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A Cross-Cultural Transformation that Drew Boundaries: Matteo Ricci and His Mapmaking in Ming China

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by

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Dedication

To My Parents

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

A Cross-Cultural Transformation that Drew Boundaries:

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the cartographic works of Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), who spent his last twenty-seven years in Ming China. In particular, by focusing on Ricci's 1602 map, I examine the broader significance of Ricci's cartographic production to understand how it reflected early modern Chinese-European exchanges. In addition to the 1602 map, I use Ricci's letters to construct a framework for his cartographic involvement. In his writings, Ricci revealed his rationale for mapmaking and explained his collection of information. Only one year after his entry into China, in 1584, Ricci compiled a world map in the Chinese language and featured China towards the center of the map. In 1602, he completed the third revision of his map, adding a significant amount of details to his previous versions. This map was reproduced during and after Ricci's lifetime and has become a celebrated map in cartography. In my thesis, I contend that more than a proselytizing tool to attract the attention of the Chinese elites, Ricci used cartography to organize, preserve and transmit the information he collected during his travel in China.

In my thesis, I show that while Ricci established himself as a religious man, under the influence of both his humanist education and his travel, he also became increasingly interested in the natural world that surrounded him. Ricci's letters and map reveal his intellectual development. In particular, Ricci's long tenure in China witnessed two phases of his intellectual transformation. The first phase, from 1582 to 1595, displayed Ricci's humanist education as he learned about China through the writing and translation of ancient Chinese and Western classics. In the second phase, from 1596 to 1610, however, Ricci presented himself as a scientist as he applied his scientific skills to collect information while traveling. In the process, he became increasingly interested in cartography which he came to view as a powerful tool to organize and present information. In time, Ricci's cartographic works became more sophisticated, reflecting both his European education and the Chinese culture.

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the intellectual transformation of Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) manifested through his cartographic works. Ricci's religious and humanist education, the impact of the scientific surroundings from Europe and the Chinese culture all contributed to his compilation in Ming China (1368-1644) of a series of world maps that were distinctly different from both European and Chinese maps. In his quest to understand a foreign land, Ricci carved out a space in cartography through which to organize and transmit the new knowledge he had created. However, as he compiled world maps that crossed two cultures, Ricci not only created unique maps, he also recorded his own intellectual transformation to a humanist and a scientist. In particular, the 1602 revision of his world map was the culmination of such a transformation.

Ricci was educated in Europe but experienced intellectual changes in China. Born into a noble family in the Italian city of Macerata in 1552, Ricci began his classical studies in his hometown at a Jesuit school. In 1571, against the wishes of his father who forbade religious discussions in his household, Ricci joined the Society of Jesus. In 1578, Ricci began his overseas missions, traveling by sea from Lisbon, Portugal to Goa, India. In 1582, Ricci journeyed to Macao, a Portuguese settlement on the southern coast of China. The following year, Ricci officially entered China after receiving permission to reside in Zhaoqing in the southernmost Chinese province of Guangdong, a short distance

from Macao. Ricci remained in China for the next twenty-seven years until his death in the Chinese capital of Beijing in 1610.

Ricci had a long engagement in cartography in China. Eight editions of world maps are known to have been compiled by Ricci between 1584 and 1608. In 1584, only one year after his arrival in China, Ricci produced a world map in the Chinese language. In 1596, twelve years after the original version, Ricci revised his world map for the first time. In 1600, Ricci revised his map again before doing so for the third time in 1602. In 1603, an eight-panel version of the 1602 map was made. The following year, a booklet was published based on Ricci's 1600 map. In 1608, at the request of the *Wanli* Emperor, twelve copies of Ricci's world map were printed. The following year, a world map was produced in the shape of two hemispheres. Only the maps Ricci produced in 1602 and 1603 are extant.[1]

Since the past century, historians have studied Ricci's maps extensively, especially their techniques and influence. Widespread interests in Ricci's cartographic works began in 1917 with the publication of J. F. Baddeley's renowned article, in which Baddeley presented his discovery of a post-1644 copy of Ricci's 1602 map at the library of the Royal Geographic Society in England. Prior to this publication, only a handful of

[1] Scholars have differed in the year in which Ricci's last world map was produced. Many scholars agree it was 1608, yet some scholars, such as John D. Day, contend that it was 1609. In either case, the map was produced in Beijing, shortly before Ricci's death. Day recently conducted a comprehensive and useful study on the origins of Ricci's world maps. The woodblock prints of the original 1602 map are currently located at the University of Bologna Observatory in Italy (Panels 1 and 6), Kyoto University in Japan (Jesuit seals removed), Miyagi Prefecture Library in Japan (complete six panels) and the Vatican Library. The Vatican Library has one complete six-panel copy, as well as another complete copy at an unknown location within the Library. Another complete copy is part of the private collection of Mr. Clermont Ferrand. Multiple copies of Ricci's 1602 and 1603 maps have also been located. See John D. Day, "The Search for the Origins of the Chinese Manuscript of Matteo Ricci's Maps," 94-117.

scholars were engaged in the study of Ricci's cartographic works. Although they believed that several copies of Ricci's maps were extant, these scholars did not know the locations.[2] Baddeley's discovery was therefore significant.

More than pointing to the existence of one of Ricci's maps, however, Baddeley also presented in his article two observations regarding Ricci's mapmaking. Firstly, according to Baddeley, Ricci made maps not to contribute to European knowledge of the world, but to simply convey existing European knowledge to the Chinese, who were not aware of China's boundaries and location in its relations to other countries. Secondly, as Ricci's main objective in China was to convert Chinese to the Roman Catholic faith, Baddeley contended that Ricci attempted to attract Chinese to the Church by satisfying their love of learning with European science, especially maps.[3] In other words, Ricci's cartographic involvement served a religious purpose to convert Chinese to Christianity. Ricci's maps were thus a missionary tool.

Aided by the English translation of the Chinese texts on Ricci's 1602 map, Baddeley's article generated tremendous interests in Ricci's maps among historians, and set a foundation for future studies.[4] Historians soon focused on Baddeley's first argument

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[2] Prior to Baddeley's discovery, Colonel Yule was one of the few scholars who studied Ricci's maps. In 1874, Yule published a brief account of Ricci's maps with a small-scale "hypothetical reconstruction," as he and other scholars who studied Ricci's maps were all unaware of any extant copies of any of Ricci's maps in China. At the time of Baddeley's publication, it was only known that extant copies were housed in the Vatican. See J.F. Baddeley, "Father Matteo Ricci's Chinese World Maps, 1584-1608," *The Geographical Journal*, 50, no. 4 (Oct, 1917), 254-256.

[3] Ibid., 256.

[4] In his article, Baddeley expressed the limitation on the study of Ricci's maps due to the language barrier and called for translations of Ricci's map. Immediately following Baddeley's publication, Lionel Giles translated the Chinese texts on Ricci's 1602 world map into English, making Ricci's map available for non-Chinese-speaking scholars. See Lionel Giles, "Translations from the Chinese World Map of Father

that Ricci introduced to China existing European cartographic knowledge. They expanded this argument by assessing the contributions of Ricci's maps to Chinese cartography. Henri Bernard and Kenneth Ch'en were among the first scholars to discuss at length Ricci's contributions to Chinese cartography. In his work, first published in 1935, Bernard described Ricci as a "reformer of Chinese astronomy" and "scientific initiator" of modern China, catapulting Ricci to a significant position in the development of Chinese science.[5] Through maps, Bernard contended that Ricci introduced to the Chinese such concepts as the use of meridians, the equator and the two poles. Like Bernard, Ch'en also praised Ricci for introducing to the Chinese these European cartographic knowledge in 1939, while he also credited Ricci with introducing to the Chinese the unified conception of the world, the sphericity of the earth, the five continents; and translating geographic terms into the Chinese language.[6]

The study of Ricci's world maps did not attract the attention of many Chinese scholars until much later, yet most also focused on Ricci's cartographic contributions. In 1985, Cao Wanru et al published an in-depth analysis of Ricci's cartographic works, in particular the extant 1602 world map. Calling Ricci's maps the most detailed world maps of the far east, Cao and her fellow authors followed Bernard and Ch'en's position by crediting Ricci for introducing European cartographic techniques to the Chinese. In his

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Ricci," *The Geographical Journal*, 52, no. 6 (Dec, 1918): 367-385, and "Translations from the Chinese World Map of Father Ricci (Continued)." *The Geographical Journal* 53, no. 1 (1919): 19-30.

[5] Henri Bernard, S.J., *Matteo Ricci's Scientific Contribution to China*, trans. Edward Chalmers Werner (Peiping: H. Vetch, 1935; reprint, Westport, CT: Hyperion Press, 1935), 72, 93 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[6] Kenneth Ch'en, "Matteo Ricci's contribution to, and Influence on, Geographical Knowledge in China," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 59, no. 3 (September, 1939), 340-341.

1996 study on Ricci's contributions to Chinese science, Lin Jinshui also followed the same pattern, as he asserted that Ricci brought to China maps that incorporated contemporary European new discoveries and cartography.[7]

While Ricci's cartographic contributions remained a popular focus among some scholars, others returned to Baddeley's argument and began revising it by noting that Ricci's maps did not simply convey existing European cartographic knowledge. Rather, they were a collaboration of both European and Chinese cartographic traditions. In his article published in 1954, Boleslaw Szczesniak declared that Ricci established the "first true map of China" based on Chinese cartography, in particular *Guang Yu Tu*, and a Chinese map from 1555, remarking that Ricci's study of the 1555 map also marked the beginning of Ricci's Chinese studies.[8] By showing Ricci's use of Chinese sources in his mapmaking, Szczesniak illustrated a deeper level of Chinese-European cross-cultural exchanges manifested through Ricci's maps, and rejected Bernard and Ch'en's sole focus on European cartography.

Szczesniak's acknowledgment of Ricci's incorporation of Chinese sources in his mapmaking led other scholars to further revise Baddeley's argument and maintain that not only Ricci learned from Chinese maps, but his influence on Chinese cartography was limited. In 1965, Helen Wallis first made such an argument in her study of two new acquisitions by the British Museum, namely a globe made by two Jesuits in China and a world map published in Japan, both from the seventeenth century. Through her

[7] Jinshui Lin, *Li Madou Yu Zhongguo (Matteo Ricci and China)* (Beijing: Chinese Social Science Publisher, 1996), 200-209.

[8] Boleslaw Szczesniak, "Matteo Ricci's Maps of China," *Imago Mundi* (1954), 127-129.

examination of both items which showed traces of Ricci's cartographic works, Wallis argued that, compared to Japanese mapmaking, Chinese cartography was not influenced by Ricci as widely, and European cartography was not assimilated as deeply into the cartography in China the way it was in Japan. Using an early nineteenth-century Chinese map that demonstrated more resemblance to traditional Chinese maps than Ricci's world maps, Wallis argued that Ricci had limited influence on Chinese mapmaking in the long term.[9] She also argued that Chinese science was not behind its European counterpart. Contrary to Ch'en's argument, Wallis contended that the Chinese were already familiar with such concepts as the sphericity of the world and terrestrial magnetism of the earth.[10]

Cordell D.K. Yee further revised Wallis's argument in the landmark publication, *The History of Cartography*, published in 1987. In his work, Yee debunked the "myth of westernization," maintaining that European mapmaking had little influence on Chinese cartography. Yee went one step further than Wallis by contending that Jesuit cartography in particular made "no lasting impression" on Chinese cartography which was not inferior to European mapmaking.[11] This position carried scholars even farther away from Baddeley's original observation and diffused Bernard and Ch'en's argument on Ricci's contributions that emphasized European cartography.

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[9] Helen Wallis, "The Influence of Father Ricci on Far Eastern Cartography," *Imago Mundi*, 19 (1965), 41-43.

[10] Ibid., 39.

[11] Cordell D.K. Yee, "Traditional Chinese Cartography and the Myth of Westernization," in J.B. Harley and David Woodward, eds., *The History of Cartography. Volume Two. Book Two. Cartography in the Traditional East and Southwest Asian Societies* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 176.

During the past decade or so, scholars continued to abandon this Eurocentric approach and revised Baddeley's argument further by focusing on Chinese cartography. Following Wallis and Yee, Richard Smith explicitly advised against the use of "Western standards" to understand Chinese maps in his 1996 study of Chinese cartography, since Ricci and the Jesuits who came to China after him had limited influence on Chinese mapmaking.[12] In the same year, William Storey further dismantled the argument of European scientific superiority by contending that Chinese scientists decided what they wanted to accept from Europe, and blended European ideas into their science. Ricci and other Jesuits did not necessarily initiate reforms in mathematics, astronomy or geography. Rather, European ideas simply coincided with the growing interests among the Chinese.[13] In 2005, Benjamin A. Elman continued this position by maintaining that China had a long tradition of cartography and geographical research, and Chinese cartography was not inferior. Elman argued that although Chinese mapmakers often overlooked European content, they adopted European methods and technology. In the end, Chinese science developed on its own terms.[14]

In the past decades, scholars have refined Baddeley's argument that Ricci simply conveyed European cartographic understanding to the Chinese through his maps. By noting the Chinese sources Ricci used in his maps and moving away from the Eurocentric

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[12] Richard J. Smith, *Chinese Maps. Images of "All under Heaven"* (Hong Kong, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1, 54.

[13] See William Kelleher Storey ed. *Scientific Aspects of European Expansion* (Aldershot,Great Britain; Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1996).

[14] Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900* (Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 127-133.

approach, scholars have effectively illuminated a much deeper level of cross-cultural exchanges that Ricci displayed through his cartographic production. Although this is a welcome revision, the current trend seems to be leaning heavily towards the development of Chinese cartography. While early modern European cartography might not have impacted Chinese mapmaking as deeply as earlier scholars have contended, the containment of European cartographic influence and the praises of the advanced state of Chinese cartography and science seem to be sending scholarly discussions to a stalemate with regards to Ricci's mapmaking. Laura Hostetler has called for the need for historians to move beyond the conventional "Chinese" and "Western" dichotomy in the study of early modern cartography.[15] This is a meaningful voice, as Ricci's world maps showed influences of both European and Chinese cultures. However, Ricci's cross-cultural cartographic production demonstrated more than a macroscopic level of exchanges.

If scholars have expended much effort in understanding the "what" question of Ricci's mapmaking by revising Baddeley's first argument, many nonetheless have asked little about the "why" component which was a vital aspect in understanding Ricci's cartography. Many historians readily subscribed to Baddeley's second argument that Ricci used maps to satisfy the Chinese's love of learning to potentially attract them to Roman Catholic beliefs. Not only did earlier historians such as Vincent Cronin and George Dunne adopt this explanation for Ricci's involvement in cartography, recent

[15] See Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise. Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1-32.

scholars from both China and the West also faithfully followed this statement.[16] In 1999, David Mungello argued that Ricci's use of the Chinese language was intended to appeal to the Chinese literati.[17] In 2002, Zhang Cuo also contended that Ricci used European technology and knowledge, including cartography, to gain attention from the Chinese in order to draw them to their mission.[18]

Although Baddeley's proposition has certainly helped explain part of Ricci's motives in compiling world maps and the utility of his cartographic works, it does not make clear why Ricci continued to engage in cartography after he had successfully built missions in multiple cities, after his earlier maps had already gained the attention of many literati, and after he had established a reputation among them. Ricci continued to revise his world map even after he reached Beijing. Yet, scholars have written little about the purposes of Ricci's long engagement in cartography. Compared to the many discussions regarding Ricci's contributions and influence, the issue of why Ricci tirelessly dedicated himself to making maps in China has generated few discussions.

In this thesis, I argue that Ricci's cartographic works in China were a significant indicator of Ricci's own intellectual development. While it would be unreasonable to detach any of Ricci's intellectual activities in China from his status as a missionary,

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[16]See Vincent Cronin, *The Wise Man from the West* (New York: Image Books, 1955) and George H. Dunne, *Generation of Giants: The Story of the Jesuits in China in the Last Decades of the Ming Dynasty* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962).

[17] David E. Mungello, *The Great Encounter of China and the West, 1500-1800* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 12.

[18] Cuo Zhang, *Dongxi Wenhua Bijiao Yanjiu: Li Madou Ruhua Ji Qita (A Comparative Study on Eastern and Western Culture: Matteo Ricci in China and Other Essays)* (Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, 2002), 11.

mapmaking was nonetheless also a process through which Ricci created new knowledge and revealed his own maturation as a scientist. More than a space to convey European mapping knowledge and techniques, or to reflect European and Chinese influences; and more than a missionary tool, or the need to appeal to the Chinese literati and satisfy their love of learning, Ricci's maps also symbolized his own intellectual transformation.

In the following chapters, I will examine Ricci's intellectual development through his cartographic works and his own handwriting. Chapter One paves the foundation by focusing on Ricci's European background. Through his Jesuit training, Ricci acquired a well-rounded religious and humanist education. The new scientific environment in sixteenth-century Europe also contributed to new methods of information acquisition. Such was a background Ricci brought with him as he sailed east. Chapter Two examines the Chinese influence Ricci encountered. It was in the Chinese empire where Ricci had the opportunity to manifest his humanist education and scientific skills acquired in Europe. As he neared the vast empire, Ricci quickly became a collector of information about China. However, as he came into closer contact with the Chinese culture, Ricci also underwent an intellectual transformation that assumed two phases. From 1582 to 1595, Ricci gradually changed from a religious man to a humanist while he also showed an increasing interest in science. As he began to travel within China, Ricci increasingly applied his scientific skills to collect firsthand information about the empire. The second phase of Ricci's transformation is the focus of Chapter Three. From 1596 to 1610, Ricci primarily presented himself as a scientist, as manifested by his cartographic works. Ricci's maps were unique products combining not only his European background and

Chinese influence but also his own scientific collection of data about China. His cartographic production thus illuminated his intellectual transformation as a scientist. In particular, his 1602 map was the culmination of his transformation.

Through his Jesuit training, Ricci acquired a well-rounded religious and humanist education. The new scientific environment also contributed to the methods he employed in collecting information. However, it was in China where Ricci's intellectual development came to fruition. In the process, Ricci was profoundly influenced by the Chinese culture and gradually matured into a humanist and a scientist. Ricci's maps were unique products that not only combined both his European background and Chinese influence, but also presented the new knowledge Ricci created as the Jesuit matured intellectually.

Chapter One

Jesuit and European Background

The sixteenth century marked an important intellectual transformation characterized by the rise of new religious orders—notably the Society of Jesus— as part of the Catholic Reformation, Late Humanism, and increasing interests in science. Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), one of the most important missionaries to China, was the embodiment of just such an intellectual transformation of this time in all of these three aspects. More than a religious man who traveled to a foreign land for missions, Ricci was also a humanist and a scientist shaped largely by his Jesuit education and the intellectual environment of Europe at the time. By the time he set sail eastward in 1578, Ricci had acquired a well-rounded Jesuit education in Europe which was evident in his later religious and intellectual engagements in China. This chapter lays the framework of the Jesuit and European background that surrounded Ricci prior to his journey to China with a discussion of the Jesuit Order, Ricci's education, as well as the development of science in sixteenth-century Italy.

The Society of Jesus emphasized overseas missions since the beginning of its founding. Led by Ignatius of Loyola, a group of Basque and French students founded the Jesuit Order in 1534, taking vows of poverty, chastity and apostolic labors. They later pledged their loyalty to the Pope when Pope Paul III officially approved of the Order in

1540.[19] The Society of Jesus soon became one of the most important instruments in the missionizing efforts of the Roman Catholic Church as the Jesuits fervently traveled both to Christian countries in Europe to counter the new Protestant forces, and to pagan lands overseas to establish missions and make converts in an attempt to expand the Roman Catholic Church overseas.

The Jesuits' ties with Portugal provided convenient access and established sea routes for Jesuits who attempted to establish missions outside of Europe, especially in the New World and Asia.[20] Jesuits often traveled to their missions with Portuguese traders. In their quest to establish a mission in China, Francis Xavier, a founding member of the Order, and later Jesuits, including Ricci, all came through Goa and Macao, where the Portuguese had established settlements. Portugal's investment on the Jesuit Order facilitated the Jesuits' missions overseas. In Ricci's case, not only did he receive assistance from Portugal during his journey to China, he also received full financial support from Portuguese merchants at least during his first years in China.[21]

The Society of Jesus emphasized not only religious missions but also education for the theological training of its members.[22] The Jesuits became some of the most learned men in Europe as a result of the many educational institutions the Jesuit Order

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[19] John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (London and Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993), 23.

[20] Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 38.

[21] See Ricci's November 10, 1585 report to Claudius Aquaviva, General of the Jesuit Order. Matteo Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji (Complete Works of Father Matteo Ricci, S.J. Volumes 3 and 4: Letters I and II*), trans. Yu Luo (Taipei: Kuangchi Press, 1986), 77.

[22] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 23.

established in Italy and throughout Europe. Shortly after the founding of the Order, the Jesuits began establishing colleges in such cities as Messina and Palermo in Sicily. Among them, the Roman College, founded in 1551, soon became the principal educational facility of the Order.[23] In 1572, Ricci entered the Roman College, which provided him the finest theological training available in his preparation to become a Jesuit priest.

Nonetheless, Ricci studied more than theology at the Roman College. Over the door of the College was the inscription *School of Grammar, Humanities, and Christian Doctrine, Free*.[24] The Roman College under which Ricci was educated emphasized the study of not only Church doctrines but also other disciplines. This tradition was directly contributed by the education of the founders of the Order, including Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier, at the University of Paris. There, rather than theology, the future founders of the religious order studied philosophy, which was a combination of logic, dialectics, physics, astronomy, metaphysics, ethics, psychology and other subjects.[25]

The study of disciplines outside of theology was greatly influenced by Renaissance humanism. Loyola and Xavier's university study of philosophy was based on the works of the ancient Greek thinker Aristotle. When they opened schools after the founding of the Jesuit Order, Loyola and other founding members included not only humanities in their curriculum, but also demonstrated the humanist spirit of the time by

[23] Paula Findlen ed., *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (London: Routledge, 2004), 1.

[24] *Schola di Grammatica, d'Humanità e Dottrina Christiana, gratis.* See O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 205.

[25] Ibid., 252-253.

emphasizing the use of ancient texts. The teaching of mathematics at the Roman College, for example, was based on the first six books of *Elements* by ancient Greek mathematician Euclid, as well as the work of medieval astronomer Johannes de Sacrobosco, who studied the geometry of the famous ancient geographer and astronomer Ptolemy.

Ricci was educated to search for wisdom and knowledge in ancient texts. At the Roman College, Ricci studied mathematics under the instruction of Jesuit Christoph Clavius (1537-1612), who greatly influenced the mathematical education of the Jesuit Order. A renowned mathematician known as the "Euclid of the Sixteenth Century," Clavius began teaching at the Roman College in 1564 and would later lead the Gregorian calendar reform in the 1580s.[26] In addition to teaching mathematics, Clavius also wrote a series of textbooks on such mathematical topics as Euclid's *Elements*, algebra, arithmetic and geometry, as well as astronomy, where he adhered to the Ptolemaic system and rejected Nicolaus Copernicus's new heliocentric theory. Ricci was a direct beneficiary of Clavius's teaching and writings. Clavius's expertise on Euclid's work and his adherence to Ptolemy's theory regarding the earth were clear examples of humanist influence on Jesuit education.

In addition to his Jesuit education, the Scientific Renaissance also contributed to Ricci's intellectual background. By the time Ricci was born in the middle of the sixteenth century, the Italian peninsula had become the center of the scientific world in western

[26] Ibid., 234.

Europe, and a fertile ground in which new ideas thrived.[27] Although sixteenth-century scientists studied ancient texts, many also realized the incomplete knowledge of ancient sciences, which they then used as the basis for improving contemporary scientific development. Sixteenth-century pursuit of science therefore moved beyond the search of ancient texts. In addition, not only university professors but also popes, princes and governments were interested in achieving and promoting a deeper understanding of the natural world.[28] This widespread enthusiasm strengthened the favorable environment for the pursuit of new scientific knowledge in early modern Europe. It also contributed to the increasingly sophisticated development of scientific disciplines, exemplified by the emergence of natural history. Once under the broad umbrella of medicine, such fields as botany and geology gradually became independent disciplines under "natural history" and were taught at universities throughout early modern Europe.[29]

Sixteenth-century European science also gave birth to a new desire to take possession of materials, evidenced by the emergence of cabinets of curiosities and museums which were filled with such items as the translation of key texts, compasses, astrolabes, dried plants and stones gathered from around the world.[30] Scientists collected specimens of plants and animals, not for aesthetic and anthropocentric reasons, but as a

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[27] Paula Findlen, "Science and Society," in John A. Marino ed., *Early Modern Italy, 1550-1796* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 166.

[28] Ibid., 167-169.

[29] Paula Findlen, "The Formation of A Scientific Community: Natural History in Sixteenth-Century Italy," in Anthony Grafton and Nancy Siraisi eds., *Natural Particulars: Nature and the Disciplines in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), 369.

[30] Findlen, "Science and Society," 169-170.

result of their desires to understand various objects through examination.[31] Generous patronage and the practice of gift-giving contributed to the establishment of many museums, some of which enjoyed sizeable collections.[32] The rise of both the cabinets of curiosity and museums indicated the emphasis on the increasing firsthand collection of materials in the study of science. Rather than relying on ancient texts as the sole authority, scientists now began to engage themselves in a new method of collection.

Jesuit emphasis on missions and education nurtured a distinct group of priests. The Jesuits were trained in theology and well-educated in disciplines including mathematics, astronomy and cosmology through the study of ancient texts, in a scientific environment where new disciplines and new methods of studying science came into being. A sixteenth-century Jesuit, Ricci was both a religious man and an intellectual. However, the influence of Ricci's humanist education and the new scientific surrounding did not come to fruition in his native Europe. Only when Ricci traveled to China did he begin to manifest his skills. The Chinese culture with which Ricci soon came into contact quickly transformed him.

[31] Brian W. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 8, 268-271.

[32] See Paula Findlen, "The Economy of Scientific Exchange in Early Modern Italy," in Bruce T. Moran ed., *Patronage and Institutions: Science, Technology, and Medicine at the European Court, 1500-1750* (New York: They Boydell Press, 1991), 5-24.

Chapter Two

Chinese Influence

As Ricci departed Europe for his mission in 1578, his main task was certainly to convert Chinese people to the Roman Catholic faith. However, Ricci's intellectual transformation also began as he sailed to China. As he approached the Chinese empire, Ricci found a very favorable environment to apply his training from Europe, and he quickly became a collector of information. Beginning with his days in Macao in 1582, Ricci actively accumulated information about China. However, his methods of collecting gradually changed. In his first years in China, Ricci depended heavily on his humanist education as he immersed himself in the study of ancient Chinese texts and engaged with the Chinese literati circle. However, as he began to travel within China in 1589, Ricci increasingly applied his scientific skills and gathered firsthand information previously unknown to Europe. This chapter will detail Ricci's life from 1582 to 1595, not only as a missionary, but also as a humanist and a scientist who was changed by a foreign culture and the people for whom he had come.

Since departing his homeland, Ricci wrote numerous letters to Europe. Written mainly in Italian, these letters detailed many of Ricci's activities overseas, from his years in India, then Macao and finally China. Although it remains unknown how many letters Ricci wrote in Asia, and especially during his long tenure in China, fifty-four letters are

extant.[33] These letters provide significant insight into Ricci's mission and intellectual activities both before and during his years in the Chinese empire. However, scholars have yet to fully explore these letters due to extremely limited English translation. For the remainder of this thesis, I will examine Ricci's firsthand writing in order to trace his intellectual transformation in China.

Upon entering China, Ricci quickly asserted his identity as a religious man embarking on his missionary objectives. In 1583, Ricci received official permission to reside in Zhaoqing, the capital city of China's southernmost Guangdong Province. Desiring to integrate into the local religious culture, Ricci immediately adopted the clothing of Buddhist monks and established a mission, adorned with two plaques with the words *Xianhuasi, Heavenly Flower Temple*, and *Xilai Jingtu, Pure Land from the West*.[34] Gifts from Wang Pan, prefect of Zhaoqing who helped Ricci enter China, the plaques promptly and formally established Ricci as a religious man and his mission a religious site. However, Ricci also turned his attention just as quickly to the Chinese culture.

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[33] Ricci's letters were first discovered in the early twentieth century by Jesuit Pietro Tacchi Venturi. In the mid-1980s, Guang Luo, General of the Jesuit Order in Taiwan, requested Professor Yu Luo to translate Ricci's extant letters from the original Italian and Portuguese languages into Chinese to commemorate the four-hundredth anniversary of Ricci's arrival in China. After a long process of delays and editing, the Chinese version of all fifty-four letters was published in 1986 by Kuangchi Press in Taiwan in two volumes as part of the Matteo Ricci series. The Chinese version has remained the most extensive and complete translation of Ricci's letters outside of the original languages. See Matteo Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji (Complete Works of Father Matteo Ricci, S.J. Volumes 3 and 4: Letters I and II*), trans. Yu Luo (Taipei: Kuangchi Press, 1986). The latest Italian version of Ricci's letters was compiled and published in 2001. See Matteo Ricci, *Lettere: 1580-1609*, ed. Francesco D'Arelli (Macerata: Quodibet, 2001). Regarding the English version, M. Howard Rienstra translated a selection of eight letters by a group of Jesuits between the years 1583-1584. However, only Ricci's November 13, 1584 letter was included. See M. Howard Rienstra, *Jesuit Letters from China, 1583-84* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). In this thesis, I examine Ricci's letters based on Professor Luo's Chinese translation.

[34] See Ricci's October 20, 1585 report to Claudius Aquaviva. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 67-68.

Ricci studied the Chinese culture as he refined the Jesuit accommodation policy first established by Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), Visitor of the Jesuit Mission in the far east. Ricci primarily took into consideration the differences between Roman Catholic doctrines and the Chinese culture in two aspects, namely the Chinese term for "God," and the Chinese rituals in honor of their ancestors and Confucius. Regarding the name for "God," Ricci employed a Chinese term, *Tianzhu, the Lord of Heaven,* to represent the God of the Roman Catholic faith. As for rituals, Ricci determined that ancestral veneration was simply a traditional practice with social and civil meanings through which the Chinese paid respect to their ancestors. Through his examination of Confucian teachings, Ricci also concluded that Confucius was an ancient master scholar and tributes to him by the literati did not carry religious implications. In Ricci's mind, both sets of rituals were therefore not incompatible with Roman Catholic beliefs. His careful examination demonstrated Ricci's high level of sensitivity to the Chinese culture which continued throughout his years in China, and the refined accommodation policy would become the general approach in the Jesuits' proselytizing efforts in China well beyond Ricci's death.

This merger of mission and his study of the Chinese rituals and Confucian teachings quickly steered Ricci's focus to the Chinese literati and texts, and manifested his humanist education. As he came into contact with scholar-officials such as Wang Pan, Ricci became aware of the importance of introducing Roman Catholic doctrines to the Chinese through writing. By 1584, only one year after his arrival in Zhaoqing, Ricci had translated three Church doctrines, namely the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and the Ten

Commandments, into Chinese.[35] Through a conversion of languages and adaptation to the Chinese culture, Ricci translated basic Roman Catholic beliefs.[36] Together with Jesuit Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607), Ricci also compiled a Chinese book entitled *Tianzhu Shilu, The True Record of The Lord of Heaven*. This work was based on the translation of the Roman Catholic catechism, but Ruggieri and Ricci presented Church doctrines in the form of a dialogue between a Confucian scholar and a Jesuit.[37] Ricci included references to Confucian teachings, interpreting them alongside Roman Catholic beliefs.

As he introduced Roman Catholic doctrines to the educated Chinese, Ricci was also eager to introduce China to Europe with the information he had collected thus far. While compiling *Tianzhu Shilu*, Ricci wrote a letter to Juan Baptista Román, deputy exchequer of Spanish King Philip II in Manila and Macao. In the letter, Ricci introduced Román to the many facets of the Chinese society. Ricci outlined the fifteen provinces of the Chinese empire, described the three major types of climate and pointed out the variety of crops grown in China, noting the differences between Chinese and European agricultural and consumption patterns. Ricci also reported the abundance of wheat, rice, and silk, and noticed the absence of the production of olive oil or dairy products.[38] In this

[35] Ricci reported the translation and publication of these three works in his September 13, 1584 letter from Zhaoqing to Juan Baptista Román, and mentioned them in his November 12, 1592 letter to Fabius de Fabio, head of St. Andrew when Ricci entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus. Ricci stated that he distributed the works to the locals as gifts. By 1592, Ricci estimated that he baptized about eighty Chinese people as a result of the circulation of these translated doctrines. Ibid., 57, 109.

[36] Peter Burke, "Cultures of translation in Early Modern Europe," in Peter Burke and R. Po-chia Hsia eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 16.

[37] See Ricci's November 30, 1584 report to Aquaviva. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 59.

[38] See Ricci's September 13, 1584 letter to Román. Ibid., 45-57.

long letter, Ricci also presented the Chinese language, government, military structure, religions, history, geography and people. Although Ricci had been in China for only a short period of time, he already collected a significant amount of information about the vast Chinese empire.

Ricci further sought to understand Chinese culture by immersing himself in the ancient texts of both China and Europe.[39] Through his study and translations of ancient knowledge from both cultures, Ricci further demonstrated the influence of his humanist education.[40] In 1591, with the help of literatus Qu Taisu, Ricci translated from Latin to Chinese the first book of *Elements*, which he had studied under Clavius at the Roman College. In 1594, Ricci completed the translation from Chinese to Latin of *Sishu*, *Four Books*, the most important works in Confucian teachings that all Chinese literati were required to learn. As he studied the Chinese classics, Ricci compared *Sishu* to ancient Roman texts and concluded that they were a collection on ethics.[41] In addition to translation, Ricci continued to engage in writing. In 1595, at the request of a Chinese friend, Ricci wrote *Jiaoyou Lun, A Treatise on Friendship*, a collection of what Ricci

[39] Ricci assessed that he had become fluent in spoken Chinese and was able to read and write Chinese in his November 10, 1585 letter. He also stated that he read many Chinese books. Ibid., 77.

[40] See R. Po-chia Hsia, "The Catholic Mission and translations in China, 1583–1700," in Peter Burke and R. Po-chia Hsia eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39-51.

[41] See Ricci's December 10, 1593 report to Aquaviva, and his November 15, 1594 letter to de Fabio. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 134-135, 143.

termed "ancient western morals, wisdom and literature."[43] Based on ancient texts, Ricci had compiled a rich collection of works in the Chinese language.

As Ricci translated and wrote about classical texts, he came into contact with an increasing number of Chinese literati who influenced Ricci's western education. As soon as he stepped foot in Zhaoqing, Ricci quickly learned the customs of the Chinese literati, one of which was paying visits to each other. Ricci learned that when a literatus visited his fellow scholar, the host would pay a courtesy visit to his visitor in return within a few days. As soon as the mission in Zhaoqing was completed, many local scholars and officials, including Wang Pan, visited Ricci. As a result, Ricci began to make numerous courtesy visits to his many visitors. Throughout his time in China, this practice opened doors for Ricci to develop a network with the many literati from whom he learned much about China.

Through his increasingly close connection with the literati circle, Ricci gradually transformed his identity from a religious man to a scholar. In 1589, after he was forced to leave Zhaoqing by the order of the new governor, Ricci traveled northwards until he received permission from the local authority to settle in Shaozhou, a city northeast of Zhaoqing connected by the Bei River. In the new city, Ricci did not identify himself as a religious man, and deliberately kept a distance from the local Buddhist monks. Instead, when asked by an official his purpose in Shaozhou, Ricci called himself "a cosmographer and astronomer who can also draw world maps, which have been published in

[43] See Ricci's October 13, 1596 report to Aquaviva, and August 14, 1599 letter to Girolamo de Costa, a Jesuit from Ricci's hometown of Macerata. Ibid., 231, 258.

Zhaoqing."[44] After six years in Shaozhou, Ricci voluntarily relocated to Nanchang, capital of the Jiangxi Province, to where Ricci was attracted for its intellectual atmosphere created by the many literati who lived there.

After settling in Nanchang in 1595, Ricci abandoned his Buddhist clothing and permanently adopted the attire of the literati. He had realized that Buddhist monks enjoyed "a low status in the eyes of the Chinese people" while Confucian scholars were highly respected in the empire. Ricci adopted the long silk robe and hat, and grew his hair and beard in the same manner as the literati, converting his own appearance to that of a Chinese literatus, in order to explain to the Chinese that he and his fellow Jesuits were in China "to do the works of the literati."[45] (Figure 1 and Figure 2) To further imitate the way of the Chinese literati, Ricci even purchased a *qiaozi*, a sedan carried by men, to transport himself.[46] He had also acquired a Chinese name, *Li Madou* 利瑪竇, which he used for his writings and translations.[47]

Ricci's focus on the literati was also greatly influenced by the Chinese print culture that had reached a high point in the sixteenth century. Ricci learned that China, like his native Italy, also enjoyed a rich history of printing. While in Macao, Ricci had already expressed great interests in the numerous types of printed Chinese books he had come across. He also articulated his admiration for the Chinese printing techniques,

[44] See Ricci's September 9, 1589 letter to Alessandro Valignano as he reported his settlement in Shaozhou. Ibid, 96.

[45] See Ricci's August 29, 1595 letter to Duarte de Sande, Jesuit in Macao. Ibid., 152-153.

[46] See Ricci's October 28, 1595 letter. Recipient unknown. Ibid., 177.

[47] It is unknown when Ricci acquired his Chinese name as Ricci did not mention it in any of his extant letters.

stating that they were more sophisticated and had a longer history compared to printing in Europe, as "their printing techniques developed earlier than ours." Ricci noticed the "great volumes of books of all kinds," and had decided that he "must read more Chinese books." [48] Indeed, China experienced a rapid growth of book publishing and book trade beginning in the mid sixteenth century.[49] Imprints outnumbered manuscripts, and books became more readily available as a result of lower carving costs, cheaper labor and lower prices of paper. By the time of Ricci's arrival, the number of printed books in China reached an all-time high since the founding of the Ming Dynasty in 1368.[50] In particular, the lower Yangtze delta in central China was the heartland of this explosion of the production and distribution of books since the tenth century.[51] Within the heartland, Nanjing, where Ricci would later relocate from Nanchang, was a major publishing and book center.[52] Ricci commented on the "ridiculously low" price of Chinese books and engaged himself in the vibrant print industry.[53]

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[48] See Ricci's February 13, 1583 letter to Martino de Fornari, his teacher in Rome. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 34.

[49] Joseph P. McDermott, "The Ascendance of Imprints in China?" in Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 92.

[50] Lucille Chia, "Of Three Mountains Street: The Commercial Publishers of Ming Nanjing," in ibid., 127-128.

[51] Joseph P. McDermott, *A Social History of Chinese Books: Books and Literati Culture in Late Imperial China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 5.

[52] Nanjing was the capital city of Ming China until the royal edict was issued in 1420 to relocate the capital to Beijing in the northeast of the empire. See Chia, "Of Three Mountain Streets," 107-108, 110.

[53] Matteo Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journal of Matthew Ricci, 1583-1610,* trans. Louis Gallagher, S.J. (New York: Random House, 1953), 20-21. Shortly after Ricci's death in Beijing in 1610, Nicolas Trigault, another Jesuit in China, discovered Ricci's private journal and brought it back to Europe on his return journey from China. Trigault then translated the journal from Italian to Latin and

In addition to writing and translation, Ricci immersed himself further in the Chinese print culture by seeking prefaces to his works. When he wrote *Tianzhu Shilu* in 1584, Ricci had already noticed that, as was the custom in Europe, a preface was often included when a new book was published in China. Following this tradition, Ricci had invited Wang Pan, whom Ricci called a "protector," to write a preface for *Tianzhu Shilu*. Ricci had even reserved a space for the preface in his work. However, although pleased with the book, Wang chose not to write a preface. Ricci reported that "Wang told him that he could not write a preface," and Ricci stated that "it seemed neither did anyone have the authority to write one," before adding that Wang told him the book "did not need a preface" and could be distributed to the local people the way it was printed.[54]

Ricci's desire to include a preface from Wang was not simply an attempt to adhere to a traditional Chinese practice, as Ricci was seeking approval from the literati. In Chinese books, prefaces not only set up the context of the work and helped define readership. More significantly, only the literati could write prefaces.[55] Therefore, a preface was a seal of approval from the literati. For Ricci, the inclusion of a preface from a Chinese scholar would indicate that Ricci was one of them. As a result, Ricci continued to seek prefaces from the Chinese literati in his subsequent works, until he finally

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published it in 1615. In the twentieth century, Louis Gallagher, S.J. translated the journal into English and Ricci's journal was made known to a wider audience.

[54] Ricci explained this in his second annual report to Aquaviva dated November 30, 1585. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 64.

[55] Anne E. McLaren, "Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China," in Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 159.

succeeded in his endeavor in 1595 when he invited Feng Yingjing to write a preface for his work *Jiaoyou Lun*.[56]

From 1582 to 1595, as he transformed into a literatus, Ricci also became increasingly interested in the natural world that surrounded him as he came to realize that in addition to the information he had gathered through texts and the Chinese intellectuals, he could collect firsthand data about China through his astronomical observations and scientific surveying skills. In the process of searching for Beijing's precise location, Ricci first learned that scientific observations were useful in his collection of information about the Chinese empire. Since his early days in China, Ricci had been in pursuit of information on the geographical extension of China and the specific location of Beijing, the city he desired to enter. Although he had consulted many Chinese books, he could not find the longitude and latitude of the capital city. In the beginning of his mission, Ricci had observed the lunar eclipses, once in Macao and once in Zhaoqing. These earlier studies revealed to Ricci the importance of astronomical observations and mathematical skills in deriving the longitude and latitude of Zhaoqing, and in general in obtaining further information about China.[57] In 1584, from the data he had collected, Ricci determined the boundaries of China to be:

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[56] See Ricci's October 13, 1596 report to Aquaviva. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 231. From then on, Ricci often invited the Chinese literati to write prefaces for his works. For example, when Ricci published *Ershiwu Yan, Twenty-Five Words*, in 1604, he invited Xu Guangqi, a member of *Hanlinyuan*, the Imperial Academy, to write a preface. For *Qiren Shibian, Ten Paradoxes*, published in 1608, Ricci also asked Feng Yinggang, another member of *Hanlinyuan*, to proofread the work and write a preface. For Ricci's description of these two works, see Ricci's March 8, 1608 report to Aquaviva. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 367.

[57] See Ricci's October 20, 1585 report to Aquaviva, and his November 24, 1585 letter to Jesuit Giulio Fuligatti, whom Ricci met at the Roman College where he later taught mathematics. Ibid., 69, 80, 85-86.

> First from Cochinchina in the south, to the northwest tip, which is Liaozhou (Liaodong Peninsula). It is a province in China. From there one can travel northward by sea to Japan. It is from 120 or 137 degrees longitudes to the Fortunate Islands……its southern coast is located from 20 to 28 degrees; from the north pole, the north of China is the Tartary area, about 44 or 45 degrees from the north pole.[58]

In addition to his scientific skills, Ricci began to record an increasing amount of firsthand information as soon as he began traveling within the Chinese empire. Ricci's extensive travels in China spanned almost twenty years. After six years in Zhaoqing, Ricci involuntarily traveled northwards in 1589. He eventually settled in Shaozhou as he learned that this city was along the route to Nanjing and Beijing, the two most important cities in China. From this southern city of Shaozhou, Ricci relocated to Nanchang in central China in 1595. As he traveled northwards within the empire, through his observations, Ricci increasingly accumulated valuable information previously unavailable to Europeans (Figure 3).

A comparison between the letters he wrote after Ricci began traveling and those he wrote at the beginning of his Chinese experience reveals an important change. During his first years in China, in the letters he wrote while in Macao and Zhaoqing, Ricci's descriptions of the Chinese empire reflected what he had learned through books and what others had informed him. In his letter to deputy exchequer Román in 1584, Ricci described China in broad and general terms. When he reached Shaozhou from Zhaoqing in 1589, however, Ricci described in accurate details the Bei River that connected both cities, the way it flowed from north to south through Shaozhou, the bridge that connected

[58] See Ricci's September 13, 1584 letter to Román. Ibid., 46.

the eastern and western part of the city, the residences, the Buddhist Nanhua Temple, and even the ships that passed through the city.[59] In 1595, as he relocated from Shaozhou to Nanchang, Ricci filled his letters with detailed information about each city he passed through, including Nanxiong and Ganzhou. He observed that Nanxiong was a "major commercial center in Guangdong Province." Ricci reported that "there were many people on the streets and countless people passing through Nanxiong, with some using carts and donkeys to carry their goods, and over two thousand workers constructing infrastructures at one time; and the villages were countless.[60] Ricci even outlined the characteristics in food patterns that distinguished northern from southern China. He noted that Chinese people who lived north of Nanjing consumed more wheat than rice, which was the custom in southern China. Ricci also noted a lack of wood supply in Nanjing, before describing in great details the three walls that protected this major city.[61]

As he traveled, Ricci began observing the natural world that surrounded him and in the process acquired a more accurate understanding of China. Each time he arrived in a new city, he derived its longitude and latitude to pinpoint its exact location. Without fail, he included such information as he reported his journeys in his letters. With new scientific data, Ricci began to refine his calculations of the extension and location of China, and eventually he also became aware of the mistakes he had made in his previous calculations. For example, by 1596, as he had traveled to central China and had derived

[59] See Ricci's September 9, 1589 letter to Alessandro Valignano. Ibid., 94.

[60] See Ricci's August 29, 1595 letter to de Sande. Ibid., 148.

[61] Ibid., 155- 156.

the location of Nanchang, he noticed that his 1584 estimations of the location of Beijing were incorrect and adjusted Beijing's position from fifty degrees to no farther than forty degrees north.[62] In the process, Ricci also elaborated new scientific equipments and while in Shaozhou, he made numerous globes in the Chinese language and presented them to the local literati.[63]

As he collected information about China, Ricci gradually matured and transformed himself as a humanist and a scientist. Through his Jesuit education, Ricci manifested his deep appreciation of ancient texts, and he began to collect information about China primarily through texts and the literati circle. However, Ricci also began to make astronomical observations and applied scientific surveying techniques as he traveled in China. These skills and experiences allowed Ricci to gain much firsthand data about the Chinese empire. Ricci's religious, humanist and scientific activities merged his Jesuit and European educational background as well as the Chinese culture, enabling Ricci to collect information no Europeans had ever been able to obtain and create brand new knowledge about China.

[62] See Ricci's October 12, 1596 letter to Fuligatti. Ibid., 221.

[63] See Ricci's November 12, 1592 letter to Fabius de Fabio. Ibid., 110.

Figure 1.

Portrait of Matteo Ricci, circa 1610. Painted by You Wenhui, a Chinese convert, Ricci wore the attire of Chinese literati, and grew his hair and beard to imitate their appearance. Ricci also posed in the manner of a literatus, as his two arms were locked together inside the wide sleeves of his silk robe. Reproduced from Shijian Huang and Yingyan Gong, eds., *Li Madou Shijie Ditu Yanjiu (A Study of Matteo Ricci's World Maps)* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publisher, 2004), 136.

Figure 2.

Frontispiece of Athanasius Kircher's *China monumentis illustrata*, 1667. Ricci is shown on the right, in the attire of a Chinese literatus, holding a map of China. Reproduced from Florence Hsia, "Athanasius Kircher's *China Illustrata* (1667)," in Paula Findlen ed., *Athanasius Kircher. The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 396.

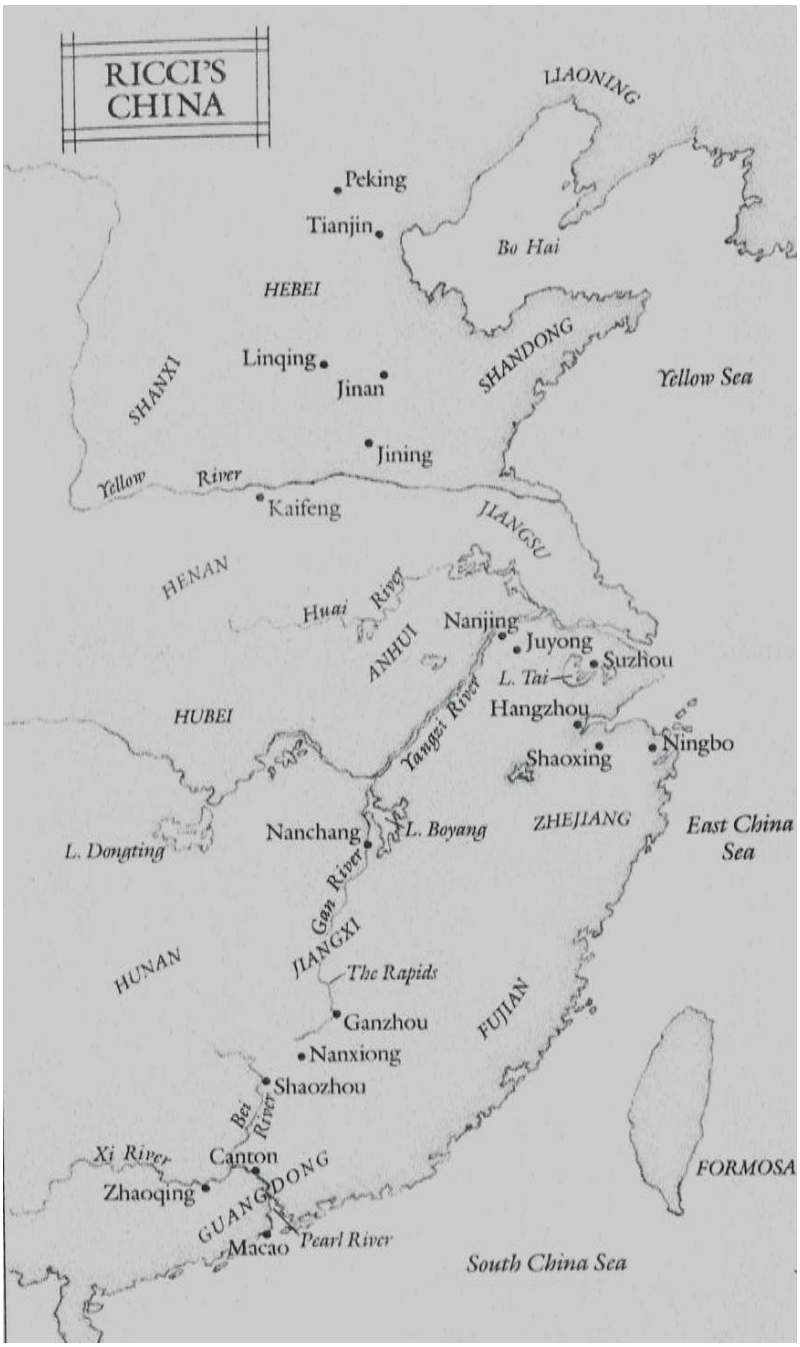

Figure 3.

Map of Ming China. This map highlights the cities in which Ricci settled and through which he traveled throughout his years in China. Reproduced from Jonathan Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books, 1984), xiii.

Chapter Three

The Display through Maps

In January 1601, after a failed attempt to settle in Beijing, Ricci was granted residency in the Chinese capital where he remained until his death in 1610. Having accumulated numerous and detailed observations about the Chinese cultural and natural worlds, Ricci soon became aware of the need of a platform from which to organize and present his findings to both the Europeans and the Chinese. Influenced by the Chinese culture, Ricci recognized cartography as an ideal means through which to communicate the new knowledge he had created through his travel and observations. At the end of 1584, Ricci compiled his first world map which he revised for the first time twelve years later, in 1596, and thereafter, multiple times. The initial longer gap in time followed by the high frequency of revisions between 1596 and 1610 reveal Ricci's intellectual transformation in the second half of his tenure in China as expressed by his maps. In 1602, Ricci revised his world map for the third time, creating a piece of celebrated cartographic work distinctly different from both contemporary European and Chinese maps. This map, through which he expressed not only everything he had collected and learned about China but also his newfound awareness of the power of scientific observations, represents the culmination of his intellectual growth.

Maps were no by means an unfamiliar part of early modern European culture. Mapmaking had long been a tradition in Europe and it gained higher popularity between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries when European society experienced a "map consciousness."[66] By the time Ricci left Europe, maps were produced in great numbers, as both rulers and popes used them for their political or religious purposes. Equipped with the mathematical and astronomical skills necessary to compile maps thanks to his Jesuit education, Ricci carried with him this map consciousness as he sailed to the east. But in his 1584 letter to deputy exchequer Román, Ricci voiced his dissatisfaction with certain world maps that circulated in Europe, in particular those from the New World, which he believed had been the inaccurate products of the political rivalry between Spain and Portugal.[67] From the very beginning of his tenure in China, Ricci had already been deeply aware of the possible implications of mapmaking, and the role maps played in presenting information. Ricci's interests in cartography were a direct reflection and expansion of this European culture.

However, the Jesuit and European cultures under which Ricci was educated were not his only motivation to compile world maps. Ricci's high level of map consciousness contributed to his awareness of Chinese cartography. While in India, Ricci never mentioned any intent to compile a map.[68] However, Ricci's interests in mapmaking

[66] David Buisseret ed., *Monarchs, Ministers and Maps. The Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1-2. See also Daniel Birkholz, *The King's Two Maps. Cartography and Culture in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), xvii-xxvii.

[67] See Ricci's February 13, 1583 letter to de Fornari. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 35.

[68] Among Ricci's letters from India, six of them are extant. See Ibid., 1-30.

became evident as soon as he came into contact with the Chinese culture in Macao. As soon as he began to learn the Chinese language, Ricci was particularly impressed by the Chinese custom of binding printed maps into books with the intent to organize and preserve such information as main crops, population and landmarks, all in one place. Ricci also observed that every major city in China collected information in this way, remarking that the "Chinese people were very wise."[69]

Maps had been a regular part of the upper-class Chinese culture and the Chinese literati had a long engagement with maps.[70] Chinese cartography was distinctly different from its European counterpart. Not only was the Chinese concept of the world different, Chinese maps illustrated the emphasis on the cultural mapping of the Chinese world since the tenth century. Zhu Siben's *Yutu*, circa 1320, and Luo Hongxian's *Guang Yutu*, produced in 1579, were two well-known examples. Chinese maps often featured China prominently in the middle, with other countries, many of which tributary states, surrounding it. Chinese maps did not emphasize the accurate depictions of all countries in the world, but rather Chinese supremacy over other countries. Ricci himself noted as early as 1584 that the Chinese "thought China was the whole world, or at least occupied most of the world, and was the most important land."[71] Through his involvement with the Chinese culture, Ricci had access to numerous Chinese maps. Moreover, the interests on the part of the Chinese literati in cartography increased Ricci's curiosity in cartography.

[69] See Ricci's letter to de Fornari. Ibid., 34.

[70] Craig Clunas contended that maps were not a "stunning novelty" amongst the Chinese literati. See Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 80.

[71] See Ricci's September 13, 1584 letter to Román. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 55.

At the end of 1584, only one year after settling in Zhaoqing, Ricci compiled his first world map, entitled *Yudi Shanhai Quantu* 輿地山海全圖, *A Complete Map of the Earth's Mountains and Seas*. The skills he had acquired in Europe and the influence of Chinese culture increased Ricci's awareness of the importance and the role of cartographic production and helped him quickly identify cartography as an ideal tool to glorify the Chinese empire, and the best space for the presentation of the information he had collected. Ricci displayed both European and Chinese influences through his mapmaking. Shortly after completing his first world map, Ricci reported his cartographic work to Claudius Aquaviva, General of the Jesuit Order. Ricci informed the General that he compiled his map in the European format and projection, but recorded information such as the calculations of time and distances, and place names in the Chinese language.[72] Although Ricci employed European cartographic techniques as the foundation of his map, Ricci did not simply translate a European map, for he also included his own scientific calculations on his own version. Ricci believed that his map was the first of its kind produced in China and was convinced that it was better than existing Chinese maps.[73]

Although the 1584 map is not extant, a rendition of Ricci's 1584 map was included in *Tushu Bian*, *Compilation of Illustrations and Writings*, a work by Zhang Huang (1527-1608), respected Confucian scholar and head of the prestigious *Bailudong* College who met Ricci in 1595 in Nanchang (Figure 4). Ricci made his map on a larger

[72] See Ricci's November 30, 1584 report to Aquaviva. Ibid., 60.

[73] See Ricci's October 20, 1585 report to Aquaviva. Ibid., 70.

scale than conventional European maps in order to allow room for the Chinese characters which, according to Ricci, were "somewhat larger than our own." Based on Zhang's rendition, Ricci's world map showed Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South Americas. With the exception of Europe, all continents, and the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean were marked in Chinese names. China was represented as two large islands occupying a large part of Asia.[74] Significantly, Asia was placed towards the middle of the map. Unlike contemporary European world maps, Ricci's map did not feature Europe in the middle.

Ricci's world map was highly popular amongst the Chinese literati. Ricci reported to General Aquaviva that he had presented the map to Wang Pan, who appreciated it so much that he ordered its immediate publication and even supervised the printing himself at his mansion. Wang regarded Ricci's map so highly that he used the printed copies as gifts to Chinese of high status.[75] Ricci did not expect the map to be published so soon, and he was also aware that his map was not completely accurate, which in his evaluation was due partly to his own mistakes and partly to printing errors.

Ricci's identity as a scientist was in full display from 1596 to 1610 through cartography, as he began to revise his 1584 world map several times. Each time Ricci revised his world map, it took place in a different city, and he gave each new map a different title, indicating the new information he had collected over time, especially through his travel. In 1596, twelve years after the original version, Ricci revised his

[74] Yee, "Traditional Chinese Cartography and the Myth of Westernization," 171.

[75] See Ricci's November 30, 1584 report to Aquaviva. Ricci, *Li Madou Shuxinji*, 60.

world map for the first time in Nanchang. Carved on stele, the revised map was entitled *Shanhai Yudi Tu* 山海輿地圖, *A Map of Mountains and Seas*. Ricci revised his maps two more times within the next few years. In Nanjing, Ricci revised his map again in 1600 and renamed it *Wanguo Yutu* 萬國輿圖, *A Map of all Regions of the World*.[76] In 1602, Ricci revised his world map for the third time in Beijing. The 1602 map was entitled *Kunyu Wanguo Quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖, *A Complete Geographical Map of all the Regions of the World*. These title changes reflected Ricci's more confident understanding of China and the world. While the titles of his first maps focused on natural elements such as mountains and seas, Ricci later changed his titles to "all regions," shifting his focus to the countries of the world, including China. Compared to his 1600 edition, Ricci was even confident that his 1602 version was a "complete" cartographic production.

This 1602 version is one of the most celebrated maps in cartography, as it displayed an elaborate understanding of China as well as the world.[77] (Figure 5 and Figure 6) Ricci incorporated both European and Chinese mapmaking traditions and techniques as he created his own space to present the information he had collected in China. Ricci's maps became a "contact zone," a "spatial and temporal copresence" of subjects previously separated.[78] However, this 1602 map not only served as a bright

[76] Cronin, *The Wise Man from the West*, 151.

[77] Theodore Foss, "A Western Interpretation of China: Jesuit Cartography," in Charles E. Ronan, S.J. and Bonnie, B.C. Oh, eds., *East Meets West. The Jesuits in China, 1582-1773* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1988), 211.

[78] Mary Louise Pratt used the term "contact zone" to describe the points of interactions between Western travelers and indigenous people in the New World in her analysis of early modern travel writings. See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 6-7.

moment of contact between Europe and China. Through this cartographic production, Ricci completed his long process of intellectual transformation in China as he also introduced his new knowledge of China collected through his own firsthand scientific observations during his many years of travel.

Ricci's newly revised map retained certain European cartographic techniques. As in his 1854 map, the 1602 version featured the oval projection commonly used in European maps which indicated the roundness of the earth. It also featured Europe, Africa, Asia, North America, South America, and the unknown land on the southern edge of the earth, which was in accord with contemporary European understanding of the world. In addition, Ricci's map also employed meridians at ten-degree intervals, illustrating in a precise manner the locations of the continents and major countries. Consistent with Clavius's teaching of the Ptolemaic theory, Ricci also included in the top right corner of his map the illustration of the nine spheres of the universe with the earth featured as the center.

Nonetheless, Ricci demonstrated a high level of Chinese influence in his mapmaking through the display of several main features. One of the most striking elements of Ricci's world map was the placement of China. Like his 1584 map, Ricci's new map placed China towards the center of his map. While Abraham Ortelius and other European cartographers positioned Europe towards the center of their world maps, Ricci's 1602 version continued to abandon this conventional European projection (Figure 7). Ricci spun the globe, so to speak, moving Europe to the far right while featuring

China in a central position.[79] Ricci conformed to the traditional Chinese concept of the "Middle Kingdom," which Ricci expressed in his journal:

> I have heard that this title is due to the fact that the Chinese look upon the heavens as spherical and imagine that the world is flat and that China is situated in the middle of this flat plain. Due to this idea, when they first saw our geographical maps, they were somewhat puzzled to find their empire placed not in the center of the map but at its extreme eastern border. When [I] drafted a map of the world for them and inscribed it with Chinese characters, out of deference to their ideas, [I] so arranged it that the empire of China occupied more or less of a central position.[80]

By placing China towards the middle of his world map, Ricci conformed to the Chinese idea of their country being the center of the world, displaying the same kind of sensitivity towards the Chinese culture he showed as he refined the accommodation policy.

The use of the Chinese language was another feature Ricci continued to adopt for his revised map. As in his 1584 world map, Ricci compiled his new version entirely in the Chinese language, further distinguishing his map from contemporary European maps. While his original map did not have the names of specific countries, and only limited information, Ricci adorned his new map with the names of many countries, rivers, mountains within each continent, as well as the names of the major oceans. The North and South Poles were also illustrated in spheres on the left hand side of his map.

In addition to the use of the Chinese language, Ricci's new version contained numerous elaborate textual descriptions, another influence from the Chinese culture

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[79] Cheryl Ann Semans, "*Mapping the Unknown: Jesuit Cartography in China, 1583-1773."* Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1987, 91. In her dissertation, Semans acknowledged Ricci as the first Jesuit cartographer in China.

[80] Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, 7.

displayed through Ricci's map. The practice of written texts on maps had long been a part of Chinese mapmaking and Ricci followed this tradition in his map.[81] As with European maps such as Ortelius's famous map, Ricci's 1584 version had limited texts. Ortelius had the title, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, on the top of his map and an inscription at the bottom, in addition to the various country names. Similarly, Ricci had his title, *Yudi Shanhai Quantu*, on the top of the map, but without inscription at the bottom and limited Chinese characters. Almost twenty years later, however, Ricci had become fluent in the Chinese language. In his 1602 map, Ricci included elaborate texts throughout the entire map, which could explain the size of the map. Compared to the 1584 version, which measured one meter by two meters, the 1602 edition comprised of six panels, measuring approximately two meters by four meters, and was designed to display as a screen. This revised map was twice the size of Ricci's original edition.

The Chinese texts on Ricci's 1602 map followed the traditional Chinese style of writing, beginning from top to bottom, and from right to left. On the right hand side, Ricci began with his own preface of the map. As was his pursuit since his first written work, Ricci kept in mind the importance of prefaces in Chinese print culture. Not only did he write his own preface, Ricci also sought the recognition of the Chinese elites by inviting such literati as Li Zhizao, one of his converts, to write prefaces on his newly revised map. Ricci even placed Li's preface towards the center of his map, in the space that depicted the Pacific Ocean between Asia and North America, giving it a prominent place on the map.

[81] Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, 17.

The texts on this revision contained more than the names of countries, continents and oceans. In his portrayal of countries around the world, Ricci described weather, local customs, inhabitants and local products in various countries learned from his reading of both European and Chinese sources. For each continent, Ricci included the names of the countries, major rivers and mountains. He also had specific details for certain countries. Ricci introduced the grape wine and white sugar produced on the Fortunate Islands, which enjoyed a mild climate. He described the two volcanoes in Sicily, Italy, one constantly emitting flames and the other smoke. Ricci explained that the Nile River in Africa was the "longest river in the world."[82] He also warned that crocodiles appeared outside of the Cape of Good Hope, while informing readers that myrrh was produced in Arabia.[83] He also noted that Brazilians did not build houses but rather made their dwellings on the ground. These written descriptions provided much information about the ethnography of the world.

Amongst all countries, Ricci depicted his native Italy in a relatively detailed manner. While Ricci introduced the five countries in South America and included several descriptions of the continent, including that of the Brazilians, he provided greater details about Europe, which he introduced as a continent with over thirty countries which worshipped *Tianzhu*. Within much of the continent, however, Ricci provided the names of European countries and only a few cities such as Lyon in France. However, Ricci included the names of at least ten cities and regions of the Italian Peninsula on his map,

[82] Giles, "Translations from the Chinese World Map of Father Ricci," 379.

[83] For a list of descriptions, See Ch'en, "Matteo Ricci's Contribution to, and Influence on, Geographical Knowledge in China," 329-337.

including the cities of Rome, Naples, Venice and Puglia, and regions such as Piedmont, in addition to his description of Sicily. Considering the limited space Ricci had for the Italian Peninsula due to its size, Ricci provided more details for his native land than many other countries.

Ricci's depictions of China far exceeded those of Italy in details, which was the result of not only the influence of Chinese culture but also his collection of firsthand information. Compared to his 1584 map, Ricci's revised map featured greater details and much higher accuracy in the portrayal of China. The empire was no longer represented by two sizeable islands. Rather, Ricci portrayed the empire as one vast country. Not only did Ricci include the names of all fifteen provinces of China, which he had introduced to Román in his 1584 letter, and the main rivers and mountains, he also provided elaborate descriptions of its location and expanse. On the southeastern corner of China on the map, Ricci wrote the following inscription of China:

> China is most famous for her culture and products. She occupies an area which extends from 15 degrees to 42 degrees North Latitude. Tributary countries are very numerous. In such a general map as this, only the mountains, rivers, provinces and circuits are indicated and for a more detailed account, the various gazetteers may be consulted.[84]

Ricci improved the accuracy of his understanding of Chinese geography through the firsthand data he had collected. Applying his scientific skills, Ricci had attempted to determine the location of China and Beijing as early as 1584. On this 1602 map, his estimation of the northern and southern extent of the empire was nearly perfect, while the

[84] Ibid., 335.

western border was only two degrees to the west, and the eastern border seven degrees too far west. This was a much more accurate determination compared to not only his original map but also contemporary European maps such as Ortelius's version, which positioned China much too far north between thirty-seven and fifty-two degrees.[85] Although not completely accurate about every country, Ricci's revised map revealed an especially detailed and precise portrayal of China.

Although Ricci determined the boundaries of China rather accurately, the 1602 map showed a discrepancy of Ricci's illustration within the empire which corresponded to his own travel. Ricci's extensive travel significantly enhanced the accuracy of his depiction of China, especially in the inland areas. From Southern China to the Yangtze River, Ricci's depiction was fairly precise. Ricci's measurements of such major cities as Nanchang and Nanjing, where he had established missions, were highly meticulous. His illustrations of the major rivers and the Great Wall were also close to perfection.[86] Ricci also placed Beijing's location at forty degrees north, the latitude he revised in 1596.[87] His careful examinations of the location of many major Chinese cities resonated a more complete understanding of the vast Chinese empire. However, as Ricci scarcely traveled after reaching Beijing in 1601, the coastlines along the northern part of China on his map were not as precise, especially Shandong Province, Liaodong Peninsula and the Bo Sea, outside of Beijing.

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[85] Semans, "*Mapping the Unknown*," 92-93.

[86] Ibid., 91-93.

[87] Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, 307.

As he traveled half a world away to Ming China, Ricci's intellectual transformation unfolded. It was in China where Ricci became aware that maps could be used as a powerful means to record, preserve and communicate his new knowledge. As early as 1584, he compiled a world map. As he collected more information over the years, Ricci revised his map, especially during the second half of his tenure in the empire from 1596 to 1610. After almost twenty years in China, Ricci revised his world map for the third time in 1602 and produced a unique piece of cartographic work. Ricci's world maps were more than the combination of European traditions and Chinese culture that illuminated the many moments both cultures interacted. His maps marked a cross-cultural intellectual transformation that the Jesuit himself underwent. Ricci made maps not to simply arouse the curiosity of and gain favor among the Chinese elite. His world maps reflected his humanist education and scientific skills displayed under the immense influence of the Chinese culture, and exhibited a continuous development of his understanding of China through his own progression as an intellectual. His 1602 map epitomized his transformation to a scientist.

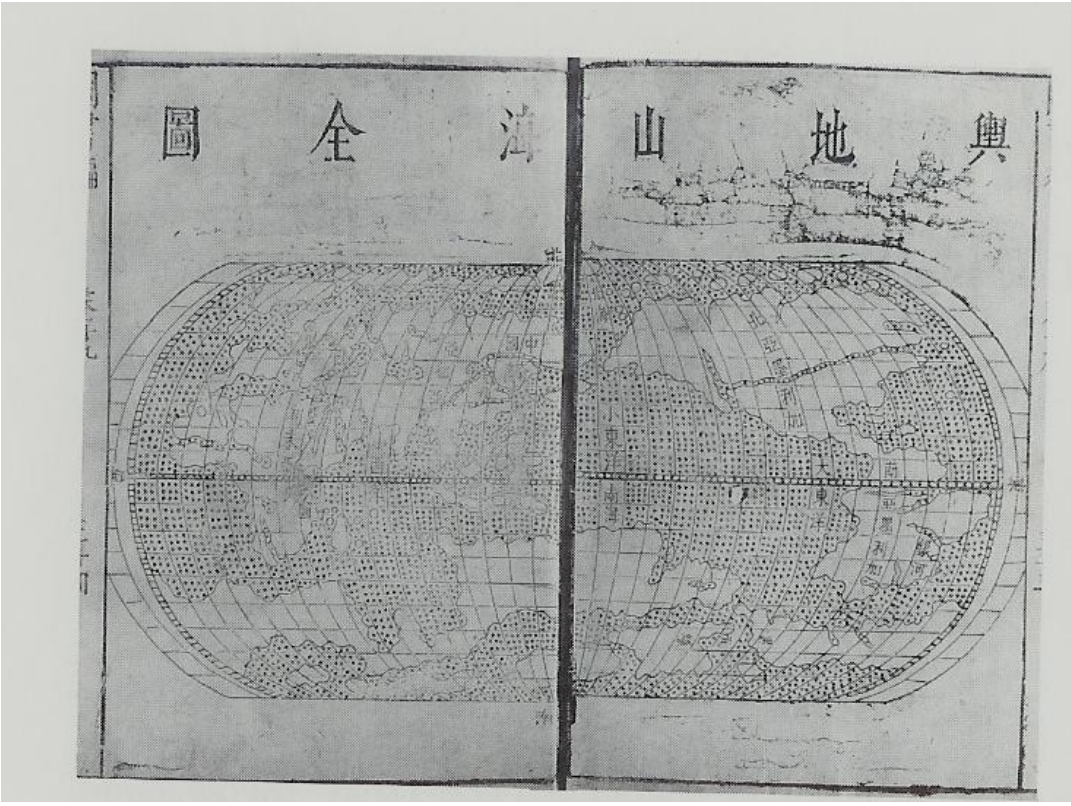

Figure 4.

Rendition of *Yudi Shanhai Quantu* 輿地山海全圖, *A Complete Map of the Earth's Mountains and Seas*. This version of Matteo Ricci's 1584 map was included in *Tushu Bian* by Zhang Huang, according to Cordell Yee. The size of each page measures 23cm x 14.5cm. Reproduced from Cordell D.K. Yee, "Traditional Chinese Cartography the Myth of Westernization," in J.B. Harley and David Woodward, eds. *The History of Cartography. Vol 2, Book 2, Cartography in the Traditional East and Southwest Asian Societies* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 172.

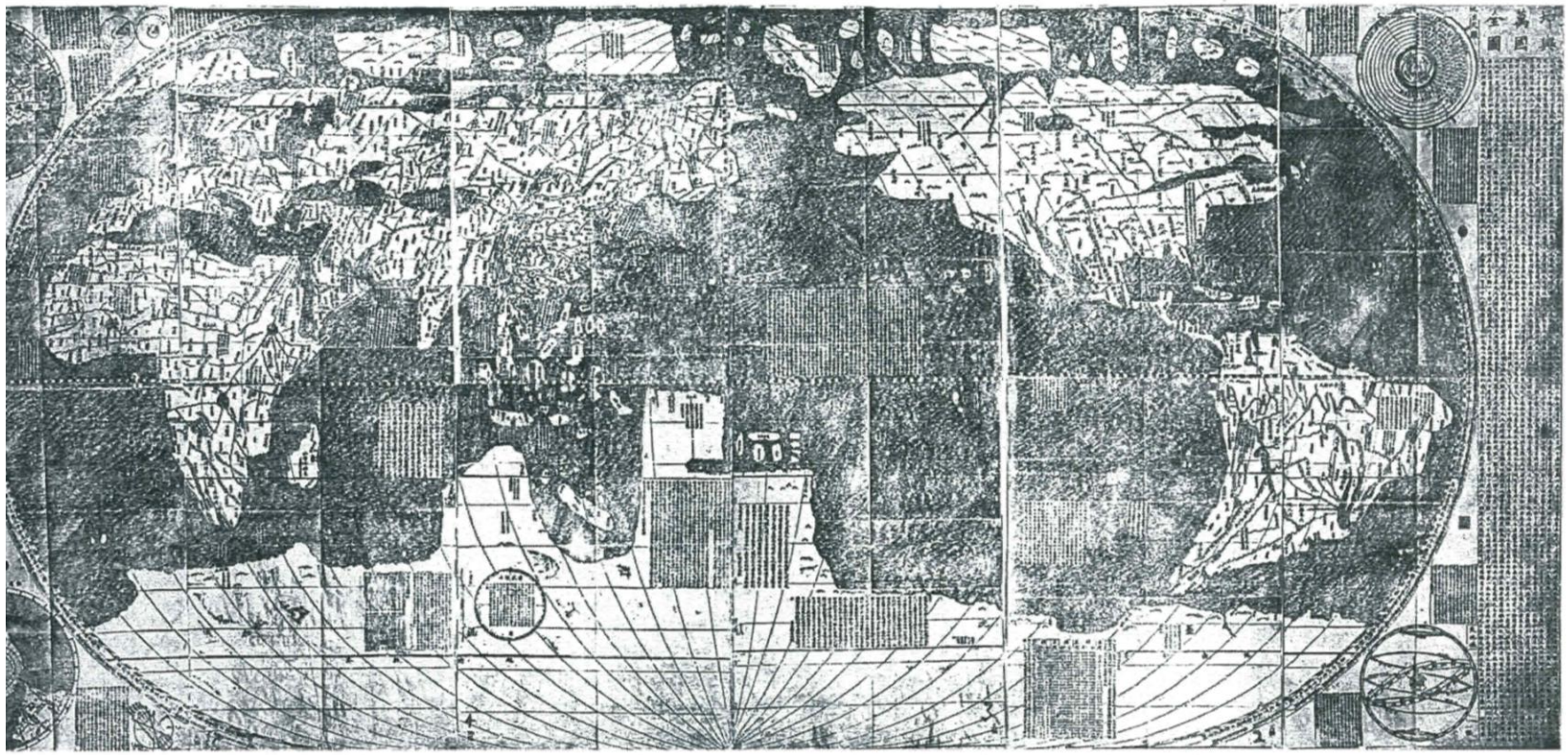

Figure 5.

Kunyu Wanguo Quantu 坤輿萬國全圖, *A Complete Geographical Map of all the Regions of the World*,1602. This is the complete six-panel woodblock print housed at the Vatican Library. Each panel measures approximately 183 x 66 cm. Reproduced from John D. Day, "The Search for the Origins of the Chinese Manuscript of Matteo Ricci's Maps," *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 47 (1995), 99.

Figure 6.

China as depicted on *Kunyu Wanguo Quantu*.

Figure 7.

Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum,* 1570. Reproduced from John Rennie Short, *The World Through Maps. A History of Cartography* (Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 2003), 122.

Conclusion

From Europe to China – An Intellectual Transformation

Matteo Ricci was an important figure in early modern Chinese-European relations. Not only did he go to China as a missionary, but through his involvement in cartography amongst other activities, he also presented himself as an intellectual and a scientist. After almost two decades in China, Ricci gained rich geographical knowledge of the empire through texts, and the scientific skills he acquired in Europe as a Jesuit. His own travel within the empire also assisted in his efforts in producing maps with great details. The production and revision of his world map was Ricci's process of cataloguing, organizing and transmitting his knowledge of China and of the world as he acquired new information. In sixteenth-century Europe, where people were uncertain whether Cathay and China were the same empire or two separate countries, Ricci was instrumental in compiling new and more accurate geographical information. While Ricci's world maps showcased the world to the Chinese in a systematic way, they also transmitted new and firsthand geographical images of China to Europe, enhancing Jesuit and European understanding of the Chinese empire.

Ricci's maps were more than an evangelization tool. Traveling half a world towards the Chinese empire, Ricci found a favorable environment where he unveiled his religious mission, practiced his humanist education and experimented his scientific skills.

But Ricci was also deeply affected by the Chinese culture. From his days in Macao and throughout the first half of his tenure in China between 1582 and 1595, Ricci actively engaged with the Chinese literati. He followed their customs, wrote treatises and booklets, studied and translated their classics, and introduced ancient Western works to them. His radical change of appearance from a Buddhist monk to a Chinese literatus followed his increased interests in applying his astronomical skills and engaging in direct scientific observations. Ricci's interest in the natural world led him to collect firsthand data about China which had been unknown to Europeans. Influenced by the Chinese literati culture that had had a long engagement with maps, Ricci found his ideal platform for his knowledge in cartography.

Cartography was an important means for Ricci in his quest to understand the vast Chinese empire. When Ricci produced his first world map in Ming China in 1584, the map became the first of its kind in the Chinese language. Unlike any contemporary European world maps, Ricci's map placed China towards the center, conforming to the traditional Chinese perception of its empire as the "Middle Kingdom." As Ricci's understanding of Chinese geography and culture developed, Ricci revised his maps. Through his reading of both European and Chinese texts, his scientific surveying techniques, astronomical observations, and his own travel, Ricci gained richer geographical understanding of China. His creation of world maps allowed Ricci to utilize the cartographic space to convey what he had understood about the world around him in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, revealing a fluid and continuous shaping and progression in his perceptions of China and the world. Adorned with an

abundance of new information, Ricci's elaborate 1602 map was the culmination of his intellectual transformation.

Until his death, Ricci continued to produce world maps. The production and revision of his world maps was Ricci's process of creating and maintaining a space to catalog and transmit his knowledge of China to Jesuits and of the world to the Chinese. Ricci's *mappamundi* showcased the world to the Chinese in a systematic manner, and transmitted new images of China to Europe since Marco Polo's travels in the thirteenth century, enhancing European understanding of the Chinese empire geographically.

Ricci's cartographic ventures provided an important and intriguing window for more than early modern Chinese-European encounters. As Ricci achieved cultural and scientific interactions between Europe and China through the adaptation of both Chinese and European technologies and cultural traditions, Ricci nonetheless did not simply bring together Chinese and European cultures. Through his world maps, Ricci created a new body of knowledge as he matured as a humanist and a scientist, recording his own intellectual transformation.

In 1610, Ricci died in Beijing. At the petition of his fellow Jesuits, the emperor granted Ricci a tomb outside of the capital city. After living in China for twenty-seven years, Ricci was buried in the city he labored so hard to reach, an unprecedented honor bestowed on a foreigner. Ricci won favor with not only the Chinese literati, but also the emperor. From a city in the south to the heart of the expansive Chinese empire, Ricci's long journey in China ended with a series of world maps the Jesuit created and revised along the way.

The Scientific Revolution and the emergence of taxonomy in the seventeenth century, and the emphasis on empirical research during the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century increasingly emphasized science, reason and natural laws. Enlightenment thinkers tirelessly promoted the use of reason and rationale to human society. Rather than searching for wisdom and knowledge from ancient texts, modern scientists began to make observations and record their firsthand findings. These forms of collecting and recording of information became commonplace in the modern era. However, this new practice did not begin with the scientists from the seventeenth or the eighteenth centuries, but earlier. Before Carl Linnaeus and the Age of Reason, a sixteenth-century Jesuit in Ming China had deeply involved himself in the collecting and cataloguing of information about China and the world, and manifested his new knowledge on maps. As Matteo Ricci journeyed to the east for his mission long ago, he also embarked on a cross-cultural intellectual transformation that found its origin in Europe but came to fruition half a world away in China through the drawing of boundaries.

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