



# Portuguese Missionaries' Contribution to Japanese Linguistics

## On João Rodrigues and the Linguistic Outline in the First Japanese Grammar *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the early modern time of Japan, also regarded as the Warring State Period, Japan was suffering from intensive civil wars launched by daimyos with ambitions to unify the whole country. After Portuguese sailors' first visit to the Islands of Japan in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, agreements and disagreements between the oriental and occidental cultures took place, without doubt, in various aspects of the society like social theory, religion, education, art, technology and custom.

During this period, missionaries from the West such as St. Francisco Xavier, Matteo Ricci, and those having another occupations, such as *Nanban Tçuzu* (Portuguese interpreter) like Rodrigues and Frois, had played an important linking role in the communication between the West and the East. Besides, native Japanese enrolled in the seminaries, colleges, and churches established by the Jesuits to study Portuguese and Latin also held a material part in the cultural transmission

and trade negotiations between Japan and Europe. In a comparatively long period, the transmission and popularisation of the theory from the West had changed the world view of Japan's intellectuals, those who led the social reform in Japan afterwards. Moreover, in fact, the theory from the West had even changed the political vision of the Tokugawa shogunate, in which some enlightened decision-makers were equipped with adaptive foresight for the reform by receiving Western education that enabled them to make and implement policies in accordance with world trends. Simultaneously, the study of Japanese linguistics had been carried out by a growing number of Western missionaries, among which João Rodrigues was regarded as the founder of Japanology in Europe for his *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* (hereinafter referred as *Arte*) and *Arte Breve da Lingoa Iapoa* (hereinafter referred as *Arte Breve*).

This paper will attempt to study Rodrigues' linguistic outline in the compiling of the *Arte* and the effect of the western theory of linguistics.

### 2. JOÃO RODRIGUES AND THE BACKGROUND OF COMPILING THE *ARTE*

João Rodrigues had not received formal schooling before he arrived in Japan in 1577. In 1580, at the start of his academic career, Rodrigues entered the novitiate at Usuki, where he took some primary courses, after

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which he spent the following few years at a higher seminary for studying humanities such as Latin and arts, philosophy, natural science and Catholic theology. At the seminary in Funai, Rodrigues had the chance to meet Paulo Yōhō, a celebrated writer among the Jesuits of Japan, who was over 70 years old. Paulo had preached in his youth and had good medical skills and knowledge of literature. He had taken part in the translation of early Jesuit literature, such as *Santos' Work*. With the opportunity to learn from Paulo Yōhō, whose learning had reached a high degree of excellence, Rodrigues the young missionary must have benefited a lot both in knowledge and morality, through which, together with the fluent Japanese learnt in daily contacts with the local Japanese, he had grown into 'the first person proficient in Japanese'<sup>2</sup> among the Jesuits of Japan in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1608 and 1620, Rodrigues published two very influential grammars: *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* and *Arte Breue da Lingoa Iapoa*, in which he insisted on perfect Japanese expression, and to discover the origin and development of Japanese. The two grammars are not only ample in content, even with the chapter discussing the relation between the original *Taiheiki* and *Jesuit Edition of Taiheiki-Nukigaki* included, but also have explicit characteristics from other Japanese grammars and reflect Rodrigues' view on Japanese study.

## 2.1. LEXICOGRAPHICAL MOVEMENT OF NON-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES STARTED BY THE PORTUGUESE

In accordance with relevant studies, the first modern grammar in Europe is *Gramática Castellana* written by Nebrija in 1492,<sup>3</sup> before which only those ancient languages such as Greek, Hebrew and Latin are said to have been systematically studied by priests and nobles only.

The publication of Nebrija's *Gramática Castellana* pushed forward the lexicography of the other languages in Europe. Among them, the first French grammar written by Barkley was finished in 1521, and the Italian one was published by Bembo in 1528. The Portuguese ones were published respectively by Fernão de Oliveira and João de Barros in 1536 and 1540, and afterwards the German one written by Albrecht and the English one written by Bullocae came out in quick succession.

The advent of the Great Navigation Era, under Portugal's world hegemony, marks the commencing of the lexicography of non-European Languages, in

which Portuguese sailors and missionaries are not frustrated by unknown languages. Instead, they firstly analyse them with the Latin grammar, and for parts to which Latin is not applicable, they apply the modern European grammar.

According to the Portuguese linguist Prof. Buescu, an elementary series for education and preaching called *Cartinha* has played an important role as an intermediary in the lexicographical development of unknown languages.<sup>4</sup> This series demonstrates the Portuguese writing and pronunciation in its first part and lists some simple doctrines after learners are capable of reading, for which it is called an introduction series for Mass used by missionaries. It is alleged that the *Doctrine of Catholic* used by Xavier in the early mission of Japan is modeled on Barros' *Cartinha para aprender a ler*.<sup>5</sup> Another example is the bilingual book entitled *Cartinha em Tamul e Português* published in 1554, in which the author attempts to make a comparative analysis to the structure of the Tamil and Portuguese languages.

Furthermore, Father Henrique Henriques<sup>6</sup> published *Arte Malabar* in 1561 for the language of southwestern India and Father José de Anchieta<sup>7</sup> published his *Arte de Gramatica da Lingua mais usada na Costa do Brasil* in 1595.<sup>8</sup> Besides the plan of standard Latin grammar, both grammars have adopted a variety of Portuguese examples and quotations, which is an attempt to supplement the Latin grammar with modern grammar (Portuguese grammar). The lexicography movement of non-European languages started by the Portuguese finally spread to Japan in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century during which Rodrigues had compiled his *Arte* in Nagasaki from 1604 to 1608, and published his *Arte Breue* in Macao in 1620.

In short, the modern lexicographical movement of European languages, beginning with the publication of the Spanish grammar, *Gramatica de la lengua Castellana* turned out to be a worldwide movement with some non-European





languages in Asia and South America engaged. The end of this movement was marked by Rodrigues' *Arte Breve* published in 1620 in Macao.

2.2 JAPANESE STUDIES CAMPAIGN LED BY THE JESUIT

It is indisputable that the *Arte* did not appear accidentally. In fact, after Xavier's arrival in 1549, the Jesuits' studies of Japanese linguistics had undergone several stages in which some significant achievements had been made by the Jesuit missionaries.

Juan Fernandez, the Spanish youth who followed Francisco Xavier to Japan, is the first missionary who studied Japanese hard and was proficient in Japanese. Living in Japan for 15 years and encouraged by Luís Fróis, he commenced compiling a Japanese grammar, a Japanese-Portuguese dictionary and a Portuguese-Japanese dictionary in 1564, and these were later supplemented and modified both in form and content by Fróis. Prior to Fernandez' works, another mission veteran, Duarte da Silva, who died in Kawajiri of Higo in 1563, is also reported to have composed a Japanese grammar. Nevertheless, their works were presumably only personal notes of language studies.<sup>9</sup>

There existed in the Jesuit Archives relevant records of Fernandez' *Japanese lexicon and grammar* and Duarte da Silva's *Arte da Lingua Japoneza* compiled in 1564. Moreover, in 1583, there were a number of works on Japanese grammar, Latin grammar and Japanese semantics published.<sup>10</sup> Despite none of them having been preserved to this day, they actually laid down a foundation for the forthcoming *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam* (hereinafter referred as *Vocabulario*) and the *Arte*. As regards this, Tadao Doi, the Japanese translator of the *Arte*, points out that

As for the conversion of pagans, the Jesuit that determined to develop new missions in other continents had adopted suitable solutions for different peoples. In order to grasp the thinking of the local people and enable them to understand the Christianity, the Jesuits had placed extreme importance to language studying and set out to compile grammars for non-European languages to improve the efficiency of learning. Modeled on the plan of Latin which is letter based, these works are all arranged alphabetically.<sup>11</sup>

As the official language of the Jesuits, Latin was used in almost all the Jesuit schools for missionary tuition. As early as 1590 the *consulta* at Katsusa had



urged Valignano to produce a Japanese dictionary, suggesting that a committee of Japanese and European Jesuits should be set up to superintend the work. In fact, the need for such a book was evident if newly arrived missionaries were to receive efficient language tuition. Although there already existed handwritten lists of Japanese vocabulary, those could not meet the urgent need of the Jesuits for Japanese tuition. Consequently, a number of grammars appeared as required. In the event, the first language book was a Latin grammar entitled *Emmanuelis Alvares e Societate Iesu De Institutione Grammatica Libri Tres* (hereinafter referred as *De Institutione Grammatica*),<sup>12</sup> which was an abridged version of Manuel Alvarez' renowned Latin grammar, especially adapted for use in Japan. Published in Amakusa in 1594, the work was the second grammar published outside Europe, next to the Mexican one in 1579. The work was the very grammar that the Jesuits had been looking for and it was used as a textbook for language studying in the Jesuit schools, including the

novitiate established by the Jesuit in 1580, for over two centuries. In 1595, one year later, the *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum* was published.<sup>13</sup> The work, which included more than 30,000 entries was modeled on Calepino's renowned Latin-Italian dictionary, under the title of *Cornucopia*. In 1598, the Japanese dictionary of kanji, entitled *Rakuyōshū*, was published by the Jesuit press.<sup>14</sup> The *Rakuyōshū* came in three parts: Part One, entitled *Rakuyōshū honpen*, gave Japanese reading of kanji and kanji compounds according to Chinese pronunciation 'koē'; Part Two, entitled *Irohajishū*, gave Chinese pronunciation of kanji and kanji compounds according to Japanese reading 'yomi'; and Part Three, *Shōgyokuhēn* gave the pronunciation and readings of kanji according to radicals 'bushu'. With the three parts, the work 'has processed almost all the essential functions of a dictionary'.<sup>15</sup>

In 1590, when the Kyushu delegates returned after their successful expedition to Europe, they brought back with them a printing press with metal Latin type, which thereafter brought a rapid development to the editing and printing of books in Japan. During his first visit to Japan, Valignano had been planning to use the press to produce books on Christianity and faith and make them widely disseminated around the country, so as to make up for the lack of missionaries and improve the efficiency of preaching. Accordingly, Valignano had made a plan that

As soon as I reach Japan, I have decided to have made, with the help of God and with all diligence, a kind of Calepino, with which one can study the Latin and Japanese languages at the same time, and also an *arte* (grammar). These two books are at present the most needed, both for our men from Europe to learn Japanese easily as well as for the Japanese to learn Latin.<sup>16</sup>

Before Valignano reached Japan for his second visit, machine printing had been widely used. In 1603, the celebrated *Vocabulario* with more than 30,000 entries was published and its addendum was finished in 1604. The *Vocabulario* not only translated Japanese into Portuguese word by word, but also added, as required, plenty of examples and near-synonyms. On this account, the work was considered as a modern dictionary for both its plan and scale. Actually, quotations for near-synonyms and special usage of words had been used in *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum, ac*

*Iaponicum* on which the *Vocabulario* is said to be based, but it pays more attention to practicability and seeks to 'be a capable helper for Japanese learners'.<sup>17</sup> The Bodleian Library, Oxford, possesses a copy of both the *Vocabulario* and its supplement bound together in one volume. The dictionary runs to a formidable total of 660 pages, while the supplement extends to 142 pages, each page carrying two columns of text. The value of this great dictionary, containing a total of 32,798 entries, is considerable. Words proper to the Miyako area, as well as those found in Kyushu are carefully noted; special attention is paid to the elegant pronunciation of the capital. Poetic and literary terms, and also women's words and common expression, are duly listed and explained. Quotations for the Japanese classics, such as *Heike Monogatari*, and popular proverbs are liberally included to clarify the meaning of particular terms. In view of the importance of this dictionary to Japanese linguistic studies and of the abundant historical materials relating to Jesuit work in Japan at this time, it is rather remarkable that little is known about the identity of its compiler. The title page merely states that the work was composed by 'some Father and Brothers of the Society of Jesus'. The 1602 annual letter does not add much further information, only noting that work on the copious dictionary had almost been completed.

More than four years have been spent by a priest, who most diligently has done the work together with various Japanese. Without any doubt the book will be of the greatest use for those coming to the country for the first time.<sup>18</sup>

If there is doubt about the identity of the dictionary's editor, there can be none whatsoever about the name of the author of the remarkable *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*, for the title page clearly bears the name Father João Rodrigues of the Society of Jesus. Rodrigues is presumed to have compiled this monumental work from 1604 to 1608. In the introduction, Rodrigues explains that the purpose of the *Arte* was that 'Superiors ordered me to compile an *Arte*, in which, in addition to the conjugations and rudiments, there might be a simple explanation of the rules and precepts, by which one may learn to speak correctly and elegantly.'<sup>19</sup>

Rodrigues' pioneer work was followed by a number of Jesuits, through whose numerous attempts, modifications and supplements, many monumental



Japanese works appeared. Statistics show that the number of works on grammar, history, and linguistics published from 1590 to 1611 was up to 30 books. However, due to Tokugawa shogunate's policy of isolation, the Jesuit missionaries dedicated to Japanese study were expelled from the country in 1610, which led to the decline of lexicography. Rodrigues' *Arte Breve* published in 1620 marks the end of the Japanese study movement.

### 3. CONTENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE *ARTE*

When exactly Rodrigues compiled the *Arte* is not known, but it is reasonable to presume that it was composed by Rodrigues alone at the same time as another remarkable dictionary, the *Vocabulario*, which was edited by a group of lexicographers.<sup>20</sup> However, the compilation of the *Arte* was finished later than the *Vocabulario*. The *Arte* being checked and approved by the Jesuits of Japan, its printing is presumed to commence from 1604 for the title page bears the date 1604, while at the end of the book, there is a reference to 'the present year of 1608'.<sup>21</sup> It is implied by the discrepancy that the bulk of the book was printed in 1604 and the rest was printed in 1608. In all probability, as some scholars presumed, the Jesuits' difficulties in Japan contributed to the delay in printing, for the *Arte*, whose bulk had been printed, had to make way for those books or documents prepared for the difficulties.<sup>22</sup> After all, there is no doubt that the grammar was published during the four years from 1604 to 1608. For the motive of compiling the *Arte*, Rodrigues noted in the prologue that

Superiors had long desired to bring out such a grammar, but had been unable to do so because of the demand of pastoral work. But now there was greater opportunity, and they ordered me to produce an *arte*.<sup>23</sup>

Rodrigues explained that the purpose of the *Arte* was that 'our Fathers and Brothers from Europe and India may learn the language of this nation with greater facility'. With this in mind, 'Superiors ordered me to compile an *arte*, in which, in addition to the conjugation and rudiments, there might be a simple explanation of the rules and precepts, by which one may learn to speak correctly and elegantly'. He continued:

I have used various annotations that some of our

Fathers have made on this subject and are distributed on handwritten copies; and I have used various other things that I have noted throughout many years and that I have learned from Japanese who are very well informed about their languages and letters.<sup>24</sup>

It is beyond all doubt that Rodrigues not only referred to some annotations that some Brothers had made, but also based his work on Alvarez' remarkable Latin grammar. Most of the *Arte* is written in Latin, but for better understanding of the beginner, Portuguese and Japanese is frequently used in dealing with the reflection, conjugation, gender and number of Japanese. In his *Arte*, Rodrigues divided the Japanese grammar in to three parts, in which the first deals with the declension of nouns and pronouns, and the conjugation of verbs; the second, the eight parts of speech; the third, the syntax or the structure of the language. Among them, Part I and Part II are modeled on Alvarez' Latin grammar, while Part III is entirely original. This system of adaptation has obvious disadvantages, for it leads to a good deal of repetition and overlapping of material, and does not lend itself to teaching the spoken language. A further drawback arising from copying the Latin grammar is that Japanese is not an inflected language, and there is little profit in solemnly listing the nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, and ablative cases.

What was required, of course, was an entirely different approach to an entirely different language. Rodrigues was no fool and he probably appreciated the inadequacy of transforming a Latin grammar into a Japanese one, and as the book progressed his independence on Alvarez lessens until he eventually abandoned the Latin model completely. For example, Rodrigues quoted freely from the classics to illustrate points of grammar and syntax. The prize goes to *Heike Monogatari*, for this work is quoted more than 90 times. The Japanese versions of *Aesop's Fables* and of *Confucius' Analects* each provide some 40 quotations. Michael Cooper asserts

Of special interest are the numerous references made to the various *monogatari* printed by the Jesuit press. There are stories written, in at least some cases by Brother Paulo Yōhō, in colloquial Japanese; such, for example, were *Kurofune Monogatari* and *Bungo Monogatari*. None of these works has survived until present day and nothing more is known of their contents except

the quotations found in the *Vocabulario* and Rodrigues' *Arte*.<sup>25</sup>

For the general reader who has no particular interest in the niceties of Japanese grammar, the second half of the *Arte* has undoubtedly a greater appeal, for it is here that Rodrigues wisely abandoned the plan of Alvarez and showed more originality. The *Arte* was intended for newly arrived missionaries, and the author was determined to pack in every scrap of information which could possibly be of some use. He talked about the linguistic errors commonly made by foreigners and about the difficulty of translating Portuguese into Japanese, advising the reader to translate the sense of a passage and not try to render it word for word. Warming to his subject, he stressed the need to learn elegant Japanese, and remarked: 'The language of Miyako is the best and should be imitated as regards pronunciation and vocabulary.'<sup>26</sup>

Portuguese and Latin pronunciation forms the basis of Rodrigues' transliteration. His system, differing only slightly from that employed in the *Vocabulario*, was completely consistent. Rodrigues is acclaimed as the forerunner of the modern Hepburn system of Romanisation used today.

In Book III of the *Arte*, Rodrigues gave up all pretense of writing about grammar in any accepted sense of the term. Instead, he talked happily about literary style, and then spent more than a dozen pages listing the rules of etiquette and the technical terms employed when writing formal letters. All the necessary information about inscriptions, signatures, style of contents, and even the types of paper used in writing these letters would have been found in his *Arte*.<sup>27</sup> What is more, he listed the titles of state officials, from *Kampaku* and great offices of Minister of the Left and Minister of the Right down to lowly officials. In the course of the description he threw in a complete list of the 66 provinces, including the number of their respective *gun*, or districts. There was no stopping Rodrigues now, and he eagerly continued with a short but detailed treatise on the complicated and regionally varying systems of weights, measures, and numbers. He gave a conversion table of money, and next set about describing the complexities of the Japanese calendar. Before starting to give a long list of Japanese emperors, Rodrigues decided to talk about the origin of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism in China. He then turned to Japanese history, and named

the legendary gods and goddesses to be found in such ancient chronicles as *Nihonshuki* and *Kojiki*.

Although most of the historians studying history in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Japan showed a positive attitude for the *Arte*, it inevitably came in for a certain amount of criticism on account of its unwieldy length, lack of method, and irrelevant material.<sup>28</sup> It has to be admitted that the *Arte* leaves something to be desired as a grammar of the Japanese language.

Rodrigues probably realised as much himself even before the book was published. He noted apologetically in the preface that

Explanation of some things in this book is a little diffuse. But the language is so strange and foreign that it is better to explain things clearly and well, rather than merely list compendious rules full of obscurities. I will provide plenty of things which may not be easily met by the teachers.<sup>29</sup>

However, better things were in store for those just beginning to study Japanese, for the author went on to promise that 'there will be produced a brief extract of the whole of this treatise so that they will not be confused by the variety of rules and explanations.'<sup>30</sup>

#### 4. ARTE DA LINGOA DE IAPAM AND DE INSTITUTIONE GRAMMATICA

The Society of Jesus, which was founded by Ignatius de Loyola in 1534 and recognised by Pope Paul III in 1540, was an influential Catholic society during the two centuries after its foundation. The Jesuits were well-known in the fields of education and intellectual research. In addition to establishing seminaries, schools, and Catholic colleges, they published books in various fields including not only theology and philosophy but also linguistics, geography, folklore, astronomy, and physics.

Since Latin is universally used in Catholicism, the language of education must be based on Latin. The initial Latin grammar adopted universally by the Society of Jesus around the world is Alvarez' renowned Latin grammar, which was first published in 1572, and an adapted edition entitled *Emmanuelis Alvares e Societate Iesu De Institutione Grammatica Libri Tres*, appeared in Amakusa in 1594. After Alvarez' work, Rodrigues published his remarkable *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* in Nagasaki between 1604 to 1608. Tadao Doi asserts when commenting the two works edited by the Jesuits:



Although the Amakusa edition of Manuel Alvarez' *Emmanuelis Alvari e Societate Iesu De Institutione Grammatica Libri Tres* in 1594 is a grammar for Latin, the quotation for Japanese grammar is an indispensable part of it, by which, one may presume that Rodrigues' *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* is somewhat based on Alvarez' work.<sup>31</sup>

In view of the importance of Rodrigues' *Arte* to the study of Japanese, it is necessary to find out which book and, more importantly, what theory and linguistic framework of the book, affected the compiling of the *Arte*. Therefore, this part of the study will attempt to compare the *Arte* with the renowned *De Institutione Grammatica*, in order to prove that it was the western theory of linguistics and, especially the Latin grammar that affected the compiling of the *Arte*.

#### 4.1. HISTORIC STATUS OF ALVAREZ' *DE INSTITUTIONE GRAMMATICA*

The study of language in Europe commenced in Greece from the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., in which grammar was classified as philosophy. In the early part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C., a huge library was built in Alexander, the colony of Greece, after which the city became an influential centre of literature and language studies. At that time, scholars in Alexander were proceeding with the work to compare, restore and identify the manuscripts of such deceased writers as Homeros. In view of the difference between the language used in the manuscript and that in Alexander, works on manuscript analysing and grammar studying appeared to solve problems in reading the early works. In the later 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., a grammar system was created by Dionysius Thrax who distinguished words according to case, gender, number, tense, etc. About 300 years later in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., Apollonius Dyscolus expounded on the Greek with his *Syntactic Phenomena*. As early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C. or even earlier, the Greek culture was highly praised by Rome nobles and thus Greece was taken as a standard of Latin.<sup>32</sup>

Alvarez' grammar was adapted over two centuries as a textbook by missionary schools, including those in Japan, after its publication in Lisbon in 1572. In 1590, the western printing press with metal Latin type assisted the publishing of a number of textbooks, among which Alvarez' work was the first Latin book printed. And

what is more, the work was the second Latin textbook outside Europe later than the one published in Mexico in 1579.

In *A 'Japanese Grammar' Printed at Nagasaki and a 'Latin Grammar' Printed at Amakusa*, Tadao Doi writes that

His (Alvarez') *De Institutione Grammatica* has been renowned and used by the Jesuit schools since it was published for the first time in Lisbon in 1572. The work, or parts of it, has been printed in so many editions: 15 published in the 1570s, 17 in the 1580s, and 20 in the 1590s. After the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the publication has achieved a rapid growth, which amounts to more than 300 editions.<sup>33</sup>

In Ieiri Toshimitsu's comment upon Alvarez' *De Institutione Grammatica*, he summarises its features as follows.

Published for the first time in 1572, the *De Institutione Grammatica* has been adopted widely as a standard work of Latin used by the Jesuit schools over Europe. In addition to the first one, there existed numerous editions published in the United Kingdom, German, France and many other countries in West Europe; and at the same time, it was also used by missionaries in Japan and China. The most distinctive feature of the Amakusa edition is the conjugation of verbs which was given in volume I, page 24 to 124. The editor classifies the conjugation of verbs into three columns as Latin, Japanese and Portuguese and adds explanatory quotations. In addition, when it comes to the formation of Latin words and sentences, the editor provides corresponding occasional examples in Japanese. Furthermore, examples in Japanese are also used to illustrate the inflection of nouns... to make it easier for the Japanese readers. As mentioned above, despite differences from the original one, the Amakusa edition does not lose the plan and style of the original work.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.2. SIMILARITIES OF THE TWO GRAMMARS

In Alvarez' Latin grammar, occasional examples and explanations were given in Portuguese in the first section, which dealt with the inflection of Latin. However, in numerous translations into various languages, Portuguese examples and explanations were

usually replaced by those in other languages, while in the edition published in Amakusa explanations in Japanese were added. Nevertheless, such additions covered only the part dealing with the conjugation of verbs. Alvarez began his work by declining the word *dominus* (lord) and, in the Amakusa edition, it is noted in explaining declension that Japanese particles function as the case declension of Latin, which is apparently a conclusion made by comparing the particles in Japanese that indicate case and plural with the declension of Latin. In view of the editor's profoundness and meticulousness in the study of Japanese particles, the Amakusa edition listed, in politeness order, such particles indicating nominative as *wa, ga, no, yori* and those indicating plural as *tachi, shu, domo, ra*. Corresponding to the four main patterns of conjugation in Latin, the editor listed example sentences in each of the four Japanese verbs, *omou, oshiyuru, yomu* and *kiku*, were included. The editor then listed the suffixes of the four verbs; the first conjugation is *oshie*, the second conjugation, *yomi* and *kiki*, and the third conjugation, *omoi*, which is similar to the categorisation of *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*. Hereby, it is reasonable to conclude that the policy of categorising Japanese verbs into three conjugations was proposed before Rodrigues, for which, Tadao Doi asserts:

The Jesuits' study on Japanese grammar is reported to have reached a reasonably advanced stage before 1594, with regard not only to the grammatical structure, but also to specific grammatical phenomenon.<sup>35</sup>

Judging from the plan of grammatical categories and the three-section structure, Rodrigues apparently based his work on Alvarez' *De Institutione Grammatica*. In fact, Rodrigues followed the same grammatical system and used almost the same terms as Alvarez' work. But for specific grammatical phenomenon, he went beyond the plan of Alvarez and persisted in factualism. It is acknowledged that such a dual stand was a distinct feature of his work, but Rodrigues was somewhat rigid and unwise in coordinating the two stands, which resulted in the inconsistency of the *Arte* as he emphasised Latin in the first half, while he turned gradually to Japanese in the second.

In the beginning of the *Arte*, Rodrigues followed Alvarez' plan to deal with the declension and conjugation of Japanese words, in which his strong tendency to base his *Arte* on Alvarez' work was

reflected. As a matter of fact, the missionaries who pored over Alvarez' grammar always thought in Latin and translated what they thought into Japanese. As a result, the sequence, from thinking to translating to expressing is thought to be applicable and convenient and the lexicographers may not intend to avoid such adoption and imitation.

#### 4.3. DIFFERENCES OF THE TWO GRAMMARS IN LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE

Rodrigues based his *Arte* on the Latin grammar system and attempted to model the plan of Alvarez' work, for which he strived to seek for corresponding Latin grammar in the grammatical system of Japanese. Despite the effort he made, things always went contrary to his wishes since exact translation is not possible because of the structural difference of the two languages. Besides, the purpose and the studying objective of the two languages were so different, for Latin was used as a formal and written language in Europe, while the Japanese language used by missionaries was colloquial.

For example, the term '*verbo depon*' on page 52 of *De Institutione Grammatica* can be translated to 'deponent verb', which is defined by *New English Linguistic Dictionary* as a 'verb that is active in meaning but takes its form from a different voice, most commonly the middle or passive.'<sup>36</sup> Rodrigues had made an attempt to find a corresponding Japanese grammatical category of deponent verbs, but he failed, for which there existed no relevant chapter or explanation regarding deponent verb conjugation in the *Arte*.

It was asserted at the beginning of the *Arte* that Japanese is a graceful language with diversified expressions, to illustrate which several features of Japanese were listed, such as the richness of synonyms, the profoundness of Japanese expressions and the diversity of compounds and adverbs. What is more, Rodrigues had spent many folios on the matter called 'honorific expression', which was to clarify the difference of Japanese expressions used by different subjects, on different occasions and to different objects, while this matter was not mentioned in Alvarez' grammar.

Another structural difference of the two grammars is the attitude towards Chinese words which comprise a large proportion of Japanese vocabulary. The *Arte* had a separate chapter to deal with this issue, while, Alvarez' grammar had nothing on it. In the *Arte*,





Rodrigues classified the vocabulary borrowed from *kango* (Chinese vocabulary) with *koe* reading and that from original *wago* (Japanese vocabulary) with *yomi* reading. Besides, there existed corresponding classification in the synonyms brought forward by him in the *Arte*. Furthermore, similar classification in negative particles was discussed in the part of 'Das *particulas negatiuas* (on the negative particles)'. It should be noticed that the definition of the *aduerbio* (adverb) used by Rodrigues is much broader than that used in contemporary grammar.<sup>37</sup>

In view of the difference between Indo-European languages, whose negatives are formed by using a negative adverb, and Japanese whose negatives are formed by reflecting the verb, Rodrigues hereby asserted, 'Japanese verbs can be affirmative and negative' and in his opinion, 'the reflection of Japanese takes many forms and has numerous functions and meanings'. For this reason, he called the conjugative form of verbs the 'radical' and explained it in detail.<sup>38</sup> In addition, Rodrigues sorted the prefix, the suffix, and the auxiliary verb given in contemporary Japanese grammar into *artigo* and *particula* in his *Arte*.<sup>39</sup>

Every language has the form to express the attitude and politeness of the speaker and compared to that of Latin, the honorific expression of Japanese is more systematic in that it is embodied in grammar rather than in daily expressions and customs. In view of its importance, Rodrigues explained it systematically from both lexicology and syntax in three chapters, namely *Das particulas de honra*, *Dos verbos honrados de sua natureza* and *Dos verbos humildes* in the *Arte*.

#### 4.4 DIFFERENCES OF THE TWO GRAMMARS FOR STUDYING PURPOSES

When talking about the attitude of the West towards Latin and Japanese, Ryoji Baba asserts that Prosody is an indispensable part of Latin grammar for Latin is an official and formal language in the Christian world, for which, page 150 of *De Institutione Grammatica* has a number of paragraphs concerning prosody like *De Ultimis Syllabis*, *Disyllaba Communi*, *De Pedibus*, *De Caesure* and *De Prosodia*. Nevertheless, Japanese, for the Western missionaries, is merely a tool for preaching, hearing confession, debating with the Buddhist, and getting the permission and support of the local authority for mission, for which,

there may be no need for them to understand the beauty of Japanese prosody.<sup>40</sup>

However, pure and original Japanese pronunciation, free from the influence of the European language, was the life-time pursuit of Rodrigues, for which, his *Arte* had a separate chapter of *Dos modos de pronuncia da Lingoa Iapoa*.

For the Jesuits, it is necessary daily to submit documents of different kinds to the authority. In view of the difficulty in writing, the *Arte* had a three-chapter instruction on this issue.<sup>41</sup> Besides, the *Arte* also had other similar contents on writing styles, greetings and written Japanese, which are not mentioned in Alvarez' *De Institutione Grammatica*.

To carry out missionary work in a country whose culture and tradition are totally different is not an easy task, in which not only is preaching necessary but also social relationship is vitally important. For this reason, greeting expressions used for bestowal, which help to establish and maintain a solid social relationship, appear as an important chapter entitled *Do Mocurocu*. Moreover, Rodrigues' exposition on astronomy, geography and calendar in his work is believed to have exceeded the scope of *De Institutione Grammatica*, for which, Ryoji Baba asserts

For those from the West where the solar calendar is used, the exposition of *Trado do modo de contraos* in the *Arte* is essential. Besides, the *Arte* has a chapter entitled *Dos animais que respondem as horas de Iapam & dos rumos da agulha* as a solution to the problem that there are Twelve Zodiac Signs in Japan. What is more, the chapter of *Tratado de varios modos de cotar* specifies the number and also the difference between Japanese and Latin.<sup>42</sup>

#### 5. THE LINGUISTIC OUTLOOK OF THE ARTE

Driven by the lexicographical campaign and the Jesuits' studying campaign which spread in Japan in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Rodrigues brought out his two monumental works: the *Arte* printed in Nagasaki and the *Arte Breve* published in Macao.

Rodrigues' linguistic outlook reflected in his *Arte* was apparently rooted in the Western linguistics, especially Latin, for the *Arte* had almost the same style and plan as *De Institutione Grammatica*. Despite

similarities, Rodrigues had gone beyond his predecessor in methodology in the follow aspects:

1 – He insisted on pure and native pronunciation uninfluenced by the European languages, for which, he placed his rules for pronunciation in the *Arte*.

2 – He transliterated words into Japanese on the basis of Portuguese and Latin pronunciation.

3 – With regard to Chinese vocabulary existing largely in Japanese, he introduced the *koe* reading and *yomi* reading to clarify the correspondence of the *kango* and the *wago*.

4 – He made a systematic introduction to the conjugation of verbs and rudiments, and stressed the need to learn elegant Japanese.

5 – He pointed out the difference between the oral and written Japanese used on various occasions by a detailed comparison.

6 – He added masterly treatises on Japanese poetry, in which he made a penetrating analysis on the various types of verse, which showed his profound understanding of Japanese literature.

7 – He explained systematically the feature of the honorific expressions from morphology and syntax.

8 – He gave all kinds of information needed in Japanese socialising such as style, name, counting, measure, formal writing, era name, and the emperor's name.

To ferret in the *Arte* would provide ample material for several doctoral theses.<sup>43</sup> Not only was 17<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese grammar copiously, if not always lucidly and logically, explained, but much can be learned of contemporary pronunciation by closely studying Rodrigues' method of spelling Japanese with Roman letters.

## 6. INFLUENCE OF THE *ARTE*

The Japanese themselves had never undertaken a systematic study of their own tongue, and the *Arte* marked the beginning of the methodical exposition of spoken Japanese. 'Both Japanese and foreign philologists admit that his works are indispensable for the study of the grammar and colloquial speech of Japan in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.'<sup>44</sup> The two grammars were monumental pioneer works, in which Rodrigues' ample knowledge of Japanese and profound life experiences were fully shown. For this reason, it is kept, with other representative western works, as an important historical

material of the Edo Period of Japan, in libraries and museums.

Later, many scholars frequently mentioned the *Arte* or based on it their studies in Japanese. Let us see two examples, from which, the influence of the *Arte* can be clarified. First, Rodrigues' pioneer work was followed by a grammar compiled by a Dominican friar named Diego Collado and published at Rome in 1632 under the title of *Ars Grammaticae Iaponicae Linguae*. The grammar was a brief work of 75 pages, and in the preface Collado acknowledge that he borrowed much from Rodrigues, but in point of fact a great deal of his material and most of his method are original. Collado was determined to keep his work concise and to the point, and as a result he had nothing to say about rhetoric or literary style. Most of his examples to illustrate grammatical points were given in simple sentences, involving two characters named Pedro and Paulo.<sup>45</sup>

Second, more than a century was to pass before another Japanese grammar was published by a Westerner. In 1738, Melchor Oyanguren, a Spanish Franciscan who had worked as a missionary both in the Philippines and Cochin China, published in Mexico his extraordinarily competent work. The author made no mention of Rodrigues in his preface, and he seemed to have depended very little or not at all on the Jesuit's *Arte*. In fact, the friar gave longer lists of synonyms than did Rodrigues, and used quotations from *Heike Monogatari* which did not appear in Rodrigues' *Arte*. He included within his work a fourth book, which approached to some extent Rodrigues' *Arte*, inasmuch as he briefly mentioned prose style, rhetoric, counting methods, and systems of reckoning time; he even included a few lines on Japanese poetry, noting that there were six types of poetry, the best known of which is the *renga*. Nevertheless, in the whole of this section there was no obvious dependence on Rodrigues, and one can only conjecture how Melchor learned about Japanese so well at a time when the country had been sealed off from most foreign contacts for the best part of a century.<sup>46</sup>

## APPENDIX

The authorship of the *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* was attributed for a long time to his namesake and fellow countryman on the Japanese mission, João Rodrigues



Girão. Girão served as the provincial's secretary for many years, and he is well known to European readers as he compiled seven of the Jesuit annual letters from Japan between 1604 and 1612, and seven more between 1616 and 1626 during his exile in Macao.

It is possible that confusion concerning the identity of the author began even before the publication of the second grammar in 1620. Whereas the first *Arte* merely gave Father João Rodrigues, of the Society of Jesus, Portuguese, as its author, the *Arte* of 1620 stated more specifically that its author was Father João Rodrigues, of the Society of Jesus, Portuguese, from the diocese of Lamego, as if to distinguish him from Rodrigues Girão, who was born at Alcouchete near Lisbon.

The confusion was cleared once and for all only in recent times after Michael Cooper's research, although several authors in the past suggested that Rodrigues

Girão was not the author. Cooper found that despite the clarification it is still common to find in Library and museum catalogues references to Rodrigues Girão as the author of both grammars. Rodrigues, or Rodriguez, is a very common name in Spain and Portugal. Francisco Rodrigues made his religious profession in 1601 along with our João Rodrigues and is credited with editorship of the *Vocabulario*. When our Rodrigues left Japan and retired to Macao, there were four Jesuits named Rodrigues on the staff of the college there.<sup>47</sup>

Rodrigues did not receive due credit for his great brilliance for centuries, for his monumental works were almost invariably attributed to others. The pity, not to say the shame, of the matter is that Rodrigues' contribution to the study of the Japanese language has not received adequate recognition in the West. It must be an unfair historical mistake. **RC**

NOTES

- 1 Doi Tadao, *Kirishitan Ronkou*, p. 69.
- 2 Shimizu Norio, 'Neburiha-ron Josetsu - Supein Runesansu heno Shiza'. *Shisou*, no. 762, 1987, pp. 68-91.
- 3 Maria Leonor Carvalhão Buescu. *O Estudo das Línguas Exóticas no Século XVI*, p. 57.
- 4 Kamei Takashi, H. Chiisuriku, Kojima Yukie, *Nihon Iezusukai-han Kirishitan Youri - Sono Hon'an oyobi Hon'an no Jittai*, Chapter 2.
- 5 Father Henriques was born in 1540 and died in 1600 in India. He went to India 4 years after Xavier's arrival.
- 6 Father Anchieta who was born in 1534 and died in 1597 was a missionary flourished in Brazil and was respected by the Indians for his contribution to preaching, education, and charity.
- 7 This grammar is generally accepted as the grammar most widely used in the coast area of Brazil.
- 8 Doi Tadao, 'Daibunten Kaidai'. In João Rodrigues, Doi Tadao, Mitsuhashi Takeshi, *Nihon Bunten*. Tokyo: Benseisha, 1976.
- 9 Ebizawa Arimichi, 'Nihon Saisho no Raten-Porutogaru Gogakusho'. Rikkyo University, *Raten Amerikan Kenkyujo Kenkyujoho*, no. 3, 1975, pp. 1-8
- 10 Doi Tadao, 'Daibunten Kaidai'. In João Rodrigues, Doi Tadao, Mitsuhashi Takeshi, *Nihon Bunten*.
- 11 Manuel Alvarez, *Emmanuelis Alvari E' Societate Iesu De Institutione Grammatica libri Tres*. 1594. The Chapter on conjugation is supplemented with translation in Japanese.
- 12 *Dictionary Latino Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum*: A Latin-Portuguese-Japanese dictionary published in Japan.
- 13 *Rakuyōshū*, A kanji dictionary published in Japan by Jesuit.
- 14 Kajikazawa Chizuru, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Shoubunten" no Dokujisei ni tsuite'. Sophia University, *Kokubungaku Ronshu*, no. 27, 1994, pp. 53-72.
- 15 Michael Cooper, S.J. *Rodrigues the Interpreter. An Early Jesuit in Japan and China*. New York: Weatherhill, 1974, p. 221.
- 16 Doi Tadao, Morita Takeshi, Chonan Minoru. *Nippo Jisho: Hoyaku*.
- 17 Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 222.
- 18 Ibid., p. 225.
- 19 Ibid., p. 222.
- 20 It is said that there are only two known extant copies of this fascinating work. Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 224.
- 21 Doi Tadao, *Kirishitan Ronkou*, pp. 75.
- 22 João Rodrigues, 'Shogen'. In João Rodrigues, *Nihon Daibunten (Arte da Lingoa de Iapam)*. Translated by Doi Tadao, 1955. Tokyo: Sanseido (Reprinted in 1995), p. 4.
- 23 Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 225.
- 24 Ibid., p. 228.
- 25 Ibid., p. 229.
- 26 Ibid., p. 231.
- 27 Ibid., p. 233.
- 28 João Rodrigues, 'Shogen'. In *Nihon Daibunten*, p. 6.
- 29 Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 233.
- 30 Doi Tadao, *Kirishitan Ronkou*, p. 91.
- 31 Baba Ryoji, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Daibunten" no Seiritsu - "Ranten Gogaku" no Ataeta Eikyō - 1', pp. 11-25.
- 32 Doi Tadao, 'Nagasaki-han Nihon Bunten to Amakusa-han Raten Buten'. Keio University, *Shigaku*, 1933, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 243-278.
- 33 Baba Ryoji, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Daibunten" no Seiritsu - "Ranten Gogaku" no Ataeta Eikyō-1', pp. 11-25.
- 34 Doi Tadao, *Kirishitan Ronkou*, p. 73.
- 35 Baba Ryoji, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Daibunten" no Seiritsu - "Ranten Gogaku" no Ataeta Eikyō-1', p. 11-25.
- 36 The adverb given by Rodrigues includes the conjugation of verbs, a part of the *te*-form verbs, the adverbial particle like *sae*, *sura*, *dani*, the formal noun like *tokoro* and *you*, the prefix, the suffix, the auxiliary verbs, and etc.
- 37 João Rodrigue, *Nihon Daibunten*, vol. 1, p. 6.

- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., vol. 2.
- <sup>39</sup> Baba Ryoji, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Daibunten" no Seiritsu - "Ranten Gogaku" no Ataeta Eikyō-1'. *Kumamoto Joshi Daigaku Gakujutsu Kiyō*, no. 46, 1994, pp. 11-25.
- <sup>40</sup> The three chapters are *Do Xeixi de Iapam Jurmeto por escrito*, *Do voto por escrito*, and *De como se escreue apeticam ou accusacam*. In addition, the *Arte* has chapters on greetings in letter writing like *Da conjugacam do verbo soro*, *Da conjugacam dos verbos da escritura*, *Do estilo da escritura*, and *Tratado do estilo das cartas*.
- 41 Baba Ryoji, 'Rodorigesu "Nihon Daibunten" no Seiritsu - "Ranten Gogaku" no Ataeta Eikyō-1', pp. 11-25.
- 42 Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 228.
- 43 Ibid., p. 235.
- 44 Ibid., p. 236.
- 45 Ibid., pp. 237-238.
- 46 Doi Tadao, *Kirishitan Ronkou*, pp. 62-63; Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 236.

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