

Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and the  
Reconstruction of the Moral Authority in late Ming China

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## Abstract

The thesis aims to analyze the role of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), an moral philosophy book of the Spanish Jesuit Diego de Pantoja, in the process of the reconstruction of the moral authority in late Ming China. Since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, China was undergoing a severe social-political crisis. The orthodox literati attributed the social-political crisis to the decline of moral authority and proposed to re-establish moral authority and the highest moral standards. The preaching of God as the source of moral principles and the ultimate goal of moral conduct in Pantoja's book attracted the orthodox literati. They reinterpreted the book of the Spanish Jesuit and even modified it to meet their own need. As a result, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) wielded a specific influence in the development of moral philosophy in the late Ming and early Qing periods.

## Resumen

La tesis tiene como objetivo analizar el papel de *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), un libro de filosofía moral del jesuita español Diego de Pantoja, en el proceso de reconstrucción de la autoridad moral a finales del período Ming. Desde principios del siglo XVI, China atravesaba una grave crisis sociopolítica. Los literati ortodoxos atribuyeron la crisis sociopolítica al declive de la autoridad moral y propusieron restablecerlo y los más altos estándares de moralidad. La predicación de Dios como fuente de principios morales y el objetivo final de la conducta moral en el libro de Pantoja atrajo a los literatu ortodoxos. Reinterpretaron el libro del jesuita español e incluso lo modificaron para satisfacer sus propias necesidades. Por este motivo, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) ejerció una influencia específica en el desarrollo de la filosofía moral en el período de finales de Ming y principios de Qing.



# INTRODUCTION

Since the cultural communication between the two civilizations is believed to begin in the late Ming Dynasty, there is currently a growing number of investigations into the contact between China and Europe during this period. In the communication process, the European missionaries, especially the Jesuits, played a primary role as intermediaries. Consequently, in the area of the study on the cultural communication between Europe and China, the study on the Jesuits usually brings much academic attention.

Together with Matteo Ricci, Diego de Pantoja, a Spanish Jesuit, played an essential role in the early evangelization period in China. As Professor Joan-Pau Rubiés indicated, what made Ricci's missionary strategy truly original in comparison to that of so many other Jesuits practicing accommodation in other countries, was his idea that Confucianism, as a non-Christian ethical tradition could be perfectly valid, was entirely compatible with Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The Italian Jesuit's idea about this non-Christian ethical tradition opened a door for Pantoja to talk about the moral issues with the Chinese literati in a constructive way. Meanwhile, the Chinese literati who were facing the social-political crisis in the Wanli 萬曆 era (1573 – 1620), became very interested in the Spanish Jesuit's moral teachings. In this thesis, Pantoja will be regarded as a catalyst for change in Chinese moral philosophy and analyze his book *Septem Victoriis (Qike 七克)*' function in reconstructing the moral authority in late Ming China.

## 1.The state of the question

Although Diego de Pantoja was a significant figure in the Jesuits' early mission, there were not enough studies about him and his writings. The western scholarship made some studies on the letter of Pantoja to Farther Luis de Guzmán, which is one of the critical works of the Spanish Jesuit, titled “Relación de la entrada de algunos padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China” (A Letter of father Diego de Pantoja, one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Rubiés, 2017, 294.

company of Jesuits, to father Luis de Guzmán, provincial in the province of Toledo). In his letter, Pantoja related his journey from Macao to Beijing, the initial evangelical work of him and Ricci, and some detailed descriptions of the Ming Empire, which is full of first-hand observation and quite valuable for the European readers in that time.

Beatriz Moncó Rebollo made the transcription of this letter's original text, which is preserved in the National Library of Madrid. This is truly a significant contribution to introduce to the public the figure of Pantoja, who, in his time, was on a par with the famous Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci. Also, Beatriz Moncó wrote an extensive introduction to this letter and offered a portrait and an assessment of Pantoja's figure from an anthropologist's view.<sup>2</sup>

In the master thesis *Hibridación cultural y el discurso sobre China en el siglo XVII. El caso de Diego de Pantoja* (Cultural hybridization and the discourse on China in the 17th century. The case of Diego de Pantoja)<sup>3</sup>, Salvador Baena based his study on explaining the letter of Pantoja to Luis de Guzmán. He indicated that Pantoja offered a more critical view of China and presupposed a sense of superiority of European culture over China in his letter. This attitude of Pantoja had a notable influence on the Europeans. Before the Spanish Jesuit's commentaries, the vision that the two cultures were equal and similar egalitarian prevailed in Europe. By analyzing Pantoja's letter, Robert Ellis also believed that the Spanish Jesuit "delimit a sense of European identity different from and subtly superior to Chinese identity."<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, there are also some articles talking about *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). For example, Ann Waltner discussed the book of Pantoja and the response of contemporary Chinese to his work<sup>5</sup>. Eugenio Menegon talked about Pantoja's contempt for the flesh and sexual contacts in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) when he compared the differences between Christian virginity and Confucian chastity.<sup>6</sup> However, they did not elaborate much about the concerns of the literati; neither did they analyze the book in the historical background of the late Ming Dynasty.

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<sup>2</sup> Rebollo and de Pantoja, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Baena, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Ellis, 2016, 115.

<sup>5</sup> Waltner, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> Menegon 2004, 201-206.



In the Asian scholarship, up to now, Zhang Kai 張鎧's work on this Spanish Jesuit, under the title "Pang Diwo yu Zhongguo: Yesuhui Shiyong Celue Yanjiu 龐迪我與中國：耶穌會適應策略研究 (Diego de Pantoja and China: a study on the 'Adaptation Policy' of the Society of Jesus)<sup>7</sup>, is still the most critical research on Pantoja's life in China and his missionary strategy. Using Pantoja's letter to Luis de Guzmán, his mentor, and the provincial of the Jesuits society in the Toledo province as the prime resource, Zhang Kai analyzed Pantoja's knowledge about China. Furthermore, with the letters of Matteo Ricci and other Chinese resources, the author described Pantoja's evangelical work in Beijing and explained his role in the so-called Nanjing Persecution with the self-defense letter of Pantoja, which titled *Ju Jie* 具揭 (A statement in clarification).

In addition to being a well-documented biography, the book of Zhang Kai is also a critical study on the evangelical strategy of the first generation of Jesuits in China. According to Zhang Kai, Pantoja was an ardent supporter of the "Adaptation Policy" and a loyal follower of Ricci. Nevertheless, in his book Zhang Kai did not pay enough attention to *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), Pantoja's most well-received work in China.

The modern Chinese investigators began to set eyes on the moral philosophy book of Diego de Pantoja at the end of the 20th century. Some of them analyzed the impact of this book on Chinese society with the view of cultural comparison.

For example, in the book *Xixue yu Wanming Sixiang de Liebian* 西學與晚明思想的裂變 (Western learnings and the transformation of the thought in Late Ming China)<sup>8</sup>, He Jun 何俊 discussed the influence of Western learning on the thought of the literati in late Ming China. He took Pantoja's book as an example of his arguments, indicating that this moral book influenced Confucian ethics in late Ming China. Nonetheless, the book of the Spanish Jesuit and the commentaries about the book are not the focus of He Jun's discussion. He did not study the book in the context of the late Ming society; neither he explained why the Chinese literati were interested or what the readers acquired from this book of Pantoja.

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<sup>7</sup> Zhang Kai, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> He Jun, 1998.

In addition, Lin Zhongze 林中澤 studied the sexual morality from Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and evaluated its impact on Confucian ethics<sup>9</sup> in *Wanming Zhongxi Xinglunli de Xiangyu* 晚明中西性倫理的相遇 (the encounter of the Western and Chinese sexual morality in the late Ming period). Lin Zhongze did not provide a full study on Pantoja's book; neither did the author explain what impact this encounter had on Chinese sexual moral principles.

Besides, Zou Zhenhuan 鄒振環 also briefly introduced the author, the content, and the influence of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) on Chinese society in his book *Wanming Hanwen Xixue Jingdian: Bianyi, Quanshi, Liuchuan yu Yingxiang* 晚明漢文西學經典：編譯、詮釋、流傳與影響 (The Chinese written western learning classics in late Ming China: translation, interpretation, circulation, and impact)<sup>10</sup>. Notwithstanding, the same as He Jun, Zou Zhenhuan neither made an in-depth study about Pantoja's moral philosophy book.

Apart from these books, there are also some articles about *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克). For example, the South Korean investigator Kim Sunghae analyzed Pantoja's terminology and the book's content<sup>11</sup>. According to Kim, despite Pantoja adopting the idea that humans are born with good nature from the Confucian ethics, he challenged many teachings in Confucianism. Han Siyi 韓思藝 compared the moral cultivation method in the book of Pantoja and another Confucian ethics book *Ren Pu* 人譜<sup>12</sup>. Han also wrote some articles about the Catholic doctrine concluded in Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克).<sup>13</sup> Zhu Youwen 朱幼文 indicated the similarities and differences between the Catholic and Confucian ethics in his article.<sup>14</sup> Besides, there are also articles focusing on some individuals' commentaries on Pantoja's book and its impact on their ethical ideology.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Lin Zhongze, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Zou Zhenhuan, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Kim Sunghae, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Han Siyi, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Han Siyi, 2011; Han Siyi, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Zhu Youwen, 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Chen Xinyu, 2013; Zhang Xianqing, 2015.

In summary, Asian scholars' research on Diego de Pantoja and his book *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), concentrates on three aspects:

Firstly, some Chinese investigators tended to compare Catholic and Confucian ethics by analyzing *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) 's text. They interpreted the book of Pantoja in the view of Sino-Christian theology. That is to say, they paid much attention to the Christian doctrine concluded in Pantoja's book instead of studying the book in the historical background of late Ming China.

Secondly, some investigators regarded Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) as a practice of accommodation policy. Based on this judgment, they tried to find clues of Pantoja's attempt to reconcile Confucianism and Christian ethics in the text. Consequently, some researchers tended to believe that Pantoja distorted Catholic ethics to adapt to Confucianism for the convenience of the mission.<sup>16</sup> This approach leads people to underestimate Pantoja's knowledge about Chinese society and ignored Chinese literati's needs. By doing so, they took the creation of the moral philosophy book as a simple imitation of Matteo Ricci's work. Some of them even failed to notice that Pantoja did not deliberately reconcile Confucian and Catholic ethics.

Finally, some scholars evaluate to what extent did *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) change the ideas of the Chinese literati such as Wang Zheng 王徵 (1571 – 1644) or Zhuang Qiyuan 莊起元 (1575 – ?). In this way, these scholars regard Chinese literati as passive recipients of ideas introduced by missionaries, subsequently ignoring the active interpretation of the Chinese literati' on this book, making it impossible for people to notice that the change in Chinese moral philosophy which was caused by this interpretation the Chinese literati.

Two primary questions remained to be answered about Pantoja and his moral book. First, why were the Chinese literati interested in the *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克)? Second, what is the influence of Pantoja's book on Chinese moral philosophy? Or, how

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<sup>16</sup> Han Siyi, 2011, 382.

did the Chinese literati interpreted this moral book to bring changes to Chinese moral philosophy? In this thesis, these questions will be answered.

## 2.Objectives and hypothesis

This thesis aims to analyze the decline and reconstruction of the moral authority in late Ming China and evaluated the role of Pantoja's moral philosophy book in this process. The purpose is also to contextualize this significant change in moral philosophy into a social and historical perspective. The study focuses on Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike 七克*) and the commentaries of its Chinese readers, who were the orthodox literati and the defender of the traditional moral order. The orthodox literati were mainly the members of the Donglin Academy 東林書院<sup>17</sup>. In addition, there were some Catholic converts such as Xu Guangqi 徐光啟(1562 – 1633), Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠(1557 – 1627), and Wang Zheng, who shared similar ideas on moral philosophy.

Pantoja's book on ethics and the acceptance of its Chinese readers are selected as the research object mainly for two reasons:

On the one hand, the current study about the cultural exchange between Europe and China mainly focuses on science, technology, art, or how Catholic doctrine got around in China. Still, their dialogue on moral issues is mostly ignored. In the late Ming period, the literati paid close attention to moral issues because they believed that moral teachings were closely related to Chinese society's development. Since the middle Ming Dynasty, the economic growth brought about constant social change and turmoil. The social mobility was active, and the traditional social order was collapsing. Therefore, the government was losing control of the local society. Not only the social custom suffered the transformation, but also political corruption was expanding.

According to the Chinese political tradition, the literati tended to moralize the social-political issues and exhort people to cultivate their virtues. That is to say, they tried to solve the crisis through moral education. In such circumstances, the literati were

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<sup>17</sup> Donglin Academy, originally built in 1111 during the Northern Song Dynasty, was a private educational institution in Wuxi 無錫, China. In 1604, the literati who were dissatisfied with the policy of the government and the social morality refounded this academy.

attracted to the moral doctrine of the Jesuits. Similarly, Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike 七克*), as the most critical ethical work of the early Jesuits in China, received many Chinese scholars' attention.

On the other hand, in the study of the development of moral philosophy in late Ming China, people rarely paid attention to the Chinese literati's discussion about moral authority. Are there objective moral standards for people to observe? If the answer is positive, from where do these standards come? In this thesis, the late Ming literati's views on these issues will be discussed.

There are some four hypotheses remained to be verified:

1. Through the cooperation with the Chinese literati, Pantoja precepted that the most concerned issue of them was the moral disorder of the late Ming society.
2. In order to restore the social order, the orthodox literati intended to reconstruct the moral authority, which declined due to the challenge of the school of heart-mind.
3. The orthodox literati were attracted by the moral teachings in Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike 七克*) and reinterpreted it to reconstruct the moral authority.
4. Heaven, as an anthropomorphized deity and the moral authority, was adopted by the Chinese literati as the result of their interpretations of the words of Pantoja. Be that as it may, they did not admit that the heavenly rewards are their moral motivation.

### **3.Outline of chapters**

This thesis will be divided into four chapters. Chapter one presents the chronicle of Pantoja's missionary work in China. Through the Chinese and western sources, the readers could understand how the Spanish Jesuit came to know Chinese society and began cooperating with the Chinese literati.

Chapter two deals with economic development and the social changes in late Ming China, using mainly Chinese resources. Through the social-political crisis, the main concerns of the Chinese elites could be revealed. How did the orthodox scholars plan to solve social problems through moral education will be analyzed as well. All of these set the stage for the dialogue on the moral issues between the Jesuits and the literati.

Chapter three is dedicated to studying the moral book *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), including its completion time, structure, and even the resources that Pantoja referenced for his writing. In addition, particular emphasis is placed on how did the book of Pantoja was evaluated by its Chinese readers in the campaign of encouraging morality

Chapter four deals with the significant issues about the moral authority of the moral philosophy in late Ming China. It attempts to analyze how the moral authority declined and why the orthodox literati planned to reconstruct it. Special attention is given to how the Chinese literati used the concept of an anthropomorphized deity to reconstruct Heaven, a pre-existed notion in the Chinese Classics, as the moral authority. Meanwhile, their interpretation of this moral authority was continually improving under the influence of the moral teachings in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克).

#### **4.Methodology and sources**

As it is well known, the study on the history of communication between China and Europe once treated the missionaries as the transmitter, seeking to reveal their influence on Chinese literati.<sup>18</sup>These studies' objectives were always about, what manner did the missionaries adapt to transmit their teachings, or, to what extent did the transmitter have an /impact/influence on the receiver, or to what extent was the Chinese literati changed by the missionaries and their messages.

Thereafter, some researchers began to study this cultural exchange from a different perspective. The Chinese response became the center of the analysis. Since then, questions such as “how did the Chinese react, positively or negatively, to the introduction of Christianity and other aspects of Western Culture” emerged. This Chinese-centered study's representative work is *Chine et christianisme: Action et*

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<sup>18</sup> Standaert, 2002, 4.

reaction<sup>19</sup> of Jacques Gernet, which pays more attention to the Chinese reactions to Christianity.

Although the main focus on this Cultural encounter shift from the European missionaries to the Chinese literati, the study of the early Sino-European encounter is still extremely missionary-oriented. Or at least, this culture communication is, for most occasions, still studied in the frame of the Church History. It is just that the investigators pay more attention to the localization of Catholicism rather than the evaluation of the adaptation policy of the Jesuits. In this sense, the roles of the two parties in this communication never changed. That is to say, no matter whom the researchers focus on, the Chinese remained to be taken as the passive receivers and the missionaries as transmitters.

Nowadays, people realized that it is indispensable to study this cultural communication from the view of Chinese literati. However, if the Chinese are still treated as the receiver of the new knowledge or this communication between the Chinese literati and the Jesuits in late Ming China remains to be studied in the mission history framework, half of the cultural encounter history would always be neglected.

Thus, in this thesis, a new perspective will be adopted to study the cultural communication in late Ming China. The Chinese literati would be treated as the topic initiator, and the cultural encounter between the Chinese literati and Jesuits will be studied in the context of the development of Chinese thought history. This thesis will use this perspective to study how the Chinese literati interpreted the moral book *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) written by a Spanish Jesuit named Diego de Pantoja (1571 – 1618) and reconstructed the moral authority with some ideas in this book. To some extent, the arguments on why the Chinese literati are interested in Pantoja's book could also explain the early success of the Jesuits mission in China in the view of the Chinese side.

Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) will be used as a breakthrough point to study how the supreme deity from the Judeo-Christian tradition affected the reconstruction of moral authority in late Ming China. On top of that, the Reception theory will be adopted

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<sup>19</sup> Gernet, 1985.

to analyze the prefaces of Pantoja's book, written by the Chinese orthodox literati. As Hans-Robert Jauss indicated:

*In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them.*<sup>20</sup>

Jauss's attempt to bridge the gap between historical and aesthetic approaches to literature gave birth to Reception Theory, which brought the readers' role to the attention of academia. According to the Reception Theory, the readers of a literary work can be regarded as a part of the dialogue, and they interpret the meanings of the text based on their unique cultural background and life experiences. In this thesis, the literati reinterpreted and endowed new meanings to the text of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) based on their Confucian background and their concerns of the society, rather than passively accepting the book. In essence, the meaning of this book was created in the background of Chinese intellectual history. Accordingly, through analysis of the literati's commentaries, the readers of this thesis could understand how did the Chinese elites utilize the moral teachings of the Jesuits to serve their purpose.

In addition, the historical-philological method will be adopted for a close reading of Chinese primary sources to discuss the political-social crisis in late Ming China and the Chinese literati's appeal for moral authority. Since this investigation focuses on late Ming China, the main body of texts is from this period. These texts were part of a commentarial tradition preoccupied with classical texts dating as far back as the eleventh century BC. Correspondingly, this thesis will go back to these texts for using the original context of references made by the Chinese literati.

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<sup>20</sup> Jauss, 1982, 19.



The most important source for this investigation is *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and its prefaces written by six Chinese literati: Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠, Cao Yubian 曹于汴 (1558 – 1634), Xiong Mingyu 熊明遇 (1579 – 1649), Zheng Yiwei 鄭以偉 (1570 – 1633), Chen Liangcai 陳亮采 (? – ?), and Peng Duanwu 彭端吾 (? – ?). *Septem Victoriis*, or by its Chinese title *Qike* 七克 was first published in 1614. In his book, Pantoja described how to reach self-cultivation and obtain salvation by overcoming the seven cardinal sins: pride, lust, greed, gluttony, wrath, envy, and sloth. There are seven self-restraint ways to overcome these sins, which constitute the seven chapters of this book. The work of Pantoja contains many references to the Bible, the commentaries, and stories of saints and Western philosophers.

In the prefaces, the Chinese literati recorded their interpretations and commentaries on this moral book. By analyzing these prefaces, the issues that deeply concerned the literati and the cultural exchange between China and the West from the Chinese elites' perspective in the late Ming period could be revealed.

The other sources that will be used in this thesis are the books and letters of some key figures in the intellectual society in Ming China, such as Wang Yangming 王陽明, Li Zhi 李贄, and Gu Xiancheng 顧憲成.

*Chuan Xi Lu* 傳習錄 (Instructions for Practical Living)<sup>21</sup>, a compendium of conversations and letters collected and edited by the disciples of Wang Yangming, is essential for understanding his moral teachings. Chan Wing-Tsit 陳榮捷 translated this book by the title *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writing*<sup>22</sup>. Besides, Julia Qing also translated some letters of Wang Yangming with philosophical content, which were not included in the work of Chan Wing-Tsi. The book was titled *The philosophical letters of Wang Yangming*.

Another critical resource is the *Li Zhi Quanjizhu* 李贄全集註 (the Complete Works of Li Zhi and the annotations)<sup>23</sup>, which could help us to understand the decline of the

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<sup>21</sup> Wang Yangming, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit, 1963.

<sup>23</sup> Li Zhi, 2010.

moral authority in late Ming China. The work of Li Zhi was partially translated by Paulina Lee and printed in 2016 in volume *A Book to Burn and a Book to Keep (Hidden): Selected Writings*.<sup>24</sup> Besides, the works of Gu Xiancheng, titled *Gu Duanwen Gong Yishu* 顧端文公遺書<sup>25</sup>, is a representative work that contains the views of the orthodox literati. With the works of Wang Yangming, Li Zhi, and Gu Xiancheng, the readers of this thesis could better understand the decline and reconstruction of the moral authority in late Ming China.

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<sup>24</sup> Lee, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 1995.

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# 1.PANTOJA'S JOURNEY IN CHINA

## 1.1 The beginning of the journey

In the year 1571, Diego de Pantoja was born of noble lineage in Valdemoro, a small town located 25 km away from Madrid, the Spanish Empire's capital. At eighteen, he joined the novitiate of the Jesuits in Toledo. After hearing the achievement of his fellow Jesuits in the overseas missions, Pantoja volunteered for Asia.

Initially destined for Japan, he came to Macau in 1599, but the ongoing civil war made him stay in the city inhabited by the Chinese, Portuguese, and merchants worldwide. At this moment, an unexpected change happened. Lázaro Cattaneo (1568 – 1640), a companion of Matteo Ricci, came to ask another Jesuit to join the mission in China. In late 1599 Pantoja and several other priests secretly entered China. He had to be careful because he knew it was illegal for foreigners to come to China without permission. Perhaps at that moment, he already made up his mind to follow the example of his fellow Jesuits and dedicate his life to the greater honor and glory of God. Indeed, he and Ricci went through all kinds of hardship and danger to visit the Wanli 萬曆 Emperor (1563–1620). The beginning of the journey set the tone for Pantoja's mission in China.

### 1.1.1 Visiting the throne

At twenty-five years old, Pantoja was going to start a new life, and he would do his utmost to adapt to Chinese culture. Probably instructed by Ricci, his Spanish surname was transliterated to Pang Diwo 龐迪我, which in Chinese literally means “follow me.” He also changed his clerical costume to the Chinese literati's robe and headdress, as did Ricci. Furthermore, while rehearsing the gestures of Chinese courtesy, he began to learn Mandarin. A eunuch who was the companion of the two Jesuits left them a boy from Nanjing. Ricci believed that this boy “spoke so distinctly, and he could teach Pantoja the

perfect Mandarin of Nankinese accent<sup>26</sup>.” The tone of Nanjing was the standard Mandarin back in the Ming Dynasty. Mastering this accent would help them a lot in their communication with the Chinese literati and their life in the capital. After meeting Ricci in Nanjing, Pantoja was assigned to learn how to play with clavichord with Fr. Cattaneo. Ricci believed that his new Spanish fellow Jesuits had a talent for music, which could help their mission.

Since their goal was to persuade the Emperor to permit them to evangelize in China, they had to exert all their energy to make a good impression on him. On May 19 of 1600, Pantoja and Ricci left Nanjing to go to the capital to “pay tribute” to the Emperor, carrying the European gifts for the Emperor. These gifts allowed them to travel by the waterway of the Grand Canal.

When they arrived in Linqing 臨清, Shandong Province, a key post in the transport chain of Ming China, they were within a stone’s throw to the capital. Outside the city, they encountered the infamous Eunuch Ma Tang 馬堂(? – ?), who created unimaginable troubles for these missionaries. Wanli Emperor trusted the eunuchs and appointed them as tax collectors and mining supervisors. Subsequently, they were sent to critical commercial cities such as Linqing and the mines. Heavy tax burdens were forced on the people. The eunuchs compared with each other on how much tax they could collect for the Emperor. Ma Tang resorted to every conceivable means to rob the people of Linqing. If anyone dared to resist, Ma Tang would lodge a false accusation of plotting treason on him. Many families were ruined. In 1599, more than ten thousand outraged people burnt the administrative building of Ma Tang and beat 37 of his lackeys to death.<sup>27</sup> The literati urged the Emperor to bring Ma Tang to justice because he provoked this popular revolt. Still and all, Wanli took sides with his money purse. He sentenced the leader of this revolt to death and left Ma Tang unpunished. The literati were furious about his decision.

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<sup>26</sup> Ricci, 1953, 362.

<sup>27</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 7809; Ricci, 1953, 359.



Pantoja and Ricci arrived in Linqing not more than a year after this revolt. When Ma Tang discovered that these foreigners carried exotic gifts for the Emperor, undoubtedly, he would not let as an excellent opportunity to please his master slide away. Especially he still needed to strive for Wanli's favor with another eunuch.<sup>28</sup> For this reason, the cunning Eunuch was willing to put the Jesuits under his protection and offered to accompany them to the capital. After spending nearly a decade living in China, Ricci knew that he had to be cautious about dealing with the eunuchs. The literati in Linqing also warned them about Ma Tang. However, they recommended the Jesuits fall in with his wishes as much as possible because the Emperor trusted the eunuchs, which means that Ma Tang could hinder the Jesuits' passage. As Pantoja recorded, this Eunuch could "take away our gifts from us and give it himself with his hand to the king, without making any account of us, without controlment of any man, because he was not subject to any Mandarine."<sup>29</sup> Having no choice, the Jesuits took the ship of Ma Tang and went to the capital together.

At first, the Jesuits were received with great courtesy, but after Ma Tang realizing that they could not give him more precious gifts, they were cold-shouldered. Although the journey was not that beneficial as he expected, Ma Tang sent a memorial to Wanli, reporting that the Jesuits craved to come to the capital and pay the tributes. In the same memorial, he also requested the Emperor to allow the missionaries to go to Beijing. Ma Tang even bragged to Ricci, say that "my requests are taken care of by the king the day after they are presented. Those of others are answered late or not at all".<sup>30</sup>

However, neither Ma Tang nor the Jesuits anticipated that the Emperor did not respond to the memorial. Now the Eunuch regretted that he got himself into this foreign affair. Without the permission of the Emperor, even he could not go back to the capital by himself. This regret made him blame the Jesuits. When Pantoja and Ricci crossed their fingers to pray for the Emperor's permission, the angry Eunuch stormed into their residence with lots of people. His arrogance and rudeness left a deep impression on the

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28 Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 7807.

29 Pantoja, 1905, 341.

30 Ricci, 1953, 362.

missionaries. The record of Pantoja provides us lots of details about the behavior of Ma Tang and the fear of the Jesuits:

*And seeing it seemed unto him that he could not get us by another way, to give that which hee desired, and wee had not hee became shamelesse, and two dayes before his departure, he came with a great companie to our house, as though it had beene to visite us in friendship, we thinking nothing of any such thing, and When he was come in he began to speak unto us, and put us in great fear, asking us, how we durst come so far into the Kingdom without leave of the king? And that other eunuchs had advertised him from the court, that we had many other things, and that we would not show them, nor given them to the king. While he was thus talking and dealing, he commanded his men to seize upon all our stuff, which we had in four or five hampers, and to lay them all out upon a bank, which with great celeretie above an hundred officers which came with him performed, and in two words, they undid and opened all, and with his own hands he opened as many papers as he found, to seek that which he desired.*<sup>31</sup>

This Eunuch Ma Tang was famous for his greed and relentlessness. He made things difficult for Ricci and Pantoja:

*And seeking he could find nothing that he looked for, he took that which he found, which was an image of our Lady, being one of the two small ones which we had reserved, that which he left was better without comparison, and also very excellent, on which he had cast his eye. He took also some glasses, and other small thins, of small importance, but there were no better. But that which grieved us much was, that he took from us a cross of very good and great relics, and a case of relics likewise, and the chalice wherein we said mass, which because it was of silver and gilt( which that year they had sent us of Almes from Macau ) did please him; and when we prayed him not to touch it, because it*

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 345.

*was a thing consecrated to God, which the kings of our country durst not presume to touch, he made a jest of it, and the more it was told him that he should not touch it, he handled it the more with scorn, saying, that though we told him he might not touch it, yet we saw he held it in his hands without any difficulty or danger.*<sup>32</sup>

Pantoja's words recreated the scene and vividly showed the readers how Ma Tang acted like a bully and how the missionaries dealt with him cautiously. It was clear that Ma Tang attempted to find fault with the missionaries. Some literati attempted to help and persuade the Eunuch to give back the chalice. Still and all, Ma Tang did not stop to press the missionaries:

*At last they met with a case wherein was a craved crucifix, which was mine. He began to look upon our Lord Jesus Christ being bloody and wounded, being a very fair and pleasant sight to our eyes and heart, but very strange, foul and offensive to his sight. He used certain gestures not saying any word, until he was astonished, and turned his head, and asked what it was? We told him, that that was the true God which made Heaven and Earth, whom all the World ought to worship, who died for our sin, and to give us life, and afterward rose again by his own power, and ascended into Heaven. He would not hear many reasons; for it seemed unto him that we were deceived in worshipping a God that in his eyes was dead.*<sup>33</sup>

Maybe Pantoja chose not to write down all the details of this incident in his letter. According to Ricci's record, instead of admitting that it was God himself on the cross, the Italian Jesuit only said that it was a great saint from occident, and he suffered the punishments for the people because he was worried that he could not make the Chinese understand the Catholic doctrine in a short time:

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 345-346.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 346.

*Il Padre Matteo, per una parte non voleva dire che questo era il nostro Dio, parendogli difficile tra quella gente ignorante et in quel tempo dichiarare sì alto misterio, specialmente parendo all'eunuco che tutto quanto diceva era scusarsi del male che aveva fatto; e perl'altra vedeva tutti voltati contra lui pieni di sdegno per quella crudeltà che preva a loro aveva fatta a quell'huomo. Per questo cominciò pucò a pucò a dichiarare al Pinpitao et altri, che non potevan imaginare che cosa era quella, esser quello un grande santo di nostra terra che aveva voluto patire per noi quelle pene nella croce; per questo noi lo pingevamo e sculpivamo di quel modo per tenerlo sempre avanti gli occhi, e dargli gratie di tanto beneficio. Con tutto questo, disse il Pinpitao, non par bene tenere quel huomo di quella guisa.*

*<My translation> Father Matteo, on the one hand, did not want to say that this was our God, as it seemed to him it was challenging to let these ignorant people understand such a great mystery at that time, especially since it seemed to the Eunuch that everything he said was excused for the evil he had done; and on the other hand, he saw everyone turned against him full of disdain... For this reason, he began to tell the Pinpitao and others that a great saint of our land who suffered those pains on the cross for us; for this reason, we pinged it and we sculpted in that way to keep our eyes always on, and to show that we are deeply grateful. With all this, said Pinpitao, it is not good to keep that man of that kind.<sup>34</sup>*

In his letter, Pantoja did not write what Ricci responded exactly in Chinese. Maybe he did not want the reader of his letter to discover that Ricci had distorted the Catholic doctrine, or he was also kept in the dark by his companion. Although the missionaries tried to explain the symbolic meaning of the crucifix, Ma Tang and other Chinese literati on the spot were shocked:

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<sup>34</sup> Ricci, 2010, 343.

*Because we had the shape of a man misused with so great inhumane, nailed on a cross, and all besprinkled with blood, as that was, and that is was nothing else but some witchcraft to kill the king... That which the Eunuch said in our house, he uttered also abroad : in so much that certain grave Mandarins which favored us, retired themselves from us, and sent us word, that from henceforth we should leave that crucified man, and that seeing now we remained in China, we should wholly conform ourselves unto them, for as long as we kept it they durst not speak in favor of us, because the report went that it was a device to kill the King..... he sent us a moderate message, bidding us to hide that figure, that nobody should see it, for the report that went of it. The Eunuch gave out many threatenings against us, saying, that whether the king received the present, or not, the least displeasure that he would do us was, to thrust us out of the kingdom, as wicked fellowes, writing a petition to the king against us.<sup>35</sup>*

This incident was a cultural collision that Pantoja encountered. He could not understand why the Chinese, even the friendly literati, were so alarmed before the crucifix, which is “very fair and pleasant” for him. Neither could he fully understand why Ricci interpreted Jesus as a great saint.

Luckily Ma Tang did not pursue this matter. After all, he was the one who brought these foreigners near the capital. If the rumor about some outsiders intended to curse the Emperor spread out, Ma Tang could quickly get himself into serious trouble. The missionaries were very lucky to slip under the radar. Two months later, a piece of exciting news came, the Emperor asked these foreigners to go to the court. The Eunuch immediately accompanied Pantoja and Ricci to the capital.

Wanli Emperor was very interested in the gifts (especially the clock) and the missionaries themselves. Although he never met Pantoja and Ricci in person, he was so curious about these guests’ appearance from afar that he sent painters to draw portraits for them. Through his eunuchs, the Emperor asked Pantoja and Ricci about their countries and

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<sup>35</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 347.

customs. He must have been delighted because he allowed Pantoja and Ricci to live in Beijing, supported by public funds. Even in the famine years, the Emperor still gave them more than 100 taels of silver. The ordinary laborer's annual income in the capital was ten taels of silver<sup>36</sup>. Obviously, this considerable sum of money from the Emperor was beneficial for the Jesuits, and Ricci was quite satisfied.<sup>37</sup>

Not just economic support, the Emperor also provided the ultimate protection for the Jesuits. According to Ricci, some literati sought to persuade the Emperor to expel the missionaries out of the capital. Be that as it may, the Wanli Emperor had other plans for these foreigners. He offered official positions to the Jesuits in exchange for their service. Although the Jesuits declined, the Emperor still gave a salary to them. This salary, which helped the Jesuits with their economic difficulties, suggested that the Emperor formally approved their residence in the capital. After seeing this, the hostile officials gave up expelling Ricci and Pantoja.<sup>38</sup> Although it was not easy to receive the fund on time while some officials deliberately placed obstacles, the Jesuits would get their money because the officials were afraid of irritating the Emperor.<sup>39</sup>

### 1.1.2 Settling in the Capital

After having an “audience” with the Emperor, Ricci and Pantoja were allowed to go to Forbidden City while their service was needed. Being received by the Emperor (As a matter of fact, they just knelt and bowed down to the empty throne.) and frequently going to the court made Pantoja and Ricci famous in the capital, especially among the literati. Lots of them came to the residence of the Jesuits. Some were eager to see these foreigners out of curiosity; some yearned to consult these scholars from afar about the moral, life issues, and natural science. As Pantoja recorded in his letter:

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<sup>36</sup> Gao Shouxian, 2008, 56.

<sup>37</sup> Ricci, 2001, 411.

<sup>38</sup> Ricci, 2001, 411-412.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 471.

*Many Mandarins of this Court, heard great fame of us and of our things : and understanding that we were come out of that place, began to come in great numbers and concourse with much honour and respect, courtesie and presents to visite us, and to enquire divers things which they desired to know.*<sup>40</sup>

Although Ricci admitted that it was impossible to Christianize the Emperor, his protection was beneficial for their mission. The Jesuits could continue their job without being interrupted, and there was an increasing number of people converting to Catholicism.<sup>41</sup>

The fame provided them more opportunities to communicate with the local literati, the protection of the Emperor made them live in peace, but all of this came with a price. It seems that the permission to stay in the capital also meant that they could not leave the city.

Matteo Ricci once wrote to Claudio Acquaviva, S.J. (1543 – 1615), the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, indicating that he was not acquainted with many missionaries in China because he could not leave Beijing. For the same reason, he neither knew how their performances were in the mission.<sup>42</sup> In another letter to Acquaviva, Ricci mentioned that they had to do precisely what the court instructed.<sup>43</sup> In the same letter, he again admitted that he could not leave Beijing, and as a result, he failed to report the situation of the mission in South China.

The letters to his family revealed more about his personal feeling. He complained that he would die in Beijing eventually since the Emperor did not allow him to leave Beijing.<sup>44</sup> The clock brought by the Jesuits aroused the interest of the Emperor. Probably the Emperor permitted the Jesuits to stay in the capital in order to fix the clock.

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<sup>40</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 355.

<sup>41</sup> Ricci, 2001, 389.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 426.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 495.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 505; Ibid., 389.

In addition to this, there were other reasons that the Emperor kept Ricci and Pantoja in Beijing. Probably they lost their freedom because of the antiforeign attitude of the Chinese people. Ricci wrote with sadness in his letter, complaining that the Chinese did not trust the foreign regimes and thus closed the doors to the rest of the world. Only the missionaries who had no intention to go back to their motherland could stay in China, and the Emperor would not allow the foreigners who reside in Beijing to go back to Europe. For this reason, he told his friend that he could not have a reunion with him until in the afterlife.<sup>45</sup>

Lots of officials did raise doubts about the missionaries residing in China. For example, a high official of Nanjing once presented a memorial to Wanli Emperor:

裔夷窺伺潛住兩京，則國家之隱憂當杜也。聖明自為社稷計，豈其不留念及此乎？

*<My translation> The barbarians lurked in the northern and southern capitals and watched for the proper moment for action. This hidden danger should be avoided. Your majesty always care about our empire's interest. How couldn't your majesty be aware of this danger? <sup>46</sup>*

The literati commonly questioned the intention of the missionaries, and some of them even implied that the Jesuits served as foreign spies:

但其各省盤據，果爾出神沒鬼，透中國之情形於海外，是《書》所稱‘寇賊奸宄’者也？此其關係在廟謨國是，為禍隱而大。

*<My translation> These barbarians have hidden in several provinces, coming and going like a shadow, revealing the intelligence about China abroad. It is what the ShangShu called “evildoers.” Their existence*

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 504.

<sup>46</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 63.



*endangered our country in an unobvious but profound way.*<sup>47</sup>

In the last letter before his death, Ricci told his Jesuit companion that it was because the Jesuits resided in China for an extended period and knew a lot about this country. For this reason, they were not allowed to leave in case of doing anything to harm China.<sup>48</sup>

There is no evidence of Ricci and Pantoja receiving an official document requiring them to stay in the capital. However, their Mandarin friends might have told them that they could not leave unless they got the Emperor's permission. Because of this, Ricci could not perform his duty as the leader of the Jesuits in China. He tried to resign but never succeeded. The most concrete evidence to prove that the Jesuits in Beijing lost their freedom is from Pantoja's letter. The Spanish Jesuit recorded:

*And divers times the Eunuches told us, that the Kings meaning was of all likelihood, that we should stay here, For fear lest we should return into our Country, to give news and knowledge of his Kingdome; as they delt with a Turke, which hath been here above forty years.*<sup>49</sup>

Since Pantoja received the audience of the Wanli Emperor together with Ricci, he was also recorded in the official documents:

遠夷利瑪竇，偕其徒龐迪義入京，上嘉其向化之誠，予之餼廩。

*<My translation> Barbarian Ricci came to the capital with his prentice Pantoja. The Emperor appreciates his earnest effort to come to the civilized world and granted them the court's salary.*<sup>50</sup>

大西洋歸化之臣龐迪義熊三拔等攜有彼國曆法諸書。

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 80.

<sup>48</sup> Ricci, 2001, 512.

<sup>49</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 354.

<sup>50</sup> Gu Bingqian, 1966, 10425-10426.

*<My translation> The naturalized subjects Pantoja and Ursis had the books about their calendar.<sup>51</sup>*

The literati always mentioned Pantoja together with Ricci:

西極之國有畸人來。最先西泰利氏，次順陽龐氏。

*<My translation> There are people with talent from the extreme west country, the first one is Ricci, then Pantoja following him.<sup>52</sup>*

Pantoja was quite famous in the capital. In the opinions of the Chinese, he was Ricci's apprentice. Thus, it was highly possible that he would receive the same treatment as Ricci. Therefore, if Ricci could not leave Beijing, there were also restrictions on the freedom of Pantoja.

Zhang Kai once explained that it was a balancing act that Ricci decided not to choose Pantoja as his successor to take charge of the Chinese mission because the Italian Jesuit had to consider the Portuguese's reaction.<sup>53</sup> However, since he was not allowed to leave Beijing, he must have been excluded from the list in the first place.

After settled in Beijing, Pantoja wrote a letter to Luis de Guzmán, his mentor, provincial of the Toledo province in 1602. In this widespread letter, the Castilian Jesuit wrote down his impressions about China. Through this letter, many European readers could learn the people, customs, political systems, and geography of this country, which was still a mystery for the Europeans. Staying in Beijing was just the beginning of Pantoja's journey, and more complicated tasks were still waiting for him.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 9219.

<sup>52</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 9.

<sup>53</sup> Zhang Kai 2009, 176-190.

## 1.2 Assisting Ricci

Pantoja spent his first ten years in China working with Matteo Ricci. These two Jesuits were the pioneers of the missions in China and the first ones who got the Emperor's permission to stay in the capital. With Pantoja's help, Ricci succeeded in pleasing the Emperor and developing a friendship with the Chinese literati. Still, the Italian Jesuit was not completely satisfied with his Spanish companion's work. In this section, Pantoja's mission from 1601 to 1610 will be narrated. The cooperation and their divergence are vital to understand Pantoja's attitude towards the Chinese literati.

### 1.2.1 Establishing relations in Beijing

After getting the imperial permission to reside in Beijing, Ricci and Pantoja began their work immediately. The most important task for them is to maintain the favor of the Emperor. Therefore they had to service the court. For example, Ricci gave the Wanli Emperor a harpsichord as a gift, but nobody in the court knew how to play it. Then the Emperor summoned the Jesuits to the forbidden city to teach the eunuchs to play that exotic instrument. The Jesuits were well prepared. Before coming to Beijing, Ricci already made Pantoja learn how to play the harpsichord from another Jesuit Lazzaro Cattaneo (1560 – 1640). Ricci also created eight songs with lyrics about the meaning of life and the origin of humanity. He believed that these songs could help explain the notion about the creator to the court, and Pantoja played a vital role in his strategy. Therefore, after getting the order of the Emperor, Ricci arranged Pantoja to go to the palace alone for several days until the eunuchs learned to play well.

Wanli Emperor was quite interested in these people from afar. One day he ordered the Jesuits to explain the courtesy in European courts, the European palaces, and the funerals of European kings. It was not a tough question for Pantoja because he had just received a letter about the death and burial of Philip II, king of Spain and Portugal, which enable him to provide many details about the royal funeral of his own country. He explained to the eunuchs and even presented a newly cut copper map of San Lorenzo del Escorial.

Meanwhile, the Chinese literati were shocked by the maps brought by Ricci and Pantoja from Europe:

*They saw a very faire and great Map of the world which wee brought with us, and we shewed them how bigge the world was, which they thought to bee so little, that they imagined that there was not so much more in all the same, as their Kingdome: And they looked one upon another, and sayd, wee are not so great as we imagined, seeing heere they shew us, that our Kingdome, compared with the world, is like a grayne of Rice, in comparision of a great heape.*<sup>54</sup>

Even though some people did not believe this new knowledge, it indeed had a significant impact on the existing knowledge system of China:

意大裡亞，居大西洋中，自古不通中國。萬歷時，其國人利瑪竇至京師，為《萬國全圖》，言天下有五大洲。

*<My translation> Italy is located in the far west ocean, and there was no connection between China and this country since antiquity. During Wanli's reign, Matteo Ricci, who was from this country, came to the capital and drew the Great Universal Geographic Map, saying that there are five continents under the sky.*<sup>55</sup>

This new knowledge about cartography created a great sensation in Beijing. Surely it also interested the Emperor. He ordered Ricci and Pantoja to make twelve world maps with place names written in Chinese. The two Jesuits finished this was laborious work in a month, which made the Emperor very content. Being summoned to the court was considered a great honor, which left the door open for Ricci and Pantoja to communicate

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<sup>54</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 355.

<sup>55</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 8460.

with the literati in Beijing.<sup>56</sup> When the Mandarins learned that the Jesuits traveled an enormous distance over the ocean to come to China, they showed great respect to the missionaries.

Ricci and Pantoja made the best of this respect, introducing European science and preaching to these Chinese literati. Pantoja's main task was assisting Ricci. Because of this, he was treated as the apprentice of Ricci by the Chinese. It did not take long before these two Jesuits successfully earned the friendship and esteem of these elites. Ricci wrote several books on secular and religious topics with his literati friends' help, which evoked substantial repercussions among the officials and scholars. Several years later, Pantoja followed the step of Ricci. Since then, writing and publishing books became a pattern for the European missionaries to evangelize in China.

Besides, Ricci and Pantoja were also actively associated with the literati on some private occasions, as they believed that the social activities were beneficial for their mission. Ricci consistently paid attention to these precious moments to preach the Catholic doctrines:

*Percioché quasi tutti vanno a vedere la chiesa e adorano l'immagine del Salvatore e della Madonna, che quivi sta sempre nell'altare molto bene adornata; e se bene la maggior parte di loro vengono per curiosità di vedere l'artificio della nostra pittura o stampa de' libri et imagini o horiuoli artificiosi, con tutto noi con questa bella occasione continuamente gli predichiamo le cose della christianità e falsità delle sette degli idoli; e così non è necessario ire a ricercar gente per predicare, poi loro stessi vengono, e con questo ci danno occasione de ire alle loro case dove rinnoviamo il ragionamento delle cose della loro salvatione; ché quasi tutti i christiani fatti così si fecero.*

*<My translation> Almost all visitors came to our church to pay homage to the holy statue of the Savior and the Virgin on the altar. The icon was very decent.*

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 8461.

*Although they are mostly curious, they expect to see our icons, books, clocks, etc. We also take this opportunity to introduce them to our teachings and refute their superstitions. Consequently, you do not have to go out to find them to preach. They will come home automatically. After knowing them, I went to visit their home and explained to them the truth of salvation. Almost each of our Christians converted in this way.*<sup>57</sup>

While serving the court and socializing with the literati, Pantoja took the time to write a letter to his superior in Toledo, Luis de Guzmán (1546 – 1605). The letter was finished in 1602 and later named *Relación de la entrada de algunos padres de la compañía de Iesús en la China* (*Account of the Entry of Some Fathers of the Company of Jesus in China*), which recorded Pantoja's early years in China and his understandings about this country. The letter was first published in Valladolid in 1604 and subsequently in numerous editions in Spanish and other European languages, bringing the news about China to inquisitive European readers. The *Relación* was divided into two parts. In the first part, Pantoja recounted what happened during his journey from Macau to Beijing. He vividly recorded the conflicts with the Eunuch Ma Tang and how he and Ricci surmounted numerous difficulties and finally got the Emperor's permission to stay in the Chinese capital. He also wrote down the situation of their mission in China and the difficulties which he believed the Jesuits had to face in this Empire. In the second part, Pantoja wrote down Chinese customs, politics, and government. He also made some comments about these issues. That is to say, he tried his best to convey some first-hand information about China to Europe.

### 1.2.2 Working in the countryside

During the first decade of the 17th century, Ricci and Pantoja attended to the Emperor's mandates and was visited frequently by the notable mandarins. The friendships between the missionaries and the Chinese scholars increased. Although the Jesuits aimed to seduce the Chinese elites, they never forgot their purpose was to promote Catholic

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<sup>57</sup> Ricci, 2001, 495-496.

doctrine, giving catechesis to men and women in Beijing. When Ricci stayed in the city, Pantoja went out to the countryside to evangelize among the commoners. Xu Bideng 徐必登(1580 – 1611), a Chinese monk born in Macau and with a Portuguese name António Leitão, accompanied Pantoja to the small villages. Although the accomplishment was limited, it did not stop them from traveling to the outskirts of Beijing.

In 1605 he went out to various places in the surroundings of the capital. In a village with a population of a thousand, twenty-four leagues away from the city, he baptized twelve people. Because it was on the day of San Clement, he named the village after this saint. Yet preaching in the village was not an easy job. The Jesuits went through some setbacks when they, such as facing the accusation of the villagers:

*Cominciarono a discreditarci con i popoli con dire che l'immagine del Salvatore era figura di qualche mio antepassato o mio proprio ritratto, cercando io, sotto protesto d'insegnar nuova legge, d'esser adorato. Altre volte tacciavano la nostra dottrina come peregrina, barbara e nuova che s'insegna indifferentemente a tutti, senza far distintione di persona a persona; altre persone biasimavano il vederci, contra il costume della Cina, parlar con donne, aggiungendo che, nel battezzarle, le dipingevamo la faccia.*

*<My translation> They began to discredit us, saying that the image of the Savior was the figure of my ancestors or my portrait, and we are seeking to be worshiped. Sometimes they also deny our doctrine as the peregrine, barbarous and new, which is taught indifferently to all, without distinguishing between men and women; other people blamed us against China's custom, talking to women, baptizing them, painting her face.<sup>58</sup>*

These reactions suggested that evangelical activity already affected rural life. In some villages, the tradition was broken by the new religion. For example, there was a village

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 448.

where people used to donate to Buddhism pilgrimages. Howbeit, after some villagers converted to Catholicism, they refused to give the donations. The pilgrimage was severely affected.<sup>59</sup>

Pantoja was dispatched to another village named Todos Santos by the Jesuits in the next year. Although he only baptized thirteen people there, the other inhabitants were very interested in Christianity. After Pantoja left, the people from this village sent a letter to Matteo Ricci, begging him to send them another Jesuit to “collect the fruits of the evangelical grain that had been sown the previous year.” Regardless, Pantoja could not return there because he was frequently summoned to the royal palace; thus, Gaspar Ferreyra went to the same village instead.<sup>60</sup> Ferreyra also mentioned that lots of villagers converted to Catholicism because of the work of Pantoja.<sup>61</sup>

It seems that after residing in Beijing, Pantoja and Ricci divided their responsibility. Ricci, who was better at Chinese and familiar with the Chinese literati’s etiquette, stayed at their residence to receive and talk with the visitors. Thereupon they can build up their connections and explain the catechism to the Chinese elites. Meanwhile, Pantoja focused on preaching among the commoners. Nevertheless, since Pantoja had duty in the court and Ricci always needed his help, he had to leave the village and go back to the capital.

After Ricci’s death, Pantoja was in charge of communicating with the literati, yet he kept on preaching to the commoners. When the Empire began to ban Christianity in 1616, many converts were interrogated. There are some details of Pantoja’s evangelical work contained in the confessions of these Chinese Catholics:

張案供：年二十六歲，山西平陽府曲沃縣人。于萬曆四十二年三月內前往北京，推水過活。因見同鄉人說稱天主教極好，遂拜從龐迪義門下。迪峨即以雞翎粘聖油，向額上畫一十字，謂之擦聖油。乃又持聖水念天主經，

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 450-451.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 446.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 451.



向額上一淋，即滌去前罪。自後七日一瞻拜，群誦天主經，在天我等父者云云。日將出乃散，習以為常。

*<My translation> Zhang Cai confessed that he went to Beijing in 1614, making a living by delivering water. His countrymen told him that Christianity was great, so he took Pantoja as his teacher. Pantoja drew a cross on his forehead using a chicken feather with oil and called it “Anointing.” Then he chanted, holding the holy water, then he threw the holy water on his forehead to cleanse his former sins. Since then, they gathered every seven days and chanted their Bible, saying our father, who resides in heaven, et cetera. They used to disperse and go back home when the sun is about to rise.<sup>62</sup>*

There were quite a few converts, such as Zhang Cai, who were baptized by Pantoja. Besides, Pantoja bought some boys as the Jesuits servants from their fathers.<sup>63</sup> Obviously, Pantoja was very close to the poorest and the people from the bottom.

### 1.2.3 Ricci expressing dissatisfaction with the work of Pantoja

In a letter written to Acquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus in 1606, Ricci made a very severe criticism on Pantoja, saying that his Spanish companion “lacks virtue and reason” and “should feel shame since he has already worked with me for five or six years.”<sup>64</sup> It seems that, at least for a while, Ricci was quite disappointed with Pantoja.

The relation between these two Jesuits was quite intense during that time. Due to the situation of the mission, Ricci had to make higher demands on his companions. Ricci complained in a letter that writing books in Chinese swamped him, and nobody could help.<sup>65</sup> In a letter of the same year, he wrote to Father Costa, saying that “the more I

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<sup>62</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 101.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ricci, 2001, 427.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 377.

advance in this work, greater responsibility falls on me and I become exhausted... it would be good if there was a man more capable than me”<sup>66</sup>.

After having an audience with the Emperor, a new challenge appeared before the Jesuits: endless social activities. Many literati were longing to visit these wise men from the west. According to the custom, the Jesuits had to return the visits and attend the banquets. Ricci was determined to take this opportunity to establish a good relationship with the elites, whereas these activities took up a lot of time and effort. He recorded that he sat in the living room almost all day, waiting for the visitors. Every three or four days, he had to go out to pay a return visit. Ricci felt exhausted from these social activities. He admitted that this work “really exceeds our physical strength, but we cannot give up. Otherwise, we would be rejected and regarded as barbarians, which could harm the mission.”<sup>67</sup>

In detail, Ricci recorded the social etiquette of the literati, which no doubt impressed and wearied him a lot:

*E così sta sempre alla porta, come in tutte le case di persona di qualità si usa, un servitore grave, ben vestito a ricevere i libri di visita, che sono di ordinario di dodici fogli ciascheduno. dove solo sta scritto il nome di quello che visita, benché altre volte fosse venuto a visitare, e in un libro che sta nella portaria scrive di giorno in giorno il nome e qualità di quel che venne a visitare, e con che libro grande o piccolo, e con che cortesia, e dove habita, accioché fra tre o quattro giorni gli possiamo pagare la sua cortesia. E vi è giorno che entrano in casa più di venti di questi libri, anzi nell'anno novo e feste solemni non mancherà molto per cento. Se bene, come ho detto, è fatica immensa, con tutto ciò ci è di gran-dissima autorità.*

*<My translation> Therefore, everyone who has status has a severe and well-dressed servant in the concierge, specializing in receiving visit book or*

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 395.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 495.

*Shouben 手本*<sup>68</sup>. The visit book is usually twelve pages, with the name of the visitor, etc. Even if you have visited, you must show this book. The servant then clearly registered the visitor's name, identity, address, size of the visitor's book, and the etiquette, etc. It is because the literati would pay a return visit with the same etiquette. One day, I received more than 20 interview books, and in the New Year or the important holidays, I received more than 100. As just written, this is exhausting work. However, in order to increase our reputation, it is a worthy social engagement.<sup>69</sup>

Ricci consistently paid attention to these precious moments to preach the Catholic doctrines for the sake of his mission.<sup>70</sup>

Anyhow, this was a strenuous job, and it was too heavy for Ricci. He needed more time to write books in Chinese, which he believed was the best way to win the literati's respect. Although his superiors were unwilling to lighten his burden,<sup>71</sup> Ricci's determination to write in Chinese never changed. During his stay in China, Matteo Ricci wrote ten original works in Chinese: *Jiaoyou Lun* 交友論 (On Friendship), *Tianzhu Shiyi* 天主實義 (The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven), *Ershiwu Yan* 二十五言 (Twenty-Five Words), *Jiren Shipian* 畸人十篇, *Bianxue Yidu* 辯學遺牘, *Jihe Yuanben* 幾何原本, *Celiang Fayi* 測量法義, *Tongwen Suanzhi* 同文算指, *Hungai Tongxian Tushuo* 渾蓋通憲圖說, *Qiankunti Yi* 乾坤體義. The above works cover many fields such as morals, religion, mathematics, and astronomy in Europe, and their target readers are Chinese elites.

Ricci needed his companions to share his burden. Consequently, Ricci felt very tired and desperate if his companions could not help him. When Ricci complained about his excessively burdensome work, there were only two Jesuits who accompanied Ricci in Beijing: Ferreira and Pantoja. Since Ricci expressed his content with Ferreira, who had

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<sup>68</sup> Shou ben was like a name card in ancient china, sometimes well decorated, with information of the visitors' name and title.

<sup>69</sup> Ricci, 2001, 495.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 495-496.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 506.

just arrived in China, it means that he felt dissatisfied with Pantoja's work. It is probably because when Ricci had a great need for help, Pantoja did not publish anything from 1601 to 1610. Compared with his enthusiasm for evangelizing in the countryside, Pantoja did not perform well in writing books, which was the best method to communicate with the Chinese elites.

Moreover, Pantoja was not familiar with the ancient classics and the ideologies of Ming Dynasty scholars, or perhaps he simply despised the mundane moral teachings in Confucian classics. In the books of Pantoja, there is no expression of respect for Confucianism. On the contrary, the Spanish Jesuit criticized the Chinese literati for devoting themselves to the search for virtue instead of God. He also criticized their belief that virtue was the key to achieving universal peace. Pantoja indicated that the Chinese only cared about mundane affairs yet knew nothing about the transcendent and purely spiritual faith. In the letter to Luis de Guzmán, his mentor and the governor of the Jesuits society in the province of Toledo, he complained:

*...estos filósofos(como Gentiles) no hablaron nada de la otra vida, sino del buen gobierno y virtudes morales, hasta aquí imaginaban se puede llegar sin creer que puede haber otra cosa.*

*<My translation> ... these philosophers (as Gentiles) talked nothing about the other life, but only about good government and moral virtues. They even do not believe that there are other things.<sup>72</sup>*

Due to this discontent, Pantoja frequently behaved impatiently with the Chinese or even bluntly criticized them. A literati named Peng Duanwu 彭端吾 (? – ?) once complained euphemistically:

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<sup>72</sup> Rebollo and Pantoja, 2011, 131-132.

龐君雖與華之人處，往往交臂而失，即諳華性，不應徹見俯肝，窮悉底蘊，言言當也。

*<My translation> Although Mr. Pantoja lives among the Chinese, he has frequently lost the opportunity to have more contact with them; Since he understands the character of the Chinese, he should not look so radically at the depth of their hearts, probing what is latent in the background and expressing it so openly.<sup>73</sup>*

Ricci and Pantoja's main difference is evident: while communicating with the Chinese literati, Ricci always attempted to seek common ground while reserving differences. On the contrary, Pantoja highlighted the cultural differences and did not avoid criticizing Confucianism. Because of this, Pantoja impressed the literati that he was quite stubborn.

Therefore, Ricci was not content with Pantoja and had enough reasons to question the attitude or even the character of his Spanish companion. His severe criticism could be a way to pour out the discontent that accumulated for years. Perhaps for the same reason, Ricci's reputation is prominent, whereas Pantoja was neglected in history.

### **1.3 Working in the post-Ricci period**

The death of the famous Italian Jesuits was, no doubt, a heavy blow on the mission. After that, Pantoja had to assume more responsibility. With the Chinese literati's help, Pantoja managed to turn the Jesuits' tragic loss into a success. He expanded the reputation and influence of the Jesuits by requesting the cemetery for Ricci. On top of that, in the last six years of his stay in Beijing, he developed closer cooperation with the Chinese literati.

#### **1.3.1 Requesting the cemetery for Ricci**

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<sup>73</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 6.

The work of Ricci and Pantoja achieved initial success in the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, a heavy blow came unexpectedly. The Italian Jesuit fell sick on May 3, 1610. He had to return to his residence and became confined in bed. Eight days later, Ricci passed away with the presence of his fellow Jesuits.

Since he devoted much of his time to maintaining a friendship with the officials and literati, many Christians and Mandarins came to offer their condolences during the next three days. Ricci's corpse, deposited in a large coffin of enduring wood, was kept in their residence. The Jesuits had to decide where and when to bury it.

After receiving a suggestion from a neophyte, Pantoja and Ursis petitioned for a piece of land to the Emperor for burying Ricci to honor his contribution to the mission and increase the Jesuits' reputation. Until then, the Chinese authorities rarely granted a foreigner a cemetery. As a result, before Ricci, all the Jesuits who had died were buried in Macau.

Pantoja expected to set a precedent. Together with Ursis, he wrote a draft of a humble plea to the Emperor for granting a small piece of land to bury Ricci and permitting the Jesuits to live near Ricci's cemetery. The literati Li Zhizao, baptized by Ricci before he became ill, corrected the text and improved the style of the request to the Emperor. In order to ensure that there was no danger of anything going wrong in the memorial, before presenting it to the Emperor, the Jesuits asked two Grand Secretaries of the Emperor, Ye Xianggao 葉向高(1559 – 1627) and Li Tingji 李廷機(1542 – 1616), who were also friends of Matteo Ricci, to review the words.

With their Chinese official friends' help, Pantoja's memorial was sent to the Wanli Emperor quickly. Meanwhile, the Spanish Jesuit visited two important mandarins, who would be in charge of this matter, giving them some books written by Ricci in Chinese and the Great Universal Geographic Map, drew by Ricci and himself. Li Zhizao also visited his teacher Wu Daonan 吳道南 (1550 – 1624), the Right Vice Minister of Rites,

to ask for his help in Ricci's burial. A month later, some officials of the Minister of Rites, who were in charge of the foreign affairs and favored the appeal of Pantoja, asked the Emperor to bestow favor on these people from afar:

伏乞敕下本部轉行順天府，查有空閒寺觀隙地畝餘，給與已故利瑪竇為埋葬之所。見在龐迪我等許就近居住，恪守教規，祝天頌聖。

*<My translation> We humbly hope that Your Majesty authorize the Ministry of Rites to entrust the matter to the Governor of the Shuntian Superior Prefecture 順天府<sup>74</sup> to find an unoccupied temple or a wasteland for burying Matteo Ricci. Furthermore, Pantoja and his companions could be permitted to live around the cemetery, strictly observing their faith, honoring the God of Heaven, and pleading with his God for the well-being of Your Majesty.<sup>75</sup>*

Seeing that Pantoja's petition had so much support from the high officials, Wanli Emperor granted a piece of land for the Jesuits. The name of Pantoja was deliberately mentioned in the memorial of the officials. It is clear that the Chinese elites thought highly of this Spanish Jesuit and took him as the mission's leader.

The officials of the Minister of Rites then instructed Huang Jishi 黃吉士(? – ?), the Vice Governor of the Shuntian Superior Prefecture, to find a piece of land for the Italian Jesuit. Pantoja tried his best to ensure things go well. He brought some gifts to visit Ye Xianggao and Wu Daonan, on the one hand, to thank them for their help, on the other hand, to ask them to put some pressure on Huang Jishi. Seeing the Jesuits having the favor of these senior officials, Huang Jishi and his subordinates quickly found five places for the Jesuits to choose. One of those lands was located on the outskirts of the capital, called Shanjiao Temple 善教寺, once belonged to a eunuch, who lost the Emperor's

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<sup>74</sup> Shuntian Superior Prefecture was the administrative region of the capital of China during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

<sup>75</sup> Han Qi and Wu Min, 2006, 22-23.

favor and was condemned to death. The Jesuits, ignorant of that situation, preferred that temple and its adjacent land.

In the following transfer of the property right, there was still one more obstacle to get over. The eunuchs were furious that the foreigners occupied their land. When the Jesuits attempted to build the cemetery, some young eunuchs came aggressively and provoked the missionaries. Huang Jishi exerted all his energies to prevent the situation from getting worse. He also advised the Jesuits to talk to the chief eunuch. (Who was this chief eunuch is remained to be found out.)

Ursis sent some gifts to this chief eunuch and persuaded him to stop bothering the missionaries. Meanwhile, the Minister of Rites sent a plaque with the word of “Qin Ci 欽賜”, suggesting that Wanli Emperor himself granted this land. Since then, no more eunuchs came to make trouble. After this setback, the Jesuits finally could continue the preparation of the burial for Ricci.

Since Pantoja presented his memorial to the Emperor, it took the Jesuits and their friends almost one and a half years to acquire the land for Ricci's cemetery. At the end of October 1611, the coffin was moved into the cemetery, accompanied by many Chinese converts. Nicolás Longobardi (1565 – 1655), the new Superior of the Jesuits mission in China, arrived in Beijing on November 30. The next day, a solemn mass was celebrated in the morning, and in the afternoon, the funeral proceeded. Some Christian Mandarins carried the coffin at the foot of the grave, including the close friend of Ricci and Pantoja, Xu Guangqi.<sup>76</sup>

Anyhow, the Jesuits used their connections to full advantage and achieved their goal successfully. It is safe to say that Ricci's cemetery was a full display of the Jesuits' capability. No doubt, obtaining the imperial sanction for the land was a significant step for the mission. Pantoja, regarded as Ricci's closest companion by the Chinese literati, played an essential role in this matter. After he and Ursis moved into Ricci's cemetery,

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 22-23.



many officials came to donate to the Jesuits. Thereupon, the fame of the missionaries reached the peak. More or less, at the same time, Pantoja began to write his book *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), which is about Catholic morality and written in Chinese.

### 1.3.2 A dispute between Pantoja and Ursis

In the resting place of Ricci, a small chapel was erected. The Supervising Secretary of the Office of Scrutiny for Rites named Yao Yongji 姚永紀(? – ?) said they could call it Tianzhu Tang 天主堂, which means the house of the Lord of Heaven. Since then, all the churches in China were called Tian Zhu Tang by the Chinese. Hence, the cemetery also served as a residence of the Jesuits and a religious center for the missionaries and the Chinese converts.

Longobardi organized studying and praying in this new residence with regularity. The officials and literati always visited Pantoja and Ursis in the cemetery. For example, Cao Yubian, who wrote the preface for Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), came to talk with the Jesuits several times. Meanwhile, some eunuchs also came to visit, which caused the dispute between Pantoja and Ursis.

The focus of this dispute was on the attitude towards the eunuchs. In their residence, the Jesuits kept some “strange stuff” from Europe. From time to time, Ursis also made some small devices based on the knowledge of Western hydraulics. Therefore, lots of eunuchs came to the residence with great curiosity. Ursis believed that, after seeing God's image and the missionaries' books, the eunuch showed more interest in their religious teachings than the Chinese scholars. He wanted to seize this opportunity to talk more with the eunuchs because he believed that their religion could be introduced to the court by the Emperor's servants. He might even have anticipated that the eunuchs could persuade the Emperor to convert. After all, obtaining the imperial sanction for evangelizing was their first concern. Longobardi shared the same opinion with Ursis.

Notwithstanding, Pantoja was firmly against this idea. The experience of dealing with Ma Tang, the powerful eunuch who tried to rob them and ruin their plan to Beijing, left a very negative impression of the eunuchs. Pantoja believed that the eunuchs came to their residence just for seeking novelty and entertainment. More importantly, he knew that lots of his literati friends resented the eunuchs. Probably in Pantoja's mind, keeping a close relationship with the eunuchs could seriously damage their friendship with the Chinese literati, or maybe worse, get the Jesuits involved in the political conflicts.

Besides, losing the literati's support means that all the efforts he and Ricci made would go in vain and endangered the mission. Additionally, after spending so many years with the literati, he could already share a similar view on the social-political issues with the Chinese elites. Accordingly, he decided to avoid any association with the eunuchs, let alone entertaining them in residence.

This split between Pantoja and Ursis can not be seen in the open archives, but it is recorded in the diary of Ursis. According to the Italian Jesuit, the dispute between him and Pantoja continued for several years. During this time, neither of them could persuade the other side. Both Pantoja and Ursis tried their best to influence the decisions of their Jesuits' superiors. Ergo, the policy towards the eunuchs remained vacillated.<sup>77</sup> In 1616, an external force ended the dispute between the Spaniard and the Italian. An official from Nanjing initiated an anti-Christ campaign, which caused the foreign Christian missionaries' expulsion and a temporary prohibition on open evangelizing.

### 1.3.3 Continuing serving the empire

During the communication with the literati, the Jesuits realized that the Chinese elites were in dire need of a new calendar. To earn the trust of these elites, the Jesuits planned to help rectify the calendar. Ricci was the first missionary who brought forward this idea:

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<sup>77</sup> De Ursis, 49-v-5.

*Nel fine di questa voglio priegare molto a V. R. una cosa, che molti anni sono chiesi, né mai mi fu risposto, et è che una delle cose più utili che potrebbe de là venire per questa corte, era alcun padre o anco fratello buono astrologo. E dico astrologo, perché di queste altre cose di geometria, horiuoli e astrolabij ne so io tanto e ne ho tanti libri che basta; ma loro non fanno tanto conto di questo, come del corso e vero luogo de' pianeti e del calcolo delle eclisse et in summa di uno che possa fare efemeridi. ....Come io qua con questi mappamondi, horiuoli, sphere e astrolabij et altre opre, che ho fatte e insegnate, venni a guadagnar nome del maggior matematico che ha nel mondo,.....Dico poi che, se qua venisse questo matematico che dissi, potressimo voltare le nostre tavole in lettera sinica, il che farò io assai facilmente, e pigliar l'assunto di emendare l'anno che ci darebbe grande reputatione, aprirebbe più questa entrata nella Cina e staressimo più fissa e liberamente.*

*<My translation> At last, I have one thing to request, which is my hope for many years and has not been answered so far. This matter is of great significance for missionary work, that is, sending a priest or brother who is proficient in astronomy to China. Because of other technologies, such as clocks, globes, geometry, etc., I know a little or two, and there are many books of this kind for reference, but the Chinese do not pay much attention to them. The calculation of eclipse is critical because it is crucial to edit the "calendar book" ... I use the world map, clocks, globes, and other works in China to teach the Chinese people, and for this reason, they regarded me as the greatest mathematician in the world ... Thus, I suggested sending an astronomer to Beijing, and I could translate our calendar into Chinese, which is not difficult for me so that we will gain more respect from the Chinese.<sup>78</sup>*

Why is the calendar so crucial for the Chinese people? As is well-known, China is an ancient civilization with agriculture as the foundation of the people's livelihood. The

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<sup>78</sup> Ricci, 2001, 407-408.

Chinese people generally believed that the celestial phenomena were closely connected with the ruler's actions on earth. Consequently, the calendar was vital for the nation, politically and economically. Historically, every contact with foreign civilizations would bring about changes in the Chinese calendar. For example, from the late 6th century to the 10th century, many astronomers from India served in the court. They helped in making Taien calendar 大衍曆, a calendar used in China and Japan for hundreds of years. In the Yuan Dynasty(1271 – 1368), the mogul rulers invited lots of scholars from Central and West Asia, so the Chinese astronomers referred to the Islamic calendar when they created Shuoshi Calendar 授时历.

After the founding of the Ming Dynasty, Shoushi Calendar was changed to Datong Calendar 大统历, which was quite similar to the former. Nonetheless, the Datong Calendar was used for more than 270 years and was full of errors. Since 1450, the Directorate of Astronomy officials always failed to speculate the correct date of solar and lunar eclipses.<sup>79</sup>

Some mandarins suggested the reformation on the calendar. Still, they failed to find someone who was competent to carry out the reforms. One hundred fifty years later, when Ricci and Pantoja arrived in Beijing, more and more Chinese officials realized that the Datong Calendar had to be changed. After seeing that the Jesuits could make an accurate prediction on the solar eclipses' date, they came to ask these foreigners to make a new calendar for the empire.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Jesuits' knowledge of astronomy calendrical science was the main reason they earned the Chinese literati's trust. Precisely because of that, Ricci was desperate to ask his superior to send someone good at astronomy to help him. In 1607, Father Sabatino De Ursis, specializing in astronomy and hydraulics, arrived in Beijing (1575 – 1620). As the Superior of the mission in China, Ricci appointed him the new Superior missionary of Beijing's residence. Finally, the requirement of the Chinese

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<sup>79</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 518, 520.

on a new calendar could be answered. In October of 1610, Ricci was already dead by then, the Directorate of Astronomy made a tremendous blunder in calculating the solar eclipse.<sup>80</sup> Seizing this opportunity, Zhou Ziyu 周子愚(? - ?), an official from the Directorate of Astronomy, officially recommended Pantoja and Ursis to revise the calendar:

大西洋歸化遠臣龐迪我、熊三拔等，攜有彼國曆法，多中國典籍所未備者。乞視洪武中譯西域曆法例，取知曆儒臣率同監官，將諸書盡譯，以補典籍之缺。

<My translation> The naturalized subjects Pantoja, Ursis, and their companions have the calendar of their country, which records knowledge that cannot be seen in our classics. We humbly ask Your Majesty to follow the example of Hongwu Emperor, who granted the translation of the western calendar. By order of Your Majesty, the ministers could lead the Directorate of Astronomy officials to interpret all their books about the calendar. Thereupon the vacancy of our classics could be filled.<sup>81</sup>

Two years later, Li Zhizao presented a memorial to the Emperor, not only recommending Pantoja and his companions for revising the calendar but also showing his admiration for the missionaries' scientific knowledge.:

伏見大西洋國歸化陪臣龐迪我、龍化民、熊三拔、陽瑪諾等諸人，慕義遠來，讀書談道，俱以穎異之資，洞知曆算之學……其言天文歷數，有我中國昔賢所未及道者。

<My translation> The naturalized subjects Pantoja, Longobardi, Ursis, Diaz, and their companions came from afar because they admired our civilization.

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<sup>80</sup> Shen Defu, 2004, 20.

<sup>81</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 528.

*They are well educated and discuss their Dao. They are also very talented and have a good knowledge of calendar and math... our ancient scholars did not know astronomy and calendrical science about which they talk.*<sup>82</sup>

Li Zhizao expressly indicated that the study of Astronomy was not forbidden in Europe, which gave an advantage to these foreigners to gain a higher level of knowledge:

蓋緣彼國不以天文歷學為禁。西洋即以此等學如中國制科五千年来通國之俊。曹聚而講究之。窺測既核。研究亦審。與吾中國數百年來。始得一人。無師無友自悟自是。此豈可以疏密較者哉。觀其所制窺天窺日之器。種種精絕。……今迪我等年齡向衰，乞敕禮部開局，取其歷法，譯出成書。

<My translation> *It is because, in their country, the astronomical and calendrical knowledge is not monopolized by the government. In their country, the people of talent are selected for displaying their knowledge in astronomy and math, the same as we did with our imperial examinations. Because of this, their literati always gathered and discussed astronomy. Consequently, their speculations are more accurate, and they study more carefully. In comparison, in our country, maybe there is only one person who dedicates himself to astronomy for hundreds of years. Without mentors and fellows, he can only study by himself and discuss it with no one. That is why our knowledge of astronomy and math is not on par with theirs. We can see the scientific instruments and appliances they made are exquisite...Now Pantoja and his companions are growing old and battered. I humbly ask Your Majesty to order the minister of Rite to translate their book on the calendar.*<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Li Zhizao, 1962, 5321.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Despite these mandarins' efforts, it was hard for the government, which cling conservatively to the old system, to proceed with the translation.<sup>84</sup> At first, the Wanli Emperor gave an affirmative response to the petitions of his subjects. Pantoja and Ursis immediately began their preliminary works. The latter translated a book about planetary theory into Chinese and determined the longitude of Beijing. Meanwhile, Pantoja calculated the latitude of lots of major cities in China. Their imperial mandate enhanced the prestige of the Jesuits.

However, some eunuchs and officials did not want to see the foreigners getting the imperial task, and thereupon acquired fame and success. They persuaded the Emperor to abandon the project of calendar reform.

Although temporarily, Pantoja and his companions could not assume the task of creating a new calendar, the future Jesuits took over this job, even the rough time of war and the change of dynasty did not stop them. Finally, the new calendar, which embodied the painstaking work Pantoja and his companions, was published in 1645, the early phase of a new dynasty.

Despite the setbacks, Pantoja never stopped introducing astronomical knowledge to the literati. He tried his best to earn respect and trust of the Chinese elites. For example, in 1612, he and Sun Yuanhua 孙元化 (1582 – 1632) co-wrote a book named *Ri Gui Tufa* 日晷图法, which is about making sundials and other similar devices.<sup>85</sup>

While maintaining a friendship with the literati, the Jesuits also tried their best to satisfy the Emperor. In 1612, the Wanli Emperor inquired of them about other countries. Pantoja remade a world map and offered to translate a book about the countries in the world for him:

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<sup>84</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 529.

<sup>85</sup> Xu Jie and Shi Yunli, 2006; Zhang Kai, 2009, 372- 373.

如蒙皇上幾務之暇，欲得通知萬國情形，則有《萬國圖志》一冊，先年原系臣等貢獻御前者。其中所說至詳至備，又皆臣國人遊學經商耳聞目見傳信之書，並無鑿空駕造之說。臣等仰蒙聖恩，養有年，略通經書大義，似可翻譯成書。臣今外無副本，倘聖意必須詳備，伏乞發下原書，容臣等備細變寫，上呈聖覽，即四方萬國地形之廣狹，風俗之善惡，道術之邪正，政治之得失，人類之強弱，物產之怪異，俱載無遺，非徒以廣見聞，爾或少裨於聖治，而臣等蒙恩日久，得效絲毫之勞，略解素餐之愧，有餘榮矣。

*<My translation> If Your Majesty have the interest in knowing the general information about the other countries after conducting state affairs, there is a book called Wanguo Tuzhi 万国图志 (Geography of the world with graphic illustrations) that we presented to Your Majesty years ago. The detailed information of other countries that it contains is what exactly our countrymen saw and heard during their journey for study or business. It is not an invented fiction. Thanks to your kindness, we, subjects of Your Majesty, have lived comfortably and without any worry. We have acquired basic knowledge of the books classics of this country. That is why we consider ourselves fit to translate this book into Chinese. We happen to have no copy, and if Your Majesty are willing to know more details, we beg you to return the book, and we can translate it for you. The book is about each country's landscape and territory, the customs, religious beliefs, the administrations, the people, and the products. This book serves to open the reader's eyes and can be treated as a reference for Your Majesty's government. We, subjects of Your Majesty, who have enjoyed your great goodness, wish to contribute our little strength by translating the book. After doing this, we may feel a little relieved since we did not contribute enough, and this indeed constitutes a great honor for us “.*<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Han Qi and Wu Min, 2006, 364.



More than the maps, Pantoja also made two sundials for Wanli Emperor. The Spanish Jesuit knew that the Emperor was interested in their exotic appliances. For this reason, he tried to seize every opportunity to impress him:

象牙时刻晷二具，或看日、或看月、或看星，皆可测知时刻。臣等学道余闲，颇习曆法，二物系臣等製造，謹附進御前，以為皇上宵衣旰食之一助。

*<My translation> Two devices of ivory can be used to tell the time with the sun, the moon, and the stars. We, Your Majesty's servants, spent some time on studying the astronomy and calendar after practicing our religion. Thus we could make these two devices and presented them to Your Majesty, hoping them offering some help when Your Majesty are busy with state affairs.* <sup>87</sup>

Pantoja was extremely active after the death of Ricci. He spared no effort to maintain the Emperor's favor and developed a close relationship with the literati. Through this communication and cooperation, Pantoja gradually understood their concerns. He even shared the same views on some issues with the literati, and therefore, he earned their trust.

#### 1.3.4 The Nanjing incident and the death of Pantoja

The Nanjing incident had a significant impact on the early mission, and it inevitably changed the fate of Pantoja and Ursis. On top of that, this incident is vital for understanding the communication between the Jesuits and the Chinese elites.

The success in getting the emperor's permission of land for Ricci's cemetery suggested the imperial sanction of the missionaries' presence in Beijing, which certainly strengthened the evangelical work. By the year 1616, there were 13 missionaries in Beijing, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Nanchang, and Nanxiong. They were Diego de Pantoja,

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 120.

Sabatino de Ursis and Francois Sambiasi (Bi Fangji 畢方濟 1582 – 1649), who were stationed in Beijing; Alfonso Vagnoni (Wang Fengsu 王豐肅 1566 – 1640) and Alvaro Semedo (Xie Wulu 謝務祿 1585 – 1658) in Nanjing, Giulio Aleni (Ai Rulue 艾儒略 1582 – 1649) Gaspard Ferreira (Fei Qiguan, 費奇觀 1571 – 1649), Emmanuel Diaz (Yang Manuo 陽瑪諾 1574 – 1659) and their companions were in provinces such as Zhejiang and Jiangxi. Nicholas Longobardi was the superior of the mission and traveled from one city to another in that capacity. With a residence of some fifteen years in the capital during which they occasionally received marks of imperial favor, Ricci, Pantoja, and Ursis did quite well in Beijing. Nonetheless, the danger loomed over the missionaries in Nanjing.

In the summer of 1616, an official named Shen Que 沈樞 (? – ?) in Nanjing opened his attack on Christianity, the missionaries, and their Chinese Christian converts by sending a memorial to the Chinese throne. After that, the Jesuit mission in China was seriously threatened.

In the memorial titled Can Yuanyi Shu 參遠夷疏 (the memorial impeaching the distant barbarians), Shen emphasized the distinction between Chinese and the foreigners, which is a traditional concept that came from the ideology that China was culturally superior to other nations. In the Chinese classics, “Zhong Guo 中國” (the central kingdom) was always differentiated from the cultural or ethnic outsiders, which were considered barbarians. He then reminded the Emperor that his ancestor, the Hongwu Emperor, was also quite strict on this distinction, and he would not allow the barbarians to enter China without questioning. Accordingly, he explained his worry about the possibility of the missionaries inciting the people to revolt against the government. He also indicated that the missionaries already committed the following crimes:

1. The missionaries called their country the Great Western Ocean, and their doctrines the religion of the Lord of Heaven. Since the emperor was the sole ruler on the earth, his country was called the Great Ming. How could there be two “great” countries in the

world? Although the Chinese emperors were considered the “Son of Heaven”, the imperial edict is considered to be following Heaven’s mandate, the missionaries explained that their God was Lord of Heaven. It seems that they conspired to usurp the imperial prerogative, putting their god on the top of “Heaven”, and in consequence, allured the commoners.

2. The missionaries corrupted many people’s minds. Even some literati believed and respected them, which meant that they already had quite a few followers.

3. The barbarians would change the traditional calendar of China. Since the calendar system was closely related to the political order, the Chinese traditional organization system would be disturbed if the missionaries succeeded.

4. The missionaries persuaded the commoners to stop making sacrifices to their ancestors, saying that worshipping the Lord of Heaven could enable a person to attain heaven and avoid hell. Clearly, they schemed to induce them to be unfilial.

5. The commoners were easy to be deluded by the missionaries’ artful speech. The avaricious and foolish ones could be attracted by their bribe and follow them to gain some money.

Finally, he summed up with anger:

由前言之，是率天下而無君臣；由後言之，是率天下而無父子。何物丑類，造此矯誣！蓋儒術之大賊，而聖世所必誅，尚可蚩蚩然驅天下而從其說乎？

<My translation> On the one hand, the missionaries would destroy the relationship between the sovereign and his subjects; on the other hand, they would destroy the relation between father and son. What monsters they must be to spread such arrogant falsehood. They indeed are the great enemies of

*Confucianism and must be wiped out in the wise reign of your Majesty. How could we still tolerate their teachings?*<sup>88</sup>

Then he compared the missionaries with barbarians in Chinese history, who rebelled against the emperors, warning that these distant barbarians might have caused vast calamity in the coming years. Hence, he requested an imperial rescript be sent to the Ministries of Rites and War, having them collaborate in the case. He suggested trying the leaders according to the law and expelling followers from China.

Albeit Shen Que did not have any concrete evidence, his worry was not groundless. Even if the Spaniard and the Portuguese never launched a massive attack on mainland China, the plan of conquering China was indeed presented to Felip II, the king of Castilla and Portugal. Just because the defeat of the Spanish Armada and Felip II's concern about his Portuguese subjects' interests made the king refuse to take action against China.<sup>89</sup>

Given the severe nature of the case, Shen Que felt that some further investigations would be necessary. He aimed to know when did the Western missionaries entered China, how many residences they had throughout the country; how they obtained their resources; what credentials the Jesuits used when they passed through Chinese border posts; why the officials and soldiers in charge of such posts allowed them to pass through. When the answer to these questions was obtained, corrective measures would be taken to ensure that foreigners would not pose a threat to the Ming Dynasty in the future.

Shen Que desired to remove all Western missionaries from China and eradicate all Christian influences in the country. However, there was no imperial response to this memorial. Meanwhile, the literati who were in favor of the missionaries soon gave a response to Shen Que. Yang Tingyun, who was at his home in Hangzhou, immediately wrote a paper titled “Xiao luan Bu Bingming Shuo 鴞鷺不並鳴說” (The owl and the phoenix do not sing together) in defense of the Jesuits.

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<sup>88</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 61.

<sup>89</sup> Ollé, 2002, 199, 224, 239.

Pantoja and Ursis, who were with Xu Guangqi in Beijing, also realized the potential damage that Shen Que caused to their mission. Accordingly, they utilized their connections to defend themselves. As a Jesuit who had the closest relationship with the literati, Pantoja had to react. After hearing the news of the arrests in Nanjing, he wrote a defense of Christianity entitled *Ju Jie 具揭* (A statement in clarification), in which he responded to every accusation made by the anti-Christian literati. His arguments are as follows:

1. Pantoja pointed out in the first place that his entry with Ricci into the capital was legal. At all the stops throughout the trip, they had obtained permission from the local authorities. To prove this fact, he enumerated the names of numerous high-ranking officials and essential personalities who had helped them. He then described all the favors that the Wanli Emperor had granted, suggesting that they had imperial permission to stay in China.
2. Pantoja also explained the notion of the Lord of Heaven. He argued that the Chinese word “Tian 天” (Heaven) had two meanings. The first meaning referred to the sky, while the second referred to the Shangdi 上帝, which was the same as Lord of Heaven. For this reason, he stated unequivocally that the Lord of Heaven was just the western way of saying Shangdi, rather than the lord of “Tian”, as Shen Que accused.
3. Pantoja guaranteed that there was no political implication in calling their country the Great Western Ocean, which was merely a geographic concept.
4. Pantoja explained that their study of astronomy was not incompatible with the Chinese classics. He emphasized that it was the Chinese officials who invited the missionaries to participate in the revision of the calendar, and they were still waiting for the order of the Emperor.

5. To answer the accusation of alluring the commoners to be unfilial, Pantoja tried to distinguish “making the sacrifice to the ancestors” from “being filial.” He stressed that it was wrong to pray to the ancestor for blessing, which was certainly not written in the Chinese classics. The Spanish Jesuit insisted that only God could grant a blessing to the people. Meanwhile, he said that filial duty was listed as one of the Christian doctrines and, therefore, the missionaries did not oppose it. (This accusation was hard to tackle for the missionaries. They could not compromise in their faith, yet neither could they went against the Chinese custom openly.)

6. Pantoja also explained the fund resources of the missionaries. He admitted that they got funds from the church and some donations from the foreign merchants. Anyhow, he insisted that the fund and donations they received were minimal and many Jesuits lived a frugal life and even struggled in poverty. Ergo, they could not inveigle anyone, and no one got richer after converting.

7. As to the “distinction between Chinese and the barbarians”, Pantoja declared with pride that they were from a highly civilized country, which was equal, if not superior to, China. Spanish Jesuit admitted that the missionaries revered God. In the meantime, they were also loyal to the Chinese Emperor. They strictly observed Christian morals and rules, yet they did not contravene the Chinese norms of ethics and morals. He guaranteed that there was not a single term contrary to those norms in their books. Consequently, they could not be considered as “foreign barbarians”, much less “spies”.

Then Pantoja concluded that Christian and Confucian doctrine was not in contradiction or excluded. On the contrary, the former could be grafted into the latter and complement each other. Therefore, it was wrong to call Christianity a “heterodox sect.”

Since the Emperor made no response to Shen Que’s first memorial, some of his associates decided to take further actions. They arrested some Chinese converts. The minister of the Ministry of Rites in Beijing presented a memorial, supporting Shen’s charges against Christianity. Xu Guangqi understood that the situation was getting worse,

so he also composed a memorial in defense of Christianity, which he presented to the throne at the first opportunity<sup>90</sup>. In this memorial, he vouched for the missionaries' excellent character, and he was unequivocal in pointing out the merits of Christianity. He argued that since Christianity was good for society, then it should be given the same rights in China as Buddhism, Taoism, and Mohammedanism. He stated that he was willing to share their punishments if his evaluation proved incorrect to express his confidence in the missionaries and Christianity.

The Emperor remained silent in the case, despite that his subjects and the missionaries began to debate openly about Christianity. Meanwhile, the order for the arrest of the Jesuits was given by the Grand Secretariat. When Shen Que got this order, he immediately took Alfonso Vagnoni, Alvaro Semedo, and some converts in Nanjing in custody. Since Longobardi and Aleni were not mentioned by name in the arrest warrant, they fled Nanjing.

Despite all, the Wanli Emperor still did not issue an anti-Christian edict, and the authorities in Beijing took no immediate action against Pantoja and Ursi. Seeing this, the officials in favor of Shen Que also send memorials to the Emperor. They accounted that Christianity needed to be destroyed, and the regulations governing foreigners coming to China to be tightened.

Witnessing the situation rapidly worsened, Pantoja decided to publish the defense that he wrote to help the prisoners. For convenience, he decided to send it to Nanjing in draft form in the expectation that the Christians there would print and circulate it. He selected a Christian named Zhang Cai for the task of bearing the draft to Nanjing.

While the literati who were in favor of Christians and the Jesuits making determined efforts to defend Christianity, Shen Que was not idle. He presented his second memorial *Zai Can Yuanyi Shu* 再參遠夷疏 (the second memorial impeaching the distant barbarians). Realizing that Pantoja and Ursis had the support of the gentry in Beijing,

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<sup>90</sup> This memorial was called “*Bianxue Zhangshu* 辯學章疏” (A memorial in defense of Christian learning).

Shen Que sought to gain the initiative by criticizing them tactfully. In the second memorial, he warned that although the missionaries in Beijing did not do anything wrong because they were afraid of the imperial might's presence, their counterparts in Nanjing already began their subversive activity. Then he brought some new charges against the Pantoja and his companions:

1. Nanjing was the old capital and housed the mausoleum of the Hongwu Emperor, which was of vital importance for China. The barbarians' very presence was disrespectful for the Hongwu Emperor, the founding father of the Ming Dynasty. Foreigners should not be allowed to move freely in such areas.
2. The missionaries in Nanjing were able to obtain official information contained in the Beijing Gazette <sup>91</sup>, even earlier than the Nanjing Ministry of Rites. For example, they learned the content of the memorial of Shen Que, which never went public, suggesting they had access to the confidential information.
3. Some people at the bottom in Nanjing paraded through the streets with specially prepared banners as a public declaration of their belief in Christianity, saying that they were willing to die for the Lord of Heaven. The situation was quite urgent because the missionaries possessed the ability to mobilization the commoners.
4. The missionaries gave bribes to the people to convert them. They wrote down their converts' dates of birth and the number of their family members, stressing them to answer their summon. Then they made periodic meetings of Christians four times each month.
5. Since the missionaries were in Nanking for twenty years, they were also associated with the gentry. It was of the grave danger that their presence in the city could be regarded as legal and accepted.

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<sup>91</sup> Dibao 邸報, a type of publications issued by central and local governments in Ming Dynasty.



He again revealed his concern over Pantoja and Ursis, who were both in Beijing and might have send messages to their companions, seeking to obstruct what was being accomplished by the Nanjing Ministry of Rites. Once again, he asked the Emperor for an imperial order of banishing the missionaries.

Once again, the Emperor did not respond to this memorial. (Ignoring the memorial was quite common for Wanli Emperor, especially in the later period of his reign. The Emperor's behavior will be explained in the next chapter.)

Meanwhile, Zhang Cai arrived in Nanjing under the instruction of Pantoja. He and some other Christians printed the draft of the Spanish Jesuit, aiming to defend Christianity. When Shen Que discovered this, he immediately arrested Zhang Cai and his companions. Then he interrogated the Jesuits and the Chinese converts, asking:

*What law is the law of yours? How came you to China? How do your professors live? How do they maintain themselves? What the government they have? What commerce with Macau, and the Fathers of that place?*<sup>92</sup>

Shen Que doubted that the missionaries had a close relationship with the Portuguese, which was a real threat to China. Soon the Nanjing Ministry of Rites issued an official notice<sup>93</sup> to comfort the commoners that no more people would be implicated and urged the converts to abandon Christianity. He emphasized that this alien religion was a threat to China and needed to be banished. The report also listed four crimes of the missionaries:

1. Christian writings stated that the Lord of Heaven signified Heaven, which had been worshipped in China throughout history. Yet, in their own book, it was written that the Lord of Heaven was born in the time of Han Aidi 汉哀帝 (7 B.C.– 1 A.D.), and his name was Jesus, whose mother was called Mary. They also declared that he was born in the

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<sup>92</sup> Samedo, 1655, 213.

<sup>93</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 69.

west and died on a cross as a criminal. How could a guilty barbarian be the Lord of Heaven? Such preposterous lies could not go unchallenged.

2. The law forbade the private practice of astronomy, and the official calendar of our country could not be put in doubt. Otherwise, the unscrupulous individuals would fabricate heretical ideas and threw the world into confusion. The Jesuits infringed the prohibition and manufactured armillary spheres. They even calumniated the traditional theory of the universe. Since the traditional Chinese astronomical system had functioned admirably in the past, there was no need for change at this point in order to avoid the cunning barbarians seize the opportunity to create chaos in China.

3. The Jesuits were guilty of lots of infractions of the law by the private pray to Heaven, the writing of invocations, the private hoarding of secret images, and the burning of incense and gathering together large numbers of their confederates. All of these behaviors created a threat to national security.

4. The Jesuits gave each convert silver, bribing them to follow their teaching, and thereby broke the laws against agitating.

Finally, the report encouraged the commoners, saying that there was no need to fear the devilry of the barbarians.

Seeing the emperor still did not respond to the memorial, the anti-Christian literati, including the Minister of Rites in Beijing and the Supervising Secretary of the Office of Scrutiny for Rites, kept on presenting their memorials and urging the Emperor to expel the missionaries.<sup>94</sup> Shen Que also submitted his third memorial in January of 1617. In this new memorial, he again emphasized the distinction between China and foreigners. Additionally, he developed some of his earlier accusations in this third memorial:

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 73-82.

1. Shen Que questioned the doctrines of Incarnation and crucifixion, saying that making a crucified criminal as the Lord of Heaven was a fraud not worth refuting.
2. He mentioned that the missionaries built a garden near the Hongwu Emperor's mausoleum, constructed a Church near the city wall and the principal gate, implying the Jesuits were hatching a sinister plot against the state.
3. He indicated that the missionaries paid money to the government couriers to learn the contents of official documents. He then pointed out that the Jesuits know the contents of his memorials before it went public, suggesting that they could access the inside news of the government.
4. The missionaries admitted that 13 of them lived in China. They took the imperial permission of granting a piece of land for burying Ricci as a pretense and lurked in every corner of China.
5. People from the coastal areas recognized that the missionaries were Franks ( Fo Langji 佛郎機). Alfonso Vagnoni and his confederates conquered Luzon years ago, then they changed the name of Luzon into the Great Western Ocean (Da Xiyang, 大西洋). As a matter of fact, they were just some evil barbarians from the sea near the Guangdong and Fujian provinces, not coming from a distance of eighty thousand lis.

In the end, Shen Que warned the Emperor that he was not sure about this story, but clearly, the government could not afford the risk. Thus he suggested the Emperor gave orders to put these missionaries on trial and punish them according to the law.

According to Alvaro Semedo, Shen Que bribed a eunuch, making him persuade a Grand Secretary to draw up an edict of expulsion against the missionaries in the name of the Emperor. Semedo insisted that this expulsion order was not the intention of the Emperor himself, but the tricks of the eunuchs:

*...the eunuchs...fraudulently contrived a way to get it subscribed, or, as some say, they put it among a great heap of petitions, so that the King signed it without taking notice what it was; or as others say, they perswaded the Queen to subscribed it, to whom the King doth often remit the signing of Memorials.* <sup>95</sup>

There are no other resource records back up the words of Semedo, so the real opinion of the Emperor was unclear. Anyhow, since the imperial edict was issued, the destiny of the mission was determined. Pantoja's name was explicitly mentioned in this edict:

这奏内远夷王豐肅等，立教惑众，蓄谋叵测，尔部移咨南京礼部行文，各该衙门速差员役递送广东抚按，督令西归，以静地方。其龐迪義等，去歲爾等公言曉知曆法，請與各官推演七政，且皆系向化來京，亦令歸還本國。

*<My translation> The memorial says that Alfonso Vagnoni and other barbarians from afar, who established religious sects to incite the people, concealed evil intent against the state. Your Ministry must issue an official communication to the Ministry of Rites in Nanjing, making the different local authorities send officials in a hurry to escort Vagnoni and his companions to Guangdong Province, which should send them back to the West, to guarantee local security. As for Diego de Pantoja and his companions, last year you said that they had a good understanding of the calendar and invited them to study astronomy together with our officials. Furthermore, they have come to Beijing out of the admiration for Chinese culture, then let them return to their respective countries.* <sup>96</sup>

Under the imperial command, Pantoja and Ursis left Beijing in March of 1617. Five months later, they arrived in Guang Zhou 广州 and were locked up with Semedo and Vagnoni. Then they were all transferred to Macau in January of 1618. After arriving in

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<sup>95</sup> Semedo, 1655, 218.

<sup>96</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 81.

Macau, Pantoja made his final effort to beseech the imperial pardon for his Jesuits companions:

臣與先臣利瑪竇等十餘人，涉海九萬里，觀光上國，叨食大官十有七年。  
近南北參劾，議行屏斥。竊念臣等焚修學道，尊奉天主，豈有邪謀敢墮惡  
業。惟聖明垂憐，候風便還國。若寄居海嶼，愈滋猜疑，乞並南都諸處陪  
臣，一體寬假。

<My translation> The deceased subject Matteo Ricci, as well as other companions, after a journey of ninety thousand lis, arrived in this honorable country. During the seventeen years of staying, we enjoyed your Majesty's great favor and protection. Recently the Ministry of Rites of the South and the North presented memorials impeaching us and proposed our banishment. We, humble subjects of Your Majesty, have done nothing but profess of faith in Christ, study his doctrine and venerate the Lord of Heaven. How could we dare to harbor other intentions and commit any evil? Now we can only hope that Your Majesty will pity us and let us return to our homeland when we have the favorable wind. If we continue to stay in Macau, this will lead to more suspicions, so we beg Your Majesty to pardon all of us, including your humble subjects in the south capital (referring to other Jesuits in Nanjing).<sup>97</sup>

This petition was left unanswered. Three months later, on July 9<sup>th</sup> of 1618, Pantoja died at the age of 47 and was buried in Macau<sup>98</sup>. It is said that even shortly before his death, he was still working on translating the Christian doctrines into Chinese.<sup>99</sup>

In brief, the so-called Nanjing Persecution interrupted the well-going mission and made Pantoja be expelled to Macau. Although Pantoja might have passed away with the regret of failing to carry forward Ricci's work, his achievement was enormous. He spent 21

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<sup>97</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 8462.

<sup>98</sup> Schütte, 1975, 425.

<sup>99</sup> Jin Guoping, 2019, 119.

years in China, brought much information about China to Europe, and surely introduced western knowledge to China. Especially the moral book *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) that he wrote in Chinese had a profound impact on Chinese traditional moral philosophy. (This will be explained in the 3rd and 4th chapters.) During his stay in the capital, he cooperated with the Chinese literati and emotionally felt close to them. This experience helped him understand the concern of the Chinese literati and establish a close relationship with them. In the following chapter, there will be an analysis of the social issues that concerned the Chinese elites.

## 2. THE CRISIS IN LATE MING CHINA (1580 – 1620)

### 2.1 The economic growth and social mobility

In this section, the social-political reality in late Ming China, as the historical background of the moral discussion between Pantoja and the Chinese literati, will be analyzed. Since the reign of Zhengde 正德 (1505 – 1521), the commercial activity began to disturb the stillness of the agricultural society. Timothy Brook described it as “the sedate certainty of agriculture was edged out by the hotter speculative world of commerce.”<sup>100</sup> As Pantoja witnessed through his journey to the capital, the economy still developed rapidly.

This economic growth generated the social stratification change. The farmers went to the city; the literati class began to mix with the merchant class, the gap between rich and poor augmented. As a result, the traditional social order was falling apart, which alarmed some Chinese elites.

#### 2.1.1 The economic development in late Ming China.

Since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or even before, trade and commerce thrived in China. After the lifting of the sea-ban policy in 1567, the maritime trade became increasingly popular.<sup>101</sup> Macau became a port of vital importance that connected East Asia and Europe. Chinese goods such as raw silk and spun silk were exported from here, making Macau a key trading hub for the commercial route Macau–Goa–Lisbon. China became a part of this global economy, and lots of silver from America and Japan came into China through Macau.

When Pantoja entered China, he met Matteo Ricci in Nanjing and went north to Beijing along the Grand Canal. The two Jesuits passed many commercial cities and towns,

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<sup>100</sup> Brook, 1999, 1.

<sup>101</sup> Rossabi, Twitchett and Mote, 1998, 675.

witnessed the busiest commercial route in China. Being shocked by the wealth of China, Pantoja recorded the real state of China's external trade:

*The fertilitie of this Kingdome is great, of all things that seeme to be needfull for the use of mans life. And if there bee any other Nation which liveth commodiously without needing trafficke with forraine Kingdomes, they are the Chinois. And though it bee true that some things come unto them from forraine Countries, yet are they not the necessary things for the life, and which all men use. The most that commeth out of forraine parts, and they desire, is Silver : And that which all men carrie from thence is very much, and very good merchandise: as Silke, Gold, Muske, Porcelanes, pieces of wrought Silke, raw Silke, cloth of Cotton wooll, all kinde of worke in Copper, Iron, and Latten, Quicksilver, Sugar, Honey, Waxe, Cinnamon, workes made of fine wood', and gilded, as Bedsteads, Ink-horns, Cabinets, and an infinite number of other things, whereof there is so great abundance, that although they send out many ships laden for Japon, India, Manila, and other parts: yet without doubt they might provide ten times more: and if more would come to buy, they would always have the more to sell.<sup>102</sup>*

The global economy drove the import and export trade in China. Furthermore, the continuous flow of silver laid a solid foundation for the silver-based monetary system in the late Ming period. Due to the growing need for raw silk, silk, cotton, and other commodities in overseas markets, the commodity economy in the southeastern coastal areas was greatly stimulated. Wang Shimao 王世懋 (1536 – 1588), a literati who was born in Jiangsu Province and spent the more significant part of his political career in the south of China, once wrote:

凡福(州)之綢、絲，漳(州)之紗、絹……無日不走分水嶺，及浦城小關，下吳越如流水。其航大海而去者，尤不可計。

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<sup>102</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 370-371.



<My translation> *There is no day that Fuzhou's silk and the yarn of Zhangzhou... would not pass through Fenshui mountain and Pucheng custom, being sent to Jiangnan and Guangdong. Many commodities were exported overseas.*<sup>103</sup>

Xu Guangqi also mentioned the prosperity of the overseas commerce:

有西洋番舶者，市我湖絲購物，走諸國貿易。若呂宋者，其大都會也。而我閩、浙、直商人，乃皆走呂宋諸國。倭所欲得於我者，悉轉市之呂宋諸國矣。

<My translation> *The foreign boats from the west came to buy our silk and then transported it to other countries. Luzon is the metropolis of these foreigners. All the merchants from Fujian, Zhejiang, and Nan Zhili went there to do business with them. The Japanese could buy all the commodities that they wanted from us from Luzon.*<sup>104</sup>

With foreign markets developing, domestic wealth and consumers were continually increasing. The towns which participated in the trade flourished as well, especially in the Jiangnan area.<sup>105</sup> For example, the prosperity of Shengze 盛澤 Town of Wujiang 吳江 County was described in the novel *Xingshi Hengyan* 醒世恒言 (*Stories to Awaken the World*):

鎮上居民稠廣，土俗淳樸，俱以蠶桑為業。男勤女謹，絡緯機杼之聲通宵徹夜。那市上兩岸綢絲牙行，約有千余家，遠近村坊織成綢匹，俱到此上

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<sup>103</sup> Wang Shimao, 1936, 12.

<sup>104</sup> Xu Guangqi, 1933, 83.

<sup>105</sup> About the growth of the counties and towns, please refer to the local gazettes such as Wujiang Xianzhi 吳江縣誌 vol.2 Jiading Xianzhi 嘉定縣誌 vol.1 Qingpu Xianzhi vol.2 from the reign of Hongzhi to the reign of Wanli.

市。四方商贾来收买的，蜂攒蚁集，挨挤不开，路途无住脚之隙，乃出产锦绣之乡，积聚绫罗之地。

<My translation> *There are masses of residents in the town. The people are honest and straightforward. They are all devoted to cultivating silkworms, reeling silk, and weaving. Men are laborious, and women prudent, the voice of the loom could be heard the whole night. There are more than one thousand brokerage firms of silk. The silk from the other villages was brought here to sell. The businessmen from elsewhere all came here to buy the silk. It is so crowded on the street that there was not room enough to swing a cat. Indeed this is a town of silks and brocades.*<sup>106</sup>

Pantoja also witnessed the commercial activities in China as he traveled with Ricci:

*There are about this Citie many others within one or two dayes journey, and very famous for greatnesse and trafficke; among which there are two, one named Hancheo (杭州), the other Sucheo (蘇州); and this is very great and like to Venice, whose streets are halfe water and halfe land. The Chinois call these Cities Paradise, to expresse the goodnesse, abundance, and cheapnesse of all things that are in this Kingdome, and come from other places. And Sucheo is so full of people, merchandise, and trafficke, that a Booke which is printed (wherein all things are set downe which the Provinces and Cities pay to the King) saith, that this only payeth one yeere with another in Silver, Gold, Rice, and Silke, and other things, wherewith it doth greatly abound, twelve millions : so that there be whole Provinces that amount not to so much by a great deale: which though it seeme an incredible thing, yet they write it for a certaintie: and hee which knoweth what these Cities are, will beleeeve it.*<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Feng Menglong, 2012, 293.

<sup>107</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 366.

With the economic development, the small towns expanded, and its population was also growing. Pantoja praised the Chinese cities and towns in his letter:

*Onely I say in generall, that all the way which wee travelled, wee met with so many Cities, Townes, and Villages, that to beleeeve their greatnesse, it was necessarie to see them. For your Worship will hardly beleeeve, that wee spent two or three houres in sayling still by the walls of one Citie. After which there still followed many Townes and Villages, one within sight of another. And after this manner all this way continueth, even to Paquin. Yea, the Villages are very great, and full of people, and of much trafficke. For China though wee give them this name (which among us signi- populous. fieth some small matter) The Chinois doe not distinguish them by great or small, and so their Villages are bigger then others which wee call Townes.*<sup>108</sup>

As Pantoja witnessed on his journey, the scale of some villages and towns exceeded the typical size because of the economic development. What impressed the two Jesuits most was the richness of Beijing and Nanjing, the empire's two capitals. Especially Nanjing, due to the population, favorable geographical environment, and abundant resources around it, this city gradually turned to commercialized cities since the middle of the Ming Dynasty, lots of merchants came to develop their business.<sup>109</sup> Pantoja described the scale and population of these cities in his letter:

*It hath three walls of Bricke very high and faire, with very great and beautiful gates, which they shut up very timely before night. This Citie, of old time, two hundred yeeres past, was the habitation of the Kings of China; and so it continueth in very good condition: The streets are very broad, and all paved with very great square stones, or set with bricke. It hath exceeding long streets of two leagues, and two leagues and an halfe, and in the midst of the Citie are the Kings Palaces, which are very great.*

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 365.

<sup>109</sup> Zhang Han, 1985, 83.

*The Chinois declare the circuit of this Citie, that two Horsemen going in the morning both out of the same gate, and one going on the one side, and the other on the other, going all the day they meet at night in the gate opposite to that which they went out at. The very truth is, that it is at least eleven or twelve leagues in circuit, and seemeth to have above two hundred thousand houses of people. It seemed to all of us that were there, that Nanquin and this Citie of Paquin, each of them have as many people or more, then foure of the most famous and populous Cities of all our Europe, as Rome, Lisbon, and others of the greater sort. For whereas these two whereof I speake are in themselves so great Cities, not one nor two streets, but the greater part of the Citie every day doth swarme with people.*<sup>110</sup>

Linqing, in which Pantoja met the eunuch Ma Tang, was another city that developed because of trade. The Spanish Jesuit also recorded its prosperity:

*Having travelled two hundred and thirty leagues in forty dayes, wee came to a very famous place and Mart Towne in China, which is in the Province of Xantun, which is next unto the Territories of Paquin, called Lincin. Where, because of the great Lincin. Trafficke of Vessels and Merchants, which goe and come from the Court, who pay to the King a very great tribute, he hath placed one of his chieftest Eunuchs, which serveth Mathan the to gather up his Customes: which lived there in great Kings Eunuch, estate, and much attendance.*<sup>111</sup>

Maybe the Jesuits did not like Linqing because of their bitter encounter with the eunuch, yet it was still one of China's biggest cities at that time. Because of its location along the Grand Canal, Linqing benefited greatly when the commercial trade was growing. On the long-distance transportation route from Beijing to Hangzhou, Linqing's status was very

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<sup>110</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 365.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 339.

prominent. The cotton in the north was transported to Suzhou, Songjiang, Hangzhou, and other places, while the grain, silk, and cloth in the south also reached the north by the Grand Canal. In 1429, the court started to set up customs in Linqing, making this commercial city increasingly prosperous.

By the reign of Wanli Emperor, the court established eight customs: Chongwenmen 崇文門, Hexiwu 河西務, Linqing 臨清, Huaian 淮安, Yangzhou 揚州, Hushu 許墅, Beixin 北新, Jiujiang 九江. These customs were called “Chaoguan 鈔關”, which were the passes of levying commercial taxes on passing ships. During the reign of Wanli, the tax collected by these customs was almost 410,000 tales per year, which contributed a lot to the state’s revenue.<sup>112</sup> According to the record of the Gazette of Linqing, in the heyday of the city, the shops and stores stretched for thousands of miles; the masts of the junks formed a forest on the water.<sup>113</sup>

When Ricci and Pantoja entered China, the late Ming society’s economic development was in a period of rapid growth. Pantoja’s journey on the Grand Canal allowed him to witness the wealthiest cities in China. This first-hand experience left him an indelible impression about Chinese society, which was very important for understanding the literati’s concern.

### 2.1.2 The change of the social stratification

Economic growth prompted the change of social stratification. Some peasants became hired workers or servants of the rich, some flooded into cities and became urban laborers. This phenomenon began to appear in the Jiajing 嘉靖 period (1522 – 1566):

今天下之民從事于商賈技藝遊食者，十而五六。

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<sup>112</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 1980.

<sup>113</sup> Xu Zishang, 1968, 45.

*<My translation> Nowadays, more than half of the people engage in trade, handicraft, and service <sup>114</sup>.*

The literati He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506 – 1573) recorded the dramatic social mobility in late Ming China:

余謂正德以前，百姓十一在官，十九在田。蓋固四民各有定業，百姓安于農田，無有他志，官府亦驅之就農業，不加煩惱。……自四五十年來，賦稅日增，徭役日重，民命不堪，遂皆遷業。昔日鄉官家人亦不甚多，今去農而為鄉官家人者，已十倍於前矣。昔日官府之人有限，今去農而蠶食於官府者，五倍於前矣。昔日逐末之人尚少，今去農改業為工商者，三倍於前矣。昔日原無遊手之人，今去農而遊手趁食者，又十之二三矣。大抵以十分百姓言之，已六七分去農。

*<My translation> Before the reign of Zhengde, ten percent of the people worked for the government while the other ninety percent worked in the field. Because all the people of the four classes had their proper occupations, the commoners were settled in the field and had no other anticipations. The local government encouraged them to make a living on the land and left them alone... In recent years, people cannot bear the tax and the corvee labor, which press down heavily on the people, and they have to abandon their land. In the past, the gentry had limited servants, now ten times as many servants were once peasants and now work in the houses of the gentry; In the past, there was a small number of people working as servants of the local government, now the number has increased fourfold; In the past, a few people were engaging in trade, now the number triples.... In general, almost sixty or seventy percent of the peasants had left their land.<sup>115</sup>*

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<sup>114</sup> Lin Xiyuan, 2015, 56.

<sup>115</sup> He Liangjun, 1959, 111-112.

In the year 1565, an official named Zhou Shi 周詩 (? – ?) presented a memorial to Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor (1507 – 1567), analyzing the problems in China. He pointed out that many farmers had to leave their land because of the hefty tax and annexation of land, the rich chose to engage in trade, and the poor went to the city serving as hired labor. A significant number of people escaped from their hometowns because of this massive tax burden. Zhou Shi said that he traveled for a long distance in some provinces and found no trace of human habitation.<sup>116</sup>

This issue aroused the wild concern of the literati. The same as Zhou Shi, Ye Mengzhu 葉夢珠 (1623 – ?) also mentioned this in his book the change in the countryside:

里中小戶，有田三畝、五畝者，役及毫釐，中人之產，化為烏有。狡書貪吏，朋比為奸，圖蠹虎差，追呼絡繹，視南畝如畏途，相率以有田為戒矣，往往空書契券，求送縉紳，力拒堅卻，並歸大戶，若將浼焉，不得已委而去之，逃避他鄉者。

*<My translation> The small families in the village which possessed some lands had to bear heavy corvee and tax which would make them go broke. The minor officials consorted together to repress the commoners. People regarded farming as a perilous undertaking and tried their best to get rid of their land. They sent their title deed to the gentry or the powerful families, begging them to accept their land. Then they left their home and fled to other towns.<sup>117</sup>*

This phenomenon continued in late Ming China. Farmers also kept on abandoning their land and pouring into the city. A significant number of vagrants emerged in the cities.<sup>118</sup> China was an empire built on the foundation of agriculture. In this sense, when people left their land, the government lost control of the human resource and the tax base. Seeing

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<sup>116</sup> Xu Jie, 1966, 8803-8804.

<sup>117</sup> Ye Mengzhu, 1981, 23.

<sup>118</sup> Shen Bang, 1982, 8.

that the government's control over society is weakened by the population mobility, Zhang Xuan 張萱 (1553 – 1636) burdened with worries:

如今京師土曠人稀，一城之中，兩縣編民百無一二，非禁旅軍匠受廩於官，即江南游賈居奇於市，皆仰公家之利者也。

*<My translation> Now the capital is a scarcely populated area, only one or two percent of the registered residents of the two counties of the capital remained. The city inhabitants are either soldiers supported by the government or the merchants chasing the profit in the city. They all relied on the supply of the government".<sup>119</sup>*

A literati named Shen Bang 沈榜 (1540 – 1597) recorded that in Wanli's reign, being a servant of the nobilities, engaging in handicrafts, could acquire more wealth than farming. Even the farmers preferred planting profit crops over subsistence crops. To gain more wealth, a growing number of farmers left the countryside and found a life in the city. Some peasants began to become wage-earners in cities and towns, and their social status changed while improving their living conditions. As Chinese historian Wan Ming 萬明 said, at this time, "the late Ming Chinese society was moving along the path from tradition to modern development and was in a social transformation."<sup>120</sup>

The development of the commodity economy made the merchant class rising rapidly. More and more people with merchants' background edged themselves into the gentry class, which was forbidden in the early Ming era. Some of the merchants even bought a place in the Guozijian 國子監, the imperial academy in China. According to Ping-ti Ho 何炳棣, since 1550, the hierarchy established by law had been broken. Some wealthy commoners could be equated with the elite class.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Zhan Xuan, 1991, 106-107.

<sup>120</sup> Wan Ming, 2004, 17.

<sup>121</sup> Ho Ping-ti, 1959, 330-359.



While merchants paid to the range with the literati, the literati also engaged in trade. Yu Yingshi 余英時 called it “the social mobility between literati and merchants (士商互動 Shishang Hudong).”<sup>122</sup> In his opinion, the merchants and literati classes’ combination caused the most significant change in the social structure in late Ming China. At that time, society re-evaluated the social status of the merchant class. He also indicated that there were two reasons that the literati went to conduct business instead of studying and taking the imperial exams:

1. The imperial exam was the primary path to become an imperial officer. In the mid-Ming period, China’s population increased several times, and more people were dedicated to seeking success in the imperial exam. However, the imperial court did not provide more posts such as Jinshi 進士 and Juren 舉人, which were the higher degrees and titles of reserved officers. Accordingly, the competition in the exams became increasingly furious.

2. The commercial and urban development since the 16<sup>th</sup> century produced a great temptation for scholars. The odds of getting a title in the imperial exams was 10 percent, while the odds of being successful in the business was 90 percent.<sup>123</sup> No doubt, this is an exaggerated statement. Still, doing business rather than serving in the government became the right choice for people who lived in the late Ming Dynasty.

In the late Ming period, many literati abandoned their opportunity to become a state official and finally chose to do business. Gui Youguang 歸有光 (1507 – 1571), a famous litterateur, also indicated the change of the social stratification when he offered birthday congratulation to a successful businessman:

古者四民異業，至於後世，而士與農、商常相混。今新安多大族……雖士大夫之家，皆以畜賈游于四方……豈非所謂士而商者歟？

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<sup>122</sup> Yu Yingshi, 2004, 155-212.

<sup>123</sup> Wu Jihu, 1992, 378.

*<My translation> In ancient times, the four classes of people had their distinct functions, whereas recently, the literati, farmers, and merchants' demarcation line has vanished. Nowadays in Xin'an 新安 county, the literati from great families traveled afar to do business...Aren't these gentleman literati as well as merchants? <sup>124</sup>*

Another literati Wang Daokun 汪道昆 (1525 – 1593) openly praised the merchant class and declared that people could be a good merchant and also literati:

大江以南，新都以文物著，其俗不儒则贾，相代若践更。要之，良贾何负閎儒。

*<My translation> In the south of Yangtze, the county Xindu 新都 is famous for its rich cultural history. The locals look forward to becoming literati or merchants, sometimes they are both. A good merchant is no less renowned than a learned scholar. <sup>125</sup>*

In late Ming China, it was a normal phenomenon that the literati had an intimate association with the merchants, which never previously existed. The successful merchants liked to study poems and classics. The ones who were less talented and could not compose poems would buy books and calligraphy works. <sup>126</sup>

The blur of the status distinctions among the literati and the merchants reflected that the traditional social order was falling apart and indicated social organizations' change. Besides, the craftsmen's social status also ascended. Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597 – 1689), as a cultural celebrity, even provided a list of well-respected artisans for their outstanding

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<sup>124</sup> Gui Youguang, 1981, 319.

<sup>125</sup> Wang Daokun, 2002, 415.

<sup>126</sup> Yuan Hongdao, 1981, 461.

work. Their contemporaries took these craftsmen as “the social equals of gentlemen of the gentry”.<sup>127</sup>

The Complicated occupational classification provided more proof about the radical change that China underwent during that time. Traditionally, Chinese politicians and scholars believed that there were four categories of people: literati, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants. Although this classification is merely an idealization rather than a practical reality, it reveals the stable social structure in Chinese history. Nevertheless, in the late Ming period, the literati realized that the traditional class stratification was inapplicable to the real situation. Some of them even stated that there were twenty-four categories in late Ming China.<sup>128</sup> Maybe he exaggerated a little, but it was apparent that at that time, people noticed the change of class stratification and began to accept it.

Besides the social mobility between merchants and literati classes, the stratification in the very literati class was also significant. As indicated previously, due to the increasingly fierce competition in the imperial examinations, more and more literati in the late Ming Dynasty did not have the opportunity to become officials to change their destiny. There was a poem describing the predicament of the literati:

五十餘年做秀才，故乡依旧布衣回。

<My translation> *Being Xiucai*<sup>129</sup> for more than fifty years, returning to the hometown still as commoners.<sup>130</sup>

Indeed, most of the literati could not become the state official. They had to find other ways to realize their value of life or seek a livelihood. Some people from a well-off family would choose to travel; some would engage in business; some wrote and

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<sup>127</sup> Zhang Dai, 1982, 226.

<sup>128</sup> Yao Lv, 2008, 202-203.

<sup>129</sup> Xiucai 秀才 is the popular name of Shengyuan 生員, which is the primary level of the literati. Being a Shengyuan means that one gets the qualification of taking the imperial examination but still haven't passed the imperial exam.

<sup>130</sup> Ye Sheng, 1980, 15.

published books for remuneration; some chose to be a ranking officials assistant, while someone would, without a doubt, live in poverty.<sup>131</sup> In other words, while the merchants' position ascends in the social hierarchy, some literati's position descended.

## 2.2 The changes in social values

The Chinese historian Wang Yuquan 王毓銓 (1910 – 2002) once made comments about the influence of the commercial development on the society in late Ming China: “Business tends to improve the social mobility,” “It was not politics, but commercial and commodity production gradually destroyed the closed and solid natural economic structure, discarded the policies and customs that discriminate against merchants, broke the traditional hierarchy, and ascended the social status of businessmen.”<sup>132</sup>

With the development of the commodity economy, the Chinese began to pay attention to the enjoyment of life, and people's views on wealth also changed. Some literati openly defended their pursuit of wealth and their luxurious lifestyle. Besides, some literati gave up their social responsibilities and lodged in the mountains and woods or returned to the countryside. These series of changes in the social values were at odds with the traditional Confucian ethics.

### 2.2.1 Pursuing a luxurious life

Some county gazetteer compilers recorded a significant change in social customs in late Ming china:

*吾松正德辛巳以來，日新月異，自儉入奢。*

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<sup>131</sup> Liu Xiaodong, 2002.

<sup>132</sup> Wang Yuquan, 1983, 375-376.

*<My translation> Since 1521, the custom of our Songjiang Fu(松江府) changed rapidly, from frugality to extravagance.<sup>133</sup>*

The literati widely mentioned the luxurious way of life in that epoch. With the development of the economy, people were getting richer and becoming fastidious about their food or clothing. Consequently, more and more people lived in luxury:

今者里中子弟，謂羅綺不足珍，及求遠方吳綢、宋錦、雲縑、駝褐，價高而美麗者，以為衣……倏忽變異，號為時樣。

*<My translation> The young men from our town said that the silk rope is not precious. They seek to obtain Songjin, Yunjin (cloud brocade) from Jiangnan, or the clothing made of camel's hair. They prefer to buy the sewing beautiful and costly clothes... they also pursue the latest design, calling it fashion.<sup>134</sup>*

The family of Xu Hongzu 徐宏祖 (1587 – 1641), a representative figure of the travelers in that period, also benefited a lot in economic growth. Based on the historical records, his mother participated in silk production and even earned a reputation for the quality of her products:

孺人織布精好，輕弱如蟬翼，市者輒能辨識之。

*<My translation> His mother was very good at weaving. The silk fabric made by her was as thin as a cicada wing. The buyers from the market could recognize her work<sup>135</sup>.*

When his mother was eighty years old, Xu Hongzu invited two painters to complete a painting for her mother, depicting this industrious woman looming in the early morning.

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<sup>133</sup> Fang Yuegong, 1991, 173.

<sup>134</sup> Lin Yuncheng, 1995, 47a-47b.

<sup>135</sup> Chen Jiru, 1995, 354.

At that time, the literati began to appraise women like her for “dedicating her whole life in the family business of weaving and looming.”<sup>136</sup> Meanwhile, Xu Hongzu was also proud of his mother’s ability to create wealth.

The feast also became extravagant. Before the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the average family did not invite people to dinner. Even if there were occasional treats, the meal was quite common. However, since the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the custom changed:

乡里之人，无故宴客者，一月凡几，客必专席，否则耦席，未有一席而三四人共之者也。肴果无算，皆取诸远方珍贵之品，稍贱则惧渎客，不敢以荐。每用歌舞戏，优人不能给，则从他氏所袭而得之，以得者为豪雄。

*<My translation> People have feasts several times monthly even if there is no special event, and some guests would have a table to his own, or two guests share one, never would three or four guests share one table. The dinner is splendid, and with lots of dishes and fruits, all of them are obtained from afar. Serving a common meal would be regarded as treating the guests with impropriety. During the feast, there would be some entertainment. If there are not enough entertainers, the host could hire more from other families, and therefrom he would earn respect from others for his family.*”<sup>137</sup>

Besides satisfying the basic needs of life, such as food and clothes, wealth accumulation also meant that people could pursue the richness of leisure and entertainment. More and more literati, or even the commoners, were willing to spend time and money on leisure and recreation. For example, Zhang Dai recorded the leisure life of the people in Hangzhou:

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<sup>136</sup> Dong Qichang, 1995, 316.

<sup>137</sup> Lin Yuncheng, 1995, 48b.

虎丘中秋夜虎丘八月半，土著流寓、士夫眷屬、女樂聲伎、曲中名妓戲婆、民間少婦好女、崽子嬰童及游冶惡少、清客幫閒、僕僮走空之輩，無不鱗集。

<My translation> In the night of the middle of August, the locals and the people from other places, the literati and their families, the geishas and the musicians, the hetaerae and the virtuous women, the erastes, eromenos, the gangsters, the literary hack and the servants, all of them were gathered here in Tiger Hill<sup>138</sup>.

以故二鼓以前，人聲鼓吹，如沸如撼，如魘如癡，如聾如啞，大船小船一齊湊岸，一無所見，止見篙擊篙，舟觸舟，肩摩肩，面看面而已。

<My translation> Before the drum sounded the second time<sup>139</sup>, the noise of the music and the shouts of people were in great commotion, like the water was boiling, the mountain was moving; some people acted like they were talking and screaming unconsciousness; others acted like they were both deaf and mute, all the pleasure-boats were pulling in to shore at the same time, punt-poles knocked against other punt-poles, boats touched other boats, swarms of tourists jostled, all you could see is nothing but others' faces<sup>140</sup>.

When the weather was good, the residents of the cities preferred to go outside:

冠紳閨閣，尋春選勝，繼以上塚踏青，寶馬鈿車，更番雜遝，競出西關，水邊林下，壺榼無虛日。

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<sup>138</sup> Tiger Hill is a tourist destination in Hangzhou. Zhang Dai 1982, 85.

<sup>139</sup> In ancient China, people use the beat of the drum to inform the time during the night, from dusk to dawn, one night is divided into five periods, which were marked by beating the drums five times. The second time of the drum sounds equal 19-21 in modern time.

<sup>140</sup> Zhang Dai 1982, 112.

*<My translation> The gentry and the ladies have a spring outing or go to places of historic interest and scenic beauty. Then they go for a walk in the country in the early spring or travel in decorated carts pulled by fine horses and drink all day by the water or in the wood.<sup>141</sup>*

More small changes happened in social customs. In the reign of Wanli, people began to send greeting cards to the officials on special occasions such as the Chinese New Year or when they assumed office. One official could receive thousands of greeting cards, which were beautifully crafted and extremely luxurious.<sup>142</sup> All of these shreds of evidence suggested that the people, especially literati in late Ming China, compared with their predecessors, paid more attention to enjoying life.

### 2.2.2 The change of view on wealth

According to the traditional Confucian ethics, the men of virtue should not pay too much attention to personal gain. As it is recorded in Analects:

子罕言，利，與命，與仁。

*<My translation> Master Confucius seldom spoke about profit. He cared about fate and humaneness.<sup>143</sup>*

Be that as it may, some of the literati's views on wealth changed dramatically in late Ming China. There was a growing number of literati that participated in business writing. They cooperated with booksellers and played the role of content providers.<sup>144</sup> The Dynasty commercial publications prospered in the late Ming period. The utilitarian value orientation of serving and amusing the masses appeared in the books.<sup>145</sup> The literati were

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<sup>141</sup> Shen, Defu 2004, 2901.

<sup>142</sup> LiYue, 1986, 200-201.

<sup>143</sup> *Analects*, 9.1.

<sup>144</sup> Zhang Xianzhong, 2017.

<sup>145</sup> Guo Mengliang, 2011, 200.



trying their best to adapt to this new role in the rapidly changing society. They had to pay more attention to earning money and supporting the family because of social pressure:

民多仰機利而食，俗雜好事，多賈治生，不待危身取給。若歲時無豐食飲，被服不足自通，雖貴官巨室，閭里恥之，故其民賤嗇而貴侈。汀、漳人悍嗜利。

*<My translation> People live by speculative trade, and there are lots of merchants in these regions. If someone fails to meet his own basic needs of life at a time of poor harvest, his neighbors will despise him, even though he might be a high official or a great personage. Hence, these people treat miserliness with contempt and value lavishness. In Tingzhou and Zhangzhou the people are ruthlessly coveting profit.<sup>146</sup>*

The pursuit of interests became a common phenomenon among the literati. Some of them did not hide their desire for personal interest. The conversation between Sang Yue 桑悅 (1447—1513) and his friend is a vivid presentation of some literati's view on money:

常熟桑思玄曾有人求文，托以親昵，無潤筆。思玄謂曰：“平生未嘗白作文字，最敗興，你可暫將銀一錠四五兩置吾前，發興後待作完，仍還汝可也。

*<My translation> Someone asked Sang Yue to write prose free of charge for the sake of friendship. Sang said to him: “I never write essays for free because this will have my spirits dampened. You'd better put a piece of silver in front of me for a while, and then I will return it to you when I finish writing.”<sup>147</sup>*

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<sup>146</sup> Zhang Han, 1985, 84.

<sup>147</sup> Li Xu, 1982, 16.

Some literati not only pursued fortune but also showed off their wealth. Yan Shifan 嚴世蕃 (1513 – 1565) amassed great fortune under the protection of his father Yan Song 嚴嵩 (1480 – 1567), who dominated the Ming government for two decades as Grand Secretary during the reign of the Jiajing. It is said that every time he accumulated one million taels,<sup>148</sup> he would host a grand banquet to share his joy with his guests. This kind of celebration banquet was held five times in total. Yan Shifan was so proud of his wealth that he made a rich list with him being on the top.

Some literati justified the pursuit of wealth. Zhu Guozhen 朱國禎 (1557 – 1632), an official in the reign of Wanli and later the Grand Secretary in the reign of Tianqi 天啟 (1621 – 1627), once said:

做官只有兩件：為國家幹事，為自己營私。二者俱做不得，真極癡極蠢人。

<My translation> *There are two purposes of being a state official: serving the state and seeking personal gain. If one could not achieve either of them, then he is extremely foolish.*<sup>149</sup>

The words of Zhu Guozhen suggested that people began to attach importance to wealth openly, which marked the change of the customs, especially compared with the early period of the Ming Dynasty.

Some literati tried to justify the luxury lifestyle. The most famous arguments were the essay *refutation to prohibiting extravagant lifestyle* 禁奢辯 (Jinshe Bian) of a literati named Lu Ji 陸楫 (1515 – 1552). He boldly acclaimed that the frugal way of life was not helpful for the economy, which was contrary to the traditional moral values:

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<sup>148</sup> A unit of weight in the traditional Chinese currency system, approximately equal to 1.3 ounces.

<sup>149</sup> Zhu Guozhen, 2005, 3341.

*At present, the custom in Ningpo 寧波, Shao-hsing 紹興, Chin-hua 金華, and Ch`ti-chow 衢州 is known as most frugal. Then (according to conventional reasoning) the people there should be rich. But the people in these prefectures can not even support themselves and half of them have travelled to other places for a living. This is because the custom is so frugal that the people are unable to help each other. In short, richness precedes extravagance and poverty precedes frugality.*<sup>150</sup>

He emphasized the positive impact of consumption on production, believing that the luxurious custom resulted from economic prosperity. Meanwhile, he criticized people for “merely observing the benefit from trade without realizing that the reason why there is trade is exactly because people are extravagant.” Then he warned that “If everyone leads another in being frugal, then those who pursue secondary occupations (referring to engaging in business) will return to agriculture. How can people still distinguish themselves by means of trade?”<sup>151</sup>

In his opinion, the government should not forbid the luxury lifestyle, which could help to redistribute the wealth:

*As for extravagant custom, there is no place where it surpasses that of the people in Soochow 蘇州 and Hangchow 杭州, where numerous people consume fine food without tilling one inch of soil and wear embroidered textiles without touching the shuttle. This is because the custom there is extravagant and there are many people pursuing secondary occupations. Let us merely illustrate with the lakes and hills in Soochow and Hang-chow. The people residing there go out to amuse themselves at these places according to a seasonal schedule. Whenever they go out, they always have painted boats, sedan chairs, delicacies, and superior wine, together with singing and dancing. This is, indeed, extravagant. On the other hand, numerous people, including*

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<sup>150</sup> Yang Lien-sheng, 1957, 51.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

*boatmen, sedan-chair carriers, singsong boys, and dancing girls, depend on the lakes and hills for a minimum living. Therefore we say, one person's loss becomes the gain of another.*<sup>152</sup>

Hence, he questioned the traditional value of encouraging frugality:

*I do not see how extravagance is capable of impoverishing the whole world. Spoken from the point of view of an individual, his frugality can, perhaps, save him from becoming poor. Spoken from the point of view of a family, its frugality can, perhaps, save it from becoming poor. In an over-all consideration of the trend of the world, this, however, is not true. Should the ruler of the world plan only to enrich an individual or a family, or rather to enrich the whole world in an equalized manner?*<sup>153</sup>

The development of the commodity economy in the late Ming Dynasty and social customs changes produced a utilitarian thought trend. Li Zhi 李贄 (1527 – 1602), one of the most strikingly original thinkers in the late Ming period, once acclaimed:

夫私者，人之心也，人必有私，而後其心乃見；若無私，則無心矣。

<My translation> *The selfish motive is the mind and the individual will of a person. This selfish motive is indispensable for everyone so that the mind can be demonstrated; if there is no selfish motive, nor will there be mind.*<sup>154</sup>

No doubt, these words wielded an impact on ethical principles. More and more literati had a positive evaluation of commercial activities. They showed their understanding or even admiration for the merchant class, which was never the case in the early years of the Ming Dynasty. Li Zhi once defended the merchant class in his book:

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Li Zhi, 2010, 526.

且商賈何鄙之有？挾數萬之貲，經風濤之險，受辱于關吏，忍詬于市易，辛勤萬狀，所挾者重，所得者末。

<My translation> Why are the merchants being despised? They carried cargos of great value, fighting fierce and frightening storms on the sea, enduring the officials' humiliation in the customs, bearing disgrace in the market. How arduous and laborious they are! So much they paid, but so little they gained.<sup>155</sup>

Wang Daokun, who shared the same idea with Li Zhi, also defended the profit-seeking actions in his time:

夫儒者以非欲為訓辭，故罕言利。要以生財有道，治所必先，何以聚人？非財不可？則聖人未嘗廢財矣。

<My translation> The Confucians emphasized “containing the desire” to cultivate virtues. In consequence, they rarely talked about pursuing benefits. However, the principal issue of running a state is making money in the right way. How can people be united? Only by wealth. Hence the sages and men of virtue did not forbid earning profit.<sup>156</sup>

Wu Shiqi 吳士奇 (? – ?), a literati who got his Jinshi title in the reign of Wanli, criticized the traditional view of despising the commercial activities and emphasized the importance of the knowledge of economics:

余每笑儒者齷齪，不善治生，一旦握符，莫知縱橫。習儒而旁通于賈，異日為政，計然、桑孔之籌，豈顧問哉？

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<sup>155</sup> Li Zhi, 1975, 49.

<sup>156</sup> Wang Daokun, 2002, 666.

*<My translation> I always laughed at the Confucians that are bad at making money. If they become state officials, they could do nothing beneficial to the country. People who master the knowledge of Confucianism and also know better about business could indeed compete with the great politicians and economists of the past, such as Ji Ran 計然, Sang Hongyang 桑弘揚, and Kong Ji 孔僅.<sup>157</sup>*

The necessity of utilitarianism for people cannot be denied. Even so, due to the lack of advance of moral values that were synchronized with economic development, utilitarianism was very likely to trigger a wave of money worship. A dialogue between Ximen Qing 西門慶<sup>158</sup> and his wife in the famous novel *The Plum in the Golden Vase* 金瓶梅 from late Ming china vividly presents the phenomenon of money worship in that time:

*As long as I expend this property of mine in the doing of extensive good works, even if I were to rape Ch'ango, fornicate with the Weaving Maid, kidnap Hsü Fei-ch'iung, or abduct the daughter of the Queen Mother of the West<sup>159</sup>, it would do nothing to diminish the Heaven-splashing wealth and distinction that I now possess.”<sup>160</sup>*

### 2.2.3 Literati retiring from public life

For the Chinese literati, Confucian ethics was a theory full of moral idealism and practical guidance to establish a perfect social and ethical order. That is “Yi Tianxia Xingwang Wei Jiren 以天下興亡為己任”, which means taking the rise and fall of all under heaven as my responsibility, suggesting that the literati should do their best to serve the country and its people. This is a core idea of Confucian ethics. Nonetheless, in

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<sup>157</sup> Wu Jihu 1992, 354.

<sup>158</sup> The leading character of the novel *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, or *Jin Ping Mei* 金瓶梅.

<sup>159</sup> Ch'ango, Weaving Maid, kidnap Hsü Fei-ch'iung and daughter of the Queen Mother of the West are all beautiful fairy maidens of the Chinese folklore.

<sup>160</sup> *The plum in the golden vase* or, *Chin P'ing Mei*, 1993, 411.

the late Ming Dynasty, this idea was challenged by many literati, who began to deviate from this tradition. They refused to become official and voluntarily chose a quiet and comfortable life instead of serving the empire and its people.

The representative figure of this lifestyle was Xu Hongzu, a traveler in late Ming China who left many essays with detailed descriptions of the geography, hydrology, geology, plants of the provinces that he visited. Xu Hongzu was born into a wealthy family. Instead of taking the imperial exams and serving the empire, he was determined to spend his whole life traveling. His contemporaries described him as “the marvel of the world” and “a celestial being who walks on the earth.”<sup>161</sup> His friend Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558 – 1639) appraised him:

不謁貴，不借郵符，不覬地主金錢，清也；置萬里道途於度外，置七尺形骸於死法外，任也；負笠懸瓢，惟恐駭漁樵而驚猿鳥，和也。

*<My translation> (Xu Hongzu) does not go to visit the nobles or uses the official posthouse,<sup>162</sup> neither he needs the support of the rich, which means that he is honest and upright. Besides, he never considers his travel distance, neither gives thoughts to his security, which means that he follows his heart and travels to wherever he wants. Also, he travels alone and with light packs, to not make trouble to the fishermen or woodmen, neither to frighten the monkeys and birds, suggesting that he is kind and gentle.<sup>163</sup>*

This appreciation expressed Chen Jiru’s recognition of Xu Hongzu’s lifestyle. Xu Hongzu was not the only traveler in late Ming China because travel was a popular trend among some literati. For this reason, traveling literature was quite popular in late Ming China.

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<sup>161</sup> Xu Xiake, 1987, 1161.

<sup>162</sup> Using the official posthouses was quite common for the scholar-bureaucrats when they travelled in Ming China.

<sup>163</sup> Xu Xiake, 1987, 1183-1184.

During the period of Wanli, the trend of traveling also affected the commoner. Some literati stated that there were too many people that came to borrow their travel notes. In order to satisfy them, they had to publish these notes. For example, Wang Shimao complained that he had to write a book about his travel to Fujian when he just returned from traveling because all of his fellow-townsmen came to ask him everything about this province. He believed that his town fellows could imagine traveling to Fujian by reading his travel notes without leaving their house.<sup>164</sup>

Another famous traveler, Wang Siren 王思任 (1574 – 1646), once mocked those who stayed at home and had little interest in traveling:

瓦一壓而人之識低，城一規而人之魄狹彼。

<My translation> Once trapped in the house, the man is limited in knowledge;  
Once trapped in the city, the man is narrow-minded.<sup>165</sup>

He believed that travel was an enlightening experience, and he endowed it with the meaning of enjoying life. He said that “staying at home as young girls and daring not to go out” was a betrayal of life and the beautiful scenery. People who lived like that are “bees and ants, inferior to the fish and birds.”<sup>166</sup>

It was quite common in the Jiangnan 江南 area (the region in the south of Yangtze) that the scholars were keen on traveling and immersed themselves in designing gardens. Zhang Dai once wrote an essay about his “plum blossom house 梅花書屋 (Meihua Shuwu)”,<sup>167</sup> which was a garden house designed by him. After retiring from their office, the literati spent lots of time designing the gardens, which were usually very luxurious. The gardens also cost immense sums. A garden designer named Ji Cheng 計成 (1582 – 1642) once said:

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<sup>164</sup> Wang Shimao, 1936, 1.

<sup>165</sup> Wang Siren, 1936, 19.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>167</sup> Zhang Dai, 1982, 32-33.



石非草木，采後復生，人重名利，近無圖遠。

*<My translation> Stone is not grass, which could regenerate after being taken. Some people crave getting the impressive rock to show off and gain fame, while some want to get it for profit. If they cannot find the stone nearby, they will go to a distant place.<sup>168</sup>*

In order to build his garden, a literati named Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526 – 1590) tore down the city gate of his hometown to let in the big stone.<sup>169</sup> Building gardens became a fashion among the literati. Some of them tried their best to awe their visitors while others crazed to keep up. This endless comparison made some families impoverished.

Building gardens was a way of enjoying life for the literati. In the late Ming period, a growing number of literati preferred an idyllic and pleasant life than becoming state officials. They were satisfied with art and literary creation. This life attitude won the appreciation of many people. For example, the famous poet Chen Jiru was regarded as an exemplary person for some literati. As Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582 – 1664), another famous poet and politician in late Ming, recorded:

眉公之名傾動寰宇，遠而夷酋土司，咸丐其詞章，近而酒樓茶館，悉懸其畫像。甚至窮鄉小邑，鬻柜妝、市鹽豉者，胥被以眉公之名，無得免焉。

*<My translation> Mei Gong<sup>170</sup> is a significant figure. The barbarian lords from afar want his poet and other literary writings while His paintings are hanging on the tearooms and taverns' wall. Even the small retailers who sell*

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<sup>168</sup> Ji Cheng, 1988, 223.

<sup>169</sup> Xie Zhaozhi, 2005, 1536.

<sup>170</sup> Chen Jiru styled himself as “Mei Gong 眉公”.

*cosmetics and condiments in the remote villages use his name as their brand.*

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The late Ming period's economic development provided more options for the literati. They could live a comfortable life and gained great fame without being a state official. In fact, since the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the remuneration for writing, painting, or calligraphy was already impressive. If the parents of a state official or a merchant passed away, he would ask some literati to write elegy poems. It was quite popular at that time. For the sake of money, the literati would write whatever his payer asked, no matter they knew each other or not, he would praise the merits of the people as his payer wanted, no matter that person was moral or immoral. The most absurd thing was that some literati even prepared some templates of the elegies. When the buyer came, they only changed the name or modified some sentences. The buyer printed this elegy from batch production, carved it on the steles, and even used it as teaching material for their descendants.<sup>172</sup> No doubt, this was quite a commercial activity.

The literati could choose to be a hireling painter instead of a state official. For example, Chen Jiru, as mentioned above, dedicated himself to literary creation and wrote for a living because of the imperial examination's failure in the early years. The remuneration was so huge that he could buy villas and enjoyed the comforts of life for decades.

The case of Chen Jiru was not unique. Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470 – 1559), another literati who failed in the imperial examination, also became famous for his painting and writing talent. It is said that there were people who continuously came to buy his paintings or poems and his works. Even for rich people, it was hard to get a small piece of his work<sup>173</sup>. Tu Long 屠隆 (1542 – 1605), a playwright and essayist who also lived in the late Ming period, was a prolific writer and quick in writing. When he retired from his official position, he also depended on his pen for a living<sup>174</sup>.

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<sup>171</sup> Qian Qinyi, 1991, 677.

<sup>172</sup> Lu Rong, 1985, 189.

<sup>173</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 7363.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 7389.

More and more literati took people such as Chen Jiru as their life idol. For them, enjoying a leisure life was more appealing than serving the state. Chen Jiru himself was recommended to be the state official many times, yet he always declined. He settled down to a retired life in a village for his whole life, staying away from the officialdom's disputes.

The Jesuits adopted literati's mode of dress to adapt to the Chinese elites' community because the literati dress was the symbol of high status. For the same reason, Chen Jiru burnt all his literati clothes at 29 years old to show his determination to be a hermit<sup>175</sup>. The same as Xu Hongzu, Chen Jiru was another iconic figure of the literati who retreated from public life. His desirable lifestyle was described as:

飲酒聽歌，調馬釣魚，山屐水棹，觴月尋花。

*<My translation> Drinking and singing, training horses and fishing, visiting mountains and lakes, admiring the beauty of flowers under the moonlight.<sup>176</sup>*

As mentioned before, with economic development, the literati had more ways to fulfill their values in life and made a living. Having more options undoubtedly weakened some literati's will to take the imperial examination and serve the state in the late Ming period. Some of them did choose enjoying life over serving the country and people.

## 2.3 The social-political crisis in the reign of Wanli

Until the reign of Wanli, the Ming Empire's bureaucracy had already functioned for more than two hundred years, many contradictions intensified, which formed a clear impact and destruction on the established social-political order at that time. Furthermore, the civil commotions augmented due to the misgovernment of the Wanli Emperor. Pantoja

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<sup>175</sup> Qian Qianyi, 1991, 677.

<sup>176</sup> Yuan Zhongdao, 1989, 429.

spent his 16 years in the missions of the Jesuits in China in the reign of Wanli. These political crises and social turmoil were either witnessed by his own eyes or acknowledged through the Chinese literati's words. Due to these personal experiences, he could understand that solving this social-political crisis and restoring the social order was the dominant motive for the Chinese literati to communicate with the Jesuits. In this section, the political and social problems in the reign of Wanli will be discussed.

For the Chinese literati, there were three major crises in the reign of Wanli: 1. The contradiction between the Emperor and the officials; 2. The Civil Commotion caused by the eunuchs; 3. The irreconcilable contradiction between the literati from different factions.

### 2.3.1 The opposition between Wanli Emperor and his officials

The opposition between the emperor and the officials was a significant phenomenon that could be dated back to the foundation of the Ming Dynasty.

The founding father of this Empire, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328 – 1398), also known as Hongwu Emperor, came from an impoverished family and did not get any education in his childhood. He rose to power at a young age. With military force, he defeated his rivals, chased away the Mongolians, and built his empire. Affected by his early experience, he was suspicious, cruel, and had a deep mistrust of the literati. In order to defend his authority, he ordered Embroidered Uniform Guard or Jinyiwei 錦衣衛, the imperial secret police, to spy on his officials. Jinyiwei also had the authority to arrest, interrogate, and punish anyone by the emperor's order. Zhu Yuanzhang also punished the literati by flogging them in the court, which could kill them or cause some serious injuries. On top of that, this punishment was also a great humiliation to the literati class.

The attitude of Zhu Yuanzhang set a tone for the political atmosphere in Ming China. His successors inherited his way of treating the literati. For this reason, the monarch-official relationship was always in a state of tension. Mainly, the contradiction between the

monarch and the officials came from the assignment of authority. On the one hand, the emperors wanted unrestricted power. On the other hand, the literati resolved to put the imperial power under the supervision and demanded the rulers act according to Confucian moral principles.

The Guoben Zhizheng 國本之爭 (controversy over the appointment of the crown prince) made this deep-seated contradiction come to the surface. The crown prince of the emperor, or Taizi 太子 in Chinese, was regarded as the basis of the Chinese Empire. The officials requested their Emperor to observe the custom and choose his first-born son Zhu Changluo 朱常洛 (1582 – 1620) as his heir. Although the officials requested time after time, the Wanli Emperor refused to crown Changluo because he preferred to nominate another son, Zhu Changxun 朱常洵 (1586 – 1641), whose mother was his favorite concubine, as his heir. Being afraid that the first-born could not be crowned, the officials protested and sent memorials to persuade Wanli. Although the Emperor could not disregard his officials' opinions, he neither planned to yield to his subjects. He adopted a passive countermeasure, refusing to go to the court and meet his officials. This dispute lasted for 15 years. Until 1601, Wanli had to make a concession and crowned Zhu Changluo as his heir under the officials' pressure.

This political issue was crucial for the Chinese elites and raised the concern of the Jesuits. Pantoja understood the significance of this controversy, so he recorded it in his letter:

*There fell out another accident in this kinde within these few yeeres, which because it is notable I will heere set it downe. This King hath many women besides his lawfull wife, which among themselves keepe the order of first and second. Hee hath no Sonnes by his lawfull Wife, but he hath one which is the eldest of the third or fourth, and others younger of the second. The Eldest by the custome or lawes of the Kingdome, is the lawfull inheritour, although he bee of the fourth wife: but hee bare more affection to the other and to her Sonne, and desired, by her perswasion, to advance him to bee Prince, and*

would not have advanced the lawfull Heire. The time being passed to performe the same, many Mandarins lost their Offices, for reprehending him of this disorder, and for seeking to make him advance the Eldest. But the principall Mandarins of the Court perceiving that hee proceeded on, and would not doe that which they requested, and which was reason, consulted together, and published a Proclamationj which commanded all the Mandarins which are in the Court (which are above some thousands) that under paine of losing their Office, they should all meete at such a day, and such an houre, in such a place of the Kings Palaces. When they were all assembled at the day appointed, with their Ensignes of Mandarins, they put up a Petition unto the King, saying, That since so often they had advised him of a thing so Just, and that hee made none account of them, not seeking to advance the true Prince, that hee should seeke those that would serve him, that all of them would there give over their Ensignes of Mandarins, and would no longer serve.<sup>177</sup>

When Pantoja arrived in Beijing, this dispute was still in a state of heat. Meanwhile, the Emperor had to make some concessions for political stability. Pantoja was well informed about the political situation in China:

*It seemeth the King was afraid of so great a resolution of the chieftest men of his Kingdome: And so hee commanded an Eunuch to goe forth unto them, and answer them, that they should resume their Offices in Gods name, and that hee would fulfill their request. Finally, they did effect so much, that they caused him to doe that which was reason; and so this yeere 1602.*<sup>178</sup>

Matteo Ricci also recorded that the Emperor preferred his little son to his first-born. The officials, who insisted on observing the custom and choosing the first-born as the heir, were firmly against the Emperor's partiality. Ricci compared this contradiction between

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<sup>177</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 388-389.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 389.

the Emperor and his subjects with the external threat from the Japanese, calling it internal unrest.<sup>179</sup>

What the literati fought for is not only crowning Changluo but also making the Emperor obey the traditional values which were defended by them. They believed that emperors' power could not go beyond the Confucian ethics or the rules set by the founding father of the Empire. Hence, almost all the officials considered that they had an obligation to rectify the Emperor's error and the right to restrain the Emperor from acting recklessly. During the Guoben Zhizheng, the Senior Grand Secretary (內閣首輔) Ye Xianggao 葉向高 once wrote a memorial to Wanli:

夫礼法虽自王者定，而王者之身未尝顷刻违。夫法此礼、此法，其来已远，累朝遵行，无敢逾越。

*<My translation> Although the emperors could make the rules, they still cannot violate them once it was made. It is because that the customs and rules were from ancient times and were observed for hundreds of years, and no one dares to violate.*<sup>180</sup>

Choosing the first-born as the heir was the custom in Chinese history. Therefore, Wanli could not openly decline the request of his subjects. Still, he made an excuse to delay the ceremony of crowning his first-born son. This prevarication raised more critiques and protests. Wanli punished the officials who dared to question him by dismissing, exile, and Tingzhang 廷杖.<sup>181</sup>

In 1610, the Wanli Emperor set examination questions for 302 literati who participated in the palace exam and were about to become the Empire's officials, complaining that more

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<sup>179</sup> Ricci, 2001, 178-179.

<sup>180</sup> Shen Yiguan, 2002, 193.

<sup>181</sup> Literally means flogging with a bid stick at court, which is a form of penalty in Ming Dynasty to punish the officials who offended emperor.

and more literati dared to resist the emperor's command.<sup>182</sup> Although the Emperor's authority was not undermined, there is no doubt that the Emperor and his officials' antagonism was quite strong.

### 2.3.2 The aggravating social contractions in the late Ming China

The increase in the civil commotion was a spectacular phenomenon in the reign of Wanli. This kind of collective action of people was caused by the irrational orders of the Emperor's envoys. Due to the economic development in the late Ming period, the social stratification was changing, which demanded new benefit allocation. In spite of that, the Emperor never intended to answer the need of the merchant class, which was keeping on growing more robust. Instead, the Emperor only saw economic growth as an opportunity to squeeze wealth. He sent lots of his confidential eunuchs to the mines and ports to collect taxes, which significantly interrupted the people's lives and provoked great hostility against these eunuchs of the Wanli Emperor.

Under the protection of their master, the eunuchs perpetrated every conceivable evil to threaten the people and to extort money and goods from them. In order to protect their wealth, lots of people resorted to violence.<sup>183</sup> The initial years of Pantoja's stay in China were the most active period of these commotions.

For example, in the spring of 1599, the eunuch Ma Tang extorted illegal taxes. In order to terrify the people, Ma Tang urged his underlings to take the wealth of the merchants by force and rob the people who did not pay the taxes, making lots of small dealers lost their means of livelihood. Then they came to protest in front of the administrative office of Ma Tang. Notwithstanding, Ma Tang answered the request with violence, sending his servant to beat people with clubs. The people were furious, and the situation went out of control rapidly. Tens of thousands of people burnt down the residence of this domineering eunuch and beat 37 of his underlings to death. When the Emperor personally ordered the

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<sup>182</sup> Zhuang Qiyuan, 1997, 2b.

<sup>183</sup> Gu Yingtai, 1997, 1005-1024.



main culprit's arrest, a commoner named Wang Chaozuo 王朝佐 (? – 1599) stepped forward bravely and was executed. Despite this, the magistrate of Linqing, Li Shideng 李士登 (1553 – 1628), as if deliberately protested the Emperor's order, gave money to the wife and mother of Wang Chaozuo, who was consecrated the people of Linqing in a temple.<sup>184</sup>

A half-year later, almost the same story happened in Wuhan 武漢. This time, the protagonist was a eunuch named Chen Feng 陳奉 (? – ?). Although the Grand Secretary Shen Yiguan 沈一貫 (1531 – 1617) and another literati named Feng Yingjing 馮應京 (1555 – 1606) sent memorials to impeach him of his numerous crimes in the city, the Emperor did not punish his tax collector. Instead, he put Feng Yingjing<sup>185</sup> in prison. Lots of people believed that the order of the Emperor was unjust.

For this reason, when Feng Yingjing was in his prison van to Beijing, many literati and commoners from Wuhan saw him off and surrounded this honorable official, making the van unable to move forward and therefrom showing their support for this straightforward literati and their discontentment with the Emperor's command.<sup>186</sup> After Feng was constrained in the imperial prison in Beijing, Matteo Ricci visited him several times. Feng had opportunities to read some books of Ricci and even wrote the preface for the book *Tianzhu Shiyi* 天主實義 (*The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*).

In June of 1601, the scene changed to Suzhou 蘇州. A commoner named Ge Cheng 葛成 (1568 – 1630) led another riot against the eunuch tax collector Sun Long 孫隆 (? – ?) because the textile worker could not bear the taxes imposed on them.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 7809.

<sup>185</sup> Feng Yingjing was quite close with Matteo Ricci, it is highly possible that his opinions about the eunuchs also affected Pantoja and Ricci.

<sup>186</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6173, 6175.

<sup>187</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 282, 7814.

In 1602, the Wanli Emperor had a sudden illness. Since he thought he would be dead, he summoned the ministries and the Grand Secretaries to give future policy instructions after his death. Mainly the sick Emperor made two arrangements: For one thing, he told his loyal subjects to assist his son to rule the state; For another, he admitted that sending eunuch tax collectors around the imperial was a bad policy. Therefore, he ordered to call back all the tax collectors and pardon all the literati who offended him on this issue. The ministries and Grand Secretaries were content about Wanli's last order, believing that the whole Empire could be exempt from the harm of the tax collectors.

Soon after, the event underwent a dramatic change because the Wanli Emperor recovered the next day. The first thing he did was to revoke his last imperial edict. Although one of his close eunuchs refused to obey, Wanli succeeded in rescinding the order, making this policy, which caused great harm to the Empire and the people, lasted until the end of his reign, which was 18 years later.<sup>188</sup>

Consequently, civil commotions never stopped. Although these incidents did not turn into large-scale rebellions, the commoners and the literati were extremely disappointed about their Emperor's greed and injustice. A historian named Gu Yingtai 谷應泰 (1620 – 1690) of the Qing Dynasty once commented:

國法恣睢，人懷痛憤，反爾之誠，覆舟之禍，亦間有之。

<My translation> *The imperial laws were trampled. People resented this injustice and looked for revenge, which led to the frequent occurrence of civil commotions.*<sup>189</sup>

### 2.3.3 The factional disputes among the officials in Wanli Reign.

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 5757.

<sup>189</sup> Gu Yingtai, 1997, 1024.

The literati of the Ming Dynasty was famous in Chinese history for their intolerance and impatience. They formed different factions and groups based on their friendship, similar political views, or even a fellow countryman's bond. The conflict between literati with different political factions was getting increasingly fierce in the Wanli period. Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周(1578– 1645), the famous philosopher in late Ming China, commented:

廷臣日趨爭競，黨同伐異之風行，而人心日下，士習日險。

*<My translation> The political conflict between officials is getting fierce. They take sides with those in the same cabal and ostracize those who hold different opinions; the moral degeneration of the world is getting worse; the general mood of the literati is becoming vicious.<sup>190</sup>*

There was a systemic problem existing in the state institution that caused continuous political struggle. In 1380, the Grand Councilor Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸 (? – 1380) was sentenced to death because of plotting a rebellion. Hongwu Emperor took advantage of this opportunity to abolish the position of Grand Councilor and ordered that whoever advised the emperor to restore this position would be punished with severity. By doing so, the emperors seized the Grand Councilor's full authority, making all the power centralized in the monarch's hand. Zhu Yuanzhang also named some secretaries to be his assistants, which consisted of the Grand Secretariat 內閣 (Nei Ge).

The responsibility of Grand Councilor was divided into Six Ministries 六部 (Liu Bu). All of these six ministers reported directly to the emperor. Meanwhile, the Minister of Personnel 吏部尚書 (Libu Shangshu), which held the power of appointing and removing officials, became the most influential ministry. Nevertheless, with the times passing by, the power of the secretaries of the emperor increased. Accordingly, the conflicts between the Grand Secretaries and the Minister of Personnel were on the rise. The main issue that they argued was about the appointment and removal of the officials.

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<sup>190</sup> Liu Zongzhou, 2012, vol.4, 16.

The Hongwu Emperor believed that the throne was secured by abolishing the post of Grand Councilor, whereas he also laid trouble for future politicians. On the one hand, his successors had to rely on the help of his secretaries to rule. Consequently, some Grand Secretaries obtained the responsibilities of Grand Councilor; On the other hand, it was a violation of the First Emperor's order if the Great Secretary assumed the Grand Councilor's power. Therefore, the authority of these Grand Secretaries was questioned by the officials all along with the Ming Dynasty.

In the reign of Wanli, this problem became more complicated.<sup>191</sup> The officials sided with the Grand Secretariat while the officials sided with the Minister of Personnel formed two political camps. They competed with each other and denounced their political rivals for losing their moral compass.

According to the custom, Jingcha 京察, the evaluation of the officials' performance in Beijing, was conducted every six years. In 1593, the Ministry of Personnel processed the Jingcha, which attracted both parties' attention. They all aspired to seize this opportunity to remove their dissidents. Lots of officials sent memorials to Wanli Emperor, reproaching their rivals were wicked and harmed the state.

At last, Wanli Emperor had to intervene and made the judgment in favor of the Grand Secretariat. Many officials who supported the Ministry of Personnel resigned out of disappointment. The tension aggravated. Some literati who were frustrated in this Jingcha Incident 癸巳京察 (Guisi Jingcha) established Donglin Academy 東林書院 (Donglin Shuyuan). They made comments on current events of the state and propagated their ideas of political renovation. The leaders of this academy became the leaders of the Donglin Faction 東林黨 (Donglin Dang).<sup>192</sup> The officials sided with the Grand Secretariat also formed their political group. As a contemporary literati commented:

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<sup>191</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 3395.

<sup>192</sup> Donglin Academy was refounded by the orthodox literati who determined to launch an ethical movement. They discussed the current events, political situation, and also lectured their teachings about moral philosophy and statecraft. Many young talented literati were attracted by its founders. For this reason,

門戶之禍堅固而不可拔，自此始也。

<My translation> *The parochial prejudice was consolidated, and the political disaster began from here.*<sup>193</sup>

Wang Xijue 王錫爵 (1534 – 1614), a Grand Secretary, once talked to Gu Xiancheng 顧憲成 (1550 – 1612), the leader of the Donglin literati, saying: “the most bizarre thing is that people always go against the judgment and decision of the Grand Secretariat.” Gu Xiancheng responded: “On the contrary, I think it is the Grand Secretariat that always goes against the judgment and decision of the people.”<sup>194</sup>

This factional conflict also existed in the “controversy over the heir of the empire.” Matteo Ricci recorded that most ministries insisted on choosing the first-born as the successor of the Empire, whereas some Grand Secretaries were on the side of the Wanli Emperor, who planned to pass over the elder in favor of the younger.<sup>195</sup>

As a matter of fact, the Grand Secretariat also proposed the Wanli Emperor to crown his first son, yet they preferred to use a euphemistic way to persuade him. Anyhow, due to the deep-going distrust between the different factions, many officials believed that the Grand Secretariat stood behind the Wanli Emperor and his illegitimate demand. Ricci’s narration about the standpoint of the Grand Secretaries suggested that the Jesuits could get the most information from the Donglin Faction literati.

When Ricci and Pantoja resided in Beijing, the power struggle between the Grand Secretariat and the Ministry of Personnel officials became increasingly fierce. Gu

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the members of this academy formed a moral fellowship and their political oponents labled them as a political faction.

<sup>193</sup> Wen Bing, 2000, 650.

<sup>194</sup> Gu Yingtai, 1997, 1027-1028.

<sup>195</sup> Ricci, 2001, 167.

Xiancheng, as the keyman of the anti-Grand Secretariat group, made clear that he opposed the Grand Secretariat's monopoly of power:

我太祖罷中書省而設六部，惟恐其權之不散。嚴分宜以來，內閣合六部而攬之，惟恐其權之不聚，散則互鈐，權臣不得行其私，國家之利也。聚則獨制，各人不得守其職，權臣之利也。安危大機於是乎在。

<My translation> Our Hongwu Emperor abolished the post of Grand Councilor and separated its power into Six Ministries. It was because he worried that the administrative power was not divided. However, since Yan Song 嚴嵩 (A mighty Grand Secretary in the rein of Jiajing 嘉靖), the Grand Secretariat began to seize the Six Ministries' power, lest the power was not centralized in their hands. Because when the power is divided, the officials could resist these Grand Secretaries, making them unable to seek their gains, which is good for the state. On the contrary, if they arrogate all powers to themselves, then the officials can not perform their duty, which is suitable for these secretaries. This is a vital issue of the Empire.<sup>196</sup>

In the opinions of the Donglin literati, the power should be centralized in the emperor's hands. They denied that the Grand Secretaries had superior authority over other officials. Qian Yiben 錢一本 (1546 – 1617), an official with the same ideals as Gu Xiancheng, also said:

朝廷之政，輔臣安得總之？內閣代言擬旨，本顧問之遺，遇有章奏，閣臣宜各擬一旨。今一出時行專斷。皇上斷者十一，時行斷者十九。

<My translation> How can the Grand Secretaries monopolize the power? Their responsibility is to draft the imperial edict under the emperor's command and serve as advisers. When there are state issues to be discussed, all the

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<sup>196</sup> Gao Panlong, 2008, vol.11, 57.

*Grand Secretaries should offer their ideas. Nevertheless, now the Grand Secretary Shen Shixing acted arbitrarily. He made decisions for almost ninety percent of the state issues, while the Emperor ten percent.* <sup>197</sup>

The Donglin literati blamed the Grand Secretaries of exerting a bad moral influence on the society, one of them sent a memorial to Wanli, saying:

君臣之分，等于天地。今上名之曰总政，己亦居之曰总政。以其身居于宠利之极，耐弹忍辱，必老死于位而后已。古所谓元老大臣，乃如其不知进退存亡者耶？大臣既无难进易退之节，天下安有顽廉懦立之风。举一世之人心风俗，糜烂于乞墻登垄之坑，滔滔而莫之止。是故陛下之治，前数年不胜其操切惨刻，而势焰烁人。后数年不胜其姑息委靡，而贤愚共贯。前之政自居正总，今之政自时行总，而皆不自朝廷总故也。

<My translation> *The difference between the monarch and his subjects is like heaven and earth. Now the Emperor ordered the Grand Secretary to be in charge of all the state affairs. He too dared to regard himself as the person in overall charge, putting himself in a position of ultimate glory and interest, indifferent to others' criticism, not handing over his post until he is dead. Surely the competent officials in ancient times did not behave like this. If the grand officials lacked the virtue of humility and the sense of shame, how could they encourage the virtue? The social ethics was poisoned by their endless conducts of pursuing fame and gain. Hence, in the early days, your majesty's rule was quite impetuous and hasty, making people suffer greatly. It was indulgent towards mistakes and omissive of responsibility in the late days, confusing the distinction between good and evil. In the early days, Zhang Juzheng was in charge of state affairs. In the late days, Shen Shixing is in charge, never a day that the Emperor runs the Empire.* <sup>198</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6039.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 6039.

The political dilemma in the Ming Dynasty is crystal clear: On the one hand, based on the imperial edict of the Hongwu Emperor, the authority of the Grand Councilor was merged into the imperial throne. No one could become the leader of the literati except for the Emperor himself. Being a dictator not just means that the Emperor had more power but also more responsibilities. On the other hand, since many emperors such as Wanli did not have the energy or will to take charge of administering such an enormous empire, they all needed their Grand Secretaries to wield more power than Hongwu Emperor permitted. Consequently, these Grand Secretaries would always be questioned by some literati because they violated the edict of the founding father of the Ming Dynasty. At last, their opponents constituted the core of the Donglin Faction.

Gu Xiancheng, as the representative figure of this political faction, once intended to make a new interpretation about the imperial power. He divided it into power and responsibility, indicating that the power should be centralized in the hands of the Emperor and the responsibilities distributed to his subjects:

夫權者人主之操柄也，人臣所司謂之職掌，吏部以用人為職，進退去留一切屬焉。然必擬議上請奉旨而後行。則所謂權者固自有在，非人臣可得而專也。是故職主于分任，而權則無所不統，權主於獨斷，而職或有所不伸，君臣之分於是乎在，蓋其際嚴矣。

*<My translation> The monarch should take power, and his subjects bear the responsibility. The responsibility of the Minister of Personnel is appointing and removing officials. Anyhow, the officials can only rough out a decree and fulfill their duty under the monarch's permission. That is to say, the power belongs to the monarch instead of the subjects. Therefore, the responsibility should be divided, and the power should be centralized. The power is exercised by one, and sometimes it means the officials cannot perform their duty thoroughly. This is the impassable boundary line that separates the monarch and his subjects.<sup>199</sup>*

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<sup>199</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 2008, vol.1, 14a.



Nonetheless, Gu Xiancheng and his companions failed to draw a clear boundary between power and responsibility. Another loophole in this theory is that the emperors were not morally perfect as the literati expected and not always qualified to be the literati's leader. On this ground, this theory could not be put into practice. Anyhow, it is clear that the Donglin literati insisted on practicing the political order set by Hongwu Emperor: The Grand Secretariat should just perform their duty of consulting the emperor while the monarch, which surpasses the factional conflicts, possessed the absolute power. No doubt, the Donglin literati believed that only the emperor qualified to be a political authority and thereupon maintained a stable political situation.

Consequently, when the Grand Secretariat commanded the Six Ministries' officials, they would be criticized for stealing power from the imperial throne. In the meantime, the Grand Secretariat's followers were treated as accomplices in the crime of breaking the political order by the Donglin literati<sup>200</sup>. Consequently, those who suffered the critics also formed their alliance to fight against the Donglin literati, and the factional disputes among the officials became irreconcilable.

## **2.4 The attempt to reconstruct the moral order**

Due to the social transformation caused by the economic development in late Ming China, the traditional social order was shaken. In the reign of Wanli, the fundamental contradiction that already existed in the state system was becoming increasingly acute. This series of political and social crises aroused the concern of the Chinese elites. They blamed this series of problems on moral degradation. For this reason, some literati began to defend the traditional moral standards and criticize the novel social phenomena, the unethical behavior of the emperor, and their political rivals. Besides, they founded academies to preach their moral teachings and rebuild the moral order.

### **2.4.1 Moral criticism on Wanli Emperor**

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<sup>200</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6067.

According to Confucian ethics, the emperors should run the country by virtue and become a central moral icon of his realm. Aware of their responsibility, many literati criticized the moral of the Wanli Emperor. As Pantoja recorded:

*There were many men of courage which wrote unto him: among whom there was one very renowned: The letter which he wrote to, the King, began thus. That although hee were assured, that he were to be hanged, and that the Fire were kindled to burnt him, yet hee would reprehend his vices and lewdnesses, and the evill example that hee gave to all his Kingdome: And so hee did, and spake verie freely, and put him in great feare.*<sup>201</sup>

Pantoja's words suggested that the Chinese literati did not hide their dissatisfaction with the Emperor from their Jesuit friends.

During Wanli's reign, the number of memorials criticizing the Emperor was increasing. Many literati accused the Emperor of lack of virtue and implored him to pay more attention to the state issues. In the year 1579, a famous memorial written by Luo Yuren 雒於仁(? – ?) was presented to the court, indicating that:

皇上之恙，病在酒色财气也。夫纵酒则溃胃；好色则耗精；贪财则乱神；尚气则损肝……皇上诚嗜酒矣，何以禁臣下之宴会？皇上诚贪财矣，何以惩臣下之饕餮？皇上诚尚气矣，何以劝臣下之和衷？

<My translation> *The illness of your majesty comes from alcoholism, lust, avarice, and wrath. Excessive drinking could hurt the stomach; lechery has deleterious effects on the vigor; monetary greed is poisonous to the mind, and the wrath could damage the liver. ...How could your majesty forbid your subjects to have luxury banquet when you drink that much? How could your*

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<sup>201</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 387-388.

*majesty forbid your subjects to indulge in carnal pleasure when you are a lascivious person? How could your majesty forbid your subjects to be greedy when you are avaricious of wealth? How could your majesty make your subjects get along well and work together when you abandon yourself to emotions?*<sup>202</sup>

This sharp criticism deeply hurt the pride of Wanli. He wished to give severe punishment to this bold official. His advisors held him back, telling him that the punishment on Luo Yuren would cause more criticism and made more people know his reproaches, which was terrible for the Emperor's reputation. Hearing this, Wanli had to oppress his anger.

Wanli was widely criticized for extorting taxes ruthlessly. To increase income, he sent lots of his confidential eunuchs to the mines and ports to collect taxes. This command caused strong dissatisfaction among the literati, who believed that it was their moral responsibility to prevent the Emperor from hurting the people. Feng Qi 馮琦 (1559 – 1603), the Minister of the Rites, once said:

蓋璫弁四出，搜括已空，士大夫既無能為百姓做主，……不僅縉紳名教所不齒，實亦天理枉法所不容也。

*<My translation> Now the eunuchs went to every corner of the country and extorted wealth from the people if the literati could not protect and support the people... not only would they be despised by their peers, but also the heavenly principle and the imperial law will not tolerate this ignorance of their responsibility.*<sup>203</sup>

Some literati reproached the Emperor for being avaricious and bringing disasters to the commoners in China:

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<sup>202</sup> Gu Bingqian, 1966, 4086-4087.

<sup>203</sup> Feng Qi, 1607, 2.

敕使手握利權，動逾數萬。有司不敢問，撫按不敢聞，豈無吮膏血以自肥者，而陛下曾不一察及。金取於滇，不足不止。珠取於海，不罄不止。錦綺取於吳越，不極奇巧不止。乃元老聽其投閑，直臣幾於永錮，是陛下之愛賢士，曾不如愛珠玉錦綺也。

<My translation> The eunuchs have much power in finance, and they control tremendous wealth. Since your majesty nominate them, the officials did not dare to investigate them. Haven't they squeezed the fortune of people and fill their pockets? Your majesty did not even bother to ask about it. They are determined to take all gold in Yunnan province, all pearls in the sea, all the fine silks in Wu and Yue until there is nothing left. Your majesty just leave your senior counselors aside and prison your officials who dared to remonstrate. It seems that your majesty prefer treasures to your able and virtuous officials.<sup>204</sup>

If this criticism seems relatively mild, some other accusations against the Emperor were extremely harsh. In 1600, just one year before Ricci and Pantoja entered the Forbidden City, the governor of Fengyang 鳳陽 named Li Sancai 李三才(? – 1624) presented a memorial full of anger:

自礦稅繁興，萬民失業。陛下為斯民主，不惟不衣之，且並其衣而奪之；不惟不食之，且並其食而奪之。……昨運同陶允明自楚來雲：“彼中內使，沿途掘墳，得財方止。”聖心安乎不安乎？且一人之心，千萬人之心也。皇上愛珠玉，人亦愛溫飽；皇上愛萬世，人亦戀妻孥。奈何皇上欲黃金高於北斗，而不使百姓有糠粃升鬥之儲？皇上欲為子孫千萬年，而不使百姓有一朝一夕？試觀往籍，朝廷有如此政令，天下有如此景象而不亂者哉！

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<sup>204</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6057.

*<My translation> Since your majesty began to collect the Mining Tax, lots of people's livelihood were deprived. As the leader of all people, your majesty take their cloth and food instead of giving them... Yesterday Tao Yunming 陶允明(? – ?) came and told me that 'these eunuchs break into the tombs to get the treasures buried with the body.' Does not the conscience bother your majesty? Everybody has their own needs. Your majesty like jewelry, and your people also need adequate food and clothing, your majesty want your offspring to rule the empire for ever, and your people also expect the best for his family. How could your majesty have an immense amount of treasure at the price of depriving all the savings of your people? How could your majesty want your bloodline to exist forever while you make your people hold their life on a precarious tenure? If we look up into history, are there any precedents that the state was not in chaos under this kind of government?' <sup>205</sup>*

An official named Tian Dayi 田大益 (1563 – 1622) even compared Wanli to the most notorious tyrants in Chinese history:

陛下矜奋自贤，沈迷不返。以豪珰奸弁为腹心，以金钱珠玉为命脉。药石之言，褒如充耳。即令逢、干剖心，皋、夔进谏，亦安能解其惑哉。此所谓意迷难救也。

*<My translation> Your majesty are so self-righteous that you cannot see your errors and turn back from your wrong path, taking the eunuchs and wicked people as your trusted subordinate, the treasures as your lifeline. Your majesty turn deaf ears to the honest advice, even the good and able men such as Longfeng 龍逢, Bigan 比干, Gaoyao 皋陶, and Kui 夔 cannot make you see things bright, your heart is so lost that is beyond salvation. <sup>206</sup>*

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<sup>205</sup> Gu Yingtai, 1997, 1014.

<sup>206</sup> Longfeng 龍逢, Bigan 比干, Gaoyao 皋陶 and Kui 夔 all are legendary figures, which all are famous for their sincere advice to their kings, the first two were killed by two tyrants. Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6172.

Believing that they have the moral responsibility to rectify the Emperor and make him observe the Confucian moral principles, the literati solemnly demanded that the Emperor correct his mistakes:

敬天地，嚴祖宗，毋輕臣工，毋戕民命，毋任閹人，毋縱群小，毋務暴刻，毋甘怠荒，急改敗轍，遵治規。

*<My translation> Respect Heaven, Earth, and ancestors, do not despise your officials, do not harm your people, do not give important posts to eunuchs, and do not give countenance to villains misrule the empire, nor neglect the national affairs and have to change immediately.<sup>207</sup>*

The literati, who possessed the right to interpret the moral principles, was obliged to resort to the traditional political discourse to request the Emperor to act as they expected. For this purpose, they needed to emphasize the role of Heaven, Earth, and ancestors as the moral authorities.

#### 2.4.2 Moral criticism on the social customs

In addition to criticizing the emperor, the literati also reproached the customs that they believed harmful. For example, the change of the dressing code that was strictly observed for hundreds of years was regarded as a dangerous signal by the literati. A conservative official Li Yue 李乐 (1532 – 1618), mentioned some peculiar phenomenon that he had witnessed:

二十年來，東南郡邑凡生員讀書人家有力者，盡為婦人紅紫之服，外披內衣。

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<sup>207</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6171.

*<My translation> Since twenty years ago, the Shengyuan (the literati who have not passed the imperial exam) from rich and well-off families all have put on red and purple as the women do, and even go out dressed underwear outside.<sup>208</sup>*

Li Yue expressly indicated that since the reign of Longqing (1567 – 1572) and Wanli (1573 – 1620), more and more people were wearing outlandish dress, which went contrary to the dressing code, and the officials did not do anything to stop it.<sup>209</sup> The psychological impact that Li Yue experienced when he saw the literati wearing strange clothes should not be underestimated because “normal clothes” was an essential symbol of society’s order. Wearing outlandish clothes was called “Fuyao (服妖)”, which means a monster of clothes, and it was regarded as an omen of catastrophe. According to the Chinese classic Shangshu Dazhuan 尚書大傳:

貌之不恭，是為不肅，厥咎狂，厥罰常雨，厥極惡，時則有服妖。

*<My translation> Acting disrespectful is called undignified, which would cause insanity. The Heaven would send a rainstorm as a punishment, then the evil would follow, and the Fuyao would appear.<sup>210</sup>*

In the *Book of Han* 漢書<sup>211</sup>, it also recorded:

風俗狂慢，變節易度，則為剽騎奇怪之服，故有服妖。

*<My translation> People get self-indulgent. The norms and rules of society are changed, then they would wear strange clothes, and the Fuyao would appear.<sup>212</sup>*

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<sup>208</sup> Li Yue, 1986, 816-817.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>210</sup> Chen Shouqi, 1888, II. 5b.

<sup>211</sup> A classical Chinese history book which records the history from the first emperor in 206 BCE to the fall of Wang Mang in 23 CE.

As frugality being regarded as a virtue, the extravagant lifestyle was repeatedly criticized by the orthodox Confucians. Lv Kun 呂坤 (1536 – 1618), a famous philosopher in the reign of Wanli, appealed to people:

富貴之家，敦崇朴素，散其餘積，賑濟饑民，爲子孫留多少陰德，在世間傳多少香名？彼爭誇滿身錦繡，互鬪驚眼樓臺，鼓樂震心，肥甘厭口，不思一飽一煖之外安用許多？生在足衣足食之家，亦當惜福。况老成安靜者，君子之德；誇張炫耀者，兒童之識。由此觀之，節儉無非美俗，奢華盡是邪心。但愚頑之輩，千說萬說不依；浮詐之徒，好吃好穿不改。

*<My translation> If a wealthy family can advocate simplicity and distribute redundant property to the hungry people, how much virtue and merits can they leave to their children and grandchildren; How great a reputation can they win for themselves? On the contrary, these people are just boasting about their clothes, showing people their houses with carved beams and painted rafters, raising private bands for entertainment, and eating delicate food. Why can't they think about how could a person spend so much wealth after having enough food and clothing? If you are born in a wealthy family, you should be content and deter extravagance and waste. Moreover, being mature and serious is the gentlemen's virtue, whereas flaunting wealth is the children's behavior. To conclude, frugality is nothing but virtue, while extravagance is absolutely evil. Still, the thickheaded could never be persuaded; the pompous person could never change their luxurious lifestyle.<sup>213</sup>*

Most literati believed that the extravagance not only caused waste but also made the commoners suffer:

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<sup>212</sup> Ban Gu, 1962,1352.

<sup>213</sup> Lv Kun, 2008,1000.



今也，散敦樸之風，成侈靡之俗…… 侈則饑寒生。

<My translation> Nowadays, the virtue of thrift is gone, and extravagance is prevailing... as a result, there would be people living in poverty.<sup>214</sup>

In addition to worrying about people's increasingly luxurious lifestyles, some literati also felt anxious when the commoners challenge the authority of the official:

正德以前，民皆畏官府追呼，依期而集，無事捶楚。城中之民或不識府縣門，村民有老死不識城市者。訟絕無面而僅有稱為民淳，事簡焉。今逋負爭訟，至習慣不畏官府矣。蓋撫之非道也，抑或世變之趨與？

<My translation> Before the Zhengde era, the people were all fearful of local authorities. They met their tax payments and performed the corvée on schedule, and none got whipped. Some urban dwellers did not know the local authorities' gates, and some villagers died without ever going to the market town. There were absolutely no lawsuits. All an official could report is that the people were honest and affairs straightforward. Today people do not pay their taxes and fail to carry out their obligations. The officialdom is not feared. Is there something wrong with the administration, or the social custom is changing?<sup>215</sup>

For the literati, the change in customs was a vital early warning sign of social unrest. In their view, the traditional customs were all excellent and straightforward, whereas any changes could suggest a moral decline. Therefore, they needed to rely on traditional moral norms to maintain simple social customs and preserve social stability.

### 2.4.3 Men of virtue, villains and hypocrites

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<sup>214</sup> Zhang Han, 1985, 77.

<sup>215</sup> Wang Chen, 1967, 45-46.

The political struggle between officials in the late Ming Dynasty was also often moralized and regarded as a fight between villains and men of virtue. As mentioned above, a political force called the Donglin Faction was formed in the reign of Wanli. This political group was initially composed of the officials who opposed the expansion of the Grand Secretariat's power. Meanwhile, their political opponents supported strengthening the power of the Grand Secretariat and some political speculators, which went against the Hongwu Emperor's order. Therefore, the Donglin literati regarded themselves as righteous men and guardians of Confucian orthodox moral principles, whereas their opponents as villains. The essential characteristics of the Donglin Faction members are: they support traditional Confucian principles and criticize people based on these principles. They opposed the abuse of power and mainly criticized the selfishness and corruption of the officials. Besides, they often attacked their political opponents for moral corruption. A memorial written by Donglin literati named An Xifan 安希範(1564 – 1621) contained some details about how the moral accusations were carried out:

近年以來，正直之臣不安於位。趙南星、孟化鯉為選郎，秉公持正，乃次第屏黜。趙用賢節概震天下，止以吳鎮賢子一疏而歸……至如孫鑰之清修公正(清廉而公正)，李世達之練達剛明，李禎之孤介廉方，並朝廷儀錶。鑰、世達先後去國，禎亦堅懷去志，天下共惜諸臣不用，而疑閣臣媚嫉，不使竟其用也。高攀龍一疏，正直和平，此陛下忠臣，亦輔臣諍友。至如應宿辨疏，塗面喪心，無復人理。明旨下部科勘議，未嘗不是攀龍非應宿。及奉處分之詔，則應宿僅從薄謫，攀龍又竄炎荒。輔臣誤國不忠，無甚於此。乃動輒自文，諉之宸斷。……吳弘濟辨別君子小人，較若蒼素，乃與攀龍相繼得罪。臣之所惜，不為二臣，正恐君子皆退，小人皆進，誰為受其禍者。乞陛下立斥應宿、材，為小人媚灶之戒；復攀龍、弘濟官，以獎忠良；並嚴諭閣臣王錫爵，無挾私植黨，仇視正人。

<My translation> In recent years, honest officials always have been pushed aside. Zhao Nanxing 趙南星, Meng Huali 孟化鯉 served in the Bureau of

*Appointments of the Ministry of Personnel 吏部文選清吏司. Despite being upright and just, they were still removed from office. Zhao Yongxian 趙用賢 is well-known for his virtue, but he was dismissed because of the accusation of Wu Zhen 吳鎮... Sun Long 孫龍 is just and incorruptible; Li Shida 李世達 is capable and principled; Li Zhen 李禎 is true-hearted and as straight as an arrow. They all set a good example for their companions. However, Sun Long and Li Shida were successively dismissed. Li Zhen also determines to resign. Everyone is dreadfully sorry that they could not render their service to your majesty, doubting that the Grand Secretaries are jealous of their talent and block their way of serving the Empire. The suggestions in the memorial of Gao Panlong 高攀龍 are impartial and gentle. He is truly a loyal subject of your majesty and a friend who could give forthright admonition of the Grand Secretaries. As for the memorial of Yang Yingsu 楊應宿, it is clear that he has no shame and makes slanderous charges against others. All his words are absurd. Your majesty ordered the officials to discuss this. Everyone believes that Gao Panlong is straightforward, and Yang Yingsu is wrong. Anyhow, in the end, Gao Panlong suffered more severe punishment than Yang Yingsu. There is no disloyal conduct of the Grand Secretaries that could damage our state like this. In addition to this, they went so far as to absolve themselves and lay their fault at your majesty... Wu Hongji 吳弘濟 clearly explained the difference between a villain and a man of virtue. He was punished together with Gao Panlong. I am not sorry for what happened with these two, but I am saddened by this political situation, which favored the villains but frustrated the gentlemen. Who will suffer the consequence in the end? Your majesty should waive the official duties of Yang Yingsu and Zheng Cai. This action could serve as a warning to those who curry favor with those in power. Your majesty should also resume the position of Gao Panlong and Wu Hongji, reward the loyal subjects, and strictly forbid Wang Xijue to engage in factional*

*activities in pursuit of personal gains and take the men of strict morals as his enemy.*<sup>216</sup>

Many names appeared in this memorial. Gao Panlong, Wu Hongji 吳弘濟 (1559 – ?), Zhao Nanxing 趙南星 (1550 – 1628), Li Shida 李世達 (1533 – 1599), Li Zhen 李禎 (? – ?), Sun Long 孫龍 (1525 – 1594) were Donglin literati; whereas Zheng Cai 鄭材(? – ?), Yang Yingsu 楊應宿 were the supporters of the Grand Secretariat. In the narration of An Xifan, the political struggle between Donglin men and their opponents was nothing but a fight between good and evil.

The core members of the Donglin Faction did adhere to the path of righteousness and hoped to defend the moral principles of orthodox Confucianism. According to the Donglin literati Li Yingsheng 李應升(1593 – 1626):

*治亂之數相循環，而一以君子之聚散為侯，蓋君子聚則小人散矣……君子之力不厚，則小人之膽畢張，萬一進一匪人，豈不全域俱覆？*

*<My translation> The fate of the country depends on the action of the men of virtue. If the men of virtue assemble, the villains will disperse... If the men of virtue's power is weak, then the villains become bolder; if they possess the government's high office, would not everything be ruined?*<sup>217</sup>

In the view of the Donglin literati, the alliance of the men of virtue suggests that the country was well-governed, whereas the dispersal of them means the country was in chaos.

They believed that the learned men should choose what was right and hold to it unwaveringly. However, the sense of responsibility and moral superiority made the

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<sup>216</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 6049.

<sup>217</sup> Li Yingsheng, 1848, 42a-42b.

Donglin literati unwilling to tolerate any moral flaw. Thus, they often criticized the literati who did not choose sides as political speculators or hypocrites. Gu Xiancheng once indicated:

乡愿之同流合污，从而不倡者也。……既以忠信廉洁媚君子，而其同流合污又不为倡而为从，则君子亦宽之而不责矣；既以同流合污媚小人，而忠信廉洁又不为真而为似，则小人亦安之而不忌矣。

*<My translation> The hypocrites drift with the current, sneakingly join in the courses of the vicious and unite in their wicked practices... Meanwhile, they please the men of virtue with their honesty, and they are never the initiators of the evil deeds. For this reason, the men of virtue always forgive and do not condemn them; on the other hand. They join the terrible practices to please the villains, and their uprightness is not genuine. Thus the villains do not scruple them.*<sup>218</sup>

The Donglin literati, represented by Gu Yanwu, criticized the people who hesitated to act or choose his course. They were deeply disgusted by the blind obedience of the hypocrites who did not distinguish between right and wrong. For the Donglin literati, there was no middle ground in moral issues nor political issues. In this way, they often regarded people with different political views as enemies and frequently launched moral crusades against their political rivals.<sup>219</sup>

As a result, the political struggle became increasingly intense, and political issues' moralization became popular. During the reign of Wanli, the factional conflict kept escalating. Either side could not tolerate their rivals. That is one of the reasons that there were so many literati talking about moral issues with Pantoja.

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<sup>218</sup> Gu Yumu, 1999, vol.3, 3a.

<sup>219</sup> Hucker, 1957, 132-133.

#### 2.4.4 Moral education as the solution to the crisis

In the reign of Wanli, the orthodox literati believed that the moral decline became increasingly severe. Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613 – 1682), one of the most influential philosophers in late Ming China, looked back into the history of the reign of Wanli and commented :

自萬曆以上，法令繁而輔之以教化，故其治猶為小康。萬曆以後，法令存而教化亡。

*<My translation> Before the reign of Wanli, with the law and the moral teachings' assistance, society was under a comparatively good administration. However, since the reign of Wanli, the law existed, yet the moral teachings were gone.<sup>220</sup>*

According to the Confucians doctrine, the ultimate aim for learning is to build a morally perfect world:

*In ancient times, those who wished to make bright virtue brilliant in the world first ordered their states; those who wished to order their states first aligned their households; those who wished to align their households first refined their persons;...Only after one's person is refined may one's household be aligned. Only after one's household is aligned may one's state be ordered. Only after one's state is ordered may the world be set at peace.<sup>221</sup>*

Consequently, when the orthodox literati felt frustrated by the moral decline, they believed that they were obliged to defend the Confucian moral principles. Some started to found academies to lecture their moral teachings. The Donglin Academy 東林書院,

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<sup>220</sup> Gu Yanwu, 2006, 519.

<sup>221</sup> *The Great Learning*, 2.

which was organized in 1604 by Gu Xiancheng and Gao Panlong as a private center for the discussion of state affairs and moral issues, was the most famous example. The teachings of Gu and Gao attracted many literati who shared the same concern with them. These orthodox literati, who worried about the social crises, aspired to rectify the world through their moral philosophy. According to Gao Panlong:

自古治天下者，未有不以教化為先務，而教化之汙隆，則學術之邪正為之所係，非小也。是以聖帝明王，必務表章正學，使天下曉然知所趨，截然有所守，而後上無異教，下無異習，道德可一，風俗可同，賢才出而治化昌矣！

*<My translation> Since ancient times, there is not any ruler does not give priority to education. The morality of people depends on it. Educations are by no means trivial. Therefore, the wise monarch must support and praise the orthodox doctrine, making everyone know that those principles should be observed so that there will be no different doctrines or theories. Moral principles and customs could be united. Then men of virtue will continue to appear, and the world could be in peace and order.<sup>222</sup>*

In the view of the Donglin literati, the solution to all crisis was moral doctrine:

天下不患無政事，但患無學術。何者政事者存乎其人，人者存乎其心。學術正則心術正，心術正則生於其心、發於政事者豈有不正乎？故學術者，天下之大本。

*<My translation> All that matters is not policy, but rather the right doctrine. It is because good or bad policy depends on people's choice, and people's choice depends on his heart-mind. If the doctrine is sound, and so is the heart-mind, if*

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<sup>222</sup> Gao Panlong, 2008, vol.7, 1-2.

*the heart-mind is good, how could the policy which comes from the heart-mind is not good. Therefore, the doctrine is the base of the world.*<sup>223</sup>

In order to rectify the world with moral doctrine, the literati must pay attention to moral self-cultivation and assumed their social responsibility. According to Gu Xiancheng:

生平有二癖一是好善癖，一是憂世癖。二者合併而發，勃不自禁。

*<My translation> I have two partialities in my life. One is the fondness of virtue; the other is worrying about society. These two partialities always combined, and I could not control them.*<sup>224</sup>

The Donglin literati respected the people who abandoned their interests and dedicated themselves to rebuilding the social order through moral education. They called them “heroes”:

天生豪傑，原為世教，既為世教，自不能與時俯仰。

*<My translation> The heroes were born for the moral education of the world. Since their mission is that noble, of course, they could not be carried along by the tide*<sup>225</sup>

It’s worth noting that the Donglin literati also took the Jesuits as heroes:

西極之國有畸人來，最先西泰利氏，次順陽龐氏、有綱熊氏，偕徒友十數，……諸公大雅宏達，殫見洽聞，精天官、日曆、算數之學，而猶喜言名理以事天帝為宗。傳華語，學華文字，篝燈攻苦，無異儒生，真彼所謂豪傑之士也耶？

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<sup>223</sup> Gao Panlong, 2008, vol.1, 26.

<sup>224</sup> Gu Yumu, 1999, vol.2, 33a.

<sup>225</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 2008, vol.4, 41b.



*<My translation> There were exotic men from kingdoms of the far west, of which the first is Matteo Ricci, followed by Diego de Pantoja and Sabatino de Ursis. Together with ten or so disciples and friends... All these gentlemen of great elegance and outstanding erudition in astronomy, calendaring, mathematics, take particular delight in talking about the dialectics and take service to the Lord of Heaven as their primary objective. They preach in the Chinese language, study the Chinese texts, and burn the midnight oil like Chinese literati. Aren't they the authentic outstanding person?*<sup>226</sup>

Some Chinese literati were much impressed by the Jesuits' strict adherence to an ascetic ideal. As Yang Tingyun once commented:

諸君子觀光用賓，大都潔身自好。其為人不詭時向，其為學不襲浮說，間用華言譯其書教，皆先聖微旨也。察其燕私屋漏，密修密證，皆鑿鑿不背所聞。

*<My translation> These western gentlemen come to China as worthy guests. They maintained their integrity and did not cater to the current social atmosphere. They refused to follow the outrageous teachings and have translated their teachings into Chinese. All they have translated are sublime words with the deep meaning of the ancient sages.*<sup>227</sup>

Yang Tingyun used the term “the outrageous teachings” to refer to the ideas that violated the traditional Confucian ethics and intoxicated the social atmosphere. Although Yang Tingyun was not a member of the Donglin Academy, he shared similar thoughts and had a close relationship with them.

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<sup>226</sup> Pantoja, 2019,9. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 4.2 of this thesis.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid. 5. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

Decades later, the Italian Jesuit Daniello Bartoli (1608 – 1685) recorded the close relationship between the Jesuits, the converts-literati, and the Donglin members:

*Erasi da pochi anni addietro istituita in Vusuie, città presso a Nanchìn, una famosa Accademia di Letterati, che si adunavano a ragionare or delle virtù morali, or de'modi più acconci ed utili al huon governo de'popoli: ... I Dottori nostri, Lione, Paolo, Michele, presederono in alcune; e i Padri ne commendavano l'istituto, per lo grand'utile che ne traeva la Fede: peroche quasi tutti quegli Accademici si affezionavano in gran maniera alla Legge cristiana, la quale (oltre alle divine) professa e insegna quelle medesime virtù morali, che anch'essi prendevano a praticare.*

*<My translation> A few years ago, a famous academy of men of letters was established in Vusuie, a city near Nanchìn. They gathered to discuss moral virtues or the most appropriate and useful ways of administration.... Our Doctors, Lyons, Paul, Michael, presided over some speeches; the Fathers assent the ideas of this institute for the great benefit that the Faith drew from it: because almost all those literati were much interested in the Christian Law, which (in addition to the divine) professes and teaches them the same virtues, which they also began to practice.<sup>228</sup>*

The consensus on moral issues made the orthodox Confucians considered that the Jesuits shared similar pursuits with them, that is, to restore the social order through exhorting people to cultivate virtue. Therefore, the orthodox literati such as the Donglin scholars were more willing to accept the moral doctrines of these “western literati”. Some Donglin members, such as Zou Yuanbiao 鄒元標 (1551 – 1624), emphasized that there was much in common between the Catholic doctrines and the Confucian teachings.<sup>229</sup> Xiong

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<sup>228</sup> Bartoli, 1825, 42.

<sup>229</sup> Zou Yuanbiao, 2008, 39.

Mingyu even stated that “these gentries from west render outstanding service to Confucianism.”<sup>230</sup>

Furthermore, it seems that the Jesuits deliberately kept a distance from literati that were opposed by the Donglin members. The most obvious example was the deterioration of the relationship between the Jesuits and Li Zhi, a controversial thinker in late Ming China<sup>231</sup>. The Donglin literati believed that he beguiled people out of the right way and intoxicated social morality. Ricci once had a close relationship with Li Zhi. The latter provided lots of help in Ricci and Pantoja’s journey to Beijing. He even helped to write the memorial presented to the Wanli Emperor. Still and all, the Jesuits alienated Li Zhi. When the “China Journal” of Ricci was edited, another Jesuit Nicolas Trigault (1577 – 1628) even deleted the record about the help that Li Zhi provided to the Jesuits.<sup>232</sup> The Jesuits’ hostility towards Li Zhi stemmed from their disagreements with him on the moral issues. Ricci criticized that his doctrines were absurd and violated the Classics.<sup>233</sup> Of course, it is also highly possible that other orthodox literati’s opinions about Li Zhi also affected the Jesuits.

The orthodox literati and the Jesuits could find a lot in common on moral issues. On the one hand, the orthodox Confucians aspired to the moral order, and they tried to rebuild the authority of the moral teachings in Confucian Classics. On the other hand, the Jesuits society was founded shortly after the Protestant reform began. Ignatius of Loyola (1491 – 1556), the founder of this almost military-style religious order, viewed Christendom was under siege, and it was the duty of the Jesuits to defend the authority of the Catholic Church. In this sense, the orthodox literati’s role in Chinese society resembled the Jesuits society’s role in the Catholic world. Therefore, as two groups of people who served as the defender of the traditional moral values and authority, it was easier for them to develop a mutual appreciation. When the two groups met, the orthodox literati were attracted by the

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<sup>230</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 10.

<sup>231</sup> We’ll look into the moral teachings of Li Zhi in the fourth chapter.

<sup>232</sup> Zhu Weizheng, 2007, 101, 102.

<sup>233</sup> Ricci, 1942, II, 183-184.

ascetic practice and the austere lifestyle of the Jesuits. Thus, Ricci and Pantoja were deeply admired and regarded as the Chinese literati's moral examples.

In short, the business's prosperity promoted the changes of the social stratification in late Ming China. Farmers went to reside in the city, and some of them became merchants. Similarly, social mobility occurred between the merchant and the literati class. Under the dual influence of the exacerbation of the Imperial Examination System's crisis in the late Ming period and the commercial economy's development, the literati group was continually diverging. These elites gradually gave up their traditional way of life and did not take the official position as the only life goal. Meanwhile, they realized their value in other fields instead of serving the government.

These changes greatly affected the traditional social order, and even some ideas which contradicted the traditional values appeared. In addition, Contradictions rooted in the national system also broke out during Wanli's reign, the antagonism between the Wanli Emperor and his officials, the fight for power between different factions of the literati intensified.

This phenomenon raised the concerns of the orthodox literati, who blamed all the crises on the lack of morality. Therefore, some literati began to defend the traditional moral principles and tried to solve the crisis with moral teachings. For this reason, the orthodox literati founded the academies such as Donglin Academy to preach their moral teachings and appeal the return of the traditional moral values. Besides, they were also impressed by Jesuits' virtues. During the communication, the Donglin literati realized that the Jesuits shared many similar views on moral issues with them. This consensus between the two parties developed a reader base for *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), the moral book written by Diego de Pantoja.

### 3 *SEPTEM VICTORIIS* (QIKE 七克) IN THE CAMPAIGN OF ENCOURAGING MORALITY

#### 3.1 The creation of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克).

As mentioned in the second chapter, the literati in the late Ming Dynasty hoped to solve the social-political crisis by improving social morality. Therefore, they launched the campaign of encouraging morality.

During his stay in Beijing, Pantoja witnessed the political crisis and learned about the literati's concerns. In order to lead the Chinese elites to understand the Catholic doctrine, The Spanish Jesuit completed *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), a book written in Chinese about the seven capital sins and the seven corresponding virtues. This book is the major work of Diego de Pantoja and a prevalent moral book among the Chinese literati.

In this chapter, the creation process of Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and its role in the campaign of encouraging morality will be introduced.

##### 3.1.1 The completion time and the editions

The Spanish Jesuit composed the book with his literati friends' assistance, especially the Christian convert Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠, who polished and revised the whole book. Pantoja chose the title "Qike", which literally means seven victories in Chinese. The text describes the seven deadly sins and the virtues to overcome them. The author also utilized western fables and biblical citations, stories, and dictums of the western saints to illustrate these vices and virtues. Additionally, Pantoja commented on some social issues that he witnessed in China, providing a perspective from an outsider. Perhaps that is why this book attracted the attention of the Chinese literati.

In *Siku Quanshu Zongmu Tiya* 四庫全書總目提要, the annotated catalog of the largest collection of books in the pre-modern time of China, completed in 1798, firstly recorded that *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was published in 1604 (year of Jiachen 甲辰). Xu Zongze 徐宗澤 (1886 – 1947), a historian who focused on the history of missions of the Jesuits in China, offspring of Xu Guangqi 徐光啟, also adopted the opinion of *Tiya*, stated that the book of Pantoja was published in 1604.<sup>234</sup>

Yet, for all that, it was almost impossible for this book to be completed and published in 1604. Because in the year 1612, some literati still donated money to the Jesuits to fund the publication of Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克):

*Muitos mandarins mandaram prata para ajuda da impressão do livro de Xui fa, de modo que disse o Doutor Paulo, ficavam de mais vinte taeis, as quais se aplicarão para ajuda da impressão do libro, que tinha feito o P.Pantoja de virtutibus, e avitiis.*

<My translation> Many mandarins sent silver to help print the book of Xui fa(referring to *Taixi Shuifa* 泰西水法( the work of Ursis), so Doctor Paul (referring to Xu Guangqi ) said, twenty taels would be kept to help print the book, which P. Pantoja had written about virtues and vices.<sup>235</sup>

Since *Taixi Shuifa* was published in 1612, there was an excellent possibility that this donation happened in 1612. Besides, Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was published after *Taixi Shuifa*. It could be speculated that this book "about the virtues and vices" was *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) since it is the only one about the moral issues among all Pantoja works. That is to say, at least in 1612, this book was still not published. Besides, in a letter of 1606, Pantoja talked about his level of Chinese:

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<sup>234</sup> Xu Zongze, 1949, 52.

<sup>235</sup> Biblioteca da Ajuda, Códice 49-V-7, ff.17r-35r.

*La lengua me costó no muy grande trabajo ni mucho tiempo porque con la gracia de Nuestro Señor, que mucho me ayudó, el segundo año que entre hablava yacon todos, y agora ya ha mucho tiempo que con mucha facilidad en las letras, aun me falta mucho por aprender, por ser ellas sin número y cada una con muchas significaciones diversas.*

*<My translation> The language does not cost me a lot of work or much time because with the grace of Our Lord, which helped me a lot, the second year I have been here, I could already talk to everyone, and now it has been a long time since I can easily write the Chinese characters, I still need a lot for learning, for there are countless Chinese characters and each one has many different meanings.<sup>236</sup>*

The Spanish Jesuit admitted his Chinese was not good enough by 1606. If he could write a book in Chinese, he would talk about it in this letter. Besides, Ricci once complained in a letter of 1606 that no one could help him, and he was exhausted writing the books in Chinese.<sup>237</sup> If his Spanish companion already published a book, which was well accepted among the Chinese literati, Ricci could not feel that frustrated. Therefore, it is unlikely that this book was published in 1604.

Then, when the book was published must be answered. Pantoja wrote the author's preface in 1614, and the afterword of the book was written in the same year. It is in all probability that this book was published in 1614. Additionally, Pantoja and the writer of the afterword recorded the year in the form of the sexagenary cycle, which is Jiayin 甲寅 in Chinese. It is highly possible that the author of *Tiyao* copied Jiayin 甲寅 as Jiachen 甲辰, which corresponded to 1604, by mistake.

Further, in one preface of Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), its author Chen Liangcai 陳亮采 (? - ?) wrote his title as "Shandong Ancha Fushi 山東按察副使

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<sup>236</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 566.

<sup>237</sup> Ricci, 2001, 377.

(Surveillance Vice Commissioner of Shandong).” According to *Ming Shilu* 明實錄, the Ming Dynasty’s imperial annals, Chen Liangcai served as the Surveillance Vice Commissioner of Shandong during 1610 –1612. That is to say, Chen should have read and prefaced *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) during 1610 – 1612. In other words, it is possible that albeit the book of Pantoja was finished by or before 1612, the publication was postponed to 1614.

Two years after the first publication of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), the Nanjing Incident occurred in 1616. Then, Pantoja and Ursis were expelled to Macau and died there. Some Chinese Christians were also arrested. Even the books and astronomical objects from the west were temporarily banned<sup>238</sup>. This incident was the first nationwide setback of the missions of the Jesuits. Therefore, the spread of *Qike* must have been affected by this incident.

Precisely due to this ban on western books, the first edition of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), which was published in 1614, was lost. In one preface of the book, its author Peng Duanwu showed his sympathy for Pantoja and mentioned that the Spanish Jesuit suffered from the ordeal. It is probably that the preface was written after the Nanjing Incident. Evidently, some books of the Jesuits were passed round for perusal among the literati. It is worth noting that Peng Duanwu recommended this book to Fan Dingyu 樊鼎遇 (? – ?), another literati who made a considerable contribution to Pantoja’s work. After reading the book and being impressed by its moral teachings, he invested to engraved the book for 10,000 copies and wrote a postscript.<sup>239</sup> In this new version of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), Fan Dingyu renamed it as *Xisheng Qibian* 西聖七編 (Seven Treaties of the Saints of the West), which corresponds to the title of the preface written by Peng Duanwu, suggesting that he wrote the preface for this version. Fan Dingyu probably changed the title of Pantoja’s book to avoid the censor of the authority. Most likely, for this reason, Pantoja’s book left two titles in history.

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<sup>238</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 120.

<sup>239</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 153



When the Nanjing incident was over, the ban on western books was lifted. Li Zhizao 李之藻(1571 – 1630), one of the most famous Chinese converted to Christianity, also known as one of the Three Great Pillars of Chinese Catholicism, compiled *Tianxue Chuhan* 天學初函 (First Collectanea of Heavenly Studies) in 1626 in order to spread the teachings from the west. This collection was classified into humanities and science, which were called *li* 理(principle)and *qi* 器(instruments). *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) is part of the *li* branch, which means that this book was well-received among the Chinese literati because *Tianxue Chuhan* reflects the intellectual production of the Jesuits and their Chinese associates in the late Ming period. It is worth noting that the *Tianxue Chuhan* edition is also the earliest edition of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) preserved today. There are in total six prefaces in this edition of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), written by Yang Tingyun, Zheng Yiwei 鄭以偉, Xiong Mingyu 熊明遇, Cao Yubian 曹于汴, Chen Liangcai 陳亮采 and an author's preface of Pantoja.

Another critical edition of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was re-engraved by Jingdu Shitai Datang 京都始胎大堂 (Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception)in 1798. Compared with the *Tianxue Chuhan*, the Jingdu Shitai Datang edition incorporated an additional preface of Peng Duanwu 彭端吾, with the heading *Xisheng Qibian Xu* 西聖七編序 (Preface of the Seven Treaties of the Saints of the West). At the beginning of each chapter, there is a short introduction by Cui Chang 崔渥. At the end of the book, there are two postscripts written by Wang Ruchun 汪汝淳 and Fan Dingyu 樊鼎遇. The postscript of the later bears the title of *Xisheng Qibian Ba* 西聖七編跋 (postscript of the Seven Treaties of the Saints of the West). Furthermore, the terminologies as “Shangdi 上帝” and “Tiandi 天帝” were all changed into “Tianzhu 天主”(the Lord of Heaven).

### 3.1.2 The structure and the author's writing motivation.

There are seven chapters in all editions. The order of the chapters of the *Tianxue Chuhan* edition is: Fuao 伏傲 (To subdue pride); Pingdu 平妒 (To quiet envy); Jietan 解貪 (To relieve greed); Xifen 熄憤 (To extinct wrath); Setao 塞饕 (To stop gluttony); Fangyin 坊淫 (To control the lust); Cedai 策怠 (To spur on sloth), whereas in the *Jingdu Shitai* Datang edition, the order changes to: Fuao; Jietan; Fangyin; Xifen; Setao ; Pingdu; Cedai. Each chapter corresponds to each one of the seven deadly sins. The concept of the seven deadly sins is linked to Christian ethics. In the bible, there is a list of the sins that God abhors:

*These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in the running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*<sup>240</sup>

Since the fourth century, many versions have emerged about the seven deadly sins. For example, the fourth-century monk Evagrius Ponticus listed the vices opposed to the virtues as gluttony, fornication, avarice, sadness, acedia, vainglory, jealousy, and pride.<sup>241</sup> In the year 590, the Roman Pope St. Gregory the Great (540 – 604) revised and formed the standard list of the seven deadly sins. His classification of the severity of sins was in accordance with the degree that they offended against the love of God. According to St. Gregory, the order of the seven deadly sins, from minor to the most serious, were: lust, sloth, gluttony, wrath, envy, greed, and pride.

In medieval Europe, the seven capital sins were the focus of Catholic scholars. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1273), the most influential theologian and philosopher, respected and used the same list of St. Gregory the Great, yet with another order as: pride, greed, gluttony, lust, sloth, envy, and wrath. Pantoja also changed the order of the seven deadly sins, which corresponded to his understanding of these capital vices.

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<sup>240</sup> Proverbs 6:16 – 19, King James Version.

<sup>241</sup> Sinkewicz, 2005, 62-65.

Matteo Ricci once indicated that the Chinese literati were interested in the new knowledge and respected the morals of the Jesuits. Moreover, the Chinese literati were impressed by their proficiency in the Chinese language. Due to the Chinese tradition of valuing letters, he believed that writing books in Chinese was the best way to communicate with the Chinese elites and expand Catholicism in Chinese society.<sup>242</sup>

In order to gain more respect and maintain the friendship with the scholar-officials, Ricci spent a great deal of effort in writing Chinese books on Catholicism, ethics, and science. As a close companion of the Italian Jesuit, Pantoja also realized that the Chinese literati admired the knowledge of the Jesuits. In his letter, he recorded with elation:

*Many Mandarins of this Court, heard great fame of us and of our things...therefore every one came to enquire that which hee desired. And though our knowledge be but little, in comparison of the knowledge which is in our Countrey: yet being compared with theirs of China, which knoweth nothing of the world, save their owne Kingdome, which by a common name they call, The World, of God, and of the things of Heaven, nothing, and of other things little, it was somewhat, and was sufficient to send them home amazed, and always with a desire to return.*<sup>243</sup>

Comparing with Ricci, Pantoja demonstrated more sense of cultural superiority. He ridiculed that the Chinese did not know other languages and stated that the Chinese literati were astonished by the books and the knowledge from the west.<sup>244</sup> He acclaimed that the Chinese philosophers reminded him of Seneca and Plato, though they could not compare with the European counterparts.<sup>245</sup> He also pointed out that there were no Chinese books about science, and all the books were full of “moral sentences, to the advancement of good customs and government.”<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Ricci, 2001, 519-520.

<sup>243</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 355.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Rebollo and de Pantoja, 2011, 163.

<sup>246</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 385-386.

Besides, he indicated that the main topic between the Jesuits and the Chinese literati was about moral issues. Indeed, the Chinese literati showed great interest in Christian ethics and the teachings about God.<sup>247</sup>

Pantoja must have noticed that *Tianzhu Shiyi* 天主實義 (The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven), the book that Ricci wrote to explain the existence of God, was well received. Its contents on the moral issues attracted the attention of the Chinese elites. Feng Yingjing 馮應京(1555 – 1606), an official and close friend of Ricci, commented:

是書也，曆引吾六經之語，以證其實，深詆譚空之誤……語性則人大異於禽獸，語學則歸於仁，而始於去欲。時亦或有吾國之素所未聞者，而所嘗聞而未用力者，十居九矣。

<My translation> This book quotes from the Six Classics to prove its correctness and criticizes the falsehood of Buddhism... The author emphasizes the difference between humans and animals' nature and believes that the purpose of cultivation and study is for acquiring Benevolence (Ren 仁).<sup>248</sup> The beginning of such a process is eliminating the desire. Some of its teachings were never heard in China. Despite some had been heard, most of them were never put into practice.<sup>249</sup>

Li Zhizao also said that this book could serve to “create a society with high ethical standards foster healthy social conduct.”<sup>250</sup>

*Jiren Shipian* (The Ten Paradoxes), another book of Ricci, was an instant success. Ricci reported with pride that it was the most popular one among all his books in Chinese.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid, 356.

<sup>248</sup> Ren, which represents an inner development towards an altruistic goal, is the core principle of Confucian virtues. It could be translated as "benevolence", "goodness" or "human-heartedness".

<sup>249</sup> Ricci and Zhu Weizheng, 2001, 98.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid, 100.

This book also contains lots of content about Catholic moral codes. Some Chinese literati believed that this book could greatly help the moral development in China. Li Zhizao once commented that this book “could make the greedy temperate and generous, humble the proud, make the envy gratitude, make the angry ones patient.”<sup>252</sup>

*Jiren Shipian* is divided into ten chapters. In the first chapter, Ricci exhorted the Chinese to not look back to the past and emphasized that they should not waste time on delusional and meaningless things, but rather always think of God and make the best of the time to cultivate themselves. In the second chapter, he pointed out the vanity of the secular world, then he stated that the purpose of life is not suffering in this world, but rather to demonstrate their value and morality to God. Therefore, God could give a ruling based on human performance on judgment day. In the third and fourth chapters, he talked about death, a topic that the Chinese seldom talked about. He also highlighted the five benefits of continually thinking of death:

1. Thinking about death can make people stop idling away.
2. Thinking about death could help people restrain their lust.
3. Thinking about death could help people make light of worldly fortune and fame.
4. Thinking about death could make people humble.
5. Thinking about death could help people stop fearing death.

In the fifth and seventh chapters, Ricci explained the purpose of being silent and self-examination, which are moral cultivation methods. Then he refuted hedonism by quoting the Christian saints in the sixth chapter. In the eighth and ninth chapters, he criticized Buddhism and Chinese fortune telling, indicating that people should realize that beatitude lies in the afterlife. At last, in the tenth chapter, Ricci explained the harm of being greedy.

Now that the Chinese literati’s most concerning issue was morality, Pantoja also chose to write a book on this theme. “Qike” means seven victories, but “Ke 克” in the title actually

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<sup>251</sup> Ricci, 2001, 460.

<sup>252</sup> Ricci and Zhu Weizheng, 2001, 501.

has another meaning as “restraining.” Moreover, “Keji”, which means “self-constraint”, is a central idea of Confucianism. As Ann Waltner pointed out, Pantoja’s book could be comfortably accommodated in the late Ming context.<sup>253</sup> *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) and *Jiren Shipian* have some similarities. In other words, the book of Pantoja could be held as a companion of Ricci’s book, at least in the eyes of the Chinese literati. In the author’s preface, Pantoja also emphasized the importance of eliminating desire and passion, indicating that selfish desire was the root of all sins:

人惟汨之以私，乃始罪讐萬狀，諸惡根焉。此根潛伏於心土，而欲富、欲貴、欲逸樂。三巨幹勃發於外，幹又生枝。欲富生貪；欲貴生傲；欲逸生饕、生淫、生怠。其或以富貴逸樂勝我，即生妬，奪我，即生忿，是故私欲一根也。欲富、欲貴、欲逸樂，幹也。而生傲、生貪、生饕、生淫、生怠及妬忿，枝也。種種罪訕、非義之念慮言動，七枝之結為實，披為葉也。

<My translation> Human beings swirl the desire with their selfishness, and this is the beginning of transgression in a thousand ways, the root of all evil. This root is latent in the land of the heart desiring fame, glory, and laziness; Hence three large trunks that protrude outward with vivid branches. Desiring wealth produces greed, desiring fame produces pride, desires to sneak out gluttony, lasciviousness, and laziness. If others surpass me in these three pleasures of wealth, fame, and a comfortable life, then envy arises. If they snatch me, anger arises. Therefore, the selfish desire is, without doubt, the root and desire for wealth, fame, and comfortable life of the trunk, while pride, greed, gluttony, lust, laziness, envy, and anger branches are. All kinds of fault and sin, all wicked thoughts, worries, words, or deeds, come out as fruits of these seven branches and unfold like their leaves.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Waltner, 1994, 447.

<sup>254</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 11. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.

As mentioned before, this book is divided into seven chapters. In each chapter, the author presented one of the seven deadly sins and how to prevent them. The first chapter Fuao (To subdue pride), is also the longest, with 76 pages, followed by Cedai (To spur on sloth), 72 pages, Xifen (To extinct wrath), 62 pages, Setao (To stop gluttony), 56 pages, Fangyin (To control the lust), 52 pages, Jietan (To relieve greed), 47 pages, the shortest chapter Pingdu (To quiet envy) merely has 42 pages.<sup>255</sup>

In the first chapter Fuao, the author indicated that pride, which generates sins while humility generates virtues, was most hated by God. Then he explained how to prevent the sin of pride in 10 following sections: 1. Keao Nan 克傲難 (It is hard to subdue pride); 2. Jie Yi Xingfu Ao 戒以形福傲 (Exhortation against the arrogance of mundane fickleness) ; 3. Jie Yi Xinde Fa 戒以心德伐 (Exhortation against the presumption for their virtues); 4. Jie Haoyi 戒好異 (Exhortation against being keen on acting out of the ordinary); 5. Jie Haoming 戒好名 (Exhortation against the fondness for fame); 6. Jie Zhashan Junming 戒詐善釣名 (Exhortation against false goodness for pursuing fame); 7. Jie Tingyu 戒聽譽 (Exhortation against listening to praise); 8. Jie Haogui 戒好貴 (Exhortation against the fondness for the social position); 9. Lun Qiande 論謙德 (On being humble); 10. Shiji Baoqian 識己保謙 (Self-knowledge and the preservation of humility.)

In the second chapter Pingdu, Pantoja compared envy to the partner of being proud and stated that envy was being jealous of what God gave to others. Then he explained how to quiet envy in four sections: 1. Jie Jinian Ren E 戒計念人惡 (Exhortation against thinking about other's badness); 2. Jie Chanyan 戒讒言 (Exhortation against slander); 3. Jie Tingchan 戒聽讒 (Exhortation against hearing and believing slanders); 4. Ren'ai Ren 仁愛人 (To love people).

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<sup>255</sup> Based on the *Tianxue Chuhan* edition.

In the third chapter Jietan, Pantoja linked greed with the yearn for mundane wealth, which also disobeyed the order of God. As indicated before, the boost of commerce in late Ming China invoked yearn for wealth. Hedonism prevailed in the society. Some literati openly stated the righteousness of extravagance. Meanwhile, many people believed that money worship was the origin of moral decline. The idea of eliminating greed in Pantoja's book dealt with the exigent need to treat wealth. Then in the additional section with the title "Lun Shishe De 論施捨德 (On charity)", he pointed out that the fortune that God blessed to people was for them to help the poor. Hence he suggested people do charity to satisfy God.

In the fourth chapter Xifen, the Spanish Jesuit reminded that wrath was what the devil utilized to seduce people into sins. For this reason, he instructed the readers about how to extinct wrath in three steps: 1. Ai Chou 愛讎 (Loving your enemies); 2. Yi Rende Dinan 以忍德敵難 (To endure the disaster with tolerance); 3. Jiongnan Yide 窘難益德 (The distress regenerates virtues).

The fifth chapter Setao (To stop gluttony) focuses on the harm of leading a life of pleasure. In an additional part with the title "Lun Jiede 論節德 (On the virtue of thrift)", the author stated that God instructed humans to live frugally. Though it was irrelevant to this chapter's main idea, Pantoja spent much space criticizing the idea of "Saṃsāra" from Buddhism, saying that this theory of rebirth came from the metempsychosis of Pythagoras, which was regarded as wild talk in the west. Clearly, Pantoja meant to seize this opportunity to belittle Buddhism.

In the sixth chapter Fangyin (To control the lust), he explained that the sin of lust was also a cunning enemy of virtues. Then the author talked about "Zhende 貞德 (chastity)", "Hunqu Zhengyi 婚娶正議 (matrimony)" and explained "clerical celibacy" to his readers.

Finally, in the seventh chapter Cedai (To spur on sloth), Pantoja explained the harm of sloth and the benefits of diligence. The author also indicated that people should cultivate



morality with diligence for the pleasures in the afterlife, rather than being occupied by mundane affairs.

In his book, the Spanish Jesuit introduced Christian moral principles with an unquestionable tone. The book tackled many specific social issues in late Ming China as well. It is no wonder that some orthodox Confucian literati thought highly about this book.

### 3.1.3 The sources

Some investigators believe that Pantoja took the form of morality books, which were quite popular in late Ming China to impress the Chinese readers. He Jun even suggested that Xu Guangqi largely decided the style of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and modified it as a morality book of China.<sup>256</sup> Indeed, as Nicolas Standaert stated, the book of Pantoja was assimilated with the Chinese genre of “ledgers of merit and demerit (Gongguoge 功過格),”<sup>257</sup> many Chinese readers also took Pantoja’s *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) as a book of morality. However, it does not mean that Pantoja adapted this Chinese form of literature so that the Chinese could well receive his book. There was a tradition of compiling the books of Exemplum in medieval Europe<sup>258</sup>. Pantoja did nothing more than repeated this tradition in late Ming China. As Li Shixue 李爽學 stated, the literature style of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) came from the pastoral handbooks of medieval Europe.<sup>259</sup>

Pantoja might have referred to some moral books that were popular in Europe to create *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克). For example, Li Shixue indicated that Pantoja might have used the book *Tratado de la Vanidad del Mundo* (Treatise of the Vanity of the World) of

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<sup>256</sup> He Jun, 2013, 283.

<sup>257</sup> Standaert, 2000, 656.

<sup>258</sup> An exemplum is a short tale originally incorporated by a medieval preacher into his sermon to emphasize a moral or illustrate a point of doctrine.

<sup>259</sup> Li Shixue, 2010, 391.

Diego de Estella<sup>260</sup> for reference. In the following table, some parts from these two books are extracted and translated into English. Some similarities in these two books could be found after comparing their contents:

<i>Septem Victoriis</i> (Qike 七克) 261	<i>Tratado de la Vanidad del Mundo</i> <sup>262</sup>
<p>Original text:</p> <p>他欲雖大，至死則止。惟傲，殮尚形於棺，葬尚形於墓，永世不已。</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>No matter how great the other passions might be, they end with death. Only pride is still evident after being embalmed for the sarcophagus and last for centuries.</p>	<p>Original text:</p> <p>Aprarejate porque has de pelear con la soberbia, la qual nunca huye, ni dexa de perseguir al hombre, y hasta que ve que se está muriendo lo combate, quando los otros vicios no osan acometerle.</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>Be prepared because you have to fight with pride, which never flees, nor does it stop haunting people, and until it sees that he is dying, he still launch attacks, whereas other vices do not dare to do so.</p>
<p>Original text:</p> <p>人行他惡，羞而匿之。惟傲者，明行其傲，不以為羞，反</p>	<p>Original text:</p> <p>Todos los otros pecados huyen y se esconden, sino la soberbia,</p>

<sup>260</sup> Diego de Estella (1524-1578 ) was a Spanish Franciscan and theologian. His most famous book *tratado de la vanidad del mundo* was first published in 1562, Toledo where Pantoja entered the novitiate of the Jesuits.

<sup>261</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 16-19.

<sup>262</sup> Estella O.F.M, 1785,518-524.

<p>以為榮，故其染人益易，其除去益難。</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>When people committed sins except for pride, they are ashamed and try to hide it. Only the arrogant people demonstrate their proud behavior to the public, without feeling shameful, but for proud, hence it is easier to infect than to eradicate.</p>	<p>que en la iglesia y lugares publicos, sinvergüenza se muestra el soberbio ser soberbio en sus trages, vestidos, fausto y asiento, y se precia y honra de ser soberbio y vano. En las fiestas más solemnes, quando se esconden los otros pecados, este se manifiesta más.</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>All other sins flee and hide, but not pride, in the church and in public places, the shameless shows himself to be proud of his clothes, clothes, luxury, and seat, and he prides and honors himself for being haughty and vain. In the most solemn festivals, when the other sins are hidden, the pride is manifested more.</p>
<p>Original text:</p> <p>上帝惡傲何故？萬善萬福，皆天帝賦予。傲者以天賦為己自有，若斯倍負，是以所受於天帝者，反與為敵讎也。天帝豈不與為敵讎哉？……傲者心心事事，惟願尊己。盡人類凌轢</p>	<p>Original text:</p> <p>Dios resiste a los soberbios, porque solos estos le hacen cara y se ponen contra Dios, huyendo y escondiéndose los otros vicios. De Dios es aborrecido porque usurpa su honra, que no quiso dar a nadie,</p>

<p>屈抑之。則天人交惡焉。</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>Why does God hate pride? The Lord of Heaven bestows all goodness and blessings. The arrogant takes what Heaven offers as his own, thereby committing a betrayal that consists of taking what God grants to God's enemy. Wouldn't it be the same as God himself give it to his enemy? ... what the arrogant continuously think of is nothing but craving reverence for themselves and put their own will above other people. Consequently, they make themselves enemies of God.</p>	<p>y en alguna manera deifica a si mismo, queriendo ser adorado como Dios.</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>God disgusts the proud people because only these people face him and stand against God, while the other vices flee and hide from him. God hates him because he usurps his honor, which he did not want to give to anyone, and in some way, he deifies himself, expecting to be worshiped as God.</p>
<p>Original text:</p> <p>傲去，他欲易除</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>Once the pride is gone, it is easy to get rid of the other passions.</p>	<p>Original text:</p> <p>Si desarraigas la soberbia de tu corazón, que es cabeza de los vicios, fácilmente vencerás los otros pecados.</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>If you uproot the pride of your heart, which is the head of vices, you will easily overcome</p>

	the other sins.
<p>Original text:</p> <p>試問：傲何故乎？爾盍思爾生從何來，將從何往，今複何為？言爾來，則天主造爾也。爾以前，是何貴重物？無爾也。無爾則賤於獸，微於草。浮於細塵者，爾也。言爾往，往於土耳。爾非永久物，未及百年，穢灰而已。言爾為，獨有妄想、妄言、妄行在，皆取罪者也。有何聰明，有何智巧，有何力能乎？</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>One might ask: What is the origin of pride? Why don't you consider where you are made of, where you are going and what to do right now? If we make a thorough inquiry on your origin, then you were made by God. Before this, would you consider yourself something valuable? You did not exist. You were nothing, and therefore you were less than beasts, more insignificant than grass. You</p>	<p>Original text:</p> <p>Grande remedio contra la soberbia es el conocimiento de si mismo. De este remedio usa la Iglesi, quando para curar nuestra soberbia nos pone ceniza sobre nuestra cabezas, diciendo a cada uno de nosotros: Acuérdate hombre que eres ceniza, y te convertirás en ceniza. ...Pues si consideras lo que serás después de muerto, no sé que causa hay para que seas tan soberbio, estando sentenciado a ser manjar de viles gusanos, ...Si miras ánima, tampoco hay causa de ensoberbecerte; pues las virtudes, ciencia, ingenio, y todas qualesquier gracias y habilidades que tengas, son dones de Dios, y no tuyos.</p> <p>Translation:</p> <p>An excellent remedy against pride is having a definite estimation of oneself. In this way, the church cures our pride, they put ash on our heads,</p>

<p>were more negligible than a speck of dust, you. If we talk about your destiny, you will turn to the humus. You are not eternal. Less than a hundred years, you are mere ashes. If we talk about your behaviors, there are only illusions, presumptions, arrogances, all things that incur sins. What intelligence, ability or potential do you possess?</p>	<p>saying to each one of us: Remember that you are ash, and you will become ash. ... Well, if you consider what you will be after death, I do not know for why you are so proud, being sentenced to be a delicacy of vile worms... If you look at your soul, there is no reason to be arrogant either; for the virtues, reasons, ingenuity, and all whatever graces and abilities you have, are gifts from God, and not yours.</p>
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No doubt, there are some similarities between *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and *Tratado de la Vanidad del Mundo*. Still, these similar contents only suggest that two authors expounded their ideas about the seven deadly sins and their corresponding virtues in the same way. There is no evidence that Pantoja copied lots of contents from the work of Estella. As a matter of fact, many citations from the bible and the western saints in Pantoja's book do not appear in the *Trato*. That is to say, the books that Pantoja referred to in the creation of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) are remained to be discovered.

To introduce the doctrine of Christianity, the Spanish Jesuit cited the words of the *Bible* more than one hundred times. He also quoted dozens of times the Christian saints such as Seneca the younger 色搦加 (23 times), Saint Gregory the Great 聖厄勒臥畧(23 times), Saint Bernard 百爾納 (20 times), Saint Augustine 亞吾斯丁 (33 times) and Saint Chrysostom 聖契理瑣 (7 times). In order to support his arguments, he used the pronouncements of Aristotle and six stories from *Aesop's Fables*, which juxtaposed

Pantoja and Ricci as the two Europeans who first introduced this collection of fables to China.

It's worth noting that Pantoja hardly quoted any Confucian scriptures in his book, which was different from Matteo Ricci. Probably Pantoja was not in favor of Ricci's adaptation methodology, or at least he was not full of enthusiasm about finding the common point between Christian and Confucian scriptures. The Spanish Jesuit might have privileged European cultural accomplishments over Chinese endeavors, as Robert Ellis stated in his essay<sup>263</sup>, or simply he was not familiar with Confucian scriptures as Ricci. Anyhow, lots of literati still believed that Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was in accordance with Confucian ethics because of its moral teachings.

### **3.2 *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and the moral cultivation of the Chinese literati**

Most literati assimilated Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) to a genre of morality books or ledgers of merit and demerit, which were quite popular in late Ming China. The literati's common concerns on the moral issues gave a steady reader base for Pantoja. They took his work as a guide book for personal moral cultivation and a social crisis solution.

#### **3.2.1 A basic Christian text for the Chinese converts**

The Italian Jesuits Giulio Aleni (1582 – 1649) once enumerated the five most critical Christian texts for the Chinese Catholics: 1. *Credo*; 2. *The Ten Commandments*; 3. *The Fourteen works of Mercy*; 4. *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克); 5. *The Seven Sacraments*.<sup>264</sup> He compared these five books to the Confucian Five Classics, suggesting these books are the required readings for the converts.

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<sup>263</sup> Ellis, 2016, 103.

<sup>264</sup> Li Jiubiao, 2002, vol.6,27a–27b.

*Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was also highly valued by the Jesuits in their evangelical work. For example, when Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611 – 1671) asked the Italian Jesuit Francesco Sambias 毕方济 (1582 – 1649) to explain the knowledge of science and technology, the latter was unwilling to elaborate. Instead, he was quite content when Fang Yizhi consulted about God. Then the Italian Jesuit recommended him Pantoja's book and told the Chinese young man that it was a book about philosophy.<sup>265</sup> It seems that the Jesuits took *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) as an introduction to lead the Chinese elites to understand and accept God through Christian morality.

Pantoja acknowledged that his book was a guide for moral cultivation. In the author's preface, he wrote:

人生百務，不離消積兩端。凡所為修者，消舊積新之謂也。聖賢規訓萬端，總為消惡積德之藉。

<My translation> *There are hundreds of things in life that can be categorized as accumulating and dissipating. The moral cultivation is nothing but accumulating the new and dissipating the old. The saints and sages exhorted this in a thousand ways, which were ultimately reduced to the means of dissipating evil and accumulating virtue.*<sup>266</sup>

Aleni expressed similar ideas to the Chinese Catholics:

凡人有舊人，有新人。所謂舊者，平日習慣罪宗，傲、忿、淫、妒、饕、吝、怠七罪是也；所謂新者，從今興起於善，謙、忍、貞、仁、廉、節、勤七德是也。故因循於七罪而不知改，則為舊人矣；知七罪之可醜，而罷勉乎七德，則為新人矣。

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<sup>265</sup> Fang Yizhi, 1888, 25.

<sup>266</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 11. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.



*<My translation> There are new men and old men in the world. The old men are those who are used to the seven capital sins: pride, wrath, lust, envy, gluttony, greed and sloth; the new men are those who possess the seven virtues: humility, patience, chastity, gratitude, charity, temperance, and diligence. The people who immerse themselves in the seven capital sins and do not reform remain old men; the ones who feel shameful of the seven capital sins and act their best to cultivate the seven virtues become new men.*<sup>267</sup>

Li Jiubiao 李九標 (? – ?), a literati-Catholic in the early seventeenth century, wrote the book *Kouduo Richao* 口鐸日抄 (The Diary of Oral Admonitions), which provided the substantive source of the interaction between Chinese converts and European missionaries in the late Ming period. This book allows a glimpse of Jesuits' practice and the self-cultivation of the Chinese converts. Li Jiubiao once recorded that a convert confessed to Aleni that the moral cultivation method in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was quite challenging to follow. He complained that sometimes he could constrain his desires; nonetheless, most of the time, he failed to put it in control.<sup>268</sup>

The case of this convert was not unique. Xu Guangqi also used *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) as moral cultivation guidance. He once wrote a poem to praise the seven virtues which conquered the seven capital sins:

*If a river needs to be stemmed,  
We must dam it at the source.  
If weeds need to be cleared  
We must pull out their roots.  
A man can clean his heart himself in the same way.  
Man has ten thousand kinds of sin  
But seven sins stand out among them all.*

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<sup>267</sup> Li Jiubiao, 2002, 538-539.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid. 118.

*Only by the seven virtues can they be overcome  
Just as one need a particular medicine to make us well when we have a disease.  
If you prosecute the case you will have success.  
If you go to war you will be victorious  
And blessing will flow down from heaven  
But do not play the coward and shirk your responsibility  
For when the seven sins have been eliminated  
The ten thousand will simultaneously be removed.*<sup>269</sup>

Based on the cases above, it is highly possible that the Chinese Catholics took Pantoja's book to guide moral cultivation in the late Ming period.

### 3.2.2 The novelty

Many literati readers noticed the novelty of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). They believed that this book contained new ideas on the moral teachings, instead of repeating the clichés of the Confucian classics. Therefore, people could benefit from its ideas while being attracted to its content.

Although Yang Tingyun admitted that some ideas in Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) were quite shocking when people first read about them, he still believed the readers could gain a lot from this book after carefully savoring its meaning:

惟是《七克》所載，大率遠於俗情，如以富貴榮寵為綴疣；貧窮苦楚為福澤。驟閱之，覺可駭可異；而徐玩之，名理妙趣，醒心豁目，未有不躍然神解，而卷不釋手者。此書在慧悟之士，機警觸發，見之自有神契。其次則困衡之輩，推勘路窮，如貧見家珍，渴逢甘露，更有津津證入處。惟一

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<sup>269</sup> Wang Xiaochao, 1998, 119.

種世味濃郁，嗜進無已之人，靈府多滓，雖與微言，視此不免嚼蠟。或以此方文字見解測之，更泥不通，則不終卷而臥，此非書之罪也。

<My translation> The values elaborated in “Qike” are quite different from the conventional way of thinking. For example, wealth and social rank are regarded as problems, whereas poverty and misery as blessings. When you read the book for the first time, it is incomprehensible. However, when its meanings are savored, it is noticed that the book is interesting and full of wisdom, and that is why it will never be left behind. To the most insightful and intelligent, the book may interest them and lead them to understand its content soon; to the studious and thoughtful people, the book will make them reflect and understand their teachings, as if it were a poor man who finds a treasure or a thirsty man who finds water. It is an unusual experience to get to know the truth through your own efforts. Be that as it may, those blinded by desire, eager for wealth and power, will not be able to know the truth and will not find interest in the book. Even after reading this prologue, they will still not be able to understand it and will despise it. In spite of it all, it is not the fault of the book.<sup>270</sup>

The European stories and fables that Pantoja introduced in his book also impressed the Chinese. For example, a literati convert Han Lin 韓霖 (? – ?) adopted a story about Demetrius I of Macedon from *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) for his book *Duo Shu* 鐸書, an ethical work that combines Confucian and Catholic ethics. He spoke highly about Pantoja’s *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), saying that even those who did not fully understand the book’s profound teaching still found it interesting.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 6. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

<sup>271</sup> Han Lin, 2008, 147.

Impressed by the novelty of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), the Chinese literati compared it with *Zhuangzi* 莊子, a philosophical book bearing the author's name from the Warring States period (403 – 221 BC)

《七克》一書，順陽所著，大抵遏欲存理，歸本事天，澹而不浮，質而不俚，華而不穢。至稱引西方聖賢言行，有鴻寶論衡之新，無鄭圃漆園之誕。

<My translation> *Qike*, written by Pantoja, is about restraining the desire and preserving rationality, quoting the sages and men of virtue from the west. Its text is moderate without remaining in the mere superficial emotion. It has substance but without falling into the vulgar. It is rich in details but without losing order. Since he quotes words and deeds of wise saints from the west, the book possesses the novelty of “Hongbao 鴻寶” and “Lunheng 論衡”<sup>272</sup>, without falling into the absurdities of “Zhengpu 鄭圃” and “Qiyuan 漆園”<sup>273</sup>.

Another literati named Xie Wenjian 谢文湊 made a similar comment about the book of Pantoja:

(七克)於情偽微暖，千狀萬態，刻露畢盡，…令人如冰水澆背，陡然驚悟，頗有莊生寓言風致。然莊生令人蕩，《七克》令人驚。

<My translation> (*Qike*)vividly described the fickleness of human nature, recorded the stories of all walks of life,...reading it made people suddenly

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<sup>272</sup> The Hongbao (鴻寶), which focuses on the ways to achieve longevity, is part of a book called Honglie (鴻烈), compiled by the prince of Huainan, Liu'an (劉安, 179 BC - 122 BC) at the time of the Western Han Dynasty. The Lunheng (論衡) is a book written by Wang Chong of the Western Han Dynasty. It contains critical essays on natural science, mythology, philosophy and literature.

<sup>273</sup> 10 Zhengpu (鄭圃), which is the name of a place, is here designating a book titled Liezi (列子). This book portrays the legendary character Lie Yukou (列禦寇). Qiyuan (漆園), is a place where Zhuang Zhou (莊周 - also known as Zhuangzi, 莊子), worked. It is here alluding to the Taoist classic "Zhuangzi", a book of relativistic philosophy. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 4.2 of this thesis.

*realize the truth like they were sprayed with cold water, its words are quite similar with the fables in Zhuangzi. Nevertheless, Zhuangzi might lead people astray, while Qike only awakes people from illusion.*<sup>274</sup>

Zhuangzi was famous for using allegories to expound his ideas, yet his view was often regarded as relativism or skepticism. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, Zhuangzi's teachings were prevalent among the literati who were eager to break from the shackle of classic Confucianism. Compared with the Confucian classics, the teachings of the Warring States period philosopher are novel and original. He could be regarded as a symbolic figure for the literati with the spirit of revolt. Therefore, in late Ming China, Zhuangzi's philosophy could not be accepted by the literati who yearned for social order.

Although Pantoja used many fables and stories in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) to explain his moral principles as Zhuangzi, the literati deemed his teachings on moral issues were consistent with Confucian ethics. Therefore, the orthodox Confucians acknowledged the novelty of Pantoja's book and believed that its practical moral teachings could help maintain the social order.

Yang Tingyun, one of the so-called Three Great Pillars of Chinese Catholicism, indicated the similarity of Confucianism and Catholicism in moral cultivation:

步步鞭策，著著近裏。此之為學，又與吾儒闡然為己之旨，脈脈同符。

*<My translation> It is necessary to continue exercising in spirit and examining the heart. This is precisely the path of Confucius and his followers when they maintain a humble profile, reflect and practice the analysis of their behavior.*<sup>275</sup>

Chen Liangcai, another author of the preface, also believed that there was common ground between Catholicism and the teaching of Confucius:

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<sup>274</sup> Xie Wenjian, 1997, vol.14, 251.

<sup>275</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 6. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

其書精實切近，多吾儒所雅稱。至其語語字字，刺骨透心，則儒門鼓吹也。其欲念念息息，皈依上帝，以冀享天報而永免沉淪，則儒門羽翼也。

<My translation> This book contains profound truth and is very close to daily life, which is what we Confucianists agree with. With its sharp words, the book can touch people's hearts, and as a result, it is constructive to preach our Confucian ideas. With its will to convert to the Lord of Heaven for the heavenly rewards and avoid suffering, it is an assistant in need of our Confucianism.<sup>276</sup>

According to Chen Liangcai, Catholic ethics could benefit Chinese people in moral enhancement and serve as an assistant to Confucianism. Despite that many literati were not Catholic and did not accord with the teachings about God, *Qike* still was a book full of wisdom and valuable moral teachings for them.

### 3.2.3 Tackling the actual social issues

Pantoja always tried to tackle some actual social issues of China in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). For example, in the fifth chapter, he criticized the luxurious lifestyle and especially commented on the drinking customs in China. Since the middle period of the Ming Dynasty, the luxurious banquet and the new forming drinking customs began to attract people's attention. Lu Rong 陸容 (1436 – 1494) once said:

古人飲酒有節，多不至夜……長夜之飲，君子非之。京師惟六部十三道等官飲酒多至夜。

<My translation> People in ancient times were temperate in drinking. Often, they stopped drinking before midnight... drinking all night was criticized by the

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 11 Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 5.2 of this thesis.

*men of virtue. Now the officials of the central government in the capital usually continued their drinking until midnight.*<sup>277</sup>

The boost of commerce in late Ming China motivated yearn for luxurious life. The social behaviors of the literati were also affected. Till the Wanli era, this long feast was still in fashion. Zhu Guozhen 朱國楨 recorded the drinking customs of his time:

世家子弟，向號淳謹有法度者，多事豪飲，以夜為晝。

*<My translation> The people from the aristocracy family, even the prudent ones of them, are fond of drinking all night and do not stop until they drink to the limit of their capacity.*<sup>278</sup>

The banquet in China must have impressed the Jesuits, Ricci once complained that the dinner was too long, and he had to spend much time at the dinner party. He recorded in detail the literati's social etiquette, which no doubt wearied him a lot.<sup>279</sup>

In the fifth chapter of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), Pantoja criticized the people who drowned their worries and denounced the behavior of urging other people to drink. Moreover, he quoted the bible saying that the drunkard would not inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>280</sup> Then he persuaded his readers to practice thrift:

今人設席豐盛，以為優賓榮己，實則慢賓辱己也。以豐厚待客者，以淫根投其腹中矣。且意彼喜厚厭薄，故厚奉之，正以訕其侈奢無節廉耳，豈不甚慢之乎？

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<sup>277</sup> Lu Rong, 1985, 179.

<sup>278</sup> Zhu Guozhen, 2005, 3513.

<sup>279</sup> Ricci, 2001, 495.

<sup>280</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 99.

*<My translation> People provided substantial food and drink with the belief that this is how to show respect to their guests and bring honor to themselves. It turns out to be a humiliation to themselves and a slight to their guests. To entertain the guests with sumptuous food and delicious wine resembles putting the seed of lust in their stomachs. Treating people with a sumptuous feast suggests that the host believes that his guest prefers luxury over thrift as if the host mocks them for being extravagant and vain and lacking the virtue of thrift.<sup>281</sup>*

Apart from the critics on the overdrinking and luxury feast, Pantoja also decried the concubinage in China. In his book, he recorded a dialogue between him and a Chinese when he explained monogamy in Europe:

或問余曰：“貴國婚禮如何？”曰：“敝鄉千國之俗，皆以伉儷為正。上自國主，下至小民，一夫特配一婦，莫或敢違。婦沒，得更娶正妻，不得娶妾也。

*<My translation> Some people asked me: “what is the marriage custom in your country?” I replied: “In all the countries of my land, people maintain monogamous relationships. Whether the kings or the commoners, one husband has one wife. No one dares to violate this custom. Only when the wife is dead, the husband could marry another wife. Keeping concubine is forbidden.”<sup>282</sup>*

Pantoja explained that people have to maintain monogamy because this was the right track set by God. He indicated that having a concubine could seriously damage the family:

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid., 124.



妻恃尊，妾恃寵，兩不相下，其亂不已。兩婦為讎，兩婦之子，豈得相合？是一家犯罪，罪悉由爾，爾之負罪不已重乎？爾娶一妾，而父子、夫婦、兄弟三大倫俱廢，尚曲解為不犯正道哉？

*<My translation> The wife presumes upon her place in the family while the concubine presumes upon the favor of the man, the rival of the two women could bring constant chaos to the family. When the two women adopt a hostile attitude towards each other, could their children get along well? ...Once you marry a concubine, and the fraternity, conjugal and parent-child relationships are all alienated. How could you say it is not a violation of the correct way?<sup>283</sup>*

The literati who had concubines might have fully understood the words of Pantoja. Furthermore, as the most significant political event caused by an imperial concubine, the “controversy over the heir of the empire” might have corroborated Pantoja’s theory and made the book easier accepted by the literati.

Another phenomenon condemned by the Jesuits was homosexuality. In the late Ming times, the sexual relationship between men was generally tolerated by the Chinese elites. Zhang Dai described his life:

好精舍，好美婢，好嬖童，好鮮衣，好美食，好駿馬，好華燈，好煙火，好梨園，好鼓吹，好古董，好花鳥，兼以茶淫橘虐，書囊詩魔。

*<My translation> I am passionate about beautiful houses, pretty girls, catamites, bright and colorful clothes, delicious dishes, brave horses, decorated lanterns, fireworks, operas, music, antiques, flowers, and birds, I also love tea, chess, books, and poetry.<sup>284</sup>*

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid.125.

<sup>284</sup> Zhang Dai, 1991, 294 -297.

In the eyes of Zhang Dai, having sexual relationships with young men was just a fondness. This fondness was quite popular among the Chinese literati. A Fujian writer named Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛 (1567 – 1624) recorded:

今天下言男色者，動以閩、廣為口實，然從吳、越至燕雲，未有不知此好者也。

<My translation> Nowadays, people always talk about the pedication in Fujian and Guangdong provinces. In fact, from Jiangnan and Zheijiang to Beijing and Shanxi, no one does not know of this fondness.<sup>285</sup>

This so-called “male trend 男風 (Nanfeng)”, which was quite common in the long history of China, suffered constant accusations from the Jesuits. In his journal Ricci lashed out at this phenomenon in Beijing, saying that the youngsters were dressed up like beautiful girls and publicly comported themselves as prostitutes.<sup>286</sup>

Pantoja opposed the “male trend” in his book and explained to his readers how people deemed pedication in Europe:

淫罪多端，男淫最大。我西國，凡罪皆名以其罪，獨此罪者，名為不可言之罪。示此罪，行者污心，言者亦污口矣。罪惡，上帝悉惡之，而惡此罪尤甚。

<My translation> There are many forms of the vice of lust. The most severe one is pedication. In my country, all offenses are charged with concrete accusations. Only the pedication was charged as the crime that cannot be named in order to demonstrate that the ones who committed this would

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<sup>285</sup> Xie Zhaozhi, 2005, 1638.

<sup>286</sup> Ricci, 1942, I, 98.

*contaminate their minds and the ones who mentioned it would contaminate their mouth. God abhors all crimes, but he hates this the most.*<sup>287</sup>

Then the Spanish Jesuit warned the Chinese people with the story of Sodom:

《經》記昔有瑣奪馬國，地豐饒，用力微而生產裕，其人富厚優閒恣于男色。上帝久竢之，不悛；屢戒之，不聽，故厭惡而約罰之。天主……遂降大火，草木室屋，人畜鳥獸諸物，頃刻煨燼。從此至今，三千餘載，地不生寸草，山石尚存火跡。遇火輒燃，惡臭不可聞。海不生纖鱗，名為死海。海風中人，輒生諸疾。我西方從此傳知，男淫之罪，上帝深惡重罰焉。爾犯之而上帝未遂降殃，詎寬爾罪，正竢爾悟改之耳。不悟不改，積怒甚矣。……上帝雖寬忍，必有時而報。

*<My translation> The Bible records that there was a kingdom named Sodom. Its land was so fertile that with little labor, people can have an excellent harvest. The people are rich and lead lives of leisure while they indulge themselves in homosexual acts. God waited for them to change their evil ways and reform. For several times God warned them, yet no one obeyed. Thus, God abominated them and prepared to punish... The Lord of Heaven laid fire on this kingdom, all the plants and houses, birds and beasts, all the people and their belongings reduced to ashes instantly. Up to now, more than three thousand years have passed, the land is still barren, and embers of the fire still reside in the rocks. With a spark, it can burn again. The stench in there was almost unbearable. Since nothing survives in the sea, it is called the Dead Sea. The blow of the wind could make people fall ill. Since then, people in the west know that the pedication is detested by God and would be severely punished. If you committed such a crime and yet have not to be punished, it is because God is waiting for your repent and reform. If you do not wake from your sin, his*

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<sup>287</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 116.

*anger will amass... For now, God restrains his fury, but there is no doubt You will have to answer for your crimes one day.*<sup>288</sup>

Although the Chinese literati reactions to Pantoja's words were not recorded, some of his readers could be attracted to his arguments because no one criticized the homosexual relationship as the Jesuits did. After all, pedication was a noticeable trend in late Ming China.<sup>289</sup>

### 3.2.4 Cure for social disease

Most readers of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) acknowledged that this book was beneficial for social morality. From the prefaces written by Pantoja's Chinese contemporaries, lots of positive commentaries of the Chinese literati could be found.

Of all Jesuit publications before 1616, including the work of Matteo Ricci, Pantoja's book had the largest number of prefaces. As mentioned before, the literati who wrote prefaces and postscripts for *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) were Yang Tingyun, Peng Duanwu, Cao Yubian, Zheng Yiwei, Xiong Mingyu, Chen Liangcai, Cui Chang, Wang Ruchun, and Fan Dingyu. Most of them had the Jinshi 進士 or Tong Jinshi 同進士 title<sup>290</sup> and served as government officials. Zheng Yiwei even became the Great Secretary in the reign of Chong Zhen 崇禎 (1628 – 1644 ). Although Wang Ruchun and Fan Dingyu did not have the Jinshi title, nor were government officials, their fathers did assume government office.

It is worth noting that Zheng Yiwei, Cui Chang, Xiong Mingyu, and Peng Duanwu passed the imperial examination in 1601, the year that the Wanli Emperor permitted the Jesuits to stay in Beijing. Probably they came to visit the Jesuits the same as other literati in the capital and maintained a relationship since then. Moreover, according to the

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<sup>288</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 116-117.

<sup>289</sup> Wu Cuncun, 2000, 114-155.

<sup>290</sup> Jinshi is the highest degree in the imperial examination in Imperial China while Tongjinshi literally means along with jinshi, suggesting that it's second to the Jinshi title.

political tradition in Ming China, the successful examination candidates of the same year automatically formed a close relationship similar to alumni. It is very likely that these four literati knew each other and belonged to the same relationship circle. Additionally, both Xiong Mingyu and Cao Yubian later were regarded as the key members of the "Donglin Faction".

Yang Tingyun, the Catholic convert literati, also had a close relationship with many members of the "Donglin Faction".<sup>291</sup> For example, he was recommended by Zou Yuanbiao 鄒元標 (1551 – 1624), the famous Donglin leader, to get a promotion in the government. Besides, he also knew Ye Xianggao 葉向高 (1559 – 1627) well, who was not just the Grand Secretary, but also a doyen of the Donglin Faction. These records suggested that Yang Tingyun had similar political views with the Donglin members, or, at least, they shared the same ideas about moral issues.

Evidence shows that some of these literati shared *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) with their friends. For example, Peng Duanwu recommended this book to Fan Dingyu.<sup>292</sup> Yang Tingyun also recommended it to Wang Ruchun, who contributed a lot to the publication of *Jiren Shipian*, the book of Matteo Ricci.

As mentioned in the second chapter, the Donglin Faction appealed to the moral Confucian traditions' return and governing capacity improvement. Most of the literati with the Donglin background valued the teachings of the Jesuits.<sup>293</sup> Although the authors of the prefaces and postscripts of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) were not all from the "Donglin Faction", they still shared similar ideas on the social issues and all concerned about the moral degeneration in late Ming China. Therefore, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) circulated among the orthodox literati's circle because they believed that this book could cure social disease.

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<sup>291</sup> Standaert, 1988, 36.

<sup>292</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 153.

<sup>293</sup> Heinrich Busch, 1949, 156.

Wang Ruchun indicated that Pantoja could follow Ricci's step to spread the Teachings of Jesus (Yesu Zhi Jiao 耶穌之教). It seems that he was quite familiar with the evangelical work of the Jesuits. He compared the Confucian moral teachings with the moral doctrines in Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), indicating that the Confucian ethics was for the people with sharp intelligence, whose heart-mind was not beclouded by their emotions and desires. In contrast, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was a cure for people with their minds dominated by their desires.<sup>294</sup>

Many literati believed that the novel ideas in the book of the “western literati” could reconstruct the social order. According to Peng Duanwu, one of the faithful readers of Pantoja:

西洋龐君迪我著七編，始於伏傲，終於策怠。示余，餘愛而讀之。蓋洗心之聖水，對證之要方也。古者國有狂泉，國人飲之皆狂。當今之時，問今之俗，絜己方人，似無不中此七病者，幾于以國狂。而龐君實來傳其國學，實為此方七藥。

<My translation> Mr. Diego de Pantoja, who came from the West, composed seven treatises, beginning with the dejection of pride and ending with the need to spur on laziness. [Pantoja] showed me the book, which I found interesting and read through. It is like holy water where you can clear your heart, a suitable remedy that can cure your disease. In ancient times there was a “spring of madness” in a kingdom. The inhabitants who drank from it went mad. If we ask about current habits, considering the inhabitants of today, it seems that there is no one left unaffected by these seven diseases, which would almost make the entire population mad. For this reason, Mr. Pantoja has come to transmit the doctrine of his country that, precisely, serves as a sevenfold remedy for this land.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 152.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.,6. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 6.2 of this thesis.

These comments of Peng Duanwu represented the orthodox literati's aspiration to solve the moral crisis in China. He appealed to all the readers to forsake exclusivism and accept *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克):

讀龐君書者，毋以歐邏巴生遠近想 亦毋以六經四子生異同想，期於切救時  
病於國有瘳乎？

<My translation> *The readers should neither think that Europe is afar and barbaric nor that the missionaries' teachings are different from the Confucian classics. We should just care about if their teachings can help our country and solve social problems?* <sup>296</sup>

In his prefaces, Cui Chang interpreted the seven deadly sins with his understanding. He also pointed out that *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was the exact cure for the moral disorders that existed in China.

Compared with other preface-writers, Zheng Yiwei shared many academic thoughts in his preface. In his opinion, the original mind, which was not stained by the mundane world, remained in a state of quietness (*Jing* 靜).<sup>297</sup> When people had a desire, the state of quietness was broken, and the evil came. The self-restraint aimed to maintain the state of *Jing* instead of conquering the desires. From this point of view, Zheng Yiwei's thought was very close to Luo Hongxian 羅洪先 (1504 – 1564), a representative figure of Jiangyou School 江右學派.<sup>298</sup> It is worth noting that Zheng Yiwei was born in Shangrao 上饒, Jiangxi province, which was the base of Jiangyou School. There is a high chance

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<sup>296</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 7. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 6.2 of this thesis.

<sup>297</sup> This idea about the state of quietness was first created by Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073), a Chinese philosopher who lived in the Song Dynasty. Remain the state quietness was a quite influential idea for moral cultivation in Neo-Confucianism.

<sup>298</sup> After the death of Wang Shouren, his followers formed several different schools based on their different understandings of his teachings. Jiangyou School 江右學派, seemed as the orthodox among all the schools of Yangmingism.

that Zheng Yiwei adopted the thought of Jiangyou School, suggesting that he stuck to some teachings of Wang Yangming.

As a scholar who believed in heart-mind, his evaluation of Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was not wholly positive. In his opinion, this book encouraged people to extinct their passions and desires, which was not the best method of moral cultivation. He compared restraining passions to launching a war with the enemies. Even the enemy was beaten, they still could make a strong effort to recover lost ground. He argued that the best method for moral cultivation was to remain the heart-mind in the state of quietness, where the passions and desires were annihilated. Anyhow, he still gave a positive evaluation on Pantoja's work:

順陽子哀世人之多欲，作《七克》以覺之，曰伏傲，曰平妒，曰解貪，曰熄忿，曰塞饕，曰防淫，曰策怠。……一寓目，鮮有不憬然悟者。苟可以弢弓矢而止其殺人之用，於世教不無大補也。

<My translation> Mr. Pantoja pities that there are so many people in this world with countless passions, and he wrote *Qike* to awaken them by lecturing on prostrating pride, calming envy, undoing greed, appeasing anger, putting a stopper to gluttony, guard against lust, whip laziness. ...If you begin to read, there will hardly be anyone who does not suddenly be enlightened. If it could prohibit the passions from harming people, it is surely a great help for people's universal cultivation.<sup>299</sup>

According to Zheng Yiwei, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) probably could not help people to maintain the original state of the quietness of the heart-mind, yet it could be regarded as a good morality book.<sup>300</sup> Although his words are quite diplomatic, he had certain reservations about the Spanish Jesuit's moral doctrines. The case of Zheng Yiwei

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<sup>299</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 9. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 3.2 of this thesis.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.



suggests that some readers did not fully recognize the value of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克).

Besides, they were also a certain amount of criticism attracted by the book of Pantoja. For example, an anti-Christ literati named Huang Wendao 黃問道 (? – ?) believed that the Spanish Jesuit's book was shallow and simple. The ideas of this book violated the doctrines of Confucius as well:

其所謂”七克”者，曰驕、曰吝、曰色、曰怒、曰饕、曰妒、曰惰。夫此數者，雖修身之條件，只克復之粗跡。夫子告顏子之旨，大不如是。以仁為宗，以禮為體。仁存，則不仁自退；禮復，則非禮自除。

*<My translation> What they call the seven [things] to be overcome are pride, avarice, lust, anger, greed, jealousy, and sloth. Although all this involves self-cultivation, they are only clumsy imitation to restrain the desire and follow the social norms. What Confucius instructed Yanzi is totally different: he considered the Ren 仁 (virtue of humanity) as the basis and the Li (social norms) as the substance. When one knows how to preserve humanity within oneself, whatever contrary to humanity disappears of its own accord. When social norms are re-established, whatever contrary to the rituals eliminates itself of its own accord.<sup>301</sup>*

Although Huang Wendao admitted that *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) was a moral book, he disagreed with the book's moral instructions. In his opinion, there was no need to conquer the “sins” separately. The most important thing was understanding the true meaning of Ren. Obviously, his solution to moral degradation was traditional Confucian ethics.

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<sup>301</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 268.

In sum, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) is a book about Catholic morality, and its purpose is to lead people to know the Christian God. It means that the book of Pantoja is closely related to *Tianzhu Shiyi* and *Qiren Shipian*. The consistency of these three books could be easily discovered. The Chinese literati valued the book of Pantoja for two reasons:

On the one hand, the Chinese literati took *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) as a book with practical moral teachings. No matter the baptized Catholics, or the non-religious Chinese literati, they all genuinely believed that the Spanish Jesuit's book's moral preaching could improve Chinese society's morality. Pantoja purposely made some comments on the actual social problems in Chinese. Although his judgments were based on his identity as a European missionary, his words of asking people to restrain their desires definitely won many literati's recognition.

On the other hand, they could find some novel ideas in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), which made it different from the traditional moral teachings. This novelty in the book aroused their interest and inspired them to reform traditional Chinese moral teachings. In the next chapter, how Pantoja's book was used by Chinese scholars to resolve disputes in moral philosophy will be discussed.

## **4. THE DECLINE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF MORAL AUTHORITY**

### **4.1 The decline of the traditional moral authority in late Ming China**

When Ricci and Pantoja came to Beijing, the moral philosophy in China was undergoing a tremendous change. As is well-known, the Cheng-Zhu school philosophy 程朱理學, one of the primary philosophical schools of Neo-Confucianism, was the official mainstream ideology of the Ming Empire. No one could challenge its status for a time. According to the doctrine of the Cheng-Zhu school, the moral authority is premised on the Principle (Li 理), the standard of things and activities, the universe's ultimate pattern, which determines both the descriptive and the normative structure of the universe.<sup>302</sup> As carriers of the Principle, the Confucian classics were believed to possess moral authority by generations.

However, as mentioned in the second chapter, the social transformation in the late Ming Dynasty brought a series of changes, the social-political crisis intensified. The literati aspired to solve these political and social problems through moral improvement. Therefore, they began to reflect on the teachings of Cheng-Zhu school philosophy. Some people thought that it was necessary to abandon the obsolescent moral teachings, liberate people from the shackle of Principle, and make moral judgments based on their intuition. As a result, moral authority declined, which triggered moral subjectivism.

#### **4.1.1 The crisis of the mainstream thought**

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<sup>302</sup> Chen Chun and Chan Wing-tsit, 1986, 112-113; Tiwald, Justin, and Bryan W. Van Norden, eds. 2014.170-177. Although some investigators prefer to translate “Li 理” to “Pattern”, in this thesis this most important term in Neo-Confucianism will be translated as “Principle”, as Chan Wing-tsit did in *Neo-Confucian Terms Explained*.

According to Confucianism, the moral authority did not lie in mundane monarchs' hands, but in the hands of the sages and men of virtue such as Confucius. The Chinese literati believed that it was their great responsibility to urge the rulers to abide by the Principle, to make the emperor a moral example icon, and to set examples for the future generations.<sup>303</sup> Therefore, they had to correct their unethical behaviors. As Mencius once pointed out:

*It is not enough to censure a ruler over those who have been appointed to office, nor is it enough to criticize the policies of his government. Only a great man can correct what is wrong in a ruler's mind.*<sup>304</sup>

The thinkers of the Song Dynasty developed the teaching of Mencius about “correcting the ruler's mind”:

治道…… 從本而言，惟從格君心之非，正心以正朝廷，正朝廷以正百官。

<My translation> The root of the statecraft... lies in correcting the wrong of the emperor's mind, thereupon rectifying the government's policy and the officials' behavior.<sup>305</sup>

君仁莫不仁，君義莫不義，天下之治亂系乎人君仁不仁耳……格其非心，使無不正，非大人其孰能之？

<My translation> If the emperor is benevolent and righteous, his subjects will follow his example, the order and prosperity of the empire depend on whether

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<sup>303</sup> Zhu Xi, 2010, vol.20, 674, 675.

<sup>304</sup> *Mencius*, 4A20.

<sup>305</sup> Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, 1981, 165.

*the emperor is virtuous...Who can assume the responsibility of correcting the emperor's mind and making him just but the great men?*<sup>306</sup>

Therefore, when the literati deemed that any emperor did not observe Confucianism's moral codes, they began to "correct what is wrong in a ruler's mind." The more the monarch's commands violated the Confucian moral principles, the more strongly the literati resisted his commands. This confrontation between the monarch and the subjects recurred throughout Chinese history.

Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism (Cheng-Zhu Lixue 程朱理学)<sup>307</sup>, which was produced in the traditional rural society and widely accepted by the literati since the South Song Dynasty, gradually became a dominant ideology in the intellectual circle. After Zhu Yuanzhang established the Ming Dynasty, he did his utmost to promote the Cheng-Zhu school's thoughts. He declared that the imperial exams would follow the canon put forth by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130 – 1200)<sup>308</sup>, and in the imperial college (Taixue 太學), only the teachings of the Cheng-Zhu school would be taught.<sup>309</sup> Since then, the teachings of the Cheng-Zhu school began to have the same moral authority as the Confucian classics, which provided a standard for judging good and evil.

The Cheng-Zhu school was devoted to explaining the eternal Principle behind everything in the universe. That is to say, the entire universe, including human society, follows this Principle as a pattern that is constant and eternal. This Principle could also be called "Way (Dao 道)."<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 390.

<sup>307</sup> The Cheng-Zhu school 程朱理學 is one of the major philosophical schools of Neo-Confucianism, based on the ideas of the Neo-Confucian philosophers Cheng Yi 程頤, Cheng Hao 程顥, and Zhu Xi 朱熹, which all were philosophers in Song dynasty.

<sup>308</sup> Zhu Xi was a Chinese philosopher of the Southern Song Dynasty, who was the figure most responsible for what became orthodox Neo-Confucianism.

<sup>309</sup> Chen Ding, 1986, vol.2, 38.

<sup>310</sup> As Cheng Yi put it: Li is Dao. Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, 1981, 290.

Zhu Xi believed that the Principle, as a transcendental existence, went before and beyond human beings and social relations.<sup>311</sup> For the Cheng-Zhu school literati, the Principle was also the source of mundane ethical codes. The hierarchical relationships of the monarch and subject, the father and son, and the husband and wife are the embodiment of this Principle:

父當慈，子當孝，君當仁，臣當敬，此義也。所以慈孝，所以仁敬，則道也。

*<My translation> Father should be kind while son filial; The monarch should be benevolent while subject respectful...The ground of these relations lies in "Dao".*<sup>312</sup>

仁莫大于父子，義莫大於君臣，是謂三綱之要，五常之本，人倫天理之至，無所逃於天地之間。

*<My translation> The highest benevolence lies in the father and son relationship; the highest righteousness lies in the monarch and subject relationship. This is the essence of the ethical code, the ultimate "Principle", which no one in this world can forsake.*<sup>313</sup>

Zhu Xi also related the Principle with ritual propriety (Li 禮), endowing new meaning to the famous saying of Confucius, "Look not at what is contrary to propriety (fei-li-wu-shi 非禮勿視)" and indicating that the ethical behavior is in accordance to the Principle<sup>314</sup>.

It is clear that the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty valued the role of the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings in maintaining the social-political and moral order. Zhu Yuanzhang

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<sup>311</sup> Zhu Xi, 2010, vol.17, 3204.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 1725.

<sup>313</sup> Zhu Xi, 2010, vol.20, 633.

<sup>314</sup> Zhu Xi, 2010, vol.18, 3615.

promulgated decrees to urge his subjects to observe the Cheng-Zhu school's ethical codes, making himself the spokesman of the moral authority. With the support of Zhu Yuanzhang and his successors, the teachings of the Cheng-Zhu School became the moral standards for the Chinese literati in the Ming Dynasty. Furthermore, since the Principle was regarded as the eternal and universal truth,<sup>315</sup> and Zhu Xi himself equated the words of the Confucian sages to the Principle<sup>316</sup>, the Confucian Classics and the commentary of Zhu Xi were considered to possess the similar moral authority.

Therefore, for an extended period of time, no one dared to challenge the authority of the Confucian classics and the teachings of Cheng-Zhu. The famous Confucian Xue Xuan 薛瑄 (1389 – 1464) even declared that since Zhu Xi perfectly interpreted the Principle, there was no need to write books about it, and people should only do what he instructed.<sup>317</sup>

Nevertheless, as an official mainstream thought, the Cheng-Zhu school gradually failed to adjust to the rapidly changing society. Until the Zheng De 正德 era<sup>318</sup>, more and more literati realized the moral degeneracy and social-political crisis, which spurred them to ponder the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings. Some scholars criticized that the mental stagnation made the elites deficient in coping with the crisis. Clearly, they realized that these teachings could not serve to "correct what is wrong in a ruler's mind."

Further, some literati stated that the Principle was not an eternal truth. On the contrary, they argued that the Principle kept changing, and the norms of behavior should be adjusted according to the current social situation. Consequently, people should no longer blindly follow the old dogma.<sup>319</sup> As a result of this reflection, a critique of the mainstream thought spawned under social change.

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<sup>315</sup> Ge Zhaoguang, 2001, vol.3, 400.

<sup>316</sup> Zhu Xi, 2010, vol.14, 314, 315, 335.

<sup>317</sup> Zhang Tingyu, 1974, 7230.

<sup>318</sup> Literally Zheng De means "Right virtue" or "Rectification of virtue". It is the era name of the reign of Zhu Houzhao 朱厚熜 (1491 –1521), the 11th Emperor of the Ming Dynasty.

<sup>319</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit, 1963, 5.

Wang Yangming 王陽明<sup>320</sup> (1472 – 1529), an outstanding thinker and a practical politician, realized the problem existing in the mainstream thought and felt frustrated when he observed that most literati just follow the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings on the surface, yet without taking effective action to solve the social problems. In a letter, he shared his worries with a friend:

*“the teachings of the Sage became more and more distant and obscured, while the current of success and profit ran deeper and deeper..... For up to the present time it has been several thousand years since the poison of the doctrine of success and profit has infected the innermost recesses of man's mind and has become his second nature. People have mutually boasted of their knowledge, crushed one another with power, rivaled each other for profit, mutually striven for superiority through skill, and attempted success through fame.”*<sup>321</sup>

The Cheng-Zhu school teachings were no longer moral guidance for the elites but a tool to struggle for personal fame and gain. Wang Yangming painted a vivid picture of his contemporary literati:

*When they came forward to serve in the government, those in charge of the treasury wanted also to control the departments of military affairs and justice. Those in charge of ceremonies and music wanted also to have one foot in the important office of civil appointments. Magistrates and prefects aspired to the high office of a regional governor. And censors looked forward to the key position of the prime minister. Of course one could not take a concurrent position unless he could do the work and one could not expect any praise unless theories were advanced to justify the practice. Extensive memorization and recitation merely served to increase their pride, substantial and abundant knowledge merely served to help them do evil, enormous information merely*

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<sup>320</sup> The actual name this great thinker is Wang Shouren 王守仁, Wang Yangming is one of his courtesy names which is best remembered by people.

<sup>321</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit, 1963, 123.



*served to help them indulge in argumentation, and wealth in flowery compositions merely served to cover up their artificiality.... Using slogans and borrowing labels, they say they want to work together with others to complete the work of the empire. In reality their purpose lies in their belief that unless they do so they cannot satisfy their selfishness and fulfill their desires.*<sup>322</sup>

This kind of hypocrisy intoxicated social morality: For one thing, most literati were obsessed with chasing fame and fortune instead of acting in accord with the moral codes. For another thing, they still preached the moral teachings of the mainstream thoughts, which persisted in ascetic moral teachings. While the social stratification and the values changed due to economic development, the mainstream thought was no longer adjusted to social reality. Instead of providing moral guidance, people only saw that the teachings of Cheng-Zhu school produced moral hypocrisy. The position of the teachings of Cheng-Zhu school as the moral authority was shaken.

#### 4.1.2 The decline of the moral authority

The moral decline and the social crisis were burning issues for the Chinese elites such as Wang Yangming. He exclaimed that “the world today has long been morally degenerate. It does not differ from a sick man approaching death.”<sup>323</sup> He noticed that the literati no longer paid attention to moral development. Instead of moral cultivation, most educated dedicated their time and energy to studying the texts of the Confucian classics:

*...the learning of textual criticism developed and those perpetuating it were regarded as famous. The practice of memorization and recitation developed and those advocating it were regarded as extensively learned. The writing of flowery compositions developed and those indulging in it were regarded as elegant. Thus with great confusion and tremendous noise they set themselves up and competed with one another, and no one knew how many schools there were.*

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Wang Yangming and Julia Ching, 1972, 23.

*Among tens of thousands of paths and thousands of tracks, none knew which to follow. Students of the world found themselves in a theater where a hundred plays were being presented, as it were. Actors cheered, jeered, hopped, and skipped. They emulated one another in novelty and in ingenuity. They forced smiles to please the audience and competed in appearing beautiful. All this rivalry appeared on all sides. The audience looked to the left and to the right and could not cope with the situation. Their ears and eyes became obscured and dizzy and their spirit dazed and confused. They drifted day and night and remained for a long time in this atmosphere as if they were insane and had lost their minds, and none had the self-realization to return to his family heritage [Confucianism]. Rulers of the time were also fooled and confounded by those doctrines and devoted their whole lives to useless superficialities without knowing what they meant.<sup>324</sup>*

Faced with this situation, Wang Yangming tried to shift people's attention from "learning of textual criticism" back to moral development. Moreover, he resolved to eliminate hypocrisy, dissuade people from following the moral teachings professedly but actually seeking fame and gain. Therefore, he set his mind on averting people's attention from the external moral codes of Principle to human inner moral consciousness. According to him, people should search deeply in their heart-mind instead of following the principle blindly when it comes to moral judgments. Wang Yangming emphasized the importance of the heart-mind (xin 心) by saying that there was no difference between the Principle and the heart-mind, which people already possessed and contained within it the moral principles. He explained to his disciples about his doctrine on "heart-mind being identical with Principle":

*Why should I now declare that the mind is identical with principle? Simply because people of the world divide the mind and principle into two, thus giving rise to many defects and evils. ....people always admire the deeds of the powerful despots. They just want their deeds to look good on the outside and*

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<sup>324</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit, 1963, 122.

*completely ignore the relationship to the mind. They divide the mind and principle into two and unwittingly drift into the insincerity which is characteristic of the way of despots. Therefore I talk about the identification of the mind and principle so people will know that mind and principle are one and devote their efforts to the mind instead of accumulating individual acts of righteousness externally. This is the essence of the kingly way of moral principles. This is the basic purpose of my founding the doctrine.”<sup>325</sup>*

Before Wang Yangming indicated the importance of the heart-mind, almost all literati stated that the Principle was their ultimate guidance. Nonetheless, as the master of the heart-mind pointed out, obedience to the Principles was a mere formality for most of them. Although they studied the classics, observed nature, and gained knowledge, their behaviors were still immoral. Wang Yangming tried to make people understand that the bits of knowledge they got from the classics and the world could not help their moral development. Only the heart-mind could make them virtuous. He said:

*Fortunately, the Principle of Nature is inherent in the human mind and can never be destroyed and the intelligence of innate knowledge shines through eternity without variation. Therefore when they hear my doctrine of pulling up the root and stopping up the source, surely some will be pitifully distressed and compassionately pained, and will indignantly rise up, like a stream or a river which cannot be stopped, bursting its banks. To whom shall I look if not to heroic scholars who will rise up without further delay?<sup>326</sup>*

The so-called “pulling up the root and stopping up the source 拔本塞源(Ba Ben Se Yuan)” was the base stone of Wang Yangming’s moral philosophy. He expected the world to realize that the saints’ heart-mind was full of universal fraternity and free from the eclipse of desires. He illustrated that everyone possessed the same heart-mind as the saints, whereas the own ego blinded them. This own ego was regarded as the “root” and

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<sup>325</sup> Ibid., 251-252.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 124.

“source” of the moral crisis by Wang Yangming and needed to be “pulled up”. For this purpose, he planned to construct a new moral system that could adapt to the ever-changing society and solve the crisis.

Thus, he urged people to rediscover the heart-mind. According to Wang Yangming, the separation of the heart-mind and the principle of things caused the moral calamity. He persuaded people not to “seek the supreme good” on external things and stated that “there is no object, no event, no moral principle, no righteousness, and no good that lies outside the mind.”<sup>327</sup> By declaring Principle and heart-mind are united, Wang Yangming further suggested that people follow their heart-mind to judge between right and wrong. In a letter to his friend Wang Yangming emphasized that the essence of moral judgment was the heart-mind:

眾皆以為是，苟求之心而未會焉，未敢以為是也；眾皆以為非，苟求之心而未契焉，未敢以為非也。

*<My translation> If one reflects upon something that others consider correct without finding that it agrees in his mind, he does not dare to believe that it is correct. Again, if one reflects upon something that others consider to be incorrect and in his mind finds it correct, he does not dare to acknowledge that it is incorrect.*<sup>328</sup>

In the teachings of Wang Yangming, the personal subjective will began to be valued. He reinterpreted the idea about the innate knowledge of good (Liangzhi 良知)<sup>329</sup> from *Mencius* to explained how heart-mind functions:

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<sup>327</sup> Wang Yangming and Julia Ching, 1972, 29.

<sup>328</sup> Wang Yangming, 2008, 326. This thesis referred the translation of Julia Ching in her *The philosophical letters of Wang Yangming*.

<sup>329</sup> Philip Ivanhoe translate Liangzhi as “pure knowing”, See Ivanhoe, 2009, 105. Yet in this thesis this term is translated as “the innate knowledge of good” or “the innate knowledge” to emphasizing its meaning about morality.

*The mind is naturally able to know. When it perceives the parents, it naturally knows that one should be filial. When it perceives the elder brother, it naturally knows that one should be respectful. And when it perceives a child fall into a well, it naturally knows that one should be commiserative. This is innate knowledge of good and need not be sought outside.*<sup>330</sup>

The so-called innate knowledge of good was regarded as the heart-mind's original state by Wang Yangming.<sup>331</sup> Additionally, he asserted that innate knowledge was not equal to good itself, but the heart-mind's ability to distinguish good from evil. In other words, the function of innate knowledge is like a mirror, which is not good or evil, but can reflect good and evil and make people see clearly:

*The substance of his innate knowledge is as clear as a bright mirror without any slight obscuration. Whether a beautiful or an ugly object appears, it reflects it as it comes, without anything being left behind on the bright mirror itself.*<sup>332</sup>

According to Wang Yangming, studying the classics or investigating the principles behind everything, which was the core idea of the Cheng-Zhu school, could not guide people to be virtuous. On the contrary, these doings might have made people deviate from the path to the good.

He urged people to pay more attention to their moral cultivation and suggested that people should use the innate knowledge to judge good and evil, right and wrong. This is so-called “extending the innate knowledge 致良知”:

*Although in the task of study, inquiry, thinking, sifting, and earnest practice, those who learn through hard work and practice with effort and difficulty have to exert a hundred times as much effort as others, when the task is fully*

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<sup>330</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit. 1963, 15.

<sup>331</sup> Chen Lai, 1991, 82-83.

<sup>332</sup> Wang Yangming and Chan Wing-tsit. 1963, 148

*extended to the point of fully developing one's nature and knowing Heaven, it is no more than extending the innate knowledge of one's mind to the utmost. Is there anything, even an iota, to be added to innate knowledge? Now if we insist on investigating all the principles in the world to the utmost and do not know how to return and seek within our mind, then, aside from the innate knowledge of our mind, what is there to carry out the examination of what you have called the activating power of good and evil and the discrimination of truth and falsehood?*<sup>333</sup>

Believing and using the moral insight within the heart-mind constituted the essence of the teachings of Wang Yangming. Marked by the heart-mind replacing the Principle, the rival idealistic school of Cheng-Zhu—Yangmingism— was founded.

Obviously, there was a fundamental disagreement in moral philosophy between Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming: The philosopher from the Song Dynasty believed that people are incapable of recognizing the Principle, or the ultimate Pattern. Thus they have to try their utmost to study the classic texts and follow the sages' guidance. Wang Yangming, on the other hand, did not approve of Zhu Xi's approach as the way of moral cultivation. He insisted that people have the capacity to realize their moral nature and become sage through the guidance of innate knowledge. For this reason, compared with Zhu Xi's constant emphasis on studying the classics and the sages' words, Wang Yangming encouraged people to look for the answers and guidance in themselves, rather than relying on anything external. He claimed in his poem:

千聖皆過影，良知乃吾師。

<My translation> *The thousand sages are all passing shadows; only the innate knowledge is my mentor.*<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>334</sup> Wang Yangming, 1992, 796.

Wang Yangming criticized the dogmatism of the Cheng-Zhu school and asserted that people should have independent thinking when they make moral judgments:

*The important thing in learning is to acquire learning through the exercise of the mind. If words are examined in the mind and found to be wrong, although they have come from the mouth of Confucius, I dare not accept them as correct. How much less those from people inferior to Confucius! If words are examined in the mind and found to be correct, although they have come from the mouth of ordinary people, I dare not regard them as wrong. How much less those of Confucius.*<sup>335</sup>

In sum, as a result of Wang Yangming and his followers' criticism of dogmatism, the traditional moral values of the Cheng-Zhu school were questioned, the shackles of doctrines of the Cheng-Zhu school began to be loosened. On the other hand, Yangmingism underlined the moral nature of Principle and equated it with the heart-mind. Consequently, the literati began to appeal to their heart-mind to be their guide. The Principle became less relevant to them in the process of determining right or wrong.

To make a moral judgment based on innate knowledge of the heart-mind instead of the judgment of the moral icons such as Confucius was not only a significant contribution to ideological emancipation but also marked a tremendous breakthrough in Chinese intellectual history.<sup>336</sup> The personal feelings and judgments began to be recognized; the social values diversified.<sup>337</sup> In a word, the teachings of Wang Yangming produced an enormous impact on the trend of thought in the Chinese empire. Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555 – 1636), the famous thinker and art theorist of the late Ming, once described the changes in the ideological sphere of his time:

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<sup>335</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>336</sup> Historians such as Yu Yingshi 余英时 asserted that the teachings of Wang Yangming as the fourth breakthrough in the intellectual Chinese history, for more details please refer to Yu Yingshi, 2012, 22-23.

<sup>337</sup> Chen Baoliang, 2014, 281.

成弘間，師無異道，士無異學，程朱之書立於掌故，稱大一統……理學之變而師心也，自東越始也……濂洛、考亭幾為搖撼。

<My translation> In the reigns of Chenghua 成化 and Hongzhi 弘治, there were no divergences in the teachings. The canon of the Cheng-Zhu School is based on the traditional classics and was challenged by no one... Wang Yangming started the trend of modifying Neo-Confucianism, and following the guidance of the heart-mind,... the teachings of Cheng-Zhu school was almost demolished by him.<sup>338</sup>

After Wang Yangming, the social changes in late Ming China fueled the decline of traditional moral values. His canon was also modified to adjust the social circumstance. Wang Yangming once left a four-sentence-teaching to his disciples:

*In the original substance of the mind, there is no distinction of good and evil. When the will becomes active, however, such distinction exists. The faculty of innate knowledge is to know good and evil. The investigation of things is to do good and remove evil.*<sup>339</sup>

The statement of “in the original substance of the mind there is no distinction between good and evil” does not mean that there are no moral values as good and evil, or there is no difference between them. Wang Yangming intended to emphasize that the heart-mind is transcendent and above the empirical world. As a judge of good and evil, or as a mirror that reflects good and evil, the hear-mind could not take sides. Moral good and evil appear when people begin to make decisions, which only happens in the empirical world. Since then, people could make moral development through learning and cultivation.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Dong Qichang, 1997, vol.1, 260.

<sup>339</sup> Chan Wing-Tsit, 2008, 686.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid., 689.



Wang Longxi 王龍溪 (1498 – 1583), one of Wang Yangming’s principal disciple, reworded this teaching as:

*If we say that in the original substance of the mind there is no distinction between good and evil, then there must be no such distinction in the will, in knowledge, and in things.*<sup>341</sup>

This modification on the four-sentence-teaching suggested that the whole process of the mind’s activity was spontaneous and not attached to the existing moral judgment. Wang Longxi believed that the heart-mind’s original state, which was conferred by Heaven, was pure, active, and free of the shackle of the redundant moral teachings. Thus the mind should not have any attachment to existence, and people should let the mind follow its own spontaneous flow of action, uninfluenced by external things.<sup>342</sup> Once people realized the teachings about good and evil, the heart-mind’s original state was lost, and their motivation for good was no longer pure.

By underling that “there is no distinction between good and evil”, he tried to persuade people not to deliberately or even deceptively do good and remove evil according to others’ words. Wang Longxi intended to avoid setting up a *priori* good or give a specific definition of good<sup>343</sup>. Obviously, he valued people’s goodwill instead of their good deed or their teachings to do good. In short, compared with his mentor, Wang Longxi paid more attention to the intuitive awakening. Therefore, people could follow the moral insight of their heart-mind and genuinely do good. As more and more literati accepted the teachings of Wang Yangming and Wang Longxi, they began to question if they still needed moral authority.

As the U.S. scholar Willard Peterson commented, the teachings of Wang Yangming and Wang Longxi about heart-mind and innate knowledge created “an environment amenable

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<sup>341</sup> Ibid. 687.

<sup>342</sup> Feng Youlan, 1983, vol.2, 625.

<sup>343</sup> Yuzo Mizoguchi, 1997, 195.

to a dramatic exponent of relativism, Li Chih.”<sup>344</sup> Li Chih, or Li Zhi, inherited the revolutionary ideas of the two Wangs. The Chinese historian Hou Wailu 侯外廬 argued that Li Zhi represented the newly rising urban bourgeois class’s interests against state authority.<sup>345</sup> This rebellious thinker’s thoughts were formed in the Wanli era when the social changes and turbulence were aggravated. Zhang Juzheng 張居正(1525 – 1582), who served as the Grand Secretary in the early years of the reign of Wanli, described the ever-changing moral codes of people:

故有在昔以為善，而在今以為不善者矣；有在此以為善，在彼為不善者矣。

<My translation> *There are things regarded as good in the past, yet as evil at present; There are also things regarded as good by one, yet as evil by another.*<sup>346</sup>

Li Zhi shared the same opinion with this illustrious politician:

*Disputes about right and wrong are just like the passing of the four seasons or the alternating of day and night; never do these become one. Yesterday it was right, today it is wrong; today it is wrong, and tomorrow it is once again right. Even if Confucius and Zixia 子夏<sup>347</sup> were to be reborn again in these times, I am not sure what kinds of judgments of right and wrong they would make. So how can people rashly issue blame and praise based on what Confucius is supposed to have said in the Spring and Autumn Annals.*<sup>348</sup>

Times change, thereupon the old social norms and the old moral standards are incompatible with present needs. Li Zhi spoke highly of the teachings of Wang

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<sup>344</sup> Peterson, 1998, 745.

<sup>345</sup> Hou Wailu, 1957, 4:B.

<sup>346</sup> Zhang Juzheng, 1935, 671.

<sup>347</sup> Zi Xia is the courtesy name of Bu Shang 卜商 (507–c. 420 BC), a prominent disciple of Confucius.

<sup>348</sup> Li Zhi, 2016, 318.

Yangming. Of all his disciples, Li Zhi expressed extreme respect to Wang Longxi, praising him as the “leading Confucian of our great dynasty possessed the compassionate vision of a bodhisattva, which extended to both the celestial and terrestrial realms.”<sup>349</sup> The same as Wang Longxi, Li Zhi placed greater emphasis on the spontaneous actions of the heart-mind. He insisted that only if the heart-mind was genuine, the people were motivated purely by their sense of moral duty, instead of a personal gain of fame or other motivations. Consequently, there was a moral worth in his/her behaviors. For this reason, he approved the statement of “no distinction between good and evil” by saying:

夫人本至活也，故其善為至善，而其德為明德也。至善者，無善無不善之謂也。惟無善無不善乃為至善。……若執一定之說……是執一也。

*<My translation> The nature of human is quite flexible. Accordingly, their good is the highest good (Zhishan 至善), and their virtue is illustrious virtue (Mingde 明德). The highest good is precisely neither good nor bad. Only because it is neither good nor evil, it can be the highest good.... If someone insists that there is a defined good...He is clinging to this ready-made doctrine, which would do harm to the Dao.* <sup>350</sup>

To have a genuine will to do good or to keep themselves purely motivated by their goodwill, people needed to give up their obsession with the already-made moral principles. Li Zhi called this genuine will “the childlike heart-mind (TongXin 童心).” He defined it as follows:

*The childlike heart-mind is the genuine heart-mind. If one considers the childlike heart-mind unacceptable, then he considers the genuine heart-mind unacceptable. As for the childlike heart-mind, free from all falsehood and entirely genuine, it is the original mind at the very beginning of the first thought. If one loses one’s childlike heart-mind, one loses the genuine heart-*

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<sup>349</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>350</sup> Li Zhi, 2010, vol.6. 466.

*mind. Losing the genuine mind is losing the genuine self. A person who is not genuine will never regain that with which he began.*<sup>351</sup>

He indicated that the Principle was not universal and unalterable. On the contrary, it was individual and ever-changing.<sup>352</sup> “As long as the childlike heart-mind is preserved, the Principles of the Way will not be endlessly perpetuated,” Li Zhi added.<sup>353</sup> Sometimes Li Zhi even interpreted the Principle as the “Principles of the Way 道理”, which was merely some empirical principles such as moral codes and customs. Therefore, he warned that people should be vigilant not to let the Principle replace the childlike heart-mind:

*From the beginning, sounds and sights enter through our ears and eyes. When one allows them to dominate what is within oneself, then the childlike heart-mind is lost. As one grows older, one hears and sees the “Principles of the Way” [i.e., moral teachings]. When one allows these to dominate what is within oneself, then the childlike heart-mind is lost. As one grows older, the “Principles of the Way” that one hears and sees increase day by day; what one knows and senses thus also increases daily. In time one comes to believe it is desirable to covet a good reputation and one endeavors to enhance one’s reputation; one’s childlike heart-mind is then lost.*<sup>354</sup>

According to Li Zhi, the Principle was not a universal and eternal truth. He underlined that this childlike heart-mind did not come from studying the Principle, because even if the sages of antiquity “did not study books, their childlike heart-mind was secure and at ease.” The purpose of the study was merely protecting their childlike heart-minds from being lost. Li Zhi did not try to persuade people to close their eyes and cover their ears, neither to cut their contact with the outside world, but to criticize the stubbornness of some literati who clung conservatively to the old system.

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<sup>351</sup> Li, Zhi. 2016, 107.

<sup>352</sup> Li Zhi, 2010, vol.14, 271.

<sup>353</sup> Li Zhi. 2016, 108.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid., 107.

For this reason, he asserted that there was no determined standard for moral judgment and stated that people could have their own standards, which were produced by their childlike heart-mind:

*Concerning what people view as right and wrong, there is no determined standard. As for people judging others as right or wrong, here too there is no established view. If standards are not determined, then what this person views as right and that as wrong are both nurtured; they are not in contention. If there exists no established view, then judging this as right and that as wrong are also simply two views; they do not work against each other....With the later three dynasties—the Han, Tang, and Song—the time spanned is over eleven hundred years, and yet throughout there was no person to set down authoritative judgments of right and wrong. But could it be that these people held no views on what was right and wrong? No. Rather, it was simply that every single person accepted Confucius’s views on right and wrong as what indeed was right and wrong; never did anyone pronounce a judgment of right or wrong.<sup>355</sup>*

Li Zhi ridiculed people who followed Confucius’s judgment blindly, saying that “although people possess eyes, nobody uses them.”<sup>356</sup> Further, he deliberately challenged the authority of Confucius classics:

*As for the Six Classics, the Analects, and the Mencius, if they are not words of overdone reverence from official historians, they are phrases of bloated praise from loyal subjects. If not one or the other, then they are what misguided followers and dim-witted disciples wrote down of what they recalled their teacher had said. What they wrote had a beginning but was missing an ending; or the followers remembered the conclusion but forgot the introduction. These disciples put down in writing whatever they happened to see. Later scholars did*

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<sup>355</sup> Ibid., 317-318.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 290.

*not scrutinize these writings. They simply declared that these words came directly from the mouths of sages and decided to establish them as great classics. Who knows whether more than half these writings are not words from the mouths of sages?*

*Even if these words are those of the sages, still, they were uttered in response to a specific situation. This is much like the case of prescribing a medication for a particular illness, applying a specific remedy depending on the circumstances in order to cure this dim-witted disciple or that misguided follower. The medicine prescribed depends on the illness; surely there is no fixed and unchanging prescription. Given this, how could we hastily accept these writings as the perfected doctrine for endless generations? And so, the Six Classics, the Analects, and the Mencius have become nothing more than a crib sheet for those belonging to the School of Principle, a fountainhead for phonies. It would be utterly impossible to describe such writings with the label of “childlike heart-mind.”<sup>357</sup>*

In comparison with Wang Yangming and Wang Longxi, Li Zhi had a strong spirit of rebellion. He opposed absolutism and called for diversified values; he opposed setting standards for moral values and the meaning of life. Further, repeatedly he stated that people should be responsible for themselves, relying on their childish heart-mind to make their own moral standards. Someone asked him which teachings he followed, Neo-Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, or legalists' teachings? Li Zhi denied all of them by saying he only follows his own thoughts.<sup>358</sup>

By questioning the moral teachings of the Confucian classics, Li Zhi showed to everyone that, as independent individuals, they no longer needed a super moral legislator or moral standards; By making subversive comments on the historical figures and undermining the moral messages encoded in those canonical narratives, he showed his determination to

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 109-110.

<sup>358</sup> Lv Kun, 1997, 42.

revalue all moral principles. In the view of this rebellious philosopher, only in this way could an individual's life values be demonstrated.

In sum, after seeing the moral crisis, Wang Yangming tried to use his teachings to rectify the mainstream thoughts, which triggered a significant change in Chinese philosophy. Represented by Wang Longxi and Li Zhi, the teachings about the heart-mind and innate knowledge were well-accepted among the literati. The individual's moral judgment became increasingly important. Theodore de Bary even took the teachings of Li Zhi as individualism.<sup>359</sup> Consequently, the Principle was not regarded as an eternal truth. The Confucian classics and the Cheng-Zhu school teachings, which were believed to carry the Principle or even equate with the Principle itself, were widely questioned. The traditional moral authority declined.

#### 4.1.3 Moral subjectivism and its critics in late Ming China

To solve the moral crisis, Wang Yangming started a new school of moral teaching to rectify malpractices and save the manners and morals of the time. Meanwhile, his teachings about the heart-mind and the innate knowledge challenged moral authority. Even though the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings remained the official mainstream thought, a growing number of Chinese literati accepted the teachings of Wang Yangming. As Wang Longxi and Li Zhi, the following philosophers developed his teaching, emphasizing the heart-mind's independence.

Still and all, there was a question about the heart-mind that remained unanswered: how could it provided objective moral standards and support the moral order? If there were no objective moral standards, what could stop people from acting as their pleases? Therefore, as time went by, while the moral crisis was still not solved, some literati began to criticize the teachings of Wang Yangming. Gu Xiancheng, the founder of the Donglin Academy, said:

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<sup>359</sup> De Bary, 1970, 145-225.

陽明先生開發有餘，收斂不足，當士人桎梏于訓詁辭章間，驟而聞良知之說，一時心目俱醒，況若撥雲霧而間白日，豈不大快！然而此竅一鑿，混沌遂亡。往往憑虛見而弄精魂，任自然而藐兢業。凌夷至今，議論益玄，習尚益下……仁人君子又相顧裴回，喟然太息，以為倡始者亦不能無遺慮焉，而追惜之。

*<My translation> Master Yangming created a whole new dimension in the philosophy but failed to maintain the traditional values. When the literati were shackled in the Confucian classics' textual study, they were enlightened by the teachings about innate knowledge. The joy they felt was like dispelling the clouds and finally seeing the sun. Nevertheless, since this source of the disaster appeared, Hun Dun was dead. Lots of literati talked about their mind and spirit with their idle words, following their will without restraint and ignoring the ethical efforts. Now things are getting worse, and the teachings are deliberately mystifying, the conducts of the literati are immoral. .... The virtuous people grieved about the situation and sighed while thinking that the one who started all this would also feel regretful.<sup>360</sup>*

Here Gu Xiancheng used an ancient Chinese parable about “Hundun (*Hun-tun*) 混沌” to comment on influence caused by the teachings of Wang Yangming:

*The emperor of the South Sea was called Shu [Brief], the emperor of the North Sea was called Hu [Sudden], and the emperor of the central region was called Hun-tun [Chaos]. Shu and Hu from time to time came together for a meeting in the territory of Hun-tun, and Hun-tun treated them very generously. Shu and Hu discussed how they could repay his kindness. “All men,” they said, “have seven openings so they can see, hear, eat, and breathe. But Hun-tun alone*

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<sup>360</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 1975, vol.3, 62-63.



*doesn't have any. Let's try boring him some!" Every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died.*<sup>361</sup>

Obviously, Gu Xiancheng believed that Wang Yangming, as Shu and Hu, did something terribly wrong with good intentions. Hundun is an analogy to the moral authority of traditional moral standards. In the mind of Gu Xiancheng, it was "killed" by the teachings about the heart-mind, and since then, ridiculous ideas and behaviors emerged.

As Gu Xiancheng pointed out, Wang Yangming's teachings produced the most influential intellectual movements in late Ming China because people revolted the Cheng-Zhu school's traditional moral standards. In particular, the wrongdoings under cover of the traditional moral values even made people associate it with rigidity and hypocrisy. Li Zhi mocked the ones who preached moral teachings and simultaneously used dirty tricks for their self-interest, accusing these hypocrites "cloak and gown themselves in Confucian dignity yet comport themselves like dogs and swine."<sup>362</sup> Another famous litterateur named Yuan Hongdao also said that he "rather make friend with a genuine thief than a corrupted Confucian."<sup>363</sup> Therefore, some literati hope to subvert the traditional moral authority and declare that they would no longer blindly follow the sages' words. In other words, they chose not to be the slave of collective morality but the master of personal judgment. Furthermore, Li Zhi and the literati who shared similar ideas emphasized sincerity as a crucial ethical code. They encouraged people to act based on their sincere judgment and required everyone to be true to themselves and live honestly instead of imitating others and yielding to external pressure.

When everyone was allowed to answer what was moral and immoral, someone might have thought that there was no need to refer to collective or social requirements when they made their moral judgments. In other words, moral principles varied from person to person. In this sense, the universality of morality no longer existed. Consequently, the moral teachings of Li Zhi turned into moral subjectivism.

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<sup>361</sup> Chuang Tzu and Watson, 1968, 97.

<sup>362</sup> Li Zhi. 2016, 281.

<sup>363</sup> Zhang Yi, 2006, 508.

Besides, since the heart-mind's function was based on the innate knowledge under specific circumstances, a question remained to be answered: what if the innate knowledge was affected by their mundane desires and feelings (qing-shi 情識)? A late Ming philosopher named Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 complained:

今天下爭言良知矣，及其弊也，倡狂者參之以情識，而一是皆良。

*<My translation> In the present day, everyone clamors about the innate knowledge, that raises a problem: the radical ones mixed the innate knowledge with mundane feelings, with the result that everything is good in their opinion.<sup>364</sup>*

Many literati regarded sincerity as the most important moral value. The same as Li Zhi, these literati were tired of living in the grip of the Cheng-Zhu school's ascetic teachings. They tried to rebel against traditional moral principles and laud people's genuine feelings and natural desires. For example, Luo Rufang 羅汝芳 praised the spontaneous expression of feelings as follows:

*What child at birth does not long to suckle at the mother's breast? Or desire to be held by her father? What father or mother is not fond of holding and nourishing his or her child? What brother or sister does not enjoy watching and protecting his or her little brother or sister? Humans possess this goodness, a natural disposition (liang shan 良善).<sup>365</sup>*

Since expressing one's feeling sincerely was considered to be good, people no longer hid their desires. The same as Luo Rufang, He Xinyin 何心隱 also stated that enjoying good food, beauty, melodious sound, and comfort is human nature.<sup>366</sup> Another philosopher

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<sup>364</sup> Liu Zongzhou, 2012, vol.3, 248.

<sup>365</sup> Pauline C Lee, 2012, 57.

<sup>366</sup> Liang Ruyuan, 2002, 639.

named Yan Jun 顏鈞 indicated that it was harmful to restrain one's desire by saying, "People are found of money and women because of their nature. These instinct behaviors... cannot be restrained", therefore, he said, "restrain the desire is not practicing Ren", "the way to practice Ren is follow the desire of the heart-mind."<sup>367</sup>

Li Zhi believed that the desires originated by genuine feelings were the fundamental component of human nature and these genuine desires were precisely the motivation for people to create a good life. He wrote:

*Human beings necessarily are self-interested, and their heart-minds are comprised of these interests. Without self-interest, there is no heart-mind. If a farmer self-interestedly desires to bring in a harvest in the fall, he will exert all his efforts in tilling the fields. If one who governs a household self-interestedly desires to grow wealthy, he will exert all his efforts in managing his estate. If one who pursues learning self-interestedly desires the rewards due to an official, he will exert all his efforts in preparing for the Civil Service Examinations. If a bureaucrat is not given emoluments, even if he is summoned to take an official position he will not accept. If a person is not esteemed with a high rank, then even if he is urged to take the position, he will certainly not respond. Even with a sage such as Kongzi, if he were not given the position of the Minister of Justice and the duty of an acting prime minister, certainly he would not settle down in the state of Lu for even one day. This is the way things naturally are.*<sup>368</sup>

Therefore, Li Zhi always spoke highly of this "self-interestedness (Zisi 自私)." He once alleged that "I lecture self-interestedness based on my self-interest heart-mind and I act only to get pleasure despite the criticism of others."<sup>369</sup> He also told one of his friends that

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<sup>367</sup> Yan Jun, 1996, 82.

<sup>368</sup> Pauline C Lee, 2012, 65.

<sup>369</sup> Li Zhi, 1975, 265.

“I write only to amuse myself, not for other people.”<sup>370</sup> On this ground, everyone was free to pursue what he truly desires. He once elaborated his ideas in a letter:

*The variety of people and things in this world are countless. If one wants all these people and things to abide by one's methods, then heaven and earth would not be able to function... Each person pursues what he zealously desires, and each person seeks to pursue what he is good at.* “<sup>371</sup>

By declaring that no standard in the world was more authoritative than the personal ones, the human instinct to satisfy the desires was rationalized by Li Zhi. Since he envisioned that people were born with fully developed virtues lacking nothing, nothing was immoral if people spontaneously expressed their genuine feelings. As he dramatically claimed:

成佛征聖，惟在心明，本心若明，雖一日受千金而不為貪，一夜樂十女不為淫也。

<My translation> *To become a Buddha or sage, you just need to clear your heart-mind. When the heart-mind is clear, you cannot be corrupted even you accepted a thousand taels in one day, not be licentious even you have sex with ten women in one night.* <sup>372</sup>

This shocking statement suggested that he took genuineness as the most important moral value. Further, these words of Li Zhi implied that hedonism was quite popular among the literati. Indeed, if the moral standards were verified and the moral judgments were only relative to individuals' standpoint, it was logical that some literati called for leading a life of pleasure. In the second chapter, the social changes that occurred in the late Ming period were discussed. Under the influences of such social changes. The literati gradually deviated from the traditional Confucians' pursuit of perfect morality; instead, they sought

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<sup>370</sup> Li, Zhi. 2016, 109-110.

<sup>371</sup> Pauline C Lee, 2012, 65.

<sup>372</sup> Zhou Yingbin, 1976, vol.2, 165.

the enjoyment of life. This social environment provided support for the acceptance and development of Li Zhi's theory.

Consequently, these teachings of Li Zhi were also used to defend the hedonic behaviors. For example, Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道(1568 – 1610), who was a close friend to Li Zhi, stated that people should enjoy pleasure in good time and die without anything to regret:

*To see with one's eyes all the most sensuous sights of the world, to hear with one's ears all its most beautiful sounds, to taste all the world's delicacies and to join in all the most interesting conversations... Within one's hall, to have food-laden vessels arrayed in the front and music being played in the background; to have one's table crowded with guests and the shoes of men and women scattered everywhere; for the smoke of the lanterns to rise to the heavens and for jewelry to be strewn across the floor...*<sup>373</sup>

When all external ideals, moral values were cast away, the satisfaction of the senses created new meanings for life. In late Ming China, erotic novels, paintings, and aphrodisiacs were quite popular on the market. The brothels were flourishing, and a group of famous courtesans appeared. Many nobles and wealthy merchants kept their music performers, singers, and dancers. Human desire gained society's approval during this period, and any sexual form was tolerated or even condoned.<sup>374</sup>

Meanwhile, the conservative literati frown upon this phenomenon. Some seemed Li Zhi as the initiator of evil:

今日士風倡狂，實開於此。全不讀‘四書’本經，而李氏《藏書》、《焚書》，人夾一冊，以為奇貨。

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<sup>373</sup> See the original text in Yuan Hongdao, 1976, 922; See the translation in Cambell, 2002, 173-174.

<sup>374</sup> Wu Cuncun, 2000, 3.

*<My translation> The extremely conceited general mood of the literati began with the prevalence of the teaching of Li Zhi, instead of reading the classics Four Books, every educated man keeps a copy of A Book to Burn and A Book to hide.”<sup>375</sup>*

That is to say, in late Ming China, a vast divergence among the literati emerged because one side advocated the spiritual value of intuitionism and cheered for the liberation from the shackles of the traditional moral values. In contrast, the other side was worried about hedonism and called for moral cultivation.

As a matter of fact, this divergence went back to the discussion on innate knowledge between the two principal disciples Wang Longxi and Qian Dehong 錢德洪 (1496 – 1574). Wang Longxi suggested that “the innate knowledge appears and exists in all people.” He called it “Xianzai Liangzhi 現在良知”, which means the present innate knowledge. Wang Longxi emphasized that people were born with the capability of making moral judgments, and they should trust their intuitions. On the other hand, Qian Dehong took moral cognition as an acquired ability, which needed to be perfected by constant cultivation through learning and constraining the desire. Only by then people could function as moral-capable sentients. The dispute between Wang and Qian was never settled. Accordingly, the teachings of Wang Yangming were separated and developed in two different directions.

The followers of Wang Longxi twisted the teachings about the hear-mind and innate knowledge by saying that innate knowledge was already made in everyone, i.e., the so-called “Xiancheng Liangzhi 現成良知”.<sup>376</sup> They ignored the importance of moral cultivation and believed that there was no need to restrain the desire since the innate knowledge was already developed in everyone. With the ideas of the childish heart-mind, Li Zhi was one prominent voice among them.

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<sup>375</sup> Zhu Guozhen, 2005, 3483.

<sup>376</sup> Bo Mou, 2008, 439.

Meanwhile, the literati who favored the opinions of Qian Dehong warned that the moral cultivation could not be ignored or human desires could taint the innate knowledge.<sup>377</sup> In addition to criticizing that Li Zhi intoxicated the social custom and bewitched lots of literati, they analyzed why the teachings of Li Zhi were popular:

人心誰不欲為聖賢，顧舞台聖賢礙手耳。今渠謂酒色財氣，一切不礙，菩提路有此便宜事，誰不從之？

*<My translation> Who does not want to be a sage? It just takes arduous ethical efforts to reach that realm. Li Zhi stated that wine, women, avarice, and pride — the four cardinal vices would not negatively influence people's morals, making people believe that it is so simple to become a sage. Who would not listen to his doctrine?<sup>378</sup>*

It is clear that the opponents of Li Zhi required people to make efforts for moral cultivation and restrain their desires. For example, Luo Hongxian 羅洪先 (1504 – 1564) indicated that through ethical efforts, people could make the heart-mind go back to the state of tranquility (jing 靜), which was free from the disturb of desires. He described his experience of the utmost tranquility:

*Once in the utmost tranquility, I feel as if my heart went completely vacuous and infinitely expansive. It is like the vast sky, where free flows of clouds and vapor knows no bounds; and it is like the immense ocean, in which fish could turn instantly into dragons and dragons into fish. To it, all distinctions, be they between the internal and the external or between Activity and Tranquility, become absolutely irrelevant. In it, all spatial and temporal dimensions are merged, hence its presence is nowhere, at no time, and yet ubiquitous of all ages. As a medium [of this bean], my body is of course not confined by its physical form. When I look afar and listen attentively, the sphere of my*

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<sup>377</sup> Zhang Xuezhi, 2000, 140.

<sup>378</sup> Huang Zongxi 2008, 347.

*perception can therefore outrange even the entire universe. And when my heart is tranquilized, nothing in the universe escapes my thoughts. The ancients are gone. but my spirit starts where theirs ends. (In this sense, the ancients) are never gone....* <sup>379</sup>

According to Luo Hongxian, this mysterious experience was premised by the elimination of desires:

昔洪先所尝着力者，以无欲为主。辨欲之有无，以当下此心微微觉处为主。此觉处甚微，非志切与气定，即不自见。

*<My translation> The only thing I focused on is the elimination of desires. My heart-mind could perceive the slightest movement of my desires. The movement is so subtle that it will not be noticed if you do not stay calm and have a firm will.* <sup>380</sup>

Luo Hongxian disagreed with Wang Longxi's ideas about the already-made innate knowledge. Although they maintained their friendship, the debate about moral cultivation never stopped. He criticized Wang Longxi:

自來聖賢論學，未嘗有不犯做手一言，未有學而不由做者。惟佛家則立躋聖位。此龍溪極誤人處。

*<My translation> The saints never talked about the way of learning without indicating the importance of ethical efforts. None of them only learned but never put it into practice. Only the Buddhists believed that they could reach the level of the saint in an instant. That is the way that Wang Longxi leads people astray.* <sup>381</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Hu Jiaxiang, 2019, 441.

<sup>380</sup> Luo Hongxian, 2007, 331.

<sup>381</sup> Huang, Zongxi 2008, 428.



According to Luo Hongxian, people were born with various desires and senses, which always affected innate knowledge. If they did not apply moral cultivation, the innate knowledge would be mixed with lust and emotions. Then, there was no way to become a saint, and people who ignored this would end up being a villain who acted recklessly and cared for nobody.

Gu Xiancheng, one of the founders of the Donglin Academy, shared similar ideas with Luo Hongxian by emphasizing moral cultivation. He also suggested that people restrain their desires and “make tranquility the ruling principle (Zhujiang 主靜).”<sup>382</sup> As one of the orthodox Confucians, he criticized Li Zhi for betraying the traditional moral principles:

聞有忠節孝義之人，卻云都是做出來的，大體原無此忠節孝義。學人……  
趨之若狂，不知誤了多少人。

*<My translation> When he (Li Zhi) heard that someone is loyal, filial, chaste, or righteousness, he called them hypocrites because he believed that such moral values did not exist in the original state of the heart-mind. The literati...admired him fanatically. We do not know how many people were misled by his teachings.*<sup>383</sup>

In a letter to his friend Gao Panlong, another leader of the Donglin Academy, he criticized Li Zhi for destroying the moral principles with a tone of frustration:

李卓吾大抵是人之非，非人之是，又以成敗為是非而已。學術到此，真成  
塗炭，惟有仰屋竊歎而已。

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<sup>382</sup> The idea of Zhu-jing 主靜, which was an ethical device to eliminate the desires, was first raised by Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤, a neo-Confucian of the Northern Song Dynasty. For more information please see his book *Taiji Tushuo* (太極圖說, Explanations of the Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate)

<sup>383</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 1995, vol.14, 435.

*<My translation> In general, Li Zhi just strikes up an entirely different tune with others in distinguishing right from wrong. Further, he makes moral judgments on a person by his success or failure. The way of learning is truly ruined. The only thing I can do now is look up to the sky and draw a sigh.<sup>384</sup>*

Therefore, he appealed to restore the moral order by requesting people to observe the same set of moral standards. When he made a compact for meetings of the Donglin Academy, he put forward the idea of “respecting the classics 尊經”, arguing that the Six Classics expounded by Confucius and the teachings of the Cheng-Zhu school embodied the eternal principle. He sincerely required all literati to study these classics carefully and internalize the teachings as their moral standards. According to Gu Xiancheng, if the Confucian classics hold no authority, the heresy would prevail, and the people who lost guidance would stop at nothing.<sup>385</sup>

Gao Panlong also criticized the outrageous ideas and appealed to restore the moral order of society. The same as Gu, he underlined the importance of studying the Confucian classics:

故覺聖賢之言，愈淺近，愈精深。蓋一字一句，有終身用之不盡者。乃欲舍是而別求異端之說，直當面錯過矣。故嘗妄意以為今日之學，寧守先儒之說，拘拘為尋行數墨，而不敢談玄說妙，自陷於不知之妄作。

*<My translation> Every word of saint’s teachings could benefit us in our entire life. When people abandon these teachings and pursue the heresy’s words, they just miss the golden opportunity. Therefore, I dare say that now we would rather adhere to the traditional teachings and study the classics word for word than engage in the esoteric and occult talks.<sup>386</sup>*

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<sup>384</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 2008, vol.5, 50a.

<sup>385</sup> Gu Xiancheng, 1995, 10a.

<sup>386</sup> Gao Panlong, 2008, vol.8, 33b.

In short, the new ideas proposed by literati such as Wang Yangming and Li Zhi freed people from the rigid dogma of the traditional official thought and created a tolerant environment for the individual intuitions. As a result, the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings, which held the official mainstream position, were challenged.

The anti-orthodox literati, represented by Li Zhi, revolted against the moral hypocrisy in the society, blaming this phenomenon on the literati's blind obedience to the traditional moral authority. As a result, the moral authority of the Cheng-Zhu school's teachings and the Confucian Classics declined. While the elites questioned the idea of Principle being the origin of morality, individualism was on the rise. Some literati emphasized the intuition of the innate knowledge and neglected to restrict the desires. Therefore, these teachings of Yangmingism, especially the teachings of Li Zhi, were used to defend moral relativism and hedonism. Consequently, Wang Yangming and Li Zhi did not achieve their goals for restoring the moral order. On the contrary, it seems that their teachings accelerated the decline of social morality.

In order to curb this moral crisis, the orthodox literati severely criticized these teachings for encouraging outrageous behavior and ideas. Particularly for Li Zhi, as an iconoclastic figure who always questioned the traditional moral authority, he became the orthodox Confucians' primary target. The critiques on him and Wang Yangming suggested that some literati, represented by the Donglin scholars, were determined to improve public morals by strictly observing the traditional moral codes. They raised the idea of "respecting the classics", suggesting that they intended to settle the differences in moral issues by reconstructing the moral authority.

## **4.2 *Septem Victoriis (Qike 七克)* and The Reconstruction of the moral authority**

While the hedonism was growing, the orthodox Confucian became more and more anxious about the impact brought up by the rebellious philosophy such as Li Zhi. The Chinese elites needed a moral philosophy breakthrough to solve the moral crisis and end

the division on inner knowledge and moral education. Therefore, the orthodox Confucians intended to reconstruct a moral authority to provide objective moral standards and rectify moral relativism in late Ming China. In the following parts, how the Chinese literati interpreted *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) and reconstructed the moral authority will be discussed.

#### 4.2.1 Heaven as the origin of morality

Through his communication with the literati, Pantoja realized that their most concerned issue was about morality. In the letter to Luis de Guzmán he recorded:

*...lo principal con hablarles de las virtudes morales (de que ellos escriben, hablan y tienen muchos libros) y de las cosas de Dios, corrió tanta fama, que hasta los Mandarines mayores de todo este reino (que son las mayores perfonas después del rey) procurando tratar con nosotros, y hacerse nuestros amigos...*

*<My translation> ...the main topic that they talk is about the morality (that they write, speak and have lots of books about) and the things of God, we are so famous that even the high-ranking officials in this kingdom (which are the highest-ranking after the king) look forward to communicating with us and becoming our friends ...<sup>387</sup>*

In order to preach the Catholic doctrines, Pantoja decided to respond to their urgent need. In the author's preface, Pantoja first raised a question about moral cultivation in China:

克欲修德，終日論之，畢世務之，而傲妒忿淫諸欲卒不見消，謙仁貞忍諸德卒不見積，其故云何？

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<sup>387</sup> Rebollo and Pantoja, 2011, 129.

*<My translation> Overcoming the desire and cultivating the virtue are what people talked all day and tried to do in their whole life. Nonetheless, why desires such as arrogance, envy, wrath, and lust do not disappear, and virtues such as humility, gratitude, chastity, and patience do not grow?<sup>388</sup>*

This question aimed to draw the Chinese elites' attention. Pantoja then answered his question and directly pointed out that the problem existed in moral practice:

有三蔽焉。一曰不念本原，二曰不清志向，三曰不循節次。

*<My translation> It is because there are three obstacles: the first is that people do not recognize the origin (of moral principles and virtues); the second is that people do not clarify the aim of moral cultivation; the third is that people do not proceed with their cultivation in an orderly way.<sup>389</sup>*

The meaning of Pantoja's words is clear: the literati must understand the origin of morality if they wanted to be a moral individual. He understood that the followers of Wang Yangming took the heart-mind as the moral guidance or even the origin of moral standards, while the defenders of the Cheng-Zhu School insisted that morality derived from Principle, the underlying reason and the order of nature. Pantoja did not try to reconcile the differences. Clearly, he neither believed that morality was a social construction or that morality resulted from rational choices. His answer to this question was simple and straightforward: God, a supreme deity from the Judeo-Christian tradition, decided the moral standards and principles.

He pointed out that only God or *Tian* (Heaven)<sup>390</sup> was the guidance for moral actions. This was a direct refutation to the literati's teachings, which took the "heart-mind" as guidance. As he declared in no uncertain terms to a Chinese literati:

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<sup>388</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 11. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>390</sup> As mentioned before, Pantoja agreed with the use of the terms Shangdi (Lord on High) , Tian (Heaven) and Tianzhu (Lord of Heaven) as the Chinese name of the Christian God. In the original Chinese text of

東方之士，才智絕倫，從事學者非乏也，獨本領迷耳。夫學不稟於天而惟心是師，辟泛舟洪洋而失其舵也。其弊方且認賊為子，認邪魔而為天神也。

<My translation> The gentry's ability and wisdom from the east are outstanding, many people devoted themselves to moral cultivation, but they did not understand the origin. Following the mind, instead of the guidance of Heaven, is like sailing without a rudder. The harm can be compared with regarding the enemy as kith and kin, devil as an angel.<sup>391</sup>

Pantoja firmly indicated the differences between Catholicism and Wang Yangming and his followers' teachings. This argument of Pantoja was quite similar to what his companions did in Japan fifty years ago. As Profesor Joan-Pau Rubiés pointed out, the Jesuits' apologetic impulse in Japan was precisely to identify and magnify the differences.<sup>392</sup> Pantoja emphasized that the anthropomorphic God was the origin of morality and warned his readers against the ideas that people possessed the virtues by themselves rather than being granted by God, calling this was the sin of arrogance:

傲者，過分之榮願也。其端甚多。綜統有四。以為善從己出。不歸天主。一，知善從天主出。而因己功；二，伐有所實無；三，輕人自以為異於眾人；四，自滿自用，自驕自誇。……天主聖經雲：“一傲之子萬罪宗。蓄之者，必滿其禍災。”

<My translation> Pride is a massive desire for honor and is caused by many reasons. Specifically, there are four of them. First, people believe that virtue is

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*Qike*, Pantoja used the expression Tian 天, but sometimes it was changed to Shangdi (上帝) or Tian Zhu (天主). Likewise, for the Chinese converts, the terms Shangdi, Tian, and Tian Zhu all can be used to refer to the personified deity.

<sup>391</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 10. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 5.2 of this thesis.

<sup>392</sup> Rubiés, 2012, 490.

*part of themselves and they do not attribute it to God; Second, although knowing that virtues come from God, people still believe that these virtues are also the results of their effort; Third, people boast about what they do not have; Fourth, people despise others and consider themselves untouchable ...In the bible, it is read that: Pride is the root of all evil.<sup>393</sup>*

Further, Pantoja stated clearly that God, instead of human being, possessed the moral authority and could provide the strength for moral cultivation:

夫世之傲然自是者，咸謂修德克欲之力量，我自能之。不知自有生來，但有一念提醒，莫非天主上帝賜我者。富貴壽安微暫之福，有一隙之明者，皆知出於上帝。而克欲修德，最難劇務，妄自認為己能，謬孰甚歟？如知力量悉從上帝而出，其於欽事祈禱，自不容己。迨德成欲克，皆認帝(主)賜也。彼謂我自能之，不緣帝利，乃由傲魔所中，忘卻本原。冥悻自是，聞諛則沾沾自喜，稍拂則謂非所應遇，而怨尤不已，此其所修何德哉？

*<My translation> Those who proudly consider themselves righteous in this world say without exception that they possess the strength to cultivate virtues and overcome passions. However, they do not know that there is not a single motion of conscience that is not granted by God since they were born. Even the people with a small share of wisdom know that the passing happiness related to wealth, honor, longevity, peace comes from the Celestial Sovereign. As overcoming the passions and cultivating virtue is dramatically challenging, what a mistake those who foolishly believe that they can face it by virtue of their own! For those who know that this force always comes from the Celestial Sovereign, they will worship and serve the Lord without reserve. When the virtue cultivation bears fruit and the passions are overcome, they will regard this as a blessing from the Lord. Those who declare that they can achieve this by virtue of their ability and that their destiny is not related to the strength of*

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<sup>393</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 16.

*the Almighty, have fallen into the arrogance of the devil, forgetting the origin of that strength. When they listen to flatter, those who obtusely think they are righteous will gloat over complacency; when they encounter some setbacks, they will say that they should not suffer that, and they complain without stopping: what kind of virtue are they cultivating here?*<sup>394</sup>

Since the religious atmosphere was strong in Europe, the Jesuits naturally believed that the moral principles were based on the religious foundation. In their perspective, it was unquestionable that God entrusted meaning to the moral life and was the only source of moral principles. As Pantoja illustrated in the preface, moral cultivation could only be realized on the premise that people understand that God or Heaven was the source of moral principles and virtues. Obviously, God's existence was essential in the moral teachings of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克).

For the Chinese literati, the theology term “Lord of Heaven”, which the Jesuits clearly referred to as the Christian God, was the same as Heaven in the Confucian classics. The idea of heaven always played an essential role in traditional Chinese philosophy. In some Confucian classics, heaven was regarded as an anthropomorphized deity with will and intentions. The will of heaven was considered more authoritative than that of the monarchs on the earth, who were the supreme deity representatives and called Tianzi 天子 (Son of Heaven). Matteo Ricci also noticed these records in Confucian classics, and thereupon he concluded that the Chinese recognized God in ancient times.<sup>395</sup>

The ancient philosophers also believed that Tian possesses moral values, insisting that Heaven endows human beings with a distinctively ethical nature.<sup>396</sup> For example, Mencius equaled moral virtues such as humaneness, righteousness, loyalty, and trustworthiness with Tianjue 天爵 (heavenly honors)<sup>397</sup>, suggesting that these human

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<sup>394</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 12. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.

<sup>395</sup> Ricci, 1985, 125.

<sup>396</sup> Ivanhoe, 2007, 211.

<sup>397</sup> *Mencius* 6A15.



virtues were granted to humans by Tian. According to Mencius, preserving nature, or the virtues of Tian was the exact way to serve this anthropomorphized deity:

*To fully fathom one's heart-mind is to understand one's nature. To understand one's nature is to understand tian. To preserve one's heart-mind and nourish one's nature is the way to serve tian.*<sup>398</sup>

Nevertheless, in the history of Chinese philosophy, the concept of Tian as the sky of nature always threatened its role as a moral authority. For example, philosophers such as Xunzi 荀子 (c. 310 BC – c. 235 BC)<sup>399</sup> denied that Tian possessed moral consciousness and will:

*Heaven's ways are constant. It does not prevail because of a sage such as Yao 尧; it does not cease to prevail because of a tyrant such as Jie 桀.*<sup>400</sup>

The philosophers of the Song Dynasty, especially the Cheng Brothers and Zhu Xi, made significant development in the interpretation of Tian. They stated that Tian was the principle, an abstract cosmological being, the order and regularity of nature, and the standards and norms. Additionally, as mentioned in the last chapter, the development of the teachings of the heart-mind made some literati focused on their own moral judgment and neglected the necessity of an external moral authority, which was the spring of the moral principles and the supervisor of the implementation of these principles.

These ideas in Chinese moral philosophy further weakened Tian's role as an anthropomorphized deity, which granted moral values to humans. Therefore, since the Song Dynasty, Tian was seldom mentioned as a moral authority. Nonetheless, when the Confucians in late Ming China needed some breakthrough in moral philosophy,

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<sup>398</sup> Mencius 7A1.

<sup>399</sup> Xunzi was a Chinese Confucian philosopher who lived during the Warring States period. Although his status cannot be compared with Mencius, his thought wield great influence on the Chinese moral philosophy.

<sup>400</sup> Watson, 2003, 79.

Pantoja's teachings about God reminded them of the original meaning of heaven from the Confucian classics. For the orthodox Confucians, who were anxious about the moral crisis and the decline of the authority of the Cheng-Zhu School, Heaven (God), as a conscious and rational entity, provided a solid ground for the moral principles, the foundation of moral facts and duties, met their goals to rectify the moral order in China. It goes without saying that the Chinese elites needed to convince people that there were objective moral facts while there was also a forbidden zone for some activities. In this sense, they required a moral lawmaker, which was absent in the teachings of Yangmingism. Since Pantoja elaborated that Heaven was the origin of morality, the orthodox literati regarded his teachings as an excellent supplement for the traditional Confucian ethics. Moreover, the good virtues of the Jesuits were the best proof of their doctrine.

Therefore, the moral philosophy book of Pantoja was welcomed by the literati. In the preface, Yang Tingyun declared:

伏傲，熄忿，解貪，坊淫，遠妒，清飲食，迷醒懈惰，於為善之七克，克其心之罪根，植其心之德種，凡所施愛，純是道心。道心即是天心。

*<My translation> To subdue pride, to extinct wrath, to relieve greed, to control the lust, to stay away from envy, and to spur on sloth are the seven ways to overcome the root of evil and to plant goodness in the heart. Consequently, all the good people do is out of the very heart of the Dao. The heart of the Dao is the heart of Heaven.* <sup>401</sup>

For the literati who yearned for moral order, Heaven, as the origin of the moral principles, could provide the objective moral standards and solve all the chaos caused by the heart-mind teachings. As Peng Duanwu wrote in the preface:

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<sup>401</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 5. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

近世學者，祇信即心之學，不解原天之心。素無止定之功，妄言隨欲皆善，往往駕慈航而殞命，握至寶而喪家，無明師友以導之，和毒臘其雜進矣！夫用七德克七情，以理治欲，實以心治心也。

*<My translation> Nowadays, the literati only believe in the teachings of discovering the essence of human nature through their heart-mind, but do not understand how to examine the mind of Heaven. They ignore restraint their desire, acclaiming that following one's instinct is good. Without the guidance of excellent mentors and helpful friends, they are exposed to poisonous teachings. If you use the seven virtues to overcome the seven passions, utilize reasons to overcome desires, actually, you are using the mind of Tian to overcome the mind of desire.<sup>402</sup>*

According to Peng Duanwu, taking Heaven as the moral authority could settle the differences in moral philosophy and restrain the desires. Here Peng Duanwu did not discard the teachings on the heart-mind. On the contrary, he believed that following the heart of Heaven could rectify some errors of the Yangmingsim and then perfect its teachings. His words “using the mind of Tian to overcome the mind of desire” implied that Tian set the ultimate moral standards for people. Subsequently, he expressed his confidence in the moral teachings of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), saying they were the exact words from Heaven:

且所述者，天主之言，天使言之，度無為君難者。即有之，度無能舉七編之言，而非是之也，則亦不足為君難矣！

*<My translation> What he expressed is the word of the Lord of Heaven; Heaven is the one who has made him say these things so that no one could embarrass this gentleman. If it were done, I do not think it was possible to find*

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<sup>402</sup> Ibid.,7. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 6.2 of this thesis.

*any content in these seven treaties that could be refuted, so no one is really qualified to make things difficult for this gentleman.*<sup>403</sup>

Peng Duanwu and Yang Tingyun's assertions of "the heart of Dao is the heart of Heaven", "to examine the mind of Heaven" and "the word of the Lord of Heaven" suggested that some literati approved that the terms "Heaven", "Lord of Heaven" and "God" in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) were identical to the anthropomorphized deity in Confucian classics. Furthermore, they recognized heaven as the origin of moral principles. It goes without saying that Heaven (God) met their demands for moral authority. The statement of Zhuang Qiyuan 莊起元(1575 – ? ) about this moral authority was quite representative:

人之放僻邪侈，靡所不為者，不知有天主故耳；人之戒慎恐懼罔敢戲渝者，常知有天主故耳。分為七惡，定為七克，真滌除罪過之方而積累懿善之法也。……善而福之，淫而禍之。神矣哉，化矣哉！其天之所以為天哉，為有主在焉。

*<My translation> The people indulge themselves in carnal desires and commit all manner of crimes because they do not know God; people whose heart is filled with awe and veneration and dare not to lead a life of pleasure because they always know God. Categorizing seven capital sins and conquering them is an excellent method to eliminate the sins and amassing the virtues. ... (The Lord of Heaven) gives benediction to the good and punish the evil. How miraculous and superb! That is why heaven is called heaven because there is Lord above all.*<sup>404</sup>

In breve, the meaning of God that Pantoja tried to convey converged with the terminology of Shangdi and Tian from Confucian classics. As a result, a moral authority identified by the Chinese literati as Heaven was reconstructed.

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<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Zhuang Qiyuan 1997, vol.2, 11b-12a.

#### 4.2.2 The thought of “revering Heaven” in late Ming and early Qing China

Since Heaven was expounded as the origin of morality, Pantoja also encouraged his readers to develop the emotions of love and revere towards this super moral legislator.<sup>405</sup> He indicated the love and revere towards God is of vital importance for moral actions:

知天主，故愛天主，為眾善之始…… 不知天主，故無所畏望於天主，為眾惡之成。

*<My translation> The comprehension of the Lord of Heaven leads to loving the Lord of Heaven, which is the first step of all goods ... The ignorance of the Lord of Heaven leads to disregard for the Lord of Heaven, which allows all evil's attainment.*<sup>406</sup>

Some Chinese literati accepted this idea and regarded Heaven as the super moral supervisor who regularly observed their thoughts and actions. For example, when Wang Zheng became interested in the doctrine of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), he visited Pantoja in his residence in Beijing and asked the Spanish Jesuit to expound on the teachings in the book. Pantoja gladly agreed and explained the Catholic doctrine to him. Years later, Wang Zheng converted to a Catholic-literati. He recorded how he practiced moral cultivation under Pantoja's instructions while he stayed in Beijing:

隨與龐子時時過從，相與極究天人之旨。竊謂果得一主以周旋，自可束我心神，不致走放，可訓至不愧不忤無難矣。

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<sup>405</sup> In the books of the Chinese converts, God was always translated into Tian 天.

<sup>406</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 37.

<My translation> *I always stay with Mr. Pantoja. Together we study the ultimate truth about heaven and human. I understand that if there truly is a Lord that could restrain my mind and prevent it from running wild, I could truly reach the state that Mencius called “have nothing to be ashamed of before God or man.”*<sup>407</sup>

Pantoja Probably taught Wang Zheng some contemplative practices and meditation methods in *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola. In his book Pantoja interpreted the relationship between God and human as the lord and his servants:

(一僕)媚茲其主，雖小過弗敢故犯之；雖微命，弗敢不尊(避)之。自此之外，又伺主心所喜，雖大勞，悉務行之。

<My translation> *(A servant) tries his best to please his lord, restraining himself from committing even the slightest error. He dares not ignore even the smallest request of his lord. Besides, he carefully observes whatever delights his lord and achieves it regardless of how hard the work is.*<sup>408</sup>

Wang Zheng adopted this idea and indicated that the Lord of Heaven could overawe the evildoers:

故知命君子，懷刑與懷德之念並急。懷刑者不但畏世主之賞罰，實以畏天主之賞罰。……孔子……明明以天之威命靈爽不可禱者，攝服小人之膽。而解者乃謂天即理也。權奸寧知畏理乎哉？……有明知天子儼然在位，天威咫尺，賞罰森嚴，而敢不畏焉者乎？！嘻！世之人只知地上有主，而不知天上有主。只知地上主賞罰可畏，而不知天上主更有真正大賞罰之更可畏。

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<sup>407</sup> Wang Zheng, 2011, 120.

<sup>408</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 148.

*<My translation> The men of virtues who understand the mandate of heaven always think of morality and the law. When they think of the law, it is not just the mundane rewards and punishments from the monarch, but also the rewards and punishments from the Lord of Heaven. ... Confucius... evidently said that there is no use of praying if you offend heaven. His purpose is to deter the evildoers. Nevertheless, some people misinterpreted Heaven as Principle. Do the powerful villains even fear the Principle? ... Is there anyone who does not fear the emperor who is stern and strictly enforces the law to punish and reward? Alas! People only know there is lord on earth, yet they have no idea about the Lord of Heaven; They revere and fear the rewards and punishments of the lord of earth, yet they do not know what they should revere and fear more the great rewards and punishments of the Lord of Heaven.<sup>409</sup>*

Confucius once said: “The superior man thinks of virtue; the small man thinks of comfort. The superior man thinks of the sanctions of law; the small man thinks of favors which he may receive.”<sup>410</sup> Here Wang Zheng modified Confucius’s teaching with the ideas he learned from Pantoja, indicating that the men of virtue should think of both the law of the mundane monarch and the law of the Lord of Heaven. Wang Zheng, one of the literati who objected to the heart-mind as the origin of morality, realized the shortcomings in the moral teachings of Cheng-Zhu School as well. He deliberately distinguished Heaven and Principle. In the views of Wang Zheng, Principle, as an abstract concept, regarded by the Cheng-Zhu school literati as the basis for human society’s morality, did not act as a deterrent to the villains. Only Heaven, as the moral legislator and enforcer, could frighten the evil and earn respect from people.

Another convert named Han Lin 韓霖 demonstrated a similar idea of revering Heaven:

蓋天既生人，即付以性，與禽獸不同。自生時至死後，……善有永賞，惡有永罰，總是愛人之意。所以吾人第一要敬天。

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<sup>409</sup> Wang Zheng 2011, 122.

<sup>410</sup> *Analects*, IV, 11.

*<My translation> When Heaven created people, he endowed human nature to them, making them different from the beasts. From birth to death, heaven accompanies everyone to cultivate and supervise them, guaranteed that the straightforward person is rewarded and the wicked punished. All of these doings come from his love for the men. That is why our priority is revering Heaven.*<sup>411</sup>

Obviously, the Catholic-literati's arguments on "revering Heaven" underlined an anthropomorphized deity's attributes, focusing on its ability to punish and reward according to people's thoughts and behaviors. In addition, the Catholic-literati related "revering Heaven" with practical charities, which Pantoja and other Jesuits encouraged. In his book, Pantoja declared:

(天主)所喜德，亦莫過于仁愛也。微獨本德為天主所喜，是德所在，諸德隨之。……故天主真道萬端，總歸愛慕天主萬物之上與夫愛人如己二者而已。

*<My translation> (Lord of Heaven's) favorite virtue is benevolence. It is because when one possesses this virtue, other virtues will follow... That is why so many teachings of the Lord of Heaven could be reduced into two things: admiring the Lord and loving people.*<sup>412</sup>

Yang Tingyun responded this teaching of Pantoja:

又以泛而言敬天，稽顙對越，皆敬也。必愛人乃為敬天之真，泛而言愛人，怵惕煦嫗，皆愛也。必克己乃有愛人之實，故有所謂食饑者，飲渴

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<sup>411</sup> Han Lin, 2008, 60.

<sup>412</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 50.



者，衣裸者，舍旅者，醫病者及顧囹圄者，贖虜者，葬死者，皆愛人事也。

*<My translation> Revering God goes beyond ceremonies. You also have to love people, and therein lies the correct way to revere God. Loving people is not just a formality. You have to make an effort to love others genuinely. That is why we say that offering food and clothing to those who need it, as well as lodging for the travelers, healing the sick, visiting and comorting the prisoners, rescuing the captive, and burying the deceased, all of these means loving people.*<sup>413</sup>

The Catholic-literati took the charity as a way to practice their reverence and love to the Lord of Heaven. Wang Zheng also indicated that people should imitate the benevolence of the Lord of Heaven:

天主至善，無德不備，吾儕所當效法。

*<My translation> The Lord of Heaven is infinitely benevolent and possesses all kinds of virtues, we human beings should follow his example.*<sup>414</sup>

Perhaps it is for this reason that Wang Zheng actively participated in social welfare and created a charitable organization named Ren Hui 仁會 (the League of Benevolence)<sup>415</sup>. On the other hand, some orthodox Confucian also founded some charitable organizations, such as Gao Panlong founded Tong Shan Hui 同善會 (the League of the Common Good). In contrast with Ren Hui, this kind of organization was laicized, and the motivation of the founders was to reconstruct the social order instead of serving the Lord of Heaven.

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<sup>413</sup> Ibid., 5. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

<sup>414</sup> Wang Zheng. 2011, 152.

<sup>415</sup> Wang Zheng adopted some ideas from *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and other Catholic moral books to create the agreement of Ren Hui, for more details, please refer to Wang Zheng 2011, 139-156.

The thought of “revering Heaven” was not confined to the Catholic-literati. Cao Yubian, another reader of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), declared that Lord on High played a pivotal role in restraining one’s desires and passions:

傲、妒、慳、忿、迷食色、情善七者，情之所流，上帝降衷之性所無有也。率吾天命之性，未肯任其流者，中華、泰西之所不能異也。……盡人性者，化其情者也。……化其情者，率上帝而已矣。上天之載，聲臭且無；知天之人，纖欲俱絕。詎令七者之潛伏，之流溢也乎哉？

*<My translation> Pride, envy, greed, wrath, gluttony, lust, and sloth are aroused by the passions, which do not exist in the essential nature granted by the Lord on High. Following the nature granted by Heaven to restrain those passions is what we all are eager to do, and there can be no difference between China and the Far West... The ones who fathom their nature are those who can put out their passions... The ones who put out their passions just have to obey the will of the Lord on High. The fullness of Heaven is undoubtedly silent and without a noticeable trace. People who know about Heaven have put aside every iota of desire. Could it be possible that they let these seven evils surreptitiously penetrate and roam freely?<sup>416</sup>*

While the followers of Li Zhi rationalized the basic desires of people, the Orthodox Confucians such as Cao Yubian gave careful attention to restraining these desires, seeing them as the obstacle to virtues. These Orthodox literati shared the same opinion with Pantoja. The Spanish Jesuit also emphasized that the misuse of the desire granted by God was the root of evil, making his standpoint close to the orthodox Confucians:

凡惡乘乎欲，然欲本非惡，乃上帝賜人存護此身，輔佐靈神、公義、公理之密伴。人惟汨之以私，乃始罪讐萬狀，諸惡根焉。

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<sup>416</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 7. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 2.2 of this thesis.

*<My translation> All kinds of evils make use of desire. However, desire is not something evil in itself but rather an intimate, fair, and equitable envoy, which is bestowed by the heavenly Emperor (God) to protect the human beings' bodies and assist their spirits. Nevertheless, the human being swirls it with his ego, and this is the beginning of the transgression in a thousand ways. Thus all kinds of evils take root.*<sup>417</sup>

In early Qing China, there was a literati group called the Chengshan School 程山學<sup>418</sup>, which also preached the teaching of “revering Heaven”. Xie Wenjian 謝文濬 (1615 – 1681), the founder of this school, was so interested in Pantoja’s moral teachings that he even recomposed *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). Although Xie Wenjian never recognized the Catholic religion, his arguments on Lord on High were deeply influenced by Pantoja’s book. According to Xie, people should always follow the guidance of a perfect divine will instead of their own will. He also regarded the Lord on High as a moral supervisor. This idea made him quite similar to the readers of Pantoja’s book in late Ming times:

此心才憬覺處，便是上帝啟我處，便須謹凜不敢逾越，……真誠惻怛，才是天命炯然處。

*<My translation> When your heart is alarmed, you know that the Lord on High is giving you enlightenment. Then you should strictly comply with his guidance.... Only when you are sincere and awed, you could realize the mandate of Heaven.*<sup>419</sup>

Although Xie Wenjian and his followers were not Catholics, they applied some religious color to the Confucian moral cultivation. In Xie Wenjian’s view, the genesis of individual

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<sup>417</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 11. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.

<sup>418</sup> For more details about the Chengshan School, please refer to the article of Liu Yunhua, 2011.

<sup>419</sup> Xie Wenjian, 1997, 50.

morality highly depended on the reverence for the super deity. In addition, he taught his disciples that they should always feel the presence of the Lord on High to eliminate their desires and cultivate their virtues:

上帝臨汝，無貳汝心。如何留得些子別念掛帶？十二時中，行住坐臥，稍稍停機佇思，於軀殼上起見，便疾於掃去，只留一片赤膽忠肝奉與上帝，為之盡其所事而已。便到刀鋸鼎鑊，甘心如飴，不作一毫悔念！

*<My translation> Shangdi comes down on you, so you must remain loyal. Do not reserve other desires. Daily and hourly, whenever you are walking, standing, sitting, or lying, you must ponder yourself and eliminate the desires immediately. You must dedicate yourself entirely to Shangdi, do whatever you can for him. Even go through fire and water, you would be willing to endure and hold no regrets.<sup>420</sup>*

In sum, as time went by, there was an increasing number of literati that noticed the religious meaning of Heaven, which Pantoja tried to convey in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克). Catholic-literati and the scholars represented by Xie Wenjian all developed the thought of “revering Heaven”, both parties underlined that an anthropomorphized deity, which was always supervising people, was helpful for moral cultivation. Moreover, Catholic-literati associated the thought of “revering Heaven” with the actual deeds of loving people. This means that their religious enthusiasm could be transformed into motives for actively participating in social welfare activities, which undoubtedly had positive social significance. Besides, for the Catholic literati, another motive of revering Heaven was their belief in God’s rewards and punishments in the afterlife. This issue will be discussed in the next section.

#### 4.2.3 Heavenly rewards as moral motivation

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid.,13.

What is the purpose of moral principles and moral conduct, or what is the motivation to be moral? Obviously, different moral frameworks and systems of belief have different answers.

As is well-known, there are some aspects of virtue ethics in Confucian moral teachings.<sup>421</sup> That is to say, the Confucians paid attention to the people's concrete behaviors and focused on what kind of people we should be. Since the era of Confucius, the Chinese elites regarded the pursuit of the perfection of virtues as the ultimate goal of life. As it is said in the Confucian classic the Great Learning 大學:

大學之道，在明明德，在親民，在止於至善。

*<My translation> The way of Great Learning is the comprehension of illustrious virtue, the renovation of people, and the endless pursuit of the perfection of humanity.<sup>422</sup>*

On the other hand, the Jesuits believed that the purpose of moral conduct was to obey the rule of God and gain eternal happiness after the Last Judgment. Pantoja explained this in the author's preface:

修德克欲者，惟是蠲潔其一心以媚茲上帝，其志足貴也；次則志羨天德之美也；次則志在乎生享淨心之樂，而身後獲見天帝，與神聖耦也。

*<My translation> The noblest intention of those who exercise in cultivating virtues and overcoming is purifying their whole hearts to please God; Admiring the beauty of the virtue that comes from above ranks second; then, enjoying the joy of a clean heart while alive and in the afterlife being presented to the heavenly Sovereign as the companions of angels and saints ranks third.<sup>423</sup>*

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<sup>421</sup> Slingerland, 2011; Tan Sor-hoon, 2005.

<sup>422</sup> *The great learning*, 1.

<sup>423</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 12. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 7.2 of this thesis.

This idea clearly contradicted the Confucian teachings. For this reason, the Jesuits had to face constant challenges from the literati. In the views of Chinese literati, there were no moral values in doing good for eternal happiness. Pantoja recorded a discussion between him and a Chinese literati:

行善而望天報，此非德乃利矣，爾行德不冀天報，不尤精美乎？

*<My translation> If some do good deeds to get the rewards of heaven, it is not moral but an act of seeking gain. Isn't it better to do good without aspiring after return? <sup>424</sup>*

Pantoja bluntly denounced that it was nothing but a trick of the devil:

此言似高遠，引人進於至德，其實使人離於實德，誘人恣行諸惡者也。

*<My translation> It seems that doing good without aspiring after the return is pure and lofty, but in nature, it drives people away from true virtue and lures them to evil. <sup>425</sup>*

The same as Pantoja, Ricci also recorded the query of a literati:

*To persuade people to do good or to prohibit them from doing evil because of the gain or loss that will accrue from conduct is to try to profit from good deeds and to avoid harm by restraining from evil; it is not to delight in goodness or to hate evil, which should be man's true ambition. Our ancient sages and worthies taught men not to discuss profit, but only humanity and righteousness. The superior man does good without any ulterior motive, and certainly without any thought of gain and loss...Motive is not eliminated in the teachings of the sages*

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<sup>424</sup> Ibid, 140.

<sup>425</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 140.

*and worthies, but it is directed only towards moral cultivation and not towards its effectiveness; therefore, when they persuade people to do good, they only point to the beauty of moral conduct, and saying nothing of rewards; when they teach people to reject evil, they only speak of the wrongness of evil, and say nothing of punishment.*<sup>426</sup>

According to the Confucians, although the utilitarian motive could lead people to do good deeds, the idea was contrary to Confucian values. Therefore, the Chinese elites extremely opposed the idea of doing good for rewards. Pantoja set his heart on persuading his readers and retorted:

行德為德，此物此志，洵美矣。第非聖人，弗及此也。即聖人之行德也，其大意悉為上帝，為德美，亦何嘗不望於死後之報，況眾人乎？非望益，安能策怠，當行德之苦，謝隨世之樂；非畏害，安能去惡克己哉？

*<My translation> The idea of doing good for moral cultivation indeed is glorious, yet who could live up to this but a sage. Although the sages who do good deeds for God and virtue cultivation, they still expect rewards in the world to come, let alone the commoners. Who could spur on sloth, refuse the mundane pleasure, and choose the hardship of moral cultivation without anticipation of profit? Who could eliminate evil intentions and restrain his lust without the fear of loss?*<sup>427</sup>

Indeed, Confucian ethics set a high standard for Chinese literati, demanding them to cultivate virtues and restrain their desires spontaneously and thereupon, making sure that everyone could be a sage. In this sense, Confucian ethics emphasized the obligatory aspect of moral, without paying attention to moral motive.<sup>428</sup> On top of that, the idea of eternal happiness as a reward after death was also unacceptable for the Confucians. Even

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<sup>426</sup> Ricci, 1985, 285, 297.

<sup>427</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 140.

<sup>428</sup> Chen Jiaming, 2016, 45.

if they avoided arguing about the existence of heaven or eternal happiness, they still refused to acknowledge this reward as a final purpose of moral conduct. They told Pantoja:

死後天堂應報，縱實有，我輩勉于善，必昇受之，今何必論有無，何必信望之？

*<My translation> Even indeed exist the rewards of heaven, I could just focus on doing good works. On this occasion, I surely could get the rewards of heaven. Why bother to believe in eternal happiness or to find out whether it really exists.<sup>429</sup>*

It seems that the Chinese literati were ready to agree to disagree on this issue. However, the Jesuits regarded the existence of heaven as the ground problem of Catholic ethics. Consequently, even the slightest doubt on eternal happiness could not be left unanswered by them. Pantoja gave a firm summary to defend Catholic ethics:

有天堂之報，真為善者，勤心事天主者，必昇受之。但不實信果有而望受之，必不能事上帝為真善矣，又何以能昇受之耶？

*<My translation> There are rewards from heaven prepared for the ones who really do good and serve God diligently. There is no doubt they would get the rewards. Nevertheless, the ones who do not honestly believe in the rewards surely cannot do authentic good deeds for God. How could they go to heaven and get the rewards?<sup>430</sup>*

According to the Spanish Jesuit, good virtues and moral activities are based on belief. If there was no belief in heaven and eternal happiness, moral conduct loses its meaning, and

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<sup>429</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 140.

<sup>430</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 140-141.



moral principles become false. Pantoja specifically pointed out that people would inevitably abandon goodness if people did not firmly believe in the rewards after death:

夫死後無永報，天壤亦無主，若果有天地人物之主，身後必有善惡之永報矣，此萬世聖賢共心語也。夫天地有上帝，為萬物共主，全能至善，誰疑之，則死後有永年之應報，亦豈屬可疑之理哉？

*<My translation> If there is no reward after death, then there is no Lord of the heaven and earth; if the Lord of heaven and earth exists, there must be eternal rewards after death. These are the true words of all the sages and worthies of all ages. There is God, Lord of everything, holy and righteous. Who can question his existence? Similarly, who can have doubts about the rewards and punishments in the world to come? <sup>431</sup>*

Using God's existence as an unquestionable prerequisite, the Spanish Jesuit sought to make his readers unconditionally accept the ideas about eternal life rather than persuading them with rational reasoning. Moreover, Pantoja stated that if people do not expect the rewards after death, they would inevitably abandon goodness. In his opinion, anyone who refused to believe in eternal happiness in heaven was deceived by the devil.

Compared with Pantoja, Matteo Ricci adopted a gentle approach to persuade the Chinese literati. He argued that doing good for rewards was not against the Confucian teachings because the ancient sage kings of China also promoted virtues and punished evils, even Confucius himself considered gain and loss in doing good deeds. The Italian Jesuit stated that there were three kinds of gain and loss in the word:

*The first kind is gain and loss in terms of the body where health and long life are regarded as gain and calamity and brevity of life as loss. The second kind is gain and loss from the standpoint of wealth and goods. ...The third kind of gain and loss falls within the sphere of reputation. Gain in this case is the*

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<sup>431</sup> Ibid., 141.

*acquiring of a great name and fame, whereas loss is to suffer reprimand and the destruction of one's reputation.*<sup>432</sup>

He argued that Confucius punished evil because he believed in the gain and loss of fame. Meanwhile, he stated that everyone wanted to benefit their relatives and friends. Accordingly, no one does not concern with gain. Forbidding people from speaking of gain is hypocritical behavior that transgressed morality. The correct way is extending benefits to others despite they ought not to look for personal gain. Then Ricci summed up, people should realize that “the gain is not harmful to virtue.”<sup>433</sup> Finally, he argued with a cite from the Confucian Classic *Book of Changes*: “what is called ‘the advantageous’ is the harmony of all that is right 利者，義之和也 (Li Zhe, Yi Zhi He Ye)”,<sup>434</sup> and reinterpreted the Confucian ethics as a utilitarianism.

Although it seems that Ricci's arguments were more easily accepted by Chinese literati, he shared the same purpose with his Spanish companion. Both of them intended to prove that the sages and men of virtue in ancient China did good deeds for gain.

In any case, all moral preachers had to face a reality that the people who did good things failed to meet with recompense, while the people who committed wrongdoings never get retributive justice. This cruel reality raised questions about whether moral conduct could be justly rewarded. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145 – 86 BC), the most famous historian in China, once commented on people's doubts about the meaning of good deeds in his *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記:

*Some say, ‘Heaven's way favors none, but always sides with good men.’ Can men such as Po Yi 伯夷 and Shu Ch'i 叔齊<sup>435</sup> be called good then, or bad?*

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<sup>432</sup> Ricci, 1985, 301.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>434</sup> *I Ching* 1/9.

<sup>435</sup> Po Yi and Shu Ch'i were two brothers who lived in China at the time of the transition between the Shang dynasty and the Zhou dynasty. They are remembered for their moral virtue. They also opposed the violent transition of power, for this reason they starved to death because they refuse to eat the food of the new dynasty.

*They accumulated such virtue, kept their actions this pure and died of starvation. Of his seventy disciples, Confucius recommended only Yen Yuan 顏淵 as 'fond of learning'. But Hui was often poor, and did not get his fill of rice dregs and husks, finally dying young. How then does heaven repay good men? The Bandit Chih killed innocent men daily, made delicacies from men's flesh, was cruel and ruthless, willful and arrogant, gathered a band of thousands of men and wreaked havoc across the world, yet finally died of old age. For what virtue did this follow? These are just the most notorious and best known examples. As for more recent times, men who do not follow what is proper in his actions, and do nothing but violate the taboos are still carefree and happy for all their lives and wealthy for generations without end; men who choose carefully when how they tread, wait for the right time to offer their words, in walking do not take shortcuts, and except for what is right and fair do not vent pent-up emotions, still encounter disaster and catastrophe in numbers beyond counting. I am deeply perplexed by all this. Perhaps this is what is meant by 'the Way of Heaven'. Is it? Or isn't it?*<sup>436</sup>

Confucius also made comments about Po Yi 伯夷 and Shu Ch'i 叔齊. When one of his disciples asked him if these two moral persons harbored resentment for ending up miserable, he answered: "They sought to act virtuously, and they did so; what was there for them to repine about?"<sup>437</sup> Sima Qian shared the same idea with Confucius, and he insisted that one should follow their own will without considering which was worthy or unworthy, which was gain or loss.<sup>438</sup> Obviously, for Confucius and his followers, one should not do moral conduct considering whether he could be rewarded properly.

Alternatively, for the Confucian scholars, morality itself provided a purpose for everything. What they craved for rewards was nothing but virtue. By acclaiming this virtue ethic doctrine, the Confucians made peace with the injustice of social reality.

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<sup>436</sup> Sima Qian and Nienhauser, 1995, 4.

<sup>437</sup> *Analects*, 7/15.

<sup>438</sup> Sima Qian and Nienhauser, 1995, 4-5.

However, the Jesuits had to provide convincing arguments to explain why “people who do good do not meet with recompense.” Otherwise, their standpoint of doing good for a reward could be untenable. Further, the authority of Heaven, which could encourage and reward moral actions, would also be questioned. Some literati indeed asked Pantoja about the justice of Heaven:

《書》云：‘天道，福善禍淫。’又云：‘惟上帝無常，作善降之百祥，作不善降之百殃。’是以善者蒙福，惡者膺譴，理有固然，奈何事有不然，或遭不虞之災，或冒非分之福。顛倒孔多，參錯過半，無乃增君子之疑，起小人之倖。天道不平，厥欽久矣。是誠何謂？

<My translation> Book of Documents said: ‘the way of Heaven is to bless the good and make the bad miserable.’ It also said: ‘(The ways) of God are not invariable: on the good-doer, he sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer, he sends down all miseries.’ Therefore, the good ones are blessed, and the evils are punished. It should be like this, yet why is it not the fact? Someone suffers from undeserved punishments while someone enjoys undeserved rewards. Right and wrong are reversed nearly in more than half of the cases, which raises the virtuous men’s doubts and encourages the villains to take their chances. The Way of Heaven is not fair for so long. Why is this happening? <sup>439</sup>

Facing the doubts of Chinese literati, Pantoja took an aggressive approach. He criticized that men shouldn’t question the judgment of God for they didn’t possess the moral authority:

夫人之真善真惡，誰能決判？念想言行，咸若天理，此為真善，微有不然，豈真善也？求善非全不成，若求不善，一缺已足。夫全善了無微缺之人，世間有之乎？今人視形，天主視心，烏知人所稱善，非天主所稱惡者

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<sup>439</sup> Pantoja, 2019,87.

耶？且爾謂此人甚能作善，苦之非是。余謂天主至明無暗，至公無私，甚能識善惡，苦之必是也。爾信人之隱善，疑天主之顯義。余信天主之顯義，疑人之隱善。孰是乎？

*<My translation> Who could decide what is authentic good or evil? Only if one can observe the Way of Heaven in all his thoughts, words, and actions can he be considered really righteous. If not, how can that be authentic good? The goodness results from wholeness. If there is a deficiency, then it is not good. Are there people who possess complete goodness? We only see the surface of things while God can see through the heart of people. How could you know that what you think is right is not precisely evil in the eyes of God? Moreover, you think that it is not fair to make good people suffer, while I believe that God is the highest and the justest and can recognize good from evil, he must have good reasons to makes someone suffer. You believe in the indefinite good of people and suspect the justice of God while I believe in the justice of God and hold doubts on the indefinite good of people? Which of us is correct?<sup>440</sup>*

In Pantoja's opinion, people should believe in and hold no doubts about the judgment of God. The relation between people and God was like the patient and his doctor. The patient should completely trust his doctor, no matter the medicine that the doctor gave was sweet or bitter.

Although the Spanish Jesuit always emphasized the importance of belief, he still needed to provide more reasons to persuade his readers to believe that there would be rewards for moral behaviors. According to the missionaries, God made good people suffer "for the Lord disciplines the one he loves."<sup>441</sup> Further, he explained to his readers about the arrangement of God:

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<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Hebrews 12:6.

即是人果善矣，爾謂苦為不幸，天主不宜加之，抑知天主用苦以加善人，乃大可幸乎？……見苦加善人，疑天不明。天非不明，人則不明也。

*<My translation> Even if this person possesses complete goodness, which makes you think it is unfortunate for him to suffer and God should not do that, how do you know that it is not bliss when God makes him suffer?... When people see the good men suffer, they have doubts about the justice of God. As a matter of fact, God does not lack the penetration of judgment; it is the men who do not see clearly.<sup>442</sup>*

He then explained that God made people suffer to keep them away from the mundane pleasure and increase their virtues. Only in this way could people get heavenly rewards in the world to come.<sup>443</sup> Following that, he told a story that was quite similar to the “unfair” destiny of Po Yi, Shu Ch’i, and the Bandit Chih:

一賢出行，遇一盛德人被獅子齡死於野；及郊，遇一惡人之喪甚盛。竊疑曰：“彼賢而橫死，無人收之，此不肖而人崇之，非上帝明釋我此故，我不前矣。”忽有天神曰：“此誠惡，曾有微善，上帝以微榮酬之，其東神重受大苦於鬼境。彼誠賢，曾有微過，上帝以此橫死鍊之，其靈頗沾大樂於天域也。但爾以後，慎勿要上帝。凡上帝所為，惟信服之，勿強測之。

*<My translation> A person of virtue went out in the field and saw a lion killed a man of virtue. When he went to the outskirts of the city he saw a magnificent funeral of a bad man, he was full of doubts and said: “the good one met a violent death with no one burying him, while people respected the bad man, I could not continue my way if God does not give me an explanation.” Then suddenly, a celestial being came to him and said: “This man surely was bad,*

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<sup>442</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 87.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., 88.

*God rewards him with some honor since he did small good. However, his soul should suffer in hell. On the other hand, that man surely was good. God punished him with sudden death because he committed small errors while his soul would enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. From now on, you should bear in mind that people cannot put pressure on God. People should believe in whatever God does and should not have doubts about his motive.”*<sup>444</sup>

In order to convince the Chinese that God could reward and punish according to people's behavior, the Jesuits had to persuade the Chinese to accept the ideas about Heaven and Hell. Nevertheless, during the communication with Chinese literati, the Jesuits always encountered doubts about the “world to come.” As Pantoja recorded in his letter, the Chinese people did not believe in the afterlife, paradise, or hell.<sup>445</sup> For example, the literati suggested that people are limited to the present world and “to consider what happens after death seems to be so impractical.” Consequently, some of them questioned if the issue of “gain or loss in the next life”<sup>446</sup> was worth discussing. Probably that is why the Jesuits thought Chinese literati were atheists. Since the age of Confucius, most Chinese literati treated “the next life” with indifference. Neither did they care about the rewards after death. For them, the crucial thing was self-fulfillment in the present world.

Being well aware of the Chinese elites' mindset, the Jesuits had to try their best to devalue the present world. They intended to convey this idea: in comparison with the present world, the gain or loss in the world to come is more important. For this reason, Pantoja indicated that people's attitude towards mundane and eternal happiness was the key to do good deeds or to commit crimes:

夫古今脩德者，莫不因輕世福之念，成就其聖賢。世人犯罪者，亦莫不因重世福之念，受欺惑於邪魔。則世福者，陷善之阱，聖賢所懼，引惡之梯。邪魔所據，人以為實德之報，繆莫大矣。

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<sup>444</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>445</sup> Pantoja, 1905, 358.

<sup>446</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 309.

*<My translation> People at all times that aim to cultivate their virtues would belittle the mundane happiness and thereupon become a sage. People who are deceived by the devil and committed crimes, with no exception, pay too much attention to mundane happiness. Therefore, mundane happiness is a trap that is feared by the sages, a deception decoy that the devils use to lure people to evil. It is incredibly wrong to take it as a reward for moral conduct.*<sup>447</sup>

While mundane happiness was the obstacle to a virtuous life, the happiness in the world to come was what people should anticipate. As Pantoja wrote in his book:

生積德，則死永樂，真福也。生作惡，則死永苦，真禍也。

*<My translation> The beatitude is accumulating virtue while alive and gaining eternal happiness after death; the actual suffering is doing evil things alive and getting eternal punishments after death.*<sup>448</sup>

Since the idea of heaven and hell had a critical place in Pantoja's moral teachings, Some Chinese literati specially asked him what looked like heaven and hell. They even stated that only when these images were clearly pictured, they could try to understand the rewards or punishments of the Lord of Heaven and accept the Catholic doctrines.<sup>449</sup> In order to make his readers understand the eternal, the Spanish Jesuit needed to give more details:

蓋肉身一入此境，無受損害，常生不死，百體強固全備，四肢相，無餘無虧；發大光明，七倍於日；周旋六合，不待俄頃；透山入石，了無留礙。……若其靈心親見天主無窮能性悉得洞曉，無複疑礙，大定於善，無複更易，寓於靜天……與天神及萬世之聖神，相為伴侶，相為昆弟，相視

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<sup>447</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid., 142.



相愛，如一身心，共是共非，共愛共惡。人所願，惟天主所願，分外之願，自不復容，自不復起。凡巨細願，無或不遂，有所欲為，賴天主之全能，無不能為。

<My translation> When the body entered heaven, it would live forever and not be harmed, it will become perfect and in a neat figure. It will give out light seven times stronger than the sun; it travels around the whole universe in the twinkling of an eye, it can also go through the mountains and stones without block... While the soul could thoroughly understand the power of God and reside in heaven and stay imperishable and indestructible...The soul will stay together with the celestial beings and the saint spirit like their brother, be kind to each other and love each other like they are united, they will share the same concept of right and wrong, hateworthy and praiseworthy. People only want what God designates without having or producing improper thoughts. What they expect will be accomplished, and they could achieve everything with the help of God.<sup>450</sup>

All these descriptions of Pantoja were traditional Catholic views about heaven. For example, qualities such as *impassibilitas*, *subtilitas*, *agilitas*, *claritas* of the resurrected bodies were precisely similar to the sayings of St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica*.<sup>451</sup> It is worth noting that the actual words of St. Thomas Aquinas about the brightness of the heavenly body were “seven times more than the sun, although there be no authority or reason to prove this.”<sup>452</sup> Pantoja deleted the latter part of this statement. Probably it was for winning the confidence of the Chinese literati, and he did not write as prudent as the Catholic saint.

On the other hand, Pantoja also spent much space of his book explaining the punishments in hell:

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<sup>450</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>451</sup> Thomas Aquinas, 1947, 3855-3889.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., 3937.

地獄之苦多種，總歸於二：一謂覺苦，一謂失苦。覺苦者，寒火、饑渴、臭穢、暗冥、憂慙與凡一切能致痛楚之刑，此之苦，地獄甚備甚大。凡世間所謂苦者，以是苦視之，悉不為苦，正如畫物與真物也……失苦者，則失天主及天堂諸慶福，永不復得之悲憂也。兩苦並大，失苦更深。

*<My translation> There are lots of pains in hell, generally speaking, they could be reduced to two kinds: The pain of sense and the pain of loss. The pain of sense consists of many torments such as hellfire without heat, hunger, thirst, filthiness, stench, darkness, and others that could cause lots of pain. The hell is full of this kind of pain. Compared with the pain in hell, every mundane pain is unworthy of mention. It is like the difference between the real thing and its image. The pain of loss arises from having lost God and heaven's benediction, which will never be retrieved. Both pains are overwhelming, while the pain of loss hurts more.<sup>453</sup>*

Pantoja also adopted some ideas of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas to describe the suffering in hell <sup>454</sup>for his Chinese readers. He warned them that it was too late when they realize the existence of heaven and hell after death, and they had to suffer enormous harm for not believing in God :

矧此信望，能策人怠慢，激人精進，又何故不誠心信望之？若曰必待死後既親見，吾則信焉，則先失天堂之永福，墮地獄之永苦，而後始信實有天堂地獄，豈不甚晚，信何益耶？

*<My translation> If this belief in God could spur on sloth and make people strive resolutely, why don't people accept it? If you say that you can only*

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<sup>453</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 145-146.

<sup>454</sup> For the description of the pains of hell please refer to ST. THOMAS, I:64 and Supplement 9:97, and his commentators and Consideration XXVI THE PAINS OF HELL in *Preparation for Death: A Popular Abridgment* of St. Alphonsus Liguori.

*accept the faith after you see it in the world to come, you will lose the eternal happiness of heaven and suffer the eternal punishment of hell. Isn't it too late to have faith at that time? Then what is the point of having faith?*<sup>455</sup>

In comparison with the books of Ricci, Pantoja provided more details about hell and heaven. This was the first time that the Jesuits elaborated the world to come to the Chinese people<sup>456</sup>. Obviously, all these efforts of Pantoja were for his readers to understand God's rewards as the purpose of moral conduct.

To sum up, Pantoja wanted to convince his readers that God would reward or punish people for their actions, and he indicated that this belief was the foundation of morality. As for the cases that "good people have no good rewards", they were just surface phenomena that people observed in this world. They had doubts because they did not understand the arrangements God made for these people in the world to come. Anyhow, the idea about the "world to come" brought about a significant difference between Confucianism and Catholicism: the former focuses on the mundane life, while the latter emphasizes the value of the afterlife.

#### 4.2.4 The dispute on the idea of eternal happiness and God

The Catholic-literati accepted the Jesuits' whole argument about the afterlife rewards and punishments, which they believed was a significant inducement for moral behaviors. Wang Zheng made it clear that the existence of eternal happiness and punishment is the only explanation for the fate of virtuous people and villains in history :

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<sup>455</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 141.

<sup>456</sup> Ricci didn't spent much space elaborating heaven and hell, for example in his book *True Meaning of Lord of Heaven*, he only mentioned that heaven is where God resides and it is a place full of joy, going to heaven is a reward for the good people in their afterlife, while hell is a place full of suffering and devil lurks there, going to hell is an eternal punishment for the villains.

如真文王、殷王、周公在天堂上，則桀、紂、盜跖必在地獄下矣。行異則受不同，理之常；何容疑哉？況顏貧夭，跖富壽，令不天堂不地獄也而可乎？

*<My translation> If King Wen of Zhou, King Yin, Duke of Zhou are in heaven, then Jie, Zhou, and Bandit Chih must be in hell now. The rewards vary according to people's deeds. This is right and proper. How could people doubt that? Moreover, Yan Hui 顏回<sup>457</sup> was poor and died at a young age while Bandit Chih 盜跖<sup>458</sup> enjoyed a long and abundant life. How could there not be heaven and hell? <sup>459</sup>*

Yan Hui and Bandit Chih were iconic figures in Chinese history, representing the two polarities of good and evil. Yan Hui, a man of virtue, died at a young age. Meanwhile, Bandit Chih, the legendary villain, died full of years and wealth. This cruel fact became an inescapable issue in ancient Chinese ethics. The rewards and punishments from heaven provided a reason for some literati to believe that Justice does exist. If not in this world, but surely in the afterlife. This idea from *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) was actually similar to the views of Buddhism and Taoism in China. As a result, the literati were more clearly aware of the religious connotation of Pantoja's book.

Since some literati disliked the ideas about “the world to come”. Xu Guangqi, the most famous Catholic convert and one of the Three Great Pillars of Chinese Catholicism, tried to defend Catholicism in a memorial presented to the emperor. He argued that what made the Catholic teachings different from Buddhism and Taoism is the role of God, which holds the final moral authority as the inarguably supreme deity:

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<sup>457</sup> Yan Hui (c. 521 – 481 BC) was the favorite disciple of Confucius, a man of virtue, one of the most revered figures of Confucianism.

<sup>458</sup> Bandit Chih was a legendary villain in the Chinese history.

<sup>459</sup> Wang Zheng 2011,128.

臣常論古來帝王之賞罰、聖賢之是非，皆范人於善、禁人於惡，至詳極備。然賞罰是非，能及人之外行，不能及人之中情。又如司馬遷所雲：顏回之夭，盜跖之壽，使人疑於善惡之無報，是以防範愈嚴，欺詐愈甚。一法立，百弊生。空有願治之心，恨無必治之術，於是假釋氏之說以輔之。其言善惡之報，在於身後，則外行中情，顏回、盜跖似乎皆得其報。謂宜使人為善去惡不旋踵矣。奈何佛教東來，千八百年，而世道人心，未能改易，則其言似是而非也。……且欲抗佛而加於上主之上，則既與古帝王聖賢之旨悖矣，使人何所適從、何所依據乎？必欲使人盡為善，則諸陪臣所傳事天之學，真可以補益王化，左右儒術，救正佛法者也。

*<My translation> I always state that the emperors' rewards and punishment measures, the judgments of the sages, had provided elaborate directions. Its purpose is to teach people toward goodness and forbid them from evil. However, these measures and judgments have jurisdiction over people's behavior, not their minds. As the great historian Sima Qian once said, Yan Hui died young, but Bandit Chih enjoyed a long life. Their destinies make people wonder if there is retribution for Good and Evil. While the prevention and control go stricter, more fraud appears; one law is established, hundreds of loopholes would be exploited. People have the wish but not the methods to make a moral society. Therefore, they have to apply Buddhism's doctrine, stating that the retribution for Good and Evil lies in the afterlife to constrain people's behavior and minds. Yan Hui and Bandit Chih would get what they deserved in the afterlife. The Buddhists declare that it would not take long before their doctrines make people exterminate the evil and follow the good. Although Buddhism came to China more than 1800 years, people's manners and morals did not improve. It proves that its doctrine is specious and false... Further, it is against the teachings of the ancient sages when the Buddhist put Budda above Shangdi. Consequently, people are bewildered. If we want people to follow the good, we need to adopt these missionaries' teachings, which can*

*benefit the emperor's teachings, the doctrines of Confucianism, and rectify Buddhism.*<sup>460</sup>

Similarly, Chen Liangcai declared that people should cultivate morals for the sake of heavenly rewards as the farmers expecting a harvest. This argument suggests that Chen Liangcai also believed in the necessity of eternal happiness :

天德無際，天報無涯，圖天之報，俛焉日有孳孳，惟日不足，此文所以純亦不已，而孔所以不知老至也，奈之何其諱言報也？周孔黜人世之報以虛其心，大西希生天之報以實其證。東西南北，聖聖一揆，豈非然哉？

*<My translation> The virtues of heaven are immeasurable; the heavenly rewards are endless. In order to get these rewards, people cultivate their morals diligently, fearing that their efforts are not enough. This is why people say that Zhou Wenwang<sup>461</sup> is loyal to the Way of Heaven continuously, and Confucius did not even realize he was getting old in the process of moral cultivation. How can you say that it is not because they want to be rewarded? Zhou Gong<sup>462</sup> and Confucius did not speak of mundane rewards to make people humble; the Western classics declare that people should look forward to the heavenly rewards for us to understand that they really exist. The saint's intention is the same, whether it is in the East or the West, isn't it?<sup>463</sup>*

Yang Tingyun admitted in his preface that everyone should apply the method in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) to cultivate their morality, only in this way could people find meaning in life and have no fear for death:

學者循此繕修，存順沒寧，來去倏然，既不徒生，亦何畏死也？

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<sup>460</sup> Xu Guangqi, 1933, vol.5, 2.

<sup>461</sup> Zhou Wenwang 周文王, or King Wen of Zhou was an epic hero of Chinese history, the founder of the Zhou Dynasty, he was considered to be a sage king and moral standard by the Confucian scholars.

<sup>462</sup> Zhou Gong or the Duke of Zhou, was another sage and moral standard in Confucianism.

<sup>463</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 11. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 5.2 of this thesis.

<My translation> *Whoever follows his (referring to Pantoja) teachings will be able to remain calm while living and till the end of life. Life is short, but if one leads a meaningful life, why should one fear death?*<sup>464</sup>

Nevertheless, in the six prefaces of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), only Yang Tingyun and Chen Liangcai talked about the heavenly rewards and the meaning of the afterlife. It is worth noting that Yang was a convert, and Chen also got access to the Catholic teachings from his childhood. Despite all Pantoja's efforts, it seems hard to make most of his readers accept the heavenly reward as moral motivation.

Most readers of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) still focused on the mundane world and took Pantoja's work as a useful guidebook for Chinese society's moral development. That is why people could accept God as the moral authority but remained indifferent to the idea of heavenly rewards.

Some literati could not accept the idea that worldly life was vanity, and the purpose of life was for eternal happiness. Part of the reason was that they believed that personal gain was a corrupt inducement and that people should not act in anticipation of rewards or punishments. What is more, some regarded these ideas, which were accepted by some other literati, as severe threats to Confucian teachings' purity. Thus, they turned into fierce critics of the Jesuits and made *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) one of their main targets. Huang Zhen 黄贞 (? – ?), a representative figure of the anti-Catholic literati, once stated:

自十六字传心以来，中国之儒门无异学，惟仁义而已，故生死皆不失其正。仲尼集千聖之大成，孟子學孔子者，後先垂教，可謂至矣。妖夷不知真體所在，心惟主是逐，不嫌盡此生而媚之，則生也為抱妄想，生是虛生；志惟天堂是惑，不難舍此生而求之，則死也為抱妄想，死是虛死，生

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<sup>464</sup> Ibid.,6. Please see the full translation of this preface in Appendix 1.2 of this thesis.

死皆欲也。夫吾人之生死，大事也。妖夷與孔孟理欲相背如此，矧其他乎？

*<My translation> There is no heresy in Confucianism since the age of classics. All its teachings focus on benevolence and righteousness. Therefore, no matter the literati are alive or dead, they do not deviate from the correct path. Confucius epitomized the thoughts of all the saints before him. Mencius learned from him. Both of them spread their doctrine to people, and the truth had been explained by them entirely and clearly. The wicked barbarians do not know what the truth is; their hearts only follow their lord. They hesitated at nothing to please their lord. Therefore, their life is meaningless because of their illusion of the lord while they are alive. They set their minds for heaven, and they seek their goal at the price of their life. Therefore, their death is meaningless because they died with the illusion of heaven. They possess many desires, no matter they are dead or alive.*

Huang Zhen clearly expressed his contempt for the teachings about God. He specifically lashed out at the idea of getting rewards from God, indicating it was an utter violation of Confucianism's teachings.

The followers of Yangmingism also fought back, criticized the Jesuits "failed to follow the heart-mind and meaninglessly search the truth on the outside."<sup>465</sup> They cited the words of Mencius, saying:

夫聖賢之學，原本人心，故曰“人者天地之心”，未聞心外有天也。孟子不嘗雲事天乎，曰：“存其心、養其性，所以事天也。”所以雲者，見天於此心、此性焉爾，存養外非別有天可事也。

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<sup>465</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 383.



*<My translation> The teachings of the sages and men of virtue are originated from the heart-mind. That is why they say “humanity represents the soul of the world”, they never said there is Heaven beyond the heart-mind. Didn’t Mencius once talked about serving Heaven: “It is through preserving one’s mind and nourishing one’s nature that one may serve Heaven.” That is to say, people could discover heaven in the heart-mind and nature. Besides that, there is no heaven that people have to serve.*<sup>466</sup>

Most educated people showed little interest in the Catholic doctrines in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克). They just saw the work of Pantoja as a book about cultivating virtues. Some of them even took some passages of Pantoja’s book and made their own. In the meantime, these authors deliberately deleted the Catholic terminologies or the names of the saints. For example, in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) there is a paragraph:

或問：”天主驕傲，猶有在高位者，何故？”曰：”使傲人登高，非增其榮，獨重其隕。

*<My translation> Some asked: “How is it possible that if God (Tian Zhu 天主) abhors pride, there are still potentates? I answered: “he makes the arrogant people climb up not to glorify them, but to make them fall harder.”*<sup>467</sup>

A Chinese literati named Zhao Han 趙韓 (? – ?) almost adopt the whole paragraph in his book, but he deliberately deleted the phrase “some asked” and changed the word “Tianzhu” into “Tian.” In this way, the Catholic God was transformed into a deity that could be found in the Confucian classics. The case of Zhao Han is not unique. Another literati Xie Wenjian also excised the religious contents in *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克) and revised it into a book of purely mundane moral teachings. The title of the book is

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<sup>466</sup> Xia Guiqi, 1996, 271.

<sup>467</sup> Pantoja, 2019, 17.

Qike Yi 七克易, which means the revised version of *Qike*.<sup>468</sup> He was quite proud of his work:

此番刪校《七克》，彼教陋處，俱已剔盡，存者俱切實格言也，置之案頭，可以為刮骨洗髓之劑。

<My translation> *I corrected the book Qike, the absurd contents of their religion were all weeded out. What remained are the real practical mottos. This new book is always on my desk, and I see it as a medicine to cleanse one's heart*<sup>469</sup>

That is to say, several decades after the publication of *Septem Victoriis* (Qike 七克), although there were many literati exposed to the teachings of the Jesuits, some of them still rejected the notion of a Christian God and salvation. The attitude of a literati named Wei Xi 魏禧 (1624 – 1681) was quite representative:

泰西書，其言理較二氏與吾儒最合，如《七克》等類皆切己之學……特支分節解，雜以靈幻之辭耳。”所尊天主，細求之，即古聖所雲上帝，先儒所雲天之主宰，絕無奇異。每每于說理時無故按入天主，甚為強贅。

<My translation> *The books from the far west, such as Qike, which correspond to Confucianism more than Daoism and Buddhism do, are teachings of self-cultivation... However, it (Qike) is too fragmented and mixed with strange and illusional things. If we deliberate on Tianzhu that they worship, it is nothing more than Shangdi mentioned by the Chinese saints, which bears nothing supernatural. In this book, the author always mentions Tianzhu for no reason, which is too farfetched and redundant.*<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Li Shixue, 2014, 34-35; Liu Yunhua, 2011, 1.

<sup>469</sup> Xie Wenjian, 1997, 355.

<sup>470</sup> Wei Xi, 2003, 1129.

As Ann Walter pointed out, Pantoja's decision to write a moral tract was calculated<sup>471</sup>. He intended to make more Chinese literati understand and accept the Catholic doctrine through his book. Nevertheless, judging from the commentaries in the prefaces and its later readers' attitudes, *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) did not attain the results expected. The same as Wei Xi, many literati acknowledged that *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) could preserve social ethics, yet still refused to accept the Catholic teachings, which means that the core ideas of Catholicism were ignored or even criticized by most of its readers. The Chinese elites' focus always remained on the mundane affair. When they discovered the religious elements in the teachings of the Jesuits, some of them became indifferent or even alarming. That is why so few literati commented on heavenly rewards despite such an idea was a critical argument in Pantoja's book.

Although *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) remained popular in the Early Qing times, its popularity gradually decreased since the middle of the Qing Dynasty (18th century). When the literati in those times realized that the book of Pantoja was well received by the literati of the late Ming period, they were puzzled:

所說或儒或釋，而釋氏之旨居多。大抵欲人敬事天主以邀福利，或釋氏之奉佛伎倆無異趨也。故說有不通處，仍遁入於釋氏，宜為縉流所竊笑也。而儼然號為儒流者不知之，非下愚而何？

<My translation> *The teachings of Qike are mixed with Confucianism and Buddhism, and the great part of the book is full of Buddhist principles. In general, the book intends to urging people to serve the Lord of Heaven for personal gain, which is the same as the Buddhism trick. Therefore, when their teachings do not make sense, they turn to the teachings of Buddhism. It is reasonable that the Buddhists mocked the book. On the other hand, the literati,*

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<sup>471</sup> Waltner, 1994, 431.

*who called themselves Confucians, did not realize that. Isn't it clear that they were fools?*<sup>472</sup>

Obviously, the literati lived in the middle of the Qing Dynasty could not understand why a book loaded with religious ideas and moral teachings was well received by the literati decades ago. Society changed with time, the Chinese who lived in the middle of the Qing Dynasty never experienced the social changes as their predecessors did, and they did not have to solve the moral crisis. Consequently, a book about moral teachings and moral authority was insignificant for them.

In short, *Septem Victorii* (*Qike* 七克) did help to reconstruct an anthropomorphized deity as the moral authority, the legislator of the moral standards. With this moral authority, the orthodox Confucian could disprove the moral relativism and restore the social order. Meanwhile, they realized that Heaven could play a supervisory role in moral cultivation as an anthropomorphized deity. Some scholars even admitted that the rewards from Heaven were the purpose of people's moral behavior. However, some Chinese elites still insisted on the Confucian traditional ethics and strongly opposed this utilitarianism. Some of them, even some preface authors of Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), refused to admit that God had the moral authority instead of heart-mind. For this reason, the dispute on eternal happiness as the moral motivation and God as the moral authority never ceased.

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<sup>472</sup> Zhou Zhongfu, 1958, 1058.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis is a study of Chinese literati's interpretation of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) and the discussions on moral philosophy between Pantoja and his Chinese readers in the late Ming period. According to the arguments presented before, the four hypotheses raised at the beginning of this thesis could be verified.

1. Through the cooperation with the Chinese literati, Pantoja precepted that the most concerned issue of them was the moral disorder of the late Ming society.

As it is discussed in the first chapter, Pantoja spent lots of time communicating with the Chinese elites and cooperating with them to serve the court, and they developed a close relationship. This long-term communication made Pantoja fully understand the concerns of the Chinese literati. In his letter to Luis de Guzmán, Pantoja indicated that Chinese elites were most concerned about morality and showed little interest in the world after death. This statement contains rich information:

On the one hand, a series of changes were taking place in Chinese society at that time, and the social unrest and political struggles caused by these changes were blamed on the corruption of social morality by the Chinese literati. Therefore, they hoped to reorganize the moral order of society;

On the other hand, for Confucians, improving social morality was their responsibility and the ultimate pursuit of life. As Pantoja found out during his communication with the literati, the Chinese elites were not interested in salvation because they regarded participating in creating a morally perfect society as a way of realizing self-fulfillment.

Pantoja realized and experienced the social-political crisis that concerned the Chinese. Thereby, he wrote *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) and participated in this dialogue of

moral cultivation, hoping the arguments about the relationship of God and moral principles could guide the Chinese literati to understand the teachings of the Catholic church.

2. To solve the crisis and restore the social order, the orthodox literati tried to reconstruct the moral authority, which declined due to the challenge of Yangmingism.

Due to the social-political crisis, an increasing number of literati in late Ming China realized that the official mainstream thought failed to convince people to live virtuous lives. Even worse, it became a device for people to fight for fame and profit. Therefore, some Confucians began to challenge and modify traditional moral teachings. They criticized the rigid moralizing of the official mainstream thought, which encouraged the stifling and hierarchical culture and brought moral distortion. Among them stood out Wang Yangming, who advanced Confucian doctrines' interpretations and sometimes clashed with the mainstream ideas. He and his followers challenged the rigid ideology, calling on individuals to make their intuition the touchstone of their behavior. They undoubtedly provided more flexible and individualistic ways of moral cultivation.

Since then, literati paid more attention to the individual's moral judgments. Accordingly, the traditional rigid moral dogma and the Principle, the core idea of mainstream thought, were gradually questioned by people. Some literati even suggested that if the words and ideas of the sages no longer proved applicable to current situations, one should abandon them and search for a more practicable truth. Consequently, rigid ethical conventions were flouted; the traditional moral authority was falling. Nevertheless, due to the lack of moral authority, and Chinese society was undergoing a turbulent time, moral nihilism prevailed. Some literati twisted the teachings of the heart-mind school and declared that everything was good as long as one's heart permitted. In order to avoid this confusion in moral philosophy, the orthodox literati, the exponents of which were the Donglin members, criticized the philosophers such as Li Zhi, appealed the return of the traditional moral orders, and attempted to restore the moral authority.

3. The orthodox literati were attracted by the moral teachings in Pantoja's *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) and reinterpreted it to reconstruct the moral authority.

When the orthodox literati were disappointed about the social morality, Matteo Ricci and Diego de Pantoja entered China. To preach the Catholic doctrine, they tried their best to understand Chinese society and established a very close relationship with some Chinese literati. The concern of the Chinese literati on moral issues provided many opportunities for communication. Deliberately or unintentionally, they were involved in the heated discussion of morality. Impressed by these Jesuits' virtues, the orthodox literati believed that these foreign intellectuals' teaching could improve the Chinese's manner and morals. Some even regarded the Catholic doctrine as the cure for the moral crisis because it could restore the right and wrong criteria and restrain people's behavior and mind. To resolve the social crisis and end disputes in moral philosophy, Chinese scholars needed to provide concrete moral standards and convince people to believe in objective moral facts. Therefore, they hoped to reestablish moral authority.

They believed that they found this authority in the teachings and books of Ricci and Pantoja. The Spanish Jesuit demonstrated in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) an anthropomorphized deity who possessed the moral will and established moral standards for humans. This exact idea perfectly met the urgent need of the orthodox Confucians. Thus, they reinterpreted "God" as the moral authority and combined the meaning of "God" with "Heaven" in the Confucian classics.

4. Heaven, as an anthropomorphized deity and the moral authority, was adopted by the Chinese literati. Nevertheless, they still did not admit that heavenly rewards were their moral motivation.

As it is well-known, the concept of Heaven with will and intention did exist in ancient Chinese classics. However, due to the philosophers' efforts in the Song Dynasty, this concept of anthropomorphized deity was removed from the Chinese ideological system. Heaven was reinterpreted into a collection of principles, patterns, and values. In the late

Ming Dynasty, some literati hoped to establish a super moral legislator to resolve the moral crisis. Tian, or Heaven, which already existed in the Confucian classics, implied a natural legitimacy for the Chinese. Meanwhile, the Jesuits also stated that God from their teachings was the same as “Tian” or “Shangdi” in the Confucian classics, which made the concept of God in their moral books more readily accepted by Chinese literati.

Therefore, the original meaning of Heaven as an anthropomorphized deity and moral authority was rediscovered. Even if the Jesuits were not the initiators of the reconstruction of moral authority, they were also essential participants. The reconstruction of the moral authority was achieved by the cooperation between the Chinese literati and the Jesuits. Of course, this cooperation does not mean that the two parties painstakingly created a new moral theory, or “Confucian monotheism”, as Erik Zürcher stated.<sup>473</sup> As a matter of fact, the reconstructed moral authority was more like a result of a chain reaction when the Jesuits put a drop of their moral ideas into the already heated debate on moral philosophy.

In *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), Pantoja stated that all the moral principles derived from the Lord of Heaven, which brought forth great response among his Chinese readers and left a special meaning in the history of Chinese moral philosophy. The influence of Pantoja’s teachings on the reconstruction of moral authority can be summarized as follows:

First of all, indicating Heaven as the origin of morality helped the Chinese literati restore their confidence in the objective moral standards. A generally accepted moral authority could provide a solid ground for moral principles. The ideas about Heaven as the origin of moral principles augmented the voice of the orthodox Confucians. Therefore, the confusion caused by moral relativism gradually died away. This means that people had to judge whether their thoughts and actions were in accord with the objective norms

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<sup>473</sup> For more details about Confucian monotheism, please refer to Zürcher, 1994 and Zürcher, 1999.



regulated by this moral authority. As a result, moral rigorism was on the rise in the late Ming and early Qing China.<sup>474</sup>

The concept of an anthropomorphized deity that possessed moral will and emotions was accepted by some literati, even including some non-Catholic literati. Under the influence of books such as *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克), some literati developed the thought of “revering Heaven”, recognizing the presence of a transcendental deity that served as a supervisor during moral cultivation. This idea added some sense of heteronomy to the Confucian ethics.

Last but not least, regarding God’s rewards and punishments as the motivation of people’s moral behavior aroused considerable controversy in the field of Chinese moral philosophy. What is the purpose of doing good? The Catholic-literati shared the same answer with the Jesuits, stating that pleasing God and getting his reward to go to heaven was the ultimate purpose of moral actions.

In Dostoevski’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, Smerdyakov stated, “If God does not exist, everything is permitted.” This well-known saying also speaks out the mind of some orthodox Confucians in late Ming China. They believed that the sense of right and wrong was predicated on the assumption of a higher system of values personified as a supreme deity. If this foundation was wiped away, there would be no objective moral standards nor moral reality, or even if there were, there was no reason to abide by it. Then, everything was intellectually permissible.

That is why Heaven, as the origin of morality, the supervisor of the moral cultivation and the motivation of moral conduct, became the perfect moral authority for the literati who were eager to restore social order and even constrain the emperor of China.

Nevertheless, some Confucians insisted that moral behavior’s driving force was purely the will to be moral. The behaviors were only seemed to have moral value when people

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<sup>474</sup> Wang Fansen, 1998, 69-81.

were determined to do good without any personal gain. This view was clearly incompatible with the Catholic belief that humanity's highest and ultimate goal was everlasting bliss in the afterlife. Many literati indicated that the idea of getting eternal happiness in the afterlife only induced people to act according to desires, which was a false principle to comply with. For the Confucians, virtuous life ought to be sought for its own sake, whereas Catholics believed that virtuous life should be pursued in the hope of a greater reward: happiness in the future life. Obviously, there was a clear difference between the two cultures. The Confucians believed that life's goal was virtue itself, neither limited happiness in this world nor the infinite heavenly beatitude in the afterlife. Besides, there were also some literati who objected to taking Heaven as moral authority.

In sum, when the Chinese literati urgently needed the moral authority to restore the social order, the Spanish Jesuit Pantoja provided an option for them with his moral philosophy book. Some Chinese elites adopted the moral teachings in this book and used the ideas about a moral legislator to reconstruct the moral authority. Meanwhile, quite a few literati refused to acknowledge that this authority was the Christian god and clearly expressed their disapproval of the Catholic doctrine. Although Pantoja resolved to make his readers understand the Salvation in Christianity through his book, only a few converted to Catholics while the majority either ignored the religious teachings or cast these contents away. On the other hand, Pantoja never thought about solving social problems in China, yet his book *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) attracted many Chinese literati, who were extremely worried about the moral decline. These literati interpreted this book based on their urgent need and their cultural background. They did not fully understand Pantoja's intention. Anyhow, this misunderstanding did produce more communication opportunities between China and Europe.

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## Appendix

This section includes the original Chinese texts and its English translation of the prefaces of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). The author cited lots of contents of these prefaces to demonstrate the Chinese literati's interpretation of Pantoja's book. Thus, the bilingual texts were attached in the appendix for the convenience of the readers. The original texts of these prefaces were extracted from *Yesuhuishi Pang Diwo Zhushuji* 耶穌會士龐迪我著述集 *Escritos de Diego de Pantoja, S. J.*. The author of this thesis translated them into English because these prefaces were crucial documents to understand Chinese readers' reception of the book of Pantoja and the dialogue between the two parts on moral issues. Furthermore, the author adds punctuation again for a better understanding of the original texts.

### Appendix 1 Preface of Yang Tingyun

#### 1.1 Preface of Yang Tingyun: original text

##### 七克序

自子思子發明性道，原本天命，後世言道術者准焉。至謂天下之至聖，德施洋溢，及乎照墜，命曰配天，殆未易揆測也。今上在宥天下，遠人來賓，乃有泰西諸君子，航海而來，計其途八萬餘裡，閱三年始抵中國。有古越裳、肅慎、奇肱、身毒所未徑涉者，此亦盡乎照墜矣。夫麟遊鳳至，皆稱聖瑞，貴來遠也。物之瑞，孰與人為瑞乎？洋洋哉聖德配天，非我皇上疇當之。

諸君子觀光用賓，大都潔身自好。其為人不詭時向，其為學不襲浮說，間用華言譯其書教，皆先聖微旨也。察其燕私屋漏，密修密證，皆鑿鑿不背所聞；其言語文字，更僕未易詳，而大指不越兩端，曰“欽崇一天主萬物之上”，曰“愛人如己”。夫欽崇天主，即吾儒昭事上帝也；愛人如己，即吾儒民吾同胞也。而又曰

一，曰上，見主宰之權，至尊無對，一切非鬼而祭，皆屬不經，即夫子所謂獲罪於天，無所禱也。其持論可謂至大至正，而至實矣。

夫課虛崇立，洸洋無際，要眇何難？要以真實世諦，使人可信可解而不可易，此為難耳！則畫師圖鬼物，圖狗馬之說也。又以泛而言敬天，稽顙對越，皆敬也。必愛人乃為敬天之真，泛而言愛人，怵惕煦嫗，皆愛也。必克己乃有愛人之實，故有所謂食饑者，飲渴者，衣裸者，舍旅者，醫病者及顧囹圄者，贖虜者，葬死者，皆愛人事也。而又有所謂伏傲，熄忿，解貪，坊淫，遠妒，清飲食，迷醒懈惰，於為善之七克，克其心之罪根，植其心之德種，凡所施愛，純是道心。道心即是天心。步步鞭策，著著近裏。此之為學，又與吾儒闇然為己之旨，脈脈同符。學者循此繕修，存順沒寧，來去倏然，既不徒生，亦何畏死也？

惟是《七克》所載，大率遠於俗情，如以富貴榮寵為綴疣；貧窮苦楚為福澤。驟閱之，覺可駭可異；而徐玩之，名理妙趣，醒心豁目，未有不躍然神解，而卷不釋手者。此書在慧悟之士，機警觸發，見之自有神契。其次則困衡之輩，推勘路窮，如貧見家珍，渴逢甘露，更有津津證入處。惟一種世味濃郁，嗜進無已之人，靈府多滓，雖與微言，視此不免嚼蠟。或以此方文字見解測之，更泥不通，則不終卷而臥，此非書之罪也。

龐公號順陽，予未與一面，聞其居長安，大官授餐，為聖天子所禮遇，名流多與之遊。諸題語言人人殊，率企向不啻口出，即其人可知矣。

鄭圃居士楊廷筠書於明旦齋中

## 1.2. Preface of Yang Tingyun: English translation

By Heaven's command, Since Zisi (子思) (c. 481 – 402 BCE) had discovered that the human nature accorded with the Mandate of Heaven, all the scholars of later times followed his interpretation. As for the great sages under the heaven that he mentioned, their moral power was so influential that it spread to all corners of the world. His virtue is said to have been as immense as Heaven that no one can imagine. In our days, the Emperor applies a benevolence policy, which is why people come from far away to bow to him. Among them are men of virtue from the far West, some 80,000 miles<sup>475</sup> away. It has taken them three years to sail to China. The country they come from is beyond Yueshang (越裳)<sup>476</sup>, Sushen (肃慎)<sup>477</sup>, Qigong (奇肱)<sup>478</sup>, and Shendu(身毒)<sup>479</sup>, corroborating that virtue has already reached all ends of the earth. As if Qilin 麒麟 or the phoenix 凤凰 came to us bringing their good omen, as something valuable that comes from afar. If these creatures are valued by people, how much are the omens when there are human beings from afar! How great is the virtue that can equal Heaven! Who can possess it, besides our Emperor?

These men of virtue come to China as worthy guests, and they maintain their integrity and have not followed current trends. They have refused to use hasty and exaggerated expressions and have translated their teachings into Chinese. All they have translated are sublime words with the deep meaning of the ancient sages. His language and texts are not easy to understand, but in general, all his teaching refers to two great themes: worshipping God above all things; love your neighbor as yourself. Worshipping God is what our Confucius called serving God diligently; loving your neighbor as yourself resembles the

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<sup>475</sup> Obviously this is an inordinate figure, even though the mile used in the Ming Dynasty was just under half a kilometer.

<sup>476</sup> According to Chinese historical records, Yueshang was an ancient country which located in modern Vietnam.

<sup>477</sup> Sushen refers to an ancient country which located in the northeastern part of China.

<sup>478</sup> According to the *Shan Hai Jing* 山海经 *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, Qigong is a legendary country which was far away from mainland China

<sup>479</sup>, Shendu refers to the current India.

Confucian expression that all people are my brothers and sisters.<sup>480</sup> They use the expressions “one” and “above” to underline the incomparable power of God. Any sacrifice to false spirits or gods constitutes a violation of classical doctrines; It is like what Confucius said: “Whoever offends against Heaven has no one left to pray to.” His teachings are full of greatness, and they are just and authentic.

Talking about vague and pointless things is not difficult; the difficult thing is to explain the truth to people. It is like what the old Chinese saying: for a painter, it is easy to draw ghosts, but it is challenging to draw dogs and horses, since, unlike ghosts, we all know the appearance of dogs and horses. Revering God goes beyond ceremonies, you also have to love people, and therein lies the exact way to revere God. Loving people is not just a formality, you have to make an effort to love others genuinely. That is why we say that offering food and clothing to those who need it, as well as lodging for the travelers, healing the sick, visiting and comorting the prisoners, rescuing the captive, and burying the deceased, all of these means loving people. Furthermore, to subdue pride, extinct wrath, relieve greed, control the lust, stay away from envy, and spur on sloth are the seven ways to overcome the root of evil and plant goodness in the heart. Consequently, all the good people do is out of the very heart of the Dao. The heart of the Dao is the heart of Heaven. It is necessary to continue exercising in spirit and examining the heart. This is precisely the path of Confucius and his followers when they maintain a humble profile, reflect and practice the analysis of their behavior. Whoever follows his(referring to Pantoja) teachings will remain calm while living and till the end of life. Life is short, but if one leads a meaningful life, why should one fear death?

The values that were elaborated in the book *De Septem Victoriis* are quite different from the conventional way of thinking. For example, wealth and social rank are regarded as problems, while poverty and misery as blessings. When you read the book for the first time, it is incomprehensible. However, when its meanings are savored, it is noticed that the book is interesting and full of wisdom, and that is why it will never be left behind. To

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<sup>480</sup> Yang Tingyun is referring to the words of *Ximing* 西銘 written the neo-Confucian moral philosopher Zhang Zai 张载 (1020–1077).

the most insightful and intelligent, the book may interest them and lead them to understand its content soon; to the studious and thoughtful people, the book will make them reflect and understand their teachings, as if it were a poor man who finds a treasure or a thirsty man who finds water; It is an unusual experience to get to know the truth through your efforts. Be that as it may, those blinded by desires, eager for wealth and power, will not be able to know the truth and will not find interest in the book. Even after reading this prologue, they will still not be able to understand it and will despise it. In spite of it all, it is not the fault of the book.

Its author, Mr. Pang, known as Shunyang (順陽), whom I have never seen, is said to live in the capital and to work for the court, and was once received with great courtesy by the Emperor. Many distinguished figures have befriended him. All who have written the various prefaces of this book have shown their respect for him so that we can get an idea of the moral qualities he must have.

Written by Zhengfu Jushi Yang Tingyun in Mingdan Zhai

### **1.3. Brief introduction of Yang Tingyun**

Yang Tingyun was born in Hangzhou of Zhejiang Province in 1562. At the age of 35 (1592), after taking the Imperial Examinations, he became an Inspector in the imperial ministries.

Although Yang Tingyun was not a member of the Donglin Academy, he shared similar thoughts and had a close relationship with them. Especially on many specific social-political issues, his position is similar to that of the Donglin literati. That is to say, facing the same crisis in late Ming China, Yang Tingyun was much concerned about moral cultivation.

In 1600 he met Matteo Ricci, one of the founding fathers of missionary activity in China. Since then, he worked with Ricci and other Jesuits and began to expose himself to the new technology and the religion brought by these westerners. Impressed by the Catholic doctrine, Yang Tingyun was baptized and receiving the Christian name “Michael.” As Nicolas Standaert once pointed out, Yang Tingyun was both a Neo-Confucian and Christian. Although he adopted a critical attitude toward the doctrine of the Cheng-Zhu school, he was against the teachings of Li Zhi. Furthermore, he paid attention to sectarian issues and showed solicitude for the worth of life. According to the preface of Yang Tingyun, he added the belief of monotheism into the Neo-Confucianism ideology, which consequently built a new ideology in late Ming China.

Known as one of “The Three Pillars” of Christianity along with Xu Guangqi and Li Zhizao, throughout his whole life Yang did his best to protect Christianity and the Jesuits in China. Although he never met Pantoja in person, he gave his full support to the creation and publication of the Spanish Jesuit’s work. At the age of 71, Yang Tingyun requested the sacraments from the priest and then died in January 1628.



## Appendix 2 Preface of Cao Yubian

### 2.1 Preface of Cao Yubian: original text

#### 七克序

昔者魯鄒之立訓，知天知人之說，蓋屢言之，學莫要於知天矣。知天斯知人，知人者，知其性也。共戴一天，共秉一命，共具一性，可知也。

泰西距中華八萬里，逖矣。龐君順陽著《七克》各一卷。中華之士，諷其精語，為之解頤，此何以故？其性同也。傲、妒、慳、忿、迷、食色、情善七者，情之所流，上帝降衷之性所無有也。率吾天命之性，未肯任其流者，中華、泰西之所不能異也。

謂傲妬之可長，慳忿之可恃，食色之可迷，善之可情，豈天之降性爾殊哉？平坦而憬然，見君子而厭然，聞善言而快然，其憬然、厭然、快然者，性為政情順聽矣。性如堂皇，僕隸之所不得擾也。性不為主，雜情熾；堂皇無主，僕吏登矣；性靈一覺，雜情濯濯；堂主一升，群僕寂寂。

故知人之性者，可以盡人之性矣；盡人性者，化其情者也；化人之情者，自盡其性而已矣；自盡其性者，自化其情者也；化其情者，率上帝而已矣。上天之載，聲臭且無；知天之人，纖欲俱絕。詎令七者之潛伏，之流溢也乎哉？而克之烏容以已？於是龐君梓其編，索序于餘，漫書此以複之。

晉人曹于汴撰

## 2.2. Preface of Cao Yubian: English translation

The teachings that Confucius and Mencius instituted in ancient times always mentioned the knowledge of Heaven<sup>481</sup> and the human being; Within these teachings, there was nothing more important than Heaven's knowledge. To know man, one must first know Heaven; who knows man, knows his nature. It is apparent that we live under the same sky, carry the same destiny, and have the same nature.

The Far West is 80,000 miles from China, making it a land of barbarians. Mr. Shunyang Pantoja<sup>482</sup> has written each of the Seven Victories. The Chinese literati give a knowing smile when they ponder these fine words of the book. Why is this so? Because we share the same nature. Pride, envy, greed, wrath, gluttony, lust, and sloth are aroused by the passions, which do not exist in the essential nature granted by the Lord on High. Following the nature granted by Heaven to restrain those passions is what we all seek to do, and there can be no difference between China and the Far West.

If it is said that pride and envy can be allowed to grow, that one can lean on greed and anger, that one can obsess over food or sex, that one can be reluctant to do good, is it perhaps so different the nature that Heaven endows to people? When in daily life, one keeps his mind sober; when one sees a man of virtue, he feels peace within; when listening to precious words, one feels joy, such sober mind, peace, and joy happen when the emotions follow the order of one's nature. Nature is like a pavilion where servants must not wander. If nature cannot dominate, the chaotic fire of passions is stoked. If the pavilion lacks a lord, the servants pass inside. As soon as the soul of nature awakens, the murky passions are rinsed away; once the lord of the pavilion controls, the band of servants is silent.

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<sup>481</sup> The term Heaven (Tian 天) carries here a certain ambiguity according to which it can refer to the part of the cosmos that is not the Earth, or directly to God.

<sup>482</sup> Diego de Pantoja, in addition to his usual Chinese name, had a courtesy name Shunyang, which was common for the men of letters in China.

Accordingly, those who know human nature manage to fathom it; The one who fathoms people's nature is the one who can put out people's passions; he who could put out the passions of others just have to fathom his own nature; The one who fathom his own nature is the one who can put out his own passions; The ones who put out their passions just have to obey the will of the Lord on High. The fullness of Heaven is undoubtedly silent and without noticeable trace; People who know about Heaven have put aside every iota of desire. Could it be possible that they let these seven evils surreptitiously penetrate and roam freely? Therefore, let us dominate them and do not give them room in ourselves. To this end, Mr. Pantoja drafted these treaties and asked me for a preface. I have written this in response.

Written by Cao Yubian from Jin Region

### 2.3. Brief introduction of Cao Yubian

Cao Yubian was born in Anyi 安邑 County, Jiangxi Province, in 1558. He passed the imperial examination and obtained the title of Jinshi in 1592. After that, he became an official in the local area, and then he was soon promoted because of his outstanding performance in his post. In Beijing, he served as Supervising Secretary of the Office of Scrutiny for Personnel 吏科給事中. He was very dedicated and often criticized the bad governance in late Ming China. For this reason, he also became a Donglin literati and had a close relationship with Gao Panlong and Feng Congwu, the core members of the Donglin Party.

While Feng Congwu founded the Shoushan Academy 首善書院 In 1622, Cao Yubian sent a dedication for the completion of the Academy. His work “Yangjietang Ji 仰節堂集” was also printed in the Shoushan Academy. It is especially worth noting that the Academy was located next to the Catholic Church, where Matteo Ricci and Pantoja resided.

Although Matteo Ricci and Pantoja had both passed away when the Shoushan Academy was constructed, it is probably not just a coincidence that the Donglin literati choose this place to promote their academic and political views. Likely, the literati who held similar political stances with the Donglin Party often visited Matteo Ricci and Pantoja. Cao Yubian, as one of them, also discussed moral issues with Matteo Ricci and Pantoja. Therefore, the Donglin literati established the college next door to the Catholic Church to facilitate their continued communication with other Jesuits.

In the preface, Cao Yubian repeatedly emphasized the similarities between Eastern and Western moral philosophies. Obviously, he believed that Confucianism and Catholic ethics contained universal values. The same as other preface authors, he believed that moral cultivation in Septem Victoriis (Qike 七克) could help maintain society's moral order.

Cao Yubian was also implicated in the later political struggle because of his identity as the Donglin literati, and he resigned from his office. In 1634, he died in his hometown at the age of 77.

## Appendix 3 Preface of Zheng Yiwei

### 3.1 Preface of Zheng Yiwei: original text

#### 七克序

人處函蓋中央，如人腹內有心，則人之與動也俱來哉。故墮地啞然而啼矣，亡何夭然而笑矣，則順違之故也。順違所起，以認墮地之己為己，而不復知無己之己。無己之己，靜也。順己成好，違己成惡，由是從殼漏子起，見識與年長，為傲，為妬，為貪，為忿，為饕，為淫，為怠，大約撰為七種，而究之不過啼笑之變。然其性初豈有己哉？

常試辟之。湛然者水乎？波於風則跳如沫，戚如鱗，吼如雷，水體非損也，少焉而澄。此湛然者，又不從外得，則己性原靜也。故謂風動水則可，謂水體為風所壞，則不可矣。又試辟之，土與人無愛憎也，或埏為孟<sup>坵</sup>，則宋王惆悵；埏為隴簾，則負薪者醜之矣；又或埏以為鬼神，遂走百家之社；其埏以為餅孟，人得而器用之而不知即前日之土。使解其埏，則愛憎敬又亡矣。世間一切可喜、可惡、可恠、可常之境，皆捏土之類，則物性亦靜也。故謂土有異埏則可，謂有異質則不可矣。惟於靜中執一私己，於是熠熠鉤瑣膠固而不能自脫，故《樂記》曰：“人生而靜，天之性也。感於物而動，性之欲也。物至知知，然後好惡形焉。”好惡者，吾之所為啼笑也，感於動而後有者也。第不曰情之欲而曰性之欲，明動之體原靜也。不曰感物有知而曰物至知知，明靜之用即動也。

好惡非性病也，附於己則物至而人化物矣。物至而人不化，則以無好好，無惡惡，如嬰兒日啞日笑，尚不知有己，何知有順違？只為墮地有己，此己一生七欲並作。譬蛾之赴火，以有蛾己故；蚋之聚醯，以有蚋己故；蚋不赴火，以無蛾己故；蛾不聚醯，以無蚋己故。以至秦越相非，肉素相嘲，各以己故。己者，欲之根也，如賊帥然。

吾夫子曰“克己復禮”，克己者，主靜之謂也。主靜，則己無泊處而欲自克。如太末蟲處處皆泊而不能緣於火焰之上，以火能克之也。凡師之勝敵曰“克”，摧

堅陷陣者，果也；廓清剪除者，毅也；伐謀銷患者，豫也。顧帥不靜，則敵不可得而克矣。即求賊所在而撲之，可名曰戰而不名克，此克伐怨欲不行而非仁也。雖然，弰弓矢則與枯株無異。弰弓矢不若弰空虛者之無觸也，乃天下不少矢之殺人者，求其為枯株亦何可得哉？

順陽子哀世人之多欲，作《七克》以覺之，曰伏傲，曰平妒，曰解貪，曰熄忿，曰塞饕，曰防淫，曰策怠。讀之若立射候之下，不覺令人恭。可以折慢懂，若鶻鷂之愈妒，青棠之蠲怒，饕餮之懲貪，敝笱之刺淫。至《策怠》一篇，又可以為窳夫之枉策。一寓目，鮮有不憬然悟者。苟可以弰弓矢而止其殺人之用，於世教不無大補也。

春秋抑桓之會而進黃池，嘉其冠端而藉乎成周，為得尊王之體耳。夫吳王夫差曰：“好冠來！好冠來！”慕中國之冠尚猶予之，況慕義而來藉聖人之言者耶？雖不知有當於主靜與否，亦可謂善藉矣。故不谷樂為之弁其端。

### 3.2. Preface of Zheng Yiwei: English translation

The human being lives in the center between Heaven and Earth, as the heart within man's entrails. Since the men come to this world with movement as his nature, although he comes to this world in silence at first, he immediately breaks down crying and soon laughs happily, which is due to what is favorable or contrary to his will. The reason for these pros and cons is to take the self that appears in the world as ego, and not be aware of the selfless self. The self without ego is static. The human being considers what favors him as good, and what opposes him as bad. Since one's body is formed, their perception of things grows with age and acting with pride, envy, avarice, anger, gluttony, lust, or laziness. Approximately it could be summarized into these seven categories, which are no more than the variations of that first cry and that first laugh. Notwithstanding, did these exist at the beginning of human nature?

I always try to explain this. Isn't the water clear? When the wind blows, the wave jumps in the form of foam, and it wrinkles like scales, its roars like thunder, but the substance of the water suffers no loss. Soon after, it becomes clear again. This clarity does not come from the outside, but because its nature is initially static. Therefore, it can be said that the wind moves the water, but it would not be possible to affirm that the substance of the water suffers any impairment. I will offer another explanation: People possess no feelings for the mud. Nevertheless, the Emperor Song sighed when someone molded the mud into a close stool decorated with precious stones<sup>483</sup>; Even the firewood-bearer thinks that it is ugly if the mud is modeled into a tattered container; Likewise, the mud could end up in the sacrifice places of hundred homes if it is mold into the form of a deity; If it is used to make a pot, people would acquire it to use without knowing that it was previously clay. If the molded things returned to their original forms, they would again cease to provoke any feeling of love, hate, or respect. All those things that in this world can please, displease, scare, or accustom are something like molded clay. Hence the nature of all things is also

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<sup>483</sup> According to Shushui Jiwen, Emperor Taizong of Song once found a close stool decorated with seven kinds of precious stones in the court of Later Shu 后蜀 (934-965). He was surprised by this luxury item, and believed that this extravagant lifestyle was the cause of the decline of the state, so he ordered the item to be smashed.



static.<sup>484</sup> This is what allows us to affirm that clay can be molded in different ways, rather than that there are different substances.

People clinging to their ego-self in the static state, then they are constrained tightly by the resplendent chains and cannot get rid of it; The Classic of Music 乐记 already said: “The human being was born with tranquility<sup>485</sup>, which is the nature bestowed by Heaven. Affected by things he gets moved<sup>486</sup>, this is the desire from his nature. Things come and are sensed by our intelligence, and then the likes and dislikes of people begin. “ The sense of liking and disliking is what makes me cry or laugh; they are things that arise under the effect of emotion. Thus, in order to clarify that the essence of movement comes from the static, we would rather say the desire of nature than the desire of emotion. Similarly, in order to indicate that the dynamic is the practical dimension derived from the static, we do not say that we sense the things and form our likes and dislikes, but that the advent of the things leads us to form our likes and dislikes.

The feeling of liking or disliking is not a disease of nature, but if people attach themselves to their ego when things come, the human being becomes one of them. Suppose things come and the human being remains unaffected as a breastfed child, without any criteria about what is pleasant or unpleasant, he spends the whole day crying or laughing, without even having any idea of ego, how could he know what is favorable or contrary to him? Be that as it may, everyone has an ego since his birth, and this ego will be accompanied all his life by the seven passions. Using a metaphor, the moth approaches fire because it has a concept of the “I-moth”, the fly goes to the vinaigrette because it has the concept of “I-fly”; the fly does not go to the fire because it does not have the concept of the “I-moth”, and the moth does not go to the vinaigrette because it

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<sup>484</sup> According to Zheng Yiwei, every state of clay or any other object that has some definite form or use is equated to the "active" or "dynamic" state, which would not be its natural state.

<sup>485</sup> Tranquility suggests a pure state that is not tainted by desire and passions, which is the nature of Heaven. Nevertheless, in the human nature is mixed with nature of Heaven and desires, when people are moved by things, his likes and dislikes formed and his desires emerged, which makes him disengage with the state of tranquility.

<sup>486</sup> The term move 动 is here expressed as an emotion, since it refers to a movement that occurs fundamentally within the person. However, it could also be translated as “the dynamic”, since it is the antithesis of the term 静, which is translated as “tranquility”.

does not have the concept of the “I-fly.” For the same reason, the Qin and Yue criticize each other, meat-eaters and vegetarians mock each other, each by virtue of their ego. This ego is the root of all desire, as the leader of the rebels.

Our Confucius says: “overcome ourselves and follow social norms”; that of overcoming oneself is what we have commented about giving the lordship to tranquility. Once the tranquility dominates, the ego has no place to stay, and the desire is automatically defeated, in the same way, a microbe perches anywhere except on the edge of the flames since the fire has the power to consume it. When an army defeats the enemy, we call it “victory”; overthrowing the fortress and breaking the enemy ranks is an act of bravery; exterminating and eradicating is an act of determination; putting in place a strategy on how to eliminate threats is an act of having forethought. Now, if the marshal is not static, there will be no way for the enemy to be defeated. It is like going to meet the rebels and launching against them, which is equivalent to fighting but not defeating. This is repressing the sense of superiority, boasting, resentments, and covetousness, but still unable to achieve the perfect virtue.

Nevertheless, if arrows are kept in the quiver, they are no different from the dry branches. Despite that hiding the bow and arrow are not comparable to having an empty quiver that does not harm anyone<sup>487</sup>, under the sky there are quite a lot of arrows that cause the death of people. Thus, it seems that turning the arrows into dry sticks is not an option that bad, isn't it?

Mr. Pantoja pities that there are so many people in this world with countless passions, and he wrote *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) to awaken them by lecturing on prostrating pride, calming envy, undoing greed, appeasing anger, putting a stopper to gluttony, guard against lust, whip laziness. Reading this work resembles placing yourself under a target, and automatically you begin to feel fear and tremble. He succeeds in bending arrogance,

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<sup>487</sup> Zheng Yiwei seems to be implying that Pantoja's doctrine of bending the passions (in his metaphor, putting a bow and arrow in the quiver) is not yet comparable to the doctrine of letting the tranquility rule over nature (主静), which in his metaphor would be to have an empty quiver.

as the oriole can cure jealousy, as the silk tree quells the anger, as the Taotie<sup>488</sup> punishes greed, as the Bigou<sup>489</sup> satirizes lust. Having come to the treaty on the “spur on sloth”, it is again possible to find a whip for the lazy men. If you begin to read, there will hardly be anyone who does not suddenly be enlightened. If it could prohibit the passions from harming people, indeed, it is a great help for the universal cultivation of people.

The book Spring and Autumn Annals didn't give praise to the Assembly of Zha but spoke highly of the Assembly of Huangchi<sup>490</sup> because the author appraised the behavior of admiring the coronets<sup>491</sup> and paying tribute to the King of Zhou<sup>492</sup>, which is seemed as a sign of respecting the King of Zhou. The king of Wu<sup>493</sup>, Fuchai<sup>494</sup> said, “I came out of the admiration of the coronets! “I came out of the admiration of the coronets!” Since admiring the coronets of China was appraised, how much more appreciation should we give to those who come for the admiration of the justice and paying tribute to Confucius's teachings? Although I do not know if it agrees with the idea of the dominion of the static, it is still good work. Hence this poor old man has willingly written the preface to this book.

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<sup>488</sup> The Taotie is a legendary beast from the times of the Shang dynasty (1,600 - 1046 BC) characterized by an excessive and brutal appetite. Here Zheng Yiwei puts both gluttony and greed under this reference.

<sup>489</sup> El Bigou (敝笱), lit. "Damaged fishing basket" is a poem from the Spring and Autumn period (722 - 481 BC).

<sup>490</sup> In the Spring and Autumn period, the feudal dukes and princes held the assemblies to establish their hegemony by using the slogan “supporting the king”. Assembly of Zha and Assembly of Huang Chi were two assemblies among many.

<sup>491</sup> Here the coronets refer to the etiquette civilization of ancient china, the king of Wu, which were seemed as the monarch of the land of barbarian in the time of Spring and Autumn period, admired the civilization of Zhou.

<sup>492</sup> Here Zhou refers to Eastern Zhou, the second half of the Zhou dynasty of ancient China.

<sup>493</sup> Wu was one of the states during the Western Zhou dynasty and the Spring and Autumn period.

<sup>494</sup> Fuchai was the last king of the state of Wu during the Spring and Autumn Period of Chinese history.

### 3.3. Brief introduction of Zheng Yiwei

Zheng Yiwei was born in Shangrao 上饒, Jiangxi province, in 1570. He passed the imperial examination and obtained the title of Jinshi in 1601. Zheng Yiwei was known for his virtue and self-containment. Some also regard him as a member of the Donglin Party, but he was not radical nor obsessed with political calculation. Zheng Yiwei spent all of his official career in the central government. As a literati who always cared about moral issues, he was likely to admire the morality of the Jesuits. Also, since he always served in the central government of Beijing, he had many opportunities to communicate with Pantoja. He was very conceited about his literary accomplishments yet not good at handling specific government affairs. Although he and Xu Guangqi joined the cabinet together in the Chongzhen 崇禎 era(1628 – 1644), he did not leave any political achievements.

Among all the preface authors, Zheng Yiwei was the only one who criticized the content of *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克). He believed that dividing people's desires into seven categories did not conform to the more sophisticated Confucian ethics. However, he admitted that some ideas in Pantoja's work could help reconstruct moral order.

After Zheng Yiwei died in 1633, Emperor Chongzhen praised him for being an honest and upright officer throughout his life. People generally evaluate his work as profound in writing, which is consistent with his preface style to *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克).

## Appendix 4 Preface of Xiong Mingyu

### 4.1 Preface of Xiong Mingyu: original text

#### 七克引

西極之國有畸人來，最先西泰利氏，次順陽龐氏、有綱熊氏，偕徒友十數，絕海九萬里觀光中國，斯亦勤已。所攜圖畫巧作及陳說海外謠俗風聲，異哉！所聞如漢博詛鑿空，鵲雲天馬筇竹，特稗師之街談耳。諸公大雅宏達，殫見洽聞，精天官、日曆、算數之學，而猶喜言名理，以事天帝為宗。傳華語，學華文字，篝燈攻苦，無異儒生，真彼所謂豪傑之士也耶？

《七克》一書，順陽所著，大抵遏欲存理，歸本事天，澹而不浮，質而不俚，華而不穢。至稱引西方聖賢言行，有鴻寶論衡之新，無鄭圃漆園之誕。薦紳先生家戶傳之，即耕父販夫耳所謂天門火宅，亦凜凜如也。

同文之朝，大收篇籍，詎可令沉冥五都之市哉？孔子論仁，於視聽言動之四目而以禮克；孟子論性，於口鼻耳目四肢之五官而以命克。鄒魯相傳，所以著道之微，安人之危，千古如日月經天。不意西方之士，亦我素王功臣也。

南州熊明遇

## 4.2 Preface of Xiong Mingyu: English translation

There were exotic men from far-west kingdoms, of whom the first is Mr. Li, Xitai (西泰)<sup>495</sup>, the second are Mr. Pang, Shunyang (順陽)<sup>496</sup>, Mr. Xiong, Yougang (有綱)<sup>497</sup>, as well as ten other disciples and friends, who furrowed 90,000 lis<sup>498</sup> and visited the Middle Kingdom, which is already a great company in itself. The maps, drawings, and artifacts they carried, as well as the foreign legends, customs, and stories they told, were indeed peculiar! What was heard resembles Han Bowang's<sup>499</sup> adventures and his stories of celestial horses and bamboo canes that only gave content when the minstrels recited through the streets. All these gentlemen of great elegance and magnificent knowledge of outstanding erudition in astronomy, calendaring, mathematics take particular delight in speaking of epistemology and take service to the Emperor of Heaven as their primary objective. They preach in the Chinese language, study the Chinese texts, and burn the midnight oil the same as Chinese literati. Aren't they the authentic outstanding person?

*Septem Victoriis (Qike 七克)*, written by Pantoja, is about restraining the desire and preserve rationality, quoting the sages and men of virtue from the West. Its text is moderate without remaining in the mere superficial emotion, it has substance, but without falling into the vulgar, it is rich in details but without losing order. Since he quotes words and deeds of wise saints from the West, the book posses the novelty of "Hongbao 鴻寶" and "Lunheng 論衡"<sup>500</sup>, without falling into the absurdities of "Zhengpu" and "Qiyuan 漆

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<sup>495</sup> According to the tradition in the ancient China, a courtesy name was given to well-educated people. In Matteo Ricci's case it is Xitai, which could roughly be translated as "Western Peace".

<sup>496</sup> Shunyang, the courtesy granted to Diego de Pantoja, literally means "He who follows the Sun".

<sup>497</sup> Yougang, was the curtesy name used by Sabatino de Ursis, with the meaning "He who has order".

<sup>498</sup> The "li" or "shili" (市里), equivalent to 0.5 km. or .311 miles, was a traditional length measurement in China,

<sup>499</sup> Han Bowang refers to Zhang Qian 張騫 (? - 114BC), a Chinese official and diplomat who served as an imperial envoy to the world outside of China, he brought back valuable information about Central Asia to the Chinese people.

<sup>500</sup> The Hongbao (鴻寶) is part of a book called Honglie (鴻烈), compiled by the prince of Huainan, Liu'an (劉安, 179 BC - 122 BC) at the time of the Western Han dynasty. Versa on ways to achieve longevity. The Lunheng (論衡) is a book written by Wang Chong of the Western Han dynasty. It contains critical essays on natural sciences, mythology, philosophy and literature.

园.”<sup>501</sup>This work is going from house to house among renowned people 鄭圃 le; even those whom farmers and merchants call “Gates of Heaven” (天門) and “Burning House” (火宅)<sup>502</sup>, respect the book in a similar way.

In this era of literary development and unification, where all kinds of volumes and works are preserved, will we let this book pass unnoticed in the five cities’ great market<sup>503</sup>? Confucius spoke of benevolence by relating it to the restriction of sight, hearing, speech, and action through principles and rites. Mencius spoke of nature, putting it with the restriction of the five senses of the mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and the four limbs through destiny bestowed by Heaven. Those of Zou 鄒 and those of Lu 魯<sup>504</sup> were transmitting the teachings on the mysteriousness of logos that allows stabilizing human’s endangered heart-mind, something that since ancient times remains like the sun and the moon that cross the sky. I did not know that educated people from the West could help to preach the doctrine brought by Confucius.

Xiong Mingyu from Nanzhou

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<sup>501</sup> 10 Zhengpu (鄭圃), which is the name of a place, is here designating a book titled Liezi (列子). This book portrays the legendary character Lie Yukou (列禦寇). Qiyuan (漆園), is a place where Zhuang Zhou (莊周 - also known as Zhuangzi, 莊子), worked. It is here alluding to the Taoist classic "Zhuangzi", a book of relativistic philosophy.

<sup>502</sup> The author is probably using "Gates of Heaven" (天門) and "Burning House" (火宅) to allude to devotees of Taoism and Buddhism.

<sup>503</sup> This is a classic way of referring to the prosperous market of the Chinese nation in ancient times whereby Xiong Mingyu probably refers to the abundant publishing market of his time.

<sup>504</sup> Zou (鄒) is the name of an ancient Chinese state to which Mencius belonged, and Lu (魯) is the name of the Chinese state to which Confucius belonged. By naming these two states, the author is referring allegorically to Confucianism.

### 4.3. Brief introduction of Xiong Mingyu

Xiong Mingyu was born in Nanchang, Jiangxi province in 1579. He passed the imperial examination and became a Jinshi in 1601. He had a deep understanding of the social and political crises of the late Ming Dynasty during the Wanli era and repeatedly advised the Emperor to get rid of bad governance. He was one of the Donglin Party members in the late Ming Dynasty and one of the representatives who were interested in Western learning in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasty.

When he took the imperial exam in Beijing, Matteo Ricci and Pantoja were in Beijing and was given an audience with the Emperor and were allowed to settle Beijing. This prestigious event is likely to stimulate his interest in the Jesuits and their doctrines. As a matter of fact, he learned some Catholic teachings and Western science and believes that these are the knowledge that Confucian scholars should study. He also wrote the book “Ge Zhi Cao 格致草” to introduce theology and western science and technology. He was also keen to impart this knowledge to young Chinese scholars. The great Confucian scholar Fang Yizhi 方以智 was once influenced by Xiong Mingyu.

He deeply admired the Jesuits’ virtue and believed that *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克) could help maintain the Confucian moral order. Since he had a close relationship with the Jesuits, he wrote a preface for Pantoja. After the Nanjing Persecution, he had no chance to see Pantoja again. His official career went smoothly, and later he became the Minister of War 兵部尚書. After the fall of the Ming Dynasty, unwilling to serve the Manchu rulers, he lived in seclusion in his hometown for five years and died in 1649.



## Appendix 5 Preface of Chen Liangcai

### 5.1 Preface of Chen Liangcai: original text

#### 七克篇序

曩余年方垂髫，即于天主耶穌之教竊有聞也。蓋吾鄉之舶于海者与大西人遊歸，為余言天主耶穌之教：以事天地之主為主，以仁愛信望天主為宗，以愛養教化人為功用，以悔罪歸誠為入門，以生死大事有備無患為究竟。余聞其說而心向焉。其後二十餘年以待次都門，得交西泰利君。持所聞質之，利君輒大詫，因得畢聞其說。所謂《天主實義》《畸人十篇》者，每閱卒篇，余亦復大詫，謂與周孔教合。其後復因西泰以交順陽龐君，一觀而稱莫逆。

一日，龐君過余，曰：“東方之士，才智絕倫，從事學者非乏也，獨本領迷耳。夫學不稟於天而惟心是師，辟泛舟洪洋而失其舵也。其弊方且認賊為子，認邪魔而為天神也。嗚呼，殆哉！”余曰：“唯唯否否。夫戒慎恐懼，以率其天命之性而達於上天之載，此吾儒真本領、真學問也。但恐愚俗不知天為何物，而以為在與蒼茫窮冥之表。故叔而詔之曰：‘天即在吾心是也’。而後之學者遂認心为天，以為橫行直撞，真机旁皇，擺落規條，快樂自在而卒流為無忌憚之小人，是豈周孔之教則然哉？”龐君殊击節余說，因持其所論著《七克》篇示余，余卒業焉。

其書精實切近，多吾儒所雅稱。至其語語字字，刺骨透心，則儒門鼓吹也。其欲念念息息，皈依上帝，以冀享天報而永免沉淪，則儒門羽翼也。且夫克之為義，孔顏稱之矣。一日克己，天下歸仁，並育並行，聖神極事。而其工夫惟曰非禮勿視聽與言動而已。無高詞，無侈說，真積即久，上與天通。是故孔門之教期於達天。顏子之學謂之乾道，故四勿也，七克也，其義一也。或曰：“學貴達天，固也。奈之何其覬天報為也？”余曰：“否否，稼不圖熟乎？工不圖良乎？鹵莽而稱熟，器苦窳而稱良，其可乎？所惡於覬者，謂人世之報耳！”天德無際，天報無涯，圖天之報，俛焉日有孳孳，惟日不足，此文所以純亦不已，而孔所以不知老至也，奈之

何其讳言报也？周孔黜人世之报以虚其心，大西希生天之报以实其证。东西南北，圣圣一揆，岂非然哉？龐君以序属余，余不文，特次第其语而为之序。

赐进士第出身钦差整饬武德兵备山东按察司副使陈亮采撰

## 5.2. Preface of Chen Liangcai: English translation

When my hair was still hanging free<sup>505</sup>, I already had heard about the doctrine of the Lord Jesus. This is because some of my townsman who sailed with people from the Far West and when they returned they told me of the doctrine of the Lord Jesus: that we must serve the Lord of Heaven and Earth as Lord, that the primary purpose is to believe and wait on the Lord, that we take the charity work and cultivating the virtue of men as the application of its doctrine, that we take the repentance of sins as the first step and that the ultimate goal of all is to be prepared and not suffer harm before the great question of life and death. When I heard those words, my heart resounded. About twenty years later, when I was waiting in Beijing to be assigned as a Mandarin, I had a chance to meet with Mr. Xitai Li and asked him about what I had heard in the past; This surprised Mr. Li. For this reason, I was able to listen to this doctrine in full. As I read the chapters of the so-called “True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven” and “Ten Chapters of an Extraordinary Man”, I was also surprised because I felt that it was a teaching that went well with the doctrine of Confucius. After this, I was able to meet Mr. Pang Shuyang through Xitai: we became close friends as soon as we saw each other.

One day, Mr. Pang came looking for me, and he said: “The ability and wisdom of the gentry from the East are outstanding, many people devoted themselves to moral cultivation, but they did not understand the origin. Following the mind, instead of the guidance of Heaven, it is like sailing without a rudder. The harm can be compared with regarding the enemy as kith and kin, the devil as an angel.” I replied: “Yes, and no. To follow the essence of the heavenly mandate with prudence and awe, then reach Heaven is certainly the true foundation and core doctrine in our Confucian teachings. However, we fear that the commoners do not know what Heaven is, and take it for the mere surface of infinite and dark space. As a temporary measure, we tell them: “That Heaven is within the heart-mind.” Thus, afterward, some scholars took heart-mind for Heaven, thought they could wander freely, putting the truth in question, discarding the rules, proceeding

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<sup>505</sup> Before the Qing Dynasty, gathering hair together suggested that a young person's transition from being a child to being an adult. Here author Chen Liangcai (陳亮采) using this expression refers to his childhood.

cheerfully, and finally becoming unscrupulous villains. Does this have anything to do with what Confucius teachings?” Mr. Pang greatly commended my words and showed me the work of the “Seven Victories” that he had written. For my part, I studied it thoroughly.

This book contains profound truth and is very close to daily life, which we Confucianists agree with. With its sharp words, the book can touch people’s hearts, and as a result, it is beneficial to preach our Confucian ideas. With its ideas of conversion to Lord of Heaven for the heavenly rewards and avoid suffering, it is an assistant in need of our Confucianism. Furthermore, Confucius and Yan Hui 顏回<sup>506</sup> already talked about righteousness in self-overcoming. Once the self-overcoming is completed, all under Heaven will ascribe perfect virtue to him, everything will bear fruit and flourish. How divine is this! And the only thing we should put into practice is seeing, hearing, saying, and doing in accordance with the ethics expressed in the rite. Not using high-sounding words, not being talkative, people only need to calmly gather the truth until they manage to communicate with Heaven. Therefore, the Confucian teachings are aimed at Da Tian 達天(Knowing your own destiny)<sup>507</sup>. The way of Yanzi doctrine could be called the way of Heaven. Therefore, both the four restrictions and the seven abnegations are linked to the same righteousness. Some say: “Knowing your own destiny is undoubtedly the most valuable thing about cultivating yourself. However, why do people covet heavenly rewards? I replied: “How can it not be so? Do people sow without aspiring the harvest? Do people create things without aspiring to make a proper utensil? Can we consider weeds to be harvested in season? Can we take a rough pot for something refined? What I detest are those who so desire the mundane rewards! The virtues of Heaven are immeasurable, and the heavenly rewards are endless. In order to get these rewards, people cultivate their morals diligently, fearing that their efforts are not enough. This is why people say that Zhou Wenwang is loyal to the Way of Heaven continuously, and Confucius did not even realize he was getting old in the process of moral cultivation.

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<sup>506</sup> Yanzi or Yan Hui (c. 521–481 BC) is one of the most famous disciples of Confucius and his favorite.

<sup>507</sup> Da Tian could be literally translated as “reaching Heaven”, however, in Confucian writings it has the meaning of penetrating or deeply understanding the mandate of Heaven, that is, the destiny that has been assigned to one.

How can you say that it not because they want to be rewarded? Zhou Gong and Confucius did not speak of mundane rewards in order to make people humble; the Western classics declare that people should look forward to the heavenly rewards for us to understand that they really exist. The saint's intention is the same, whether it is in the East or the West, isn't it? Mr. Pang asked me to write a preface, due to my literary clumsiness, I took note of his words as the preface.

Written by Chen Liangcai, with Jinshi title,  
Imperial commissioner for the Maintenance of Military Discipline and Weapons,  
Deputy Surveillance Commissioner in Shandong Province.

### 5.3. Brief introduction of Chen Liangcai

Chen Liangcai was born in Jinjiang 晉江 of Fujian Province in 1562. Since his hometown is near the sea, and Fujian merchants often went to sea for trade in the late Ming Dynasty, Chen Liangcai knew about Christianity since he was a child.

In 1595, he passed the imperial examination and obtained the title of Jinshi. From then on, he had been serving in various provinces. Due to the constant foreign troubles in the late Ming Dynasty, Chen Liangcai paid great attention to national defense. He also learned the weapon technology brought by the Europeans and used it to make artillery. Because of this, he was recognized and recommended by Xu Guangqi. He and Huang Kezhen 黃克纘(1550 – 1634), his colleague as well as townee, jointly recruited their countrymen who were familiar with European artillery technology to make defensive weapons, and then played a huge role in the fight against the Manchu invasion. The works left by Chen Liangcai are remained to be discovered. Due to the limitation of historical data, his birth and death year is unclear. His thoughts and his attitude towards Catholic moral philosophy could only be deduced from his preface in *Septem Victoriis* (*Qike* 七克).

## Appendix 6 Preface of Peng Duanwu

### 6.1 Preface of Peng Duanwu: original text

#### 西聖七編序

西洋龐君迪我著七編，始于伏傲，终于策怠。示余，余愛而讀之。蓋洗心之聖水，對證之要方也。古者國有狂泉，國人飲之皆狂。當今之時，問今之俗，絜己方人，似无不中此七病者，几于以國狂。而龐君實來傳其國學，實為此方七葯。

龐君雖與華之人處，往往交臂而失，即諳華性，不應徹見俯肝，窮悉底蘊，言言當也。石言于晉，或凭之言，龐君之言，无所凭假。意者，天主使之耶？

特揭開心，鴻宣驚耳，警策破夢，妙喻解頤，天地之淫厲，人身之膏肓，皆從骨髓心絡。剝剔其淫邪虫毒，薰以反魂之香，塗以合体之膏。其神解，在秦和扁鵲之上。其易簡，在六經四子之表。漢遣宋雲等，往西域得四十二章。經鹿苑之危談，驚峰之批論，而藏之蘭台石室，過甚珍藏。余訝時人，見龐君久在華域，溷迹中庸，不澄意遠觀，割情獨繮，不知其可重也。

近世學者，祇信即心之學，不解原天之心。素无止定之功，妄言隨欲皆善，往往駕慈航而殞命，握至寶而喪家，無明師友以導之，和毒腊其雜進矣！夫用七德克七情，以理治欲，實以心治心也。得其道者，葯在殊方絕域，可以籬壁間物代之。

讀龐君書者，毋以歐邏巴生遠近想 亦毋以六經四子生異同想，期於切救時病於國有瘳乎？雖然，君書業已懸之國門，或諱疾而忌醫，復增長其病心，與君為魔難，將奈何？君不与此士人比肩事主，同籍分祿，且所述者，天主之言，天使言之，度無為君難者。即有之，度無能舉七編之言，而非是之也，則亦不足為君難矣！

## 6.2. Preface of Peng Duanwu: English translation

Mr. Diego de Pantoja, who came from the West, composed seven treatises, beginning with the dejection of pride and ending with the need to spur laziness. [Pantoja] showed me the book, which I found interesting and read through. It is a book that is holy water where you can clear your heart, a suitable remedy that can cure your disease. A long time ago, there was a “spring of madness” in a kingdom. The inhabitants who drank from it went mad. Today, if we ask about current habits, considering the inhabitants of today, it seems that there is no one left unaffected by these seven diseases, which would almost make the entire population mad. For this reason, Mr. Pantoja has come to transmit the doctrine of his country that, precisely, serves as a sevenfold remedy for this land.

Although Mr. Pantoja lives among the Chinese, he has frequently lost the opportunity to have more contact with them; Since he understands the character of the Chinese, he should not look so radically at a depth of their hearts, probing what is latent in the background and expressing it so openly. That stone from the Jin region spoke, perhaps, by some possession, but in the words of Mr. Pantoja, there is no spell of any kind. Is it to be assumed that it is the Lord of Heaven who sent him?

His words reveal the veil of the heart in a unique way; his announcement awakens the ears and stimulates people, and makes them stay clear-headed; the subtle metaphors he used are entertaining. The catastrophes of the cosmos and the body’s metastasis are related to the marrow and the framework of the heart. These words extirpate the evil and the poison that has been introduced there, exhale a scent that returns the soul and apply an ointment to the sutures. Their healing power is even higher than that of Qin He 秦和 and Bian Que 扁鹊<sup>508</sup>. These words are concise and to the point; its meaning goes beyond the six scriptures and the four classics<sup>509</sup>. The Emperor of the Han dynasty sent Song Yun

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<sup>508</sup> Qin He and Bian Que were two legendary doctors in ancient China.

<sup>509</sup> This expression refers to the Classic of Poetry (诗经), the Book of Documents (尚书), the Classic of Rites (礼经), the Classic of Music (乐经), the Book of Changes (易经), Spring and Autumn Annals (春秋), as well as from the book of Great Knowledge (大学), The Doctrine of the Mean (中庸), the Analects (论语) and the Mencius (孟子).



宋雲<sup>510</sup> and others to the western regions to obtain the forty-two chapter sutra. Luyuan(鹿苑)’s disjointed words, Jiufeng(鷲峰)’s<sup>511</sup> empty speech are preserved in the stone chamber of the court library, receiving inordinate honor. I am surprised that the people of today, who see that Mr. Pantoja has lived in China for a long time, running around with the commoners, as their senses are blurred, and they do not see far, as they do not restrain their emotions and cultivate their virtues, they do not understand anything of the importance of this man.

Nowadays, the literati only believe in the teachings of discovering the essence of human nature through his heart-mind but do not understand how to examine the mind of Heaven. They ignore restraint their desire, acclaiming that following one’s instinct is right, without the guidance of good mentors and helpful friends, they are exposed to poisonous teachings. If you use the seven virtues to overcome the seven passions, utilize reasons to overcome desires, it means that you are using the mind of Tian to overcome the mind of desire. Whoever manages to enter this path, even if this medication is in a distant and remote place, can replace it with the most common things here.

The readers should neither think that Europe is afar and barbaric nor that the missionaries’ teachings are different from the Confucian classics. We should just care about if their teachings can help our country and solve social problems? Even though this gentleman’s book has already reached the threshold of our land, some hide their ailment and avoid the doctor, which makes the disease of his heart grow again. How could people put this gentleman on the spot? <sup>512</sup>Since he does not share the office of serving the Emperor alongside other literati, what he expressed is the word of the Lord of Heaven; Heaven is the one who has made him say these things so that no one could embarrass this gentleman. If it were done, I do not think it was possible to find any content in these

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<sup>510</sup> Here Peng Duanwu made a mistake by believing that an emperor of Han Dynasty (202 BC–9 AD; 25 AD–220 AD) sent Song Yun(?-?), a Chinese Buddhist monk, to northwestern India to search for Buddhist scriptures. As a matter of fact, it was the Empress Dowager Hu 胡太后 (? -528) of Northern Wei 北魏 (386 – 535) who gave the order.

<sup>511</sup> It is the first place where Siddhārtha Gautama preached his doctrine after being enlightened.

<sup>512</sup> When this foreword was written, Pantoja had already been expelled from mainland China and this phrase alludes to this painful situation for the author of this preface.

seven treaties that could be refuted, so no one is really qualified to make things difficult for this gentleman.

### 6.3. Brief introduction of Peng Duanwu

There are few historical records about Peng Duanwu, his birth and death year, and his official career needs to be further studied. At present, there are only pieces of evidence proving that he was from a distinguished family in Xiayi 夏邑 of Shangqiu 商丘, and he was also a scholar-official of the Donglin Party. In 1601, he and Xiong Mingyu and Zheng Yiwei got the Jinshi title in the same year. Perhaps, they often discuss moral philosophy with Pantoja. According to the preface of Peng Duanwu, there have been some arguments between the Pantoja and him.

Peng Duanwu showed his sympathy for Pantoja and mentioned that the Spanish Jesuit suffered from the ordeal in his preface. It is possible that the preface was written after the Nanjing Incident, which led to the Jesuits' expulsion from China between 1617 – 1618. After that, Septem Victoriis (Qike 七克) was given a new name (Seven Treaties of the Saints of the West), to prevent it from being recognized as the book of a foreign Jesuit, since this work already he had achieved certain fame among the literati. Therefore, the writing time of this preface should be after 1616.

## Appendix 7 Author's Preface

### 7.1 Preface of Pantoja: original text

#### 七克自序

人生百務，不離消積兩端。凡所為修者，消舊積新之謂也。聖賢規訓萬端，總為消惡積德之藉。凡惡乘乎欲，然欲本非惡，乃上帝(天主)賜人存護此身，輔佐靈神、公義、公理之密伴。

人惟汨之以私，乃始罪讐萬狀，諸惡根焉。此根伏於心土，而欲富、欲貴、欲逸樂三巨幹勃發於外，幹又生枝；欲富生貪，欲貴生傲，欲逸生饕，生淫，生怠。其或以富貴逸樂勝我，即生妒。奪我，即生忿。

是故私欲一根也，欲富、欲貴、欲逸樂，幹也；而生傲、生貪、生饕、生淫、生怠及妒忿，枝也。種種罪訕，非義之念慮言動，七枝之結為實，披為葉也。地獄之火，此樹薪之。故曰去私欲，而獄火自無矣！世間疾憂患亂，身心不寧，皆由食此樹之實而作者。拔此樹於世，而人皆天神也。視人如己，視死如歸，天堂境界，豈遠乎哉？

然而克欲修德，終日論之，畢世務之，而傲妒忿淫諸欲卒不見消，謙仁貞忍諸德卒不見積，其故云何？有三蔽焉。一曰不念本原，二曰不清志向，三曰不循節次。

夫世之傲然自是者，咸謂修德克欲之力量，我自能之。不知自有生來，但有一念提醒，莫非天主上帝賜我者。富貴壽安微暫之福，有一隙之明者，皆知出於上帝。而克欲修德，最難劇務，妄自認為己能，謬孰甚歟？如知力量悉從上帝而出，其於欽事祈禱，自不容己。迨德成欲克，皆認帝(主)賜也。彼謂我自能之，不緣帝利，乃由傲魔所中，忘卻本原。冥悻自是，聞諛則沾沾自喜，稍拂則謂非所應遇，而怨尤不已，此其所修何德哉？

凡人善惡，係於所志。有善業而無善志，猶人形而無靈神，非人，徒人形耳！輕舟利車，濟人於難，而人不賞其功，何者？舟車有功，而無濟人之志耳！修德克

欲者，惟是蠲潔其一心以媚茲上帝，其志足貴也；次則志羨天德之美也；次則志在乎生享淨心之樂，而身後獲見天帝，與神聖耦也。若修德而雜之以富貴榮名世福之望，則所修非德，乃修他欲而襲德貌耳！非以德攻欲，乃以欲攻欲耳！舊欲未去，新欲且增墊焉。夫德所至忌，世福之羨也。祛欲者所攻，正攻此世福之俗腸。有所攻以積德，又操所忌以毀之，德烏乎成？故志向不可不清也。

凡有志修德者，必曰”吾必使無絲毫人欲之私”。語甚美矣，弟言之易也，行之難也。一言而盡，百年不能迄，攻一欲難於勝一國，矧併攻諸欲乎？且德之初修也，甚微甚弱。而欲之初受攻也，方巨方強。以微弱之德，攻巨強之欲，意徒銳而欲彌增，旋廢業而反受其害。夫克私欲如拆舊屋也，先拆址者，室覆材破，人受壓焉。先拆薨斫，漸至於柱礎，則材與人不傷而功易奏。是以克欲者，須一一攻之。始于易小，俟德力滋巨矣，乃始漸進於難且大者，以漸滋致精，道路更穩。如過於亟，易於礙墜，故曰進德如升梯，謹行勿奔，奔必隕，不控於地不已矣！亟修而無度，非自恃而凌躐，即速倦而委頓耳。此不循節次之咎也。

迪我八萬裡外異國之旅，蚤荷天主靈慈，悟此世福至暫至微，匪堅匪駐。轉思身後，實具永年禔福。爰從耶穌會教習，聞豪傑光闡之旨，正己化俗。憫夫邪說充塞，不知天主為人物真主，不思天堂有真修捷路，乃偕數友東來，九死一生，涉海三載而抵中華。中華語言文字，迥不相通，苦心習學，複似童蒙。近稍曉其大略，得接講論。

竊見有志儒賢，多務修德克己之功。同方合志，萬里非懸。弟緣三者之蔽，隔藩未一，因繹所聞及所管窺一二，以資印可。夫人心之病有七，而瘳心之樂亦有七。要其大意旨，總不過消舊而積新。積之之極以積永樂永慶，消之之極以消永苦永殃焉。諄諄箴誥，良費辭說。蓋緣人心如口也，口各喜其味，故饌各投其喜，德一而已。眾言錯陳，固析俎之不一齎也。惟嗜者之所染指，如曰支離其辭，以支離其德，則迪我烏乎敢焉？

## 7.2 Preface of Pantoja: English translation

There are hundreds of things in life that can be categorized as accumulating and dissipating. Moral cultivation is just accumulating the new and dissipating the old. The saints and sages exhorted this in a thousand ways, which were ultimately reduced to the means of dissipating evil and accumulating virtue. All kinds of evils make use of desire. Nevertheless, desire is not something evil in itself but rather an intimate, fair, and equitable envoy, which is bestowed by the heavenly Emperor (God)<sup>513</sup> to protect the human beings' bodies and assist their spirits.

However, the human being swirls it with ego, and this is the beginning of the transgression in a thousand ways. Thus all kind of evils takes root. This root is latent in the earth of the heart, which desires fame, glory, and laziness; from there, three large trunks arise that protrude outwards with branches. Desiring wealth produces greed; desiring fame produces pride; desiring comfort and pleasure produces gluttony, lewdness, and laziness. If others surpass me in these three pleasures of wealth, fame, and a comfortable life, then envy arises; if these things are taken from me, anger burns.

For this reason, selfish desire is undoubtedly the root and desire for wealth, fame, and easy life, the trunk, while pride, greed, gluttony, lust, laziness, envy, and anger are its branches. All kinds of sins, all unjust thoughts, words, and deeds, come out as fruits of these seven branches and unfold like their leaves. Hellfire feeds on this wood. Therefore, when one eliminates his selfish desire, the hellfire automatically extinguishes! The diseases, discouragements, misfortunes, chaotic situations of this world, and the lack of peace of body and mind are caused by feeding on this tree's fruit. If this tree is removed from the world, all human beings would be the same as celestial beings. They would consider others as themselves, understand death as a return to the assembly of Heaven, and how could this be considered a distant place?

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<sup>513</sup> In the original Chinese text, Pantoja used the expression Shàngdì (上帝), but later it was changed by Tiān Zhǔ (天主), which reflects the diatribes of the controversy of the Chinese rites that had in the designation of God one of its hot spots.

Nevertheless, overcoming the desire and cultivating virtue is what people talked all day and tried to do in their whole life. Nonetheless, why desires such as arrogance, envy, wrath, and lust do not disappear; virtues such as humility, gratitude, chastity, and patience do not grow? It is because there are three obstacles: the first is that people do not recognize the origin; the second is that people do not clarify the aim of moral cultivation; the third is that people do not proceed with their cultivation in an orderly way.

Those who proudly consider themselves righteous in this world say without exception that they possess the strength to cultivate virtues and overcome passions. However, they do not know that there is no single motion of conscience that is not granted to them by God since they were born. The passing happiness related to wealth, honor, longevity, peace, even a small share of wisdom, it is known that they come from the Celestial Sovereign. Overcoming the passions and cultivating virtue is a dramatically challenging matter. What a mistake those who foolishly believe that they can face it by virtue of their own! For those who know that this force always comes from the Celestial Sovereign, they will worship and serve the Lord without reserve. When the virtue cultivation bears fruit and the passions are overcome, they will take this as a blessing from the Lord. Those who declare that they can achieve this by virtue of their ability and that their destiny is not related to the strength of the Almighty, have fallen into the arrogance of the devil, forgetting the origin of that strength. When they listen to flatter, those who obtusely think they are righteous will gloat over complacency; when people encounter some setbacks, they will say that they should not suffer that, and they complain without stopping: what kind of virtue are they cultivating here?

Whether a man is good or evil depends on his intention. Someone who does good works, but does not have a good intention, is like the one with the human appearance but without the spirit to encourage him. It would not be a person, but only a human shell! A light boat and a fast carriage help people amid difficulty, but no one rewards them for their excellent services. Why is this so? Because, although the boat and the carriage render a meritorious service, they do not do so to help. Some people exercise in cultivating virtues and overcoming their passions. They can possess a sufficiently noble intention only if

they purify their whole hearts to please God; then these people will admire the beauty of that virtue that comes from above; Next, they will put their interest in enjoying the joy of a clean heart while they are alive, so that after this life they will be presented to the heavenly Sovereign and be companions of angels and saints. If, on the contrary, they mix the effort for virtue with the anticipation of worldly happiness of wealth, honor, glory, and name, then what they cultivate will not be a virtue, but other passions that only emulate the appearance of virtue. It will not be attacking passion through virtue but through passion itself! When the old desires are not yet gone, the new ones begin to accumulate. The natural enemy of virtue, then, is admiration for worldly happiness. Those who resolve to banish passion fight precisely this mentality that is fascinated by this mundane happiness. If those who strive to accumulate virtue simultaneously incur in exercising what is contrary to it, how will they be able to be virtuous? This is the reason why it is essential to clarify the aim of moral cultivation.

Anyone who strives to improve his virtue will undoubtedly affirm: “In me, there must be not the slightest trace of selfish desires.” These words are undoubtedly great, although speaking is easy, whereas practicing challenging. What a word fully describes cannot be achieved in a hundred years: fighting a passion is more complicated than defeating a kingdom. How much more difficult will it be to combat all desires together! On top of that, at the beginning of this personal improvement, virtue is small and weak, while the passions that they fight are tough and strong. You stand on your own weak virtue by fighting powerful passions. Although the intention is firm, the passions grow even more. In an instant, the cultivation is discarded, and the damage from it could get back to you. Overcoming selfish desires is like dismantling an old house: if you start by dismantling the foundations, the house collapses, the materials fall apart, and people are crushed; If you start at the eaves and gradually move up to the pillars, the materials and people are not harmed, and you can proceed smoothly. Likewise, those who attempt to overcome their passions must fight them one by one according to a particular order. Begin with the simple and small, waiting for the force of virtue to emerge firmly, then gradually begin to tackle difficult and great things, reaching maturity through a continuous process, consolidating on this path. If they rush too much, they will easily stumble. Hence it is



said that to advance in virtue is like ascending a ladder; you have to climb cautiously and without haste because otherwise, you can fall and not stop until you reach the bottom. If one just hastes and does not follow the correct steps, he will become proud, commit mistakes, fail quickly, and get depressed soon. The fault of this is not sticking in an orderly way to proceed with the cultivation.

I, Deigo de Pantoja, as a traveler from a strange country beyond eighty thousand miles, received at an early age the grace of the Lord that made me realize how short and tiny this happiness of the world is, neither stable nor permanent. Also, I reflected on the endless happiness that can be possessed after this life. Because of this, I received instruction in the Society of Jesus and listened to the formidable way in which the mission was carried out, improving oneself to transform the mundane. What a pity that evil ideas are everywhere, without knowing that the Lord of Heaven is the true Lord of people and everything, without considering that there is quick access of genuine virtue to access Heaven! Because of these, I undertook a three-year transoceanic journey to the East, which decimated a good number of friends who accompanied me, until finally arriving in unparalleled China. With determination despite the exhaustion, I exercised myself in learning Chinese speech and writing, which is totally incommensurable with other ways of communicating, making me an illiterate child again. Lately, I have gained a specific understanding of the language that allows me to communicate and argue.

I have observed that there are scholars and men of virtue of the Confucian tradition who have moral aspirations and that many of them strive meritoriously to be better people and to overcome themselves. Different worlds, common aspiration: not even ten thousand miles isolate us! However, due to the three causes, as mentioned above, an isolation barrier still prevents us from being one. For this reason, I will explain a little of what I have heard and understood, hoping to find a Yinke 印可.<sup>514</sup> There are seven diseases of the human heart, just as there are seven joyful ways to heal. The basic idea here is none

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<sup>514</sup> The term used by Pantoja "印可" (Yinke) is a concept used in Buddhism, to express the result of a process of dialogue by which someone hopes to obtain confirmation from the other person regarding what they are proposing.

other than to get rid of the old and accumulate the new. Accumulate this in abundance until you receive eternal joy and bliss. Get rid of that to the extreme until you eliminate perpetual suffering and misfortune. I will spare no words and exhort it without rest. We can say that the human heart is like the mouth because there are flavors for different tastes and dishes that satisfy them. Virtue is one. However, there are many discourses and theories about it, as pots are separated with different meat so that the one who appreciates a type only chooses from that one. If someone says that using different categories to talk about this means deconstructing virtue, this was not the intention of writing this book.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Pantoja seems to be here protecting himself from the accusations that would be directed against the type of ethical discourse that analyzes the problem of moral depravity based on different categories. Faced with this, some intellectuals will demand a more classically Confucian treatment of the question based on the concept of self-overcoming (克己), which does not enter into the specific analysis of types of capital or mortal sin. Later these criticisms of the classic moral treatment of the Catholic doctrine that the missionaries brought will be shown in the well-known volume "Treatise on the Defeat of Evil" (破邪集), where evil would be the doctrine brought from outside.