

Binding friendship: Ricci, China and Jesuit cultural learnings

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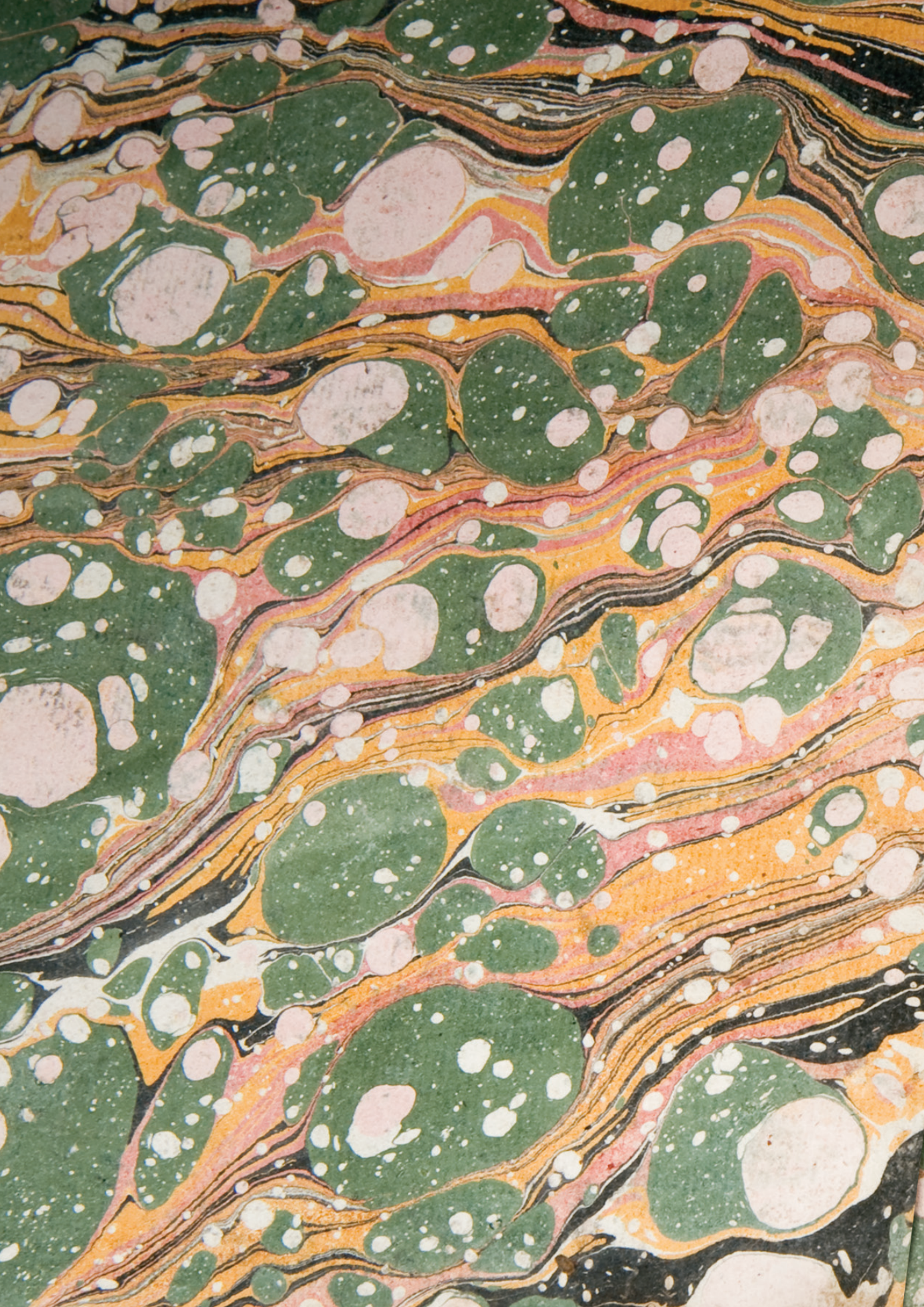
BINDING FRIENDSHIP:

RICCI, CHINA AND JESUIT CULTURAL LEARNINGS



Edited by Jeremy Clarke, S.J., Lake Coreth and Caitlin M. Cain

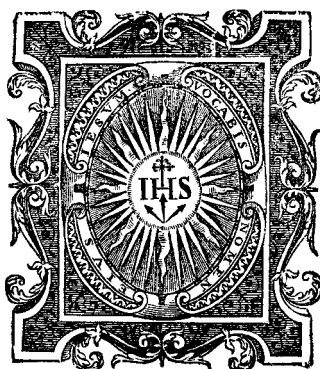
*Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
The Jesuit Institute of Boston College*



BINDING FRIENDSHIP:

RICCI, CHINA AND JESUIT CULTURAL LEARNINGS

Edited by
Jeremy Clarke, S.J.,
Lake Coreth
and
Caitlin M. Cain



Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
The Jesuit Institute of Boston College
2011

This publication is issued in conjunction with the exhibition *Binding Friendship: Ricci, China and Jesuit Cultural Learnings*, held at the John J. Burns Library, Boston College, March 21 to October 31, 2011.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Jesuit Institute, Boston College, and organized by Jeremy Clarke, S.J., Caitlin M. Cain, Lake Coreth, Grace Heisenbottle and students of the HS 306 *Beyond Ricci* history class, and the Burns Library staff: Justine Sundaram, reference librarian and Barbara Adams Hebard, conservator.

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Back cover: image of a French vessel arriving in a Chinese port, from Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *A description of the empire of China and Chinese-Tartary*, 1738.

Inside cover: marbling effect achieved by copying inside cover of a volume from the *Mémoires des Chinois* series, 1776-1797; photograph by Kerry Burke.

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Three volumes of *Mémoires des Chinois* by the following China-based Jesuits: Frs Amiot, Bourgeois, Cibot, Kao and Poirot, 1776-1797; photograph by Kerry Burke

(Right) Left to right: *China Illustrata*, Athanasius Kircher, 1667, *Imperio de la China*, Alvaro Semedo, 1642, and *Euclidis Elementis*, Christoph Clavius, 1574; photograph by Kerry Burke

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CHINA
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Euclidis
Elementa
Mathematica

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FOREWORD

The first of the Jesuit anniversaries that the Jesuit Institute of Boston was available to celebrate occurred in 1990-1991 when Boston College celebrated the 450th anniversary of the founding of the Society of Jesus and the 500th birthday of St. Ignatius Loyola. Since that time, various Jesuit anniversaries have begun to appear that the Jesuit Institute has been pleased to commemorate. It is no exception then that the Jesuit Institute happily joins with the Burns Library, the Institute of the Liberal Arts and the Trustees of Boston College to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of the great Jesuit missionary to China, Matteo Ricci, S.J. (1552-1610).

In addition to this beautiful catalogue, *Binding Friendship: Ricci, China and Jesuit Cultural Learnings*, prepared and edited by Jeremy Clarke, S.J., Lake Coreth and Caitlin M. Cain, Professor Clarke in curating this Burns Library exhibition, has also commissioned a musical composition from Boston College's Assistant Professor of Music Theory & Composition, Ralf Gawlik. Not only will the music be heard as part of the exhibition, but a performance will be presented in concert at St. Mary's Chapel during the exhibition. Clarke has organized a speaker series around the exhibition as well.

The Jesuit Institute of Boston College, in its mission to engage the dialogue between faith and culture, joyfully welcomes this exhibition and the cognate activities that accompany it to the Boston College campus. The richness of Boston College's Jesuitana Collection has provided us once again with an experience that engages our minds and memories in ways that will bring to life the title of our exhibition, *Binding Friendship: Ricci, China and Jesuit Cultural Learnings*, for a long while to come.



PREFACE

Jeremy Clarke, S.J. editor of this catalogue, *Binding Friendship: Ricci, China and Jesuit Cultural Learnings*, and curator of the exhibit by the same name, first contacted me in February 2010 to propose organizing an exhibition in the spring of 2011 at Burns Library to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of Matteo Ricci, the celebrated Jesuit missionary to China who died in Beijing in May 1610. The exhibit was intended also to commemorate the Jesuit endeavors in China and the past four hundred years of Chinese Catholic history. This ambitious exhibition, moreover, was to be accompanied by a profusely illustrated printed catalogue and would also incorporate audio-visual displays, including sound files to bring the texts to life, film footage of the places highlighted in the exhibition and Web-based learning modules.

I was intrigued by this proposal, in part because while I was in graduate school I worked as a research assistant to the late Donald F. Lach, Bernadotte Schmidt Professor of History at the University of Chicago, whose monumental and groundbreaking multi-volume work *Asia in the Making of Europe* relied heavily on the very resources Professor Clarke planned to use to illustrate the journeys and maps undertaken by Jesuits involved in the China mission, the way they communicated their findings back to Europe and the way that they used such means of communication to help their mission. It would also be a golden opportunity to showcase the Burns Library's extraordinary Jesuitana Collection, the largest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. Nevertheless, I confess I was initially a bit skeptical that Fr Clarke could pull off this exhibition and its accompanying catalogue in such a short time. Ordinarily, exhibits of this magnitude, especially those accompanied by a printed catalogue, require a minimum of two years preparation. To make things even more interesting, Professor Clarke was in Australia when he contacted me and would not arrive in Boston until August 2010 to assume his duties as a newly appointed assistant professor in the History Department. To be sure, Professor Clarke had spent calendar year 2009 at Boston College as a post-doctoral fellow in the History Department, and used this opportunity to do research in the Burns Library's Jesuitana Collection. Still, he was taking on a daunting task. To have the catalogue alone ready for the exhibition opening on March 21 required that all the accompanying essays had to be written and edited and that all the exhibit material selected, described and

photographed by the end of January 2011. With the generous financial support of the University's Jesuit Institute and the Institute for the Liberal Arts, and the research help of his undergraduate research assistants Lake Coreth and Caitlin M. Cain, assisted also by sophomore Grace Heisenbottle and students of Professor Clarke's HS 306 *Beyond Ricci* history class and assisted by Burns Library staff, most especially Reference Librarian Justine Sundaram and Conservator Barbara Adams Hebard, Professor Clarke pulled it off. This beautiful and scholarly exhibit catalogue bears witness to this impressive, indeed singular, achievement. It is a triumph and Jeremy Clarke is to be heartily congratulated.

Robert K. O'Neill
Director, John J. Burns Library, Boston College



LIST OF BOOKS ON DISPLAY

The exhibition includes works of history, science and philosophy, as well as books that deal with the Chinese Rites controversy and that reveal Jesuits as travelers and geographers. Some also focus on the significance of Matteo Ricci. One other showcases the Jesuitana Collection's jewels. Complete details are on the accompanying Website.

First Cabinet

- *La Moral des Jésuites*, Sebastien-Joseph de Coislin du Cambout, 1698
- *Memoirs and remarks geographical ... physical*, Louis Le Comte, 1737
- *Entrata nella China de' padri della Compagnia del Gesu*, A. Sozzini (trans.), 1622
- *A description of the empire of China and Chinese-Tartary*, J.B. Du Halde, 1738
- *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, Louis Le Comte, 1697
- *Correspondance de Ferdinand Verbiest de la Compagnie de Jésus (1623-1688)*, Henry Josson and Leopold Willaert, 1938
- *Zhongguo yu Ouzhou zaoqi zongjiao he zhixue jiaoliu shi* (A history of the earliest religious and philosophical exchanges between China and Europe), Zhang Xiping, 2001
- *China monumentis*, Athanasius Kircher, 1667



Matteo Ricci Cabinet

- *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas suscepta ab Societate Jesu*, Matteo Ricci, 1615
- *China in the sixteenth century*, translated by Louis Gallagher, 1953
- *Fonti ricciane; documenti originali concernenti Matteo Ricci e la storia delle prime relazioni tra l'Europa e la Cina (1579-1615)*, volume 1, Pasquale M. d'Elia, 1942
- *The memory palace of Matteo Ricci*, Jonathan D. Spence, 1984
- *Journey to the East: the Jesuit mission to China, 1579-1724*, Liam M. Brockey, 2007
- *The memory palace of Matteo Ricci*, Jonathan D. Spence, 1990, (Chinese translation)
- *Histoire de l'expédition chrétienne au royaume de la Chine, 1582-1610*, 1978
- *Galerie illustrée de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Alfred Hamy, 1893
- *The wise man from the West*, Vincent Cronin, 1962

Historical Works

- *Histoire générale de la Chine*, v.13, J.-Anne-Marie de Moyriac de Mailla, 1777-1785
- *Due lettere annue della Cina del 1610 e del 1611*, Nicolas Trigault, 1615
- *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, Louis Le Comte, 1697
- *Histoire de ce qui s'est passé à la Chine*, Pierre Morin, 1625
- *Relatione della felice morte di cinque religiosi*, Alessandro Valignano, 1595
- *Memoirs and remarks geographical ... physical*, Louis Le Comte, 1737
- *Neuer Welt-Bott das ist*, two volumes, Peter Probst and Franciscus Keller, 1736
- *Imperio de la China*, Alvaro Semedo, 1642
- *Histoire universelle de la Chine*, Alvaro Semedo, 1667
- *Relatione della grande monarchia della Cina*, Alvaro Semedo, 1643
- *Rerum a Societate Iesu in oriente*, Giovanni Pietro Maffei, 1574



Chinese Rites

- *Mémoires historiques présentées au souverain Benoit XIV*, Pierre-Curel Parisot, 1745
- *Dictionnaire des livres opposés à la morale de la Société des soi-disant Jésuites*, Louis Patouillet, 1763
- *Lettre à l'auteur de l'article Jésuite dans le dictionnaire encyclopédique*, 1766
- *Défense de nouveaux Chrétiens*, Michel Le Tellier, 1688
- *The moral practice of the Jesuites*, an English translation of *Morale Pratique*, 1670
- *Morale Pratique des Jesuites*, 1689
- *Lettre du R. Père Louis Le Comte ... sur les cérémonies de la Chine*, Louis Le Comte, 1700
- *Des cérémonies de la Chine*, Louis Le Comte, 1700
- *Six lettres ... ou Relation des assemblées de la Faculté de Théologie de Paris*, 1701
- *Histoire apologétique de la conduite des Jésuites de la Chine*, Gabriel Daniel, 1700
- *The mystery of Jesuitisme*, English version of Blaise Pascal's *Les provinciales*, 1658

Science Cabinet

- *China monumentis*, Athanasius Kircher, 1667
- *Sinicae historiae decas prima*, Martino Martini, 1659
- *Historica relatio de ortu et progressu fidei ... in Regno Chinensi*, Giovanni Foresi, 1672
- *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, Louis Le Comte, 1697
- *Confucius Sinarum*, Frs Intorcetta, Herdtrich, Rougemont and Couplet, 1687
- *Dictionnaire français-chinois contenant les expressions les plus usitées de la langue mandarine*, Séraphin Couvreur, 1884
- *Oeuvres de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, Jean Jacques Rousseau, published posthumously in 1817
- *Mémoires concernant l'histoire, les sciences, les arts, les mœurs, les usages, &c. des Chinois*, Joseph-Marie Amiot, François Bourgeois, Pierre Cibot, Aloys Kao and Aloys de Poirot, 1776-1797
- *Voyage de Siam des pères Jésuites*, Guy Tachard, 1686
- *Euclidis Elementorum libri XV*, Euclid, 1574
- *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu*, António Cordeiro and Sylvestre Aranha, 1600
- *Gnomonices libri octo*, Christoph Clavius, 1581



Maps and Travel Accounts

- *An account of Tibet; the travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia*, Ippolito Desideri, 1932
- *Travels into divers parts of Europe and Asia*, Philippe Avril, 1693
- *Fantômes d'islam & de Chine*, Hugues Didier, 2003
- *Nouvel atlas de la Chine, de la Tartarie chinoise et du Thibet*, J.-B. d'Anville, 1737
- *Relatione del nouo scoprimiento del Gran Cataio overo regno di Tibet*, António de Andrade, 1628
- *The Portuguese Asia*, Manuel de Faria e Sousa, 1695
- *Histoire des decouvertes et conquestes des Portugais dans le Nouveau monde*, Joseph-François Lafitau, 1734
- *Histoire générale de la Chine*, v.10, J.-Anne-Marie de Moyriac de Mailla, 1777-1785



Ruins of St Paul's, Macau; photograph copyright Ian Fairhurst, used with permission

BINDING FRIENDSHIP:

RICCI, CHINA AND JESUIT CULTURAL LEARNINGS

Jeremy Clarke, S.J.

Those who will live one hundred generations after us are not yet born, and I cannot tell what sort of people they will be. Yet thanks to the existence of written culture even those living ten thousand generations hence will be able to enter into my mind as if we were contemporaries. As for those worthy figures who lived a hundred generations ago, although they too are long gone, yet thanks to the books left behind we who come after can hear their modes of discourse, observe their grand demeanour, and understand both the good order and the chaos of their times, exactly as if we were living among them.

— Matteo Ricci to Cheng Dayue, 1606¹

During 2010, many articles and several books were published on the famous Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), and commemorative activities and exhibitions were held throughout the world. While in large part this is due to the fact that the past year marked the four-hundredth anniversary of his death in Beijing, it is also because this remarkable priest's endeavours over almost twenty-seven years in China still arouse both general interest and scholarly reflection. This fascination is a product of Ricci being involved in so many areas of academic and pastoral activity, including the fields of horology, hydraulics, geometry, catechetics, observational astronomy and music, among other things. At times, however, interest in these areas of cross-cultural exchange can obscure the fact that Ricci was first and foremost a Jesuit missionary who wished to talk about the things of God even if this meant going to the ends of the world.

Ricci's travels and travails were part of the explosion of activity that occurred in the first few generations after the foundation of the Society of Jesus in 1540 by Ignatius Loyola and his early companions. Within a few decades, Jesuits were to be found all around the world, from Lisbon to São Paulo, and had established an international network of schools and colleges. As John O'Malley, S.J. describes so comprehensively in his work *The First Jesuits*, these generations of highly learned men were living out their Ignatian charism by laboring at such things as conducting works of charity, promoting the Catholic faith, becoming the schoolmasters of Europe, being engaged in acts of reconciliation and being involved "in any ministry of the word of God whatsoever."² In the case of Matteo Ricci and Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607), the Jesuit who proceeded Ricci both into China and in undertaking Chinese studies, being involved in any other ministry of the word entailed arduously applying themselves to the study of Chinese language and culture so as to be able to engage in Christian dialogue in culturally appropriate ways.

In this regard, they were living out the missionary insights of Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), the Jesuit in charge of works east of Goa, who wrote guidelines for missionaries on how to conduct themselves in a manner which was not only cognizant of local cultural norms but also respectful of them.³ These principles covered everything from the most appropriate architectural style for the mission's churches and residences to the way in which cups of tea ought to be served to visitors. Ricci is credited with having perfected these basic principles in China, although in truth, for all his personal genius (and his list of academic accomplishments is testimony to that fact that he was clearly most capable in this regard), he was obviously as much helped by his relationships with local scholars as he was by any code of cultural conduct.

A prime example of the way in which his capacity for friendship enabled the advance of the Christian mission is the famous case of when the Jesuit



Adam Schall and Matteo Ricci hold up a map of China as Francis Xavier and Ignatius Loyola look down from heaven, from *China Monumentis*, by Athanasius Kircher; photograph by William J. Donovan

missionaries changed from wearing Buddhist garb to taking on the garments of scholar officials. When Ruggieri and Ricci left the Portuguese enclave of Macau and entered the south of China in 1583, they chose to clad themselves in the robes worn by Buddhist monks (and even shaved off all their facial and cranial hair for full effects) believing that this would best denote them as men of religion. They did not realize, however, that at that time many monks were looked down upon by the learned elite and thus by choosing to represent themselves as akin to monks they were shutting themselves off from easy interaction with the scholars, thereby placing their evangelical goals in jeopardy. Ricci's own learning in such things as

cartography and observational astronomy had nevertheless already brought him in contact with a few inquisitive scholars, and these new friends informed them of the mistake they had made. After discussing this momentous change with Valignano in Macau, Ricci and others began to wear scholar's clothing in 1595, at Nanchang.⁴

Interestingly enough, such adaptability eventually brought the Jesuits into conflict with religious orders that arrived in the century after them, including the Dominicans, the Franciscans and the Paris Foreign Mission Society. It was not as though the Jesuits had frivolously appropriated cultural customs at random, however, as their decisions were based on lengthy, considered and communal reflection on their accumulated experiences. Even so, this disagreement over the best way to preach the gospel in China, combined with political and theological debates in Europe, culminated in what has become known as the Chinese Rites controversy.⁵

The controversy flared up from the middle of the seventeenth century and lasted until the early decades of the eighteenth century, when Benedict XIV definitively banned the cultural adaptations that had been permitted by the Jesuits, especially regarding forms of cultural piety permissible to Chinese Catholics. Yet, before considering the intricacies of the Rites controversy further, it is important to continue to trace the development of the engagement by Ricci and his confreres with Chinese culture and society.

The shedding of Buddhist robes is an illustrative example not only of the flexibility of the Jesuits but also of the influence of their Chinese companions and friends. Over time, these relationships were to bear much fruit in terms of the numbers of Chinese who became Christians and also in the progress of east-west cultural exchange that was attendant upon the Jesuits' mission in China. Although the Jesuits were intent on bringing Christ to China, they ultimately also brought many facets of Western learning as well, in fields as diverse as optics, perspective theory and astronomy. At the same time, they were responsible for transmitting aspects of Chinese culture and tradition to other parts of the world, including information on things like Confucian philosophy, Chinese garden design (as well as detailed descriptions of Chinese fauna and flora, including such things as tea and ginseng) and the imperial history of China.⁶ Their role was truly one of bridge-builders between the cultures, however much this was in addition to their self-perceived roles as missionaries.

Chinese Christian neophytes assisted the Jesuits in their task as mediators between different cultures and worldviews. This included not only those Chinese men who became Jesuits (the earliest Chinese Jesuits joined in 1591) but also a number of significant scholars, and indeed members of their families, male and female. These included one scholar whose official roles included a period as the President of the Board of Ceremonies, Xu Guangqi (1562-1633), and his granddaughter Candida Xu (1607-1680); Li Zhizao (1565-1630), who translated

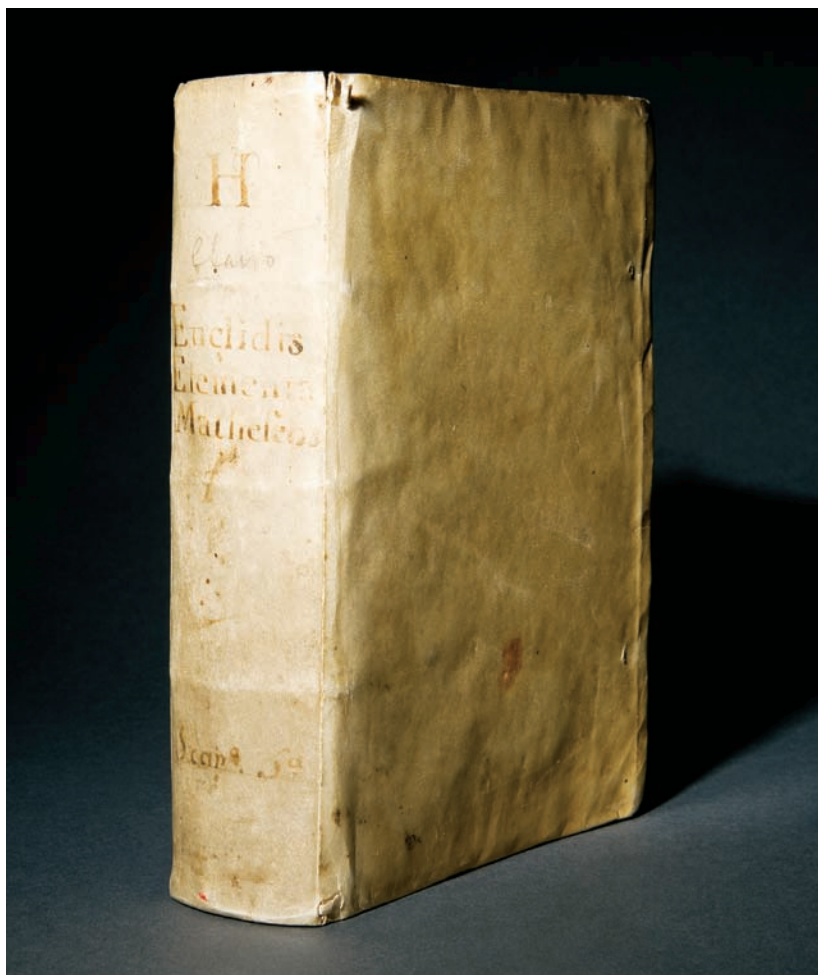
many European works on science and who worked for a time at the Imperial Bureau of Astronomy; and Yang Tingyun (1557-1627), who likewise wrote many Chinese texts about Christianity and protected the nascent Church during times of persecution.⁷ These Chinese Christians were more than just academic companions or co-religionists but were truly friends, living and working alongside the Jesuits and sponsoring and assisting their mission and ministry.

It is through the prism of friendship that one can perhaps best understand the undertakings of the Jesuits in China over this time, and it is no accident that one of the major works of Ricci during this period was a reflection upon the place of amicable relationships in society. This was his famous *Jiaoyou Lun* (On friendship), which was an annotated collection of classical sayings and quotations that Ricci not only remembered from his long years of education, steeped as they had been in Renaissance humanism, but which he also drew from such collections as the work of contemporary scholar Andreas Eborensis.⁸

The current exhibition picks up this theme of friendship and reflects upon the way in which the work of the Jesuits and their companions in China was a cross-cultural exchange that exerted much influence in both China and other parts of the world. As the quotation at the beginning of this essay reveals, the Jesuits knew that the ministry of publishing and writing could have the most effect. In this case their desire to perform any other ministry of the word of God whatsoever was to be taken quite literally if their exertions were to bear the most fruit. Such labor was not to be restricted to Chinese soil, however, but also consisted of significant communication between the missionaries based throughout China and the friends and patrons, benefactors and detractors back in their home countries as well.

At the same time as communicating the intricacies of Euclidean geometry to China, for instance, the Jesuits were also writing to scholars in the French Academy of Science or the Royal Society in London about such things as their astronomical observations and their new understandings of Chinese philosophy. Such learned exchange is discussed in the essay in this catalogue by Lake Coreth (College of Arts and Sciences, 2011). As the debate about cultural accommodation and its influence on religious practice became more pronounced (the Chinese Rites controversy mentioned above), Jesuits in both China and Europe began to write treatises and commentaries defending their position on these matters and refuting the accusations made against them. This body of work was addressed to theologians as well as to patrons and interested parties, and the arguments waged back and forth for over a century. One cabinet in the exhibition displays some of these works.

Another significant body of literature consisted of the general letters and personal correspondence that Jesuits on the missions had with their fellow Jesuits in their sending provinces as well as with family members and benefactors of the



Euclidis Elementis, Christoph Clavius, 1574; photograph by Kerry Burke

work abroad. In fact, Jesuits were encouraged to write a type of letter that could be circulated widely to those who might be interested in supporting the works in foreign lands, and consequently these communications included information about the number of baptisms in a given year as well as described the way in which silk was turned into cloth, for instance. The inscriptions and dedications on these pieces of correspondence reveal the extent of the Society's relationships in Europe in the early modern world and the impact their writings had on cross-cultural exchange. The dedications of some of the works on display—to people as diverse as Louis XIV, Stefan Batory and François de la Chaise (after whom the famous cemetery in Paris is named)—indicate the breadth of the conversation that was taking place. These epistles and histories, treatises and maps were examples of the friendships that bound the Jesuits and their intellectual and religious companions across the seas. They were also representative of the cultural learnings that were

being exchanged. The present exhibition displays many of these works, not only in the sections on travel and history, but also in the display cases dealing with the Chinese Rites controversy and scientific and philosophical exchange.

Only a small selection of the riches of the Jesuitana Collection has been chosen for this exhibition. As shown by the accompanying essay on provenance by Caitlin M. Cain (College of Arts and Sciences, 2011), the Jesuitana Collection came to Chestnut Hill as a result of years of careful preservation of these works by scholars and librarians at Jesuit institutions throughout the world. Since its arrival, the collection has continued to grow and, using the theme of China and cross-cultural exchange, the exhibition enables such treasures to be brought to a new readership. It is our hope that now that these jewels have been displayed and brought once again into the light of the public domain, scholars and other interested individuals may choose to delve even more deeply into these timeless moments of mutual exchange and friendship—the ties that perennially bind.

Notes

¹ Ricci to Cheng Dayue, *Li Madou ti baoxiang tu*, section 2, pp.1b-2, as cited in Jonathan D. Spence, *The memory palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1984), 22, fn 71.

² John W. O'Malley, S.J., *The first Jesuits* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 91-133.

³ See Josef Franz Schütte, S.J., *Valignano's mission principles for Japan, volume 1. From his appointment as visitor until his departure from Japan (1573-1582), Part I: The problem (1573-1580)*, translated by John J. Coyne, S.J. (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980), *Part II: The solution (1580-1582)*, trans. by John J. Coyne, S.J., (Anand, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1985).

⁴ See the work in the exhibition by Alvaro Semedo, *Imperio de la China* (published in 1642), where this is discussed. Several of the works on display show the Jesuits in their scholarly clothing.

⁵ The Chinese Rites were first banned by Pope Clement XI in 1715; a copy of this decree is displayed in the work *Memoires historiques présentés au souverain pontife Benoit XIV* (1745).

⁶ The role of the Jesuits as the transmitters of culture has prompted numerous scholarly conferences and workshops; see, for instance, Jerome Heyndrickx (ed.), *Philippe Couplet: The man who brought China to Europe* (Nettetal Steyler-Verlag, 1990), and Franco Demarchi and Riccardo Scartezzini (eds.), *Martino Martini: A humanist and scientist in seventeenth century China* (Trent, Italy: Università degli studi di Trento, 1996).

⁷ Regarding Xu Guangqi, see "In praise of Xu Guangqi" by Aloysius Jin Luxian, *China Heritage Quarterly*, no. 23, September 2010, and for Yang Tingyun, see Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His Life and Thought* (Leiden/New York: E.J. Brill, 1988).

⁸ For a modern edition, see *On friendship: one hundred maxims for a Chinese prince*, by Matteo Ricci; translated by Timothy Billings (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

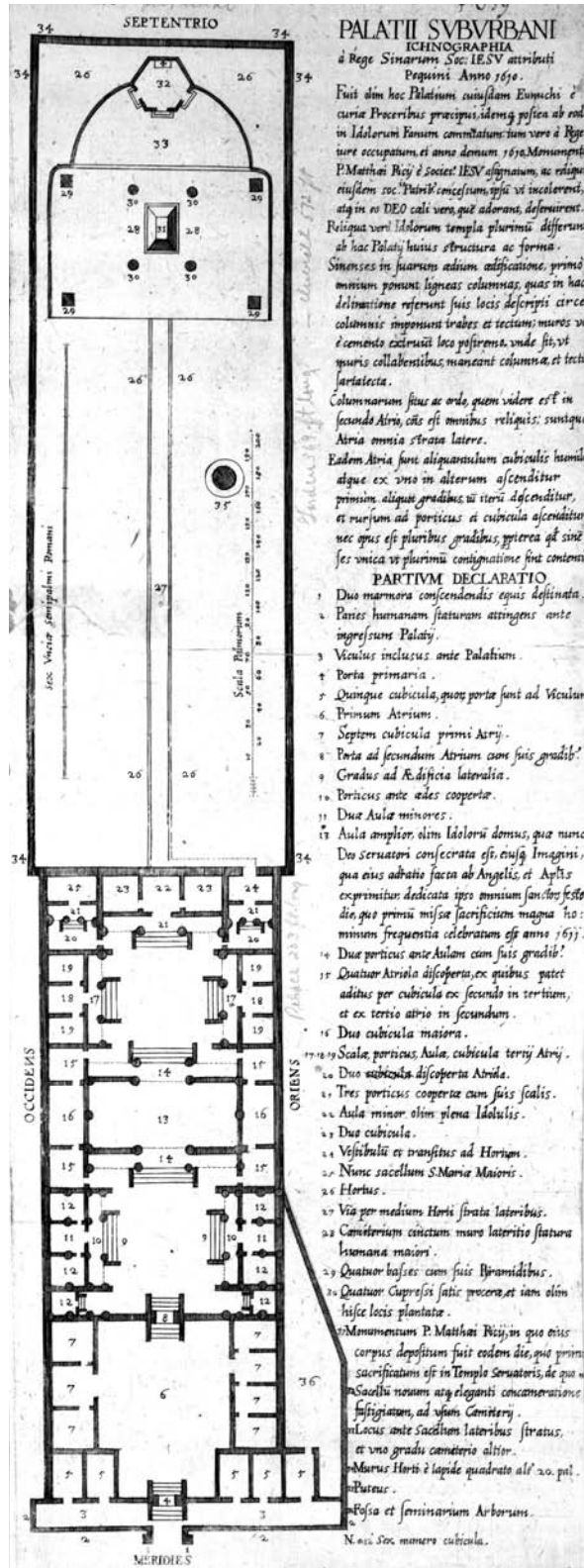


Diagram of
 Zhalan Cemetery,
 Beijing, De
 Christiana
 expeditione apud
 Sinas suscepta
 ab Societate Jesu,
 Matteo Ricci and
 Nicolas Trigault,
 1615

EAST-WEST CROSSING: CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND THE JESUIT MISSION IN CHINA

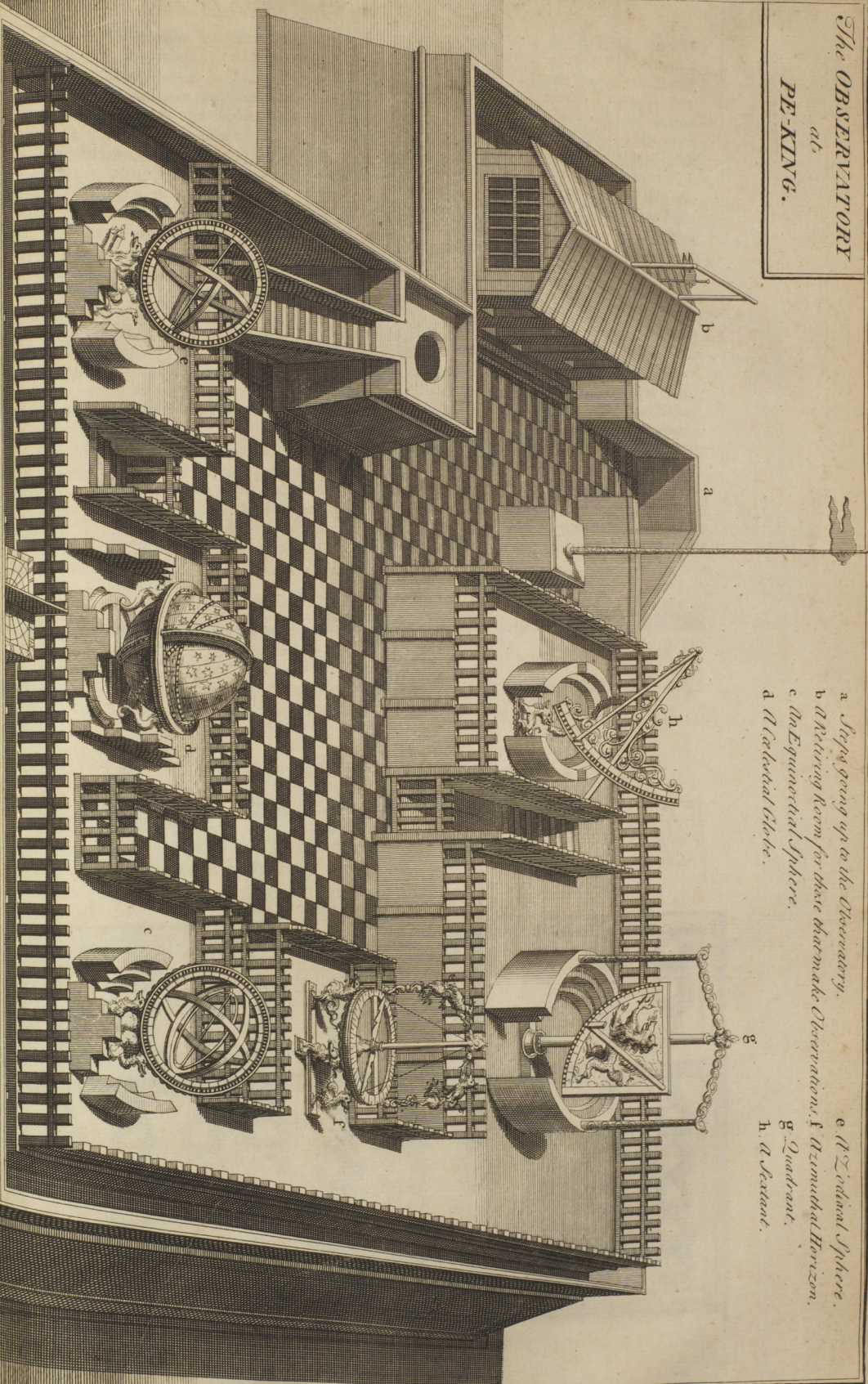
Lake Coreth

In 1514, the Portuguese discovery of a sea route to southern China marked the genesis of a new age of Sino-Western relations. Commercial trade between China and Europe developed exponentially throughout the sixteenth century; and with increased contact came heightened exposure to and curiosity of the enigmatic Middle Kingdom. Silk, tea, medicine, spices and jewels were not the sole commodities transmitted to Europe from China. An exchange of knowledge and information accompanied these goods and moreover, revolutionized the intellectual arena of Europe. European merchants, traders and Jesuit missionaries, in particular, facilitated this exchange of information. The reports and publications issued by the Society of Jesus communicated Chinese perspicacity of a variety of academic disciplines including—among other things—philosophy, science, mathematics and theology. Through ongoing dialogue with Chinese and European intellectuals, the Jesuit mission in China changed the intellectual landscape of Europe and China from the late sixteenth century and beyond.¹

During the sixteenth century, European powers such as Spain and Portugal—the dominant sea-faring nations at the time—promoted missionary activity along with territorial expansion. As a way of spreading Christianity, the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs provided both financial aid and passage for missionaries aboard their ships. Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits all participated in such missionary activity, but the Jesuits played the leading role in missionary activity in China.² All Jesuits arriving in China during the sixteenth century operated under the Portuguese *padroado*. Issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1493, the *padroado* granted the kings of Spain and Portugal autonomy over Catholic ministries both domestic and abroad; and moreover, divided the world into Spanish and Portuguese territories. Whereas Spain held jurisdiction over the Western hemisphere, Portugal held it over the Eastern hemisphere. Up until the decline of the Portuguese empire a century later, the Portuguese government chose which Jesuits were to be sent to China. Though the Portuguese authorities preferred to send their own abroad, the small size of the Portuguese nation limited their options. As a result, Italian Jesuits such as Michele Ruggieri, Matteo Ricci, Niccolò Longobardo (1559-1654), Giulio Aleni (1582-1649), Prospero Intorcetta

(Right) The observatory at Peking, from *A description of the empire of China and Chinese-Tartary*, Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, 1738

*The OBSERVATORY
at
PE-KING.*



- a Steps going up to the Observatory.
b A Retiring Room for those that make Observations.
c The Equinoctial Sphere.
d A Celestial Globe.
e The Zodiacal Sphere.
f A Zenithal Horizon.
g A Quadrant.
h A Sextant.



Confucius Sinarum Philosophus, Frs Intorcetta, Herdtrich, Rougemont and Couplet, 1687; rebound by Mark Esser

(1625-1696), Martino Martini (1614-1661), Claudio Filippo Grimaldi (1638-1712) and the painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766), played salient roles in the early, Portuguese-mandated Jesuit mission in China.³

For this reason, Jesuit transmission of Chinese philosophy and culture occurred almost exclusively through Portugal, Italy, and Spain up until the late seventeenth century—at which time the French monarchy began to influence the Jesuit mission in China. The French monarch, Louis XIV (1638-1715), approved of the Jesuit enterprise in China, and sent French Jesuits to China independently of the Portuguese Vice-Province. A scholastic alliance with China was yet another platform that the king could use to enhance his growing power and recognition within Europe.⁴ The Flemish Jesuits Philippe Couplet (1623-1693) and Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) advocated on behalf of the Jesuit mission in the French court. Couplet managed to persuade Louis XIV that the way in which the Jesuits engaged the Chinese in scientific dialogue would advance France’s own scientific interests. Whereas Rome was at the vanguard of scientific development at the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the end of the century Paris had taken its place. Sending French Jesuits abroad offered a way for Louis XIV to extend his influence to the Far East; and by sending French Jesuits well trained in the sciences, he could

gain influence in the Chinese Imperial Court. Among the handful of Jesuits sent to China by the French mission were Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730), Louis Le Comte (1665-1728) and Guy Tachard (1648-1712).⁵ Sent to the Chinese court with the title of “Mathematiciens du Roi,” these men were prominent figures of the Jesuit mission during the seventeenth century.⁶

Germans also took part in the Jesuit mission in China. Johannes Schreck (1576-1630), Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592-1666) and Ignatius Kögler (1680-1746) were three Germans well known for their contributions to astronomy and calendar making. From 1645 to 1664, Schall was the director at the Astronomical Bureau and from 1720 to 1746, Kögler occupied the same prestigious position.⁷

The success of the Jesuit mission in China reverberated throughout China and Europe, in both religious and secular circles. Through following Ricci’s method of indirect apostolate—which taught mathematics and philosophy along with the gospel—the Jesuit mission in China promoted developments in science, philosophy and Christianity. In order to evangelize Chinese persons, the Jesuits accommodated Western concepts into Chinese culture and philosophy, and in order to awaken Chinese interest in European culture, the Jesuits engaged Chinese officials and intellectuals in scientific dialogue. The majority of the missionaries who worked in the imperial service of the emperor were Jesuits. The Jesuits worked within the Imperial Court in Beijing on behalf of the Astronomical Bureau, and some went so far as to become personal advisors of the emperor.⁸

That being said, the study and mastery of secular disciplines was a vital component of the Jesuit mission in China. By engaging Chinese scholars and officials in scientific dialogue, the Jesuits introduced Chinese scholars to European culture. In fact, publication was the primary role of scientific inquiry in China. Jesuits located in China were substantially connected to scientific communities in Europe. European intellectuals supplied Jesuits with the most recent scholarly publications and the Jesuits, in return, provided Europe with information about China. Jesuit cultural learnings of the Chinese civilization were not, however, limited to the sciences. The Jesuits translated and published Chinese teachings, such as Confucian maxims, and wrote extensively on Chinese political, social, and religious systems. European intellectuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were very much aware of the Jesuit enterprise in China. Through publication and personal correspondence, the Jesuit mission acquainted and informed Europe of the culture and philosophy of China.⁹

Direct correspondence between Jesuits and Western intellectuals was instrumental to the circulation of information regarding the Jesuit mission and the disciplines they studied. Already recognized as leaders in their respective fields, Jesuits such as Johannes Schreck and Ignatius Kögler embarked on their journey to China with the specific assignment of studying Chinese philosophy, mathematics,

and science. While in China Schreck and Kögler capitalized on their knowledge of both Western and Eastern disciplines to facilitate transcultural communication.

Born in the Holy Roman Empire, the German Jesuit Johannes Terrenz Schreck—also known by his Latin name, Terrentius Constantiensis, and his Chinese name, Deng Yuhan—was a renowned physician, mathematician and scientist. He befriended Galileo Galilei while studying at the Academy of Lincei in Rome and later became one of Galileo’s disciples at the University of Altdorf in Padua. In 1611, Schreck became a Jesuit, whereupon Galileo remarked that the departure of Schreck was a “great loss” to their academic community. In 1618, Schreck sailed for China. While stationed abroad, Schreck continued the operation of the Imperial Observatory begun by Matteo Ricci. With the permission of the Chinese emperor, he spearheaded the Chinese calendar reform initiative and translated Western astronomy textbooks into Chinese and Chinese mathematical and astronomy books into Romance languages. Together with Adam Schall von Bell, he published *Chong chen li shu* (Calendar of the emperor Chongzhen) and with Niccolò Longobardo, he published *Zheng qiu sheng du biao* (About the right construction of the sphere). Schreck collaborated on a dozen other publications. He maintained contact with both Galileo and Johannes Kepler while living in China and published the *Epistolium ex regno Sinarum ad mathematicos Europaeos missum, cum commentatiuncula Joannes Keppleri* in Europe.¹⁰

Born in Germany, Kögler—known as Dai Jinxian in Chinese—joined the Society of Jesus in 1696. His knowledge of mathematics and astronomy led him to join the Jesuit mission in China, and in 1716 he sailed for Macau. Soon after arriving, Kögler was inaugurated as the president of the Astronomical Tribunal by the Emperor Kangxi. In 1742, Kögler drew up an improved astronomical system based upon Newton’s lunar theory with the help of a Jesuit colleague and forty other Chinese astronomers. Called *Lixiang Kao Cheng Houbian* (LKH), the collaboration was published in ten volumes and was the first document in which the Chinese name for Newton, Nei Guan, appears. A new Chinese calendar was derived from the *Lixiang Kao Cheng Houbian* and remained in use from 1742 to 1924. The new calendar solved the issue of accurately predicting solar and lunar eclipses, which was a feat of the greatest importance to the credibility of the Chinese emperor. Kögler published in both Chinese and European languages. He died in 1746.¹¹

The most famous Jesuit correspondence involving a Western intellectual outside of China took place between Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) and both Claudio Filippo Grimaldi and Joachim Bouvet.¹² Leibniz first mentioned China in his *De Arte Combinatoria* (1666) and last mentioned China in a letter he wrote in 1717, in which he offered his calculation machine as a gift to the Chinese emperor. Leibniz spent half a century acquainting himself with Chinese



Airs Chinois, from *A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese-Tartary*,
Jean-Baptiste Du Halde; 1738, photograph by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.

publications and reports of all types. In Volume I of his *Pensées*, he wrote extensively about the morality and philosophy of the Chinese. In the section entitled “Eloge de Chinois” meaning “Praise for the Chinese,” Leibniz stated that while the Europeans excelled in theoretical disciplines, the Chinese surpassed the West in matters of applied philosophy, civil life and the practice of natural theology. As he wrote to Grimaldi in 1689, “Physics relies more on practical observations, and mathematics needs considered understanding. In these two fields Europe is excellent. But the Chinese are superior in practical experience, since the flourishing of their empire over so many millennia let them retain old traditions that had been largely lost in Europe through the People’s Migrations.”¹³

The cross-cultural exchange of information, facilitated to a great extent by the Jesuits, awakened European interest in China. Like Leibniz, Western intellectuals paid particular attention to the *modus operandi* of the Chinese civilization. Jesuit missionaries highlighted the sophistication of Chinese civilization and the practical theology of Confucianism. Jesuit reports portrayed the Chinese *literati* as elite members of the Chinese court; as persons of high moral integrity stemming from the principles of Confucianism; and as belonging to a stable and prosperous nation ruled by a central authority. In this way, many Enlightenment Intellectuals came to view China as a model of society that was civilized, ethical, and most importantly, atheistic—in the sense that the Chinese



Memoirs and remarks geographical, historical, topographical, physical and ecclesiastical made in above ten years travels through the empire of China, Louis Le Comte, 1737

did not worship the Judeo-Christian God. The Enlightenment philosophers championed secular humanism and social criticism. Through the practical application of their intellectual doctrines, Enlightenment thinkers sought to influence—and correct—imperfect political and social policies. Enlightenment philosophers were also notorious opponents of the Catholic Church and aristocratic despotism. That said, the sophistication and virtuosity of Chinese society corroborated the Enlightenment claim that universal human reason could effectively govern society without the wisdom of revealed religion. At the time, European philosophers dreamt of enlightened despotism and it appeared that Chinese civilization was an example of such enlightened rule.

Confucianism and the later interpretation of that philosophy known as Neo-Confucianism were also met with great acclaim among Enlightenment thinkers. The Confucian concept of *li* was very similar to the deist belief in God as the “Great Watchmaker,” meaning God surveys but does not intervene in the progress of humanity. The Confucian emphasis on social harmony was also particularly appealing to a group of thinkers plagued by the inherent disaccord amidst warring states and religions.¹⁴ Confucian principles stress the importance of leading lives that uphold filial responsibilities for the purpose of instilling virtue and social responsibility. Intrigued by such teachings, Enlightenment thinkers such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Arouet Voltaire and Christian de Wolff continued to investigate the principles and doctrines of Confucius and Neo-Confucianism in search of a “common humanity.”

Although the Jesuits chose to focus their efforts on the accommodation of Christianity into Confucian concepts, Jesuits in China were also aware of the prevalence of Buddhism and Daoism. Of China’s three major spiritual beliefs—namely, Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism—only Confucianism was assigned a Latin name. The name Daoism originated from the Chinese term *Dao*, meaning “the way,” and the name Buddhism originated from the Sanskrit root *budh*, meaning “to know.” Confucianism, on the other hand, is a completely Latinized term that originates from the Chinese name Kong Fuzi or Master Kong. The decision to Romanize the name Kong Fuzi stemmed from the Jesuits’ interest in his philosophy and wisdom, which bears remarkable similarities to Western morality. It was the intention of the Jesuits to use the morality of Kong Fuzi as an avenue through which they could demonstrate the similarities between Western and Chinese morality; and moreover, corroborate their claim that Kong Fuzi, or Confucius, was a cultural representation of monotheistic thought—and not a deity.¹⁵

In addition to its philosophy, Chinese history also gained considerable interest among Enlightenment thinkers because if Chinese history predated the events of the Bible, it would disprove the biblical world chronology. The notion that the biblical world chronology was not the sole history of human existence

was met with excitement by philosophers like Voltaire, who saw this revelation not only as a means to undermine Church authority but also as a chance to construct the true world chronology. In fact, the proof supporting the existence of a separate Chinese history became a large enough threat to the authority of the Church that it issued documentation affirming that the Chinese were descendants of Shem, the son of Noah.¹⁶

Interest in Chinese culture was not limited to intellectual inquiry. Although the Enlightenment movement took particular interest in Chinese culture on account of its secularism and adherence to “natural morality,” the rest of Europe (or at least aristocratic Europe) took notice of the “exoticism” of Chinese culture. Both fictitious and factual accounts of China enthralled Europeans by depicting a fanciful “otherness” that was unlike the way of life they were familiar with.¹⁷ Known as *Chinoiserie*, Europe’s fascination with Chinese culture permeated throughout the continent during the same period as the European Enlightenment. *Chinoiserie* was evident among European interpretations of Chinese culture depicted in porcelain, laquerware and gardens, and by Rococo painters such as the Frenchmen Antoine Watteau and François Boucher.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the publications and reports of Jesuit missionaries were Europe’s main source of knowledge regarding China.¹⁸ Reporting on philosophy, mathematics, science, botany, musicology and astronomy, the Jesuit missionaries disseminated knowledge of the Chinese civilization across Europe. The Jesuits in China were pioneers of Sinology. Men such as Ricci, Couplet, Schreck and Kögler, among others, dedicated their lives to engaging the Chinese elite in aspects of their culture and philosophy, be it mathematics, astronomy or Confucianism. Moreover, Jesuit publications and accounts of China framed intellectual discussion of Chinese civilization in Europe. Until 1750, no Enlightenment intellectual of note had ever visited China or learned to speak the Chinese language.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the Jesuit mission in China had been underway since 1582. Through dedication to their mission in China, the Jesuits ignited an ongoing, cross-cultural dialogue between Western and Eastern customs, philosophies and cultural learnings that began in the late sixteenth century and has continued ever since.



Notes

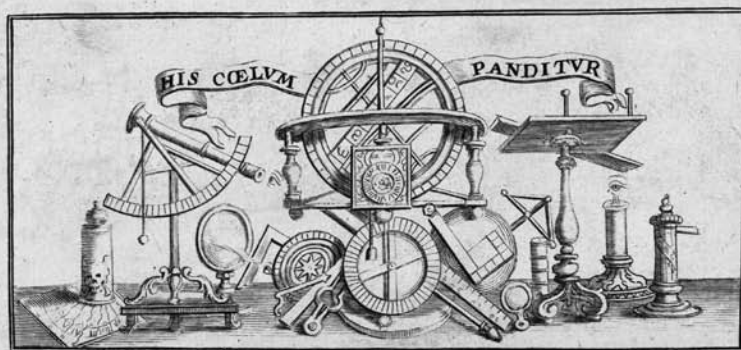
- ¹ David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 15.
- ² Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *The handbook of Christianity: Volume one: 635-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 309.
- ³ Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 309-330; Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation*, 23-24.
- ⁴ Guy Basil, *The French image of China before and after Voltaire* (Geneva: Delices, 1963), 35.
- ⁵ Although Tachard never in fact made it to China, he was among the first group sent.
- ⁶ Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 309-330.
- ⁷ Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 309-330.
- ⁸ Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 309.
- ⁹ Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 689-691.
- ¹⁰ *Stochastikon Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Biography of Johannes Schreck SJ, China missionary and scholar," accessed December 13, 2010, <http://encyclopedia.stochastikon.com>.
- ¹¹ *Stochastikon Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Biography of Ignaz Kögler SJ, China missionary," accessed December 13, 2010, <http://encyclopedia.stochastikon.com>; Nick Kollerstrom, "How Newton inspired China's calendar," *Astronomy & Geophysics* Vol.4, Issue 5 (2000), 21.
- ¹² Standaert, *The Handbook of Christianity*, 691.
- ¹³ Wenchao Li, Hans Poser, "Leibniz's positive view of China," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* Vol. 33, Issue 1 (2006): 17-33; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Pensées de Leibniz, sur la religion et la morale* (Paris: Nyon, 1803), 50-51.
- ¹⁴ The concept of *li* refers to propriety or the practice of proper etiquette and ritual. While *ren*, meaning humanism, is the cardinal principle of Confucianism, submission and obedience to *li* is the key to a cultivation of *ren*. Although *li* originally was referred to as meaning "rites of sacrifice," over time, its meaning has expanded to include the practice of polite and proper behavior. Essential to any understanding of *li* is its contribution to social order through the cultivation of *ren*, for in this way *li* was perceived as the governing rule of the universe and the fundamental authority of human behavior. See J.O. Yum, "Confucianism and communication: Jen, li, and ubuntu." (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Miami Beach, FL, November 2003).
- ¹⁵ Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 5-9.
- ¹⁶ Basil Guy, "The French image of China before and after Voltaire," 40.
- ¹⁷ Walter W. Davis, "China, the Confucian ideal, and the European Age of Enlightenment," 35.
- ¹⁸ Thomas Fuchs, Martin Schönfeld (trans.), "The European China-receptions from Leibniz to Kant," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* (2006), 37.
- ¹⁹ Walter Demel, "China in the political thought of Western and Central Europe, 1570-1750," in *China and Europe: images and influences in sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, ed. Thomas H.C. Lee (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1991), 45.

VOYAGE DE SIAM,

DES PERES JESUITES.

Envoyez par le ROY aux Indes
& à la Chine. JS

AVEC LEURS OBSERVATIONS
*Astronomiques, Et leurs Remarques de Physique,
de Géographie, d'Hydrographie, & d'Histoire.*



A PARIS,
Chez { ARNOULD SENEUZE, rue de la Harpe, à la Sphere.
ET
DANIEL HORTHEMELS, rue de la Harpe, au Mécenas.

M. DC. LXXXVI.
PAR ORDRE EXPREZ DE SA MAJESTE'.
JS.

FROM CHINA TO CHESTNUT HILL: REFLECTIONS ON ISSUES OF PROVENANCE

Caitlin M. Cain

Boston College's Jesuitana Collection—which showcases Jesuit contribution to learning and cultural exchange—is the largest collection amidst the twenty-eight Jesuit universities in the United States, and, over time, has become one of the leading repositories of Jesuit works in the country. The collection has grown significantly throughout the 1990s. In 1996, the Burns Library received an additional 1,200 Jesuit works from the Weston School of Theology, then based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The following year, in 1997, the Burns Library doubled its collection with an even larger acquisition—5,000 rare works—from the Bibliotheque des Fontaines, the world's largest Jesuit library, in Chantilly, France. From these acquisitions, the Jesuitana Collection presently holds over 2,500 rare works that predate 1773, the year that the papacy suppressed the Jesuit Order.¹ The Society remained suppressed until August 1814, at which time Pope Pius VII formally brought it back into being via the papal bull of restoration *Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum*.

The successful consolidation of this portion of the Chantilly collection into the Burns Library at Boston College represented a trend that has occurred often throughout the history of the Jesuits. Most of these collections have emerged from situations where institutions were downscaled or closed, or from a concerted effort to bring all the works together under one roof.

Following the restoration of the Jesuits and throughout the 1800s, the French Jesuit provinces began buying dispersed books, particularly those concerning philosophy, from a variety of locations. By the middle of the twentieth century, one of the largest repositories was located at the Centre Culturel des Fontaines located in Gouvieux, just outside Chantilly, France. It was common at the time for these collections to be based at sites of Jesuit learning, usually in the countryside away from urban commotion. When the Centre Culturel des Fontaines closed, however, its collection of Jesuitica and philosophical works (numbering more than 40,000 volumes) was moved to Centre Sèvres, the Jesuit Theologate at Rue De Sèvres, Paris. During the relocation, the Municipal Library of Lyon received around 500,000 works from Chantilly, including more than 12,000 works in Chinese.² Boston College also bought a portion of the collection—5000 works—that primarily dealt with East-West cultural exchange for the Burns Library.

Similar to Chantilly relocating to Paris, the Woodstock Collection has merged with Georgetown University. The original Woodstock College was founded in Maryland in 1869 as a college aimed at the education of young Jesuits and continued to prepare these priests for the next 100 years. After Vatican II, Jesuits began to believe that they should be educated amid the urban environment instead of in rural isolation, and Woodstock moved to New York City in 1969. In 1972, Woodstock lost its designation as a college; however, its mission and esteemed library were relocated to Washington, D.C., and converted into the Jesuit Center for Theological Reflection—now referred to as the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University. It has become a premiere research center for theologians and other scholars regarding ethical and social concerns within the United States and abroad, and the Woodstock Theological Center Library boasts an extensive collection of Jesuit works, including letters of St. Ignatius Loyola and the journal of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.. The new Soave Collection resulted from the recent acquisition of primary Jesuit texts from the Libreria Antiquaria Soave in Torino, Italy.³

Further, the Maurits Sabbe Library in Leuven, Belgium, was a collaborative effort to consolidate Jesuit works from the area. The Theology Library within the Catholic University of Leuven was inaugurated in 1974, stemming from the efforts of Professor Maurits Sabbe to amass a vast collection of works. The greater part of the collection came from already existing collections—the theological library of the Flemish Jesuits at Heverlee and the collection from the Major Seminary at Malines, also in Belgium. Individual contributors and other collections from other religious affiliations have also been incorporated, and in the fall of 2006, the library received the transfer of the Dutch Jesuit Province's Nijmegen Jesuitica collection. At present, the Maurits Sabbe Library contains over 170,000 books published in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and over three hundred incunabula—books and pamphlets printed before the year 1500.⁴

At other times, however, remarkable collections such as these exist because there has been external pressure. In the Chinese context, the Jesuits established a library at Beijing's North Church, referred to as the Beitang. The Beitang's library, founded in 1693 and dedicated to Jesus the Savior, began with volumes brought from Europe to China in 1620 by the Jesuit missionary Nicolas Trigault. The church was taken over by French Lazarists (also known as the Vincentians) after the rites controversy of the early eighteenth century contributed to the disbanding of the Jesuits. Then, it was forcibly confiscated by the nascent communist government when Christianity was made illegal, and after 1949 was integrated into the National Library of Beijing in accordance with the communist government's decree of secularization and renationalization of all previously foreign-owned property within China.⁵



Imperio de la China, P. Semedo, 1642, limp vellum bound; photograph by Kerry Burke

The other of the two Jesuit libraries in China at the forefront of their scholarly endeavors was the Xujiahui (or Zikawei) theology library in Shanghai. This was begun in 1847 as a Jesuit residence, five years after the Jesuits had been able to return to China. The newly restored mission aimed at continuing the legacy of Matteo Ricci, perhaps the most significant of the Jesuit missionaries to China, and his able successors.

In the early years of the Society's return to Shanghai, the head of the mission, Father Claude Gotteland, S.J., set aside room for a collection of books that would support the Jesuits' work. As the collection grew, the library itself expanded in 1860 and was relocated to a larger building in 1906. It became a center for original research aimed at scholarship and scientific endeavor and boasted the largest collection of local gazetteers in China. The works acquired by scholars for the library focused on Chinese-Western interaction, and like earlier Jesuits to China, the mission priests worked as both scholars and ministers, exhibited respect for Chinese culture and worked toward slowly finding a place for Christianity within Chinese culture. Like other previously foreign-run religious entities, the Xujiahui Library was confiscated by the new government in 1956 and

became part of the Shanghai Municipal Library, which had been established in 1952. The old library was re-opened in 2003, and the collection once more made available to the general public.⁶

The Jesuits have never been compensated for the confiscation of these works, and have received barely any acknowledgment for the great acts of collection and custodial care that such a library represents. Thus, in many ways, the apparent strangeness of Boston College receiving a great library from French Jesuits can be seen as part of this long line of library amalgamations. It also exemplifies the Jesuits' desire to preserve not only the knowledge contained in the collection but also the patrimony of the Society, which can then be offered to the world.

Over 300 years have passed since most of the works featured in the Jesuitana exhibition *Binding Friendship: Ricci, China, and Jesuit Cultural Learnings* were published. Each of these early works has taken a unique path from various locations across Europe to their present home at Boston College. Although the issue of provenance for each of these works is fascinating, the following works serve as illustrative examples of some of the riches contained in the collection.

Imperio de la China, by Alvaro Semedo (1585-1658), was originally published in 1641 in Portuguese under the title *Relação de pragação da fé no reyno da China e outros adjacentes*.⁷ It was then translated into Spanish, rearranged and given its historical style by Manuel de Faria e Sousa before publication in Madrid in 1642 by Juan Sanchez. The Burns Library's copy of Semedo is a first-Spanish-language edition from 1642. On the inside of the front cover is written in pencil at the top: "10/85 J. Mancevice (Worcester, Mass.)-\$850" and on the title page, penciled underneath the author's name, is "First Edition, Cordier, I, p 24, Bell Cat, S005." The Cordier most affiliated with Chinese as well as Catholic studies is Henri Cordier (1849-1925), a specialist on Chinese affairs and professor of history, geography and the legal systems of the Far East at the School of Oriental Languages in Paris. He was also a professor at the National Foundation of Political Studies and the Paris Institute of Political Studies and was the editor-in-chief of *T'oung Pao*, an international journal focused on Chinese affairs. He lived in China for seven years from 1869-1876 and his greatest published works include: *The Travels of Marco Polo: The Complete Yule-Cordier Edition* (1920); *Catholic Encyclopedia* editions *China*, *Evariste Regis Huc*, *Tibet* and *The Church in China* (1913); and *Bibliotheca sinica: Dictionnaire bibliographique des ouvrages relatifs à l'Empire chinois* (1895).⁸ Further, the J. Mancevice inscription could refer to the Jeffery D. Mancevice Rare Books store in Worcester, Mass., a private company established in 1982 specializing in early printed books, illustrated books, incunabula, Jesuit authors, medicine, the Reformation, the Renaissance and science.⁹ The copy of Semedo's work may have been bought or donated from this store to the Burns Library.

A collection of letters from Jesuits was compiled and edited by Joseph Stöcklein (1676-1733).¹⁰ The letters were published in German from 1726-1758 in Augsburg and Gratz, Germany, by Martin Phillip and Johann Veith seelige Erben. The Burns Library currently possesses three editions of these letters from the years 1728, 1732 and 1736. All three have a paper label on the front page with the bookplate of Ignatius Sargent, Jr. The bookplate bears the family crest with the motto: *nec quaerere honorem nec spernere*, meaning “neither to seek nor to despise honors.” The crest displays a thick inverted V with two jumping fish above it and one fish below it. An eagle is poised on a striped bar above the fish with its wings spread. Although there were a number of Sargent families residing in New England, this family crest and motto links the ownership of the letters to the Sargent family of Gloucester, Massachusetts. The same crest was found on Ignatius Sargent’s personalized porcelain plates from China in the early 1800s; a large part of the collection is now on display at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. The bookplate inside the Jesuit letters, which was engraved by Joseph Callender, was supposedly used as the source for the Chinese decorators to duplicate.¹¹

Athanasius Kircher’s (1602-1680) *China Illustrata* was published in Amsterdam in 1667.¹² Although Burns Library does possess two copies of *China*



Bookstamp from the Jacob Van Meurs edition of *China Monumentis*, Athanasius Kircher, 1667; photograph by Kerry Burke

Illustrata by his original publishers Janssonius van Waesberge and Elizaëus Weyerstraten, it also has an unauthorized copy of the original printed by Jacob van Meurs. Although it includes the same text, van Meurs included artfully copied engravings in a smaller format. Remarkably, when van Waesberge and Weyerstraten learned of this reprint, they called for a meeting between the publishers to be mediated by fellow Amsterdam printers and attended by a public notary. The meeting took place on June 27, 1667, and the injured parties requested that van Meurs turn over all his copies of the book and his printing plates and prohibited him from printing any other copies in the future. In return, they paid van Meurs 3,450 florins to cover the costs of his publication. Following the cordial settlement, the subsequent printings from Waesberge and Weyerstraten's shop included the smaller engravings originally found in van Meurs's copy. The Burns Library owns one original copy that predates the van Meurs reprint and one that was published after it, complete with his engravings.

The edition of *China Illustrata* published by van Meurs has an armorial bookplate of George Gostling on its inside front cover bearing the motto *spernit pericula virtus* meaning "virtue despises dangers." There was a George Gostling who was a proctor in the British Admiralty at the time of the War of 1812 between the United States and England.¹³ Another George Gostling bookplate was found in a 1784 copy of Dandré-Bardon's *Costume des anciens peuples, à l'usage des artistes*, edited by C. Cochin in Paris, on sale in London in early 2011 by Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts in London.¹⁴ Other copies of works that bear armorial bookplates of George Gostling are *M. Tulli Ciceronis De officiis libri tres*, *Cato Major*, *Laelius*, *Paradoxa*, *Somnium Sciponis* by Cicero, published in 1688 in Amsterdam and listed on Open Library,¹⁵ and Aulus Gellius's *Noctus Atticae*, published in Venice in 1489 and currently at the Smithsonian Institution Library.¹⁶ The wide range of bookplates possibly indicates that the same George Gostling may once have had an extensive collection of rare manuscripts.

Also on the front page of van Meurs's *China Illustrata* is a fading copperplate signature for a C. Morton. This could connect the book to Charles Morton (1627-1698), a nonconformist minister who kept a school in Newington Green, London. Facing persecution, Morton emigrated to New England in 1685 where he became Harvard College's first vice president and published his compendium of physics in 1687.¹⁷ Should this be the same C. Morton as the owner of the book, he would have had possession of *China Illustrata* prior to either of the George Gostlings, being that the book was only published in 1667.

The first copy of *China Illustrata* printed by the original publishers van Waesberge and Weyerstraten includes a bookseller's label for "Maisonneuve Freres, 3 Rue de Sabot, Paris ... Libraire Orientale & Américaine, Livres Anciens & Modernes," while copy two, the one complete with van Meurs's engravings, bears

ink stamps from both Boston College and Weston College Library on the title page, referencing their previous as well as present home.

The copy of *The Voyages of Alexandre de Rhodes* by Alexandre de Rhodes (1591-1660) that is currently at the Burns Library is a second edition, published in 1666 in Paris by S. Mabre-Cramoisy.¹⁸ The front cover bears the heraldic bookplate of “The Honble. Frederic North” with the motto *la veretue est la seule noblesse*, meaning “virtue is the only true nobility.” The crest exhibits a lion surrounded by three *fleur de lys* and a crescent moon, all surmounted by a dragon’s head. This was the family crest of the North family; therefore, The Honorable Frederic North could refer to one of two men bearing this name: the British Prime Minister Fredrick North (1732-92), known as Lord North, who led Great Britain through much of the American Revolutionary War, or his younger son, Fredrick North (1766-1827), the Fifth Earl of Guilford, representative to Parliament from 1792-94 and governor of Ceylon at the turn of the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Further, the front page also has a lightly penciled signature of an unknown Edith F. Bixby and a note that the book was a gift from Stephen C. Griffin ’65 in 4/80 to the Burns Library.

In addition to the copies contained in Boston College’s extraordinary Jesuitana Collection, it is true that other copies of these works can be found in various places around the country, as well as at the Municipal Library of Lyon in France. The Woodstock Theological Center Library has a first edition of Alvaro Semedo’s *Imperio de la China* in Spanish, which appeared in Madrid in 1640, as well as a first edition of Athanasius Kircher’s *China Illustrata*, published in France in 1670.²⁰ The Municipal Library of Lyon has two copies of Kircher, both by the unauthorized publisher Jacob van Meurs from 1667, and three first-edition copies of Alexandre de Rhodes’s *Voyages*, published in Paris by S. Cramoisy in 1653 and one second-edition copy published by S. Mabre-Cramoisy in 1666.²¹ The Linda Hall Library in Kansas City, Missouri—a private library focused on science, engineering, and technology with a large Jesuitana collection—also has one copy of Kircher by his authorized publishers Waesberge and Weyerstraten from 1667.²² The conglomeration of all these exceptional works in one place at Boston College, however, is unique not only to universities in this country but to research institutions around the world.



Notes

- ¹ Mark Sullivan, "Burns Doubles Size of Jesuitana Collection," *The Chronicle*, http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/rvp/pubaf/chronicle/v6/o16/jesuitana.html.
- ² Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, <http://www.bm-lyon.fr/decouvrir/collections/fontaines-en.htm>.
- ³ Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University, <http://woodstock.georgetown.edu/>.
- ⁴ Jesuitica, <http://www.jesuitica.be/homepage.php>.
- ⁵ Catholic Churches: Beijing, http://www.chinaonlinecentre.org/china_churches_catholic_beijing.html.
- ⁶ Gail King, "The Xujiashui Library of Shanghai," *Libraries and Culture* 32, no. 4 (1997): http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~landc/fulltext/LandC_32_4_King.pdf.
- ⁷ Full catalog title: *Imperio de la China. I cultura evangelica en èl, por los religiosos de la Compañia de Jesus*.
- ⁸ Henri Cordier, http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/works-in-focus/search/commentaire/commentaire_id/henri-cordier-21097.html?no_cache=1&cHash=73cdaab967.
- ⁹ International League of Antiquarian Booksellers, http://www.ilab.org/eng/booksellers_main_page/ILAB_Booksellers_on_Video/ILAB_Booksellers_on_Video_Jeffrey_D._Mancevice.html.
- ¹⁰ Full catalog title: *Allerhand so lehr- als geist-reiche Brief, Schrifften und Reis-Beschreibungen, welche von denen Missionariis der Gesellschaft Jesu aus beyden Indien, und andern über Meer gelegenen Ländern, seit Anno 1642. biss 1726. in Europa angelangt seynd. Jetzt zum erstenmal Theils aus handschriftlichen Urkunden, Theils aus denen Frantzösischen Lettres Edifiantes verteutscht und zusammen getragen von Joseph Stöcklein*.
- ¹¹ Diplomatic Reception Rooms, <https://diplomaticrooms.state.gov/Pages/Item.aspx?item=105&rm=7>.
- ¹² Full catalog title: *Athanasii Kircheri e Soc. Jesu China monumentis: qua sacris quâ profanis, nec non variis naturae & artis spectaculis, aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis illustrata auspiciis Leopoldi primi, Roman. Imper. semper Augusti, munificentissimi mecaenatis*.
- ¹³ Great Britain, *The Navy List* (H.M. Stationery Office, 1814): 130.
- ¹⁴ Christies, http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=3840660.
- ¹⁵ Open Library, http://openlibrary.org/books/OL19267151M/M._Tullii_Ciceronis_De_officiis_libri_tres_Cato_Maior_Laelius_Paradoxa_Somnium_Scipionis.
- ¹⁶ Smithsonian Institution Libraries Publications, <http://www.sil.si.edu/digitalcollections/incunabula/CF/browse-results-title.cfm?title=Noctes%20Atticae>.
- ¹⁷ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19360?docPos=1>.
- ¹⁸ Full catalog title: *Divers voyages du P. Alexandre de Rhodes: en la Chine, & autres roiaumes de l'Orient, avec son retour en Europe par la Perse & l'Armenie. Le tout divisé en trois parties*.

¹⁹ Earl of Guilford. <http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/online/content/index559.htm>.

²⁰ The Woodstock Theological Center Library, <http://woodstock.georgetown.edu/library/index.htm>.

²¹ Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, <http://www.bm-lyon.fr/>.

²² Linda Hall Library, <http://www.lindahall.org/>.



Bookplate from a French book store on Rue de Sabot, Paris affixed to the inside cover of the
Waesberge and Weyerstraten edition of *China Monumentis* by Athanasius Kircher, 1667;
photograph by William J. Donovan



Title page, *Gnomonices Libri Octo*, Christopher Clavius, 1581

ACCOMPANYING IMAGES

The Jesuitana Collection is incredibly rich in historical, philosophical, scientific and religious information, among other things. It also contains many splendid images, maps and diagrams – everything from detailed descriptions of the *I Ching* through to fanciful renderings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius standing in his library with scribes at work behind him. The printing houses of Europe that were commissioned to publish these works took professional pride in making these scholarly tomes also objects of great beauty, and so they employed some of the best engravers and designers of their day to illustrate the factual content. These images today are themselves works of great historical significance. In the following pages, we have reproduced a diverse selection of images from the collection that resonate with the works we have chosen to display. On occasion, we have also placed modern images alongside the historical ones to illustrate the ongoing nature of this conversation of cultural learnings.

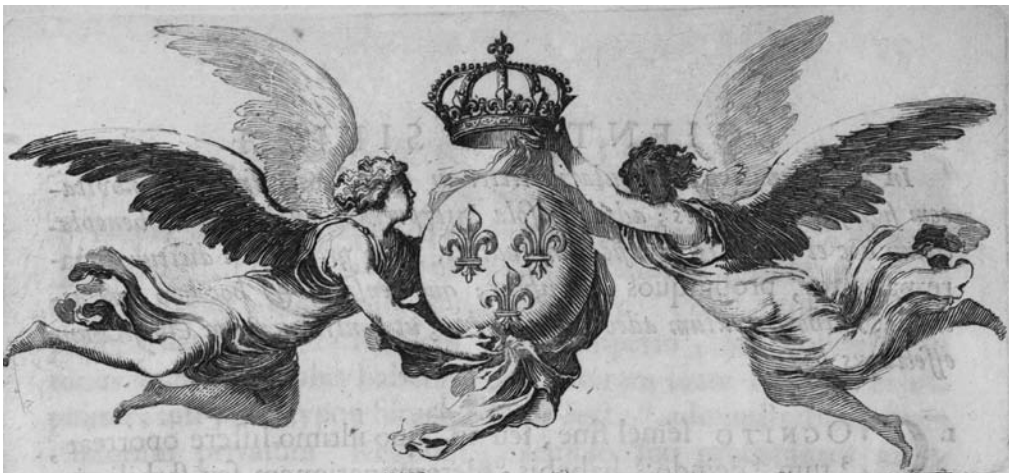
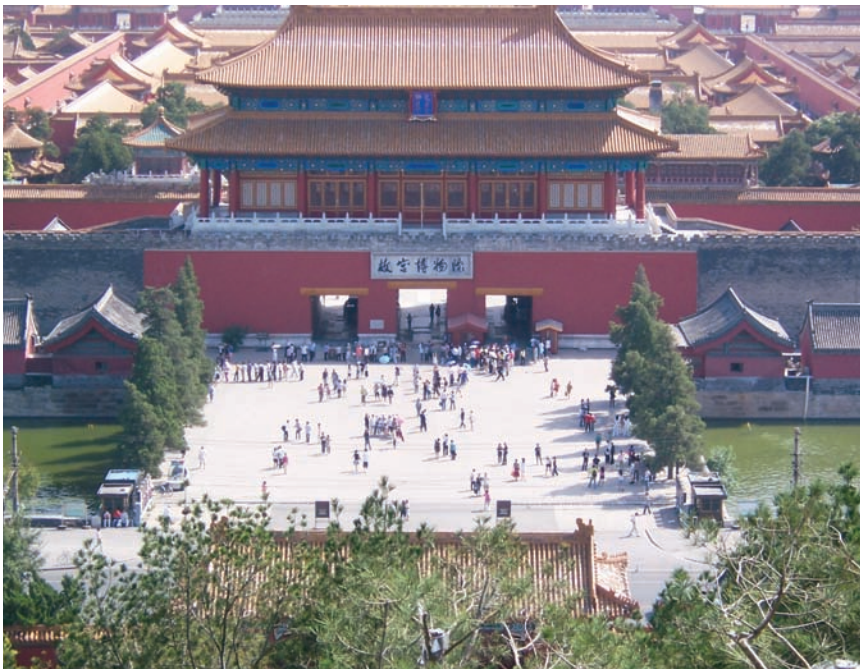
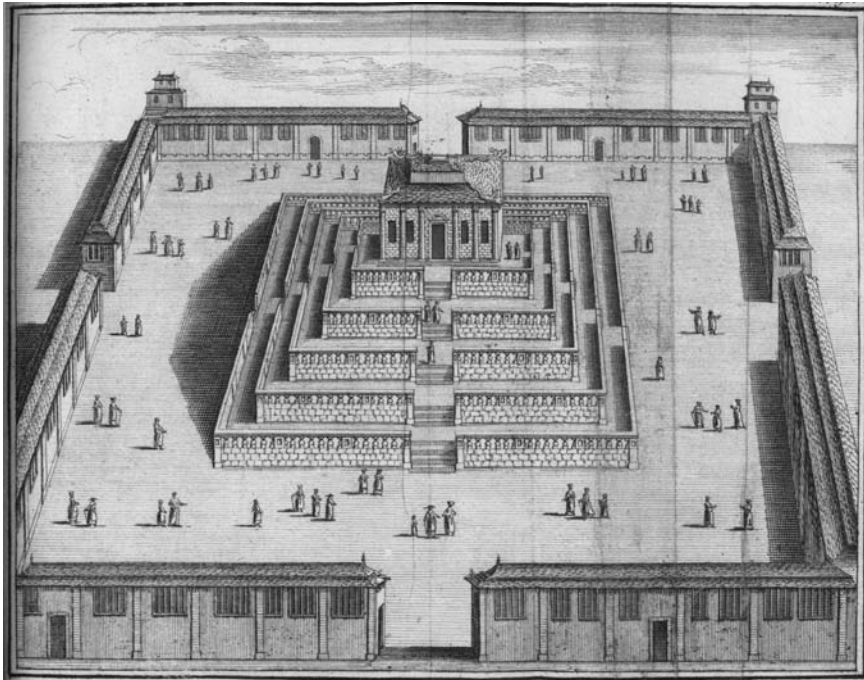


Image from *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, Couplet et al., 1687



Representation of the Chinese emperor, from Athanasius Kircher's *China Monumentis*



Two representations of the Forbidden City, one from Louis Le Comte's *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, 1696, and a photograph of the Gate of Divine Might, the northernmost gate of the Forbidden City complex in Beijing, by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



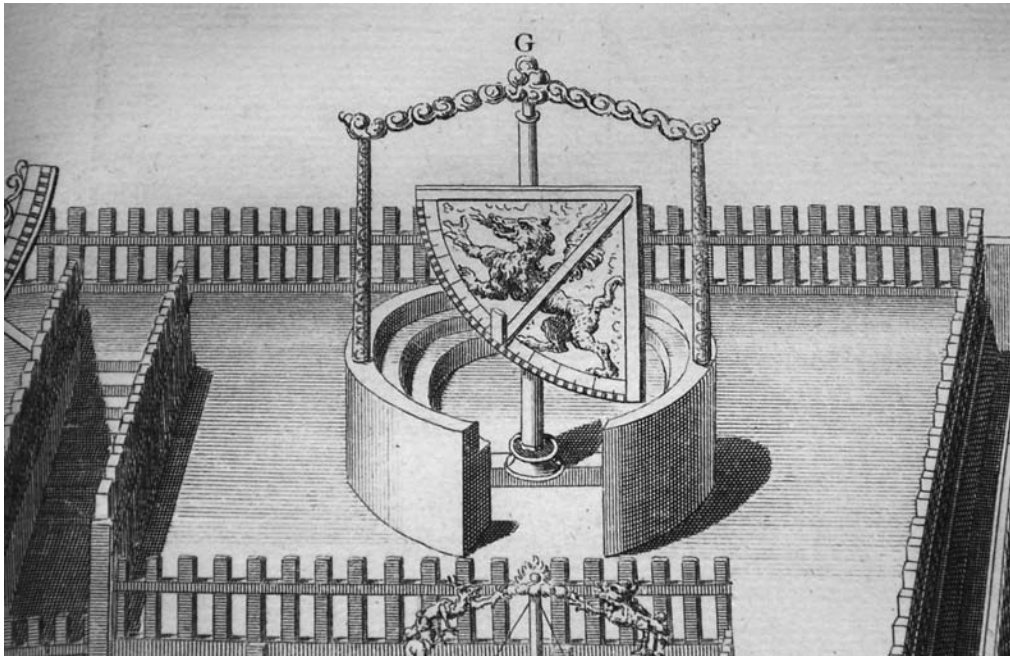
A beautiful woman of the Imperial Court, listening to a songbird (the Chinese character means “beautiful”), from Athanasius Kircher’s *China Monumentis*



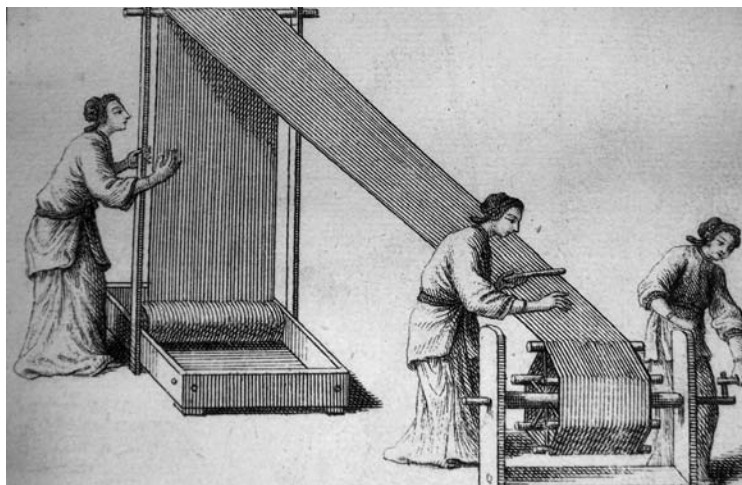
Candida Xu, granddaughter of Xu Guangqi and a prominent benefactress of the Church in China, especially in the Jiangnan region, from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*



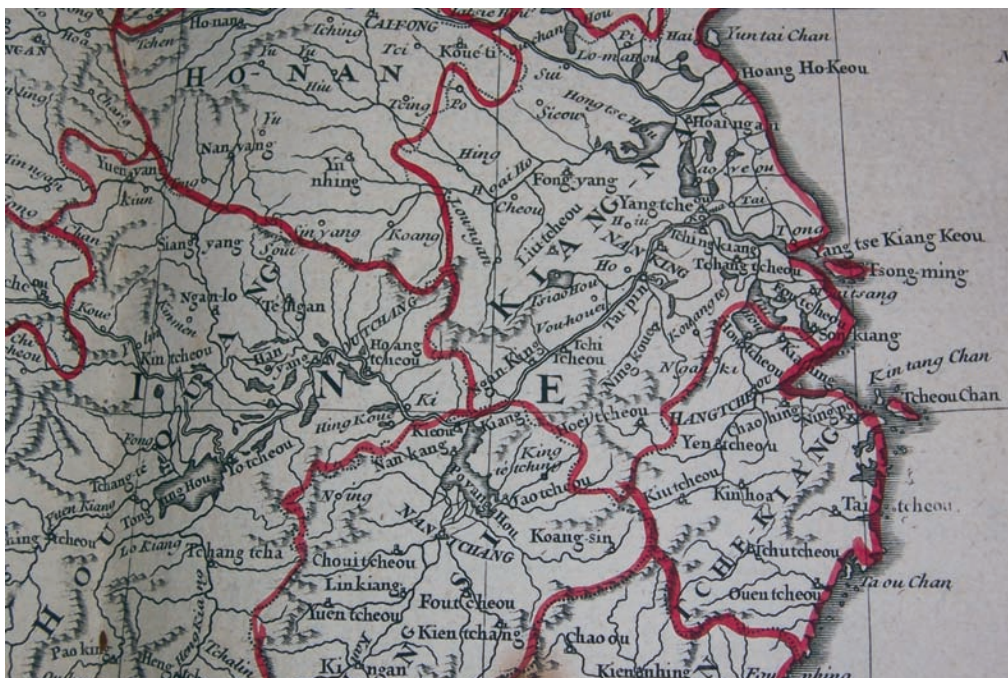
Procession passing through the Great Wall of China, from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, and a section of the Great Wall today; photograph by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



Old Jesuit Observatory, Beijing, from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, and a photograph of some of these instruments today by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



Representations of women involved in the production of silk, from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, and silk from Suzhou; photograph by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



Section of a map from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise* showing the Jiangnan region (which appears on the map as Kiangnan) and the province of Zhejiang (listed as Tche Kiang)



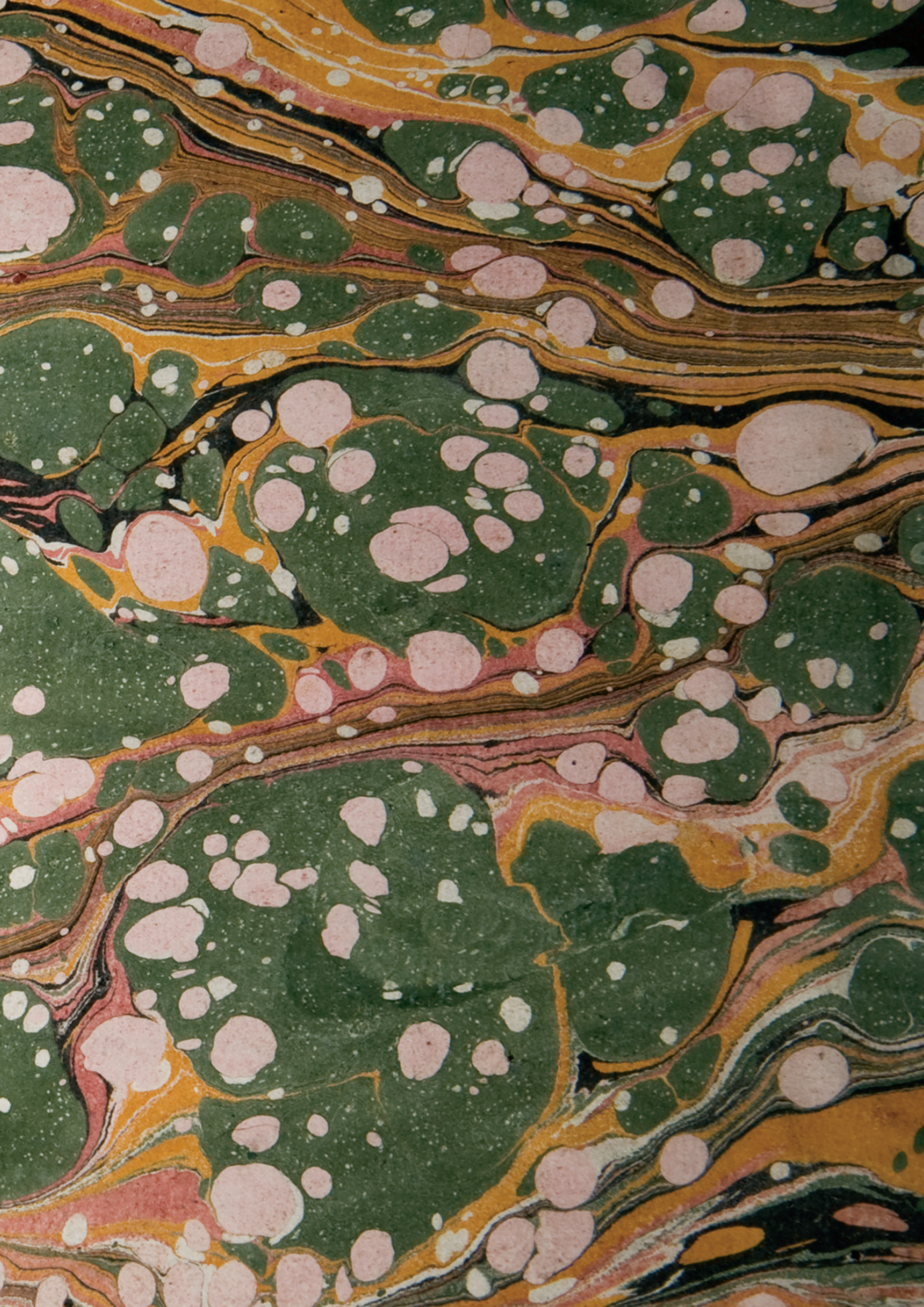
Section of modern stained-glass window from St Ignatius Cathedral, Shanghai;
photograph by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



The memorial cross of a Chinese Christian using French to translate the expression of faith on the cross's vertical post, from Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*



Statues of Matteo Ricci and Paul Xu Guangqi walking and talking in Guangqi Park, Shanghai, bound through their love of learning and of God; photograph by Jeremy Clarke, S.J.



AN EXHIBITION OF EARLY PRINTED WORKS

From the Jesuitana Collection of the

JOHN J. BURNS LIBRARY, BOSTON COLLEGE



*Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
The Jesuit Institute of Boston College*

2011