

## Father Matteo Ricci, S.J.: An Intellectual Biography

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Matteo Ricci<sup>1)</sup> was born on October 6, 1552, the year Francis Xavier had died, in Macerata, Italy. The oldest of eleven children, he was enrolled in the local Jesuit College at the age of nine. In 1568 he was sent to the University of Rome to study law. Three years later he joined the Society of Jesus entering the noviciate of S. Andrea in Quirinale. After taking his first vows, and a brief period of teaching at the Jesuit College in Firenze, he returned to Rome to enter the Collegio Romano. He studied philosophy and mathematics under the famous Christopher Clavius (Klau), the associate and friend of Kepler and Galileo and a leader in the Gregorian reform of the Julian calendar promulgated in 1582. Ricci also studied the geometry of Euclid, physics and the Ptolemaic system of astronomy as well as map-making and mechanics. Most of the scientific treatises on these subjects were later translated or adapted into Chinese by him or under his direction. He had practical talent as well, for from the making of sun-dials, he passed to the construction of clocks and other appliances which he made with

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1) For Ricci's biographical data see: Pasquale M. D'Elia, *S. Fonti Ricciane*. 3 vols. Roma 1942~1949; Louis Pfister, S.J., *Notices Biographiques et Bibliographiques sur les Jesuites de l'Ancienne Mission de Chine 1552~1773*. 2 vols. Shanghai 1932; Louis Gallagher, S.J., *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journal of Matthew Ricci*. New York 1952; Pietro Tacchi Venturi, S.J., *Opere storiche de P. Matteo Ricci, S. J.*. 2 vols. Macerata 1911, 1913.

exceptional ingenuity. When he passed to the study of theology he likewise showed special ability. The Jesuit Professor Roberto Bellarmino, today a Doctor of the Church, taught the course of controversy from which Ricci learned that clear exposition of doctrine which he put to such practical use in later years. Everyone predicted for the young student a great career as a professor but as his training progressed he was drawn to the foreign missions in the new world the discovery of which was one of the accomplishments of the Renaissance. In 1577, he was accepted for the Jesuit mission in the Indies under the Portuguese Padroado. He went to Portugal and prepared himself by continuing the study of theology at the University of Coimbra. He sailed from Lisbon in March 1578. For the next years he taught at the Jesuit College of St. Paul in Goa, except for a brief period in Cochin, where he was ordained to the priesthood in July of 1580. It was from here that Alessandro Valignano called him to Macao where he arrived on August 7, 1582. He was called to Macao at the suggestion of Michele Ruggieri who had been called for the same China enterprise in 1579.

In the meantime, between 1580 and 1582, Ruggieri had made four trips to Canton and one directly to Chao-ch'ing 肇慶. On this last one, in December 1582, he was accompanied by Francesco Pasio, Ricci still feeling the effects after a rough passage from India though he was to join them later.<sup>2)</sup> Unfortunately they could not remain but had to return to Macao. It was only on September 10, 1583, that Ruggieri and Ricci succeeded in establishing themselves in Chao-ch'ing permanently, Pasio in the meantime having gone to Japan. Ricci never left China again and died in Peking in 1610. In 1588 Valignano had decided to send Ruggieri to Rome to explain the situation and to petition the Pope to send an embassy to the emperor of China. For the occasion Ricci with the help of a Chinese scholar in Chao-ch'ing had drafted a Breve which Pope Sixtus V was to send to the emperor; it was engraved

2) *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* (hereafter ARSI) *Jap.-Sin.* 9 I, ff. 112-113v, 149-150v, 163-164v

in wood and was brought to Rome by Ruggieri to have it reproduced in the proper form. But the death of four Popes within a year and a half prevented further consideration of an official embassy, and by the end of that time the opportune moment had passed anyhow. The Breve Ricci drafted is now in the Bibliotheque National in Paris.<sup>3)</sup> In Europe Ruggieri's health failed and he never returned to China.

Thus it was in 1583 that the Jesuits were finally successful in obtaining permission from the governor-general of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, Kuo Ying-p'ing 郭應聘 to establish themselves at Chao-ch'ing, west of Canton, where the viceroy's residence was at that time. Through the assistance of the local prefect, Wang P'an 王泮, the two missionaries soon acquired a piece of land outside the city, where they built a house and a chapel in the European style, the first mission station in China. The magistrate presented the establishment with two plaques, one reading Hsien-hua ssu 僊花寺 (Fairy Flower Monastery), the other Hsi-lai ching-t'u 西來淨土 (Pure Land from the West), both indicating that the Chinese at that time thought of the missionaries as Buddhists since the missionaries following Valignano's instruction had adopted the Buddhist life-style. The first reference to the Christian God as T'ien-chu 天主 dates from this time. Through their exemplary life and their devotion to scholarship, and at the same time through their careful avoidance of any obstructive proselytizing the missionaries gradually succeeded in becoming respected and in making friends with a few educated Chinese. The sympathy manifested in public by the prefect greatly enhanced their prestige. Nevertheless they were also the target of xenophobia and jealousy and of calumnies. Ricci, once wrongly indicted, was able to prove his innocence and the calumniator was punished. Just a little later Ruggieri found it much more difficult to obtain vindication. In his residence Ricci displayed a world map which aroused the interest of some of his visitors. At their suggestion he

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3) D'Elia, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 249 n. 5

copied the map, translating the names into Chinese. This became the first edition of Ricci's famous *Mappamondo, Yü-ti shan-hai ch'üan-t'u* 輿地山海全圖, printed in 1584. No copies of this edition are extant, but the outlines are reproduced in the *T'u-shu pien* 圖書編<sup>4)</sup> by Chang Huang 章潢, who later became a friend of Ricci. His *Mappamondo* had six editions all together. The efforts of Ricci and Ruggieri to pave the way for further Jesuits to come to China and to penetrate other provinces, as well as the embarrassment caused by one of the few Christian converts who proved to be an impostor, increased the difficulties they met from certain officials and from the people. Ricci, however, becoming more and more familiar with the Chinese managed to stay on. The display of western clocks,<sup>5)</sup> Venetian prisms,<sup>6)</sup> European paintings and books unknown to the Chinese attracted many visitors of the official and educated class. Also by the gentle and cultivated way in which he entertained his guests Ricci formed a number of friendships among them and gained much respect from those who made his acquaintance never forgetting the primary purpose, the conversion of souls. The number of those baptized by the missionaries between 1583 and 1589, was around seventy. Nothing, however, could indefinitely guarantee favorable status for the missionaries. Nor could his friends protect Ricci when the newly appointed governor-general, Liu Chi-wen 劉繼文, in 1589, ordered them to leave, paying them an indemnity of only sixty silver taels, far below the real value of their property. In August of that year the Jesuits had to abandon their residence at Chao-ch'ing. But due to his adroitness in conversation with the viceroy, Ricci managed to get permission to settle at another place in the province. Instead of returning to Macao as originally ordered, Ricci

4) L. Carrington Goodrich (ed.), *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368~1644*. New York, London 1976.

5) In Chinese called "Tzu-ming chung" 自鳴鐘 or self-sticking clock, see D'Elia, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 39, 121.

6) By the Chinese called "Wu-chia chih pao" 無價之寶 or priceless treasure, see D'Elia, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 189.

went to Shao-chow 韶州 in the northern part of Kwangtung with a letter from Liu commending him to the local authorities. Ruggieri, as we have seen, was despatched to Rome by Valignano.

At Shao-chow, Ricci now more experienced with Chinese social conventions, found a more friendly atmosphere than at Chao-ch'ing. He soon received permission to acquire a piece of land and to build a house and a church. This time the church was built in the Chinese style. He established amicable relations with the officials and with members of the educated elite in and near Shao-chow. The local prefect granted particular protection to the missionaries and as a result mistreatment of the missionaries could be nipped in the bud. The climate, however, was not very salutary and Ricci's two successive companions, Antonio de Almeida and Francesco de Petris<sup>7)</sup> died in 1591 and 1593 respectively.

Attracted by the rumour that the foreign priests were experts in alchemy, Chū Ju-k'uei 瞿汝夔<sup>8)</sup> of the well known Chū family of Ch'ang-shu 常熟, asked Ricci if he might study under him. Ricci instructed him in mathematics and astronomy as well as in the Christian religion. Chu became a devoted student and later on a Christian. Western science was at that time somewhat ahead of Chinese science, and Chū spread the fame of the extraordinary scholarship of Ricci and thus induced not a few like-minded people to call on him.

Up to this time the Jesuits in China had adopted an attire similar to that of the Buddhist monks, and like them were referred to as seng 僧, or ho-shang 和尚, Ricci gradually had become aware, however, that the social status of monks was considered inferior to that of the

7) Antonio de Almeida was born at Trancoso in Portugal in 1556 and Francesco de Petris was born in Abatia de Farfa near Rome. For details see Pfister, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43, 45-46.

8) Arthur W. Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644 ~ 1912)*. 2 vols. Washington 1943~1944, vol. 1, pp. 199~201. He was baptized Igantius by Father João da Rocha, S.J.

literati who held degrees. He therefore requested permission of his superiors to wear the attire of the Chinese scholar class, to let his hair and beard grow as they did, and to discontinue his designation as seng or ho-shang. He first chose the designation tao-jen 道人; the terms shen-fu 神父 and ssu-to 司鐸 were adopted several years later. In so doing he disassociated the Jesuits from the Buddhist clergy and stressed their relationship with the Confucian literati. At Shao-chow Ricci was probably already speaking Chinese fluently, but he continued to study, to read and write the classical language. A result of these studies was the first translation of the *Four Books* into Latin<sup>9)</sup> which he completed during his stay at Shao-chow. In addition he elaborated the first system of romanization of the Chinese language. These two achievements justify crediting Ricci with originating western sinology.

Remembering the instructions of Valignano, who convinced by his own experience in Japan had urged that in order to convert Japan it was necessary to convert China first—Xavier had been of the same view—, to convert China, however, one had to start with the higher classes at the top. In the spring of 1595, Ricci seized the opportunity to travel to Nanking and Peking. He crossed the Mei-ling pass into Kiangsi and proceeded by boat on the Kan 贛 river from Nan-an 南安 through Kan-chow 贛州 and Chi-an 吉安 to Nan-chang 南昌, and farther via Poyag like and the Yangtze to Nanking where he arrived at the end of May. Although he had recommendations to several officials in Nanking, because of the unfavorable political situation<sup>10)</sup> he was unable to obtain permission to stay and had to leave after a week and return to Nan-chang.

Through the good offices of a friend Ricci was received by the governor of Kiangsi, Lu Wan-kai 陸萬垓, and at once received the

9) The Latin title is *Tetrabilion Sinense Moribus*. See Pfister, *op. cit.*, p. 41; D'Elia, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 295, n. 1

10) Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea, a tributary of China, aroused suspicions towards all foreigners.

required permit. Two imperial princes residing at Nan-chang, the princes Chien-an 建安 and Lo-an 樂安 also welcomed him. Probably at the request of the former Ricci wrote his first book in Chinese, *Chiao-yu lun* 交友論 or Treatise on Friendship which he presented to the prince whose family name was Chu To-chieh 朱多樛. On one occasion Ricci so astounded the officials and some of the literati with his fabulous feats of memory that they asked him to teach them his method. In answer he translated into Chinese a little work he had written as a student in Rome *On Local Memory*, in Chinese *Hsi-kuo chi-fa* 西國記法. At this time Ricci became acquainted with Chang Huang. In 1596, Ricci rewrote his catechism with the title *T'ien-chu shih-yi* 天主實義 which superceded the earlier *T'ien-chu shih-lu* 天主實錄 by Ruggieri.

In 1598 the Nanking minister of Rites, Wang Hung-hui<sup>11)</sup> 王弘誨 expressed willingness to escort Ricci and Father Lazzaro Cattaneo<sup>12)</sup> to Peking. He thought he might introduce the missionaries at court in order to put their knowledge of astronomy and mathematics to use in correcting the calendar. Ricci himself was most eager to make the trip to obtain permission to establish himself in the capital. But the war in Korea and the subsequent involvement of China in the war, as before had made the officials of Nanking and Peking suspicious of all foreigners. In spite of their sponsorship the missionaries were unable to stay and had to remain on their boats; if they did go ashore they could travel only by closed sedan chairs. Ricci nevertheless made the acquaintance of the governor, Chao K'ohuai 趙可懷 who was friendly toward Ricci and kept him at his house several days. In addition he provided him with funds for the trip, but warned him at the same time of the difficulties he would encounter at Peking. The party traveled on the Grand Canal to T'ung-chow and arrived at Peking September 7, 1598. There they were able to stay in the house of Wang

11) Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 32.

12) Pfister, *op. cit.*, pp. 51~56; Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 31~33.

Hung-hui, but owing to the Korean war, people were reluctant to meet him. It soon became evident that there was no hope of success in their objective, and Wang Hung-hui advised them to return to Nanking. After some hesitation Ricci and his companion eventually left after a sojourn of nearly two months, travelling again by boat on the Grand Canal and arriving at Lin-ch'ing 臨清, Shantung, early in December. Due to the cold Ricci had to continue his trip overland. He went first to Soochow and stayed there with his friend Chū Juk'uei (in Jesuit circles known as Chu T'ai-su) who nursed him back to health from an illness Ricci had contracted. Ricci hesitated for a while whether to establish his residence there where his friend's family lived or go to Nanking.

Finally he decided in favor of Nanking where he arrived on February 6, 1599. Because of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's death in the fall of 1598, the atmosphere had greatly improved. Wang Hung-hui invited Ricci to settle in the southern capital. By this time Ricci had become well known, and not a few of the higher officials at Nanking were eager to meet him. His knowledge of the newest achievements in Western mathematical and astronomical sciences in particular attracted the scholar class. At the suggestion of his friends Ricci published, in 1600, a revised edition of his *Mappamondo* now with the slightly modified title *Shan-hai yü-ti ch'üan-shu* 山海輿地全書. Among people Ricci met in Nanking were leading officials such as the ministers of the six Nanking ministries, the grand commandant at Nanking, Li Huan 李環, descendant of Li Pin 李彬<sup>13)</sup>, the eunuch Feng Pao 憑保<sup>14)</sup> and eminent scholars such as Chu Shih-lu 祝世祿<sup>15)</sup>, Wang K'en-t'ang 王肯堂<sup>16)</sup>, Li Chih 李贄<sup>17)</sup>, Chiao Hung 焦竑<sup>18)</sup>, as well as one of the

13) Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 793~797.

14) Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 5~, 55, 103, 158, 352, 857, 900, vol. 2, pp. 1140, 1190, 1219.

15) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 214.

16) *Ibid.*,

17) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 807~808.

most famous Buddhist monks of the time, San Hui. Ricci was often invited to larger banquets, where scientific and religious questions were discussed. By now well versed in the Chinese Classics Ricci proved his ability in argumentation. In a letter to a friend Li Chih, who did not become a Christian says the following about Ricci:

“...He [Ricci] further asked those familiar with the interpretation of the six Canonical Writings to pass on their explanation. Now he can speak our language fluently, write our script, and acts according to our rules of conduct. He is an extremely impressive man — a person of inner refinement, outwardly most straightforward...Amongst people of my acquaintance no one is comparable to him...”<sup>18)</sup>

When a new opportunity presented itself in 1600, to proceed to Peking, he seized it hoping to obtain the sanction he had sought before. Again he hoped that the gifts he brought might attract attention and win him an imperial audience. These presents had been shown to high officials and occasionally exhibited in Ricci's residence at Nanking, in order to spread the knowledge of their extraordinary quality and so arouse the curiosity of the dignitaries at court and perhaps of the emperor himself. After consultation with his friends in the spring of 1600, Ricci considered conditions sufficiently favorable to make another attempt. He left Nanking by boat together with Diego de Pantoja and a lay brother<sup>20)</sup>, and once more proceeded via the Grand Canal. At Chi-ning 濟寧 Ricci again met Li Chih who introduced him to his host, the supreme commander of grain transportation on the Grand Canal, Liu Tung-hsing 劉東星 who was particularly friendly and helpful. The Jesuits continued their trip unmolested as far as Lin-ch'ing where they

18) Hummel, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 145~146.

19) Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1140.

20) For Diego de Pantoja see Pfister, *op. cit.*, pp. 69~73, and for Brother Sebastian Fernandes see *ibid.*, pp. 47~48.

were stopped by order of the director of tax administration of Lin-ch'ing and Tientsin, the powerful and greedy, much feared eunuch Ma T'ang 馬堂. Ma confiscated part of their belongings and some of the presents destined for the emperor and kept the party under custody at Tientsin for almost half a year. Certain friends whose help they sought could do nothing and they were in despair. Eventually, however an order arrived from Peking telling the missionaries to come at once and bring their presents to the emperor. Since it was winter and the canal was frozen, they travelled overland as guests of the government and arrived in the capital on January 24, 1601. The emperor took delight in the presents<sup>21)</sup> and ordered the missionaries to stay in the palace to instruct the eunuchs in the care of the clocks and other objects, and teach them how to play the clavichord. Their treatment was respectful and polite but eunuchs of Ma T'ang's clique guarded them constantly and almost prevented them of getting in touch with any of the officials, lest they should pass on information about Ma T'ang's machinations. Outside the palace, however, the director of the bureau of reception of the ministry of Rites, T'sai Hsien-ch'en 蔡獻臣, in charge of foreign ambassadors, considered it an encroachment of the jurisdiction of his bureau that the foreigners had been introduced by Ma T'ang and his clique. The resulting dispute about jurisdiction put Ricci and Pantoja into a very delicate position. Eventually, much to their relief,

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21) In the *Ming-shih* 明史 or the History of the Ming Dynasty we read: In the 29th year of Wan-li Ricci came to the capital and offered presents to the emperor among which was a picture of Christ and his mother. Then after describing the difficulties with Ma T'ang and the Li-pu it goes on to say that the emperor appreciating the presents granted the missionaries lodging and temporal support. Pierre du Jarric in his *Histoire des choses plus memorables...* Bordeaux 1608~1614, gives a more detailed description of the emperor. Among them he mentions two clocks, one large and one smaller; three oil paintings, the first one representing the Virgin Mary with the child Jesus and St. John the baptizer, the second one representing the Virgin Mary, and some mirrors; a *Teatrum Orbis* of Ortellinus; a Breviary and other objects.

they went under the protection of the bureau and were lodged in the residence for foreign envoys. Here they met people from Central Asia, and basing himself on their accounts Ricci concluded correctly that Cathay was but another name for China, and Khambalik for Peking. Ricci wrote about this to India and Europe and his letters led to the sending of the embassy of Brother Bento de Goes which proved him convincingly right.<sup>22)</sup> Their stay in the residence for foreign envoys as guests of the government was nevertheless a kind of detention preventing them from freely moving about the city. Finally with the help of the courageous supervising secretary of the office of scrutiny for Personnel, Ts'ao Yü-pien 曹于汴, who had become their friend, they were discharged from the residence and permitted to rent a house in the city. Soon afterwards this permission was confirmed by the emperor and at the same time a monthly stipend granted. As soon as their status was satisfactorily adjusted, officials and scholars in the capital no longer hesitated to associate with Ricci and he became acquainted with such high officials as Grand Secretary Shen I-kuan 沈一貫, minister of war, Hsiao Ta-heng 蕭大亨, of Rites, Feng Ch'i 憑琦, and Personnel, Li Tai 李戴, and many others.<sup>23)</sup>

A few of Ricci's friends took a serious interest in the Christian religion. Most outstanding among them were the learned scholar-official Feng Ying-ching 憑應京, who was prevented only by his untimely death from being baptized, and Li Chih-tsao 李之藻. The latter became one of the closest collaborators of the Jesuits in their scientific and

22) Eduardo Brazão, *Em demanda de Cataio. A viagem de Bento de Goes (1603~1607)*. Lisboa 1954; Cornelius Wesels, S.J., "The grave of Brother Bento de Goes, S.J.," in ARSI 4 (1935), pp. 337~338; Henri Bernard, S.J., *Le Frere Bento de Goes chez les Musulmans de Haute Asia (1603~1607)*, Tientsin 1934.

23) Among the nine men with whom Ricci held dialogues, as recorded in his *Chi-jen shih-p'ien* (Ten chapters by a non conformer or by Jesuit translators called The ten paradoxes) seven are known, namely Li Tai 李戴, Feng Ch'i 憑琦, Hsü Kuang-ch'i 徐光啓, Li Chih-tsao 李之藻, Th'ao Yu-pien 曹于汴, Wu Chung-ming 吳中明, and Kung Tao-li 龔道立.

religious activities. With Li's assistance Ricci published in 1602 and in 1603 the third and fourth editions of his *Mappamondo*, now with the title *K'un-yü wan-kuo ch'uan-t'u* 坤輿萬國全圖. In addition Li reprinted Ricci's catechism and his *Chiao-yu lun*. Because of efforts to make a synthesis of Confucianism and Christianity, to the exclusion of Buddhism and Taoism, Ricci met much opposition from the Buddhist clergy and from officials with strong Buddhist or Taoist sympathies.

Ricci's success was, of course, much appreciated by his Jesuit superiors and in 1604 the China mission ceased to be subordinated to the Jesuit College of Macao and became independent with Ricci in charge. Nevertheless his method of cultural accommodation met with considerable opposition both within and outside the Jesuit order. Ricci considered the accommodation of the practice of the Christian religion—not its contents—to the particular Chinese conditions as an absolute necessity. This is what is meant by the modern terms indigenization and inculturation. Ricci tried to “disengage Christianity from the non-Christian ingredients in Western civilization and to present Christianity to...the Chinese, not as a local religion of the West, but as a universal religion with a message for all mankind.”<sup>24)</sup> This is what Paul and Barnabas had done when they accommodated Christianity, hitherto a small Jewish sect, to the Greco-Roman culture and civilization of the Gentiles of Antioch, Syria and Cilicia.<sup>25)</sup> In view of his obvious achievements Ricci succeeded in overcoming opposition at least among the Jesuits, and his method was accepted as basic for the conduct of the Jesuit mission in China in his own life time. By publication of his *Mappamondo* and *Chiao-yu lun*, Ricci became famous as an author among Chinese scholars. Being aware of the particular importance and efficacy of the written word to promote new ideas among the Chinese literary class, Ricci continued his literary apostolate. In 1604 he

24) Arnold Toynbee, *The World and the West*. Oxford 1953, pp.63~6.

25) *Acts of the Apostles* 15, 1~31.

published a collection of short notes on Christian ethics, *Ehr-shih-wu yen* 二十五言 or Twenty-five sayings, and a new edition of his catechism *T'ien-chu shih-yi*; in 1608 he brought out a book on philosophical and ethical questions in the form of ten short dialogues, *Chi-jen shih-p'ien* 畸人十篇 or Ten chapters by a non-conformer. The *T'ien-chu shih-yi* and the *Chi-jen shih-p'ien* provoked strong reaction so Ricci wrote the *Pien-hsueh yi-tu* 辨學遺牘 or Apologetical Correspondence (according to D'Elia) or Disputations against idolatrous sects (according to Pfister). This last work was published after the author's death. These last five works are reviewed in the *Ssu-k'u ch'uan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* 四庫全書總目提要 or Summary Reviews of the General Bibliography of the Four Treasuries, published later on during the Ch'ien-lung reign.<sup>26)</sup>

Besides Li Chih-tsao, Ricci found, in 1608, another close friend and influential collaborator in the person of Hsu Kuang-ch'i 徐光啓, whom he had already briefly met at Nanking in 1600. Hsü took a deep interest in the Christian religion and was baptized at Nanking in 1603 by Father João da Rocha. The following year he came to Peking where he passed the metropolitan examination and was subsequently appointed to the Hanlin Academy. In 1606/7 Ricci together with Hsü prepared a Chinese translation of the first six chapters of Euclid's *Elements*, initially published probably in 1607 with the title *Chi-ho yüan-pen* 幾何原本 or Elements of geometry. Further scientific works in the preparation of which Ricci took a major or minor part (some

26) *The T'ien-chu shih-yi* and specially the *Chi-jen shih-p'ien* caused strong reaction and were attacked by Yü Chun-hai 虞淳熙 a scholar-official with Buddhist leanings, and the monk Chu-hung 祿宏. This latter listed his objections against Ricci in four points and gave the letter to one of the leading officials of Hangchow who in turn sent them to Ricci for reply. Ricci's reply written probably by Hsü Kuang-ch'i, after 1607 and probably in 1609 was still in manuscript form in 1615. With an epilogue by Yang Ting-yun it is included in Li Chih-tsao's Collectanea *T'ien-hsueh ch'u-han* 天學初函 or Preliminary contents of the celestial doctrine (in 19 ch'uan) under the title *Pien-shüeh yi-tu*. Li's Collectanea was published in 1629 and of the nineteen works it contains eleven are by Ricci.

of them published only after his death) were the *Ch'ien-k'un ti-yi* 乾坤體義 or a Treatise on Celestial Bodies. This work of Ricci is not only reviewed in the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* but was copied into and appears in the main text of the *Ssu-K'u ch'üan-shu* 四庫全書 or Great Encyclopedia of the Four Treasuries.<sup>27)</sup> The *Ts'e-liang fa-yi* 測量法義, a work on trigonometry was dictated by Ricci and written by Hsü Kuang-ch'i. The *Yüan-jung chiao-yi* 圓容較義, a Treatise on geometry. And the *T'ung-wen suan-chih* 同文算旨, a work on arithmetic was dictated by Ricci and written by Li Chih-tsao. Paul Hsü Kuang-ch'i, Leo Li Chih-tsao and Michael Yang T'ing-yün 楊廷筠 (although he had met Ricci was baptized only in 1612) together are known as the "Three pillars of the early Catholic Church", *K'ai-chiao san chu-shih* 開教三柱石.

During the first few years Ricci and his companions had occupied rented houses and had moved several times. Only in 1605 did they manage to buy a compound of their own in the western central section of the city, just inside Hsüan-wu Gate 宣武門, later (after a church building was erected) known as the Nan T'ang 南堂. The new resid-

27) *Ch'ien-k'un t'i-yi* in two or three ch'üan printed in or after 1614 was published by his followers after Ricci's death. It actually contains five minor works of Ricci. The first or upper section consists of *T'i'en ti hun yi shuo* 天地渾儀說 or The basic elements of cosmography and geography; *Ti ch'iu pi chiu chung t'ien chih hsing yüan ch'ieh ta chi ho* 地球比九重天之星遠且大幾何 or Comparing the distance and size of the terrestrial globe and the planets of the Nine Heavens; and *Ssu yüan hsing lun* 四元行論 or Treatise dealing with the four elements, in which Ricci tried to correct the prevalent Chinese theory of the five elements by replacing metal and wood with air, which together with water, earth and fire would make four. The middle [中] section consists of *Jih ch'iu ta yu ti ch'iu, ti ch'iu ta yu yüeh ch'iu* 日球大於地球, 地球大於月球 or The solar disk is bigger than the terrestrial disk, [and] the terrestrial disk is bigger than the lunar disk. And the last section [下] is the *Yüan jung chiao yi* 圓容較義 or Treatise dealing with isoperimetric figures. It should be mentioned that in the PRC beginning in August 1983 "The Commercial Press photolithographic facsimile edition of the Wen-yüan pavillion *Ssu k'u Ch'üan shu* imperial library collection" will be underway.

ence was opened on August 27, 1605 and is still in the possession of the Catholic Church. The original buildings are, however, no longer standing. Here Ricci and his confrères were busy receiving visitors from all over the country who had read some of Ricci's publications and were eager to meet him in person. This was the case in particular in 1607 and 1610, when the metropolitan examinations were held and scholars from every province in China assembled in the capital. It has been reported that he met prominent men from all but two of the fifteen provinces of China. One of his visitors was Ai T'ien 艾田 a member of the Jewish community of Kaifeng. From him the first information of the existence of this community, as well as the earlier penetration of Nestorian Christianity came to the West. During all these years Ricci and his fellow Jesuits were at intervals ordered to the imperial palace, particularly to take care of the foreign clocks and other instruments. Ricci had hesitated to present his *Mappamondo* to the emperor for fear that the representation of China as only one part of the world, and not according to the usual Chinese concept as the world's center occupying the major part of the earth might arouse the emperor's resentment. The emperor, however, learned about the map and became quite interested in it. As a result in 1608, Ricci was asked to prepare a special copy for imperial use. This further enhanced his prestige. The number of his friends among the scholar-officials constantly increased not a few among them becoming converted to Christianity. The high favor Ricci enjoyed in the capital had its effects throughout the empire and the Jesuit missions in other places in the provinces, particularly at Nanking were able to expand their activities. This is what is meant by "working from the top down". And this was important because there was actually considerable opposition to the foreign missionaries and their teaching on the popular as well as on the educated level.

On May 3, 1610 Ricci fell seriously ill and foresaw his approaching end. A number of the most famous physicians called for consultation

were of no help. Stress and overwork had ruined his physique. He died calmly and peacefully on May 11 at the age of fifty-seven. After the funeral mass, one of the officials suggested that the emperor be asked to grant a burial place for Ricci. Pantoja drew up the memorial with the help of Li Chih-tso, which through Li's good offices was presented to the throne. On June 18 the request was granted. Among several places offered, the missionaries selected a villa outside the western city gate, Fou-ch'eng men 阜城門, which had been confiscated from a eunuch sentenced to death. In spite of opposition of some eunuchs the place was eventually handed over. It was spacious enough for a cemetery and a chapel as well as a residence. On November 1, 1611, Ricci was laid to rest there, and after him a number of Jesuits who died in Peking. The place known as Cha-la-ehr 柵欄兒, was in the 19th century, after the Society of Jesus had been suppressed, transferred to the congregation of the Marist Brothers. During the Boxer uprising in 1900 it was almost completely destroyed but later restored. In 1966 during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution it was once more desecrated and destroyed but has again been partially restored; the tombstones of the three great Jesuit missionaries Matteo Ricci, Johann Adam Schall von Bell and Ferdinand Verbiest have been re-created from rubbings.

At the time of Ricci's death, according to his successor as superior of the China mission, Nicolo Longobardo's letter, the mission consisted of four residences and one mission soon to be elevated to the rank of a residence, eight European missionaries, eight Chinese Brothers and 2,500 Christians.<sup>28)</sup>

This in brief is the story of an extraordinary man. By the time he died the missionaries of the Society of Jesus were all over the world and different methods were used in different countries appropriate to that country's culture and civilization. That in China differed from

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28) In this letter from Shao-chow to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva, dated November 23, 1610 Longobardo gives a kind of "a state of the mission report." See Tacchi Venturi, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 489~503.

all others because it was recognized that the country was different; it was one of an old and honored culture which would have to be recognized and understood before the Christian faith could be grafted unto it.

Let me conclude with Professor Wolfgang Franke's assessment of Ricci's life and work:

"Looking back with our present understanding of Chinese civilization of the late Ming period, we find it almost incredible that a foreigner—however well educated and intelligent he might be—without any previous knowledge of the language and civilization was able within less than twenty years to take up residence in the capital, be accepted by a very different, highly sophisticated, sinocentric, antforeign and exclusive society, make friends with a number of the most eminent scholar-officials of the time, and even convert some of them to his Christian faith, and receive a regular allowance from the emperor during his lifetime and a burial place after his death. Only Ricci's particular intellectual and personal qualities made such an achievement possible. Ricci had become aware at an early date that from the beginning there was no need to make as many Christian converts as possible; it was of basic importance instead to secure for the foreign missionaries a solid and respected position within Chinese society, and that such a position could be gained only by way of a complete accommodation to the leading Chinese scholar-official class. This accommodation included a thorough Chinese literary education in order to carry on discussions with Chinese scholars and to talk to them on the achievements of European science and development of thought in their own terms. Ricci himself was particularly able to master a highly sophisticated form of accommodation, and was therefore accepted by the Chinese as one of their own. This becomes evident by such statements as the one by Li Chih quoted above. Another scholar, Kuo Tzu-chang 郭子章..., at that time governor of Kweichow, even stated that in accordance with other examples from Chinese history Ricci must be treated as a Chinese and not as a "barbarian"... Ricci's ingenious, gentle and kindly nature conformed to

the highest Chinese standards. This natural talent inclined him to appreciate and value the essence of Chinese culture. Thus it was probably more the unique personality of Ricci which appealed to many Chinese than the religious doctrine practiced by him. All in all Ricci may be considered as the most outstanding cultural mediator between China and the West of all time.<sup>29)</sup>

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29) Goodrich, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp.1143~1144.

## 〈國文 要約〉

## 마테오 릿치의 思想 形成

조셉 시베스

마테오 릿치(1552—1610)는 이탈리아의 마체라타에서 태어나 중국에서 약 27년을 살다가 北京에서 죽었다. 1583년에 마테오 릿치와 미셸 루기에리(Michele Ruggieri)는 佛敎徒 行裝의 모습으로 중국에 입국하였다. 몇 년 후 릿치는 그 자신과 예수회를 佛敎僧團으로부터 독립시켜 유학자의 복장과 생활양식을 취하기로 하였다. 릿치는 이것이 기독교 宣敎를 위해 보다 바람직하고 적당하다고 생각하였다. 릿치는 처음 몇 해 동안은 中國語와 儒敎의 經典을 공부하는데 보냈다. 그는 四書를 라틴어로 번역하고 최초로 中國語의 로마字化 체계를 완성하였다. 한편으로는 사람들과 교제하고 또 중국 사회에 있어서의 처신법을 배우면서 릿치는 저술활동을 시작하였는데 그의 첫번째 저작은 “交友論”이었다. 마침내 그는 皇帝를 謁見하고자 北京으로 향하였다.

北京에서 릿치는 사제관을 설립할 수 있었고 1610년에 그가 죽을때까지 皇帝를 정기적으로 謁見하게 되었다. 그는 여러 사람들과 상호 관심있는 문제를 토의하기도 하고 學術·宗教에 관한 저술도 하였다. 知人과 친구의 수가 점차 늘어갔고, 그들 중 몇몇은 마침내 기독교로 改宗하였다. 릿치의 宣敎방침은 “위로부터 아래로의 傳敎”였다. 그것은 곧 처음에는 皇帝, 그 다음은 중국에서의 기독교의 정착을 보장할 수 있는 영향력과 지도력을 가진 상층의 학자·관료를 대상으로 하는 것이었다. 릿치는 1610년 5월 11일에 北京에서 죽었다. 皇帝는 친히 阜城門 밖에 그의 葬地를 마련해 주었다. 니콜로 롱고바르도(Nicolo Longobardo)의 편지에 의하면 릿치가 죽을 즈음에 예수회 선교단은 네곳의 사제관과 하나의 공소가 있었으며(그것은 곧 사제관으로 승격되었다.) 8명의 유럽인 선교사와 8명의 중

국인 수사, 2,500여명의 신도가 있었다.

릿치의 특별하고도 知的인 역량이 이러한 업적에 결정적인 역할을 하였다고 할 것이다. 릿치는 그 자신과 기독교를 中國의 學者-官僚의 文化에 적응시키려고 하였다. 그리하여 릿치는 中國에 기독교를 정착시킬 수 있었다. 아마도 릿치는 중국과 서양 간의 文化의 매개자 중 가장 뛰어난 인물로 간주될 수 있을 것이다.

<Reaction>

Kim, Sung-hae

(Sogang University)

This article draws detailed biographical information on Matteo Ricci from both European and Chinese sources: Matteo Ricci's own works and journal, various biographies and modern studies of Ricci, the History of the Ming dynasty 明史 and *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* 四庫全書. The bibliography found in the notes of the article is helpful for those who want to study the life of Matteo Ricci and the history of scholarship on him. In the midst of rich historical facts on Matteo Ricci illustrated in this article, one notes a few significant decisions by Matteo Ricci that are mentioned in passing, but which possess a symbolic power to illuminate his intellectual growth, that makes it worth exploring and analyzing them in the context of his life and his time.

Here I would like to suggest three particular decisions in the life of Matteo Ricci which he seemed to have made for a definite purpose. First is his decision to change his garb and that of his Jesuit companions (along with the title) from that of a Buddhist Bhikkhu to that of a Confucian scholar. This change can be explained in connection with his negative evaluation of Buddhism and a closer affinity that he felt with Confucianism. In the beginning of the second chapter of the *True Doctrine of God* 天主實義 we read a dialogue between a Chinese scholar and a Western scholar. The Chinese scholar asks: "We Chinese have three religions 三教 and each established its teaching. Taoism teaches that everything is born from nothing and so they take nothingness 無 as the way 道. Buddhism teaches that all forms are originated from emptiness 空 and so they try to attain the state of

emptiness. Confucianism teaches that Great Ultimate 太極 is the source of all changes of the phenomenal world and they consider Being 有 as the foundation and take sincerity 誠 as their goal of study. Now among these three teachings I do not know which one is correct and merits my respect." The Western scholar (i.e., Matteo Ricci) answers: "Buddhism and Taoism talk about nothingness and emptiness; they err by strongly opposing the principle of God, and so they cannot be respected. On the other hand, Confucianism talks about Being and sincerity and so even though their meaning is not completely explained, indeed it is near to the truth."

Although his understanding of Buddhism and Taoism might have not been accurate enough (for he understood nothingness and emptiness too literally as the negation of the absolute), he seemed to have had a general perception and even some instinctual feeling that the structure of Confucianism (especially in its early form) was nearer to Christianity. I think further study is necessary to clarify from whom he actually learned Buddhism and Taoism and then to compare his understanding of the two with the Confucian understanding of Buddhism and Taoism in the late Ming dynasty.

The second significant decision by Matteo Ricci is the change of the architectural style of the churches he built. His first chapel at Chao-ch'ing 肇慶, which was also the first Catholic Church in China, was built in the European style, but six years later (1589) when he built the second church at Shao-chow 韶州 he constructed it in the Chinese style, which policy he continued. This clearly shows his desire of and growing understanding for inculturation, which concretized his conviction of "Church universal." Matteo Ricci's commitment to inculturation endures as a powerful heritage and inspiration for the Christians living in East Asia.

Thirdly, the fact that Matteo Ricci devoted his first book in Chinese to friendship 交友論 seems to have a symbolic meaning. Why did he write a treatise on friendship before he composed any book directly

with religion or Christian doctrine? This may indicate his effort to find a common ground (humanity itself) on which to build the bridge between the Chinese and Western traditions.

Using the above mentioned three significant decisions of Matteo Ricci I have tried to point out that his thoughts should have been analyzed in depth as they relate to his decisions in life. This would have heightened the value of the article by giving a coherent picture and clearer meaning to the intellectual biography of Matteo Ricci. Moreover in order to grasp the deeper connections, a more thorough exposition at Ricci's background (both his European studies and milieu, and the late Ming China milieu) should be added. Wang Yang-ming 王陽明's effort to go to the core of Confucianism against the over-systematized Chu Hsi 朱熹 school would have provided an intellectual openness, which probably made it possible for Matteo Ricci to have many friendships with the intellectuals of that time. The late Ming thirst for practical and empirical study prepared the way to accept and welcome scientific knowledge of Matteo Ricci. As to the milieu whence Ricci came, is his adaptability to Chinese culture and thought the result of the training of an Italian college or of Europe at large? or Jesuit emphasis on practicality? or his own genius? How much influence derived from India, where he was ordained? This kind of analysis might help to clarify the complexity of the well known "rites controversy."

The policy of Matteo Ricci's missionary activity is formulated in a phrase by Joseph Sebes "working from the top down." In the missionary history of East Asia Church development began with the intellectuals, but endured only when it spread among the common people. The heritage of Matteo Ricci, therefore, will be remembered more in the area of dialogue and inculturation. By his life and works dealing with religious and scientific matters Matteo Ricci was a bridge between Western science and Chinese culture, Christianity and Confucianism.