Matteo Ricci: The Pioneer of A "Renaissance" in China

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Abstract

As a pioneer in introducing Western knowledge to China and in dialogue between these two cultures, Matteo Ricci played a significant historical role in the Ming-Qing period. If we consider Ricci's influence from the perspective of instilling new blood and vitality to the Chinese culture, he could be portrayed as a pioneer of a "Renaissance" in China. Of course we are just borrowing the term "Renaissance" from Europe, saying that China was moving towards a revival of her culture at about the same time as the arrival of the Jesuits. It was the effort of a generation of people of the Ming-Qing period, and Matteo Ricci was a representative figure. By revering Ricci as the pioneer of a "Renaissance" in China, we are acknowledging the contribution Matteo Ricci and his colleagues made to Chinese society.

Foreword

The word "Renaissance" comes from the Italian word "Rinascimento", meaning to regenerate or to revive. This word was

first formally used by Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574, Italian painter and architect of the Renaissance period) in his book *Le vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostril* to describe the new culture. This Italian word was later translated into French — Renaissance — and began to be widely used among the European languages from the 17th century onwards.

Since the 19th century, historians have been using the word Renaissance to refer to what was taking place in the European culture from the 14th to the 16th century, which was generally speaking a revival of the Greek and Roman cultures. The Renaissance began in Italy. Representative figures included Dante Alighieri (1265-1321, Italian poet and pioneer of the Renaissance) with his masterpiece *La Divina Comedia*; Italian writer and poet Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), with his masterpiece *Decameron,* which had the Black Death in Europe as its setting; Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527, Italian political philosopher, musician, and poet) with his masterpiece *The Prince*; and French writer François Rabelais (*circa* 1493-1553), and his *La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel,* which had once been banned. From these representative figures and their masterpieces we can see that the Renaissance pointed toward humanism, which can be further divided into that with a religious belief and that without. The religious side was represented by humanist thinker and theologian Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) of Holland, and Thomas More (1478-1535), an idealist socialist, saint, and writer in England. The Catholic Church was critical towards atheist humanism, saying, "A humanism which excludes God is an inhuman humanism"[1] As for humanism with God, the Church described it in this way: "Thus we see the birth of a new humanism, the content of which is that

[1] Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate*, No. 78, June 29, 2009.

mankind is defined by his responsibility to his brothers and sisters, and to history."[2]

The language and the basic thoughts of the Renaissance in a way reflected the declining moral standards in Europe. For some time, the Renaissance was reduced to simply reviving classical culture. However, the real meaning of "reviving" should not be limited to simply restoring old customs. Rather, it should be analytical in regard to the current social situation in order to prepare for the establishment of a new culture. The Renaissance brought about fundamental change to European culture, particularly in people's ways of thinking. These changes in turn led to the onset of the Reformation and the Enlightenment, which followed. Although academics differ in their judgment of the Renaissance, it is certain that the Renaissance had a significant influence on astronomy, mathematics, physics, medicine, geography, philosophy, architecture, music, painting, and literature in Europe, and led to unprecedented changes in people's ways of thinking, and in their knowledge of the world, of humankind, and of society.

Now we return to our original discussion. Did China ever have a Renaissance? When was it? Can we compare the development of the Chinese culture with the Western one? Are we simply pleasing people with empty words by talking about a "Renaissance" in China? Even if we give a farfetched interpretation of China's prosperous Kangxi-Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty and the New Culture Movement as being China's "Renaissance," would not it be somehow "ungrateful to our Chinese predecessors" and "flattering the foreigner," if we honor a foreigner as being the pioneer of China's Renaissance?

To answer the above questions, we should first of all point out that this article borrows the term "Renaissance" and applies it to China because the timing coincided with the later period of the European Renaissance. Although China was lagging behind Europe,

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[2] Documents of the Vatican II Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 55, December 7, 1965.

it was catching up. Secondly, this term sums up the tremendous cultural and ideological changes taking place in Chinese society at that time and in the period that followed, signified by the prosperity of the Kangxi-Qianlong period and the New Culture Movement. Thirdly, the partial opening of China during late-Ming and early-Qing period no doubt played a role in the enormous social and cultural changes happening in China at that time. As for the last question, the famous late-Ming Chinese thinker Li Zhi (李贄 1527-1602) wrote in a poem that Ricci had traveled far-and-wide, over the mountains and waters, with temples honoring his name. He then asked: had China seen the light yet? The answer was that it was getting brighter and brighter.[3] Wang Kentang (王肯堂 1549-1613) of the Hanlin Academy in the late-Ming period said that Ricci's *Treatise on Friendship* could cheer up the sick, and that it was even better than Mei Sheng's (枚乘) work *Qi Fa* (七發).[4] Furthermore, the famous historian Fang Hao (方豪) considered Matteo Ricci to be the first person to establish a dialogue between Chinese and Western cultures in the Ming period. From Ricci's entry into China until the ban on the propagation of the Catholic faith during the Qianlong-Jiaqing period of the Qing dynasty, a great amount of communication between Chinese and Western cultures took place. Modern Western astronomy, mathematics, physics, medicine, philosophy, geography, water conservancy, architecture, music, and painting were all introduced into China during this period.[5]

Truckloads of books and articles have been written which talk about the contributions of Matteo Ricci to science and culture in China. This article will only discuss a few areas in which Matteo Ricci made a significant impact on the ideology and on the Chinese peoples' way of seeing things, in order to prove that Matteo Ricci deserves to be call the pioneer of a "Renaissance" in China.

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[3] 李贽，《焚书》卷六，中华书局，1974, p. 667.

[4] Refer：林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 63.

[5] 方豪著，《中西交通史》下册，岳麓书社，1987, p. 692.

I. Mathematics

The traditional Chinese way of calculation was rod calculation, and later, calculation with an abacus. The rod calculation practised in ancient China used bamboo sticks for counting, doing addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and calculating the square of a number. This method of calculation began around the Spring and Autumn Period in ancient China, and was used until it was replaced by abacus calculation during the Ming dynasty.

Elements of Geometry (幾何原本), translated by Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi (徐光啓), introduced geometry into China. It was through the Western method of calculation that the reform in calendar calculation during the Ming-Qing period could be achieved.[6] The geometry that Ricci introduced into China served as a forerunner and foundation for all calculation, facilitating acceptance of the more accurate calendar calculation.

Furthermore, many Chinese mathematical terms still in use today have come from the Chinese translation of *Elements of Geometry* by Ricci and Xu, such as, the Chinese words for point, line, surface, curved line, curved surface, right angle, obtuse angle, acute angle, vertical line, parallel lines, diagonal, triangle, rectangle, polygon, circle, center of a circle, and geometry.

Zhu Weizheng (朱維錚) pointed out that traditional Chinese mathematics emphasized practicality. Thus people paid attention to induction through experience, while abstract deduction was ignored.[7] Three books on mathematics, namely, *Elements of Geometry*, *The Theory and Method of Measurements* (測量法義), and *Treatise on Arithmetic* (同文算指) contributed greatly to speeding up the process of going from induction to abstract deduction in Chinese mathematics. We can say that these books had a significant impact because, as Zhu said, when *Elements of Geometry* was translated and introduced to China, mathematicians

[6] 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 184.
[7] 朱维铮 主编，《利玛窦中文著译集》，复旦大学出版社，2007, 2nd edition, p. 294.

who had almost established their own "geometry" theory were quickly fascinated, and were attracted by the ways of using definition, hypothesis, axioms, and abstract figures in the logic system. They claimed that this was some sort of secret of Matteo Ricci.[8]

The Chinese of the word geometry "*ji he*" (幾何) was originally an interrogative numerical term, but Ricci and Xu successfully transformed it into a noun, which embraces inquiry into the origin of things. "It includes inquiry into the traditional view of the cosmos, and also of life."[9] Thus they had adopted an interrogative numerical term to associate mathematics with a philosophy of life. In this sense, the "Renaissance" in China might have had an even deeper meaning than the Renaissance in Europe, which was promoted by literature.

Ricci's contribution to China's Renaissance in the field of mathematics can be verified by the remark of Ye Xianggao (葉向高), a high government official, on the granting of the land to bury Ricci in Beijing. When Ricci died, the Ming emperor granted him a gravesite. Some people strongly objected to this unprecedented offer, but Ye supported the gesture, saying that if only for the translation of *Elements of Geometry* Ricci deserved to be granted a burial place by the emperor.[10]

Ricci and Li Zhizao (李之藻) translated *Treatise on Arithmetic* which opened the way for written calculation in China. Nowadays, students begin to learn written calculation in primary school. "Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division in written calculation in the old days was the same as today; the only difference is that in those days Chinese numerals were used, while today we use Arabic numbers."[11]

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid, p. 297.
[10] 方豪 著，《中国天主教史人物传》，中华书局，1988, p. 79.
[11] 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 190.

With the help of his translations of *Elements of Geometry*, *Treatise on Arithmetic, The Theory and Method of Measurements*, and *Treatise on Isoperimetric Figures* (圜容較義), Ricci brought a new vitality to Chinese mathematics. Much of that mathematical knowledge is still in use, and has become an essential element of Chinese mathematics. Because of the mathematical knowledge that Ricci and later Jesuits brought to China, "the Chinese became excited and declared that the age of 'indigenous mathematics' was coming to an end; this opened up new prospects for the reordering and development of traditional Chinese mathematics during the Qing dynasty. Therefore when we assess the mathematics introduced into China during late-Ming early-Qing period, we should not forget the 'catalytic' effect of those translated books."[12]

Objectively speaking, Matteo Ricci and his translated books brought new blood to China in the field of mathematics; at least they acted as a "catalyst" to the revival of mathematics in China. In view of this, it is right to honor Matteo Ricci as the pioneer of a "Renaissance" in China in the field of mathematics.

II. Astronomy

Academics both inside and outside of China generally agree: "Astronomy and mathematics were at the center of the Western sciences brought to China during the late-Ming early-Qing period. Considering quantity, astronomy ranked first among all the sciences."[13] However, the significance was not on the quantity, but on the change in the Chinese peoples' fundamental concept of astronomy. This change was revolutionary, in a way similar to the impact of Copernicus' revolution. The knowledge of astronomy that Ricci and later missionaries brought to China opened a new phase in astronomy in China. It overturned the Chinese peoples' ancient concepts of astronomy. In the field of astronomy, Ricci acted only

[12] Ibid, pp. 198-199.
[13] Ibid, p. 146.

as a forerunner; Johann Adam Schall and Ferdinand Verbiest, who came after him, brought the new astronomical theories to maturity.

Through the book *Astrolabe and Spheres: Charts and Commentary* (渾蓋通憲圖說), which Ricci dictated and Li Zhizao copied, and the last map that Ricci drew — *Complete Geographical Map of all the Kingdoms of the World* (坤輿萬國全圖), Ricci introduced new ideas about astronomy to China. The changes in astronomical concepts that Ricci's pioneering work played a role in are as follows:

From the theory of a "spherical sky and square land" to "spherical land". "Spherical sky and square land" was the main traditional Chinese model of the cosmos, although this theory was mingled with the model of Armillary Sphere (渾天說 — the sky is a sphere with the celestial bodies hanging on it; the earth is not attached to the sky but floats on air or on water); the Celestial Dome model (蓋天說 — the sky is a hemisphere covering the land, with the celestial bodies circulating around it); and the Concept of Infinity (宣夜說 — heaven is infinite in extent; the celestial bodies float in the air, even celestial bodies are masses of air that glow). It was from Matteo Ricci that for the first time the Chinese knew for certain that the earth is spherical, that the earth has a gravitational force, that people inhabited the whole earth, and that people living on opposite side of the earth would not fall off.[14] These new concepts in astronomy posed great challenges to the traditional concepts of astronomy in China. People at that time "were able to believe some of the things, but for other things, most of them found it unimaginable."[15] By introducing those "unimaginable" astronomical concepts to China, Matteo Ricci changed the traditional ideas on astronomy for the Chinese. It enabled them to gradually accept the new astronomical theory of a Spherical Earth.

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[14] 利玛窦、金尼阁 著，何高济、王遵仲、李申 译，《利玛窦中国札记》，中华书局，1983, p. 347.

[15] Ibid.

For the first time Chinese astronomers learned the reality about the eclipse of the sun and moon. Traditional Chinese astronomy had quite ridiculous explanations for the eclipse of the sun and moon. They thought that the eclipse of the moon happened because the center of the moon became dim; or because when the moon faced the sun, it became so frightened that it lost its glow; or because the sun had a hole, and when the moon was near this hole, the glow of the moon was absorbed.[16] From Matteo Ricci the Chinese astronomers heard for the first time: "The eclipse of the moon occurs because the earth had become between the sun and the moon."[17] Thus Ricci enabled the Chinese to know the truth about eclipses of the sun and the moon.

For the first time the Chinese knew that "the sun is larger than the earth, and the earth is larger than the moon." Two thousand years ago, when Confucius had a discussion about the sun with his two sons, it concluded with Confucius' humble admission "what I know, I know; what I do not know, I do not know." The Chinese people greatly respected Confucius' humility. As praiseworthy as the virtue of humility is, there was still no explanation based on scientific research. In his *Complete Geographical Map of all the Kingdoms of the World*, Ricci talked about "the sun is larger than the earth, and the earth is larger than the moon." This saying was shocking and inconceivable for the Chinese academics of that time. Wang Kentang (王肯唐, 1549-1613) considered "that the statement of Ricci that the sun is larger than the earth is quite astonishing and unbelievable, but what he said is so solid that it should be true."[18] Even in the early Qing dynasty, there were still scholars who did not believe this theory, and they tried to find reasons to disagree with it. Fang Yizhi (方以智, 1611-1671), a scientist and philosopher of the late-Ming early-Qing period, refuted Ricci,

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[16] Ibid., pp. 347-348.
[17] Ibid., p. 347.
[18] 王肯唐《郁冈斋笔麈》第 3 册。Quoted from: 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 163.

saying, "He (Matteo Ricci) said that the sun is more than a hundred times larger than the earth, but I don't think so. The sunshine would be so strong that people on earth would surely die."[19] Matteo Ricci was the first one to introduce the concept of "the sun is larger than the earth, and the earth is larger than the moon" to China. It radically altered the general concept of the academics of that time, which was: "The earth is big but the sun is small."

The knowledge that Ricci brought to China contributed to the revision of the almanac, and gradually eliminated the idea of a connection between the almanac and rises and falls in the country's fate. Although the more meticulously revised *Chongzhen Almanac* (崇禎曆書) was the work of Chinese intelligentsia including Xu Guangqi (徐光啓) and Li Zhizao (李之藻), we cannot deny that Xu and Li's knowledge of astronomy and the almanac had come from Ricci. As Lin Jinshui (林金水) wrote, "The *Chongzhen Almanac* reflects the fruit of the application of the Western calendar that Ricci brought to China. Because of this, people in the Qing dynasty not only regarded Ricci as the person who revised the Ming calendar, but also as the one who revised the calendar of the Qing dynasty. They collectively referred to the revision of the almanac of both the Ming and Qing periods as having been done according to "the School of Ricci".[20] This calendar not only provided China with a more accurate almanac, but also greatly changed the concepts of the Chinese people. Sou Neiqing (薮内清) wrote, "From the Tang to the Qing dynasties, although Western astronomers were highly respected in China, and the Chinese made reference to the Western method in their astronomical calculations, the Chinese calendar nonetheless was still calculated in the traditional way. The new calendar of the Qing period nevertheless applied the new Western method as the basis of its calculations. From this perspective, we

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[19] 方以智《通雅》卷 11《天文》。Quoted from: 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 164.

[20] 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 176.

cannot deny that the Western science imported into China during the Ming and Qing periods was epoch-making."[21] Those who refused to adopt the Western method of calculation to revise the almanac were simply tied to the idea that it was related to the rises and falls in the country's fate. Using Western calculations to revise the almanac was undoubtedly a drastic change for the existing ideology, and this change originated from "the School of Ricci".

"During the reign of the Ming emperor Shenzong (明神宗), Matteo Ricci and other Westerners came to China. They were very good in astronomy, in almanac calculations and in making instruments, which were unprecedented." This remark from the *History of the Ming Dynasty: Treatise on Astronomy*《明史・天文志》suffices to show that Matteo Ricci is worthy to be called the pioneer of China's "Renaissance" in the field of astronomy.

III. Geography

According to Hong Weilian's (洪煨蓮) book on the study of Matteo Ricci's world maps (考利瑪竇的世界地圖), there were 12 versions of world maps drawn either by Ricci or redrawn by other people.[22] Among them, the *Complete Geographical Map of all the Kingdoms of the World*, which was the last one that Ricci drew, was the most well known. Ricci was a forerunner, who brought a Western knowledge and understanding of geography to China. In Fang Hao's (方豪) view, Ricci's world maps brought about a renewal in China's geographical knowledge in six areas:

- The use of modern scientific methods to carry out field surveys of the longitude and latitude of places (the longitude and latitude of many major cities in China calculated at that time are the same or quite close to their present longitude and

[21] Quoted from: 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 182.

[22] Refer to: 方豪 著，《中西交通史》下册，岳麓书社，1987, pp. 825-826.

latitude readings, which were calculated by much more precise methods);

- The translation of place names: Many place names translated by Ricci are still in use today;
- The introduction to China of the latest findings in European geographical knowledge;
- The idea of five continents;
- The different geographical zones;
- The knowledge of world maps.[23]

Ricci's maps brought to China new geographical knowledge which totally changed the China's original concepts of "the four poles of the universe" and of "China". The new ideas faced strong resistance; many intellectuals raised strong opposition. For instance, Li Weizhen (李維楨, 1570-1624) thought, "The *Complete map of the world's mountains and seas* drawn by this foreigner Matteo Ricci has made China very small"; Wei Jun (魏濬, 1553-1619?) thought that "Ricci's theory is ridiculous and deceptive"; Xu Changzhi (徐昌治, late Ming) wrote, "Matteo Ricci uses heresy to delude the public.... The *Complete map of the myriad countries in the world* deceives people regarding the places that they cannot see, that they cannot reach, and therefore cannot prove exist. It's the tricks of the drawer. The location of China on the map is shifted to the west and north. However, when we look at the sky at night, Polaris is in the middle, which means that China should be in the middle. But the map shows China deviated towards the west, which is unfounded."[24]

Matteo Ricci's world map with its new geographical knowledge was for China like "thunder bursting out of the silence, arousing a tremendous reaction from the intellectuals of the late Ming dynasty."[25] The greatest impact was that the maps had

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[23] Refer to: 方豪 著，《中西交通史》下册，岳麓书社，1987, pp. 830-831.
[24] Ibid., p. 885.
[25] Ibid, p. 208.

enabled the Chinese to "see" the whole world for the first time. "Before Matteo Ricci came to China, the Chinese had never seen illustrations of the surface of the whole world, whether in the form of a globe or drawn on a map. They had never seen the globe marked by the meridians, longitude and latitude, and they had no knowledge of the equator, the tropical zones, the north and south poles, and the five continents of the world."[26] Matteo Ricci's world map let the Chinese see for the first time the mountains, rivers, and places in the world. This knowledge changed the Chinese understanding of the world, and even their way of thinking. The elites of the kingdom suddenly realized that the world was very large, and that China did not equal "the world". They realized that the Chinese civilization was not the only advanced civilization in the world. The second effect was that, from then on, the Chinese saw a brand new world. As Zhu Weizheng said, "From the perspective of cross-cultural comparative studies, the historical impact of Ricci's map may lie beyond the history of geography or the history of cartography."[27] "The impact that lie beyond" most likely referred to the change in the Chinese nationalistic mentality of "I am the world" or "the Middle Kingdom". This change in mentality had an ground-breaking effect for the revival of Chinese culture that came later. The third effect was that the *World Map* of Ricci was a forerunner of the *Huangyu Quanlantu*《皇輿全覽圖》 map that Emperor Kangxi requested the missionaries to draw, which was the first map in China containing longitudes and latitudes.

VI. Linguistics

Matteo Ricci translated many Chinese terms in the fields of astronomy, geography, and mathematics, which are still in use

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[26] 方以智《通雅》卷 11《天文》。转引自：林金水著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 348.

[27] 朱维铮 主编，《利玛窦中文著译集》，复旦大学出版社，2nd edition, 2007, p. 172.

today. Apart from this contribution, the greatest influence of Ricci in the area of linguistics is the introduction of Romanization (or Latinization) for Chinese characters. Traditional Chinese phonetics use the complicated *fanqie* (反切 Chinese phonetic signs) to pronounce a word. To make it easy for the missionaries to learn Chinese, Matteo Ricci used Latin, that was popular at time, as phonetics for the Chinese words. The first book that used Romanization was a Portuguese-Chinese dictionary, an unfinished work compiled by Matteo Ricci and Michele Ruggieri in 1584-1588. Father Fang Hao called it the first Chinese-Western language dictionary. A more complete work was *Remarkable Examples of Western Writing* (西字奇蹟), published in 1606. Matteo Ricci set a precedent in using the Roman alphabet as a help to pronounce Chinese words. Twenty years after this book was published, in 1625, Nicolas Trigault wrote *An Aid to the Eyes and Ears of Western Literati* (西儒耳目資), which was a more systematic guide to Chinese Romanization; it used 29 alphabet signs for the Chinese phonetics. It consisted of vowels, consonants, and a combination of some of them. Obviously this was based on *Romanization Phonetics* and had a great influence on the later Chinese Pinyin (Mandarin Chinese phonetics). "In 1957, the Chinese Character Reform Press re-published *Romanization Phonetics*, with the title *An Article on Romanization Phonetics in the late-Ming Period.*"[28] As Lin Jinshui pointed out, "Matteo Ricci's *Romanization Phonetics* had a positive influence even in modern time. For example, Ricci's phonetics influenced the use of the Wade-Giles system of Romanization in the second half of the 19th century."[29] *Romanization Phonetics* opened a new approach to the phonetics of Chinese words. In the 1950s, the Chinese Character Reform Press pointed out that "this was the first phonetics method using the Latin

[28] 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 246.
[29] Ibid, p. 247.

alphabet in China."[30] Hence we can see that in the field of phonetics Matteo Ricci can be considered a pioneer in the development of Chinese linguistics.

In the field of phonology, *Romanization Phonetics* had a similar contribution. Luo Changpei was of the opinion that the study of Chinese phonology encountered two difficulties: the first is the "phoneme", and the second is "pronunciation". The phonetic transcriptions of Chinese words had gone all the way from *pikuang* (譬況 analogy condition), to *duruo* (讀若 read as), and eventually to *fanqie* (反切 Chinese phonetic sign), which certainly was already a great improvement. The hieroglyphics of Chinese words makes it impossible to see the phoneme of the words: "The first part of the *fanqie* is not a simple consonant, nor the following part a simple vowel. Using them for phonology is definitely not as simple and easy to understand as the simple consonant and vowel."[31] Therefore, for phonology in the field of linguistics, Ricci's *Romanization Phonetics* laid the foundation for the "phoneme" and "pronunciation" of Chinese words, setting a precedent for the development and restoration of phonology in later days.

V. Humanism

Matteo Ricci had a considerable influence on Chinese culture in the areas of astronomy, mathematics, geography, linguistics, art and music, and there are many writings on these subjects. The author's purpose in this paper has been mainly to expound on Matteo Ricci's role in laying the foundation for further development in these various fields, in order to verify his special position as a pioneer of China's own "Renaissance". The Renaissance in Europe was a revival of humanism; Ricci also laid the foundation for a revival of humanism in China. In Lin Jinshui's view, this can be seen in the following four aspects:

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[30] Quoted from: Ibid, footnote 6.
[31] Quoted from: Ibid, p. 246, footnote 3.

(1) It posed a great challenge for the scholars of those days, who were used to talking about abstractions;
(2) Some literati began the Western practice of discussion, learning and imparting;
(3) Under the challenge and influence of Western learning, Chinese scholars began to organize and unearth the legacy of science passed down from ancient China, that had long lay hidden;
(4) With the introduction of advanced Western scientific knowledge and "strange instruments" into China, Western technology began to be acknowledged. For example, Li Zhizao and Xu Guangqi suggested learning Western applied technology. They also advocated the purchase and manufacture of Western firearms and artillery to resist the invasion of the Qing army.[32]

Merely judging from this, we cannot deny that it was the beginning of a "Renaissance" or the revival of humanism in China. Although restrained by an obstinate conservative group, represented by Yang Guangxian (楊光先), who said that "they would rather China do without a good calendar than that there be Westerners in China," and the revival of humanism in China only lasted a short while, at least somebody had thrown a stone into a pool of stagnant water and created some ripples. Besides a renaissance, inspired by Matteo Ricci, in the four areas mentioned above, in the fifth area, humanism, it should be noted, that the humanism introduced by Ricci was humanism with a God. It is generally known that Chinese humanism does not have a God, nor does it talk about God. The humanism that Matteo Ricci inspired has combined the humanism of the one God of the Catholic faith with that of the humanism of China with its atheist tradition, which does not talk about God. This is explicit in Ricci's *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (天主實義). The remarks in the *General Index of the Encyclopedia*

[32] 林金水 著，《利玛窦与中国》，中国社会科学出版社，1996, p. 282.

Sinica (四庫全書總目) on *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* highlighted the basic attitude of Ricci's humanism with a God: That book "called upon people to believe in God, and to act according to His teaching. Knowing that Confucianism could not be surmounted, it adopted the Confucian phrase Shangdi (上帝 God), which corresponded to their God, and turned to attack Buddhism."[33] Therefore we can see that Matteo Ricci explicitly introduced God into traditional Chinese humanism, which did not contain a god and did not talk about God. This humanism with God was particularly accepted by some intellectuals of the late-Ming early-Qing period, such as Xu Guangqi and Li Zhizao. Of course this sort of humanism with God did not develop very far. So we can say that Matteo Ricci only made a start in China for a humanism containing God.

All in all, Matteo Ricci's influence in China touched upon some of the most important areas of humanistic thought, and in these areas Ricci played a role of setting the precedents. We can see that a revival took place in some areas of study in China and great achievements were made, such as in the fields of mathematics and astronomy, which are even on the cutting edge of the world, while other aspects still have a long way to go. Considering all the above, it is justifiable to honor Matteo Ricci as the pioneer of a "Renaissance" in China, and as the initiator there of a humanism which professes a belief in God.

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[33] Quoted from: 朱维铮 主编，《利玛窦中文著译集》，复旦大学出版社，2nd edition, 2007, p. 4.