

Studies 2019

edited by Paolo Santangelo



Ming Qing Studies 2019

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isbn 978–88–85629–71-4 Ist edition: November 2019 No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm, microfiche, or any other means, without written permission from the publisher

MING QING STUDIES

MING QING STUDIES is an annual publication focused on late imperial China and the broader geo-cultural area of East Asia during the premodern and modern period. Its scope is to provide a forum for scholars from a variety of fields seeking to bridge the gap between 'oriental' and western knowledge. Articles may concern any discipline, including sociology, literature, psychology, anthropology, history, geography, linguistics, semiotics, political science, and philosophy. Contributions by young and post-graduated scholars are particularly welcome.

Provided that the process of double-blind peer-review proceeds with no delay and the scrutiny of our experts confirms the scientificity, scholarly soundness and academic value of the author's work, it is one of MING QING STUDIES' commitments to publish the submitted manuscript within one year after its formal acceptance. This would ensure a timely circulation of the author's research outcomes without imposing hard limits on word counts or compromising the quality of peer-review, which, for publications in the same field, is usually much longer. The average article length is 10.000-15.000 words, but long articles and notes on focused topics are also taken into consideration.

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PREFACE

Two contributions on scholars' identity and intercultural relations between Confucianism and Christianity are published in this issue. In *Ming Qing Studies 2018* another essay, "Christian Literati of the Lower Echelon in Late Ming China: The Case of Xiong Shiqi" by Cheng Yu-Yin 程玉瑛 has dealt with a similar question by reconstructing Xiong's intellectual journey to his conversion, and mapping the role played by Christian *literati* in late Ming Christianity through the examination of the life of a lower-echelon scholar. A different perspective is taken in **Zhang Yu**'s 張禹 article *Between Confucianism and Catholicism: Rethinking Wu Li as a Ming Loyalist*. This study focuses on Wu Li's effort to reframe Christianity within the Confucian discourse and interpret it not simply as a passive response to the dynastic change, but also as a way to combine his various identities, as a loyal Ming scholar and subject of the new Qing dynasty, as well as his discomfort for the Church's abolition of the Chinese rites. Dr. Zhang is assistant professor at Loyola University Maryland.

Another aspect of the encounter of Christianity with Chinese culture is tackled by **Bai Limin** 白莉民, senior lecturer in Chinese Studies at the School of Languages and Cultures, Victoria University of Wellington. His *Jesuit Educational Tradition and the Remaking of Erudite Scholars in Late-Qing China: A Case Study of Li Wenyu* 李問漁 (1840-1911) throws new light on this scholar who devotes himself to Catholic education and journalism and accepts the Jesuit educational influence. The author explains that Li Wenju's peculiar path was aimed at the assimilation of scientific knowledge along with Christian faith and the promotion of a modern educational system. In this perspective, Western technology was not the only key to a nation's progress and prosperity and Darwin's evolution theory refuted. The article ends with an exploration of common and divergent views of Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo 馬相伯.

Many of the Chinese intellectuals engaged in the modernisation movement, on the contrary, promoted the Darwinian theory of evolution, social Darwinism and Western science. Loïc Aloisio, Ph.D. candidate at Aix-Marseille University (AMU) is author of *A Response to an "Alien Invasion": The Rise of Chinese Science Fiction.* By the time China was suffering humiliating pressures, invasions, and menaces from foreign powers due to the technological gap, science fiction turned out to be a Chinese response to the trauma. The article suggests that if "salvation through science" was the greatest target of the nation,

fiction became an ideological and political tool to awaken the national consciousness in the confrontation between China and the West.

Novels, nevertheless, could have other functions, such as the "fiction sequels" (xiaoshuo xushu 小說續書) in their connection with dynastic transition. Henry Lem's Fiction as Cautionary Tale: Rewriting 'Rebellion' in Yu Wanchun's Dangkou zhi is a nuanced and careful reading of a sequel to the Water Margin - Shuihu zhuan 水滸傳, the "Quell the Bandits" (Dangkou zhi 蕩寇志), published in 1853. The novel tackles the role of a fiction commentator and sequel writer in the Confucian exegetical tradition, in the attempt of reducing the subversive readings of Shuihu zhuan. In his "interpretation" Yu Wanchun 俞萬春 (1794-1849) tries to properly "end" this novelistic tradition by reinventing the popular Liangshan heroes as rebels unworthy of the title of loyal and righteous for those who do not understand the virtue of zhong 忠 (loyalty to the emperor) will always fail to be righteous (vi 義). Dr. Henry Lem is a Ph.D. candidate in Chinese Language & Literature at the Department of East Asian Studies, University of California, Irvine.

Aude Lucas, Ph.D. candidate at the East Asian Civilisations Research Centre of the Université Paris Diderot, presents a new interpretation of the contradictions between the two main characters of *Honglou Meng*, Jia Baoyu 賈 寶玉 and Lin Daiyu 林黛玉. By adopting a Lacanian reading, her *Expressing Desire Through Language: The Paradoxes of the 'Baodai' Relationship* offers an explanation of the obstacles of communication between them: the two characters utter words that reflect their desire, but they do not grasp the meaning of each other's confessions, as their words exceed the meaning they are conscious of, provoking misunderstandings and contradictions. One may ask whether they reach a certain syntony when they borrow and share the language of *Xixiangji* 西廂記.

Zhang Jing 张静, Associate Professor of Chinese Language and Culture in New College of Florida, offers an in-depth analysis of Hong Pian 洪楩 and his writings. Her *A Filial Publisher's Unfilial Subjects: Printing, Literati Community, and Fiction-Making in Liushijia xiaoshuo* discusses Hong Pian's efforts to fashion himself as a filial son and his fascination with unfilial subjects – an inconsistency that reveals the complexity of social and cultural functions of private printing in 16th-century China. At the same time, the work brings also some noteworthy insights into the mid-16th-century publishers' interest toward "innovative and entraining texts" in the form of *xiaoshuo*, as well as into the social implications of printing.

An anthropological study is *Visualising Human Differences in Late Imperial China: Body, Nakedness and Sexuality* by **Zhu Jing** 朱敬, CCKF postdoctoral fellow at University of Warwick. This essay examines the representation of the body of ethnic minorities in Miao albums – a genre of ethnographic illustrations depicting the physical appearances, culture and environment of non-Han peoples in the southwestern borderlands of China. Probing into how human variations

were conceptualised in late imperial China, it deciphers the visual codes hidden behind the culture of representing non-Han bodies (including skin colour, nose, eyes, hair, as well as women's feet and naked parts), thereby demonstrating the visual regimes of imperial order, space and peoples. From the perspective of gender and sexuality, it explores the ways in which, bodies as an indicator of identity, were manipulated to exhibit superior or inferior binary coding, to weave a web of narrative of human variations, and to constitute China's imperial order.

Special thanks are due to the anonymous readers who have generously contributed to the publication of this volume. I express my grateful feelings also to Maria Paola Culeddu and Tommaso Previato for their competent and indefatigable commitment.

We finally express our gratitude to Prof. Li Xuetao 李雪涛 for accepting to join the Board of *Ming Qing Studies*. Professor Li is Dean of the School of History (北外历史学院院长) at Beijing Foreign Studies University (北京外国 语大学), Deputy Director of the Sino-Foreign Sinology Research Center, and Assistant Editor-in-Chief of *International Sinology*. He is the author of several volumes and articles, such as "Dialogue of Misunderstanding: German Sinologists Recalling China" (*Wujie de duihua: Deguo Hanxuejia de Zhongguo jiyi* 误解的对话——德国汉学家的中国记忆), Beijing: Xinxing chubanshe, 2014, "On German Sinology" (*Ri'erman xueshu puxi zhong de Hanxue: Deguo Hanxue zhi yanjiu* 日耳曼学术谱系中的汉学——德国汉学之研究), Beijing: Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu chubanshe, 2008), *Land der Kunst und Musik. Chinesische Traumsuche in Österreich*, Düsseldorf University Press, 2011; *Dein Bild in meinem Auge. Chinesische Deutschland-Bilder im 20. Jahrhundert*, Beijing: Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu chubanshe, 2009.

JESUIT EDUCATIONAL TRADITION AND THE REMAKING OF ERUDITE SCHOLARS IN LATE-QING CHINA: A CASE STUDY OF LI WENYU 李問漁 (1840-1911)

BAI LIMIN 白莉民 (Victoria University of Wellington)

This paper investigates how the Jesuit educational tradition influenced the remaking of erudite scholars (*tongru* 通儒) in the late Qing period, with a focus on Li Wenyu 李問漁 (1840-1911), a native Catholic priest of the Society of Jesus in Shanghai. Li Wenyu, like Ma Xiangbo 馬相伯 (1840-1939), was educated at the Collège de Saint-Ignace in Zi-ka-wei (Xujiahui 徐家匯). Both men were preeminent Catholic scholars and educators, but Ma was also a politician and was active and influential in the late-Qing reforms, while Li devoted himself to Catholic education and journalism. Although they differed in their personalities and career paths, they both possessed a firm faith in Christianity and shared the same views on the relationship between religion and modern science, as well as between religion and modern education. While this study will inevitably refer to Ma Xiangbo's ideas and his activities, the primary focus is on the lesser known Li Wenyu.

This study first narrates how the Chinese term of *tongru* was redefined to embrace the Western learning introduced to China by the early Jesuits. This historical description provides a context against which I investigate Li Wenyu's life, education, and work in order to establish Li as an erudite scholar as a result of the Jesuit education he received in Zi-ka-wei. Then, Li's views on the century-long conflicts and interactions between China and the West, Confucianism and Christianity, and religion and modern science are elucidated. Li's views reflect both his education and his position as a Jesuit priest, providing insights into the Chinese clergy's understanding of issues regarding whether early Jesuits edited scientific knowledge to suit their agenda of spreading the Christian faith. This study suggests a close link between the Jesuit educational tradition and the *tianxue* $\mathbb{R}^{\frac{10}{2}}$ ('learning of Heaven', or 'learning from Heaven', or 'studies of Heaven') package that the early Jesuits conveyed to China. This *tianxue* package was instrumental to Ma Xiangbo's proposal for the revival of the early Jesuit accommodation policy. In order to show the evolution of this

tianxue package from the late Ming to the end of the nineteenth century, this study further investigates Li Wenyu's refutation of Yan Fu's *Tianyan lun* to illustrate Li's broad knowledge of Chinese and Western learning, and more importantly to point to the link between the Jesuit educational tradition and the emergence of a newly-defined concept of 'erudite' at the turn of the century. This may provide an innovative perspective on the early Jesuit legacy from the late Ming to the early twentieth century.

1. The Changed Definition of Erudite Scholars in Late-Qing China

Tongru, the Chinese term for erudite scholars, can be traced back to Han documents. It was used to refer to those scholars who had mastered a broad range of knowledge through their comprehensive studies.¹ However, within the framework of traditional Chinese learning, a tongru normally referred to a widely read scholar who was familiar with all Confucian classics along with all scholarly works on such classics. The civil service examination system after the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE) enhanced this definition of a *tongru* by rewarding such scholars with official positions. This may provide us with a context against which to postulate why Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) was held in high regard by late-Ming scholars such as Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562-1633), Li Zhizao 李之藻 (1565-1630),² and Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠 (1557-1627). They were impressed by Ricci's Western knowledge that introduced them to a type of erudition they had never known before. They therefore used the term xiru 西儒, meaning a Confucian scholar from the West, to express their admiration for his broad knowledge. Meanwhile, the early Jesuits, beginning with Francis Xavier (1506-1552),³ and later Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607),⁴ and Ricci all learned of the Chinese respect for knowledge. Their erudition indeed won the respect of scholars like Xu Guangqi, and their knowledge provided passage to the world of scholars in late-Ming China.

The *xixue* 西學 (Western learning) package that the Jesuits introduced into China at that time mirrored the education they received. As formulated in the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599, Jesuit education mainly contained the classical subjects: theology, philosophy, Latin, and Greek. According to the *Ratio*, pupils at the lower level focused on humanities, studying Latin and Greek grammar,

¹ *Hou Hanshu*, pp. 127, 153.

² According to Fang Hao (1966), Li Zhizao was born in 1565, and most scholars followed Fang's conclusion. But Gong Yingyan and Ma Qiong (2008, p. 90) claim that based on the new material they found Li's birth year should be 1571.

³ Sebes 1988, p. 25.

⁴ Michele Ruggieri, an Italian Jesuit, was the first Western missionary to arrive in China in the sixteenth century.

syntax, and rhetoric, as well as geography and history. Following their studies in the humanities, the pupils progressed on to study philosophy. The curricula required three years to complete:

The Ratio of 1599 prescribed for the *First Year*: Introduction and Logic; *Second Year*: Physics, Cosmology and Astronomy; *Third Year*: Special Metaphysics, Psychology and Ethics. A course of mathematics runs parallel with philosophy.⁵

Both natural sciences and mathematics were part of the philosophical course which unified the teaching of literary and scientific subjects.⁶ In his study of the treatment of mathematics in the definitive 1599 *Ratio Studiorum*, Dennis C. Smolarski suggests:

Jesuit schools were being founded around the time of Galileo and other key figures who influenced the scientific revolution. The introduction of mathematical sciences into universities and the textbooks of Clavius laid the groundwork for generations of students to become better acquainted with mathematics and the sciences that were being developed during that period of history.⁷

The early Jesuit tradition Ricci established in China was consistent with the educational principles stipulated in the *Ratio Studiorum*. Ricci studied under Clavius at the Roman College from about 1572 until 1577. Equipped with such knowledge, Ricci went to China in 1582 where he used "his mathematical acumen to gain credibility in China, initially by translating two of Clavius' mathematical books into Chinese, thereby giving the Orient its first opportunity to enjoy Euclid."⁸

The early Jesuits' erudition granted them access to the cultural elite of China. Ricci's popularity among the Chinese literati was due to his moral conduct, familiarity with the Confucian classics, and his knowledge of mathematics and other sciences, as well as "his alleged knowledge and experience in alchemy."⁹ For example, Li Zhizao was first attracted to Ricci's map of the world, which led him to the 'science' brought to China by the missionaries.

In particular, as the 'Three Pillars' of Catholicism in Ming China, Xu Guangqi, Li Zhizao, and Yang Tingyun were interested in Western mathematics, and intended to use such knowledge to broaden the framework of traditional Chinese learning and to improve calendar making. Their admiration for Western mathematics can be seen in the preface they each wrote for the *Guide to*

⁵ Schwickerath 1903, p. 131.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁷ Smolarski 2002, p. 447.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 451. About the friendship between Galileo and Father Clavius, see D'Elia 1960, pp. 7-8.

⁹ Sebes 1988, p. 41.

Calculation.¹⁰ It was Ricci's knowledge and his "strength of character" that attracted them and other literati to Christianity.¹¹

More importantly, the Western learning they introduced to China was an integrated package of Christianity and scientific knowledge. This was not just a strategy where scientific knowledge was used as 'bait' in order to propagate Christianity. In Jesuit education, science subjects were part of their studies in philosophy and theology. The Chinese believers, such as the Three Pillars of Catholicism mentioned above, understood this package well because, in traditional Chinese scholarship, the study of natural phenomena, technology, ethics, and philosophical teachings formed an organic whole. This fundamental common ground was the foundation upon which late-Ming scholars and early Jesuits exchanged knowledge and worked to blend such Western learning into the Chinese system.¹² Therefore, it was not surprising that in 1628 Li Zhizao compiled Tianxue chuhan 天學初函 (The first Collection on the Learning from Heaven), containing both scientific knowledge and religious writings.¹³ Ricci and Li Zhizao both grasped the relationship between the study of the natural world and God, its creator, and here the term *tianxue* perfectly allowed them to embrace metaphysics as well as physics. To the late-Ming scholars, the Jesuit's understanding of *tian* 天 served to enhance their status as erudite scholars.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Christianity re-entered China along with the gunboats of Western powers. Most Chinese viewed missionaries as accomplices of Western invasions; on the other hand, however, in order to restructure the system of Chinese learning, scholar-reformers like Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) were willing to learn new knowledge from missionaries and Chinese Christians who were trained by Jesuits. Under such circumstances, and prior to the 1898 Reform, the Jesuit Society of Shanghai at Zi-ka-wei – where Chinese and French Jesuits had mastered Latin, English, French, and other European languages, as well as modern scientific knowledge - became a symbol of eruditeness. Liang Qichao is purported to have contacted Valentin Garnier (Ni Huairen 倪懷綸 in Chinese, 1825-1898), the apostolic vicar of Jiangnan (1879-1898), through the ambassador of France in Beijing, asking him to allow Ma Xiangbo, the very influential Chinese Jesuit and reform activist of the late Qing, to establish a translation college (Yixue guan 譯學館) in Beijing. Ma Xiangbo then wrote to the Qing Court requesting that this college be located in Shanghai, and that the priests of the Shanghai Jesuit Society be invited to help manage and administrate this future college. At that time, both Liang and Ma believed that training *vicai* 譯才 (talented translators) was one of the most urgent reform measures China needed to implement. The proposal was granted by both Bishop Garnier and the

¹⁰ Hart 2012, p. 131.

¹¹ Peterson 1988, p. 140.

¹² Sebes 1988, p. 40.

¹³ Peterson 1988, pp. 141-142.

Guangxu Emperor. Unfortunately, however, the project fell through because of the failure of the 1898 Reform.¹⁴

In the final decades of the nineteenth century, both Catholic and Protestant missionaries attempted to influence the course of China's reforms, and education was regarded as the key to achieving change in China. Ma Xiangbo – as a preeminent Catholic scholar, educator, and politician – urged the Catholic Church to resume Ricci's legacy of *xueshu chuanjiao* 學術傳教, advocating the use of scholarship to spread the gospel instead of relying on the power of the gunboat.¹⁵ For secular Chinese thinkers and scholar-reformers, the synthesis of Western knowledge and Chinese learning was not purely an academic exercise but a key element essential to China's survival. It was in this historical context that the concept of *tongru* or erudition was redefined and the native Catholic priests of the Society of Jesus in Shanghai, such as Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu, were highly respected as erudite scholars.

2. Li Wenyu and the Jesuit Educational Tradition

Li Wenyu lived during a time when China faced encroachment from Western powers while it was internally undergoing reforms and revolutionary initiatives. Li was one of two sons of a seventh-generation Catholic family located in Xi Lijia, a village in Chuansha, Jiangsu Province (today Chuansha is part of Shanghai). Not long after his birth, the first Opium War (1839-1842) ended with the signing of the Treaty of Nanking which, among other settlements, lifted the 1724 Qing government's prohibition against Christianity. Li received his traditional Chinese education from a local teacher named Zhuang Songlou 莊松 樓, who also came from a Catholic family of many generations. Apparently, the early Jesuits had a strong influence in this region thanks to the legacy of Xu Guangqi. In 1852, Li left home and entered the Collège de Saint-Ignace in Zika-wei when it first opened. He was among the first Jesuit novices recruited from the Major Seminary in 1862. By then, both Catholic and Protestant missionaries had gained more important concessions because of the treaties of 1858-60 – a result of China's defeat in the second Opium War (1856-1860). The treaties permitted missionary members to travel and promulgate Christian faith in the interior of China. In 1869, Li was ordained as a priest in the Shanghai mission. After he obtained his Doctorate in Theology in 1871, he began to preach in Songjiang, Nanhui, and Yingzhou. In 1875 he returned to the Collège de Saint-Ignace as the principal in charge of Chinese language teaching. After his mission to Anhui (1876-1877), Li returned to Zi-ka-wei in 1878 and

¹⁴ Zhang Ruogu 1939, pp. 197-198.

¹⁵ Ma Xiangbo, "Xueshu chuanjiao" 学术传教, in Zhu Weizheng 1996, p. 599. For biographical information on Ma, other than in Zhang Ruogu's *Ma Xiangbo xiansheng nianpu*, see Fang Hao 1988, pp. 292-298.

launched the *Yiwenlu* 益聞錄, a Chinese Catholic newspaper, while undertaking teaching duties at the Minor Seminary located in Dongjiadu 董家渡. In 1898, the *Yiwenlu* merged with *Gezhi xinbao* 格致新報 to become *I-Wen-Lou et Revue Scientifique* (*Gezhi yiwen huibao* 格致益聞匯報), which in 1899 was abbreviated to *Huibao* 匯報 (Revue pour Tous). Under Li Wenyu's editorship the newspaper continued until 1911 when Li passed away.¹⁶ Three months after his death, the Qing Empire collapsed and China completed its constitutional journey from an absolute monarchy to a republic.

Li Wenyu received a Jesuit education at the Collège de Saint-Ignace in Zi-kawei and later at the Seminary. The Jesuit education in the nineteenth century expanded the curriculum and scope of knowledge, as the 1832 revised *Ratio* emphasized teaching in the mother tongue, and added physics, chemistry, physiology, astronomy, geology, and cosmology, which were "taught according to the established principles of modern sciences."¹⁷ Nevertheless, the broadened content of Jesuit education still embraced the *tianxue* package the early Jesuits and Chinese Catholic scholars referred to.

The Chinese term *tian*, however, has a more ambiguous meaning than the word 'Heaven' in English. Jacques Gernet's *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures* has been controversial since its publication in the 1980s,¹⁸ but he is right to point out that the term 'Heaven' may not convey the precise meaning of the term *tian* in Chinese, as *tian* is "a concept in which secular and religious aspects merge";¹⁹ whereas "for the Christians the word 'Heaven' is simply a metaphor to refer to God and his angels, and paradise and its elect." Also, the term *tian* in Chinese "expresses an order that is both divine and natural, both social and cosmic."²⁰ In the Chinese classics, such as the *Book of Changes* (*I Ching* 易經), "Heaven appears not as a way of referring to a personal, creator God, but as the anonymous power whose continuous action ensures the alternations and equilibrium of nature."²¹

In the view of Gernet, this linguistic difference was associated with the difference between Chinese and Greek thought.²² However, to both Ricci and

¹⁶ The detailed information used here to sketch Li's life is largely based on Xu Zongze 1936, pp. 722-729. See also Fang Hao 1988, pp. 284-248; Chen Baixi 1962, pp. 66-69. For detailed information on *Yiwenlu* and *Huibao*, see Ge Boxi 1987, pp. 190-196.

¹⁷ Schwickerath 1903, p. 194.

¹⁸ For criticism of the book, see the book reviews by Ching 1987; Mungello 1988; Cohen 1987. Paul Rule's interpretation of the terms *tian* and *tianzhu* also disagreed with Gernet's view, see Rule 2001, pp. 63-80.

¹⁹ Gernet 1985, p. 193.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²² Gernet says: "The Chinese tendency was to deny any opposition between the self and the world, the mind and the body, the divine and the cosmic"; and they refused to "make any radical distinction between nature and its power of organisation and generation," as Chinese thought "never had separated the sensible from the rational, never had imaged any 'spiritual

converted Chinese scholars of the late Ming, the ambiguous meanings of *tian* provided the Chinese with the linguistic vehicle for consolidating their knowledge packages. This linguistic vehicle allowed Ricci and his followers to adopt the vocabulary from Confucian classics and interpret them in Christian terms. More importantly, the religious aspects of the *tian* can be used to refer to God while the natural aspect of *tian* can be used for science. Meanwhile, in Ricci's journal the term 'questa scientia' was used to give ambiguity to the meaning 'scientific' knowledge and 'learning from Heaven', as the term is translated as 'this knowledge.' This ambiguity may be attributed to the original meaning of 'scientia' which, in Ricci's time, referred to any kind of organized knowledge, and thus included theology.²³ The ambiguous but broader connotations of these two terms were perfectly accommodated in the term *tianxue* (learning from Heaven)²⁴ which, as argued in the previous section, integrated Western learning into the Chinese system, and where Christianity blended together with scientific knowledge to become Western learning.²⁵

Li Wenyu, along with the brothers Ma Xiangbo and Ma Jianzhong 馬建中 (1844-1900), differed from late-Ming Chinese converts as they came from established Catholic families and trained as Catholic priests. They received a complete Jesuit education at the Collège de Saint-Ignace, where they studied science subjects, philosophy, theology, French, and Latin, as well as classical Chinese. Their training was perhaps more aligned with the revised Ratio of the nineteenth century, and science subjects were taught in accordance with "the established principles of modern sciences." The Ma brothers were sought-after figures in the late-Qing reforms thanks to their education, language capacity, and knowledge of the West. They left the Society of Jesus to work for Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901) and were actively involved in the late-Qing reform movement. The Ma brothers became active members of the Church as laymen, whereas Li Wenyu devoted himself to teaching, translation, writing, and editorial duties as a clergyman. As the chief editor for the first Chinese Catholic newspaper, professor for the only Catholic university of the time, writer, and translator, he held a pivotal role in Zi-ka-wei, and was influential as a Catholic scholar, journalist, and educator.²⁶ As the chief-editor for the Catholic Chinese newspaper for 33 years, Li represented the voice of the Church and the Catholic community. After his death, the Catholic community commemorated his

substance distinct from the material,' never had conceived of the existence of a world of eternal truths separated from this world of appearances and transitory realities." *Ibid.*, p. 201. ²³ Elman 2006, pp. 3, 15.

²⁴ There are various translations of the term *tianxue*. Willard Peterson translates it as 'learning from Heaven' (see Peterson 1998, pp. 789-839). But Paul Rule postulates that the term should be translated as 'heavenly learning', as 'heaven' in the term is the object but not the source of study (Paul Rule's unpublished manuscript on Chinese Rites, Chapter 4). I am grateful to Dr. Paul Rule for providing me with his argument and this information.

²⁵ Sebes 1988, p. 40.

²⁶ Kurtz 2006, pp. 147-156.

contribution to the propagation of Catholic faith as well as his scholarly achievements.²⁷ Li Wenyu's perspective on the world outside the church wall might have differed from people such as Ma Xiangbo but, like Ma Xiangbo, Li believed that the early Jesuit tradition served him well, and he promoted both science and Christian religion in China with a firm belief that both were needed for addressing China's problems.

3. Li Wenyu and Knowledge Transmission

Jonathan D. Spence coined the phrase "the ascent to Peking" to 'encapsulate' his view of the significance of Ricci in the encounter between China and the West in the late Ming. Ricci's 'ascent' is firstly "a cartographic ascent", referring to his long journey from south to north, moving toward his goal. Secondly, this 'ascent' refers to Ricci's "growing linguistic skills", and the third aspect of Ricci's 'ascent' is the sensitivity through "which he learned to take Chinese values ever more seriously."²⁸ Ricci's ascent laid the foundation for the early Jesuit tradition.

Ricci inherited his predecessors' ideas and practices and fostered the development of cultural accommodation, which became the tradition of the early Jesuits. In this tradition, there was respect for the native culture. Such respect was embodied in their learning of the native languages and their sensitivity towards the native cultures. The translation and interpretation of the Confucian classics, such as the *Four Books* and *Five Classics* (*Sishu Wujing* 四書五經), was also part of "the Jesuit program of accommodation and the attempt to make the Confucian Classics meld harmoniously with the role they had been assigned in the Confucian-Christian synthesis."²⁹

As mentioned earlier, when Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo entered the Collège de Saint-Ignace, Father Angelo Zottoli (Chao Deli 晁德蒞 in Chinese, 1826-1902) was in charge of teaching, and he fostered the early Jesuit tradition by encouraging young pupils to continue their study of Chinese classics. Zottoli himself was a Sinologist.³⁰ Along with the continuity of this early Jesuit

²⁷ Immediately after Li's death, *Shengxin bao* 聖心報 [Sacred Heart] reported this sad news along with biographical information about his life, work and achievements (July 1911, no. 290). In 1936, the Catholic community commemorated the 25th anniversary of his death and published essays to celebrate his life and work; among which Xu Zongze 1936 portrays Li's life in detail, including a brief chronology of Li Wenyu and a report of Xu's visit to Li's family.

²⁸ Spence 1988, pp. 12-13.

²⁹ Mungello 1988, pp. 260-261.

³⁰ For information on Zottoli and the curriculum of the Collège de Saint-Ignace when Zottoli was principal, see Hayhoe and Lu 1996, pp. 102-104 (especially ft. 25, which gives a brief introduction to the life and work of Zottoli), 151-153; and for the personal relationship between Ma and Zottoli, pp. 111-112. For a more detailed biography of Zottoli, see Fang Hao

tradition, at that time the Church also encouraged students to prepare for the civil service examinations. A high rate of student success in the examination would certainly enhance the reputation of the Church. There was also a practical consideration for these training-to-be priests: to prepare students for a secular life in case they could not complete the novitiate or they wanted to leave the Jesuit order later.³¹ When Ma Xiangbo was principal of the college, he wanted to continue with this early Jesuit tradition, and emphasized the study of Confucian classics, Chinese history, philosophy, and literature.³² Li Wenyu maintained the same focus when he replaced Ma as head of the college in 1875. In 1909 he compiled Guwen shiji 古文拾級 (Classical Chinese Essays), which contains one hundred essays from the late Qing tracing back to the pre-Han period. The term 'shiji' in the title means 'to ascend the stairs' and vividly illustrated the order of the essays collected in this volume: the essays were presented in reverse chronological order, the latest going first, then backwards to the most ancient. In this way students could gradually master classical Chinese.³³ In his foreword to this volume, Ma Xiangbo regarded it as a bridge to the literature produced in ancient times (足為逮古之津梁).34

Ma Xiangbo believed that language was the key to the essence of a particular civilization – a country's wisdom and culture were embodied in its language. This was why, he asserted, the study of Chinese language was so important. Ma's brother, Ma Jianzhong, in 1898 compiled the *Ma Grammar (Mashi wentong* 馬氏文通),³⁵ "the first Chinese systematic grammar written by a Chinese scholar."³⁶ Ma Xiangbo said that the *Ma Grammar* only provided a basic idea of how to write Chinese essays, and students needed to learn how to structure an essay. Ma then praised Li Wenyu's compilation of this volume which he believed would benefit students and contribute to the preservation of the essence of Chinese learning (*guocui* 國粹).³⁷

As well as emphasising the study of Chinese classics, the early Jesuit tradition blended Western learning into Chinese culture and knowledge. Jonathan Spence relates the fourth aspect of Ricci's 'ascent' to "his roots in the intellectual soil of classical Rome", and "the reinterpreting of those roots" was

^{1988,} pp. 260-262.

³¹ Kurtz 2010, pp. 79-109

³² Ma Xiangbo, *Yiri yitan* 一日一谈 [Daily Chat], in Zhu Weizheng 1996, p. 1085.

³³ Li Wenyu, "Guwen shiji xu" 古文拾級序 [Preface to Guwen shiji], in *Guwen shiji*, p. 4.

³⁴ Ma Xiangbo, "Guwen shiji xu" 古文拾級序 [Forward to Guwen shiji], in *Guwen shiji*, p. 3. ³⁵ Nowadays many scholars believe that Ma Xiangbo also contributed to the compilation of *Mashi wentong*. For a synthesized report on the discussion of the authorship of *Mashi wentong*, see Yao Xiaoping 2006. There are numerous studies on the *Mashi wentong* in Chinese, such as Lü and Wang 1991. For a study of the book in English, see Peyraube 2004, pp. 341-355. Peyraube traces similarities between the *Ma Grammar* and the works on Indo-European languages, and argues that the book is designed like a Western grammar book. ³⁶ Alleton 2004, p. 216.

³⁷ Ma Xiangbo, "Guwen shiji xu", pp. 2-3.

"central to Renaissance humanism."³⁸ In order to summarise the meaning of Chinese 'ethical and philosophical stances' for his colleagues and friends in Portugal and Italy, Ricci's classical learning enabled him to draw analogies between Confucian classics and Latin and Greek. Meanwhile, "he deliberately uses Roman and Latin models to impart his ideas to the Chinese, surely because he felt such models would have a greater initial impact than images drawn from the Old or New Testament." In his *Western Memory Techniques*, Ricci "drew almost the whole work from Cicero, Quintilian, Seneca, and above all Pliny's *Natural History*" in classical Chinese.³⁹ In this sense, Ricci's classical learning served his purpose of blending Confucianism with Christianity and bridging the East and West. This 'ascent' formed a significant part of Ricci's cultural accommodation policy and became an integral part of the early Jesuit tradition.

The academic training Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo received at the Collège de Saint-Ignace can be seen as a continuity of Ricci's policy. This early Jesuit tradition advocated the synthesis of Western and Chinese learning which, to a certain extent, coincided with the ideas held by both Qing government reformers such as Li Hongzhang, Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-1872), and Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909), as well as influential scholar-reformers like Liang Qichao. However, none of these reformers had both Chinese and Western education training like Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu. Ma addressed the issue from a totally different perspective. Like Ricci, Ma intended to use Latin as a tool to bridge East and West, to combine the essence of the cultures of the two most renowned empires – ancient Rome and China – and then to re-construct a new and unique scholarship which would shine in China.

At that time, both Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu had already understood that Western technology was not the only key to a nation's progress and prosperity. In his preface to Guwen shiji, Li Wenyu emphasized the significance of learning the classical Chinese language. In 1885, Li Wenyu, with Bishop Valentin Garnier, travelled to Hankou for a meeting; the Bishop pointed to the ships on the Yangtze River, saying: "This is what people admire the most. [...] It can travel around the globe, connecting with hundreds of countries among five continents. It enables countries to trade and expand their national powers across borders. Nothing can be greater than this!" Li said that at first he agreed with the Bishop, but then had second thoughts: "A boat can only carry people and goods, but not a civilization. A boat can travel a long distance, but cannot run through the history of a nation. What is the greatest achievement of human society? It would be nothing but language."40 In his view the classical Chinese language was the bridge between the present and the past. At that time, China had adopted a modern school system based on the Japanese model, and students began to study different subjects in accordance with modern curricula and would not have

³⁸ Spence 1988, p. 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴⁰ Li Wenyu, "Guwen shiji xu", pp. 1-2.

the time to study the classical language. Those who wanted to pursue classical learning also found it was too difficult to discern what they should study. The collection of classical Chinese essays compiled by Li Wenyu, intended for beginners, aimed to address these issues and attract students to study the classical Chinese language under the changed education system.⁴¹ This collection is also a reflection of the legacy of Jesuit education and the early Jesuit tradition upheld through its educational practice in Zi-ka-wei.

Both Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu held a key role in the assimilation of scientific knowledge along with Christian faith and the promotion of a modern education system. In 1900, Ma Xiangbo donated all his wealth to the Church to establish Aurora Academy (L'Aurore in French, and Zhendan 震旦 in Chinese) in Shanghai.⁴² From then on Ma Xiangbo tirelessly devoted himself to founding modern education, hoping that he could make a difference to China. From this perspective, his admiration of ancient Roman civilization and his advocacy for the study of Latin was an expression of his desire for young people to obtain a deep understanding of Western cultures; only then could Western systems and methods be adopted wisely and work effectively for China.⁴³

As mentioned earlier, Ma Xiangbo is well known for his devotion to the establishment of modern education in China. Li's activities in promoting science and education, however, are less well known. In fact, Li was crucial to the ongoing operation of this first Catholic university in Shanghai running. Because of conflict with the French Jesuits regarding the management of the institute, Ma Xiangbo left Aurora with his student followers and went on to establish Fudan. Aurora was then forced to cease its operation until Li Wenyu was appointed president. He invited famous locals such as Zhang Jian 張謇 (1853-1926)⁴⁴ onto the university Board and, in August 1905, Aurora commenced operating again under Li's leadership.⁴⁵ Li was also a professor of philosophy at the university.

Moreover, Li Wenyu contributed to the spread of scientific knowledge in China through the first Chinese Catholic newspaper he edited. After the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Society of Jesus in Shanghai became actively involved in the introduction of modern science to the Chinese audience and also supported the reform movement (*weixin* 维新) in 1898. A monthly journal, *Gezhi xinbao* 格致新報 (the Revue Scientifique), was published by two Chinese Catholic believers in Shanghai from March to August 1898; then it merged with *Yiwenlu* into the brand-new *Gezhi yiwen huibao* (I-wen-lou et Revue

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁴² The deed Ma signed for his endowment was dated 1900 (see Zhu Weizheng 1996, p. 36). In 1902 the regulations for Aurora were drafted (see Zhu Weizheng 1996, pp. 41-43). The institution came to existence in 1903.

⁴³ For a study of Ma Xiangbo and his activities in education, see Huang Shuguang 2004.

⁴⁴ Zhang Jian was a well-known entrepreneur, politician, and educationalist. For biographical information on Zhang Jian, see Zhang Xiaoruo 1930; Zhang Kaiyuan 2011. There are many research works on Zhang Jian and, for a recent study, see Wei Chunhui 2011.

⁴⁵ Jiang E'ying 2001, p. 74.

Scientifique). As mentioned earlier, it remained under the editorship of Li Wenyu and was issued twice a week. In August 1899, it changed to *Huibao*, while a separate weekly science magazine, *Kexue huibao* 科學匯報, was edited by a Belgian called Van Hee (He Shishen 赫師慎 in Chinese), answering questions relating to science. This science magazine was short-lived after Van Hee returned to Belgium, but *Huibao* continued to be published as a Chinese Catholic newspaper until August 1911, about two months after the death of Li Wenyu. ⁴⁶ Li Wenyu signalled that the newspaper aimed to prioritize the publication of Western learning over daily news, and to educate all literate Chinese on the key points of scientific knowledge.⁴⁷

Among Li's translated works, the book *Xixue guanjian* 西學關鍵 (Key to Western Learning) made an outstanding contribution to China's wave of new learning.⁴⁸ It stemmed from *A Guide to the Scientific Knowledge of Things Familiar*, which was first published in 1838 and was the first major book written by Rev. Dr Ebenezer Cobham Brewer (1810-1897). It provided scientific explanations for common phenomena and was intended for readers with a limited knowledge of science. This small volume achieved unprecedented success and was translated into other languages including French, Spanish, and Portuguese. By 1905 the English version alone had been reprinted forty-seven times. It was translated into French under the title *La clef de la science, ou Les phénomènes de tous les jours expliqués*, by François Napoléon Marie Moigno (1804-1884), a mathematician, physicist, writer, and translator. This French version was published by H. Loones (Paris) in 1876. Li's translation was based on this French version, and he was aware that the original book was very well received in many countries, enjoying great popularity.⁴⁹

Li's translation was published in 1903 after the Qing government had issued a proclamation to establish a modern school system and to integrate the content of Western learning into traditional Chinese education. Li stated that the then Qing Court realized that China faced a difficult time; in order to save the country, the emperor circulated an edict in 1898 to replace 'eight-legged essays' in the civil examinations with *celun* \mathfrak{R} $\mathring{\mathbb{R}}$ (political commentaries); and to change *shuyuan* $\mathring{=}$ \mathfrak{R} (academies) at all levels to *xuetang* $\mathring{=}$ $\mathring{=}$ (modern schools), where the curriculum would include both Chinese and Western learning. Li stated that he understood that "[the study of scientific knowledge] is fundamental for China to be wealthy and strong", and the book he translated would contribute to the spread of scientific knowledge and train the talented.⁵⁰ This was in accordance with educational reform measures proposed in the 1898 Reform and

⁴⁶ Elman 2005, p. 386; Wang Jianhui 2006.

⁴⁷ Li Wenyu, "'Xixue guanjian' xu" 西學關鍵序 [Preface to Key to Western Learning], in *Xixue guanjian*, pp. 1b-2a.

⁴⁸ For a list of Li's writings and translated works, see Kurtz 2006, pp. 147-156.

⁴⁹ Li Wenyu, "Xixue guanjian xu", p. 2b.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 1b-2a.

implemented in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion, as well as the 1903 Regulation which devised the first modern school system in China. From this perspective, we may say that Li Wenyu's service to the Church was relevant to the building of a modern China.

4. Li Wenyu's Refutation of Yan Fu's Tianyan lun

In the late Ming and early Qing period, European astronomy was transformed by the invention of the telescope and acceptance of the heliocentric theory of Copernicus. Chinese interest in Western knowledge, however, focused narrowly on the prediction of solar eclipses and the calculation of the calendar. The intellectual impact of Jesuit knowledge of mathematics and astronomy only stimulated curiosity amongst a fraction of Chinese literati, who intended to employ it to complement what was lacking in traditional Chinese learning. From the Opium War onward, Western sciences were regarded as medicine crucial to the survival of China. Translated missionary works and their writings were an important source of Western learning for intellectuals like Liang Qichao. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Western information flooded into China and missionary sources were no longer the only channel for the transmission of Western learning. This challenged the Church's authority on knowledge transmission. Meanwhile, the secular movement in the West further encouraged the Chinese endeavour to separate religion from modern science and Christianity from Western learning. For example, in his writings prior to the 1898 Reform, Liang Qichao carefully separated the Christian religion (jiao 教) from Western secular learning (xue 學).⁵¹ Li Wenyu's refutation of Yan Fu's translation of Huxley's work reflected this critical situation.

In 1906, Li Wenyu published Tianyan lun boyi 天演論駁議 (A Refutation of Evolution Theory) to rebut Yan Fu's (嚴復, 1854-1921) translation of Thomas Huxley's work *Evolution and Ethics*. Li's work was appended to *Zhexue tigang* 哲學提綱 (Outlines of Philosophy), a collection of his philosophy lectures at Aurora University.⁵² It should be noted that some pieces from this book had been published in Huibao under his pseudonym "Damuzhai zhu" 大木齋主.53 In 1909, parts of the Tianvanlun boyi appeared once again as a series of essays on evolution in the September and October issues of Huibao, though this time the essays were under the pen name "Xu-bai-shi zhu" 虚白室主 (the master of the

⁵¹ See Liang Oichao's Xixue shumubiao 西學書目表 [Bibliography on Western Learning] and Bianfa tongvi 變法通議 [On Reforms] - both were written and published in 1896; Bai 2001, p. 143. ⁵² Wang Tiangen 2006, p. 229; Kurtz 2006, pp. 147-156; Kurtz 2011, pp. 225-256.

⁵³ *Huibao*, no. 54. It is reported that as early as 1900 Li Wenyu had already published an essay in Huibao entitled "Wulei shengke shuo" 物類生克說 [On the struggle for existence] to refute Darwin's biological evolution theory. See Wei, Li, and Yao 2011, pp. 89-90.

empty-white studio). ⁵⁴ After Li Wenyu's death, the *Tianyanlun boyi* was reprinted by the Press of the Society of Jesus.

Researchers on China and Darwinism in both Chinese and English literature have agreed that Darwin's theory was first introduced into China by missionary members before Yan Fu's translation of Evolution and Ethics. In the early 1870s, D. J. MacGowan (1814-1893)⁵⁵ and his Chinese collaborator Hua Hengfang 華 蘅芳 (1833-1902)⁵⁶ translated the sixth edition of the book by British geologist Charles Lyell (1797-1875), Elements of Geology, into Chinese as Dixue gianshi 地學淺釋. The book was initially the fourth volume of Lyell's book Principles of Geology; in 1838 Lyell issued the Elements as a separate book, and six editions were subsequently published. Lyell's Principles of Geology was a powerful influence on young Darwin who later became a close friend of Lyell. However, Lyell's acceptance of the theory of natural selection only appeared in the tenth edition of the *Principles* (1866-68).⁵⁷ The sixth edition of the *Elements* was published in 1865, and its Chinese translation, Dixue qianshi, was published in 1873, which contained information on both Lamarck and Darwin's theories of evolution.⁵⁸ In the same year, Shenbao 申報 (Shanghai News) also reported the publication of Darwin's The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex (1871). However, this report focused on Darwin's scientific research which led him to conclude that all human beings had the same origin. The report stated that the book was already published and contained a brief outline to illustrate that Westerners devoted themselves to practical learning (shixue 實學).⁵⁹ This report indicates that Darwin's theory was initially introduced into China as part of new science or gezhi 格致 learning from the West. John Fryer (1839-1928) and his Chinese collaborators at the Jiangnan Arsenal, such as Huang Hengfang, Li Shanlan 李善兰 (1811-1882), Xu Shou 徐壽 (1811-1884), and his son Xu Jianyin 徐建寅 (1845-1901), and reformer missionaries (such as Timothy Richard, Young J. Allen, and W.A.P. Martin) mentioned Darwin and his evolution theory in their translations of scientific knowledge into Chinese from time to time, but nothing was systematic and there was no mention of the

⁵⁴ *Huibao*, no. 65, pp. 1025-1026; no. 66, pp. 1041-1042; no. 69, pp. 1089-1090; no. 73, pp. 1153-1154.

⁵⁵ MacGowan was an American Baptist medical missionary in Ningpo. He was also employed as a translator at the Translation Department of the Jiangnan Arsenal in Shanghai in 1868, where he and Hua Hengfang also translated *Jinshi shibie* 金石識別 [The identification of minerals]. For biographical information on D. C. MacGowan, see Wylie 1867, pp. 132-134; Wright 2000, pp. 86-87, ft. 34.

⁵⁶ Hua Hengfang, a well-known mathematician in late Qing China, worked at the Translation Department of the Jiangnan Arsenal with other Chinese scientific talents such as Li Shanlan, Xu Shou, and his son Xu Jianyin. See Wright 2000, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁷ Porter 1976, pp. 91-103; Wilson 1973.

⁵⁸ *Dixue qianshi*, 13: 16a. For a brief discussion of the book and its impact on Kang Youwei, see Pusey 1983, p. 26.

⁵⁹ Shenbao.

religious controversy over Darwin and his evolution theory in the West.⁶⁰ The Chinese essay competition at the Shanghai Polytechnic in 1889 can be seen as a reflection of the spread of evolution and Darwinism via education at this time.⁶¹

Although missionaries were among the first sources of information on the theory of evolution and Darwinism, it was Yan Fu's translation that raised the consciousness of the Chinese society. ⁶² While Yan Fu introduced the ideas of Huxley and Spencer but not the original version of Darwin's theory, in 1902 and 1903 Ma Junwu 馬君武 (1881-1940) translated and published the first five chapters of Darwin's Origin of Species, and also wrote an introductory article on biologists who believed in and contributed to the theory of evolution in the West.⁶³ It was Yan's free translation of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, with his interpretation as to what he perceived as the evolution theory, that had an immense impact on Chinese society after the 1895 Sino-Japanese War; many famous Chinese phrases, such as the term *tianze* 天擇 (natural selection), and shizhe shengcun 適者生存 (the survival of the fittest), were created and became the label for new ideas that attracted scholar-reformers of the time, such as Kang Youwei 康有爲 (1858-1927) and Liang Qichao, who used the notion of 'the survival of the fittest' to call for reforms.⁶⁴ Young students were also inspired by Yan Fu's Tianyan lun, one of whom was Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936). He first read Yan Fu's translation of Huxley's work in 1901 when he was twenty-years old, while studying at the School of Mining and Railways in Nanjing. The theory of 'the survival of the fittest' had a strong impact on him.⁶⁵

Li Wenyu was aware that Yan Fu's *Tianyan lun* promoted Spencer's Social Darwinism. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) proposed the idea of struggle for survival based on the *Principal of Population* by Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) and created the phrase 'survival of the fittest.' Huxley was a famous defender of Darwin's evolution theory, but he did not quite agree with Darwin's 'natural selection' theory; rather, he adopted Spencer's idea and applied struggle

⁶⁰ Wright 2000, p. 395; Pusey 1983, p. 5.

⁶¹ Elman 2005, pp. 345-351.

⁶² The draft of Yan's *Tianyan lun* was circulated among Yan's friends and key reformists, and was then serialized in *Guowen bao* 國聞報 [National News]. It was believed that the first formal publication of this book was a wood-print which appeared in April 1898, and various versions by other publishers then followed. The popularity of the work increased in 1905 when the Commercial Press released a typographical version. This was subsequently reprinted many times and the 24th edition was published in 1927. See Yu Zheng 2002, pp. 108-112.

⁶³ Although it was not until 1920 that Ma Junwu translated and published the replete version of the *Origin of Species*, his extracts of the *Origin of Species* can be regarded as the first to systematically introduce Darwin and Darwinism into China. In 1930 he also translated Darwin's *The Descent of Man* and *Selection in Relation to Sex* in their entirety. For information on Ma Junwu and his translation works, see Yuan Binye 2005, p. 61. For Ma's translation and other works in this period, see Mo Shixiang 1991.

⁶⁴ Schwartz 1964; Huang c. 2008; Pusey 1983, pp. 15-26, 83-126.

⁶⁵ Lu Xun 1973, pp. 58-59. See also Pusey 1983, pp. 156, 205-207. Pusey 1998 presents a philosophical critique of Lu Xun's interpretation of Darwinism and evolution theory.

for survival and survival of the fittest to social development. However, unlike Spencer, who philosophically legitimized laissez faire capitalism, Huxley instead advocated the use of ethics to restrict the brutality of free market capitalism. Yan Fu's translation of Huxley's work added his own understanding and interpretations to both Huxley and Spencer's ideas. He included a lengthy introduction of Spencer's ideas in his commentary while his introduction of Darwin's Origins of Species was very brief. In other words, Tianvan lun was a book on Social Darwinism rather than on Darwin's original theory of evolution. Li Wenyu noticed this difference,⁶⁶ and clearly stated in the beginning of his book that Yan Fu's Tianyan lun gave readers the impression that he had introduced new ideas into China, but it was false scholarship (miuxue 繆學). This false scholarship, continued Li, was the 'Transformation Theory' (Transformismus, or bianmo 變模 in Chinese) which prevailed in the West, especially in England.⁶⁷ He was fully aware that the evolution theory promoted by Herbert Spencer, Huxley, and Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) differed from Darwin's original thesis.

As a philosophy professor, Li Wenyu criticised evolution theory from the perspectives of philosophy, reason (science), and religious belief. He focused firstly on the origin of species and life, refuting the point that living organisms could be generated from non-living matter.⁶⁸ The belief that living matter arose from non-living material can be traced back to the ancient Greek theory of spontaneous generation which is an essential part of the theory of evolution. Li used the term *huasheng* 化生 to describe it. This was originally a Buddhist term: hua meaning 'change', and sheng meaning 'to give birth to', 'to bring something or someone from the dead', and 'to grow.' Li explained that this belief existed in both China and the West in ancient times when people were unable to observe microscopic organisms. Li used his knowledge of the discoveries in biology and microbiology to argue that scientists such as Francesco Redi (1626-1697), Antonio Vallisneri (1661-1730), Jan Swammerdam (1637-1680), Marcello Malpighi (1628-1694), René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683-1757), and Charles De Geer (1720-1778) had all used the microscope to gather evidence to challenge the theory of spontaneous generation. Li also reported that the Dutch tradesman and scientist Antonie Philips van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) had created powerful microscope lenses and applied them to a thorough study of the microscopic world. Leeuwenhoek was the first scientist to observe bacteria and microorganisms, and he recorded his microscopic observations and sent them to the Royal Society in England. In Li's opinion, the significance of Leeuwenhoek's discovery, in addition to his contribution to the fields of biology and microbiology, was that he provided proof that invalidated the theory of evolution.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Li Peishan 1991, p. 31.

⁶⁷ *Tianyan lun boyi*, p. 1.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁹ *Tianyan lun boyi*, pp. 7-8; Graves 1996, p. 71.

Li further highlighted the experiment made by Louis Pasteur (1822-1895), a French chemist and microbiologist. Based on his experiment, Pasteur concluded that "[m]icroscopic beings must come into the world from parents similar to themselves."⁷⁰ Li Wenyu exclaimed that Pasteur's discoveries supported his point that "living matter cannot arise from non-living material" (物不化生).⁷¹

The second major point Li confronted was human evolution. He declared that evolution theorists believed human beings evolved from great apes, although Darwin claimed that human ancestors were not the monkeys of today, but another type which were already extinct.⁷² Li used the term *lei* 類 (group, category) to argue that any species could not come into the world from parents different to themselves. He said that *lei* referred to a massive amount of species sharing similarities which they could pass on for generations. The same species may exhibit minor differences. For instance, human beings have different skin colours, but the basic nature and characteristics of human beings remained the same. Li further elaborated the physical differences between human beings and great apes to argue that it was impossible for human beings to originate from great apes or other animals since human beings and animals did not belong to the same species.⁷³

The focal point in the above discussion is the origin of life. Li first summarized the Kant-Laplace nebular hypothesis, a theory of the commencement of the solar system.⁷⁴ According to the theory, Li said, there was nothing but an extended cloud of material/gas which rotated about the Sun. Turbulent rotation brought nebular material together to allow clumps to form. The planets condensed from this material, and the inner planets were denser than outer ones. Once the planets formed, they all orbited the Sun in the same direction, and travelled in nearly the same plane. There were disparities between Kant's and Laplace's theories but, Li pointed out, their ideas about how matter came together to form the planets were similar.⁷⁵

The term *yuanzhi* 元質 was used in Li Wenyu's summary of the Kant-Laplace theory. *Yuan* 元 means prime, first, beginning; and *zhi* 質 stands for material form or body, matter, thing, substance. The term *yuanzhi* thus means the prime or original form of material, element or life. The Jesuits of the seventeenth-century frequently used the term *yuanzhi* when refuting the Song Neo-Confucian concept of *taiji* 太極 which, they believed, was the origin of the universe (太極生天地萬物). The Jesuits argued that *taiji* was the "primeval chaos" (*hundun* 混沌) which was filled with *yuanzhi* (prime thing) that could

⁷⁰ Tiner 1990, p. 63.

⁷¹ *Tianyan lun boyi*, pp. 8-9.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁴ Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), German philosopher. Pierre-Simon de Laplace (1749-1827), French mathematician, astronomer, and physicist.

⁷⁵ *Tianyan lun boyi*, p. 3.

not form the universe. The Jesuits differentiated the word *yuan* 元 from *yuan* 原 which in classical Chinese could be used interchangeably as the two words shared the same syllable. To the Jesuits *yuan* 原 meant the original source/ root, and *tianzhu* 天主 (the Lord of Heaven) ought to be the only source or origin of things in the universe.⁷⁶ This argument can be exemplified by the title of Giulio Aleni's book, *Wanwu zhenyuan* 万物真原, which means "true origin of ten thousand things" (ca. 1629).⁷⁷ The term *yuanzhi*, with a general meaning of prime or original form of material, element and life, could be understood to refer to either living or non-living matter, but its specific reference varies according to the context against which the term is used. For instance, in Li's summary of the Kant-Laplace nebular hypothesis the term referred to *yuanqi* 元气, or an extended primitive solar atmosphere.

Li commented that Huxley regarded the *yuanzhi* as the origin of the universe where everything – no matter whether non-living matter or living species with or without intellectual faculty – originated through the self-transformation of *yuanzhi*; and there was no Creator that created different species and things for different roles in the universe.⁷⁸ Li used mythological motifs in early civilizations, such as the Chaldean (Babylon), Phoenician, Etruscan, Greek, Latin, Jewish, and Chinese, as examples to state that the universe was initially the "primordial and central chaos" (*hundun* 混沌) – there was no life but *yuanzhi*. This view did not differ from the evolution advocates. However, unlike evolutionists who regarded the *yuanzhi* as the origin of the universe, Li asserted that the *yuanzhi*, as the beginning of the universe, could not produce life itself; so there must have been a Creator, and any organism must be created by God (*zaowu* 造物).⁷⁹

Li then drew attention to the lack of evidence in Haeckel's evolutionary process. Li narrated Haeckel's claim that the *yuanzhi* was the origin of everything, and it evolved into soil which then was transformed to stones, to grasses and plants, to animals, and then to human beings. In Haeckel's description, continued Li, this was a gradual but upward process involving twenty-two transformations from the lowest progression to the highest form of life. Li Wenyu mocked Haeckel by saying that he presented the twenty-two-step transformation process as if he had seen them in person.⁸⁰ Li further argued that, no matter whether by gradual or sudden evolution, great apes or any animal could not become human. This was because any being without intellect (*zhi* 智) could not produce human beings, and humans were the only beings in the universe that possessed this faculty. Li then used the term *ling* 靈, which has two

⁷⁶ For a discussion of the Jesuits of the seventeenth-century and their refutation of Song Neo-Confucianism, see Zhu Qianzhi 2002, vol. 7, pp. 106-115.

⁷⁷ For a study of Aleni, see Song Gang 2018.

⁷⁸ *Tianyan lun boyi*, p. 30.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

meanings: soul and intellect. This implied that only human beings could have a spiritual life, which differentiated humans from animals. In this sense, humans and apes could not have common ancestors, Li concluded.⁸¹

Li Wenyu welcomed the new discoveries in modern science and used them in his arguments. In many aspects, his understanding of evolution and Darwinism was correct, and he indeed grasped the key point in his refutation that evolutionary theory denied the creation theory. Li Wenyu recognised that although Darwin did not reject the existence of the Creator, he developed the idea of *selectio naturalis*, suggesting that all species of life had evolved over time from common ancestors through the process of natural selection. This notion was in opposition to the idea that all the species, including human beings, had been created by God.

To Li Wenyu, it was rejection of God rather than the theory of evolution that was harmful. As discussed earlier, missionary writings and translations had already mentioned evolution, but did not foment anti-Creation sentiments. It was Yan Fu who stated that, after the publication of Darwin's theory, biologists in both Europe and America all accepted his evolution theory and rejected God's creation.⁸² Li certainly could not accept this statement. Based on a German Jesuit's book ⁸³ on famous scientists in Europe from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, Li stated that there were more than three hundred famous scientists in Europe in the past four hundred years, out of which 242 scientists were Christian believers. He particularly emphasized that among Darwin's counterparts only twelve of them did not believe in God while 124 held faith in God. Even Darwin himself did not entirely abandon God.⁸⁴

Li Wenyu's refutation was written for a general audience, not specialists. Therefore, Li Wenyu did not present a systematic introduction and critique of biological evolution or social Darwinism. What he tackled was Yan Fu's anti-Creation sentiments as presented in his interpretation of evolutionary theory. Li Wenyu appeared to be knowledgeable on the theory of evolution and scholarly reactions to the theory in Europe and America. The terms he quoted in his refutation were largely in French, such as *Transformismus universalis, lex evolutionis* and *Darwinismus*.⁸⁵ However, he did not specify or acknowledge his sources in his refutation of Yan Fu's version of evolution. What he was really concerned about was that Chinese readers would take Yan's interpretation of evolution theory as new learning from the West, and would be unable to identify the errors in Yan's interpretation. Li felt it was necessary to refute the theory of evolution presented in Yan's translation which, in Li's opinion, was more harmful to Chinese society than the original work of Huxley.⁸⁶

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸³ Li Wenyu only provided the author's surname as Dennerl.

⁸⁴ Tianyan lun boyi, p. 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

5. Christianity, Modern Science and Education

Compared with the knowledge package introduced to China by the Jesuits in the late Ming period, Western learning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries included new discoveries in modern science, which then led to questions regarding the relationship between Christianity, modern science, and modern education. Li Wenyu felt compelled to address such issues as both a faithful Catholic and the chief editor of the Catholic newspaper.

Firstly, Li had to answer the questions regarding the divergence between creation theory and modern science. According to the *Book of Genesis*, God created the world in six days, but the view as a result of modern science was that beings evolved over millions of years. Facing this challenge to creation theory, Li Wenyu presented a lengthy explanation in his editorials in *Huibao*. People often assumed, Li wrote, that Christian religion must have been wrong when it came to the discord between Christian beliefs and scientific evidence, but they did not realize that the creation theory and modern science were not diametrically opposed. Li elaborated on this point, saying that the apparent contradictions were due to errors in the translation of the *Old Testament* from Hebrew, as the Hebrew word for day (*yom*) can sometimes mean a period longer than 24 hours. Li said that the term 'six days' should be six *jie* \Re (period), and each *jie* stood for millions of years. According to this interpretation, there was no disagreement between the creation theory and scientific views regarding the formation of the earth.⁸⁷

Secondly, Li Wenyu assertively rebutted the view that Christianity was an impediment to the development of modern science. As discussed above, in his refutation of *Tianyan lun* Li argued that the discoveries in biology and the invention and use of powerful microscope lenses helped invalidate the evolution theory. Regarding the Chinese perception of the contradictory relationship between modern science and Christianity, Li Wenyu pointed out that scholars who made greatest contributions to modern science were all from within the Church. For example, Nicolaus Copernicus and Galileo Galilei were both Catholic; therefore, the heliocentric concept originated from scholars within Catholic faith.⁸⁸

Of course, Li Wenyu was aware that the condemnation of Galileo by the Catholic Church in 1633 contributed to the unfavourable image of the Church that opposed modern science and was thus opposed to progress. Based on the limited sources available to him at the time, Li explained that this was partly because Galileo did not present enough evidence to support his idea and most scholars were not convinced, although he admitted that it was also a mistake made by the Pope. Nevertheless, Li continued, the Pope's error was simply an indication that he did not understand science, and the controversy was largely attributed to the

⁸⁷ *Huibao*, no. 87, p. 1378.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1379.

arguments among scholars and Galileo's own arrogance. The Galileo affair did not discourage Li Wenyu from reinforcing his main point that most of the achievements in modern science were made by scholars in the Church.⁸⁹

In relation to Galileo, one may question whether the early Jesuits held back Galileo's discovery. The study conducted by Pasquale M. D'Elia confirms that it was Adam Schall von Bell (Tang Ruowang 湯若望 in Chinese, 1591-1666), the Jesuit in charge of the Chinese Bureau of Astronomy in Beijing, who introduced the telescope and the new astronomy of Galileo into China. D'Elia provides a detailed account of the spread of Galileo's discovery to China through the Jesuit scientist-missionaries, and describes how in c. 1640 Jesuit missionaries openly praised Galileo for having "reached where 'no other astronomer had reached in several thousand years.""⁹⁰

In 1933 Ma Xiangbo stated that the early Jesuits conveyed the latest discoveries in astronomy to China, contributing to the reform of the Chinese calendar by employing the achievements of the seventeenth century European academic world, including world's oldest universities such as L'Université de Montppellia (established in 1289), as well as the Accademia dei Lincei, ⁹¹ the exclusive scientific society founded in Rome in 1603, where Galileo became its sixth member on April 25, 1611.⁹²

Ma Xiangbo's statement was supported by D'Elia's research which provides us with a clear timeline demonstrating that the period from the announcement of Galileo's new discovery to the use of the telescope for astronomical observations at the Calendrical Bureau of late Ming China, was only about twenty years. In 1610 Galileo, in his Sidereus Nuntius, announced his discoveries based on his observations using a telescope. In 1615 the Jesuit Manuel Dias (1574-1659) wrote Tian wen lue 天問略 (Problems of Astronomy, or The Sphere), an astronomy book in Chinese, introducing the telescope to a Chinese audience.⁹³ In 1626 Adam Schall von Bell, with the help of Li Zubai 李祖白, a Christian Chinese, published a treatise in Chinese entitled Yuanjing shuo 遠鏡說 (The Telescope), containing a detailed introduction of Galileo's telescope. On October 25, 1631, "observations were made with a telescope." "In that same year and in following years some telescopes arrived in several cities of the province of Fukien brought there by the missionaries Andrew Rudomina, S.J. and Julius Aleni, S. J."94 Circa 1630 Xu Guangqi and Li Tianjing 李天經 (1579-1659) began to use the telescope in their astronomical observations.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ D'Elia 1960, p. vii.

⁹¹ Ma Xiangbo, "Xu Wendinggong yu Zhongguo kexue" 徐文定公与中国科学 (Xu Guangqi and Science in China), in Li Tiangang 2014, p. 487.

⁹² D'Elia 1960, pp. 12-13.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁹⁵ Jiang Xiaoyuan, 1984, p. 109. The exact years of this timeline in Jiang's article somewhat differs from D'Elia's.

The above narrative proves that the knowledge of astronomy introduced into China by the early Jesuits was the most advanced of the day. Furthermore, the Jesuits' efforts in facilitating the diffusion of Galileo's observations and discoveries in China endorsed Li Wenyu's core argument that, rather than science and religion contradicting each other, they were complimentary to each other.⁹⁶ This also indicates that the scholars within the Catholic Church were committed to both modern science and religion.

Education was crucial to the *xueshu chuanjiao* in early twentieth-century China where modern education was desperately needed to foster a new generation of talents. However, news of the French secularization movement along with the narration of the history of the Catholic Church by the newly emerged media created doubts over the link between modern education and the assimilation of Christianity in China. One example is a 1905 article which stated that the period 500-1500 AD saw the rise and growth of the Catholic Church which had the power to influence the rulers of Europe, and that monks and bishops taught in schools where the curriculum consisted of subjects related solely to Christianity. In this author's view, such a narrow educational focus resulted in widespread ignorance where only Christian clergy received a comprehensive education. The author concluded that this was why the period was labelled as the Dark Ages.⁹⁷

Contrary to this image, modern scholarship on medieval education and science however point out that the existence of the separation between church and state in the late Middle Ages made possible the formation of the university, and that the translation of Greco-Arabic science and natural philosophy into Latin furnished "a curriculum that was overwhelmingly composed of the exact sciences, logic, and natural philosophy."98 This view coincides with the point made by Li Wenyu in one of his editorials that modern education originated in Christianity, and without the Church the West would not have the advanced civilizations witnessed at the time.⁹⁹ In particular, Li listed the contributions the Jesuits made to the development of new learning in China, including Ricci's world map that, in Li's words, laid the foundation for modern geography in China. Li also praised the early Jesuits' work in calendar making in the Qing Court, as well as the Shanghai Sheshan Observatory. He further pointed out that the Church had established schools and universities all over the world, and that the curricula in these schools and universities covered subjects in both the humanities and modern science, such as theology, literature and history, philosophy, physics, medicine, mathematics, law, and fine arts.¹⁰⁰

In 1912, Ma Xiangbo presented the same argument but from a different perspective. In his letter to the Pope, Ma pleaded that learning as an instrument

⁹⁶ *Huibao*, no. 90, pp. 1425-1428.

⁹⁷ Dongfang zazhi 1905, p. 62.

⁹⁸ Grant 1997, p. 106.

⁹⁹*Huibao*, no. 88, pp.1393-5.

¹⁰⁰ *Huibao*, no. 90, pp. 1426-1428.

for attracting Chinese people to Christianity should not be neglected (用學問為 誘掖之具, 斷不可無). While highlighting the early Jesuit tradition, Ma pointed to the fact that the Catholic Church was lagging behind the Protestants and that the French mission trailed behind the British, German, and American missions in terms of promoting education. Ma stated that in Beijing the Catholic Church only had one French primary school – with extremely expensive fees, the school could only recruit children from non-Catholic families, and after these children graduated they relied on the French to make a living. Ma further pointed to the fact that the late Qing government had asked the Church to open and run a university in Beijing, but this request was declined and Protestants grasped the opportunity. He concluded that Protestants had gained favour with the late Qing government; after the republic, its influence on China's education, society, and politics expanded, and Catholicism appeared to have been discarded (而我教獨 見摒焉). Ma sharply argued that the erosion of Catholic influence was not from any external force but rather because the French missionary members in China neglected the early Jesuit tradition and policy of using science and knowledge as the vehicle for spreading Christian messages. In his view, few of them followed the steps of Ricci and Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688),¹⁰¹ who introduced the science of Europe to China, ranging from astronomy to irrigation. By deviating from Ricci's policy, Ma maintained, the Catholic Church could only attract illiterate or semi-illiterate people. This would not contribute anything to China's move to democracy, Ma concluded.¹⁰²

Apparently, Ma Xiangbo was not shy about the instrumental role of education and scholarship in evangelism. Of course, Ma's point was made with particular reference to his proposal that the Catholic Church should contribute more to the development of modern education in China. From then to the late stage of his life Ma Xiangbo consistently campaigned for the *xueshu chuanjiao*. Clearly both Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu shared the same view about a close link between the propagation of Catholic faith and modern education.

Conclusion

For both Ma Xiangbo and Li Wenyu, the Jesuit education they received provided them with "well-grounded and solid learning"¹⁰³ and made them erudite scholars.

¹⁰¹ Ferdinand Verbiest, a Flemish Jesuit missionary in seventeenth-century China. He was a successor to Adam Schall von Bell at the Imperial Bureau of Astronomy and was appointed Head of the Mathematical Board and Director of the Observatory. For a comprehensive study of Ferdinand Verbiest against the historical context of the Jesuit mission in China and the contact between Western and Chinese science in the early modern period, see Golvers 2003.

¹⁰² Ma Xiangbo's letter to the Pope for promoting education in China is collected in Zhu Weizheng 1996, pp. 115-116. This letter is translated into English by Ruth Hayhoe, in Hayhoe and Lu 1996, pp. 219-222.

¹⁰³ Smolarski 2002, p. 456.

What is worth noting is that their eruditeness includes a package of Christian faith and a broader knowledge of both Chinese and Western subjects. To them, Western scientific knowledge and Christianity were an integrated organic package that complemented rather than contradicted each other. This knowledge package may have differed from the early Jesuit tradition, but its essence remained the same. The early Jesuit cultural accommodation policy made it possible for those scientist-Jesuits to introduce into China "a notion of modern science informed by Christian natural theology for missionaries."¹⁰⁴ The legacy of this early Jesuit compromise was further embodied in the nineteenth-century Protestant missionary activities and achievements in translation, publication, and education, which contributed significantly to the introduction of modern science in late-Qing China. Although the Catholic Church in China, as Ma Xiangbo criticised in his 1912 letter to the Pope, was as a whole less effective than the Protestant missionary in terms of propagation of scientific knowledge and helping China develop modern education, Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo were definitely among those erudite Catholic scholars who worked for a better China through their devotion to the promotion of modern education and scientific knowledge.

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¹⁰⁴ Elman 2006, p. 139.

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