native religion and concluded that it was better to concentrate on using multiple tactics to dismantle the aboriginal religion that, if successful, would solve the problem substantially. For this purpose, Junius employed three different, but interconnected ways to deal with the aborigines, either through persuasion or by coercion. Of these three, like Candidius, he believed the most effective method to solve the abortion problem was to target the

¹⁶ Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 86.

¹⁷ The reason for such a peculiar custom is a question that several scholars have tried to answer. For example, the anthropologist John Shepherd was fascinated by this peculiar custom, and therefore wrote an article intending to answer the question. In his article he uses institutional exegesis and complementary perspectives, Shepherd suggests the Sirayan age-grade system and "matrilineal system practicing duolocal residence" was the reason for such a peculiar custom. He suggests such a practice may complement with Freudian, feminist and demographic perspectives. See John Robert Shepherd, *Marriage and Mandatory Abortion Among the Seventeenth Century Siraya*, American Ethnological Society Monograph Series, No. 6. (Arlington, Virginia: American Anthropological Association, 1995).





problem of the native priestesses or inibs. He recalled Candidius' words about the Sirayan priestesses' hindrance of his missionary activities:

The other and principal impediments are their female teachers, some old women whom they call Inibs, who teach everything which is in contradiction to what I teach and who in no way whatsoever will allow even the smallest tittle of their superstitions, idolatry, and irregularities to be derogated and belittled.¹⁸

David Wright does not mention this custom in his comprehensive account, perhaps because this practice was carried out secretly in private between a pregnant woman and the priestess. Wright, as a VOC employee and administrative officer, would obviously find it difficult to get any information about a custom of this kind. With the minister, it was quite a different matter. As Candidius describes it in his account:

When she is with child, the fruit of her womb is destroyed. This is brought about in the following ways: They call one of their priestess, and, on her arrival, the woman lies down on a couch or on the floor and is then pushed, pinched, and roughly handled till abortion follows, which occasions more pain than if the child had been brought living into the world. It is not for lack of maternal love among these women that this system is followed, but because their priestess teaches them so to act.¹⁹

Mandatory abortion involved three elements: Sirayan custom, the priestess, and the pregnant woman.

¹⁸ Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 85.

¹⁹ Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 20.





d. The Prevention of Native Priestesses or *Inibs* from Meddling in Village Affairs

Junius' first tactic was to stop aboriginal priestesses from meddling in village matters and especially to stop them from visiting the villagers. His first victory in this struggle occurred in 1632. In that year, the General Missive reported the progress of Christianity in the Sinckan village as follows:

The Christian Faith in Sinckan waxes by the day, so that the Tackakusach or council of the village has agreed with the Reverend Junius no longer to admit any more heathens to it. And besides, their priestesses and old women, who perform their idolatrous superstitions, have promised to refrain from the performance of this service. Because of these two points everything will be better than it has ever been before. May the Almighty grant His blessing.²⁰

This report reflected two significant developments for missionary work in Sinckan: the village council would no longer authorize priestesses to be oversee the villagers' observation of the taboos, and the priestesses would be asked to refrain from performing religious ceremonies. The village council was completely replaced by the landdag on February 21, 1636.²¹ Since the minister's influence on village matters was increasing, the council's function as the supervisor of the native religious practices ceased. Despite their promise to refrain from performing religious ceremonies, the priestesses continued to practice religious rites and give consultations in secret. By 1640, the situation had changed. In a letter dated October 23, 1640, to Antonius van Diemen, the Governor-General of the East Indies, Junius mentions the declining influence of priestesses in the village.

The priestesses, who were so great an obstacle to our work, have now lost all power, and are treated with contempt for the many falsehoods they formerly

²⁰ General Missive. Extract 1 December 1632, Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 203.

²¹ Ginsel, *De Gereformeerde Kerk op Formosa*, 34.





promulgated. They are not allowed to enter any house except their own, and are thus prevented from practicing their former idolatry.²²

Although the problem of the native priestesses was solved in Sinckan, in other Sirayan villages the priestesses retained their influence. To solve this problem definitively, Paulus Traudenius, the Governor of Formosa, decided to banish almost all Sirayan priestesses from various villages to Tirostan,²³ a frontier village near the hostile Favorlanger territory. Junius wrote the following letter to the governor about this arrangement:

Yesterday, according to Your Honour's orders, the priestesses, being seventy in number, left from Mattouw for Tirosten. Today, another 56 will depart from Soulang, and tomorrow and the day after tomorrow those of Bacaluan, Sincan and Tavakang will follow. A measure that undoubtedly will have the desired effect on the missionary work.²⁴

In Junius' mind, banishing the priestesses from their own villages to Tirostan was the most severe tactic he could tolerate. In fact, the VOC administration's intention was to transport the priestesses from Formosa to Batavia, but Junius objected to this suggestion. Therefore, Antonius van Diemen wrote a letter to Maximiliaen Lemaire, President of the Formosa Council, expressing his displeasure.

Junius' other objection, concerning the sending away to Batavia of the pagan priestesses was also seen to be quite absurd. The Governor-General was of the opinion that Junius flattered these old crones far too much.²⁵

Despite the fact that the native priestesses were a major obstacle to the spread of the

²² From R. Junius to Governor-General Anthonio van Diemen; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 186.

²³ Tirostan, a village located in current Chia-yi County in southern Taiwan.

²⁴ Missive of the Reverend Robertus Junius to Governor Paulus Traudenius. Soulang, December 10, 1641; Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. II. 276.

²⁵ Missive Governor-General Antonius van Diemen to President Maximiliaen Lemaire. Batavia, May 9, 1643; Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. II, 369.





Gospel in Formosa, Junius was not convinced that banishing those old women from their native land to a completely foreign territory in Batavia was morally right. Obviously, such an objection was not based on policy but on Junius' humane concern for those already alienated women. This same kind of concern is reflected in Van Diemen's letter when he complains that Junius also objected to the policy of collecting a tax from native Formosans.²⁶

During Junius' service, the policy towards native priestesses did not get harsher. It was impossible for him to establish a solid Christian community by simply relying on the banishment of native religious leaders or forbidding traditional religious practices. On the contrary, he had to work very hard to teach the inhabitants about the Christian faith through holding worship services and setting up educational opportunities. Junius' major contributions to the establishment of the Christian church in Formosa were through his activities: sermons, schools for the youth, teacher training, and the publication of several catechisms.

e. Teaching the Congregation

Junius' sermons, catechisms, and prayers were preserved in the archives of the Classis of Amsterdam, and most of them were included in Grothe's book.²⁷ The content of his sermons and two of his three catechisms are contextualized. Therefore, it is easy to discern what the native's religious concepts were and how Junius responded to such concepts from a Christian perspective. For example, his sermon on Psalm 1:15 states:

²⁶ Ibid., 369.

²⁷ These writings include, *Formulier dervraachstucken, Ordinar Formulier des Christendoms, Grootte Vraachstucken, het Gebed voor den Godsdienst, Predicatie van Rob. Junius over Psalm. 50,15, Een gebed naer de predicatie, Een predicatie over het 12 vers des 116 Psalms, Een predicatie over de voorreden des Wedts ende over het eerste gebod, De tien geboden des heeren op zijn eigen voijse, Het geloove op de voijse vanden 100 Psalm, Het onse vader op de voijse vanden 100 Psalm, Een avont gesangh op de voijse vanden 100 Psalm, Den 130 Psalms op de voijse vanden 100 Psalms*. All the above documents are still in manuscript form and kept in the archives of the Classis of Amsterdam. Some were transcribed and translated by Grothe and Campbell and included in their books.





[God] wishes the people to serve Him. He therefore desires and commands them to humble themselves before Him. Does He therefore desire that sacrifices should be brought unto Him? Does He say: When you set snares in the field and catch deer, give Me the tongue, the liver, or the kidneys of the deer? Does He say: Serve me with Binang, siry, beverage, cooked rice, or the flesh of swine?²⁸

This admonition refers to the Sirayan religious ceremony that required them to offer sacrifices of various foods as well as parts of their game. Sacrificial worship had been part of the Sirayan religious tradition for generations. When the Sirayans converted to Christianity, they still retained their rational concept of sacrifice as a means of worship, a concept that contradicted Christian belief. Therefore, Junius explains to the newly converted Christians what true worship of God entails.

In his sermons, Junius admonishes the aborigines not to use sacrifices while worshipping God but to worship him sincerely with their minds. According to aboriginal custom, sacrificial offerings were a necessary part of worship. When the aborigines hunted deer, they had to offer the tongue, liver, or kidney to their gods. In public worship they had to offer betel nuts, siry, cooked rice, and pork.²⁹

During the Old Testament period, God required sacrificial offerings. The book of Leviticus states that Israel was to use specific animals for sacrifice. Throughout the Roman Empire, many sacrifices were offered to both Greek and Roman deities; thus sacrifice became a symbol of paganism. In the New Testament period, however, Jesus Christ's sacrifice of Himself made a final and conclusive atonement for sin, and therefore, additional sacrificial offerings are no longer needed.

Junius told the aboriginal people: "Thus God has done in times past, and He does so still. If we call properly upon him, will he forget to listen to us? ... God said, Call upon Me, sometimes aloud, sometimes in thought By doing so, you will be like unto Moses, the friend of God, who called upon God before all the people."³⁰

²⁸ Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 331-333.

²⁹ Ibid., 333.

³⁰ Ibid., 333.





When the Dutch Reformed missionaries arrived among the aborigines, the priestesses represented the largest obstacle. These inibs warned the aborigines not to accept Christianity and ordered the pregnant women to commit mandatory abortions. All their activities, religious or moral, were opposed to Christianity. Junius reported the bad influences of these priestesses:

Many old persons in Sinckan, especially among the former priestesses, ventured to prophesy to the people at the time of their conversion that, if they neglected their idols and began to serve the God of the Dutchmen, their fields would no longer yield them their crop of rice.³¹

The catechism Junius compiled reflects another Sirayan tradition that contradicted the Christian faith even more gravely. To highlight the serious offense of this tradition, Junius altered the content of the Ten Commandments to warn the Sirayans of the seriousness of the unchristian activities that prevailed in their villages, including mandatory abortion and unchaste and adulterous behavior:

The sixth commandment: Do not kill any other man, and do not commit abortion.

The seventh commandment: Do not commit adultery, and do not visit women in secret.³²

The grave sins of mandatory abortion and adultery can be traced to the Sirayan family structure. According to Candidius' account, the Sirayan men lived with other men and Sirayan women lived with other women, not as married couples. This arrangement created many temptations for adultery. Therefore, Junius introduced the Christian marriage ceremony into the Sirayan villages and asked all couples to marry and live in a Christian manner. This had several effects.

³¹ Ibid., 140.

³² Ibid., 337-338.





First, by living in family units, the unchristian indigenous social structure that made a Western-style family structure (which has its origin in the Bible) impossible, was broken. Second, by living together as husbands and wives according to the teaching of Scripture, the temptation to commit adultery was greatly reduced. Third, when couples lived together, a wife's pregnancy would be noticed by the minister who could then prevent mandatory abortions. In addition, the banishment of the priestesses to the remote northern Tirosang village made it impossible for them to carry out mandatory abortions.

f. The Establishment of Educational Institutions

Schools for Young People

Junius was not the first missionary who realized the importance of teaching Christian doctrine as a means of establishing a solid Christian church in Formosa. Candidius already mentioned this as being important in his missionary theory. He acknowledged that it was very difficult to convert aboriginal adults who were committed to traditional beliefs and transform them into real Christians. Therefore, it was paramount to teach native young people about the Christian faith before heathen beliefs could take root in their minds. It was Junius, however, who first turned this theory into a practical reality by establishing schools for Formosan young people. In addition, after several years of service, Junius realized that the best way to provide sufficient schoolteachers for the growing schools was to establish a teacher training school. Therefore, he established such a school in Soulang where he served and recruited fifty students for that purpose.

Junius opened the first school for youth on May 26, 1636, with an enrollment of 70 boys and 60 girls. The curriculum included morning and evening prayers, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, prayers before and after meals, and several psalms. The newly arrived Governor of Formosa, Jan van der Burg, inspected the school at Sinckan and made this report:

It is pleasant to see how fair a beginning has been made in the school which is there established. Mr. Junius daily instructs about seventy boys of ten to thirteen





years and older, in the Christian religion. He does this in the Sinkan language, writing the words in Latin characters [A]bout sixty girls are also daily instructed in prayer and other subjects.³³

Once a school had been established in Sinckan, more schools were begun in the areas under Dutch sovereignty: in Akau, Bakloan, Dolatok, Dorko, Favorlang, Kattia, Kelung, Mattauw, Pangsoia, Sinckan, Soulang, Tapoulang, Tavakan, Tevorang, and Tirozen.³⁴ Of these villages, some were located in southwestern Formosa and belonged to the Sirayan tribe, including Bakloan, Mattauw, Sinckan, Soulang, Tavakan, Tevorang, Dorko, and Tirozen. One, Flavorlang, was located in central Formosa and belonged to the Favorlang tribe. Some were located in southern Formosa and spoke Pansoia and other southern languages, including Akau, Dolatok, Kattia, Pangsoia, and Tapoulang. The last village, Kelung, was located in northern Formosa, and belonged to the Bassay tribe which spoke Bassayan.³⁵ Schools in the Sirayan and Pansoia language districts were established after the 1635-1636 expedition. The Favorlang school was established in 1640, and the Kelung school in 1655 (where Marcus Masius, its first minister, taught). In short, during Junius' service in Formosa, he established schools throughout the Sirayan and Pansoia districts.

These schools continued to exist until the Dutch were expelled from Formosa. The aboriginal students were taught to write and read Dutch and the romanized characters of their own language. As we have seen, these writing skills would later help the aborigines when they had to deal with the Chinese on land rights because they would be able to ascertain if their rights were being violated. They would use these writing skills for 150 years after the Dutch left Formosa in 1662.

Teacher Training Courses

From 1636 until the end of Dutch rule, only nine Dutch schoolteachers served in

³³ Extract from the first letter of the new governor, Jan van der Burg, to the Governor-General and Councilor of India; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 147.

³⁴ Ibid., Index on 617-629.

³⁵ Ibid., 617-629.





Formosa.³⁶ Among them was Joost Gillesz, who was a catechist and worked as teacher in Sinckan in 1643.³⁷ In terms of school management, the lack of teachers presented Junius with an ongoing difficulty. To solve this problem, Junius decided to establish a training school for native teachers in Soulang. In fact, the idea of training native teachers did not originate with him; Governor-General Brouwer first suggested training native teachers in a letter to the Formosan Church Council as early as 1634. He wrote:

We are firmly convinced, that it would be necessary and useful to try to teach and bring some of the most outstanding children of the principal people in Sinckan, Soulang, and other settlements, so far that they could be used in the first place as schoolteachers and later on as teachers of the Gospel for their compatriots. For a mere six, eight or ten guilder monthly stipend, we could increase their loyalty and the loyalty of their parents as well as that of their compatriots.³⁸

In this letter, not only did Brouwer suggest selecting outstanding native children to serve as teachers but even went a step further to suggest that they could go on to serve as ministers. His was a pioneering voice for that time. It would not be until 1659 that a native seminary would be established in Soulang as a response to the vision of the former Governor-General. Despite the fact that Junius had a similar vision for the training of native ministers, his approach was very different from Brouwer's. On the value of training of native schoolmasters, Junius agreed that native schoolmasters would be better than European ones. As he wrote to the Governor-General in 1641:

Moreover, the pupils prefer being taught by their compatriots above our own catechists, who can sometimes be rather impatient when the people do not

³⁶ The ten teachers who served in Formosa were, Joost Gillesz, Daniel Hendricksz, Joannes Horsteman, Samuel, Dirck Scholten, Hendrick Veer, Frans van den Voorn, Heems, Jonas, Caesar van Winschooten; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 617-629.

³⁷ Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 201.

³⁸ Missive of Governor-General Hendrick Brouwer to the Church Council in Tayouan. Batavia, June 27, 1634; Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. I, 251.





immediately comprehend what is told to them.³⁹

Junius put his plan into practice sometime later, but the exact date of the establishment of the first such school is unknown. The only information we have on the matter came from Hans Olhoff, the translator of Junius' *Groote Vraachstukken* (Larger Catechism). Olhoff mentions that the catechism was used by Junius as a textbook during his last year of service, that is, in 1643.⁴⁰ Therefore, one may infer that the training school was probably established earlier than 1643. The curriculum and period of training have been lost because Junius did not record how the training school was established or managed. He did record, however, that he selected fifty students from surrounding villages and used the *Groote Vraachstukken* as the teaching material.

All fifty students came from Sirayan villages. In a 1644 resolution of the Tayouan council, it was decided that the villages of Sinckan, Soulang, Bacaluan, Mattauw, Tavocan, Tevorang, Dorko and Tirose

every year, at the time they pay their tribute, also have to provide as much rice as needed by the native schoolteachers of each village as food or sustenance for a whole year. This will commence at the coming new year.⁴¹

Since these villages were all located in the Sirayan language district, one may conclude that the students were selected solely from among the Sirayan young people and that after graduation, they worked only in Sirayan villages.

There is no information on whether the training school continued to recruit new students after Junius left Formosa or not. The significant contribution of native schoolteachers was acknowledged by later missionaries and by VOC administrators. In 1657, for example, Governor-General Maetsuijcker wrote to Formosan Governor Coyett about the principle of establishing Christian churches in Formosa:

³⁹ Missive of the Reverend Robertus Junius to Governor-General Anthonio van Diemen. Tayouan, October 21, 1641; Leonard Blussé and Nathalie Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. II: 1636-1645, 35.

⁴⁰ Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 345.

⁴¹ Resolution, Tayouan, November 5, 1644; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 256, 495.





The foundations of the Christian religion should be built in villages that have one language in common in such a way they can produce teachers from among their own people who will be able to teach others in the future.⁴²

Educational institutions were an important step in the establishment of a solid Christian church in Formosa. This endeavor required two essential components: the establishment of schools equipped with a fundamental curriculum of the Christian faith, and a sufficient supply of Christian schoolteachers. Ever since he established the first school in the Sinckan village around 1643, Junius attempted to fulfill these requirements. For that purpose, he collected contextual material from the native religion, integrated them into the catechisms he compiled, and used them as educational material for converts as well as for the students. At the same time, he selected fifty brilliant students from surrounding villages to be trained as teachers. Junius' educational achievements were only a significant component of a broader scheme that he designed for the development of an independent and indigenous Formosan church. We will now turn to an examination of this overall blueprint.

g. The Establishment of an Indigenous Church in Formosa: Sending Young Sirayans to Study in the Netherlands

On September 28, 1634, Hans Putmans followed the suggestion of Candidius and Junius to send young aboriginal men to the Netherlands to study theology:

The clergymen also think that this work of instruction would be greatly advanced if several of the more intelligent native youths were selected for this purpose. These selectees would always have to remain under the strict supervision of the person who took them to Holland, and this person would also have to see that

⁴² Missive of Governor-General Maetsuijcker to President Frederick Coyett and the Formosa Council, Batavia, June 11, 1657; Blussé and Everts, eds., *Formosan Encounter*, vol. IV: 1655-1668, 266.





they diligently and continually attended to their studies...⁴³

This was an important step in the establishment of an autonomous church in Formosa.

The Establishment of the Aboriginal Soulang Consistory

Robertus Junius tried two methods of Christianization in Formosa. The first was to persuade the natives to accept the Christian faith, and the second was to establish an autonomous Soulang Consistory. Through his sermons and catechisms, he succeeded in persuading the Sirayan people to abandon their previous religious practices and to accept Christianity. He then helped the Sirayans to organize their own consistory and to eventually become an independent aboriginal church.⁴⁴

In a letter dated October 7, 1643, Junius described the need for establishing such a consistory to teach the aborigines to manage their own church affairs. He strongly believed the aborigines could learn to manage church matters and finances and that they, like the Dutch consistories, needed to have an independent identity and to share in the power of Dutch society in Formosa.⁴⁵

Concluding remark

As a clergyman under VOC administration, Junius' missionary zeal transformed his role from as a chaplain (as original requirement of the company) into a full fledged missionary, he spent all his time preaching Gospel amongst villages, established churches and schools training native teachers for local schools, compiled catechisms and established native Soulang consistory. He left Formosa in 1643 after fulfilled contract requirement with VOC. After returned to the Netherlands he served as pastor of a local congregation in Delft, afterwards he moved to Amsterdam. At that city he established a training school teaching young seminary student about Asian culture and language especially Formosan

⁴³ Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 108.

⁴⁴ Although Junius succeeded in establishing a shining beacon of mission throughout the East Indies, later missionaries would unfortunately not share his ideas.

⁴⁵ The Soulang Consistory was half Dutch and half Formosan; Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, 194.





language. Several students served in Formosa after graduated from that school.

Robertus Junius created a legend for mission history in Taiwan, a towering figure that almost not possible to overtaken by latter missionary, it is not until 19th century that Rev. George L. Mackay can compete this great figure. However, Junius's missionary endeavor is indeed the first episode of Taiwan church until today.



