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Is Virtue Self-sufficient for Happiness?:

Augustine on Virtue and Happiness

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Abstract: The paper investigates whether Augustine adheres to the Stoic assertion that "virtue is self-sufficient for happiness," especially whether Augustine still maintains the self-sufficiency of virtue in this imperfect life. This paper will first present how Augustine adopts the self-sufficiency of virtue in his earlier writings. After that, this paper will show how Augustine criticizes the self-sufficiency of virtue in this life by emphasizing original sin. Lastly, this paper argues that Augustine redefines virtue by introducing the concept of love, through which he redefines the cardinal virtues and theological virtues. Grounded in the idea of love, Augustine contends that properly ordered love can contribute to happiness in this life. In a word, virtue is also self-sufficient in this life, but only when received as love from God.

Keywords: Augustine, virtue, Cicero, love, happiness

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Introduction

During the Hellenistic period, various philosophical schools had different understandings and views of happiness, which guided their respective philosophical practices (Horn 1998, pp. 95-108). Stoicism was one of the most famous schools to identify virtue with happiness and to claim that "virtue is self-sufficient for happiness." (*Virtutem ad beate vivendum se ipsa esse contentam*) (*Tusculanae disputationes* V.1). Indeed, Augustine's philosophical development was also influenced by Stoic doctrine, particularly through the writings of the Roman philosopher Cicero. The influence of Stoicism on Augustine, particularly in the context of the concepts of will and emotion, has indeed been a subject of scholarly research in recent years. (Colish 1985; Frede 2011; Byers 2012).

My aim in this paper is to examine how Augustine inherits and transforms Stoic doctrine regarding the relationship between virtue and happiness. More specifically, this paper is analyzing whether Augustine is an adherent of the Stoic doctrine that virtue is identical to happiness in this imperfect life. Scholars have different perspectives on this question. Classical solutions advocate the thesis of discontinuity. The earlier Augustine emphasizes the self-sufficiency of virtue and free decision for a happy life, while Augustine in his later works dismantles ancient philosophy's moral ideals, which conflict with Christian doctrines of predestination and grace. (Brown 2010, p. 490； Flasch 1990, pp. 19-25). The same paradigm is also used in James Wetzel's argument that the early Augustine followed the Stoics' position and advocated the identification of virtue with happiness by exploring the power of and the invulnerability of will, and by stating that in Augustine's mature years, he abandoned the Stoic view that happiness and virtue are the same thing. (Wetzel 1992, pp. 54-55). According to Harding, Augustine's philosophy breaks with ancient philosophy's eudemonist project because of the denial of virtue sufficiency and the attainment of happiness in this life. (Harding 2008, p.32) Wolterstorff also argues that Augustine has a rejection of the fundamental tenets of eudaimonism in general. (Wolterstorff 2012) The similarity between these authors lies in that Augustine, in his later writings, rejects the ancient eudaimonism, asserting that humans cannot attain happiness in this life. Instead, Augustine emphasizes the imperfection and corruption of human nature.

In contrast to previous interpretations, there is a current trend seeking to demonstrate that Augustine adhered to ancient eudaimonism (Beierwaltes 1981; Horn 1999). Christian Tornau contends that Augustine consistently followed the Stoic tenet that "virtue is self-sufficient for happiness."

According to Tornau, even in his later period, Augustine maintained the Stoic principle that one could achieve happiness through virtue, not only in the afterlife but also in this present life (*in hac vita*) (Tornau 2015). Boersma's argument presents a nuanced perspective on Augustine's relationship with Stoicism. It suggests that while Augustine may have engaged in a critical examination of Stoic ideas, he ultimately accepted and incorporated certain elements of Stoicism into his own philosophical framework (Boersma 2017).

This paper does not aim to discuss the relationship and difference between Stoicism and Augustine, as there have already been numerous studies, especially Byers' comprehensive research (Byers 2012). Instead, this paper focuses on how Augustine grapples with the Stoic tenet "virtue is self-sufficient for happiness" in various periods of his writings. It is recognized that Augustine adopts a Stoic strategy in his earlier writings. However, consensus is lacking concerning the concept of happiness in this life when considering Augustine's later works in the context of original sin and the doctrine of grace.

This paper argues that Augustine still adheres to the Stoic principles in his later writings. Even though humans cannot gain a stable beatific vision, they can love God in this life. Rooted in the notion of love, Augustine's properly ordered love virtue can contribute to happiness in this life. Virtue is self-sufficient, but only when received as love from God.

Part I Virtue is Self-Sufficient for happiness

The principle "Virtue is Self-Sufficient for happiness "is presented and discussed in Cicero's *De finibus bonorum et malorum* and *Tusculanae Disputationes*. Cicero, in his role as a skeptic philosopher, undertook an examination of the debate between Stoics and Peripatetics regarding the concepts of happiness and virtue. The primary issues that occupied these two philosophical schools were twofold: (1) the types of good and (2) whether virtue alone was sufficient for happiness.

Regarding the first question, the Stoics hold that there is only one good, namely, the good of the soul: virtue (*virtus*) or the beautiful (*honestum*). In contrast, Peripatetics argue that there are three kinds of goods: goods of the soul, bodily goods, and external goods.

Concerning the second question, the Stoics regard virtue to be a sufficient condition for happiness, insofar as virtue has intrinsic value and the self-sufficiency of virtue protects it from uncertainties or misfortunes. In contrast, the Peripatetics criticized this claim, arguing that bodily or external

misfortunes can influence happiness. According to them, virtue alone was not sufficient for happiness.

Cicero's perspective on these two philosophical schools evolved across his various works. George Karamanolis interprets this as follows (Karamanolis 2020, p. 169): "Cicero first distances himself from all contemporary ethical theories in *De finibus* because he finds them all unconvincing; then in *Tusc*. 5 he returns to the main two antagonistic theories, the Stoic and the Peripatetic/Antiochean and supports the superiority of the Stoic view, arguing that it can be traced back to Socrates."

According to Cicero's view, the disagreement between the Stoics and the Peripatetics amounted to a verbal dispute, rather than a resolution of factual matters. According to Cicero's perspective, the Stoics did not regard bodily and external well-being as intrinsically good; instead, they viewed them as "conveniences" (*commoda*). On the other hand, the Peripatetics, while acknowledging the importance of bodily and external goods, did not prioritize them over virtue. Cicero criticized the position of both schools.

In *De finibus* Cicero adopted a skeptical stance towards both the Stoic and Peripatetic doctrines, refraining from endorsing either of them. In *Tusculanae Disputationes*, his position appears to align more closely with the belief that virtue is identified with happiness. This change in perspective is significant and is set in the context of Cicero coping with the death of his daughter. With philosophy as a way of life, Cicero maintains that one can discover inner serenity through philosophy. (*Tusc*.V.2)

In what follows, we can summarize the argumentations for the sufficiency of virtue according to Cicero's presentation in *Tusculane Disputationes*.

First of all, according to Cicero, the Stoics believed in the concept of *apatheia*, which taught that a wise man's soul is free of emotional disturbances, such as fear (*metus*), pain (*aegritudo*), desire (*cupiditas*), and pleasure (*laetitia*). (*Tusc*.V.17) Therefore, virtuous people or wise people do not worry about external gains and losses and do not allow fortune to affect their lives in any way.

Second, the Stoics stated that happiness was characterized by permanence (*perpetuatio*) and constancy (*constantia*). (*Tusc*.V.40) With this concern, pursuing bodily and external goods would affect the stability of happiness. Therefore, they regarded the good of the soul as the sole good which lies in human power. By distinguishing between what is within our

control and what lies outside our faculty, the Stoics deemed virtue sufficient for a happy life.

Third, Stoics famously advocated determinism through the concept of fate (*fatum*). (*Tusc*.V.25) Thus, they believed that individuals could only change their attitudes toward the world and cultivate virtue, establishing an inner citadel. This inner virtue enabled the Stoic pursuit of "conformity with nature" (*Tusc*.V.82). Virtue and reason were within our power, preventing uncertainty and enslavement to fate.

It is indeed noteworthy that Cicero, despite sharing an agreement with the Stoic perspective that virtue and happiness are closely connected. In the end of *Tusculanae Disputationes* V, he claims that he is a follower of Socrates. Cicero's perspective is optimistic in that it underscores humanity's capacity to attain a happy life through the exercise of reason and the cultivation of virtue. Furthermore, in Cicero's skeptical perspective, he discovers happiness in reflecting on the viewpoints of diverse philosophical schools and in the pursuit of wisdom.

Part II Augustine's discussion on sufficiency and insufficiency of virtue

Augustine's conception of virtue was influenced by Cicero, and he directly quotes Cicero in various instances. Similar to Cicero, Augustine employed a strategy of syncretism when addressing the debate between Stoicism and Peripatetics. This debate extended beyond the classification of goods and encompassed the realm of emotions as well. According to Augustine, the dispute between these two schools are merely about words, not fact. (*verba, non facta*). (*De civitate Dei* IX, 4). In order to compensate these two schools, Augustine has also introduced the distinction among the happy life, happier life and the happiest life. (Byers 2012, p.73).

However, Augustine doesn't share the skepticism of Cicero. In his earlier *Cassiciacum* Dialogues, he firmly asserts that human happiness is knowing or possessing God. In this part, we will show Augustine discuss abouts the relationship between virtue and happiness.

(1) The Stoic's elements in the definition of virtue

Following Cicero, virtue is defined as a disposition (*adfectio*) and habit (*habitus*) of soul by Augustine in his earlier works. (*De libero arbitrio* I.13.27). In *De libero arbitrio* I 13,27-28, Augustine argues that virtue is rooted in on prudence (*prudentia*), which allows individuals to discern between what is morally right and wrong. In simpler terms, by making correct rational judgments through the exercise of prudence, one could cultivate a good will

(*bona voluntas*), which ultimately contributes to achieving happiness.

It is also important to note that Augustine's earlier works place a significant emphasis on the power of the will, asserting that nothing is more within our control than the will itself (*De libero arbitrio* I, 12,25). Regarding the connection between reason and will, Augustine's perspective was that the will is dependent on reason. Augustine argued for the self-sufficiency of virtue, emphasizing the power of the will and giving priority to reason. This perspective underscored the importance of human agency and rationality in achieving virtue and happiness.

Regarding the self-sufficiency of will and virtue, there are also elements that align with Stoic philosophy. First, the happiness lies in the human's power. Augustine claims that virtue which is dependent on good will can lead to happiness. Augustine expresses an optimistic attitude towards the power of the will in his earlier writings, emphasizing that happiness can be attained through human power. Thus, happiness does not lie in the possession of external and bodily goods, but in the possession of the unchangeable good (*De beata vita 4.25*).

Second, virtue in Augustine's philosophy is characterized by its alignment with the rationalist tradition. Augustine defines virtue as the right reason (*recta ratio*) and states that one can achieve happiness by virtue: "For the virtue is the right and the perfect reason..... this is the truly perfect virtue, the reason, which arrives at its end, followed by happiness."(Est enim virtus vel recta vel perfecta ratio... et haec est vere perfecta virtus, ratio perveniens ad finem suum, quam beata vita consequitur.)(*Soliloquia* I. 6. 13). This definition of virtue corresponds to the definition of happiness as "living according to the best in us."(*Contra Academicos* I.2.5). "The best" refers to reason (*ratio*) or mind (*mens*). In Augustine's view, the rational soul is God's creation and is closer to God than anything else. The participation (*participatio*) of ideas, which is based on the eye of souls, can be identified as the happiest vision (*beatissima visio*). In other words, happiness is found in the soul's perfection, nourished by wisdom. By contrast, unhappiness lies in searching for the things we will necessarily lose.

Third, Augustine, like the Stoics, considers happiness as a state free from emotional disturbances and from uncertainty. "The wise man doesn't fear either the body or the pains that are to be gotten rid of, avoided, or deferred by those necessities that are susceptible to become scarce for him."(Non igitur metuit sapiens aut mortem corporis, aut dolores, quibus pellendis vel vitandis vel differendis sunt necessaria illa, quorum ei potest contingere inopia.) (*De vita beata* 4.25) (trans.Foley 2009, 41.)

(2) The insufficiency of virtue

In the following, we can illustrate the inadequacy of virtue for happiness, specifically, emphasizing that virtue alone is not sufficient for a happy life.

A key difference between Augustine and the Stoics is the notion that virtue is not viewed as the supreme good (*summum bonum*). In *De libero arbitrio* II, 19,50, Augustine defines virtue as the great good (*magnum bonum*), which leads to happiness, while the supreme good is God, which is transcendent. In Augustine's view, the soul nourishes itself with wisdom which is transcendent, while the body relies on external goods for sustenance. This bears a resemblance to Plotinus' discussion of happiness in *Enneades* I.4, which posits that happiness is found in the soul's journey back to unity or oneness.

By doing this, Augustine differs from the Stoics and prefers the hierarchical understanding of the world. In addition, virtue is acquired in the pursuit of wisdom or the supreme good. Thus, virtue is seen as a great good, by which man lives rightly. (*Virtutes igitur quibus recte vivitur, magna bona sunt.*) (*De libero arbitrio* II. 19. 50). It is also worthwhile to note that virtue is immune to error when it refers to the supreme good.

Conversely, when the virtue is oriented to the earthly world, it cannot lead to the happy life. This idea has been further developed in *De civitate Dei* XIX.4.4, where Augustine argues that the four cardinal virtues acquired by man in this life are not sufficient for a happy life if they do not have a transcendent aim. For example, prudence teaches us to recognize good and bad, and temperance teaches us not to do bad things, but the existence of both shows that man is still in a struggle between the spiritual and the physical: the virtue of courage means that man still has to bear the bad things on earth; the virtue of justice also shows that man is still in a state of spiritual disharmony.

Thirdly, Augustine differs from the Stoics by not subscribing to the belief that moral evil is the only form of evil. In contrast, he aligns more closely with Neoplatonic thought, which regards the body as an obstacle to the soul. For instance, in his work *Soliloquia* I,6,12 Augustine emphasizes that the body can hinder the attainment of happiness. In *De civitate Dei* XIX.4.2, Augustine offers a critical examination of the Stoic notion of the Wise. He underscores that even the Wise may encounter physical limitations and endure various difficulties in the earthly realm. Augustine's critique brings to light the Stoics' excessively optimistic perspective on virtue, underlining that humans cannot achieve a happy life on earth solely by relying on the self-sufficiency of their souls.

Lastly, in Augustine's *Contra Iulianum*, he critiques Cicero's definition of

virtue. "Virtue was not defined absurdly by those who said, 'Virtue is a disposition of the soul that is in conformity with the mode of nature and to reason.' They told the truth, but they did not know what it is to be in conformity with the nature of mortals so as to free it and make it blessed." (*Non enim absurde virtus definita est ab eis qui dixerunt, 'virtus est animi habitus, naturae modo atque rationi consentaneus.' Verum dixerunt, sed quid sit consentaneum liberandae ac beatificandae naturae mortalium nescierunt.*) (*Contra Iulianum* IV. 3.19. trans. Bochet 2018, 54.). According to Augustine, Cicero's definition is accurate in a certain sense, but it lacks an understanding of what it means to conform to the nature of mortal beings in a way that can free them and bring them happiness. Augustine's response to Cicero also underscores the inherent brokenness of human nature, which, he argues, can only be perfected by God's grace in order to be integrated into the spiritual realm. In addition, Augustine emphasizes that understanding virtue solely through human reason and nature is insufficient. Instead, he contends that grasping virtue requires an acknowledgment of the role of grace.

In summary, despite Augustine's incorporation of certain Stoic elements in his discussion of virtue, his philosophy does not align with Stoicism. On the one hand, Augustine asserts that virtue alone is not self-sufficient and instead relies on the supreme Good, which is God. On the other hand, one cannot attain happiness in this life based on intellectual efforts or human nature.

Part III The Christian-Platonic transformation of virtue

Now we turn to Augustine's definition of virtue as the supreme love of God (*summus amor dei*) (*De Moribus* 15.25). Here, Augustine substitutes reason with love as the central element. I will argue that this innovative shift reflects Augustine's distinctive theological perspective and the transformative role he attributes to the primacy of love within the moral framework. By introducing love, Augustine redefines the cardinal virtue and theological virtues. On one hand, we can see that there is an identification between virtue and happiness in the afterlife. On the other hand, love, as the gift of God, can unify the split soul and lead to happiness in this life. What we particularly need to demonstrate is that humans can attain happiness not only in the afterlife through virtue but also in this life.

(1) Defining the love

In *De diversis questionibus 83*, Augustine defines love as a form of desire (*appetitus*), a concept that involves an inherent sense of movement (*motus*) directed towards its object. This definition signifies that love is not static but rather dynamic, involving an inner drive that propels an individual towards

the object. In other words, Augustine's characterization of love as a desire in motion underscores its active and transformative nature, highlighting the inherent inclination to seek connection and union with what is loved. In the context of the object of love, love can be differentiated into two categories: charity (*caritas*) and desire (*cupiditas*). Charity refers to the love of God, while desire pertains to the love directed towards mutable or changeable things.

It has been pointed out that love should be comprehended within the context of eudaimonism. (O'Donovan 1980; Horn 1999; Tornau 2005) Augustine formulates this perspective in his definition of happiness as "to have what one loves or wills" (*habet quod vult/amat*) (*De beata vita* 2.14). Furthermore, the metaphor "my love is my weight" (*pondus meum amor meus*) (*Confessiones* XIII,9,10) aligns with the Platonic tradition and suggests a tendency to return to the concept of Oneness or unity as a fundamental aspect of love and happiness. Thus, love is directed toward the pursuit of happiness, and this pursuit is informed by pre-existing concepts of happiness in the mind. Thus, love is not wholly independent but is intrinsically connected to knowledge. Hence, it would be inaccurate to assert that Augustine departs from the ancient eudaimonism. Instead, he should be rightly characterized as an eudaimonist, as his philosophy emphasizes the pursuit of eudaimonia as a central concept in his moral and philosophical framework.

To deepen our grasp of Augustine's perspective on love, I will explore the correlation between knowledge and love. I aim to demonstrate that, in the perfected state, knowledge and love are intertwined. Yet, in the imperfect state or post-original sin, knowledge and love are not interconnected, particularly emphasizing that love is not a result of reason.

To begin with, there is a circular and interconnected relationship between love and knowledge. On the one hand, Augustine emphasizes that knowledge serves as a foundation for love. Augustine points out that no one can love something unless he knows it. (*De Diversis Quaestionibus 83*,35.1; *De Trinitate* IX,3,3) As he asserts, it is challenging to genuinely love something without having a comprehensive understanding of it. Thus, our love for God is rooted in our knowledge of God – the more we come to know about God, the more profound and genuine our love for Him becomes. On the other hand, Augustine posits that love reciprocally perfects knowledge. "Nevertheless no one can perfectly possess or know a good that is not loved." (*De Diversis Quaestionibus 83*,35.1) When we love God, this affectionate bond brings us to a deeper understanding of Him. Love leads us to seek to know God on a more profound level. This understanding arises not solely through rational reasoning but also through a spiritual connection fostered by our love for Him.

This interconnected relationship creates a cycle: knowledge produces love, and love enhances knowledge. Augustine's insight underscores the inseparable nature of our connection with God, where love and knowledge constantly enrich and inform each other.

Consequently, Augustine posits that love and knowledge are intertwined within the framework of our interaction with God. It necessitates not only the possession of God through rational understanding but also the enjoyment of God (*frui deo*). It follows that love and knowledge must penetrate each other in the relationship with God. Regarding God, human beings should not only possess God by knowing but also by enjoying God through loving. In other words, happiness lies not only in the possession of the knowledge of God but also in the enjoyment of God.

However, when it comes to the imperfect state in this life, love is not simply a byproduct of knowledge. In *De Trinitate* VIII. 2.3, Augustine regards God as truth and describes his intellectual failure. There, Augustine argues that humans can only see God at the first flash (in ipso primo ictu), but they cannot firmly remain in God. The difficulty of ascent to God lies in the "mists of bodily images and the clouds of phantasms" (imaginum corporalium et nubila phantasmatum), which are related to the sensible world. It indicates that the love does not necessarily follow the intellectual efforts.

Additionally, Augustine proposes a solution to this situation: if we cannot achieve a constant and beatific vision of God, what should we do in this life? In *De Trinitate* VIII, 12, Augustine shifts his focus to love and advocates following the command to love one's neighbors. Here, love is characterized by the self-reflexivity. "For since 'God is love' he who loves love, surely loves God; but he must need love love who loves his brother." (*De Trinitate* VIII, 12, trans. McKenna 2002, p. 20).

This implies that love not only extends itself toward the beloved object but also inwardly, toward itself. For instance, in the injunction "love your neighbor," the action of love, as a verb, is directed not only toward the neighbor but also toward the love itself. For "God is love" (*deus dilectio est*). That is to say, by loving neighbors, the expression of love for God becomes evident. In this sense, the love of God does not hinge on a precise intellectual comprehension of God. One can express love for God through the act of loving one's neighbor.

In other words, the act of love inherently contains an understanding of God. From this perspective, we can imply that even though we do not have a fully intellectual understanding of God, we can still love him by loving our

neighbors. In other word, the exercise of life in this world can be seen as a preparation for the perfect vision of God in the next life.

(2) The cardinal virtue as clinging to God

While Augustine does critique the Stoic understanding of virtue and happiness, it doesn't imply that he completely abandons the idea that "virtue is self-sufficient for happiness." Instead, Augustine transforms the concept of virtue. He contends that cardinal virtue can be fully realized in the eschatological state, which aligns with his Christian beliefs. Augustine maintains that true happiness can only be attained in the eschaton when humans will come "face to face" with God, as mentioned in 1 *Corinthians* 13:12. This perspective reflects his conviction that ultimate fulfillment is found in the divine realm beyond earthly existence. Let's now examine how Augustine reshapes the cardinal virtues through the lens of love. Augustine redefines the cardinal virtues, placing their focus on " clinging to God" (*adhaerere deo*).

"This might be called prudence because it will with perfect foresight cling to the good that will not be lost. It might be called courage because it will most firmly cling to the good that will not be torn away. It might be called temperance because it will most chastely cling to the good by which it will not corrupted. And it might be called justice because it will with full righteousness cling to the good to which it is rightly subject." (Dicatur haec et prudentia, quia prospectissime adhaerebit bono quod non amittatur; et fortitudo, quia firmissime adhaerebit bono unde non avellatur; et temperantia, quia castissime adhaerebit bono ubi non corrumpatur; et iustitia, quia rectissime adhaerebit bono cui merito subiciatur.) (*Epistulae*155,12; trans.Teske 1990, p.413)

The central concept in this paragraph is "cling to God" (*adhaerere deo*), which Augustine defines as happiness. This differs from Augustine's previous definition of "possessing God" (*deum habere*), which can be equated with "knowing God" and is rooted in the faculty of reason. In contrast, "cling to God" places the emphasis on love. For Augustine, love is a dynamic force that drives human actions and guides the relationship with the divine. Thus, the act of "clinging to God" is not solely an intellectual endeavor or a result of practical engagement, but rather is an inner motivation toward God.

By introducing love, prudence no longer serves as the discernment between good and evil. Instead, it is defined as the act of clinging to God. Courage, once associated with enduring hardships, now takes on the meaning of not turning away from God. Similarly, temperance, which was previously about resisting the allure of evil, transforms into clinging to the good. And

justice, which typically involves the harmonization of spiritual and physical aspects, is redefined as the submission to God. These transformations indicate that the cardinal virtues no longer hold their traditional practical connotations. Rather, they are rooted in establishing and nurturing a profound relationship with God or the supreme good. Augustine's perspective shifts the focus from specific actions to the deep spiritual connection with the divine, reflecting his notion that the ultimate virtue lies in the union with God rather than adherence to practical issues.

Indeed, the comparison between Augustine's perspective on the cardinal virtues and Plotinus's discussion in *Enneads* VI.8.5 draws attention to an interesting parallel in their philosophies. Plotinus, in *Enneads* VI.8.5, delves into the concept of the four cardinal virtues as they relate to practical life. He contends that if these virtues remain confined to the realm of practicality without being connected to reason or the One (the ultimate reality), they become emblematic of the flawed nature of our earthly existence. Plotinus's example involving courage highlights the paradox of virtues tied to practical life. Courage, considered a virtue, is entwined with the condition of war, which in itself is not intrinsically good. This exemplifies the intricate relationship between virtues and the complexities of practical situations.

Furthermore, Plotinus divides virtue into three categories: civil virtue, purifying virtue, and contemplative virtue. This classification suggests an evolution from practical engagement (civil virtue) to a purification of the soul (purifying virtue), culminating in contemplation that transcends the material world and connects with higher realities. This journey aligns with Plotinus's emphasis on ascending toward the One through intellectual and spiritual introspection. Similarly, Augustine's perspective also shifts the focus of virtue from earthly practicality to a transcendent connection with God or the supreme good. Augustine also argues that true virtue extends beyond the confines of conventional virtues linked solely to practical life. Instead, it involves a higher, metaphysical dimension that points towards a more profound understanding of existence and an alignment with higher principles.

(3) Theological virtues

We turn to Augustine's discussion of the relationship between virtue and happiness in this life (*in hac vita*). As previously mentioned, due to original sin, humans cannot achieve perfect happiness in this life. Does this suggest that people can only live a pessimistic life? Is it true that humans cannot achieve happiness through virtue in their lifetime?

We can response these questions by illustrating Augustine's understand-

ing of theological virtues. Let's first explore the context in which Augustine introduces the theological virtues. In *Soliloquia* I,6,13, Augustine states that it is impossible for a human to experience the vision of God in this life because of the body. In order to compensate the failure of the intellectual efforts, Augustine introduces the theological virtues, faith-hope-love. In other words, to attain the beatific vision, the theological virtues serve as a means of nurturing a pure heart. Augustine's theological virtues function akin to a Neoplatonic concept of purified virtue, aligning with Neoplatonism's teachings on the path to salvation.

This paper argues that Augustine transformed the cardinal virtues by introducing the theological virtues, paving the way for happiness. The discussion will proceed in the following steps: first, Augustine establishes the cardinal virtues on the foundation of the theological virtues, enabling these virtues to surpass the limitations of the earthly realm; second, there will be an emphasis on love as the core among the theological virtues—faith, hope, and love—which serves as the foundation for the continuity between earthly and eschatological virtues. Lastly, it will be pointed out that the role of love lies in unifying the split will and transforming one's love. In a word, when one loves God wholeheartedly, one can have the true virtues which lead to happiness, albeit not in a perfect state.

Concerning the relationship between theological virtues and cardinal virtues, Augustine emphasizes that cardinal virtues can attain the status of "true virtues" (virtutes verae) when grounded in theological virtues in different texts (*De civitate Dei* XIX, 4, 5; *Epistulae* 155,13). For example, Augustine illustrates this by asserting that the four cardinal virtues necessitate "faith" to truly become virtues – “This faith works through charity in such a way that the virtues also, whereby one lives prudently, bravely, temperately, and justly, are all referred to the same faith, for in no other way can they be true virtues.” (*De trinitate* XIII, 26)

Among the theological Virtues, Augustine places love at the core. He articulates, "Without love, faith is of no benefit to others; without love, hope cannot exist.” (Iam de amore quid dicam, sine quo fides nihil prodest? Spes vero esse sine amore non potest.) (*Enchiridion*, 8) Augustine draws upon the foundational source of this assertion primarily from the relevant biblical text, which states, "And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Furthermore, Augustine argues that love maintains continuity both in this life and the afterlife, setting it apart from faith and hope. Augustine explains, "But sight will take the place of faith, and hope will disappear in the full joy we are to receive. However, love is not

like this; when these diminish, it is destined to become greater."(Sed fidei succedet species quam videbimus, et spei succedet beatitudo ipsa ad quam perventuri sumus, caritas autem etiam istis decedentibus augebitur potius.)(*De doctrina christiana* I,38,42) In the afterlife, as faith and hope fade, love endures. That is to say, love not only exists as a theological virtue in this life but also persists into the afterlife. Both the cardinal virtues and theological virtues find unity around the concept of love.

Noteworthy, Augustine regards love as a gift from God, and it is only through Holy Spirit that man could change the orientation of his will and attain inner renewal. Augustine also underscores the power of love for worldly things. He argues that humans cannot avoid loving sensible objects and often become ensnared in desire (*cupiditas*). This inclination is not solely due to the influence of the body but is primarily a result of the perverse will (*perversa voluntas)*. Building on Paul's teachings about the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, Augustine formulates his concept of the "chain of will" (*catena voluntatis*) in *Confessiones* VIII, 5. This concept divides the will into the "new will" (*nova voluntas*) and the "old will" (*vetus voluntas*), corresponding to the spiritual will and the carnal will respectively. In such cases, rational judgment alone may not necessarily motivate the soul to turn towards God.

To attain happiness, the primary step is to resolve the internal conflicts within the will and establish a harmonious unity of purpose. Within this context, grace symbolized as love, assumes a vital role. Augustine perceived love as a divine gift, and he believed that it was solely through the Holy Spirit that individuals could reorient their will and achieve inner transformation. Augustine did not confine his definition of love solely to knowledge but also considered it as a bestowed gift from God. (*De trinitate* VIII.10.14). Through the introduction of grace, virtue is no longer solely the product of human cultivation of the mind in the knowledge of God; instead, it becomes the outcome of God's love. God, being love itself, has the power to draw humans to love Him. With the assistance of God, humans can achieve the unity of their will and love, directing their will toward what they should truly love. God's love doesn't overpower human love but liberates it. Human will, divided by conflicting desires, can be unified through love.

Conclusion

We now turn to the question we discussed at the beginning, whether Augustine followed the Stoic view of virtue. Augustine transforms the Stoics' teaching within his own Christian Platonism, asserting that while virtue alone may not be sufficient, virtue coupled with ordered love contributes to a happy life. Hence, we can argue that Augustine, despite emphasizing the imperfection

of this life, is not a pessimist. Instead, he maintains that humans can still pursue happiness in this life through their love.

Augustine introduces several novel aspects to the discourse on virtue theory. Firstly, within the Christian framework, Augustine places a significant emphasis on human frailty and humility. He highlights the importance of human humility while opposing self-sufficiency. In order to be virtue, humans must rely on the grace and God. In this sense, Augustine's virtue is characterized as theo-centered.

Secondly, virtue does not solely rely on rational judgment and deliberation but also necessitates a transformation of the human love through the light of God's love in order to embark on the path to happiness. Therefore, Augustine replaces reason with love in his definition of virtue.

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Chen Yuan and Ying Lianzhi:

A Chronicle of Their Association

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Abstract: Chen Yuan, the president of Fu Jen Catholic University, was a famous scholar in the field of religion studies. Ying Lianzhi, a distinguished educator and philanthropist, founded *Ta Kung Pao* and Fu Jen Catholic University. They had been acquainted with each other for nearly ten years until Ying Lianzhi died in 1926. They collected, collated and published the Catholic works written in late Ming and early Qing periods. Chen Yuan, together with Ying Lianzhi not only promoted the academic research of Chinese Catholic history, but also participated in the localization of Chinese Catholicism actively.

Keywords: Catholic, "Yuan YeliKewen Kao", Fu Jen Catholic University

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Introduction

Chen Yuan (1880-1971), a prominent historian and educator, was a trailblazer in the study of religious history in modern China. His scholarly contributions include seminal works such as *Yuan Yelikewen Kao* (*An Inquiry into the Yuan-era Yelikewen*), *Kaifeng Yicileyejiao Kao* (*A Study on the Kaifeng Jews*), *Huihuijiao Ru Zhongguo Shilüe* (*A Brief History of Islam in China*) and so on. Alongside his academic pursuits, Chen Yuan served as president of both Fu Jen Catholic University and Beijing Normal University, leaving a lasting impact on Chinese education. Ying Lianzhi (1867-1926), a distinguished educator, philanthropist, and founder of *Ta Kung Pao* and Fu Jen Catholic University, was equally influential. His notable writings, such as *Yeshi Ji* (*Is Too Collection*) and *Wansongyeren Yanshanlu* (*Worthy Words by Wansongyeren*), reflect his intellectual vigor and dedication to cultural preservation.

The two scholars first met in 1917 and maintained a close association until Ying Lianzhi's death in 1926. During this period, they collaborated in collecting, collating, and publishing Catholic works from the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. Their partnership not only advanced the academic study of Chinese Catholic history but also played a significant role in the localization of Catholicism in China. This article explores their intellectual and personal interactions, shedding light on their shared contributions to scholarship and cultural exchange in early 20th-century China.

Part I

In 1913, at the age of 33, Chen Yuan left Guangzhou for Beijing to attend the First National Assembly. From then on, he settled in the capital. Chen Yuan maintained a deep interest in historical texts. During his time in Beijing, he attempted to employ the textual criticism methods of the Qian-Jia School (a Qing Dynasty philological tradition) in his biblical studies. He wrote, "Whenever I made a discovery, I would jot it down immediately. Over the past eight years, these notes have accumulated into a substantial volume" (Chen 1923).

Chen's strong interest in Christianity can be traced back to his childhood, when reading *Sikuquanshu Zongmu Tiyao* (*The Annotated Catalogue of the Complete Library of the Four Treasuries*), he learned that Jesuit missionaries in China during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties had authored numerous books. "As a child, reading *Sikuquanshu Zongmu Tiyao*, I came across mentions of such works," he recalled, "The editors of *Sikuquanshu* had categorically excluded them, retaining only their titles and harshly denouncing them" (Ying 1919). Ironically, it was precisely this exclusion that aroused his curiosity.

There are evaluations of 37 works related to missionaries who came to China in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties in *Sikuquanshu Zongmu Tiyao*. Some of these works were included in the *Sikuquanshu*, while others were only listed by title. For example, *Tianxue Chuhan* (*First Collection of Studies on Heavenly Learning*), compiled by Li Zhizao, one of the famous Catholics in the late Ming, consists of 19 volumes, divided into two categories which were nine under "*Li*" (*Principles*) and ten under "*Qi*" (*Instruments*). The volumes categorized under *Qi*, which introduced western science and technology, were accepted into the collection. The *Li* volumes, which expounded Catholic doctrine, were for the most part excluded, leaving only their titles. The *Sikuquanshu Zongmu Tiyao* explicitly explains the rationale for this selective inclusion, "We have chosen the ten volumes under Q*i* useful for mathematical and scientific reference and recorded them separately. As for the *Li* volumes, only *Zhifang Waiji* has been listed to broaden knowledge of the world. The rest have been categorically excluded as a sign of total rejection. The list of the entire compilation by Li Zhizao is preserved solely to highlight his guilt in promoting heterodoxy" (Yong 1931, p. 7). Following this rejection, the *Li* volumes were neglected by publishers and eventually scattered. Although Chen Yuan took note of these titles, he lamented that "not a single original copy could be found in Guangdong" (Ying 1919).

After relocating to Beijing, Chen Yuan began to systematically collect Christian texts from the late Ming onward. In early 1917, he resolved to write *A History of Christianity in China*, and also planned to compile *A Record of Christianity in the Qianlong Era*, aiming to systematically catalog Catholic literature in China and fill in the gaps left by the *Sikuquanshu Zongmu*. However, at that time, northern Catholic dioceses were under the control of missionaries of Congrégation de la Mission. They neglected academic pursuits and kept many valuable historical documents in the Beitang (North Church) Library[1], hidden from Chinese scholars. Notably, Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi, two prominent Chinese Catholics, were aware of these issues but were still unable to access the Beitang collection. Fang Hao, a famous historian, commented, "In the early Republic, senior Catholic scholars Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi were the first to pay attention to the Chinese books in Beitang, but even gaining access proved extremely difficult. Later, Mr. Chen Yuan learned about them, but never got a glimpse of the hidden collection. He heard that a Chinese translation of *Misa Jingdian* (the *Roman Missal)* from the late Ming was housed there and tried several times to obtain a copy through intermediaries—but to

[1] Beitang, originally built by French Jesuit missionaries in 1693 near Canchikou inside Xi'anmen, was completed in 1703. It housed the largest collection among Beijing's four major Catholic churches, with holdings on religion, science and culture.

no avail"(Fang 1969, p. 1840).

Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi, both prominent Catholic intellectuals, opposed the prevailing disdain among Western missionaries for Chinese language and culture. They advocated for Catholic higher education and academic evangelization, which made them unpopular with foreign missionaries. They hoped to organize and publish Jesuit writings from the Ming-Qing era but could not access the conveniently located Beitang collection. Instead, Ma Xiangbo had to borrow manuscripts from the Xujiahui Library in Shanghai and entrusted Ying Lianzhi with proofreading them. Ying, deeply engaged in Catholic studies, published *Wansongyeren Yanshanlu* in 1916, quoting not only from Chinese traditional philosophers such as Confucius, Mencius, but also from western missionaries such as Matteo Ricci, Adam Schall von Bell, Diego de Pantoja and so on, to promote moral self-cultivation.

In April 1917, after much effort collecting Christian texts, Chen Yuan read *Wansongyeren Yanshanlu* and was overjoyed to discover that many of the sources it cited were precisely those he had long sought in vain. He immediately wrote to Ying Lianzhi requesting to borrow these books. Ying promptly replied, "I am honored to read your letter. Your humility and earnestness are truly admirable. I shall soon return to the city and hope for the chance to receive your instruction. Please let me know by phone when it would be convenient for you. If you are able to come to the Peigen Library, that would be even more convenient. I await your decision respectfully"(Chen 1990, p. 2). Ying promptly replied, expressing admiration for Chen's scholarly humility. Although Ying was in poor health and living at Xiangshan, the countryside of Beijing, he was eager to meet Chen and discuss their shared interests—or even more, to welcome Chen for a visit. At the end of the letter, Ying included his phone number.

As a younger scholar eager to access the materials, Chen gladly visited Ying at Xiangshan. Their conversation on the history of Christianity in China was so congenial that they quickly became kindred spirits. Ying was deeply impressed by Chen's talent, while Chen was moved by Ying's sincerity. Both of them felt they had met too late in life. Chen Yuan recalled, "I was deeply touched by Ying Lianzhi, and he in turn was pleased to find someone who could understand his collection. He hoped that I would one day take charge of compiling and collating these works. That was the beginning of our friendship" (Ying 1919). Ying hoped Chen would assist in the collection and editing of Jesuit writings and showed him the curriculum and research topics at Furen Society.

Part II

Furen Society was a small educational institution founded by Ying Lianzhi

at Xiangshan in 1913 after his retirement from *Ta Kung Pao*. It aimed to train young Catholics to serve the church in China. The name "Fu Ren" which meant "making friends through literature and assisting virtue through friendship" was derived from the *Analects*. It reflected Ying's commitment to reviving Chinese traditional culture. He prepared a large collection of classical and modern books, along with famous calligraphy rubbings, and regularly engaged in discussions with his students, assigning them to write essays and give speeches in stages, in order to instill socially relevant knowledge that could serve the world in the future (Ying 1940, p. 11). Students at Furen Society were required to regularly submit written assignments, known as sheke (papers).

It was somewhat unfortunate that although some young men were sent from parishes across China, their numbers were small and their foundation in classical studies was weak. As a result, there were no particularly outstanding individuals. It was Chen Yuan, with his ambition to write *A History of Christianity in China*, who became deeply interested when he saw topics such as "A Study of the Tang Nestorian Stele," "Yuan Yelikewen Kao," and "An Analysis of the *Sikuquanshu Zongmu*'s Critiques of Early Catholic Writings." Inspired by the topics and student essays, Chen quickly completed *Yuan Yelikewen Kao* within about ten days. Encouraged by Ying and polished under Ma Xiangbo's guidance, Chen published the paper. The work was an immediate success and established his academic reputation. It also marked the decisive turning point in Chen's life from politics to historical scholarship.

Chen Yuan had not initially planned to publish *Yuan Yelikewen Kao*. Besides his personal interest, he also saw it as a way to repay Ying Lianzhi's trust and support. As he wrote in the preface, "I touched upon the thread of inquiry, was occasionally inspired, returned to open my book chest, and after ten days of cross-checking, gathered over a hundred supporting evidences. Supplemented by materials from the students of Furen Society, I arranged the topics and composed a single volume to repay the gentleman" (Ying 1926, p. 20). Since Chen was newly settled in Beijing with limited access to books, his research was inevitably imperfect. Some sections, such as the discussion of the Beitang stele, relied on Ying's firsthand observations rather than Chen's own inspection.

Nevertheless, Ying highly appreciated Chen's work and encouraged him, "You may make additions and corrections at a later date" (Ying 1926, p. 20). He even agreed to fund the publication through Furen Society. Ying Lianzhi encouraged Chen Yuan to publish the paper as soon as possible, because the list of society paper topics showed that Ying had already begun to form a general framework for the development of Christianity in China. He had long been puzzled by the term Yelikewen and initially hoped his students might

resolve it. However, the students' work fell short. Thus, when Chen Yuan was able to "draw upon various sources and trace the origins clearly, making a term that had remained obscure for centuries suddenly transparent," Ying was overjoyed (Ying 1926, p. 20)[2]. Despite the initial edition's limitations, Ying praised Chen's research as clear and accurate and personally funded its publication through Furen Society. He wrote, "Mr. Chen first gathered evidence related to the term Yelikewen, arranging it into twelve categories. The structure is clear, and the conclusions are sound. I was completely convinced upon reading it and thus promptly arranged for its publication" (Ying 1926, p. 20). Just over three months after the first edition, Chen Yuan had already gathered several times more material which included several strong pieces of evidence (Chen 1917). Upon reissuing the expanded version of *Yuan Yelikewen Kao*, Ying enthusiastically arranged for a second printing.

Chen's *Yuan Yelikewen Kao* was his first academic paper in historiography. By applying Chinese historical methodology to the study of Christianity during the Yuan dynasty, he drew considerable attention in both China and Japan. In a letter dated December 8, 1917, during a visit to Japan, Chen wrote to his friend Mu Yuanfu, noting that his work was well-received by Japanese scholars and that further achievements could be expected, "My humble work, *Yelikewen Kao*, has been quite well received by scholars here. It is likely to draw the attention of academics in this country. What I may gain in the future will likely be more than this"(Chen 1990, p. 3).

As anticipated, Chen went on to publish other major works, such as *A Study on the Kaifeng Jews*, *A Study on the Introduction of Zoroastrianism into China*, and *A Study on the Introduction of Manichaeism into China*, thus pioneering the field of religious history in China and filling significant gaps in official historical records. The renowned historian Chen Yinque once pointed out, "During the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, historians' knowledge was inferior to that of the Song period. Therefore, strictly speaking, in the B-category of Chinese historiography, there are hardly any comprehensive works on religious history. However, the emergence of such works truly began with the writings of Mr. Chen Yuan in recent years" (Chen 2009, p. 272).

Part III

The book *Wansongyeren Yanshanlu* led to the acquaintance between Chen

[2] Fang Hao believed this postscript was written in the third lunar month of the year Dingsi (1917), two months before the book's first publication. However, I believe that the third lunar month refers to the lunar calendar and corresponds to May 1917 in the solar calendar, since Ying's first letter to Chen Yuan inviting him to Xiangshan was dated April 20, 1917. Thus, it is unlikely Ying wrote the postscript before that time.

Yuan and Ying Lianzhi. Chen Yuan later recalled, "I came to know Wansongyeren [Ying Lianzhi's pen name] because of the *Wansongyeren Yanshanlu*" (Ying 1919). Thus began a celebrated friendship between the two. Although Chen Yuan initially sought out Ying Lianzhi with the intention of compiling the *Qianlong Jidujiao Lu (Record of Christianity during the Qianlong Era)*, he ultimately noted that "due to the scarcity of materials, it remained unfinished for a long time"(Chen 2009, p. 633). Nevertheless, they embarked on the work of proofreading and publishing Catholic writings from the Ming and Qing periods. It can be said that thanks to their joint efforts, the early Republic of China saw significant achievements in the collection, collation, and publication of these Catholic texts from the Ming and Qing dynasties.

On May 8, 1917, Chen Yuan wrote to Ying Lianzhi specifically about the plan to reprint *Tianxue Chuhan*. Ying had spent over a decade collecting the complete set of this work and wished to reissue it to "broaden its dissemination and allow people to know the truth" (Ying 1917, p. 5). In his letter, Chen Yuan suggested that instead of transcribing the texts by hand, it would be better to borrow the originals for direct photographic reproduction, since "upon careful consideration, this is preferable to manual copying. Copying requires proofreading, then typesetting, and another round of proofreading—altogether too labor-intensive." He proposed following the format of the recently published *Sibu Congkan* from Hanfenlou: to first reproduce *Chaoxing Xueyao (*The *Essentials of Supernatural Theology)* (21 volumes) translated by the missionary Louis Buglio, under the title *Tianxue Erhan* (*Second Collection of Studies on Heavenly Learning*), and to select other important works for a third volume. If resources permitted, *Tianxue Chuhan* could then also be reproduced. "This approach would not be too costly, would be relatively easy to accomplish, would avoid the labor of copying and proofreading, and would achieve effective circulation—thus, it seems feasible"(Chen 1990, pp. 2–3). Chen hoped Ying Lianzhi would consult with Ma Xiangbo and agree to his proposal, observing that had they adopted photographic reproduction earlier, the publication project would already have been a great success.

In October 1917, Chen Yuan traveled to Japan with Liang Shiyi[3]. While stopping in Shanghai, he visited Ma Xiangbo and consulted rare books at the Xujiahui Library. In a letter to Ying Lianzhi dated November 8, 1917, Chen wrote, "I spent four days reading at the Xujiahui Library and gained quite a lot. Many notable works from the late Ming and early Qing survive there, but alas,

[3] Liang Shiyi (1869-1933), also known as Yifu and Yansun, was born in Sanshui County, Guangdong Province. He was a politician, renowned economist, and banker during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China.

I lacked time to read them all" (Chen 1990, p. 3).

On December 8, in a letter to his friend Mu Yuanfu, Chen mentioned that while in Kyoto, he had found the *Zhenyuan Shijiao Mulu (Zhenyuan Catalog of Buddhist Teachings)*, a text confirming the historical connections between Nestorianism and Buddhism, lamenting that "no copies are extant in China; only Japan and Korea have preserved it"(Chen 1990, p. 3). In Osaka, he unexpectedly discovered *Poxie Ji* (*Collection on the Refutation of Heresy*), a Ming-era anthology of anti-Christian writings compiled by monks and laymen alike. This text was critical for studying the interactions between Christianity and Buddhism. Chen had searched for it without success in China, Tokyo, and Kyoto, so finding it in Osaka was a major and happy surprise.

Starting in 1919, with financial support from Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo and Chen Yuan's editorial leadership, a number of Jesuit works were successively published. In May, they completed the proofreading and publication of François Sambiasi's *Lingyan Lishao* (*A Scoopful of Divine Words*). Chen Yuan composed a preface, describing the work's significance and the process of its republication. He wrote, "Among the many works, *Lingyan Lishao*, *Xixue Fan (Western Studies Essentials)*, *Lun Youyi (On Friendship), and Ershiwu Yan (Twenty-Five Sayings)* had long been out of print. Of these, *Lingyan Lishao* is the most eloquent in reasoning. I borrowed a manuscript copy from Wansongyeren, loved it dearly, and wished to republish it. Recently, I found a copy from the Chongzhen-era Shenxiu Hall reprint of *Tianxue Chuhan* and had Mr. Fan Shouzhi meticulously collate it for movable-type printing"(Chen 2009, p. 409).

In August, they proofread Matteo Ricci's *Bianxue Yidu (Debates on Learning)* and Giulio Aleni's *Daxi Li Xiansheng Xingji (The Life of Fr. Matteo Ricci).* Chen Yuan wrote introductions for both books. In the preface to *Bianxue Yidu*, he supplemented it with an epilogue by Yang Tingyun, another famous Catholic in late Ming China. He explained, "At that time, Catholic talent flourished. Many Westerners and Chinese scholars were capable of writing such works… When Wansongyeren was in charge of *Ta Kung Pao*, he published this volume in the newspaper. Now, wishing to reprint it, he asked me to revise it. I retained the original title and added the missing epilogue by Yang Tingyun, which was found in a Fujian print from the Chongzhen era but absent from the *Tianxue Chuhan* version"(Chen 2009, pp. 410–11).

In October, Chen Yuan wrote a postscript for the third edition of *Zhuzhi Qunzheng* (*Mastering the Testimonies of the Faith*), edited by Ying Lianzhi, stating, "Wansongyeren greatly admired this work and reprinted it in Tianjin in 1915. He has recently planned another reprint, appending a collection of congratulatory writings from early Qing literati to Fr. Schall von Bell, whose

poems had not appeared in earlier editions but were newly transcribed from the Xujiahui Library. This reflects the flourishing culture of that era"(Chen 2009, p. 423). *Zhuzhi Qunzheng*, authored by Schall von Bell, was highly praised by Ying Lianzhi, who called it "a profound and unparalleled work in Chinese history"(Ying 1917, p. 5). Even early in his Christian life, Ying had expressed admiration for Schall von Bell. He wrote in his poem, "I often loved reading the sayings of Fr. Schall von Bell. Today, as I open this book, it feels like meeting him again. My friend is deeply moved, urging me many times to visit and weep at his tomb"(Ying 1891).

In addition to the aforementioned works, they also transcribed and collated numerous other Catholic historical texts, such as *Mingli Tan*, *Shengjing Zhijie* (*Direct Explanation of the Bible)*, *Tianxue Juyao* (*Essentials of Heavenly Learning)*, *Zhenzhu Lingxing Juyao* (*Proofs of God's Spirit and Nature)*, *Linghun Daoti Shuo* (*On the Soul and the Tao)*, *Duo Shu*, *Tianjiao Mingbian* (*Clear Defense of the True Faith)*, *Zhengjiao Fengbao* (*Commemorations of Right Doctrine)*, *Shengjiao Shilüe* (*Brief History of the Holy Religion)*, *Huanyu Lun* (*Universal Commentary)*, *Shengmeng Ge* (*Holy Dream Song)*, *Tongyou Jiaoyu* (*Education for Children)*, *Chaoxing Xueyao*, *Wang Juesi's Poems for Schall von Bell*, *Jiaoyao Xulun* (*Introduction to Christian Essentials)*, *Daiyi Lun* (*Discussion on Addressing Doubts)*, *Tianshi Mingbian* (*Clear Defense of Catholicism against Buddhism)*, *Huoyi Lun* (*Refuting Misconceptions)*, *Pi Wang* (*Collected Responses to Doubts)*, D*aiyi Bian* (*Supplement to Responses to Doubts)*, *Da Kewen* (*Questions and Answers with Guests)*, *Tianjiao Mengyin* (*Primer for Christian Instruction)*, *Zhengshi Lüeshuo* (*Outline for Saving the World)*, *Zhuanshi Jinshu Zhijie* (*Direct Explanation of the Book of Rebirth)*, *Guxin Jing* (*Ancient and New Scriptures)*, *Sanshan Lunshuo* (*Three Mountains Discourse)*, *Zunzhu Shengfa*n (*Following the Holy Examples of the Lord)* and so on(Zhang 2010, p. 70).

The collection and collation of these materials greatly assisted Chen Yuan's scholarly research. In 1918, he began compiling a *Bibliography of Chinese Christian History*, although he never fulfilled his original plan of completing the *Record of Christianity in the Qianlong Era*. Nevertheless, in 1927, in the transcript of his lecture *History of Christianity's Introduction into China*, he appended a "Current Bibliography of Missionary Translations during Ming and Qing dynasties," listing over 150 works.

Part IV

According to the statistics, Chen Yuan authored over thirty articles and books on Christianity. "Among them, one was published in 1917, two in 1918, and as many as nine appeared in 1919 alone" (Liu 2013, p. 61). These academic accomplishments indirectly fulfilled the research project of Furen Society on

"An Analysis of the *Sikuquanshu Zongmu*'s Critiques of Early Catholic Writings." For this, Ying Lianzhi praised him, stating, "Compared to the judgments made by the compilers of the *Sikuquanshu*, theirs are hardly worth a laugh"(Ying 1926, p. 21).

So impressed by Chen Yuan's historical expertise that Ying greatly valued his scholarship. For instance, Xu Gandida, the granddaughter of the famous late-Ming Catholic Xu Guangqi, was a devout believer and her son Xu Zanzeng was described in church history as a zealous Catholic. Chen Yuan, after detailed research, concluded that Xu Zanzeng had no connection to Catholicism. When Chen presented this conclusion to Ying, the latter was "initially delighted, but ultimately stunned" (Chen 1982, p. 199). Obviously, Ying Lianzhi was delighted by Chen Yuan's precise research, though he also regretted that Xu Zanzeng was not a Catholic. Ying thus placed high hopes on Chen and enthusiastically supported his research in every possible way.

Chen Yuan had once planned to study Catholicism through non-Christian sources, because "the learning and character of believers are rarely recorded in church history"; "Catholics should engage with the world outside the church. And to do so, they must have writings beyond purely religious content" (Chen 2009, pp. 602–03). With this in mind, Ying Lianzhi introduced Chen to Fr. Franz Xaver Biallas. Chen later recalled, "Around 1922 or 1923, Mr. Ying Lianzhi introduced me to Fr. Biallas, saying he was translating the book *Chu Ci*" (Chen 2009, p. 603). Fr. Biallas, a German Divine Word missionary and expert in Qu Yuan's literature, got his PhD from the University of Leipzig and lived in Qingdao after arriving in China. Chen was surprised to learn from Ying that a Catholic priest excelled in *Chu Ci* studies, initially assuming Catholicism had little connection to such texts. However, he later discovered that "in the late Ming, Jesuit Emmanuel Diaz wrote *Tianwen Lüe (*An *Abridged Inquiry into Heaven*), which was later included in *Yihai Zhuchen (Jewels from the Sea of Learning*). The term *Tianwen* itself originates from the book *Chu Ci*. In the Yongzheng era, *Shandaige Zhu Chuci* (Commentaries *from the Shandaige Studio* on the *Chu Ci), Yuan You* and *Tianwen* cited the views of Matteo Ricci, Emmanuel Diaz, Francisco Furtado, and Schall von Bell, marking the beginning of Catholic engagement with the *Chu Ci*. That was over 200 years ago" (Chen 2009, pp. 603–04). Thanks to Ying's introduction, Chen befriended Biallas and composed two poems in his honor. In 1933, after the Society of the Divine Word took over the administration of Fu Jen Catholic University, Chen appointed Fr. Biallas as director of academic affairs and professor of sociology. In 1934, Fr. Biallas founded the prestigious journal *Monumenta Serica* and served as its first editor-in-chief.

In November 1924, when the last Qing emperor Pu Yi was expelled from Beijing, Chen Yuan—then a member of the "Qing Court Aftercare Committee"—sought to organize archival materials related to Catholicism within the former imperial palace. In July 1925, he discovered two documents originally stored in the Maoqin Hall of the Forbidden City, both closely linked to the Rites Controversy during the Kangxi reign. He immediately informed Ying Lianzhi, who replied with a letter suggesting, "Please write annotations for the two memorials and send them quickly. Adding them as printed appendices would be ideal" (Chen 1990, p. 3). The facsimile of the documents was preceded by Ying's note: "One papal decree and one Kang Xi edict were retrieved by the Qing Court Aftercare Committee from imperial archives in the Three Southern Courtyards (historically housing imperial princes). Now reproduced in facsimile for public viewing" (Chen 1990, p. 3, footnote). In 1932, these two texts and several related documents were collectively published under the title *Documents on Kangxi's Relations with the Roman Embassy*.

In early 1926, due to the strain of establishing Fu Jen Catholic University, Ying Lianzhi fell gravely ill and passed away. Shortly before his death, he entrusted Chen Yuan with the university's future. Although Chen was not a Catholic, Ying had full confidence in him and entrusted him with the Catholic institution he had founded through immense personal sacrifice. This selfless decision stemmed from Ying's clear understanding of Chen's integrity and capabilities. Their long acquaintance had shown him that Chen not only possessed profound mastery of Chinese classical learning but also had a humanistic vision capable of synthesizing Chinese and Western traditions. This very quality aligned with Ying's original vision of founding Fu Jen University based on the ideals of "making friends through literature and assisting virtue through friendship," promoting evangelism through scholarship.

Chen later reflected on the founding of Fu Jen University and his own role in its development in an article titled Three Points for Fu Jen University to Strive Toward, where he wrote, "Mr. Ying Lianzhi, grieved by the estrangement between China and the West and the difficulties facing the true faith, looked back fondly on the achievements of Matteo Ricci and Adam Schall von Bell, as well as those of Xu Guangqi and Li Zhizao. He wrote *Quanxue Zuiyan* (*Encouragement to Study in the Face of Persecution)* to express his convictions. By the grace of the Holy See, Fu Jen University was established in Beijing. As I succeeded him in academic affairs, I sought to carry forward the aspirations of our forebears and proposed three goals for our university. First, to adopt new western academic methods to reorganize Chinese historical studies. Second, to compile and translate various reference works for the benefit of scholars at home and abroad. Third, to disseminate new Sinological

research in the service of international academic cooperation. These three aims should be pursued equally and in tandem. They will not only bridge the divide between East and West but also advance the mission of the true faith, possibly even surpassing the accomplishments of Ricci, Schall, Xu Guangqi, and Li Zizao. This is my modest aspiration, and I hope it will gain the support of scholars worldwide" (Chen 2009, pp. 526–27). It is evident that Chen Yuan faithfully upheld Ying Lianzhi's founding vision which was rooted in Chinese tradition while integrating Western thought. He developed Fu Jen University into a vital center for classical Chinese scholarship and modern academic research in Republican China.

In November 1926, Fang Hao, who aspired to study Catholicism, wrote to Chen Yuan requesting books. In his letter, Fang Hao expressed admiration for the good fortune Chen had in meeting Ying Lianzhi and hoped he too might be so lucky as to receive Chen's support. Fang wrote, "Sir, you were fortunate to encounter Mr. Ying and thus achieved your aspirations, whereas I, coming later and missing the opportunity to meet Mr. Ying, cannot fulfill my ambitions and can only lament endlessly! Then I reflect that now you have received Mr. Ying's trust and carry on his work; surely your compassion for humanity and desire to save and uplift the people must align with Mr. Ying's. Thus, I rejoice in the good fortune of encountering you and need not fear disappointment... Moreover, my request to you today is no different from your own request to Mr. Ying seven or eight years ago. Just as Mr. Ying generously granted your request back then, I trust you will be equally generous today."(Chen 2010, p. 308)

At the time he wrote this letter, Fang Hao was only 15 years old. Likely worried that the busy Chen Yuan would not pay attention to him, he invoked Ying Lianzhi's name—a reflection of both the boy's innocence and sincerity and a testament to Ying's crucial role in Chen's early career. Naturally, Chen Yuan did not neglect this eager young scholar. Among the books he sent Fang were *Lingyan Lishao*, *Zhuzhi Qunzheng*, as well as Ying Lianzhi's *Jianzai Shengmo* and *Wansong Xinhua*, along with a pair of calligraphic couplets, thus paying homage to Ying Lianzhi's memory and influence.

On February 3, 1946, Chen Yuan wrote to his eldest son Chen Lesu, "For a person, the first requirement is ability and the second is mentorship. Without mentorship, even great ability may never find a stage; with mentorship but no ability, even if one ascends the stage, one will not stand firm"(Chen 2010, p. 1136). Here, the "mentorship" clearly refers to figures like Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo. Although these words were addressed to his children, they also summarized Chen Yuan's own experience in academic achievement and his

long tenure as president of Fu Jen Catholic University.

Conclusion

The acquaintance and friendship between Chen Yuan and Ying Lianzhi is undoubtedly one of the remarkable episodes in modern Chinese history. Ying Lianzhi advocated for saving the nation through religion. After converting to Catholicism, he hoped to transform Western Christianity into a faith suited to the Chinese people, thereby addressing the national crisis and healing the societal spirit. Throughout his life, he devoted himself to integrating Christian faith with Chinese culture. When Ying met Chen Yuan, he not only cherished his talent—hoping Chen would study the history of Christianity in China and help the Church trace its origins—but also highly valued Chen's humanistic spirit, capable of bridging Chinese and western cultural traditions. He hoped Chen would shoulder the responsibility of revitalizing Catholic education in China, nurturing talent, and advancing the indigenization of Catholicism.

For Chen Yuan, Ying Lianzhi became an immensely influential figure. Though Chen was not a Catholic, he greatly advanced the academic study of Catholic history in China and actively participated in the localization of Chinese Catholicism. He contributed to the collection, organization, and collation of Ming and Qing Catholic texts, supported the academic missionary methods promoted by the Jesuits in China, and during his tenure as president of Fu Jen Catholic University, he promoted Chinese classical studies, established a distinctive program in Sino-Western cultural exchange history, and oversaw the publication of influential journals such as *Monumenta Serica* and *Furen Xuezhi*, ushering Fu Jen University into what became known as the "Chen Yuan era." In 1939, Chen Yuan was awarded the title of "Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great with Badge" by the Pope in Rome, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Catholic education in China.

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Feminist Biblical Interpretation through an Intersectional Lens: Diverse Developments in Theory, Methodology, and Practice

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Abstract: This paper traces the development of feminist biblical interpretation from its marginal beginnings to its current position as a mainstream academic approach. It examines the field's evolution through four historical phases: early enlightenment (late 19th -mid 20th century), systematic development (1960s-1980s), theoretical diversification (1990s-early 2000s), and contemporary intersectional analysis. It explores key theoretical frameworks, methodological innovations, and significant contributions that have shaped this field. Special attention is given to recent developments in intersectionality and global-south perspectives, which have profoundly enriched biblical interpretation through diverse cultural lenses. The paper also addresses the impact of digital humanities technologies on biblical scholarship. While highlighting feminist biblical criticism's achievements in challenging patriarchal interpretations and recovering overlooked female voices, the paper acknowledges ongoing challenges, including methodological debates and tensions with traditional approaches. It concludes by emphasizing feminist biblical interpretation's continued relevance and potential for promoting social justice.

Keywords: Feminist Biblical Interpretation, Gender and Religion, Hermeneutics, Intersectionality, Global-South Perspectives

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1. Introduction

Originated from the feminist movement in the late 19th century, feminist biblical criticism gradually developed into an independent and diversified academic field in the second half of the 20th century. As an important branch of Feminist Theology, Feminist Biblical Criticism aims to challenge the traditionally male-dominated mode of biblical interpretation and to reinterpret the scriptures through a female perspective in order to show the subjectivity and position of women in the biblical text and the real society (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, p. 11; Ruether 1983, pp. 25-26). It is generally accepted that the feminist movement, women's theology and feminist biblical interpretation are intertwined with the common aim of promoting gender equality, social justice and human liberation (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1975, p. 611; Russell 1985, pp. 16-17).

In recent decades, feminist biblical interpretation has gradually become an important direction in contemporary biblical studies. Especially in the context of globalization and multiculturalism, the introduction of feminist perspectives has brought about considerable changes in biblical studies, leading to a gradual transformation of traditional exegetical methods and concepts (Kwok 2005, pp. 17-18; Levine 2006, pp. 82-83; Dube 2006, pp. 178-93). The purpose of this study is to examine the development of feminist biblical interpretation from historical to contemporary times, focusing on its theoretical framework, methodological approaches, and practical implications. The scope of this study is clearly set within the field of feminist biblical interpretation, and the methodology of literature analysis, and comparative study is employed to demonstrate the diverse development and significant contributions of the field by analyzing and comparing representative literature and scholars' perspectives at various stages of the development process.

It will firstly reviews the historical development of feminist biblical interpretation, including the early Enlightenment stage, the systematic development under the second wave of the feminist movement, and the introduction of postmodern and pluralistic theories until the rise of intersectional analyses and the Global South perspective since the 21st century; secondly, it discusses the core theoretical frameworks and research methodologies; next, it elaborates on its academic and practical contributions; and finally, it puts forward challenges and controversies facing the field of study and makes concluding reflections. Finally, we will present the challenges and controversies facing the field of research and make concluding reflections.

2. Historical Development of Feminist Biblical Interpretation

The development of feminist biblical interpretation can be roughly divided into four phases: late 19th to mid-20th century as the early Enlightenment phase, 1960s-1980s being the second wave of feminist movement and systematization of relevant theories, 1990s to early 2000s as the postmodern and pluralistic theoretical turn, and the 1st quarter of this century the contemporary phase.

An early example of feminist biblical interpretation was *The Woman's Bible* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), who criticized the patriarchal ideology that was deeply entrenched in traditional biblical interpretation, emphasizing that biblical interpretation had long been dominated by men and that it needed to be reinterpreted from a female perspective (Stanton 1895, pp. i-vi). Despite the many criticisms of the book at the time of its publication, it undoubtedly symbolized the formal emergence of feminist biblical interpretation (Mace 2009, pp. 5-6). It is conceivable that this should have been a result of earlier female struggles. In early colonial America, women religious leaders such as Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) and Mary Dyer (1611-1660) had already begun to challenge traditional religious authority. Against this backdrop, Antoinette Brown Blackwell (1825-1921) became the first officially ordained female minister in the United States, setting a precedent for women's equal rights in the religious sphere (Lerner 1993, pp. 16-19).

During the second wave of the feminist movement (1960s-1980s), feminist biblical interpretation became more systematic and academic. Phyllis Trible and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza are representative figures of this period. Trible proposes "Depatriarchalizing Hermeneutics", which seeks to remove patriarchal overtones from biblical texts and restore the dignity and subjectivity of women's roles (Trible 1973, pp. 30-48). Schüssler Fiorenza, on the other hand, proposed "Hermeneutics of Suspicion", which advocates a critical examination of power structures in biblical texts and emphasizes the restoration of women's contributions to early Christian history (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, p. 56). Notable feminist scholars including Letty Russell, Luise Schottroff, and Amy-Jill Levine have similarly advanced feminist hermeneutical methodologies and will be examined subsequently.

In the last decade of the last century, feminist biblical interpretation began to incorporate multiple theoretical perspectives, including postcolonial theory, Queer theory, and eco-feminism. Among them, Kwok Pui-lan and Musa W. Dube outstandingly integrated postcolonial critique into feminist interpretation, exploring the intersection of colonial experience and gender oppression (Kwok 2005, pp. 57-58; Dube 2000, pp. 18-19). Queer theory, introduced by scholars such as Marcella Althaus-Reid and Ken Stone, challenges the biblical

exegetical tradition of heterosexism (Althaus-Reid 2000, pp. 12-13; Stone 2004, pp. 110-34). Rosemary Radford Ruether, an eco-feminist, is concerned with the relationship between humans and nature and advocates an eco-ethical dimension in biblical interpretation (Ruether 2003, pp. 23-33).

Since the 21st century, intersectionality has become a mainstream methodology in feminist biblical interpretation. This analytical framework, which originated with African American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, pp. 139-67) has evolved from its roots in legal discourse to become an increasingly important tool in biblical criticism. Its ideological foundations can be traced to earlier Black feminists who articulated the experience of multiple, simultaneous oppressions (Mehring 2024; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). Before Crenshaw coined the term, these scholars had already explored the interconnections between gender, race, and class, highlighting the need for a theory that addresses forms of oppression beyond a single category or perspective focused primarily on white women's experiences (Janssen 2022, pp. 112-25; Kartzow 2010, pp. 364-89). After Crenshaw provided a concrete framework in legal studies, the concept crossed disciplinary boundaries into the social sciences and spread to Europe and beyond during the 1990s (Mehring 2024). The core of intersectional analysis is the understanding that an individual's identity is not merely a separate collection of categories such as gender, race, and class, but rather results from their interplay and co-construction; multiple systems of oppression operate simultaneously and reinforce each other, creating unique impacts on individuals (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26).

In biblical studies, intersectionality has been applied in a comparative deal to analyze power relationships and marginalized experiences in texts, connecting ancient scriptures with contemporary social justice issues (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). The introduction of intersectionality as an explicit analytical framework in biblical studies, particularly New Testament studies, took place primarily in the early 21st century (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48). Although some scholars employed intersectional approaches before the term gained popularity (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48), figures such as Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, Joseph A. Marchal, Mitzi J. Smith and Jin Young Choi, and Gale A. Yee have been identified as important pioneers in formally introducing intersectionality into biblical scholarship (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Smith and Choi 2020). Schüssler Fiorenza's work, while using the term "kyriarchy" to describe multi-layered power structures in ancient societies, also significantly advanced understanding of the intersections of race, gender, class, and empire in early Christianity (Mehring 2024; Nasrallah and Schüssler Fiorenza 2009). As intersectionality has gained traction, it has proven particularly valuable for revealing cultural complexity in biblical texts

(Kartzow 2024, pp. 1-11; Cobb 2024, pp. 43-60), and for encouraging researchers to move beyond single perspectives to consider how multiple social categories interact, with special attention to marginalized experiences (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26).

Entering the 21st century, the use of intersectionality in biblical studies has increased and diversified significantly. For example, scholars analyze cultural complexity and power structures. Kartzow has made extensive use of the intersectionality framework, particularly in her study of the relationship between Galatians 3:28 and the Colossians family code, suggesting that intersectionality is an effective way of understanding the cultural complexity of the ancient Roman Empire, revealing how social spheres intersected with each other and co-constructed identity and class (Kartzow 2010, pp. 364-89). Her "asking another question" approach encourages researchers to go beyond single-category analyses and examine how different categories interact with each other (Kartzow 2010, pp. 364-89). She believes that intersectionality is a useful tool for revealing the cultural complexity of ancient societies and prompting interpreters to take the complexity of the contemporary world seriously (Kartzow 2010, pp. 364-89). A special issue edited by Denise Kimber Buell et al. attempts to extend the scope of intersectionality analysis to dimensions such as the body and locality for the study of the Jesus Movement (Buell et al. 2010, pp. 309-312).

Marginalized groups and social justice issues are also important concerns. Scholars apply intersectionality to examine the experiences of marginalized figures in biblical texts and connect them to contemporary social justice issues (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). Yee advocates "thinking intersectionally" in biblical studies, arguing that it can help to expose multiple oppressive power relationships in the text and uncover marginalized voices that have been ignored or silenced. She points out that intersectionality applies to everyone, including privileged groups who should reflect on their privilege (Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). South African scholar Mlamli Diko employs intersectionality to analyze women's oppression in the Old Testament and South African contexts, exploring the complex intersections of gender, race, class and history (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34). He emphasizes that intersectional analyses can reveal the complex oppression that women face in the Old Testament due to the interweaving of gender, social status, ethnicity and cultural backgrounds (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34). Ndikho Mtshiselwa also explores the intersectional perspective of Exodus 1-15 in relation to the oppression of Zimbabwean immigrant women in South Africa (Mtshiselwa 2021, pp. 503-29).

Intersectionality is also used for in-depth analysis of specific biblical characters and their complex identities. Hanna-Maria Mehring conducted an

intersectional analysis of the Samaritan woman in John 4, focusing on her gender, ethnicity/religion and other identity dimensions, and exploring power structures in the text, historical background, and interpretive history (Mehring 2024). Julie Newberry combines intersectionality and intertextuality analyses as a means of studying Elizabeth in Luke 1. She argues that this approach deepens understanding of the text and highlights its relevance to contemporary issues of social justice (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48). Elizabeth's complex identity is viewed as embodying the intersection of multiple identities with which intersectionality is concerned (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48).

Intersectional analysis has gradually incorporated more dimensions, such as age, disability, nationality, religion, etc. (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Dempsey et al. 2024, pp. 1-51; Mehring 2024). Scholars have also begun to focus on children, viewing children's experiences as a category requiring intersectional analysis and recognizing their diversity (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34). Religious belief itself is also explored as a dimension that can intersect with other categories (Janssen 2022, pp. 112-25; Mehring 2024). Additionally, Christy Cobb applies intersectionality to analyze slavery relationships in early Christian literature, revealing the complex experiences of female slaves and female slave owners. Cobb's analysis highlights how these female slave owners occupied complex positions, experiencing oppression as women within patriarchal structures while simultaneously participating in and benefiting from the broader system of kyriarchal domination by exercising power over their slaves through their social status and privilege as property owners (Cobb 2024, pp. 43-60).

Cross-cultural and regional applications are also a trend that cannot be overlooked. Although the term originated primarily from American scholars, intersectional thinking and research methods have received positive responses in non-Western regions. For example, in India, although the term "intersectionality" is not always used, scholars naturally address the intertwined effects of caste, gender, religion, and class when focusing on local contexts, which is viewed as a default position in local biblical studies (Melanchthon 2021, pp. 55-74). In South Africa, intersectionality is also used to analyze phenomena of oppression and is combined with local perspectives such as African feminism (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Mtshiselwa 2021, pp. 503-29).

Scholars have also reflected on the methodology of intersectionality analysis, emphasizing its value in revealing cultural complexity (Kartzow 2024, pp. 1-11; Cobb 2024, pp. 43-60). The Discussions include how to avoid oversimplifying or distorting the position of intersectionality analysis as rooted in Black feminism and critical race theory (Mehring 2024; Cuéllar 2021, pp. 4-10; Melanchthon 2021, pp. 55-74). The application of contemporary frameworks to the

interpretation of ancient texts poses a challenge, as scholars attempt to calibrate their interpretations by combining historical research, literary analysis, theological reflection, and intertextuality analysis (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Mehring 2024). The researcher's own social position affects interpretation, so reflection on the interweaving of their own identities becomes an important orientation (Janssen 2022, pp. 112-25; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26; Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48). Reflecting the importance of intersectionality in the study of Hebrew biblical feminism, the *The Oxford Handbook on Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* edited by Susanne Scholz covers analyses of multiple structural oppressions and has been cited as a marker of a shift in the field (Dempsey et al. 2024, pp. 1-51).

As can be seen, from the introduction of the concept in the late 20th century until today, intersectionality in biblical criticism has evolved from a relatively marginal method to a key tool for analyzing complex identities, power relationships, and inequalities in texts (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Mehring 2024). It encourages researchers to move beyond single perspectives and consider the interactions between multiple social categories, with particular attention to the experiences of marginalized groups (Diko 2023, pp. 612-34; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). Through combination with other methods, such as intertextuality, and reflection on researchers' own positions, intersectional analysis continues to deepen understanding of biblical texts and their relevance to contemporary social justice issues (Newberry 2024, pp. 321-48; Mehring 2024; Yee 2020, pp. 7-26). Despite methodological discussions and challenges, the influence of intersectionality in the field of biblical studies continues to grow, promoting more inclusive and socially conscious exegetical practices.

In addition, the rise of the Global-South perspective and the development of digital humanities technologies (Nockels 2025, pp. 46-65) have led to further diversification and methodological innovation in the field. The "global-south perspective" is a loosely defined term referring to approaches emerging from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and other regions outside North America and Western Europe. This perspective challenges Western academic hegemony by offering readings rooted in local cultural, historical, and social experiences. Christians in the Global South identify powerfully with the biblical world, an agricultural society marked by famine, plague, and persecution, giving Scripture a vividness unavailable to most believers in the industrialized North (Jenkins 2006, pp. 68-70). These interpretations often yield both fundamentalist and socially liberating readings, particularly regarding women's rights and social justice. Huffard notes that as Christianity's demographic center shifts southward, biblical scholarship increasingly reflects these diverse perspectives (Huffard 2006, pp. 65-72). South Korean Minjung theology, represented by Kim

Yong-Bock, interprets texts through the experience of the oppressed masses, connecting ancient liberation narratives with contemporary struggles (Kim 2013). Similarly, Tamez's work combines feminist concerns with liberation theology, reading biblical texts from the perspective of the economically marginalized in Latin America (Tamez 1982, pp. 25-38). These approaches prioritize ordinary readers' experiences, connect interpretation directly to social justice issues, engage indigenous cultural resources, and recognize the Bible's complex role in both colonization and liberation.

Digital technologies also have significantly transformed biblical studies through innovative methodological approaches. Researchers are now employing artificial intelligence and computational tools to analyze the scripture in unprecedented ways. Lima et al. developed an AI-based system for contextual biblical citation recommendations from the New Testament, demonstrating how natural language processing can extract semantic meaning from complex religious texts (Lima et al. 2023, pp. 125-30). Digital approaches have also prompted theological reflection, as Herzfeld explores in her examination of AI's implications for understanding human nature and the image of God (Herzfeld 2002, pp. 18-30). These technological developments expand access to biblical scholarship while creating new interpretive possibilities ahead (Eskandar 2024, pp. 140-45).

3. Theoretical Framework and Main Methodologies

At the heart of feminist biblical interpretation lies a critical "deconstruction" of established interpretive traditions and a "reconstruction" from the perspective of women and the oppressed, in order to reveal the impact of patriarchal structures and to seek an emancipatory understanding. This methodological distinction distinguishes feminist interpretations from "women's studies", which merely describes biblical women, or "academic gender studies", which seeks objectivity (Claassens 2024).

3.1 Deconstruction and Reconstruction Based on Women's Experiences

Critical feminist interpretation for liberation asserts that the Bible must be read in the context of women's struggle to change patriarchal structures of oppression in religious, cultural and social institutions (Sharp 2017, p. 151; Sharp 2021, p. 49). This interpretive approach challenges the view that feminist approaches to liberation theology do not respect conservative women's experience of reading the Bible. Through the use of critical feminist hermeneutics, it is able to reject biblical texts and interpretations that promote kyriarchal values. The aim of this critical approach, which has been labelled as "biblical essentialism", is not to disrespect conservative women's experience of deriving meaning

and self-esteem from reading the Bible, but rather to point out that if these readings fail to transcend the doctrinal, male-dominant (malestream) interpretation of the Bible, they should not be taken as a sign that the Bible should not be read. Rather, it points out that if these readings do not go beyond the doctrinaire male mainstream (malestream) framework of biblical interpretation, they remain trapped within it (Exum 1993, pp. 14-15; Sharp 2017, p. 151; Dempsey et al. 2024, pp. 1-51).

The central theory of feminist biblical interpretation lies in the dual action of deconstruction and reconstruction. The purpose of deconstruction is to reveal gender bias in traditional biblical interpretation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1992, pp. 154-55). Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's "Hermeneutics of Suspicion" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1992, pp. 53-55, 136), and Trible's "depatriarchalising hermeneutics", are typical approaches to deconstruction. Deconstruction also involves critically investigating the theoretical frameworks and scientific methods we have adopted from mainstream male biblical studies, and questioning the established norms and practices of biblical studies (Schüssler Fiorenza 1988, pp. 3-17). This involves exposing the inscription of the biblical text by a dominating ideology (Schüssler Fiorenza 1992, pp. 96, 117).

Reconstruction aims to restore the diverse aspects of biblical texts themselves (De Troyer 2002, pp. 121, 154; Tov 1999, p. 154; Ulrich et al. 1999, p. 3). It attempts to reconstruct women's status in early Christian history, which requires shifting from male-centered texts to the experiential authority of women in liberation struggles (Dube 2000, p. 5). Reconstruction work includes rebuilding historical narratives through the use of additional literature and the incorporation of social science models with gender perspectives (Buss 1999, p. 7; Ulrich et al. 1999, p. 3; De Troyer 2002, pp. 121, 154; Tov 1999, p. 154). Sometimes, even simply reading the prescriptions in biblical texts can enable reconstruction through "reading against the grain" (Trible 1984, p. 9). For example, prophetic condemnations of goddess worship can be understood as traces of sixth-century BC Israelite women's religious practices. Similarly, reading extremely patriarchal and androcentric texts like the Pastoral Epistles can inversely infer the existence of active female leadership groups. Reconstruction is not only historical but also concerns articulating a biblical spirituality and liberative vision for justice and well-being for all people (De Troyer 2005, p. 154). This reconstruction work is viewed as part of "rebuilding history" (Buss 1999, p. 7; Ulrich et al. 1999, p. 3; De Troyer 2002, pp. 121, 154; Tov 1999, p. 154), and is an important component in the three-step process of feminist work: "critique, reclaim, reconstruct". The ultimate goal is to transform oppressive structures, achieving profound social change with political and social revolutionary significance (Vander Stichele 2002, pp. 147-155). Effective hermeneutics must be based on

faith's response—it is a hermeneutics of life, liberation, and justice that challenges the status quo (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, p. 29).

Schüssler Fiorenza proposed a complex model of critical feminist interpretations of emancipation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 157; Schüssler Fiorenza 1992, pp. 51-76, 195-218), which consists of four interpretative strategies: suspicion, reconstruction, evaluation and imagination (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 157). These strategies are not independent, step-by-step steps or rules of methodology, but rather, they are interacting, simultaneous interpretive practices in the interpretation of biblical texts or any other cultural text. This model attempts to overcome the hermeneutical split between meaning and understanding, interpretation and apprehension, critique and recognition, distance and empathy, reading "behind" and "before" the text, present and past, interpretation and application, reality and imagination (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 157).

3.2 Application and Innovation of Interdisciplinary Methods

The innovation of feminist biblical interpretation at the theoretical level is characterized by interdisciplinary exploration and application (Scholz 2020, p. xlix). The social scientific method plays an important role (Theissen 1978, p. 12; Meeks 1983, pp. 70, 73; Schottroff 1995, pp. 60-79). In addition to traditional historical-critical (Stock 1983, pp. 28-31; Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, p. 285), and literary approaches (McKnight 1980, pp. 53-69), feminist biblical interpretation also employs social science models (Meeks 1983, pp. 70-73), and engages with methods such as cultural studies and cultural criticism (Liew 2008, pp. 211-31). Cultural criticism focuses on the interactions between the text and the reader (McKnight 1980, pp. 53-69; Ringe 1998, pp. 136-51). Its methodology is heterogeneous, driven by diverse factors including class, culture, and ethnicity (Meeks 1983, pp. 70-73; Schottroff 1995, pp. 60-79; Liew 2008, pp. 211-31). This makes it necessary for the interpreter to be attentive to the specific context in which they find themselves (Ringe 1998, pp. 136-51; Dube 2000; Kwok 2005; Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, p. 289).

Contemporary feminist biblical interpretation significantly incorporates intersectionality analysis (Scholz 2020, p. xlix). As described by Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge, intersectionality is a way of understanding the world, individuals, and the complexity of human experience, which recognizes that social inequality is not shaped by a single factor (such as gender, race, or class) alone, but is constituted by multiple intersecting axes of influence (Fadden 2020, p. 195; Collins and Bilge 2016). Examining biblical literature under social categories such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, disability, and geopolitical domination (Scholz 2020, p. xlix), helps reveal and dismantle the "rhetoric of empire" that prevails in today's world (Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, p. 79). The

term feminism itself also serves as a broad umbrella term, encompassing numerous kyriarchy-critical perspectives and approaches including gender, womanist, liberationist, postcolonialist, Asian, African or indigenous, Latina, queer, interreligious, and transnational studies (Jobling 2020, p. 57; Scholz 2020, pp. 11, 102, 573; Kwok 2002, p. 31; Bacon 2009, p. 34).

Specifically, the interdisciplinary application is demonstrated through various methodological approaches: Queer Theory and Queer Biblical Criticism provide insights for analyzing gender in the Bible (Punt 2020, pp. 65-80; Tamber-Rosenau 2020, pp. 479-93). The combination of animal studies and feminist studies can be used as a framework for interpreting biblical texts, revealing the dynamics of gender, kinship, and power within them (Stone 2020, p. 543). Postcolonial Feminist Biblical criticism analyzes biblical texts from a postcolonial perspective (Tan 2014, pp. 281-92; Scholz 2020, p. 573). Womanist and Mujerista/Latina Feminist interpretations focus on the experiences of African American women and Latina women (Scholz 2014, pp. 58-63; Bacon 2009, pp. 34, 121), while Asian Feminist Theology/Interpretation combines Asian culture and traditions to interpret the Bible (Melanchthon 2014, pp. 105-19; Scholz 2020, pp. 573-74; Kyung 1990; Kwok 2000).

Interreligious approaches emphasize learning from the history and interpretive methods of other religions, placing dialogue within the context of transformative reading (Gross 2002, pp. 58-78; Sinn et al. 2017). This helps broaden perspectives and recognize that no neutral interpretation exists when reading religious texts. Some scholars also rediscover traditional reading practices from Jewish feminist perspectives, such as interpretive practices of Jewish texts, while African women theologians employ African reading practices (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 98; Ọlọjẹde 2020, pp. 131-32).

This interdisciplinary and pluralistic methodological orientation of feminist biblical studies transcends mere academic exploration, seeking instead to transform both individuals and oppressive structures while connecting with women's social movements for change (Scholz 2020, pp. 55, 79, 589; Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 211; Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, p. 29). It advocates for a liberative paradigm shift that views biblical studies as a rhetoric and ethics of inquiry and transformation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, p. 29; Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, pp. 158-59; Belsey 1983, p. 26; Scholz 2020, pp. 55, 79), aimed at overcoming the binary oppositions between theological and scientific, literary and historical, and sociopolitical and religious approaches. Through this comprehensive framework, feminist biblical interpretation continues to challenge established hermeneutical boundaries and opens new pathways for understanding Scripture in service of justice, liberation, and social transformation.

4. Contributions and Implications of Feminist Biblical Interpretation

Since its emergence, feminist biblical interpretation has had a profound and multifaceted impact on the field of biblical scholarship and church practice.

4.1 Academic Contributions: Reshaping the Biblical Interpretation Methods

The primary contribution of feminist biblical interpretation lies in its in-depth challenge to the traditional patriarchal mode of biblical interpretation. Traditional biblical scholarship has long been dominated by male scholars, unconsciously reflecting patriarchal cultural values, resulting in the neglect and even marginalization of women's presence and role in biblical narratives and the early Christian movement. Feminist interpreters have endeavored to uncover patriarchal or broader structural biases in textual and traditional interpretations (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, pp. 210-11; Geisterfer 2005, p. 133; Schüssler Fiorenza 2020, pp. 2-20), the latter of which Schüssler Fiorenza has called "kyriarchy", which encompasses intersecting oppressions of gender, race, class, and so on (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, pp. 210-11; Matthews 2014, pp. 233-48; Schüssler Fiorenza 2020, pp. 2-20). To counter this prejudice, feminist interpretation has developed and applied several innovative methodological approaches (Schüssler Fiorenza 2014, pp. 1-17). Schüssler Fiorenza proposes a critical feminist hermeneutics of liberation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, pp. 151-52). She combines historical-critical methods and social-critical analysis to reconstruct marginalized and suppressed voices and traditions in early Christianity (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 70). She explores the issue of women's historical agency in early Christianity by tracing its history, and rewrites the origins of early Christianity from a feminist perspective in *In Memory of Her*, a monograph that has been recognized as one of the most important works of feminist hermeneutics of liberation. This work is considered an important milestone in feminist hermeneutics, demonstrating how critical biblical scholarship can lead to a new understanding of Christian origins (Scholz 2014, pp. 53-70).

Trible, on the other hand, employs a literary-critical approach, especially rhetorical criticism, to analyze the biblical text itself, revealing its oppression and violence against women (Trible 1978, pp. 159-60; Trible 1984, pp. 288-89). She contrasts methodologically with Schüssler Fiorenza, who focuses more on historical reconstruction, while Trible focuses on the text itself, J. Cheryl Exum's work also uses literary analysis to explore the fragmented image of women in biblical narratives (Exum 1993, pp. 14-15).

Feminist biblical studies have also challenged the "objective science" perspective by pointing out that the social and political stance of the interpreter inevitably affects her understanding and reconstruction of the text (Schüssler

Fiorenza 2014, pp. 1-17; Geisterfer 2005, pp. 129-44). Feminist hermeneutics is therefore seen as a hermeneutic with a dual orientation of "suspicion" and "reconstruction", criticizing oppressive elements in the text while seeking to reconstruct emancipatory visions or suppressed stories (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 19). The reassessment of the role of women in Luke-Acts, and the interpretation of Paul's epistles, have challenged the underestimation of women's leadership in traditional scholarship (Martin 1994, p. 770). Luise Schottroff's sociohistorical research also provides an important contribution to understanding the situation of women in early Christianity (Schottroff 1995, pp. 46-50).

4.2 Practical Contributions: Impact on the Church and Social Change

The influence of feminist biblical interpretation extends beyond the academy to make practical contributions to theology, church life, and the pursuit of social justice (Schüssler Fiorenza 2016, p. 147; Schüssler Fiorenza 2014, pp. 1-17; Schüssler Fiorenza 2020, pp. 2-20). It is closely tied to the women's movement and is rooted in the struggle for the dignity and equality of women in society and the church (Schüssler Fiorenza 2014, pp. 46-49, 175-78). This hermeneutic is seen as a liberative praxis that seeks to promote greater equality and justice (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, pp. 151-52; Schüssler Fiorenza 2014, p. 48; Sharp 2021, p. 49). It emphasizes the need for the interpretation of texts to be linked to the emancipatory struggles of the community and encourages the church community to re-evaluate which texts should be used in worship and teaching, prioritizing those with an emancipatory vision (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. xii).

Feminist biblical interpretation has had a direct practical impact on biblical translation by promoting the use of non-sexist or inclusive language (Janssen and Köhler 2014, pp. 339-63; Dempsey 2020, pp. 37-52). This is seen as an effort to move towards a just language that better reflects the value of equality in the gospel and avoids marginalizing or erasing the presence, agency and contribution of women (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 19).

Contemporary feminist biblical studies have increasingly emphasized intersectionality, recognizing the multiple oppressions that arise from the intersection of gender and race, class, sexuality, disability, colonialism and so on (Scholz 2020, pp. xlviii-xlix). This has led to a broader perspective, incorporating voices and experiences from the Global South, post-colonialism, and different cultural contexts, which we have already touched on in Part 2. This cross-cultural dialogue enriches interpretive possibilities and situates feminist biblical studies within a global movement of change (Kwok 2002, p. 23). Despite multiple challenges, feminist biblical studies is committed to deconstructing kyriarchal structures and opening up different spaces for biblical interpretation and meaning-making (Schüssler Fiorenza 2014, pp. 1-17; Sharp 2017, p. 151).

5. Challenges and Controversies

5.1 Issues of Methodological Legitimacy

As feminist biblical interpretation expands in academia and church practice, questions and criticisms of its methodology have surfaced. One of the most frequently raised issues is the controversy over the subjective and selective reading of feminist biblical interpretation. Critics have argued that feminist biblical interpretation tends to be informed by contemporary values of gender equality, selectively highlighting texts that conform to its position and ignoring or downplaying those that conflict with it (Poythress 2019, pp. 147-58). This mode of interpretation, criticized as "ideology first", has been accused of lacking objectivity and methodological rigor, and has even been seen as projecting contemporary values onto ancient texts, thereby distorting the original meaning of the Bible (Carson 1996, p. 147).

The use of modern theoretical frameworks has become another point of contention in feminist biblical interpretation. Critics have pointed out that approaches employing postcolonial theory, queer theory, ecofeminism, and other contemporary analytical frameworks face methodological challenges when applied to ancient texts. According to Anthony Thiselton, these frameworks were not originally designed for biblical studies, and their direct application to ancient texts may result in methodological misalignment and potential misreadings of textual meanings. Thiselton argues that the significant temporal and cultural distance between contemporary theoretical paradigms and ancient texts requires careful methodological calibration to avoid anachronistic or projective interpretations that distort the original contexts and meanings of biblical passages. Such concerns highlight the importance of maintaining historical awareness while engaging with contemporary critical approaches in biblical interpretation (Thiselton 2009, pp. 320-35). For example, when interpreting biblical texts within the framework of contemporary agency theory, it is important to consider the historical context in which the text was produced and the original meaning of the text, otherwise it is prone to overly subjective or projective interpretations (Cafferky 2014, pp. 19-28).

However, advocates of feminist biblical interpretation have offered robust responses to the aforementioned criticisms. First, Schüssler Fiorenza emphasizes that no hermeneutical method can be entirely neutral or objective, as all interpretive activities inherently embody the interpreter's position and ideology. Thus, feminist interpretation is not exceptionally subjective; rather, it openly acknowledges and actively examines its standpoint and values, which constitutes a strength rather than a weakness of feminist hermeneutics (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001, pp. 10-15). Furthermore, scholars note that the

application of modern theoretical frameworks does not involve direct transplantation but rather creatively constructs a dialogical relationship between the text and the interpreter while fully respecting the textual context, thereby making interpretations more relevant to contemporary concerns (Thiselton 1980, p. 445).

5.2 Conflict and Dialogue with Traditional Biblical Interpretation

While challenging the traditional patriarchal model of biblical interpretation, feminist biblical interpretation inevitably leads to conflicts with traditional biblical interpretation in terms of methodology, understanding of biblical authority, and core theological concepts.

The conflict in methodology is mainly manifested in the principles and approaches of interpretation. Traditional biblical interpretation is usually centered on the Historical-Grammatical Method, which emphasizes a return to the original historical context and grammatical structure of the text, in order to reconstruct as objectively as possible the original intention of the biblical author (Osborne 2006, p. 67; Sharp 2021, pp. 46-51). In contrast, feminist biblical interpretation places greater emphasis on the experience and subjectivity of the interpreter, and tends to create an interactive dialogue with the text from the perspective of the contemporary interpreter (Baltazar 2003, p. 160; Geisterfer 2005, p. 135). This difference has led to the frequent criticism of traditional interpreters that feminist interpretations have ignored the objectivity and historicity of the original meaning of the text, while feminist interpreters have argued that traditional interpretations have been too narrow, ignoring the realistic meaning and emancipatory potential of the text (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985, p. 13).

The understanding of biblical authority has also become another important point of contention. Traditional churches usually regard the Bible as absolute and ultimate authority, emphasizing the literalness and authority of the text (Grudem 2020, p. 62). Feminist interpretations, on the other hand, tend to understand biblical authority as dynamic rather than static, emphasizing the historical and contextual nature of biblical revelation, and arguing that biblical authority should be constantly reinterpreted and reinterpreted in the context of the interpreter's interaction with the text (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001, pp. 105-06). This difference has led to frequent difficulties in reaching consensus between the two sides and has challenged feminist biblical interpretation in the more conservative church environment.

Conflicts in core theological concepts should not be overlooked. For example, while the traditional theological understanding of God is usually based on patriarchal or male metaphors, feminist theologians have criticized this unisex

image of God and proposed a more inclusive and pluralistic theological expression (Johnson 1992, pp. 40-55). This shift in core concepts has often provoked strong reactions and resistance from traditional theological positions.

Despite these conflicts, dialogue and integration are not entirely impossible. Many scholars have argued that the two modes of interpretation can learn from and complement each other. Specifically, the rigorous historical-grammatical analyses of traditional interpretations can help feminist interpretations more accurately grasp the original meaning of the text, whereas the subjective experiences and practical concerns emphasized in feminist interpretations can help traditional interpretations more effectively respond to contemporary social issues (Hidalgo 2014, p. 200; Brenner 2005, p. 334).

5.3 Internal Diversity and Disagreements

Feminist biblical interpretation is not a single and unified theoretical system, and there are obvious plurality and differences within it, especially in the theological stance, cultural background, and understanding of core concepts, which also constitutes an important challenge within feminist biblical interpretation.

Firstly, in terms of theological position, feminist interpretations can be divided into radicals and moderates. Radicals advocate the complete overthrow of patriarchal structures and even the re-construction of the foundations of biblical theology (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, pp. 35-37; Hauge 1993, pp. 8-12). Moderates, on the other hand, tend to make adjustments and reforms within the framework of the established church and biblical theology (Johnson 1992, p. xviii; Pennington 2017, p. 3). Secondly, differences in cultural backgrounds also led to internal divisions. Womanist and postcolonial feminist interpreters emphasize the intersectionality of race, culture and colonial experience in gender oppression, which is in marked contrast to Western white feminist interpretations (Williams 1993, pp. 15-20; Jobling 2020, p. 131). The expansion of feminist biblical interpretation has increasingly recognized geographical diversity matters. While early feminists focused primarily on "white middle-class North American and European positionality", contemporary scholarship acknowledges that "race matters, class matters, and geographical matters". Scholars from the Global South have developed distinctive approaches to challenge Western academic hegemony, offering readings rooted in local cultural, historical, and social experiences (Claassens 2024). And finally, there are also differences in the way core concepts such as "liberation" and "female experience" are understood, which complicates the integration within feminist biblical interpretation.

In response to these internal divisions, many scholars have proposed integrative strategies, such as "integral hermeneutics", which emphasizes dialogue and integration from multiple perspectives, in an attempt to form an inclusive consensus based on respect for difference (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001, pp. 200-10).

Conclusion

This paper systematically explores the diverse development of feminist biblical hermeneutics from its origins in the late nineteenth century to its contemporary manifestations. The theoretical core of feminist biblical interpretation lies in the dual movements of "deconstruction" and "reconstruction". Deconstruction reveals the gender bias in traditional biblical interpretation through methods such as Schüssler Fiorenza's "Hermeneutics of Suspicion" and Trible's "depatriarchalizing hermeneutics". Reconstruction actively recovers women's subjectivity through frameworks such as Russell's "partner theology", Ruether's eco-feminism, and feminist theology. These theoretical innovations are enhanced through interdisciplinary methods, including social science methods, literary criticism, postcolonial theory, and more recently, digital humanities techniques.

Feminist biblical interpretation challenges the hegemony of patriarchal interpretation, restores marginalized female voices and roles, and introduces pluralistic and cross-cultural perspectives into biblical studies. On a practical level, it inspires the reform of church rituals and language, promotes gender equality within religious institutions, and advocates inter-religious dialogue and social justice.

Nevertheless, the field still faces significant challenges. The problem of methodological legitimacy persists, with critics arguing that feminist interpretations tend to be subjective, selective, or overly dependent on contemporary theoretical frameworks which conflicts with traditional biblical interpretation methods, biblical authority, and core theological concepts remain unresolved. In addition, the internal diversity and disagreements between radical and moderate positions, Western and non-Western perspectives, and different understandings of key concepts contribute to the complexity of the field itself.

However, these challenges also conceive research opportunities. The growing use of intersectional analysis offers methods for studying the complex interactions of gender, race, class, and other identity factors in biblical texts. The expansion of global-South perspectives brings new interpretive perspectives from different cultural contexts. Digital humanities technologies create new possibilities for textual analysis and expand the scope of biblical scholarship.

The value of feminist biblical interpretation goes beyond academic innovation to address practical issues of gender equality, social justice, and human liberation. The critical perspectives and liberating visions it provides remain very important in our increasingly globalized and multicultural world. Feminist biblical interpretation continues to be important for academic research and social transformation by continuously engaging in dialogue with traditional interpretive models while embracing internal diversity.

Through this research, we have seen that feminist biblical interpretation is not simply a specialized academic pursuit but a vibrant field that connects rigorous scholarship with practical commitments to justice and equality—a connection that will continue to shape biblical studies and broader social discourse in the years ahead.

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"No Distinction between Contemplating the Created Realities and Contemplating the One God": The Earliest Chinese Natural Theology

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Abstract: The Church of the East sent its missionaries to China in the seventh century. As the earliest Christian presence in pluralistic and scientific-techno China, they not only remained faithful to their theological tradition but also creatively engaged in natural theology to demonstrate to the polytheistic Chinese people the existence of one God. This paper argues that Jingjiao's earliest natural theology in Chinese bridged between the Greek concept of kosmos and Chinese cosmology and cosmogony. This paper will begin by surveying natural theology and the development of the concept of *ziran* 自然 in the Chinese context. Next, the paper will analyze the texts of the Jingjiao documents, and present its natural theology. Then, the paper studies the continuity between Jingjiao and the Church of the East in terms of its Greek learning. Finally, the significance of Jingjiao's theology toward the interdisciplinary study of theology and science.

Key words: Natural Theology, Jingjiao, *kosmos*, *ziran*

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When the Church of the East[1] sent their missionaries to China in the seventh century and established *Jingjiao* 景教 (the Luminous Teaching), they hardly realized that the land they were about to set their feet on had never known of the Christian faith, let alone the one God responsible for the creation and sustenance of the entire universe. One may be curious to ask these questions: How did the earliest Christian missionaries express the idea of Creator God to the techno-scientific China, whose spiritual world is filled with a pantheon of gods and ghosts? This paper studies the *Jingjiao* documents in the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and argues that the Syriac missionaries creatively developed the earliest "natural" theology in Chinese to demonstrate to the polytheistic people the existence of one God by resorting to nature and natural phenomena. In this paper, I will first briefly present natural theology and the study of nature. Then the paper will investigate *Jingjiao*'s natural theology based on a study of their primary texts. Then, I will trace their root and identify their theological connections with the fathers of the Church of the East. Finally, the paper will analyze its theological significance for the interdisciplinary study of theology and science.

Introduction: Natural Theology and Nature in Ancient Chinese Context

In order to properly define natural theology, it is imperative to study the concept of nature. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (2015, pp. 40–45) surveys the development of the concept of nature in modernity and postmodernity in the West. In the seventeenth century, the radical interpretation of nature happened due to the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution. The reworked concept of nature is characterized by several interrelated features such as quantification, mechanization, seeing nature as "other," and secularization (Westfall 1992, pp. 86–87). The image of a machine rather than a living organism became dominant.[2] The autonomy of nature pushed to the margins the idea of God as the first cause.[3] Due to human desire for autonomy (Gunton 1993, 19–20), nature and other people are used instrumentally, as a tool of "technocratic attitude" (Gunton 1993, p. 14), rather than experienced relationally and in terms of mutual belonging. It also rips from nature any purpose.[4] Due to modernity's perverted vision of rationality, human reason and universals take the place of

[1] Also known as Nestorian Christianity, Syriac Christianity, East Syrian Church, and Assyrian Church of the East. In present academia has followed Sebastian P. Brock in recognizing that the so-called Nestorian church has, in antiquity, preferred to self-describe itself as the "Church of the East," or more recently, the Assyrian Church of the East. For some excellent recent works on the history of the Church of the East, see (Thompson 2024; Chaillot 2021; Wilmshurst 2011; Baumer 2016; Baum and Winkler 2003).

[2] For nature as machine, see (McGrath 2001, 2002, 2006 [2003], pp. 1:107–10).

[3] Among the Enlightenment advocates, none surpasses Francis Bacon. See (Bauckham 2011, pp. 47–58; Moltmann 1999, pp. 98–99).

[4] See (Shakespeare 2007, Kindle loc. #165); cited in (Kärkkäinen 2015, p. 41).

God (Gunton 1998, p. 37). Rather than human liberation and integration with nature, a new kind of "slavery" (Gunton 1993, pp. 28–29) emerges in the world left under the power of human reason alone, which ultimately "operates deceptively or oppressively" (Gunton 1993, p. 31). Such oppression may express itself politically, socially, and in relation to nature. Rather than diversity and plurality, homogeneity and totalitarianism lie on the horizon for the world of modernity (Gunton 1993, pp. 28–40).

For Kärkkäinen, not all are convinced of the legitimacy of such absolutely irreversible breaks in intellectual history as Gunton and many others claim about modernity (Kärkkäinen 2015, p. 42). Radical Orthodoxy maintains that modernity is rather a continuation of developments started in the late medieval period under the tutelage of Scotus and his school, which came to their zenith with Descartes and Kant (Pickstock 2005, p. 545). Consequently, "late" modernity represents not a break in but rather an intensification of modernity.[5] In the Radical Orthodox assessment, the Scotist view of univocity brought about "secularism," a radical shift from the time when "there was no 'secular'" (Milbank 1991, p. 9). For Kärkkäinen, this is the positive insight of Radical Orthodoxy's view of secularism, notwithstanding whether or not the Scotus-driven "modernity" arguments stand historical scrutiny.[6] Modernity's dominant philosophical-theological orientations and its appraisal of nature are in direct opposition to Christian tradition's ontology of participation,[7] the idea that being is nothing in itself but is based on its relatedness and dependence on the Creator (Milbank 1997, p. 44).

Continental postmodern philosophy is not only deconstructing the rationality and objectivity of concepts and values, it also maintains that "nature is not possessed of the epistemological finality and inevitability implied by the category of the *given*; it is created in the process of historical construction, and may be reconstructed as and when required" (McGrath 2001, 2002, 2006 [2003], p. 1:111). A corollary implication among many postmodernists is that even natural sciences are therefore but social constructions and "stories," no more reliable than, say, political opinions. They push the claim of the perspectival and relativistic nature of human knowing to its logical end. Such postmodern rebuttal of the rationality of the scientific enterprise is both misguided and deeply biased (Kärkkäinen 2015, p. 44).

In Kärkkäinen's theological assessment, the modernist construction of

[5] As argued in detail in (Pickstock 1998, chapters 1–3).

[6] Kärkkäinen (2015, p. 43n27) himself doubts if Scotus can be made the "first modernist." He also cites other critics such as D. Ford and Cross.

[7] For a short statement, see (Smith 2004, pp. 74–75, 193–95).

nature as autonomous and the postmodern deconstruction of its rational basis are both mistaken (Kärkkäinen 2015, p. 45). However, both moves make a critical positive statement that nature is a socially constructed concept (Kärkkäinen 2015, pp. 45–46). The contested nature of "nature" should be welcomed by theologians as it gives new and unsurpassed resources in loading the concept with a robust trinitarian theological meaning. At the same time, theologians should be constantly reminded of the impossibility of speaking properly of "natural theology," "natural knowledge of God," or "natural law" unless nature's meaning is determined. Kärkkäinen laments that with the exception of the triology by McGrath in his *Scientific Theology*, even the most recent major theological accounts of the doctrine of creation are basically silent about this essential task (Kärkkäinen 2015, p. 47).

Kärkkäinen's survey and assessment are to be complemented by an eastern, and in particular, an ancient Chinese view of nature. Chinese philosopher Zhang Dainian 张岱年[8] (1909-2004) surveys the historical development of the concept of *ziran* 自然 and concludes that for most of the time, *ziran* in ancient Chinese literature refers to "that which is naturally so, or spontaneously so." Laozi 老子 (571 BC-471 BC) uses *ziran* and argues against the concept of God creating the universe. Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263) is the first who employs *ziran* to refer to the totality of heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things (Zhang 2017, pp. 95–96). Therefore, Tomohisa Ikeda (1993) rightly concludes that in ancient China, the phrase *ziran* did not carry with it a connotation that corresponds to today's concept of nature. Here, one discerns the similarity between the ancient Chinese view of nature and that of modernity in that first, both insist on nature as an autonomous entity; second, both reject the idea of God as first cause.

The phrase *ziran* is used in the Tang *Jingjiao* documents[9] ten times (seven

[8] For English translation of Chinese words, the standard *pinyin* system will be used in italics, followed by the Chinese character in simplified form.

[9] The Tang *Jingjiao* documents refers to the seven widely accepted authentic documents, which include 大秦景教流行中国碑并序 (Stele of the Diffusion of Daqin *Jingjiao* in China and Preface, abbreviated as Stele), 大秦景教三威蒙度赞 (Hymn in Praise of the Salvation Achieved through the Three Majesties of Daqin *Jingjiao*, or Praise, 尊经 (Honored Persons and Sacred Books, or Honored), 一神论 (Discourse on the One God, or Discourse), 序听迷诗所经 (Book of Righteous Meditator, or Mediator), 志玄安乐经 (Book on Profound and Mysterious Blessedness, or Blessedness), and 大秦景教宣元至本经 (Book of Daqin *Jingjiao* on Revealing the Origin and the Deepest Foundation, or Origin). This collection of the Tang *Jingjiao* documents excludes the documents that were published in the late 1940s, namely, the so-called Kojima documents (Kojima manuscript A, or *Daqin Jingjiao Dasheng tongzhen guifa zan* 大秦景教大圣通真归法赞, and Kojima manuscript B, or *Daqin Jingjiao xuanyuan zhiben Jing* 大秦景教宣元至本经), which have recently been recognized as modern forgeries. See (Nicolini-Zani 2022, pp. 154–55). Lin Wushu and Rong Xingjiang are among the earliest scholars who concluded that the Kojima manuscripts are more likely than not forgeries executed by a knowledgeable antiques dealer. See (Lin and Rong 1992,

in Discourse; once in Blessedness; twice in Origin). In Origin, Xu Xiaohong, Tang Li, and Nicolini-Zani (Xu 2020, p. 146; Tang 2009, p. 115; Nicolini-Zani 2022, p. 300) all translate it to "nature," and therefore err anachronistically because the correspondence between *ziran* and the Western European sense of nature didn't take place until the modern era in Japanese history, which then was adopted into Chinese (Ikeda 2005, p. 39). None of the references in the Tang *Jingjiao* documents corresponds to the modern sense of nature. Instead, the *Jingjiao* authors employed *ziran* in the sense of "naturally" and "autonomously."

1. *Jingjiao*'s Natural Theology

Jingjiao's natural theology is exhibited in Discourse, which is "one of the earliest works among the *Jingjiao* classics in Chinese, and also one that carries the most theological weight" (Luo 1965, pp. 148–49; 1966). In Discourse, one finds the earliest version of what we now know as "natural theology"[10] in Chinese if we adopt its earliest form in Latin, namely, *theologia naturalis*, which could arguably be translated as either "a natural theology" or "a theology of nature."[11] The term was coined in the pre-Christian classical world to describe a general mode of reasoning which ascended from the natural world to the world of the gods (Klauck 2007). For classic Greek philosophers, natural theology was often framed in terms of a rational or scientific quest for an *archē*—a first principle. In contrast to the pre-Socratic tradition, which showed little interest in developing arguments in support of the existence of the gods,[12] the author of Discourse appeals to *wanwu* 万物 (the ten thousand things) and the sustenance of heaven (without the need of pillars and walls) and earth to argue for the existence and the power of one God:

The ten thousand things reveal the One God. All ten thousand things, [having

1996). The list is confirmed in (Nie 2016, pp. 6–7), with the exception that Nie considers Praise and Honored as one document. For the whole list of the documents, see the diagram in p. 7, according to which there are in total 16355 Chinese characters. According to Sun Jianqiang (2018), who redated the seven Dunhuang documents, only two belong to the Tang era, namely, Blessedness and Origin. However, this paper does not follow Sun's dating, but the majority view by including the seven genuine documents in the Tang *Jingjiao* corpus.

[10] In terms of the definition for "natural theology," Alister McGrath (2017, p. 11) argues that it is not acceptable to offer a contemporary definition of natural theology which has gained acceptance within some particular community of discourse, as if that settled the matter, or become locked into a "metaphysical deployment of ideal significations" capable of delivering clear and crisp answers. He proposes that we study the genealogies of these core concepts, which is one of the most effective (although not unproblematic) means of subverting the vested interests of intellectual power groups, and allowing the retrieval of suppressed or marginalized notions which remain nonetheless live intellectual options for contemporary theological discussion.

[11] See (Topham 2010). Padgett (2004) argues constructively for interpreting *theologia naturalis* philosophically as "natural theology" and theologically as "a theology of nature."

[12] See, e.g., (Lesher 1992, pp. 114–19; Enders 2000, pp. 47–73).

been created] by the One God, [namely,] all having been created that are visible. There is no distinction between contemplating the created realities and contemplating the One God. From this, one understands that it is God who made all ten thousand things. Both what is visible and what is invisible are created by God. 万物见一神。一切万物，既是一神，一切所作若见；所作若见，所作之物，亦共见一神不别。以此故知：一切万物，并是一神所作；可见者不可见者，并是一神所造。

The manifestation of God through creation is further expounded: "There is no distinction between contemplating the created realities and contemplating the One God." Here Wang Lanping surmises that the *Jingjiao* author most likely draws his insight from Rom. 1:19-21.[13] Even more probably, the natural theology in Discourse can be traced to the early Syriac fathers. The "no distinction" statement in Discourse corresponds to Ephrem's grand conception of the harmony between God and all the orders of creation, based on which one understands Ephrem's poetical-theological method, beyond his use of types, symbols, and even sacramental "mysteries." God has filled creation with his traces and has given humans the mind and the faculty of language that can appreciate these pointers, express them, and follow them by the light of the gift of faith (Murray 1975–1976, p. 2).

2. *Jingjiao*'s Continuity with the Church of the East in Greek Learning

For the author of Discourse, the ten thousand things in the universe have been *anzhi* 安置 (set and placed, or set in a stable course)[14] , indicating the orderliness of God's creation. The concept of the world as an ordered whole, that is, as a *kosmos*, was used by the Ionian philosophers to develop a natural theology, according to which such an orderly world was, at least to some degree, transparent to the human intellect (Gerson 1990, pp. 1–2). Pythagoras is often credited with being "the first to call the containing of all things the *kosmos*, because of the order which governs it" (Brague 2003, pp. 17–25). The Greek term *kosmos* thus developed overtones of order and intelligibility. The universe is something that we can *understand*, however partially and imperfectly (McGrath 2017, p. 12). *Jingjiao*'s connection with Greek thought can be traced to their ancestors, namely, the believers of the Church of the East who were known as inheritors of the Greek culture (Zhu 1993, p. 69, translation mine).

In the same text, the author of Discourse speaks of the power of the One

[13] Wang Lanping (2016, p. 181) also observes the proximity between these two sets of verses.

[14] The phrase is used 15 times in the entire Tang corpus, among which 11 instances have to do with God's creation (all in Discourse).

God:

> *Heaven does not have pillars to support it. If the One God did not support it, how could it have stayed in place so long without collapsing? This is only possible thanks to the power of the One God, whose ways are mysterious. If it were not the One God who acted, who could sustain [heaven] to keep it from collapsing? (Discourse 1:7-8)* 天无柱支托，若非一神所为，何因而久立，不从上落？此万一神术妙之力，若不一神所为，谁能永久住持不落？（论一 7-8）

Todd Godwin observes that Aristotle's unmoved mover concept is present in the above passage (in combination with 1:23-24).[15] It is known that during the seventh and eighth centuries, Greco-Roman scientific texts and thought were spreading into Tibet and Central Asia, and in a milieu in which Iranians and Iranian Christians were doing missionary work. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the appearance of Aristotelian metaphysical notions within the apologetics of the Church of the East in the Tang setting stems from these larger developments (Pelliot 1913); (Beckwith 1987, pp. 297–313).

3. Significance of *Jingjiao*'s Natural Theology

Jingjiao's natural theology contributes significantly to Chinese culture in general and Chinese theology in particular. First, ancient Chinese culture did not develop a monotheistic religious faith. Kuang Zhiren 邝芷人 traces the religious activities of the Chinese people in the early Qin Dynasty. By studying *Shujing* 书经 and *Shijing* 诗经, Kuang asserts that people of the Yin 殷 and Shang 商 Dynasties practiced polytheistic faiths, to whom *Shangdi* 上帝 (the Supreme God) is the highest authority of humans and the natural world. Although *Shangshu* 尚书 personifies *Shangdi* who have emotions such as fondness, anger, and mercy, such a concept was later mixed with the metaphysical concept of *Tiandao* 天道 (heavenly mandate) in Western Zhou (1046 BC-771 BC), producing a kind of monotheistic religion, which was later inherited by Mozi 墨子 (468 BC?-376 BC). However, such a trend was interrupted by Confucianism, which replaced religious faith with the humanistic spirit. Therefore, the concept of One God was never fully developed in ancient China.[16] Therefore, the Church of the East missionaries are the first who introduced to the Chinese people the concept of One God by resorting to things of nature, such as the mechanism of the sustenance of heaven.

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[15] See (Godwin 2018, pp. 90–91). Also see Aristotle's *Physics*, 258b, 32-259a, 8, in (Barnes 1984, p. 432).

[16] Kuang Zhiren 鄺芷人 (2003) traces the religious activities of the Chinese people in the early Qin Dynasty. By studying *Shujing* 書經 and *Shijing* 詩經, Kuang asserts that people of the Yin 殷 and Shang 商 Dynasties practiced polytheistic faiths, to whom *Shangdi* 上帝 (the Supreme God) is the highest authority of humans and the natural world.

Second, the Church of the East missionaries brought with them the Greek thought of *kosmos* with the inherent understanding of nature's orderliness and intelligibility. The noted philosopher of religion Richard Swinburne identifies the importance of observable ordering within the natural world as follows:

Regularities of succession are all-pervasive. For simple laws govern almost all succession of events. In books of physics, chemistry and biology we can learn how almost everything in the world behaves. The laws of their behavior can be set out by relatively simple formulae which men can understand and by means of which they can successfully predict the future. The orderliness of nature to which I drew attention here is its conformity to formula, to simple, formulable, scientific laws. The orderliness of the universe in this respect is a very striking fact about it. The universe might so naturally have been chaotic, but it is not—it is very orderly (Swinburne 1979, p. 136).

Elsewhere, I (2023, pp. 92–99) have reconstructed *Jingjiao*'s *qi*-tological theology of creation due to their creative, conceptual imagination by "dancing" around the Chinese metaphysical concept of *qi*. Coupled with their natural theology, the *Jingjiao* authors creatively brought their Greek understanding of *kosmos* and the orderly creation of God into the Chinese society.

Third, Kärkkäinen (2015, p. 25) argues that Christian tradition has been a major catalyst in facilitating the empirical study of nature with its idea of orderliness and rationality of the created order. This is made more interesting if we connect it to the Syrian monks' scientific and technological strategy in their bold engagement with the techno-scientific Tang China. They were known for their medical expertise, accomplishments in astronomy, and other Greek-Byzantine technologies such as bell-making techniques and architectural skills. They incorporated their comprehensive scientific learning and technological expertise in their missionary endeavor, which contributed to their success as the first missionaries in ancient China (Feng 2023, pp. 84–88, 102). Therefore, *Jingjiao*'s natural theology serves as a promising field of research for theology and science.

4. Conclusion

In this article, I have offered a study of *Jingjiao*'s earliest Chinese natural theology. First, the paper briefly studied the concept of nature and its development in the Western world. In comparison, the Chinese concept of *ziran* 自然 in the ancient literature was presented, followed by its usage in the Tang *Jingjiao* documents. Then by analyzing *Jingjiao*'s natural theology and its continuity with the Church of the East, the paper argues that the *Jingjiao* authors creatively resorted to nature and the natural phenomena to convey the

ideas of one God and God's creation. The paper concluded with a three-fold significance of such natural theology.

If there is anything original in this paper, it is the theological retrieval and analysis of the earliest Chinese natural theology and its connection with the Greek thoughts and theological roots in the Church of the East. More in-depth research is needed to fully explore its potential in theology and science dialogue in general, and the theology-science-religion trialogue in particular.

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The Eastward Transmission of Augustine's Eschatology in Ming and Qing China

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Abstract: Augustine's eschatological doctrines were highly regarded during the Middle Ages and saw a revival in the early modern period. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Catholic missionaries arrived in China and compiled relevant works, spreading Augustine's eschatological thoughts through quotations. This paper provides a detailed introduction to the writings related to Augustine's eschatological ideas by missionaries such as Diego de Pantoja, Alphonse Vagnoni, Philippe Couplet, Manuel Dias, Thomás Ortiz, as well as the Chinese catholic scholars Zhang Xingyao and Li Wenyu. Additionally, it discusses Gabriel de Magalhães's translation of *Fuhuo lun* from the Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. This paper argues that Augustine's eschatological ideas are well represented in Chinese documents from the Ming and Qing dynasties. The frequency of quotations regarding his eschatology is comparable to that of his views on the Trinity and the *Imago Dei*, underscoring the significance of his theory of human nature and thoughts on humanity's ultimate destiny in the context of Ming and Qing China.

Key words: Augustine, *De novissimis*, eschatology, purgatory

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Eschatology is a central theological theme of the 20th century and represents a significant shift from traditional perspectives. Modern eschatology emphasizes the fate of humanity as a whole, as outlined in biblical prophecies, whereas traditional eschatology focuses more on the final destination of the individual, referred to as *De novissimis*, which pertains to the time of death, judgment, heaven, and hell.[1] In the 20th century, there was a renewed focus on the historical eschatology of Augustine (Aurelius Augustinus, 354-430 AD), featuring a diverse range of perspectives and in-depth exploration. However, during the Middle Ages and early modern periods, Augustine's doctrines of *De novissimis* (the last things) was more highly regarded (Scanlon 1999, pp. 316-317).[2] During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Catholic missionaries arrived in China, and translated and compiled a series of works on *De novissimi*, in which Augustine's eschatological thoughts permeated in the form of quotations. The extensive eschatological ideas of Augustine have been the subject of focused study (Pollmann 2021; Drecoll 2007), yet there is no comprehensive scholarly analysis of their transmission in China. This contribution does not aim to fill that gap. Instead, it will outline how Catholic missionaries introduced Augustine's eschatological thoughts and how these ideas interacted with Chinese culture.

1. Augustine's Eschatological Thoughts

Augustine follows the Christian chronographers of his time and believes that human history can be divided into seven ages based on the seven days of creation, with each age lasting one thousand years (Mathisen 1999, p. 476). The sixth age has passed, followed by a seventh Sabbath and Parousia (*City of God*, [*De civtate Dei*, *civ.]* 22:30). After 394, following his North-African compatriot Tyconius, Augustine ceased to follow the millennial tradition (Pollmann 2021, p.473). Instead, he does not consider the sixth "millennium" to be exactly one thousand years long. Since the Second Coming of Christ will take place at the beginning of the seventh millennium (around the sixth millennium), there are only a few hundred years left before his time. In *epp*. 197-99 to a fellow bishop, Hesychius of Salonae (written in 418/419 CE), Augustine specifically addresses the question of Christ's Second Coming, arguing that the future is becoming increasingly shorter and that Christ's Second Coming is "getting nearer and nearer every day", saying that time accumulates and moves toward the end, and

[1] *De novissimis* is often categorized as "individual eschatology" in contemporary systematic theology to differentiate it from collective eschatology, which concerns itself with concepts such as the "kingdom of heaven," the millennium, and the age to come (Erickson 2013 ; Geisler 2011).

[2] Augustine's theory of justice, which involves heaven and hell, has been a topic of discussion in recent years within the context of individual eschatology, particularly in comparison to annihilationism and universalism (Cho 2010). Recent discussions on Augustine's "juridical-penal framework" of the divine-human relationship (with God as judge and man as sinner) can be seen in Bart Van Egmon's work (Egmon 2018).

it is increasingly possible to say that "the Second Coming is more and more at hand every moment" (Mathisen 1999, pp. 476-78) .

Augustine's writings on the Last Judgment, as well as on heaven and hell, are primarily found in his works *Enchiridion* and *The City of God* (books 20-22). Additionally, these themes are discussed throughout his *epistulae* and *sermones*. Augustine describes the resurrection of the bodies of the dead at the Last Judgment as also involving "spiritual bodies." He argues that this refers firstly to the immortality of the body (*ench.* 23:91, *civ.* 20:21), and secondly to the complete submission to the human spirit (*civ* 20:21, *Serm.* 42:8:11). The resurrected body is perfectly united with the soul, which itself is completely obedient to God and partakes of His divine life. As a result, the resurrected body will possess "complete freedom of movement, and is easily attainable" (*serm.* 242:8:11; 277:12). Moreover, it will be entirely transparent to the soul (*serm.* 243:5). The resurrected saints can see God with their physical eyes (*civ*. 22:29). Those who die young or are disabled in this life will have their bodies restored to perfection at the time of resurrection (*ench.* 23: 85-87). The material elements that constitute the body are eternally indestructible, and God will rearrange them at the resurrection, much like sculptors and potters create new images out of the same materials (*ench.* 23:89): "But if it is the plan of the Creator that in His image the property and distinguishable likeness of each should be preserved, while in other good qualities of the body all should be made equal, then the matter of each body will be so modified that nothing of it will perish, and what is lacking in anyone will be supplied by Him who is capable of creating from nothing. However, if there is to be a reasonable inequality in the bodies of those who rise again, just as there are the voices that make up a chant, then this will be done to each from the matter of his own body so as to make the man fit for the angelic choirs and cause no discomfort to their senses" (*ench.* 23: 90; Daley 1999, pp. 722-23).

Both the Bible and the Church Fathers address the concept of hell, and Augustine offers a rational argument for its existence. He contends that eternal damnation is necessary for the sake of justice. In this life, we often observe that the wicked seem to prosper while the good suffer; justice requires that this inequity be balanced in the next life. For Augustine, the fire, brimstone, and worms of hell are merely secondary punishments, while the primary punishment is the separation from God. He distinguishes between two kinds of death. The first is the physical death we commonly recognize, where the soul reluctantly (and temporarily) leaves the body. The second is the eternal death of the soul due to sin, where the soul suffers the pains of hell alongside the resurrected body, enduring punishment and anguish without end (*ench.* 23:93; *civ.* 21:3:1).

Why do some people end up in hell? Augustine's interpretation varies depending on whether he emphasizes free will or predestination. From the perspective of free will, Christ redeemed humanity, allowing individuals to make a free choice: to love God or not. Those who choose to embrace God have their sins forgiven and will ultimately be brought into God's presence. Conversely, those who reject God find themselves in a state of isolation from the divine. Under the framework of predestination, the original sin committed by the first ancestors distorted the wills of all humankind, making sin inevitable for everyone. God elects certain individuals from among all sinners and grants them the grace that leads to salvation. The rest, who are not chosen, are denied redemption. They must endure the anguish of separation from God and the endless torments that follow, and this separation is everlasting (*civ.* 21:23). On the whole, Augustine adheres to the latter view. Augustine held the view that the world in which we live is a mixed society (*civitas permixta*), made up of the City of God (the Kingdom of God) and the City of this World (the City of the Devil). The City of God loves God, while the City of this World loves only itself. However, no one can determine who belongs to which city; only God knows. Those who love only themselves and not God are doomed to hell or, in a loveless hell in the present (*civ.* 21:23).

The saved do not live without sinning in this world, so they must be purged of their stains before entering into the beatific vision. Therefore, Augustine conceived the idea of purgatory. In *ench.* 29:109, Augustine states that "the time, however, which intervenes between a man's death and the final resurrection, confines the souls in hidden abodes, as each one deserves either rest or suffering, according to what it has earned in the body during its life."[3] It is also mentioned in *ench.* 18:69 that "and it can be inquired whether this is true and whether it can be discovered or remain hidden, that some faithful people are saved more slowly or more quickly through a certain purgatorial fire, depending on how much they have loved transitory goods, either more or less."[4] However, he denies that those who "will not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:10), that is extremely wicked, can be saved through purgatory, "unless they obtain forgiveness through necessary repentance"(*ench.* 18:69). At the last judgment, both the interim state and the state of purgatory will cease to exist. All people will exist eternally, either in the presence of God or separated from Him (*ench.* 14:54-55, 17:66; *civ.* 20:21-30). Augustine believed that it is beneficial for the living to

[3] *Enchiridion* 29:109 "*Tempus autem quod inter hominis mortem et ultimam resurrectionem interpositum est, animas abditis receptaculis continet, sicut unaquaeque digna est vel requie vel aerumna pro eo quod sortita est in carne dum viveret.*" The authors translated the literature from its original languages to English.

[4] *Enchiridion* 18:69 "*...et utrum ita sit quaeri potest, et aut inveniri aut latere, nonnullos fideles per ignem quemdam purgatorium, quanto magis minusve bona pereuntia dilexerunt, tanto tardius citiusque salvari.*"

perform good works and offer prayers for their deceased relatives and friends who are in a state of moral uncertainty. This can help alleviate the punishment endured by the departed soul (*ench.* 28:109).

In relation to Augustin's theory of Purgatory, the patrologist Fulbert Cayré summarized his views: "Based on 1 Corinthians 3, Augustine clearly affirmed the existence of Purgatory. He recognized that, in the afterlife and at least until the general judgment, there is a temporary punishment intended to purify the soul. Augustine discussed the fire of purification; while he did not specify the exact nature of this fire, he was unequivocal about the existence of Purgatory. Additionally, he acknowledged that prayers, good deeds, and especially the Holy Sacrifice, can help alleviate the suffering of souls in Purgatory" (Cayré 1927, pp. 693-94).

Jacques Le Goff, a renowned contemporary historian of the Middle Ages, asserted that Augustine was the "true father of Purgatory." He claimed that Augustine contributed two important elements to the later concept of Purgatory. First, Augustine limited the effectiveness of the fire of purification (the fire used to purge sins) to those who committed venial sins. Second, he assigned this fire to the period between death and resurrection. While Augustine had not yet introduced the concept of "venial sins" or defined the specific details and location of Purgatory (Le Goff 1981, p. 117). He categorized people based on their moral standing into four groups: those who were completely good, those who were completely evil, those who were not entirely good, and those who were not entirely evil. According to his classification, the completely good would go to heaven, the completely evil to hell, and those in the other two categories would go to Purgatory. Over time, medieval theologians simplified his fourfold classification into three categories: the completely good would go to heaven, the completely evil would go to hell, and ordinary people (neither entirely good nor entirely evil) would go to Purgatory (Le Goff 1981, p. 105; p. 299; p. 303). [5]

The fire of hell is true fire. The damned souls will suffer from the fire of hell even before the Last Judgment (*civ.* 21:10). It will suffer as if it had a body: the suffering the soul feels is like suffering the body feels it from corporeal fire.

[5] After being systematized by numerous theologians during the Middle Ages, the Council of Trent (1562) officially incorporated the concept of "Purgatory" into Catholic doctrine, establishing it as a fundamental element of religious education. The Catholic missionaries who arrived in China in the 16th century adhered to these teachings. For example, Michele Ruggieri's *The True Record of the Lord of Heaven* (1584) introduced the concepts of Limbo for unbaptized infants and Purgatory (Huang annd Wang 2013, vol. 1, p. 15). Similarly, Matteo Ricci's *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* focused on refuting Buddhist interpretations of Heaven and Hell for strategic reasons. While it discussed Heaven and Hell, it did not mention Purgatory. This can be referenced in the sixth chapter of Ricci's work (Meynard 2014, pp. 159-180).

Although the demon does not have a proper body, he also suffers from fire. After the Last Judgment, the resurrected bodies will be tortured by corporeal fire. Just as the intensity of joy in heaven varies among the saved, so the intensity of suffering in hell varies among damned. All are equally and forever lost, but some suffer more acutely than others (Russell 1999b, pp. 422- 23).

The saints will go to heaven. The essence of heaven is that the saints praise God forever. And secondly, in heaven, human potential is perfectly realized. It is human nature to have a need for heaven. "Our hearts will not rest until they rest in God" (*conf.* 1:1). "God is the fount of our blessedness and He is the goal of our desires" (*civ.* 10:3). At the end of *The City of God*, Augustine says that the resurrected saints will "rest and see, see and love, love and praise" (*civ.* 22:30).

Being in heaven means being fully united with Christ. Heaven is a state in which the whole person, both physically and spiritually, experiences the joy of God's presence. The Apostle Paul distinguished between "*sarx*" (flesh) and "*soma*" (body) in Greek, while Augustine differentiated between "*caro*" (flesh) and "*corpus*" (body) in Latin. The flesh, drawn toward perishable things, is destined to perish. In contrast, the body—created by God in His own image—will be changed, renewed, and transformed into a heavenly body. The resurrected body that dwells in heaven with Christ is the same body that each person possesses in the present. Although the fundamental nature of the resurrected body remains unchanged, some of its properties will change: it will become imperishable and perfect in accordance with its divine potential. Each blessed individual will retain their own individuality, being distinct from God as well as from others. Those endowed with greater potential by their Creator will shine more brilliantly and sit closer or higher to the Creator, but there will be no envy among them, because no one fails to experience supreme joy and fully embody the image of Christ. Heaven is the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision, which means directly understanding and seeing God Himself. "We shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, and in every created thing which shall exist; and also by the body we shall see Him in every body to which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall extend"(*civ.* 22:29). At the end of *The City of God*, Augustine declares that in heaven we will have eternal rest to see, to love, and to praise God (*civ.* 22: 30; Russel 1999, pp. 419-21).

2. The Jesuits' Introduction of Augustine's Eschatology

During the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasties, Augustine's works were not translated into Chinese. Instead, his ideas were introduced to the Chinese-speaking world through quotations, aphorisms, and catchphrases. Catholic missionaries were enthusiastic about compiling catechism booklets to

educate Chinese believers. Among these booklets that included Augustine's quotations, the themes covered were diverse, with two or three standing out, such as the Trinitarian view of the image and eschatology (Zhou 2017a, pp. 76-83).

At that time, the works related to the Four Last Things (*De novissimis*) mainly included Matteo Ricci's (Li Madou 利瑪竇, 1552-1610) *Jiren Shipian* 畸人十篇(*Ten Essays on Exceptional Men*), Alphonse Vagnoni's (Gao Yizhi 高一志, 1566-1640) *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 (*Discussion of the Four Last Things of the Sagely Catholic Church*, published in 1636)[6], Manuel Dias's (Yang Manuo 陽瑪諾, 1574-1659) *Shengjing zhijie* 聖經直解 (*Direct Interpretation of the Bible*, published in 1636), Ferdinand Verbiest's (Nai Huairen 南懷仁, 1623-1688) *Shan e bao lüeshuo* 善惡報略說 (*Brief Account of Rewards for Good and Evils*, 1670) (Zhang et al. 2014, vol. 33, pp. 651-672), Andre-Jean Lubelli's (Lu Ande 陸安德, 1610-1683) *Zhenfu zhizhi* 真福直指 (*Direct Guidance to True Happiness*, published in 1673) (ibid., vol. 15, pp. 199-472) and *Shansheng fuzhong zhenglu* 善生福終正路 (*The Right Path to a Good Life and a Blessed End*)(ibid., pp. 477-750), Philippe Couplet's (Bai Yingli 柏應理, 1623-1693) *Simo zhenlun* 四末真論(*True Treatise on the Four Last Things*, published in 1675)(ibid., vol. 1, pp. 1-62), *Fuhuo lun* 復活論(*On the Resurrection*) translated by Gabriel de Magalhães (An Wensi 安文思, 1609-1677), Thomás Ortiz's (Bai Duoma 白多瑪, 1668-1742, a Spanish Augustinian) *Sizhong lüeyi* 四終略意(*Brief Meaning of the Four Last Things*, published in 1705) (Ren and Wang 2005, vol. 5, 114-44), Zhang Xingyao's (1633-1715?) *Tianjiao mingbian* 天教明辨(*Clear Discrimination of the Heavenly Teaching*, published in 1711), Jean de Sexas'(Lin Deyao 林德瑤, 1710-1785) *Zhao yong shenjing* 照永神鏡(*The Mirror of Eternal Illumination*, published in 1769) (Standaert et al. 2013, vol.19, pp. 1-404).

Today, the extent of secularization is quite significant in both the West and China. People generally interpret "heaven" and "hell" symbolically. However, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, individuals in both regions understood "heaven" and "hell" literally, viewing them as real spatial structures. Additionally, concepts like resurrection and the rewards and punishments of the afterlife were also taken literally by most people at that time. As a result, Chinese individuals who sincerely embraced Catholicism seriously considered the Last Judgment and strived to fulfill their duties in this life according to the

[6] The dating evidence is from Jin Wenbing (Jin 2015, pp. 75 - 76.). This book is stored in the National Library of France (No. 6857) and was printed in 1636. The copy of *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 which the authors referenced did not indicate the date and place, and it is likely the 1636 version.

Christian "ethics of the two worlds," hoping to attain happiness in heaven in the future.

A notable example is Xu Guangqi (徐光啟 1562-1633), a prominent statesman and scientist from the late Ming Dynasty in China, who was also one of the "three pillars" of Catholicism during that era. Xu Guangqi once remarked that what shaped his career, motivated him to pursue practical knowledge with sincerity, and inspired him to work diligently throughout his life—without any hint of laziness—was a lengthy conversation he had with Matteo Ricci about the Last Judgment. The details of this important dialogue can be found in the third and fourth articles of Matteo Ricci's writings *Jiren Shipian*. During their lengthy conversation, Matteo Ricci explained to Xu Guangqi that people not only live in this present life but also possess immortal souls. In the future, these souls will be reunited with their resurrected bodies and together they will face judgment by God during the Last Judgment. Some souls will ascend to heaven to enjoy eternal happiness, while others will be condemned to hell for eternal suffering. Influenced by this "ethics of the two worlds," Xu Guangqi carefully examined and monitored his actions in this life through the lens of eschatology. As a result, he maintained a noble moral character throughout his life, dedicating himself wholeheartedly to serving his country and its people. He also strictly adhered to the moral commandments of Catholicism, becoming a model of devotion to both his country and his faith (Zhu 2001, p. 440; Chai 2002, p. 111).

Xu Guangqi's example highlights the impact of individual eschatology on Catholics during the Ming and Qing dynasties. This paper will examine works that frequently reference Augustine's sayings. We will elaborate several texts within the Jesuit Order that have a clear inheritance relationship.

2.1 The Overture of Diego de Pantoja's Quotation of Augustine's "Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus"

The missionaries who arrived in China during the late Ming dynasty took Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci of the Jesuit Order as their forerunners. They were the first Westerners to introduce Augustine's thoughts to the Chinese (Zhou 2017b, pp.125-35). Diego de Pantoja (1571-1618), who accompanied Matteo Ricci to China, is the earliest individual to have quoted Augustine's eschatology explicitly. In his posthumous work, *Pangzi yiquan* 龐子遺詮 (*the Legacy of Pangzi*) (Standaert and Dudink 2002, vol. 2, p. 8),[7] Augustine is quoted three times. The third volume of this book discusses the

[7] This book was probably written after 1600, as it states, "in 1600 BC, Feilüe was born into the world as Jesus, taking on human nature through the Virgin Mary, a chaste maiden."

significance of the Catholic liturgy for the purification of sins. According to Pantoja, any one who believes in other religions will never have the chance to enter heaven and will ultimately end up in hell. Diego de Pantoja states:

> *Saint Augustine stated that those who are determined to do good and cultivate virtue, even if they exert all their efforts outside of the Ecclesia (referring to the Church), will find it insufficient to erase their sins and appease the Lord's anger. This is similar to a spider's web being inadequate to keep out the cold. He also taught that virtue is the path to ascend to heaven and return to God. Those who aspire to do good, cultivate virtue, and enter heaven but do not follow the holy way of the Ecclesia are like a strong person running quickly but not on the right path. They may tire their muscles and bones, but how can they ever reach their destination? (*ibid., vol. 2, p. 154)

This reflects Augustine's belief that "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*" in his *Sermo ad Caesariensis ecclesiae plebem*. Augustine claimed, "No man can find salvation except in the Catholic Church. Outside the Catholic Church one can have everything except salvation. One can have honor, one can have the sacraments, one can sing alleluia, one can answer amen, one can have faith in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and preach it too, but never can one find salvation except in the Catholic Church."[8] In the fourth volume of *Pangzi yiquan* 龐子遺詮 (*The Legacy of Pangzi*), when discussing angels and devils, it references Augustine's idea that guardian angels protect good people. It states: "God created my body. From pregnancy to birth, and from birth to death, I rely on the guardianship, reminders, and inspiration of the angels to avoid the harm of demons. Therefore, Saint Augustine said: Guardian angels are the angels from heaven. They descend to our earthly realm to protect the good people whom God hopes will ascend to heave" (ibid., vol.2, p.194).

2.2. Alphonse Vagnoni's Detailed Quotations of Augustine's Eschatology

Alphonse Vagnoni's work, *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 (*Discussion of the Four Last Things of the Sagely Catholic Church*, which was published in 1636, contains 4 volumes. The book quotes Augustine approximately 40 times, a frequency higher than that of any other similar works.

2.2.1. The First Volume — *Sihou* 死候 (On the Time of Death)

[8] https://catholicism.org/eens-fathers.html assessed on September 17, 2021.

This volume contains 19 chapters, discussing how people in this world should view death and treat the dead.[9] In Chapter 1, titled "Death is Inevitable," the text discusses the inevitability of human death. It quotes Augustine: "Whether a person is good or evil is uncertain, but death is the only certainty" (1st volume, 1st *ye*, lower part). When talking about how the first ancestors' sin resulted in the physical death of humanity, he also quotes Augustine, "St. Augustine stated that the body of the first ancestor had the potential to either die or remain immortal. This possibility of death arose from the nature of the physical body, whereas the chance of not dying was a gift from the Lord. However, when this grace was lost due to sin, the one who could have lived forever was then forced to die" (2nd *ye*). Death is a result of sin. It is not created by God, but is instead brought upon humanity by their own actions. The story recounts how the first ancestors were tempted by the devil to eat the forbidden fruit and commit sin. Quoting Paul's words, "Sin entered the world through one man," Alphonse Vagnoni elaborates, "St. Augustine detailed that the first ancestor received life to pass on to his descendants. The consequences of obedience and disobedience would also extend to all subsequent generations. Those who were obedient not only received the grace of eternal life for themselves, but their descendants would also share in it. Conversely, for those who were disobedient, wouldn't the heavy penalty of death for their own bodies also apply to their descendants? The existence of the human body originally depends on the presence of the soul, and the existence of the soul relies on God's love and favor. If a person sins against the Lord, divine grace will surely be lost, and though the soul may inhabit the body, it becomes akin to a dead one" (3rd *ye*).

The soul is sustained by God, and the body is sustained by the soul. Without God, the soul dies; without the soul, the body dies. This idea comes from a famous saying by Augustine. After referencing the Psalms of David, which state that if a person loses their spiritual clarity, they are no different from the foolish, Alphonse Vagnoni returned to Augustine's thoughts: "St. Augustine further explained that once the first ancestor developed a proud heart, he desired eternal life akin to that of the Lord. When he was suppressed, he became like the death of a foolish beast. This reflects the supreme justice of the Lord. From this, we understand that the death of the physical body was not the original intention of the Lord; it resulted from human choice. God is simply enacting the law of sin punishment as originally determined. When a magistrate sentences a traitor to

[9] Since there is no photocopied version of *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論, the authors provide the folio numbers (*ye* 叶)for the quoted sentences based on the 1636 edition. Please note that the page numbering differs from today's standards; one folio corresponds to two pages in modern terms, and each folio is divided into upper and lower sections.

the death penalty, it is not the magistrate's original intention, but rather a consequence of the traitor's actions, with the magistrate merely applying the law" (Lower part of 3rd *ye*, upper part of 4th *ye*). The first ancestors rebelled against God's commandments, which resulted in original sin for all people. As a consequence, they should receive various punishments, including physical death, which is just.

In Chapter 2, titled "The Fearfulness of Death," it is discussed that all beings created by God love life and fear death. "St. Augustine remarked, 'Stupid beasts are born to die, and that's just the way it is.' However, these creatures fear death profoundly and are quite adept at avoiding it, as if they possess significant intelligence. Humans, on the other hand, were originally meant to live, but through disobedience to God's commandments, they brought death upon themselves. Thus, how much more should they fear of death? Since human life is considered more precious than that of beasts, their fear of losing it is even more intense" (Lower part of the 4th *ye*).

"St. Augustine also noted that many people live their lives knowing they cannot escape a fixed end date. Despite this awareness, they still desire to prolong their lives. Even those who aspire to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and enjoy true happiness often wish to delay their time of death to comfort their innate inclinations. This reveals that human life is indeed a very precious asset. Everyone loves and cherishes it, striving to preserve it at all costs. Therefore, it is no wonder that people fear death" (Upper part of 5th *ye*). From animals to humans, all beings cherish life and seek to avoid death, which is inherent to human nature. People, in particular, yearn for eternal life. There are various aspects that contribute to the fear of death, including differences that arise before death, at the moment of death, and afterward. These differences can stem from both external and internal causes, as well as distinctions between the body and the soul. In the following chapters of this volume, Alphonse Vagnoni analyzes these aspects one by one.

Chapter 4, titled "The Dreadfulness at the Moment of Death," discusses King David's prayer to God: "Rescue me in my time of death; do not let me be overcome by the dread of my enemies." Alphonse Vagnoni immediately references St. Augustine, who states, "The saint does not pray to God to be rescued from the fierce power of the enemy demons, but only to be delivered from the fear of the enemy demons. Why? Because the torment of this fear is more severe than all the tortures in the world" (Upper part of 9th *ye*). That is, to avoid succumbing to the emotion of fear.

In Chapter 6, titled "The Worldly Delusion of Fearing Physical Death but Not Spiritual Death," it begins with the statement: "According to St. Augustine's

theory, there are two types of life and death: physical and spiritual. The life of the body depends on the attachment of the spirit, while the life of the spirit relies on God's favor. When the body loses harmony among the four humors, the spirit departs, resulting in physical death. Conversely, when the spirit loses its harmony with God, the favor is lost, leading to a form of spiritual death" (Upper and lower parts of 14th *ye*). This implies that God is the source of the soul's life, and the soul is essential for the bod's life. However, many people would rather choose spiritual death than physical death. "St. Augustine lamented this delusion, stating, 'Many individuals violate God's commandments out of fear of physical death, attempting to avoid the inevitable yet temporary death, only to fall into an avoidable eternal death. Isn't this pitiful? Isn't this astonishing?" (Upper and lower parts of the 15th *ye*). When discussing the serious consequences of the Last Judgment, "St. Augustine reflected on the ancient scriptures, saying, 'Who doesn't love life, and who doesn't desire to see days of peace? Yet, do not love life in the realm of suffering and death, nor hope for peaceful days in a world that is neither peaceful nor harmonious...'" (Upper and lower parts of the 16th *ye*) It is truly foolish for people to prefer living in a chaotic world rather than entering the realm of true peace.

2.2.2. The Second Volume — The Judgment

This volume explores the concept of private judgment that every person faces upon death, as well as the public judgment that occurs at the resurrection on the Day of Judgment. It begins with a "General Discussion on the Eternal Retribution of Good and Evil," followed by a total of fifteen chapters.

Chapter 1, titled "Man Must Be Judged After Death," states: "St. Augustine asserted that what our holy religion has believed since ancient times is an established truth: once the human soul departs from the body, it is immediately subject to judgment regarding good and evil. This belief is not only reasonable but also highly beneficial for spiritual cultivation. Once a person's life ends, the opportunity to accumulate virtues, perform good deeds, commit sins, and transgressions also concludes. Each individual should receive corresponding rewards or punishments for what they have accumulated, without the need to wait for the public judgment at the resurrection" (This is noted on the lower part of the third *ye*). Thus, one's ascension to heaven or descent to hell can be determined through individual judgment.

Chapter 2, titled "The Public Judgment Is Indispensable," discusses the reasons for the necessity of public judgment. Goodness and evil are often concealed and unclear in the world; the righteous suffer while the wicked enjoy blessings, and rewards and punishments are not always immediately apparent. For the sake of justice, public judgment is essential, as previously argued by

Augustine. At the conclusion of this chapter, it states: "St. Augustine said: There is no need to offer many reasons. Simply acknowledge that the most true and spiritual Lord of all things, whose prophecies were fulfilled through the prophets and saints, and who spoke directly to His disciples, will also fulfill the prophecy of public judgment without exception. Therefore, the more one understands the truth, the more firmly one believes in it, and the greater benefit it will bring to true spiritual cultivation" (the seventh *ye*).

In Chapter 9, titled "The Truth of the Resurrection of the Dead," the discussion centers on the Creator's power to resurrect individuals in their original form. Saint Augustine made a relevant comment on this principle: "Consider the seeds of things. They are incredibly tiny when planted in the ground and are destined to decay. Initially, they lack consciousness or senses. However, when the time comes, they will surely germinate. One seed can multiply into ten, and those ten can grow into hundreds or thousands, thriving and flourishing. Who makes this happen? It is all the work of the divine will of God. Additionally, consider a skilled craftsman who shapes an object from gold. That object may be melted down or broken into pieces, taking on various forms, yet the craftsman can recreate it just as it was before. If a craftsman possesses such wisdom and skill, how could the all-wise and all-powerful Lord be incapable of doing the same? Moreover, think about plants and trees. In the winter, they appear dead and show no signs of life, but when spring arrives, they come back to life, blooming and bearing fruit. Given that the all-powerful Lord can bring all things to life in this way, how could He lack the ability to do the same for the human body? It is a narrow-minded viewpoint of the world that people often witness strange events but dismiss them as ordinary, while they find it hard to believe in things that are less commonly seen, even if they are founded in truth. What can be done about this?" (On the lower part of the 18th *ye* and the upper part of the 19th *ye*) Regarding the appearance of each person's body at the time of resurrection, Augustine's fundamental belief is that God has the ability to recreate a perfect spiritual body from the original materials. In Chapter 10, titled "How the Dead Are Resurrected," the focus shifts to the recombination of the body's original substance and the soul. Saint Augustine stated: "Even if all the original substances of the human body are completely scattered, leaving not the slightest trace behind, they cannot escape the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit, the Lord. They will obey the command of the all-powerful Lord and be reunited, resulting in the resurrection of the original person. Since our Lord created all things out of nothing, how could He not be able to replenish the substance to compensate for the lack of the original substance?" (On both the upper and lower parts of the 20th *ye*)

In the following section of this chapter, the discussion of issues such as beauty or ugliness, youth or old age, health or illness, and wisdom or foolishness at the time of resurrection will primarily draw on Augustine's views. In Chapter 15, titled "The Many Benefits of the Thought of the Public Judgment for Spiritual Perfection," Saint Augustine states: "When we reach that dreadful day, we will first hear the angels blowing their trumpets. Looking around, we will see the world in ruins, and all people will be trembling in fear. Then we will be brought before the strict Lord's platform and hear an account of every kindness He has bestowed upon us and every sin we have committed. How could we possibly withstand His righteous anger? Alas, the period of mercy and forgiveness has passed, and the time of justice and punishment is gradually approaching. There is no way to escape. Thus, we must understand without a doubt that the Lord of judgment was more lenient before the judgement and will be more severe after the judgement" (On both the upper and lower parts of the 19th *ye*). As the end of the world approaches, people should feel a sense of urgency in their hearts. The witnesses at the time of judgment, in addition to God and the angels, will also include the sages and saints from previous ages (Upper part of the 20th *ye*). The sages of the past faced the same challenges as I do, yet they distinguished themselves from the crowd. In comparison, it has become evident that I have willingly fallen and positioned myself in a lowly state.

2.2.3. The Third Volume — "Hell"

This volume contains a total of seven chapters. In Chapter 2, titled "Types of Torments in Hell," it explains that the torments of hell can be generally classified into two categories: the torment of sensation and the torment of loss. The torment of sensation refers to the pain inflicted through the five external faculties—the senses—which is considered external pain. In contrast, the torment of loss pertains to the absence of all the blessings bestowed by God, leading to feelings of inner fear and anxiety; this can be viewed as an internal disaster. For human beings, ultimate happiness is found in the Beatific Vision, which means that nothing in this world can truly satisfy the human heart. Saint Augustine once stated, "We are truly born from You, and only You can fulfill our hearts. If people do not return to You, how can their hearts find peace and contentment?" (This quote is drawn from the lower part of the fourth *ye* of the third volume, referencing *conf.* 1: 1) Augustine also expressed, "Hell and all the torments within it are not truly terrifying. What is truly terrifying is losing the blessed countenance of the Heavenly Father and being eternally rejected by Him"((On the upper part of the fifth *ye*). This sentiment emphasizes that God is the very life of the soul, and losing God equates to losing life—a condition described as the second death. In Chapter 3, title "Various Torments According to the Divine Will," it further explains that this kind of death is all-encompassing.

A person's memory, understanding, and love become disconnected from friendship, kinship, beauty, goodness, and love. Instead, they are filled with regret, confusion, and hatred (as mentioned in the lower part of the sixth *ye*).

2.2.4. The Fourth Volume — "Heaven"

This volume consists of a total of thirteen chapters. In this volume, Augustine is referred to as "Aowuding 奥悟丁" or "Aowusiding 奥悟斯丁," possibly indicating a later compilation of this work. In Chapter 1, "Everyone Must Act for a Purpose," when discussing the true happiness that can truly satisfy the human heart, it states,"Saint Augustine said: What is true and complete happiness? It is the attainment of everything one desires, and all that one obtains must be entirely good, free from any evil" (This appears on the lower part of the second *ye* of the fourth volume). In Chapter 3, "Where Does Man's True Happiness Lie," it is explained that within the human soul, understanding and love act like the two hands of the soul, enabling one to "select and embrace the essence that represents true happiness," which is God—the Creator and the beginning of all things. At the same time, God is also the ultimate goal towards which all things aspire. As noted, "In the past, Saint Augustine said to God: One who knows all things but does not know You gains nothing useful and is extremely unfortunate. One who knows all things and also knows You does not merely know things in an absolute sense; it is the knowledge of You that brings true happiness. The reason for this is: My Lord, You created my heart to turn towards You. Therefore, if I do not return to You, my heart will surely find no peace or contentment. Thus, it can be understood that the source of true happiness must lie in the true Lord of all things..." (On the lower part of the sixth *ye*).

In Chapter 4, titled "How the Human Soul Sees the Essence of God," it is stated that true happiness comes from beholding the Holy Face of God. A few days after the death of *Riluoni* 日落尼(also known as Saint Jerome), he appeared to another saint who loved him, named Augustine. Jerome revealed to Augustine, "The true happiness for me in heaven lies in constantly gazing upon the divine and wonderful essence of God" (On the upper part of the ninth *ye*). This vision also included Jerome sharing with Augustine that in heaven, he used the eyes of his spiritual body to forever behold God. Augustine remarked, "In heaven, what our spiritual eyes perceive is beyond the reach of our physical eyes, ears, and hearts in this world. It is a beauty that surpasses all other beauties" (On the lower part of the ninth *ye*). Augustine believed that the sights and sounds we experience with our spiritual senses in heaven greatly exceed those we perceive with our physical senses in this life. In Chapter 5, titled "How People in Heaven Perceive Things," Augustine explains, "The essence of God is truly a living

mirror, unlike the lifeless mirrors used in the secular world. A dead mirror reflects objects only when placed in front of the viewer's eyes. In contrast, the essence of God, as a living mirror, emanates its own light. Each spirit's perception (referring to the souls of angels and saints) varies in quantity, depth, and degree according to its merits and the blessed light bestowed upon it" (Lower part of the eleventh *ye*).

In Chapter 8, titled "Heaven: Virtues Complete and Flawless, Life Eternal and Death - Free" Saint Augustine once said: "In the world, no virtue is complete, no joy is everlasting, no wish is fully satisfied, and no life is without death. Only when all worldly affairs come to an end and one enters the Kingdom of Heaven can virtue be complete and without blemish, joy be free from any deficiency, wishes be fully fulfilled, life be eternal and without death, and the heart be steadfast and unchanging. Therefore, Heaven is also called the realm of eternal bliss and the land of true life" (On the lower part of the seventeenth *ye* and the upper part of the eighteenth *ye*). This means that the virtues and joys in Heaven are perfect and flawless. In Chapter 9, titled "What are the Blessings of the Bodies in Heaven," it discusses how the bodies of people in Heaven move nimbly, quickly, and without obstruction. Saint Augustine said: "For the blessed people in Heaven, moving from near to far is as swift as a thought" (On the lower part of the twentieth *ye*). This indicates that the saints in Heaven, because they possess spiritual bodies, do not move as ponderously as they do in the mortal world, but instead move as swiftly as a fleeting thought.

In Chapter 10, titled "The Blessings and Joys of the Five Sense Organs of the Body", when discussing the blessings and joys associated with the sense of hearing, Saint Augustine remarked, "The deeds of all the saints in heaven are solely to extol the kindness and virtue of the Lord and to praise His wonderful beauty. They will never grow tired of it" (On the twenty-second *ye*). In heaven, the only music is the praise of God, and one will never tire of listening to it. When addressing the sense of touch (associated with the limbs), Saint Augustine said to his soul and body: "What does my soul hope for? What does my body desire? Only when I reach the heavenly kingdom will everything be complete, and all the desires of both the soul and the body will be fully satisfied. What doubt can there be?" (See the lower section of the twenty-third *ye*) In heaven, all desires of the soul and body are perfectly fulfilled. In Chapter 13, "The Remembrance of the End is Very Beneficial for Spiritual Cultivation", when discussing how the thought of the end can conquer pride, it is noted that Saint Augustine once admonished a proud person, saying: "The glory of one's ancestors, the splendor of worldly power, and the respect and honor given by others may foster a proud heart. In those moments, one should reflect that these accolades are all tied to death, that your body will return to dust and perish, while your soul will be

judged by the Lord. Consider where the emperors, ministers, and prime ministers of the past are now and what traces they have left behind. Look around at the tombs everywhere. Who can distinguish between kings and subjects, the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the noble and the humble, the wise and the foolish, the officials and the common people?" (See the upper section of the twenty-eighth *ye*) All things are transient, and one should revere God, the ultimate Judge.

The four-volume work *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 by Alphonse Vagnoni comprehensively expounds the Catholic eschatological views. Its citations of Augustine are also comprehensive. Later works of the same kind in the Ming and Qing dynasties did not surpass it in terms of the number of citations and the breadth of themes.

2.3. Philippe Couplet's Simo zhenlun 四末真論 (True Treatise on the Four Last Things)

Simo zhenlun 四末真論 (*True Treatise on the Four Last Things*) written by Philippe Couplet was engraved and published in Songjiang 松江 in 1675. The "Four Last Things" refer to death, judgment, heaven, and hell. The book includes both illustrations and text.

After the first section, titled "An Account of the Time of Death," there is an "Appendix of Ten Sayings of the Saints." Saint Augustine is cited twice in this appendix: "Saint Augustine said: Whether a person is good or evil is not yet certain; however, the inevitability of death is the only certain thing" (Zhou 2024, vol. 2, p.160). "Saint Augustine said: Those who carefully avoid evil deeds and earnestly practice the right path during their lifetime will surely have nothing to fear" (ibid., p.160).

After the second part, titled "An Account of the Judgment," there is also an "Appendix of Ten Sayings of the Saints," in which Augustine is cited three times: "St. Augustine asserted that what our holy religion has believed since ancient times is an established truth: once the human soul departs from the body, it is immediately subject to judgment regarding good and evil. This belief is not only reasonable but also highly beneficial for spiritual cultivation. Once a person's life ends, the opportunity to accumulate virtues, perform good deeds, commit sins, and transgressions also concludes. Each individual should receive corresponding rewards or punishments for what they have accumulated, without the need to wait for the public judgment at the resurrection. Augustine also stated: There is no need to offer many reasons. Simply acknowledge that the most true and spiritual Lord of all things, whose prophecies were fulfilled through the prophets and saints, and who spoke directly to His disciples, will

also fulfill the prophecy of public judgment without exception. Therefore, the more one understands the truth, the more firmly one believes in it, and the greater benefit it will bring to true spiritual cultivation" (ibid., p.160). "Augustine stated: Consider the seeds of things. They are incredibly tiny when planted in the ground and are destined to decay. Initially, they lack consciousness or senses. However, when the time comes, they will surely germinate. One seed can multiply into ten, and those ten can grow into hundreds or thousands, thriving and flourishing. Who makes this happen? It is all the work of the divine will of God. Since the all-powerful Lord can create everything as it is, why would He be less capable when it comes to the human body?!" (ibid., p. 160).

After the third part, titled "An Account of Heaven" in the "Appendix of Ten Sayings of the Saints," there are three sayings attributed to Augustine. He stated: "All the holy beings in heaven clearly behold the essence of God. This vision is both their task and their delight, allowing them to live a blessed life. The more they behold God's essence, the more they savor it, and the more blessed their lives become. As they savor it, their desire to experience it again grows. This desire is neither burdensome nor urgent; they can savor it repeatedly without ever growing tired of it" (ibid., 160). "Saint Augustine stated: the essence of God is truly a living mirror, unlike the lifeless mirrors used in the secular world. A dead mirror reflects objects only when placed in front of the viewer's eyes. In contrast, the essence of God, as a living mirror, emanates its own light. Each spirit's perception (referring to the souls of angels and saints) varies in quantity, depth, and degree according to its merits and the blessed light bestowed upon it" (ibid., p.160). "Saint Augustine stated that in this world, no virtue is perfect, no joy is everlasting, no wish is fully fulfilled, and no life is free from death. It is only when worldly matters come to an end and one enters the Kingdom of Heaven that virtue can be entirely pure, joy can be complete, wishes can be fully satisfied, life can be eternal without death, and the heart can remain steadfast without change" (ibid., p.160).

After the fourth part, titled "An Account of Hell," there is an "Appendix of Ten Sayings of the Saints." In this appendix, Saint Augustine is quoted: "Saint Augustine often said that hell and all its torments are not truly terrifying. What is truly terrifying is the loss of the blessed presence of the Heavenly Father and being eternally rejected by Him"(ibid., p.161).[10]

[10] Philippe Couplet's work, True Treatise on the Four Last Things, is included in the compilation Texts of Western Learning in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, edited by Huang Xingtao and Wang Guorong (Huang and Wang 2013, vol. 2, 843, 846, 849-850, 852).

When comparing Philippe Couplet's *True Treatise on the Four Last Things* with Alphonse Vagnoni's work, *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 (*Discussion of the Four Last Things of the Sagely Catholic Church*), it's noticeable that Couplet incorporated several quotations from Augustine that Alphonse Vagnoni also used, and the wording is identical in both texts. However, there are two or three sentences in Couple's work that do not appear in Vagnoni's. This indicates that while Couplet drew inspiration from Vagnoni's *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun*, he also contributed a small amount of original content to his own writing.

2.4. Manuel Dias's *Shengjing zhijie* 聖經直解

Manuel Dias's work *Shengjing zhijie* 聖經直解 (*Direct Interpretation of the Bible*), written around 1636, consists of fourteen volumes in total. The first eight volumes are arranged with the Lord's Day as a clue, while the last six volumes center on the Feast Day. Together, they provide detailed annotations on the scriptures related to these festivals. (Zhang et al, 2014, vol. 17 pp. 288-89) Manuel Dias follows the tradition of annotating scriptures by extensively citing the Church Fathers and Scholastic philosophers, with a particular emphasis on Augustine. In Volume Fourteen of this book, there is a dedicated chapter titled "General Discussion on the Four Last Things." This chapter includes 13 references to Augustine's quotations, most of which differ from those cited by Alphonse Vagnoni and others.

The section titled "The Time of Death" discusses how a person's attitude towards death influences their views on wealth and pride. Death is certain, and life is essentially a journey towards it. If wealthy individuals behave unkindly while enjoying their riches, they will face significant consequences. Therefore, it is important to reject the pursuit of wealth and to prioritize virtue instead(ibid., vol. 19, pp. 520-21). "Saint Augustine stated: originally humans were not meant to die. However, it was the sin of pride that led to their mortality. This death is a consequence of pride. God punishes pride to encourage people to reflect on their actions and cultivate humility. When individuals reflect on their own mortality, they effectively close off the path of pride and open the way to humility (ibid., vol. 19, p. 522). This aligns with the notion of overcoming pride by contemplating death, as mentioned by Alphonse Vagnoni. Augustine also noted that life is filled with uncertainties; for instance, a father cannot predict whether his son will be good or evil, wealthy or poor, strong or weak. However, the certainty of a person's inevitable death is indisputable" (ibid., vol. 19, p. 523). Life is short. "Our lives are like letters being delivered, swiftly heading towards death. When a person is born from their mother's womb, it is as if they are emerging from a tomb,

and when they die and are laid to rest in the grave, these two tombs are close to each other" (ibid., vol. 19, pp. 526-27). Therefore, one should make the most of their time to cultivate themselves diligently.

In the section titled "The Judgment," Augustine discusses the powerful enemies and bitter foes of Christ in the last days. These adversaries subdue people's hearts through force, bribes, and deception, demonstrating hostility toward God and causing significant harm (ibid., vol. 19, p. 532). Augustine refutes those who oppose the resurrection, asserting that God is all-knowing and all-powerful, far beyond human imagination, and that resurrection is not difficult for God (ibid., vol. 19, p. 536).

Concerning the appearance of people's bodies at the time of resurrection, Augustine explains: "The work of God is perfect. Children are not fully developed humans due to their immaturity, and the elderly are not fully perfect either because of bodily decline. At the time of resurrection, there will be neither the young nor the old. Moreover, there will be no distinction between black and white; black-colored individuals will be transformed white. Those who were blind, paralyzed, or had other physical impairments will, at the time of resurrection, possess bodies that are perfectly proportionate, without any excess or deficiency, and will be completely whole" (ibid., vol. 19, p. 537). Augustine's statement about all black people turning white upon resurrection may relate to his concept of "light." Currently, Christ deeply understands people's hearts and serves as a witness; however, he will conduct a great judgment and determine people's sins in the future (ibid.,vol. 19, p. 543).

In the section titled "Heaven," it elaborates on the concept of "the good being resurrected to enjoy eternal life." The Gospels recount the account of Jesus being transfigured on the mountain, a moment that left the disciples in a state of ecstasy. This experience parallels the "the state of contentment and joy experienced by Confucius and his student Yan Hui." Augustine describes this as a "faint shadow of true happiness," representing a foretaste of the joy of heaven (ibid., vol. 19, p. 550). Heaven is depicted as a place of light—a wonderful realm where great and small lights shine upon each other, each emitting its own radiance and showcasing its unique beauty. "Each has different merits, and each light has its own uniqueness" (ibid., vol. 19, p. 556). "The first ancestors, who were able to avoid death, are contrasted with the saints who cannot die" (ibid., vol. 19, p. 556). In heaven, the status of the saints is much higher than that of the first ancestors.

What joy do the saints experience in heaven? Unlike the fragmented pleasures of the world, which can only provide one type of satisfaction at a time, the joy of God encompasses all desires and can fulfill every need. "The gold of

the world does not come with jade. The jade does not come with a palace. The palace does not come with property. The property does not come with food and clothing. What a pity! People need many things to find pleasure. God is the gathering place of all needs and pleasures (ibid., vol. 19, pp. 562-563).

For believers, it is worthwhile to exchange the sufferings of this brief earthly life for the eternal blessings and beauty of heaven (ibid., vol. 19, p. 564). This perspective reflects a strong tendency to undervalue this world in favor of the next, indicating a disposition towards renunciation of worldly attachments.

2.5. Zhang Xingyao's *Bian simo* 辨四末

Zhang Xingyao 張星曜(1633 - 1715?), also known by his courtesy name Zichen 紫臣, was a native of Renhe County in the Hangzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province. His notable work, *Tianjiao mingbian* 天教明辨 (*Clear Discrimination of the Heavenly Teaching*) published in 1711, comprises a total of twenty volumes. The content is diverse and complex, exploring all aspects of Catholicism. This work can be considered China's equivalent of *Summa Theologica*. The seventh volume is titled "*Bian simo* 辨四末" (*Discernment of the Four Last Things*), and it includes several relevant quotations from Augustine.

When it comes to the common people being misled and fearing the death of the body while neglecting to fear the death of the soul, it quotes: "Saint Augustine stated that human life has two aspects: the physical form and the inner soul. The life of the body depends on the soul's attachment, while the life of the soul relies on God's favor. When the body loses the balance of the four humors, the soul departs, resulting in death. Similarly, when the soul loses its harmony with God, it forfeits God's favor and experiences a kind of death as well" (Standaert et al, 2013, vol. 8, p. 181).[11] "Saint Augustine lamented the extreme confusion of the world, stating: Many people violate the commandments of the Lord out of fear of death. They try to avoid the temporary death that can be avoided but ultimately fall into the eternal death that can also be avoided. Is it not sad? Is it not strange!" (ibid., vol. 8 p.182)[12] "Saint Augustine also remarked: The Lord prolongs the lives of the wicked, actually hoping that they will repent. Otherwise, it will surely benefit the good people" (ibid., vol. 8 p.199).[13]

[11] This sentence is identical to the text found in Chapter 6 of "The Time of Death" from Alphonse Vagnoni's *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun*. This sentence does not appear in Philippe Couplet's work.

[12] This sentence also appears in Chapter 6 of "The Time of Death." Philippe Couplet does not include this sentence.

[13] This sentence also appears in Chapter 10 of "The Time of Death." Philippe Couplet has omitted this sentence.

"Saint Augustine stated: humans were originally not meant to die. They incurred the sin of pride and thus faced death. God punishes pride with death, intending for people to reflect on this punishment and become humble. When individuals contemplate their death, they effectively block the path of pride and open the path of humility (ibid., vol. 8 p.229)."[14] "The Lord declared: The days of human life are evil days. Saint Augustine explained: the days of human life are filled with false joys, inappropriate pleasures, sorrows that harm the soul, and fears that pierce the heart. Therefore, they are considered evil. Given that the state of the world is so evil, why do you still love and desire a long life? How confused you are!" (ibid., vol. 8 p.274)[15] "Saint Augustine remarked: Once the life of a living person comes to an end, the opportunity for accumulating virtues, performing good deeds, gathering vices, and committing sins also concludes. Each person should receive corresponding rewards for what they have accumulated, without needing to wait for public judgment at the time of the resurrection of all people. He also stated: Regarding the most true and spiritual Lord of all things, all that was prophesied through the prophets and saints... Just observe the seeds of things in the ground. They are extremely tiny and are bound to decay..." (ibid., vol. 8 pp. 306-07)[16]

After our comparison, when compiling the content about "the Four Last Things" in *Tianjiao mingbian* 天教明辨(*Clear Discrimination of the Heavenly Teaching*), Zhang Xingyao mainly drew on the works of Alfonse Vagnoni, and also incorporated the works of Manuel Dias and Philippe Couplet.

3. Gabriel de Magalhães's Translation of *Fuhuo lun* 復活論(*On the Resurrection*) in *Summa Theologiae*

Chaoxing xueyao 超性學要 is the first Chinese translation of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, translated by Louis Buglio (1606-1682) and Gabriel de Magalhães, in which the tenth paragraph of the third major branch, the two books of *Fuluo lun* 復活論 , were translated by Gabriel de Magalhães. *Fuluo lun* 復活論 was printed in 1677, just after the death of Gabriel de

[14] This passage aligns with the text in "The Time of Death" found in Manuel Dias's work *Shengjing zhijie* 聖經直解 (Direct Interpretation of the Bible).

[15] This sentence does not appear in the works of Alphonse Vagnoni and Philippe Couplet, indicating that Zhang Xingyao has alternative sources.

[16] In this passage, the two sentences "Once the life of a living person comes to an end" and "Just observe the seeds of things in the ground" are identical to texts found in Chapter 1 of "The Judgment" by Alphonse Vagnoni in his work, *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* (天主聖教四末論), as well as in "The Doctrine of the Judgment" in Philippe Couplet's "True Treatise on the Four Last Things." This clearly indicates that Zhang Xingyao borrowed material from his predecessors. Additionally, the phrase "the most true and spiritual Lord of all things" appears in Philippe Couplet's work but is absent in Alphonse Vagnoni's writings.

Magalhães. *Fuhuo lun* 復活論 focuses on the issues of the Last Judgment, the resurrection of the body, and heaven and hell, so it is closely related to "De novissimis 四終." In *Fuhuo lun* 復活論, there are seven quotations from Augustine.

In the "*Shu* 疏(Annotation)" section of Chapter Two, titled "Will the Angels Have Something to Do in Our Resurrection," in Volume One of "On the Resurrection" Augustine is quoted as saying that when the resurrection occurs, God will allow the angels to participate in the process (Zhang et al, 2014, vol. 13 589). In Chapter Three, titled "Do the Ashes of Each Person's Body Have a Natural Tendency to Reunite with Their Soul" of the same volume, it is stated that at the time of resurrection, God can completely transcend natural laws to reunite the body and soul. In the "*Bo* 駁(Objection)" section, which expresses doubts, Thomas Aquinas cites Augustine and argues that the body has a natural inclination to unite with the soul, therefore, there is no need for supernatural intervention (ibid., vol. 13, P. 620). In the "*Zheng* 正(Reply to Objection)" section, Thomas Aquinas addresses these doubts by asserting that the body does not possess a natural tendency to unite with the soul; rather, it has only the "*Rongde* 容德(capacity of reception)," a passive ability to receive and unite with the soul. This union, he argues, requires divine intervention. Aquinas emphasizes the importance of correctly understanding Augustine's statement (ibid., vol. 13, p. 621). The resurrection of the body depends on God reshaping it, much like a potter reshapes clay.

In Chapter Three, titled "Will All the Four Humors of the Human Body, Namely White, Black, Yellow, and Red, be Resurrected" from Volume One, Augustine is quoted expressing that all components of the human body—such as the five sense organs, bones, body fluids, and so on—can indeed be resurrected. God is capable of using the same atoms to recombine them into a body, albeit a spiritual one (ibid., vol. 13 p. 648). In Chapter Three, titled "Will All the Resurrected be Men?" also from Volume One, Augustine indicates that in heaven, individuals will retain their male and female genders, unlike angels (ibid., vol. 13, p. 657).

In the "*Bo* 駁 (Objection)" section of Chapter Two, titled "Will the Resurrected Move with Swiftness and Lightness?" from Volume Two, it is noted that Augustine states, "For the resurrected, not only should the soul love God, but the body should also love God. The soul always loves God and cannot be separated from Him. So, is it appropriate to say that it moves? The same applies to the body; it is clear that it cannot move with swiftness and lightness (ibid., vol. 13 p. 739). Here, if the soul in heaven loves God and continually

gazes at Him without being separated, when it is said that the soul "moves," does that imply a state of separation?

In the "*Bo* 駁(Objection)" section, it raises doubts in Chapter Three, titled "Can the Resurrected Move in an Instant?" of Volume Two, it is noted that "Saint Augustine said: Whenever the soul desires to move to a certain place, the body will follow. The movement resulting from the power of desire occurs suddenly and takes only an instant." This implies that the resurrected will indeed move instantaneously (ibid., vol. 13 p. 742). The soul in heaven, along with its spiritual body, can be considered as one entity. Its movements are distinctly different from those of a physical body and are much faster, almost as swift as thoughts.

Fuhuo lun 復活論(*On the Resurrection*) delves into detailed issues and reflects the characteristics of medieval scholastic philosophy. Here, Augustine's quotations, as an authoritative Church Father, are highly esteemed. Whether presented as "doubts" or "positive arguments," his perspectives on resurrection are thoroughly explored.

4. Thomás Ortiz's *Sizhong lüeyi* 四終略意

Thomás Ortiz's (also known as Bai Duoma 白多瑪), an Augustinian friar from Spain, arrived in China in 1695 and authored several works, including *Shengjiao qieyao* 聖教切要(*Essentials of the Catholic Faith*) and *Yaojing lüejie* 要經略解 (*Concise Explanations of Holy Scripture*)要經略解. His book, *Sizhong lüeyi* 四終略意(*Brief Meaning of the Four Last Things*) was published in 1705 and has since been reprinted multiple times. This work is divided into five chapters, each addressing a specific topic: the time of death, the individual judgment, the general judgment, hell, and heaven.

In discussing the "individual judgment," Thomás Ortiz writes, "The severity of the individual judgment is truly terrifying. Saint Augustine reflected on it and noted: at the judgment, our Lord is the judge who decides the case. Below, hell opens its mouth wide to swallow the sinners. On one side stand various sins, which serve as the true evidence. On the other side are a group of demons, acting as accusers and executioners. Additionally, guardian angels serve as witnesses to the graces that have been bestowed. The soul stands as the defendant, while the conscience of the wicked person acts as the record book, documenting the sins. When the sinner perceives the multitude of witnesses surrounding him—having no words to reply, no means to escape, and no hope for the future—one can only imagine the depth of his terror and

distress." The text vividly describes how sinners, facing severe punishment, find themselves with nowhere to flee (Ren and Wang 2005, vol. 5 p. 123).

When discussing the suffering of sinners who cannot see God, it states, "Saint Augustine stated, if the wicked lose God but obtain all blessings, the suffering they experience would still be unbearable!" It provides the example of Absalom, the son of King David, who felt extreme sorrow because he could not see David. And then it states, "Augustine says, the anxiety of losing the most benevolent and merciful God, along with the suffering of not being able to enjoy the sight of His divine countenance, is so dreadful and terrifying that it surpasses all the sufferings of hell!" (ibid., vol. 5, p. 133)

When addressing the torments of hell, it mentions the fierceness of the fire in hell. "Augustine states, compared with the fire in hell, even the fiercest and most brutal fire in the world cannot be compared at all!" (ibid., vol. 5, p. 135) It also describes the punishment of hell, where water, fire, heat, and cold coexist. "Augustine says, this alternating and opposing suffering is a great torment for the wicked. Imagine being placed into a red-hot iron ball or in the center of a large circle of fire; as I am being burned, I am suddenly moved into a lake of ice water. How could I endure such suffering? Moreover, in the sea of fire in hell, if I were suddenly transported into a sea of snow and was forever subjected to the alternating and opposing sufferings of fire and snow, how could I bear it? Additionally, if the body is either in the fire or in the snow and is always bound by fetters, unable to move left or right, the suffering would be even more unbearable....." (ibid., vol. 5, p. 135)

Thomás Ortiz depicted the sufferings of the "three faculties of the soul"—memory, understanding, and love —in hell. He emphasizes that if people focus only on worldly things without remembering, understanding, or loving God, they will ultimately face eternal suffering in hell (ibid., vol. 5, p. 136). Similarly, Alphonse Vagnoni's work, *Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 (*Discussion of the Four Last Things of the Sagely Catholic Church*) conveys a comparable message. This notion reflects Augustine's theory of the image, which encompasses the concept of "endowing image, losing image, and restoring image."

When discussing the topic of heaven, it is said, "the wonders of heaven are far beyond human comprehension. Attempting to grasp these marvels with our limited abilities is like trying to contain the entire ocean in a small cup. When Saint Augustine was about to write about the wonders of heaven to Saint Jerome, Saint Jerome, unexpectedly, ascended to heaven and appeared to Saint Augustine, radiating extraordinary brilliance. He asked Augustine, 'What is

your intention? What are you seeking? Can your fist encompass the vastness of the earth? Can your hand stop the swift motion of the heavens? To try to measure the immeasurable and understand the unfathomable is a futile endeavor.'[17] Despite Saint Augustine's remarkable intelligence and knowledge, which surpassed that of all others at his time, he still could not fully comprehend the wonders of heaven. If he struggled to grasp these concepts, how could anyone else hope to understand them?.....When Augustine attempted to estimate and describe the eternal bliss of heaven, he reflected on the beautiful things in our world and remarked, ...in this valley of tears, a place of exile, there exists an abundance of exquisite beauty. Now imagine the realm of eternal happiness in heaven, the homeland of saints, a place of eternal life. How incredibly beautiful, opulent, splendid, glorious, and blissful it must be!" (ibid., vol. 5, pp. 138-39).

When comparing the glories and blessings of heaven with those of the world, "Saint Augustine stated, people in the world may possess gold but not jade; they may have jade but not a palace; own a palace but have no offspring; have offspring but lack food and clothing. Those who obtain one thing often lack nine others, and therefore, they cannot experience complete happiness. The blessings of heaven are innumerable; there is no blessing that does not exist, and all blessings are gathered together. The soul enjoys the true blessings that pertain to its understanding, memory, and love. The various blessings and joys in heaven far exceed all other blessings" (ibid., vol. 5, p. 141).[18] When discussing the pleasures experienced through the five senses of the physical body in heaven, Augustine is also referenced. For example, the experience of taste in heaven takes on a different significance. "Saint Augustine remarked: the magnitude of the taste and the joy of experiencing it are beyond any explanation. The people in heaven constantly savor this flavor, always yearning to taste it, and can continue to enjoy it. The more they taste, the more they long to taste. The longer they taste, the deeper their desire grows. While tasting, they do not feel boredom, and when they wish to taste, they do not feel hunger. Thus, there is never a time when they do not wish to taste, nor is there

[17] This legend is also referenced in Alphonse Vagnoni's work,*Tianzhu shengjiao simolun* 天主聖教四末論 (*Discussion of the Four Last Things of the Sagely Catholic Church*), specifically in the third chapter of the "Heaven." Though the wording differs between the two accounts. Even before them, in 1607, Thomas Mayor, a Dominican missionary working among the Chinese in the Philippines, mentioned this legend in his book *Xinkan gewu qiongli bianlan* 新刊格物窮理便覽 (*Newly Printed Record of the Investigation of Things and Exhaustive Examination of Principle*) on the left side of the 251st *ye*.

[18] This expression is somewhat similar to what is mentioned in the section titled "The Joy of the Saints" in Manuel Dias's work *Shengjing zhijie* 聖經直解 (*Direct Interpretation of the Bible*); however, the Chinese expressions differ significantly, clearly indicating that Thomás Ortiz does not follow Manuel Dias's work.

a time when their desires go unfulfilled. The joy it brings is always complete, and the saints continuously fully enjoy this joy" (ibid., vol. 5, p. 142).

In comparison to similar works, Thomás Ortiz's writing style is vivid and emotive, with his descriptions being striking. Under his pen, Augustine appears as a painter, allowing the wicked to experience the terrifying scenes of the "Hell Scroll" in ukiyo-e while enabling the righteous to enter the glorious and resplendent heaven illustrated in Gustave Doré's edition of *The Divine Comedy*.

5. Quotes of Augustine's Purgatory Supplemented by Pedrode la Piñuela and Li Wenyu

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Augustine's eschatology was referenced in various works compiled by Jesuits and Augustinians. Though these references were often fragmented, their concise and meaningful nature allowed for a coherent reflection of Augustine's thoughts when considered together. Among these references, Augustine's views on the Last Judgment, the resurrection of the body, the punishment of the wicked in hell, and the ultimate happiness of the saints (the beatific vision) in heaven were highlighted. Overall, Augustine's eschatological doctrines are well-represented in Chinese documents from the Ming and Qing dynasties. Notably, the frequency of quotations regarding his views on eschatology is comparable to those concerning his understanding of the Trinity and *Imago dei*. This suggests that, within the Chinese context of the Ming and Qing dynasties, Augustine's theories of *Imago dei* and his thoughts about the ultimate destiny of humanity were particularly emphasized.

Augustine's ideas about purgatory, the intermediate state, and the belief that the good deeds and prayers of the living can benefit the souls of the deceased are seldom quoted. This may be because, although the concept of purgatory had its early foundations in Augustine's thought— referred to as the "true father of purgator" by Jacques Le Goff—it was more fully developed by other thinkers in the Middle Ages. Currently, the only notable citation of Augustine on this topic comes from Pedro de la Piñuela (Shi Duolu 石铎琭, 1650-1704), who referenced him twice in his book *Ai'jin Lianling Lun* 哀矜炼灵论(*On Almsgiving for the Souls in Purgatory*). He noted, "Saint Augustine once said: Performing Mass, giving alms, and observing great fasts for the souls in purgatory are deeds of extraordinary merit"(Standaert et al. 2009, vol. 21, p. 257). He further stated, "(The suffering in purgatory) is no different from eternal suffering, except for the distinction between the finiteness of purgatorial pain and the infiniteness of eternal torment. Those within the Church

constantly fear it. One should not claim that entering purgatory is a blessing. Saint Augustine remarked: If a person speaks such words and harbors such expectations, is not it he extremely foolish? Nowadays, when a person burns their finger for just half an hour, they can barely endure it. How then could one withstand the fire of purgatory for several seasons with their entire body and limbs? It may be easy to perform good deeds during one's lifetime to atone for sins and punishments, yet many people are lazy and procrastinate, thereby suffering greatly after death. What a pity!" (ibid., vol. 24, pp. 262-63)

In the late Qing Dynasty, Li Wenyu (1840-1911) , a Chinese Jesuit, wrote a book titled *Lianyu lüeshuo* 炼狱略说(*A Brief Account of Purgatory*) in the Xinwei year of the Tongzhi reign (1871). This work was later revised and published as *Lianyu kao* 炼狱考(*The Treatise on Purgatory*) in 1885 and reprinted by Cimutang 慈母堂 (Motherly Love Hall) in Shanghai in 1905.

First, Augustine affirmed the existence of a place called purgatory after death. This concept is distinct from hell; those who end up in hell are never forgiven, while the Bible indicates that some individuals can still have their sins absolved after death. Purgatory serves as a place for the purification of souls who have committed only minor sins, and it is described as being underground.

> *"Saints Augustine, Gregory, Bernard, and others have stated that, according to our Lord's words, people can still have their sins forgiven after they pass away. However, once someone enters hell, there will be no possibility of forgiveness forever. Thus, it is evident that, in addition to hell, there is also purgatory"* (Li 1905, ye 2-3).[19]

> *"The Old Testament says, 'I went down to the underworld and had pity on those who were in death and were hoping for the Lord's rescue, and I illuminated them with a bright light.' Saint Augustine interpreted this scripture by stating that after Jesus was crucified, He descended into purgatory. Additionally, on the Requiem Mass, the priest prays to the Lord, saying, 'Lord, please grant the souls in the dark prison the opportunity to be released from punishment.' The term 'dark prison' refers to the underworld. Therefore, it is clear that purgatory is located in the underworld"*(ibid., ye 6).

[19] The authors provide the folio numbers (*ye* 叶) for the quoted sentences based on the original edition（Li 1905). Please note that the page numbering differs from today's standards; one folio corresponds to two pages in modern terms. The authors translated the literature from Chinese to English.

Secondly, the soul must endure great suffering from the purifying fire in purgatory. Although it may seem absurd in theory to purify an intangible soul with tangible fire, Li Wenyu also quoted from Augustine:

> *"Saint Augustine once said: 'It is indeed a strange phenomenon that a physical fire burns a spiritual body, but it is a fact. Just as everyone knows that the soul and body combine to form a human being, no one can fully understand how they combine and how they function. How, then, can we fully comprehend the matters in purgatory? Most people have sinned against the Lord because they have overly loved physical things. Therefore, isn't it appropriate for God to punish them with physical fire?"* (ibid., ye 7)

Thirdly, the duration of punishment in purgatory depends on the will of God and is also related to the severity of the sins committed during one's lifetime. However, the soul itself cannot reduce its punishment in purgatory because the merits and demerits accumulated during on's life have already been determined and cannot be changed after death.

Fourthly, the good deeds, Masses, intercessions, prayers, and other acts performed by the deceased's relatives, friends, fellow believers, and the Church can help reduce the punishment in purgatory, allowing the deceased to exit purgatory earlier and ascend to heaven. The following sentences are particularly worthy of full quotation:

> *"Saint Augustine stated, 'Alms giving and assisting the poor to help the souls in purgatory is a highly meritorious deed"* (ibid., ye 25).

> *"(on atonement), Augustine remarked, 'The prayers of the Church, the sacrifices on the altar, and the acts of alms giving can all benefit the deceased. Since the Holy Church practices the sharing of merits, this applies not only to the living but also to the dead"* (ibid., ye 28).

> *"(Regarding heartfelt prayer and silent supplication), both can help souls in purgatory to be exempt from punishment and absolved of sins. Saint Augustine said, 'The prayers of the righteous are like keys to the gates of heaven.' He also stated, 'When the prayers of the good ascend to heaven, the mercy of God descends to the earth"* (ibid., ye 34).

> *"Acts of mercy and aiding the poor can replace the punishment of souls in purgatory. Therefore, from the very beginning and continuing to this day, whenever a believer passes away, the Holy Church always donates alms on their behalf. During Saint Augustine's lifetime, when a believer passed away, their relatives often provided food to the poor, demonstrating that almsgiving can save souls. If someone's ability does not match their intentions, particularly if their*

family is extremely poor, that is understandable. However, for wealthier families: why not allocate a portion of their wealth to assist the souls in purgatory? (ibid., ye 35).

This can be considered the standard position of the Catholic Church regarding Purgatory since the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Although Li Wenyu did not mention indulgences directly, the concept of Purgatory serves as the theoretical basis for them. However, due to opposition from Protestant churches, indulgences were abolished, and the theory of Purgatory, which underpinned them, was also rejected. This is a topic that Li Wenyu, as a Catholic, chose not to address in his book.

When analyzed together, these Chinese texts provide a comprehensive reflection of Augustine's thoughts of eschatology. They cover his views on the Last Judgment, the resurrection of the body, the punishment of the wicked in hell, and the saints' experience of supreme happiness (the beatific vision) in heaven. However, they omit concepts such as purgatory, the intermediate state, and the belief that the good deeds and prayers of the living can benefit the souls of the deceased.

Conclusions

In the case of Matteo Ricci, who was part of the first generation of missionaries that arrived in China during the late Ming Dynasty, there was already a notable emphasis on using eschatology to address issues concerning what happens after death. Confucianism, as articulated by Confucius, held a limited view, with the statement, "We don't even know about life; how can we know about death?" The missionaries supplemented Confucianism's focus on life—what can be termed its "ethics of one world"—with the "ethics of two worlds" found in monotheistic thought.

Some Confucian scholars, such as Xu Guangqi 徐光啟(1562-1633), Li Zhizao 李之藻(1565-1630), and Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠(1557-1627), viewed this integration as a valid solution to the questions surrounding life, death, and the concept of absolute justice—the correlation between virtue and fortune. The influence of these missionaries and their Chinese followers facilitated the spread of Catholic individual eschatology (the theory of the four last things) in China.

Given that the theory of the four last things is closely associated with Augustine, his views on individual eschatology—covering themes of death, heaven, and hell—were introduced in significant detail during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Even the concept of Purgatory, which typically garnered less

attention, was thoroughly presented during this period. Thus, from Matteo Ricci and Diego de Pantoja onward, there was a continuity of Catholic individual eschatology during the Ming and Qing dynasties, reflecting Augustin's influence throughout.

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A New Exploration of Li Wenyu's Life and Works

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Abstract: Li Wenyu（李问渔）was a prominent Chinese Jesuit theologian, philosopher, educator, and pioneer of the Catholic press in late Qing China. This paper aims to systematically examine and verify the major events of Li Wenyu' s life as well as his corpus of authored and translated works. A total of 78 works have been identified, of which approximately two-thirds are directly related to Catholic doctrine, catechism, liturgy, Church history, and hagiography. The remaining works span a range of disciplines, including the natural sciences, philosophy, history, and social institutions. His contributions on Western learning aligned with the societal demand for knowledge from the West in modern China, objectively advancing the nation's modern development.

Key words: Li Wenyu, Jesuit missionary, Authored and Translated works

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Current studies on Li Wenyu's life and works remains limited to fragmented commemorative biographical sketches with insufficient details. There is a notable lack of systematic collation and research on his works and translations, particularly concerning unresolved discrepancies among scholars about the number and titles of his writings. Building upon previous studies, this paper employs newly discovered archival materials and genealogical records to comprehensively reconstruct Li Wenyu's biographical trajectory. Concurrently, it undertakes a critical examination to verify the corpus of his authored and translated works, analyzes their historical contexts and creative motivations, thereby laying a material foundation for further exploration of his thoughts.

Chronicle of Li Wenyu's Life

Li Wenyu (1840–1911), personal name Di (杕), literary name Damu Zhai Zhu(大木斋主),[1] and Christian name Laurentius, was born in Tangmuqiao Town, Chuansha County, Jiangsu Province, which today is part of Pudong, Shanghai. At the time, the Li family belonged to a small Catholic community, possessing a chapel, with over a hundred parishioners. (Xu 1936a, p. 723)

According to historical records, "Catholicism has a long history in Pudong. As early as the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, the earliest group of Catholic believers had already appeared. In its early stages, Catholic missionary activities in Pudong centered around Zhangjialou and Jinjiaxiang in Yangjing, while in modern times, Tangmuqiao became the focal point." (Tang 2007, p. 149) The Gazetteer of Chuansha County states: "Among the local people, aside from the majorities who traditionally believed in Buddhism, Catholicism was the

[1] In "*Biographies of Figures in the History of Chinese Catholicism* 中国天主教史人物传" by Fang Hao(方豪), it is recorded that Li Wenyu was originally named Hao Ran during his studies at the St. Ignatius College in 1853. In a work "Guanguang Riben 观光日本" , printed by the Shanghai Cimutang(上海慈母堂) press in 1871, translated by François Giaquinto (1818–1864), the proofreader noted as "Yun Jian Tong Hui Shi–Wenyu Li Haoran" (云间同会士 问渔李浩然). (Fang 2007) Likewise, in Angelo Zottoli' s(晁德莅) *The True Religion Proven from Within*(Zhen Jiao Zi Zheng 真教自证 1872), the proofreader noted as "Li Haoran Wenyu (李浩然问渔), indicating that he had not yet changed his name to Di 杕, and at the time went by the Literary name Da mu Zhai Zhu(大木斋主)."(Zottoli 1872) However, *the Genealogy of the Li Clan* 李氏家乘, revised in the 14th year of the Republic (1925), records in the eighth generation: "Zhongjun(钟俊), personal name Guofan(国范), had sons Haodi(浩杕) and Haoran（浩然）, and four daughters without personal name." (Li 1925) In the ninth generation, it records: "Haodi, named Wenyu, was a Catholic priest and academic work abounds," (Li 1925) suggesting that Li Wenyu had a younger brother named Li Haoran. (The character "Hao" 浩 was used for the ninth-generation naming convention in the Li family. Based on various scholarly studies and historical records, there remains some disagreement as to whether "Li Haoran" was an earlier name or alias of Li Wenyu. This matter warrants further scholarly investigation. Regarding the origins of his name "Wenyu", some scholars interpret it as subtly expressing his Catholic faith. (Leeb 2000b, p. 81)

most prevalent religion." (Fang and Huang 1937, p. 2)

According to the Li family genealogy, the Li family's conversion to Catholicism dates back to the Kangxi or Yongzheng reigns of the Qing Dynasty. What prompted the family to adopt the Catholic faith? In the Li Family Records, under the section "Additional Notes from Madam Fang: Anecdotes of Ancestors," it is recorded: "Our clan has long practiced the Catholic faith, though the exact origin can no longer be traced. During the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods, due to the social situation, the second branch of the fourth generation, represented by Rubin（如滨）, converted to Buddhism after moving to Shen (i.e., Shanghai). However, the first branch (Ruwei Gong 如渭), third branch (Ruyuan Gong 如渊), and fourth branch (Ruyuan Gong 如源), who remained in Zhangjiangzha, continued practicing Catholicism to this day." (Li 1925, p. 29)

In the preface to his work *Liku* 理窟, Li Wenyu mentioned: "Since our ancestors embraced the faith, it has been eight generations now, and I have been nurtured in this atmosphere, so my understanding is exact and detailed." (Li 1886a, Pref. p. 1) According to Xu Zongze's Account of the Visit to the Family of Father Li Wenyu, "They say that the Catholic faith was first embraced by Yongxi Gong 永锡公, and counting from him, Father Li (the author notes: Li Wenyu) is the seventh generation." Li Wenyu's third generation ancestor, Yongxi Gong, married into the Gong family in Zhangjiangzha, Nanyi. He had four sons. The second son, Rubin, inherited the ancestral property and followed his grandfather Tianpei(天培) to reside in Shanghai. The other three brothers remained in Zhangjiangzha. From the aforementioned "Anecdotes of Ancestors," we learn that Rubin converted to Buddhism. According to Account of the Visit to the Family of Father Li Wenyu, "Because Rubin followed his grandfather Tianpei, who was of another religion (i.e., Buddhist)." From these materials, we can deduce that Li Wenyu's second-generation ancestor, Tianpei Gong, was a Buddhist, while his third-generation ancestor, Yongxi Gong (son of Tianpei), was a Catholic. Xu Zongze inferred: "Yongxi married into the Gong family, which was likely Catholic at the time, and thus naturally converted upon joining the family. Since Yongxi was Tianpei's only son, his second son Rubin inherited the family property and followed his grandfather in not adopting the Catholic faith—though perhaps he had been baptized at some point." (Xu 1936b, pp. 730-731)

Li Wenyu was born on August 12, 1840. He had one elder sister, one younger brother, and three younger sisters. In his early years, he studied for the imperial examination under Mingjing Scholar Zhuang Songlou of Chuansha (dates of birth and death unknown). In 1851, due to a famine in

Shanghai, Li Wenyu was sent to study at St. Ignatius College in Xujiahui, where he learned both science and French. He studied alongside Ma Xiangbo 马相伯. At that time, Italian Jesuit missionary Angelo Zottoli (1826–1902) was the rector of the college, and both Li and Ma were his students. On August 18, 1856 he joined the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception and subsequently held various positions such as vice leader, secretary, and convener over the next six years. (Zhi 1942, p. 252) In 1859, Li Wenyu gave up the pursuit of the imperial examination and dedicated himself to the study of Latin, philosophy, theology, and Catholic doctrine. He graduated from St. Ignatius College in 1862. On May 29, 1862, the Jesuit Novitiate was established, admitting eleven novices in its first class. Nine came from St. Ignatius College, including Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo, while two came from the monastery. (Fang 2020, p. 65) Father Zottoli served as the spiritual director of the novices. Between 1863 and 1864, as a novice, Li Wenyu and others such as Ma Xiangbo engaged in relief work in places like Suzhou and Taicang, helping refugees and tending to the wounded. (Bao 2017, p. 54) After completing his two-year novitiate, Li took his first religious vows: poverty, chastity, and obedience. (Fang 2020, p. 67) In 1865, Li continued his philosophical studies at the Dongjiadu Major Seminary. Three years later, in 1867, he began studying theology. On June 29, 1869, during the Tongzhi reign, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Adrien Languillat (1808–1878).[2] He graduated in theology in 1870. After earning his doctorate in

[2] There are differing scholarly views on the date of Li Wenyu's ordination and the period during which he engaged in missionary work. According to Fang Hao (Fang 2007), Li Wenyu was ordained in the eleventh year of the Tongzhi reign (i.e., 1872) and preached for six years. In 1878, he taught Latin at the Dongjiadu Minor Seminary. Similarly, Jean Charbonnier states: "He entered the Jesuit novitiate and, ten years later (editor's note: 1872), was ordained. After six years of missionary service, he was appointed rector of a minor seminary near the Huangpu River in Dongjiadu, Shanghai, where he taught Latin." (Charbonnier 1998) Leopold Leeb records: "In 1872 (some say 1866), he was ordained and preached for six years. In 1878, he taught Latin at the Dongjiadu Minor Seminary in Shanghai." (Leeb 2000a) Joachim Kurtz asserts that Li Wenyu was ordained along with his classmate Ma Xiangbo in 1872 as a priest of the Shanghai diocese. (Kurtz 2010) (This claim may be incorrect, as discussed below) These scholars generally agree that Li Wenyu was ordained in 1872 and preached for six years. However, an article titled "The Death of Father Li Wenyu of Our Institution," published in 1911 in Shengxinbao 圣心报, reports: "In the summer of the eighth year of the Tongzhi reign (editor's note: 1869), he was ordained and then served in missions in Songjiang, Qingpu, Nanhui, and Shanghai in Jiangsu Province, as well as in Yingshan, Jianping, and Ningguo in Anhui Province." (Anonymous 1911a) The Genealogy of the Li Family, (Lishi jiacheng, 李氏家乘) biography of Li Wenyu directly cites this Shengxinbao article, also affirming that he was ordained in 1869. (Li 1925) A 1911 article titled "Brief Biography of the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the Huibao for Thirty-Two Years" (Huibao, 汇报) also states: "He entered the Society in 1862 and was ordained in 1869. He preached in Yingzhou, Ningguo, and Songjiang for ten years." (Anonymous 1911b) Zhi Mao, in "A Writing Missionary: Father Li Wenyu" (Xiezuo chuanjiao de Li Wenyu shenfu, 写作传教的李问渔神父), citing Xu Zongze's " 25th Anniversary Memorial of the Death of Father Li Wenyu," (Li Wenyu siduo shisi zhounian jinian 李问渔司铎逝世二十五周年纪念) and a French biography co-authored by Zhang Boda and Fu Yagu, notes: "After his ordination, he preached for six years in Songjiang, Nanhui, Qingpu, and in Anhui's Yingshan, Jianping, and Shuidong, before being transferred in 1878 to teach Latin at the Dongjiadu Minor Seminary." (Zhi

philosophy and theology, he began his missionary work. In 1871, he served in Songjiang. In 1872, he was transferred to Nanhui, and in 1873, he returned to Songjiang. At that time, a special Catholic deanery had been established in

1942) In 25th Anniversary Memorial of the Death of Father Li Wenyu, Xu Zongze wrote: "On June 29, 1869, he was ordained by Bishop Lang. The following year, he completed his theology studies with distinction and earned doctorates in philosophy and theology. He then began missionary work... In 1878, he was appointed professor at the Dongjiadu Seminary." (Xu 1936a) This record provides clear timelines and locations: he preached from 1871 to 1875, returned to Xujiahui to teach Chinese, and then resumed preaching in Anhui in 1876–1877, amounting to six years of missionary service. An article in Fujian Catholic Weekly, (Fujian Gongjiao Zhoukan, 福建公教周刊), titled "In Memory of a Philosopher: 25th Anniversary Memorial of the Death of Father Li Wenyu," states "After graduating from Xujiahui College, he joined the Jesuit order and was ordained, preaching for ten years in Yingzhou, Ningguo, and Songjiang in the Shanghai Diocese."(Anonymous 1936b) Hu Duan, in "A Catholic Writer: Father Li Wenyu" (Yi wei gongjiao zuojia Li Wenyu siduo, 一位公教作家李问渔司铎), also cites the Shengxinbao article, confirming that Li was ordained in 1869. (Hu 1937) In Tianjin Catholic Daily, (Tianjin Yishi Zhu Ribaobao, 天津益世主日报), an article marking the 25th anniversary of Li Wenyu's death recounts "He and a classmate joined the Jesuits in the first year of Tongzhi (editor's note: 1862) and were later ordained, becoming the first Chinese priests ordained after the Jesuits' return. He preached for ten years in Yingzhou and Ningguo in Anhui and Songjiang in Jiangsu." (Anonymous 1936a) In Biography of the Classical Scholar Li Wenyu, (Guwenjia Li Wenyu zhuan, 古文家李问渔传), Zhang Ruogu writes "At the age of thirty (editor's note: 1869), he was ordained as a Jesuit priest. The following year, he received doctorates in philosophy and theology and was assigned to preach in Anhui and Jiangsu. In the first year of the Guangxu reign (1875), he returned to Xujiahui Seminary to teach Chinese and in the fourth year (1878) taught Latin at Dongjiadu." (Zhang 1938) These records reveal discrepancies regarding Li Wenyu' s ordination and missionary dates. He was ordained either in 1869 or 1872, and his missionary period lasted either six or ten years. According to Zhang Ruogu's chronology of Ma Xiangbo: "In the ninth year of Tongzhi, gengwu (1870), at age thirty-one, he received a doctorate in theology and was ordained." (Zhang 1939) Zhu Weizheng et al., in A Brief Biography of Ma Xiangbo, (Ma Xiangbo zhuanlüe, 马相伯传略), include a chronological table by Liao Mei that likewise states Ma was ordained in 1870 and began preaching in Ningguo and Xuzhou. However, Li Tiangang in Faith and Tradition: Ma Xiangbo's Religious Career, (Xinyang yu chuantong—Ma Xiangbo de zongjiao shengya, 信仰与传统—马相伯的宗教生涯) notes that "in 1869, Ma Xiangbo earned his doctorate and was ordained. As a priest, he began preaching in Ningguo and Xuzhou." (Zhu et al. 2005) Although these three sources differ slightly on Ma Xiangbo' s year of ordination, we need not delve deeper into that here. What they do indicate is that Joachim Kurtz's statement that "Li Wenyu and Ma Xiangbo were ordained together in 1872" is inaccurate, since Ma Xiangbo was not ordained in 1872. In the preface to Liku 理窟, Li Wenyu recalls his own timeline: "I have long wished to write a book to expound the Way and publish it to the world. But after ordination, I traveled extensively in Anhui and Jiangsu for eight years, constantly occupied and unable to fulfill my wish. In the spring of the year Jimao (1879), I was appointed editor-in-chief of the Yiwenlu 益闻录." (Li 1886a) This suggests he preached for eight years and became an editor in 1879, meaning his missionary work spanned 1871–1878. Since this was post-ordination, his ordination must have occurred before 1871. Based on the above sources, this article preliminarily concludes that the oft-cited date of 1872 is doubtful. While it remains unclear whether he began preaching immediately after ordination, the ordination almost certainly occurred before 1871. Given the textual evidence, especially the 1911 Shengxinbao obituary, and the common claim that he was ordained the same year as Ma Xiangbo, we tentatively identify 1869 as the most plausible date of Li Wenyu's ordination. As for the duration of his missionary work: assuming he was ordained in 1869, received his doctorate in 1870, began preaching in 1871, returned to Xujiahui to teach Chinese in 1875, resumed preaching in Anhui in 1876–1877, and taught Latin at Dongjiadu in 1878, the total duration of his missionary service would be from 1871 to 1877—six years. The "ten years" often cited likely refers to the span from ordination to his return to Shanghai in 1878, that is, roughly 1869–1878.

Ningguo, staffed by six foreign priests and two Chinese priests, managing 27 churches, over 1,650 baptized believers, and more than 20,000 catechumens. Li Wenyu was one of the two Chinese priests. In September 1873, Father Joseph Seckinger assigned him to Lu'an to care for catechumens and newly baptized Christians who had migrated from Henan Province due to religious persecution. (Fang 2020, pp. 71-72) In 1874, he was posted in Yingzhou. In 1875, he returned to Xujiahui Minor Seminary to teach Chinese. From 1876 to 1878, he resumed missionary work in places such as Shuidong, Ningguo, Anhui Province. Due to the "Southern Anhui Persecution," Li Wenyu, who was then at Xujiahui, together with Father Qiao Qianyu (pastor of Ningguo) and Father Joseph Seckinger (then in Zhenjiang), went to Wuhu to receive and support fleeing priests. In September, Father Shen Zekuan was the first to be reassigned to Ningguo, and Li Wenyu was also assigned to return to continue his missionary work in Anhui. (Fang 2020, p. 72)

In 1878, Li Wenyu was transferred back to the Dongjiadu Minor Seminary to teach Latin. On July 31, he professed his final vows.[3] From this point on, Li Wenyu remained in Xujiahui, ceased traveling for missionary work, and began his writing career. On December 16, 1878, Li Wenyu launched a trial issue of *Yiwen Lu* 益闻录, a semi-monthly Catholic newspaper published in Shanghai.[4] On March 16, 1879, the official launch took place, and on August 16 of the same year, it was converted into a weekly publication. "At that time, apart from *Shen Bao* 申报 in Shanghai, newspapers were as rare as morning stars. Once *Yiwen Lu* was launched, it quickly gained popularity." (Xu 1936a, p. 723) In 1880, Li also oversaw the Major Seminary and Lady's Convent. He preached and supervised spiritual formation at the girls' school, managing multiple roles. Father Gong Guyu assisted him in editing *Yiwen Lu*. (Xu 1936a, p. 723) On May 3, 1882, beginning with issue No. 151, *Yiwen Lu* became a semimonthly publication. In 1887, Li Wenyu launched another Catholic newspaper, *Shengxin Bao* 圣心报, as a semi-monthly publication. Since he held multiple responsibilities, from 1887, Li focused on *Shengxin Bao*, while Father Gong Guyu took over *Yiwen Lu* and the Major Seminary, with Li continuing to provide support. (Xu 1936a, p. 723) In 1888, Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) awarded Li the Order of the Star in recognition of his service. (Anonymous 1911b, p. 598) In 1890, Li resumed his role as chief editor of *Yiwen Lu*, while continuing as chief editor of *Shengxin Bao*. In 1891, he also resumed oversight of the Major Seminary and supervised spiritual formation for students of St. Ignatius College. These roles remained unchanged for the next five years. In 1897, he

[3] Information on Li Wenyu's missionary activities—including dates and locations—mainly comes from Xu Zongze (Xu 1936a) and Fang Yunfang (Fang 2020).

[4] For the naming and publication cycle of Yiwenlu (益闻录) see Fang's book. (Fang 2020, pp. 101-112)

became the spiritual director for the Sisters of the Presentation while resigning from the administration of the Major Seminary. (Xu 1936a, p. 723) In 1898, *Yiwen Lu* merged with *Gezhi Xinbao* (a Catholic-affiliated newspaper) to form *Gezhi Yiwen Huibao* 格致益闻汇报, which was renamed *Hui Bao* 汇报 beginning with issue No. 100 on August 9, 1899. In 1904, Father Pan Qiulu succeeded Li as editor of *Hui Bao*, with Li remaining as associate editor and continuing to oversee *Shengxin Bao*. (Xu 1936a, p. 723) That same year, Li Wenyu drafted the charter for Qiming Girls' School, formally named the institution, and oversaw its establishment. (Zhang 1933) In 1906, Li became president of Aurora College (Zhendan Xueyuan) and a professor of philosophy, while also serving as chief editor of both *Hui Bao* and *Shengxin Bao*. (Fang 2007, p. 651) As Li Wenyu held multiple positions and struggled to achieve perfection in all duties, Father Xu Yunxi took over *Hui Bao* in 1907, enabling Li to devote himself exclusively to Aurora College (震旦学院) and Shengxin Bao. In February 1908, Huibao was split into two publications: *Shishi Huilu* 时事汇录, which remained semiweekly, and *Kexue Zazhi* 科学杂志, which became semimonthly. As Li Wenyu approached his seventies and his energy diminished daily, the superiors instructed Father Xu Boyu to assume control of both *Hui Bao* and *Shengxin Bao*, with Li serving as his assistant. (Xu 1936a, p. 724) On February 5, 1909, the two publications were re-merged. As Father Xu took on other responsibilities, Father Zhang Yushan assisted, and Li resumed editorial duties for both papers until his death. (Xu 1936a, p. 724) In 1910, Li taught philosophy and ethics at Nanyang Public School. (Zhang 1947, p. 56)[5] On May 7, 1911, falling ill, Li spoke with his associate editor about arrangements after his death. He expressed satisfaction that all his translated works had been completed and entrusted the editor with proofreading the unpublished ones. Li Wenyu passed away on May 12, 1911. (Anonymous 1911b, p. 597) *Hui Bao* ceased publication thereafter.

Textual Research on Li Wenyu's Writings and Translations

Li Wenyu produced an extensive body of writings and translations during his lifetime. As recorded, he "simultaneously managed two newspaper affairs, ceaselessly reading with eyes and writing with hands. His works piled up to his height, yet he never complained of fatigue." (Anonymous 1911a, p. 213) "The quantity of his writings and translations established a new record in Catholic literary history. Although missionaries like Matteo Ricci, Johann Adam Schall von Bell, Ferdinand Verbiest, and Ludovico Buglio had

[5] The author records that Li Wenyu's "*A letter to discourse on the Tao with Mr Fu Shuojia*" (Yu Fushuo jia xiansheng lun daoshu, 与傅硕家先生论道书) was written in May of the second year of the Xuantong reign (1910), while Li was teaching philosophy and ethics at Nanyang Public School. However, the exact date of his appointment at the school remains unknown.

contributed many valuable works, none could match Li's erudition and productivity." (Hu 1937, p. 33) In his Divine Work Diary, Li Wenyu wrote that he "wrote at least one book annually."(Zhi 1942, p. 252) However, scholars have presented divergent views regarding the exact number, titles, and other details of Li's works, with some offering only general descriptions. This section first collates and verifies the quantity, titles, and editions of Li Wenyu's works based on previous research and collections from major domestic libraries. Subsequently, it analyzes the background and purposes underlying Li's literary creations: Was his motivation solely "writing for the pursuit of true human happiness," as suggested by others? (Hu 1937, p.35) Or were there other considerations and concerns?

In "A Brief Biography of the Founder and Chief Editor of The Bulletin Over Thirty-Two Years," the author provides a comprehensive inventory of Li Wenyu's works, totaling 61 titles. (Anonymous 1911b, pp. 598-599) (see Table 1) According to the *Fujian Catholic Weekly* 福建公教周刊, Li Wenyu authored 18 original works, translated 39 works, and compiled 4, making him not only a pioneer of Catholic journalism in China but also one of its most prolific writers. (Anonymous 1936b, p. 5) The author of the biography reports a total of 61 works authored and translated by Li Wenyu. Xu Zongze's statistics list 17 original works, 39 translations, and 4 compilations, amounting to 60 distinct works, with a detailed enumeration of each title. (Xu 1936a, p. 727) (see Table 2). Hu Duan conducted a more meticulous categorization of Li Wenyu's literary output, identifying 66 titles (though one was a duplicate, the actual number is 65) (Hu 1937, pp.34-35) (see Table 3). Zhang Ruogu notes that Li Wenyu "translated and interpreted approximately sixty works on religious doctrine and academic inquiry. His prolific writings were the result of tireless dedication. His most renowned works include *Li Ku* 理窟, *Xinjing Yiyi* 新经译义, *Xixue Guanjian* 西学关键, *Xingxing Xueyao* 形性学要, *Xingfa Xueyao* 性法学要, and so on. He also compiled such collections as the *Collected Works of Xu Wendin Gong* 徐文定公集 and *Mo Jing Ji* 墨井集, among four compilations in total." (Zhang 1938, p. 421) An article published in the *Tianjin Yishi Catholic Daily* 天津益世主日报, titled "The 25th Anniversary of the Death of Father Li Wenyu", states: "In addition to his editorial work for the two Catholic journals, he was devoted to writing. He authored 18 works, translated 39, and compiled 4", (Anonymous 1936a, p. 591) making a total of 61 works. In Writing as Evangelism: Father Li Wenyu, the author further elaborates:

> *He also authored many books, of which more than sixty were published. In addition, quite a few of his works appeared in Yi Wen Lu, The Bulletin, and Sacred Heart News but were never printed as standalone volumes. Among the published*

works, there are 17 original writings, 39 translations, and 4 edited volumes. (Zhi 1942, p. 254)

The author counted a total of 60 works authored and translated by Li Wenyu and briefly categorized their subject matter. In Postscript to the Letters of Father Li Wenyu, Zhang Ruogu recorded: "During his lifetime, Mr. Li translated and authored over sixty works expounding on doctrine and academic discourse. Notable titles include *Li Ku* 理窟, *Xinjing Yiyi* 新经译义, *Xixue Guanjian* 西学关键, *Xingxing Xueyao* 形性学要, *Xingfa Xueyao* 性法学要. He also compiled Collected Works of Xu Wendin Gong and Collected Writings from the Wu Li." (Zhang 1947, p.56) Fang Hao cited the biography of Li Wenyu written by Chen Baixi, who in turn quoted Mr. Gong: "There was no year without a new book." The biography listed 58 book titles and noted that during a 32-year span, Li Wenyu authored and translated a total of 60 works—17 original compositions, 39 translations, and 4 editorial works. (Fang 2007, p.651) Jean Charbonnier echoed Fang Hao's assessment: "Li Wenyu wrote or translated approximately 60 works. Over a span of 32 years, he independently authored 17 works, translated 39 titles, and led the compilation of 4 collections." (Charbonnier 1998, p. 270) Leopold Leeb also recorded that Li Wenyu authored and translated a total of 60 works, listing a selection of them, though not comprehensively. (Leeb 2000a, pp. 182-183) Joachim kurtz, in his academic article, carefully compiled detailed information about the titles, sources, and editions of Li Wenyu's writings and translations, tallying 70 works in total(see Table 4). (Kurtz 2006, pp.152-158) Fang Yunfang also reviewed Li Wenyu's works, concluding that " a relatively reliable count of Li Wenyu's published works, including original writings, translations, and edited volumes, comes to 69. This figure is based on the 68 titles recorded by Guo Jianbin and Xiao Qinghe, minus a duplicate entry for *Tianyan Boyi* 天演驳议, and plus two overlooked titles: *Kewen Tiaoda* 客问条答 and *Lianyu Lueshuo* 炼狱略说. If further verified, three additional titles found by Joachim kurtz—*Feizhou Youji* 斐洲游记, *Riyong Baoshu* 日用宝书, and *Questions on Daily Communion for Children* 幼童日领圣体之问题—would bring the total to 72"(Fang 2020, p.151) (see Table 5). The present author has previously published an article compiling Li Wenyu's works, identifying 68 titles at the time. (Xiao and Guo 2016) However, subsequent scholars pointed out certain errors in that compilation. This paper seeks to correct those earlier inaccuracies and advance the research based on prior studies.[6]

Comparative research reveals discrepancies among earlier scholars regarding the total number of Li Wenyu's works. Joachim kurtz and Fang

[6] Fang Yunfang has pointed out some errors in this study. (Fang 2020, p.151)

Yunfang both undertook detailed inventories of titles and editions, but errors and omissions remain. For example, According to *A Brief Biography of the Founder and Chief Editor of Hui Bao over Thirty-Two Years* (hereafter referred to as the "*Hui Bao Biography*"), "*Xu Liku* 续理窟 was not yet published, and *Original Theology* 原神学 was still being serialized." (see Table 1) Since the biography was published in May 1911—the month of Li Weny's death—it is likely *Original Theology* had not yet been completed or published. As for *Xu Liku*, the biography states: "After his passing, colleagues at the publishing house compiled and printed *Xu Liku* in two volumes in 1915. This book was a manuscript finalized by Mr. Li during his lifetime."(Xu 1936a, p.726) Therefore, Xu Liku was unpublished during Li Wenyu's life. Xu Zongze's inventory (hereafter referred to as Xu's research or article) includes an entry for *Liku Zhengxu* 理窟正序(see Table 2), which likely refers to both *Li Ku* and *Xu Liku* as a single work. However, since *Li Ku* was published during Li' s lifetime and went through multiple editions, while *Xu Liku* was first printed in 1915, each with standalone editions, the two should be regarded as separate works. In a catalog (see Table 3), Hu Duan listed *Zengbu Quanhuoji* 增补拳祸记 (in two large volumes) as a single work (hereafter referred to as Hu's research or article). Fang Hao, when discussing Li Wenyu's more academic works, referred to *Quanhuoji* 拳祸记 (two types) . (Fang 2007, p. 651) The term "two types" may imply two meanings: first, that the two volumes—*Quanfei Huoguoji* 拳匪祸国记 and *Quanfei Huojiaoji* 拳匪祸教记—deal with different subject matters; second, that after publishing the original, Li Wenyu solicited feedback from missionaries, revised errors and omissions, and later reissued a revised edition—*Zengbu Quanfei Huojiaoji* 增补拳匪祸教记. (Li 1909c) In either case, since both volumes were published independently and most scholars treat them as separate titles, they should be regarded as two distinct works. Li Wenyu also compiled and published a lithographic edition of *An Account of the 1900 Church Persecutions* (*Gengzi Jiaonanji* 庚子教难记)in 1902, based on reports from priests across dioceses affected during the Boxer Rebellion. In its preface, Li stated: "Fearing the potential inaccuracies in reporting incidents from thousands of miles away, and recognizing that much may still be missing, I have had this lithographically printed and distributed to priests in the afflicted regions. They are kindly asked to point out inaccuracies and supply missing information before sending it back. — Jesuit Father Li Laolengzuo, October, Guangxu 28 [1902]." (Li 1902) This indicates the edition was intended as a draft for verification by contributors. Upon comparing this version with the 1905 *Quanfei Huojiaoji* published by the Tushanwan Press, it is evident that while the content is largely similar, the lithographic version lacks publication data and shows minor variations in structure, content, and prefaces. Thus, the

lithographic edition of *An Account of the 1900 Church Persecutions* appears to be a preparatory version for the later formal publication of *Quanfei Huojiaoji* and can be considered its earliest version.

In the article in *Huibao Xiaozhuan*, as well as the articles by Xu Zongze, and Fang Yunfang, the book titled *Gongyibu Zouding Hunli* 公议部奏定婚例 is listed. However, in the articles by Hu Duan and Joachim Kurtz, a similarly titled work, *Hunpei Tiaoli* 婚配条例, is recorded. As I have not yet located the relevant book, it is provisionally categorized as the same work based on the literal meaning of the titles.

Huibao Xiaozhuan, Xu Zongze, and Kurtz all mention that *Shengmu Zhuan* 圣母传, *Zongtu Dashilu* 宗徒大事录, and *Jiaohuang Hongxu* 教皇洪序 were extracted from the book *Daoyuan Jingcui* 道源精萃.(Garnier 1887) According to my research, these three works were translated by Li Wenyu. The work *Zongtu Liezhuan* 宗徒列传, included in *Daoyuan Jingcui*, was edited and polished by Li Wenyu based on a fragmentary manuscript by Gao Yizhi, and should be classified as a compiled work by Li Wenyu.[7]

The 1926 edition of *Zongtu Liezhuan* is held in the Peking University Library, and library catalog records also register Li Wenyu as its editor. *Shengmu Zhuan*, *Zongtu Dashilu*, and *Jiaohuang Hongxu* were all published as standalone editions and should be counted as three distinct works. *De Jing* 德镜 is divided into two volumes: the first volume is *Shengmu Zhuan*, and the second is *Muxiang Sanshiyi Shou* 默想三十一首.(Li 1889) The *Shengmu Zhuan* in the first volume of *De Jing* is identical to the version included in *Daoyuan Jingcui*.

Fang Yunfang correctly pointed out errors in my previous textual research articles, and these have now been addressed. First, due to my oversight, *Kewen Tiaoda* 客问条答 was not included in the initial compilation, but it has now been added. Second, since I had not yet consulted *Lianyu Lueshuo* 炼狱略说 (held at the National Library of China) at that time, I failed to conduct a comparative study between Lianyu Lueshuo and *Lianyu Kao* (炼狱考), and superficially categorized them as a single work based solely on literal interpretation of their titles, when in fact they are two distinct texts. These have now been properly reclassified. Finally, in Hu Wen' s bibliography under the "Theological and Philosophical" category, both *Tianyan Boyi* 天演驳义 and *Tianyan Lun Boyi* 天演论驳义 were listed. I concur with Fang's assertion that these two titles should be considered a single work. This conclusion is supported by the fact that only Hu's bibliography contains both similar titles,

[7] For specific textual research . (Xiao and Guo 2016, pp.227-228)

while Kurtz's records list only *Tian Yan Lun Bo Yi*. Furthermore, modern scholarly research on Li Wenyu' s "evolutionary views" primarily references Tianyan Lun Boyi, with no extant citations of Tian Yan Bo Yi as a separate work.

Kurtz' s research verified that Li Wenyu authored or translated a total of 70 works. Building upon Kurtz's study, Fang's article added *Zongtu Liezhuan* and *Mojing Shuhuaji* 墨井书画集, bringing the total to 72 works. Zhang Ruogu mentioned in *Biography of the Classical Prose Master Li Wenyu* and *Postscript and Commentary on the Letters of Priest Li Wenyu* that *Mojing Shuhuaji* was compiled by Li Wenyu. Xu's article and the article in *Huibao Xiaozhuan* also listed *Mojing Shuhuaji* as one of Li's compilations (see Table 1 and Table 2). Although *Mojing Shuhuaji* is housed in the Shanghai Library, its authorship by Li Wenyu has yet to be conclusively confirmed. In the preface written by Ma Xiangbo for *Mojingji*, it is mentioned that "My friend Wenyu has always been strictly self-disciplined regarding indulgence in trivialities. Though his words are known throughout the land, they are all writings on basic human necessities. Yet for the poetry of Mojing, he not only praised and compiled them, but also included its calligraphy and paintings." (Li 1900b, Pref. Ma xiangbo.p.2) This suggests that beyond editing the poetry and works of Wu Yushan, Li also compiled his paintings.

In Kurtz's text, the book *Dawen Xinbian* 答问新编 is listed, and the author asserts that it remains an unpublished manuscript. This work is cataloged alongside *Kewen Tiaoda* 客问条答, suggesting they might be regarded as the same or closely related texts. This is incorrect. First, *Dawen Xinbian* was in fact published in 1880 by the Xujiahui Printing House in Shanghai. In the preface by Ni Huailun（Valentin Garnier）, it is stated: "Therefore, key doctrines of the Church, and several dozen common doubts held by people at the time, were explained in detail in the form of questions and answers, and Priest Li was entrusted to carefully review and translate the material into this volume." (Li 1880a, Pref. p.2) This clearly identifies the work as a translated piece by Li Wenyu. I have also examined an unpublished manuscript version of *Dawen Xinbian*, and found its content nearly identical to the published version, with only minor differences in wording. Secondly, *Dawen Xinbian* and *Kewen Tiaoda* are two distinct works. Although the main content is largely similar, a comparative analysis shows additions and omissions in each; parts of their prefaces are identical, both written by Ni Huailun. While both texts adopt a question and answer format, *Dawen Xinbian* includes specific characters, settings, and narrative context, whereas *Kewen Tiaoda* is structured in a concise one-question-one-answer format. Moreover,

Dawen Xinbian concludes with an essay titled *Piqi Qianlun* 辟畦浅论 by Ni Huailun. Fang's article also omits *Dawen Xinbian*.

Li Wenyu once authored *Shengxinyue Xinbian* 圣新月新编, and due to the excellence of its writing, Zhou Fengqi adapted it into the Yanbei dialect and republished it under the title *Shengxinyue Xinbian Yixiang* 圣心月新编遗响. Fang noted: "Li Wenyu also excerpted, translated, and edited *Shengxinyue Xinbian Yixiang* , published by the Catholic Church in Hejian，1903."(Fang 2020, p. 154) This statement may not be entirely accurate, as the work should be considered an adaptation rather than an excerpted and edited translation. Thus, *Shengxinyue Xinbian Yixiang* should be treated as an independent title. In the process of collecting Li Wenyu's works, I discovered two handwritten thread-bound manuscripts that were never published: *Lixue Boyi*（理学驳议）and *Mousiduo Hangao* 某司铎函稿. The preface of *Lixue Boyi* states: "Written by Li Di in the second month of the 13th year of Guangxu." *Mou Siduo Hangao* is a collection of correspondence between Li Wenyu and his friends, which was also unpublished at the time. Accordingly, *Lixue Boyi* and *Mousiduo Hangao* should be recognized as two distinct works by Li Wenyu.

To further explore the background and motivations of Li Wenyu's works and translations across different historical periods, this paper undertakes a detailed investigation and chronological arrangement of the first editions of his publications. Both Kurtz's and Fang's articles date the first edition of *Aizhu Jinyan* 爱主金言 to 1902. However, a edition held in the Shanghai Library shows the publication year as 1900, with the publisher listed as the "Cimutang Movable Type Press," and the imprint on the last page indicates that it was "published by *Shengxin Bao*". (Li 1990a) Since the founding of *Shengxin Bao*, Li Wenyu had served as its editor-in-chief and principal writer. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that he contributed to this work, and that this is the *Aizhu Jinyan* referred to by scholars. Thus, the first edition of *Aizhu Jinyan* should be dated to 1900. Regarding *Bian'ao Jinzhen* (砭傲金针), Kurtz dates the first edition to 1882, while Fang records 1883. The reprinted 1884 edition includes a preface titled "Re-engraved Preface to *Bian'ao Jinzhen*," written by Li Wenyu in the winter of the ninth year of (1883) at Yiwen Guan. In the preface, he notes: "Last year I translated *Bian'ao Jinzhen* … the initial print run was extensive… within less than a year, the copies were exhausted. To meet continued demand, I revised several dozen words and had the book reprinted." (Li 1884) This suggests that the first edition appeared in 1882. For *Bianhuo Zhiyan* (辩祸卮言), Kurtz and Fang respectively date the first edition to 1880 and 1902. The Shanghai Library holds a version published by the Xujiahui Press in 1880, with the imprimatur of Bishop Valentin Garnier. (Li 1880b) Other

versions in the collection contain labels such as "reprinted" or "revised preface," indicating that this 1880 edition is the earliest extant version.

Fang dates the first edition of *Jiaohuang Hongxu* to 1886, but the earliest version I have found is from 1888. The eighth volume of *Daoyuan Jingcui* includes this text and was published in 1888. In the absence of evidence for an earlier edition, 1888 is adopted as the first publication date. Kurtz and Fang list the first edition of *Kewen Tiaoda* 客问条答 as 1881 and 1910 respectively. However, the Xujiahui Press printed an edition in early 1882, with a preface by Bishop Valentin Garnie dated to the same period. (Li 1882) In the 1897 reprint, Valentin Garnie wrote a new preface referencing: "*Kewen Tiaoda*, written in Renwu year [i.e., 1882], has since circulated widely for fifteen years." This confirms that the earliest edition appeared in 1882. As for *Meigui Jingyi* 玫瑰经义, Kurtz was unsure of its initial publication year, while Fang lists it as 1886. The Shanghai Library holds an 1886 version published by Cimutang 慈母堂, with a preface by Li Wenyu dated summer of 1886, consistent with the publication year. (Li 1886b) Thus, this edition is likely the first. Regarding *Mo Jing Ji*, Kurtz records the first edition as 1908, which appears to be inaccurate. A 1909 edition includes a preface by Li Wenyu. In it, he writes, "In the summer of 1909, I opened an old box at the Xujiahui Library and found an unprinted manuscript by the master, along with *San Ba Ji* 三巴集, containing more material than that compiled by Mr. Gu. The writings deal extensively with matters of the Church and are of great significance. I sought approval from the superiors to compile both the printed and unprinted materials into a single volume, titled *Mo Jing Ji*."(Li 1909b) Therefore, the book was published in 1909. For *Qidao Huiyou Bianlan* 祈祷会友便览, both scholars date the first edition to 1896. However, I have examined an 1887 edition printed by the Ci Mu Tang Movable Type Press at Tushanwan. The preface concludes with the notation: "Mid-autumn 1887, recorded by Shengxin Bao." I suspect this version may be the earliest edition.

Kurtz did not specify the first publication date of *Shengmu Zhuan* 圣母传, while Fang listed it as 1886. However, Volume 6 of Daoyuan Jingcui is Shengmu Zhuan, published in 1887, with a preface by Jesuit Li Wenyu dated to the summer of 1887. It can thus be inferred that the first edition was issued in 1887. Regarding *Sheng Ruose Yue Xinbian* 圣若瑟月新编, (Li 1892)Kurtz recorded the first edition as 1888. The 1892 edition printed by Ci Mu Tang in Shanghai contains a preface by Jesuit Li Wenyu dated 1892, and there are no markings indicating a reprint or revised edition, suggesting this was the first edition. As for *Shengxin Yue Xinbian* 圣心月新编, (Li 1879)Fang dated the first edition to 1900. However, the Shanghai Library holds a copy published by the

Ci Mu Tang Ju Zhen Press in 1879, which includes a preface by Li Wenyu dated 1878. Therefore, this earlier version should be regarded as the first edition. Concerning Tianshen Pu (天神谱), Kurtz and Fang respectively list the first edition as 1885 and 1876. I consulted an 1886 edition, (Li 1886c, Pref. p.1) printed by Ci Mu Tang Movable Type Press, with a preface written by Li Wenyu in June of 1885. The preface predates the publication by one year, which is reasonable, and no indication of reprinting appears in the text. In the preface, Li Wenyu mentions, "It has now been six years since I began managing *Yi Wen Lu*, and though the newspaper has widely circulated…". *Yi Wen Lu* was formally launched in 1879. This disproves the claim of an 1876 edition. The earliest reliable publication date should therefore be 1886. Fang suggests that the first edition of *Tianti* 天梯 was in 1891, which appears to be inaccurate. Ci Mu Tang in Shanghai published an edition in 1888, (Li 1888) accompanied by a preface authored by Li Wenyu in the same year. Thus, the 1888 edition should be considered the first. Both scholars date the first publication of *Tianyuan Lun Boyi* 天演论驳议 to 1910. However, this work was included as an appendix to *Zhexue Tigang·Shenglixue* 哲学提纲·生理学, published in 1907, and was later issued as a standalone volume. Therefore, the earliest publication of *Tianyuan Lun Boyi* should be dated to 1907. Regarding *Wuli Tuiyuan* 物理推原, Kurtz did not provide a first publication date. I consulted an 1896 edition which bears two imprints on the cover, "Printed in 1892" and "Reprinted in 1896". (Li 1896) The edition also contains a preface by Li Wenyu dated "early spring of the 18th year of Guangxu" (1892). It can thus be inferred that the first edition of *Wuli Tuiyuan* was published in 1892.

Regarding Fun*ü* Maliyana Zhuan 福女马利亚纳), Kurtz dates the first edition to 1904, which may be inaccurate. A 1906 edition printed by the Ci Mu Tang Press in Shanghai includes a preface by Li Wenyu, dated "January 6, 1906," which matches the publication date. This edition is likely the first. As for Xin Zhen (心箴), Kurtz and Fang list the first edition as 1893 and 1889 respectively. I have consulted both the 1893 (Li 1893) and 1905 editions, both of which contain a preface by Li Wenyu dated to 1890. This suggests that the first edition may have been issued in 1890. Regarding *Sheng Liunaduo Zixiuzhi* 圣留纳多自修志, both scholars mark the first edition as "unknown," with the second edition dated 1924. In fact, the work was originally serialized in *Shengxin Bao* between 1904 and 1906, and was later compiled and published by scholars from the same press. The 1924 preface states, "Father Li Wenyu, former director of the *Shengxin Bao* at Xujiahui, once translated *Sheng Liunaduo Zixiuzhi* and published it in the 1904–1906 issues of *Shengxin Bao*. Focused on the Saint's love for God and mankind, and his example of personal cultivation, the articles, when read thoroughly, greatly aid spiritual development. Yet no independent

volume had ever been published, a source of some regret... It was thus decided to commit it to print for wider circulation." (Li 1924, Pref. p.1) This preface, written by Chen Dong of Sheshan Observatory in the summer of 1924, confirms that the 1924 edition is in fact the first published version. As for *Shengli Xue* 生理学 and *Lingxing Xue* 灵性学, Kurtz dated the first edition to 1907, while Fang listed 1908. I have reviewed the 1907 edition of Shengli Xue, which includes a preface by Li Wenyu dated "Spring of the 33rd year of Guangxu" (1907), stating, "Now that the works on *Shengli Xue* and *Lingxing Xue* are completed, I shall proceed to print them in order."(Li 1907a) Additionally, the cover of *Lingxing Xue* is marked as having been typeset and printed by the Tushanwan Printing House in Shanghai in the "33rd year of Guangxu, dingwei year" (1907).(Li 1907b) This indicates that both works were first published in 1907. Regarding the first publication of *Zhenjiao Wenda* 真教问答, Kurtz marked the date as unknown, while Fang listed 1895. I have examined an 1899 edition, which contains a preface by Li Wenyu dated "May, 25th year of Guangxu" (1899). This suggests that the 1899 edition was the first.

The first edition date of Acts of *Zongtu Dashi Lu* 宗徒大事录 is disputed by Kurtz and Fang, who respectively state it as 1907 and 1886. However, I believe both dates to be inaccurate. Volume 5 of Selections from *Daoyuan Jingcui* is titled Zongtu Dashi Lu and was published in 1887 by the Ci Mu Tang Press in Shanghai. The 1926 edition of *Xinjing Yiyi*, *Zongtu Dashi Lu* appears as an appendix. In the preface to *Xinjing Yiyi*, written in 1907, it is mentioned, "in former times, translations of the New Testament were rarely available or circulated. This deeply troubled the devoted. Fortunately, in the bingshen year of the Guangxu reign, four volumes of the *Wanri Lue* 万日略 were translated, and in the autumn of the yisi year, a volume of Zongtu Dashi Lu was translated and sequentially published to promote wider dissemination and to glorify God, while also praying for mercy upon the humble translator." (Li 1926, Pref.p.4) This suggests that *Zongtu Dashi Lu* was translated in 1905. The cover bears the note, "translated by Jesuit Li Wenyu in 1907. Reprinted by the Tushanwan Press in Shanghai in 1914." Therefore, the first edition of this version of *Zongtu Dashi Lu* dates to 1907. A comparison between the version in Selections from *Daoyuan Jingcui* and that appended to *Xinjing Yiyi* reveals that the two works narrate essentially the same apostolic stories from the Bible. However, they differ significantly in terms of linguistic style, vocabulary, length, and annotations. Furthermore, the Selections from *Daoyuan Jingcui* includes a note at the beginning of the main text: "Excerpt-translated by Jesuit Li Wenyu." Based on this, it can be inferred that the two works are distinct translations of *Zongtu Dashi Lu*.

Based on the above analysis, a total of 78 works authored or translated by Li Wenyu have been identified (see Table 6 for details)[8]. The majority of these are translations. As Kurtz noted, "more than two third of which were tanslations or digests of works originally written in French or Latin, on a brand range of subjects ranging from Catholic doctrine and liturgy to history, science, philosophy, ang logic." (Kurtz 2006, p.149) Approximately two-thirds of Li wenyu's works are directly related to Catholic teachings, catechism, liturgy, history, and hagiography. The remainder primarily address the dialogue between Catholicism and traditional Chinese culture and religions, or promote Catholicism through the dissemination of Western learning. This distribution reflects not only Li Wenyu's personal identity and missionary vocation, but also the Jesuit publication strategy in China and the socio-historical context of the late Qing period. Kurtz examined the publishing history of the Tushanwan Printing House between 1874 and 1917. According to the publisher's categorization, the ratio of religious to non-religious Chinese-language publications was roughly 2.5:1. (Kurtz 2010, p.91) The proportion of religious to non-religious works in Li Wenyu's corpus corresponds closely to this ratio.[9] Why does such a proportional allocation exist? It is well known that the Jesuits maintained a rigorous system of publication review. Each of Li Wenyu's works includes approval marks such as "Approved by the Vicar Apostolic of Jiangnan," attesting to this control. After the dissolution of the Society of Jesus in 1773 and its restoration in 1814, the reestablished Jesuits aimed to continue the overseas missionary legacy of their predecessors. They planned to revive the missionary strategy of the Ming and Qing Jesuits, which integrated the dissemination of scientific knowledge with evangelization. Through this strategy, they sought to maintain continuity with the work of earlier Jesuits. (Wu 2017, pp.2-8) However, upon re-entering China, the new Jesuits faced a variety of missionary challenges. First, following the Rites Controversy, Emperor Kangxi banned Christianity. Consequently, missionary work went underground, and Chinese Catholics, lacking clerical oversight and guidance, had to pass on their faith independently. "The Qing Christians inevitably compromised with local culture and transformed many of their practices in order to survive. When the new Jesuits and other Christians missionaries arrived in China in the mid-nineteenth century, the Christian communities they encountered were usually detour though unconscionably heterodox in the missionaries' view." (Wu 2017,

[8] I was unable to identify five works during research: *Feizhou Youji* 斐洲游记, *Hunzi Tiaoli* 婚配条例, *Shencha Jianze* 省察简则, *Shencha Guishi* 省察规式, *Youtong Riling Shengti Zhi Wenti* 幼童日领圣体之问题. These were included based on the bibliographies compiled by Joachim kurtz and Fang Yunfang.

[9] Based on my collation of Li Wenyu's works, approximately 50 are religious books and over 20 are non-religious books, with a rough ratio of 2.5:1. As Joachim Kurtz categorized works by publisher while I classifies them by content, some books cannot be strictly divided into "religious" and "non-religious". Hence this is the approximate figures.

p.11) Second, the arrival of Protestant missionaries introduced significant competition. "Since the mid-19th century, the Protestant missionaries and foreigners who had taken the place of the original Jesuits became new culture intermediaries. They worked with Chinese intellectuals to translate the latest Western learning into Chinese." (Wu 2017, pp. 12-13) Finally, the late Qing Jesuits may have believed that "the scientific knowledge in the old texts was now out of date. Certainly scientific advances in Europe since the eighteenth century had changed the old system such that new disciplines had come into existence and the outer world had come to be understood in radically new ways."(Wu 2017, p.55) In light of these new circumstances, Jesuit missionaries in the late Qing period concluded that "imposing European Christian practices on the Chinese was more important than winning support by showing their knowledge of science and Chinese culture."(Wu 2017, p.8) As a result, to reinforce their connection to the Jesuit legacy of the Ming and Qing periods while differentiating themselves from Protestant and other missionary groups, the late Qing Jesuits prioritized the re-publication of devotional and faith-centered works by their predecessors. "As for the scientific texts that had won acclaim far beyond the Jesuit sphere, the new Jesuits had no thought of them." (Wu 2017, p.32)

Due to the publishing strategy of the Jesuits in the late Qing period, the majority of Li Wenyu's works focused on the promotion of Catholic doctrines and teachings. However, he also published a number of "non-religious" works, primarily dealing with themes such as Chinese culture, interreligious dialogue, Western science and technology, institutions, and thought. These works most clearly reflect the evolution of Li Wenyu's intellectual trajectory, as well as the purposes and contextual background of his writings. What changes, then, occurred in Li Wenyu's thought? Why did these changes take place? What were the purposes and circumstances of his publications? First, through a study of Li Wenyu's *Li Ku* and *Xu Liku*, we can trace changes of his intellectual thinking with some clarity. *Li Ku* was first published in 1886. It compiled essays that had originally been serialized in the *Yiwenlu*. In the preface to *Li Ku*, Li wrote, "In the spring of the year Ji Mao (己卯), Yiwen office was established and I was appointed its director. I thus began composing essays explaining the essentials of our religion, arranging them by topic and publishing them regularly. Eight years have since passed, and over 300 essays were written. I have now selected and edited them down to 100, organized into nine volumes."(Li 1886a, Pref. p.2) Over the following two decades, Li continued to publish essays in the newspaper *Huibao*. After his death, these writings were compiled and published by his Jesuit colleagues as *Xu Liku*. This book contains "109 essays personally approved by Mr. Li during his lifetime." (Xu 1936a, p.726) Its

purpose was "to rectify social customs, debunk superstitions, integrate scientific understanding, and return to true moral principles, forming a coherent system of thought." Its content is diverse, and each essay stands independently. "Its materials may be drawn from varied sources, and its arguments strive for balance." According to contemporaries, "Readers may treat it as an alternative gospel, a scientific reference, or even a collection of universal maxims." (Li 1915, Pref. pp.2-6) The content of *Liku* primarily focused on proving Catholicism as the one true faith and refuting the errors of other religions. *Xu Liku*, in contrast, encompassed a much broader range of topics, including theological arguments, science and education, and the improvement of social customs. In 1887, Li Wenyu also wrote *Lixue Boyi*, a critical work on Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. However, this manuscript survives only as a handwritten copy and was never formally published. I speculate that this may be due to changes in the missionary strategy of both the Jesuits and Li himself—polemics against Confucianism were no longer prioritized in the evolving context of missionary work, and thus the work remained unpublished. From the above materials, it is evident that not only did the content of Li Wenyu's evangelism change, but his missionary strategy also underwent adjustments. In terms of content, he expanded from a single focus—proving Catholicism as the sole true religion and refuting other beliefs—to include broader themes such as science, education, and the advocacy for social reform. In terms of strategy, Li initially followed the traditional Jesuit model from the Ming and Qing dynasties—"harmonizing with Confucianism while opposing Buddhism,"incorporating ancient Confucian thought, and criticizing Neo-Confucianism. However, with the shift in historical and social conditions, he gradually turned his attention to public welfare and social concerns as a means of advancing the missionary cause.

The transformation of Li Wenyu's thought is also evident in the Western scientific works he translated. In his 1892 publication *Wuli Tuiyuan* (物理推原), the content covered topics such as "astronomy, physical forms, plants, humans, animals, insects, mollusks, and microscopic organisms, as well as the underlying principles behind their existence." Li's purpose in translating this work was to demonstrate that the observable natural phenomena of the universe—its myriad forms and the intelligence of mankind—ultimately testified to the governance and providence of God. The preface reveals his method of argumentation:

The origins of the natural sciences (referred to in classical Chinese as ge zhi zhi xue, or the study of investigating things) can be traced back to antiquity. As early as the era of Yao and Shun, astronomical observation was employed to formulate calendars and regulate governance—practices that may be

considered the embryonic stage of this discipline. During the reign of Yu, efforts to control floods led to a clearer understanding of geographical principles. By the Zhou dynasty, rudimentary trigonometric techniques—such as those recorded in the *Zhoubi Suanjing*—had emerged, including the use of gnomons and square tools to measure shadows and distances. Following the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, successive regimes placed varying emphasis on different branches of knowledge. The Jin dynasty prioritized philology and the study of script; the Tang dynasty valued poetic competence as a key criterion for talent selection; the Song dynasty revered Neo-Confucian metaphysics; the Yuan dynasty favored the visual arts; and the Ming dynasty championed classical exegesis. However, these intellectual traditions often focused narrowly on specific disciplines, neglecting the broader philosophical and empirical pursuit of understanding the fundamental principles governing the cosmos—the quest to return to origins and seek first causes (gui yuan fan ben 归原返本).

As a result, Buddhist monks pursue emptiness and non-being, yet prattle endlessly—for them, reincarnation alone is the Way, with no other doctrine; Daoist adepts pursued esoteric longevity practices, largely concerned with immortality cults; and Confucian scholars, motivated by worldly ambition, confined their studies to civil service examinations, with little attention paid to knowledge beyond classical texts and literary composition.

In contrast, my examination of modern Western intellectual traditions reveals a profound divergence. Western scholars' investigations into the natural world—spanning the mysteries of astronomy, the foundations of geography, the dynamics of climate and atmospheric change, the circulation of rivers and oceans, the life cycles of flora and fauna, the instincts of birds, beasts, fish, and insects, and the physiological functions of the human body—demonstrate a deep commitment to systematic inquiry. Their method proceeds from surface to substance (you xian ru wei 由显入微) and from phenomena to underlying causes (tan yuan jiu wei 探原究委), enabling groundbreaking technological innovations such as railways, steamships, gas lamps, telegraphs, steam engines, and photography. These inventions have not only proliferated in use but have also attained increasing levels of refinement, reflecting the widespread influence and prestige of Western scientific thought.

Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that even within Western academic circles, there exist those who are content with the mere observation of natural phenomena (the "what is" of physics) without delving into the deeper causality or theoretical principles underlying them (the "why it is" of physics)." (Li 1986, Pref. pp.1-3)

From the preface, it is evident that Li Wenyu revered the teachings of the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang, Zhou). He believed that after this period, scholars became overly focused on specialized disciplines and neglected the concept of "returning to the origin and essence". As a result, Buddhism emphasized reincarnation, Daoism pursued immortality, and Confucian scholars became preoccupied with fame and official titles. Even modern Western naturalists, though proficient in the study of the natural world, failed to trace the fundamental origins of physical phenomena. At this stage, Li Wenyu primarily employed "a reverence for antiquity to critique Buddhism while promoting the social functions of Christianity." (Sun and Standaert 2004, p.146) In his writings, through the introduction of modern science and technology, Li continued to criticize traditional Chinese religions and culture, using this as a means to advocate for Catholicism. In his 1899 work *Xingxing Xueyao* 形性学要, Li Wenyu discussed Western disciplines such as mechanics, hydrodynamics, pneumatics, acoustics, thermodynamics, optics, magnetism, and electricity—clearly presenting it as a treatise on physics. However, Li did not emphasize tracing the origins of physical phenomena. Instead, he argued for the adoption of Western learning as a path toward national prosperity and strength. He wrote, "Today, Western methods are prevalent, competing in ingenuity and innovation, and are generally derived from the latest developments in these sciences. When Chinese people encounter Westerners and witness their inventions—steamships, locomotives, gas lamps, electric wires, solar photography, telegraphs—they often marvel in admiration, yet remain unaware of the principles behind them. Why? Because they have not studied the nature of things (Xingxing Xue 形性学). Why have they not studied them? Because such books are unavailable. And even when available, they are difficult to comprehend. Without familiarity with Western learning, how can one establish the foundation for national prosperity and strength?" (Li 1899, Pref. pp.1-2) In his 1903 publication *Xixue Guanjian* 西学关键, Li Wenyu addressed subjects such as astronomy, mechanics, acoustics, thermodynamics, optics, magnetism and electricity, and pneumatics. In the preface, he identified the study of investigating things as equivalent to Western learning. He observed that Western nations have developed this field to increasing levels of precision, and that their investigations are inevitably translated into practical application. This has led to their advancements in politics, economics, military affairs, agriculture, and manufacturing. In contrast, after the Three Dynasties, Chinese scholars neglected practical knowledge concerned with statecraft and real-world application. During the reform era of the Hundred Days' Reform (1898), the Qing government began to revise its talent selection system and promote Western learning. In this context, Li Wenyu advocated for the Chinese to embrace Western studies as a means to strengthen and enrich the nation.

With the flourishing of commerce, the advancement of weaponry, the abundance of agricultural harvests, and the proliferation of manufacturing, human footprints now reach the ends of the earth, and authority extends overseas—by all accounts, Europe and America have truly reached a height of prosperity in our day. Tracing the roots of this success, it is clear that they have benefited from Western learning and the ingenuity of its practical applications. By contrast, since the era of the Three Dynasties, China has devoted itself primarily to literary pursuits, the Jin dynasty prized calligraphy, the Tang esteemed poetry, the Song emphasized ritual and metaphysics, the Yuan valued painting, and the Ming favored exegetical commentaries. All these remained confined to the narrow domain of literary arts and scholarly writing. To attempt to govern a nation on this basis is no different from seeking sharpness from a leaden blade—even a child would recognize the futility of such an endeavor. Now, the Majesty, with keen insight into the perils of the times and an urgent desire to remedy them, issued an edict in the twenty-fourth year of his reign, abolishing the eight-legged essay and the traditional examination essays. Academies across the provinces, both large and small, were ordered to reform into schools that combine the study of Chinese and Western knowledge. Our mission, while upholding reverence for the Divine Creator and adherence to the sovereign's commands, has accordingly renamed *Yiwen lu* as *Huibao*. The publication now includes substantial content on Western learning, supplemented with current news, in hopes that Chinese across the twenty-two provinces may come to understand the essential principles of scientific and practical knowledge. In this way, the intellectual climate may be transformed, talent may emerge, and the foundations of national wealth and power may thus be established. (Li 1903, Pref. p.2)

That same year, Li also translated and published *Taixi Shiwu Congkao* 泰西事务丛考, another work promoting Western learning. In 1904, he translated and published *Xingfa Xueyao* 性法学要, which addressed subjects such as: Discipline of Right Conduct (Zhengxing Xue 正行学): cultivating correct thought, speech, and behavior, Guilding Principles for Solitary Practice;（Li 1909a,p.1）(Duxing Fa 独行法): maintaining discipline in one's household and profession without forming exclusive groups;(Li 1909a, p.25) Mutual Aid Covenant (Hehui Fa 合会法): cooperation among people to achieve common benefits;（Li 1909a, p.46）Protocol for Inter-state relations (Bangjiao Fa 邦交法). These are our codes of conduct for personal behavior, the principles governing how we relate to ourselves and others, family members, the government, and the nation, as well as the norms governing diplomatic interactions between states. Li argued that only by understanding the nature and principle of things (xingfa 性法) could the customs of the people be purified and the nation

flourish. As he wrote, "the nature and principle of things is the standard for correct intention, proper speech and action, and righteous interaction. It governs commerce, education, sovereign-subjects relations, and international diplomacy—everything is rooted in natural law." (Li 1909a, Pref. p.2)

In the 1907 preface to Philosophical Outlines (Zhexue Tigang 哲学提纲), a textbook for the Collège Saint Ignace (Zhendan Academy), Li further advocated the importance of philosophy in modern China: "Later generations reading the works of philosophers must select what is good and follow it. This establishes personal cultivation, clarifies kinship duties, distinguishes social roles, and demarcates personal rights and obligations. All disciplines have their roots here. Other nations understand this well, which is why they require philosophical examinations for civil service selection system. This practice has long-standing precedent. Recently, the Majesty issued a sacred decree establishing constitutional governance. Schools now prioritize Western learning, and government policies draw from Western models. The spread of philosophy in China is thus imminent." （Li 1907a, Pref. p.3）

The thematic focus of Li Wenyu's dissemination of Western learning evolved over time, beginning with translations of works in astronomy and physics and later expanding to encompass Western legal, ethical, and philosophical thought. His approach shifted from continuing the Jesuit tradition of combining science and missionary work during the Ming and Qing dynasties, to emphasizing the application of practical Western knowledge in light of China's national conditions and historical context, aiming ultimately at enriching the nation and strengthening the people. This transformation was closely linked to the socio-political environment of late Qing China and Li Wenyu's personal sense of identity. "People showed more interest in Western learning particularly after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895."(Wu 2017, p.59) Li's translated works—*Xingxing Xueyao* (1899), *Xixue Guanjian* (1903), *Taixi Shiwu Congkao* (1903), *Xingfa Xueyao* (1904), and *Outline of Philosophy* (1907)—coincided with the Qing government's reform efforts, from the Hundred Days' Reform to the New Policies and the constitutional preparations in the late Qing. These works reflect the process of China's learning from the West, progressing from military technologies to political-legal institutions and ultimately to intellectual and cultural thought. As Xu Zongze noted, "Li's thought underwent considerable transformation over these thirty years, largely as a result of changing circumstances and environments. At the end of the 19th century, China still clung to outdated traditions and revered the literary examination system, leaving little room for reformist ideas to penetrate the minds of Confucian scholars. Hence, Li's writings and public arguments at the time had to align with this context. However, after the Boxer

Rebellion, Chinese perceptions began to shift significantly. Especially in the two to three years before the revolution, Li paid particular attention to introducing new ideas and theories from Europe and America. He was, indeed, highly adept at responding to change." (Xu 1936a, p.726) In terms of personal identity, Li Wenyu was not only a Jesuit missionary and Catholic priest, but also a Chinese intellectual. He had received traditional Confucian education and only later renounced the imperial examination system to join the Jesuits. Catholicism and Chinese culture thus coexisted harmoniously within him. Deeply aware of the nation's backwardness and crisis, he hoped to promote practical Western knowledge through translation, awakening national consciousness and offering a practical path to national salvation, ultimately achieving prosperity and military strength. This sense of identity is also reflected in Li's esteem for classical Chinese literature. He compiled *Steps to Classical Prose*(*Guwen Shiji* 古文拾级), in whose preface he argued that "Though ornate compositions may please the emotions, they contribute little to practical utility. Only robust and lucid prose can sustain the moral order and enlighten the people. This is the value of classical prose, and every student ought to read it… In recent years, with the Imperil Court initiating reforms and diversifying education, fewer children devote themselves to classical prose. The existing anthologies are overly complex and deep, unsuited to the average student." (Li 1909b, Pref.6) With the help of a friend, he compiled *Steps to Classical Prose* in two volumes, intended for use in elementary and secondary education.

In sum, although the new Jesuits were generally less enthusiastic about the scientific missionary strategies of the Ming-Qing Jesuits, scientific works continued to emerge. Li Wenyu, as a representative figure among late Qing Jesuits in China, not only fulfilled his religious duty of "writing for the true happiness of mankind," but also expressed profound concern for China's situation, using his pen to articulate a heartfelt commitment to national salvation and public enlightenment.

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Appendix

Table1: according to "A Brief Biography of the Founder and Chief Editor of The Bulletin Over Thirty-Two Years"(汇报发起人兼主笔政三十二年之小传)

Works	*Shengxin Yue Xinbian* 圣心月新编, *Bianhuo Zhiyan* 辨惑卮言, *Bian'ao Jinzhen* 砭傲金针, *Tianshen Pu* 天神谱, *Liku* 理窟, *Meigui Jingyi* 玫瑰经义, *Shengti Ji* 圣体纪, *De Jing* 德镜, *Xin Zhen* 心箴, *Dawen Lucun* 答问录存, *Zhong Yan* 忠言, *Sheng Ruose Yue Xinbian* 圣若瑟月新编, *Misa Xiao Yan* 弥撒小言, *Fengci Zhengyi* 奉慈正义, *Aizhu Jinyan* 爱主金言, *Quanhuo Ji* 拳祸记, *Zengding Quanfei Huojiao Ji* 增订拳匪祸教记, *Xu Liku* 续理窟 (unpublished)
Chanslations	*Lianyu Kao* 炼狱考, *Sheng Yinnajue Shengshui Ji* 圣依纳爵圣水记, *Shengmu Zhuan* 圣母传, *Zongtu Dashilu* 宗徒大事录, *Jiaohuang Hongxu* 教皇洪序（The three books mentioned above are sourced from Daoyuan Jingcui 道原精萃）, *Tianti* 天梯, *Beizhong Lu* 备终录, *Sanyuan Wenda* 三愿问, *Shengxin Jinjian* 圣心金鉴, *Yawu Yanyi* 亚物演义, *Ling Shengti Xuzhi* 领圣体须, *Qidao Huiyou Bianlan* 祈祷会友便览, *Wuli Tuiyuan* 物理推原, *Mosi Shengnan Lu* 默思圣难录, *Shengti Yue* 圣体月, *Funu Majialida Zhuan* 福女玛加利大传, *Zhenjiao Wenda* 真教问答, *Xingxing Xueyao* 形性学要, *Yesu Shounan Jilüe* 耶稣受难记略, *Xunmeng Shi'er De* 训蒙

	十二德, *Xixue Guanjian* 西学关键, *Qiande Pu* 潜德谱, *Xingfaxue Yao* 性法学要, *Funü Maliya Ya'na Zhuan* 福女玛利亚亚纳传, *Sheng Rilae'er Zhuan* 圣日辣尔传, *Xinjing Yiyi* 新经译义, *Shenglixue* 生理学, *Lingxingxue* 灵性学, *Sheng Anduoni Zhuan* 圣安多尼传, *Gongyibu Zou Dinghun Li* 公议部奏订婚例, *Moxiang Shengxin Jiuzhe* 默想圣心九则, *Minglixue* 名理学, *Tianyuxue* 天宇学, *Lunlixue* 伦理学, *Tongshi Jilan* 通史辑览, *Ling Shengti Qianhou Reqing* 领圣体前后热情, *Bai Shengti Wen* 拜圣体文, *Qin Ling Shengti Shuo* 勤领圣体说, *Yuanshenxue* 原神学（Uncompleted Publication）
compilations	*Xu Wending Gong Ji* 徐文定公集, *Gu Wen Shiji* 古文拾级, *Mo Jing Ji* 墨井集 , *Mo Jing Shu Hua Ji* 墨井书画集

Table 2: according to Xu Zongze, Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Death of Li Wenyu
李问渔司铎逝世二十五周年纪念

Works	*Shengxin Yue Xinbian* 圣心月新编, *Bianhuo Zhiyan* 辨惑卮言, *Bian Ao Jinzhen* 砭傲金针, *Tianshen Pu* 天神谱, *Liku Zhengxu* 理窟正续, *Meigui Jing Yi* 玫瑰经义, *Shengti Ji* 圣体纪, *De Jing* 德镜, *Xin Zhen* 心箴, *Dawen Lucun* 答问录存, *Zhong Yan* 忠言, *Sheng Ruose Yue Xinbian* 圣若瑟月新编, *Misa Xiaoyan* 弥撒小言, *Fengci Zhengyi* 奉慈正义, *Ai Zhu Jinyan* 爱主金言, *Quanhuo Ji* 拳祸记, *Zengding Quanfei Huojiao Ji* 增订拳匪祸教记
Chanslations	*Lianyu Kao* 炼狱考, *Shengmu Zhuan* 圣母传, *Zongtu Dashilu* 宗徒大事录 *Jiaohuang Hongxu* 教皇洪序, *Sheng Yinnajue Shengshui Ji* 圣依纳爵圣水记, *Tian Ti* 天梯, *Bei Zhong Lu* 备终录, *San Yuan Wenda* 三愿问答, *Shengxin Jinjian* 圣心金鉴, *A Wu Yanyi* 亚物演义, *Ling Shengti Xu Zhi* 领圣体须知, *Qidao Huiyou Bianlan* 祈祷会友便览, *Wuli Tuiyuan* 物理推原, *Mo Si Shengnan Lu* 默思圣难录, *Shengti Yue* 圣体月, *Fu Nu Majialida Zhuan* 福女玛加利大传, *Zhenjiao Wenda* 真教问答, *Xingxingxue Yao* 形性学要, *Jidu Shounan Jilue* 耶稣受难记略, *Xun Meng Shi'er De* 训蒙十二德, *Xixue Guanjian* 西学关键, *Qian Depu* 潜德谱, *Xingfaxue Yao* 性法学要, *Fu Nu Maliya Yana Zhuan* 福女玛利亚亚纳传, *Sheng Rilae'er Zhuan* 圣日辣尔传, *Xin Jing Yi Yi* 新经译义, *Shenglixue* 生理学, *Lingxingxue* 灵性学, *Minglixue* 名理学, *Lunlixue* 伦理学, *Yuan Shenxue* 原神学, *Tianyu Xue* 天宇学, *Sheng An Duo Ni Zhuan* 圣安多尼传, *Gong Yi Bu Zou Ding Hun Li* 公议部奏订婚例, *Mo Xiang Shengxin Jiu Ze* 默想圣心九则, *Tongshi Jilan* 通史辑览, *Ling Shengti Qianhou Reqing* 领圣体前后热情, *Bai Shengti Wen* 拜圣体文, *Qin Ling Shengti Shuo* 勤领圣体说
compilations	*Xu Wending Gong Ji* 徐文定公集, *Gu Wen Shiji* 古文拾级, *Mo Jing Ji* 墨井集 , *Mo Jing Shu Hua Ji* 墨井书画集

Table 3: Based on Hu Duan's A Catholic Writer: Li Wenyu (一位公教作家李问渔司铎)

Classics, Sacraments Category	*Xinjing Yiyi* 新经译义, *Zongtu Dashilu* 宗徒大事录, *Qinling Shengti shuo*[10] 勤领圣体说, *Misa Xiaoyan* 弥撒小言, *Hunpei Tiaoli* 婚配条例
Theological and Philosophical Doctrines	*Zhe Xue Ti Gang Ming Li Xue* 哲学提纲·名理学, *Zhe Xue Ti Gang Sheng Li Xue* 哲学提纲·生理学, *Zhe Xue Ti Gang Tian Yu Xue* 哲学提纲·天宇学, *Zhe Xue Ti Gang Ling Xing Xue* 哲学提纲·灵性学, *Zhe Xue Ti Gang Lun Li Xue* - 哲学提纲·伦理学, *Zhe Xue Ti Gang Yuan Shen Xue* 哲学提纲·原神学, *Tian Yan Bo Yi* 天演驳义, *Xing Fa Xue Yao* 性法学要, *Tian Yan Lun Bo Yi* 天演论驳义, *Li Ku* 理窟, *Xu Li Ku* 续理窟, *Bian Huo Zhi Yan* 辨惑卮言, *Da Wen Lu Cun* 答问录存, *Zhong Yan* 忠言, *Wu Li Tui Yuan* 物理推原, *Zhen Jiao Wen Da (Ke Wen Tiao Da) 真教问答（客问条答）*

[10] In Hu Duan's writings, the work Qinling Shengti Shuo is duplicated in both the "Classics and Sacraments" category and the "Spiritual Cultivation and Liturgical Rites" category.

Historical Biographies and Chronicles	*Sheng Ti Ji* 圣体纪， *Ye Su Shou Nan Ji Lue* 耶稣受难纪略, *Sheng Ri La Er Zhuan* 圣日辣尔传, *Sheng An Duo Ni Zhuan* 圣安多尼传, *Sheng Yi Na Jue Sheng Shui Ji* 圣依纳爵圣水记, *Sheng Liu Na Du Zi Xiu Zhi* 圣留纳多自修志, *Dao Yuan Jing Cui* 道原精萃, *Fu Nü Ma Jia Li Da Zhuan* 福女玛加利大传, *Ma Li Ya Ya Na Zhuan* 玛利亚亚纳传, *Zeng Bu Quan Huo Ji* 增补拳祸记
Spiritual Cultivation and Liturgical Rites	*Bian Ao Jin Zhen* 砭傲金针, *Sheng Ti Yue* 圣体月, *De Jing 德镜*, *Xin Zhen 心箴*, *San Yuan Wen Da 三愿问答*, *Xing Cha Jian Ze* 省察简则, *Xing Cha Gui Ze* 省查规则, *Bei Zhong Lu* 备终录, *Xun Meng Shi Er De* 训蒙十二德, *Qian De Pu* 潜德谱, *Sheng Xin Yue Xin Bian* 圣心月新编, *Mo Si Sheng Nan Lu* 默思圣难录, *Sheng Xin Jin Jian* 圣心金鉴, *Ling Sheng Ti Xu Zhi* 领圣体须知, *Ling Sheng Ti Qian Hou Re Qing* 领圣体前后热情, *Bai Sheng Ti Wen* 拜圣体文, *Qin Ling Sheng Ti Shuo* 勤领圣体说, *Ai Zhu Jin Yan* 爱主金言, *Mo Xiang Sheng Xin Jiu Ze* 默想圣心九则, *Qi Dao Hui You Bian Lan* 祈祷会友便览, *Feng Ci Zheng Yi* 奉慈正义, *Ya Wu Yan Yi* 亚物演义, *Tian Ti* 天梯, *Mei Gui Jing Yi* 玫瑰经义, *Sheng Ruo Se Yue Xin Bian* 圣若瑟月新编, *Lian Yu Kao* 炼狱考, *Tian Shen Pu* 天神谱
Science	*Tai Xi Shi Wu Kao* 泰西事务考, *Xi Xue Guan Jian* 西学关键, *Xing Xing Xue Yao* 形性学要
Literature	*Mo Jing Ji* 墨井集, *Xu Wen Ding Gong Ji* 徐文定公集, *Tong Shi Ji Lan* 通史辑览, *Gu Wen Shi Ji* 古文拾级

Table4: According to Joachim Kurtz"The Works of Li Wenyu(1840-1911): Bibliography of a Chinese-Jesuit Publicist

Titles	Publisher and editions
Aizhu Jinyan 爱主金言	Tushanwan Press，1902；1925
Bai Shengti Wen 拜圣体文	Tushanwan Press，1907,；1911；1923
Beizhong Lu 备终录	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1902；1907；1913；1926
Bian'Ao Jinzhen 砭傲金针	Tushanwan Press，1882；1902；1908；1922
Bianhuo Zhiyan 辩惑卮言	Tushanwan Press，1880；1884；1931
Dawen Lucun 答问录存	Tushanwan Press，1890；1904；1909；1937
Dawen Xinbian 答问新编（未出版手稿）*Kewen Tiaoda* 客问条答	Tushanwan Press，1881；1911，Third Edition
Daoyuan Jingcui 道原精萃（8 卷）	Tushanwan Press，1888；1926； Li Wenyu is the author of Volumes 5, 6, and 8.
Dejing 德镜	Tushanwan Press，1889；1896；1909；1910
Feizhou Youji 斐洲游记	Tushanwan Press，1905.
Fengci Zhengyi 奉慈正义	Tushanwan Press，1895；1931
Funü Magalida Zhuan 福女玛加利大传	Tushanwan Press，1895；1909；1914；1931
Funü Maliya'Na Zhuan 福女玛利亚纳传	Tushanwan Press，1904
Guwen Shiji 古文拾级	Tushanwan Press，1909；1920 Third Edition
Hunpei Tiaoli 婚配条例	Tushanwan Press，1908
Liku 理窟	Tushanwan Press，1886；1901；1909new version；1916；1920Sixth Edition；1930 Seventh Edition
Lianyu Kao 炼狱考	Tushanwan Press，1886；1905；1921；1927
Lianyu Lüeshuo 炼狱略说	Tushanwan Press, 1871 ; New version of Hejian Shengshitang1877
Ling Shengti Qianhou Reqing 领圣体前后热情	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1911；1924Fourth Edition；1931 Fifth Edition
Ling Shengti Xuzhi 领圣体须知	Tushanwan Press，1891；1902；1907；1915 Fourth Edition；

	1924 Eighth Edition
Meigui Jingyi 玫瑰经义	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1888；1920
Misa Xiaoyan 弥撒小言	Tushanwan Press，1894；1902；1903；1922
Mojing Ji 墨井集	Tushanwan Press，1908
Mosi Shengnan Lu 默思圣难录	Tushanwan Press，1893；1907；1917；1928
Moxiang Shengxin Jiuze 默想圣心九则	Tushanwan Press，1897；1908；1923
Qidao Huiyou Bianlan 祈祷会友便览	Tushanwan Press，1896；1911
Qiande Pu 潜德谱	Tushanwan Press，1904；1906；1924 Fourth Edition
Qinling Shengti Shuo 勤领圣体说	Tushanwan Press，1906；1911；1927
Quanhuo Ji 拳祸记	Tushanwan Press，1905；Huoguoji 祸国记 1923；Huojiaoji 祸教记 1927
Riyong Baoshu 日用宝书	Tushanwan Press，1903
Sanyuan Wenda 三愿问答	Tushanwan Press，1891；new edition1904；1910 Second Edition；1924 Fourth Edition
Sheng Anduoni Zhuan 圣安多尼传	Tushanwan Press，1908；1915
Sheng Liunaduo Zixiu Zhi 圣留纳多自修志	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1924
Shengmu Zhuan 圣母传	Tushanwan Press，Publication date unknown
Sheng Rilaar Zhuan 圣日辣尔传	Tushanwan Press，1906；1922
Sheng Ruose Yue Xinbian 圣若瑟月新编	Tushanwan Press，1888；1914
Shengti Ji 圣体记	Tushanwan Press，1889；1893；1912
Shengti Yue 圣体月	Tushanwan Press，1893；1906
Shengxin Jinjian 圣心金鉴	Tushanwan Press，1891；1909
Shengxin Yue Xinbian 圣心月新编	Tushanwan Press，1879；new edition1889；1900；1909；1920
Sheng Yinajue Shengshui Ji 圣依纳爵圣水记	Tushanwan Press，1886
Taixi Shiwu Congkao 泰西事物丛考	Tushanwan Press，1903
Tianshen Pu 天神谱	Tushanwan Press，1885；1916
Tianti 天梯	Tushanwan Press，1888；1899；1905；1916；1930 Seventh Edition
Tianyan Lun Boyi 天演论驳议	Tushanwan Press，1910；1923；1930 reprint
Tongshi Jilan 通史辑览	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1915；1920；1924；1929
Wuli Tuyuan 物理推原	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1896；1905；1915；1922
Xixue Guanjian 西学关键	Shanghai Hongbao Zhai Publishing House，1903
Xinjing Yiyu 新经译义	Tushanwan Press，1897；1907；1912；1926
Xinzhen 心箴	Tushanwan Press，1893；1905；1914；1922；1930
Shengcha Guishi 省察规式	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1905Third Edition；1922；1929 new edition
Shengcha Jianze 省察简则	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1924 new edition
Xingfa Xueyao 性法学要	Tushanwan Press，1904；1918
Xingxing Xueyao 形性学要	Tushanwan Press，1899；1906
Xuliku 续理窟	Tushanwan Press，1915；1926
Xu Wendin'Gong Ji 徐文定公集	Tushanwan Press，1896；1909
Xunmeng Shier De 训蒙十二德	Tushanwan Press，1902；1907；1922
Yawuwu Yanyi 亚物演义	Tushanwan Press，1891；1911
Yesu Shounan Ji Lue 耶稣受难记略	Tushanwan Press，1889；1893 new edition；1900；1914；1929
Youtong Riling Shengti Zhi Wenti 幼童日领圣体之问题	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1922 Third Edition

Zengding Quanfei Huo Jiaoji 增订拳匪祸教记	Tushanwan Press，1909
Zhexue Tigang: Lingxing Xue 哲学提纲·灵性学	Tushanwan Press，1907；1914；1931
Zhexue Tigang: Lunlixue 哲学提纲·伦理学	Tushanwan Press，1909；1921
Zhexue Tigang: Minglixue 哲学提纲·名理学	Tushanwan Press，1908；1916
Zhexue Tigang: Shenglixue 哲学提纲·生理学	Tushanwan Press，1907；1914；1927
Zhexue Tigang: Tianyuxue 哲学提纲·天宇学	Tushanwan Press，1908；1916
Zhexue Tigang: Yuanshenxue 哲学提纲·原神学	Tushanwan Press，1911；1922
Zhenjiao Wenda 真教问答	Tushanwan Press，First edition unknown；1902；1913；1923 Fifth Edition
Zhongyan 忠言	Tushanwan Press，1892；1904；1931
Zongtu Dashi Lu 宗徒大事录	Tushanwan Press，1907；1914

Table 5: Based on Fang Yunfang, *"Yi Xie Yi Dao: Wanqing xixue dongjian zhong de Li Wenyu"*.[11]

Titles	First Edition	Reprint
Aizhu Jinyan 爱主金言	Tushanwan Press 1902	Tushanwan Cimutang 1925
Bai Shengti Wen 拜圣体文	Cimutang 慈母堂 1907	
Beizhong Lu 备终录	Unknown	Cimutang1915，Cimutang1926(5th Edition)
Bian'Ao Jinzhen 砭傲金针	Tushanwan Press1883	Tushanwan Press1908、1922、1933
Bianhuo Zhiyan 辩惑卮言	Cimutang1902	Tushanwan Press1935
Dawen Lucun 答问录存	Xuhui Printing Press1890 年	Huibao Printing Press1904，Tushanwan Press1909、1937
Dejing 德镜	Cimutang1889	Cimutang1896,1910
Feizhou Youji 斐洲游记	Tushanwan Press1905	
Fengci Zhengyi 奉慈正义	Cimutang1895	Tushanwan Press1920、1931
Funü Magalida Zhuan 福女玛加利大传	Cimutang1895	
Funü Maliya'Na Zhuan 福女玛利亚纳传	Cimutang1906	Tushanwan Press1937
Gongyi Bu Zou Dinghun Li 公议部奏订婚例	Tushanwan Press1908	
Guwen Shiji 古文拾级	Tushanwan Press1909	Tushanwan Press1922、1930
Jiaohuang Hongxu 教皇洪序	Cimutang1866	Tushanwan Press1924Second Edition
Kewen Tiaoda 客问条答	Tushanwan Press1910	Tushanwan Press1937
Liku 理窟	Cimutang1886	Cimutang1901，Tushanwan

[11] This table is transcribed from Fang Yunfang's book, *Yi Xie Yi Dao: Wanqing xixue dongjian zhong de Li Wenyu*, 230-234.

		Press1909、1916、1920、1930、1936
Ling Shengti Qianhou Reqing 领圣体前后热情	Unknown	
Ling Shengti Xuzhi 领圣体须知	Cimutang1891	
Lianyu Kao 炼狱考	Cimutang1885	Cimutang1886 、 1905 、 Tushanwan Press1909、1916、1920、1930、1936
Lianyu Lüeshuo 炼狱略说	Cimutang1871	Shengshitang, Hejian, Hebei 1871 、1877
Meigui Jingyi 玫瑰经义	Cimutang1886 年	Cimutang1888 , Tushanwan Press1920、1935
Misa Xiaoyan 弥撒小言	Cimutang1894	Cimutang1903reprint , Tushanwan Press1922、1935
Mojing Ji 墨井集	Xujiahui Press1909 , Tushanwan Press1909	
Mojing Shuhua Ji 墨井书画集	Unknown	
Mosi Shengnan Lu 默思圣难录	Cimutang1892	Cimutang1906、1917
Moxiang Shengxin Jiuze 默想圣心九则	Tushanwan Press1897	Tushanwan Press1923
Qidao Huiyou Bianlan 祈祷会友便览	Tushanwancimutang1896	Tushanwancimutang1911
Qiande Pu 潜德谱	Tushanwan Press1904	Tushanwan Press1906、1924、1937
Qinling Shengti Shuo 勤领圣体说	Tushanwan Press1906	Cimutang1911，Tushanwan Press1927
Quanhuo Ji 拳祸记	Tushanwan Press1905	Tushanwan Press1909,1923
Riyong Baoshu 日用宝书	Tushanwan Press1903	
Sanyuan Wenda 三愿问答	Cimutang1891 年	Cimutang1904 、 1910 , Tushanwan Press1924、1933
Sheng Anduoni Zhuan 圣安多尼传	Tushanwan Press1908	Tushanwan Press1937
Sheng Liunaduo Zixiu Zhi 圣留纳多自修志	Unknown	Shanghai Catholic Association1924
Shengmu Zhuan 圣母传	Cimutang1886	Cimutang1889 , 1924Tushanwan Presssecond Edition
Shengti Ji 圣体记	Cimutang1889	Cimutang1893，Tushanwan Press1912
Sheng Rilaar Zhuan 圣日辣尔传	Cimutang1906	Tushanwan Press1922
Sheng Ruose Yue Xinbian 圣若瑟月新编	Cimutang1892	Cimutang1914
Shengti Yue 圣体月	Tushanwan Press1893	Tushanwan Press1906
Shengxin Jinjian 圣心金鉴	Cimutang1891	Cimutang1909
Shengxin Yue Xinbian 圣心月新编	Cimutang1900	Catholic Church In Hejian Prefecture, Hebei1903 、 1907 、 Tushanwan Press1920、1934
Sheng Yinazhué Shengshui Ji 圣依纳爵圣水记	Cimutang1886	
Taixi Shiwu Congkao 泰西事物丛考		

	Hongbao Zhai 1903	
Tianshen Pu 天神谱	Cimutang1876	Cimutang1886，Tushanwan Press1916
Tianti 天梯	Cimutang1891	Cimutang1905，Tushanwan Press1921、1930、1937
Tianyan Lun Boyi 天演论驳议	Tushanwan Press1910	Tushanwan Press1932
Tongshi Jilan 通史辑览	Unknown	Tushanwancimutang1915、1929
Wuli Tuyuan 物理推原	Tushanwan Press1892	Tushanwan Press1894、1896，Xuhui Press1915、1916
Xixue Guanjian 西学关键	Hongbao Zhai1903，Huibao Press1903	
Xinjing Yiyu 新经译义	Tushanwan Press1897	Tushanwancimutang1926
Xinzhen 心箴	Cimutang1889	Cimutang1893、1901、1905，Tushanwan Press1914、1922
Xingfa Xueyao 性法学要	Xujiahui Press1904	Tushanwancimutang1918
Xingxing Xueyao 形性学要	Xujiahui Huibao Press1899	Xujiahui Huibao Press Second Revised Edition, 1906
Shengcha Guishi 省察规式	Unknown	Tushanwan Press1905(3rd Edition)，1922(4th Edition)，1929reprint
Shengcha Jianze 省察简则	Unknown	Tushanwan Press1924
Xuliku 续理窟	Cimutang1915	Tushanwan Press1920、1926、1936
Xu Wendin'Gong Ji 徐文定公集	Cimutang1896	Cimutang1909，Xujiahui Catholic Church Library1933
Xunmeng Shier De 训蒙十二德	Tushanwan Press1902	Tushanwan Press1907
Yawuwu Yanyi 亚物演义	Cimutang1891	Cimutang1911
Yesu Shounan Ji Lue 耶稣受难记略	Tushanwan Press1889	Tushanwan Press1929(4th Edition)
Youtong Riling Shengti Zhi Wenti 幼童日领圣体之问题	Unknown	Tushanwan Press1922(Third Edition)
Zengding Quanfei Huo Jiaoji 增订拳匪祸教记	Tushanwan Press1909	
Zhexue Tigang: Lingxing Xue 哲学提纲·灵性学	Tushanwan Press1908	Tushanwan Press1915、1931
Zhexue Tigang: Lunlixue 哲学提纲·伦理学	Tushanwan Press1909	Tushanwan Press1916、1921、1935
Zhexue Tigang: Minglixue 哲学提纲·名理学	Tushanwan Press1908	Tushanwan Press1916、1935
Zhexue Tigang: Shenglixue 哲学提纲·生理学	Tushanwan Press1908	Tushanwan Press1914、1927
Zhexue Tigang: Tianyuxue 哲学提纲·天宇学	Tushanwan Press1908	Tushanwan Press1916、1935
Zhexue Tigang: Yuanshenxue 哲学提纲·原神学	Tushanwan Press1911	Tushanwan Press1922
Zhenjiao Wenda 真教问答	Cimutang1895	Cimutang1899，Tushanwan Press1923
Zhongyan 忠言	Tushanwan Press1892	Tushanwan Press1904、1931、1936
Zongtu Dashilu 宗徒大事录	Cimutang1886	Cimutang1907；Tushanwan Press1924 年 Second Edition

Zongtu Liezhuan 宗徒列传	Cimutang1886 年	Tushanwan Press1924 年 Second Edition

Table 6：

Titles	First edition date	Publisher
lianyu lüeshuo 炼狱略说	1871	Shanghai Cimutang
Shengxin yue xinbian 圣心月新编	1879	Shanghai Cimutang Juzhen Edition
Bianhuo zhiyan 辩惑卮言	1880	Shanghai Xuhui Printing Press
Dawen xinbian 答问新编	1880	Shanghai Xuhui Printing Press
Bian'ao jinzhen 砭傲金针	1882	Shanghai Cimutang
Kewen tiaoda 客问条答	1882	Shanghai Xuhui Printing Press
Liku 理窟	1886	Cimutang
Lianyu kao 炼狱考	1886	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Meigui jingyi 玫瑰经义	1886	Shanghai Cimutang
Sheng Yinazhue shengshui ji 圣依纳爵圣水记	1886	Tushanwan Cimutang
Tianshen pu 天神谱	1886	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Qidao huiyou bianlan 祈祷会友便览	1887	TushanwanCimutang movable type
Shengmu zhuan 圣母传	1887	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Zongtu dashilu 宗徒大事录	1887	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Zongtu liezhuan 宗徒列传	1887	Shanghai Cimutang
Lixue boyi 理学驳议	1887	Handwritten copy
Jiaohuang hongxu 教皇洪序	1888	Shanghai Cimutang
Tianti 天梯	1888	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Dejing 德镜	1889	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Shengti ji 圣体记	1889	Shanghai Cimutang
Yesu shounan ji lue 耶稣受难记略	1889	Tushanwan Press
Dawen lucun 答问录存	1890	Xuhui Printing Press movable type
Xinzhen 心箴	1890	Shanghai Cimutang
Ling shengti xuzhi 领圣体须知	1891	Cimutang
Sanyuan wenda 三愿问答	1891	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Shengxin jinjian 圣心金鉴	1891	Shanghai Cimutang
Yawu yanyi 亚物演义	1891	Shanghai Cimutang
Sheng Ruose yue xinbian 圣若瑟月新编	1892	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Wuli tuiyuan 物理推原	1892	Xuhui Printing Press
Zhongyan 忠言	1892	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Mosi shengnan lu 默思圣难录	1892	Shanghai Cimutang
Shengti yue 圣体月	1893	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Misa xiaoyan 弥撒小言	1894	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Fengci zhengyi 奉慈正义	1895	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Funu Magalida zhuan 福女玛加利大传	1895	Shanghai Cimutang
Xu Wendin'gong ji 徐文定公集	1896	Shanghai Cimutang
Moxiang shengxin jiuze 默想圣心九则	1897	Tushanwan Cimutang movable type
Xinjing yiyu 新经译义	1897	Tushanwan Press
Xingxing xueyao 形性学要	1899	Xuhui Huibao Press

Zhenjiao wenda 真教问答	1899	ShanghaiCimutang movable type
Aizhu jinyan 爱主金言	1900	Cimutang movable type
Xunmeng shier de 训蒙十二德	1902	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Gengzi jiaonan ji 庚子教难记	1902	Unknown Lithographed Edition
Riyong baoshu 日用宝书	1903	Hongbao Edition
Taixi shiwu congkao 泰西事物丛考	1903	Hongbao Zhai Edition
Xixue guanjian 西学关键	1903	Shanghai Hongbao Zhai
Shengxin yue xinbian yixiang 圣心月新编遗响	1903	Hejian Catholic Church
Qiande pu 潜德谱	1904	ShanghaiCimutang movable type
Xingfa xueyao 性法学要	1904	Xujiahui Press movable type
Feizhou youji 斐洲游记	1905	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Quanhuo ji 拳祸记	1905	Tushanwan Press
Qinling shengti shuo 勤领圣体说	1906	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Sheng Rilaar zhuan 圣日辣尔传	1906	Tushanwan Cimutang
Funu Maliya'na zhuan 福女玛利亚纳传	1906	Shanghai Cimutang movable type
Bai shengti wen 拜圣体文	1907	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Tianyan lun boyi 天演论驳义	1907	Tushanwan Press
Shenglixue 生理学	1907	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Lingxing xue 灵性学	1907	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Zongtu dashilu 宗徒大事录	1907	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Gongyi bu zou dinghun li 公议部奏订婚例	1908	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Sheng Anduoni zhuan 圣安多尼传	1908	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Minglixue 名理学	1908	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Tianyuxue 天宇学	1908	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Guwen shiji 古文拾级	1909	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Mojing ji 墨井集	1909	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Zengbu quanfei huo jiaoji 增补拳匪祸教记	1909	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Lunlixue 伦理学	1909	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Yuanshenxue 原神学	1911	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Xuliku 续理窟	1915	Shanghai Tushanwan Press
Sheng Liunaduo zixiu zhi 圣留纳多自修志	1924	Shanghai Catholic Association of the Public
Ling shengti qianhou reqing 领圣体前后热情	Unknown	Unknown
Mojing shuhua ji 墨井书画集	Unknown	Unknown
Beizhong lu 备终录	Unknown	Unknown
Tongshi jilan 通史辑览	Unknown	Unknown
Shengcha guishi 省察规式	Unknown	Unknown
Shengcha jianze 省察简则	Unknown	Unknown
Youtong riling shengti zhi wenti 幼童日领圣体之问题	Unknown	Unknown
Mousiduo hangao 某司铎函稿		Handwritten copy

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Educational Development and the Pace of Religious Change: How the Sequence of Institutional Change in China and Japan Shaped the Emergence of Modern Religious Policy

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Abstract: In the mid 1800s, both China and Japan began reform movements in order to face the threat of increasing Western encroachment. Central to that reform were adaptations of the educational systems that helped prepare the revolutionary leaders of the Meiji Restoration in Japan and the Xinhai Revolution in China. As part of the subsequent state formation process, each country determined the role that religion would play in the new modern state. The policies each chose were significantly influenced by the educational context out of which those new leaders had emerged. Yet those leaders were shaped by the pace and sequence of educational reform relative to the timing of political revolution. Japanese leadership in the Meiji era reflected the *Kokugaku* and Confucian education they had received. Similarly, Nationalist leadership exhibited the Euro-American educational context, whether threw study abroad or at Western schools at home, in the policy choices they made.

Keywords: Education, China, Japan, Religion

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Encounters between Euro-American powers with China and Japan initiated a process of reassessing many institutional and cultural forms. It was this process that brought into elite debate such questions as the need for modernization and what that would entail, the improvement of technical capacity (particularly military tactics and technology), and the strengthening of industry and the national economy. Unsurprisingly, the figures engaged in this debate were shaped by the thinking and beliefs of the education institutions out of which they emerged. In both countries, educational systems were dialectically incorporated into these broader debates — forming and being formed by the ongoing question of how to adapt, how to modernize, and how to fend off Western aggression.

By mid-19th century, leading Chinese officials and the Manchu government could no longer ignore the problem of Western imperial aggression and the rather insurmountable technology gap placing the Qing government at perilous disadvantage.[1] Japan, having observed the unfolding problem in China was soon to face their own moment of crisis. The First Opium War in China (1839-1842) and the arrival of Perry's fleet in Japan (1843) further destabilized political circumstances that had become increasingly untenable. While some form of "Western learning" had existed in both China and Japan before,[2] it was not until this period in the latter half of the 19th Century that the pace of incorporation of this new learning began to quicken. As that pace quickened, educational development both fueled and was driven by emerging revolutionary movements.

Prior to this period of transformation, schools proved crucial in the revolutionary and reform movements of China and Japan as well as in the eventual emergence of "modern" religious policies particular to both countries. Not only was educational reform seen as the primary way of closing the technology gap, existing educational institutions were the intellectual training ground for the key players vying for control of the state building process.

The twin goals of the educational systems in China and Japan were to both train officials for government service and to develop the moral faculties of those officials. Such education assumed certain things about the world – the role of heaven, the nature or persons, the existence of and role of supernatural powers — and it was this fundamental and arguably religious basis of the educational system that came under threat from the implications of Western incursion and formed the ideological framework on which activists and institutions involved

[1] Early on, the Qing sequestered Euro-Americans to Canton, far from important political and cultural centers.

[2] During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Jesuit missionaries like Matteo Ricci and later Johann Adam Schall von Bell gained national prominence, while "Dutch Studies," (*Rangaku*) garnered from Dutch and Portuguese traders, had long existed in Japan.

in the revolutionary process drew. In short, education was also a theological and ideological project. And there were a variety of frameworks that informed the state building process and out of which particular approaches to religion at the state level emerged.

Yet, as we will see below, it was not merely the fact of education, reform, revolution, and ideological formation, but that these each happened at particular times and in particular sequences. It was not just the relationship between causal mechanisms, but the order in which they occurred, that had a decisive role in the future of religious policy in both countries. When and how institutions formed/reformed influenced cadres at disparate times to engage in the process of revolutionary change. As a result, institutions, actors, and resources were more or less available, or more or less central to key moments of policy formation, based on when such changes in education took place.

Educational Reform and the Timing of Revolution

Major trends in historical sociological research point to the importance of timing, sequence, events, and path dependency (Abbott 2001; Goldstone 1998; Mahoney 2000; Pierson 2004; Sewell 2005). Social change is historically situated, depends on recent as well as formative yet chronologically distant causes, is shaped by the structural transformation of major events, and yet remains significantly contingent. Of these findings, two in particular help explain the differing outcomes of modern religious policy in China and Japan as a result of educational system reforms. The first is work on the timing and sequence of events, and the second comes from studies on how the context of political change has far reaching effects on structural and cultural elements beyond the directly political.

Educational reform in China and Japan offers an illuminating pairing when compared over their respective periods of revolutionary state formation. Both countries confronted a significant technological gap with the West and attempted to close, or at least arrest the growth, of that gap through educational reform. Similarly, schools were important training grounds for would be revolutionaries as well as their more successful competitors who eventually helmed programs of political transition and state building. Yet the *timing* of these events and projects differed substantially in both countries and helped shape the process of religious change.

In Japan, at the time of the Restoration, the younger crop of revolutionaries stepped out of comparable educational settings. Confucian education remained the centerpiece, but this was increasingly supplemented by studies in "Dutch learning" and the increasingly popular *Kokugaku* and Mito ideologies that

centered on the uniqueness and importance of the Imperial cult and the sacredness of Japanese territory. Yet the impact of Western education remained limited, especially for those who became the "Meiji Oligarchs."[3] Widespread introduction of Western styles and topics in education, such as scientific subjects focused on the production of industrial citizens rather than Confucian imperial subjects, were a product of and not a catalyst for the Meiji Restoration. As such, and as I will show below, that educational system, while unarguably more "Western," was formed and guided by institutional changes and elite reformers steeped in ideologies of Confucian and Shinto lineage.

China's case was remarkably different. In comparison with Japan, China's revolution took an additional 40 years to come about (1911 in China and 1868 in Japan). During that time, the Qing government largely stayed committed to the examination system and the traditional educational structure that fed into it. But this did not mean that a Western educational system was absent. In fact, the spread of Western styled education increased substantially as schools were opened and students went overseas for further studies (Biggerstaff 1961; Keenan 1994; Johnson 2014). The increase in Western education was aided by structural and economic changes beyond the control of the state that required students to have something more than a traditional education (i.e. chemistry, engineering, foreign language). The result was a changing educational system distinct from the interests and efforts of the state and that fostered an anti-Confucian, Western/secular vision of political change. When the Nationalist revolution finally succeeded, the resulting government, the one that would shape religious modernity in China, was filled with graduates of mission schools, Western styled universities of Chinese founding, and schools in France, the United States, and Japan.[4] Education reform shaped, rather than was shaped by, the revolution and, subsequently, the emergence of Chinese religious policy.

In this regard, the relationship of educational reform and revolution strongly supports Abbott's (2001) claim that causation does depend on an element's context in time, that "the order of particular events is the center of interest" (p. 177). Abbott describes sequences of events as "careers" and notes that, "the only narrative assumption that need be made is that an event can affect only events beginning after it in the career" (p. 176). Given this, what we would expect and do find is that it is not immaterial when programs of educational reform take place. In his discussion of "positive feedback processes" Pierson makes a similar claim, emphasizing that "different sequences may produce

[3] "Oligarchs" typically refers to a cadre of leaders of the Restoration who subsequently played dominate roles in the early Meiji state. They most often came from Satsuma or Choshu, the leading provinces in the Restoration.

[4] Notably, this was after Japan had instituted their own Western educational system.

different outcomes" (2004, p.18). Which actors and institutions gain access to the formative stages of educational development wield enormous influence on the cultural practices it engenders. And it is just these types of turning points that represent the structural changes and events that determine path dependent trajectories.

The importance of timing and sequence become even more significant when we consider how events and historically specific causal processes shape culture and practice. Sewell's work on the structural significance of events is perhaps best known. He argues that, "Events bring about historical changes in part by transforming the very cultural categories that shape and constrain human action" (Sewell 2005, p. 101). Yet we would be wrong to conclude that conceptual categories like "revolution" or "state formation" are uniform processes. They are in fact highly contingent and malleable. Robert Fishman's work on democratic transition on the Iberian peninsula provides useful theoretical leverage on this point. He finds that, "[r]egime transitions hold the ability to change not only the basic rules linking governmental institutions to the broader populace, but also a variety of social practices and understandings" (Fishman 2011, p. 2). And it is not merely the fact of transition but that those transitions have important qualities to them that they carry over into the process of institutionalization. In considering revolution, Fishman's study shows not only *that* revolution leads to political transition, but *how* it does so has important cultural implications for both political practice and cultural tastes (Fishman and Lizardo 2013). If revolutionary change is contextual and contingent and if it carries through specific peculiarities into resulting structures and practices, then it is important to identify any patterns involved in such transmissions.

The central point is this: in the universe of possible influences exerted on the educational system that *could have* shaped religious policies in China and Japan, the *timing* of revolution determined which *did*. Differing sequences of revolution and educational reform advantaged different projects of ideological reproduction. In these specific cases, the early period of educational reform was crucial as it was a significant moment of institutionalization — for the purposes of the state in Japan, or in opposition to the imperial dynasty in China. More significantly, patterns of institutionalization opened certain opportunities by strengthening developmental paths and structurally weakening others. As such, there were two keys mechanisms through which educational institutions shaped the emergence of religious policy.

First, the *ideological context* of activist education determined *how reform and revolutionary elites and institutions conceived of the modern*. Put differently educational institutions significantly impacted the emergence of religious policy by

developing the ideological communities that drove the political reform process and constituted the discourse on modernity.

Second, the *timing* of educational reform relative to political transformation determined *which ideologies obtained broader reach in the educational system*. Encounters with Western imperial aggression revealed significant technological gaps that brought into question the effectiveness of prevailing educational institutions and ideologies. However, educational changes unfolded at very different paces in China and Japan and that *pace of change* led to different manifestations of a "modern" educational system.

In what follows, I will elaborate on the historical process of educational change in China and Japan and map its significance for the emergence of each countries approach to “modern” religious policy.

Education from Tokugawa to Meiji

Education under the Tokugawa existed primarily for the purpose of supporting the existing political structure. While private schools existed in continuously increasing numbers, the *han* 藩[5] and *bakufu* 幕府[6]remained the primary "employers" of educated samurai and it was to their purposes that the educational system was shaped. As Rubinger describes it, "These [official] schools, as institutions of feudal administration of the *bakufu* and *han*, were expected to conform to the best interests of the state. Until the end of the period their primary purpose remained the training of moral attitudes considered a necessity for a hereditary ruling elite" (Rubinger 2007, p. 7)

The earliest roots of the Tokugawa system started under Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川 家康(1543-1616). It was his encouragement that led to the creation of libraries, founding of *bakufu* schools, and printing of books. The Shogun, Ieyasu, also appointed Hayashi Razan 林羅山(1583 – 1657) as an education advisor for the Tokugawa. Razan was a Confucian scholar who helped to promote Confucian studies. He opened his first school in Edo (Tokyo) in 1630 and his lineage became the centerpiece of the Tokugawa educational system.

Beyond the schools specifically linked with the ruling Tokugawa, there were a variety of educational institutions spread out across the Japanese landscape. *Shijuku* 私塾, *terakoya* 寺子屋, and *hankō* 藩校 were the most prevalent educational institutions, and Rubinger lists the *gōkō* 合考 as a fourth. *Hankō*

[5] The political-familial leadership of Japanese domains. They were more like mini kingdoms than territories of a larger kingdom - something akin to late medieval/early modern German states.

[6] The military government headed by the Tokugawa household which led the various Japanese domains.

were largely concentrated in cities and regional capitals whereas *shijuku* and *terakoya* were more geographically distributed. Gōkō were the least numerous and most functionally specific of the schools. There were primarily two types of *gōkō*. The first of these were branches of *han* schools for rural samurai who lived far from the castle towns in which most *hankō* were located. Secondly, they functioned as schools that targeted commoners and offered general moral instruction.

Another school type that is, for our purposes, less relevant, was the *terakoya*. These were alternatively referred to as *tenarai-sho* 手習い所. *Terakoya* drew their name from being typically located in temples (*tera* 寺) and were primarily, though not exclusively, for non-samurai commoners. Merchant children were especially common at these types of schools. They taught basic Confucian content, focusing on literacy, proper expression, and Confucian morality. As schools for samurai helped to institutionalize proper loyalty to the Shogunate, the *terakoya* helped to instill models for basic levels of discipline and morality across broad swaths of the populace.

More relevant to our question were the *hankō* and *shijuku*. *Hankō* were the educational institutions of the individual *han*. Their central task was to prepare samurai for service within the feudal court. The instruction emphasized the Confucian classics. Readings and recitations formed the foundation for later study of reading, expression, and moral development. *Hankō* were initially somewhat slow to catch on, but they grew in number and significance throughout the Tokugawa era, with the periods of reform in the 19th century being especially important times of growth and expansion. *Hankō* were less likely to adopt more cutting-edge styles of learning (particularly Dutch Learning, but even *Kokugaku* and related subjects) though such subjects were occasionally present. Additionally, they were only marginally responsible for producing the eventual leaders and activists of the *bakumatsu* 幕末 period.

Shijuku are the most amorphous and yet more significant category of educational institution. *Shijuku* are most easily understood as private schools (as opposed to the more official *hankō*); however that understanding was not as readily apparent during the period. Nevertheless, Rubinger provides a useful summary definition:

> *We can, however, isolate the shijuku as a type on the basis of: (1) administrative structure – they were privately run...(2) the curriculum — it was free from official control and dependent solely on the particular interests and training of the headmaster... (3) the constituency – the shijuku imposed no geographical or class barriers to entrance* (Rubinger 2007, pp. 8-9).

Shijuku, being free from direct links to the han governments, were not beholden to the same necessity of transmitting proper Confucian morals and Neo-Confucian political philosophy. While most still emphasized some sort of Confucian training, the flexibility made *shijuku* successful forums for engaging with newer forms of study and learning. As a result, Western learning and especially *Kokugaku* found *shijuku* to be a welcoming homes and hothouses for spreading and developing their ideas. They also served as intra-*han* network nodes in a way that the *hankō* never were able to. Even though relationships between *han* were generally cordial, it was simply far less of a priority for *hankō* to develop or facilitate such relationships. *Shijuku* thrived on them. As a result, *shijuku* were able to have an important impact on national networks of schools and ideological groups.

Throughout the course of the Tokugawa era, the number of schools increased significantly, with particularly large jumps coming in the years just before the Restoration. The majority of these gains came from *terakoya* expansion, but *shijuku* grew proportionately. Rubinger puts the count at around 1000 *shijuku* and 220 *hankō* (Rubinger 2007, p. 5). Platt's numbers are even larger, with 1500 *shijuku* and 276 *hankō* by the end of the Tokugawa (Platt 2004, p 4). Fief schools (*hankō*) saw enormous increases at the end of the 18th century, and the growth of the closing decades of the 1700s continued through to the restoration (Dore 1965). In the late decades of the Tokugawa, a growing number of fief schools included *Kokugaku* teachers which was likely due to the increasing importance of education and "aesthetic expertise" for samurai as economic conditions deteriorated (Platt 2004).

With the growth and expansion of schools, their content also became more standardized.[7] Given their role as stepping stones for fief employment, most of the education at fief schools centered on preparing samurai for their role within the feudal system. The primary means by which this was accomplished was through a Confucian curriculum. This would include the study of classic Confucian writings, with an eye not only to styles of writing and expression, but, more importantly, as a way of transmitting moral instruction. It was also in the classics that aspiring samurai officials learned about both their role in society and their duty to fief and the *bakufu*. The classics also were a treasure trove of political philosophy from which students would be expected to draw. All of this was packaged within a very particular cosmology that defined relationships of people to each other, to their government, and to Heaven.

Fief schools and *shijuku* composed what were also called the *"bun,"*文 or literary, side of learning. Instruction methods were mainly *sōdoku* 総読, or

[7] This and the following are mostly drawn from Dore.

readings/recitations, and *kōshaku* 講釈, or lectures on the readings. Schools often operated their own printing presses and both schools and students were subsidized by the fief itself. As might be imagined, this led to rather rigid reproductions of the accepted ideology:

> *Designed though it was to heighten the student's sense of the seriousness of the business of learning, it was hardly conducive to spontaneity or intellectual adventurousness, the more so since, from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, all texts used were those of the Sung Confucianist school and no discussion of varying interpretations was expected or even permitted* (Dore 1965, p. 83).

It wasn't until the 1850s that Western learning made its way into the fief schools and even then it was limited to navigation, gunnery and medicine. At the main *bakufu* school, Western subjects were separated and largely unofficial. Western learning *shijuku* certainly existed before the Restoration, as did a negligible number of mission schools, but they were not significantly widespread. *Shijuku* could vary widely in their content and focus. This was dependent on the instructor's background and interests. Confucian works remained entry level requirements, but beyond that the direction of instruction could diverge significantly. It was in these schools that the ideas that fueled the Restoration developed.

Among *shijuku* that contributed to the Restoration and to the reassertion of the primacy of the imperial cult, Yoshida Shoin's 吉田 松陰 (1830-1859) Shōka Sonjuku 松下 村塾 stands out (Van Straelen 1952). Shoin took over control of the school in 1857 and he quickly became a major force on the political scene and an extremely controversial figure. In fact, his subversive machinations would lead to his death. But before that, he helped educate and form the ideological commitments of a litany of stars of the Restoration. Among them were Kido Koin 木戸 孝允(1833-1877), Ito Hirobumi 伊藤 博文(1841-1909), and Yamagata Aritomo 山縣 有朋(1838-1922), just to name a few of the best known.

Shoin's teachings, which he gleaned from Mito Scholars among others, elevated the role of the Emperor and the imperial cult as well as the sacral uniqueness of Japan as a nation. The importance of these beliefs, which while not explicitly of the *Kokugaku* school they certainly share many similarities with them, can best be seen in how they became the rally cry for the Restoration movement and the explicit goals of the Meiji state. Shoin muses on them in a number of letters:

> *The family law of the Sugi's [Shoin's birth house] has really great advantages over other family laws, namely it prescribes ancestor worship, without which any family will soon go to pieces, worship of the [g]ods, charity towards relatives, study*

of literature, to avoid being submerged in Buddhism and finally it prescribes agriculture" (Yoshida Shoin, quoted in van Straelen [1952, pp. 17-18]*).*

We must worship the Gods. Yamato is called the land of the [g]ods. Therefore nobody who has been born in this sacred country should despise the [g]ods'. But there are many among the common people who are far from the true attitude of mind, although they believe in the [g]ods. Those who come for worship and clasp their hands and pray for success, a long life, wealth and honours these people err indeed. The [g]ods love sincerity and purity. Therefore if one worships the [g]ods, he should have a true and sincere heart, clean his body and worship without any other purposes. Only this is real piety" (Yoshida Shoin, quoted in Van Straelen [1952, p. 69]*).*

In reading Shoin's exhortations, it is quite clear that these were not merely political concerns. He writes as if composing theology. And it was out of this theologically rich context that many important Restoration leaders emerged and it was exactly these ideas that many of them endeavored to enact. While Shoin and his school were somewhat exceptional, they were not alone as sources for revolutionary ideologies. Similarly important is the fact that these contexts, whether they were *Kokugaku*, Confucian, or more radical versions of support for the imperial cult, they were all located within ideological and religious lineages that had historical roots in Japan. Even the growth of Western learning took place as an addendum and not a significant subversion of these lineages.

Martial schools, most commonly schools of swordsmanship,[8] were another important area of education through which ideas rapidly spread. As their title implies, martial schools were centers of physical education, but they were not separated from the moral expectations and philosophical musings of the educational system. They were the *bu* 武 of the *bun/bu* pairing that structured samurai training. Thus, the discussion of philosophical principles and contemporary politics was commonplace. More importantly, as one of the few locations to which samurai could gain unrestricted access across domainal borders, swordsmanship schools were critical network hubs. As the *sonnō jōi* 尊王攘夷 movement[9] grew in the early years of the restoration efforts, it is in the swordsmanship schools that activists, like Takechi Zuizan 武市瑞山 (1829-1865) and Sakamoto Ryōma 坂本龍馬 (1836-1867), transmitted and fanned Mito and *Kokugaku* ideas (Jansen 1959, p. 1971). The leaders cultivated in these schools and

[8] These are often referred to as fencing schools. While technically correct, the name conjures up unhelpful images of Western style fencing and the class distinctions that go with it. Similarly, anyone who has seen a kendo match can attest to the dramatically different aesthetic.

[9] "Revere the emperor and expel the barbarian" became a slogan for radical restorationists.

those like Yoshida Shoin's academy were the same leaders who would later help to build the modern Japanese state. Yet here we have a more religious (or deeply cosmologically aware) education training the modernizers of Japan.

Shoin's Sonjuku and the martial schools were not the only ones that began to break from the standard educational formula. Chinese studies – the study of the Confucian classics — remained important, but they increasingly became primers for studies elsewhere. Students studying Western learning would still begin with the Confucian texts and then move on to naval studies, medicine, or language. As Marius Jansen observes, "In late Tokugawa and early Meiji times the term ""investigation of principles," *kyūri* 究理, changed in content from the study of Neo-Confucian universals of [Zhu Xi] to the "science" of the West" (Jansen 1971, p. 19). While this would seem to imply that there was a significant departure from the Japanese ideological lineages, thus undermining the possibility of the emergence of a Japanese religious modernity (as will be the case in China), yet that many of the most important students of Western learning were heavily influenced by *Kokugaku* and Mito studies. Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤 諭吉 (1835-1901), Saigo Takamori 西郷 隆盛 (1828-1877), Kido Koin, Ito Hirobumi, Inoue Kaoru 井上馨 (1836-1915), and Katsu Kaishu 勝海舟 (1823-1899), among many others, all studied in Nagasaki for significant periods of time (Rubinger 2007, p. 112). Most of them are notable as driving forces behind restoring the Imperial cult despite their exposure to and interest in Western learning.

As *Kokugaku* expanded as an intellectual movement its impact on education in Japan grew apace. By the 1830s and 1840s, fiefs increasingly incorporated *Kokugaku* into their school programs. It was during that time period, which coincided with Hirata Atsutane's 平田 篤胤(1776-1843) emergence as the most visible leader of the movement, that *Kokugaku* took on a more decidedly political and overtly religious role. The movement always had had implications for both religion and politics with its emphasis on returning to the Shinto textual tradition and elucidating the foundational myths of the country and the imperial household (Bito 1984). However it had sustained its roots as a philological movement through most of Motoori Norinaga's 本居 宣長 (1730-1801) life.

By Norinaga's death, *Kokugaku* had become an accepted part of the Japanese intellectual landscape and its headway into fief schools grew to match its significant foothold among *shijuku*. It was also during the 1830s and 1840s that many early disciples of the movement, particularly those of Atsutane, transitioned to roles as teachers at various levels of the educational system (platt 2004). *Kokugaku* scholars and teachers were also known to travel extensively,

teaching and lecturing around the country to gatherings of students and their reach to the broader public expanded through their rather unique efforts at an early form of correspondence education (Rubinger 2007). By the time Perry's flotilla arrived and the movement to topple the Shogunate and restore imperial rule gathered pace, *Kokugaku* was a source of ideological and religious formation both in the *hankō* and the growing number of *shijuku*. It was this positioning that provided the movement with a platform of influence and recruitment that helped shape the Restoration and the subsequent Meiji state.

With the success of the Restoration, the new Meiji state began to expand and standardize the educational system. Schools were modeled more along the lines of Europe and the United States, with math, science, and literature replacing the centrality of Confucian studies and the *Bun*/*Bu* training. The state also continued to support a limited, but influential, cadre of students who studied abroad. Around 200 students studied overseas at the government's expense from 1868 – 1870, but these numbers dwindled to only 58 from 1875 – 1885 (Marshall 1977, p. 74).

The early years under the Meiji saw a flurry of local efforts to open up schools and provide local education. The state actually allowed a significant amount of initial freedom in founding schools and they called on local leaders and elites to spearhead this movement. The range of freedom was eventually curtailed with sate movement to incorporate and standardize educational content. Local officials had little choice but to respond to the demands of the state regarding incorporation and standardization, but they were not without space to affect the process (Platt 2004).

The Meiji Fundamental Code on Education (1872) was the first major codification of educational law under the Meiji and helped flesh out the structure of early Meiji education. The Fundamental Code (*Gakusei* 学制) established eight university districts directly under the Ministry of Education – headed at this time by Mori Arinori 森有礼 (1847-1889). These universities would come to play an important role as pathways to power and influence within the Meiji state. Most important of these was Tokyo Imperial University which, by the 1880s, was one of the most important conduits to powerful job placement and influence in Meiji society (Marshall 1977).

The Fundamental Code codified the basis for education under the university level as well. Under the eight university districts were 32 middle school districts and 210 primary school districts. At the middle school district level, officials called *torishimari* 取り締まり were given oversight powers. These officials exercised significant power as policy agenda setters and organizers of

reform at the intermediate level (Platt 2004, p. 167).

The Fundamental Code also established a system of teacher training and education. Of the structural changes, this was perhaps the most significant. Up until the promulgation of the Fundamental Code, many local teachers were drawn from pre-Meiji educational institutions. This meant they were most likely Confucian teachers, emphasized readings/recitations and lectures on Confucian texts, or were one of the many *Kokugaku* teachers dotted throughout the country. The Fundamental Code established normal schools and required teachers to pass through one in order to teacher within the official school system. As would be expected, this move on the part of the Meiji state leadership helped to gain more control of education at a local level.

While the legal and structural changes to the educational system were a significant part of the formation of Meiji education, the struggle between intellectual groups over control of this new system had a more direct impact on the emergence of religious policy in Japan. Marshall describes the ideological conflicts of this period as between three primary groups:

> *1) the Confucians who had served as intellectual elite under the Tokugawa regime; 2) the nativist scholars of the National Studies (Kokugaku) who laid claim to the Restoration as their own on the basis of their long championship of the Imperial Throne; and 3) the specialists in Western area studies* (Marshall 1977, p. 73).

Of these three, the two with the most significant impact on the ensuing struggle for power were the "Nativists" and the proponents of Western education.

In the immediate aftermath of the Restoration, it would have seemed most likely that *Kokugaku* scholars were positioned to reap the benefits of their contribution to the revolution. It had been their ideas that carried forward the pro-Imperial thinking of earlier Mito scholars. Their investigation into and support for the mythical roots of the imperial household fleshed out claims to the uniqueness and rightful centrality of the imperial cult as a unifying force in the new Japan. And their scholars lead the way in writing about and theorizing concepts like the *tennosei* 天皇制, the *kokutai* 国体, and the *saisei itchi* 祭政一致 – all of which became the defining policy of the Meiji state.

In one sense the *Kokugaku* movement got what it wanted. However, *Kokugaku* scholar's themselves quickly saw their influence wane. After the Restoration, three *Kokugaku* scholars were named to important posts within the education system – including Atsutane's heir, Hirata Kanetane 平田鉄胤 (1799-1880).

But any early gains were quickly lost as *Kokugaku* scholars were frozen out from important positions in key universities and within the Ministry of Education. These scholars responded by establishing their own school, the Kogakusho 国学所, after their initial attempts to Shinto-ize the Meiji educational system failed. Although by the mid-1870s the influence of *Kokugaku* thought could be seen at most levels of the new Meiji state, the influence of *Kokugaku* scholars was largely invisible.

However, this did not mean a clear win for the proponents of more Western education. Figures like Fukuzawa Yukichi and movements like the developmental educationists (*kaihatsu-shugi* 開発主義) exemplified this group. As spiritual successors to leaders in Dutch Studies and Western learning, activists in this tradition had been important supporters of the Restoration and of the reformation of the educational system along Western, Enlightenment lines. This made them important competition for the *kokugaku* scholars as "[Enlightenment positivism] encouraged the formation of alternative conceptions of nature, humanity, knowledge, and their relationship to one another" (Lincicome 1995, p. 24). Given the religio-mythical commitments of *kokugaku*, this group of Western scholars represented the possibility for a very different version of religious policy to emerge – one decidedly less Shinto and religious.

The fate of developmental education serves as a representation of the fate of Enlightenment positivism's fate as a whole. As early as the 1870s, developmental education began to exert considerable influence over educational reform given its attention to practical aspects of pedagogy. Early in the Meiji period, developmental education's ideas and instructional techniques were disseminated through teaching materials and translated works on education (Lincicome 1995, p. 27). Teachers affiliated with the movement gained influence at normal schools and the movement published a number of periodicals with translated works on developmental education and comments on ongoing debates at the level of national policy.

However, their influence was only slightly less short-lived than that of the *Kokugaku* movement. By the end of the 1880s, the reassertion of Meiji statist ideology – in particular the centrality of the Imperial cult – precipitated a decline in the influence of developmental education. During the early 1880s, the movement provided a dominant voice on educational policy, espoused primarily through its different publications and via leaders of the movement who held important posts within universities and the Ministry of Education. However, Enlightenment positivism was never able to overcome the foundational role of *Kokugaku* ideology in the formation of the state and the continued role of those formed by it in the pre-Meiji years. As the imperial cult further solidified as the

raison d'etre of Meiji Japan, developmental education's ideological commitments - their cultural conception of modernity - became increasingly untenable.

Throughout the process of educational reform, it was a more moderate group of supporters of the Imperial cult that guided the establishment of Meiji educational policy. While both the *Kokugaku* and development movements provided the ideological frameworks for the debate about the future of Japanese education, it was actors like the Meiji oligarchs and institutions of the state that monopolized political power and could turn the ideas of the movements into policy. In fact, few of the activists mentioned throughout this chapter who were trained in late Tokugawa schools and who drove the revolutionary movement were directly affiliated with any discernible ideological movement. However, their beliefs and priorities were clearly shaped more by the thinking of *Kokugaku* and Mito scholarship than by Enlightenment positivism or Western thought (Kido 1983; Mori 1873).

The role of these political activists can be most clearly seen in the support for the *tennosei* and its translation into the educational system. It is worth quoting Platt on this process: "The silencing of alternative educational visions, accomplished decisively through the suppression of the Popular Rights Movement, then allowed for the extension of the "emperor system" (*tennosei*, 天皇制) into the realm of education, resulting in "emperor system education" (*tennosei kyoiku* 天皇制教育)" (Platt 2004, p. 10). The most illuminating element of Platt's observation is exactly that idea of emperor system education. The actors and institutions responsible for institutionalizing the Meiji educational system were committed to supporting the *tennosei* and to translating it into a prevailing "*tennosei kyouiku*." It was this commitment that distinguished them from both the *Kokugaku* and developmental movements. *Kokugaku*'s commitment to restoration went too far in the eyes of many Meiji leaders and threatened to undermine the fragile peace they needed to maintain in order to secure the fledgling Japanese state. However, the commitments of movements like the development educationists put them fundamentally at odds with the ethos on which the state was built and by which Meiji leaders were motivated.

Debates concerning the educational system were effectively closed with the promulgation of the Rescript on Education *kyouiku ni kansuru chokugo* 教育ニ関スル勅語 (1890). "As the Imperial Rescript on Education made abundantly clear, by 1890 loyalty and patriotism had been elevated in educational discourse from the category of emotions whose importance for national survival had been rationally determined to the category of moral virtues willed by the emperor upon his subjects" (Lincicome 1995, p. 183). The Rescript on Education differed markedly from the Fundamental Code in role and intent. Where the Code set

out legal guidelines, the Rescript established the moral tenor of the educational system. It gave education a revised purpose that put the welfare of emperor, nation, and family (the component parts of the *kokutai*) at the center of schooling. While many of the virtues it extolled (filial piety, proper regard among the five relationships, etc.) were drawn from the Confucian tradition, much of the language reinforced the cosmological precepts of the Shinto revivalists (the *kokutai*, the imperial ancestry, everlasting descent of the imperial line). The emphasis was that while the subjects taught in the classroom were not specifically drawn from the imperial cult, their purpose was to be used to that end (Shimazono and Murphy 2009).

More important than the mere language of the Rescript (which, like the constitution, firmly anchored the ideas of Shinto revivalism in the structure of the state) was the use to which the Rescript was put. Schools were required to have copies of the Rescript, to often recite it, and to place it, along with the image of the emperor, at the center of regular school rituals. This last point is particularly interesting, because here a part of the imperial cult was resurrected by the population as an aspect of the educational system. Ritual veneration of the emperor and the Rescript carrying his sacred instructions were the product of state efforts and worked toward the goal of strengthening the modern Japanese state. Here again, while thoroughly modern, the educational program of Meiji Japan involved elements that were profoundly religious.

The Progress of Revolution and Education in China

Education in China shared many characteristics with Japan. The similarity was based both on the shared focus on the Confucian classics as well as Japan's rather explicit borrowing from China's educational model. However, developments during the Qing, particularly during the latter years of the dynasty, led to a gradually diverging educational context that significantly shaped the course of revolution and the resulting form of religious policy.

The Chinese educational system under the Qing included a hierarchical structure of schools. At the top of this system was the Imperial Academy at the national level and the Hanlin Academy 翰林院 at the curricular center. Imperial edicts helped to fill out the lower levels of this system, with a 1652 order calling for the establishment of schools in rural areas (Rawski 1979, p. 33) and a 1733 order creating academies in every province (Keenan 1994, p. 500). While teaching positions at upper level schools were filled with higher degree holders, the lower levels schools became a fall back for failed lower degree holders. Students, teachers, and bureaucrats created a cyclical system by which the Qing educational program was reinforced.

Learning the classics began early, with recitation and brushwork forming the basis for later learning. Students were not expected to understand what they were reciting but to simply internalize it so that, it was assumed, the works would develop the student even before and then in combination with deeper understanding of the text. Students also often began with primers like the *Thousand Character Classic* 千字文, *Trimetrical Classic* 三字經, and the *Hundred Names* 百家姓. These helped with improvement of literacy while also contributing moral lessons. Once students could read well enough, the four books and 5 classics became the focal point of the educational process.

Not all schools were the product of government order. Outside provincially sponsored schools a number of different private schools also operated. Similar to Japan's *terakoya* in goal if not in scope, China had a number of charitable schools that were privately run and emphasized broader basic literacy. A more prevalent form of private school was the clan school. These were operated and financed by local family groupings or villages and were also largely focused on literacy rather than preparation for the exams. By the end of the Qing, many villages had some form of educational institution, though these were often focused on literacy. However, that was not exclusively the case, as some degree aspirants would start at small village schools with a *tong sheng* 童生 or *sheng yuan* 生員 teacher and pass the initial levels of the exam (Harrison 2005).

Most important of the private schools were the private academies or *shuyuan* 書院. *Shuyuan* doubled as both intellectual and educational centers and had a history of being the homes of important intellectual movements. These operated in a fashion similar to the Mito educational center in Japan. While devoted to education, they were also largely research centers where scholars would locate and investigate texts at greater length. It was here that the possibility of educational and intellectual streams outside the examination system had the greatest hope of sprouting up. However, given their politically volatile history, they were often banned, including for much of the Qing reign.

While Confucian studies across all schools aimed at an imminently pragmatic goal (acquiring a position in the dynastic bureaucracy) the content was not areligious. At its core, Confucianism treats deep metaphysical questions that are intertwined with practical aspects of living. The concept of Heaven (*tian* 天) was central to the Confucian metaphysic, as was its relation to earth and mankind. Heaven was understood as being "above" but also was an operating force in and through all things (Watanabe 2012, Lagerwey 2010). Ritual practice, the Emperor's role as the "son of heaven," and the mandate of heaven which bestowed or confirmed rulership formed the metaphysical as well as political basis of Confucian study. Beyond these fundamental principles,

Confucian schools typically had shrines to the Great Sage around which periodic rituals were performed.

And it was exactly this metaphysical world which the educational structure reproduced and reaffirmed as the gatekeeper of the national bureaucracy. While this reflects a surface level similarity with the Japanese system, it is also the point of greatest departure. Where the Japanese system prepared would be officials for their roles working within their own *han*, the Chinese system prepared students for the examination system as the primary means of becoming a scholar-official. While the Japanese system allowed for more leeway in educational content (though it was still mainly Confucian, there was a lower hurdle for adapting the curriculum), there was far less incentive to learn anything but the required works for the imperial exam in China (Elman 2013).

As the mechanism for reproducing the ideology of the empire, the exam system created a bureaucratic elite whose fortunes were tied to that of the state. Thus, whether believers because of their educational upbringing or based on more utilitarian reasons, the exam and its content held significant sway over the actors and institutions on the scene. And it produced them in tremendous quantities. Estimates for the number of clerks – lower level positions for minor degree holders – reached 300,000 and that was only for local posts (Rawski 1979, p. 9). The number of officials bloated over the period of the Qing Dynasty, as exemplified by a 30 percent increase in the number of *sheng yuan* degree holders over the course of the Qing (Keenan 1994, p. 493). This created a growing surplus middle strata — similar to lower/mid samurai in Japan in the late Tokugawa years – but who were still folded into the system with either clerical work or lower-tier education.

This process of recreating the imperial ideology and implied religious commitments was not dramatically altered until the Tongzhi Restoration 同治中興 in the years following the disasters of both the first and second Opium Wars. The Restoration also coincided with the waning years of the Taiping Rebellion and was equal parts attempt to strengthen the country in the wake of the devastation and to further address the growing problem of foreign dominance. A major component of the Tongzhi Restoration was the Self-Strengthening Movement 自強運動, which aimed to enable the Chinese state to match the pressure from the Euro-American powers by narrowing the technological gap. Much of the work of the movement's leaders focused on developing industries and new educational opportunities (particularly in the technical fields related to the production of arms and in military sciences).

Many of the leading figures in petitioning the Qing to open new schools

with "Western" subjects, as well as those who played an important part in founding new schools were the leaders of the Tongzhi movement (同志運動). Comparatively, these figures were akin to their contemporaries in Japan who helped push forward the Meiji Restoration. Both were essentially cultural conservatives who saw the need for adopting the technical skills of their Western antagonists (Wright 1978). Figures like Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901), who we will see played an important role in the establishment of modern government schools, and Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-1872) were committed to the Confucian logic of the state. Zeng, in fact, continued to write to his children about their Confucian education while he was leading Qing forces against the Taipings. Zeng was even involved in debates about Han and Song learning, which was one of the more prominent intellectual discussions of the period (Liu 2023). Leaders in the Self-Strengthening Movement were not merely bureaucrats but were members in good standing of the Confucian intelligentsia.

Early educational reform efforts included Qing sponsored government schools. At the center of these were the Tongwen Guan 同文館 ("Combined Learning") schools in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou whose primary role was training scholars for positions in the Zongli Yamen 总理衙門 which handled foreign affairs. The Beijing school was the first and was founded in 1862. Students at the Tongwen Guan were still required to study the Confucian classics and were typically drawn from degree holders. At the Tongwen Guan students focused on language study and scientific courses given that their later duties would include translation or industrial development. After the establishment of the first school in Beijing, Li Hongzhang petitioned the throne in 1863 for the creation of the two additional schools in Shanghai and Guangzhou (Biggerstaff 1961, p. 52).

The development of new government sponsored schools during the Tongzhi Restoration and Li Hongzhang's involvement in the process continued well beyond these efforts in the early 1860s. Tianjin became another major center for the founding of new schools. In the early 1880s this included a telegraph school (1880) the Tianjin Naval Academy (1881 for deck officers, 1882 for engine room officers), and a military academy (1885). As Biggerstaff notes, "Between 1861 and 1894, schools were opened to train interpreters, engineers (shipyards and arsenals and mining), telegraph operators, as well as naval and military academies and medical schools" (1961, p. 31). This movement to found and run schools with Western subject matter began as a supplement and then grew into an independent track of educational attainment through the course of the second half of the 19th century.

While this represented a small shift numerically, the development of

Western schools altered the composition of reformist and revolutionary activist groups in the coming decades. One reason for this transformation comes from a stark contrast with the Japanese pre-Restoration approach to Western studies. Where in Japan Western studies were grafted into the Japanese educational structure as a subject, in China it became a parallel instructional track with its own separate institutions. Whereas leading Japanese activists in the late Tokugawa sought out instruction in Western learning (i.e. Kido Koin, Ito Hirobumi, Saigo Takamori), successive waves of Chinese reformers passed before students of these early schools themselves became the vanguard of the revolutionary movement. Even though they represented only a small part of the developing sites of Western education, the government schools had a significant impact by training a number of important figures involved in the 1911 Revolution and its aftermath. Yan Fu 嚴復[10] (1853-1921) graduated from the Foochow Naval Academy. Li Yuanhong 黎元洪[11] (1864-1928) graduated from the Tianjin Naval Academy, as did Zhang Boling 張伯苓[12] (1876-1951) (in addition to graduating from St. John's). Wu Peifu[13]吴佩孚 (1874-1939) and Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥[14] (1882-1948) were both Tianjin Military Academy graduates as were Cao Kun 曹锟 (ROC President, 1862-1938) and Duan Qirui 段祺瑞 (also ROC President, 1865-1936). Here it is also important to point out how the Western schools, with their emphasis on military or naval technology and tactics, fed into a growing alternative center of power: the professional armed forces.

The establishment of government schools with Western curriculum also marked a push against the Confucian moral education that had so long dominated the Chinese educational system. Practical education – seen as craftsmanship and not the work of a scholar – began receiving support, particularly from leaders in the Self-Strengthening Movement such as Zeng Guofan, Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠(1812-1885), and Li Hongzhang. Biggerstaff relates the gist of this movement in paraphrasing the Zongli Yamen's propositions for founding Western schools. "It was completely unrealistic, the [Zongli Yamen] declared, to argue that the foreign threat could be counteracted by relying solely upon the Confucian virtues of propriety and righteousness" (Biggerstaff 1961, p. 21). But such sentiments did not represent any desire to replace the cultural centrality of the Chinese educational system.

Despite the justifications of the new educational modes, conservatives

[10] Famous scholar and cultural critic
[11] Leader of the 1911 Xinhai Revolt and later President of the Republic of China.
[12] Founder of Nankai University.
[13] Beiyang Army general and warlord.
[14] One of the major post-Qing warlords known as the “Christian General” for baptizing his troops with a firehose.

within the Qing government remained in adamant opposition. Led by the elder statesman Woren 倭仁 (1804-1871), groups of Confucian adherents maintained their argument that subjects like mathematics, astronomy, or shipbuilding were best left to lesser minds and ordinary men. The role of the scholar was to be an exemplar of Confucian morality. This argument persisted despite imperial support of the subjects as more than mere crafts to which the best Chinese minds should attend. Some of the criticisms took on more religious connotations – with which we are especially concerned – claiming that teaching foreign content had incurred the wrath of Heaven and was responsible for a spate of recent droughts. Their mere existence was an offense to Heaven (Biggerstaff 1961, p. 119).

Within the Qing government, moves to incorporate the goals of increased Western education outside the existence of the Zongli Yamen were few and far between. This did not significantly change until 1887 when the national exam included aspects of modern learning (Biggerstaff 1961, p. 73). More problematic was the lack of professional placement for these new graduates. The Qing bureaucracy was, until 1905, still dependent on the examination system (or the purchase of degrees) for government appointment. Those with Western educations were thus frozen out of the Qing bureaucracy. Many of them found roles with the leaders of the Self-Strengthening Movement in their provincial offices, employment with the growing educational system that operated outside the Qing's control or concerns, or positions in the emerging industrial and economic system. And it was out of these fields that the bulk of the revolutionary movement came.

It was only with the abolition of the examination system in 1905 that the educational changes that had been taking place for decades were incorporated into the state structure. However, at this point two problems emerge. The first is that by ending the exam system, the Qing disenfranchised many of their ideological supporters from employment or even relevance (Harrison 2005). While many Confucian students and scholars found involvement at a local level through the local assemblies, (Thompson 1995; Duara 1991) another Qing creation, they were increasingly cut off from national politics and the national debate. Second, support for alternative routes of education advantaged those who were already invested in them. The problem this created for the Qing (and for the possibility of religious policies that drew on the Chinese cosmological tradition) was that now the state needed to draw on the abilities of students who had little commitment to the ideological system in which past generations of scholars had been formed. Worse, in moving to a system of Western education, the government was significantly behind the development of schools setup outside their own auspices. They had negligible impact on the ideological

formation of the next generation of leaders.

The most significant contribution to the shifting context of education and ideological formation came from the growth of mission-sponsored schools, unaffiliated Western schools, and study abroad. Over the same period that the Qing government was establishing the Tongwen Guan, a substantial number of colleges sprang up and became influential parts of the process of social change in China. Many of these schools became the foundation of the university system in China. The curricular content was based primarily on Euro-American models, though most schools also included topics on Chinese literature and the Classics. Contrary to the upper level Chinese schools which were prohibitively expensive and therefore furthered class distinctions, mission schools often drew students of rather impoverished backgrounds who showed academic talent (Dunch 2001; Song 2008; Wong 1981). Although the number of students who became Christians while in the mission schools was not exceptional, all of the students produced in Western schools (whether missionary run or otherwise) were educated in a dramatically different ideological context and were taught sets of values that drew heavily on Enlightenment and Christian priorities - one of which was often the freedom of religion and its separation from the state in a modern and representative government.

Study abroad was another important means by which generations of Chinese leaders developed their ideological leanings outside of the Chinese educational system. The earliest of these students, and one of the first sent by the self-strengtheners to gain better insight into Euro-American technology, was Yung Wing 容闳 (or Rong Hong, 1828-1912). He, and others like him, came back to apply their knowledge to the Self-Strengthening Movement, largely as assistants and advisers. The pattern of study abroad increased rapidly in the post-Boxer Rebellion years. This was in part due to programs (most commonly linked to the United States) whereby China's indemnity payments were funneled into educational opportunities. However, it was also largely linked to the growing fear that China was truly and disastrously behind Europe, the United States, and now Japan and needed to catch up. Substantial numbers of students went to the US, France, England, and Japan.[15] This influenced not only the Qing to Republic transition, but continued to shape the Republican government as major cultural and political leaders, such as Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) and Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (1898-1976), continued to graduate from foreign schools and continued to press for increasingly radical ideological goals.

[15] It is important here to note that Chinese students in Japan came after the restructuring of the educational system to match Western formatting and, given that they were not Japanese citizens, came without the religious commitments of the imperial cult.

By the 1890s and on through to the Revolution in 1911, these institutions became increasingly important. With the abolition of the examination system in 1905 the transition was complete as Confucian schools lost their *raison d'etre* and couldn't offer skill sets that would benefit students in the new China. It was not that traditional schools ceased to exist, but they no longer held the social and political power and potential that they had formerly enjoyed. An illustrative example of this comes in the form of Liu Dapeng 劉大鵬 (1857-1942), the central figure of Henrietta Harrison's picture of life in late Qing/early Republican North China. Liu's traditional education and lower degree put him in a difficult position. Though, as a respected member of the community, he saw some success as a local public figure for a time, his was "a second-class education with few prospects" that made him "merely...a relic of an earlier age" (Harrison 2005, p. 91, 163). There was no draw for students to seek Confucian education and no structure to support the power of a Confucian cosmology centered on the court.

A useful, contrasting example is that of Li Denghui 李登輝 (1873–1947). Li was educated in a Western school in Dutch controlled Indonesia. Having impressed the missionaries involved with his education, he was later sponsored and sent off to Yale University for his higher education. Upon returning home, and though his Chinese was poor at best, Li moved to the mainland to take up the leadership of the newly founded Fudan University. Li brought with him a personal Christian commitment and democratic ideals and would apply them in his time as president (Qian 2005). Li took a leading role in the growing associational life of the early Republican era, helping with established groups like the YMCA and heading up an anti-opium organization (Zhou 1999). He also threw his support behind student movements in Shanghai. During one such movement, Li accepted into Fudan students who had been expelled from their schools due to their political agitation (Wasserstrom 1991).

Republican era reforms sought to consolidate the educational system that had already grown up on its own. Schools that predated the government were required to register with and adhere to sets of state standards that would regulate their relationship with the state and the nationalist party. As most of the KMT leadership had grown up out of these institutions, there was little overt need to alter their patterns of instruction. As opposed to the Japanese case where the newly established government was able to restructure the educational system to meet their desired ends, the Chinese state grew up into the educational system that had emerged, adapted, and then produced the revolutionary movement.

Discussion and Conclusion

The trajectories of religious policy development in China and Japan highlight the role timing plays in who is able to influence religious change during the process of state formation. In the cases of China and Japan, this had significant implications for the fate of religion and religious policy in both nations.

Education has the reputation of being one of the forces of modernization that inevitably leads to the decline of religion. In the cases of China and Japan, that process appears to be have been more varied and dynamic. Rather than an engine of secular change, the output of modernized educational structures relies on differing inputs. For Japan, that input remained Japanese, with distinct Confucian and Shinto influences onto which a modern educational system was grafted. China's experience was starkly different. There was a far more influential and structurally separate network of Western schools founded by both missionaries and Western educated Chinese. In addition, the Chinese educational context drew more heavily and explicitly on Enlightenment elements, leading to views of the state and the modern that required a cordoning off of religion from the political.

The overhaul of the educational system in Japan took place immediately following the Restoration. Though it was not until 1889 that the Rescript on Education enshrined the imperial cult as a daily element of education, schooling had long been tailored to that effect. The *Kokugaku* movement may have failed to mold the educational system in their image, but the spirit of their reverence for the Emperor was injected into the ethos of the educational system and the state at large. China, conversely, experienced a fractured, longer-term transformation of education. The persistence of the examination system and the entrenched position of Confucian conservatives in the Qing bureaucracy inhibited the possibility of changes along the lines of those seen in Japan. Instead, Western education grew as an separate system and source of ideological frames on which to found the new state. It was students of these schools who became the leaders of the 1911 Revolution and Republic. And it was the same students who pushed for the separation and subordination of religion vis-à-vis the state in public life.

Both of these mechanisms – the ideological educational context of revolutionary actors and institutions and the timing of revolution relative to educational reform – shaped not only the path of state formation, but the resulting religious policies that came to define "modern" statehood in both countries. As those contexts and timing proved significantly different, so also was the difference between modern religious policy in China and Japan substantial.

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Heaven as the Deus:

Confucian Religiosity and the Confucian-Christian Dialogue Since the Late Ming

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Abstract: The religiously characterized concepts of Heaven (天) and Shangdi (上帝) found in pre-Qin Confucian classics served as the foundation for Confucian-Christian dialogue during the late Ming period. The Confucian understanding of "Heaven" varied across different historical eras. In the pre-Qin period, expressions such as *duiyue* (对越), *linge* (临格), *zhaoshi* (昭事), and *shitian* (事天) all possessed distinctly religious features. However, by the time of the Song Confucians, religious interpretations of "Heaven" were notably weakened. It was not until the late Ming, with the introduction of Catholicism, that the literati began to revive or reinforce Confucian religiosity, emphasizing Heaven's function in reward and punishment. Missionaries, for their part, equated the Confucian concept of Heaven with the Christian God. Under the shared theme of "reverence for Heaven," both East and West, Confucianism and Christianity, engaged in dialogue and exchange through the approach of "one Heaven, different interpretations" (一天各表). The interpretative ambiguity, pluralism, and openness inherent in the Confucian classics made such Confucian-Christian dialogue possible. However, as the Chinese Rites Controversy unfolded, these interpretive possibilities collapsed. The "one Heaven, different interpretations" approach exemplifying the Confucian-Christian dialogue of the Ming and Qing periods offers valuable insights for contemporary discussions on the Sinicization of Christianity and inter-civilizational exchange.

Keywords: Confucian religiosity, Heaven, Confucian-Christian dialogue

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The question of religiosity in Confucianism has long been debated in academic circles, with various and sometimes conflicting perspectives. [1] Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Confucianism contains certain elements and characteristics of religiosity. Whether such "religiosity" qualifies Confucianism as a religion per se, or to what extent it does, remains a subject of contention. In this article, "religiosity" refers to the reverence toward an external object characterized by transcendence and the attributes of a personal deity.[2] The core assumption is that this transcendent entity has the power to reward good and punish evil. Based on this definition, one can find religious expressions throughout the Confucian canon from the pre-Qin period onward. Drawing on the distinctions made by missionaries such as Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), we find that early Confucian texts are more inclined toward depictions of a personal deity, whereas later Confucians—particularly in the Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming—tended to moralize and ethicize religious expressions. In other words, the religiosity expressed by early Confucians more closely aligns with monotheism, while later Confucian religiosity often became a vehicle for moral discourse.[3]

In this light, the present article explores the religious dimension of Confucianism and its dialogue with Christianity through key terms such as *duiyue* (对越), *zhaoshi* (昭事), *shitian* (事天), and *linge* (临格). The article argues that, on one hand, Confucianism inherently contains expressions of religiosity; on the other, such expressions served as a foundation for dialogue with Christianity. These concepts were extensively employed by Jesuit missionaries and Confucian Christians in the late Ming and early Qing, ultimately giving rise to a product of Confucian-Christian dialogue: Confucian Monotheism. Precisely because of shared positions on religiosity, many Ming-dynasty literati found Christianity acceptable. Figures such as Li Yong (李颙, 1627-1705), Xu Sanli (许三礼, 1625-1691), and Wang Qiyuan (王启元, 1559-?) were directly or indirectly influenced in their efforts to revive a "religious" Confucianism.

Although the atheistic tendencies within Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism were rejected by missionaries, they nonetheless discovered a different

[1] The discussion concerning the religious nature of Confucianism originated with Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) during the late Ming Dynasty. This debate became more concrete and focused during the Chinese Rites Controversy. Contemporary discussions mainly revolve around the question of whether Confucianism qualifies as a religion (Chen 2010). Proponents of Confucianism as a religion include Ren Jiyu and his disciples, such as Li Shen (Li 2018). Multiple versions of this work exist. Opponents have published critical anthologies, such as Ju Xi (Ju 2003; Ren 2000; Han 2004; Jensen 1998; Chen 2013; Sun 2013).

[2] For definitions of a personal deity, see Fu Peirong (2010, pp. 6-7).

[3] It should be noted that some Confucians do indeed treat Confucianism as a religion and practice it accordingly. This paper primarily discusses the issue from the standpoint of mainstream Confucianism.

approach among figures such as Zhang Juzheng (张居正, 1525-1582) and Emperor Kangxi (1654-1722), who sought to reinforce moral cultivation through a transcendent "Other" (God or Heaven). This view was more consistent with Christian conceptions of God. Thus, when Emperor Kangxi conferred upon the missionaries a plaque bearing the inscription *Respect Heaven* (敬天), the missionaries interpreted it as reverence for the Creator—namely, God—and Kangxi himself concurred with this interpretation. This indicates a certain tacit understanding between the state-endorsed Neo-Confucianism of Kangxi's court and the missionary conception of Confucian Monotheism.

However, this tacit understanding was disrupted by the Chinese Rites Controversy, and the interpretive process of "one Heaven, different interpretations" was forcibly brought to an end. Consequently, the early Qing era saw the breakdown of cultural exchange and mutual interpretation between China and the West. Even so, the intellectual legacy of "one Heaven, different interpretations" had a lasting impact on Christian thought in the late Qing and modern periods. While scholarly studies of Confucian religiosity and Catholic translations during the late Ming and early Qing abound, few works have offered a focused analysis of "one Heaven, different interpretations." This article contends that the phrase aptly summarizes the Confucian-Christian dialogue and its contributions in the late Ming and early Qing, and thus merits greater attention from both academia and the Church.

The Religious Heaven: "Religious Expressions" in Pre-Qin Confucian Texts

In the classical Confucian canon, terms such as *duiyue* (对越), *linge* (临格), and *zhaoshi* (昭事) clearly display characteristics of "religiosity," as their referents are transcendent and even bear the attributes of a personal deity. These referents specifically include *Shangdi* (the Lord on High), *Heaven*, various spirits and deities, as well as ancestors and ancestral temples. At times, they appear in more direct and concrete forms such as *shi tian* (事天), meaning "to serve Heaven."[4]

In pre-Qin literature, the term *duiyue* appears only once, in the *Book of Songs*, *Zhou Hymns*: "Gathered are the many ministers, upholding the virtue of culture. Duiyue in Heaven, they gallop and attend at the ancestral temple." Later exegetes following Zheng Xuan (郑玄, 127-200) offered divergent interpretations of *duiyue*. According to scholarly research, two major views have emerged. The first understands *dui* as "to pair" or "to correspond," and *yue* as an interjection. Zheng Xuan interprets the line "duiyue in Heaven" to mean: "These numerous

[4] For features of Shang Dynasty religion during the eras of the *Book of Songs* and *Book of Documents*, see Fu Peirong (Fu 2010, pp. 1-19; Li 1978).

ministers all practice the virtue of King Wen. The spirit of King Wen is already in Heaven, yet still paired and harmonized as if he were alive." (Mao 1999, p. 1282) In other words, although King Wen now resides "in Heaven," the "many ministers" continue to act in accordance with his virtue, treating him as though he were still alive and harmonizing with his legacy. Commentators of the Song and Ming periods largely followed Zheng Xuan's approach but shifted toward a moralized interpretation of "corresponding to Heaven," suggesting that King Wen's virtue could "correspond to the Emperor in Heaven."

The second interpretation views *dui* as "to respond," and *yue* as "to extol." Song-Ming and Qing scholars such as Yan Can (严粲) and Mou Ting (牟庭) predominantly adopted this view. Scholars consider the first interpretation to carry a "strong significance of religious ritual." (Zhai 2017, pp. 33-39) In practice, however, Zheng Xuan and Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130-1200)'s interpretations of "corresponding to Heaven" were framed in political or moral terms rather than explicitly religious ones. Zheng Xuan's exegesis in particular pioneered a tradition wherein *Shangdi* or *Heaven* became understood as the supreme standard of morality or ethics, rather than a religious deity.

This theme became a significant motif in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism: figures such as *Di* (the Lord) or *Heaven*, which once carried religious overtones, were reinterpreted as the highest moral or ethical exemplars—without emphasizing their religious character. Here, the internal tension or paradox within Confucian moral discourse becomes evident: on the one hand, Confucianism inherited notions of *Shangdi* and *Heaven* from classical texts like the *Book of Songs* and the *Book of Documents*, where these figures bore religious traits; on the other hand, it retained a humanistic orientation that downplayed this religiosity. On one side, *Di* or *Heaven* were portrayed as final authorities in moral instruction, endowed with the power to reward virtue and punish vice; yet simultaneously, Confucianism emphasized human moral autonomy and self-discipline, deemphasizing dependence on external systems of reward and punishment. The balance between moral autonomy and external authority (heteronomy) varied across different periods of Confucianism. Dong Zhongshu (董仲舒, BC. 179-BC. 104)'s theory of the resonance between Heaven and humans (*tian ren ganying* 天人感应) leaned more toward heteronomy, whereas Wang Yangming's view that "everyone can become a Yao or Shun" emphasized moral self-governance.

However, the Confucian notion of heteronomy differs from that of Christianity. In Confucianism, it is primarily instrumental; in Christianity, it is teleological. As a result, due to either a deficiency in heteronomous justification or a tendency toward instrumentalism, Confucianism faced limitations in

moral reasoning—occasionally leading to ethical dilemmas, such as the problem of "the long life of the villain Zhi (盗跖) and the premature death of Yan Yuan (颜渊)," or the well-known "question of Sima Qian (司马迁, BC. 145-?)." To address these limitations, Confucianism often drew upon Buddhist and Daoist resources, borrowing Buddhist-Daoist moral texts such as *Yin Zhi Wen*, *Gong Guo Ge*, or tales of karmic retribution as tools for moral exhortation and warnings against evil.

Instances of *zhaoshi* (昭事) in pre-Qin texts are also rare: it appears once in the *Book of Songs*, once in the *Book of Documents*, once in the *Discourses of the States*, once in the *Book of Rites*, and three times in the *Zuo Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals*. In the *Book of Songs*, the reference reads: "This King Wen, cautious and respectful, zhaoshi to Shangdi." In the *Book of Documents*, it is: "At that time, Shangdi conferred his mandate upon King Wen. It was also through the former sages that the ministers could assist and zhaoshi their sovereign." In the *Discourses of the States*: "The upper [realm] thus instructs the people to be reverent, and the lower [realm] thereby zhaoshi the higher." The usage in the *Book of Rites* is a citation from the *Book of Songs*. Concerning the *zhaoshi* of Shangdi by King Wen in the *Book of Songs*, commentators generally interpret *zhao* as "to illuminate" or "to clarify"—that is, "to clearly understand the way of Heaven." As one commentary puts it: "By being respectful and cautious, one comes to understand the way of Heaven, follows it in practice, and thus seeks abundant blessings, ensuring that one's virtue does not go astray."(Mao 1999, p. 967) The *Mao Commentary to the Book of Songs* explains *zhaoshi Shangdi* as "clearly understanding the way of Heaven."

The religious dimension here is not particularly prominent. Such "secularized" (or humanistic) interpretations are common in the *Mao Commentary*, where, for example, "King Wen is above" is interpreted as "King Wen is above the people," and "King Wen ascends and descends, at the side of the Emperor" is rendered as "King Wen connects above with Heaven and below with the people." In the *Book of Documents* and *Discourses of the States*, the object of *zhaoshi* is not *Shangdi*. When *zhaoshi* in pre-Qin texts does relate to *Di* or *Heaven*, commentators often interpret the term through the lens of moral norms—using concepts like "corresponding to Heaven," "corresponding to the Lord," or "corresponding to virtue" to explain it, as in "the sage unites his virtue with Heaven and Earth."

The phrase *shi tian* appears frequently in pre-Qin literature. For instance, the *Book of Rites* states: "Without ritual, there is no means to properly serve the spirits of Heaven and Earth"; and, "Therefore, the way a benevolent person serves his parents is as he would serve Heaven, and the way he serves Heaven

is as he would serve his parents. Thus, the filial son perfects his person." It also notes: "In ancient times, the enlightened kings of the Three Dynasties all served the spiritual powers of Heaven and Earth. They relied solely on divination and augury, not daring to profane the Supreme Deity with personal motives." The *Book of Rites* contains not only the term "serving Heaven," but also phrases such as "serving the Supreme Deity" (事上帝), "serving Heaven, Earth, mountains, and rivers" (事天地山川), "serving heavenly spirits and human ghosts" (事天神与人鬼), and "serving Earth" (事地). Here, the term *shi* (事) is equivalent to *feng* (奉), carrying the connotations of reverence and veneration. Hence, the commentary on the *Book of Rites* remarks: "To serve one's parents and to serve Heaven are expressions of the same filial piety and reverence." Likewise, the *Classic of Filial Piety* (《孝经》) says: "In ancient times, the enlightened kings were filial to their fathers, hence they understood the clarity of Heaven; they were filial to their mothers; hence they understood the insight of Earth." Although later Confucian interpretations of this passage vary, all agree that filial piety connects one to Heaven and Earth and brings about a kind of spiritual resonance—inevitably leading to blessings in response. The *Classic of Filial Piety* conveys a strong religious tone through concepts such as "serving Heaven" and "divine presence."

However, Mencius—who focused on the doctrine of heart-nature (心性论)—unified the external Heaven with the internal moral nature. In the *Mencius*, it is stated: "To preserve the mind and nourish the nature—this is how one serves Heaven." The *Commentary and Sub-commentary on Mencius (Mengzi zhushu)* explain this clearly, asserting: "Knowing how to preserve one's mind and nurture one's nature—this is what enables one to serve Heaven. Since nature is endowed by Heaven, and nature is what a person receives from Heaven, thus the mind arises from nature." It further adds: "This is what it means to serve Heaven: nature is precisely Heaven. Therefore, to preserve the mind and nourish the nature is to serve Heaven." Whereas the *Book of Rites*, *Classic of Filial Piety*, and *Xunzi* advocate serving Heaven through external ritual actions, for Mencius, it becomes sufficient to preserve and cultivate the mind, because the human mind and nature are endowed by Heaven. We can observe that the concept of "Heaven" in Mencius' theory of heart-nature bears a stronger moral and ethical dimension than in the *Book of Rites* or the *Classic of Filial Piety*, where it retains a more religious connotation.

In contrast, Mozi—whom Mencius regarded as one "without father" and likened to a beast—treated Heaven as an external, transcendent force that rewards good and punishes evil. Thus, Mozi's discussions of "serving Heaven" are filled with religious meaning. In Volume One of the *Mozi*, it is written:

"Today, all the states, great or small, are settlements of Heaven. All people, young or old, noble or humble, are subjects of Heaven. For this reason, none fail to offer sacrificial sheep, raise dogs and pigs, and prepare libations of wine and rice to respectfully serve Heaven. Is this not proof that Heaven possesses all and nourishes all? If Heaven truly possesses and nourishes them, what reason could it have not to desire mutual love and benefit among people? Hence, it is said: those who love and benefit others will surely be blessed by Heaven; those who hate and harm others will surely be punished by Heaven." For Mozi, Heaven assumes the function of rewarding good and punishing evil, exhibiting the characteristics of a personal deity: "Therefore, those who love and benefit others align with Heaven's intent and receive Heaven's reward—can they not then hope to be spared? But those who hate and harm others, opposing Heaven's will—who can save them from Heaven's punishment?" He also asserts: "Now that all people dwell under Heaven and serve Heaven, if they offend Heaven, there will be no way to escape or hide."

Corresponding to concepts such as *duiyue* (对越), *zhaoshi* (昭事), and *shitian* (事天) are the terms *jiangge* (降格), *linge* (临格), and *lin* (临). *Duiyue*, *zhaoshi*, and *shitian* refer to sages, gentlemen, or ordinary people turning reverently toward a transcendent, external entity—expressions of reverence, or perhaps compliance and responsiveness, from below to above. Conversely, *jiangge*, *linge*, and *lin* denote the closeness of that transcendent, external being to humans—a movement from above to below. For example, the *Book of Documents* records: "Only the Emperor descended in judgment upon Xia." The *Zhengyi* commentary explains that "descending in judgment" (降格) refers to the Supreme Deity issuing omens to express reprimand. The *Book of Documents* also says: "When the Xia dynasty did not follow the proper path, the Supreme Deity descended in judgment." In addition to *jiangge*, there are terms like *zhijiang* (陟降) and *jiang* (降). The *Book of Songs* states: "The Supreme Deity is present with you—do not harbor a divided heart." And: "No duplicity, no worry—the Supreme Deity is present with you." Though interpretations of the term "divided heart" vary, all agree that "presence" (临) refers to the Supreme Deity's observation and watchfulness, akin to guardianship. This meaning is close to that of "Heaven sees through the eyes of the people, and hears through the ears of the people," as found in the *Book of Documents*.

In pre-Qin texts such as the *Book of Songs*, *Book of Documents*, *Classic of Filial Piety*, *Book of Rites*, and *Mozi*, the concept of "Heaven" or the "Supreme Deity" often bears the traits of a personal god.[5] Therefore, terms like *duiyue*, *zhaoshi*,

[5] Chen Mengjia believed that "Heaven" in the pre-Qin period did not refer to a personal deity, but Fu Peirong refuted this (Fu 2010, p. 7).

and *shitian* all carry religious significance. Yet starting with Mencius, Heaven is understood as the source of moral nature, imbued with ethical meaning. Both of these interpretive paths find expression in the later development of Confucian thought.

Heaven as Principle: The "De-religionization" of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism

The Han dynasty doctrine of *resonance between Heaven and humanity*, formulated by Dong Zhongshu, exhibits a theological-religious character. Although some scholars reject the classification of *Heaven-human resonance* as religious theology and instead argue that it reflects a structural homology between Heaven and humanity—thus enabling mutual vibration and sympathetic response—this interpretation fails to address why such homology between Heaven and humanity should exist in the first place. If Heaven is understood as structurally homologous to humanity, this itself implies an anthropomorphized, personified Heaven, bearing characteristics of a personal deity. Otherwise, as a purely natural Heaven, it cannot interact responsively with human beings.

Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism integrates Mencius's theory of heart and nature (*i*心性论) with the praxis of moral self-cultivation, situating the role of Heaven or the Supreme Deity at the culmination of moral effort, thus establishing it as a pivotal axis in ethical cultivation. Although the Song-Ming thinkers frequently cited pre-Qin Confucian classics, they often developed their own interpretive insights, diverging in meaning from the original texts. Within Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, the aforementioned tension remains: on the one hand, atheistic, materialist, and humanistic interpretations became mainstream; on the other, there was a simultaneous reinforcement of the transcendent, external referent as an active force in moral cultivation. However, unlike Christianity, where such a transcendent being often needs to be internalized as a state of moral self-cultivation or as an inner "moral imperative," in Neo-Confucianism it is not conceived as an independently existing personal deity.

In *The Collected Writings of the Cheng Brothers*, the phrase *duiyue* (对越)—meaning reverent communion—appears twice: "Loyalty and trustworthiness advance virtue; unceasing diligence throughout the day. The gentleman must maintain reverent communion with Heaven all day long! For the movement of Heaven is soundless and scentless; in substance it is called the *Yi* (易), in principle it is called the *Dao*, in function it is called the divine (神), and in its endowment to humans it is called nature. Following nature is called the Way;

cultivating the Way is called teaching. Mencius further elaborated this with the idea of 'flood-like qi'—this is indeed exhaustive! Thus, it is said that the divine is as though above, as though beside one's shoulders; whether in great or small matters, one only says: 'Sincerity—nothing can obscure it!' Penetrating above and below, it goes no further than this. What is metaphysical is called the Dao; what is physical is called the instrument. One must speak thus: the instrument is also the Dao, and the Dao is also the instrument. As long as the Dao is attained, it is not tied to time or person, whether now or later, self or others." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 4)

Cheng Yi (程颐, 1033-1107)'s formulation of *"reverent communion with Heaven"* differs from Zheng Xuan's earlier interpretation. For Cheng, this reverent orientation becomes the primary object of the gentleman's unceasing vigilance—that is, the gentleman constantly looks toward the Supreme Deity, with solemn awe, as though standing on the edge of an abyss or walking on thin ice—never daring to slacken, never entertaining private motives. At the same time, however, this reverent gaze is not directed at a lofty Heaven transcending the mundane world, for human nature is endowed by Heaven, and in daily conduct, there is nothing outside of *Heavenly principle* (天理). Therefore, to commune with Heaven is merely to follow Heavenly principle. (Zhai 2017, p. 36) This interpretation aligns completely with the core tenets of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism: "The Way of the Sage pervades both above and below, from sweeping and responding in everyday life to the equal governance of the world—the principle remains one." (Wang 1989, p. 760)

The Collected Writings of the Cheng Brothers also states: "With nothing but reverence, one may commune with the Supreme Deity." In *The Essential Sayings of the Chengs*, it is written: "One who is never irreverent walks the path of communion with the Supreme Deity." Cheng Yi was the first to transform *"reverent communion with Heaven"* into *"reverent communion with the Supreme Deity"*, a formulation that had formative influence within Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. (Zhai 2017, p. 35) Yet, to take this as evidence that Cheng's notion of *duiyue* carries religious implications may be a misreading. For the Cheng brothers, the personified features of "Supreme Deity" or "Heaven" found in pre-Qin texts are abstracted and transformed into "Dao" or "principle" (理): "Heaven is principle; divinity is a term for the subtle and wondrous functions of all things; the term 'Deity' names the governing aspect of affairs." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 132)

To the question, "What is the Way of Heaven?" the reply is: "It is merely this principle; principle is the Way of Heaven. For instance, when we speak of Heaven's wrath, it is certainly not that someone above is truly angry—rather,

it is simply that the principle is such." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 290)

Cheng Yi further believed that the anomalies and portents recorded in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* were responses between Heaven and humans. He noted that many people doubted the authenticity of such anomalies, yet in his view, these "responses" were indeed real. In other words, Cheng took these phenomena as expressions of Heaven's reward and punishment. However, only a personal deity could perform such a function.

In Zhu Xi's *Classified Conversations of Master Zhu*, volumes 69, 87, and 95, the phrase *duiyue* appears mostly in explanations of Cheng Yi. Zhu Xi maintained that *"reverent communion with Heaven"* interprets the gentleman's "unceasing diligence throughout the day." But Zhu also asserted: "If the human mind is upright, perfectly transparent inside and out, with not the slightest trace of selfish intention, then one may commune with the Supreme Deity—how could spirits and deities not submit to such a person?" (Zhu 1986, vol. 87, p. 2262) This *"communion with the Supreme Deity"* is consistent with Cheng's view. A superficial interpretation might read it simply as "opening oneself to the Supreme Deity," but this would be misleading. For Zhu Xi, terms such as *Di* (帝), *Shangdi* (上帝), and *Tian* (天) all refer to principle (理), and do not affirm a transcendent personal deity. Thus, the "Supreme Deity" here should not be understood as an external being, but rather as the highest standard of self-cultivation in the gentleman. As Zhu himself said of Heaven: "It is none other than the Great Void (太虛); if one exhausts the mind and understands nature, then Heaven is not external." (Zhu 1986, vol. 60, p. 1428)

The term *"serving Heaven"* also appears in *The Collected Writings of the Cheng Brothers*, as in: "Question: Heaven and Earth observe clearly, and the spirits manifest openly. Reply: The righteousness and sincerity with which one serves Heaven and Earth—when this is clear and evident, then the spirits naturally manifest. Question: Do spirits respond with resonance? Reply: Resonance is certainly within this. The utmost filiality and fraternal piety communicate with the spirits." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 224)

Scholars interpret Cheng's phrase *"serving Heaven"* here as referring to "serving the clearly observing spirits." (Li 2005, p. 13) Yet in fact, this passage discusses handling human relations and external affairs with righteousness and sincerity. The so-called "spirits" do not refer to religious deities, but rather to the level of spiritual attainment reached through utmost filiality and fraternal devotion. Thus, Cheng criticized Wang Anshi for dividing the human Way (人道) and the Heavenly Way (天道), asserting instead: "The Way has never been divided into Heaven and man. It is simply that in Heaven, it is called

the Heavenly Way; on Earth, the earthly Way; in humans, the human Way." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 282) Wang Anshi's sharp distinction between governance and serving Heaven contradicts the idea that "the Way is one." From the perspective of the unity of Heaven and humanity, Cheng's conception of *"serving Heaven"* emphasizes a relational dynamic between humanity and Heaven (or the external world), and the notion of *"reverence as the master"* (主敬) serves to delineate the nature of that relationship. Cheng also interpreted *"serving Heaven"* as "offering obedience"—here, "Heaven" clearly denotes the *Way of Heaven* or *Heavenly principle*, rather than a personal deity.

Cheng further stated: "The sage 'cultivates himself with reverence to bring peace to the people' and 'is profoundly respectful, thereby pacifying the world.' Only when both superiors and subordinates act with reverence will Heaven and Earth assume their rightful positions, all beings nurture themselves naturally, harmony pervades the vital forces, and how could the Four Spirits fail to descend? This embodies the Dao of authenticity, transparency, and compliance; intelligence and wisdom all arise from this. Thus, one serves Heaven and offers sacrifice to the Lord on High." (Cheng and Cheng 1981, p. 81) Here again, the emphasis is placed on serving Heaven and offering sacrifice to the Lord on High through reverence. Accordingly, Zhu Xi interprets "this" as "reverence."

Zhu Xi understood "serving Heaven" (*shi tian*) as the cultivation and nourishment of the mind and nature, stating, "To preserve and nourish them is to serve; the mind and nature are Heaven, and therefore it is called 'serving Heaven.'" Zhu further elaborated: "If Heaven commands filial affection between father and son, then you embody that affection; if Heaven mandates righteousness between ruler and subject, then you embody that righteousness. Otherwise, you are in defiance of Heaven." (Zhu 1986, vol. 60, p. 1428) In other words, the "Heaven" in this context refers to the Dao of Heaven (tian dao), and "serving Heaven" refers to "complying with the Way of Heaven," as he put it: "To serve Heaven is merely to submit and comply; there is nothing beyond this." (Zhu 1986, vol. 60, p. 1433)

Zhu Xi also used "serving Heaven" and "serving one's parents" to interpret Zhang Zai's *Western Inscription*, stating: "The *Western Inscription* is not fundamentally about filial piety, but about serving Heaven, though it expresses this through the heart of serving one's parents." (Zhu 1986, vol. 98, p. 2522) "The principle of serving one's parents is precisely the image of serving Heaven." (Zhu 1986, vol. 98, p. 2526) Thus, for Zhu Xi, to speak of serving Heaven is effectively to speak of serving one's parents—namely, an act of compliance and submission.

Cai Shen (蔡沈, 1167-1230), a disciple of Zhu Xi, interpreted the "Five Blessings and Six Extremities" in the *Hongfan* chapter of the *Book of Documents* as "the response of Heaven to human stimulus." Later interpretations frequently aligned the Five Blessings and Six Extremities of *Hongfan* with the Buddhist and Daoist notion of karmic retribution, thereby endowing Heaven or the Lord on High with the traits of a personal deity. Without such personification, the effects of the Five Blessings and Six Extremities would be difficult to explain. Of course, Zhu Xi, Cai Chuan, and others emphasized "resonant response" primarily from the standpoint of political Confucianism, stressing a sense of reverence and awe toward Heaven or the Lord on High as conducive to moral cultivation (Wu 2012).

"Communing with" (*duiyue*) and "serving Heaven" (*shi tian*) thus became central components of the cultivation and praxis theory (*gongfu lun*) in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Although they cannot be entirely subsumed under the rubric of immanent transcendence, they are clearly distinct from the "external transcendence" of Christianity. Lu Jiuyuan's concept of "complete cultivation" is exemplified in his assertion: "The Lord on High watches over you; let there be no duplicity in your heart. Be reverent and cautious—how could there be idle moments?" "Even in times of no apparent activity, never forget to be cautious and respectful, for you are manifestly serving the Lord on High." Yet for Lu Jiuyuan, "the Lord on High" essentially refers to Heaven itself: "Only the Sovereign Lord on High instills the norm (*zhong*) in the common people. The *zhong* is the ultimate. All people possess this ultimate, though their vital endowment may be pure or turbid, their intellect open or obstructed (Lu 1935, p. 280)." To "manifestly serve the Lord on High" is thus synonymous with "communing with Heaven" or "serving Heaven." Lu emphasized serving Heaven through one's own nature, since one's nature is endowed by Heaven. Although the human form differs from Heaven and Earth, one can understand and serve Heaven by fulfilling one's nature: "Truly, there is no principle beyond my own nature; whoever can fully realize their nature, even should they try to differ from Heaven and Earth, will find it impossible (Lu 1980, p. 347)."

Zhen Dexiu (真德秀, 1178-1235) also linked the service of Heaven with the service of one's parents: "Since one possesses a body, one therefore possesses a heart; possessing a heart, one therefore possesses a nature—this is what Heaven and Earth have bestowed upon me." "To serve Heaven is precisely to observe how one serves one's father and mother. How could there be two separate Ways in Heaven and Earth (Zhen 2005, p. 72)?" Zhen Dexiu's interpretation of the *Western Inscription* is both precise and nuanced: "Heaven has endowed me with this principle, and there is nothing within it that is not supremely good. If

I betray it, then I am Heaven's unworthy child. But if, having received human form, I can fulfill the nature of humanity, then I am Heaven's worthy child. The coming of fortune or misfortune, blessing or calamity, ought to be accepted rightly and calmly. If Heaven bestows its grace upon me, it is not out of favoritism, but to furnish me with the resources to do good, thereby deepening its demands upon me. This is like serving one's parents: they love and delight in their child, never forgetting them. If Heaven grieves or afflicts me, it is not out of malice, but to temper and strengthen my will. This is like serving one's parents: they are angry out of love, not to be resented. To extrapolate from this: parents are Heaven, and Heaven is parents—can there be two different modes of service? To serve one's parents is to serve Heaven, as the dutiful child serves his parents. And as Confucius said, such a one is a man of *ren*—for the highest form of filial piety is *ren*." (Zhong 2011, p. 58) Zhen Dexiu, too, understood the service of Heaven from the standpoint of compliance and submission.

From the perspective of praxis, Zhen Dexiu offered a detailed exposition of the Dao of serving Heaven: "Then what is the true Dao by which a ruler serves Heaven? The *Book of Songs* says: 'The Lord on High watches over you; let there be no duplicity in your heart.' It also says: 'Be single-minded and free of anxiety, for the Lord on High watches over you.' To be free of duplicity is to be unified. The key to unification is reverence; and the ability to be unified comes from sincerity. The reason King Tang could serve Heaven was because he said: 'Reflect with clarity upon the Mandate.' The reason King Wen could serve Heaven was because he said: 'Be cautious and vigilant.' Is this not all a matter of inner cultivation rather than external pursuit? If the ruler understands this, then there is no need for ostentatious construction or extravagant ritual. With solemn self-discipline, constantly as though communing with the divine, there is no need to wait for omens, oracles, or ritual codes—wherever he goes, he walks with the spirits." Though this was written as a memorial to the throne, it clearly illustrates that for Zhen Dexiu, the service of Heaven is not sought externally, but arises from internal reverence and sincerity. "With solemn self-discipline, constantly as though communing with the divine," the ruler thereby "walks among kingship," fully immersed in sacred governance.

The Thought of Revering Heaven: The Religious Revival of Confucianism in the Late Ming and Early Qing

It can be observed that the religious dimension implied in terms such as *duiyue* (facing with reverence), *zhaoshi* (manifest service), *shi tian* (serving Heaven), and *linge* (divine proximity) in pre-Qin texts—suggesting a kind of personal deity—had become nearly invisible in the discourse of Song Confucians. On the contrary, the Song Confucians developed further the

Mencian teachings on mind-nature and serving Heaven, thereby forming a theory of moral cultivation and spiritual attainment. Although, for the sake of moral self-cultivation, Song Confucians acknowledged the existence of a supreme Lord or Heaven, the personal deity characteristics had already been lost. Some scholars argue, however, that within the Confucian exegetical tradition of interpreting the Five Blessings and Six Extremities in the *Hongfan* chapter, a religious dimension is present. These Confucians, including the Song philosophers, regarded the Five Blessings and Six Extremities as expressions of karmic retribution; thus, this form of interpretation constitutes a religious mode of thought (Wu 2012, pp. 110-120). Nevertheless, this interpretation bears a strong humanistic orientation and lacks features akin to the personal deity in Christianity.

This very "absence" contributed to Confucianism's lack of sufficient competitive resources when confronted with the rise of Buddhism, Daoism, and popular religions. It also left Confucianism morally weakened in discourse and preaching when facing the deterioration of ethics and disintegration of social order brought about by the development of the commercial economy. As a result, thinkers such as Gao Panlong (高攀龙, 1562-1626) remarked that Confucianism "fundamentally does not require assistance from the Two Traditions" (i.e., Buddhism and Daoism). (Gao 2011a, p. 168) Moreover, relying entirely on the sovereign's "self-discipline" to restrain imperial power appeared insufficient to inspire full confidence in Confucianism, thus necessitating recourse to a Heaven or Supreme Being higher than imperial authority—such as through concepts like Heaven-human resonance or the divine sanction of kingship. Both responses to Confucianism's lack of "religiosity" found clear expression during the late Ming.

Zhang Juzheng's explanation of "ghosts and spirits" differs from that of Zhu Xi. While Zhu Xi, following the views of the Cheng brothers and Zhang Zai, regarded ghosts and spirits as the efficacious functions of the two vital forces (yin and yang), Zhang Juzheng understood them as the spirits venerated in sacrificial rites—including heavenly deities, terrestrial spirits, and ancestral ghosts. Although these spirits are formless and voiceless, Zhang asserted they are "clearly manifest in people's minds and eyes," existing everywhere and at all times. Thus, one must "fear and reverently serve" them. (Zhang 2010, p. 32) We may observe that Zhang Juzheng's interpretation is significantly more "religious" than Zhu Xi's. "The rites of suburban and ancestral sacrifices are for serving the Supreme Heaven." In this, Zhang's understanding aligns with Zhu Xi, as both take these as rites for the worship of Heaven and Earth. Yet in explaining this passage, Zhang further noted: "The visible and invisible realms are one in principle, though the invisible is difficult to know; gods and humans

follow one path, though the gods are difficult to approach. If one can penetrate the unseen and move the divine, then governing the visible world becomes no difficulty at all (Zhang 2010, p. 37)." Zhang held that interaction between gods and humans occurs through "resonance," and that clarity in the unseen enables clarity in governance.

In his commentary on the *Shangshu*, Zhang Juzheng's readings of "Heaven," "Supreme Heaven," and "Imperial Court" are replete with religious characteristics. Heaven may "inflict punishments upon people," "send dark omens upon the common folk," or "bring down great calamities." The "Mandate of Heaven" and "Heaven's intention" interact with the ruler; if a ruler desires the enduring Mandate of Heaven, "it lies in praying with virtue, not in seeking blessings through ritual sacrifice (Zhang 2010, p. 231)." Zhang Juzheng depicted "Supreme Heaven" and "man" in a relationship embodying the traits of a personal deity, which is especially evident in the following interpretation of a passage from *Shangshu – Duoshi*:

> *"Supreme Heaven bestows goodness upon man, that he might turn inward and cultivate himself—this is to lead him toward a land of ease and peace. Yet Xia Jie lost his good heart, willingly rushed toward peril, and refused to go to the land of peace—so degenerate was his virtue. Supreme Heaven still could not bear to sever him immediately, and thus sent down disasters and portents to warn Jie, hoping he might feel fear and reform. But Jie still did not awaken to fear or awe, nor did he reverently accept the decrees of Supreme Heaven. He indulged in licentious excess, perishing as his fate dictated. He even falsified Heaven's commands, and so Heaven found his deeds unworthy, disregarded him, and refused to listen. Ultimately, it rescinded the Great Mandate, enacted divine punishment, and the Xia dynasty met its end."* (Zhang 2013, p. 310)

Here, "Supreme Heaven" not only grants man the good but also actively "descends decrees" and uses "disasters and portents" to admonish Xia Jie. Yet Jie failed to reform— "still did not awaken to fear"—and so Heaven finally "rescinded the Great Mandate," bringing an end to the Xia dynasty's "Heavenly destiny." Such portrayals of "Heaven" and "Supreme Heaven" rewarding virtue and punishing vice are abundantly evident in Zhang Juzheng's interpretations.

Upon reading Zhang Juzheng's *Straightforward Explication of the Four Books*, the Kangxi Emperor remarked: "I have read Zhang Juzheng's *Straightforward Explication* of the *Four Books* and the *Shangshu*—the interpretations are precise and substantial, free from speculative or empty language, and may serve as a model (Zhao 1999, p. 202)." Kangxi not only praised Zhang's interpretations but also reflected similar ideas in his own imperially commissioned

commentaries on Confucian classics. For instance, his *Explanations from the Imperial Lectures on the Book of Documents* echoes Zhang's reading of the same passage in *Duoshi* almost verbatim. In his works such as *Imperial Lectures on the Four Books*, Kangxi emphasized the divine reward and punishment of "Heaven" and "Supreme Heaven," frequently invoking terms such as "*duiyue*," "*shi tian*," and "*jiangge*." *Imperial Lectures on the Book of Documents* states: "The sage serves Heaven and governs the people—nothing departs from a heart of reverence. Reverence for Heaven is manifested in precision in calendrical phenomena; diligence for the people is manifested in punctuality in the seasons. In all affairs, where did the sage not act with reverence—especially in serving Heaven and governing the people? Thus, it is said that for emperors and kings, reverence is the root of self-cultivation and the foundation of good governance (Xuanye 2016b, p. 3)." The *Imperial Lectures on the Book of Rites* further stated: "Just as the sovereign serves Heaven, merit and guilt are clearly revealed, and promotion or demotion is solely in accordance with divine command (Xuanye 2016a, p. 73)." In other words, "Heaven" grants rewards or punishments in accordance with human merit or fault. Contemporary to Kangxi, Li Guangdi also discussed this "Heaven" of rewards and punishments extensively in his writings (Li n. d.) Lu Longqi, for his part, took an oath before the "City God" to remind himself of his duty to diligent governance and benevolent rule. Lu understood the relationship between the City God and Supreme Heaven as akin to that between minister and sovereign (Lu n. d.).

Beyond Zhang Juzheng and the Kangxi Emperor, numerous scholar-officials during the Ming–Qing transition sought to revive or highlight the religious dimension of Confucianism and to practice it in their daily lives—figures such as Li Erqu (李二曲, 1627-1705), Wen Xiangfeng (文翔凤, 1577-1642), Xu Sanli, Xie Wenjian (谢文洊, 1615-1681), and Zhong Fang (钟芳), among others. Wang Qiyuan even attempted to construct a religious form of Confucianism, namely "Confucianism as a religion" (*Kongjiao*). (Wang 2004) Concurrently, the trend of "revering Heaven" (*jing tian*), closely tied to the religious revival of Confucianism, gained broad traction during the Ming–Qing period (Liu 2014, pp. 11-19).

In the late Ming, Ge Yinliang (葛寅亮, 1570-1646) strongly criticized the Song Confucians for reducing "Shangdi" to a mere sovereign figure and for their atheistic interpretations. He wrote: "The ancients conducted all their actions with reverence toward Shangdi and maintained a relationship of mutual responsiveness with Heaven. But later Confucians did not believe in spirits and deities, and thus treated Shangdi as a nonentity. Without belief in Shangdi, they consequently regarded the common people as fit for abuse, and the governance of the Three Dynasties could no longer be seen in the world (Ge

1997, p. 483).” Ge Yinliang believed that it was precisely the disbelief in spirits and deities among the Song Confucians that led to disbelief in Shangdi. And without belief in Shangdi, there could be no sense of reverence and awe. Consequently, people acted as they pleased and “regarded the common people as fit for abuse,” making the political order of the Three Dynasties unrecoverable. In other words, Ge attributed the moral collapse and disintegration of order in the late Ming to a loss of reverence brought about by disbelief in Shangdi. He emphasized the moral and educative function of Shangdi as an absolute “Other,” offering a reflection on Confucianism’s overreliance on self-discipline and excessive optimism about the idea that “anyone can become a sage like Yao or Shun.”

Likewise, Huang Zongxi (黄宗羲, 1610-1695) made similar criticisms of the Song Confucians’ concept of Heaven: “Now, when Confucians speak of Heaven, they take it merely as principle. Yet the Book of Changes says that Heaven generates all beings, and the Book of Songs states that Heaven brings down calamity. Clearly, in the unseen realm, there is in fact a sovereign that presides over all. Otherwise, the four seasons would be thrown into confusion, and humans, animals, plants, and trees would be indistinguishable and chaotic. The ancients established the suburban sacrifices—could it really be that they performed these merely as ritualized tradition, with no expectation of a real response or reception? Surely something real and substantial exists in this process. How, then, can we reduce it all to a hollow term like 'principle'?” (Huang 1985, p. 195; Wang 2004, p. 87) Although Huang Zongxi opposed the conception of a personal deity, he also rejected the reduction of Heaven to abstract principle. He insisted that “in the unseen realm, there is truly something that governs all.” He opposed the secularist interpretations of the suburban sacrifices by thinkers such as Xunzi and Zhu Xi, and argued that these rituals must have a real object of veneration. To deny such an object would render the suburban sacrifices mere theatrical performances, contradicting the Confucian emphasis on the unity of knowledge and action.

Sun Qifeng (孙奇逢, 1584-1675), meanwhile, proposed that one should “study in accordance with the ways of Heaven,” advocating the existence of an interactive relationship between human beings and Shangdi (Heaven). “To offer sacrifice to Shangdi is to be in His presence as though He were truly there. And only those who are virtuous can truly offer such sacrifice. By gathering the vital forces of all nations and harmonizing them to serve Shangdi—how could Shangdi not respond clearly and distinctly (Sun 1995, pp. 902-903)?” Sun emphasized mutual responsiveness, or *duiyue*, between humans and Heaven: “From ancient to modern times, all things and people exist beneath the vault of Heaven and upon the earth’s surface, illuminated by the sun and moon, and

they are indeed capable of entering into mutual responsiveness with Heaven and Earth (Sun 1995, p. 159)." Sun Qifeng thus highlighted the central status of Heaven within the Confucian framework.

Gao Panlong, leader of the Donglin movement, in a memorial to the Wanli Emperor, employed the doctrine of *Heaven–Human Resonance* (*tianren ganying*) to urge the emperor to maintain vigilance over his inner moral state: "The mind of the ruler is united with Heaven—it breathes in harmony with it. A single good thought receives Heaven's good response; a single evil thought receives Heaven's evil response, just as a shadow follows form, without the slightest deviation. Hence, the sage-kings of old were constantly diligent, preserving their inner state in communion with Heaven. This is why it is said: 'Vast Heaven,' and 'Heaven shines down upon you, O King,' and 'Vast Heaven dawns anew.'" He continued, "The sovereign of my mind is Shangdi Himself. Thus, it is said: 'Shangdi watches over you, do not waver in your heart'; 'Be cautious and reverent in serving Shangdi.' The moment one lets go of this heart, one has wavered—and that is no way to serve Shangdi." Here, Gao Panlong's "Heaven" is not merely the Heaven of moral cultivation proposed by Song Confucians, but one that assumes a role of moral judgment and reward and punishment, "like a shadow following form, without the slightest error." He also emphasized the need for reverence and awe toward Heaven: "Nowadays, people would not dare be disrespectful in the presence of a great guest—how could one not be reverent when in communion with Shangdi? Thus it is said: 'Ceaseless vigilance all day, ceaseless responsiveness to Heaven.' The petty person does not understand the Mandate of Heaven and therefore feels no awe; hence, he commits evil in private, without restraint—this is no surprise. If one studies without understanding Heaven, then even if one forces oneself to do good, it is not genuine (Gao 2011b, p. 397)"

Similarly, Wang Fuzhi (王夫之, 1619-1692) urged that one must use a "pure and upright heart to enter into responsiveness with the spirits. Act with integrity—what room is there for flattery or concealment?… This heart and this principle—Shangdi sees it all. Those who excel at flattery earn Heaven's condemnation (Wang 1999, p .1707)."

The reverence for, awe toward, invocation of, and prayer to Heaven in the writings of late Ming and early Qing scholar-officials—along with practices such as *cautious solitude* (Liu Zongzhou 刘宗周, 1578-1645) and *reverent fear* (Xue Xuan 薛瑄)—represent efforts to restore or reinforce the position of a religiously-inflected Heaven within the Confucian ideological framework. This religious revival in Confucianism was closely tied on one hand to the social conditions of the late Ming, and on the other to the influence of Western

Catholicism during this period. Figures such as Wen Xiangfeng, Ge Yinliang, and Gao Panlong had direct or indirect contact with Catholicism.

In other words, the arrival of Catholicism in the late Ming both appropriated existing religious elements within Confucianism—transforming them into a form of Confucian monotheism—and, in turn, prompted late Ming and early Qing scholar-officials to reflect on and revitalize the religious dimension of *Tian* and *Shangdi*. In sum, the religious formulations found especially in the pre-Qin Confucian classics became the foundation for the dialogue and integration between Confucianism and Christianity in the late Ming and early Qing.

Heaven as the Lord of Heaven: The Jesuit Discovery and Transformation of the "Religious Expressions" in Pre-Qin Confucianism in the Late Ming

Matteo Ricci, who entered China during the late Ming dynasty, acutely perceived the "religious" expressions embedded in Pre-Qin Confucian classics, as well as the dissatisfaction among contemporary scholar-officials with the materialist interpretations of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Ricci thus presented himself to the literati of the late Ming as one attempting to restore the religious dimension of the Confucian concept of "Heaven." As a result, Ricci's discourse bore a distinctly "retroactive" tendency while also conveying a critical stance, thereby resonating with the sentiments of many scholar-officials of his time.

Ricci's most significant contribution was the proposition that "Our Lord of Heaven is what the Chinese call Shangdi," thereby inaugurating the project of a Sino-Christian theological synthesis in the Chinese language (Ji 2012). Ricci's endeavor involved reinterpreting the "Shangdi" found in Pre-Qin Confucian texts into a monotheistic framework and criticizing the ethical and moral reinterpretation of Heaven or Shangdi found in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Ricci's interpretation began directly from the classical texts themselves, bypassing later commentarial traditions and offering his own exegesis. For example, Ricci asserted, "The ritual of suburban sacrifice is to serve Shangdi." While commentators such as Zhu Xi and Zhang Juzheng held that "Shangdi" already encompassed "Houtu" (Earth Deity), they did not mention that "Houtu" was a case of "abbreviated writing." Based on the *Book of Songs*, *Book of Changes*, *Book of Rites*, and *Book of Documents*, Ricci concluded: "I humbly believe that Confucius was committed to the indivisibility of the One and could not have abbreviated the text so arbitrarily (Ricci 1964, p. 415)."

In arguing for the existence of the Lord of Heaven, Ricci drew on the resources of scholastic philosophy, especially those of Thomas Aquinas,

demonstrating a form of reasoning and speculation that sharply diverged from Chinese traditions. Ricci placed particular emphasis on analogical reasoning, making his arguments especially compelling. For instance, he wrote: "A household has but one head, a state but one sovereign. If there were two, the state would fall into disorder. A human has but one body, and one head; if there were two, it would be monstrous indeed. From this I infer that within the universe, though there are many classes of spirits, there is only one Lord of Heaven who created Heaven, Earth, humanity, and all things, and who continuously governs and sustains them. Why should you doubt this?" (Ricci 1964, pp. 393-394)

Ricci restored the "Heaven" of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism to the "Shangdi" of the Six Classics, and then reinterpreted the "Shangdi" of the Six Classics as the "Lord of Heaven." Thus, for Ricci, "Heaven," "Shangdi," and "Lord of Heaven" formed an equivalence. From Ricci's perspective, the understandings of Heaven proposed by Zhu Xi and the Cheng brothers—whether as principle (li) or as physical form—were erroneous.

Why, then, are the religious expressions in Pre-Qin Confucian classics relatively subdued in the teachings of Confucius, Mencius, and the Song Confucians? Because religious expressions inevitably raise issues of reward and punishment. Yet once reward and punishment are invoked, moral exhortation becomes utilitarian, which is inconsistent with the Confucian emphasis on self-cultivation. As Ricci, through the voice of the "Middle Scholar," explained: "The teachings of the sages, though not entirely devoid of intent, are not aimed at outcomes, but rather at virtue. Thus, in promoting goodness, they point to the beauty of virtue rather than to reward; in condemning evil, they speak of its wickedness rather than punishment (Ricci 1964, p. 530)."

In other words, if one employs the promise of reward and fear of punishment to encourage good and deter evil, it amounts to a utilitarian form of moral persuasion—doing good not for its own sake. Accordingly, in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, we encounter expressions such as "correspondence," "serving with reverence," and "veneration of Heaven." Zhu Xi even composed the *Admonition to Revere Heaven*, but rarely do we see any detailed characterization of the object of this "correspondence" or "service"—i.e., Heaven itself—nor discussion of whether it possesses the power to reward good and punish evil. For Song Confucians, "correspondence" was more a form of existential alignment, while "reverence" was a method of self-cultivation— "reverence for internal rectitude, righteousness for external conduct." Yet Ricci cited passages from the *Book of Documents* to demonstrate

that "The teachings of the sages, as recorded in the classics, promote good with rewards and deter evil with punishments (Ricci 1964, p. 530)."

Thus, the fundamental moral difference between Confucianism and Christianity lies in the contrast between self-discipline (autonomy) and external discipline (heteronomy). Self-discipline entails doing good for its own sake, or acting virtuously upon attaining the moral ideal of the *junzi* (noble man); external discipline means doing good for the sake of reward and avoiding evil out of fear of punishment. Though morally pure in theory, self-discipline is difficult to sustain in practice—especially for ordinary people, for whom moral exhortations to do good for its own sake may not be effective. Ricci incisively pointed out: "I have observed that the fundamental ailment of Confucian scholars in your esteemed nation lies here: they speak only of cultivating manifest virtue, unaware that human intentions are easily fatigued and incapable of self-motivation; they also know not how to look up to the Heavenly Lord and pray for the aid of a loving Father—thus those who attain virtue are few indeed (Ricci 1964, p. 592)."

Even before his conversion (1603), Xu Guangqi (徐光启, 1562-1633) had already articulated a theology of reward and punishment in reference to Shangdi: "As I observe the 'Sovereign on High' in the poem 'Huang Yi,' He sits loftily above all people, as if His eyes and ears were suspended beyond the realm of perception; His essence dwells within humans, manifesting awe-inspiring majesty in every ascent and descent. His luminous presence shines everywhere, even when kings roam far and wide; His far-reaching gaze penetrates even the remotest wastelands—none can escape His sight (Xu 2010, p. 79)." Why did Xu Guangqi emphasize Shangdi's function of rewarding good and punishing evil? Because he was deeply dissatisfied with the lack of religiously grounded "external discipline" in Confucianism: "From ancient times, the rewards and punishments of emperors, the judgments of sages, all served to guide people toward good and restrain them from evil, in great detail and precision. But rewards and punishments, and right and wrong, can only reach external conduct, not internal feelings. As Sima Qian observed, when Yan Hui dies young while the bandit Zhi lives long, people begin to doubt whether good and evil are truly recompensed. Thus, the more stringent the laws, the more rampant the deception. For every law enacted, a hundred loopholes arise. The will to govern exists, but the means are lacking (Xu 1965, p. 24)."

In this context, Confucians turned to Buddhism and Daoism for "supplementation," yet "Buddhism has been in China for 1,800 years, and still it has not changed the human heart or social customs (Xu 1965, p. 24)." Catholicism, which promotes external discipline, could "if it truly seeks to

make all people virtuous, then the teachings of those ministers who transmit the Way of Serving Heaven are truly capable of assisting royal governance, complementing Confucianism, and rectifying Buddhism (Xu 1965, p. 25)." This may well have been one of the reasons Xu Guangqi chose to be baptized and join the Church.

Feng Yingjing (冯应京, 1555-1606) accepted Ricci's arguments with remarkable ease: "Who is the Lord of Heaven? Shangdi. It is truly stated, not empty words. In our nation's Six Classics and the Four Books of the sages, it is said: fear Shangdi, assist Shangdi, serve Shangdi, reach Shangdi (Feng 1964, p. 359)." Wang Ruzhun (汪汝淳) likewise believed that what Ricci called the "Lord of Heaven" aligns exactly with "the supreme, impartial, and upright principle of our Confucian Way (Wang 1964, pp. 374-375)." Li Zhizao (李之藻, 1565-1630) concurred: "Formerly, when the Master spoke of self-cultivation, he began with serving one's parents and extended this to understanding Heaven. By the time of Mencius, the idea of preserving and nurturing in service to Heaven was already fully developed. To know Heaven and serve Heaven—this is identical in meaning and perfectly concordant with what the classics record (Li 1964, pp. 351-354)." Zheng Man (郑鄤, 1594-1639) noted that the teachings of the Three Dynasties were all oriented toward serving Heaven. Later Confucians interpreted "Heaven as principle," thereby turning sacrifices to Heaven into sacrifices to principle—an idea he found incompatible with the teachings of the Three Dynasties: "Are we then to say that sacrificing to Heaven is the same as sacrificing to principle? Such talk verges on impiety. Alas! This is why contemporary scholarship no longer resembles the ancient ways (Zheng 2011, p. 117)."

Zheng Man's close friend Wang Zheng (王徵,1571-1644) believed that the God in Catholicism, who administers reward for virtue and punishment for vice, is the same as the one spoken of in Confucian scripture: "This is exactly what our classics refer to when they say, 'Only the Supreme Ruler is not constant: do good, and blessings shall be bestowed; do evil, and calamities shall befall.' The meanings precisely coincide, and through this one may glimpse the overarching principle behind reward and punishment (Wang 2011, p. 121)." After reading *The Seven Victories*, which strongly advocates "to conquer the nature is the Way," Wang Zheng resolved to be baptized and convert. The work *The Seven Victories*, highly esteemed among late Ming literati (such as Xie Wenjian), was in fact a kind of supplement to or reversal of the Confucian tradition of moral cultivation based on self-discipline.

After baptism, Wang Zheng came to a profound realization of the awesome power of the Mandate of Heaven: "Only now do I truly understand

that the Mandate of Heaven exists. Only now do I know that the Mandate of Heaven is indeed unerring. Only now do I grasp the true awe it commands. In the past, when reciting the words of Confucius, 'The gentleman has three things he reveres,' I thought it merely a mental discipline for scholars. Who would have imagined it to be the very heart-method employed for achieving sagehood throughout the ages (Wang 2011, p. 121) ?" In other words, the notion of *Tian* or *Shangdi*, reinterpreted through the religious framework of Catholicism, became the key for Wang Zheng to grasp the meaning of revering the Mandate of Heaven from the standpoint of moral principle: "To truly fear the rewards and punishments of the Lord of Heaven, and to harbor an awareness of divine punishment, this is precisely the real function of revering the Mandate of Heaven (Wang 2011, p. 122)."

For Wang Zheng, if Heaven lacked the capacity to reward and punish in the manner of a personal deity, then there could be no discussion of knowing, serving, or revering Heaven, nor could it serve any real purpose in the cultivation of virtue. Like Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi, Wang Zheng attributed the moral collapse of the age to later Confucians' failure to interpret *Tian* in terms of reward and punishment—that is, in religious terms:

> *"Because they do not know that there is a Lord in Heaven, they devise false theories: some claim that Heaven is nothing more than accumulated qi; others say that the cosmos operates spontaneously, by the self-moving mechanism of qi. Since they do not acknowledge a supreme Lord, they also fail to recognize the reality of reward and punishment. Thus, all phenomena of blessings for virtue or retribution for licentiousness, and omens of fortune or disaster, are all attributed to the operations of Heaven, its movements, and the mechanical unfolding of fate. Some even go so far as to say that even Heaven is not free, but everything proceeds from the natural and inevitable unfolding of the Mandate of Heaven, a necessity whose reasons cannot be fathomed. It is as though beyond the blue firmament lies only a formless void, without any ruler or master. It is such theories that have fostered a habit of moral recklessness among people under Heaven and among future generations."* (Wang 2011, p. 122)

Wang Zheng held that the Song Confucians interpreted Heaven through the concept of *qi* or principle, and regarded the Mandate of Heaven as a kind of natural, inevitable law or *Dao* of Heaven. As a result, they denied the capacity of Heaven to reward good and punish evil, which led to a general loss of moral restraint among the people. Although Confucianism does speak of blessings for the virtuous and retribution for the wicked, it does not clarify whether there is a divine being behind this mechanism, rendering it ineffective as a moral teaching. Wang Zheng also believed that advocating goodness without

referencing reward and punishment ultimately fails to guide people toward virtue: "In fact, it causes people to grow lazy in cultivating virtue, and lures them into indulging in all manner of evil (Wang 2011, p. 132)." For, as he argued, "Without hope for reward, how can one be motivated to endure the hardship of cultivating virtue and reject the pleasures of the world? Without fear of harm, how can one shun evil and restrain the self (Wang 2011, p. 132)?"

Thus, for Catholic converts, the expressions such as *duiyue* (confronting and communing with Heaven) and *zhaoshi* (serving reverently) in the Confucian classics were in fact to be understood as acts of revering the Lord of Heaven. Catholic believers began to use *duiyue* interchangeably with "the Lord of Heaven," as seen in Yang Tingyun (杨廷筠, 1562-1627)'s remarks: "People widely offer sacrifices to countless unverified deities, yet fail to maintain full devotion and reverence to the Lord of Heaven—I find this incomprehensible (Yang n. d. a, p. 5)." "To hold such an unfocused and lukewarm attitude—how can one truly *duiyue* the Lord Most High (Yang n. d. b, vol.1, p. 32)?" "At the close of night and rise of dawn, in every morning's prayer and every hour's task, in every moment of social and official duty, one must never cease from *duiyue* (Yang n. d. b, vol. 2, p. 1)." "To venerate the Lord of Heaven and Earth as the fundamental principle is the very essence of the teaching to reverently serve. To love others as oneself is the fulfillment of the work of completing oneself and others (Yang n. d. b, vol. 2, p. 9)." Zhu Zongyuan (朱宗元, 1616-1660?) noted: "The Westerners maintain celibacy all their lives, practice rigorous self-discipline—half their day and night is spent in *duiyue* (Zhu 2014, p. 672)."

Zhu Zongyuan even wrote a special treatise arguing that the ritual of the suburban sacrifice (jiaoshe) was intended for serving Heaven, i.e., honoring the Lord of Heaven, and did not include worship of the earth. Zhu held that the Confucian concept of *duiyue* was a one-directional act, whereas the Catholic notion of *duiyue* was a spiritual communion between human and God: "To cry out sincerely to the Lord is not mere hollow speech—it is an invocation that truly draws down divine favor and protection. Thus, without ever leaving one's home, one's virtue may grow daily, and one's works may benefit others ever more (Zhu n. d., p. 52)." He believed that Catholicism and ancient Confucianism were alike in their emphasis on revering and serving Heaven. For this reason, Zhu Zongyuan saw the worship of the Lord of Heaven as the very fulfillment of revering and serving Heaven, in complete harmony with the teachings of Confucius: "Let us read the works of Confucius and ask: to what object did he command such solemn reverence and service? Toward what did he urge such cautious devotion? To honor the Lord of Heaven is to follow the words and teachings of Confucius. To claim, arrogantly, that Confucianism is

sufficient and has no need of the learning of Heaven—this is not only to betray the Lord of Heaven, but to betray Confucius himself (Zhu 2014, p. 578)."

Xu Guangqi's advocacy of "replacing Buddhism with Confucianism" was a key factor prompting late Ming literati to be baptized. The intrinsic deficiency of Confucianism in terms of "religiosity" led scholar-official converts to see Catholicism as a supplement to, and even fulfillment of, the Confucian tradition. Zhu Zongyuan remarked: "In the Confucian texts, much is still obscure and not fully integrated; only the learning of Heaven elaborates it in detail. Moreover, nowadays people read texts in a confused and haphazard way. Only after accepting the Heavenly teaching can one understand that every sentence in our *Six Classics* and *Four Books* has meaning, every phrase has its key; shallow Confucians truly have not grasped them (Zhu 2014, p. 454)." "Only with this Heavenly doctrine can the method of self-cultivation and the path of returning to one's spiritual origin become truly complete (Zhu 2014, p. 453)."

Zhang Xingyao (张星曜, 1633-1715?)was even more explicit in asserting that Catholicism must surpass Confucianism, precisely because Confucius lacked the authority to reward and punish: "I preserve a heart of reverence and awe, keeping it pure and selfless, such that my actions contain no transgressions. Should I deviate even slightly, I swiftly confess. Constantly communing with the Lord of Heaven, this surpasses those who follow Confucianism and think they can deceive Confucius, who lacks the power to reward or punish. This is one reason why the Heavenly teaching is superior to Confucianism (Zhang n. d., p. 60)." Zhang further argued that the Confucian learning of serving Heaven was incomplete: "Mencius's doctrine of cultivating the mind and nurturing the nature in order to serve Heaven is indeed clear and penetrating. But in the time of Confucius and Mencius, the Lord of Heaven had not yet incarnated, and so the learning of serving Heaven was still obscure and underdeveloped (Zhang n. d., p. 61)." In Zhang's view, because Confucius had no authority to reward or punish, his teachings could not effectively guide people toward good and away from evil, and instead needed to be supplemented by Buddhism and Daoism. Yet Catholicism not only complements Confucianism—it transcends it: "If everyone, in every household, in every day and every thought and every deed, followed only Confucius as the model, then his teachings would not be considered lacking. But can people today actually do so? Can the teachings of Confucius reach every person, household, day, action, and thought (Zhang n. d., p. 26)?" "If the Way of Confucius is already perfect, why must it borrow from Buddhism and Daoism? And if all the people of the world now borrow from them, is it not precisely because they find Confucius's teaching insufficient (Zhang n. d., p. 26)?" For

Zhang Xingyao, the "religiosity" of Catholicism is the essential reason it surpasses Confucianism.

Conclusion and Final Remarks

In the late Ming period, as Catholicism entered China, terms such as *duiyue* (对越), *zhaoshi* (昭事), and *shitian* (事天), which carried a certain religious connotation, were reinterpreted within a monotheistic theological framework.[6] In Chinese-language Catholic texts, we can observe the use of similar terms borrowed from Confucianism, but their meanings had undergone transformation. *Kouduo Richao* records: "Those outside the Church see how we remain silent and reverent during *duiyue*, how we ceaselessly recite thanksgiving prayers, how we tirelessly hurry to the chapel—and they mock us, saying that we are suffering (Li 2002, pp. 415-416)." "Yet to have both heart and deeds purified, to reverently perform *duiyue*, to repent earnestly and reform oneself, to pray for forgiveness in accordance with the rules—this is genuine cultivation and the true path to Heaven (Li 2002, p. 501)." Here, *duiyue* has already become a religious term, markedly different from its original meaning. *Kouduo Richao* further states: "To serve the Lord is just like how a filial child serves his parents (Li 2002, p. 460)." This reflects a reinterpretation of the Confucian idea of "serving Heaven as one serves one's parents." Similarly, the Fujianese Catholic Zhang Geng, upon his conversion, took the religious name *Zhaoshi Sheng* ("The One Who Serves and Illuminates").

In the Catholic *Our Father*, *adveniat* was translated as *linge* (临格, "to draw near in majesty"; rendered today in Protestant usage as *jianglin*, "to descend"), clearly adopting a term from Confucian lexicon while transforming it into a Christian term. The *Confessional Prayers* contain expressions like *yugao* ("to cry out for mercy"), while *Morning Prayers* use phrases such as *huanghuang Shengsan* ("Majestic Holy Trinity").

Beyond Catholicism, early Qing *Hui-Ru* (Muslim Confucians) also engaged in similar hermeneutic efforts. In his *Tianfang Zhisheng Shilu* (*The Authentic Record of the Most Sacred from the Heavenly Land*), Liu Zhi (刘智, 1669-1764) uses *duiyue* and *zhaoshi* to refer to veneration of Allah: "In reverent *duiyue* to the True Lord, one hears the subtle truth firsthand"; "I perform *duiyue* with the Lord"; "Above the nine heavens, I perform *duiyue* to the True Lord"; "The five daily prayers embody the fullest form of *zhaoshi* (Liu 1995, p. 466)." Liu Zhi believed that Islam was continuous with the Confucian reverence for Heaven: "Yao revered the August Heaven; Tang ascended daily with reverent awe; King

[6] For the origin and meaning of the Catholic term "Tianzhu" (Lord of Heaven) in the late Ming, see Ji Jianxun (2019).

Wen served the Lord on High with manifest devotion; Confucius lamented, 'I have sinned against Heaven, and there is no one to pray to.'"[7]

While missionary efforts and Confucian converts grounded their theological articulation in classical sources, post-Ricci missionaries and believers went beyond simply introducing monotheism-they also brought in Christology.[8] The Catholic doctrine of the Trinity became increasingly well known: the so-called "Heaven" in Catholicism had once incarnated and died for the redemption of humanity. Such doctrines became increasingly difficult for the Confucian literati to accept; figures like Jiang Dejing, Huang Zongxi, and Qian Qianyi expressed strong objections.

Catholicism's emphasis on external moral restraint as a means to encourage virtue was also interpreted by the literati as mere pursuit of blessings. Zhu Zongyuan, for example, was once mocked: "A guest derided me, saying that if blessings and misfortunes are distributed by the Lord, why do those who serve Him not all enjoy wealth and prosperity (Zhu n. d., p. 314)?" Likewise, Catholic reinterpretations of *tian* (Heaven) were seen as "blaspheming Heaven" or "mocking Heaven." Critics accused: "Now these foreign heretics sprinkle holy water, apply sacred oil, bear crosses and instruments of punishment, thereby shackling body and soul alike—can this truly be called *serving Heaven* (Huang 2000b, p. 370)?" Opponents sharply perceived the fusion of Confucian *Tian*, *Shangdi*, and Catholic *Tianzhu* (Lord of Heaven), and charged the missionaries with "slandering Heaven": "They misuse the name of serving Heaven or serving the Lord on High to spread their heresies (Chen 2000, p. 401)." "Those foreigners, such as Matteo Ricci, are true impostors and slanderers of the Lord on High, and should indeed be driven out by today's enlightened emperor. Those who, deceived by empty slogans like serving Heaven or serving the Lord on High, fail to discern the reality and follow blindly—how lamentable (Chen 2000, p. 405)!" Another anti-Christian text reads: "They latch onto Confucian expressions like *zhaoshi* and *qinruo*, then indulge in cruelty, deceit, and lust. Chen Shuishi said they are like rats burrowing into our tradition—what an apt metaphor (Huang 2000a, p. 365)!" Huang Zongxi likewise criticized the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as replacing *Heaven* with "human ghosts," thereby "obliterating *Shangdi* entirely." Therefore, he classified the Catholic reinterpretation of *Heaven* as a heresy akin to Buddhism. However, Huang also argued that the anthropomorphic interpretation of *Heaven* did not originate with either Catholicism or Buddhism,

[7] For comparative studies on late Ming and early Qing Muslim Confucians and Christian Confucians, see Jin Gang (Jin 2009).

[8] See works of figurist missionaries such as Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730) and Joseph de Prémare (1666-1736).

but rather had been opened by Confucians themselves: "It was not without precedent among Confucians." Despite rejecting the Christian and Buddhist interpretations of *Heaven*, Huang still maintained that *Tian* had sovereign authority and was not merely a principle (*li*) (Huang 2020, p. 2).

The editors of the *Siku Quanshu* also believed that while Western learning excelled in mathematics, it erred in "exalting the Lord of Heaven to seduce and bewilder people's hearts." They viewed Catholicism as fundamentally incompatible with the Six Classics, stating, "its divergence is profound indeed."[9]

Catholicism reached its zenith during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor, with a symbolic moment occurring in 1671 when the Emperor granted the Church a plaque inscribed with *Jingtian* (Revere Heaven). Missionaries hung this plaque at Catholic churches throughout China. In *Gujin Jingtian Jian*, Joachim Bouvet cited passages from the Emperor's *Lectures on the Classics* to explicate the meaning of *Jingtian*. The Catholic layman Li Zubai likewise affirmed, "The true scholar is one who reveres Heaven." In 1700, amid the Rites Controversy, missionaries submitted a petition to the Kangxi Emperor, declaring that "Revering Heaven" meant "sacrificing to the ruler and source of all things." The Emperor responded with his endorsement: "What is written here is excellent and accords with the Great Way. Reverence for Heaven, serving rulers and parents, and honoring teachers are universal principles—this needs no amendment (Anonymous 2006, p. 363)."

However, as the Rites Controversy intensified, the possibility of "one Heaven, multiple expressions" (*yitian gebiao*) collapsed. The Pope issued a ban on Chinese rites, including the use of Confucian terms like *Shangdi* and *Tian*, while the Kangxi Emperor issued an edict banning Christianity.[10] Thus, the early Qing-era dialogue and synthesis between China and the West, between Confucianism and Christianity, came to an end.[11]

Debates over the religious nature of Confucianism and whether it should be reinterpreted through Christianity continue into modern Neo-Confucian discourse.[12] The rights, wrongs, and implications of such efforts still await

[9] For critiques against missionaries' interpretations of "Heaven" by anti-Christian thinkers, see *Mingchao poxieji*, and also Sun Shangyang (1994, pp. 248-256).

[10] Later missionaries such as Jean-François Foucquet still interpreted "Heaven" as the "Lord of Heaven" and viewed Emperor Yongzheng's sacrifice to Heaven as worship of the Lord, but due to the Rites Controversy and prohibition of Christianity, dialogue between Jesuits and Confucians ceased.

[11] The localization of Catholicism during the late Qing and Republican periods by the new Jesuits in China continued the trend of "one Heaven, multiple interpretations," even influencing today's efforts at Sinicizing Christianity.

[12] For example, the Boston Confucians. See John H. Berthrong (1994).

deeper investigation. Yet the notion of *yitian gebiao* from the late Ming and early Qing provides meaningful insight for today's discussions on the Sinicization of Christianity and cross-civilizational exchange. The most crucial aspect of Christian Sinicization lies in the localization and Sinification of its core theological concepts. *Yitian gebiao* implies that Sinicization should engage with the highest categories within Chinese culture and reinterpret them in Christian terms. This path may yield better outcomes.

As for civilizational exchange, first, *yitian gebiao* provides a hermeneutical method: namely, seeking commonality within each side's canonical and interpretive traditions. For late Ming and Qing Confucians, *Tian* is the *Heaven* or *Shangdi* found in the Four Books and Five Classics; for Christianity, *Tian* is *Tianzhu*, *Deus*. Second, *yitian gebiao* illustrates that mutual understanding requires not only the pursuit of common ground but also the preservation of difference. Though both sides regard *Tian* as the supreme category, their interpretations diverge. Therefore, differences between civilizations, rather than being causes of conflict, should serve as the foundation for dialogue, exchange, and synthesis.

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Sinicization of Western Learning and the Global History of Knowledge:

A Case Study of Huang Baijia's *Comment in Song Yuan Xue'An*

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Abstract: Huang Baijia has made a lengthy comment on meteorological change in *Song Yuan Xue'an*, generally, scholars regard it as Huang Baijia' s own synthesis of western learnings. In fact, Huang's comment derived from *Zhengshi Lüeshuo*, which was written by Chinese Catholic scholar Zhu Zongyuan. Zhu's book is a work of apologetics; it refers to many Jesuits' books, such as *Taixi Shuifa* of Sabatino de Ursis, *Huanyou Quan* of Francisco Furtado, *Kouduo Richao* of Giulio Aleni, etc. In Huang's citation, he pruned all the materials relating to Catholicism while sustaining western secular knowledge. Carefully comparing the valuable copies of Chinese Catholic literature, namely, *Zhengshi Lüeshuo* of Zhu Zongyuan, *Tianjiao Mingbian* of Zhang Xingyao, and *Xingxue Xingmi* of Chen Xun, we can clearly see the western origin of Huang Baijia's comment as well as his alteration. This provides us with a specific case of the circulation, transformation and sinicization of western learning in the early Qing period, as well as the globalization of modern scholarship.

Keywords: *Songyuan Xue'an*, *Zhengshi Lüeshuo*, Huang Baijia, Zhu Zongyuan, sinicization of western learning

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Introduction

According to *Songyuan xue'an* 宋元学案, Zhang Zai 张载 (1020-1077) explained the formation of natural phenomena such as wind, rain, dew and thunder in his *Zhengmeng* 正蒙, saying:

> *Yin coalesces and yang disperses. When yin gathers, yang will disperse, and its momentum is evenly dispersed. When yang is exhausted by yin, it falls as rain; when yin is gained by yang, it rises as clouds. Therefore, the clouds are spread out in the void, yin is driven by the wind, converged and not dispersed. When the yin gas coalesces, the yang within is not allowed to come out, it will fight with the birth of thunder. When the yang outside is not allowed to enter, it will be around with the birth of wind.*阴性凝聚，阳性发散。阴聚之，阳必散之，其势均散。阳为阴累，则相持为雨而降；阴为阳得，则飘扬为云而升。故云物班布太虚者，阴为风驱，敛聚而未散者也。凡阴气凝聚，阳在内者不得出，则奋击而为雷霆；阳在外者不得入，则周旋不舍而为风。

This interpretation by Zhang Zai was generally accepted among the subsequent scholars and was highly influential. In explaining natural phenomena such as hail, clouds, wind and thunder, Lu Dian 陆佃 (1042-1102) stated in his *Piya* 埤雅: "Clouds are of *yang* but derived from *yin*, winds are of *yin* but derived from *yang* 云，阳而出于阴；风，阴而出于阳". (Lu 1936, pp. 500-1, 510) Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), in explaining the cause of the formation of rain, claimed that: "Hengqu's explanations of the formation of wind, thunder, cloud and rain are most reasonable and powerful 横渠《正蒙》论风雷云雨之说最分晓". (Zhu 2010, p. 141) Wang Sanpin 王三聘 (1501-1577) also relied on Zhang Zai's *Zhengmeng* when explaining wind and thunder, clouds and rain, and snow and fog in his *Gujin shiwu kao* 古今事物考. (Wang 1987, pp. 1-2) In short, as Benjamin A. Elman puts it, the common feature of these explanations, which have been passed down for thousands of years, is that natural phenomena such as rain, clouds, thunder and lightning are produced by the interaction of *yin* and *yang*. (Elman 2005, p. 49)

Huang Baijia 黄百家 (1643-1709) has a lengthy comment following this quotation from *Zhengmeng*, recorded below:

> *Baijia carefully commented: Master Zhang Zai used the doctrine of yin and yang to explain the occurrence of wind, rain, dew and thunder, etc. Modern Westerners discussed these topics very detailed, in brief, the scientific mechanism is like this: from the earth up to the heaven, the height is two hundred and sixty li or so, this is the gas field. The gas field is divided into three layers, near the ground is the mild layer, and above is the cold layer and then the hot layer. Various climate*

> *changes all happen in this gas field. The four elements of water, fire, earth and air on ground are attracted by the heavenly bodies and rise up into the gas field, gathering together to become clouds, and dispersing to become rain…*百家谨案：此先生以阴阳之气测想风雨露雷之由也。近代西人之说甚详，略述大旨：自地而上二百六十里有奇，为气域。气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，上为热际。种种变化，悉在此气中。下地水火土为天行所吸，则腾聚于气中，郁然成云，散而为雨…… (Huang 1986, pp. 678-9)

Previous researchers have paid attention to this comment and regarded it as an important case for examining Huang Baijia's view of western learning. (Yang and Feng 1996; Xu 2000; Yang 2001; Liu 2009) However, most of the existing literature overlooked his statement that: "Modern Westerners discussed these topics very detailed 近代西人之说甚详". Generally speaking, scholars mostly regard this length comment as Huang Baijia's personal synthesis of previous writings of western learning, without further exploring the sources of this paragraph. This article finds that Huang Baijia's comment is derived from the book *Zhengshi lüeshuo* 拯世略说 written by Zhu Zongyuan 朱宗元 (courtesy name Weicheng 维城, *ca.* 1616-1660), a Catholic scholar at the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, for which a more detailed analysis is provided in the following sections.

Huang Baijia's comment is based on Zhu Zongyuan's work

There are six kinds of Catholic literature related to this piece of Huang Baijia's writing: three block-printed copies of Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, one hand-written copy of Zhang Xingyao's 张星曜 (*ca.* 1633-1715) *Tianjiao mingbian* 天教明辨, and two hand-written copies of Chen Xun's 陈薰 (courtesy name Ou'ting 鸥渟, date of birth and death unknown) *Xingxue xingmi* 性学醒迷.

The French National Library (Bibliothèque Nationale de France) has two block-printed copies of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, and two kinds of each, numbered Chinois 7139/Chinois 7140 and Chinois 7141/Chinois 7142, respectively. The rest block-printed copy in the Vatican Library's collection was from the *Yunjian jingyitang* collection 云间敬一堂藏板, which were photocopied and published by the *Zhengzhou daxiang chubanshe* 郑州大象出版社 in 2014, and included as the fourteenth volume in the first series of *Mingqing zhongxi wenhua jiaoliushi wenxian congkan* [Series of the Chinese and Western Cultural Exchange History in Ming and Qing Dynasties Literature]明清中西文化交流史文献丛刊.[1] (Zhang

[1] There were multiple re-block-printed version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* in the late Qing and Republican periods, such as the Shanghai *Cimutang* 慈母堂 version of the twelfth year of the Tongzhi period (1873), the Beijing *Jiushitang* 救世堂 version of the fifth year of the Guangxu period (1879), the lead-printed

2014; Zhou 2005; Chan 2002, pp. 191-2, 220; Dudink 2011) The original of *Tianjiao mingbian* is now in the Xujiahui Library (Bibliotheca Zi-ka-wei), which is a hand-written copy consisting of twenty volumes, photocopied and published by the Ricci Institute in Taipei 台北利氏学社 in 2013, and included in *Xujiahui cangshulou mingqing tianzhujiao wenxian xubian* [Sequel of the Ming and Qing Dynasty Catholic Literature from the Xujiahui Library Collection]徐家汇藏书楼明清天主教文献续编. It should be added that Ma Xiangbo 马相伯 (1840-1939) had sent a copy of *Tianjiao mingbian* to Ying Lianzhi 英敛之 (1867-1926) and Chen Yuan 陈垣 (1880-1971) in Beijing for proofreading in early Republican China. Now this copy is in the Chinese National Library. (Xiao 2019, p. 39) The two hand-written volumes of *Xingxue xingmi* are also collected by the Xujiahui Library. One volume (actually a fragment) (27cm × 13.5cm) is numbered 00095794B, and the other of two-volume (24.5cm × 14.5cm) is 00095795-95796B. The whole *Xingxue xingmi* was also photocopied and included in the prementioned Xujiahui sequel.

Huang Baijia supplemented *Songyuan xue'an* after Huang Zongxi's 黄宗羲 (1610-1695) death. (Huang 1986, p. 15) As Huang Baijia died in 1709, this comment in question was roughly written between 1695 and 1709. The preface of *Tianjiao mingbian*, edited by Zhang Xingyao, is signed "the year of *xinmao* of the Kangxi reign 康熙辛卯", i.e., 1711, and in fact, this book was edited earlier than 1711. (Xiao 2019, p. 39) Both the one-volume and two-volume hand-written copies *Xingxue xingmi* have a preface written by Sun Zhimi 孙致弥 (1642-1709), the grandson of Sun Yuanhua 孙元化 (1581-1632), a famous Confucian Christian at the end of the Ming Dynasty. There is a big difference in the two prefaces, yet both prefaces signed that they were written in the autumn of year of *xinsi* 辛巳年, namely, the 40th year of Kangxi reign 康熙四十年. It can thus be known that *Xingxue xingmi* was completed before the year of *xinsi* of the Kangxi reign (1701). The "Tiandi yuanshi [the origin of heaven and earth]天地原始" entry in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* stated that: "There have been 6,844 years since the beginning of the heaven and the earth until now, in the year of *jiashen* of Shunzhi reign.自有天地至今顺治之甲申，仅六千八百四十四年". (Zhu n.d.a, p.16) It can be seen that this book was written in the year of *jiashen* of the Shunzhi reign (1644). However, as scholars have noticed, it is unlikely that this

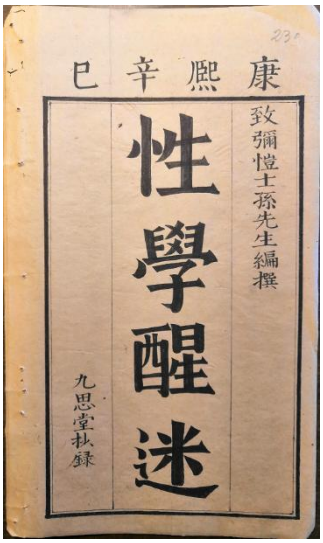
version of the *Xishiku* 西什库 Catholic Church in Beijing in the nineteenth year of the Republic of China (1930), and the lead-printed *Tushanwan* 土山湾 version of the twenty-fourth year of the Republic of China (1935) in Shanghai. These editions appeared later, and whatever textual changes they may have made have had no effect on the discussion in this paper. The three editions covered in this paper were highly likely to be printed in the early Qing Dynasty. In addition, the Xujiahui Library has a block-printed copy of *Yunjian jingyitang* version, and the Jesuit Archives in Rome has three block-printed copies, the same as those in the French National Library (Chinois 7139/Chinois 7140).

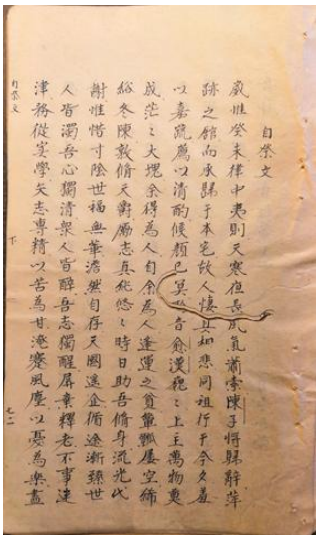
book was actually printed in 1644, because the Jiangnan 江南 region were still under the rule of the Southern Ming Dynasty until 1645, and books such as this one, which is directly dedicated to the Qing dynasty, "basically impossible to be printed and circulated". (Gong 2006; Sachsenmaier 2018, p. 50)

Zhang Xingyao stated at the beginning of "*Biantian lei* 辨天类" in *Tianjiao mingbian* that "Master Chen Ou'ting said", showing that this discussion is based on Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi*. When Huang Baijia made his comment, Zhu Zongyuan had already passed away for many years, so it can be seen that Huang Baijia's words must have appeared later than Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*. What needs to be compared now is the sequence between Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* and Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi*, and we do not know much about Chen Xun's date of birth and death. According to the German sinologist Dominic Sachsenmaier, Zhu Zongyuan's "*Zixu* [Self-Narration]自序" in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* says: "I used to debating in the beginning years, and therefore wrote the book *Da ke wen* [Answer to Guests' Questions], and now I am going to express some of the main truths again, taking the name of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* [Saving the World in a Nutshell]. What was discussed in detail in the previous book will be briefly mentioned here.（吾）始也好辩，为《答客问》行世。今标大义数端，曰《拯世略说》，大约详于彼者，则略于此". The word "*Shi* 始 [beginning]" implies that Zhu Zongyuan was a young man, and that he went through "an important period of transition" between the writing of the two books. It is assumed that Zhu Zongyuan did not complete his *Da Ke Wen* until 1640, and the word "Shunzhi 顺治" in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* indicates that the book was written in the Shunzhi reign. Zhu Zongyuan died in the reign of Shunzhi, so "what we can be sure of is that *Zhengshi lüeshuo* was completed before Zhu Zongyuan's serious illness in 1659, and it was probably printed quickly after its completion." In other words, Sachsenmaier believed that the book was written and printed between 1644 and 1659. The author believes that this statement is valid, but the time limit is perhaps too loose. According to Gong Yingyan 龚缨晏, "the book was written in the last year of the Ming Dynasty, but was printed in the early Qing Dynasty". (Gong 2006) This view may be closer to the reality.

The two-volume version of *Xingxue xingmi* includes the essay "*Ziji wen* 自祭文", which has sentences such as "Master Chen resigned from his teaching position and returned to his home in the year of *guiwei* 岁惟癸未……陈子将归，辞萍迹之馆，而承归于本宅", "My second wife passed away in lunar November of the year of *xinchou* 辛丑冬仲，继室复殒" and "The moon went down, the apes were roused, and my poor little son made it all the more mournful 哀哀幼子，月落猿惊". (Chen n.d.a, p. 72) Chen Xun had been in Wang Honghan's 王

宏翰 house to teach his two sons: Wang Zhaowu 王兆武 (courtesy name Shengfa 圣发) and Wang Zhaocheng 王兆成 (courtesy name Shengqi 圣启). (Wang 2020) Wang Honghan was born in 1648, if the year of *guiwei* in "Ziji Wen" refers to 1643, then when Chen Xun resigned, Wang Honghan had not yet been born, which is not reasonable. Therefore, here, the year of *guiwei* should be 1703, and the year of *xinchou* should be 1721. If the book *Xingxue xingmi* was written before *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, we may propose a most logical assumption: the latest possible publication year of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* was 1659, which is 62 years from 1721. Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi* was published in the same year as Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, but earlier. At this time, Chen Xun was fifteen years old, and his mind had just become mature, so this means that he was born in 1644 at the latest. According to this assumption, by 1721, Chen Xun was already at least 77 years old, which seems to be inconsistent with the situation of "second wife 继室" and "little son 幼子" in "*Ziji wen*". Therefore, it is unlikely that *Zhengshi lüeshuo* was written after *Xingxue xingmi*. In addition, Sun Zhimi, who wrote the preface of *Xingxue xingmi* and signed his name as "junior or younger schoolmate 教（眷）弟", was born in 1642. This can further prove that Chen Xun was much younger than Zhu Zongyuan, and the book of *Xingxue xingmi* should have been written later than *Zhengshi lüeshuo*.[2]





[2] It should be pointed out that Sun Zhimi composed the preface for Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi* in 1701, which means that the completion of the book should be no later than 1701. It brings up the question why the two-volume version include "*Ziji wen*", completed in 1721 by the earliest? One of the understandings is that the format should be taken into consideration, which is hand-written, with "Kangxi *xinsi*[the year of *xinsi* of Kangxi reign]", "Zhimi kaishi sunxiansheng bianzuan [edited by Sun Zhimi]" and "Jiusitang chaolu [transcribed by Jiusitang]" (fig.1). *Xingxue xingmi* compiled by Sun Zhimi may be published, but this published version has not been found yet. "*Ziji wen*" is unlikely to be included in the Sun-edited version, because Sun died in 1709, at least ten years before this essay was written. This article must have been later added to Sun's book and preserved in the Jiusitang version, which is the last article in the second volume (fig. 2).

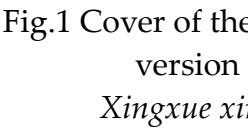


Fig.1 Cover of the two-volume version of *Xingxue xingmi*

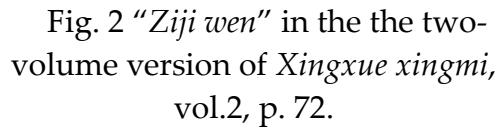


Fig. 2 "*Ziji wen*" in the the two-volume version of *Xingxue xingmi*, vol.2, p. 72.

Hence, Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* was the earliest book, and it is justifiable to regard it as the source of Huang Baijia's text. However, these Catholic documents are also very complicated in terms of the origin of their versions, which need to be sorted out and clarified. First of all, *Tianjiao mingbian* and *Xingxue xingmi*: as the contents of the two hand-written versions differ considerably, it is necessary to determine which text of *Xingxue xingmi* is the source of *Tianjiao mingbian*. A few excerpts of the texts are compared:[3]

Tianjiao mingbian: **气域**分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，近火者为热际。……水升仅到气之和际，则为雨为**露**。入于冷际，遂成霜雪。入冷再深，**则**为雹。……顾七政经星，性情不齐，有阻有悖**之势**。同度相值，则能阻其本效，使不得遂。(Standaert 2013, vol. 7, pp. 5-8)

One-volume Version of *Xingxue xingmi*: **气域**分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，近火者为热际。……水升仅到气之和际，则为雨为**露**。入于冷际，遂成霜雪。入冷再深，**则**为雹。……顾七政经星，性情不齐，有阻有悖**之势**，同度相值，则能阻其本效，使不得遂。(Chen n.d.b, no page number)

Two-volume Version of *Xingxue xingmi*: 界中分为三际，近地者为和际，中者为之冷际，近火者为之热际。……水升仅到气之和际，则为雨为**雾**。入于冷际，**则**遂成霜雪。入冷再深，**遂**成雹。……顾七政经星，性情不齐，有阻有悖，同度相值，则能阻其本效，使不得遂。(Chen n.d.a, vol.1, pp. 5-7)

It is not difficult to see that the texts of *Tianjiao mingbian* and the one-volume version of the *Xingxue xingmi* are basically the same. From the point of view of textual similarity, *Tianjiao mingbian* should have originated from the one-volume *Xingxue xingmi*.

Secondly, the relationship between Huang Baijia's comment and these Catholic documents, some texts are again extracted for textual comparison:

Comment by Huang Baijia: 气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**上**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚而风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**需**缓而广，非经数日，云气不成，

[3] In the textual comparisons here and below, the reader can determine the direction of the source flow between the texts based on the addition, deletion and alteration of Chinese words and phrases in the different versions, this task can only be reviewed and discerned in the Chinese context, and therefore these texts have not been translated into English.

故至冷际而结为霜雪者，常然也。

***Tianjiao mingbian*: 气域**分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**近火者**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚而风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**舒**缓而广，非经数日，云气不成，及其成雨，施被亦远。

One-volume Version of *Xingxue xingmi*: 气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**近火者**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚则风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……及其成雨，施被亦远。

Two-volume Version of *Xingxue xingmi*: 界中分为三际，近地者为和际，中**者**为之冷际，**近火者**为之热际。……火土并蒸，**则或先风而后雨，**或风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**舒**缓而广，**非越日不雨，雨亦广被也。**

French National Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* (1): 气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**近火者**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚则风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**需**缓而广，非经数日，云气不成，及其成雨，施被亦远。（Zhu n.d.a, pp. 53-6）

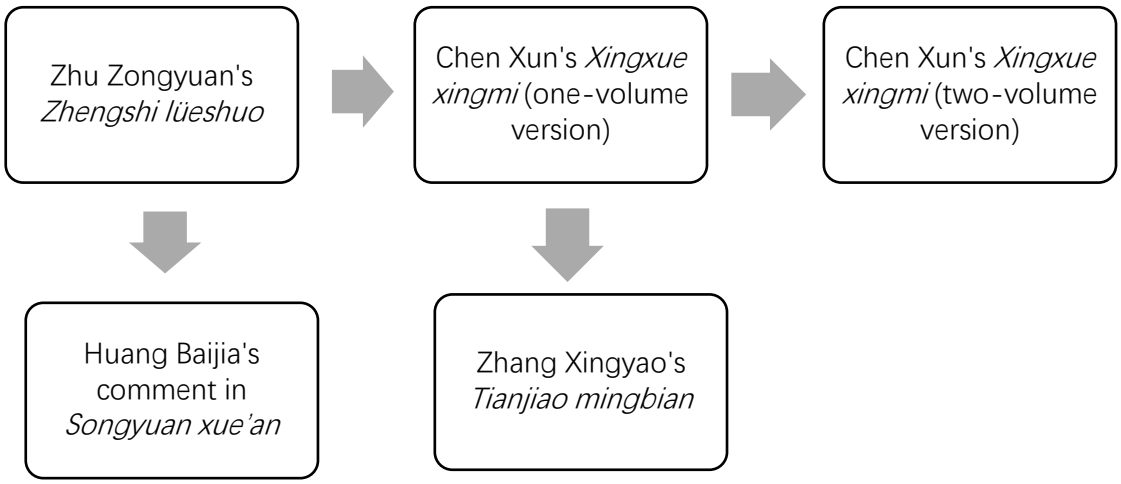
French National Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* (2): 气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**近火者**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚则风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**需**缓而广，非经数日，云气不成，及其成雨，施被亦远。（Zhu n.d.b, pp. 51-4）

Vatican Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*: 气域分为三际，近地者为和际，中为冷际，**近火者**为热际。……火土并蒸，**则或风止而继之以雨，或甚而风以散之，**或甚则风雨并作，总视其势之先后盛衰焉。……冬云**需**缓而广，非经数日，云气不成，及其成雨，施被亦远。（Zhang 2014, vol. 14, pp. 305-11）

Obviously, the two-volume *Xingxue xingmi* has the greatest differences from the other versions. In addition, it can also be seen that the comment of Huang Baijia is basically the same as that of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, while slightly different from *Tianjiao mingbian* and the one-volume *Xingxue xingmi*. For example, Huang Baijia's comment states that "冬云**需**缓而广", which is the same in all three versions of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*. While the text of this paragraph in the one-volume *Xingxue xingmi* is missing, the text in the two-volume *Xingxue xingmi* and *Tianjiao mingbian* is "冬云**舒**缓而广".

From this, we can judge that Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* should be

the reference source of Huang Baijia's comment. In addition, the relevant text in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* is also the source of the relevant text in Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi*. As far as this text is concerned, the origin and development between the above documents can be represented by the following diagram:



As a matter of fact, the text of the French National Library version Chinois 7141 is identical to that of the Vatican Library version, and there are minor textual differences between them and the other French National Library version Chinois 7139. With further comparison made, it can be judged that the direct source of reference for the Huang Baijia's comment should be the French National Library version Chinois 7141 or the Vatican Library version:

Comment by Huang Baijia	**French National Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* (Chinois 7139)**	**French National Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo* (Chinois 7141)**	**Vatican Library Version of *Zhengshi lüeshuo***
其有风而不雨者，火之升也，不受水迫，即**返**下土，为气遏抑，未获遽达，遂横奔动气而为风。	其有风而不雨者，火之升也，不受水迫，即**退**下土，为气遏抑，未获遽达，遂横奔动气而为风耳。	其有风而不雨者，火之升也，不受水迫，即**返**下土，为气遏抑，未获遽达，遂横奔动气而为风耳。	其有风而不雨者，火之升也，不受水迫，即**返**下土，为气遏抑，未获遽达，遂横奔动气而为风耳。
夏时炎烈，上升之势锐，**能**直入冷之最深处，故结而为雹；冬则上升之	夏时炎烈，上升之势，锐**然**直入冷之最深处，故结而为雹；冬则上升之	夏时炎烈，上升之势锐，**能**直入冷之最深处，故结而为雹；冬则上升之	夏时炎烈，上升之势，锐**能**直入冷之最深处，故结而为雹；冬则上升之

势缓，仅**及**冷际，遂为霜雪也。	势缓，仅**入**冷际，遂为霜雪也。	势缓，仅**及**冷际，遂为霜雪也。	势缓，仅**及**冷际，遂为霜雪也。

After clarifying the source of the text, it is logical to understand that Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, as one of the Chinese Catholic documents, has formed two channels of circulation after its publication, one is "within the Catholic Church" and the other is "outside the Catholic Church". The genealogy of its circulation and the impact it had in these two paths deserve to be explored in depth.

Zhu Zongyuan's work is based on Jesuits' Chinese Books

Zhu Zongyuan was an upper-middle-class scholar in Ningbo in the mid-17th century who played a pivotal role in bridging the European missionaries with the local scholarly and religious communities. (Sachsenmaier 2018, pp. 54-6) As discussed above, the relevant texts in Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* should be the direct source of Huang Baijia's comment. While Zhu Zongyuan's statement seems to be a synthesis of a few Catholic works by the Jesuits in the late Ming dynasty: Sabatino de Ursis' 熊三拔 (1575-1620) *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法, Francisco Furtado's 傅汎际 (1587-1653) *Huanyou quan* 寰有诠, and Giulio Aleni's 艾儒略 (1582-1653) *Kouduo richao* 口铎日抄.

Taixi shuifa was written in 1612, the year *renzi* of the Wanli reign 万历壬子年, and was published by Li Zhizao 李之藻 (1565-1630) in the first year of the Chongzhen reign 崇祯元年 and included in the *Tianxue chuhan* 天学初函. Firstly, we will compare some of the texts and sentences in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* with those in *Taixi shuifa*:

Zhengshi lüeshuo (Zhu n.d.b, pp. 51-4)	***Taixi shuifa***
若盛夏炎热，水气干，不能升，火土独上，势重则久凝，**为孛为彗**。势轻则奔散，而为流星焉。火既破气而出，成为雷霆，若火已尽，则不复风。……土自独上，奔散之际，则成**黄霾昼晦**。	气受三行，如云气上升，激成雷电，有火分也。**阴霾昼晦，黄雾四塞**，有土分也。……积火所然，土石为烬，复乘气出，共成炎上。隔于云雨，郁为雷霆，升于晶明，上成**彗孛**。(de Ursis 1965, vol. 3, pp. 1638-9)
故登高山之巅，则雷雨风云，咸出其下。	**每有高山之上，俯瞰云雨，皆在其下，下视震雷，如水发沤也。**(de Ursis 1965, vol. 3, pp. 1657-8)

火在于中，为气水所束，不得出走，**则殷殷有声。及于得路，破裂而走，遂成大响，而电正其光之奔飞者也。若土之升，亦在气中，为奔炎所炼，遂成霹雳楔，同电降地，即拾则可得之。**入土久，仍化为土矣。	阴云逼迫，既不相容，火土之势，上下不得，亦无就灭之理，**则奋迅决发，激为雷霆。是其破裂之声，电是火光，火迸上腾，土经火炼，凝聚成质。质降于地，是为劈历之楔矣。**……其土势太盛者，有声有迹，下及于地，或成落星之石，与劈历同理焉。若更精更厚，结聚不散，附于火际，即成**彗孛**。(de Ursis 1965, vol. 3, pp. 1661-3)

It can be seen that a number of discussions in *Zhengshi lüeshuo* are a synthesis and paraphrase of *Taixi shuifa*. Zhu Zongyuan integrated the relevant contents of *Taixi shuifa*, which can be proved by the use of same wording, such as "为孛为彗", "黄霾昼晦", "登高山之巅" and "遂成霹雳楔".

In addition to *Taixi shuifa*, Zhu Zongyuan should also refer to and draw on *Huanyou quan*. It is a book translated by Francisco Furtado, orated by Li Zhizao, who also wrote its preface, and also published in the first year of Chongzhen reign (1628). (Xu 2010, p. 147) *Zhengshi lüeshuo* said that: "These weather changes are formed naturally. The reason behind them is the will of the Lord of Heaven. The sun shines on the earth and is able to attract the four elements of the earth. The moon is likewise able to attract the four elements of the earth… The sun, the moon, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn can all have an effect on the earth, and their effects are different, and they have different effects at different locations. Therefore astronomers are able to project the weather conditions of the year based on the relative positions of the above celestial bodies and the Earth 种种变化，悉出自然，而其所从，咸因天德。日光所照，能吸引下地之四元，惟月亦然。……诸星之德，各能施效。顾七政经星，性情不齐，有阻有悖之势，同度相值，则能阻其本效，使不得遂。故天文之家，推此年之躔度，即可知此年之水旱". This passage actually reflects a kind of astrology in Europe at that time, which believed that meteorological changes were influenced by the operation of the *qizheng* 七政, and some scholars named it "astrometeorology". (Huang 2018, p. 81; Han 2018, pp. 19-37) *Huanyou quan* has a systematic introduction to this school of knowledge. Comparing the statements of *Huanyou quan* and *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, the author believes that the former should be the source of the latter. *Huanyou quan* states:

> 日月星施效，各有不同，乃知雨旸寒燠之候，可以出作入息，故云司备候占。(Furtado 1628, vol. 1, pp. 37-8)

> 论下域之体，其顺动之利，义固有二：一为各受天德所施，二为凡物因性之情，各所自有之动也。(Furtado 1628, vol. 2, p. 41)

> 又按，笃禄谋及占星之说，咸谓七政之情，自分冷热，间有感下土之气者。(Furtado 1628, vol. 3, pp. 7-8)
>
> 亚利论形物之变化悉繇天运而来，故穷理者具论天施下域者何如……庶星或出或入，或远或近，或离或合，皆能感召风雨。(Furtado 1628, vol. 3, p. 24)
>
> 一说，谓天施俱出固然之理。今有一星，能梗他星，阻其本效。其在此星，虽出偶然，然会通天体，总之皆固然者。(Furtado 1628, vol. 3, p. 36)

In this citation, "笃禄谋[Dulumou]" refers to Claudius Ptolemaeus (*ca.* 90-168), and "亚利[Yali]" is Aristotle (384-322 BC). In addition to the above quotation, there is another detail that shows that *Zhengshi lüeshuo* should have borrowed from *Huanyou quan*. According to Zhu Zongyuan: "From the earth up to the heaven, the height is two hundred and sixty *li* or so, this is the gas field 自地而上，二百六十里有奇，为气域". The author examined the Catholic literature in the late Ming Dynasty, including *Qiankun tiyi* 乾坤体义 by Matteo Ricci 利玛窦 (1552-1610), *Taixi shuifa* by Sabatino de Ursis, *Huanyou quan* by Francisco Furtado, *Kongji gezhi* 空际格致 and *Huanyu shimo* 寰宇始末 by Alfonso Vagnoni 高一志 (1566-1640), and found that only *Huanyou quan*, *Kongji gezhi* and *Huanyu shimo* introduced the height of the atmosphere. *Huanyou quan* stated: "According to astronomy, the atmosphere is more than 260 *li* thick 论气行，循天文学，其厚二百六十余里." (Furtado 1628, vol. 6, p. 30) *Kongji gezhi* said: "The atmosphere is about 250 *li* thick 气之厚……约有二百五十里." (Vagnoni 1633, vol. 1, pp. 17-8) *Huanyu shimo* stated: "The atmosphere is a total of 250 *li* thick 气……厚共二百五十余里." (Vagnoni 1637, vol. 1, p.16) Zhu Zongyuan's statement coincides with *Huanyou quan*, which can prove that *Huanyou quan* should be one of the sources of Zhu Zongyuan's synthesis of western learning.

In addition, the author believes that Zhu Zongyuan may have also referred to Giulio Aleni's *Kouduo richao* and *Wushi yanyu* 五十言余. The circumstances in which *Kouduo richao* were written and published are more complicated. According to Xiao Qinghe 肖清和, the first four volumes of the *Kouduo richao* were printed around 1633, and the entire eight-volume work was printed around 1640 or later. Erik Zürcher (1928-2008), on the other hand, suggested that the entire eight-volume edition of the *Kouduo richao* was printed between 1645 and 1646. However, Zürcher also pointed out that the book was probably an "internal publication" of the Catholics. The circumstances of its "internal" circulation and publication could not be known at present. (Xiao 2015, pp. 141-2) In the eighth volume of *Kouduo richao*, there are the entries "Answering no one has ever seen a dragon 答龙之为物目所未见" and "Answering the cause of

lightning 答雷电之义", which say:

> 其香问曰：敝邦之云致雨也，必以龙，未知贵邦亦同此否？先生曰：中邦之龙，可得而见乎？抑徒出之载籍传闻也？……曰：然则雨之致也如之何？先生曰：雨之致详载他篇，兹不复赘。但余向航海东来，时方晴朗，忽见阴云一簇，自天而下，至于海面。俄超腾而上，顷则散为雨矣。于时敝友推论，以为旋风吹云而下，因吸水气，始散而为雨。此余目睹甚明且真，并未见所谓龙者，未敢如中邦之神明其说也。
>
> 其香曰：请问雷电之说。先生曰：雷之为物也，乃空中四元行所渐结而成。惟受密云包裹，奋不得出，遂殷殷有声。一遇云薄之处，则迸击而下，遇物而震碎矣。电则结而未成，故只闪铄有光，而不能有声，且亦不能下击也。
>
> 其香曰：雷之击物也，或出于偶。若人之被震而死，岂出于偶然者乎？先生曰：雷虽无情之物，然非上主所命，亦不能妄击一人。即如水火皆无情之物，然其焚人、溺人也，非有上主允命不可。(Aleni 1631, vol. 8, pp. 13-4)

Apart from analyzing the reasons for the formation of cloud and rain, *Zhengshi lüeshuo* also criticizes the popular concept in China of "dragons create clouds and rain 龙致云雨", and many of its words and phrases are very close to those in the *Kouduo richao*. In criticizing "dragons create clouds and rain 龙致云雨", Zhu Zongyuan said: "Nowadays, people misunderstand that dragons are the reason why clouds and rain are created 今人误解云从龙之说，妄疑云雨系彼所致". In the discussion of "thunder and lightning killing people 雷电击人", Zhu Zongyuan wrote: "One dies from disease, or dies from killing and wounding, or dies from water flooding or fire burning.....How can we say that if one dies from lightning and thunder is more evil than those die from flooding or fire? Every one's birth and death are out of the Lord of Heaven 或死于疾病，或死于杀伤，则亦有水淹而死者，火焚而死者。……岂必死于雷者，恶于水火哉？若人之死生，不拘何等，俱出天主之命". The similarities of these words and meanings with *Kouduo richao* could prove that Aleni's book is one of the references of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*.

The discourse in Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* on thunder and lightning striking people is also similar to that in another work by Giulio Aleni, *Wushi yanyu*. (Aleni 1645, p. 11) Both Aleni and Zhu Zongyuan believed that human's life and death are all controlled by God. However, Aleni also criticizes the concept of "retribution 报应" in traditional Chinese society, which was downplayed by Zhu Zongyuan in his book. Aleni's book was first published in 1645, around the same time as Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, but it cannot be concluded that the book had not been circulated before publication. The title

page of *Wushi yanyu* reads: "According to the rules of the Church, all books written and translated must be proofread three times before they can be published. This book is written by Giulio Aleni, proofread by Emmanuel Diaz Junior, Francisco Furtado and Gaspard Ferreria, and proved by the Superior Francisco Furtado 遵教规，凡译经典、著书，必三次看详，方允付梓。兹并镌订阅姓氏于后：极西耶稣会士艾儒略撰，阳玛诺、傅汎际、费奇规仝订，司会傅汎际准梓". It can be seen that the book must have been printed later than the time of completion. Emmanuel Diaz Junior (1574-1659) had a close relationship with Zhu Zongyuan. (M. 2002) In 1640, Emmanuel Diaz's translation of *Qingshi jinshu* 轻世金书 was first published, and Zhu Zongyuan, "a disciple in Ningbo", edited it. In 1642, Diaz wrote *Tianzhu shengjiao shijie zhiquan* 天主圣教十诫直诠, for which Zhu Zongyuan wrote the preface, and the Jesuits who took part in the proofreading of the book included Gaspard Ferreria (1571-1649), Giulio Aleni and António de Gouvea 何大化 (1592-1677). (Diaz n.d., vol. 1, p. 1; Diaz 1642, preface; Xu 2010, pp. 37, 133; Fang 1988, pp. 94-5) It can be seen that there is a great deal of overlap between the groups that wrote and revised *Wushi yanyu* and *Tianzhu shengjiao shijie zhiquan*. Sachsenmaier has pointed out that it is very likely that Zhu Zongyuan had already read the Christian literature collected by Catholics in his hometown when he was very young, and that after his baptism, he also kept close contact with several European missionaries. (Sachsenmaier 2018, p. 41) Therefore, it is reasonable that Zhu Zongyuan had read Aleni's *Wushi yanyu* when writing *Zhengshi lüeshuo*. Nevertheless, limited to the historical sources, it is difficult to make an assertive conclusion. The interactions between the Catholic figures and the Christian texts during the Ming and Qing dynasties may have been more complicated than currently discovered.

Conclusion and significance

The above analysis provides us with a concrete case, from which we can see the form and path of the western meteorological knowledge introduced into China since the end of the Ming Dynasty, which was circulated and integrated into Chinese knowledge among the Chinese literati class (including both Catholics and non-Catholics). The writings by foreign Jesuits, such as Sabatino de Ursis' *Taixi shuifa*, Francisco Furtado's *Huanyou quan*, and Giulio Aleni's *Kouduo richao*, were integrated and synthesized into a new text by the Chinese Catholic scholar Zhu Zongyuan. Huang Baijia's comment in *Songyuan xue'an* neither came directly from the books of western missionaries in the Ming and Qing dynasties, nor was it his own synthesis of western sayings, but derived directly from Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*. However, it is worth noting that Huang Baijia said in the comment that "modern westerners discussed

these topics very detailed 近代西人之说甚详" but kept silent about Zhu Zongyuan and his book. This gesture may imply that in Huang Baijia's view, this knowledge did not belong to the traditional Chinese knowledge system, and what is important is not the direct source of the quotation, but the fact that this knowledge came from "modern westerners".

Equally noteworthy is the different attitudes of the Catholic and non-Catholic scholars towards western learning and western religion. For the western meteorological knowledge introduced since the end of the Ming Dynasty, Huang Baijia seems to have been inclined to accept it. Commenting on Zhang Zai's *Zhengmeng*, he said: "The development of calendars is becoming more and more sophisticated… the results can be based on scientific calculations and cannot be described in a generalized way 历法一道，至今愈加精密……灼然可见可推，非可将虚话臆度也。" (Huang 1986, p. 681) The so-called "The development of calendars is becoming more and more sophisticated 历法一道，至今愈加精密" describes the introduction of the western knowledge of astronomy and mathematics 历算. (Yang 2001) The case discussed in this paper also shows that, in the opinion of Huang Baijia, the intellectual level of the explanation of meteorological changes, "the theories of modern westerners 西人之说" seemed to be more superior to the traditional "*yin-yang* theory of sensuality 阴阳二气交互感应说".

The most significant difference between the Huang Baijia's comment in question and its intellectual source, *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, is that Huang Baijia rejected all interpretations involving Catholic theology altogether to rationalize astronomical and meteorological changes. Huang Baijia deleted two crucial sentences in Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo*: "The weather changes, God decides it 而其所从，咸因天德" and "These are the truths between heaven and earth. Only the God of Heaven who made the heaven and the earth can change them 兹皆天地固然之理矣。惟制造天地之主，可以易固然之运". However, Zhu Zongyuan said in his self-narration of *Zhengshi lüeshuo*: "When I read Catholic books, I can't help but jump for joy and say, The Way is here! The Way is here! 及睹天学诸书，始不禁跃然起曰：道在是！道在是！" (Zhu n.d.a, pp. 2-3) Obviously, Zhu Zongyuan wrote *Zhengshi lüeshuo* as well as *Da Ke Wen* for the purposes of "promote the truth 宏道". The westerners he met were "pure in virtue" and "erudite in learning", which enabled him to be convinced of "the truth". This means that in Zhu Zongyuan's understanding, "western learning" was subordinate to "western religion".

Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi* and Zhang Xingyao's *Tianjiao mingbian* are also similar to *Zhengshi lüeshuo*, and both of them can be referred to work of

apologetics, defending the Catholic religion. All of these works attempted to use "western learning" as a tool for "studying things and investigating truths 格物穷理" to achieve the purpose of "warding off evil spirits 辟邪", and their so-called targets of criticism were the "God of rain 雨师", "God of wind 风伯", "God of thunder 雷公", "Goddess of lightening 电母" and other beliefs in traditional Chinese society. These purposes are not mentioned at all in Huang Baijia's text, and he only described the "western learning", without criticizing the "Chinese customs". The above discussion also shows that these apologetic works are often related to each other, but the later ones also modified the contents. These documents formed their own genealogy in the process of copying and transmission. However, it is difficult to clearly distinguish the continuity between the various texts and versions, which requires specific comparisons and analyses.

Judging from the findings of this case study, a couple of significances could be further elaborated. Firstly, from the perspective of the relationship between Chinese and western cultures, Huang Baijia's approach of "taking western learning and abandoning western religion" reflects some profound significance in the process of contact and integration of Chinese and western cultures in the early modern era. Xu Haisong 徐海松 pointed out that Huang Zongxi and Huang Baijia had direct contacts with European Jesuits. Huang Zongxi was friends with Adam Schall 汤若望 (1591-1666) and Jacques Rho 罗雅谷 (1593-1638), and he "acquired block-printed and hand-written books on astronomy and mathematics from the westerners exhaustively 得其各种抄刻本历书极备". From 1687 to 1691, during the revision of the Ming History 明史 in Beijing, Huang Baijia was in contact with Ferdinand Verbiest 南怀仁 (1623-1688), Thomas Pereira 徐日昇 (1645-1708), Antoine Thomas 安多 (1644-1709), Giandomeniclo Gabiani 毕嘉 (1623-1694), and Joachim Bouvet 白晋 (1656-1730), and he made field trips to the observatories that housed western astronomical instruments. (Xu 2005) Gong Yingyan, by analyzing the interpersonal relations of the scholar community in eastern Zhejiang province in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, pointed out that "Huang Zongxi should have been aware of the Catholics in eastern Zhejiang, such as Zhu Zongyuan, but strangely enough, there is no mention of Zhang Nengxin 张能信, much less of the Catholics, such as Zhu Zongyuan, in the writings of Liu Zongzhou 刘宗周 and Huang Zongxi." Huang Zongxi and his son were from Yuyao 余姚 of Shaoxing 绍兴, and Zhu Zongyuan was from 鄞县 Yinxian of Ningbo 宁波, Yuyao and Yinxian are a hundred *li* apart. Zhu Zongyuan's Catholic friend, Zhang Nengxin (birth and death date unknown), was a disciple of Liu Zongzhou (1578-1645), along with Huang Zongxi. (Gong 2006) This

article shows that Huang Baijia, in his continuation of his father's unfinished work, quoted and edited Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* but anonymized the authorship, a phenomenon that at first glance seems very "strange" indeed. Huang Baijia and his father all had contacts with western missionaries, studied the western calendar and acknowledged the advantages of western learning. Therefore, the reason for Huang Baijia to keep Zhu Zongyuan and his book in obscure, should not be in the "western learning" but in the "western religion".

Regarding the relationship between western learning and western religion in the Ming and Qing dynasties, previous scholars have long made profound observations and discourses. Li Tiangang 李天纲 pointed out that Huang Zongxi disliked the western religion, but attached great importance to the rational knowledge in western learning. What is more noteworthy is the way Chinese scholars adopted western learning. Qian Daxin 钱大昕 (1728-1804), a master of *puxue* 朴学 in the Qianlong-Jiaqing period, wrote to Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724-1777), vehemently accusing Jiang Yong 江永 (1681-1762) of not being as good as Mei Wending 梅文鼎 (1633-1721), because Mei Wending was "able to use western learning", while Jiang Yong was "used by westerners". In other words, Jiang Yong was "westernized 西化" while Mei Wending could "master westernizing 化西". (Li 2007, pp. 102-12) Elman points out that before the nineteenth century, Chinese scholars had a "selective" interest in western knowledge such as astronomy, calendar, and observatory, which usually rejecting Christian theology, which was declining even back in Europe. In the eyes of the Chinese scholars, the claims of the Jesuits about the power of God were unacceptable as heresy. (Elman 2005, pp. 107, 111) Xie Guozhen 谢国桢 (1901-1982) commented that the fact that the scholars of the Ming and Qing dynasties "studied the western learnings but did not accept its religion", "shows that our scholars were able to adopt the strengths of all and discard their shortcomings." (Xie 1982, p. 6) This paper explores a specific case of the Sinicization of western learning during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and may perhaps provide a micro evidence of the assertions of the above scholars.

Secondly, from the perspective of global history, taking Zhu Zongyuan as a case study, Sachsenmaier explored the involvement of a seventeenth-century Catholic scholar in the process of globalization, and the title of his book is "Global Entanglements of a Man Who Never Traveled: A Seventeenth-Century Chinese Christian and His Conflicted Worlds". This paper is not going to give a lengthy introduction to the book, but only to point out a few main thesis therein. As Zhu Zongyuan was a pivotal figure between the European missionary community and the local believers in Ningbo, where was a center of book publishing at the time, his writings have the dual attribute of being part

of the global Catholic literature on the one hand, and the Chinese book market during the Ming and Qing dynasties on the other, as Sachsenmaier has repeatedly emphasized. (Sachsenmaier 2018, pp. 44-6) He adopts a global perspective in analyzing Zhu Zongyuan, an upper-middle-class scholar, and his discussion focuses mainly on the "intra-Catholic" sphere. This paper shows that Zhu Zongyuan's works did circulate in the wider "extra-Catholic" book market, and entered mainstream Chinese scholarship through the editing of important figures like Huang Baijia. It is well known that Huang Zongxi and his son's *Songyuan xue'an* is an important work in the history of Chinese scholarship. After the death of Huang Zongxi and his son, the book was edited by Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755), Wang Zicai 王梓材 (1792-1851), and Feng Yunhao 冯云濠 (1807-1855) and other generations of scholars. It was only then that the book was finally written and finalized, divided into one hundred volumes, and published in 1838. At this time, 83 years have passed since the death of Quan Zuwang, 143 years have passed since the death of Huang Zongxi. (Huang 1986, pp. 1-7) This process can be said to be long and tortuous. However, after all, there were generations of scholars who applied importance to this work and tried to finalize and circulate it. In contrast, traditional scholars have paid little attention to the other six types of "intra-Catholic" literature discussed in this article. The three versions of Zhu Zongyuan's *Zhengshi lüeshuo* are collected in the French National Library and the Vatican Library; The two versions of Chen Xun's *Xingxue xingmi* and Zhang Xingyao's *Tianjiao mingbian* are in the Xujiahui Library. The collection and preservation of these documents are inseparable from the Catholic missionaries, and in a certain sense, they can be called "extra-territorial related Chinese books".[4] If there is no intentional collection of Christian literature by the Catholic missionaries, or if the above literature is not properly preserved in libraries at home and abroad, the interpretation of the meteorological texts by scholars on Huang Baijia may stuck at subjective interpretations, and there may be no trace of "this piece of history of the global travel of knowledge". In other words, due to the unequal power of historical discourse between Huang Baijia and Zhu Zongyuan, it is easy to lead to the absence of key links in the history of knowledge and academia. Without such key links, the understanding and interpretation of history by later generations will also be very different. Whether the introduction of western learning into China during the Ming and Qing dynasties, or the collection of Christian literature in libraries all over the world, they are all concrete manifestations of a globalized history, which are all closely related to the Jesuits, a Catholic religious order with global characteristics.

[4] Strictly speaking, Xujiahui Library is geographically located in China, and the documents it contains cannot be called "extraterritorial". The point being made here is that it is doubtful whether these documents would have survived to this day if it were not for the efforts of "extraterritorial figures".

(Standaert 2012, pp. 47-96) From this point of view, the Jesuits' participation in the establishment of book collection system with global characteristics provided the basis for the "global involvement" of the Catholic scholar Zhu Zongyuan. Its implications went beyond the temporal limitations of the seventeenth century into a longer historical period. On the other hand, the flip side is also true: Zhu Zongyuan's case provides an important example of the depth of Jesuit involvement in the scholarly integration across the globe.

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The Types of Popular Religions in China and Their Internal Relationships

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Abstract: There are many types of popular religions in China, and there is an internal logical structural relationship between them. From the perspective of social cooperation and its equilibriums, folk beliefs originate from specific social cooperation ethics or functional expressions of local equilibriums, and do not deliberately construct the "overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics". Here, "rampant worship" (淫祀) refers to the superabundance of functional beliefs. While both the universal popular god beliefs and folk sects aim to cover all types of social cooperation ethics and clearly have construction of "overall equilibrium", the universal popular gods have an affinity with the three mainstream religions, and the "horizontal cooperation ethics" is regarded as its superior ethics, so that it can further build "pluralistic unity" (多元一体) religious pattern with the three mainstream religions; at the same time folk religious sects are institutional religions that are heterogeneous to mainstream religions and have been subjected to continuous and severe official suppression.

Keywords: Social Cooperation, Popular Religion, Folk Belief, Rampant Worship, Universal Popular God, Folk Religious Sect

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Introduction: Problems and Methods

1. Problem Statement

Unlike the single religious structure (or religious form) of Western society, the religious structure of Chinese society is characterized as "pluralism and harmony"（多元通和）, "harmony of the three religions"（三教圆融） or "pluralistic unity"（多元一体）. [1]In addition to the three mainstream orthodox religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism [2], China also has many types of popular religions (or folk religions) and countless folk gods. In this regard, Mr. Ma Xisha once made a brilliant statement: "China not only has a history of Taoism and Buddhism, but also a history of the development of folk religions that is unpredictable, confusing, intricate and long-standing…… In terms of religious significance, there is no insurmountable trench between folk religions and orthodox religions." (Ma and Han 2004, p.2)

Western scholars have a process of understanding Chinese popular religion. Early Western scholars who adopted the classification framework of classical religious studies believed that Chinese folk beliefs did not have complete classics and gods, and rituals did not manifest as church congregational worship, so they could not be regarded as religions. Later, influenced by the analysis of the relationship between classical texts and rituals by Sinologist De Groot, especially impacted by the functionalism since the 20th century, social anthropologists who have been engaged in the study of Chinese folk culture since the 1960s all agreed that Chinese folk beliefs and worship rituals can be regarded as a complete religious system, constituting a "folk religion" or "popular religion" (Wang 2005, pp.135-140).

In addition, Chinese popular religion is complex and has many types within it, so Chinese and Western scholars have different definitions of Chinese popular religion. The "folk religion" in China mainland academia usually refers to various folk religious sects or schools, which are also called "folk sects (schools)" or "folk secret religions" (Ma 2004, pp.127-138). While "folk religion" or "popular religion" used by Western and Hong Kong and Taiwan scholars includes both the "folk religion" of mainland academia and various folk worship and sacrificial rituals. The two different definitions reflect the complexity of China's popular religious forms and the difficulty of studying them. But no matter which definition is used, the research perspective is

[1] For "pluralism and harmony", we can refer to Mou (2018). "Pluralistic unity" is usually in the sense of ethnicity (Fei 2003). We use it in the field of religion, meaning a religious pattern that integrates Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and diverse popular religions.

[2] There is some debate in the academic community as to whether Confucianism is a religion. This article regards Confucianism as an official religion that combines politics and religion (Ren 1999, pp.1-7).

obviously influenced by Robert Redfield's theoretical paradigm of the relationship between "great traditions" and "small traditions" (Redfield 1956), and tends to treat popular religion as a small tradition, which is the daily belief of local society and folk people (Feuchtwang 2001; Jin 2002, 2020; Zhang 2016; Li 2017). Therefore, related research focuses on the relationship between popular religion and "great traditions", social and cultural analysis of popular religion, popular religion and society in regional history, popular religion and modernization theory, etc. (Wang 2005, pp.140-160)

However, in Chinese society, some popular religions have long existed in all social classes, without distinguishing between urban and rural areas, elites and the lower classes. They are no longer "small traditions" in the general sense. For example, the beliefs in Guandi (Guan Yu,关帝/关羽) and Mazu（妈祖）, recognized and supported by the official and mainstream three religions, are national worship that transcends local and regional levels. Of course, more popular religions are denounced by the official and elite classes as "rampant worship" or "rampant temples." In particular, the official authorities of all dynasties have spared no effort to severely suppress folk sects. Therefore, different types of popular religions have individual connections with mainstream society (and orthodox religions). It is difficult to explain effectively by simply appealing to great and small traditions.

In fact, as far as China's "great tradition" is concerned, the three mainstream religions have formed a religious pattern of "three religions in harmony" in the long-term competition and integration, and the three mainstream religions have also been constantly absorbing some gods from popular religions. Therefore, when studying popular religions and their relationship with mainstream religions, we should also fully consider the construction and evolution of China's unique and complex overall religious pattern. In this way, we raise some important questions: Why can various types of popular religions exist for a long time in Chinese society when the three mainstream religions already exist and have achieved the pattern of "three religions in harmony"? What is the internal logic of the emergence and development of various types of popular religions? Why do the official and mainstream religions have very different attitudes towards different types of popular religions? And do various types of popular religions have different impacts on the construction and development of China's overall religious pattern?

2. Research methods and preliminary applications

We have previously used modern economics to try to develop analytical

tools of "social cooperation" and "social cooperation ethics" for religious sociology research (Peng 2016, pp.282-319). [3]With the help of this tool, we have attempted to explain how the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism formed their own dominant ethics in the long-term competition and integration, and constructed the pattern of "three religions in harmony". That is, the dominant ethics of Confucianism is "intergenerational cooperation" (filial piety and teacher's virtue), "vertical cooperation" (loyalty) and "individual self-cooperation" from a collective perspective (becoming a saint and glorifying the ancestors); Taoism is "man-nature cooperation" (Taoist rites and praying for blessings), and Buddhism is "individual self-cooperation" from an individual perspective (becoming a Buddha and Nirvana) (Peng 2018, 2019, 2022). As a result, Chinese society during the Tang and Song dynasties formed a "menu-style" cooperation ethics provided by the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and under official Confucianism's organization and leadership, the dominant ethics of the three religions were constructed into "the overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics" in the form of "three religions in harmony". That is, the so-called "Confucianism governs the world, Taoism governs the body, and Buddhism governs the mind".

We have also discussed the inevitability and internal logic in forming the beliefs of Guan Yu（关羽） and Mazu（妈祖） since the Tang dynasty and especially Song dynasties. That is, the two beliefs, formed to adapt to the needs of Chinese society and to integrate the superior ethics of the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, are simple or low-cost beliefs that can cover all social cooperation ethics, including the universal "horizontal cooperation ethics", and then are symbol of faith that can simultaneously express the individual well-being and the collective well-being (or collective rationality) of local communities, groups, and countries[4]. The potential for

[3] In short, from the perspective of social cooperation (ethics), human activities include several types of social cooperation of synchronicity and diachronicity, namely, man-nature cooperation, intergenerational cooperation, vertical cooperation, horizontal cooperation and individual self-cooperation. In a social cooperation community, these types of social cooperation will reach "the overall equilibrium of social cooperation" due to the existence of transaction costs (transaction costs), that is, to obtain Pareto Optimality or social optimality, which is reflected in the overall system and form of society. Here, the meaning and function of religion is to provide ethical interpretation and support for "social cooperation and its overall equilibrium" to reduce transaction costs in various social cooperation and stabilize the overall equilibrium.

[4] As collective well-being or collective rationality, group well-being refers to the "partial equilibrium of social cooperation" in the sense of social systems (social organizations) such as marriage, family, economy, and politics, rather than the "overall equilibrium" of the overall society; local well-being refers to the "overall equilibrium of social cooperation" in the local area or community, but compared with the "overall equilibrium" at the national level (national well-being), the "overall equilibrium" of the local area and community is still a "partial equilibrium" in the sense of geographical space.

building a universal "horizontal cooperation ethics" is the decisive factor for Guan Yu and Mazu to develop from community gods to national beliefs. Therefore, the "horizontal cooperation ethics" is ultimately regarded as their superior ethics. Therefore, since the Song Dynasty, on the basis of the "three religions in harmony", Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and diverse popular religions have provided Chinese society with a more complete "menu-style" cooperation ethics and jointly built a "pluralistic unity" religious pattern (Peng 2020a, 2020b).

However, besides the popular belief in Guandi and Mazu, other types of popular religions have long existed in Chinese society. There are countless folk worships and sacrificial rituals for gods and goddesses, as well as a variety of folk sects (schools), most of which are denounced by official and mainstream religions as "rampant worship", "rampant temples" or "cults". Therefore, from the perspective of social cooperation and its equilibrium, this article continues to try to explore: What are the reasons for so many types of popular religions' long-time existence and evolutionary logic in China's society? What are their internal differences? How do these differences affect their relationship with official and mainstream religions, and then determine their various status in the overall religious landscape of China?

It should be noted that, based on the perspective of social cooperation ethics, the popular religion in this article refers to various types of folk beliefs and folk denominations (sects), mainly including: (1) Folk beliefs in the general sense, mainly various folk deity worship and worship rituals, among which worship rituals also include the worship of wizards or witchcraft rituals. (2) Folk denominations (sects), which are equivalent to the "folk religion" in mainland academia. (3) since popular belief in universal gods is a special type of folk deity worship, we list it separately. "universal gods" means that individual gods have multiple or even all types of social cooperation ethical functions at the same time, which distinguishes them from general folk gods with only a single or specific function. "universal gods" are also called "general gods" or "almighty gods", but they are not "supreme gods".

Part I: Folk Beliefs from the Perspective of Social Cooperation

1. The Origin of Folk Beliefs

Primitive religions generally include various types of nature worship, ghost worship, fertility worship, ancestor worship and totem worship (Mou and Zhang 2007, p.3). It is not difficult to see that various primitive worships focus on "man-nature cooperation ethics", "intergenerational cooperation ethics" or both, which correspond exactly to the two types of most obvious

social cooperation and their (overall) equilibriums in primitive society.

Later, as the scale and scope of the social community continued to expand, the types of social cooperation and the overall equilibrium in the community continued to enrich, and the corresponding religious and sacrificial systems should also be developed and enriched. By the Zhou Dynasty, the early religious and sacrificial systems had reached a considerable height after a long period of development and sedimentation. Later, Confucianism systematically sorted, inherited and developed them, so Confucianism was acknowledged as the official religion in Han dynasty. Since then, the overall structure and principles of the official worship system (or sacrifice ceremony) of successive dynasties have not changed much, but only have some adjustments to the specific content and form (Li 1999).

However, the official Confucian worship (deity) system focuses on the "vertical cooperation ethics" and "intergenerational cooperation ethics", and its "individual self-cooperation" also tends to be collective, which leaves Taoism and Buddhism with a huge space for development. In the end, Taoism and Buddhism formed their own superior ethics in "man-nature cooperation" and "individual self-cooperation" from an individual perspective. Therefore, the official and mainstream society during the Tang and Song dynasties constructed the "overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics" based on the respective dominant ethics of the three religions. This is the "harmony of the three religions".

The three mainstream religions provide a relatively complete "menu-style" cooperative ethics and achieve the "overall equilibrium" construction of the "harmony of the three religions", which is obviously conducive to the stability of the "great unification" social structure. However, with the stability of the great unification, the three mainstream religions and their "harmony of the three religions" could not satisfied the growing social cooperation ethics needs of the people.

First, with the development of the "great unification" society and economy, the universal "horizontal cooperation" that transcends local and blood relationship has become increasingly prominent, but the three religions have all neglected the "horizontal cooperation ethics". Second, with the enrichment of social cooperation types and the prominence of individual consciousness, the "individual self-cooperation" of Confucianism and Buddhism is increasingly unable to meet people's increasingly diverse demands for individual well-being in reality. Third, with the increasing importance of non-blood cooperation, not only does the connotation of "regional well-being" need to be updated, but the rise of new groups such as non-blood and cross-regional

business and military has also pushed up people's strong demands for emerging "group well-being". However, the "overall equilibrium" construction of "harmony of the three religions" often focuses on "national well-being" and cannot effectively promote (non-blood) regional well-being and group well-being. In this regard, Weber once argued: "China's official national ceremonies, like other countries' ones, are held only for the benefit of the whole community; while ancestor worship is for the benefit of the clan. Both have nothing to do with personal interests. ... This is the work done by the educated intellectual class, who completely ignore the typical religious needs of the common people." (Weber 2010, p.237).

In addition, although the supreme gods of the three mainstream religions all metaphysically govern all social cooperation ethics and overall equilibrium interpretation, their role are not so clear in demonstrating actual ethical functions, and there is a certain gap between them and the general public. This is true for the metaphysical supreme god "Heaven" or "God" of Confucianism, the "Tao" of Taoism and its supreme god embodied as the "Three Pure Deities" （三清神）, and the highest god "Buddha" of Buddhism and its philosophy of "emptiness". Therefore, the three religions need to construct a relatively open functional system of gods to better explain to believers the various social cooperation ethics and various partial equilibrium in real society. The latter includes "partial equilibrium" in the sense of social system and geographical space, that is, the well-being of various groups and local communities.

The above characteristics of the three mainstream religions also reserve space for the survival and development of local folk deity worship and sacrificial rituals. People can still retain or even create a variety of gods and rituals to meet the demands of diverse individuals, places and groups for various social cooperation ethics and various partial equilibrium. This is especially true when the above demands cannot be met in the "menu-style" ethics of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and their "harmony of the three religions" system.

At this time, there are two main resources available for folk beliefs (worship of gods and sacrificial rituals): one is the legacy from ancient religions, or the creation of various gods and rituals based on practical functional needs in accordance with ancient religious traditions; the other is to borrow gods from sacrificial ceremonies of past dynasties (such as gods of heaven and earth, gods of nature and mountains and rivers, saints and famous officials, etc.) or gods of Buddhism and Taoism (such as Buddha, Bodhisattva and immortals) and their rituals. Therefore, there is a saying that "folk beliefs are accumulated from relics and fragments" (Li, Liu, and Xu 2011, pp.188-189).

2. Formal Rituals and Rampant Rituals

Although the continuous preservation, creation and development of folk beliefs (gods and rituals) are reasonable, they are prone to disorder, which has become a headache for rulers of all dynasties. Therefore, folk beliefs are often labeled as "rampant rituals"(淫祀) or "rampant temples"（淫祠） by the official (even the three mainstream religions).

It was clearly regulated at least from the late Warring States period to the Qin and Han dynasties that "Rampant rituals" was separated from the formal sacrificial rituals. The definition of formal rituals/temples (official rituals/temples,正祀/正祠) and rampant rituals/temples includes two aspects: first, whether the object of worship is officially recognized by the worship classics, that is, the official god, otherwise "it does not belonging to this clan without appearing in classics" (*Sacrificial Law* in *Classics of Rites*) ; second, whether the object and rituals of worship are consistent with the status of the ritualist, that is, "sacrificing to something that is not what it is supposed to be, it is called rampant rituals" (*Qulixia* in *Classics of Rites*). Therefore, the so-called "rampant worship" is actually a kind of sacrificial activity, but it is a sacrifice outside the sacrifices that are officially recognized by the state and have certain rituals to be held (Jia 2002, pp.158-159; Rui 2005, p.124). If folk beliefs can be officially recognized and included in the national sacrificial rites, they become official rituals; if they are not officially recognized, then they are rampant rituals and will face destruction or prohibition (Zhou 2008, p.3).

Of course, the definition of formal worship and rampant worship in classics of successive dynasties has changed. This change is mainly affected by two factors: first, the Confucianization and ritualization of the national sacrificial system; second, the change in the strength of centralization of authority. Since the reign of Wang Mang (王莽) in the Western Han Dynasty, along with the Confucianization process of national sacrifice, the state began to crack down on the so-called "rampant worship". During the Tang and Song dynasties, with the deepening of centralization and the establishment of the Confucianized and ritualized "sacrificial ceremonial" system, the belief system of regional society (i.e. folk beliefs) gradually came under the direct control of the court. (Lei 2009, pp.250-252, p.291). After the Song Dynasty, the official definition of "rampant worship" and the changes of the central government's worship policy on folk beliefs can be divided into four stages. In the first stage, the Song and Yuan dynasties adopted the policy of granting titles to temples and gods. In the second stage, the early Ming Dynasty formulated a worship policy based on Confucianism Fundamentalism, promulgated the "Edict on the official god's title" and the "regulation for Prohibiting rampant Temples", but

in real world, it was not strictly enforced soon, resulting in a deviation between policy and reality. In the third stage, the Confucianism Fundamentalism was revived in the middle of the Ming Dynasty, and many campaigns to destroy rampant temples were carried out. The fourth stage, from the middle of the Wanli period to the end of the Qing Dynasty, was a period in which the Confucianism fundamentalist worship policy was in name only, and the phenomenon of granting and bestowing titles on folk gods was very active (Zhu 2008, pp.4-10).

Part II: Universal Popular Gods from the Perspective of Social Cooperation

From the perspective of social cooperation, folk beliefs are the functional expressions of various social cooperation ethics and various partial equilibriums (even "overall equilibrium" in the national sense) in the context of many individuals, local communities, and groups in Chinese society. Here, folk beliefs can also be regarded as a personalized and contextualized reflection and amplification of the "menu-style" functional deity system (and rituals) of the three mainstream religions. It goes without saying that with the complexity of social cooperation and the diversification of collective well-being, the types and number of folk gods will increase dramatically. The excessive and uncontrolled spread of folk beliefs is detrimental to both society and individuals, which will inevitably lead to the three mainstream religions to restrict or absorb them. Especially for official Confucianism, given the endless emergence of folk beliefs, "prohibiting rampant worship" often become a mere formality. Therefore, selectively incorporating some folk gods into official sacrificial rites or granting them imperial titles can be regarded as a proactive approach to restricting "rampant worship" (Zhu 2008, pp.4-10).

In this way, whether folk beliefs can survive and develop in mainstream society depends on whether they can be recognized or supported by mainstream religions (especially official Confucianism) in the short term; but in the long term, it depends on whether they can effectively expand or supplement the "menu-style" cooperative ethics of the three mainstream religions, and whether they can contribute to the improvement and stability of the "overall equilibrium" of the "harmony of the three religions". Therefore, the interaction between folk beliefs and mainstream religions actually involves the further construction and improvement of China's overall religious pattern. In this sense, after experiencing the religious policies of several dynasties, those local folk gods that can gradually develop from unknown to national universal gods highly recognized by the three mainstream religions, the official and the folk will be the most important window for understanding the dynamic changes of Chinese folk beliefs and overall religious pattern.

There are not many gods of this type, and Guandi and Mazu are typical representatives (Peng 2020a, 2020b, 2018, 2019, 2022).

1. The Origin of Universal Popular Gods

In terms of the type of "social cooperation ethics", Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, as mature scriptural religions, all attempted to provide believers with a complete explanation of social cooperation ethics, but in the long competition and integration, the three religions gradually established their own relatively dominant ethics. At this time, if folk beliefs simply expressed the superior ethics of the three religions (even if they were contextualized), they would easily overlap with the three religions. Therefore, in order to maintain and strengthen their own advantages, the three religions either selectively absorbed them or regarded them as "rampant worship" or "rampant temples" and suppressed them.

However, none of the three mainstream religions has given special support to the "horizontal cooperation ethics". Perhaps to adapt to the needs of the traditional settled agricultural society and the blood-related "differential mode of association", Confucianism's explanation of the horizontal "friendship" in the Five Relationships (五伦) is the weakest. Taoism holds an attitude of active protection towards "horizontal relationships" (between strangers). This is fully reflected in Taoist rituals such as praying and exorcising ghosts (the soul of a stranger), which is also not conducive to constructing a strong universal horizontal cooperation ethics. Buddhism advocates equality for all, which is in a universal horizontal cooperation ethics' favor and even promoted the prosperity of the temple economy in the Tang Dynasty. However, due to the excessive impact of the temple economy on traditional society and order, its reaction force eventually made Buddhism give up its efforts to build a horizontal cooperation ethics for secular society. Therefore, those folk gods with horizontal cooperation ethical functions, such as various wealth gods and industry gods, are relatively easy to be allowed (or tacitly accepted) by the three mainstream religions to exist independently because they have the least conflict with the orthodox three religions.

From the perspective of "social cooperation ethics equilibrium", whether it is the earlier "exclusive admiration of Confucianism" (独尊儒术) or the later "harmony of the three religions", the "overall equilibrium" of official and mainstream society usually focuses on the national narrative, which often cannot effectively meet people's realistic demands for "partial equilibrium" of local community well-being and various groups' well-being. In addition, the "overall equilibrium" of the "harmony of the three religions" in mainstream

society is directly constructed based on the dominant ethics of the three religions, and does not significantly include "horizontal cooperation ethics". Therefore, the transaction cost of constructing and maintaining the overall equilibrium is very high, and it needs to be highly dependent on the organization and maintenance of the Confucian government (imperial politics). Such high transaction costs are obviously difficult (and unnecessary) for local society and civil groups to bear. Therefore, in real life, people are more willing to seek a simple and low-cost collective belief symbol that can cover all types of cooperation ethics including the universal "horizontal cooperation ethics" and express individual well-being, local well-being, groups' well-being and even national well-being at the same time. As a result, the universal god (or general god) of the masses came into being.

The folk belief in universal gods, which contains horizontal cooperation ethics, first appeared in local communities, especially in the form of local community gods represented by the city god (城隍) or land god (土地神). In the Zhou Dynasty, the gods of Sheji (社稷) were gradually endowed with a certain blood relationship with local feudal lords, and they were a symbol of the overall equilibrium of the local (feudal lords) and an important part of national official worship. After the Qin and Han dynasties, the blood relationship between the gods of Sheji (also the gods of mountains and rivers) and the local society was dissolved, and they returned to the early attributes of natural gods (Li 1999, p.37). Afterwards, the personified city god (or community god) who could express a variety of social cooperation ethics gradually became a symbol of local well-being. The city god originally belonged to local beliefs and was originally a natural god. In the Han Dynasty, it was gradually played by human ghosts (some believe it started in the Sui and Tang Dynasties). Its functions also expanded to include protecting local residents, eliminating disasters, punishing evil ghosts, appeasing fierce ghosts, punishing evil and promoting good, supervising officials and deterring the people, etc. The city god was included in the official worship ritual in the Song Dynasty, and was further determined as a national sacrificial system in the Ming Dynasty (Zheng and Wang 1994, pp.28-50).

Official Confucianism manages the city gods nationwide in a hierarchical manner, aiming to integrate the "overall equilibrium" at the community and local levels (i.e., "partial equilibrium" in the sense of geographical space) into the "overall equilibrium" at the national level, in order to maintain the stability of imperial politics and the great unification pattern. However, "great unification" also promoted the rise of emerging groups such as business groups and (mercenary system) armies. The well-being demands of these emerging groups broke through the limitations of region and blood relationship, and

were very different from the traditional local well-being and family (clan) well-being. At this time, since the community gods (city gods) had no necessary blood relationship with local officials and people, the national popular universal gods stemming from them were about to emerge.

2. Characteristics of a Nationwide Beliefs in Universal Gods

Guandi and Mazu are two of the most famous national universal popular gods in China. James L. Watson used the term "standardizing the gods" (Watson, 1985, 292-324) and Prasenjit Duara once explained their historical construction by "superscribing symbols" (Duara, 1988, 778-795). We further explored the specific characteristics of this type of deity from the perspective of social cooperation ethics:

(1). The origin of the universal popular gods is from local folk beliefs. Initially, they originated from a certain worship psychology and worship rituals, especially the worship of "evil ghosts" (unnatural deaths). Soon after, or even at the same time, they were regarded as local (community) gods similar to the city god, with a variety of local ethical functions, and a symbol of the overall equilibrium of the local community. After that, they obtained various social cooperation ethical support or theological resources from the orthodox three religions (actively or passively), making the expansion of their ethical functions stable and spreadable. In the end, they combined the dominant ethics of the three religions, realized the construction of "harmony of the three religions" in their own image, became universal gods and omnipotent gods, and gradually moved from local worship to regional and then national worship.

(2). In the "menu-style" ethical environment where Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism all relatively ignore the "horizontal cooperation ethics", the potential for building a universal "horizontal cooperation ethics" is the decisive factor for the rise and prosperity of popular gods after the Song Dynasty. However, the ultimate theological and philosophical support for their "horizontal cooperation ethics" still comes from mainstream religions. For example, Guan Yu's "righteousness"(义) comes from Confucianism, and Mazu's "kindness"(慈) comes from Buddhism. In this sense, popular gods use their own deity images to specifically highlight and apply the "horizontal cooperation ethics" that was originally implicit but habitually ignored in the orthodox three religions.

(3). The universal popular gods realize the "overall equilibrium" construction of the "harmony of the three religions", but unlike construction of "harmony of the three religions" in the official and mainstream society, they are a simple and low-cost "overall equilibrium" construction that combines all

cooperative ethics. As individual omnipotent gods, they can not only embody various social cooperative ethics, but also reflect diverse individual well-being and multi-level collective well-being at the same time. They are not only the objects of personal prayer, but also the patron saints of local communities and various groups, and the patron saints of the empire, thus connecting individuals and society, folk and official, local and national.

(4). The universal popular gods are usually incorporated into the respective pantheon of the three religions, but the official Confucianism has always been the leader and confirmer in the construction of the "harmony of the three religions" of the popular gods. Through officially granted titles by successive dynasties for long time, the final titles of these universal gods can reach "Emperor"(帝), "Saint"(圣) or "Queen of Heaven"(天后), enjoying a very high official sacrificial level. However, they are not metaphysically supreme gods, their theology is lacking, and they do not have their own religious organizations. Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, groups such as chambers of commerce, guilds, and the military, individuals and families, and even folk sects and secret societies can organize worship.

(5). The universal popular gods are diverse. First, their different initial characteristics, creation regions and times determine that the paths and methods they use to construct their own images using the resources of the three mainstream religions are not exactly the same. Second, in the "overall equilibrium" that they construct, the weights of various social cooperation ethics vary greatly, which reflects the different demands of different regions and societies. For example, the "horizontal cooperation ethics" of Mazu belief has the highest weight and is more popular in coastal areas; while the "vertical cooperation ethics" of Guandi belief has the highest weight and is more popular in the inland areas. Third, as mentioned above, their most distinctive "horizontal cooperation ethics", although initially originated from a certain character of their own, was ultimately shaped and confirmed by different orthodox religions.

(6). Since none of the three mainstream religions particularly highlights the "horizontal cooperation ethics", people tend to regard the "horizontal cooperation ethics" as the superior ethics of the universal popular gods. Therefore, although the popular gods are fully functional and powerful, their most popular classic images are industry gods, guild gods, business gods and wealth gods, and their dissemination paths are also closely related to commercial activities (Hansen, 1999, 2, 72-75). Then are war gods or army gods, which are related to the army group.

Finally, from the perspective of China's overall religious structure, basing on the "menu-style" cooperative ethics of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and the "harmony of the three religions", the diverse popular gods, together with Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, provide Chinese society with a more complete "menu-style" cooperative ethics and build a larger "overall equilibrium of social cooperative ethics". This is the "pluralistic unity" religious structure of China.

Part III: Folk Religious Sects from the Perspective of Social Cooperation

1. Folk Religious Sects and Their Characteristics

Folk sects (religious schools) can be traced back to folk Taoism in the Han Dynasty. In the context of Confucianism being established as the official religion in the Han Dynasty, early Taoism (namely the Five Pecks of Rice Sect (五斗米道) and the Taiping Dao (太平道) developed from Taoism was a folk sect. As Taoism gradually became orthodox and officially accepted, its branches continued to spread among the people (Ma and Han 2004, p.3). During the Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, there were still folk uprisings organized in the form of Taoism, among which the "Li Hong Uprising" (李弘起义) was the most frequent and the most extensive (Zhang 2012, p.506). Similarly, Buddhism was also regarded as a kind of Taoism when it was first introduced into China in the Han Dynasty (Tang 2015, p.81, p.95). The mainstreams of Buddhism afterwards tried to adapt to Chinese society and integrate into the mainstream society through Sinicization. However, there were also a small number of sects that spread among the people or were not recognized by the official and mainstream Buddhism, such as the Mahayana Sect in the Northern Wei Dynasty (Zhang 2012, p.562) and the Three-stage School in the Sui and Tang Dynasties (Lai 2010, pp.328-391).

Since the Song Dynasty, when Buddhism and Taoism were orthodoxized and achieved the "harmony of the three religions" with Confucianism, some Buddhist and Taoist sects began to move toward the folk and the grassroots, and developed towards secularization. This process is also the process of the confluence of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism spreading to the lower classes of society and combining with folk beliefs, which has promoted the increasing activity of folk sects and formed a larger scale of sects (Mou and Zhang 2007, p.562). In the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, folk sects became a continuous force for the grassroots people, involving all parts of the country, with many schools and one after another.

Official documents of the Ming and Qing dynasties often denounced folk sects as "rampant worship", "heresy"(异端) or "evil cults"(邪教). However,

from the perspective of social cooperation, there is a significant difference between folk sects (after the Song Dynasty) and "rampant worship" in the sense of folk beliefs.[5]

1. Folk sects originated from the secularization movement of orthodox religions targeting the grassroots people.

In the process of completing Buddhism's and Taoism's orthodoxy, some sects turned to the folks and tried to develop secularization by combining with real life. Among them, the White Lotus Zong(白莲宗) founded by Mao Ziyuan(茅子元) in the Southern Song Dynasty, which combined the Pure Land Sect of Amitabha(弥勒净土宗) and the Tiantai Sect(天台宗) of Buddhism, had the greatest influence on later generations, leading to later generations often mistakenly referring to folk sects as the White Lotus Sect(白莲教) (Ma 1998, pp.158-168). So much so that Overmayer once mistakenly used "folk Buddhist sects" to refer to "folk sects" (Overmayer 1993, p.3). In fact, the orthodox Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism all have secularization movements. For example, the Huangya Sect(黄崖教), which originated from the Confucian Taigu School(太谷学派), Lin Zhaoen's Trinity Sect(三一教) and Sichuan Liumen Sect(刘门教) are all secular sects based on Confucianism; Hongyang Sect(华阳教) and Yizhuxiang Sect(一炷香教) are secular sects based on Taoism. [6]The secularization movement of the three religions usually includes the following main contents: advocating that daily secular life is the most suitable environment for obtaining salvation, advocating that priests can start a family, emphasizing the equality of believers, giving women a higher status than in the general social environment, and the means of conversion of the sects are simplified rituals, short prayers and popular sermons based on scriptures written in dialect (vernacular), etc. (Overmayer 1993, pp.76-77).

2. Maitreyaism and Manichaeism had a huge influence on folk religions and formed the concept of salvation.

The idea of salvation in Maitreya Pure Land belief is that Maitreya Buddha will "come to the world" at the end of the catastrophe, perform the three assemblies of Longhua(龙华三会), change the world, save the people, and return to the other shore. On the one hand, it satisfies the needs of the world to reach the other shore of Bodhi Nirvana from the shore of life and death, and on

[5] The following analysis of folk sects is mainly based on research of Ma and Han (2004), Overmayer (1993), Mou and Zhang (2007, pp.653-656) .

[6] For the research on Huangya Sect, Sanyi Sect, Liumen Sect, Hongyang Sect, Yizhuxiang Sect and other sects, please refer to Ma Xisha and Han Bingfang: History of Chinese Folk Religion, Chapters 22, 13, 23, 9 and 15 respectively.

the other hand, it does not completely abandon human desires. Therefore, it has great temptation and motivation for the lower classes. The idea of Maitreya saving the world in the face of catastrophe not only gave rise to slogans such as "Maitreya's birth", "Prince of Buddha", "New Buddha is born, and the old demon is eliminated" to resist the existing order, but also merged with the teachings of Chinese Taoism, forming the "Three Yang Tribulation Transformation"（三阳劫变）theory in later folk sects (Ma and Han 2004, pp.36-61).

Manichaeism (Ming Jiao, 摩尼教/明教) was introduced to China in the Tang Dynasty, but was later banned and went underground, integrating into folk sects. The main doctrine of Manichaeism is the "Two Substances and Three Eras Theory". The two substances refer to light and darkness, that is, good and evil; the three eras refer to the initial era, the middle era, and the final era. The two substances of light and darkness are irreconcilable and fight against each other. The prophecy of "Maitreya is born, and the Ming King is born" reflects the combination of Maitreyaism and Manichaeism. (Ma and Han 2004, pp.62-85).

3. Most folk sects are the product of the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism or the blending of multiple sects. There are many schools and the evolution is extremely complex.

According to incomplete statistics, there are more than 100 sects in the Qing Palace archives alone (Liang 2004, p.8). In general, "there are many folk religions in China, which are growing more and more, relying on each other, interweaving, and forming their own entities. Each has its own religious rules and regulations, and spreads secretly. It is too numerous to remember and difficult to classify." However, "they are mostly derived from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism in terms of doctrine and organization, among which Buddhism and Taoism have the greatest influence." (Mou and Zhang 2007, pp.653-654).

4. Belief in the Wusheng Laomu(the Eternal Venerable Mother,无生老母) and the eight-character mantra "The Native Land of True Emptiness, the Eternal Venerable Mother"(真空家乡,无生老母).

Influenced by Manichaeism, many folk sects have a female supreme god: Wusheng Laomu. She is regarded as the creator of the world and the savior who saves mankind from the sea of suffering, and has supreme authority. As a result, the eight-character mantra--"the Native Land of True Emptiness, the Eternal Venerable Mother" --has become the unique concept of many folk

sects.[7]

5. Most folk sects have their own religious classics – Baojuan(宝卷).

Baojuan is an art form in which folk religions use popular language to write doctrines, ethics and stories based on popular Buddhist literary forms, such as Bianwen(变文) and Shuojing(说经) (Ma and Han 2004, p.6-7). Different from the classics of the three mainstream religions, Baojuan of folk sects uses popular language (vernacular or colloquial), mainly in rhyme, supplemented by prose, and expressed in the form of storytelling and art such as gathas(偈子), singing poems, and qupai(曲牌). It is simple and vivid, and very much in line with the needs of the lower classes of society (Mou and Zhang 2007, p.654).

6. Folk sects have their own religious organizations and rituals.

First, the leaders of most folk sects generally form a special "sacred family "through hereditary religious power, which is opposed to secular families; through the way of becoming a disciple, a personal dependence relationship network based on the master-disciple relationship is formed within the sect organization, which is opposed to the secular guild organization. Secondly, folk sects are not composed of monks, but of secular believers. The members mainly come from the lower class, such as farmers, handicraftsmen, tax collectors, urban poor and refugees, etc. Most of them join folk sects due to poverty, isolation, and disasters, in order to seek spiritual and life relief. Third, there is no unified form of folk sect rituals. Most folk sects are centered on the belief in the Wusheng Laomu, also are mixed with different gods of other religions, often including Maitreya, Guanyin, Laozi, the founder of the sect and subsequent leaders, and even Guandi, etc. Because they are not officially recognized, the gatherings of folk sects are always "gathering at night and dispersing at dawn" and "mixed with men and women", which is also taboo in traditional society. In addition to worshipping and repenting, folk sects mostly emphasize physical and mental training, practicing qigong, practicing martial arts, and curing diseases and strengthening the body. Fourth, they attach importance to the role of women in worship objects and religious activities. The worship of female gods in folk sects is relatively prominent. In addition to the Wusheng Laomu, there are also Guanyin, Queen Mother(王母娘娘), Lishan Mother(骊山老母), Seven Fairies(七仙姑), etc. There are many female leaders among the sects, such as Lü Bodhisattva(吕菩萨), the nuns Guiyuan(女尼归圆) and Zhang Cuijie(张翠姐) of the Mahayana Sect(大乘教), and Mi Grandma(米奶奶) of the Longmen Sect(龙门教). There are also many

[7] For a discussion of the Eight-Character Mantra, see Ma and Han (2004, pp.751-758), Cai (1998, pp.182-193) and Zhuang (2002, pp.428-448).

women among the general believers. (Zhou and Xia 1998, pp.215-225; Mou and Zhang 2007, pp.654-655).

2. Explanation of folk religious sects from the perspective of social cooperation

In terms of not being included in sacrificial rites and not having legitimacy, the "rampant worship" of folk sects and folk beliefs do have similarities. However, folk sects have religious scriptures, doctrines, organizations and rituals, and are obviously a relatively mature institutional religion, which is significantly different from general folk beliefs. [8]Therefore, we still need to carefully clarify the internal differences between the two, especially the difference from the universal popular gods.

From the perspective of social cooperation and its overall equilibrium, folk sects, like the beliefs in universal popular gods, also cover all types of social cooperation ethics and have a construction process of "overall equilibrium". First, the doctrines of folk sects cover all types of cooperation ethics and also highlight the "horizontal cooperation ethics". This is prominently reflected in the idea of relative equality between men and women, as well as social functions such as mutual assistance, relief and charity among the grassroots people. Second, the long-term survival and development of folk sects among the grassroots people is largely due to the reason that these sects are also a simple and low-cost "overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics" construction, which can greatly reduce transaction costs. This is reflected in the fact that folk sects can provide believers with a set of cooperative ethics system that is simple but holistic, with their own supreme gods (such as Wusheng Laomu) as well as religious organizations and rituals. Third, the sources of cooperation ethics of folk sects are also diverse, and generally it is also a fusion of the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism (sometimes a fusion of two religions) (Ma and Han 2004, pp.1031-1033).

However, unlike the "harmony of the three religions" constructed by beliefs in universal popular Gods, the one constructed by folk sects is seriously different from the official and mainstream society.

First, the carrier of the "overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics" of folk sects is often a personified supreme god. Different from the supreme gods of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, the supreme gods of folk sects usually directly express various cooperative ethical functions, especially "horizontal

[8] C. K. Yang believes that the worship of professional wizards is also a kind of institutional religion (Yang 1961, pp.294-295). We believe that wizard worship is an immature institutional religion that originated in early society.

cooperation ethics" (mutual assistance and relief) and "individual self-cooperation ethics" (salvation). This model of constructing a supreme god with clear substantive functions should be mainly influenced by Manichaeism. Although it did not prevent folk sects from absorbing and integrating the ethical resources of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism into themselves, it obviously increased the difficulty of folk sects to achieve integration with the three mainstream religions.

Secondly, although folk sects originated from the secularization movement of the mainstream three religions, they usually have clear founders and have created their own religious classics, doctrines, organizations and rituals. They are an independent institutional religion. Therefore, folk sects generally have a "sacred family". They are independent and heterogeneous from imperial politics and secular society. They do not regard the Confucian government as their leader, and thus have a natural tendency to rebel. In particular, the salvation thought of folk sects is a great comfort and attraction to the grassroots people, and it is very easy to cause rebellion against the real society and become a millennial thought and movement (Naquin 1976).

Third, due to their heterogeneity from mainstream society, although folk sects can provide believers with a relatively complete explanation of "social cooperation ethics and its overall equilibrium", it is difficult for them to add value to the "menu-style" ethics and "three-religion harmony" pattern of the mainstream religions in terms of cooperation ethics types and various partial equilibrium. Usually, people do not regard "horizontal cooperation ethics" as the dominant ethics of folk sects. Therefore, the diverse folk sects are unlikely to become an organic part of the "menu-style" ethics, nor can they be further constructed into a "pluralistic unity" religious pattern with the three religions. Ultimately, folk sects often do not contribute to the local communities' well-being, but only to specific groups' well-being. Therefore, they are always associated with secret societies (gangs,秘密结社/会党) (Dai 1980).

The above characteristics of folk sects determined that they were subjected to continuous and severe official suppression soon after their inception in the Song Dynasty. Therefore, folk sects can only exist in secret or underground states, so they are also called folk secret religions. The fact that folk sects have been in an underground state for a long time has further strengthened their above characteristics, and thus restricted their full development. For example, folk sects cannot establish an independent group of professional monks, and thus, the closed theocracy system without open education will inevitably curb the improvement and rationalization of their theological and philosophical systems (Overmayer 1993, p.76). Therefore, folk sects have always been unable

to break away from witchcraft and mysticism.

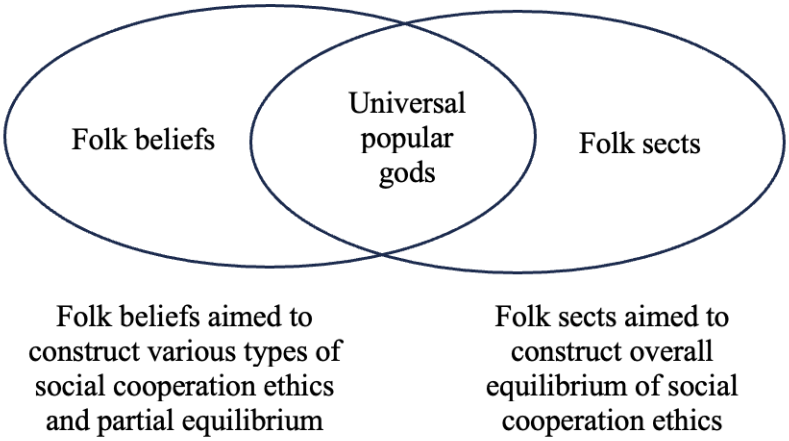
Part IV: The Inner Relationships among Three Types of Popular Religions

Popular religion is relative to orthodox or mainstream religion. Before the establishment of official Confucianism in the Han Dynasty, popular religion mainly referred to folk beliefs that were opposite to official sacrificial rites, referring to folk deity worship and sacrificial rituals with specific functions. From the Han Dynasty to the Sui and Tang Dynasties, that is, after the establishment of official Confucianism and before the completion of the "Harmony of the three religions", popular religion refers to both general folk beliefs and non-orthodox Buddhist and Taoist sects that are not recognized by the official and elite society. Since the Tang and Song Dynasties, that is, after the mainstream three religions achieved the "Harmony of the three religions", the form of popular religion has become more complex, including a variety of folk beliefs and folk sects.

It is not difficult to conclude that Chinese popular religion is a historical construction. The development of popular religious types is highly related to the development of the mainstream religious pattern, and then to the development of China's overall religious pattern. Therefore, if we simply apply western religious theories and the paradigm of great and small traditions, it will be difficult to clarify the internal structural relationship of various types within the mass religious form and its relationship with mainstream religion, which will bring a lot of confusion and controversy to researchers. For example, Arthur P. Wolf and Maurice Freedman and others have had a fierce debate on whether Chinese religion has unity and holism. (wolf 1974).

From the perspective of social cooperation and its equilibrium, the vast genealogy of popular religions after the Song Dynasty clearly has an internal logical structure and internal relationship (see Figure 1). Among them, the construction of gods and worship rituals of folk beliefs usually originate from and focus on specific functions, namely various types of social cooperation ethics and various partial equilibrium (collective well-being); folk sects originate from and are committed to the overall equilibrium construction covering all social cooperation ethics; universal popular gods (especially national universal popular gods) are between the two. Not only that, in the mainstream society's Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism "menu-style" cooperation ethics and "harmony of the three religions" religious pattern, the above-mentioned internal differences of the three types of popular religions also determine their different relationships with mainstream religions, and thus determine their different functions and status in the overall map of Chinese religions (overall pattern and overall form).

Figure 1: Types of popular religions and their internal relationships



1. Folk beliefs originate from the functional construction of individual, local, and diverse social cooperation ethics and various partial equilibrium by folk individuals, local communities, and various groups. This construction is usually random and accidental, and can also be regarded as a reflection and amplification of the "menu-style" and open deity system of the mainstream three religions. Therefore, they rarely actively or deliberately build to provide the "overall equilibrium" (at the overall social level). It is not difficult to understand that in order to maintain their own power and avoid losing control, the orthodox three religions will suppress or constrain and guide folk beliefs. In particular, for official Confucianism, the rampant worship of folk beliefs has always been the opposite pole of the official worship of the official rituals. It is only with the passage of time that when the mainstream three religions have become increasingly mature and have achieved the "overall equilibrium" construction of the "harmony of the three religions", the threat of folk beliefs that only point to specific functional construction to the three religions has become smaller and smaller. Even to a certain extent, folk beliefs are still a beneficial supplement to mainstream religions, which can make up for the shortcomings of the three religions in personalized and contextualized application. Therefore, the boundary between the so-called official worship and the rampant worship has changed in history, and there are often a large number of folk gods that are tacitly approved by the government, such as the industry gods in various industries (Li 2013). In fact, after the mid-Ming Dynasty, the official prohibition of folk beliefs has basically become a mere formality; in general local chronicles, "official temples" are placed in sacrificial records (祀典志) or ritual and music records (礼乐志), while "rampant temples" are also recorded in miscellaneous notes (杂志). This reflects that local

governments have adopted a more flexible approach to "rampant worship", neither positively affirming nor completely denying it.

2. Folk sects are at the other extreme of the mass religion type. They are initiated by civil society and deliberately oriented towards the construction of "overall equilibrium of social cooperation ethics". They are a kind of man-made institutional religion. On the one hand, folk sects draw on the worship of professional wizards in folk beliefs (an institutional religion that originated in early society). This is prominently reflected in the fact that the founders and subsequent leaders of folk sects often have "charisma" (extraordinary gifts) characteristics, and folk sects use a lot of witchcraft and mysticism. On the other hand, in the context of the harmony of the three religions, folk sects also blend the dominant ethics of the three religions, but they are often concentrated on a personified supreme god, and develop their own religious classics, doctrines, organizations, systems and rituals. However, the most attractive "horizontal cooperation ethics" (mutual assistance and relief) and "individual self-cooperation ethics" (salvation) in folk sects do not come from the orthodox three religions, but often come from Manichaeism or Maitreyaism. These characteristics of folk sects make them very different from the mainstream three religions and their harmony, and also make it difficult for them to be recognized by the official and elite classes, and the official Confucianism even less likely to be their organizer and leader. In this way, it is difficult for people to regard the "horizontal cooperation ethics" as the dominant ethics of folk sects, and folk sects will not help expand the "menu-style" ethics of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and thus cannot work with the three religions to build a "pluralistic unity" religious pattern. In addition, due to the lack of affinity between folk sects and the mainstream three religions, it is difficult for them to serve local and national well-being, and they can only focus on the well-being of specific groups (communities and parties). Therefore, they are usually difficult to be recognized by non-believers. This means that in terms of the type of social cooperation ethics, partial equilibrium and overall equilibrium, there is a big gap between folk sects and the mainstream three religions, and it is inevitable that they will be suppressed by the official for a long time.

3. The universal popular gods are between folk beliefs and folk sects, and have some characteristics of both. They are a very special type of popular religion. The popular gods originated from local folk gods. Their initial creation was accidental and random, but the subsequent process of regional and especially national worship was quite artificial. In the case of Guandi and Mazu, the initial form of national popular gods usually originated from "evil ghosts", that is, "abnormal death". In the context of traditional society, "evil ghosts" are

"strangers" (strange deities), and most of them are plain civilian personalities, so they have great potential for the construction of "horizontal cooperation ethics". With the blessing of the advantages of "horizontal cooperation ethics", they can quickly expand various cooperative ethical functions and become the universal gods of local communities and the symbols of faith of emerging groups. In this and subsequent processes, they have also been recognized, participated in and supported by the orthodox three religions (actively or passively). The superior ethics of the three religions are all gathered in the image of the universal gods. In particular, their "horizontal cooperation ethics" ultimately comes from the three religions. In the end, they covered all social cooperation ethics and achieved overall equilibrium, and truly became the symbol of overall equilibrium in the sense of geographical space and social system, that is, the imperial patron god and the national universal god. It can be said that in the types of social cooperation ethics, the construction of various partial equilibrium and overall equilibriums, the popular universal gods are directly or ultimately derived from the three mainstream religions. In particular, the official Confucianism has become the real organizer and leader in the construction of the universal popular gods through continuous imperial decrees from successive dynasties, which greatly ensures their affinity with the mainstream society. In this way, the universal popular gods can use the "horizontal cooperation ethics" as their dominant ethics, further enrich the "menu-style" ethics of Chinese society, and effectively meet people's needs for various partial equilibrium, and then organically construct a "pluralistic unity" religious pattern with the three mainstream religions.

Conclusion

In short, in the religious structure constructed by the "menu-style" ethics of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and the "overall equilibrium" of the "the harmony of the three religions", various folk beliefs and folk sects still have room for existence and development. Among them, the popular belief in universal gods between general folk beliefs and folk sects is the most typical type of popular religion.

The universal popular gods originated from the functional gods of folk beliefs and eventually became intensive gods. From the perspective of social cooperation ethics and its equilibrium, the universal popular god belief and folk sects are two religious explorations and practices carried out by the folk and local society since the Song Dynasty in order to save transaction costs. Both aim to build an "overall equilibrium" covering all social cooperation ethics (including horizontal cooperation ethics). However, the development of the universal popular gods has always maintained full interaction and integration

with the three mainstream religions. It can even be said that they themselves are the product of the interaction and integration between folk society and elite society.

It should also be pointed out that although rampant worship and folk sects have been rejected and suppressed by the official and mainstream society, they are not without significance to the religious pattern of "harmony of the three religions" and "pluralistic unity". rampant worship not only provided many gods for the orthodox three religions, but also provided soil for the emergence of popular gods. Without the local folk society taking the lead in constructing community universal gods, it would be impossible to give birth to the national universal popular gods promoted by the folk and the official later, and it would be difficult for the pattern of "harmony of the three religions" to move towards a larger pattern of "pluralistic unity". Folk sects gave birth to orthodox Buddhism and Taoism in the early days, and in the later days they were an important reference force for promoting the official canonization of popular gods. For example, Zhu Yuanzhang(朱元璋), the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, who came from a folk sect, was extremely wary of folk religions. Soon after he ascended the throne, he issued the Decree on the Correction of God Titles(神号改正诏) and the System of Prohibiting Rampant Temples(禁淫祀制), abolishing the titles of gods except Confucius, but soon discovered that popular religions such as Guan Yu and Mazu were an indispensable part of society and needed to be restored; What he really need to focus on and guard against are folk sects.

In the above sense, the rise and prosperity of popular gods has the effect of curbing the proliferation of rampant worship and folk sects.

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