

Matteo Ricci: Friendship and Chinese Christianity

by

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## Abstract

In the late sixteenth century CE, Macau was a fishing village located on China's south. Ruled by the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), a fleet of ships had anchored in the village's docks. China had limited foreign visitors. However, the Portuguese had arrived. The Portuguese wanted to export the European Catholic knowledge and culture to this unfamiliar land. The Portuguese colonial structure was hoping to assimilate the orient to Christianity. The Portuguese Missionary priests arrived. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), a Jesuit priest, arrived in Macau in 1582 CE to introduce Christianity to Chinese society. At that time, Ming China followed Confucian ideology for their social guidance. Ricci realized that in order to communicate with the Chinese government officials, who held influential positions, he must learn the Chinese language and culture. Ricci gained essential communication skills from reading and translating the *Four Books*, which were Chinese Classics. Ricci developed friendships with some government officials by sharing his knowledge of science and technology. As his last strategy, Ricci combined European Christianity theology and Cicero's *De Amicitia*. He analyzed and synthesized Confucian terminologies to write *Discussion of Friendship*, his foundational book. Ricci's book contains the sole purpose of his journey: to create a movement fermented in China's influential groups leading to the spread of Christianity. Even though Ricci did not build a physical church in China, Ricci successfully introduced Christianity to China, and laid the foundation for the European and American missionary work. He did this through friendship—gaining friends in China, earning their support, and writing *Discussion of Friendship*.

**Title:**

Matteo Ricci: Friendship and Chinese Christianity

**Topic Statement**

Matteo Ricci used friendship to cultivate converts to Chinese Christianity. By analyzing Ricci's primary writing, the *Discussion of Friendship* 交友論, we see literarily how Ricci's friendship approach was an effective one to use in China as well as in all other places that Chinese people resided. This study shows Matteo Ricci's diligent life-long work to accomplish his mission and lay the foundation for Christianity in China and the Chinese of the world through his writing on friendship and his journey into friendships.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In their latest available report from 2011, the Pew-Templeton Research Group identified at least sixty-seven million Chinese Christians, which constitutes about five percent of mainland China's population.<sup>1</sup> That is, ninety-five percent of China's population may have no familiarity with Christianity. And yet, Tom Philips<sup>2</sup> predicts that by 2030 China will have more Christians than the United States of America.<sup>3</sup> The origin of the spread of Christianity in China is strongly linked to Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who was an Italian who belonged to the Catholic Order of Jesuit priests and was under the sponsorship of the Portuguese Empire and who was one of the first missionaries sent to China in 1582 CE. Matteo Ricci was a talented preacher of the Gospel and was able to adapt his teaching to the Chinese culture.<sup>4</sup> This thesis explores how Father Matteo Ricci, S.J. employed the strategy of “Friendship” to aid in his successful missionary work in China.

Europeans have long been interested in the folklore of the East which was transferred by travelers along the Silk Road; however, it was not until Marco Polo traveled to the East to investigate and discover the riches of the culture and material goods that the European commerce met Chinese people. In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese, with Chinese permission, managed to build a trading post in Macau; afterward, many European countries followed the Portuguese in establishing a trading relationship with China.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pew-Templeton Global Religious Future Project, “Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population,” *Global Religious Future Project: The New Forum on Religion & Public Life*, Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center, (2011): 97.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Phillips, “Shanghai correspondent for the UK's Daily Telegraph. Former Guardian correspondent in Brazil”, <https://twitter.com/tomphillipsrio?lang=en> Assessed December 18, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Tom Phillips, “China on course to become 'world's most Christian nation' within 15 years,” *telegraph.co.uk*, 19 (April 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity Volume I: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 475.

<sup>5</sup> Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity Volume II: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 421.

Entering China, Ricci's first goal was to earn the trust of the educated groups who influence Chinese society; the first strategy he used in earning their friendship was teaching then-current European scientific knowledge.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese favored learning science from a foreigner, and for Ricci, this was a benign way to become acquainted with Chinese intellectuals who were not allowed, by the order of the Ming (1368–1644) dynasty Emperor Shenzong, 明神宗 (1572 – 1620), to have any “foreign influences”. Chinese scholars recognized that Ricci was in China to teach them scientific knowledge and not to take advantage of the Chinese for economic gains. Ricci earned their respect, and, through negotiations, he was able to reside in the fishing port of Macau. In the years of 1583–1589, Ricci earned the trust to stay in Shaoguan City 韶關市, the capital of the coastal province of Guangdong, but he was restricted to the town.<sup>7</sup> Though Ricci managed to get a foothold in China, he had to face the challenges of language, culture, friendship, theology, and mission. How did he overcome them?

### **Ricci's Vision**

According to Ricci's personal journal, he observed that China was a country with unique customs and culture and a large population. As the Gospel had never been successfully introduced to China, Ricci was the first individual to spread the gospel's seeds and laid down the path to continue his mission to evangelize China successfully.<sup>8</sup>

### **Language**

Ricci's first challenge was the Chinese Language. He came from Europe and his native languages were Italian and Latin. When he arrived in Macau in 1582, Ricci was assigned a Chinese teacher who was fluent in the *Four Books*—the four classic Confucian books of the

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<sup>6</sup> Louis J. Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, trans. from the Latin (New York: Random House, 1953), xx.

<sup>7</sup> González Volume I, 480.

<sup>8</sup> Gallagher, 4.

*Great Learning (Daxue 大學)*, *The Mean (Zhongyong 中庸)*, *The Analects (Lunyu 論語)*, and the *Mencius (Mengzi 孟子)*. Ricci learnt the Chinese language as well as the basics of Chinese philosophy through these books, while he also became familiar with the foundations of Chinese culture.<sup>9</sup> He used his language skills to communicate with Chinese scholars and he understood that in order to initiate communication with Chinese scholars, he had to respect the harmonic and respectful environment important to conversation. Because he understood this, Ricci was able to satisfy the requisite cultural conditions and connect with the Confucian-centered Chinese elite society without significant difficulty.<sup>10</sup> Further, he translated the majority of the *Four Books* into Latin, and he created a Chinese-learning program for new arrivals.<sup>11</sup> His innovative Chinese program allowed Jesuits and Chinese scholars to communicate with each other through the learning of the Chinese classics. European and Chinese cultures were bridged by the Ricci program, and he became known as “the founder of Western sinology”.<sup>12</sup>

Ricci recorded his learned knowledge in his journal and his writings give the impression of a high degree of understanding of Chinese culture, additionally, Ricci translated a mathematical book, called *Euclid's Element of Geometry*, into Chinese. In line with his mission among China's educated elite, Ricci's first Chinese publication was not a Christian book. Instead, he published a book called *Discussion of Friendship (Jiaoyou lun 交友論)* in 1595, which was a collection of ideas for building friendships with the Chinese. In addition, Ricci wrote *Discussion of Friendship* in order to embed the concepts of the western scholars who promoted the equality of human friendship.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, Ricci managed to spread the Gospel

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<sup>9</sup> Jean-Paul Wiest, “Matteo Ricci: Pioneer of Chinese-Western dialogue and Cultural Exchange,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 36, no.1 (2012): 17-18.

<sup>10</sup> Wiest, 18.

<sup>11</sup> Wiest, 18.

<sup>12</sup> Wiest, 18.

<sup>13</sup> Wiest, 18.

without confronting Chinese culture,<sup>14</sup> was willing to assimilate the Gospel to the new culture, and he used friendship in elite circle as his missionary paradigm.

## **Culture**

Prior to the preaching of the Gospel, Ricci realized that he had to learn Chinese language and become familiar with Chinese culture. He integrated Confucian ideas to communicate with the Chinese scholars to have respectful, mutual relationship.<sup>15</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, retired professor of historical theology at Yale University, stated that “in China the question of ‘accommodation’ had to do mostly with cultural issues.”<sup>16</sup> The above quote was a fair description of the issues that Ricci had to overcome in spreading the Gospel. Ricci reached China near to the end of the Ming Dynasty when the emperor considered the Confucian scholars to be the most important group of people. These scholars held governmental power and they were religious and ethical leaders. However, these scholars were not allowed contact with foreigners except those foreigners who were willing to live apart from the Chinese scholars because they were thought of bringing ‘bad influences’ into Chinese society.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese Emperor preferred his citizens to be isolated from the outside world in order to ensure that any new ideas that might threaten the Emperor’s absolute power were suppressed. But, according to Confucianism, learning was the goal of the individual life. As a workaround, Ricci made use of his multi-disciplinary knowledge to become acquainted with Chinese scholars through the exchange of knowledge—the Chinese scholars could teach Ricci the Chinese language and the ideology of

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<sup>14</sup> Wiest, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Piero Corradini, “Matteo Ricci’s Approach to Chinese Civilization,” *Dialogue & Alliance* 4, no. 2 (1990): 55.

<sup>16</sup> González Volume I, 482.

<sup>17</sup> Corradini, 54.



Confucius and Ricci could share his knowledge of several scientific discipline such as astronomy, mathematics, and geography.<sup>18</sup>

How did Ricci achieve his goal of communicating with the Chinese effectively given that Confucianism was embedded in Chinese culture? First, Ricci created a world map in 1602 to give Chinese scholars the true location of China on the Earth and indicated that there was a world out there with other cultures. In his map, he placed China, rather than Europe, at the center and labelled China with one of its classical names, the “Middle Kingdom,” which is still the meaning of the word “China” today. This was done to build a strong relationship with Chinese elites.<sup>19</sup> Second, he studied the original text of the four classical Confucian books that shaped Chinese culture.<sup>20</sup> Ricci postulated that he would find similarities between Chinese Confucianism and the Bible’s teaching.<sup>21</sup> Ricci recognized that the principles listed in the classics were like Christian ethics. As such, Ricci customized the Gospel to Chinese ethics, and this fulfilled Ricci’s initial intention of preaching the Gospel to the Chinese.<sup>22</sup> Ricci was especially impressed by the Confucian virtue of filial piety. He found that children had an obligation to provide all the necessities for their parents and grandparents.<sup>23</sup> During his missionary work, Ricci found that China was a well-established state and that the political-cultural system was orderly and maintained as opposed to the disorder of the European states. For example, Chinese society then had the well-established commerce system for within or outside China and the government encouraged the creative arts as well as scholastic literature.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Corradini, 55.

<sup>19</sup> Wiest, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Corradini, 55.

<sup>21</sup> Corradini, 56.

<sup>22</sup> Corradini, 56.

<sup>23</sup> Corradini, 59.

<sup>24</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Mission in China till 1926* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), 73.

The political powerhouse of the Ming Dynasty was controlled by the philosophical scholars; Ricci stated that it was like Plato's Republic and it was ideological society.<sup>25</sup> Even though Ricci was not able to convert Chinese people *en masse*, he set a foothold in China.

## Friendship

Matteo Ricci was able to successfully stay in China throughout his religious mission because he acknowledged that the friendship between Chinese scholars and himself played a very important role in the process of Christianizing the Chinese. Besides using the exchange of knowledge as a tool to earn friendship in Chinese circles, he had them come to his residence to discuss stimulating subjects with common interests. Ricci was inspired by his experiences with the Chinese scholars to write his first Chinese treatise the *Discussion of Friendship* while residing in Nanchang, a city famed for of intellectuals; the purpose of the treatise was to bring Chinese culture and European culture closer by common subject – friendship.<sup>26</sup>

During the late Ming Dynasty, scholars had an intense interest in making friendships. Friendship was one of the five Confucian ethical standards in dealing with people. In Confucian tradition, “the five cardinal human relationships” (*wulun* 五倫) are the five bonds that men in Chinese society were to observe and foster: 1) the relationships of husband and wife; 2) with parents; 3) between elder and younger brothers; 4) between ruler and subject; 5) and between friends. The first four relationships were rigid in structure and only the ethical standard of friendship gave people the choice according to their liking.<sup>27</sup> In this period, friendship networks were created either for educated scholars to gather together to study for their governmental

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<sup>25</sup> Corradini, 59.

<sup>26</sup> Ana Carolina Hosne, “Friendship among Literati. Matteo Ricci SJ (1552–1610) in Late Ming China,” *Transcultural Studies*: 190-191, assessed August 23, 2018, <https://heiup.uni-heidelberg.de/journals/index.php/transcultural/article/view/11362>.

<sup>27</sup> Hosne, 191.

examinations or for commers to have opportunities to find better work to improve their economic well-being.<sup>28</sup> Within these circles, learners had to study the Five Classics: *The Book of Odes* (*Shijing* 詩經), a collection of poetry; *The Book of Documents* (*Shujing* 書經), a book of ancient writings before Confucius; *The Book of Rites* (*Liyi* 禮儀), a ritual treatise on respecting the ancestors and each other; *The Book of Changes* (*I Ching* 易經), a manual for divination; and *The Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋), or the historical annals of Confucius state Lu.<sup>29</sup> Ricci integrated himself into Chinese society by learning the above books so that he could join the conversation that took place within elite Chinese friendship groups. Before long, Ricci was welcome to the Chinese scholastic society and friendships were built. He was then well positioned to preach the Gospel to elite men in society.

### **Mission and Method**

Ricci did not openly preach the Gospel or build churches. He was in fear of displeasing the Ming Emperor and being permanently expelled from China. He used ‘friendship’ as a tool to gain converts, who were the elites with governing power; as a result, the Jesuits converted many Chinese.<sup>30</sup> Although, Ricci’s accommodative friendship method seemed to be effective in converting Chinese elites, he was denounced by other Christian groups. For example, the Dominicans and Franciscans argued against allowing Chinese converts to retain their practice of ancestor worship as they saw it as idol worship. Ricci argued that ancestor worship was for the virtue of filial piety, and it had nothing to do with religious duties or with religion. He believed that filial piety was a social custom and it showed respect to ancestors.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Hosne, 192.

<sup>29</sup> Hosne, 192.

<sup>30</sup> González, Volume I, 480-481.

<sup>31</sup> González, Volume I, 480-481.

How effective was Ricci's friendship and accommodative methods for his mission in China? Ambrose Ih-Ren Mong, *Dominican Missions, Hong Kong, China*, argues that Ricci's evangelical method was "the model for Catholic Mission in the Far East" and was "the cultural golden age of specifically for Catholic humanism". She calls his method "Cultural accommodation".<sup>32</sup> At first, Ricci did not find the Chinese language easy because the language is entirely different from the European languages;<sup>33</sup> while Chinese is composed by individual characters which form words, European languages are formed by the combination of letters. Ricci was a brilliant language learner; however, this was not sufficient to be able to preach the Gospel, in Chinese, to elite Chinese scholars. As such, Ricci needed to learn Chinese history and Confucian philosophy to show himself to be intellectually equivalent to Chinese scholars. This method enabled him to introduce Christianity to them, instead of directly preaching the Gospel.<sup>34</sup> Ricci mainly focused on the four Classical Confucianism texts because there were similar principles between the Confucian moral standards and Christian ethics. Ricci used these commonalities to make a bridge between Christianity and Confucianism<sup>35</sup> to further his ultimate mission-preaching the Gospel to Chinese scholars. Eventually, he was successfully in achieving the "cultural accommodation" that allowed him to begin his Jesuit mission.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Scholarly Context:**

The Portuguese came to China to open a commercial route for their empire. Along with the envoy, Matteo Ricci and other Jesuits accompanied the mighty army on their voyage to

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<sup>32</sup> Ambrose Ih-Ren Mong, "The Legacy of Matteo Ricci and his companions." *Missiology: An International Review* 43, no. 4 (2015): 389.

<sup>33</sup> Mong, 389.

<sup>34</sup> Mong, 389.

<sup>35</sup> Mong, 390.

<sup>36</sup> Mong, 390.

China. *The Making of an Enterprise*,<sup>37</sup> by Dauril Alden, details how the Portuguese Empire conquered new territories and extended the Christian religion all the way to China. In addition, Christopher Hollis, Oxford, United Kingdom, in his *The Jesuit: A History*,<sup>38</sup> detailed the process of establishing the Christian ministry in China – a foreign country with different cultures and languages. Albert Chan, Jesuit scholar and Ming dynasty historian, in *The Glory and Fall of the Ming Dynasty*,<sup>39</sup> explains the daily lives of Chinese people in Ming Dynasty; whereas Theodore de Bary, an American Sinologist and East Asian literary scholar, furthers this in *Self and Society in Ming Thought*<sup>40</sup> by exploring how the Ming Dynasty’s system of elite education produced Chinese intellectuals’ thoughts and religion.

China was a closed country during the time of Matteo Ricci and its rulers were not interested in having any foreign influence in their country. Nonetheless, in the *The Wise Man from the West: The True Story of the Man Who First Brought Christianity to Fabled Cathay*,<sup>41</sup> Vincent Cronin, British historian, credits Ricci for bringing Christianity to China. Louis J. Gallagher, an American Jesuit, has translated Ricci’s journals and published in Gallagher, Louis J. *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matteo Ricci: 1583-1610*.<sup>42</sup> These journals detail Ricci’s journey to overcome his linguistic and religious difficulties in order to missionize in China. George Harold Dunne, Jesuit priest, in Dunne, *Generation of Giants: The Story of the Jesuits in China in the last Decades of the Ming Dynasty*,<sup>43</sup> chronicles the Jesuits in the Ming

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<sup>37</sup> Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Hollis, *The Jesuits: A History* (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

<sup>39</sup> Albert Chan, *The Glory and Fall of the Ming Dynasty* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982).

<sup>40</sup> Theodore De Bary, *Self and Society in Ming Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970).

<sup>41</sup> Vincent Cronin, *The Wise Man from the West: The True Story of the Man Who First Brought Christianity to Fabled Cathay* (New York: Image Books, 1957).

<sup>42</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>43</sup> George Harold Dunne, *Generation of Giants: The Story of the Jesuits in China in the last Decades of the Ming dynasty* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1962).

Dynasty's last decade and argues that Ricci was honored and respected for spreading the Christian Gospel in China to such an extent that he was invited by the Ming Emperor Shenzong for an audience in Peking (Beijing). Finally, Charles Wilfrid Allan, a Jesuit, in *Jesuits at the Court of Peking*,<sup>44</sup> and in his *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*,<sup>45</sup> Jonathan D Spence, Professor of History, specializing in Chinese History, exposes the special treatment placed on Ricci from the Emperor.

Ricci learnt the Chinese language because he wanted to learn the Chinese scripture, especially the contents of the Confucius "Four Books", recommended by the Jesuits, to find material to create parallels with Christian scripture. Ralph R. Covell, professor of world Christianity, Denver Seminary, in *Confucius, The Buddha, and Christ: A History of the Gospel in Chinese*,<sup>46</sup> details how Ricci's preaching of the Gospel was relatable and was linked with parallel views in Confucius's *Four Books* that the Chinese could understand. Ricci wrote two major texts: *Discussion of Friendship*, the document was bridging the Western culture with the Chinese culture through friendship and *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (Tianzhu shi yi 天主實義)*,<sup>47</sup> a document integrating the Confucianism and Catholicism.

### **Thesis Statement and Purpose:**

The thesis argues that Ricci used friendship as a strategy to spread Christianity among the intellectual elite in the Ming Dynasty and that we see this approach in both his writing about friendship and the community of friends that he made in China.

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<sup>44</sup> Charles Wilfrid Allan, *Jesuits at the Court of Peking* (Arlington, Va.: University Publications of America, Inc., 1975).

<sup>45</sup> Jonathan D Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984).

<sup>46</sup> Ralph R. Covell, *Confucius, The Buddha, and Christ: A History of the Gospel in Chinese* (New York: Orbis Books, 1986).

<sup>47</sup> Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, trans. Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu kuo-chen. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985).

The thesis takes advantages of the author's heritage knowledge of the Chinese language in translating Ricci's original document, *Discussion of Friendship*, so that readers are able to understand the document's detailed contents which show how Ricci used friendship as a tool to skillfully introduce Christianity to the intellectuals of Ming Dynasty. The thesis first explores Ricci's Western and Confucian's ideas of friendship, then, second, uses the integration of these two dissimilar ideas as his tool to convince the highly educated Chinese intellectuals to accept Christianity.

## Methodology

Ricci is a European and a Jesuit. The European and Catholic philosophy of friendship and Confucian's philosophy are explored to establish Ricci's learning about friendship.

The study requires historical analysis to provide historical context of his main text, *Discussion of Friendship*. The study utilizes translation of Ricci's text from the Classical Chinese language that Ricci wrote into modern English. Thus, the thesis leans heavily translation and textual analysis.

There are numerous versions<sup>48</sup> of *Discussion of Friendship* in the Classical Chinese Language.

However, the study's text is version, 交友論 (意) 利瑪竇撰 (*Discussion of Friendship*).

*RACCOLTA GENERALE-ORIENTE-III* 223.9. *Vatican Library*. 梵蒂岡圖書館藏明清中西文化交流史文獻叢刊 第一輯. (Pron.: Fandigang tu shu guan cang Ming Qing Zhong xi wen hua jiao liu shi wen xian cong kan. Di yi ji) edited by 張西平, [意]馬西尼 (Federico Masini), 任大援, [意]裴佐寧 (Ambrogio M. Piazzoni), Volume 29, Pages 615-650. Published by 中国大象出版社, 2014.

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<sup>48</sup> Matteo Ricci, *On Friendship: One Hundred Maxims for a Chinese Prince*, trans. Timothy Billings (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 144-155

## Chapter 2: Translation of Matteo Ricci's 1595 *Discussion of Friendship* 利瑪竇交友論

### Introduction

For his mission of spreading Christianity in China, Ricci benefited from learning Chinese from Chinese scholars. He acquired enough knowledge of the Chinese language that he was able to translate the aforementioned Four Books into Latin. Not only did Ricci learn the Chinese Language, he also learnt Chinese culture. In so doing, Ricci realized that instead of spreading Christianity through preaching, he would better do so through writing about friendship. His writings on friendship, however, serve to inject Christian teaching into his audience of his newly acquired friends Chinese. In his *Discussion of Friendship*, Ricci combined both Chinese and Europeans ideas of friendship. To support the study of Ricci's use of both Chinese and European notions of friendship in his mission, what follows below is a full, new translation of his text.

### Translation

#### 交友論<sup>49</sup>

#### *Discussion of Friendship*

1. 歐邏巴人 利瑪竇 譯

A European, Matteo Ricci: Author

2. 竇也，自最西航海入中華，仰大明天子之文德，古先王之遺教，卜室嶺表。星霜亦屢易矣。

I, Matteo, since having sailed from the most Far West to arrive in China, admire the culture and virtue of the Great Ming dynasty Son of Heaven as well as the transmitted teachings of the kings of old, and I chose a residence in Lingbiao [in Guangdong Province], where the stars and frosts have already changed numerous times.

3. 今年春時，度嶺浮江，抵於金陵。觀上國之光沾沾自喜，以為庶幾不負此遊也。

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<sup>49</sup> 交友論, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* (梵諦岡教廷圖書館), *RACCOLTA GENERALE-ORIENTE-III* 223.9, 1601. 梵蒂岡圖書館藏明清中西文化交流史文獻叢刊 第一輯. eds. 張西平, [意]馬西尼 (Federico Masini), 任大援, [意]裴佐寧 (Ambrogio M. Piazzoni) (China: 中国大象出版社, 2014), Vol. 29, 615-650.



In the Spring of this year, passing the mountain and sailing on the river, I arrived in Jinling (Modern-day Nanjing). Observing the brilliance of this superior country, I have the feeling of immeasurable self-satisfaction and consider the trip worth the burden.

4. 遠覽未週，返棹至豫章。停舟南浦，縱目西山，玩竒挹秀，計此地為至人淵藪也。

But my far-roaming inspections were not yet complete, and I returned by boat to Yuzhang (Modern-day Nanchang). Stopping the boat at Nanpu (Southwest of Nanchang), I looked out at the west mountain and, enjoying the unusually graceful details [of the mountain], I reckoned that this land was the gathering place of attained beings.

5. 低回留之不能去。遂捨舟就舍。因而赴見建安王。荷不鄙，許之以長揖。賓序設醴驩甚。

After consideration, I decided not to go. Then, I disembarked from the boat and stayed there. Because of this, I visited the Prince of Jian'an. I was grateful that he did not belittle me and that he permitted me to bow [to him]. A series of guests [joined] to set up a wine to enjoy immensely.

6. 王乃移席握手而言曰：「凡有德行之君子，辱臨吾地，未嘗不請而友且敬之。西邦為道義之邦，願聞其論《友道》何如？」

The Prince then moved from his seat, shook my hand, and said, "When a junzi who possesses moral integrity comes to my place with humility, it has never been that I have not invited friendship and respected them. The Western countries are countries of righteousness and justice. [I] wish to hear your discussion of the "Way of Friendship." What do you think?"

7. 賓退而從述曩少所聞，輯成《友道》一帙，敬陳於左。

I, Matteo, withdrew in order to compile and complete the "Way of Friendship" in one volume, [from old expressions that I had heard when I was young, which I] respectively present on the left side.<sup>50</sup>

8. 吾友非他。即我之半。乃第二我也，故當視友如己焉。

My friend is not somebody else. They are the half of me, none other than the duplicate of me; therefore, we accept our friends as ourselves.

9. 友之與我，雖有二身。二身之內，其心一而已。

[The relationship between] my friend and I, even though [we have] two bodies. [However, considering] the insides of two bodies, our hearts are one.

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<sup>50</sup> the Chinese tradition submitting their document to their superiors.

10. 相須相佑，爲結友之由。

Mutually need and, mutual blessing or protection are the reason for making friends.

11. 孝子繼父之所交友，如承受父之產業矣。

A filial son keeps his father's reasons friends as if [the son] inherited his father's estates.

12. 時當平居無事，難指友之真偽，臨難之頃，則友之情顯焉。蓋事急之際，友之真者益近密，偽者益踈散矣。

During peaceful times without any incident, [it is] difficult to point out [friendships] that are authentic or bogus, [however, when] hard time descends, the friend's character [will be] shown. Covering [any] urgent matters [at] any time, true friends [will] closely benefit [an urgent matter]; untrue friends [will] neglect the benefit [and will] break up [the friendship].

13. 有為之君子，無異仇，必有善友。〈如無異仇以加儆，必有善友以相資。〉

Promising Junzi [who has] no unusual enemies, must have virtuous friends. (Even though [Junzi had] no unusual enemy, [he may] increase additional guards [to avoid any enemies], but [they] must have mutually virtuous friends to help each other out.)

14. 交友之先宜察。交友之後宜信。

To make friends, firstly, persons should examine [them]. After the friendship [is established], the friends should trust [each other].

15. 雖智者亦謬計，己友多乎，實矣。〈愚人妄自侈曰友似有而還無。智者抑或謬計，友無多而實少。〉

Intelligent persons likewise exaggerate the count: Their personal friends are many! Truly? (The foolish person arrogantly says they have friends when they do not; the wise person exaggerates the count when their friends are truly not that many).

16. 友之饋友而望報，非饋也。與市易者等耳。

Friends who send gifts to friends and expect their gesture's return, are not sending gifts. Rather, [he is like] a merchant in the market.

17. 友與仇如樂與鬪。皆以和否辨之耳。故友以和為本焉，以和微業長大。以爭大業消敗。〈樂以尊和，鬪則失和。友和則如樂；仇不和，則如鬪。〉

Friends and enemies are like music and uproar. Only harmony can tell the difference between [a friend and an enemy]. Therefore, friendship is based on harmony and by means of harmony

small actions can grow big. By means of quarrelling, even big actions disappear and are lost. (Music is directed by harmony; uproar is caused by the loss of harmony. Friends are in harmony and are thus like music; enemies are not in harmony and are thus like an uproar.)

18. 在患時，吾惟喜看友之面。然或患或幸，何時友無有益？憂時減憂。欣時增欣。

In suffering times, I only like to see [my] friends' faces. As such, as to either suffering or joyfulness, at any time are friends of no help? [During the] sad time, [a friend] will [help to] decrease [the] sadness. [During the] happy time, [a friend] will increase the happiness.

19. 仇之惡以殘仇深於友之愛以恩友。豈不驗世之弱于善，強于惡哉！

The hatred of enemies that is used to harm enemies is deeper than the love of a friend that is used to cherish a friend. How can this not be proof that the world is weak in goodness and strong in evil!

20. 人事情莫測，友誼難憑。今日之友，後或變而成仇；今日之仇，亦或變而為友。可不敬慎乎？

Issues of human emotion cannot be predicted; friendship is difficult to rely on. Today's friend, afterwards, could change to become an enemy; Today's enemy, likewise, could change and become a friend. How can [we] not to be respectful and be cautious [to any friendship]?

21. 徒試之于吾幸際。其友不可恃也。〈脉以左手驗耳，左手不幸際也。〉

Having only been tested when I am in happy circumstances, this friend cannot be relied on (For the pulse, use the left hand to listen to it; the left hand is not for happy circumstances.)

22. 既死之友，吾念之無憂。蓋在時，我有之如可失。及既亡，念之如猶在焉。

As to the death of friends, I remember them without grief; when they were alive, I possessed them like I would not lose them. Ultimately, as to losing them, I consider them like they are [still] here.

23. 各人不能全盡各事，故上帝命之交友。以彼此胥助。若使除其道於世者，人類必散壞也。

A person cannot totally complete every task. Therefore, Shangdi (Mighty God) commanded the making of friends so that each mutually helps each other. If [anyone who] causes the elimination of the Dao (the Way) from the world, human beings surely will break up and destroy each other.

24. 可以與竭露發予心，始為知己之友也。

It can only be with [another] who one give rise to one's heart, [that one] starts to become a truly knowing friend.

25. 德志相似。其友始固。〈爻也，双又耳。彼又我，我又彼。〉

When virtue and purpose are shared, friendship can begin to strengthen. (爻 [an ancient form of writing representing the word ‘friend’], is made of two 又 “another.” The other is another of me; I am another of the other.)

26. 正友不常。順友亦不常。逆友有理者順之。無理者逆之。故直言獨爲友之責矣。

Righteous friends are not always so. Submissive friends are also not always so. If a contrary friend has logic, they are to be submitted to; if they are without logic, they should be countered. Therefore, speaking truly is a friend’s responsibility.

27. 交友如醫疾。然醫者誠愛病者。必惡其病也。彼以揀病之故，傷其體，苦其口。醫者不忍病者之身。友者宜忍友之惡乎？諫之諫之，何恤其耳之逆？何畏其額之蹙？

Making friends is like curing illnesses. As such, doctors truly love their patient, but despise the illness. Therefore, to save from illness, [the doctor] harms the body and embitters the mouth. The doctor does not tolerate the body of the patients. How could a friend, then, tolerate their friends’ wickedness? Oppose them! Why worry when their friend’s ears refuse [to hear]? Why fear their scornful looks?

28. 友之譽，及仇之訕，並不可盡信焉。

Whether a friend’s praise or an enemy’s slanders are not to be completely trusted.

29. 友者於友，處處時時。一而已。誠無近遠，內外，面背，異言，異情也。

Everywhere and every time, friends with friends are always alike. Truly there is no near or far, no inside or outside, no front or back, no difference in languages, no difference in sentiments.

30. 友人無所善我與仇人無所害我等焉。

Friends who do no good to me are in the same category as enemies that do no harm to me.

31. 友者過譽之害較仇者過訾之害猶大焉。〈友人譽我。我或因而自矜。仇人訾我，我或因而加謹。〉

The harm of a friend’s exaggerated praise is greater than the harm of an enemy’s exaggerated slander. (If friends praise me, I would, because of it, become conceited; If enemies criticize me, I would, because of it, become more cautious.)

32. 視財勢友人者，其財勢亡，即退而離焉。謂即不見其初友之所以然，則友之情遂渙也。

Friends looking for wealth and influence will quickly disappear if wealth and influence perish. They say that since they do not see the beginning of the friendship that then feeling of the friendship has disappeared.

33. 友之定於我之不定事，試之可見矣。

The strength of a friendship, when it comes to personal matters that are unstable, is tested and seen.

34. 爾為吾之真友。則愛我以情，不愛我以物也。

As to those people who become my true friends, it is that they love me by means of kindness, not loving me by means of material things.

35. 交友使獨知利己不復顧益其友:是商賈之人耳，不可謂友也。〈小人交友如放帳，惟計利幾何。〉

Making friends for the cause of only thinking of the benefits to one's own self but not also caring about the benefit of the friend—this person is a merchant and cannot be called a friend. (A nasty person makes friends as if they were giving out loans, only calculating their level of benefit).

36. 友之物皆與共。

The material possessions of friends are equally shared.

37. 交友之貴賤，在所交之意耳! 特據德相友者，今世得幾雙乎?

The wealth of making friends is in the intention for the friendship! In particular, for those who command virtuous and mutual friends, how many are there these days?

38. 友之所宜相宥有限。〈友或負罪，惟小可容；友如犯義，必大乃弃。〉

Of friends, it should be that mutual forgiveness has limits. (If a friend commits crimes, only small [crimes] may be forgiven. If a friend violates righteousness, this most certainly is big, and thereupon abandon them.)

39. 友之樂多於義，不可久友也。

A friend whose happiness is more than their righteousness, cannot be a lasting friend.

40. 忍友之惡，便以他惡為己惡焉。

If you endure a friend's wickedness, then their wickedness becomes your own wickedness.

41. 我所能為，不必望友代為之。

Of that which I can undertake, I do not expect my friend to replace me to undertake it.

42. 友者，古之尊名。今出之以售，比之於貨。惜哉！

As to friends, in ancient times, it was an honorable name. Nowadays, [friendship] can be put up for sale or compared to a commodity. Alas, regrettable!

43. 友於昆倫邇。故友相呼謂兄，而善於兄弟爲友。

Friends are close like brothers. Therefore, friends mutually call each other brother whereas good brothers become friends.

44. 友之益世也，大乎財焉。無人愛財爲財，而有愛友特爲友耳。

As to the worldly benefit of friendship, it is greater than wealth. Nobody loves wealth for wealth [itself], whereas there are those who love friendship particularly for friendship [itself].

45. 今也，友既沒言，而諂諛者爲佞，則惟存仇人，以我聞真語矣。

Nowadays, since friends do not speak and flatterers have become fawners, only from enemies can I hear genuine talk.

46. 設令我或被害於友，非但恨己害，乃滋恨其害自友發矣。

Supposing, now, if I were harmed by a friend, not only would I dislike being harmed, but more so I would be sad that the harm came from a friend.

47. 多有密友，便無密友也。

If there are many close friends, then there are no close friend.

48. 如我恒幸無禍，豈識友之真否哉？

If I constantly [have] fortune [and] no misfortune, how can I distinguish between true and false friends?

49. 友之道甚廣闊，雖至下品之人，以盜爲事，亦必似結友爲黨，方能行其事焉。

The road to friendship is broad and wide. Among low-caliber people who steal in order to manage their affairs, even they must connect as friends to form the gang, only then they can carry out their affairs.

50. 視友如己者，則遐者邇，弱者強，患者幸，病者愈，何必多言耶？死者猶生也。

Regarding our friends as ourselves, then those who are far are near, those who are weak are strong, those who suffer are blessed, and those who are sick are healed. What more can I say? The dead will be like the living.

51. 我有二友，相訟於前，我不欲為之聽判，恐一以我為仇也。我有二仇，相訟於前，我猶可為之聽判。必一以我為友也。

If I have two friends who are having a dispute in front of [me], I do not want to listen to their cases for fear that one will consider me an enemy; If I have two enemies who are having a dispute in front of [me], I would allow [myself] to listen to their cases and would make one of them my friend.

52. 信于仇者，猶不可失。況于友者哉。信于友，不足言矣！

People put their trust in enemies as if they cannot lose. How much more so for those who put it in friends! Trust in friends and there is nothing more to say!

53. 友之職至於義而止焉。

The duties of a friends are to arrive at righteousness and then stop.

54. 如友寡也，予寡有喜。亦寡有憂焉。

If friends are few then my happiness is few. Few, too, are my worries.

55. 故友為美友，不可棄之也。無故以新易舊，不久即悔。

Old friends are good friend and should not be abandon. There is no reason to [accept] new friends to replace the old friends. It [would not] take long to regret.

56. 既友，每事可同議定，然先須議定友。

If we are already friends, we can reach an agreement together every matter, but, first, we need to reach an agreement that we are friends.

57. 友於親，惟此長焉，親能無相愛，親友者否。蓋親無愛親，親倫猶在。除愛乎友，其友理焉存乎？

Friends and relatives only compare in superiority as such: Relatives need not love each other for relatives are not friends. Considering relatives that do not love relatives, they are still relatives like that. Eradicating the love of a friend: what remains in the logic of friendship?

58. 獨有友之業能起。

Only activities with friends can be successful.

59. 友友之友，仇友之仇，為厚友也。〈吾友必仁，則知愛人，知惡人。故我據之。〉

Friend to the friend of the friend and enemy to the friend of the enemy: this is the making of deep friendship. (My friends must be benevolent, and thus know to love persons and know to hate persons. For this reason, I rely on them.)

60. 不扶友之急，則臨急無助者。

If you do not help when a friend needs urgent help, then you will have no friends to help you in an emergency.

61. 俗友者同而樂多於悅，別而留憂；義友者聚而悅多於樂，散而無愧。

Vulgar friends who get together have more pleasure than joy and will depart with sadness; righteousness friends who get together and have more joy more than pleasure and will depart with no shame.

62. 我能防備他人，友者安防之乎？聊疑友，即大犯友之道矣。

I can guard [myself] against other people but how can friends be guarded? Falsely doubting friends is nothing other than a great transgression of the Way of friendship.

63. 上帝給人雙目，雙耳，雙手，雙足，欲兩友相助，方為事有成矣。〈（「友」字古篆作𠄎，即兩手也，可有而不可無。「朋」字古篆作「羽」，即兩「习」也，鳥備之方能飛。古賢者視朋友，豈不如是耶？〉

Shangdi<sup>51</sup> gave people a pair of eyes, a pair of ears, a pair of hands, and a pair of legs desiring that friend help each other for matters to be completed. (“Friend” 友 in Seal Script is written as 𠄎, consisting of two hands that have [to be together] and cannot [be] not together. “Friend” 朋 in Seal Script is written as 羽, consisting of two [birds wing’s] feathers. The bird needs [both] to be able to fly. [This is the way] the ancient sages see their friendships. How could it not be like this?)

64. 天下無友，則無樂焉。

If under heaven there are no friends, then there is no happiness.

65. 以詐待友，初若可以籠人，久而詐露。反為友厭薄矣。以誠待友，初惟自盡其心，久而誠孚，益為友敬服矣！

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<sup>51</sup> Shangdi is a Chinese mystical figure representing the most powerful who resides in heaven. Ricci uses this idea to describe Christian God in term of power.



If you use trickery to treat friends, initially you will be able to cover the lies for a long time, but your trick will be exposed and in return your friends will dislike you and treat you with indifference. If you use honesty to treat your friends, initially it will only diminish your heart, but after a long time your honesty will inspire confidence in and will benefit by earning the esteem of your friends.

66. 我先貧賤，而後富貴，則舊交不可棄，而新者或以勢利相依。我先富貴，而後貧賤，則舊交不可恃，而新者或以道義相合。友先貧賤，而後富貴，我當察其情，恐我欲親友，而友或踈我也。友先富貴，而後貧賤，我當加其敬。恐友防我踈，而我遂自處於踈也。

If I am initially poor and lowly and then I become rich and honored, then my old friendships cannot be abandoned because new friends may be interested in profit and dependence. If I initially rich and honored and then become poor and lowly, then the old friendships cannot be relied on because the new friends may be righteous. If friends initially are poor and lowly and then become rich and honored, I should examine their feelings for fear that my desire to be close friends might cause some friends to leave me. If friends initially are rich and honored and then they become poor and lowly, I should give them extra respect for fear that the friend guards themselves from me and leaves and that I must comply with their having left me behind.

67. 夫時何時乎？順語生友，直言生怨。

Now what sort of age is this age? Easy words create friendship and direct words create resentment.

68. 視其人之友如林，則知其德之盛；視其人之友落落如晨星，則知其德之薄。

If you observe that a person's friends are like a forest (i.e., many), then you know their flourishing virtue; If you observe that a person their friends are unsociable like the morning star, then you know their poor virtue.

69. 君子之交友難，小人之交友易。難合者難散。易合者易散也。

Persons of noble character have difficulty in making friends Wicked persons make friends easily. Difficult relationships are difficult to break. Easy relationships are easy to break.

70. 平時交好一旦臨小利害，遂為仇敵，由其交之未出於正也。交既正。則利可分，害可共矣。

If there are good friends in normal times who, one day come upon little advantage and harm and then become enemies, this is because the friendship had never come from righteousness. If the friendship is righteous, then advantage can be apportioned, and harm can be shared.

71. 我榮時，請而方來，患時不請而自來，夫友哉！

When I am flourishing, I invite [my friends] and they come; When I am suffering and do not invite friends and still, they come of their own accord: Those are friends!

72. 世間之物，多各而無用，同而始有益也。人豈獨不如此耶？

Among all things in the world, many cannot function independently. Working, together they start to have profit. As to persons when they are alone how can it not be like this?

73. 良友相交之味，失之後愈可知覺矣。

As to the fine flavor of friendship: after it is lost can you understand it even more.

74. 居染塵，而狎染人，近染色，難免無污穢其身矣。交友惡人，恒聽視其醜事，必習之而浼本心焉。

Living in a dye store and being intimate with the dyers, one will come in contact with the color of dye. It is difficult to avoid it and not pollute the body. Making friends with wicked persons and constantly listening and observing their scandals, one surely practices it and contaminates their heart.

75. 吾偶候遇賢友，雖僅一抵掌而別，未嘗少無裨補，以洽吾為善之志也。

If, coincidentally, I encounter a wise friend and though only momentarily clasp hands and depart it is not so brief as to be without mending the spirit. By means of the encounter, I undertake the intention of goodness.

76. 交友之旨無他在：彼善長於我，則我效習之；我善長於彼，則我教化之。是學而即教，教而即學，兩者互資矣。如彼善不足以效習，彼不善不可以變動，何殊盡日相與遊謔，而徒費陰影乎哉？〈無益之友，乃偷時之盜。偷時之損，甚於偷財，財可複積，時則否。〉

The idea of making friends is nothing other than this: if the other's greatness is more than mine then I will imitate and practice it; If my greatness is more than the other, then I will teach and transmit it. To learn in order to teach, and to teach in order to learn, the two have reciprocal support. If the other's goodness is inadequate for the purpose of imitation and practice and the other's badness cannot be taken up and changed, why use up my days in associating and joking and following their vain shadow? (Friends without virtue are thieves stealing time. The crime of stealing time is worse than stealing physical property. Physical property can be re-accumulated, [but] time cannot be.)

77. 使或人未篤信斯道。且脩德尚危，出好入醜。心戰未決。於以剖釋其疑，安培其德。而掇其將墜。計莫過於交善友。蓋吾所數聞，所數覩，漸透於膺，豁然開悟，誠若活法勸責吾於善也。嚴哉君子，嚴哉君子。時雖言語未及，怒色未加，亦有德威，以沮不善之為與。

Suppose some persons do not believe firmly in such doctrine and furthermore whose self-cultivation is in danger, leaving behind the good and entering the ugly, their heart warring without certainty, for the purpose of excising their doubt, calmly training their virtue, and rescuing them from their fall, there is no better plan than making a good friend. On this topic [of a good friend], I have heard, and I have seen, that [the friend] gradually penetrates the breast, piercingly opening [one's] understanding. Truly this is like a living method for exhorting responsibility and goodness in me. Demanding is the Noble Man! Demanding is the Noble Man! At times, even though [the friend's] words and speech are not finished, anger is no longer increased and already there is mighty virtue for the sake of preventing further badness.

78. 爾不得用我為友，而均為嫵媚者。

If you cannot obtain use in becoming my friend, then both of us are charmers.

79. 友者相褒之禮易施也，夫相忍友乃難矣。然大都友之，皆感稱己之譽，而忘忍己者之德。何歟？一顯我長，一顯我短故耳。

The etiquette of mutual honor between friends is easy to bestow. Moreover, mutual forbearance of friends is difficult. Accordingly, most friends are moved by praise and yet forget the virtue of forbearance. Why? Because one is a manifestation of greatness whereas the other is a manifestation of smallness.

80. 一人不相愛。則耦不為友。

If a person does not mutually love, then the pair cannot become friends.

81. 臨當用之時。俄識其非友也。愍矣！

When the time for the employment [of friends] approaches [and one] suddenly realizes these are not friends: How pitiful!

82. 務來新友，戒毋諠舊者。

In looking for new friends, take care not to forget your old [friends].

83. 友也為貧之財。為弱之力，為病之藥焉。

Friends are wealth for the poor, strength for the weak, and medicine for the sick.

84. 國家可無財庫，而不可無友也。

A country can have no stores of wealth and yet cannot not have friends.

85. 仇之饋不如友之棒也。

Gifts of the enemy do not resemble the beatings of a friend.

86. 世無友如天無日，如身無目矣。

A world without friends is like a sky with no sun, or like a body with no eye.

87. 友者既久尋之，既少得之，既難存之，或離于眼，即念之于心焉。

As to friends, since they take a long time to find, since we acquire few of them, and since it is difficult to retain them, if they leave our sight, we then remember them in our heart.

88. 知友之益，凡出門會人，必畧致交一新友，然後回家矣。

Knowing the benefit of friends, one leaves the door to meet people and must have the intention to make a new friend, and then will return home.

89. 諛諂友非友，乃偷者偷其名而僭之耳！

Flattering and fawning friends are not friends. They are thieves that steal your reputation and usurp it!

90. 吾福祉所致友，必吾災禍避之。

If my prosperity is that which brings friends, then surely my misfortune will drive them away.

91. 友既結成，則戒一相斷友情，情一斷，可以姑相著，而難復全矣。玉器有所黏，惡于觀，易散也，而寡有用耶。

If a friend has been successfully made, then prevent even one severing of your friendly feelings. If that feeling is severed it can be returned but it is difficult to make complete again. A jade vessel all [held together by] glue is terrible in appearance and easy to break and is therefore rarely useful.

92. 醫士之意以苦藥瘳人病，諂友之向，以甘言干人財。

The Doctor's intention in using bitter medicine is to [to] cure people's illnesses. The aim of fawning friends is to us sweet talk to [acquire other] people's wealth.

93. 不能友己，何以友人？

If I cannot be a friend to myself, how can I be a friend to others?

94. 智者欲離浮友。且漸而違之，非速而絕之。

A wise person desires to leave frivolous friends. Moreover, they gradually undertake to leave them and do not quickly break it off.

95. 欲於眾人交友則繁焉。余竟無冤仇則足已。

If I desire to make friends with everyone then it will be complicated. If in the end, I do not have enemies, then I am personally satisfied.

96. 彼非友，信爾，爾不得而欺之。欺之，至惡之之效也。

If another that is not your friend trusts you, you must not deceive them. If you deceive them, the outcome is that you hate them.

97. 永德永友之美餌矣。凡物無不以時久為人所厭。惟德彌久彌感人情也。德在仇人猶可愛，況在友者歟！

Eternal virtue is the delicious bait of Eternal friendship. If any material thing stays with people for a long time, then people will dislike it. Only virtue can be [stay with] us for a long time. And still move people's feelings. Virtue, among enemies even, can be admired. How much more so is this the case among friends!

98. 歷山王〈大西域古總王。〉值事急，躬入大陣。時有弼臣止之曰：「事險若斯，陛下安以免身乎？」王曰：「汝免我于詐友，且顯仇也，自乃能防之。」

Emperor Alexander the Great (European Ancient Emperor of all Emperors) handled an urgent matter by personally entering a large battle. At that time, his assistant stopped him, saying: "This is a dangerous! How would Your Majesty be safe to spare your body?" The Emperor said, "You defend me from my tricky friends who are manifest enemies. I can take defend myself from this!"

99. 歷山王亦冀交友，賢士名為善諾。先使人奉之以數萬金。善諾佛而曰：「王既吾以茲，意吾何人耶？」使者曰：「否也，王知夫子為至廉，是奉之耳。」曰：「然則當容我為廉已矣！」而麾之不受。史斷之曰：「王者欲買士之友，而士者毋賣之」。

Emperor Alexander the Great wished to make friends with the scholar Xeno. At first, he sent a messenger to present several tens of thousands of gold pieces. Xeno was angry and said: "If the Emperor gives me wealth, what does he think of me?" The messenger said: "No! The Emperor knows that the Master is very honest and righteous. For this, it is offered" Xeno said: "Accordingly, then, I shall remain righteous" and he refused to accept it. The historians summed this up saying "The Emperor wanted to buy the scholar's friendship, and yet the school would not sell it."

100. 歷山王未得總位時，無國庫凡獲財。厚頒給與人也。有敵國王富盛。惟事務充庫。譏之曰：「足下之庫在於何處？」曰：「在於友心也。」

Before King Alexander acquired his full status and did not have national stores of wealth, substantially gave to his people. There was an enemy king who was wealthy and abundant and whose only concern was filling the treasury. He ridiculed [King Alexander] saying: “Where does your treasury rest?” [Alexander] said: “Resting with friends’ heart.”

101. 昔年有善待友而豐惠之，將盡本家產也。傍人或問之曰：「財物畢與友，何留於己乎？」對曰：「惠友之味也。」〈《別傳》對曰：「留惠友之冀也。」意俚異而均美<sup>52</sup>焉。〉

In former years, there was goodness in treating friends well and abundantly benefitting [them], even using up one’s own family possession. Other persons questioned this, saying: “If wealth and possessions are completely given friends what remains for the self?” In response, it was said: “The taste of benefiting [your] friends” (In a different version of this story, the reply was: “What remains is the hope of benefiting friends.” The meanings are divergent but equally beautiful.”)

102. 古有二人同行，一極富，一極貧。或曰：「二人為友，至密矣。」竇法德〈古者名賢〉聞之曰：「既然，何一為富者，一為貧者哉？」〈言友之物，皆與共也。〉

In ancient times, there were two persons travelling together: one extremely rich and one extremely poor. Someone said: “The two persons are friends. Very close indeed.” Doufude (an ancient famous scholar) heard about it and said: “If that is the case, why is one rich person and one poor?”

103. 昔有人求其友以非義事，而不見與之。曰：「苟爾不與我所求，何復用爾友乎？」彼曰：「苟爾求我以非義事，何復用爾友乎？」

In ancient times, there was a person who requested that his friend to something immoral but would not see to do it and said: “If you do not agree to my request, then what further use if your friendship?” The other said: “If you request that I do something immoral, what further use is your friendship?”

104. 西土之一先王曾交友一士，而腆養之于都中。以其為智賢者。日曠弗見陳諫。即辭之曰：「朕乃人也，不能無過，汝莫見之。則非智士也。見而非諫。則非賢友也。先王弗見諫過且如此。使值近時文飾<sup>53</sup>過者，當何如？」

An ancient king from Europe made friends with a scholar and supported him in the capital city, considered him as an intelligence and virtuous person. Days passed without seeing [the scholar] or receiving [his] admonitions and thereupon [the King] sent him away saying “I am only a human. I can make mistakes. If you do not see that, then you are not an intelligent scholar. If you see me and do not admonish, then you are not a virtuous friend.” The ancient king did not see [the scholar] and had not been admonished and so he acted as such. If this happened in contemporary times when things are bypassed with ornate language, what could be done?

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<sup>52</sup> Same as 美, beautiful.

<sup>53</sup> Same as 飾, ornate.

105. 是的亞〈是北方國名〉俗，獨多得友者，稱之謂富也。

Shìdeyà (a Northern Country Name) has a custom: only those who have acquired many friends are praised as being wealthy.

106. 客力所〈西國王名〉以匹夫得大國。有賢人問得國之所行大旨。答曰：「惠我友，報我仇。」賢曰：「不如惠友而用恩，俾仇為友也？」

Kèlìsuǒ (European king's name) was an ordinary who acquired a great country. There was a wise person who asked what his great aim was do in acquiring the country. He answered: "Benefit my friends and take revenge on my enemies." The wise one said: "Why not benefit friends with benevolence and make enemies into friends?"

107. 墨臥皮〈古聞士者〉折開大石榴。或人問之曰：「夫子何物願獲如其子之多耶？」曰：「忠友也。」

Mòwò pí (ancient famous scholar) broke open a large pomegranate. Someone asked: "Master what kind of thing would you wish to acquire that is as numerous as those seeds?" He said: "Loyal friend, indeed."

108. 萬曆二十三年，歲次乙未，三月，望日。

23rd year of the Wànlì era, Yǐwèi year [1595 CE], the 3rd month, the 15th day of the lunar month.

### **Chapter 3: Classical Western Friendship Traditions**

Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit, came to China to spread Christianity. His mission was to create inroads into China because Christianity was largely foreign to the majority of the Chinese people. As a missionary, Ricci believed that the ‘good news’ was not only for Europeans. It was God’s intention to save all humans, including those in China. Therefore, Ricci traveled from Europe to China to spread the ‘good news’. In doing so, he had to overcome not only the language barrier, but also China’s ‘closed’ policy towards foreigners. Ricci learned the fundamentals of Chinese thought for establishing relationships with Chinese citizens; however, he was barred from circulating among the general Chinese populace. More importantly, in order to facilitate their salvation by the Christian faith, Ricci needed to make friends with his Chinese counterparts before he could share his own experiences and beliefs. The only possible relationship that he could undertake was to become friends with the courtiers whom he was permitted to circulate with.

Ricci employed friendship as a tool to build relationships with Chinese people, especially government officials whom he had access to. These relationships allowed him to achieve his goal of spreading Christianity in China. Though Ricci respected Chinese customs and language, his goal was to spread the Christian gospels in China thereby allowing his Chinese counterparts to be saved from sin. This chapter introduces and summarizes the main ideas behind Ricci’s understanding of friendship that are rooted in Western and Christian traditions, including traditions of Greek and Latin thought as well as Christian theology strongly influenced by the thought of Aquinas. Where relevant, this chapter also considers comparative discussion of the similarities and differences between western notions of friendship and that found in Confucianism. This comparative aspect will help to depict the intellectual and social world in



which Ricci worked in Ming Dynasty China.

### **Classical Western Notions of Friendship: Aristotle**

To understand Ricci's uses of friendship requires a more general understanding of the notions of friendship found in Western civilization which draws from both Greek and Latin tradition.<sup>54</sup> For example, the classical western friendship tradition came from the Greek philosophers such as Aristotle.<sup>55</sup> In particular, Aristotle appears to be formative in Ricci's own processes of friendship. Aristotle states that to understand friendship, three concepts are to be considered: "utility, pleasure and the pursuit of virtue".<sup>56</sup> The 'utility' of friendship depends on maximum gains from a mutual friendship.<sup>57</sup> The 'pleasure' of friendship is acquiring the utmost desire of emotional satisfaction.<sup>58</sup> These two levels of friendship cease to exist once the selfishness and desire is gone.<sup>59</sup> However, Aristotle cautions that these two levels of friendship are not the most desirable ones; they are better than the day-to-day relationship which is full of one-sided behaviors and taking advantage of others without reciprocity.<sup>60</sup> For Aristotle, friendship with virtue is the highest level of friendship. Both friends enjoy passion and usefulness from each other.<sup>61</sup> Aristotle defined friendship as a state of mind in relationship to the other in action. The action is not considered a personal advantage. Friendship does not rely upon personal acquaintance. It relies upon virtue and uprightness. Therefore, friendship is describing as a sphere of social, political, and public activities. Friendship is a 'public good'.<sup>62</sup> Aristotle

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<sup>54</sup> Robert French, "Friendship and Organization: Learning from the Western Friendship Tradition," *Management & Organizational History* 2, no. 3 (2007): 255.

<sup>55</sup> French, 256.

<sup>56</sup> French, 256.

<sup>57</sup> French, 262.

<sup>58</sup> French, 263.

<sup>59</sup> French, 263.

<sup>60</sup> French, 264.

<sup>61</sup> French, 263.

<sup>62</sup> French, 258.

states that friendship among individuals is more important than justice.<sup>63</sup>

### **Classical Western Notions of Friendship: Cicero**

Drawing from Latin traditions on the topic of friendship that formed part of Ricci's own understanding, we must look to Cicero. Cicero was a Roman statesman and thinker who wrote a treatise on friendship that considers—among other things—the role of friendship viz-a-vis the state. In such a way was he something like Ricci himself who was forbidden by Chinese law to circulate among the masses and therefore held relations only with statesmen and courtiers. For Cicero, and Ricci too, friendship is not an individual feeling towards others, but rather that it depends on virtue.<sup>64</sup> The friendship of individuals is built on mutually doing good to each other with spiritual dimensions.<sup>65</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, we can look to Cicero's *De Amicitia*<sup>66</sup> to examine the Western concepts of friendship and from which Ricci drew in the writing of *Discussion of Friendship*. The dialogue employed in Cicero's writing is classical literature. It is written for general interest, especially close relationships.<sup>67</sup> This form of classical writing is over two thousand years old. The writing is used as standard practice among scholars through the ages. Friendship is a special relationship among individuals who are strangers to each other. The connection with other individuals producing friendship is unique. This important relationship warrants philosophers to write and record friendships, especially the ones that have influence other societies. In response to this, Cicero gave his readers, ancient and present, a comprehensive knowledge of friendship.

Cicero is a strong follower of the established moral standard. He is not the first individual

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<sup>63</sup> French, 260.

<sup>64</sup> French, 260.

<sup>65</sup> French, 263.

<sup>66</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Cicero De Amicitia, On Friendship and Scipio's Dream*. trans. with Introduction and Notes by Andrew P. Peabody (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 2010), 11-33.

<sup>67</sup> Cicero, 11.

who has introduced the idea of friendship. He read ancient texts written by scholars before him. He summarizes previous writings and adds his own ideas of friendship. His text, *De Amicitia*, has been translated into Latin from Greek and, later, modern languages. It is because of Cicero's writing that we have a moral standard guide for treating other humans with care and dignity. In what follows, I offer a deep and step-by-step analysis of Cicero's notions of friendship. I do so because, arguably, *De Amicitia* provides a model for Ricci's own text. This analysis will aid in the discussion of Ricci's use of friendship in a Chinese context which we will see in the subsequent chapter.

### **An Analysis and Summary of Cicero's Notions of Friendship in *De Amicitia***

For Cicero, the essential focus of friendship, whether in blessed or difficult times, is to live in harmony with 'nature'.<sup>68</sup> The law of 'nature' will not change no matter what happens to humans. Individuals can share happiness with their friends when experiencing a good time. However, when experiencing a difficult time, individuals can share with their friends to help soften their pain. By understanding nature, individuals can understand that they have no control over circumstances of what is happening in their lives. Being a friend cushions the blow of bad times. A friend can tell the sorrowful friend that it is not their fault. Friends can guide their friends to get over the painful situation and move on their lives.

Humans are born innately innocent and are not in urgent need of material goods. Again, for Cicero, 'nature' provides the standards of 'good' people. Good people are not contaminated by extreme urges for material benefits and by harmful feelings toward their own families and their friends.<sup>69</sup> However, when individuals grow up, they become greedy. They seek better lives. They are looking for material possessions and fame. They are necessary items. It is not part of

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<sup>68</sup> Cicero, 14.

<sup>69</sup> Cicero, 15.

nature that humans own material goods. Sometimes, individuals may go beyond the legal means to satisfy their desires. They are willing to hurt their families and friends to obtain them. The harmony with nature breaks down. Disasters follow. Friendship promotes ‘nature’ that will bring wicked individuals back to their innocent path and become ‘good’ individuals again.

Once friendship is established between ‘good’ individuals, according to Cicero, this relationship is everlasting—more so than any family relationships.<sup>70</sup> Family relations are formed through bloodlines. An individual does not have a choice. Friendship, on the other hand, is established by ‘good’ individuals through understanding and admirations. Friends tend to have virtue. Virtue safeguards ‘good’ individuals and will remain good. They remind each other, whether a high official or a commoner, to follow virtue when they deal with an individual. Occasionally, a family member, such as the elderly, asks an individual to immorally obtain something by way of his position of power. A ‘good’ individual will not do something bad because it is against their moral beliefs. A ‘good’ individual forms friendship with ‘good’ individuals. They will not ask friends to turn their backs on virtue. As time goes by, friendships become solid, and they may have a lifelong relationship with friends.

Friendship involves fellowship and deep sympathy. Friends share their experiences and emotions toward each other and other unrelated individuals. These personal feelings rely on their sense of virtue and rightfulness which enables friends to maintain lasting friendship.<sup>71</sup> Friends share all aspects of their lives. It is difficult for adults to share their experiences and emotions that are aroused by injustice or hurt physically. Before a commoner, they do not show emotions because, depending on their culture and background, it is a sign of weakness. They tend to hide their emotions in front of others to avoid embarrassment and misunderstanding. Friends provide

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<sup>70</sup> Cicero, 15.

<sup>71</sup> Cicero, 15.

them with safe and comfortable surroundings. They can express their feelings without hesitation. Friends show their support and comfort towards their friends in need. Friends assess the situation. They are on the friend's side regardless of being just or right. If not, friends will help their friends to accept their consequences and return to a virtuous way of living. Their friendship becomes stronger over time, and it will last for good.

The virtue of 'good' individuals gives them a sense of a fulfilling life. This kind of relationship produces the maximum benefit to both individuals. They are attracted to each other because of a mutual belief in virtue.<sup>72</sup> The 'good' individuals have lived a virtuous life, and they can appreciate 'nature'. They have a sense of control over their destiny. They live a virtuous life. Their fulfillment comes from their own making. It is because they have the discernment of knowing who is 'good' and who is not 'good'. They have the confidence to choose the right individuals to be their friends. These individuals can share their experiences. With good experiences, they can share the joy and happiness with truthful friends. With bad experiences, they can share their misfortunes. They know they will receive comfort from their friends without any judgement. Likewise, they will do the same for their friends. By mutual exchange and acting according to virtue, these individuals will attract each other and become friends reaping all the benefits.

One of the benefits is 'closeness'. They treat each other as themselves. Your friend is part of you. You are not separable from each other, especially during the time of misfortune.<sup>73</sup> The relationship of a close friend is symbolized by two individuals becoming one body. Two friends are inseparable when dealing with all healthy or harmful situations. Individuals are honored and friends will have the same honor provided by their friends. If individuals are shamed by immoral

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<sup>72</sup> Cicero, 15-16.

<sup>73</sup> Cicero, 16.

behaviors, friends will be shamed. Therefore, there are incentives for individuals to follow virtuous standards for the sake of their friends. The value of friendship brings individuals together to dissolve any disagreement among them. A harmonious relationship is maintained by following the virtue of nature, and it is providing them with the capacity to be rightful to their friends.<sup>74</sup>

Individuals conclude differently when they encounter different situations. Disagreements on certain issues are unavoidable. Individuals require courage to humble themselves and comprise their opinions to maintain their friendship's harmony. The comprise of friends is guided by the rules of virtue rather than the superiority of individuals who gains control of the argument. Nature provides individuals with the capacity to achieve balance of power among friends. One of the human natures is 'love'. It originates from nature. One friend will not consider the benefits before love is applied to all friends. It is not blood related. Rather, it is because of the high moral principle for virtue.<sup>75</sup> 'Love' is a passive notion. 'Genuine love' came from individuals who are willing to follow this honorable and admirable notion. 'Love' does not discriminate.

This 'genuine love' is created by the mutual integrity and virtuous behavior between two individuals who are honorable in character. These individuals attract each other, and they form the bond of friendship even though everyone is satisfied with living in solitude. They create a mutual friendship because they have feelings of respect. They recognize in one other the same moral standards. They carry out friendship in their daily living without reservation. However, they do not have the intention to gain anything from the friendship.<sup>76</sup> Friendship is the extension

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<sup>74</sup> Cicero, 16.

<sup>75</sup> Cicero, 17.

<sup>76</sup> Cicero, 18.

of a human relationship. Friendship is going beyond our boundary of sharing our lives and enabling goodness without asking for anything in return. In this friendship, love is selfishness. Only ‘nature’ can produce this type of forever friendship because ‘nature’ is everlasting.<sup>77</sup> The love in friendship comes from nature. ‘Genuine love’ is innate. If there is no interference from wicked thoughts introduced by others, there should be no change in behaviors. Friendship is the connection between individuals.

If all individuals maintain their purity of love, their love will stay the same and their friendship will not change. However, the quest for everlasting friendship is difficult for there are many factors that could break up a friendship like growth. They might have been friends since a young age but grew apart when their different senses of worth developed. When friends are growing up, they pursue different paths such as one is married, or they competed for the same job. Another reason is when friends ask their friends to cross the moral boundary to gain benefits, individuals cannot fulfill the asking individuals’ need. The asked individual warns the friend to reconsider the decision. The answer could breakup their friendship.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, to make a lasting friendship, it takes lack of selfishness to consider the other’s needs and their well-being dependent on virtue. Righteousness guides their decisions.

Individuals who are unyielding has the determination of doing good and has internal harmony are good candidates to be friends. These friends can be trusted. They are loyal to their friends. They will not betray their friends for monetary gains or power.<sup>79</sup> Only upright individuals are worthwhile to build friendship with. They will not treat friends as a commodity to trade for goods, fame, power or favors. They treat their friends as part of themselves. They take

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<sup>77</sup> Cicero, 18.

<sup>78</sup> Cicero, 19.

<sup>79</sup> Cicero, 24-25.

care of their friends' welfare. 'A friend in need is a friend is indeed'.

In a serious situation, friends might ask their friends to fight their country's rulers. It is considered an extreme immoral action. Even friends are willing to follow the obligation toward their friendship, but if the asked friends refuses and, instead, the asked friends pull away from the immoral action and join their fight to get the friend back on the virtuous path. For a more extreme case, if friends join the enemy to fight against their own government, the moral uprightness of the asked friends will prevent them from helping.<sup>80</sup> Loyalty to the State is part of virtue. Virtuous individuals do not fight against their own country. Instead, they would sacrifice their lives for their country.

The most important value in friendship is to ensure righteousness not only for self, but the requirement from friends too. If friends are not righteous, they will deny friendship without reservation.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, it is the obligation of friends to watch out for their friends to ensure they live moral lives. 'Caring' for friends is part of virtue. They should encourage their friends to be 'good' and avoid being unwise. Virtue among friends allows the friend to be respectful and pleasant.<sup>82</sup> When friends do not live according to virtue, friends, with concern and friendliness, must not only point out the friend's faults, but coach them back to the rightful way of living.

Friendship is established because the friends follow the right virtue and acquire mutual goodness. This friendship is not trying to obtain benefits from others. Rather, friendship takes precedent over gains among friends. Furthermore, the friendship comes naturally and can be expanded to the local community or entire states.<sup>83</sup> Friendship benefits individuals when they are bonding. They have influence on others who live around them. They are setting a good example

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<sup>80</sup> Cicero, 19-20.

<sup>81</sup> Cicero, 21.

<sup>82</sup> Cicero, 21.

<sup>83</sup> Cicero, 22.



for them. They are living a harmonious life. They are following a good model for living. Furthermore, the rest of the community, hopefully, will create a utopian society.

A friendship boundary is set for the following conditions: That friends are willing to sacrifice for friends; those friends do not treat friends as an equal contributor when involving wealth; and to be careful to commit to friendship.<sup>84</sup> Wealth is the most sensitive issue among friends. Individuals treat wealth as a personal achievement. Therefore, it is difficult to share. However, to be a true friend, it demands that wealth belongs to all friends. However, they do not demand from any friend to be equal partners. All friendship is guided by virtue.

Friendship requires consistent behavior and faithfulness to preserve it. Individuals usually are honest, good-natured, and willing to satisfy others' wishes. The same interests are likely to be good for a friendship.<sup>85</sup> Friends are friends because they have similar goals in life—to achieve virtue. Individuals of good, moral standards attract others with the same honorable characteristics. These characteristics enrich their friendship and make their friendship last. Friendships can be old or new. Old friendship should be treasured for lasting long. Young friendship should be accepted and treated equally without discrimination. The purpose of friendship is to gather virtuous individuals.<sup>86</sup> Friendship is an evolving relationship. Meeting new individuals is a common event. Making new friends is possible when the newly met individuals possess virtue. Building new friendship does not mean giving up old friends. Rather, it is a process to build a friendship base and grouping virtuous friend together. Consequently, it is good for the society.

In the event that the friendship is between an individual with higher social status and an

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<sup>84</sup> Cicero, 23-24.

<sup>85</sup> Cicero, 25.

<sup>86</sup> Cicero, 26.

individual with lower social status, the higher social status individual must communicate with lower status individual as an equal.<sup>87</sup> It is easier for the lower social status individuals to seek friendships with higher status individuals for various reasons. If the lower social status individual is virtuous, the higher social status individuals will make friends with him. However, the higher social status individuals must humble themselves and treat the lower status individuals as equal for meekness is one of the characteristics of virtue.

Disagreement with friends is not detrimental to friendships. Individuals come from different backgrounds. Therefore, they have different opinions on different issues. However, if the issue is a concern and they violate moral rules, then, it is acceptable to dissolve the friendship to preserve the personal integrity of virtue. This is not accepted among friends.<sup>88</sup>

The correct way to establish a friendship is that individuals must be 'good' and virtuous so that they, with the utmost respect, can bond easily and lead to a higher virtue. The friendship demands time and resources to achieve this honorable relationship.<sup>89</sup> Friendship does not come easy. It requires all individuals to observe their potential friends and to be sure they possess the virtue they initially claimed. Once the friendship is established, the friends need to put in the effort to maintain a lasting relationship.

The worth of friendship cannot be valued by material or nonmaterial means no matter how the individuals live. Friendship joins individuals together to support each other.<sup>90</sup> The only factor in establishing a friendship is virtue. Therefore, no other matter will influence friendship. Misfortune happens to individuals. Friends would not hesitate to generously help them. Friends have the obligation to warn their friends about their wrongdoing even though the action may

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<sup>87</sup> Cicero, 26-27.

<sup>88</sup> Cicero, 27-28.

<sup>89</sup> Cicero, 28-29.

<sup>90</sup> Cicero, 29.

upset them. Eventually, through honest concern and careful language, the receiving friend will appreciate the advice and return to their rightful life.<sup>91</sup> Safeguarding their friends from the wicked thoughts and actions is the friends' duty. Friends will stop their friends when committing immoral actions or crimes by gently advising them not to commit any inappropriate actions. Friends' responses should be appreciative without any catch.

Friendship survives based on sincerity and always telling the truth. Individuals need to judge the difference between 'true' friends from the insincere ones and not taking advantage of the situation to make gains.<sup>92</sup> One of the difficulties to preserve 'true' friends is to discern the individuals' honesty. Humans have the intelligence to pretend. To avoid deceit, diligently observing based on adherence to virtue is the way to separate 'true' friends from the 'untrue' friends. The truth of friendship is simple and easy to understand. However, it depends on the individuals' value system who must judge if their friends are telling the truth based on virtue or their own interests.<sup>93</sup> To preserve friendship, friends must focus on virtue that guides our beliefs and actions with constancy and fairness. Well established friendship not only lasts for a lifetime but will be remembered even after death.<sup>94</sup> Friendship is a treasure that would not decay or lose value. Only a 'true' friend can appreciate friendship.

### **Discussion: Cicero as Model for Ricci's Elite Friendships**

As we see from the detailed summary of Cicero's *De Amicitia* above, it is a collection of ancient thinking on friendship that has considerable similarities to Ricci's text. As we have already seen, many of these similarities should be evident, and, yet I would like to summarize them here. Both Ricci and Cicero place emphasis on 'nature'. That is, friendship is not an

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<sup>91</sup> Cicero 29-30.

<sup>92</sup> Cicero, 30-31.

<sup>93</sup> Cicero, 31-32.

<sup>94</sup> Cicero, 32-33.

invented relationship, but, rather, friendship is innate. 'Nature' set the standard for 'good' individuals to follow virtue. Virtue cannot be represented by any material objects or family relationship. Virtue is a personal endeavor. Friendship is based on the willing to live a moral life and to be 'good' to self and others. These individuals are defenders of virtue. Friendship is standing firm on their beliefs. Once individuals achieve 'good' status, they will attract other 'good' individuals. Then, friendship is established. The established friendship is a lasting relationship. Friends follow virtue with the utmost respect towards each other including sharing their wealth. Their 'closeness' and harmonious relationship create a bond which cannot be broken whether they are experiencing a good time and bad time. 'Love' is part of friendship. It is formed by mutual care and respect without any intent to ask for benefits.

In the event of friends falling away from their virtuous path, being a friend obliges them to help a wandering friend to return to their 'good' life. Friends will gently coach the 'lost' friends and ask them to reconsider their decision. Friends look after friends. They do not expect anything in return. If they do not listen, they must break off the friendship. Friends are willing to sacrifice themselves to ensure a friend is all right. The unselfish behavior influences the local to the large communities. Therefore, friendship is worthwhile to preserve. Only the virtuous individuals who possess honorable characteristics, such as honesty, righteousness, and loyalty, safeguards the precious human relationship. In addition, old friendship is valued for the prolonged relationship that has built-up for a long time and has survived all adversaries. A new friendship can bring in new contributions to the group. The new friendship will benefit both new and old friends. A friendship is built on virtue. Therefore, if they are 'good' individuals, there is no discrimination for the individuals' social status.

Friendship is a bonding of virtuous individuals who has the same goal to improve

themselves and to reach the highest virtue. This achievement will take time and effort. Initially, each ‘good’ individual must evaluate a potential friend. When they come along, if they are honest about their virtuous living, they want to join a fellow of friends to multiply their kindness. It is a judgement call, but an important one. The decisions made by these ‘good’ individuals will determine the future of their friendship, and whether the relationship will last or destroyed by wicked so-called friends. The lasting friendship will benefit the group, and they will be remembering after death.

In Ricci’s writing, he integrated Cicero’s ideas of the individual concept of friendship into a hundred lines that would appeal to Chinese courtiers and statesmen who were well-versed in the Confucian intellectual traditions the *Four Books* of Chinese traditions of friendship, which Ricci also alluded to having himself studied them carefully. With the permission of Vatican and the blessing of Jesuit officials, Ricci printed the *Discussion of Friendship* in mass with the most advance printing technology at time—a carved wood block. A copy is stored in the Vatican library for today’s scholars to read. As we will see in the next chapter, Ricci had Feng Yingjing 馮應京 (1555-1606), the Provincial Minister, write the preface to his text in order to legitimate it as an official document. That way, it could be distributed within the government officials’ circle. Thus, Ricci has opened a narrow door for himself to spread Christianity in China even though he could not directly preach the Gospel because of the Ming Dynasty’s strict restriction on the activities of foreigners.

### **Ricci, Aquinas, and the Grace of Friendship**

Aquinas developed a model of Aristotelian friendship. He believed that friendship grew in virtue. Friendship with God, according to Aquinas, is made possible with the coming of Jesus Christ, who, as a human, offered the individual the capacity for friendship and the transforming

grace of God.<sup>95</sup> From John 15:12-17, Aquinas interpreted that Christians develop friends through accepting Christ. By accepting Christ, charity is in place. Charity is love provided by God. Humans and God are bonded by reciprocal love, and the reciprocal love can be realized and demonstrated with unselfish friendship. Through Christ, humans can communicate with God. Thus, “charity is the friendship of” humans “for God”. Humans who love God, and who God loves, follow charity. They become virtuous. The virtuous individuals received the ‘divine’ wisdom to be ‘good’. Thus, humans are capable of love not only for themselves, but for their friends and who are related to their friends and, even, their enemies. As we will see, Aquinas’s theology of friendship informed much of Ricci’s work in China.

The Jesuits followed Thomas Aquinas’s theology regarding human affairs.<sup>96</sup> Aquinas emphasized that ‘grace’ is innate. That it came from the divine and is divine. The individuals remained in ‘grace’ if they strove for doing ‘good’.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, perfection can be achieved by submitting an individual’s life to God.<sup>98</sup> Justice is a part of the individual’s nature, however, initially, humans are not perfect because of ‘original sin’. Humans inherit ‘original sin’ from their parents, and it causes disharmony in their physical beings and their ‘souls’. Therefore, humans are either not recognizing the capacity of doing ‘good’ or not willing to do ‘good’.<sup>99</sup> Once humans lose justice, it requires teaching and learning before the individual is whole in spirit and in mind. Individuals can restore harmony by accepting Christ as their savior. By doing so, their sins will be forgiven and the connection between God and humans will be restored.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, “The Summa Theologica, Second Part of the Second Part, Question 23,” trans. by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. *The Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition (1920), accessed July 27, 2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/summa/3023.htm>.

<sup>96</sup> Christoph Philipp Haar, *Natural and Political Conceptions of Community: The Role of the Household Society in Early Modern Jesuit Thought, C. 1590-1650*, ed. Robert A. Maryks (Brill, 2019), 28.

<sup>97</sup> Haar, 30-31.

<sup>98</sup> Haar, 31.

<sup>99</sup> Haar, 31.

<sup>100</sup> Haar, 34.

Aquinas insists that the connection is achieved through God's help, and He allows them to live life with virtue and 'good' morals.<sup>101</sup>

Individuals should make friends with God.<sup>102</sup> Friendship with God restores the original intention of God's creation. For Aquinas, this was to make friends with His creation.<sup>103</sup> The power of His friendship allows individuals to avoid any 'wrongdoing' because they are living the 'good' life.<sup>104</sup> Ricci inherits the Catholic Doctrine of 'saving' souls by 'grace', and 'grace' comes from God. Naturally, God has the generosity of letting individuals receive it for free. 'Grace' allows sinners to recognize that they are not living a 'perfect' life. Their souls and bodies are not in harmony. The only way to achieve harmony is by connecting to God as friends.

### **Ricci and Comparative Theology**

Through direct inspiration from Aristotle, Cicero, and Aquinas alongside his own writing of *Discussion of Friendship* in Chinese, Ricci was able to bridge the cultural and intellectual gap between himself and the Chinese courtiers and statesmen with whom he was associated. Ricci integrated Western and Confucianism ideologies. He did not only wear Chinese attire and speak their language, but he was successful in introducing Christian doctrines into his writings even though the two ideologies seemed dissimilar.<sup>105</sup> Ricci's theology was written in the Chinese Classical language. He sought to ensure his writings were acceptable to the intellectuals and the ruling government officials. Ricci's Chinese moral writings were drawing from the Confucian *Four Books*.<sup>106</sup> The *Discussion of Friendship* provides the principles of friendship for latter generation to read and to act accordingly. It is the European and Chinese philosophies bounded

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<sup>101</sup> Haar, 35.

<sup>102</sup> Haar, 36.

<sup>103</sup> Haar, 37.

<sup>104</sup> Haar, 38.

<sup>105</sup> Pen Yin, "Matteo Ricci's Legacy for Comparative Theology," *Modern Theology* 38, no. 3 (2002): 549.

<sup>106</sup> Yin, 550.

together so that the readers could appreciate the treatise's ageless value. Furthermore, Ricci embedded Western and Christian moral standard in his treatise.<sup>107</sup> He lists the European individuals' virtuous behaviors to demonstrate their virtue in their social communities: standing firm against undesirable behaviors; self-reflecting on spiritual well-being; and examining their friends doing as virtuous as them.<sup>108</sup> To ensure that the Chinese scholars would understand, Ricci used the comparative method that he borrowed from Confucius's *Four Books* to express his theological ideas.<sup>109</sup> Regarding friendship, Christian thoughts and the Confucian morals had a similar structure. They both had an emphasis on virtue rather than on self-interest.<sup>110</sup> However, Ricci found that the Chinese had a different ultimate end regarding their virtue: the Chinese morality has no end. It is a continue process, and nobody can achieve moral perfection. Ricci's end is to be God's friend.<sup>111</sup>

Ricci discovered two important virtues that the Chinese virtuous individuals strive for: rén (仁) or benevolence and yì (義) or righteousness. These two goals are inter-related. However, to achieve yì (義) or righteousness, the virtuous individuals must practice rén (仁) or benevolence, but they must have a desire to achieve yì (義). Ricci further explain to the courtiers that the individual must practice rén (仁).<sup>112</sup> Ricci indicated that for individuals to be virtuous, they need God to provide the necessary character to achieve rén (仁) and yì (義).<sup>113</sup> Ricci said

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<sup>107</sup> Yin, 551.

<sup>108</sup> Yin, 555.

<sup>109</sup> Yin, 556.

<sup>110</sup> Yin, 556.

<sup>111</sup> Yin, 557.

<sup>112</sup> Yin, 557.

<sup>113</sup> Yin, 558.



that the Chinese scholars devoted their lives to achieving virtue. Attaining virtue was on their way to reaching harmony with God.<sup>114</sup> It is processes by a virtuous individual and provided by the “Lord of Heaven” who has love for their friends and for their enemies who are against virtue.<sup>115</sup>

Ricci combined Confucian virtue with Christian theology to explain that Chinese scholars have the opportunity to learn about the Christian God. He said that they had already heard of God and its heavenly virtue in the *Four Books*. He disclosed that the Chinese virtue of rén (仁) and yì (義) paves the way for them to understand his preaching on Christianity.

## **Conclusion**

Ricci travelled to China from the West with the intent to spread the ‘good news’ of Christianity. Though sympathetic to China and the Chinese peoples, Ricci still saw China as a country of unbelievers who needed to hear the ‘good news’ of Christ. He was taught his theology from Thomas Aquinas’ writings. His philosophy from the writings of Aristotle and Cicero, who was a Roman rhetorician. However, Ricci encountered two issues: the first, China was ‘closed’ to the foreigners who wanted to freely contact the populace, and second, the social issue (culture and language). To get around this, he learnt Chinese to communicate with the elite Chinese government officials and to enticed them with Western technology. Finally, Ricci’s efforts paid off when he submitted and distributed his *Discussion of Friendship* to government officials.

Cicero, in *De Amicitia*, gave reader a comprehensive view on Western friendship. He introduced a practical theme for friendship: follow our instinct. An individual should be able to

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<sup>114</sup> Yin, 558.

<sup>115</sup> Yin, 560.

live a 'good' life. Cicero believed that humans are born naturally 'good'. It is the social learning of 'greed' that drew individuals away from their initial innocent state. To restore the 'good', these individuals must learn and practice virtue. Virtue brings humans back to their righteous, moral lives. Cicero emphasized that they practiced 'true' friendship. Because of this, they will bring others to join the virtuous group and form a 'good' community. During the process, virtuous individuals must choose their friends carefully. These friends have the right motives to be friends. Eventually, a group of friends becomes one body because friends are not only interested in their own benefit, but they encourage each other to live an upright life.

Thus, Ricci synthesized European teachings to form his own ideas. His thoughts can be briefly summarized as such: humans fell from 'grace' because of 'original sin'; the 'sin' produces an immoral life and a society which is unjust; the way to salvage a corrupt world is to bring humans back to their virtuous path and live life like God has initially intended. Christian morality is practicing virtue. The Ricci method is making friends with God through Christ. Thus, 'true' friendship is the way to form a Christian community that serves justice.

## Chapter 4: Chinese Friendship and the Uses of Friendship in China

Ricci earned acceptance of his text *Discussion of Friendship* among Chinese government officials who permitted its printing and distribution among the court. In addition, the Provincial Minister, Feng Yingjing, based in Nanjing 南京, himself wrote a preface to Ricci's text which was written on the 7th day of the lunar month in the year 1601. From examining Ricci's relationship with Feng, as well as the circumstances behind Feng's writing of the Preface to Ricci text, can we understand how Ricci's notions of Friendship were both domesticated and helpfully reciprocated in Chinese society in the Ming dynasty.

Feng's biography is recorded in three Chinese Classics: *The Ming History* 明史<sup>116</sup>, *Ming Confucius Scholar Cases* 明儒學案<sup>117</sup> and *Histoire de la Mission du Kiang-nan* 江南传教史.<sup>118</sup> Feng's life can be summarized thusly: Feng was born in the year 1555 CE and died in the year of 1606. Feng's father was a government officer and died when he was eight years old. To become a government officer, Feng wrote the government examination. However, shortly after becoming a government officer, his mother died. Feng took a leave from his position in order to follow the Confucian principles of mourning for his mother. To give expression to his sorrow, he spent four years (1592–1596) following the virtue that he would abstain from any social life. In 1596, Feng went back to work and took a military post, where he is credited with stopping an invasion from Korea. In 1600, Feng was in Jiangnan 江南 when he met Ricci. Feng wrote the preface to Ricci's *Discussion of Friendship* on the first lunar month of 1601 and then printed the text for distribution and shipped it to government officials. On the second lunar month, Feng was

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<sup>116</sup> 明史（清）圣祖仁皇帝特徵四方之士分司 本书 332 卷目录 4 卷，拆分成 118 册 Part 082 卷二百三十五~卷二百三十七, Pages 140-146.

<sup>117</sup> 明儒學案（清）黄宗羲 圣祖仁皇帝特徵四方之士分司 本书 62 卷，拆分成 27 册 Part 24 卷二十四~卷二十五, Pages 89-91.

<sup>118</sup> Joseph de la Serviere, "*Histoire de la Mission du Kiang-nan*," 上海天主教会出版的铅印本, (1914).

accused of wrongly accusing a tax collector. He was put in prison in the ninth lunar month of 1601. During the next three years, Ricci visited Feng numerous times. Feng accepted the Gospel and became a follower of Christ. On the ninth month of 1604, Feng was released from prison and returned to his government post. Feng died at home in the first lunar month of 1606. He was fifty-two years old.

In Feng’s preface, he acknowledges Ricci’s ambition to make friends. Feng points out that Ricci understood the deep roots of the Confucian tradition that demands structural relationships among individuals. The idea of the ‘five relationships’—basic, reciprocal human relationships codified for social behavior in Confucian thought—appears in numerous Classic Chinese documents. One of them is from the aforementioned Chinese Classic, the *Mengzi*. In Chapter four, section Teng Wengong (滕文公) 4, we find these famous phrases that explain the Five Relationships:

教以人倫 (jiào yǐ rénlún)	Teaching for the sake of human relationships:
父子有親 (fùzǐ yǒu qīn)	Between Fathers and Sons there is intimacy;
君臣有義 (jūnchén yǒu yì)	Between Ruler and Minister there is justice;
夫婦有別 (Fūfù yǒu bié)	Between Husband and Wife, there is differentiation;
長幼有序 (zhǎngyòu yǒu xù),	Between Elder and Younger there is order;
朋友有信 (péngyǒu yǒu xìn). <sup>119</sup>	Between Friends there is trust.

According to the writings of Mencius, who was the most celebrated interpreter of Confucius, every individual should follow the virtue according to Confucian standards of different relationships. As a start, the phrase “教以人倫 jiào yǐ rénlún” means that every virtuous

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<sup>119</sup> Paoli Lee, *Mengzi* 孟子: Chapter 4 第四章, Section Teng wengong 滕文公, ed. Confucius (World I-Kuan Tao Headquarters, 2007), 24.

individual has the obligation to teach and share with others the five virtuous standards of relationships. The first relationship (父子有親 fùzǐ yǒu qīn) is between the parents and their children. Parents should be kind to their children and children should respect their parents. Confucius called this the standards of filial piety. 君臣有義 (jūnchén yǒu yì), the second relationship, is between the rulers and their ministers. Their relationships are bonded by righteousness. The ministers are loyal to their Emperors and, ideally, Emperors treat their ministers as their children. 夫婦有別 (fūfù yǒu bié), the third relationship, is between husbands and wives and explains that they have different obligations that must be fulfilled, based on their sex and role in the family. In Chinese classical society, the husband is responsible for providing for their families. The wife is responsible for the domestic affairs of their families. The fourth relationship, 長幼有序 (zhǎngyòu yǒu xù), states that the older brothers and the younger brothers must follow the Confucian standard of order. The older brothers must treat their young brothers with the benefit of brotherhood, and the younger brothers must respect their older brothers. The fifth relationship 朋友有信 (péngyǒu yǒu xìn), is between friends. According to this maxim, a ‘true’ friendship is built on trust. Trust, according to Confucian standards, is the total commitment, both materially and emotionally, to each other. These Confucian traditions dictate that friends are not blood relatives and that individuals must work hard to build relationships of friendship with strangers. Furthermore, according to tradition, these relationships must be sincere, truthful, and mutually beneficial for all involved in the friend relationship. The friendship between Matteo Ricci and Feng Yingjing perhaps models this form of Confucian friendship; although they were initially meeting for the exchange of intellectual information and not business, they were impressed by each other’s virtue, and this developed into friendship.

Feng decided that Ricci's *Discussion of Friendship* was worthwhile and shared it with his colleagues. We will see this in the translation of Feng's preface below.

A second preface to Ricci's text was written by Qu Rukui 瞿汝夔 in the first lunar month of the year of 1599 CE. Qu Rukui identified himself as Ricci's friend; however, I have not located other biographical information about him outside of the preface. Qu is a scholar and a historian who traveled around China. Although, as we will see Qu, lists the ancient Chinese virtues from different dynasties in his preface, he primarily emphasized the culture and values of the Ming dynasty. He was impressed by Ricci's mathematical knowledge when they first met at Duanzhou 端州. Qu stayed with Ricci for two years. When they met again after six years, Ricci had taught himself to read and write Chinese. He shared with Qu his primary writing, *Discussion of Friendship*. Qu commented that Ricci's writing should be read by all Chinese individuals. The book circulated among the government officials in which Ricci conveyed his virtuous friendship beliefs.

To further explore how Ricci's Chinese friends Feng Yingjing and Qu Rukui understood Ricci's own interpretation of Confucian forms of friendship in the Ming dynasty and therefore shed light on how this understanding facilitated Ricci's own ability to spread Christianity through friendship in China, this chapter offers a translation of the two important prefaces of Feng and Qu. These prefaces circulated with the text, acting as an introduction to Ricci and his ideas within the elite world of Ming China in which *Discussion of Friendship* circulated.

### **Translation of the Preface by Feng Yingjing**

#### **刻交友論序**

The Preface for the *Discussion of Friendship* (version: carved wood block)

西泰子間關八萬里東遊於中國，為交友也。

The European gentlemen traveled east of his frontier for eighty thousand miles, arriving in China for the sake of making friends.

其悟交道也深，故其相求也切，相與也篤，而論交道獨詳。

His comprehension of the way of making friendship was deep and therefore his entreaties were cooperated with. His relations with others were sincere and so his treatise on making friendship is uniquely comprehensive.

嗟夫，友之所繫大矣哉！君臣不得不義，父子不得不親，夫婦不得不別，長幼不得不序，是烏可無交。

Alas! That which binds friends together is great! The relationship between the lord and his servant must be just. The relationship between a father and his sons must be intimate. The husband and the wife must be differentiated. The elder brothers and the younger brothers must be ordered. It is the crow that can be without friends.

夫交非汎汎然，相謹洽、相施報而已。

Now, friends do not flow naturally: it is nothing other than mutual clamor and harmony and mutual give it takes.

相比、相益、相矯、相成、根於其中之不容已，而極於其終之不可解，乃稱為交世。

Mutual compliance, mutual benefit, mutual rectification, mutual success; in the beginning, the heart of it is not easy and yet, in the end the termination of it is insoluble. And so, it is called life-long friendship.

未有我以面而友以心者，亦未有我以心而友以面者。

There are not those who of themselves consider the face while the friend considers the heart and there are also not those of themselves consider the heart while the friend considers the face.

鳥有友聲，人有友生。鳥無僞也，而人容僞乎哉？

Birds have the songs of their friends; human have the lives of their friends. Birds are without falsity and yet are humans not easily false?

京不敏蚤溺，鉛槧未遑，負笈求友，壯遊東西南北。

I, Jing, am unwise and flea-ridden, and my lead and tablet are lazy. Carrying a case of books to seek out a friend. [I] strengthened [myself] to journey east, west, south, and north.

乃因王事敦友誼，視西秦子，迢遙山海，以交友為務，殊有餘愧，爰有味乎？

Resultantly, because of the official matter of contracting [his] friendship. I met the European gentleman from the far away regions. Having made friends with him for the sake of business. [I was] terribly ashamed. How bitter!

其論而益信，東海西海，此心此理同也。

He discussed things and was increasingly trustworthy. From the Eastern Sea to the Western Sea, the minds and the principles are the same.

付之剗。冀觀者知，京重交道，勿忍見棄。

Disseminate by carving knife, I hope that the readers can understand it. I, Jing, am serious about the *Way of Friendship* and cannot bear to see it discarded.

即顏未承，詞未接，願以神交，如陽燧向日，方諸向月，水火相應以生。京何敢忘德。

Even if his face is not venerated and his words not received, I vow to undertake this spiritual friendship. Like the mirror that catches the heat from the sun or the basin that catches the dew from the moon, water and fire mutually correspond for [there to be] life. How can I, Jing, disregard virtue?

《交友論》九百章，藉以為求友之贄。

The *Discussion of Friendship* is all together one hundred sections. It can be used as a gift for seeking friendship.

明萬曆辛丑春正月人日

Ming [Dynasty], Wanli Era, Year of Xin Chou (1601) 7<sup>th</sup> day of the first lunar month.

盱眙馮應京敬書於楚臬司之明德堂

Xuyi county Feng Yingjing (the author) writes respectfully from Provincial Minster's [Nanjing] Mingde Hall.

### Translation of the Preface by Qu Rukui

#### 大西域利公友論序

Preface to *Jiaoyou lun* by Master Ricci from the Great Western Regions.

昔，周家積德累仁，光被四表，以致越裳肅慎，重譯來獻。

In ancient times, the Zhou's Family accumulated virtue and plied up benevolence [such that it] extended throughout the whole world. As a result, the southern coastal regions were respectful and cautious and [people] were very pleased to bring tribute.

周文公讓而不居，曰：“正朔不加，未敢臣畜。”

Duke Wen of the Zhou stepped down and did not abide, saying: “Do not increase on the first day of the new moon; do not dare to submit like an animal.”

于是以賓禮賓之，而周官王會著在史冊。

Therefore, a guest is to be treated with the ritual for a guest; the ministers and princes of the Zhou recorded [the ritual] in history books.

自時厥，後漢通漠磧，唐聘海邦，雖亦殊域竝至，德感鮮稱，故庭實則繁，而論著罔列洪。



From that time afterwards, the Han [Dynasty] opened the deserts, the Tang [Dynasty] explored overseas countries. Although these different regions were brought together, feelings were virtuous, and praise was scarce. Therefore, the gifts of tribute to the court were numerous and writings were extensively recorded.

惟我大明中天，冠絕百代，神聖繼起，德覆無疆，以致遐方碩德如利公者，慕化來款，匪希聞達，願列編氓，誦聖謨，遵王度，受冠帶，祠春秋，躬守身之行，以踐真修，申敬事天之旨，以裨正學，即楚材、希憲、未得與利公同日語也。

Only our Great Ming Dynasty is at the center of heaven, the crown of the last hundreds if generations. Holy sages have arisen one after the other and their virtue has limitless. Consequently, from the distant regions there [have been] people of great virtue like Master Ricci [whose] praise and teachings bring sincerity and who does not hope to be illustrious and eminent. Vowing to go alongside the common folk to recite their sage advice, respect the imperial limits, receive the hat and belt, offer sacrifices in spring and autumn, maintain virtuous bodily conduct, undertake to carry out true cultivation, their aim was expressing veneration for the matters of heaven. With the benefit of proper education, [they went] to the village of Chu hoping to convert people but they were not successful because they were not on par with Master Ricci.

萬曆己丑，不佞南游羅浮，因訪司馬節齋劉公，與利公遇于端州，目擊之頃，已灑然異之矣。

In the *Jichou* year of the Wanli Ji era [1589], your unintelligent servant travelled to Mountain Luo Fu. The purpose was to visit Master Liu of Sima Jiezha (Guangdong Governor) and to meet Master Ricci at Duanzhou. I saw with my own eyes in a short time [that he] was refreshingly different!

及司馬公徙公于韶，予適過曹谿，又與公遇，于是，從公講像數之學，凡兩年而別。

At that time, Master Sima had followed Master [Ricci] to Shao [Quan] and, I had just passed through Caoxi and again met Master [Ricci]. Thereupon, from the master's lectures on the study of portraits and mathematics. I studied for two year and then left.

別公六年，所而公益，北學中國，抵豫章，撫臺仲鶴陸公留之，駐南昌，暇與建安郡王殿下論及友道，著成一編。

Leaving him for six years, the Master [Ricci]'s stay that was beneficial. Coming north to learn about China, Master Ricci arrived at Yuzhang where he stayed with the provincial governor, Zhong Helu. Stationed in Nanchang, during his leisure, [Ricci] discussed the *Way of Friendship* with His Highness, the imperial servant Jian and he finished writing the full book.

公舉以示不佞，俾為一言弁之。

The Master showed it to your unintelligent servant for me to make a brief preface.

予思楛矢白雉，非關名理，而古先哲王猶頒示之，以昭明德。

I think that the *hushi* tree and the white pheasant do not connect the name with the principle. Even though, the prior worthy rulers of old were still proclaiming them, considering them shining and bright virtue.

今利公其彌天之資，匪徒來賓，服習聖化，以我華文，譯彼師授，此心此理，若合契符，藉有錄之，以備陳風采謠之，獻其為國之瑞，不更在楛矢白雉百累之上哉？

Now, as for Master Ricci, his abilities overflow the heavens abilities. He did not come here to be a guest but to become acquainted with the teachings of the sages and to take our Chinese literature and translate it for other teachers, conferring [on them] the heart and the principle. If it is tallied and noted in the registers, then considering the thoroughness and the elegance of the ballad, it is offered for the sake of the auspiciousness of the country. How can it not be superior to the *hushi* and the silver pheasant piled up in the hundreds?

至其論義精粹，中自具足，無俟拈出矣。

As to the discussions of righteousness in his collected works; there is everything sufficient inside. Do not wait to pick it up and go!

然于公特百分一耳，或有如房相國融等，為筆授其性命、理數之說，勒成一家，藏之通國，副在名山，使萬世而下有知其解者，未必非昭事上天之準的也。

Accordingly, [the book] is merely one percent of the Master. Perhaps it is like a house where mutual countries fuse together. With his writing brush, he gives his life; the reasons and logic of his teachings reign everybody in and the whole country is gathered to propagate it on famous mountains causing the 10,000 generation that will follow to know of his understanding. It must not be wrong that these exhortations are the criterion of the highest heaven.

萬曆己亥正月。

January, [The year of] Wanli Jihai (1599).

穀旦友人瞿汝夔序。

On the blessed date, Qu Rukui, the friend, [wrote the] preface.

## Discussion

### *Preface by Feng Yingjing*

Ricci showed his sincerity and eagerness to make friends with the Chinese. Feng's preface to the *Discussion of Friendship* lets the reader know that Ricci truly understood friendship and Chinese cultural norms. In general, Chinese people appreciate individuals who

make the effort to learn Chinese language and culture, especially those from far away. For example, the *Analects of Confucius* states, “If a friend comes from far off, is it not joyous?” 有朋自遠方來，不亦樂乎 (“yǒupéng zì yuǎnfāng lái, bù yì lè hū”).<sup>120</sup> According to Confucius’ teaching, Chinese individuals of virtue idealized and followed the Confucian standard of receiving their virtuous friends from far away. Ricci was able to take advantage of this custom in order to gain friendships with the local government officials, and this ensured him a successful mission. Feng commented that Ricci’s sincerity allowed him to establish deep and unique friendship with people in China. Friendship is one of the five Confucian relationships. The five relationship boundaries are clearly defined in Chinese society through obligations. Ricci knew these ideas because he learned Chinese from studying the Confucian classics. He therefore understood that he must earn ‘trust’ from his Chinese counterparts in order to establish friendship with them. When establishing friendship with such high-level officials, the friendship can last a lifetime. According to Confucius’ teaching, often interpreted by Mencius, Confucian gentleman should consider friendship as natural, part of the nature that humans are born with. To consolidate ‘true’ friendship means attracting others of virtuous behaviours. Ricci understood that meeting lower government officials connected him to medium government officials which lead to meeting with influential Chinese officials. Ricci established himself as a Western scholar. Feng was attracted to Ricci’s new and interesting knowledge that he provided. Feng enjoyed people’s stories of travel and requested making friends with them. Ricci waited patiently for the opportunity to meet Feng and Feng had an open mind to make friends with any individual disregarding their backgrounds. Ricci understood that a genuine friendship is a spiritual and permanent relationship. A friendship is comparable to a natural phenomenon. That is, a permanent

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<sup>120</sup> *Analects of Confucius* 論語, Section Xué ér dì yī 學而第一, line 1.

and everlasting friendship. Ricci learnt the Chinese language and read Chinese writings so that he can convey his appreciation for the friendship of the Ming Chinese. Ricci considers the Chinese writings as knowledgeable and worthwhile to learn. We see this all in the preface that Feng wrote, sent to print, and distributed among other government intellectuals.

*Preface, by Qu Rukui*

Qu Rukui was not a government official, but his father, Qu Jingchun, is.<sup>121</sup> Qu is a scholar who had been interested in following in his father's footsteps. Rather, he learnt of the close relationship between Christian and Confucian virtue.<sup>122</sup> An exceptional scholar, Qu established in the preface Ricci's understand of the friendship from a Chinese perspective. Qu describes his experiences with Ricci and praise his writing of *Discussion of Friendship*. He gave examples of friend relationships from antiquity in order to provide a Chinese historical precedent to Ricci himself. Chinese culture has a long and good tradition of official friend making among the elite, especially with foreigners. In return, the Chinese government has earned the foreigner's respect and they paid tribute to the Chinese government. This is what Matteo Ricci did. Ricci learnt that he was treated as an honourable guest who is a sage. Ricci did not look for any rewards other than the access to connect with the government officials, a reward that normally off limits in the context of Ming Dynasty legal policy. Qu stated that Ricci tried to spread his heavenly knowledge to the commoners, but unsuccessfully. Qu explained that Ricci's knowledge was superior to the public and therefore only relevant to the elite levels of society where Ricci had made friends. Qu is grateful to have met Ricci, and he learnt, over two years, mathematics from Ricci. When they met again six years later, Ricci showed Qu *Discussion of Friendship*. Qu

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<sup>121</sup> Andrew C. Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuit in Japan and China 1542-1742* (New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 124.

<sup>122</sup> Ross, 125.

was impressed by Ricci's writing. Qu declared that the *Discussion of Friendship* is a master document, and Ricci has described the details of friendship in the Chinese culture accurately and it is worthy to be published.

## **Conclusion**

Ricci used his Western knowledge of science and technology as a tool to attract Chinese government officials who were eager to investigate new forms of knowledge coming from outside of China. Through the exchange of knowledge, including mathematics, Ricci made friends with the intellectual government officials who, then, influenced other officials and, ultimately, the Ming Emperor. Ricci took advantage of the opportunity to learn the official governmental language and Confucian culture. Ricci learnt that the Confucian culture of relationships is structural, and that every individual knows their position and specific obligations. Ricci has no blood relationships with any Chinese individuals because he is a foreigner; as such, he knew that friendship along Confucian lines was the only relationship he could employ in order to help himself establish a link to the Chinese community. According to Chinese foreign policy, he was not allowed to contact the public. Therefore, he sought to make friends with the government officials—first through an exchange of knowledge and then through friendship.

Although Ricci was well versed in the Chinese language and philosophical tradition—even translating the Confucian *Four Books* into Latin—still, when he put his learning into writing and submitted it to the government officials, he used his own theological knowledge learnt from Augustine's teachings regarding friendship and from other Western thinkers on friendship such as Cicero. He embedded Western notions of friendship into the Chinese practice and philosophy of friendship in order to achieve his goal: directly preaching Christianity to the government officials and, later, the populace. Perhaps because he was not fully versed in all of

Chinese custom, he looked to Cicero's writing as a model for his text that would integrate Christian and Western notions of friendship into a Confucian community of scholars steeped in the Confucian notion of friendship. Ricci combined his Chinese language skills, his familiarity with Chinese social and philosophical thinking, and his cultural and learned familiarity with Western ideas of friendship into his famous text, *Discussion of Friendship*. He translated the terms and ideas used in both Augustine's and Cicero's teachings regarding friendship into Chinese. Although, at first, Ricci's goal of preaching of bringing Christianity to the Chinese public seemed untenable; Ricci was able to implant Western Christian concepts into China through the culture and value of friendship. His writings circulated among Ming scholars and Christianity has spread in China ever since his formative mission. The *Discussion of Friendship* has become one of the classical writings stored in both the Chinese government's library and the Vatican library.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Global Christianity Report projects that the number of Chinese Christians will surpass the number of Christians in the United States of America by the year 2030. An Italian Jesuit aided by the Portuguese Empire in the sixteenth century, Matteo Ricci was the first missionary to successfully introduce Christianity to China. Ricci took advantage of the intellectual curiosity of the Ming scholars to gain a foot hold among them. This was crucial because they were the ruling power authorized by the Emperor of China.

However, in China, Ricci found a powerful empire with dissimilar customs, especially the Chinese language. He took the initiative to learn the Chinese language and familiarize himself with some classics of Chinese literature so that he could communicate with Chinese scholars who were eager to learn new subjects from him. During the Ming, Confucian ideology was widely accepted as the standard practice for Chinese intellectuals; therefore, Ricci read and study the Confucian *Four Books* and, with the help of other Jesuits and Chinese scholars, translate the books into Latin. Then, Ricci used his scientific knowledge as an incentive to attract Chinese intellects to him and was then able to make friends with them. Through friendship—a social relationship highly valued by Confucian teaching as one the five basic forms of proper human relationship—Ricci managed to meet influential Chinese scholars and members of the imperial elite, who then convinced the Ming Emperor Shenzong to allow Ricci to travel to and dwell in different cities across China. This ability for Ricci to move around China was legitimated through the high-level friendships he had made, and it was invaluable because foreigners were normally not allowed to stay in Chinese cities during the period because the ruling class was afraid of undesirable influence spreading from abroad.

To convince the Chinese intellectuals to accept new ideas, it appears that Ricci had great success in writing, perhaps more so than talking. Ricci wrote his first treatise, *Discussion of Friendship* in the Classical Chinese Language—a prestige form of the language—and sent it to elite scholars and members of the imperial retinue. The treatise was created through the successful integration of Western and Chinese ideas of friendship, and it gave Ricci his much-needed foothold in China. This integration of Western and Chinese notions of friendship is the ‘accommodative friendship’ that was accepted in Chinese circles even though the Jesuits themselves did not always approve of Ricci’s tactics, thinking he had accommodated too far. However, what is important is that this method of communication was accepted by Ming Dynasty elites who were willing to read his treatise, who liked, who circulated and promoted it, and whose friendship enabled Ricci’s mission. Even though the treatise did not directly preach Christianity, it gave the readers the mental space to investigate Christianity without objections. This method is called ‘cultural accommodation’. That is, the combination of Christian ideals combined with Chinese culture to seek common ground. Ricci used it to begin his Jesuit mission to successfully preach Christianity to the Chinese.

### **A Final Word on the Significance of *Discussion of Friendship***

Scholar of Chinese literature, Timothy Billings has reviewed and translated Ricci’s text and published it under the title, *On Friendship: One Hundred Maxims for a Chinese Prince*. Billings’ study provides a chronological list of different manuscript versions of the *Discussion of Friendship*. The versions circulating among scholars depended upon on manuscripts available to different printing shops of different eras. In this study, the source is from the Vatican Library where it is sparingly accessible to scholars. Two scholars, Federico Masini (Ch. 張西平; Italian rendered in Chn. 馬西尼) and Ambrogio M. Piazzoni (Chn. 任大援, Italian rendered in Chn. 裴



佐寧) spent eight years compiling the Vatican version of the text that I have used throughout this thesis before bringing it back to China.<sup>123</sup> Beginning in 2010, its translation was the cooperation of the joint effort of Chinese and Vatican scholars. It is the authentic copy of the original manuscript written by Ricci and safekept in the Vatican Library. It includes the prefaces that I have here translated.

The task of understanding the *Discussion of Friendship* is not easy. Composed in Classical Chinese by a non-native speaker in the Ming Dynasty, the problems of the text are both related to the Classical Chinese itself, which is an unpunctuated form of the language, as well as to the usage of a variety of variant characters from his time and from antiquity which Ricci was evidently familiar with. Decoding these characters requires careful philological work, and this was accomplished through the join Vatican-China venture mentioned above that created the manuscript I have worked with.

Finally, before Ricci composed *Discussion of Friendship*, he worked with (Michele Ruggieri 羅明堅 (1543–1607) to compose a dictionary called 葡漢辭典 (*Dicionário Europeu-Chinês*).<sup>124</sup> The dictionary consisted of a Portuguese word with the corresponding Chinese word. Both Chinese dialects—the official dialect and the Cantonese dialect—are used in the dictionary. This indicates that Ricci, remarkably, was able to speak both dialects.<sup>125</sup> Because written Chinese, particularly in its Classical form, cannot express dialect, Cantonese readers, too, are able to interact with Ricci’s text. When readers read the *Discussion of Friendship* the text

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<sup>123</sup> 梵蒂岡圖書館藏明清中西文化交流史文獻叢刊 第一輯, eds. 張西平, [意]馬西尼 (Federico Masini), 任大援, [意]裴佐寧 (Ambrogio M. Piazzoni) (China: 中国大象出版社, 2014), Vol. 1 xxxi.

<sup>124</sup> Joseph Abraham Levi, “The Ricci-Ruggieri *Dicionário Europeu-Chinês*: Linguistic and Philological Notes on Some Portuguese and Italian Entries,” *Studies in Chinese and Sino-Tibetan Linguistics* 053, no. 018 (Jan. 2007): 343.

<sup>125</sup> 原珂陶, “第一部《葡漢辭典》中所見粵語詞彙,” 澳門理工學報, 第 3 期 (2019) :77.

provides the opportunity for the Cantonese's speaking Chinese to seek deeper meanings of the manuscript's individual axiom.

Whereas Catholicism is considered a separate religion from “Christianity” in the eyes of the Chinese government, there are three distinguishable religious sects within Chinese Christianity: Fundamentalist, Evangelists, and Charismatics. All of these sects argue about which of them holds the true Christian belief. Within this context of competing sectarian opinions, *Discussion of Friendship* provides Chinese Christians with a foundation for Chinese Christianity even though it is rooted in Jesuit Catholicism. According to the historical records, Europeans attempted to preach Christianity to Chinese thrice, but only Ricci's Christianity was successful. He preached Christianity by amalgamating Christian and Chinese culture.<sup>126</sup> This effective action laid the foundation of Chinese Christian Theology.<sup>127</sup> By carefully examining both Ricci's *Discussion of Friendship* as well as the prefaces written by the circle of friends that Ricci made in China, we can appreciate Ricci's foundational approach of ‘cultural accommodation.’ This strategy of missionary work suited the local culture and provided a gentle introduction of to China, in writing on friendship and through friendship with the Ming dynasty literary and ruling elite.

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<sup>126</sup> 梵蒂岡圖書館藏明清中西文化交流史文獻叢刊 第一輯, Vol.1, xx.

<sup>127</sup> 梵蒂岡圖書館藏明清中西文化交流史文獻叢刊 第一輯, Vol.1, xxi.

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