THE FILIPINO CLERGY DURING THE SPANISH REGIME

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Contextualizing the historical data and facts, and drawing observations from them, Jesus Ma. Cavanna attempts to set the record straight, or at the very least, provide a more fair-minded ground for discussion on the oft-repeated conclusion on the prejudice against the formation of the native clergy during the Spanish Regime in the Philippines. Through readings and careful consideration of the events which occur during the years, the paper presents a "search in history" to uncover a more possible – and just – fact: that Spanish colonial policy was NOT opposed because of racial prejudice to the formation and development of the native clergy.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most unjust and historically untenable errors that have been once and again admitted as a matter of fact, even by fair-minded historians and scholars, is the report that Spanish colonial policy in our country was opposed through racial prejudice to the formation and rights of the native clergy.

I am not a historian – though I love history – and I have neither the time nor the means to devote myself to deep scholarly researches. Without the least intention to enter into any polemics, I wish only to submit in this study the observations and facts which I have found in my cursory investigations on the matter. The conclusion to which they lead seem to be clearly that *the Spanish colonial policy in the Philippines was NOT opposed through racial prejudice to the formation and rights of the native clergy.*

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Spanish Colonial Policy was not Opposed to the Formation of a Native Clergy in the Philippines

I. The formation of a native clergy begins with the religious education at home and in the school,and this was provided and fostered by Spanish colonial policy.

The wonderful work of the Church and of the State during the Spanish regime for the establishment of good Christian families and Catholic schools, which are the first and as a general rule the necessary seed beds of priestly vocations, is undeniable.

"In 1565 Legaspi reached Cebu. In 1571 he settled in Manila. Just ten years later, in 1581, Manila had a bishop, Domingo Salazar, O.P. In 1598 Manila was an Archbishopric, and three other dioceses were created: Cebu, Nueva Caceres and Nueva Segovia. By 1605 most Filipinos were baptized Catholics".[1]

"There is no country out of Spain and her sister in apostolic spirit, Portugal, understood and practiced, as a nation, the missionary vocation. The evangelization of the Philippines is the most spectacular, a marvel in the history of missions. It is enough to recall that the Philippines was traversed by the ministers of the Gospel in all their breadth and converted in less than 50 years. Spain thus beats the record in the evangelization of nations."

"With uncommon fairness the American Jesuits' review AMERICA has acknowledged it saying: 'The method of Catholic Spain in its labor of colonization was just the opposite of ours. Spain has never exterminated the indigenous race; on the contrary she preserved, civilized and educated the natives . . .'"[2]

And a famous non-Catholic professor at Yale, an authority in Spanish colonization declared: "In the light of impartial history raised

[1] Cf. Francis X. Clark, S.J., *The Philippine Missions* (New York: The American Press, 1946).

[2] Jose M. Gonzalez, O.P., *Labor Evangelica de los Religiosos Dominicos en Pangasinan 1587-1898* (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1946).

above race prejudice and religious prepossessions, after a comparison with the early years of the Spanish conquest in America or with the first or second generation of the English settlements, the conversion and civilization of the Philippines in the forty years following Legaspi's arrival must be pronounced an achievement without a parallel in history."[3]

A law of Spain in 1555 stated that "to serve God, Our Lord, and for the public welfare of our kingdoms it is advisable that our vassals, subjects, and *natives* should have in their own lands Universities and 'Studia Generalia' where they may be instructed and graduated in all sciences and faculties."

And these were not empty words or dead letter. "At the time when the English colonies of the New World were burning witches and chasing Indians and bisons across the American plains, and at the age when the surrounding Oriental lands were floundering in the morass of wars and intellectual darkness, the *Filipinos* were already attending lectures by missionary-professors in various colleges and universities of Manila, delving deep into the lore of European arts and sciences and imbibing the wisdom of world sages and philosophers."[4]

When in Virginia, U.S.A. Governor Berkeley was saying: "I thank God there are no free schools nor printings and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and printing has propagated them"[5], at that same period, popular education was already organized in the Philippines and the archipelago had a network of Catholic elementary schools proportionally larger than almost any other nation of the world, excepting some countries of Europe and of the Spanish dominions in South and Central America. There were already about 1,000 primary parochial schools in the Philippines during the first century of the Spanish regime, in the XVI and first half of XVII century. In the United States the first Catholic parochial school was started by Blessed Elizabeth Seton in Emmitsburg in 1810; and the

[3] Edward G. Bourne, cited by F. Clark, *The Philippine Missions.*

[4] Gregorio F. Zaide, *Philippine History and Civilization* (Manila:Philippine Education Co., 1939).

[5] Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *History of Education in the Philippines* (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1946).

parochial school system was established in 1852 by Blessed John Neumann, fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. In the Philippines the first parochial school appeared in 1566 with the title of the Holy Name of Jesus, which was founded in Cebu by the Augustinian missionaries. In Rome the first public school was established by St. Joseph of Calasanz in 1597 (cf. Ludwig Hertling, *Historia de la Iglesia*, ed. 1964, p. 351), that is, 31 years later in the Philippines.

The conditions of elementary schools in England were chaotic until the establishment of public schools in 1870; and until 1900 the three R's were the only required studies in the English primary schools. In America the Lancasterian method was introduced in 1805; in the Philippines that method was introduced by the Franciscan Fray Juan de Plasencia in 1580. The free school system of the United States is of quite recent occurrence: in New York the abolition of tuition fees in public schools was made by law in 1867. King Charles II of Spain ordered in 1686 that instruction in the Philippines should be *free to all;* and the order was again confirmed by Charles IV in 1794: education *free for all,* attendance of children, *compulsory.* In France, primary education was made *free* in 1881; and *compulsory* in 1882.[6] Primary schools began to be established everywhere in the Philippines since 1581, so that illiteracy among Christian Filipinos in the first decade of the 17th century was almost unknown, according to the unanimous testimony of early historians such as Chirino, Morga, Blancas, Fernandez. On the contrary, Holland, for instance, did nothing until the last century for the education of her colonial natives; and as Cristopher Dawson observes ("Oriental Nationalism"), "fifty years ago (i.e., at the beginning of our 20th century) popular education hardly existed in Asia."

The Philippines organized during the Spanish regime a modern system of Public Education *controlled by the State* (previously it was all the work of missionaries) in 1863; in Spain, that took place just a little before, in 1857; in France, that was done much later, in 1886. School attendance by the end of the Spanish regime was 1 out of every 33 inhabitants in the Philippines; while in France it was 1 for every 38 inhabitants; in Russia, 1 for every 4,000.

[6] Ibid.

About secondary schools, we have them in the Philippines since 1594 for girls; and since 1595 for boys; while in the U.S.A., the first secondary school was the Public Latin School established in Boston in 1635 (curriculum, exclusively Latin and Greek, to prepare boys for college); and the first Public Academy, with a broader curriculum, in Philadelphia in 1751 for boys and girls; and the first Public High School, at public expense, was the English Classical School in Boston, in 1821. For colleges, the oldest in the States were those of William and Mary (1687), Yale (1700), Princeton (1745). In the Philippines we had high schools and colleges since the XVII century: San Jose (1601), Santo Tomas (1611), Letran (1620), San Pedro y San Pablo (1632) for boys; Santa Isabel (1632) and Santa Catalina (1696) for girls. That is, we were ahead of America by 50 or 100 years. And for Universities, we had in the Philippines Santo Tomas (1611), San Ignacio (1621) and San Felipe (1707). Santo Tomas is 70 years older than Harvard, and almost a century ahead of Yale, which are both in the United States.

* * *

Perhaps our readers may wonder what has all this to do with the subject of our study, namely, with the formation of a native clergy. I should say, much indeed, if we like to understand why the native clergy was not formed *so quickly* and *so earnestly* as we, *nowadays,* would expect. This indeed is a fact no one denies: the Spanish colonial policy did not strive to form a native clergy *as quickly* and *as earnestly* as we now understand it should have been. This fact was due, not to any racial prejudice - documentary evidence, as we shall see, contradicts openly such supposition - but simply because in those days the authorities concerned did not see neither the importance, nor the necessity, not even the opportunity of forming and counting on with a native clergy at once.

The apostles of the first ages of Christianism as well as the missionaries, who evangelized the barbarian nations that were to form the Christendom of Europe, were in most cases transient laborers of the Gospel, often impelled by personal initiative and zeal, without any guarantee of counting on with followers from their own place of origin who might at due time take up the arms from their hands and continue their work. Hence, these very circumstances led them to form earnestly a native clergy, in

accordance with the genuine mind of the Church, which has been clearly defined in the second quarter of our 20th century only.

Pope Benedict XV in *Maximum Illud*, November 30, 1919 said: "The main care of those who rule the missions is to raise and train a Clergy from among the people with whom they live. . ."

Pope Pius XI in *Rerum Ecclesiae*, February 28, 1926, remarked: "Before everything else, We call your attention to the great importance of building a native clergy. You should do this with all energy. Otherwise, We maintain that your apostolate will be incomplete, and still more, that it will too long impede and delay setting up and organizing the Church in those countries."

Pope Pius XII in *Praecones Evangelii*, June 2, 1951, stated: *"The object of missionary activity,* as you all know, *is to bring the light of the Gospel to new races and to form new Christians.* However, the *ultimate goal* of missionary endeavor, which should never be lost sight of, is to establish the Church on sound foundations among the non-Christian peoples, and *place it under its own native Hierarchy."*

When the age of discoveries came, and a New World as well as countless new peoples and races appeared before the wondering eyes of Christian Europe, a new era of conquests, material and spiritual, dawned. Protestant nations, as England, and Holland, saw in it the chance of material profit and colonial expansion . . ." and no more; Catholic nations, as Portugal, but specially Spain, saw first and foremost, without excluding material prospects, the chance of spiritual conquest, of opening new routes to the Gospel message, and leading numberless souls to Christ and His Church. The missionaries of Spain then were not simply transient laborers, impelled by personal initiative; they were sent by public authority of the Church as well as of the State; and according to the policy set by the Spanish Hapsburg monarchs (which was only changed with the advent of liberal imperialism prevailing in Europe at the end of the 18th century), the missionaries were sent to work, not, as if it were, into a foreign country or into a crown colony (as it turned out later on), but into an integral part of the Spanish Empire. They were, in a certain way, not foreigners since the natives among whom they labored were considered as citizens of Spain itself.

Furthermore, the missionaries had the guarantee, both from the State and from the Religious Order that sent them, of a continuous

inflow of helpers and successors who would continue their work, without an urgent need of providing themselves with future laborers of the Gospel from among the natives. And these circumstantial facts made them overlook or not pay the attention we *now* expect they should have had, on the *ultimate goal* of their missionary enterprises.

They understood well, as the Church has always understood it, the immediate *object of missionary activity,* namely in the words of Pius XII, "to bring the light of the Gospel to new races and to form new Christians". And this, they did it in a splendid way in the Philippines, in a way without parallel in the history of missions; and they did it through the help and cooperation of the State and of their own Religious Orders. But this very help and cooperation led them *somewhat* to overlook what "never should be lost sight of", that is, "to establish the Church on sound foundations and place it under a native clergy" as soon as possible.

I italicized "somewhat" because, as it will be shown, they did not actually lose sight of the formation of a native clergy, but merely did not realize its importance, cogency and urgency, as we realize today at the light of the clear pronouncements of the last Popes.

From what has been said above we may conclude that the Spanish colonial policy as shown by the works of the Church ministers and of the State authorities in the Philippines during the first two centuries contributed, at least indirectly or remotely to the formation of a native clergy, by preparing through a colossal missionary activity the first necessary seed beds of priestly vocations, namely, numberless Christian families and a solid Christian education in good Catholic schools. And if it is true that due to a particular "odd combination of historical circumstances of those times" the missionaries of the Philippines – as much as those who worked in similar conditions in any other part of the world those days, *including* the great saintly pioneers and heroes of the mission annals, – did not strive as earnestly as we would expect today to form a native clergy, they nevertheless did not lose sight of it, and – as we will soon see – *from the beginning* of the Philippines evangelization they tried and succeeded to form Filipino priests.

2. From the beginning of the Philippine Evangelization the missionaries aimed to form Filipino Priests.

Let us first of all answer the rather naive objection that is often advanced in these terms: "The Spanish missionaries reached Cebu in 1565. Why did they not start at once to establish a Seminary? Why the Seminaries of the Philippines appeared so late, at the beginning of the 18th century only?"

Let us see if that is really *too late*.

The institution of the Diocesan Seminaries was decreed by the Council of Trent on July 15, 1563, that is, less than two years before Legazpi's arrival to Cebu on April 27, 1565.

The first *attempts* to establish such Conciliar Seminaries were mainly done in the 16th century by St. Charles Borromeo and Pope Pius IV in Italy; by Philip II in Spain; in the 17th century, by St. Vincent de Paul, Ven. John Jacob Olier, and St. John Eudes in France; and by Bartholomew Holzhauser in Germany. But all these attempts were done in the face of difficulties and oppositions which reduced them to isolated tentative experiments and were introduced here and there, sometimes with very little success and much failure, and most often than not followed by the majority of the Dioceses in those centuries-old nations of Christian Europe. In Spain, for instance, during the 16th and 17th centuries, the *few* Seminaries established were not worthy of that name; in Italy itself, so close to Rome, after the first trials of St. Charles Borromeo in the 16th century we have to go down to the 18th century to meet in St. Alphonsus Liguori a second staunch advocate of the great work of the Seminaries. It may be safely said that after those first *attempts* of St. Charles in Italy, of the Vincentians and Sulpicians in France, and of the Bartholomites in Germany, there were no Seminaries properly established in the whole Catholic world during the 16th and 17th centuries. It is only in the 18th century when some Christian nations of the Old Continent began to awake and realize that it was time to do something for the fulfillment of the 18th decree of section 23rd of Reform of the Council of Trent which ordered the establishment of Diocesan Seminaries. And it was then, also, that in the far away Philippines, lost in the Extreme Orient, the first Diocesan Seminaries

appeared, much ahead of very many Seminaries in the dioceses of Spain, France, Germany and other nations of Europe and America. It was late indeed; but if adverse circumstances prevented an earlier achievement of the dispositions of the Council of Trent in most of the Dioceses of Europe, why to wonder that our new Christian nation or remote outpost of the mission fields could not achieve what the greatest part of Christendom did not?[7]

Furthermore – and this is what matters – even if diocesan Seminaries properly speaking were not established in the first century and a half of Philippine evangelization, they were *thought of* and *planned out, from the beginning;* and, as long as that ideal and dream could not be fulfilled, attention was given to the formation of a native clergy through other similar institutions, in *the very same way* as it was done those days, and as for long centuries before it was done, in the whole Christendom, namely, through cathedral schools, catholic colleges and Universities of General Studies.

The famous Tridentine decree on Diocesan Seminaries was issued in 1563. The Diocese of Manila was founded in 1578. The first bishop of the Philippines, Domingo Salazar, O.P. arrived in Manila on September 17, 1581. Three months later, on December 21, 1581, in his letters for the execution of the Bull of erection of his Diocese, he made a pro-vision for the endowment of a school "to support poor students, in which according to the decree of the Holy Council (of Trent) the ministers who may afterwards serve more properly (than the religious, namely the secular priests) to the divine worship and the churches of our diocese, may be educated and instructed": *"ad alendos in eo studentes pauperes in quo secundum sancti decretum Concilii, ministri instituantur et doceantur, qui divino cultui et dioecesis nostrae ecclesiis posted deservire commodius possint".*

And to make it clear that his thought was mainly directed to the formation of a *worthy native clergy,* the same Bishop, Fray Domingo Salazar, O.P., decreed that the ecclesiastical benefices (sc., the high positions and offices of responsibility in the hierarchy) shall be

[7] Cf. Casimiro Sanchez Aliseda, "Los Seminarios Tridentinos," in *El Concilio De Trento*, por colaboradores de Razon y Fe, (Madrid, 1945); also S. C. de Seminariis et Studiorum Universitatibus, *Seminaria Ecclesiae Catholicae* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1963).

obtained by *opposition* (i.e., through theological examinations) and granted, at the beginning only, to the Spanish clergy, "donec in posterum, visa et cognita *per nos* et successores nostros christianitate et capacitate *indorum, eis* dicta beneficia conferri possint; *tunc* enim *iisdem indis naturalibus,* juxta praedictam formam, *conferenda esse et conferre debere volumus et apostolica auctoritate decernimus".* That is, ecclesiastical offices in the Church hierarchy, positions of honor and responsibility in the care of souls and in the government of the Church affairs in the Philippines shall be granted for the time being – at the beginning only –, i.e., as long as the natives have not yet been trained and educated properly for the task, to the Spanish clergy: but, *as soon as the virtue and aptitude of the natives may be seen and known by us* (hence, not in a far distant future, after his death, but during his own life) and by our successors, it is our will – declared bishop Salazar – and with apostolic authority we decree that such ecclesiastical benefices *be granted and by right be granted* to the same indigenous natives (and to no others).[8]

Such was the mind of the first Spanish Bishop of the Philippines, the Dominican missionary Fray Domingo Salazar, O.P., at a time when the majority of the Bishops in the whole Christendom had not yet done anything for the establishment of a Conciliar Seminary in their dioceses.

And thus Bishop Salazar went ahead of the pious king of Spain, Philip II, who five years later in 1586, urged all the Spanish bishops to fulfill the dispositions of the Council of Trent, and eleven years after Bishop Salazar's decree, the same king Philip II ordered, in 1592: "We order that the Archbishops and Bishops of our Indies should found, support, and sustain the Seminary schools as established by the Holy Council of Trent." It is opportune to notice, here, that King Philip II received the decrees of the Council of Trent and published them in Spain as binding Law of the Kingdom, in 1564, that is, just one year after the decree on the Seminaries was approved by the Conciliar Fathers.[9]

[8] Cf. Fermin Del Campo, C.M., "El Seminario Conciliar de Manila"– *Guion Historico*, Seminario de San Carlos, Mandaluyong, Rizal, Oct. 8, 1950.

[9] S.C. de Seminariis, op. cit., 43-73.

Thus, we have both the Church and the State in the Spanish colonial policy, unanimously thinking on the formation of a native clergy, and eager to have this dream and ideal of the Church realized as soon as possible.

Obviously, the matter was not so easy to achieve in a mission country, when it appeared to meet so many difficulties in centuries-old Catholic nations, especially if we take into account the factors mentioned in our preceding article. Nevertheless, the ideal was not lost sight of, nay, *from the beginning* it was carefully planned out, and while waiting for the day of its achievement, ways and means were provided for possible native vocations to be cultivated and brought to accomplishment, practically in the same manner as the Church for long centuries cultivated and brought to accomplishment more or less perfectly or defectively priestly vocations when the providential institution of clerical seminaries was not yet established, namely, through cathedral and parochial schools, monastic or convent seminaries, Catholic colleges and Universities.[10] And as a matter of fact, in that very same way, priestly and religions native vocations were fostered and achieved in the Philippines, even in the XVII century, long before the first diocesan Seminary was established.

In 1583, that is, two years after the decree of Bishop Salazar concerning a school "to support poor students, in which according to the decree of the Holy Council (of Trent), ministers who may afterwards serve the churches of the diocese may be educated", so that "as soon as the virtue and aptitude of the native students may be seen or noticed, these very same *indigenous natives* (in preference to any other) may be granted and conferred by right the ecclesiastical benefices", at last the good Bishop saw the first chance to realize his dream. The Jesuit Fathers Sedeño and Sanchez "laid before him ...their conviction that a *school for boys* and older students 'from the first letters of the alphabet to the *faculties of arts and theology'* was one of the most useful contributions they could make to the colony, where no such school as yet existed. . . Bishop Salazar at once wrote the king (18 June 1583) to recommend very strongly that a Jesuit college be established in Manila, and that its expenses be defrayed by the royal treasury until a patron could be found to endow it . . .

[10] Ibid.

They (the Jesuits) could teach *not only Spanish boys* but also *meztizos and sons of the ruling native families*. To make a beginning, *a class of grammar* and *one of moral theology* could be opened. (Was not that a real plan for a minor and a major seminary at once?)

"Such a college would admittedly be expensive, but it could be financed by applying to it the revenues of encomiendas. . . Moreover, it would really be a saving in the end because the college would be *training priests and missionaries* (hence, to have a Seminary!) who would otherwise have to be brought over from Spain at a great cost of the royal treasury. There was also this to be considered . . . those who received their vocation to the priesthood and were trained for it in the Philippines were already familiar with the country, knew the language and customs of the people, got along better with them, and would probably make better missionaries.

"But the need for seminary studies was not only a prospective but a present. *The religious orders in the Philippines had admitted a number of applicants* whom he, Salazar, was reluctant to ordain because they had had little or no theological training. He himself had brought in his entourage several clerics whom he ordained upon his arrival in Manila, before they were quite finished with their studies; now he was worried about it, because he had no means of completing their education. A Jesuit college would be the solution to these problems, besides serving as a house of formation for the Jesuits themselves.

"Bishop Salazar apparently asked Governor Diego Ronquillo *to* make the same recommendations, because *he did* . . . According to Sedeno, the *cathedral chapter also sent a similar letter of recommendation to the king*."[11]

There are several most important points to remark from this account.

a) The Jesuits, Bishop Salazar, Governor Ronquillo, the Cathedral Chapter of Manila, in a word, the Church and the State, urgently recommended and demanded in 1583, i.e., two years only after the erection of the first Diocese of the Philippines, the foundation of a college that may serve as a Seminary, not only for Spanish boys, but also for mestizos and sons of native families, who would be trained for the priesthood and missionary work.

[11] S. C. de Seminariis, op. cit., 43-73.

b) If they, though explicitly of the *ruling* native families, it was obviously because these belong to the educated class in the colony, and from these principally were to be expected children well grounded in their faith and with better religious qualities for the future spiritual leadership of their own people; but certainly it was not meant to close the doors to other possible vocations from other social classes among the natives, as long as the apostolic and canonical norms "non neophytum" (1 Tim. 3,6) and "manus cito nemini imposueris" (I Tim. 5, 22) be not forgotten.

c) The reasons alleged as advantages for a native clergy over the missionaries from Spain were the very same stressed by the Popes of our own century in favor of the formation of a native clergy; this indicates that the Spanish colonial policy was not ignorant or blind to the importance of a native clergy.

d) The religious orders of Spanish missionaries in the Philippines by those early days (1583) had already admitted a number of applicants for the holy orders, who unfortunately could not find good opportunities for a proper priestly vocation; but nevertheless, it is worth noticing the fact that the religious Orders had never closed their doors to the natives, and from the beginning invited and led prospective candidates towards the supreme goal of the Catholic priesthood.

Two years later, King Philip II, well informed of the plans of Bishop Salazar and the proposals of the Philippine Jesuits concerning the foundation of a college for *training priests and missionaries*, not only for Spanish boys but also for *mestizos and indigenous natives*, an idea which has been strongly recommended by Governor Ronquillo and the Cathedral Chapter of Manila, wrote in 8 June 1583 a cedula to Santiago de Vera, Governor of the Philippines, in this tenor:[12]

> "I have been informed that the religious of the Society of Jesus stationed there have done and are doing much good by their teaching and example and that their preservation and increase in those Islands would be very beneficial. To

[12] Horacio de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines* 1581-1768 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), 63-64.

> this end it is proposed that they be given a subsidy toward the establishment of a college and the support of the religious who shall be employed there in teaching and instructing *those who present themselves, in grammar, sciences, and the proper* conduct of life. . . And since it is my will that they remain because of the great results I am confident will follow there from for the service of God and *the spiritual formation of those natives,* I enjoin you to confer with the bishop of those Islands concerning the manner in which said college may be instituted and the religious who shall live and teach in it be provided with what they need. . ."

In the following year, 1586, the Jesuits in Manila, Fathers Suarez and Prat, proposed to their Father General Acquaviva the opening of a college *where future priests might be trained,* and recommended "that the proposed college be not only a school for Spanish boys but also a seminario or boarding school for natives (indigenous) and mestizos".[13]

"In 1587 President De Vera had reported to the king that he and Bishop Salazar conferred as directed by the cedula of 1585 on the ways and means of founding a Jesuit college, and came to the conclusion that it could only be financed by a subsidy from Mexico."

After the arrival in Manila of nine Jesuits on 11 June 1595, the vice-provincial Fr. Sedeño "informed the governor Don Luis Perez Dasmariñas that he was now in position to comply with the request of the citizens (of Manila) for a Jesuit college. Two courses would be offered, one in moral theology for candidates for holy orders, under Juan de Ribera, and another in grammar for Spanish boys, under Father Tomas de Montoya."

Dasmariñas issued a document "on 5 September 1595, assigning a subsidy from the colonial treasury to the college of 1,000 pesos a year. This sum was to be used for the construction of a residence hall and for the board and lodging therein of twelve scholars chosen from among the sons of the conquistadores of the Islands or of other settlers of good standing. The hall was to be called the College

[13] Ibid., 75.

of San Jose. . . Note, however that this hall or college was a distinct and separate unit from the Jesuit college, the College of Manila, although its resident scholars would, of course, attend their classes there." At the beginning "when the College of Manila opened, sometime in September 1595 the students in attendance were day scholars, and the classes were held in the Jesuit residence itself."[14]

The original foundation of Dasmariñas was intended for scholars chosen "from among the sons of the (Spanish) conquistadores of the Islands or of other settlers of good standing", hence, not precisely for indigenous natives. Nevertheless, this provision was immediately changed.

In that very same year 1595, the vice-provincial of the Jesuits, Fr. Prat, was trying to accomplish and actually did accomplish, in Manila, what Fathers Alonso de Humanes, S.J. and Juan del Campo, S.J. had done already in Dulag, Leyte: a *seminario de indios* or boarding school for natives. It was the very same idea proposed by Father Sanchez to Bishop Salazar in 1583, and to the Jesuit General Acquaviva in 1583 and 1588, and which Fr. Prat himself recommended to the same General Acquaviva in 1586, namely, that of opening a college where future priests may be trained, not only from among Spanish boys, but also from among the *indigenous natives and mestizos.*

"A project in which Prat took great interest was the foundation as part of the College of Manila of a boarding school for native boys, which Alonso Sanchez had suggested some years earlier to Acquaviva. It will be recalled that Governor Dasmarinas the Younger had assigned (on 5 September 1595) a subsidy of 1,000 pesos a year for the maintenance of a residential college for Spanish scholars taking courses in the College of Manila. Some months after Figueroa had provided the College of Manila (20 October 1595) with an endowment, Prat saw the governor (Dasmariñas) and persuaded him to transfer the government subsidy from the proposed college for Spaniards to a *college of natives.* We do not know what arguments he advanced in favor of this change. He may have pointed out that most of the Spanish students came from families resident in Manila,

[14] Ibid.

and hence, there was less need of a residence hall for them than for native students coming from the provinces, supposing that the idea of opening a school for them met with the governor's approval (as it did in times of Governor Ronquillo). He (Fr. Prat) may also have suggested that Figueroa's endowment might, with careful management, be increased so as to be able to support in the future not only the Jesuit community but the Spanish college desired".[15]

We feel inclined to believe that the stronger reason alleged by Fr. Prat was probably that *such* was the will of the King, expressed in the cedula of 1585, and of late Bishop Salazar (who died the year before, 4 December 1594), of former Governor Ronquillo, and of the *Cathedral* Chapter of Manila since the year 1583. "At any rate Dasmariñas fell in with Prat's proposal, transferred the subsidy to a college of natives, *and* approved (in 1596) an additional grant of 600 pesos to pay for the construction of a building.

"The purpose of the institution as Prat conceived it was to give the sons of the native ruling families an education which would not only make Christians of them, but fit them for the local magistracy", and possibly for the priesthood, since such were the plans of the first Bishop of the Philippines, approved by the King of Spain, and so insistently recommended by the first vice-provincial of the Jesuits (Fr. Sedeño) and the famous Fr. Sanchez, and by himself (Fr. Prat) who was then the second vice-provincial of the Society in the Philippines. The Filipino boys "were to live together in community under a Jesuit priest and brother, and receive instruction in Christian doctrine, reading, writing, vocal and instrumental music and handicrafts. In addition to educating Filipino boys, the school would grant resident scholarships to poor Spaniards who wished to study for the priesthood" together with the possible candidates for it that may be found among the native boys. "This arrangement would provide them (the Spanish boys) with excellent opportunities for learning the native languages while pursuing their seminary studies in the College of Manila" together with the Filipinos.

"In his eagerness to make a beginning, Fr. Prat opened the school before the building was ready, reserving a part of the Jesuit residence as temporary quarters and classroom for the school boys. He also

[15] Ibid., 172.

hired two lay teachers for them, one of music and another of reading and writing."

"Unfortunately the government never did release the annual subsidy. Tello, Dasmariñas' successor, confirmed the grant in 1596 (in favor of the *college of natives*), but the royal treasury officials were unable to make it good . . . Prat was left with an unfinished building, a debt to the Figueroa endowment, and a group of scholars he could no longer support. Much against his will he was forced to disband them. On 6 July 1601 Governor Tello wrote to the king that the whole project had fallen through, *because of lack of funds,* and on 15 July 1604 his successor Governor Acuña put the final quietus on it:[16]

> "It seems to me – he reported to Philip III – that although *this work is very good and holy,* it would be *preferable* that said *college* be founded for poor Spaniards, sons of residents or those who come to settle, in order that they may study and learn virtue and letters so as to be more fit later on to govern and administer the colony and *be parish priests and missionaries.* This would be a greater benefit than any which can be derived from a college of natives, since the sum of what these will learn is reading and writing and nothing more, for they can neither be priests nor officials, and after they shall have learned something they will return to their homes and take care of their farms and earn their living."

Let us notice here several important points.

First, the *college of natives,* planned by Bishop Salazar from the day he took possession of the Diocese of Manila in 1581, and proposed by the Jesuits once and again since 1583 and endorsed by the Governors of the Philippines, Ronquillo (1583), De Vera (1587), Dasmariñas (1596), Tello (1599), and to a certain extent even by Acuña (1604) who praised it as a "very good and holy work"; the *college of natives,* recommended and urged by King Philip II in 1585, did not crystallize at the end, though it was actually tried out for some three years, 1596-1599, not on account of any race prejudice, but simply "*because of lack of funds".*

[16] Ibid., 172-173.

If the original foundation of the College of San Jose was intended for sons of Spaniards in the mind of a particular Governor (Luis Perez Dasmariñas), the same Governor, in the very same year of the foundation, changed his mind and agreed with the Jesuits to make it a *college of natives*.

And this college of natives was intended to fit them, not only "for the local magistracy, for as town governors and village headmen they could exercise a profound salutary influence on their own people", but also, whenever it could be possible, for the priestly ministry. This is made clear from the very words of Governor Acuña to Philip III on 15 July 1604 when referring to the *said college* he states that it was "in order that they (the students) may study and learn virtue and letters so as to be more fit later on *to govern and administer the colony and be parish priests and missionaries",* that is "to be priests and officials". A further proof of this is found in the fact that resident scholars of San Jose were to attend classes and take courses in the College of Manila, and these classes and courses were –according to the vice-provincial Fr. Sedeño –"one in moral theology for candidates for holy orders, and another in grammar for Spanish boys".[17] The class of moral theology is not said to be for Spanish boys, but for "candidates for holy orders", whoever they may be; the class of grammar, yes, is said to be "for Spanish boys"; but I believe, we should understand here, "*mainly* for Spanish boys", not "exclusively", since such was the common interpretation in similar institutions, like the school opened that same year 1595 in Cebu by Fr. Antonio Pereira, S.J. which "was originally intended for Spanish children, but Visayan and Chinese pupils were apparently admitted as well."[18]

Furthermore, let us notice that such clauses "for Spaniards" were coming from particular persons (as Governor Dasmariñas and Governor Acuña:) and even these did not reject absolutely the natives. For instance, Governor Dasmariñas soon changed his mind, and agreed to make the foundation he intended for sons of Spaniards, a college of natives; and Governor Acuña, after saying that the College of natives was a *"very* good *and holy work",* dared to suggest

[17] Ibid., 134.
[18] Ibid., 166.

that, *in his opinion, "it would be preferable"* to make it for Spaniards. It was simply a question of taste and of *preference,* as well as sometimes, a question of practicality, a question of pragmatic men who were not fond of idealistic projects but rather preferred to face actual problems and present facts.

It was not that they would deny anyone the right to aspire to the priesthood, on account of his race or of the color of his skin. The actual problem – these men thought – in the higher educational levels was that of preparing capable leaders of the people in the civil and in the religious spheres; the present facts seem to point out that in the conditions of those days, the Spaniards or sons of Spaniards, coming from a higher cultural environment, enjoying a richer and finer educational background in the very homes where they lived or from which they came, were by those very circumstances in a more advantageous position to receive and pursue a higher education and a training for leadership, rather than the indigenous natives, who though at times better gifted and brighter than the Spanish boys, nevertheless on account of their poorer cultural background and lesser educational facilities at their homes, and of greater difficulties they found in assimilating a foreign culture, in a foreign language , and due to greater financial difficulties that blocked their way in the pursuit of a long career: for all these reasons, most often these Filipino boys did not succeed to attain the final goal of a higher education. This was generally achieved by Spaniards, creoles or mestizos, during the first century at least of the Spanish regime. Indigenous natives were not excluded or considered incapable of higher studies, but simply because of environmental circumstances it became too difficult for the majority of them to accomplish such studies.

Governor Acuña referred to this "'fact" in his report to Philip III. When he said that "the sum of what these (the indigenous natives) will learn is reading and writing and nothing more" – certainly he exaggerates his point – he is alluding only to a common "fact". If he adds as a reason of such limited learning, not indeed the limitations of their natural gifts or talents but simply the "fact" again, that "they can neither be priests or officials", he at once explains that such fact is due, not because the priesthood or the magistracy were

officially closed to them – he knew well the mind of the king, of the former Bishop of Manila, of the missionaries –, but simply because of this other "fact", namely, that generally "after they shall have learned something, they will return to their homes and take care of their farms, earn their living".

The above remarks seem to explain satisfactorily the otherwise strange fact of so few indigenous native vocations to the priesthood during the first century of the Spanish regime, notwithstanding the decided plan and policy of both the Church and the State to work for the formation of a native clergy at the earliest possible time. The fact should not be misunderstood as due to a policy of discouraging native vocations on account of some race discrimination. Such interpretation would be rather superficial and unjust, and furthermore contradicted by the actual efforts and trials made both by the Church and the State to foster native vocations, although certainly, for us nowadays, such efforts and trials seem to run rather short of what we would expect at the light of the latest papal pronouncements on the matter.

Spanish Colonial Policy, from the Beginning of the Evangelization of the Philippines, Fostered Priestly Vocations among Filipino Boys

1. What should be understood by a Native Clergy in the Philippines: a necessary and important clarification.

"On 28th June, 1586, Father Alonso Sanchez, S.J., left Cavite bound for Madrid where he was being sent by the Archbishop and the Manila Government... He was accompanied by a young Pampango, Martin Sancho. This Filipino was taken along by Father Sanchez to impress the Spanish Court with the enviable natural qualities of the people of our race and, at the same time, to serve as evidence of the marked advancement of our people in the ways of Christian culture and civilization.

"In Madrid he was personally introduced to King Philip II – the only Filipino to have been so introduced. The monarch engaged

him in conversation and was highly pleased with the attainments of young Martin.

"When Martin Sancho went with Father Sanchez to Rome, he applied for admission into the Society of Jesus. He was immediately accepted".[19] He thus had the privilege "of being the first Filipino to be admitted to the Society of Jesus. This took place in 1593 in Rome. He was attached to the province of Toledo and spent some time in the college of Murcia whence he returned to Mexico in 1599",[20] "in the company of the Father Procurator."[21] "He sailed for home in the group of Jesuit missionaries headed by Gregorio Lopez in 1601, but died that same year after setting foot once more on his native land. He was twenty-five years old at the time of his death and a Jesuit eight years."[22]

This case of Martin Sancho, S.J. shows that from the early days of the Philippine evangelization the Spanish missionaries without any hesitation or race prejudice admitted at once into their religious Orders the Filipino boys found gifted with the talent and virtue required for the religious life or for a priestly vocation.

That such was the mind and policy of those missionaries was explicitly asserted by the same Father Alonso Sanchez when some five years before, towards 1588, he wrote to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva that "by far the most important contribution the Society (of Jesus) could make in the Philippines would be the establishment of a *seminary* or boarding school for *native boys* and a college for Spanish students,

> '... for the children are ... well affected towards us, lively and *very intelligent* ...some of them can serve as companions to our fathers on missionary expeditions: in fact, *many of them could be missionaries* and catechists themselves ... and almost the whole charge and care of the boarding school could be transferred to them, for the work that they are

[19] Antonio M. Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries,* Vol. 1 (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1960), 88.

[20] H. de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines,* 1581-1768, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), 84, 191.

[21] Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries*, 89.

[22] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, l.c.

> now doing for the other religious communities and in our own house proves that *they are quite capable of all these things.*[23] (Underscore ours)

These words confirmed what the Dominican Bishop Fray Domingo Salazar said five years before, in 1583. The trust and esteem that the missionaries had for well gifted Filipino boys with good signs of a priestly vocation have prompted them to proceed rather hastily in the ecclesiastical training of some candidates. "The religious orders – remarked Bishop Salazar – *had* (before 1583) *admitted a number of applicants* (to the priesthood) whom he, Salazar, was reluctant to ordain because (due to the lack of a Seminary proper) they had little or no theological training."[24] (Underscore ours)

The Bishop here was speaking, not of Spaniards as those twenty-four "clerics he himself (Salazar) had brought in his entourage" and of whom "upon his arrival in Manila, he ordained 4 priests and 3 subdeacons" in 1582; but of Filipinos, sc. of those "who received their vocation to the priesthood and were trained for it in the Philippines, were already familiar with the country, knew the language and customs of the people";[25] that is, he was speaking of *native vocations:* vocations among the *native-born* inhabitants of the country, among people born permanently residing in the country, irrespectively of their blood, parentage or skin color. Maybe most of those *applicants* to the priesthood were not *natural-born* Filipinos, that is, they may not have been *natives* in the restrictive or specific sense of the word as referring only to the *indigenous* race; but if they were *native-born* residents of the Philippines, they ought to be called real *Filipino natives* in the obvious and true meaning of the word, as we will soon explain.

Of such *native* vocations the Bishop says that "the religious orders in the Philippines had admitted a number of applicants (before 1583)" and that these Filipino candidates to the priesthood "were trained for it in the Philippines (before 1583)"; and if the training was quite deficient and the Bishop "was reluctant to ordain *(some)* a

[23] Ibid., 119.
[24] Ibid., 64.
[25] Ibid.

number of applicants (the Bishop does not say that these were *all* of those admitted in the religious orders) because they had little or no theological training", this was due to the lack of a seminary training proper; and that is why the Bishop advocated for its immediate foundation.[26] From these facts we may conclude that, though it may be true that during those early years most, if not all, of the priests ordained in the Philippines were clerics from Spain or from Mexico, who made their University studies *abroad*,[27] it is not entirely improbable that some *native* Filipino priests might have been ordained with them. However, we need not insist on this possibility. Even taking for granted that no Filipino priest was ordained during those years, the mere fact that the "religious orders were admitting a number of (Filipino) applicants," is enough to prove that *from those early days* there was *no systematic policy of precluding Filipino natives from Holy Orders;* nay, the fact that some of them "were (actually according to Bishop Salazar) trained for the priesthood in the Philippines"[28] shows that in the 16th century, from the beginning of the Philippine evangelization, the Spanish missionaries did actually work to foster priestly vocations among Filipino natives. If they did not succeed due to the circumstances of time and place, lack of a seminary proper, etc., that seems beyond the question.

One thing, hence, appears with meridian light: in the Philippines there was no race discrimination or prejudice. We know *positively*

[26] Ibid., 63-64.

[27] Fermin Campo, C.M., *El Seminario Conciliar de Manila – Guion Historico,* Seminario de San Carlos, Mandaluyong, Rizal, 8-x-1950, n. 4.

[28] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 64. With respect to the Jesuits it seems not improbable, nay, we can take it for sure that they admitted to the priesthood in the Society, "many years" before 1615 some, at least, "among those born in this country (naturales de la tierra), otherwise known as criollos" since Francisco Gutierrezz, S.J, writing to the General Acquaviva in 1615 says "for many years now no one has been admitted" and seems to allude to "some" Jesuit creoles living then "who lead model lives". And from Angelo Armano's letter to the same Acquaviva in 1606 we conclude that creoles had been admitted in good number much before 1606 since he speaks of "older men among the criollos, who are excellent religious and many of them professed", and younger ones" living in the Society by that time, and he makes reference to "other "criolo Jesuits" who "were dismissed from the Society; . . . lacked perseverance". (cf. Ibid., 236, 245.) As a matter of fact, we know that the Philippine vice-provincial Diego Garcia, S.J. in 1603 received some criollos into the Society; and most probably others had been received even in the 16th century, since 1583 (cf. Ibid., 235.)

that the religious orders from the beginning admitted Filipinos to the religious profession and even to aspire to the sacred priesthood. The first Filipino friar was Fray Martin Lakandola of the Augustinian Order,[29] who is said to be a son of Rajah Lakandola, last king of Tondo (three of whose sons were baptized[30]). According to Augustinian records Brother Lakandola died in 1590 shortly after taking his habit. Another similar case is that already mentioned of Martin Sancho, S.J., in 1593. I feel inclined to believe that this first Filipino Jesuit was probably admitted as a possible candidate to the priesthood, though later, for reasons of failing health he may have remained simply as a lay brother. The fact that he was made to accompany Father Sanchez to Spain and Rome as an exceptionally gifted boy, and that for six long years he was retained in Europe and spent some time in the college of Murcia, seems to indicate that the superiors planned to give him a chance to be something more than a temporal coadjutor. His prolonged permanence in Spain, notwithstanding the harmful effect of the climate upon his health, could not be due to the plan of providing him at all costs with a better ecclesiastical training than what he could find in the Philippines? If he was to be a lay brother only, was it not enough two or three years in Europe? If this, our surmise were true, then we could say that Martin Sancho, S.J. may well claim the honor of being the first known native Filipino aspirant to the priesthood, at least the first known by name. However, let us not insist on this point either, since the indisputable authority of the Jesuit historian H. de la Costa states (most probably from authoritative sources) that "Alonso (obviously this should read *Martin*) Sancho was received as a lay brother."[31]

Perhaps some might object to the documentary evidence presented above from Bishop Salazar's own words, that those "who received their vocation to the priesthood and were trained for it in

[29] Gregorio F. Zaide, *Philippine History and Civilization* (Manila: Philippine Associated Publishers, 1939), 318-319.

[30] Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries*, 70.

[31] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 234; 617; 84; 191. A further ground to support the "Surmise that Martin Sancho may have been admitted in the Society with a view to aspire to the priesthood, is the petition that the vice-provincial Prat of the Philippines sent to the General Acquaviva through his procurator Francisco de Vera, 1598, asking "permission to institute courses in arts and theology in the

the Philippines", as well as the "number of applicants admitted by the religious orders" for the priesthood, were not Filipinos, but *mestizos* (persons of mixed European and Asian parentage) or *creoles* ("criollos", persons born in the Philippines of European parents), or even simply *Europeans* who had *emigrated* to the colony.

We cannot admit the last supposition, namely, that the Bishop could have alluded to *emigrated Europeans,* since of these he could have not said, as he did, that "they were already familiar with the country, knew the language and customs of the people, got along better (than the Spanish missionaries) with them, and would probably make better missionaries (than those coming from Spain)".[32] But we admit that probably the Bishop was referring in those words, not precisely to *full-blooded indigenous Filipino natives*, but rather to *mestizos* and *creoles*, all of whom – as we shall presently explain – have also the right to be called *Filipinos*, since they are true *Filipino natives*, i.e., *native-born* inhabitants of the Philippines.

The objection comes from a narrow concept of the word *natives* taken restrictively in its specific sense of "indigenous", "one of a race inhabiting a country when it was discovered, colonized." Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary[33] gives instead the following obvious meanings: "1. *One born in a place or country* referred to; 2. *An inhabitant,* as distinguished from a visitor or temporary resident." And the same Dictionary explains the difference between "native" and "indigenous": *"Native,* said of individuals, implies birth or origin there (at the locality in question). *Indigenous*, said of species and races, adds to *native* the implication of not having been introduced." *"Indigenous"* means "produced, growing, living naturally in a country or climate."

College of Manila, both for Jesuits and extern students"– which seems to indicate the reason why Sancho was retained by that time in Europe –, and proposing "that the candidates for the lay brotherhood received in the Philippines be allowed to learn how to read and write and do sums"– which seems to indicate that candidates for the lay brotherhood in the Society, as in other congregations of those days, were generally recruited from unlettered or less gifted candidates than what Martin Sancho is shown to have been. (cf. Ibid., 177-178.)

[32] Ibid., 64.

[33] Based on *Webster's New International Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1958.)

The American College Encyclopedic Dictionary[34] defines: *"Native-born:* born in a place or country indicated." On the other hand, *"natural-born",* as we know, is a person who belongs to a country by *jus soli* (i.e., by birth within the country) *and* by *jus sanguinis* (i.e., by right of blood or parentage).

The American Peoples Encyclopedia[35] explains: "Originally a citizen was a member of a city (*civitas*) to which he owed allegiance, enjoying rights and privileges generally denied to foreigners. Citizenship, acquired *at birth* or *after birth,* is determined by the national laws of each state. Citizenship *at birth* is acquired either by *jus soli* (birth within the country) or by *jus sanguinis* (right of blood or parentage). Citizenship *after birth,* generally called *naturalization*, may be acquired by marriage, adoption, change in territory, special legislation, or naturalization proper." A *naturalized* person becomes a citizen, a national; but he is *not* a native of the country. Natives are only either the *native-born* or the *natural-born* inhabitants of the country. The *natural-born* inhabitants are the *indigenous natives* of the country.

In the Philippines of the Spanish times we cannot strictly speak of Filipino citizenship or nationality because the Philippines were not yet then a sovereign state; in those days our country was politically an integral part of the Spanish empire, and as the rest of Spain's overseas possessions in both hemispheres we formed with the Peninsula, as the Spanish Cortes declared, but "one kingdom, one and the same nation, and one family, and accordingly the *natives* of said places enjoyed equal rights with those born in the Peninsula".[36] Hence, to ascertain who ought to be called *Filipino natives* in those times we should disregard any legal consideration of Filipino citizenship, which would be out of the point; we should consider the Philippines of those days, not as a sovereign state or independent nation, but as a country, a people, a fatherland, and thus apply the concept of *natives* to the population that inhabited then our country.

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[34] *The American College Encyclopedic Dictionary*, ed. Clarence L. Barnhart (Chicago: Spencer Press, Inc., 1960).

[35] *The American Peoples Encyclopedia* Vol. 5 (New York: Grolier Incorporated, 1962).

[36] Decree of Spanish Cortes, 15 October 1810; cf. Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries*, 238.

Among the inhabitants of the Philippines during the Spanish regime we could distinguish: a) foreigners (mostly Spanish immigrants), some of them visitors or temporary residents, others, the majority, settlers with permanent residence in the colony; (b) the children of these settlers, born in the country (the creoles or "criollos" of Spanish parentage, and the *mestizos* of mixed parentage, either Spanish and Malay, or Chinese and Malay); c) the *indigenous natives* (called in Spanish *indigenas* or *indios),* that is, the *natural-born* inhabitants. Who among these various classes of people should be properly called *Filipino natives, Filipinos?* Who were actually called and recognized as such in those days?

There is no doubt that *transient foreigners* were *not Filipinos;* as it is obviously evident that the *indigenous natives were* full-blooded *Filipinos - Filipinos* in the strict and specific sense of the word. On these points there is no question. With respect to Spanish immigrants who have settled in the country, though in some way they might be regarded as *naturalized* Filipinos (in America and the West Indies such Spanish colonists were called *indianos),* nevertheless it seems also out of question that they remained and were considered as Spaniards, and *not* Filipinos: they were called Peninsular Spanish citizens, to distinguish them from the natives of the Philippines who were also in those times *Spanish citizens* – but not from Spain, not of the Peninsula. The Spanish settlers in the Philippines were not natural-born or even native-born Filipinos; hence, they were not in any sense *natives* of the country.

On the contrary, the *children* of those settlers, *born and permanently residing in* the country, were indisputably *native-born* – the ***mestizos,*** even to a certain extent, *natural-born* inhabitants of the Philippines, and hence, real *Filipino natives*, true *Filipinos;* and thus they were considered and called in those days. Francisco Gutierrez, S.J., and Andrea Caro, S.J., in 1615 reckoned the *creoles* "among the *natives* of the country" *(naturales de la tierra),* and *not* among the *Europeans or Spaniards;*[37] in the same way spoke in 1606 Angelo Armano, S.J.[38] Still, to distinguish these C*reole children* from the *natural-born* Filipinos,

[37] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 236.
[38] Ibid., 245.

they were at times called *Spanish boys*[39] on account of their blood and parentage, although they were *natives of the country (naturales de la tierra)*. Not so, however, with the *mestizos* (of Spanish blood) who were explicitly discerned from the Spanish boys, and grouped together with the *indigenous natives* and even reckoned among these, since with a greater reason than the creoles they were "natives of the country" (*naturales de la tierra).*[40] The decree of the Spanish Cortes in 1810, cited above, distinguishes among the Spanish citizens of the Philippines, the Filipino *natives* from the Spaniards "born in the Peninsula": the implication evidently is that under the word "natives" *of* the Philippines *were* included, not *only those* of the *indigenous race*, but also any other Spanish citizens "born and permanently residing" in the Islands, as the *creoles* and *mestizos* were. In our days and according to our present Constitution this would not be always true, except on some particular circumstances specified by the basic law of the country; but obviously such was not the condition of the historical period we are studying. This difference, perhaps, may explain the confusion of terms and pointless controversies that arise once and

[39] Ibid., 63, 75, 172, 236, 245, 571. The creoles were not Europeans or Spaniards, but were properly called "natives of the country" (236, 245). However, on account of their racial traits they were at times called "Spanish boys" to distinguish them from the mestizos and indigenous natives who on account of their blood and parentage belonged to the indigenous race, totally or partially.

[40] The mestizos were not included under the denomination of "Spanish boys"; thus Bishop Salazar wrote to the king of Spain on 18 June 1583 saying that the Jesuits "could teach not only Spanish boys, but also mestizos and sons of the ruling (i.e., indigenous-C) native families" (Ibid., 63), Similarly Prat and Suarez wrote Acquaviva on 5 June 1586, and 25-26 June 1586 respectively, saying that "the proposed college (of Manila) be not only a school for Spanish boys but also a seminario or boarding school for (indigenous-C) natives and mestizos" (Ibid., 75; 236, 145, 571). The mestizos were included among the natives, otherwise Prat would have excluded them (which cannot be admitted) from the project he proposed to Governor Dasmarinas (in 1595-C) "to transfer the government subsidy (assigned for a residential college for Spanish scholars-C) from the proposed college for Spaniards to a college of natives" (Ibid., 172). Furthermore, if the creoles were called "natives of the country" (naturales de la tierra, Ibid., 236), with greater reason the mestizos were to be called so.

Hence among the Filipino native boys (creoles, mestizos, and indigenous natives) there were two classes: Spanish boys (the creoles), and Filipino boys (mestizos and full-blooded natives).

again when studying questions related to the Filipino clergy. We hope these clarifications may set things right and obviate in the future useless discussions and apparent – not real – discrepancies among historians.

The Apostle of the Gentiles, Saint Paul, was a Jew, hundred percent, by blood; but nonetheless he was a Roman citizen, belonging to Rome and enjoying the full civil rights of any other Roman, *by birth,* as he himself remarked,[41] and not only a *naturalized* Roman as the captain of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem who paid "a heavy sum to win this privilege".[42] Among our Filipino heroes we have the case of Fathers Jose Burgos, Jacinto Zamora and Mariano Gomez. According to the former archivist of the Manila archdiocese, Manuel A. Gracia, C.M. who had the chance to examine pertinent official documents, extant before the last war, relative to those Filipino diocesan priests, it seems certain that Fr. Burgos was a creole, Fr. Zamora a mestizo, and Fr. Gomez an indigenous native. Dr. Antonio Molina states that Fr. Burgos was born in Vigan of a Spanish father and a Filipino mother; and Fr. Gomez was born in Manila, probably a descendant of some early Japanese settlers.[43] Hence, there is no doubt that they were not all full-blooded Filipino natives. And nevertheless who would dare to deny that the three of them ought to be honored as outstanding Filipino patriots who knew no other fatherland than the Philippines where they were born and lived and for which they died? Creoles and mestizos of those days could not acknowledge other true fatherland than the land of their birth and of their home: they were *Filipino natives* and could not help but to feel themselves *Filipinos,* and nothing else. That is why in our national history we often see them side by side with the full-blooded Filipino indigenous natives, and even at times leading them, in the patriotic movements. Dr. Jose Rizal speaking of the patriotic leaders who labored with him in Spain to spread the Propaganda ideas of reform, said: "they are young men, creoles of Spanish parentage, *mestizos* of Chinese and of Malay blood, but we call ourselves Filipinos only" (*son jovenes criollos de ascendencia espanola*, *mestizos*, *sangleyes y malayos, pero*

[41] Acts 22, 27-28.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries*, 328.

nos llamamos solo filipinos)[44] that is, he meant to say, we are not all full-blooded Filipinos, and we could distinguish one from another with some specific name to denote our parentage and racial traits, but we prefer to call ourselves with the single name that properly defines us all: *Filipinos,* and nothing else; *Filipinos,* and that is enough! In the same way he speaks again and again in his letters,[45] sometimes even including among the *Filipinos* some friend and schoolmate who, though born in Spain, came to the Philippines when still quite young, and was reared and settled in our country, identifying himself with the patriotic leaders who labored for reforms.[46]

And, indeed, if we were to limit the word *Filipino, native,* exclusively, to the indigenous race of our country, we should have first to define which is that particular race in the Philippines that have known at least three or four migrations of different peoples before the coming of the Spaniards and then before writing any book of history we would have to apply a "blood test" to all the great figures of our past – and even of our present – delving into the roots of their genealogical trees or ancestral pedigrees, to discover at the end that we could not claim as Filipinos, because of their lineage or ancestry, such glorious figures as Dr. Jose Rizal, Father Jose Burgos, President Manuel L. Quezon, Justice Cayetano Arellano, Attorney Felipe G. Calderon, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Joaquin Elizalde, Cabinet Secretary Andres Soriano, and many others;[47] nay, we might be practically forced to accept only as true Filipinos, the primitive people who remained isolated in our mountains and forests!

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[44] *Epistolario Rizalino*, ed. Biblioteca Nacional de Filipinas, Manila, Bureau of Printing, 1938, tomo V, letter 19, 115.

[45] *One Hundred Letters of Jose Rizal*, ed. Philippine National Historical Society, Manila, June 19, 1959; letters dated January 17, 1883, and October 1, 1885, 66, 242.

[46] Rizal's friend and schoolmate in the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, and in Universidad Central, Madrid, the father of Federico Calero, was a Spaniard who came to the Philippines when still quite young, and became a close friend and companion of Rizal in the universities of Manila and Madrid, and one of the student groups that worked for the good of the Philippines. Cf. Federico Calero's article in Voz de Manila, daily, June 1952, "Por que soy filipino".

[47] Cf. "Dilucidando la cuestion: Sobre los Arzobispos Filipinos" in *Veritas Weekly*, 23 November 1952.

If the word *natives* were to be understood only in the sense of *indigenous* inhabitants of a country, we would have to say that in the United States of America there is no *native clergy*, and never has anything been done to form and develop it, since the indigenous race, the red Indian Americans have not been trained for the priesthood; nay, we should say that most of those whom we call Americans are not true Americans, but Europeans of French, German, Italian, British or Spanish descent and ancestry. However, who will not smile at such incongruous statements? Native-born Americans are true American *natives,* true Americans, though they may not be of the indigenous race, in the same way as to be a Spaniard, a German, a French, etc. one needs not to be of the Iberian, Teutonic, Gaulish, etc. race, but simply a native inhabitant or citizen, of Spain, Germany, France, etc.

It is true that when the Church speaks of a *native clergy* in mission lands, reference is made specifically to the *indigenous clergy.* We have already seen that, as a matter of fact, the word *native* has the specific connotation of *indigenous.* And, since in most mission lands, except in those colonized with the Christian ideals of equality of races which Spain brought and upheld in her overseas possessions, practically there are no other natives than indigenous race, hence it is but natural to take one for the other when speaking in general of mission countries. But it is altogether obvious that the mind of the Church, so alien always to any racial considerations or blood and skin color preferences, is not to restrict the word *native* exclusively to its specific meaning of *indigenous.* The Church speaks of a *native clergy* in contradistinction to a *foreign clergy,* to a clergy not belonging to the country or to the people it evangelizes. Otherwise the Church would have to raise her voice against America, for instance, because it has not formed nor actually is in any way developing an indigenous clergy. However, America has a *native clergy;* and since the majority of Americans are *natives,* not of the indigenous race, hence the native clergy, and not an indigenous clergy, is what is needed there.

Certainly, for a historian it may be of interest to distinguish adequately the indigenous natives from other natives of the country. It may be, for instance, worth noticing when were the first *indigenous* native priests ordained, or when the first *indigenous* native Bishop consecrated; but it may be of interest as well to know when other

natives, though not of the indigenous race, were ordained priests or consecrated Bishops. This should be done, without foregoing the other. We intend in this study to pay attention to both things, and make it clear, without confusions and misleading terms, when our word *Filipino* refers to a native-born Filipino (either by birth only as the Creoles, or by birth and partly by parentage, as the mestizos) or to a natural-born Filipino, an *indigenous native* and full-blooded Filipino. Thus the apparent discrepancies found in the contentions of some of our historians will vanish away. But, let it be clear, we intend to speak of the *Filipino clergy* as anyone might speak of the French, German, Italian, etc. clergy, taking the word *Filipino* as accepted usage takes the words French, German, Italian, etc, in the connotation of a *native* or *one of the people* – and not necessarily of the indigenous race – of France, Germany, Italy, etc.

I have dwelt at large on this matter because more than once we hear the distinction made, especially in this subject of the native clergy in the Philippines, between Filipino natives and mestizos or *Creoles,* as if these were not also Filipinos. For instance, when we read of those "applicants (to the priesthood)" whom, according to Bishop Salazar, "the religious orders in the Philippines admitted" in the early days of the evangelization, in the 16th century, and of whom the same Bishop says that they "received their vocation to the priesthood and were trained for it in the Philippines", we feel inclined to believe with good reason that many, if not most, of them were not indigenous natives, were not full- blooded Filipinos, but mestizos or Creoles. And nevertheless, we ask, were not these last, real Filipino natives, true Filipinos? And can it be proved that there were not among those applicants to the priesthood some indigenous native?

I may even willingly believe that, in all probability, at the beginning, *most,* if not *all,* of those candidates to the priesthood were *creoles* and mestizos, not indigenous natives or full-blooded Filipinos. But, that was *at the beginning,* and quite understandably at that. However, we ask again, are there any proofs that the same was true for the following years after the first half-century of the Philippine evangelization? If it can be proved, let it be proved, but not gratuitously affirmed.

2. Actual work done in the 16th century to foster priestly vocations among Filipino youth.

As a confirmation of Bishop Salazar's statement that the religious orders in the 16th century had already admitted a number of Filipino applicants to the holy orders, we know positively that in Manila the religious missionaries founded and maintained from 1571 cloister seminaries were five in number; the Jesuits in Cebu, in 1598, a college seminary; and from the beginning of the 17th century there were some other five similar institutions in Manila.[48]

The *cloister seminaries* or *conventual colleges* were especially intended for the religious themselves to give them a course in pastoral theology and some training in the dialects before going to their mission posts; and when newly arrived missionaries had not yet completed their studies, they finished their ecclesiastical career in these cloister seminaries. A general course of ecclesiastical studies was offered in them. Furthermore, these conventual colleges had annexed to them a free primary school for poor native boys, either indigenous, mestizos or *Creoles,* among whom were found young men with vocation for the religious or even for the secular clergy. These rather informal seminaries did not have any fix program of studies and were not often recognized officially outside of the Church. That perhaps may explain the deficiency in a sound theological formation received by "a number of applicants (from among the natives) admitted by the religious orders", as Bishop Salazar noted. Lack of good professors – perhaps the ablest men were assigned to labor in other mission posts –; irregularity of classes—maybe those actually in the teaching staff were too busy with *other* apostolic ministries and urgent affairs –; and finally, want of facilities which could have been *afforded* only in a seminary proper: all these factors might easily account for the deficiencies noticed in the ecclesiastical training of some of the native applicants to the holy orders.

[48] Cf. Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *History of Education in the Philippines* (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1939), 124-125; 133; 490; op.cit., ed. 1953, 71, 107, 168-169, 182. 190-194.

The cloister seminaries were the following:

1) Convent of San Pablo (Augustinians): since 1572; 1580
2) Convent of Nuestra Senora de los Angeles (Franciscans): 1580; 1582
3) Convent of San Francisco del Monte (Franciscans): 1580; 1600
4) Convent of Santo Domingo or Nuestra Senora del Rosario (Dominicans): 1587; 1588
5) Convent of San Ignacio or Colegio de Manila (Jesuits): 1595
6) Convent of San Nicolas (Recollect Fathers): 1609

The *seminary colleges,* somewhat more popular and less exclusive than the cloister seminaries, were open to all who had vocation to the diocesan priesthood or to a civil profession. These seminary colleges included a general course of studies besides the purely ecclesiastical subjects. They admitted two classes of students: those who aspired to the priestly ministry, and the youth who desired to acquire an education superior to that given in the elementary schools.

Of these seminary colleges we find:

1) In Cebu, the College of San Ildefonso (Jesuits): 1598
2) In Manila, the College of San Jose (Jesuits): 1596; 1601; 1610
3) Item, the College of Santo Tomas (Dominicans): 1611
4) Item, the College of San Juan de Letran (Dominicans): 1620; 1640
5) Item, the College of San Pedro y San Pablo (Dominicans): 1632; 1641
6) Item, the College of San Felipe (Jesuits): 1640

In this chapter we will cursorily examine only the institutions where, in the absence of a seminary proper, native vocations to the priesthood were attended to *in the 16th century,* that is, from the beginning of the Philippine evangelization. We shall leave for subsequent chapters the study of the same or similar institutions where priestly vocations among the natives were fostered in the following centuries of Spanish regime.

A. Cloister Seminaries

A.1. Convent of San Pablo (Augustinians)

To the Augustinians belongs the glory of establishing the *first elementary school* of the Philippines, the *parochial school of the Holy Name of Jesus,* in Cebu, in 1566; and to them also goes the honor of having founded the *first center of higher learning,* though unofficial in character and intended almost exclusively for the members of the Order, the *conventual college* of San Pablo, in Manila, in 1572. It is true that this cloister seminary did not enjoy official government recognition, but it offered courses in Theology, Philosophy and Morals as well as classes in the dialects needed for the pastoral and missionary work. Adjoining to it a primary school for children of the country was established; and the Augustinian Assembly held on April 3, 1575, decreed: "Those desiring to take the religious habit (in the Philippines) should be admitted to our Order, and we designate the same Convent of Manila as the House for the novitiate." It is well to notice in this decree that no restriction is imposed on the *native* candidates for aspiring to the priesthood, and not simply to the lay brotherhood in the Order; and that no discrimination is made of *indigenous natives* from *other natives* of mixed or foreign parentage. Fr. Juan de La Hoz, O.S.A. was assigned at an early date as professor of Latin; Fr. Alfonso de Santillan was appointed professor of Arts in 1590, and Fr. Diego de Torrabe in 1596.

Although this institution "was not intended for the public in general but for their own religious personnel, and as a consequence, its life was interrupted from time to time depending on the number of vocations for the Augustinian habit and on the non-ordained priests arriving from Spain and Mexico"[49], still, as the old monastic schools (of Christendom before the Council of Trent, this and the other convent schools of Manila) undertook also the education of the aspirants to the secular clergy, if there were any, for there was no

[49] Ibid., op. cit., ed. 1953, 191.

other institution to take charge of this"[50] in those days. These were, obviously, exceptional cases; but most probably there were some. Bishop Salazar clearly indicates that there was no incompatibility for diocesan clerical students to be trained in ecclesiastical sciences together with the religious aspirants to the priesthood,[51] as it actually happened in the seminary colleges of San Jose, Letran and Santo Tomas.[52]

A.2 Convent of Nuestra Señora de los Angeles (Franciscans)

The Franciscan convent of Manila was opened as a novitiate in 1580, and the famous Father Plasencia, the great founder of elementary schools "where Filipinos were taught not only Christian doctrine, reading and writing but even some trades", seemed to have been a teacher of Latin in this cloister seminary. Fr. Martin Aguirre, later a martyr of the faith, "was professor of Theology here in Manila up to 1596, when he left for Japan".

There was also an early house of studies in the convent of San Francisco del Monte.

A.3 Convent of Nuestra Señora del Rosario (Dominicans)

The conventual college founded at Santo Domingo, Manila in 1587 by the Dominicans was of a more academic and public character than the preceding ones. "With the arrival of the first large mission of Dominicans in 1587, the first academic act took place in the Philippines. The celebration was held in the main hall of the Cathedral in the presence of prominent dignitaries of the religious orders and of the civil authorities. The academic act was directed by a professor of Theology, Rev. Fr. Pedro de Soto. From that moment Bishop Salazar was inspired to found a College-University similar to those of Mexico, where religious and lay persons might pursue

[50] Antonio Piñon, O.P., "Contribution of the Seminaries to Education in the Philippines," in *The Contribution of the Catholic Church to Education in the Philippines* (Manila: Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, 1952), 121.

[51] H. de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines* 1581-1768 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), 64.

[52] Ibid., 570-571; Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines*, 109.

college studies; and to begin with, a *"School of Grammar"* was established in addition to the *"Escuela de Tiples"*. At the same time it was determined that Fr. Miguel de Benavides, O.P. and Fr. Miguel de Santamaria gave conferences in the Episcopal Palace, in the Cathedral, and in the Convent School of Santo Domingo."[53]

In the *"Escuela de Tiples"* the missionaries, according to a historian of those days, "taught the boys to read and to write in Spanish, to serve in the church, and to sing with organ accompaniment. They got *'maestros'* to teach them to play the organ, the flageolet, the flute, and other instruments. . . They presented religious plays and comedies in Spanish and in their (vernacular) language with charm."[54]

In the "School of Grammar", the "general studies", Arts and Theology were taken up by official professors as Fr. Gregorio Ochoa, Fr. Miguel de Santamaria, Fr. Miguel de Benavides, Fr. Juan Cobo, and Fr. Francisco Morales.

A.4 Colegio de Manila (College of St. Ignatius) (Jesuits)

This was planned by the Jesuit Fathers Sedeno and Sanchez and proposed to their General Acquaviva in 1583: "Let a central residence be established in Manila, and let it be a college as understood in the Society, that is, one in which classes were conducted both for extern students and for Jesuits still in their studies (scholastics). . . Acquaviva should consider whether the rector of the college in Manila should not be authorized to receive candidates for the Society. As a matter of fact, there were already two such applicants. One was the dean of the cathedral chapter, Don Diego Vazquez Mercado; the other, Simon de Mendiola, was asking to be admitted as a lay brother."[55] Was this Mendiola a Spaniard or a native of the country? Most probably he was not an indigenous native; but he might have been a native Creole or mestizo; and in all probability "Mendiola was the first to be received into the Society in the Philippines" *in* 1583.[56]

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[53] Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines*, 81-82.

[54] Fr. Alonso Fernandez, O.P., *Historia Eclesiastica de Nuestros Tiempos*, Lib. II, chap. XXXXIII, Toledo, 1611; ap. Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines*, 82.

[55] Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 62-63.

[56] Ibid., 614, 641. The Spanish name Simon de Mendiola could be well the name of an indigenous native, as Agustin de Legaspi, for instance was the name of "one of the most influential datus of Tondo" (Ibid., 112).

As we have seen already (Ch.I, art.2) the plan of the Jesuits Sedeño and Sanchez, as proposed *in 1583* to Acquaviva and to the first Bishop of the Philippines, Mons. Salazar, was to establish "a school for boys and older students 'from the first letters of the alphabet to the faculties of arts and theology'. And they were to teach "not only Spanish boys but also mestizos and sons of the ruling (indigenous) native families. To make a beginning, a class of grammar and one of moral theology could be opened."[57] *In 1586* the Jesuits Suarez and Prat agreed heartily with the idea "that the proposed college be not only a school for Spanish boys but also a *seminario* boarding school for (indigenous) natives and mestizos."[58]

That the proposed college was intended particularly *for the natives,* and not precisely for Spaniards appears clearly, not only from the above recommendations of the Jesuits to their General, but also from the King's orders to the Governor of the Philippines. In the cedula signed by Philip II at Barcelona, 8 *June* 1585, to De Vera, the King speaks of "the establishment of a college and the support of the religious who shall be employed there in teaching and instructing *those who present themselves* in grammar, sciences, and the proper conduct of life"; and to make it clear that in such ample clause "those who present themselves" he had in mind particularly *the natives,* he adds immediately: "because of the great results that I am confident will follow there from for the service of God and the spiritual formation *of those natives,* I enjoin you to confer with the Bishop of those Islands concerning the manner in which *said* college may be instituted."[59] And as a further proof that in this sense were understood the King's orders by the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the Philippines, in the next year, *1586,* Father "Sedeño ordained that since there was a possibility of opening a school *for natives,* only Suarez and Prat should study Chinese (Suarez had proposed that they – the Jesuits –should *all* learn Chinese), while he (Sedeño) and Almerici devoted themselves to Tagalog."[60]

[57] Ibid., 63.
[58] Ibid., 75.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 76.

While the King was still looking for ways and means to establish the Jesuit college, *in 1589,* the Jesuit Father Sanchez personally *discussed* the matter in Rome with his General, repeating what all the other Fathers have said: "By far *the* most important contribution the Society could make in the Philippines would be the establishment of a *seminary* or *boarding school for* (indigenous) *native boys* and a college *for* Spanish students (mainly, *Creoles,* Filipino natives)."[61]

If the college is said to be for *Spanish students* (mainly, *Creoles,* Filipino natives) it is because, as we have explained already in Ch. I, art. 2, the majority of the indigenous native boys could not ordinarily achieve more than an elementary schooling, not on account of any race discrimination, but due to mere circumstantial conditions of those days which made it too difficult for them to accomplish higher studies. Hence, in the Jesuit plan, the college would take care of "Spanish boys (Creoles, Filipino natives) who were capable and desirous of more than an elementary schooling and also of soldiers and merchants (Spaniards) who may receive a vocation to the priesthood"; this, however, without excluding possible, though exceptional, cases of indigenous native vocations among the children of the *seminario* or boarding school, of whom Father Sanchez said "many could be missionaries themselves" since they are "very intelligent. . . .and quite capable" to be missionaries.[62]

On 20 June 1590 Father Pedro Chirino, S.J. arrived in Manila bringing at last instructions from the General raising the Jesuits' residence to the status of a "colegio formado" (central community house for religious formation, studies, etc.). However, men for running the college were still lacking, and the royal subsidy expected for its support had not yet materialized. The newly appointed Rector, Father Sedeño made then arrangements to be able to maintain the college even without the government subsidy; personnel was the only thing wanting. It finally arrived on 11 June 1595; at once Father Sedeño informed the governor, Don Luis Perez Dasmariñas, that to satisfy the long postponed requests of the citizens, the Jesuit college was at last to be opened – not only for Jesuit scholastics but for externs as well – offering two courses, one in moral theology for

[61] Ibid., 119.
[62] Ibid.

candidates to the holy orders under Father Juan de Ribera, and other in grammar (Latinity) for Spanish boys (creoles, Filipino natives) under Father Tomas de Montoya.

Classes indeed began to be held in the Jesuit residence sometime in September 1595: attending students were day scholars. But the real founder of the *Colegio de Manila* (College of St. Ignatius), Father Antonio Sedeño was called to his reward on 2 September 1955: from heaven he was to see the fruit of his apostolic endeavor.

B. Seminary Colleges

B.1. The Colegio de San Jose (Manila, 1595)

This is the first Seminary College *for natives* in the Philippines and most probably the oldest Seminary for *diocesan native vocations* to the priesthood in the whole Orient. Its history is intimately connected with that of the *Colegio de Manila* (or College of St. Ignatius) whereto the scholars of the *Colegio de San Jose* went to attend their classes, together with Jesuit scholastics.

On 5 September 1595 governor Dasmariñas assigned to the *Colegio de Manila* a subsidy of 1,000 pesos a year for the construction and endowment of a hall or residential college, which was to be called *Colegio de San Jose* "for the board and lodging of twelve scholars chosen from among the sons of the conquistadores or of other settlers of good standing"[63] Then, on 20 October and 8 November 1595, Father Ramon Prat, S.J. who on the death of Father Sedeño succeeded him as vice-provincial of the Jesuits in the Philippines, accepted an endowment offered (since 1586) by Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa to make the Jesuit college a house of studies. Towards the end of 1595 Father Prat presented to governor Dasmariñas a project he had very much at heart, namely, the "foundation as part of the College of Manila of a boarding school for (indigenous) native boys, which Alonso Sanchez had suggested some years earlier to Acquaviva. Prat persuaded the governor to transfer the government subsidy (of 1,000 pesos a year) from the proposed college for Spaniards (rather, for Filipino natives of Spanish

[63] Ibid., 134.

parentage) to a college of (indigenous) natives. Dasmariñas fell in with Prat's proposal, transferred the subsidy to a college of (indigenous) natives, and approved an additional grant of 600 pesos to pay for the construction of a building.

Work was started at once – in late 1595 or early 1596 – on a building within the Jesuit compound. In his eagerness to make a beginning, Prat opened the school before the building was ready, reserving a part of the Jesuit residence as temporary quarters and classrooms for the school boys. He also hired two lay teachers for them, one of music and another of reading and writing."[64]

Such were the first beginnings of the *Colegio de San Jose*. Let us here notice some particular features of this institution which are often missed or lost of sight.

The purpose of the institution, although originally intended by governor Dasmariñas for Spaniards or Filipino natives of Spanish parentage, was soon changed, even before the institution was started, to make it, as the Jesuits planned in 1583 and in 1586, "a school for boys and older students 'from the first letters of the alphabet to the faculties of arts and theology" where the Jesuits were "to teach not only Spanish boys (creoles, or Filipino natives of Spanish parentage) but also mestizos (Filipino natives of mixed parentage) and sons of the ruling (indigenous) native families"[65]; hence, "not only a school for Spanish boys (creoles), but also a *seminario* or boarding school for (indigenous) natives and mestizos."[66]

And the school was intended, not only to prepare the natives for the local magistracy as town governors and village headmen, but also for the ecclesiastical career and priestly ministry; that is why Sedeño and Sanchez proposed in 1583 that "to make a beginning, a class of grammar and one of moral theology could be opened"; and in 1595, as soon as the personnel was available, Sedeño actually made the start offering "two courses, one in moral theology for candidates for holy orders, and another in grammar for Spanish boys (creoles, Filipino natives of Spanish parentage)."[67] That is the

[64] Ibid., 172-173.
[65] Ibid., 63.
[66] Ibid., 75.
[67] Ibid., 63, 134.

way how the Jesuits understood their colleges in those days, as we may see in the directives of their General Acquaviva to the Philippine Jesuits in 26 March 1604: "A college should then be established . . . where courses in moral theology and native languages *for the diocesan clergy* can be given."[68]

We do not know whether among the *candidates for holy orders* referred to by Sedeño, there were any Filipino natives. Certainly, the Jesuit vice-provincial did not exclude them; most probably there were among them some Filipino natives of Spanish or mixed parentage (creoles or mestizos), though not yet any indigenous natives. As it has been wisely remarked, the efflorescence of priestly vocations "demands a certain degree of civilization below which it is impossible. It would be difficult, for instance, to encounter suitable material for the priesthood among a people just beginning to organize into stable political communities. Now the (indigenous) Filipinos during the early years of the Spanish colonization were just such a people"[69]; hence, we may well take for granted that at the end of the 16th century most probably there were hardly to be found any candidate for the priesthood among the indigenous natives. But most certainly we can affirm that it was not because they were excluded or considered inept due to any race prejudice. We have already cited enough testimonies of the high regard the Spanish missionaries had of the natural talents they noticed among the indigenous native boys, and their aptitude to become, not only catechists and companions of the missionaries, but also missionaries themselves.

And it seems they were but too eager, even rather overzealous, at times, to admit native candidates for the priesthood – as Bishop Salazar remarked of the religious orders in those days –; and, as regards the indigenous natives, they tried to provide them as soon as possible with the proper and fitting environment to foster prospective or budding priestly vocations, not only by giving them truly Christian homes and schools, but even, in the absence of a Minor Seminary or a Cathedral school, establishing for them what the Jesuits called "seminarios", i.e., pre-seminary boarding elementary

[68] Ibid., 260.

[69] Horacio de la Costa, S.J., "The Development of the Native Clergy in the Philippines," *Theological Studies* 8 (1947): 230.

schools that were to start "from the first letters of the alphabet to the faculties of arts and theology", where prospective indigenous native vocations to the diocesan priesthood might be fostered. That such was the meaning of the word "seminarios" in Jesuit nomenclature appears clear from the very words of their General Acquaviva in the directives of 26 March 1604: "boarding schools for both Spaniards and natives, in order that as this educational work develops, some of the students trained by us may be found worthy of being ordained and put in charge of the parishes by the bishop."[70]

Such was, among others founded from the beginning by the Jesuits in the Visayas islands, the Colegio de San Jose in Manila opened by Prat in 1596 as a "seminario" for indigenous natives forming "part of the College of Manila", where the boys "were to live together in community under a Jesuit priest and brother, and receive instruction in Christian doctrine, reading, writing, vocal and instrumental music and handicrafts. *In addition to educating Filipino boys (*indigenous natives and mestizos*),* the school would grant resident scholarships to poor Spaniards (Peninsular or Creole Filipino natives) who wished to study for the priesthood. This arrangement would provide them with excellent opportunities for learning the native languages while pursuing their seminary studies in the College of Manila."[71] That is, the school was "to educate Filipino boys (indigenous natives and mestizos) from the first letters of the alphabet to the faculties of arts and theology"; but since, as we have already remarked, it was hardly possible to expect in those days some priestly vocations among the indigenous natives, and since the school was intended, if not exclusively, at least ultimately indeed, to foster priestly vocations – and that is why the Colegio de San Jose was a real Seminary-College, the first in the Philippines, and most probably the oldest Seminary for natives called to the diocesan priesthood in the Orient –; therefore, in Sedeño's plan the school was to offer a course "in grammar (Latinity or Minor Seminary studies) for Spanish boys (i.e. Creole Filipino natives)", and in Prat's arrangement the school would grant "resident scholarships to poor Spaniards (as

[70] H. de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines* 1581-1768, 260.
[71] Ibid., 172.

above, Filipino natives also) who wished to study for the priesthood." But this was to be *"in addition to* (the main purpose of) educating *Filipino boys* (indigenous natives and mestizos)", and hence, not to the exclusion of these last, if there were to be found any prospective vocation among them, from the studies of the priestly career. As a matter of fact, we know from the very testimony of Archbishop Benavides in 1599 that "the fathers of the Society of Jesus admit into their classes (sc. of grammar and theology) mulattoes and mestizos"[72] as a common case, which seems to imply the possibility of some, perhaps quite few, instances of full-blooded Filipinos among those "boys in the city who had learned their first letters (probably in the *seminario* for indigenous natives started by Prat during 1596-1599) and were waiting to enroll"[73] in 1599 at the grammar school.

In conclusion, the *Colegio de San Jose,* although originally intended by its first founder governor Luis Perez Dasmariñas, to be a hall or college residence for (twelve) Spanish scholars "of good birth"(mostly, creoles or Filipino natives from Spanish parents "of good standing" among the settlers); *actually,* it was established by the same founder and the Jesuits in 1596 as a real *Seminary College for Filipino natives,* including during the first few years a pre-seminary boarding elementary school where prospective indigenous native

[72] Ibid., 571.

[73] Ibid., 181. Hence, we can hardly admit that "San Jose was founded primarily for the education of 'Spaniards of good birth'" or that "pure-blooded Filipinos began to be admitted in the early 1660s" and still then "only in the capacity of domestics who were not taught much more than the three R's, Christian doctrine, and deportment" (Ibid., 571). What then were taught those indigenous native boys admitted in the boarding elementary school opened by Prat as the first stage of the Colegio de San Jose, with government subsidy transferred from the original aim in favor of Spanish boys to a college of indigenous natives, in 1595? Were the indigenous native boys refused in Manila until the early 1660s, what the Jesuits were giving them in the school of their Visayas mission stations since 1593? How could Sanchez report in 1588 that the indigenous native boys were "very intelligent," and could learn "our alphabet, language, culture . . . and many of them could be missionaries and catechists themselves. Teachers of reading and writing could be recruited from them, and almost the whole charge and care of the boarding school could be transferred to them, for the work they are now doing for the other religious communities and in our own house proves that they are quite capable of all these things" (Ibid., 119).

vocations to the diocesan priesthood might be fostered; and then, the Seminary-College proper where those indigenous native vocations might be cultivated and brought to maturity in the attached *Colegio de Manila,* where together with Jesuit scholastics and other *Filipino* students, natives of Spanish or mixed parentage, they would follow courses in grammar (Latinity), arts (Philosophy), and Theology, in preparation for the sacred ministry.

This was indeed the initial realization of Bishop Salazar's golden dream back in 1581 (some 18 years only after the Tridentine decree on Seminaries), namely, the foundation of a school "to support poor students, in which according to the decrees of the Holy Council, the ministers who may afterward serve more properly (sc. than the religious) in the divine worship and churches of our Diocese (i.e., the diocesan native priests) may be educated and instructed" in such a way that "as soon as the virtue and aptitude of these *(indigenous)* natives is duly seen and known, the ecclesiastical benefices be granted and by right should belong to the same *indigenous* natives."[74]

The *Colegio de San Jose* as started by Prat in 1596 was indeed the Seminary *College of natives* planned by Bishop Salazar from the day he took possession of the Diocese of Manila in 1581, proposed by the Jesuits again and again since 1583, endorsed by Governors Ronquillo in 1583, De Vera in 1587, Dasmariñas in 1595 and Tello in 1599; recommended by the cathedral chapter of Manila in 1583 and in 1599, urged by the audiencia and the bishop of Cebu in 1599, and earnestly approved by king Philip II in 1585. Church and State have thought of it and longed for it from the early years of the Spanish regime in the Islands: the long waited for college of natives that was to be the first seminary for the diocesan priesthood.

Bishop Salazar's dream began to become true after some 14 years: the great Dominican did not live to see it since he was called to his reward a year earlier, on 4 December 1549; but the efforts of this first Bishop of the Philippines were finally achieved by the zeal of the Jesuits whom he himself led to our country: and the

[74] Letter of Bishop Domingo Salazar, O.P., for the execution of the Bull of erection of his Diocese of Manila, 21 December 1581: cf. Campo, Fermin, *El Seminario Conciliar de Manila – Guion Historico*, Seminario de San Carlos, Mandaluyong, Rizal, 8-X-1950, nn. 3-4.

Philippines can well glory of having its first Seminary College – in all probability the first in the whole Orient – as early as 1595.

Soon "the grammar and moral theology classes in the College of Manila (to which the *Colegio de San Jose* was attached) settled down to serious work. It is not known how many students there were in the moral theology class. In the grammar class (Latinity) there were 18 or 20 in 1596-1597, 30 in 1597-1598, somewhat more than that in 1598- 1599, and at the beginning of the next school year it became necessary to form two classes of grammar, one for beginners and another for the more advanced.

"On 28 June 1597 Governor Tello ahead, recommended to Madrid that the College of Manila be authorized to open courses leading to a university degree, 'for the sake of *the students of this country* which is so far away from the universities of Europe.' There were, then, some at least in Montoya's class (of grammar) who showed an interest in and capacity for higher studies."[75]

To make similar recommendations in Rome before the Jesuit General the Philippine vice-province sent as procurator Francisco de Vera, S.J. on 8 of July 1598.[76] "The governor, the audiencia, the bishop of Cebu and the cathedral chapter of Manila were all sending strong representations to Madrid that the college be authorized to grant university degrees. The two grammar masters reported that eight or ten of their students would be ready to begin the arts course the following term."[77]

At this point someone might ask again the intriguing question: What were those 30 students of grammar (Latinity), ten of whom were ready to begin the arts (philosophy) course in 1599? And again our answer is this: in all probability, most of them, if not all, were *Filipino natives,* true Filipinos, and not Spanish immigrants or Peninsular Spaniards. The great majority, it is true, were most probably Creoles, Filipino natives called "*Spanish boys" because* of their parentage; a number of them, we know for sure from Bishop Salazar's own testimony[78] in 1599, were Filipino natives of mixed parentage,

[75] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 173-174.
[76] Ibid., 177.
[77] Ibid., 181.
[78] Ibid., 571.

mestizos and mulattoes; and a few might have been *indigenous natives,* full-blooded Filipinos, as we may possibly infer from the report made in 1599 that "there were *boys in the city* who had learned their first letters (probably some of them came from the boarding elementary school started by Prat for indigenous natives some three years before) and were waiting to enroll the following year"[79] in the grammar school. The *Colegio de San Jose,* forming part of the *Colegio de Manila,* was indeed a *Seminary for natives,* for Filipinos: its pre-seminary department, the boarding elementary school, for *indigenous natives,* for full-blooded Filipino children among whom some prospective vocation might be found; and its minor and major seminary departments, also for *Filipino natives*, although mostly not of the indigenous race which nevertheless was not excluded and could have been actually represented in one or other instance.

Unfortunately the precarious conditions of the colony did not allow a lasting success to this first attempt at a *Seminary* for *indigenous native vocations* in the Philippines. Due to *lack of funds* the project so generously backed by Governors Dasmariñas and Tello, and so earnestly started and doggedly given a trial for some three or four years by the Jesuits, had at the end to be given up, for the time being, at least partially with respect to the boarding elementary school for indigenous natives. "On 6 July 1601 Governor Tello wrote to the king that the whole project had fallen through, *because of lack of funds."*[80] However, the new Jesuit vice-provincial Diego Garcia did not desist from the noble plans of his predecessors, and on that same year, less than two months Tello's report to the king, on 25 August 1601, obtained due permission to open the so-called "Colegio y Seminario de San Jose" as a residential college for the *youth of the city* – this time there was *no restrictive clause* in favor of Spanish boys, as in the former Dasmariñas original foundation – to "be formed and trained in right conduct and letters, and *to train ministers* of *the gospel of whom this country stands in need."*[81]

In that same year, 1601, thirteen boarding scholars paying a modest board and lodging fee inaugurated the course of arts together

[79] Ibid., 181.
[80] Ibid., 173.
[81] Ibid., 196.

with other day scholars and Jesuit scholastics. This was not anymore – it is true – the *pre-seminary* elementary school for indigenous natives we found in the *Colegio de San Jose* in 1596; but still it was a real Seminary for Filipino natives, as before, with five years grammar school (Latinity) as a pre-requisite for the arts course (philosophy) leading to the theology course opened for those who aspired to the priesthood.

As the subsequent event belongs already to the 17th century we shall reassume their development in the next chapter.

B.2. The Colegio de San Ildefonso (Cebu, 1598)

Father Antonio Pereira, S.J. arrived in Cebu in the middle of August 1595, just on time to receive from the dying first Jesuit vice-provincial Father Antonio Sedeno, the founder of *Colegio de Manila* (or *de San Ignacio),* his assignment to work in the new Jesuit house in Cebu. Pereira had the chance, just a few months before, to see with his own eyes the wonderful effects obtained in Tigbauan, Panay, by the elementary school for indigenous natives and the first "seminario" for Filipino natives of Spanish parentage started in 1593 (as we shall soon see) by his present superior in Cebu, Father Pedro Chirino, S.J. Hence, with Chirino's approval, inspiration and cooperation, Pereira soon opened in 1595 in Cebu a similar "free primary school in which he taught Christian doctrine, reading, writing, arithmetic and deportment. The school was originally intended for Spanish children (i.e., Creole Filipino natives), but *Visayan (indigenous natives)* and Chinese ("sangleyes") *pupils were apparently admitted as well."*[82]

When Pereira at the end of that year was called back to the Moluccas Jesuit mission whereto he belonged and which he left two years before to come to the Philippines on a political commision, Brother Gaspar Garay, S.J. took his place as teacher of the children in the free primary school opened in the Jesuit residence canonically established in Cebu on 21 August 1595 under the name of *Colegio de San Ildefonso.*

Three years later the Augustinian Most Rev. Fray Pedro de Agurto, elected first Bishop of Cebu arrived in Manila on 23 May 1598 in

[82] Ibid., 166.

the company of two Jesuits. He probably saw and heard of the promising fruits expected for the formation of a diocesan native clergy from the cherished project of the Jesuit vice-provincial Father Prat in Manila: the *Colegio de San Jose,* then starting even at the face of tremendous odds in the Jesuit residence *Colegio de San Ignacio* (de Manila). Could not something similar be done in their Jesuit residence Colegio de San Ildefonso in Cebu? "He asked Prat if he might take the two Jesuits in his entourage with him to Cebu to teach grammar (Latinity) both to those *(natives)* who had already learned their first letters in the primary school and to his nephews and other boys (Spaniards) who had come with him as members of his household."[83] Prat granted him one of them, a scholastic, Francisco Vicente Puche (or Puig, perhaps). "The grammar school was formally inaugurated that same year with the presentation by the students of an academy in Latin and Spanish in honor of Bishop Agurto. It was held in the cathedral and lasted three hours. According to Chirino, the academy took the form of a *comedia* that is, a play in prose and verse, composed by Puche during his voyage from Manila to Cebu . . . Puche was already a deacon when he arrived and was priested by Bishop Agurto soon afterward.[84]

There is no doubt that Bishop Agurto's intention in establishing a grammar school (Latinity course) in the *Colegio de San Ildefonso* or Jesuit residence in Cebu, was to start a Seminary College whence future diocesan native vocations for the pastoral ministry of his flock might be obtained by a careful ecclesiastical training of the children "from the first letters of the alphabet (in the primary school) to the faculties of arts and theology" as the Jesuits intended to achieve in Manila. When Bishop Agurto recommended this project of the *Colegio de San Ildefonso* in Cebu to the royal munificence in 1600 he alleged that from those studies of Latinity started just two years before "a great fruit and profit follows *already, and still much greater is expected from the Ministers (of the Gospel) who are thus reared and trained for the churches of these islands".*[85]

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Colin, S.J., Francisco, *Labor evangelica*, ed. Pastells, S.J., (Pablo, Barcelona, 1900), t. II, 167; 249 nota; ap. Fermin del Campo, C.M., "Los Colegios de San Ildefonso y de San Carlos de Cebu," in *Seminarium*, December 1952, 2.

Here we have then, the second Seminary *College* planned now by the first Bishop of Cebu, the Augustinian Pedro Agurto, in the oldest Spanish settlement in the Philippines, the City of the Most Holy Name of Jesus (Cebu), as early as 1598, still in the 16th century! And it was a Seminary *for natives* from the primary or *pre-seminary* school to the grammar course, without any distinction or preference made – at least in the mention – between *natives* of Spanish parentage or of the indigenous race: all were equally given a chance to *be reared and trained* so as to become worthy *ministers* of the Gospel *for* the service of the *churches of these Islands,* according to the express intention of Bishop Agurto manifested to the Spanish government.

It is true that due to adverse circumstances, the grammar school (Latinity) was short-lived: it had to be discontinued early in the 17th century, and was closed down for lack of students just before its founder Bishop Agurto died; by 1609 it did not exist anymore. The *pre-seminary* elementary school however of the College of San Ildefonso or Jesuit residence in Cebu City did never cease to operate since its opening in 1595 to the day when the Jesuits were expelled from the Philippines in 1768. But for the purpose of our study, the lasting success of these early enterprises is not essential; for us it is enough to ascertain that in the Philippines at the end of the *16th century* there were already in operation, though at an initial stage, Two *Seminary Colleges,* one in the Archdiocese of Manila and the other in the suffraganean Diocese of Cebu, both of them opened and intended to foster *native,* nay as soon as possible *indigenous native* vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

C. The Jesuit "Seminaries" for Natives

Closely related to the *Seminary Colleges* mentioned above were the so-called *"Seminaries" for natives* which we shall study now. But before proceeding on, it may be opportune to clarify well the exact meaning of these words "seminary", and "college" which in the course of time and events have undergone quite different connotations, and thus may create confusions if understood in another sense of what they were supposed to convey.

The obvious meaning of "college" is generally that of a "school". Nevertheless, for the Jesuits, "college" is understood as one of their religious houses or a residence in which classes are conducted among other ministries both for extern students and for Jesuit scholastics. For this purpose it ought to be endowed with a stable and sufficient income; establishments where the income is not enough for the support of scholastics are to be reckoned as "inchoate" colleges, or colleges not yet "formed" or in the full sense. The *College for Manila* (or of St. Ignatius) was "formed" college while the *College of St. Ildefonsus* in Cebu was only an "inchoate" college. But both names refer properly and directly to the Jesuit residence where classes were given; indirectly or concomitantly they were applied to the schools maintained in those religious houses.

"College" may also mean a "society of scholars incorporated for study or instruction, especially in the higher branches of knowledge"; or, again, a hall or building for board and lodging of students of a certain school, as well as the institution formed by those students or residents of that hall; and not necessarily the school attended by those students. In this way was understood the *College of San Jose* in Manila, whose scholars attended classes at the *College of Manila.*

In this sense of "students' boarding house" spoke the Council of Trent when it ordered that each Diocese should have a "college of boys" near the Cathedral to rear and train them for the priesthood from the early years of their adolescence, in the hope that each one of these *"colleges"* may become a "perpetual *seed bed, (seminary)* of Ministers of God for the Diocese".

Hence, in the sense of the Council and of the Church, a "Seminary is a center or institution for the *exclusive* education of candidates or aspirants to the priesthood in the diocesan clergy. And in this specific sense, the first Bishop of the Philippines Domingo Salazar, O.P., as we have seen above, planned for a "Seminary" in Manila *since 1581,* but due to the odd circumstances of those times a real *Conciliar "Seminary",* a Diocesan Seminary as we call them today, could not be established *until 1702* when the *Seminary of San Carlos* for the archdiocese of Manila was founded. However Bishop Salazar's plan began in some way to be realized with the establishment in 1595 of the *College of San Jose* - though not strictly speaking a

Conciliar "Seminary" exclusively for aspirants to the diocesan priesthood but rather a "College" to train and prepare future leaders in the civil and ecclesiastical life of the country, nevertheless, it shared in the nature of a "Seminary" since at any rate it aimed ultimately to prepare, among other leaders, the future ministers of the Gospel, the diocesan priests of the Philippines. That was why the institution received the name of "Colegio y Seminario de San Jose"[86], and as the *Colegio de San Ildefonso* in Cebu we call it a *Seminary College*. Of the same kind were the *Colegio* (later *Universidad) de Santo Tomas,* and the *Colegio de San Juan de Letran* founded in Manila by the Dominicans in the 17th century.

For *Catholic Colleges* to aim at fostering possible ecclesiastical vocations among their lay students and even to provide for the ecclesiastical training of those who may be called to the priesthood, was a blessing especially in those times when Conciliar Seminaries were not yet established, mainly because of the penury of the Church and State: those Colleges that served though partially the purpose of a Seminary, the *Seminary Colleges,* filled the urgent need of those days, at least in some way. It was not the same in the case of the so-called *College-Seminaries* which were tried in the Philippines from 1865 to 1924: that is, Diocesan Seminaries that were opened to lay students pursuing secular careers, Seminaries that were to serve as Catholic Colleges at the same time. This odd mixture in the educative process of lay and clerical students proved in the long run to be harmful to the real purpose of a Seminary, and for that reason was finally interdicted by the Holy See.[87]

Finally, it is worth noticing that the word "seminary" was often used in its metaphorical sense of "seed bed", "nursery", during the 16th, 17th and even 18th centuries; and thus it was applied often, not precisely to the institutions for the training of candidates for the priesthood as it is now most commonly understood, but to "any *school or center for the education and training of children and youth",* since all such places or institutions were considered by all as "seed beds" or "nurseries" whence good citizens, cultured leaders, future civil officers

[86] Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines*, 79.

[87] Cf. Fermin del Campo, C.M., "Los Colegios de San Carlos y de San Ildefonso de Cebu," in *Seminarium*, March 1953, 2-5.

and *above all ministers of the Gospel* were brought up and produced. In this sense the above mentioned *Colleges* were called *Seminaries* (Seminary Colleges), and the *boarding elementary schools* founded by the Jesuits in their mission stations were similarly called *"seminarios",* "seminaries" though they might be simply primary schools. These are precisely the ones we are to examine now.

We have already seen that the first idea of establishing a *"seminario"* or boarding school for the education of the natives was presented to the General of the Jesuits in a recommendation sent by Fathers Ramon Prat and Hernan Suarez in 1585-1586. Later, towards 1588 Father Alonso Sanchez personally explained in Rome to the General Claudio Acquaviva that "by far the most important contribution the Society could make in the Philippines would be the establishment of a *seminary* or *a boarding school for (indigenous) native boys* and a college for Spanish students" (i.e. Filipino natives of Spanish parentage).[88]

This idea began to crystallize five years later, in 1593, when Father Pedro Chirino, S.J. and Brother Francisco Martin, S.J. established in Tigbauan (Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa's *encomienda* in Panay, 14 miles west of Arevalo or Oton, now incorporated into the city of Iloilo) a school where indigenous natives were taught religion, reading, writing, Spanish, liturgical music and to act as Mass servers, choristers, and catechists who, as the first apostles of Christ, were sent "in pairs to the outlying villages of the mission" and there, in "a small chapel of reeds... in the late afternoons after work in the fields, the young catechists gathered the villagers together and began to preach their own people, in their own language, the things of God."[89]

Soon the Spaniards of Arevalo asked Chirino to give the same education to their boys; but since the missionary was not to leave his Visayan boys of Tigbauan for the Spanish boys (Filipino natives of Spanish parentage) of Arevalo, he offered the latter a dormitory and school house near his rectory: and this became the *first Jesuit "seminario"* or *boarding elementary school* to be established *in the Philippines,* which in only two years succeeded to produce a worthy candidate

[88] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 75, 119.
[89] Ibid., 144.

for the diocesan clergy. The wildest boy of Arevalo, *Juan Nuñez Crespo* who came to the boarding school with the ambition of becoming the terror of Tigbauan, was so radically reformed that in 1621 he *was ordained a secular priest,* and lived so exemplarily that in 1634 he was already *Archdeacon and Vicar General of Cebu!*[90] This case is typical of what those "seminarios" or elementary boarding schools were meant to be: *pre-seminary* training schools that were to start "from the first letters of the alphabet" so as to lead prospective candidates "to the faculties of arts and theology" or as the General of the Jesuits put it: "boarding schools for both Spaniards (or Filipino natives of Spanish parentage) and natives (of the indigenous race and mestizos), in order that as this educational work develops, some of the students trained by us may be found worthy of being ordained and put in charge of the parishes by the bishop."[91]

Unfortunately this first "seminary" of Tigbauan had to be closed in 1595 when, due to lack of personnel, Father Chirino and Brother Martin were called from the Tigbauan mission to work in the new mission fields opened to the Jesuits in the islands of Leyte and Samar.

However, in that same year of 1595, as soon as Fathers Alonso de Humanes, S.J. and Juan del Campo, S.J. began their apostolate in Dulag, Leyte, they "set to work organizing a school. Some *sixty boys,* mostly the sons of datus, were *selected* from the three encomiendas of eastern Leyte, Palo, Dulag, and Abuyog. As in Chirino's school at Tigbauan, classes were held in Christian doctrine, reading, writing and music. However, Humanes improved on Chirino's idea by having the boys live in the Jesuit compound itself, in a house which he built for them with donations collected from the encomenderos. The school at Dulag was thus the first *seminario de indios* or boarding school for (indigenous) natives to be established by the (Jesuit) Philippine vice-province. It was a completely *free* school, the living expenses of the boys and the salary of a lay schoolmaster being paid for out of the annual stipend received by the missionaries."[92]

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[90] Cf. Fermin del Campo, "Los Colegios de San Ildefonso y de San Carlos de Cebu," *Seminarium*, December 1952, 28, nota 12.

[91] de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, 260, 63.

[92] Ibid., 159.

At the end of that year, 1595, the vice-provincial Father Prat was starting in Manila, as part of the College of Manila, the "*seminario"* or *boarding school for indigenous natives,* with the government subsidy originally offered for the *College of San Jose* and soon transferred to this *"seminario"* which thus became properly the first stage of the *Colegio de San Jose.* In the following years 1596-1598 Father Francisco Otazo, S.J., opened another similar "seminario" at Tinagon, Samar, and then, the "fiscal" (a kind of deacon without orders) of the mission station of Paranas, with the approval of the missionaries, started another "seminario" with over a hundred students, which had the special feature of being self-supporting: "the older boys did some fishing, and when the rice stocks ran low they simply went back to their clan villages for more."[93]

These were the various attempts undertaken by the Jesuit missionaries to foster priestly vocations among Filipino boys in the 16th century, that is, from the beginning of the evangelization of the Philippines.

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[93] Ibid., 163.