Space and Time as Context and Device:

Dialogue and Contention in Early Luso-Chinese Interactions

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Portuguese)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2020

Date of final oral examination: 01/ 16/ 2020

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献给我的父母

/

To my parents

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Abstract

SPACE AND TIME AS CONTEXT AND DEVICE: DIALOGUE AND CONTENTION IN EARLY LUSO-CHINESE INTERACTIONS

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This dissertation examines the early interactions between the Portuguese and the Chinese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with special emphasis on the central roles respective ideas of time and space played in the creation and development of the perception of the other, as well as on how spatial and temporal discourses were employed by different parties for agendas ranging from integration and adaptation to rejection.

The Introduction outlines the scope and purpose of the study, as well as offering an overview of Luso-Chinese interactions from early sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century. It also reviews the historical, literary and cartographic production by both parties in relation to each other.

The first two chapters investigate four essential factors of space that shaped the mindset of the people at the two ends of the Eurasian continent. Chapter 1 deals with location and cardinal direction, while Chapter 2 tackles distance and scale. These factors were used not just to inform, but also to impress, to prove the falsity of the other, to alleviate fear, or to arouse panic.

Chapter 3 shifts attention to key elements of time, namely orientation, sequence/length and rhythm. As time is a more elusive object to grasp than space, more attention is given to

strategies by both parties to assimilate the other′s time into their own, through tactics such as replacement, distortion, false dependency and selective rejection.

The dissertation concludes with the reaffirmation of the extreme importance that concepts related to space and time held over the early Luso-Chinese interactions, and argues for the inseparability between time and space by revisiting the achievements and failures of several important figures in this great cultural exchange using the concept of an intercultural chronotope.

Acknowledgement

This page of the dissertation has been left blank for so long, and it feels surreal that I am finally filling it out. To borrow a traditional Chinese saying, this research has been the source of sourness, sweetness, bitterness and pungency for me. I had no idea of the scope of the emotional rollercoaster that I was about to experience when I passed the preliminary exams four years ago. Of all the things that I have learned in the past few years, I now truly understand that writing is never a personal matter for an academic, and without the unwavering support and love from my family, mentors, colleagues and friends, it is impossible to come this far.

I would like to start by thanking my committee members, who have been extremely kind and helpful. Luís Madureira, my advisor ever since my arrival in Madison in 2011, you have been nothing but generous over the years. You have been the forgiving father and taken me back under your wings, for which I am eternally grateful. Ellen Sapega, you have showed me the importance of passion for a scholar, and you always have great advice to offer. Steven Hutchinson, your wide interest and fun personality makes being a literary critic cool again. David Hildner, you master so many languages and your attention to detail is an inspiration.

Aside from my committee members, I have also been blessed with other amazing professors and mentors at University of Wisconsin-Madison, both at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and at the Department of History. Severino Albuquerque, I have taken the most seminars with you, and your erudition and well-structured classes were essential in my becoming a better graduate student and a scholar. Kathryn Sanchez, I love the small episodes and stories that you share with us in class, and your ability in balancing work and life is admirable. Diana Frantzen, I have you to thank for the transformation from a noob to an experienced TA, and I'll never forget that you tried to call me Juan. In the small field of Southeast Asian History, I thank Thongchai Winichakul for the enlightenment on the

possibility of applying spatial concepts in historiography, and Alfred McCoy for inspiring me to include temporal sequence in my research. The semester that I took a seminar with both of you was the most challenging yet rewarding time I had in Madison.

I would like to thank all the staff that have been always nice to me and helpful in every way at University of Wisconsin-Madison. All the past and current Graduate Coordinators in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese: Lucy Ghastin, Kate Fanis and Morgan Zimmer, have been extremely helpful in providing necessary information and answering all my regular or irregular questions.

My fellow graduate students as well as all the undergrads who take my Portuguese 101, 102 or 202 courses at University of Wisconsin-Madison have been kind and supportive. I am more of the introverted type, but your presence has been the welcoming campfire that keeps away the chilling Madison winters. I especially thank Jared Hendrickson, Francesca Ferrono, Marcos Colón and Israel Pechstein, we have been the comrades in arms for the longest time, and I wish you the best in all your future endeavors. My old friend Fu Chenxi, thanks for your company in our regular visits to Chinese restaurants on State Street, although I blame your departure from Madison for my dissertation's lack of progress.

I have a lot of people to thank back in my home country, China. I have spent countless hours at Peking University Library, National library of China and Nanjing Library, and I thank all the librarians who have lent a helping hand. Min Xuefei, Hu Xudong, Zhang Hui and other professors at Peking University, my *Alma mater*, have served as my academic and life mentors even years after my graduation.

Without the love and support from my family and friends I would probably still be locked in the dark prison that myself created. My parents have always been there for me, and they are the exact opposite of the stereotypical image of Asian parents who force their children to bend to their will, and I dedicate this dissertation to them. My grannies have

influenced me so much with their belief in what education can achieve, and they are a big reason I am pursuing an academic career. It is always heartwarming to know that the "American branch" of my family, uncle Liming, aunt Kang Li, cousin Yifan and "Jiefu" Geoff, always welcomes me for a visit or a stay with them. Some of my best friends are from middle school and high school years in Nanjing. Bill, David, Cherry, Candice, it is always a delight to talk about anything and everything with you, even if I often prefer to be the attentive listener. At last, Eta, my "pale moonlight" and "scarlet mark" all in one, I cannot wait for all the future adventures on which we are bound to embark.

List of Abbreviations

HMJS: *Huang Ming Jing Shi Wen Bian* (《皇明经世文编》 *Collected Essays about Statecraft of the Imperial Ming*). Edited by Song, Zhenbi et al. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1962.

LMD: *Li Ma Dou Ming Qing Zhong Wen Wen Xian Zi Liao Hui Shi* (《利玛窦明清中文文献汇释》*Collection and Annotation of Ming and Qing References to Matteo Ricci*). Edited by Tang Kai Jian. Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classic P, 2017.

MS: *Ming Shi* (《明史》 *Official History of Ming*). Edited by Zhang Tingyu et al., 28 vols. Beijing：Zhonghua Book Company, 1974.

SKCM: *Si Ku Quan Shu Cun Mu Cong Shu* (《四库全书存目丛书》 *Books Listed as "To Be Preserved" by the Editors of the Complete Collection of the Four Treasures*). In four divisions: jing(经, Classics): 734 vols, shi (史, Historical Works): 1086 vols, zi (子, Philosophical Texts): 1253 vols, and ji (集, Collectanea): 1435 vols. Jinan: Qilu P,1994-1997.

SKJH: *Si Ku Jin Hui Shu Cong Kan* (《四库禁毁书丛刊》 *Books Listed as "To Be Banned or Destroyed" by the Editors of the Complete Collection of the Four Treasures*). In four divisions: Jing: 9 vols, shi: 75 vols, zi: 110 vols, ji: 187 vols. Beijing: Beijing P, 310 vols, 1995-2000.

SKJHB：*Si Ku Jin Hui Shu Cong Kan Bu Bian* (《四库禁毁书丛刊补编》 *Supplement to Books Listed as "To Be Banned or Destroyed" by the Editors of the Complete Collection of the Four Treasures*). 90 vols. Beijing: Beijing P, 2005.

SKQS: *Jing Yin Wen Yuan Ge Si Ku Quan Shu* (《景印文渊阁四库全书》 *Complete Collection of the Four Treasures Preserved at the Pavilion of Literary Profundity*). Edited by Ji, Yun 纪昀 (1724–1805) et al. In four divisions: jing: 236 vols, shi: 452 vols, zi: 367 vols, ji: 435 vols. Taipei: The Commercial P, 1983–1986.

SCPX: *Sheng Chao Po Xie Ji* (《圣朝破邪集》 *Collection of Destroying the Evil Teachings in Our Great Dynasty*). Edited by Xu Changzhi. 1639. Edited by Xia, Guiqi. Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1996.

XXSK: *Xu Xiu Si Ku Quan Shu* (《续修四库全书》*Addendum to the Complete Collection of the Four Treasures*). In four divisions: jing: 260 vols, shi: 670 vols, zi: 370 vols, ji: 500 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Classics P, 1995-2002.

Introduction

Scope and Purpose of Study

Space-Time

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main."

John Donne, "Devotions upon Emergent Occasions" (1624)

Compared to cooperation, competition is the much more pronounced theme in the history of human societies. Torsten Hagerstrand finds the limited "packing capacity" of time-space to be a crucial part of the basic "time-geographic reality" (7), which is inherently prone to tension and competition. Although Hagerstand′s focus is on individual agency and limitation, it can be perfectly applied to the inevitable competition among nations and civilizations. Excluding rare instances of dual loyalties, no two countries can occupy the same space at the same time, whereas there may be multiple countries claiming the same territories, whether due to historical, religious, ethnic or expansionist reasons, hence the possibility of disputes, tensions or outright wars.

Real-life competition between nations happens on a variety of levels and fields, with economic, military, political and ideological rivalries being the most prominent and hence the most studied. While there may emerge obvious winners in military skirmishes, political wrangling and trade wars, the same could not be said of ideological and conceptual conflicts due to the difficulty and ambiguity of their evaluation, since it is much more disputable for any side to proclaim itself a winner on this specific front. When two civilizations confronted each other for the first time on a substantial level, and when neither side could prove its advantage through overt military dominance, ideological dialogues became the focal point of both tension and mutual learning.

This was the case for the Luso-Chinese interactions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and this research attempts to reveal the seminal role of time and space in this unprecedented encounter. Time and space were not just the framework or context, but also the most accessible and most important tools in the ideological and cultural competition. Among all the knowledge gained and all the misconceptions formed throughout this initial phase of acquaintance, issues related to time and space stand out, for the sharp contrast between the significance they exerted and the undeservedly little academic exposure they have received. While experts from diverse academic fields have shown interest in Sino-Portuguese interactions, their foci mainly lay elsewhere, like trade network, diplomatic protocols, religious conflicts, etc. In the few studies that discuss certain aspects of time or space, they either overly dichotomize the Asian and European ways of thinking, or do not view the temporal and spatial aspects behind all the cultural dialogues as a whole. This dissertation aims to systematically analyze how spatial and temporal perceptions came into play in the cross-cultural interactions, highlighting how discourses on time and space manifest, and are influenced by, actual episodes of contacts. The temporal and spatial knowledge about the other gathered during the interactions is then either subconsciously used or deliberately manipulated in the scramble for ideological superiority and dominance. In terms of space, knowledge and conjecture of the location, distance, cardinal direction and scale of the other nation became primary weapons in the ideological warfare, which were complemented by temporal notions like orientation, sequence/length and rhythm. At the same time, they also served as channels of mutual understanding and assimilation.

This dissertation engages in a simultaneous study of time and space, which are in and of themselves already extremely rich concepts. The reason for the present approach of combining the two can be explained by the inseparability of the concepts of space and time as argued by Mikhail Bakhtin, who famously created the notion of chronotope to denote “the

intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (84). For Bakhtin, in literature time "thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible," while space "becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope" (84). The Russian literary critic emphasizes that living artistic perception "seizes on the chronotope in all its wholeness and fullness" (84).

For our purposes, temporal and spatial perceptions of the other in the early interactions between the Portuguese and Chinese are as much intertwined as they are in the Bakhtinian sense of artistic expression. Adam Barrows, for example, points out that in colonial ideology, "the concept of an empty or misused space ripe for appropriation (terra nullis)" is intrinsically linked to the corresponding notion that "the inhabitants of terra nullis existed outside of recognizable temporal constraints in a land without time (terra sine tempore)" (Barrows 7). It is often difficult to distinguish temporal and spatial influences from each other. To name just a couple of intersections, temporal orientation was a central factor in spatial positioning, while spatial distancing was often embedded in temporal sequencing. Although this thesis divides the issues of time and space into separate sections for the pragmatic reason of clearer thematic presentation, their inseparability is something to constantly keep in mind.

There is no surprise that in order to justify the special role attributed to time and space, one turns to Immanuel Kant. In Kantian philosophy, the outside world enters the human mind in the form of perception/sensory input. Before it resurges in the form of "appearance," the input receives two forms, those of space and time. Kant affirms that whatever the human can perceive always has spatial and temporal attributes. The space as outer form shapes the outside world for it to be intuitive, and then time as inner form adds the sequence (67-68). Now to apply the Kantian concept liberally to cross-cultural exchange, when faced with the challenge of encountering an alien culture/civilization, the human mind also has first and foremost to

provide a spatial/temporal structure of the world, for the unknown then to be mapped onto the existing mental grid.

Time concepts, time attitudes and time behaviors are undoubtedly deeply embedded in the historic and cultural context of societies. As Edward Hall argues, the use of time constitutes a key component of what he calls the "silent language" that has impact on everyday life (88). Oswald Spengler′s infamous claim that certain temporal orientations are associated with "higher cultures" (222) obviously cannot stand modern scrutiny, as it contains a not-so-subtle suggestion of racism and Euro-centrism, but his assertion that "it is the meaning that it intuitively attaches to Time that one Culture is differentiated from another" (130) does reveal a crucial aspect of civilizational difference in a pre-globalized world.

At the same time, the importance of space in the constitution of cross-cultural understandings is also due to the aforementioned primacy effect, as the location and cardinal direction of a foreign counterpart almost always appear as the first information nations receive about each other. Every civilization has a mental map of the world, of which the most important questions have always been where it is placed. The perception of the role of oneself in the world, however, must evolve constantly and adapt quickly to its relative position to other countries.

It is worth noting that before the "spatial turn" in the twentieth century, modern theorists tend to see space as "the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile." Time, on the contrary, was "richness, fecundity, life, dialectic," as observed by Foucault ("Questions on Geography" 177). However, at least in the initial phase of cross-cultural interactions, this disparagement is largely unfounded, and the construction of space is at least as dynamic as that of time, if not even more flexible. The sixteenth-century Chinese stumbling across those cat-eyed and bearded foreigners could be as confused about their geographical origins as are modern subjects when they meet an anonymous stranger on the Internet. If the Portuguese gained the upper

hand in this respect by coming to the Chinese, it still took them decades to demystify old assumptions and to gain an approximate knowledge of the geographic placement of the Middle Kingdom in relation to other parts of the world. Nevertheless, it is from those clueless and sometimes ludicrous attempts to place the others on existing maps that observations can be made about the initial shock, about the evolution (or lack thereof) of perception, and about the mentality of the two parties.

Space and time are no longer neutral concepts when employed to describe the foreign, the exotic, the elsewhere (and by extension the perception of one′s own space and time): they become foundations of a discourse. According to Michel Foucault, power and discourse have a symbiotic relationship, thus space and time are inevitable tools of and manifestations of power, whatever the origins and forms of power they may be. But unlike Edward Said′s unilateral accusation of Western neutralization of Orientalist knowledge in the post-Enlightenment era, the current work seeks to demonstrate how both the West and the East, exemplified by the Portuguese and Chinese in their first contacts, chose to place the other in their own temporal and spatial grid, and how the question of power came into play.

Given the seminal position of time and space in a society′s cultural life, their diverse forms of representation by different civilizations comprise an illuminating field of study. Roger Chartier takes “representation” to potentially mean “the operation of classification and delineation that produces the multiple intellectual configurations by which reality is constructed in contradictory ways by various groups” (9). The clearly different representation of time and space in the West would prove to be a crucial field of debate in their interactions with the East. When arguing for European “theft of history,” Jack Goody starts by making the case for the West′s appropriation of time, from key concepts in the Calendar era: BC, AD, century and millennium, to things like mechanical clock and concepts like the linear time model. He also affirms the same hegemony in concepts of space, including the division of continents,

mapping techniques like the Mercator projection′s distortion as well as the location of the Meridian (*Theft* 14-21). While this dissertation would not go as far, it does concur with Woody's argument that although modern world citizens tend to share these concepts of time and space in the understanding of their own nation and of others, early modern inhabitants at the two extreme ends of the Eurasian landmass had much more conflicting views, generating enough room for adaptation, appropriation and rejection.

This study chooses this intercultural approach for multiple reasons. First, past research tends to emphasize the imbalance of intent in the process of the acquisition of knowledge. The general narrative states that Europeans came to the Chinese shore on purpose, actively seeking beneficial data to further their religious and commercial endeavors. This story of the beginning of the rise of the West is woven seamlessly into what Peter Burke calls "a triumphant account of Western achievement from the Greeks onward, in which the Renaissance is a link in the chain which includes the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution and so on"(*Popular Culture* 3). However, the emphasis on European particularism also fails to recognize the inherent incoherence in their discourse about China, that is many times due to their inability or unwillingness to truly understand a foreign culture′s distinct record of time and attitude towards space.

At the same time, Ming China has mostly been described as an inward-looking empire, "a reluctant improver and a bad learner" (Landes 336), whose scarce knowledge of the Westerners was the result of reactionary contingency. It became therefore harder to have a correct and systematic understanding of the so-called "barbarians". While such a description has served its purpose in explaining the power imbalance of the later centuries, its sometimes-inadvertent emphasis on Chinese passiveness does tend to deprive the Chinese of any agency in the interactions. Similarly, a long-standing reasoning behind the relative fewer commentaries on the Portuguese in Ming Chinese sources has been the Middle Kingdom′s lack of interest in

the outside world, which has been argued to be the result of their self-complacent way of life. However, this argument overlooks the reports in Portuguese accounts of how quickly Chinese people could adapt to Western ideas, as well as how much curiosity and agency was demonstrated by Ming Chinese in getting to know the outside world. Based on the chronicle by João de Barros on the different outcomes of two skirmishes between the two nations in 1521 and 1522, Tónio Andrade has argued that the Ming were quick to adapt and indigenize Portuguese artillery and military tactics, which resulted in a much more decisive victory by the Chinese forces in the second conflict ("Cannibals" 333). As for Chinese curiosity, Galeote Pereira vividly reports the reaction by Chinese nationals upon seeing these strange-looking foreigners:

> Éramos por esta cidade do Fucheo tirados muitas vezes fora do tromquo, pera nos levarem a casa dos gramdes, pera nos verem elles e suas molheres, por ainda não terê visto Portugueses, e pera saberem de nos e de nossas terras e costumes muitas cousas, que tudo escreviam por serem em estremo curiosos de novidades; fazem estes grandes honras aos estrangeiros . . . (38)

The present work seeks to demonstrate that during the initial phase of mapping the other, there was really no apparent superiority by either part in their methods, and that the difference of degree in their knowledge of the other was more the result of particular historical conditions than any predetermined advantages or disadvantages. The main objectives of this study, arranged from the broadest to the most specific aspects, are as follows: firstly, to demonstrate the complexity and difficulty of comprehending such radically distinct peoples and places; secondly, to analyze why and how conceptions of time and space were so fundamental in generating the knowledge of the other; lastly, to define the individual conditions of Portugal and China that contributed to how they reacted towards each other and the lasting implications of these reactions. What I am most interested in revealing in this thesis, therefore, is how each

side modified their temporal and spatial perception of the other during the first contacts, and more importantly, how such perceptions influenced and sometimes determined their cultural views of the other, ultimately resulting in different attitudes in interacting with one other.

China-Portugal

> "One, with his chin propped on his knees, stared at nothing, in an intolerable and appalling manner."
>
> Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1902)

When Portuguese explorers first landed on Chinese shores in the beginning of the sixteenth century, they would not be "staring at nothing" in the Conradian sense. In a similar fashion, to say that the Chinese "no auian menester a ninguna, porque todo lo necessario para la vida humana les sobraua, ye de nada tenian necessidad" (Mendoza 69) is also wrong, as Ming China did find abundant areas in which they could benefit from the Portuguese and the Jesuit missionaries, if not just their subordination and acceptance of Chinese values. The tension that Robert Richmond Ellis attributes to Hispanic countries upon encountering East Asian societies, the struggle "between images of a civilization in ways both superior and inferior" (70), could also apply to the reaction of Ming Chinese after their first interactions with European visitors to their Southern border.

This leads us to a major flaw in the existing scholarship on early Luso-Chinese interaction. Whether intentional or not, many of these scholars adopt a rather one-sided and essentialist focus. Hegel′s assertion that Asian societies corresponded to earlier stages of the more sophisticated Greek and then Roman civilizations has been since proved untrue, but the idea that China in some form or another represents the opposite of Europeans, or that there was a constant indigenous tradition prior to Western arrival, stuck in the West as well as in China.

Some of the problem is of course the language barrier, but what also has stood in the way of a more objective comparative view has been the traditional nationalistic view.

The development over the past three decades of global history and the continuing reassessment of what constitutes world literature has been crucial in expanding the horizon of academic research on cross-cultural exchanges. Though my opinions in many ways do not subscribe strictly to the California School[1] of social and economic historians, I do share their insistence on "Reciprocal Comparison", or in other words, the rejection of valuing one single side as the standard or norm.

However, the inherent weakness of the comparative approach is the difficulty of finding the delicate balance between placing the emphasis on similarities or differences. Studies on cross-cultural perceptions and exchanges are by nature pragmatic. Through better understanding of the successes and failures of past interactions, they are supposed to guide the contemporary world citizens in an ever more globalized world. However, studies of this type have an intrinsic tendency to highlight cultural differences, and by doing so, they are often plagued by the temptation to analyze the historical process based on the current state of development of each country or civilization. A classic example would be the frequently seen scholarly attempt to attribute distinctive qualities to European and American civilizations, neglecting the traditions of reason, science, democracy, etc., present in other parts of the world, and the fact that the so-called "Rise of the West" is nothing but a specific phenomenon in a specific time period.

Against this general tendency, the present study seeks to underscore the similarities in Chinese and Portuguese conceptions and uses of time and space, since it is on these aspects

[1] The California School gets its name because many of its members are affiliated with universities in that State. Some of the most representative figures of the Californian School are Kenneth Pomeranz, R. Bin Wong, André G. Frank, J. M. Blaut, Janet Abu-Lughod and J. A. Goldstone. They are most famous for their rejection of the European exceptionalists's claim that the West unique success comes from its institutional and legal tradition. See Wong, R. Bin. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell U P, 1997. Also see Pomeranz, Kenneth. *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton U P, 2000.

that existing research has focused the least, while also indicating major differences in emphasis by the two parties.

It is also worth clarifying that the present dissertation′s insistence on looking at things from both angles differs from the emphasis on "reciprocidade da ′descoberta′" as articulated in recent Portuguese official discourses. As Manuela Mourão notes in her study of the formation of Portuguese racial categories, this rhetoric by Lisbon in the more recent celebrations of Portuguese interactions with people on other continents is mainly to "enquadrar as descobertas portuguesas de modo a não ferir susceptibilidades" (114). Thus, it does not recognize the other cultures′ agency enough in this "reciprocal discovery". What this study uncovers in this network of cultural interactions is not a one-dimensional account focusing on a sole heroic side, but rather two equally important protagonists in the story, each holding a distorted mirror that reflects the Other as well as the Self.

To mirror, though, one first must see the other. Before the sixteenth century, Portugal and China were almost as far as two dots can be on the Eurasian network, with at best fuzzy pictures of each other's civilization. It was not until 1606 that Portuguese Jesuit Bento de Góis confirmed that Marco Polo′s Cathay and China were indeed one country, while all of pre-Ming Chinese imagery of the land westward of Da Qin (Byzantine Empire) was a nation called Ye Mi (蠝蠛国), meaning bugs and wasps: "其蠝蠛国在大秦国西数千里，自古未尝通"(Li Fang 530). "This nation of Ye Mi is thousands of *li*[2] westward of Da Qin, and it has never been in contact (with China)." While Europe and Asia had benefited more than any other region from long-distance exchanges, which was arguably the result of the smoother horizontal spread of people as well as technology, their form of interaction was never a direct one. Instead, it

[2] Li (里) is a traditional Chinese unit of distance that varied from one third to two thirds of a kilometer in different time periods.

relied heavily on the political stability of nations along the Silk Road for the Eurasian down-the-line exchange.

This situation however underwent a rapid transformation starting in the fifteenth century. Developments in navigation techniques and the gradual breakdown of mental geographic barriers enabled the Portuguese to round the Southern tip of Africa. Thereafter, their openness to integrating local knowledge in the Indian Ocean network helped them arrive on Chinese shores in less than two decades. On the contrary, despite an earlier commitment to building grand fleets and expanding imperial prestige in the Indian Ocean world, the Ming central government soon switched to a closed-door policy, leaving just an unofficial commercial network in Southeast Asia. It is in this context that the two peoples met in the flesh in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Ever since their first direct contacts, Portuguese and Chinese history developed initially along parallel and subsequently into intertwining lines, and the evolution of an understanding of how the two sides thought and reacted could no longer be complete without at least some mutual participation. It is due to this particularity that Sino-Portuguese interactions stand out among early modern encounters, as they embody two angles of world history that are usually mutually exclusive. Interconnection denotes contact and spread of knowledge, while parallel or "horizontal continuity" (Fletcher 2) refers to societies without significant communication sharing similarities in development. This thesis argues that Chinese and Portuguese societies were at the same time interconnected and parallel, that similar development were taking place in both regions partly in parallel and partly by adoption (Goody *East* 231).

During the timeframe of our discussion, the dichotomy of "West versus the Rest" did not figure as prominently as it would in the subsequent centuries. The true dichotomy for Europeans then was between the Christian West and the Islamic East. The powerful Ottoman Sultanate was the biggest shadow upon the Europeans fearing more erosion of Christian

territory, with King Christian I of Denmark declaring, for example, that "the grand Turk was the beast rising out of the sea described in the Apocalypse" (qtd. in Neumann 49), and Moroccans were still posing an imminent threat to the south of Iberia. In this context, for Portuguese explorers to verify the existence of a sophisticated civilization that was neither Christian nor Islamic was quite a novel experience. After the initial Manueline dreams of conquest faded, the Portuguese gradually came to sense the richness and grandeur of the Chinese empire, which was at least on a par with, if not superior, to the European civilization as a whole, and undoubtedly overshadowed tiny and peripheral Portugal. In historian Andre Gunder Frank's famously satirical formulation, Europeans initially only bought themselves a seat on the Asian train, and only much later appropriated the whole railway car (277). It would be unimaginable for the Portuguese to challenge the Chinese empire in the same fashion as did the Manifesto by Alonso de Ojeda (c. 1466 – c. 1515), the ultimatum read to indigenous people in Cartagena, instructing them to accept the Pope′s "donation of these islands and continents, of the ocean, sea, and all that they contain to the Catholic kings of Castile" (Irving 348). Instead, for the most part, the alleged descendants of Lusus manifested admiration towards the Middle Kingdom. Conde de Ficalho, who annotated the 1891 edition of Garcia da Orta′s *Colóquios dos simples e drogas da Índia*, observes that "quasi todos os nossos escriptores quinhentistas, que se occuparam das cousas do Oriente, louvaram a civilisação da China. Quasi todos admiram a «policia» dos chins, as suas leis, a sua perícia nas artes e officios, a sua perspicácia nos negócios commerciaes." Ficalho adds, "Parece que aquella civilisação material, methodica e regrada, os impressionou mais do que a cultura intellectual dos hindus, muito superior sob alguns pontos de vista, e que elles em geral não comprehenderam" (Orta 270). This mentality also impacted how the Portuguese conducted business in Asia. Much of Portugal′s realistic survival strategies in this distant land had to do with the understanding that it was virtually impossible for Portugal to overthrow such a vast land empire or replace its way of doing

commerce, and the more practical and also profitable option was for the Portuguese to adapt to the existing trading networks and diplomatic systems.

For Ming Chinese, to have a distant nation that had traditionally not been a tributary state arrive on Chinese shores in their own vessels was also quite an unusual experience, and they went back and forth for years to come up with the best way to cope with not just a new breed of foreigners but also a fresh type of religion. They exploited ways to culturally absorb the cultural and scientific aspects in which these "barbarians" were seemingly more advanced in order to benefit the Middle Kingdom. Despite initial hostilities, the Chinese and Portuguese worked their way toward creating a protocol of interactions acceptable to all, both on the official and clandestine front. The establishment of a multinational smuggling port in Shuangyu (Liampó) before 1548 has been suggested as an example of cooperation between the Portuguese and the Chinese pirate-merchants (Tang "Ping Tuo" 101-102), and the establishment and survival of a base in Macau for the Portuguese was made possible as a joint effort from both governments to regulate and maintain this "controlled relationship" (Bitterli 133). These examples of official and unofficial cooperation suggest that in this historical period, Europeans and Asians were not antitheses that countervailed each other, as nineteenth century theorists Marx Weber and Hegel claimed. Nor was the Luso-Chinese "encounter" a case of "a temporarily stronger civilization coming into contact with a weaker one and, as a result, giving some of its elements to the other," as Alfred Toynbee proposes (166). It was more like a pair of new acquaintances, still not familiar enough to let their guard down, but who remained open to further interactions.

The core legacy of Luso-Chinese exchanges in the early modern period is how each country gradually came to construct a viable system of perceiving and dealing with the other. As João de Deus Ramos summarizes, the earlier European knowledge of the land furthest to the East "não mais [fez] que dar algum colorido ao imaginário fantasmagórico do homem pré-

renascentista," while "a génese da clarificação e arrumação de ideias apoiadas na razão, e do conhecimento sistemático com base na experiência do tão vasto e antigo mundo chinês, ficou a dever-se aos pioneiros portugueses do séc. XVI" (169). Ramos′ comment only reflects half of the story, as he left out the active role played by the Chinese in this cultural dialogue and knowledge reconstruction. The importance of the establishment of such systems cannot be emphasized enough, for it not only set the tone for future interactions between the two countries, but on a larger scale, the paradigms and conventions achieved and the misapprehensions and stereotypes constructed all had a lasting influence on how East Asia viewed all other Europeans as a whole, as well as on how the European intelligentsia and policy-makers understood the Far East.

To stress the importance of precedence is not to imply that during later contacts East Asian and European powers did not have their initiative or lacked adaptations to new scenarios. However, tradition is such a powerful addiction and cultural inertia such an inherent trait of human nature that first contacts are always the most memorable. Sociologists have termed this phenomenon the "primacy effect." Other things being equal, information presented first usually has the most lasting influence. Once a certain perception is created, it would take some serious challenge for it to be amended, let alone overthrown or replaced. For Ming and Qing China, experiences with these cat-eyed strangers from the West constitute the precedent for dealing with a whole new type of foreigners, and for the Europeans, the China example was crucial in their future interactions with nations like Japan and Korea.

Before delving into further discussion, it seems inevitable to sort out the complex relationship between Christian missionaries and the Portuguese. After all, this dissertation is primarily about Luso-Chinese interactions, while Christian missionaries in Ming China were a multinational group. However, there was an extremely tight relationship between the missionary enterprise in the Central Empire and Lisbon. Not only was the Portuguese crown

the main supporter of the China mission and many of its staff from continental and insular Portugal, the lingua franca of the Jesuits in China was also Portuguese (Brockey 17). On the other hand, whether due to ignorance or deliberate misdirection by the Jesuits, the Chinese many times did not distinguish between the various European nations. For instance, Portuguese Jesuit João de Rocha was mistakenly perceived by some Chinese scholar to be from the same country as Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), an Italian priest who was one of the leading figures among the first generation of Jesuits in China: "华宗与琍玛豆同国" （Yao Lv 214). In this way, a thorough study of the imagery of the Portuguese would be inseparable from and intertwined with that of other Europeans.

Time Period

> "Cross-cultural interactions must figure prominently as a criterion in any effort to establish a periodization of world history in modern times." (Jerry Bentley 769)

This dissertation is a study about space and time, so now that the spatial scope of the study is determined, there is still the need to find an adequate starting and end date for our discussion of the interactions between the Portuguese and the Chinese. I mainly deal with the first century and a half of this crucial encounter, but as this is a thematic study and not an attempt to engage with the exhaustive bibliography of all the materials stemming from Luso-Chinese interactions in the Braudelian "long sixteenth century" (326), and as the main purpose of this particular study is to showcase the constant attempt by both parties to (re)place the other in their respective temporal-spatial coordinates, arbitrarily providing an exact starting and finishing point of the research seems unnecessary. What is indeed the milestone event that marks the beginning of this great interaction? Is it 1517, in which the first Portuguese ambassador Tomé Pires set foot on Chinese soil? Is it 1514, the year the first Portuguese fleet under Jorge Alvares arrived in Cantão? Or is it even further back when some Chinese

merchants met with Afonso de Albuquerque in Malacca? Still other possibilities abound, such as the informal information network of Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia that helped to spread the news of these newcomers back to the mainland before the Portuguese actually arrived in China, or the Portuguese intellectual inquiry about the Asian empire that far preceded this official diplomatic act.

An end date is no easier to determine than the starting one. The most appealing benchmarks are 1640, the year of the restoration of Portugal's monarchy, and 1644, the official transfer of the mandate from the Chinese Ming Dynasty to the Qing. However, as Jonathan Hay points out, for those who lived through the transitional years, such boundaries were far from unanimous and immediate (171). In fact, in both countries it took decades for the power transfer to be finalized. It was only in 1667 that Spain officially recognized Portuguese sovereignty, and although the last remnant of the Ming royal family was defeated in 1662, it was not until 1683 that the grandson of the prominent Ming loyalist/general Zheng Chenggong (better known in Western sources as Koxinga) surrendered to the Qing court, thus ending the period of "aporia" as classified by Hay.

The reason to not extend our discussion further into the latter half of the seventeenth century has to do with fundamental changes in politics as well as conceptions about foreigners. Aside from the validity of Hobsbawmian notion of a "seventeenth century crisis" in examining imperial declines all around the world, the political shakeup in both Portugal and China puts forth new challenges and opportunities for cross-cultural contacts. The newly established Manchu regime worked out an agreement involving the Portuguese, keeping their enclave in Macau, which is a fascinating topic in its own right. At the same time, a change of tone by the European side was evident from mid-seventeenth century forward, as evidenced by "perhaps the first generally negative Western account of Beijing" by Francisco Pimentel, a Jesuit member of the Portuguese embassy of 1670, who claimed it was "cold, dusty, and insect-

ridden", comparable not with the grandiose European capitals but the "poorest villages of Portugal" (Wills *Embassies and Illusions* 203). Portuguese missionaries in general also lost their primary status in the China mission, as they were largely overtaken by clerics from France and the Low Countries. While the Sino-Portuguese interactions continued in the following centuries, their impact dwindled in the scope of world history.

Before entering the main body of the discussion, it is also worth clarifying that, though terms like "early modern" will be used sporadically throughout this dissertation, it is merely a periodical stamp of a particular version of the "long sixteenth century", and in no way contains the innuendo that suggests an inevitable modernity that would follow. Nor does the interchangeable use of Luso-Chinese or Sino-Portuguese suggest any particular preference or agency given to a specific side.

Historical and Literary Outline

Sino-Portuguese Contacts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

"The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there."

Leslie Poles Hartley, *The Go-Between* (1953)

Human perceptions evolve through time. This simple fact has been surprisingly neglected by the dominant theory on "stagnation" of Asiatic societies. Experience in dealing with foreign culture can greatly transform how a society perceives the other, as well as how to organize its knowledge about itself. "The discourse of a modern nation usually presupposes this two-way identification: positively, by some common nature, identity, or interests; negatively, with respect to its differences with other nations" (Winichakul 3). Edith Hall famously claims that Persian wars not only changed the way Greeks viewed foreigners, adding the derogatory innuendo to the term "barbarian," but also fundamentally reversed how Greek constructed their own identity (1-3). From aggregative (defining oneself from within, through the construction of a same ancestor) to oppositional (defining oneself from without, through the invention of an Other), the Greek self-definition was only possible via first defining the other (Jonathan Hall 47).

Chinese and Portuguese national identities were also forged largely through interactions with other nations. As Burbank and Cooper point out, "Chinese empire and Xiongnu empire were entangled from the start, and their interactions in war and in diplomacy shaped China′s statecraft and ideology in fundamental ways" (45). In the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, dealings with Europeans reshaped a national mentality concerning the foreign. By taking up hitherto neglected Confucian teachings of the reversibility between Hua (Chinese, civilizational) and Yi (Foreign, barbarian), at least a portion of Chinese literati began to question this traditional judgmental division. A late Ming scholar comments on this relativism as follows:

> 即如中国圣人之教，西士固未前闻，而其所传乾方先圣之书，吾亦未之前闻，乃兹交相发明，交相裨益。惟是六合一家，心心相印，故东渐西被不爽耳。(Feng Yingjing 172)
>
> Just as Western scholars had never heard of the Chinese teachings of the Sage [Confucius], we also had not heard of their books from past sages, but this enables us to better elucidate [our own theories] and benefit from each other. Because of that, [people coming from] all cardinal directions should be like a family and have mutual affinity, so that [knowledge] continues to spread both to the West and East.

On the other hand, much of Portuguese national identity was developed in the *Reconquista* period against the Moors and in the "Age of Discoveries". As Eduardo Lourenço observes, "na verdade, e enquanto cultura europeia moderna, uma das originalidades da nossa cultura foi a de ter sido, entre os séculos XV e XVII, expressão singular e multiforme do ′olhar europeu′ sobre outras culturas, e o que não é menos importante, reflexo do olhar do outro sobre a Europa" (38).

During the "long sixteenth century", there was considerable evolution for both the Portuguese and the Chinese in their knowledge of the other as well as their self-cognition. It is worth emphasizing that the reconfiguration of a new world order in the early modern period was in no way a one-directional "discovery" in which one culture gives and the other receives. Knowledge circulation has always been in operation in the Eurasian continent. Not only have scientific ideas "been transmitted for millennia from culture to culture, and transformed by each recipient culture into something new" (Pingree 563), but also institutions and values such as humanism, democracy, individualism and romantic love are by no means exclusive to Europeans (Goody *Theft* 210). The old model of a passive and closed China blindly rejecting European influences should be abandoned, as at least in the fields related to time and space,

there is no significant difference in the craftiness and agency in either Portugal or Ming China to negotiate and adapt.

In order to back up this point, it is thus necessary to review the historical development of the diplomatic and cultural exchanges between the two nations. Fortunately, there has been some serious effort in studying the history of both official and unofficial relations between Ming China and Portugal, and in recent years, especially since the transfer of sovereignty over Macau, the earlier divergence in the interpretations of some key historical events between Lisbon and Beijing has been considerably narrowed. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, I will only give an outline of the contacts between the two nations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as they provide the historical background for the current discussion of space and time.

Traditionally, Jorge Alvares′ visit to Tunmen (modern-day Hong Kong and Shenzhen) in 1514 is regarded as the first direct contact between the two nations. Yet, the information network in Southeast Asia had already been in operation to convey the existence of the other to Portugal and China. During Vasco da Gama′s trips to Calicut, the Portuguese received scattered information about a fleet of white men that used to visit the Indian port decades ago, though they did not know that it referred to Admiral Zheng He′s voyages of 1405 to 1433. In 1508 D. Manuel I ordered a fleet commander to gather more information about the mysterious Chins, and during Afonso de Albuquerque′s siege of Malacca in 1511, the Portuguese received help from some local traders of Chinese origin. It is possible that these merchants were the informants that delivered not only the news of the Portuguese arrival but also details about some of their weaponry to mainland China, since before official contacts between the two nations were established, there was already documented circulation of the cannon that the Chinese called “Folangji”, a term which was later used to designate the country of origin of this new group of foreigners.

The first official attempt to contact Chinese authorities was made in 1517, by the apothecary Tomé Pires serving as the Portuguese ambassador. Through bribing the powerful eunuchs as well as the craftiness of a translator that Chinese accounts register as Huozhe Yasan, the embassy was received informally by Emperor Zhengde in Nanjing, and was on the waiting list for meeting with the Emperor formally in Beijing, when the Son of Heaven abruptly died in 1521. Meanwhile, the public opinion towards the Portuguese worsened significantly, as reports of the barbarity of the captain of a later fleet, Simão Pires de Andrade, flooded in, and the former ruler of Malacca sent his own embassy to their tributary suzerain to plead for aid in driving out the newcomers. The Portuguese diplomatic mission had to be aborted, and the members of Pires' diplomatic mission were either expelled or arrested. Two military skirmishes broke out in Guangdong in 1521 (Battle of Tunmen) and 1523 (Battle of Shancaowan, or Veniaga Island), respectively. Once the military attempts were thwarted, Portuguese traders had to roam eastward to the less protected provinces of Zhejiang and Fujian, mainly engaging in clandestine trade in the next two decades. Their settlement in Shuangyu Island (Liampó in Portuguese accounts) was demolished in a Chinese anti-piracy campaign in 1548, and it took the diplomatic tact of Leonel de Sousa to make some inglorious arrangements with Guangdong officials to legalize, at least at the provincial level, Portuguese commercial activities. Macau was officially recognized as governed by the Portuguese in 1557, initiating a new phase of Sino-Portuguese relations.

Emperor Longqing lifted the ban on maritime trade in 1567, which in theory should have broadened the prospects for further interactions between the two states. However, the improvement on the Chinese front unfortunately coincided with the general crisis of the Portuguese pluricontinental empire, as Portugal began gradually losing its hold on its other Asian territories to local and European competitors. The Union with Spain brought out a fierce rivalry from the Dutch, whose East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie:

VOC) overtook the Portuguese as the dominant force in maritime Asia. Through all the hardships, Macau managed to repel consecutive invasions by the Dutch between 1608 and 1622, and the suspicious Ming authorities became gradually friendlier towards the Portuguese because they found the Dutch a bigger regional threat. The decisive victory by the Portuguese defenders in 1622 secured the Portuguese control over the profitable China-Japan trade, but with Japan's expulsion of Portuguese in 1639 and the fall of Malacca to the Dutch two years later, the significance of Luso-Chinese interactions plunged in Lisbon′s global vision.

During this latter period, Christian missionaries under Portuguese patronage were the main contributors to the knowledge network leading both out of and into China, and Lisbon′s patronage over all missionary work in East Asia granted them a seminal role in this grand cultural exchange. However, the bad reputation of Portuguese raiders and pirates in China also meant the clergymen had to find ways to clear themselves of suspicions of collusion with the unruly barbarians, which often required a delicate balance. Towards the end of Ming Dynasty, military setbacks in the northern front called for closer ties with the Portuguese. Nevertheless, the attempts to develop a more substantial military cooperation through hiring Portuguese cannoneers and learning their tactics and weaponry still failed in the face of obstructions by conservative groups. In 1648 the Portuguese stopped its military support to the disintegrating Southern-Ming regime, choosing instead to negotiate with the new rulers of China, the Manchu-based Qing Dynasty. Themselves the target of long-time discrimination by the Han Chinese, the Manchu rulers hastily revised the Hua-Yi division in order to gain political legitimacy, granting more cultural independence to minority groups at the border, which also benefited the Portuguese in Macau. However, this new cultural pluralism falls out of the scope of the present discussion. Aside from the fact that these new interactions took place in a different time period, the Manchu-centric Qing's attitude towards the Portuguese also varied

significantly from their Ming successors due to difference in regional dynamic, thus deserves a study of its own right.

Summary of Portuguese Sources

During the century and a half since the establishment of direct contacts, both Portuguese and Chinese left behind numerous and detailed accounts of one other, dealing with themes ranging from political, economic, cultural, religious to fantastical. This thesis draws on this long list of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century primary sources written by Portuguese and Chinese authors, while also referring to some key works by third-party writers.

On the Portuguese side, Tomé Pires′ *Suma Oriental* contained the first systematic introduction of China, though it remained in manuscript form until 1944. Cristovão Vieira and Vasco Calvo, two prisoners in Guangzhou (Cantão), wrote letters of immense historical value in 1524. Traders in the South China Sea region were the main source of information on the Empire of Ming in the first decades of the sixteenth century, with Galeote Pereira′s 1561 report being one of the most comprehensive.

Chroniclers of Portuguese overseas expansion touched on the subject of China in varying degrees, including Fernão Lopes de Castanheda′s *História do descobrimento e conquista da Índia pelos portugueses* (1553), João de Barros′s third *Década de Asia* (1563), and Damião de Góis′ fourth part of his *Crónica do Felicíssimo rei D. Manuel* (1567). Missionaries of Portuguese origin also offered some of the most detailed treatises on China, including the Dominican Gaspar da Cruz′s *Tratado das cousas da China* (1569), and Jesuits Duarte Sande′s *De Missione Legatorum* (1590 in Latin), João Rodrigues′s *Historia da Igreja do Japão* (finished around 1627 but remained in manuscript form until 1954), Álvaro Semedo′s *Relação da grande monarquia da China* (the original Portuguese version was written in 1637, but it remained unpublished until 1956), António de Gouveia′s *Ásia Extrema* (written in 1644,

partly published in 1995), and Gabriel de Magalhães′ *Doze excellencias da China* (reorganized and translated into French with the title of *Nouvelle Relation de la Chine* in 1688).

In terms of literary works, the two pillars of the "Age of Discoveries", Luís de Camões and Fernão Mendes Pinto, offer some of the most relevant texts underpinning this study, with special attention given to Pinto′s *Peregrinação* (1614), a rich text containing a mixture of fact and fiction.

This thesis also examines some works that do not specifically talk about China but are representative of the zeitgeist of the time. Examples in this category include D. Jerónimo Osório′s *Tratado da Glória* (1549) and D. Frei Amador Arrais′ *Diálogos* (1589).

In terms of anthologies, Maria Ema Tarracha Ferreira′s *Literatura dos descobrimentos e da expansão portuguesa* introduces a selection of texts that served as a starting point for the current investigation. Raffaella D′Intino′s edition of *Enformação das cousas da China* includes several valuable sixteenth-century responses to inquiries about China. Rui de Loureiro organized a trilingual edition of early Iberian reports on China for *Revista de Cultura* of Macau, the most comprehensive compilation to date, titled *Visões da China na Literatura Ibérica dos Séculos XVI e XVII.*

Apart from the Portuguese, Italian and Spanish authors also provided some of the more valuable early reports on China. While this thesis does not touch on all of those works, it does draw on some of the more iconic ones, most notably Juan González de Mendoza′s widely circulated *Historia del gran reyno de la China* (1586), as well as Matteo Ricci and Alessandro Valignano′s reports and diaries, with focus on the different perspectives on the role of time and space that they offer. This dissertation also draws from treatises, memorials, letters and poems written by European missionaries in Chinese, most notably those of Giulio Aleni, Matteo Ricci and João Rodrigues.

Summary of Chinese Sources

Compared to more systematic studies on China by Portuguese authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Chinese literature on the Portuguese and Europeans as a whole is scattered over a wide range of official and private histories, court archives and memoirs, local gazetteers, specialized reference books, private miscellaneous notes and poems. This vast array of references has been the main obstacle for scholars interested in delving into the Chinese side of the interactions. James Chin Kong′s "A Critical Survey of the Chinese Sources on Early Portuguese Activities in China" contains the best (though not exhaustive) bibliography to date of these primary sources in English. In Chinese there have been several compilations of documents concerning Macau as well as Sino-Portuguese diplomacy[3], though their focus is consistently historical, thus paying insufficient attention to literary works that responded to the European arrival.

This thesis primarily studies historical and literary works that either have direct knowledge of the Portuguese people or settlement, or deal with the subject of Portuguese and Europeans to a substantial amount. Some representative works are: Gu Yingxiang′s firsthand account of interactions with the Portuguese embassy in his *Jing Xu Zhai Xi Yin Lu* [*Cherishing Times Past at the Hall of Great Quitude and Vacuity*]; Ye Quan′s travel account of Macau in 1565, included in his *You Ling Nan Ji* [*Travel Accounts of Guangdong*]; Playwright Tang Xianzu′s poems about his visit to Macau and meetings with Christian missionaries in 1592; Wang Linheng′s account of his journey to Macau in 1601, included in his *Yue Jian Bian* [*Swords of Guangdong*]; and Cai Ruxian′s 1586 illustrated account of the Portuguese in his *Dong Yi Tu Shuo* [*Illustrated Account of Eastern Barbarians*].

[3] *Ming Qing Shi Qi Ao Men Wen Ti Dang An Wen Xian Hui Bian: Wu (A Collection of Arquives and Documents on the Issue of Macau in Ming and Qing Dynasties),* vol. 5, edited by Yang jibo et al, Beijing: People P, 1999. *Zhong Pu Guan Xi Shi Zi Liao Jinxi (Collection of Arquival Materials on Sino-Portuguese Relations)*, edited by Zhang Haipeng, Chengdu: Sichuan People P, 1999. *Li Ma Dou Ming Qing Zhong Wen Wen Xian Zi Liao Hui Shi (Collection and Annotation of Ming and Qing References to Matteo Ricci)*, edited by Tang Kaijian, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Classics P, 2017.

This studies also examines private histories by Shen Defu, Huang Zhong, Zhang Xie and Tan Qian; Miscellaneous notes by Zhang Ben, Yan Congjian, Xu Shijin; Memorials by Qiu Daolong, Chen Xichang and Xu Xueju, etc. The complete bibliography of Chinese original sources is included in the Works Cited section.

Chapter 1: Essentials of Mapping: Location and Direction

Introduction

Human understanding of space has evolved dramatically since the sixteenth century. Navigation breakthroughs in land, sea and air have been boosting travel speed non-stop; ever more detailed maps and now satellites are able to depict the entire Earth to unimaginable minutiae; manned spacecraft have landed on the near and far side of the Moon, achievements utterly unimaginable for our most daring ancestors half a millennium ago. In terms of national space, the rise and fall of colonialism and imperialism have shaped modern geopolitics, and the unstoppable globalization process and the nuclear balance between great powers help maintain the delicate balance among the nation-states around the globe.

However, through all these changes, conceptual compartmentalization of space still prevails in modern minds. Arbitrary spatial concepts like that of Europe, Asia and Africa, the global North-and-South divide, or the active "worlding" of the first, second and third worlds which was vigorously attacked by postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak (260), still constrain human imagination of the geographical dynamics. Though imperial dreams of hegemony have seen serious setbacks in the twentieth century, economic, cultural and ideological colonialism continue to be a major threat that sometimes operates under the guise of globalization and modernization. Even apparently neutral tools like the Mercator projection face the imputation of being ideologically charged, since, although its initial goal was to alter the size of countries for the sake of navigational facility, in reality, inadvertently or not, those who were enlarged are mainly those that are more well-off[4].

It is therefore crucial to reassess the beginning of the scramble for spatial supremacy between China and Portugal, which were two major players in early modern world history. In this way, the aforementioned spatial ghosts that still haunt contemporary world politics can be

[4] See, for example, Monmonier, Mark. *Rhumb Lines and Map Wars: A Social History of the Mercator Projection*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2010.

stripped away to reveal the truth: the stigmatization of certain parts of the world has to do with their geographical location. We can also begin to comprehend the ascension of imperialism as the result of the shortening of distance with the help of scientific and technological advances, the South/North division as a continuation of the perceptions revolving around direction, and the controversy over Mercator Projection as in essence the result of conflicting views about scale. Location, direction, distance and scale, these are the four elements of space that were as relevant to cross-cultural dialogues half a millennium ago as they are today.

This first chapter deals with the more fundamental notions of space in location and direction. Locating a foreign place was not an easy task, and the pragmatic difficulty of verifying a nation's true location called for the employment of pre-existing cultural and ideological maps from each civilization. In a similar fashion, the direction from which the foreigners came was also a fluid and dynamic construction, as societies had preestablished expectations of the qualities people from each cardinal direction should possess. It was not a battle between the "correct" and the "incorrect" information, but rather a clash of different systems of conceptualizing the known and unknown world. The constant dislocation and relocation of China and Portugal in the other's mind reveal a particularly interesting aspect of the strategies of adaptation of the period, and the contention for positive connotations of a particular direction while distancing oneself from the previous infamy of said direction sheds new light on the agency by both parties.

Location, Dislocation and Relocation

"We shall not cease from exploration,
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning."
T.S. Elliot, "Little Gidding" (1942)

To map the other was and still is a complex cultural process, and "to understand the contents, meaning and significance of any map requires that it be reinserted into the social, historical and technical contexts and processes from which it emerges and upon which it acts" (Cosgrove 155-156).

Modern people have the luxury to consult a printed or digital map in the comfort of their home or office whenever they come across a foreign country′s name. For our ancestors, it was much harder to locate other parts of the world. In the sixteenth century, monarchs, scholars and officials in Portugal and China alike had to fight against impossible odds in their efforts to ascertain the source of the Nile or Yangtze Rivers, in their attempt to explore the whereabouts of the other country.

In 1508, in an order to the fleet of Diogo Lopes de Sequeira heading for the port city of Malacca, D. Manuel of Portugal concerns himself first and foremost with locating the people of the famed Chins: "Perguntareis pelos Chins, de que parte vêm e de quão longe, e de quanto em quanto vêm a Malaca ou aos lugares em que tratam, . . . e que costumes guardam e para que parte se estende sua terra e com quem confinam." (*Regimento* II 416) Similarly, Chinese reports on the Folangji also generally start with geographical placement, in which the infamous

assertion in *Ming Shi* (《明史》*Official History of Ming Dynasty*) that Portugal is near Malacca "佛郎机，近满剌加" (MS 8430) stands out.

Naturally, locating the other serves as the starting point for further interactions, be they peaceful diplomatic and commercial activities, or more confrontational showdowns like military conquests. Sixteenth-century Hieronymite Frei Heitor Pinto, for example, considers the visualizing of other parts of the world on a map as a precondition for Julius Caesar′s conquests: "E não conquistaria ele [Júlio César] tantas [terras], se as não visse debuxadas na mapa-múndi" (qtd. in Ferreira 466). Cristovão Vieira, one of the surviving Portuguese prisoners in Guangzhou (Cantão), only promises an easy conquest of Cantão after providing a detailed account of the geolocations of all fifteen Chinese provinces: "Esta hé a casa e terra mais a todas as do mundo pera ser sometida" (Loureiro *Cartas* 42)

The desire to clarify a foreign country′s position in the world map has to do with more than purely pragmatic concerns, however. Each society constantly accumulates experiences and prejudices regarding particular parts of the known world, and what was embedded in the varied mental maps of Portuguese and Chinese was an ideology-charged anthropological system, in which there was an automatic binding that links the people and the place. In some instances, the ideological need to match certain qualities of the people and its location overpowers the objective quest for spatial knowledge, enabling a long period of dislocation of the other.

Locating the Paradise on Earth

In Eviatar Zerubavel′s study on the mental process of how Europeans came to understand the discovery of America, he concludes that it "was not a simple linear progression from denial through ambivalence to innovation" (*Terra Cognita* 114-115), and cosmographic regressions sometimes even happened to the same individual. Similarly, Europeans also

underwent a long and arduous process of locating the Chinese, one that did not magically end when the first Portuguese fleet sailed into the South China Sea. The constant dislocation of the other derives less from a simple evolution of geographical knowledge obtained than from the insatiable desire to prove the connection between the distant country and a certain predetermined trait, be it a positive connotation like Paradise on Earth and El Dorado, or a repugnant vice like barbarity and even anthropophagy.

In the Middle Ages, according to Jacques Le Goff, one of the popular loci to project the utopian dreams of the Europeans was the supposedly closed Indian Ocean:

> The fecundity of the myth lay in the belief in a mare clausum, which made the Indian Ocean a repository of dreams, myths, and legends for the medieval mentality. This sea was the medieval West′s closed world of oneiric exoticism, the *hortus conclusus* of an Eden in which raptures and nightmares were mixed. Once its wall had been pierced, the dream evaporated. (190)

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda notes the impact of paradisiacal dream on the Portuguese mindset during the so-called Age of Discoveries:

> De qualquer modo não se poderá dizer que a sedução do tema paradisíaco tivesse sido menor para os Portugueses durante a Idade Média e a era dos grandes descobrimentos marítimos, do que fora para outros países cristãos de toda a Europa [...]. E não é menos certo pretender-se que tal sedução explica muitas das reacções a que deu lugar, entre eles, o contacto de terras ignoradas do Ultramar. (144)

Ironically, it was the Portuguese that contributed to the piercing of the Indian myth. The demand for an earthly paradise did not die with the journeys of Bartolomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama, but as discoveries unfolded, more and more of the *terra incognita* became mapped, so the last section of the Eurasian continent that is China became a last unmapped territory before Europe fell into the conundrum of not encountering the alleged Eden before reaching

geographical limits. Some observers crystallized their Utopian dream onto the Middle Kingdom, believing it to be the incarnation of the alternative civilization, while unsatisfied others continued their search for Utopia elsewhere on the Globe, turning to places like the South Sea Paradise or Shangri-la in the highest plateau. Susan Sontag points out the reason behind the fluidity of such destinations: in this quest for the "homeless self whose true citizenship is of a place that does not exist at all, or yet, or no longer exists. . . . it is understood that the journey is unending, and the destination, therefore, negotiable" (277). The Portuguese were not alone in this unending search, as the Ottomans from the sixteenth century onward also had a constantly changing target, the Kizil-elma, or Red Apple, whose capture would in theory ensure the final victory of Islam. To this end, the location of the Kizil-elma varied from era to era, with notable examples being Constantinople, Budapest, Vienna and Rome (Lewis 32).

The Chinese, by contrast, did not seem to be as devoted to the concept of an earthly heaven as their Western counterpart. It is true that some devout Buddhist monks made remarkable journeys westward to India via the Silk Road, the most notable of which being Faxian (法显, 337-422) and Xuanzang (玄奘, 602-664). Xuanzang′s legendary sixteen-year trajectory was the prototype of the great Classic novel *Xi You Ji* (西游记 Journey to the West) written in the sixteenth century. As for state-sponsored voyages, the seven expeditions under Admiral Zheng He (郑和, 1371-1433) between 1405 and 1433 were the culmination of geographical knowledge collected by Chinese and Muslim merchant networks in the previous millennium. Nevertheless, unlike the Portuguese expeditions, the Chinese voyages lacked the utopian vision of foreign lands, as they were not aiming to find the Elysium on Earth when embarking on these trips. It is quite extraordinary, if we take into account the religious aspect of these trips. The main purpose for the Buddhist monks was to travel far and wide in pursuit of original Scriptures that better conveyed the Truth. Tian Xiaofei points out that Faxian′s emphasis on the perilous journey was in sharp contrast to the peacefulness of India, arguing

that Faxian and his fellow travelers had no doubt that the birthplace of Buddha was the world center, while China was at the borderland (Tian 97-104). However, in the *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* (大唐西域记), Xuanzang′s worldview was unquestionably Sino-centric.”越自天府，暨諸天竺，幽荒異俗，绝域殊邦，咸承正朔，俱霑声教。” (32) “From the Tang empire up to the land of India all the people, either of secluded regions with different customs or of isolated places and alien countries, accept the Chinese calendar and enjoy the fame and teachings of the Emperor” (Trans. Li Rongji 12). What accounted for this disparity in attitude towards India was the conviction about the political stability of China and the consequent high level of cultural confidence. Faxian′s era saw the heartland of China invaded and divided by many foreign forces, and the popularity of Buddhism at the time was largely due to the need for spiritual support against unprecedented political turmoil. On the contrary, Xuanzang′s voyages took place during the golden era of Tang Dynasty, a period of domestic cultural flourishing and military successes abroad. After putting an end to centuries of fragmentation, China once again asserted itself as a unified power, with its capital Chang′an as the true city of the world’s desire before Constantinople. This comparison also illuminates the attitudes of the eunuchs with Muslim upbringings in charge of the Treasure Fleet in the Ming Era, as they indeed longed for the opportunity to set foot in Mecca to accomplish the duty of the Hajj, but were more than content to go back to China under Emperor Yongle in a prosperous era. In one of the first-hand accounts of Zheng He’s voyages, Ma Huan for example was delighted to jump to the conclusion that the maritime feat was proof of unprecedented flourishment of Chinese culture and its influence overseas: “而尤见夫圣化所及，非前代之可比” (I). Instead of searching for the distant Heaven on Earth, Ming Chinese were more preoccupied with justifying the central status of their glorious nation.

Geographical Determinism

There is certainly truth to the assertion that geographical location determined the historical development of different nations. The Portuguese seafaring enterprise would face much bigger odds if not for Portugal's convenient location at the western tip of Europe. Similarly, Chinese unity has been argued to be largely indebted to its geographical conditions, which are conducive to a stable nation and entail little outside threat. Nevertheless, recent thinking on these questions has called old assumptions into question. Even the neo-environmental determinism revived in late twentieth century has directed more attention to human efforts to cope with environmental challenges and seize geographical opportunities for development.

By comparison, our sixteenth century ancestors were much more devout followers of the tenets of geographical determinism. The Renaissance saw the rediscovery of Hippocrates, Strabo and Aristotle′s theories about the impact of the environment on human life, and Europeans were eager to make use of this ancient wisdom to analyze newly-discovered lands. Wey Gómez observes that sixteenth-century Europe held the conventional view that China's temperate nature and civilized society was due to its sharing the same latitude as Mediterranean Europe, in contrast to the more tropical and thus more barbarous India (356). Jean Badin's (c.1529-1596) theory of climates is a remarkable representative of such a belief. According to the French humanist, Southern people are contemplative and religious but short on energy, Northern people active and large in stature but not endowed with sagaciousness, and only those that live in between are inherently superior (85-152).

Renaissance Europe was clearly not the only region obsessed with geography′s limiting power and the consequent hierarchy of space. Ming official Zhu Guozhen (朱国桢, 1558-1632), in his 1621 *Yong Chuang Xiao Pin* (《涌幢小品》 *Essays Written in the Pavillion of Dhvaja*

at Sea), attributes the scarcity of niter in the South and iron in the North of China to a divine plan to impose restrictions to these barbarians′ military capacity:

> 迤北地寒，不产铁，迤南地暖，不产硝。故戎虏苗獞，国家得以五兵及火器制之。虽曰地气，亦天意实有以限之。(705-706)
>
> Towards the North the land is cold and does not produce iron, towards the South the land is warm and does not produce niter. That is why our nation can use the five cold weapons and firearms to contain the different barbarians. [The reason] is attributed to the *qi* of land, but it is also a deliberate divine plan to restrict them.

For bibliophile Lang Ying(郎瑛, 1487- c.1566), the *qi* (essence) manifests itself in different ways in Chinese and foreign lands: “天地精华之气，中国萃人而边夷发于山川也”(5). “The *qi* of the sky and earth makes the inhabitants wise in the Central Empire, while it only creates breathtaking mountains in *bianyi* [barbarian lands to the four sides of China].” Lang′s combination of *bian* (side, edge) and *yi* (foreigner, barbarian) is illuminating, as it showcases a standing Chinese tradition of justifying the Middle Kingdom′s geographical location as *Zheng* (straight, proper, upright), while degrading that of the foreigners in the four cardinal directions as *pian* (deviated, remote). Tang historian Du You (杜佑, 735-812) associates the remoteness of foreign territory with the obstruction of its ability to produce great philosophers, to reform, to adopt proper etiquette and to have a civilized way of life: “其地偏，其气梗，不生圣哲，莫革旧风，诰训之所不可，礼义之所不及，外而不内，疏而不戚，来则御之，去则备之，前代达识之士亦已言之详矣” (4980). The widely circulated Ming Gazetteer on foreign land and people, *Luo Chong Lu* [*Record of Naked Creatures*], makes the following statement in its preface:

> 书曰：生居中国，故得天地之正气者为人；生居化外，不得天地之正气者为禽为兽，故曰羸虫。孔子曰： 制夷狄如制禽兽。其说有自矣。

> The book says: those born and residing in the Middle Kingdom, who receive the correct and proper *qi* of heaven and earth, are human; those born outside the sphere of transformation, who do not receive the correct and proper *qi* of heaven and earth, are animals, and are therefore called "naked creatures." Confucius says, "Governing the *yi*-barbarians and the *di*-barbarians is like governing animals"- thus we see that this explanation is of long standing and authority. (qtd. in He Yuming 236-237)

This ethnocentric hierarchical arrangement of space was not exclusive to the Chinese, but is intrinsic to all societies that attempt to claim superiority over other peoples by alleging that their concrete home space corresponds to the ideal center of the world. German philosopher and poet Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) famously describes China as "thrust into a corner of the earth, placed by fate so far outside the connectedness of nations" (235) that it is deprived of any chance to play a significant role in human history.

It is curious, though, that while European colonialism and imperialism used the supposed geographic deficiency of other continents to justify their conquests, the Ming Chinese viewed the spatial drawbacks of neighboring states as reasons to not wage war on them. In the admonishment to the future emperors, Emperor Hongwu, founder of the Ming Dynasty, makes a list of fifteen nations that should never be attacked without provocation, justifying his recommendation as follows:

> 四方诸夷，皆限山隔水，僻在一隅。得其地不足以供给，得其民不足以使命。…吾恐后世子孙，倚中国富强，贪一时战功，无故兴兵，致伤人命，切记不可。 (Zhu Yuanzhang 167-168)
>
> The various foreign countries in the four cardinal directions are separated from us by mountains and seas and are far away in a corner. Their lands would not produce enough for us to maintain them; their peoples would not usefully serve us if incorporated [into the empire] . . . . I am concerned that future generations might abuse China′s wealth

> and power and covet the military glories of the moment to send armies into the field without reason and cause loss of life. May they be sharply reminded that this is forbidden.

Hongwu's successors generally carried out this policy. The only exception occurred under the reign of his son Emperor Yongle, who briefly invaded and occupied Annam (Vietnam), and his eagerness to engage in such endeavors was due to the need to use military victory to strengthen the legitimacy of his reign, as he usurped the imperial throne by rebelling against his nephew, Emperor Jianwen. There have been many theories regarding this Chinese defensive-oriented mindset in contrast to European expansionist fervor, but one aspect not explored enough is the role that different perceptions of center, periphery and frontiers in both cultural and geographical senses might have played in this process. For Christian Europeans, the loss of Jerusalem to the Muslims brought about a sense of crisis and of being relegated to the periphery, a sense of grievance and longing beyond their borders, which was not shared by contemporary Chinese.

Reference Points: Malacca, Java/Sumatra, Arabian Peninsula

Though there are sporadic cases of Chinese captives brought back to Europe during the Ming period, such as the assistant of João de Barros who translated some Chinese history and geography books for the court historian, none of them left a written record that made its way back to China. The 1721 work of *Shen Jian Lu* [*A Record of What I Saw*] by Fan Shouyi (樊守义) is believed to be the earliest surviving European travel account by a Chinese national in Chinese c. Due to this unequal exchange of information, it was even harder for Ming Chinese to properly locate the European nations. Sanjay Subrahmanyam′s claim that in the initial phase of contacts, Indians saw the newcomers as "Europeans without Europe" (73), is also a perfect depiction of Chinese mindset as well.

Thongchai Winichakul points out that "quite often, reference to otherness is made by identifying it as belonging to another nation. But the referent nation or ethnicity is usually ill defined" (5). Chinese ignorance of the location of Portugal after decades and even centuries of contact has been a common argument to criticize Confucian megalomania and Chinese overconfidence in their superiority, which arguably leaves little room for scientific curiosity. In this way, the infamous assertion in the official history of Ming Dynasty that Portugal is near Malacca becomes the ultimate embodiment of Chinese arrogance and ridiculousness. Nevertheless, cognition is a complex process that involves multiple layers of input and judgment. This dissertation thus attempts to decipher, at least to some extent, how Ming Chinese located Portugal and why. This is not to downplay the importance of a fairly flagrant instance of ignorance, but rather to shed more light on the impact of mental spatial construction on cross-cultural interactions.

Spatially speaking, when digesting information about a brand-new geographical existence, adapting it to an existing model is much easier than to produce an entirely new system for explanation. A classic example would be the adoption of the notion of America as a whole new continent: because of its conflict with not only geographical but also religious beliefs, especially the biblical accounts of the configuration of the world, the idea of an entirely new continent not introduced in the Bible was hard to digest for the devout European Christians.

Similarly, it was already hard enough for Ming Chinese to accept the notion of some foreigners coming from obscure nations, let alone a brand-new spatial system of continents, which required a complete overhaul of the traditional understanding of global space that would undermine Chinese dynastic legitimacy. What most scholar-literati chose to do instead was to accommodate the new information to their existing geographical knowledge, creating what Émile Durkheim calls "divided and differentiated" space, of which "different sympathetic values have been attributed to various regions" (11).

It is in this light that we can understand why the compilers of the official history of Ming used Malacca as the primary point of reference in rationalizing the origin of the Portuguese. The selection of reference points had to fulfill multiple purposes and thus illuminated the level of knowledge as well as the general attitude towards the target nation. The sea charter maps of Zheng He's voyages preserved in the 1621 *Wu Bei Zhi* [*Digest of Military Preparedness*] showcase a clear change of cartographic style, in the wake of his arrival in the Indian Ocean (Mao Yuanyi 652-664). It has been argued that this change is evidence of the incorporation of Muslim navigation techniques by Chinese voyagers, but it also points to the paramount importance of the port city of Malacca as a transitional hub, both linking and dividing the Indian Ocean and South China sea networks. It is notable that the Ming Chinese were not alone in using Malacca as the reference point to locate the other. The Spanish 1512 book titled *Conquista de las Indias de Persia e Arabia* refers to "the Chins" as "people close to Malacca, who do not eat with their hands but with highly scented wooden sticks" (qtd. in Gruzinski 116).

If the popularity of Malacca can be attributed to its strategic importance as the contact zone of different trading networks, "with its polyglot, trading population probably more diverse, open and cosmopolitan than its contemporary trading port, Venice" (Scott 7), in the beginning of the sixteenth century, other selections embody more of a cultural connotation that each author selected to attach to the other. Taking a closer look at the different "assimilation" methods used by particular Ming Chinese therefore provides a better understanding of how the selection of reference point corresponds to their attitude towards Portugal and Europe.

In a treatise on the history of frontiers and cross-cultural exchanges, mid-Ming mandarin Yan Xingjian (严行简) introduces the nation of Folangji in this fashion:

别有番国佛郎机者，前代不通中国，或云此喃勃利国之更名也。古有狼徐鬼国，分爲二洲，皆能食人。爪哇之先鬼啖人肉，佛郎机国与相对，其人好食小儿，然惟国主得食，臣僚以下不能得也。(320)

There is yet another barbarian state called Folangji. It had not been in communication with China in previous dynasties. Some say this is the new name for the ancient state Nanboli. In ancient times, there was the state of Langxu Ghosts, which encompasses two islands, and [residents of both islands] are cannibals. Ancient Javanese ghosts ate human flesh. The state of Folangji is located opposite Java, and its people [also] have a penchant for eating little children. But only the ruler of their state had the right to eat them, and his ministers, and others lower [in rank], did not.

Yan′s text has been noted by scholars for his subsequent inclusion of a detailed depiction of how Portuguese prepared Chinese babies for cannibalism, and for his vehement condemnation of such practice. Although several Ming authors noted rumors of Portuguese cannibalism[5], Yan seems to be the most abhorred by this practice, to the point that he links the lack of record of this nation in Chinese historiography to this cruelest of habits:

按象人而用，孔子恶之，况买人食之乎?甚哉，虎狼之不若也!佛郎机所以不载于前世诸书者，固因其荒僻而或略，亦疾其不仁而痛絶耳!今附录之，凡以为后事之鉴也 (324).

Note: To even eat something that resembles a human is deemed repulsive by Confucius. How much more atrocious is it to buy a human being to eat? What cruelty! Tigers and wolves would fall short of such bestiality! The reason Folangji was not recorded in the historical texts of the past may be due to its remoteness, which makes it easily neglected,

[5] “(佛郎机)略买小儿，烹而食之。” (Zhang Xie 93) “(Folangji) robbed and bought little children, cooked them and ate them.” “近年连至福建，地方甚遭陵砾。去年掳得郑秉义，支解剖腹，食其肺肝。略取童男童女，烹而食之。” (Zhu Wan 153). “(Folangji) came to Fujian multiple times over the years, pillaging and destroying the locals. Last year they captured Zheng Bingyi, dismembered him, cut his stomach open, and ate his lungs and liver. They robbed virgin boys and cats, cooked them and ate them.”

> but it must also be because [our ancients] detested their inhumanity and wished to obliterate them [from history]! I am recording this to serve as a reminder for the future. (Trans. Zhang Qiong 270-271)

The most common trend for Ming scholars was to place Portugal somewhere in the now Indonesian islands of Sumatra or Java. Zhu Wan, the military general who overran the Portuguese settlement in Shuangyu in 1548, speculated the true name of Folangji to be Suwendala (Sumatra), and was in fact a vassal of Siam (Thailand) (153). Yan Congjian instead suggests Folangi to be an alias of a Southeast Asian state known as Nanboli (Lambri) located in Sumatra, an opinion shared by Xiong Mingyu (熊明遇, 1579-1649): "佛郎机居海岛中，与爪哇国值，初名喃勃利国，后更今名" (177). "Folangji is located in the middle of islands and faces Java. Its original name was Nanboli, and later changed to the current name."

None of them provided any justification for their reasoning, thus decreasing the credibility of this linkage. Folangji, Suwendala and Nanboli are very different phonetically, and their Chinese characters also do not share anything remotely in common. The only logical connection between them is thus reduced to their geographical location, which according to Yan is close to another country called Lang Xu Ghosts which was rumored to have cannibalistic traditions.

This mysterious nation of Lang Xu Ghosts cannot be found in any existing Chinese texts. However, all three first-hand accounts on Zheng He′s voyages contain a tale of a cannibal ruler in the island of Java, a plot detail also adopted by Luo Maodeng′s 1597 fictional *Voyage of the San Bao Eunuch* (Ma Yau-woon 73-74). This widespread literary tradition that associates Java and Sumatra with anthropophagy served as the base for Yan and Zhu′s positioning of the supposedly cannibal Portugal in this region. William Arens famously observes that current materials indicate no proof of institutionalized cannibalism, and that almost all the rumors share the pattern of claiming that "others at some far distance eat human flesh" (10). Arens's

controversial contention has been met with suspicion and even outrage, and Derek Petrey has concluded that "such blanket disbelief in ritual cannibalism arises from an ethnocentrically-produced preconception, just as does the blanket condemnation of precontact indigenes as bloodthirsty savages" (114). Regardless of the validity of claims of cannibalism, such reports indeed saw a considerable increase in the sixteenth century, when the enlargement of perceived earthly space that came as result of brand-new interactions with other civilizations offered plentiful space for this flamboyant depiction of the exotic. Tales of foreign countries′ cannibalism were frequently used around the world to prove the Other′s backwardness and reaffirm the observers' cultural supremacy. European explorers used stories of Amerindian cannibalism as justification for their rule, while Africans in turn considered the Europeans to be formidable man-eaters that produced gunpowder out of slaves′ bones and wines out of Africans′ blood (Lindsey 89). It is crucial to point out that in the latter case, slave trade and rumors of cannibalism were very much intertwined. Local population in Asia and Africa were often ignorant of the economic intent behind the indiscriminate enslavement practiced by Europeans, which contributed to them believing in cannibalistic practices among these foreigners. João de Barros, for instance, noted that the Chinese "diziam que comprauámos moços & moças furtadas filhos de pessoas honradas, & que as comíamos assados" (*Terceira Década* 158b), and later attributes this misinformation to Simão Peres de Andrade's disrespect of local customs when buying children to serve as servants or future translators (*Terceira Década* 159a).

A foreign country′s location became more than just a reference point for geography, but also an auxiliary tool in the initial judgment of foreign people′s moral standard. Apart from cannibalism, Portuguese unruliness and ignorance of Chinese etiquette was another influential factor in their geographical positioning in Chinese literati′s mind. Gu Yingxiang (顾应祥,

1483-1565）was responsible for handling Tomé Pires′ embassy in Guangzhou in 1517, and after researching the origin of these strange-looking foreigners he concludes:

> 考历代史传,并无佛郎机国之名,止有拂林国。元世祖至正间,有拂郎国进异马,或者是其国也。又唐史西域传，开元中太食国献马不拜 (……) 却其贡而逐之，圣明之见远矣。由此观之，则佛郎机亦大食之邻境也。 (512)
>
> [I have] studied past histories and biographies, and there is no record of the nation of Folangji, only the nation of Fulin. During the era of Zhizheng under the reign of Emperor Shizong of Yuan[6], the nation of Fulang offered exotic horses as tribute, and it was probably the same nation [as Folangji]. Besides, in the Account of Western Region in the History of Tang, during the era of Kaiyuan (713-741), the nation of Dashi [Arabic Empire] offered horses but refused to kneel. . . the court refused their tributes and deported them, which was a sagacious and impactful decision. Judging from this, then Folangji is also at Da Shi′s border.

In this paragraph, Gu Yingxiang finds two countries phonetically close to Folangji in past historiography: Fulin and Fulang, which linguists have suggested to be variations of the word Farang, by which Arabs and Persians referred to all European countries. Fulin was used in the dynasties of Sui, Tang and Song (6th to 12th CE) to refer to the Eastern Roman Empire, while the Fulang reference in fact describes the Embassy of Giovanni de Marignolli sent by Pope Benedict XII to the Khan of Cathay. Marignolli was in China in the 1340s, and though he hoped to deliver a Christian message to the infidels, he is only remembered in Chinese annals for the "Heavenly Horse" he brought as a present for the emperor.

[6] There is a mistake in Gu's claim, as he confuses Emperor Shizong (better know as Kublai Khan) and his era name Zhiyuan (1264-1296) with Emperor Huizong and his era name Zhi Zheng (1341-1370). Both emperors received European ambassadors, which probably accounted for the confusion, but the most celebrated account of exotic horses as tribute occurred under the reign of Huizong in the year 1342.

Until now Gu's reasoning was quite logical with sound phonetical support, but then he took a big leap and stretched the evidence chain to include another reference, Dashi (Tajiks, used by Chinese to refer to Arabic and Persian empires). The only reasoning Gu offers to justify his conclusion that Folangji is situated near the Arabs is the coincidence that both Folang and Dashi offered an exotic breed of large horses as tribute. Apart from the belief that neighboring regions share similar products, the underlying logic is embedded in Gu′s account of the episode that occurred during Tang Dynasty. Since the Arabic ambassador refused to kneel, his tributary mission was aborted and he himself deported. Similarly, the first impression that the Portuguese left in Chinese minds was also of an unruly gang with little knowledge of the proper diplomatic protocol. Being in charge of receiving Tomé Pires's embassy in Guangzhou, Gu's first impression of the Portuguese was not a pleasant one: "其头目远迎，俱不拜跪" (511). "Their leaders went far to receive us, but none of them saluted or knelt." Even after the Portuguese were told to learn the proper Chinese etiquette, they were not at all willing to comply: "第一日始跪左腿，第二日跪右腿，三日才磕头，始引见" (511). "On the first day they knelt on the left foot, on the second day knelt on the right foot, only on the third day did they kowtow, and after that they were introduced [to the governor]." Once the translator Huozhe Yasan became Emperor Wuzong′s favorite, his refusal to kneel to a senior official of the Ministry of War caused considerable backlash, to the point that it was deemed necessary to include this episode in the section on Folangji in the official history (MS 8431). This instance further solidified the negative imagery of the Portuguese as uncultured and impolite, and Gu Yingxiang′s choice of associating them with the impertinent Arab ambassador becomes more plausible, given this cultural and (geo-)political environment.

Gu demonstrated his belief in the link between a country′s location and its nationals′ general characteristics, which was carried over by Tan Qian (谈迁, 1594-1658), in his private history of Ming Dynasty, *Guo Que* [*Discussions on National History*]. He, too, placed Europe

near the Arabs, more precisely Medina, but for a different reason. Tan questions the possibility of a continuous flow of Europeans coming from as far as they claim, so he agrees with the assertions that anti-Christians such as Shen Que (沈榷) make regarding the location of Folangji near China. What Tan finds to be a possible region of European origin is the Western Region in Chinese records that stretches to the Arabic Peninsula: "而《一统志》载西域默德那国，尚天数，谙术数，雕镂宫室，精巧颇似大西洋。吾意其人盖近是也" (5021). "And [the 1461] *Yi Tong Zhi* [*Gazetteer of the Unitary Great Ming*] tells of the nation of Medina in the Western Region, which is well versed in astronomy and numbers, they build fine carved palaces very much like [those in] the Great Western Ocean. I think that their people are near [each other]."

There will be closer examination of the association between the Western Region and astronomy in the next section on cardinal direction, but for now it is important to reaffirm the association that Ming literati established between cultural similarity and presumed spatial proximity. Faced with a scarcity of first-hand reports on the geographical location of the Other, the automatic response is to find a reference point that best exemplifies the traits that different individuals find to be most representative of such people. Though still rather primitive, this concept of "cultural zones" constituted the primary tool to cope with outside geographical mysteries.

Dislocation, Relocation

The location of the other as a cultural imagery was in no way fixed in the long term. Portugal suffered a succession crisis in 1578, which resulted in it becoming a junior partner in the Iberian Union in 1580, with Philip II of Spain serving also as Portuguese King. At the same time, Jesuit missionaries began to use a variety of terms like Da Xi Yang Guo (大西洋国 Nation of the Great Western Ocean) and even Ou Luo Ba Guo (欧罗巴国 Nation of Europe） to call their place of origin. Such perplexing information created a cognitive crisis for the Ming

literati who had little knowledge of European political systems. The conspicuous lack of mention of Folangji in some of the Ming treatises on foreign nations could be attributed to the confusion about country names. However, Ming China did gradually come to acknowledge that the foreigners in Macau and Philippines (which they termed 吕宋 Luzon after its largest island) seemed to share many things in common. Cai Ruxian for example notes that "吕宋，在海之西南，其风俗服食、婚姻与佛郎机大同小异" (426). "Luzon is to the Southeast of the Sea, and has very similar costumes of clothing, food and marriage with Folangji." Xiong Mingyu lends credence to the rumor that Luzon was a subject of Folangji: "吕宋者，海中之小岛也。一曰佛郎机之属夷" (178), and Xu Xueju (徐学聚) invents the term "the Tribe of Luzon under the Chief of Folangji nation" "佛郎机国酋长吕宋部落" (HMJS 4727b) in his memorial denouncing Spanish mistreatment of overseas Chinese. The expansion of the meaning of Folangji to also encompass the Spanish went hand in hand with the transference of geographical reference points from Malacca to Luzon, a region that received greater attention due to rumors of its gold mines as well as reports of mistreatment, and even massacres of Chinese emigrants, circulating towards the end of Ming Dynasty.

A widespread rumor concerning the cunning Europeans in Ming and Qing Chinese texts told of how the treacherous barbarians asked the local ruler of Luzon for a portion of land so tiny that an ox-hide could cover it, but once given permission, the ungrateful Europeans cut the ox-hide into tiny pieces and lay claim to a much greater stretch of land (Zhang Xie 89; He Qiaoyuan 637-638; MS 8370). This is in fact a recurring motif in various parts of the world, which has its first appearance in Appian of Alexandria′s account of the foundation of Carthage by the Phoenicians fleeing to Africa under the leadership of a woman named Dido:

> They asked for as much land for a dwelling-place as an ox-hide would encompass. The Africans laughed at the paltriness of the Phoenicians′ request, and were ashamed to deny so small a favor. Besides, they could not imagine how a town could be built in so

> narrow a space, and wishing to unravel the subtlety hey agreed to give it, and confirmed the promise by an oath. The Phoenicians, cutting the hide round and round into one very narrow strip, enclosed the place where the citadel of Carthage now stands, which from this affair was called Byrsa (a hide). (403)

It is entirely possible that a version of this story was transmitted to the Chinese in a modified form, which was then used in the xenophobic discourse. This can be verified by the modification that certain authors made to make the story more plausible, changing the actual figure of the ox to a reference to the name of the chief of Luzon who fell victim to Portuguese trickery:

> 嘉靖初年，此番潜入吕宋，与酋长阿牛胜诡借一地，托名贸易，渐诱吕宋土番，各从其教，遂吞吕宋。 (SCPX 175)
>
> In the initial years of Jiajing, this group of barbarians secretly penetrated Luzon, and tricked the local chief A Niu[7] Sheng out of a portion of his land. First, they claimed that it was for commerce, but gradually they enticed the locals to follow their religion, and in the end occupied Luzon.

What is notable in the circulation of these accounts is how most failed to distinguish between the Portuguese and the Spanish, thus using the story of Luzon and its conquest by the Spanish to discredit the reputation of the Portuguese.

The Iberian localization of China was also a long and fluid process throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is remarkable that one of the rare episodes of Chinese history that got repeated attention in Iberian accounts was their presumably strategic and prudent retreat from India and Southeast Asia, which was seen an action of geographical and geopolitical contraction. Part of the reason behind this interest lies in the fundamental influence of the tales of Alexander the Great in European mindset. Though the Macedonian king achieved

[7] Niu means Ox in Chinese.

unparallel military success in his lifetime, his empire was fragmented shortly after his death, which has been attributed to geographical overextension and contagion by the corrupt Asian ways of governing. Sometimes deeming themselves as the spiritual heirs of Alexander the Great, the Portuguese in late medieval and early modern periods often theorized their own empire according to the Macedonian model (Barletta 16-17). To urge their fellow countrymen not to repeat Alexander's mistakes, chroniclers like João de Barros (1496-1570) used the Chinese example in trying to back up this point, without realizing the error in their understanding of Chinese history. Barros was among the first to document the Chinese influence in the region beyond Indus, but when he commented that "a qual gente, por nam perder nome de cõquistador, já seguio este módo, conquistando por dentro da terra tę vir ter ao reyno de Pegú" (*Terceira Década* 46a), via an amphibian route of "assi nesta conquista terręstre que tiuęram, como na per már quando vięram á India" (*Terceira Década* 46b), the chronicler seemed to be confusing the Mongol military incursions into Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Myanmar and Java) with the mostly peaceful Ming maritime enterprise. Zheng He′s armada, despite having engaged in several skirmishes in Malacca and Ceylon (Sri Lanka), was primarily a peaceful showcasing of force to strengthen Chinese soft power rather than a precursor to European-style overseas colonization. This misinformation and anachronism suggest not only the difficulty of ascertaining the other nation′s geographical relocation, but also a clash between conflicting systems of organizing space.

Barros's account was broadly reproduced by early modern Europeans who also failed to distinguish between the nomadic hordes and the Han-centric Ming, and a great deal of the confusion comes from the lack of direct contact. Up until the Portuguese arrival in China, the already scarce first-hand reports on East Asia were primarily accumulated during the Mongol reign, written by ambassadors like Giovanni da Montecorvino (1247-1328), Odorico Mattiussi (1286-1331) and the famed Venetian Marco Paolo. When Christopher Columbus embarked on

his historic journey towards the West, he still carried with him a letter to the "Gran Can" (16), completely ignorant of the collapse of the Mongol empire in the previous century.

What mostly concerns the present study is how Barros and his contemporaries presented this statement of Chinese voluntary retreat from India and Southeast Asia, and how their reports catered to their own agenda. The Asian world order was based on tributary missions, nominal political recognitions and (mostly) peaceful cultural dissemination, concepts which were quite alien to Portuguese observers accustomed to the Roman model of "Veni, Vidi, Vici", or in other words, the order of first establishing military control of territory and then facilitating cultural transmission. While European observers had no trouble transplanting the concept of Pax Romana into Pax Mongolica, as the two terms both sought to describe the stabilizing effects of a broader region after military conquests, the model of Pax Sinica which was based on Chinese hegemony was much more puzzling in European eyes. It is thus unsurprising that the Portuguese reconfigured the Asian reality to fit their familiar Roman model. In Barros′ account, the regional dynamic in Southeast Asia was that China once conquered these lands, and after their sensible retreat, local inhabitants of these territories continued to show their gratitude to their former overlords for bringing them civilization by offering tributes every three years:

> Todos em algũa maneira abçeruam & guárdam párte da religiam deles Chijs, & o conhecimento da çiençia das coisas naturáes, conta do anno per meses da Lũa, doze signos do Zodiaco, & outras notiçias do mouimento dos corpos celęstes. Porque no tempo que por elles foram conquistádas aquellas pártes, leixáram semeáda esta doctrina: & aynda em módo de reconhecimento que todos estes reynos fóram cõquistádos daquelle Imperio da China, quásy tę nósso tempo de tres em tres annos, os reys deles lhe mãdáuam seus embaixadores com algum presente. (*Terceira Década* 46a)

João de Barros applauds the Chinese prudence in abiding by a self-imposed geographical limit to their expansion, and presented a rather harmonious, albeit paternalistic, view of the Asian world order. Similarly, Fernão Mendes Pinto (c.1510-1583) stresses that the reason behind the Chinese retreat from India after only fifty-nine years of occupation was that "o Rey successor do que a conquistou, que se chamaua Oxiuagão, alargou por sua vontade, por entẽder quanto sangue dos seus lhe custaua o pouco proueito que tiraua della" (270). In comparison, later observers had a more paradoxical attitude towards this decision by the Chinese. Although it created a power vacuum in the region that the Portuguese were able to fill, the strategic retreat also accounted for the rather over-the-top closed-door policy, which rendered more difficult the realization of the Portuguese dream to penetrate the Chinese hinterland: "Pois os Chineses, navagando até à Índia, submeteram algumas partes dela ao seu domínio; mas depois, antes de diminuírem as forças do seu reino dispersando-as por muitas províncias, alteraram o seu parecer e determinaram encerrar-se no interior das suas próprias fronteiras" (Sande and Valignano 49).

Spanish historian Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola (1562-1631) also manifests his conflicting opinion in relation to the Chinese retreat. In his treatise on the Islands of Moluccas, Argensola shows his admiration for the laudable feat of "auer dilatado los Chinas el Imperio à mas augustos limites," which was backed up not only by "sus annales, sus letras, y tradiciones antiguas," but also "los vestigios de ilustres edificios: no solo las ruynas, en que todauia se manifiesta su primera soberbia, sino ciudades, que el tiempo ha conseruado deshabitadas: y parecen aora en las prouincias que excluyeron de su distrito" (159). However, Argensola was also wary of the possibility that the Chinese could once again reverse their policy concerning overseas expansion, which would endanger the Spanish possessions in Southeast Asia:

> No passa ningun año sin amenazas de exercitos Chinas, de que se alistan las naciones, que se fabrican nauios, que los consagran, y dedican con solinidad a sus Dioses de

> escultura, o al Sol, Luna, o Estrellas, que en alguna parte adoran, publicando y pidiendo en sus vanas oraciones, vitoria contra los españoles, que ocupan aquellas tierras, que ellos dexaron por imprudencia. (162)

Since China often stands as the indisputable regional superpower, Confucian bureaucrats often recommend a more reserved attitude towards territorial expansion, as internal stability was considered paramount for such a vast nation, so Argensola′s concern was largely unfounded. However, it does leads to an interesting discussion of the mythical element in the European belief in a voluntary Chinese retreat. In the 8th Century CE, some Muslim authors were conscious that their unprecedented expansion had reached its limit on the western front, so they invented the tale of a statue in the French city of Narbonne with an admonishing inscription: "Turn back, sons of Ishmael, this is as far as you go. If you question me, I shall answer you, and if you do not go back, you will smite each other until the Day of Resurrection" (qtd. in Lewis 19). By attributing Muslim military setback in southern France to the divine plan, this myth justifies the halt to carrying out the Islamic duty of converting dar al-harb (territory of war) to dar al-islam (territory of Islam) without having to make any mundane leader responsible. Similarly, for early Portuguese and Spanish commentators who were fairly well acquainted with the parable of Alexander's decision to not cross the Ganges, the myth of Ming retreat served as a convenient tool to justify Chinese cultural influence in the region without interfering with European imperial projects in Asia. For Barros, the Chinese precedent could serve as a reminder of the importance of resource distribution within the vast Empire that Portugal was beginning to build. At the same time, in both Barros's and Pinto's texts the Chinese example also leads to an ethical critique of the imperial endeavors in general. Is it justifiable to sacrifice so many lives for imperial expansion? Pinto seems to say no, but Barros's attitude is more of a "it depends". The romanticized version of Southeast Asian nations voluntarily giving tribute to China cannot help but make the reader feel that the sacrifice could

be worthwhile, as long as the risk-award ratio is acceptable. For Argensola, on the other hand, the possibility of a Chinese change of policy bumps up the importance of the Philippines in the Spanish global network. What is valid throughout these accounts, however, is that the pursuit of historical accuracy gave way to narrative convenience and political maneuverability, while the process of locating and relocating the Other became an indispensable part of a larger rhetoric.

Body Politics of Location

The establishment of Macau as a permanent trading post for the Portuguese in the mid-sixteenth century was an important milestone in early Luso-Chinese interactions, as it initiated a trend among Ming scholars to refer to the Portuguese as *Ao Yi* (澳夷, literally Yi-Barbarian at Macau) instead of using the older term Folangji. In the meantime, Ming Chinese also began to incorporate a discourse of the body in their discussion of the threat of these not-so-newcomers.

Ever since the Portuguese set foot on Chinese shores, there was a constant debate in the court of Beijing regarding the best solution to contain the Portuguese threat, and the under-the-table arrangements that enabled the Portuguese to stay in Macau faced multiple denunciations ever0020since they came into effect. Some mandarins suggested expelling the foreigners altogether, because they considered *Ao Yi* as an "ailment in the core parts of the stomach and heart" "然议者以濠镜澳终为腹心之疾" (Deng Zhong 111a), or a carbuncle that can cause serious pain when the situation worsens: "此亦南方一瘫也，未审溃时何如耳!" (Wang Lingheng 92). The strict enforcement of the closed-door policy was for them the radical cure to this bodily ailment. They sometimes saw in the Europeans from the south certain traits that resembled those of the nomadic tribes from the north. One of the greatest strengths of these "Mongols of the sea" (Burbank and Cooper 151) was their mobility due to their *aporia* (disconnectedness). In a study of Herodotus′ representation of the Scythians, the nomadic other

of the Greek states, François Hartog claims that their spatial *aporia* is the only advantage compared to the Athenians. While "the Athenians, for their part, depend on their wooden ramparts, that is to say, their navy, the Scythians possess the surest of ramparts, their *aporia*" (199).

Scholar-officials on the opposite side tended to have a more tolerant view of Macau as a cross-cultural window, emphasizing not only its commercial benefits but also the containment effect such a port exerted. The Chinese officials who favored the Portuguese presence in Macau were conscious of the Portuguese threat, but saw their settlement in the port city a chance to alter Portugal′s *aporia*. Since the Portuguese homeland was too distant for the Great Ming to exert a direct influence upon it, the best strategy to keep them on a leash would be to regulate them from nearby, and hopefully build a relationship of dependency. This is how a governor of Guangdong explains his plan of exerting control over the Portuguese in Macau:

> 然濠境地在香山，官兵环守，彼日夕所需，咸仰给于我。一怀异志，*即扳其喉，不血刃而制其死命*。若移出浪白，大海茫茫无涯，番船往来，何从盘诘？奸徒接济，何从堵截？勾倭酿衅，莫可问矣。 (Shen Defu 786)
>
> But Macau is in the county of Xiangshan, surrounded by our soldiers, what they need day and night all depends on our provision. If they have other plans, *we could strangle their neck and kill them without blood on the blade*. If we force them to retreat from Macau, the ocean is boundless, there is no way to stop and question the foreign vessels sailing over, there is no way to cut off traitorous local inhabitant from giving them provisions, and there is no way of preventing them from colluding with Wokou to defy us. (My emphasis)

It is curious to note that despite their opposing views on the foreigners, there is a shared preference for using the metaphor of human body in their attempt at locating or relocating Portugal and its people. This practice was not unique to the Asians. As Luís Madureira notes,

in Luís de Camões's eulogy of Iberian glory, the peninsula is portrayed as "noble Iberia [as] the head . . . of all of Europe [and] the [Lusitanian] kingdom [as] the crown [o cume] of Europe′s head," while in Fernão Mendes Pinto′s *Peregrinação*, "the world′s body is consequently upended," with Malay Peninsula as a "pestana do mundo," and China "figuring as the "head" of the globe" (Madureira 168). This inclination to associate human body with geographical locations in both the East and West can be justified by Michel Foucault′s observation that Man is the "particularly privileged point" that "is saturated with analogies (all analogies can find one of their necessary terms there)"(*Order* 24): "his flesh is a glebe, his bones are rocks, his veins great rivers, his bladder is the sea, and his seven principal organs are the metals hidden in the shafts of mines. Man′s body is always the possible half of a universal atlas (*Order* 25). The human form was also the prototype from which European envisioned the entire world, as the medieval T-O maps resembled Jesus Christ's crucified body. The main difference between the East and the West in this matter is the scale. The Chinese universe in the Ming period was more inward-looking and self-centered compared to the European one, thus the Man in the body metaphor generally was limited to China proper. This is how Xie Zhaozhi (谢肇淛, 1567-1624) judges the Ming decision to make Beijing Chinese capital:

> 且京师建极，如人之元首然，后须枕藉，而前须绵远。自燕而南，直抵徐、淮，沃野千里，齐、晋为肩，吴、楚为腹，闽、广为足，浙海东环，滇、蜀西抱，真所谓扼天下之吭而拊其背者也。 (39)
>
> The foundation of a capital is like the human head, it needs a pillow behind it, and needs open space before it. From Beijing southward to Xuzhou and Huai River, there are thousands of *lic*
> of open land, the land of Qi [Shandong] and Jin [Shanxi] as Shoulders, Wu [Jiangsu] and Chu [Hunan] as stomach, Min [Fujian] and Guang [Guangdong] as feet, the seaside Zhejiang surrounds from the East, and Dian [Yunnan] and Shu [Sichuan] hugs from the

West. [Beijing] is truly is such an advantageous location, where people call choking the neck of Tianxia [all under heaven] and holding its back."

The term "capital" in many European languages derives from the Latin word "caput", meaning head. While in Chinese there are multiple ways of designating the meaning of capital, Shou Du (literarally Head Metropolis), one of the most widely used parlance, also has the body metaphor embedded in this geographical and political concept. Xie attributes the geographical advantages for making Beijing the capital as the main cause for the long duration of Ming: "国祚悠久，非偶然也" (39) "It is not a coincidence that [our dynasty] enjoys a long reign". The Folangji near Malacca had no place in the Chinese body-universe, and only after their relocation to the Chinese border did they begin to be incorporated into the body rhetoric.

In contrast, the Age of "Discoveries" broadened the horizon of the European worldview, and some began to accept the multiplicity of worlds. Catarina Fouto, for example, sees in the body labels in *Peregrinação* a signal to "the existence of different worlds," "worlds which had recently been connected by networks of political and commercial interests," in other words, "a geographical decentering," and "the decentering of power within it" (70). It is only with this global mentality that the Portuguese authors could imagine their homeland as just an organ or limb and not the entire human body.

Direction and the Contention for the Center

"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God′s great Judgment Seat"
Rudyard Kipling, "The Ballad of East and West" (1889)

The importance of direction in cartographic tradition can be justified by the phenomenon that the upper half of the chart is often socially and culturally considered as privileged. For instance, traditional Muslim cartography puts South at the upper half, as that is, for most territories under Islamic influence, the direction of the holy city of Mecca. The modern convention of placing the North on the upper half of maps is by no means self-evident to all cultures. In Western societies, it became popular thanks to the promotion of Claudius Ptolemy's cartographic model, and even then there were competing types like T-O maps, which in the Middle ages had Asia, the place of both wonder and terror, at the top, and the location of the terrestrial paradise situated at the very limit (Brotton 29). The fact that "cardinal directions take on affective significance" (Meier et al. 548) leads to recent endeavors, mostly by countries in the Southern Hemisphere, to call for maps that place the South upward as a political statement of Anti-Northern-Hemisphere-Centrism.

Nations with different geographical environments also tend to have their priorities sorted out between different directions. For the Ming Dynasty, the threat of Mongol invasions still looms despite the successful campaign by the Han Chinese to expel them beyond the Great Wall, and the relocation of the capital from Nanjing (Southern Capital) to Beijing (Northern Capital) carried out by Emperor Yongle corresponds with an increasing concern with the northern threat (Wang Gungwu 302). The following is how a mid-Ming document hierarchizes the varying levels of foreign threat coming from different directions: "国家外夷之患，北虏为急，两粤次之，滇蜀又次之，倭夷又次之，西羌又次之" (HMJS 53). "The foreign threats to the nation are ranked like this: The Northern barbarian is the most urgent, followed

by Guangdong and Guangxi [South], then Yuannan and Sichuan [Southwest], then Wokou [East], and then the Western Qiang."

The significance of a direction in space is in fact two-fold. It is at the same time a region relative to a (specified or implied) point of orientation, and the movement (physical, cultural or spiritual) towards said area. In other words, even when we are talking about a cardinal direction, it is still relative. A famous line in Álvaro de Campos′ "Opiário" shows Fernando Pessoa′s understanding of the relativity of direction, an East that does not correspond to a "projeção unívoca" (Pizarro et al. 149): "Um Oriente ao oriente do Oriente" (135).

The sun is a common metaphor involving cardinal directions precisely due to its movement, in the pre-Copernicican eyes, from East to West. Being such an integral part of human experience, the Sun has been appearing metaphorically in texts from all cultures for thousands of years. In the allegory of the cave in Plato's *Republic*, the chained people′s worldview is limited by their forced inability to face the correct direction, which is that of the Sun. Plato uses the Sun as a symbol of the light of Truth and Good, hence stressing the relative direction in an immobile state. In contrast, Hegel′s metaphor emphasizes the sun's dynamic nature. The German philosopher compares the evolution of human to the Sun′s trajectory, concluding that "the movement of Universal History goes from the East to the West. Europe is the absolute end of Universal History. Asia is its beginning" (qtd. in Dussel 69). The Westward trajectory of civilization was not Hegel′s invention, as Jacques Le Goff observes; twelfth-century European historians already were under the impression that they were witnessing a transference of civilization from East to West (34). This belief also had a huge impact on the idea of the "Quinto Império" by Padre António Vieira, who stresses that the subsequent empires are "mais ocidentais" than their predecessors, until the process stops with the "gente mais ocidental de todas," that is the Portuguese:

> O primeiro império do mundo, que foi o dos Assírios, e dominou toda a Ásia, também foi o mais oriental. Dali passou aos Persas, mais ocidentais que os Assírios; dali aos Gregos, mais Ocidentais que os Persas; dali aos Romanos mais ocidentais que os Gregos: e como já tem passado pelos Romanos, e vai levando seu curso para o ocidente, havendo de ser, como é de fé, o último império, aonde pode ir parar, senão na gente mais ocidental de todas? (83)

The increasing emphasis on the superiority of the West comes hand in hand with the rise of their relative power with respect to other parts of the world, and the notion of direction is crucial in this regard, for directions embody the process of redefining cultural connotations in a time of change. When the nomadic Xiongnu had the upper hand in their contest with the Han Chinese in the second century BCE, their ruler tried to reconfigure the power relation between the North and South: "南有大汉，北有强胡。胡者，天之骄子也" (Ban Gu 3780). "The South has the large Han; the North has the powerful Hu. Hu stands for the proud son of Heaven." Nearly two millennia later, a similar reconfiguration of the link between power relations and cardinal directions, this time West and East, would reappear in the early Sino-European interactions.

In Late Ming Dynasty, all aspects of knowledge about Europe, be it religious, scientific or philosophical, were grouped under the name Xi Xue (西学 Learning of the West). It was mainly a Jesuit construct to identity their place of origin as "the West" in the 1580s, and as Timothy Brook notes, it automatically calls upon the received Chinese imagery of Buddhism (271). The interconnectedness between Buddhism and Christianity was indeed a recurring topic in Ming literati′s minds, and the West as direction was fundamental in shaping this analogy. What Brook seems to neglect, however, is according to the Ming Chinese theological worldview, Buddhism was only one portion of the rich cultural connotations that the West embodied.

Scholars have noted the tendency to view the West as both the place of death and of happiness in ancient Europe (Baritz 620). Though it became a minority perspective in Medieval times due to "Greek-derived denigration of Eastern mysticism and slavish disposition" (Lewis and Wigen 79), there were no shortage of daring Europeans like Guillaume Postel (1510-1581), who viewed the West as "feminine, declining . . . and capricious" (Lach 2: 268).

The situation in China was at least equally, if not more complex. Negative imagery seems to be more dominant in relation to the universal analogy between sunset and darkness: "凄者，西也 (……) 又西方为万物告终之处" (Cao 329). "Sadness is what characterizes the West…. Besides, West is where all things come to an end." In the cultural imagination, men from the West are often described as deformed and corpse-like (Wu Xiaodong 43). Unique Chinese traditions like Wuxing (Five Elements) also associate the West with death, which attributes *Jin* (金 Metal, Weapon, and by extension, Killing) to the Occident. Nevertheless, the West also received positive connotations, starting from the fundamental Taoist cosmology that is Ba Gua (八卦 Eight Trigrams). The corresponding Trigram of Occident is the felicitous Dui (兑 Joyous, Open) (Wilhelm 269), possibly because the creator of the system was a leader in a Western clan. From the historical standpoint, it is also worth noting that the Westward Silk Road enabled the largest scale of material and cultural exchanges that China witnessed before the modern era, and that Buddhism, one of the most influential imports along the Silk Road, brings the concept of Sukhāvatī (Western Paradise), which forever imparts a sense of longing for the Westward direction to its believers. In order to maximize their chances at success in China, Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries therefore needed to understand that, willingly or not, they had been branded as foreigners from the West. Thus, their best shot would be to culturally appropriate everything good the West represented, while battling against adversaries who stressed the negativity of everything Western. The jostling for power that

involves the Western cardinal direction thus becomes an unavoidable challenge for both Europeans and Chinese who hoped for a better understanding of the Other and the Self.

Buddhist Connotation and Indigenous Tradition

Ming novel *Xi You Ji* (《西游记》 *Journey to the West*), a romanticized account of Tang Buddhist monk Xuanzang's pilgrimage to India, is the culmination of the Chinese imagination of the West, with strange creatures and exotic nations along the way. However, as the ultimate destination and goal of the pilgrim demonstrate, in keeping with the Chinese worldview, Buddhism still provided the dominant imagery when Ming Chinese thought of the West, even after centuries of contacts with other religions such as Islam, especially under the Mongol Rule. This was the cultural context that the Europeans faced when they first arrived in China by sea in the Ming period, and the Jesuits′ initial tactic of trying to be recognized as a variation of Buddhist monks contributed to further solidifying this connection. Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607) sometimes self-identified as being from Xi Zhu (西竺), in order to be associated with Tian Zhu (天竺), the traditional Chinese translation of Sindhu (Hindu). In the following poem dedicated to Chinese literati when he visited the Tian Zhu temple in Hangzhou in 1586, there is not a single suggestion that the Chinese should recognize him as anything other than a Buddhist monk：

僧从西竺来天竺，不惮驱驰三载劳。

时把圣贤书读罢，又将圣教度凡曹。 (Chan “Michele Ruggieri” 141)

This monk came from Xi Zhu to Tian Zhu

He was not afraid of three years of travails on the road

He often read books written by sages

Then used the Divine Religion to convert the secular.

In some cases, Ruggieri directly assumes the role of an Indian monk: “僧生于天竺，闻中华盛治，愿受风波” (Huang and Wang 5). “This monk was born in India, because he heard of the Chinese reputation of good governance, and was willing to go through wind and waves [to come here].” This was indeed how Chinese literati came to identify Ruggieri. Apart from the two poems titled *A Monk From India* (天竺僧）written by Xu Wei, that were identified by Albert Chan (“Two Chinese Poems” 326-333), another important Chinese scholar, Ou Daren, also has a poem titled “Meeting the Indian Monk Mr. Ruggieri in Xian Hua Temple” (《仙花寺逢竺僧坚公》):

> 浮海南来已几年，问师何者是单传。
>
> 法门不二无文字，岂必西天更有天。 (Ou Daren 5)
>
> It has been several years since [Ruggieri] floated by Sea from the South
>
> [I] ask him who his mentor is [and he says] he is the only student
>
> The only true teaching has no written text
>
> Is it that the sky is broader in the Western Sky?

The Jesuits′ subsequent decision to turn towards Confucianism instead of Buddhism as an ideological ally, which was signaled by Matteo Ricci′s open attack on Buddhism in 1595, proved to be a smart move for the expansion of Christian community in China because of the need to adapt to the “imperative of Confucianism” (Standaert “Jesuit Corporate Culture” 356), but it was not without backlash. One of the questions that Christian missionaries most frequently asked in China was, why did their teachings differ from Buddhism, given that they claimed to come from the West:

> 吾中国世传，谓达摩西来，人称阿弥陀佛，故礼佛法者，必尊三宝。唐玄奘白马驮经，亦自西番来 (……)尔为西僧，独曰不然。毋乃学于墨氏，而不从其教乎？ (LMD 9)

> We Chinese have had the knowledge that Bodhidharma came from the West, people referred to him as Amitābha, so everyone that worships Buddhism must respect the Three Jewels [Buddha, His teachings and the monastic order]. Monk Xuanzang in the Tang Dynasty had white horses carry the Scriptures, and he also came from the West. . . . You are a Western monk, but you are the only one that does not say so. Is it that you learn from the teachings of Shakyamuni but not follow their religion?

It is no coincidence that both Ye Quan and Tang Xianzu, two of the few Chinese who visited the Portuguese settlement in Macau during the Ming era, believed the foreigners to be following Buddhism rather than Christianity. In 1586, Ye Quan observes that the foreigners in Macau are devout worshippers of Buddha: "事佛尤谨"，who go to the temple religiously: "三五日一至礼拜寺，番僧为说因果，或坐或起，或立或倚，移時，有垂涕叹息者" (45). "They go to the worshipping temple every three or five days, the foreign monks talk to them about *hetu-phala* [Buddhist understanding of cause-effect], they either sit or get up, on foot or lean on something, when they leave, some of them cry or sigh." Six years later, one of the greatest Chinese playwrights Tang Xianzu (汤显祖, 1550-1616) also visited Macau, and his vision of the foreign settlement was also that it was predominantly Buddhist rather than Catholic. A famous scene in his masterpiece *Mu Dan Ting* (牡丹亭 Peony Pavillion) is believed to be based on his experiences in Macau. It starts with a poem that supposedly describes the São Paulo Church, whose ruins now stand out as one of the most famous landmarks in Macau:

> 一领破袈裟，香山岙里巴。
>
> 多生多宝多菩萨，多多照证光光乍。(119)
>
> A tattered cassock all I own
>
> My dwelling the Vale of the Incense Mountains
>
> Multitude of living souls Many-jewelled Tathagata Multitude of bodhisattvas
>
> And what a host of gleaming bald pates! (Trans. Toril Birch 110)

Ye and Tang′s confusion echoes Vasco da Gama′s misjudgment in Calicut, where he mistook a Hindu temple for a Christian church. Michael Murrin has argued that this well-known episode of misinformation was not limited to the Portuguese side. The confusion was mutual, as the Indians in Calicut in turn thought the Portuguese were Hindus. His research is illuminating in that it shows both parties′ involvement in the creation of misunderstanding in these initial cross-cultural interactions. Murrin attributes the confusion mainly to "restricted contact between the parties and the problem of go-betweens" (192), and while these factors also weigh in on the Luso-Chinese encounters, this latter case does have some unique causes for misinformation, such as that of spatial direction and phonetic influence.

When translating foreign toponyms, those that contain the character Fo (佛) seem to resonate better to Chinese ears, and these signifiers sometimes outlast their original signified. In another poem by Tang, he lists the countries that the Portuguese visited before settling in Macau (*Shi Wen Ji* 427), and one of them is Sanfo Guo (literally Nation of Three Buddhas), a variation of Sanfoqi, which was the Chinese transliteration for a Sumatra-based Buddhist nation known as Srivijaya. Although Srivijava had already collapsed in the thirteenth century, the powerful imagery of a Buddhist nation with the character Fo in its nation′s name lingered, and three centuries later Tang Xianzu still used it as a geographical reference point. Similarly, the very denomination that the Europeans received in Ming China, Folangji, a transcription of Ferengi, an Islamic categorization for Europeans, also had a lasting impact in Chinese scholarship, so much so that when a Portuguese embassy asked in 1565 to change the country′s Chinese translation to Pudulijia, a more literal translation of Portugal, the Chinese authorities rejected the petition, denouncing it as a trick used by the Folangji to avoid scrutiny:

> 四十四年伪称满剌加入贡。已，改称蒲都丽家。守臣以闻，下部议，言必佛郎机假托，乃却之。(MS 8433)

> In the year Forty-four of Jiajing [1565 CE], [Folangji] pretended to offer tribute as Malacca, then they changed their nation′s name to Pudulijia. The local officials were informed of this, and [the Emperor] asked for advice. [Officials] said that it must be a trick by the Folangji, so [the Emperor] refused.

For Chinese literati who did not have direct contact with the Portuguese, the character Fo, combined with the geographical location in the West, make Buddhism and India an unavoidable lens through which one gets to conceptualize the new foreign country. An episode in Zhang Ben′s *Wu Hu Man Wen* (《五湖漫闻》*Stories and Hearsays from the Five Lakes*) records a Chinese native, Fu Yongji (傅永纪), who suffered a shipwreck and drifted to a foreign land called Ji Lang Fo Guo. He was then rescued by a native, settled there and even became a translator for its embassy to China:

> 东洞庭傅永纪，正德初商游广东。泛海被溺（……)七日至海滨，见一渔翁张网立，乃拜书询为某处?渔书示曰："机郎佛国"。永纪又书日："我夏人也，覆舟随波至此，赖君可以生乎？"渔遂允为馆谷。(……)正德末年，机郎太子以永纪为通事，进刀剑于华夏，武宗礼遇优渥，永纪遂勿复去。嘉靖初年，罪其私通，乃至之瘐死，时年四十八。 (Zhang Ben 536b)
>
> Fu Yongji is from East Dongting, he travelled to Guangdong on a business trip in the initial years of Zhengde, but got shipwrecked on the sea…. After floating for seven days he reached the shore, finding a fisherman setting the net, so he wrote to ask where they were. The fisherman wrote back that they were in Ji Lang Fo Guo. Yongji then wrote: "I am Chinese, I was drifted here after shipwreck, could I depend on you for a living?" The fisherman consented to offer him room and board…. Towards the end of the Zhengde reign, the crown prince of Ji Lang used Yongji as translator to offer swords as tribute to China, Emperor Wuzong treated him with dignity and high rewards, so

> Yongji never left. In the initial years of Jiajing, he was criminated for collusion and died of disease in prison. He was forty-eight.

Recent scholarship has proposed that Fu was in fact the mysterious Portuguese ambassador Huozhe Yasan in Chinese records of Tomé Pires′ embassy (Lin Shuo 67-74; Jin and Wu 226-244). Regardless of Fu′s true identity, it is worth noting that Zhang Ben found the need to invert the order of the characters Fo Lang Ji, in order to form a phrase Fo Guo (Buddha′s Country).

Recombination of the order of characters also occurred in Ming documents about the transliteration of Portugal. The majority of records registers the nation as Pulidujia (蒲丽都家) (HMJS 3668b), while the official History writes Pudulijia (蒲都丽家)(MS 8433). If in this case, it was more likely a careless mistake by the scribe, as neither version of the transliteration has any special meaning, the same could not be said of Zhang Ben. In Zhang′s case, it was more than likely a conscious rearrangement, because he felt the need to alter the sequence of the country′s name for it to accord with his mental depiction of the world. It echoes Bernardim Ribeiro′s conscious anagram in *Menina e Moça*, but while the Portuguese poet changes Bernardim to Narbindel, Álvaro to Avalor and Joana to Aónia for the effect of estrangement, the Ming writer does it to increase familiarity.

There has been considerable study on the politics of naming in all sorts of circumstances, since to name is to identify an object, remove it from the unknown, and then assign to it a set of characteristics, motives, values and behaviors (Adler 93-94). Plato for one was meticulous about the naming process, stating that the names should imitate as much as possible the nature of the named object (*Cratylus* 151). In Chinese culture, the norm for country names is one or two characters, with the shortened one-character names much more frequent and preferred. As such, the last character in a multi-character name is generally considered the most important and, naturally, the most characteristic.

It is in this context that Zhang Ben′s inversion makes the most sense, as well as the constant allusion to Sanfoqi when Chinese authors talked about Folangji. The relationship between these two nations is not just determined by a coincidental sharing of one Chinese character, but also by all the cultural connotations with Buddhism embedded in the character Fo. Another recently discovered Chinese document, Xu Shijin (徐时进)′s "Ou Luo Ba Guo Ji" (《欧罗巴国记》*Tale of the Nation of Europe*), even asserts that Folangji and Sanfoqi are the same nation: "佛郎机即《异域志》所谓三佛齐也" (LMD 15).

The common association between Buddhism with the European presence in Macau produced quite diverse interpretations. Cai Ruxian believes that after the Indian monks sailed to Macau, their Buddhist teachings of Saṃsāra (cyclic, circuitous change) as well as their self-restraint instilled fear and awe, helping to regulate the profit-driven European merchants there: "夷性嗜利，尤易狟也。天竺僧自彼国渡海远来，历三年始达濠镜，诸夷信其法，遂奉之以要鼠诸夷，不敢或违，固怵于轮回果报之说，乃僧之戒行，亦足动人哉" (Cai Ruxian 427). If, in this instance, the linkage of Portugal/Europe with Buddhism does not contain a value judgment, this was not the case with fervent critic of Christianity Xu Dashou (许大受). In Xu′s opinion, one of the major falsehoods of these barbarians is their pretense to be from the West, and the logic behind this assertion also consists in linking the West with Buddhism. Since these false "Westerners" lacked proper knowledge of Buddhist doctrine, Xu deemed it impossible that they could come from the West (SCPX 217).

The distancing of Christian doctrine from Buddhist connotations in exchange for an approximation with Confucianism required the European missionaries to create new common grounds to win over the hearts and minds of the Chinese. It is once again under the spatial framework of the Western direction that attempts to appropriate indigenous traditions were made.

In Giulio Aleni (1582-1649)'s description of Judea in his introduction to world geography for a Chinese readership, the Italian priest attempted to suggest to his Confucian readers that the "Western Sage" documented in Chinese classics in fact referred to King David and his son King Solomon: "至春秋时有二圣王，父曰大味，得子曰撒剌满。(……) 中国所传谓西方圣人疑即指此也" (Aleni 53). The discourse of power reflected in this apparently neutral suggestion is notable. Aleni tries to remind the Chinese readers of an episode in *Liezi*, a Taoist classic with disputable authorship, in which Confucius supposedly acknowledged his inferiority to the Western Sage, as he rejected the attribution of the term Sheng Ren (圣人 Sage) to himself, instead praising a mysterious Western Sage:

> 西方之人有圣者焉，不治而不乱，不言而自信，不化而自行，荡荡乎民无能名焉。丘疑其为圣，弗知真为圣欤？真不圣欤？ (*Liezi* 110)
>
> [He] does not govern, yet there is no disorder; does not speak, yet is trusted spontaneously; does not reform, yet his influence prevails spontaneously. He is so great that none of his people can give a name to him. I suspect that he is a sage, but I do not know whether he truly is or not. (Trans. Angus Graham 78)

It is notable that the usurpation of the image of Western Sage was not a Christian invention, as Buddhists had already made the attempt to turn it into a representation of Buddha. This attribution was noted by the Christian convert Li Zhizao (李之藻, 1571-1630): "好事者曰，孔子尝称西方圣人，殆与佛与?" (380) "Somebody asked, Confucius once talked about a Western Sage, is it not the Buddha that he talked about?" In this way, the European Christians found, in an indigenous Chinese classic, an earlier ideological ally in their battle to establish a true representative of the West.

The Western Renaissance Men: Astronomer, Magician and Killer

Another focal point of contention regarding the West stems from its relationship with astronomy. Precision of calendars is one of the rare cultural aspects in which Ming Chinese were willing to accept their inferior status to foreigners. Shen Defu (沈德符, 1578-1642) justifies the employment of foreigners in the Imperial Board of Astronomy by saying: "中国历法，本不及外国精密" (524). "The Chinese calendar has always been lacking in precision compared to other nations."

To be more specific, the Chinese has always had the notion that people from the West were well-versed in astronomy: "西域人善天文，自古已然" (Gu Yanwu 1047). In the official history of Ming, the compilers find an interesting phenomenon: "尝考前代，远国之人言历法者多在西域，而东南北无闻。" (MS 544) "Having researched past dynastic histories, [we find that] those from distant countries who are versed in calendars are mostly from the Western territory, while there have been no mentions [of these experts] from East, South or North."

Matteo Ricci and the first generation of Jesuits in China were quick to grasp the opportunity that this perception provided, asking specifically for Rome to send more missionaries with a specialization in astronomy to seize this window of opportunity to create and expand their mission in China. In order to balance between not inflaming the Chinese sensitivities regarding their cultural superiority while also subtly suggesting the legitimacy of European knowledge, the Europeans had to walk on the dangerous wire of seeking, and sometimes manufacturing, echoes in Chinese classics of Western thoughts. Matteo Ricci himself in a memorial to Emperor Wanli emphasizes that the Western way of studying astronomy "coincides with ancient Chinese method" "并于中国古法吻合" (*Gong Xian* 20).

The Chinese official discourse was not content with a mere coincidence, however. What they aimed for was to deprive the foreigners of any of their proclaimed uniqueness and superiority. The official historians chose to provide an arbitrary explanation for Westerners′ abundant knowledge in astronomy, declaring that the true origin can be traced back to an ancient Chinese called He Zhong (和仲), who was believed to be the minister in charge of astronomy and agriculture under the legendary king Yao (尧). According to *Shang Shu* (《尚书》*Book of Documents*), one of the five Classics of Confucianism, He Zhong was assigned by Yao, conveniently, to live in the West to oversee the harvest："分命和仲宅西曰昧谷,寅饯纳日，平秩西成" (*Shang Shu* 6). By incorporating the Western astronomical knowledge into the Chinese lineage of Confucian Classics and Chinese mathematics books such as *Zhoubi Suanjing* (《周髀算经》), China maintains both its temporal and spatial superiority.

> 而西人浑盖通宪之器，寒热五带之说，地圆之理，正方之法，皆不能出周髀范围，亦可知其潮流之所自矣。 (MS 544)
>
> The Westerners have instruments to observe the universe, theories of five zones from tropical to polar, they think of Earth as a sphere and have a method of manipulating squares, but none of them goes beyond the limit of *Zhoubi Suanjian*, so we can deduce from where their knowledge derives.

Bringing the directional perspective into Sino-Portuguese interactions also sheds light on solving the mystery that, in some of the Ming and Qing cartographic and textual references[8], there are instances of Chinese using the term "Hua Ren" (化人) to refer to the Portuguese and/or Spanish. Until now, scholars have mostly proposed a linguistic explanation, arguing that it stems from the frequent mixture of *f* and *h* in Min Nan dialect used in the Southern Chinese

[8] For example, the Seldon Map of China, made between 1607 and 1624 and rediscovered in 2008 at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, and in Huang Ke Chui (黄可垂)'s *Lv Song Ji Lve* (《吕宋纪略》*Stories from Luzon*).

province of Fujian, where *ren* and *lang* are pronounced the exact same way (Jin "Seldon Map" 211). However, these discussions overlook the meaning that "Hua Ren" holds in the Chinese literary tradition. It is often associated with the alleged westward trip of King Mu of Zhou (周穆王, 976-922 BCE):

> 周穆王时，西极之国有化人来，入水火，贯金石；反山川，移城邑；乘虚不坠，触实不硋。千变万化，不可穷极。既已变物之形，又且易人之虑。(*Liezi* 81)
>
> In the time of King Mu of Chou [Zhou], there came from a country in the far West a magician [Hua Ren] who could enter fire and water, and pierce metal and stone, who overturned mountains, turned back rivers, shifted walled cities, who rode the empty air without falling and passed unhindered through solid objects; there was no end to the thousands and myriads of ways in which he altered things and transformed them. He not only altered the shapes of things, he also changed the thoughts of men. (Trans. Graham 61)

The tale of King Mu′s journey is a mixture of fictional and historical narrative, which entranced generations of Chinese readers. According to Wang Mingming, this fantastic tale reshaped the Chinese cultural map, initiating a tradition of viewing the West as a desirable Other (22-38). Hua Ren, or its variations of illusionists and magicians, also became a standard association whenever the Chinese literati dealt with people from the West. The persuasive power of the religions coming from West of China further solidifies this imagery, as the ability of the monks and priests to "change the thoughts of men" would seem like a special kind of magic to the onlookers. The 1591 book *Xian Bin Lu* (《咸宾录》*Record of All Tributary Guests*) associates Hua Ren with Buddhism: "西方之圣，见自由余，穆王与化人神游，何异今之言浮屠者" (Luo Yuejiong 9) "The Sage of the West can be seen in Youyu[9], King Mu of Zhou wandered

[9] Youyu was a chancellor with barbarian heritage that helped King Mu of Qin become a regional leader.

in spirit with the Hua Ren, isn′t it just like those of today who speak of Buddha.” When Catholic missionaries began to self-brand as scholars from the West, the common expectation from the Chinese public was that they could and should possess magical abilities, which ranged from being able to cover tens of thousands of miles in the short time span of inhaling and exhaling: “其人皆飞仙，好行游天下…欲还其国，一呼吸顷可万里” (Zhu Guozhen 619-620) to alchemy (Harris 123-124) and the ability not to get sick and even escape from death: “玛窦有异术，人不能害。又善纳气内观，故疾孽不作” (Li Rihua *Zi Tao Xuan* 14). Ming novelist Qian Xiyan (钱希言) showed genuine surprise when he found out about Ricci′s death: “庚戌年夏，中疫卧病，服参而死，始知其无他道术” (597). “In the summer of the year of Gengshu [1610], [Ricci] was caught in an epidemic disease, and died after eating ginseng, [I finally] found out that he had no other magical power.”

These associations are strong enough for Late Ming official Wen Deyi (文德翼) to be assertive in linking Hua Ren of the era of King Mu of Zhou with contemporary Europeans: “夫西洋善幻多奇迹，琴钟自鸣，与穆天子时化人相埒” (351). “[People from] the Western Ocean are very skilled in illusions and miracles, their musical instrument and clocks can make sounds on their own, they are like the Hua Ren of the era of King Mu.”

To link the use of Hua Ren with Iberians from the west is in no way intended to dismiss the dialectic factors that other scholars have suggested, but rather to suggest a fresh perspective, a possible influence that geographical notions could exert over people of the early modern period.

If Hua Ren represents a positive association with the West, other connotations are often less favorable. In Xu Dashou′s “Sheng Chao Zuo Bi” (《圣朝佐辟》”Assisting the Sagely Court in the Refutation of Heterodoxy”), there are more discourses in which cultural directions

are embedded. For instance, Xu also bases his doubt about the veracity of the foreigners' true geographical origin on the lack of mention of such people in Chinese historiography.

> 彼诡言有大西洋国，彼从彼来，涉九万里而后达此。按汉张骞使西域，或传穷河源抵月宫，况是人间有不到者。《山海经》《搜神记》《咸宾录》《西域志》《太平广记》等书，何无一字纪及彼国者？(SCPX 194)
>
> These people trick us in saying that there is a nation called the Great Western Ocean, which is where they come from, and that they traveled ninety thousand *li* in reaching here. My comment is that Zhang Qian of the Han Dynasty went to the Western Region as an ambassador, and it was rumored that he reached the Source of the [Yellow] River and even the Palace on the Moon, so why did he never pass [this nation] in this world? Why have books like *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, *In Search of the Supernatural*, *Record of All Tributary Guests*, *Gazetter of the Western Region* and *Extensive Record of the Taiping Era* not registered a word on that nation?

The most convincing evidence that Xu was able to muster comes from the famous Westward voyages of Zhang Qian (张骞, 164-114 BCE) during the Han Dynasty. According to Xu, Zhang went so far out to the West that it was therefore impossible for him not to have written about a Great Western maritime nation, if such a thing really existed. From today′s point of view, Xu′s reasoning seems ludicrous at best, but there is at least one fundamental cultural aspect that Xu′s paragraph reveals, which is the automatic association of the West with the voyages of the Han diplomat. In fact, Xu was far from the only Ming author who invoked the imagery of Zhang Qian in his treatment of Europeans. Many pro-Christianity Fujianese literati compared Giulio Aleni to Zhang, and some suggested that Aleni had surpassed Zhang in greatness. Among these mandarins stood out Ye Xianggao (叶向高, 1559-1627), who later became Grand Secretary of the Ming Court under Emperor Chongzhen. In his preface to Aleni′s *Zhifang Waiji* (《职方外

纪》*Record of the Foreign Land*), Ye glorifies the Jesuits′ voyages to China by stressing that they traveled a longer distance than Zhang (13), while Chen Hong (陈鸿, 1574-1646) renders the achievement of Zhang Qian ordinary compared to Aleni:

神山信可登，弱水本堪跨。

泛海昔张骞， 却是寻常者。 (Wu Xiangxiang 687)

I believe now that the divine Mountain can be climbed

And the legendary River of Ruo can be crossed

Zhang Qian who once traveled into the sea

Is actually nothing but an ordinary man.

The culmination of Xu Dashou′s attack on Christianity, however, is achieved via criticizing their true intentions based on the negative association with the West in Chinese Wuxing System. “西是金位，金是杀气 (……) 余曰：易传曰乾为天，为金，为寒，为冰，则乾亦杀气耶。今彼夷因我大明，而僭号大西，大西者独非大杀乎?” (SCPX 219-220) “West is the position of Jin, and Jin equals the essence of murder…. Now that those barbarians call themselves Da Xi [Great West] because of us Da Ming [Great Ming], but isn’t Great West in essence Great Killings?”

Wuxing (五行 Five Elements or Phases) is a fundamental Chinese cosmological and cultural system, which was widely used by Chinese people to explain a wide array of phenomena, ranging from everyday practices of medicine, Feng Shui and martial arts, to personal destiny, household fortune, dynastic rise and fall, and changes in astrology. At the core of this system is the concept of “mutual coming and mutual generation” (相克相生), meaning that while element A may generates B and is the product of C (eg. Fire comes out of Wood, Fire creates Earth), it also participates in a cyclic restricting relation (eg. Fire can melt Metal, but is put out by Water). Such practice saw a resurgence in Ming Dynasty, which can

be proved by the fact that the names of every descendant of Emperor Hongwu (its founder) all follow this cycle of generation: his sons′ names contain the radical for Wood, his grandsons Fire, and so on. On the other hand, Ming general Yu Dayou would cite the cyclic restricting relation of the Five Elements as a model to keep the different interest groups (officers and soldiers, foreign merchants and rebel soldiers) in check, claiming that the trick for success is to find the correct faction to limit another: "金克木，木克土，土克水，水克火，火又能克金，岂彼物能克此物，而终无能克彼者哉。所以能使之递克而反自克者，天工之巧，主张于其间耳。五行不能自逞也，用官兵以制夷商，用夷商以制叛兵，在主将之巧，能使之耳" (310).

Each element has been assigned a wide range of properties, of which the cardinal direction is of special note here. What represents the West in Wuxing is *Jin* (Venus, Metal), and was believed to be in control of killing and revolution. Joseph Needham once suggested that the ancient Chinese had a "correlative thinking" (*Science and Civilization* 279) that coordinated different types of processes into simple interrelated orders or patterns. One such correlation that crosses normal categorical boundaries and thus has eluded scholarly attention is the one between the translation for Portugal and the *Jin*-like character associated with the West. It is common knowledge that the most widely circulated translation of Portugal (and later Spain) in Ming China was Folangji, but in reality, this term was more frequently used in Ming documents to refer to the Western-style cannon than to designate the country of its production. It is suggested that the approximate ratio was more than three to one in favor of the cannon reference (Lin Manhong 18), a tendency that is helped by the coincidence that the character Ji (机) also means "machine" in Chinese. The association of Folangji with weaponry can be best demonstrated by a poem titled "On the Worthy Deed of the Frankish Gun" (书佛郎机遗事), which was written by Wang Yangming (王阳明, 1462-1529), the most influential Confucian

theorist in the Ming era[10]. This poem soon became the subject of one of the literati′s favorite pastimes: a poetry exchange (*Gunpowder* 139), which helped popularize the association of the term Folangji with the deadly weapon. The confusion became so prevalent that Gu Yingxiang had to make the clarification that Folangji actually refers to a nation and not the weapon: "佛郎机，国名也，非铳名也"(Zheng Shungong 1479). This unfortunate coincidence obviously lowered the possibility for the development of a peaceful image of the Portuguese in Chinese mind. The fact that such an image was already in a perilous position due to early reports of Portuguese brutality did not help either.

It is in this context that the Jesuit missionaries came to the China scene. They naturally tried to distance themselves from the infamy left by the Portuguese, and in hopes that Ming mandarins would see them as being from an equally great nation, they adopted the name Da Xi (大西 Great West) as a translation of their country of origin. Along with the start of sixty years of Spanish rule of Portugal, this tactic led to more confusion among the Chinese regarding the true identity of these foreigners. A Qing treatise on Macau even claims that the continuously arriving Da Xi Yang nationals gradually replaced all the Folangji people living in Macau:

> 先是有利玛窦者，自称大西洋人，居澳门二十年，其徒来者日众，至国初已尽易西洋人，无复所为佛郎机者。 (Yin and Zhang 23)
>
> First there was a name called Matteo Ricci, who claimed to be from Da Xi Yang [Great Western Ocean] and lived in Macau for twenty years, his disciples came in ever greater

[10] 佛郎机，谁所为？截取比干肠，裹以鸱夷皮，苌弘之血衅不足，睢阳之怒恨有遗。老臣忠愤寄所泄，震惊百里贼胆披。徒请尚方剑，空闻鲁阳。挥段公笏板不在兹，佛郎机，谁所为？(Wang Yangming 921)
The Frankish gun, who made it?
Removable, like the innards of Bigan, wrapped in smooth leather.
The blood offerings of Chang Hong did not suffice.
The fury and hatred of Suiyang remain.
The outpourings [of the cannon] carry with them the old officials′ ardent faith:
[The sound] shocking for a hundred li, splitting open the guts of the traitorous.
In vain the Sword of State is requested.
In the emptiness one hears Lu Yang brandishing his spear [at the sun].
The writing tablet of the honorable Duan is no longer with us.
The Frankish gun, who made it? (Trans. Tonio Andrade *Gunpowder Age* 138)

numbers, when our [Qing] Dynasty was founded, there were no more so-called Folangji, all of them have been replaced by nationals of the Western Ocean.

However, for the anti-Christian literati, the newly changed country′s name once again demonstrated a military threat. A critic bases his suspicion specifically on the association of the West with conflict: “旋干大字下，以西字续之，隐寄西为金方兵戈之象，则其思逞不轨潜谋之素矣” (SCPX 304). “Immediately after the character Da [Great], they add the character Xi [West], in this they withhold the imagery of the representation of West of *Jin*: weapons and war, so we can know that they have been secretly plotting against us for a long time.”

To Xu Dashou, the fact that these barbarians chose to imitate Da Ming (Great Ming) and usurped the title Da Xi (Great West), especially since they are not from the West in his view, is showcasing their evil intentions. They immediately remind any Chinese of past nomadic raids and invasions. Apart from territorial conquests, these barbarians even bring the subversive Christian doctrines that could endanger Chinese Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist teachings, and this *Jin*-like revolutionary zeal again reveals the existence of a hidden agenda behind the peaceful appearances of the missionaries. By binding the foreigners with the aggressiveness inherent to the West, and by denying that their true geographical origin is really from the West, thereby distancing the foreigners from Buddhism, Xu preemptively shuts down the possibility of pro-Jesuits scholars also wielding cardinal direction as a weapon in their counterargument, shielding the credulous Chinese literati from continuing to associate the barbarians with positive connotations of the West, such as Sukhāvatī (Western paradise), to the Christian impostors. The readers of Xu should avoid repeating the mistake of Wang Pan (王泮), a senior official in the Guangdong Province, who mistakenly gifted two plaques with inscriptions of “Xianhua Si” (仙花寺 Pagoda of Divine Flowers) and “Xilai Jingtu” (西来净土 Paradise Coming from the West) to Michele Ruggieri′s Catholic Church in Zhaoqing.

Xu cautions against the appropriation of the Chinese cultural West by the newcomers. In reality, the arrival of Portuguese and other Europeans in China did cause a fundamental change in the local perception of geographical directions. Pre-Ming Chinese discourses of the West, Western Ocean and Western Learning refer primarily to India, Indian Ocean and Buddhism respectively, but after the European arrival in China, the newcomers began to depict themselves as being from "The Furthest West" (泰西), "The Great West" (大西) or "The Extreme West" (极西), downgrading the Indian region to "Lesser West"(小西）and "Lesser Western Ocean"(小西洋) (Huang and Wang 3). Gradually, this new notion of the West would become the most predominant in China, replacing the traditional worldview that only persists today in accounts of historical events like the great expeditions of Zheng He (郑和下西洋, literally Zheng He Down the Western Ocean). Europe substitutes India as the one true West, and in doing so, Europeans solidified their position in the Chinese mental map as a potential challenger to the center.

Directional Shifts: "Southern Barbarians" and "Eastern Intellectuals"

Unlike Ming literati who generally called the Portuguese Xi Yi (西夷 Western Barbarians) and incorporated the provenance of Europeans into the cultural context of the West, the Japanese in the Sengoku period (1467-1603) and Togugawa Shogunate (1603-1868) preferred the term Nanban (Barbarians from the South) to designate the Europeans. Nanban is an import word based on the Chinese term Nanman (南蛮 Southern Barbarians), and it originally did not refer to the European ships and people arriving from the South. According to Olof Lidin, "Nanbansen coming from Southeast Asia are mentioned from early times with reference to lands south of Kyushu. The arrivals of a nanbansen from Sumatra as early as 1408 and of a nanbansen from Java a year later are recorded in the annals" (20). However, it was used to designate the Portuguese first arriving at the island of Tanegashima in 1543, and later came to refer to the Spanish and the Dutch as well.

The exact reason behind Japanese allocating the direction South to these strange foreigners could not be identified, but there do exist several possible explanations. On one hand, the newly-arrived Portuguese were treated like Sumatran or Ryukyuan merchants that arrived on Japanese shores before them, who were all grouped under the categories of people from the South. The Portuguese were in essence incorporated into the local trading network rather than a revolutionary force in the regional commercial or diplomatic structure. More importantly, the Japanese cultural West had already been occupied by the Ming Empire. A common term used to refer to China in the Togugawa Shogunate period was Sei-do (西土), meaning the Land of the West (Ng 113). In the Nanban byōbu (folding screens) depicting the Portuguese, there is a clear distinction between European Black Ships (kurofune) and the White Ships (shirofune) of Chinese merchants (Curvelo 590-591). The Europeans did try to correct the Japanese perception, as in some official documents addressed to the Emperor of Japan, the Portuguese at Macau used the term "Xiyu Guo (西域国 Western Territory Nation) to refer to their country of origin (Kondo 278-279), but achieved limited success. Whatever the Portuguese and other Europeans did in China in appropriating the position of the Cultural West originally held by India, they failed to do so in Japan, probably because their rival in the battle to become the true representative of the West in the Ming Dynasty was much stronger and much more intertwined with Japanese culture. However, this contrasting view of cardinal direction shows the complex involvement of geographical notions in intercultural interactions in the early modern period, and also attests to the agency that non-European societies had in their own interpretation of foreign knowledge.

In contrast, the European agency in relation to directions mainly consisted in the project to "Orientalize" China, or in other words, to compete for the central position by conveying another world order in which China would be placed in the East. The arrival of Christianity in China during the Ming Period was not the first attempt made by an Abrahamic religion, as

Nestorian Christians were able to achieve limited success during Tang Dynasty, but this later enterprise was by far the most influential. One of its main obstacles, however, was how to edge the Chinese out of their self-proclaimed central position in the world and into an Eastern corner. Matteo Ricci′s first version of the World Map at the end of sixteenth century caused an uproar among Chinese literati: "[but] they do not like the idea of our geographies pushing their China into one corner of the Orient" (*Journals* 167). This furious reaction prompted Ricci to make a significant change, moving the map 170 degrees to the East for China's position to be readjusted to the center of the map. According to Ricci, this new version pleased the Chinese public: "it brought a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction" (*Journals* 167). Nevertheless, Walter Mignolo sees in Ricci′s resolution only a partial concession: "Ricci was able to concede and change the geographical center, although he may never have doubted that the ethnic center remained in Rome. . . . By redrawing the world map and placing the Pacific instead of the Atlantic at the center of the world, Ricci was able to detach the ethnic from the geometric rationalization of space" (222). The Argentinian semiotician goes on to argue that the difference between the Jesuit and Chinese ways of representation is not relevant at the level of true correspondence to reality but at the level of power (225-226). Through later missionaries′ success in "orientalizing" China, we can easily testify to the power of the Eurocentric conception of the world.

Late-Ming mandarin Chen Liangcai (陈亮采), when writing preface to Diego de Pantoja (1571-1618) ′s *Qi Ke* (《七克》*Overcoming the Seven Deadly Sins*), cites the Spanish Jesuit as adopting the term "Intellectuals of the East" (东方之士) to refer to Chinese literati (Huang and Wang 43). This denomination may seem perfectly normal to modern eyes, but it is worth pointing out that, for learned East Asians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such a title was almost exclusively used for Koreans. Following a growing tendency in China to self-identity as Zhongguo (Middle Kingdom), which dates to Northern Song Dynasty (960-

1127 CE), nations in the Sinophone sphere generally locate themselves under the presumption that China equaled center. The names of Korea (Joseon), Japan (Nippon) and Vietnam (Annam) all come from their self-awareness of the relative geographical position to China. The most obvious one is that "nam" in Vietnam means South, but the origin of the other two are less known. The Joseon Dynasty in Korea (1392-1897 CE) is short for 朝日鮮明 "Bright Morning Sun", which referred to their eastward position in relation to Ming China. In the case of Japan, during the period of intense cultural and institutional learning from Tang China (618-907 CE), Nippon (日本), or "Land of the Rising Sun", replaced the local self-designation of Yamato (大和). These examples suggest the importance of the rhetoric of direction in East Asian countries, which was embedded not just in the Chinese cultural unconscious, but also those of nations in China's periphery. In 1456, a Korean official questions why in their Temple of Confucius those who were deemed worthy of commemoration were exclusively Chinese, and his use of the term "Intellectuals of the East" was emblematic of his time: "中国之配享者果皆如孔、孟、程、朱乎？东方之士皆不可如中国人乎？" (*Chosŏn* 123) "Is it really that those Chinese have merits like Confucius, Mencius, Cheng Hao, Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi[11]? Is it really that [we] intellectuals of the East are all inferior to those from Zhong Guo?"

It is in this context that the European struggle to usurp the center faced off against the Chinese effort to maintain their pivotal position, and it was indeed a tit-for-tat battle. Despite Ricci′s accommodating placement of China, Wei Rui would still reject his rendition of the world, as he found it scandalous for China to be even a little off the Center:

> 利玛窦以其邪说惑众，士大夫翕然信之(……) 所著《坤舆全国》洸洋窅渺，直欺人以其目之所不能见，足之所不能至，无可按验也。真所谓画工之画鬼魅也

[11] Cheng Hao (1032-1085), Cheng Yi (1033–1107) and Zhu Xi (1130-1200) are key figures in the Neo-Confucian movement in the Song Dynasty, and their Rationalistic School would become dominant in later dynasties.

(……) 中国当居正中，而图置稍西，全属无谓 (……) 焉得谓中国如此蕞尔，而居于图之近北？其肆无忌若此？！ (SCPX 183-184)

Matteo Ricci deludes the people with his heresy, and [Chinese] scholar-officials all believe him . . . His world map is presumptuously imaginative, and he counts on us not having the ability to see with our own eyes and not be able to set foot on those fictive lands, so there cannot be any proof. It is just like painters drawing ghosts and phantoms . . . China should be in the middle, but [Ricci′s] map puts it a little to the West, which is totally nonsensical. . . . How can he claim China to be this tiny and to be near the north of the map? How shameless is he?!"

In contrast, Christian convert and Chinese mandarin Yang Tingyun (杨廷筠, 1562-1627) took the first step in trying to downplay the importance of the West-East division:

地有中边，人分夷汉，此各囿方隅，自生畛域之见。上帝视之，同在地球之上，同覆圆盖之中。何东何西，何内何外，天命之性，厥赋为均。 (LMD 161)

To divide the land by center and periphery and to divide the people by barbarian and Han [Chinese] is a self-limiting and self-restricting view. God sees everything equally on Earth, and equally under the Sky. Why stick to divisions of East and West or Interior with Exterior? Natural human inclinations are given equally by God.

The mere fact that Chen Liangcai would document the unorthodox use of the denomination "East" by Pantoja, even though Chen himself did not adopt the phrase to describe the people of China, shows the extent to which some Ming Chinese scholars went to accept cultural relativism, a concept keenly promoted by European missionaries. In a letter addressed to a Korean translator for Portugal's embassy to China, Portuguese Jesuit João Rodrigues (1561-1633) explains that former world maps with China in the middle are only one possible arrangement, and that any country could be placed at the center:

> 万国图以大明为中，便观览也。如以地球论之，国国可以为中。中国见此图，见西人，方知地之大、国之多也。 (Tang *Wei Li Duo* 227)
>
> The Map of Ten-Thousand Nations has Great Ming as its center, but it is only because it facilitates viewing. If we talk about the Earth as a globe, then any nation can be in the middle. [Only after] Zhong Guo sees this map and meets us Western people did they know how large the Earth is, and how many nations there are.

By also documenting Chinese amazement in seeing the true size of the Earth, Rodrigues was in effect hinting to the Koreans that they could also be in the middle, that they did not necessarily have to follow the Chinese world order and accept their place as merely a country in the East. This tactic worked to some extent, as evidenced by a Korean official who viewed a version of Ricci′s world map brought from China in 1603, and provided the following comment on the possible shift of center: "欧罗巴地界，南至地中海 (……) 地中海者，乃是天地之中，故名云" (Yi Su-gwang 55). "The territory of Europe stretches to the Mediterranean Sea in the South. . . . It is called the Mediterranean Sea because it is in the middle of Sky and Earth, so they gave it this name." At least for this Korean observer, China ceased to be the sole cosmological center, which created the possibility for it to stop being the ideological and cultural center as well. A Qing scholar summarizes the Western rhetoric best: "西士言地，面面居人，无适非中者，不欲中国独擅得中之美耳" (Xu Guilin 50). "Western scholars say every side of Earth is habitable, and there is no definitive center, because they do not want China to have exclusive benefits of being in the center."

In Manuel Dias′ (1574-1659) *Tian Wen lve* (《天问略》*Epitome on the Questions of Heaven*), a 1615 account of European cosmographic and astronomical understandings, scholars have observed some specific accommodations to cater to Chinese readership, such as an emphasis on eclipses, a phenomenon of rich cultural meaning in China, and a table of the times of sunrise and sunset for all fifteen provinces of China (Leitão 113). However, this treatise also

contains some implicit suggestions of cultural relativism, which have not received enough scholarly attention. When explaining the science behind an eclipse, Dias uses the metaphor of a candlelight blocked by an obstacle to facilitate understanding (860b). However, alluding to the East as the direction where the view is obstructed could be a conscious choice by Dias. As the accommodation strategy is prevalent in this treatise, it could be argued that here Dias is choosing the East since it could elicit greater empathy from the people of China, a land that Dias believed to be in the Far East. Nevertheless, as we have seen above, Ming Chinese themselves did not share this positional allocation, thus this European push to "orientalize" China may have ulterior motives. More probably, it served as a subtle admonishment to the proud Chinese about the imperfections of their "sight", as their worldview is flawed without the guide of Christianity.

Eyesight and, by extension, the number of eyes, was a common metaphor for knowledge of the other in different cultures. João de Barros was one of the most vocal about a popular belief, according to which the arrogant Chinese boldly claim to be the only people with two eyes and that Europeans had one and the rest were completely blind: "Os Chijs dizem q̃ elles tem dous ólhos de jntendimẽto acerca de todallas cousas, & nós os da Európa depois q̃ nos comunicará temos hum ólho, & todallas outras nações sam çegas" (*Terceira Década* 46). This figurative reading into the eye metaphor was intended as a satire of the Chinese ignorance, making use of the Portuguese tradition of saying: "em terra de cegos, quem tem um olho é rei." Interestingly, this widespread rumor of Chinese arrogance actually transformed into Western hubris under the pen of anti-Jesuit scholar Su Jiyu (苏及宇), who cited the barbarians as blindly believing themselves to have more eyes than all the other civilizations: "夷辈喜而相告曰：我西士有四眼，日本人有三眼 (两到日本开教被其两杀故云)，中国人有两眼，呂宋人无一眼" (SCPX 178-179). "These barbarians are happy to tell each other: We Western intellectuals have four eyes, the Japanese three (because we tried to spread our faith there twice

and failed both times), the Chinese two eyes, and the locals of Luzon do not have a single eye." In Su′s reasoning, the Europeans seem to acknowledge foreigners′ degree of civilization based on the latter's level of suspicion of the Catholic faith, and Luzon, who foolishly believed the Europeans, are instead ridiculed by their new masters.

Recently, scholars have traced the origin of this proverb to Persian Manicheans in the Middle Ages, seeing in its creation a reflection of their admiration for the two landmasses that had not yet succumbed to their religion that were Europe and China (Wu Liwei 64). Regardless of its true origin and notwithstanding the diverse sentimental values attributed to it, the popularity of this rumor in both West and East goes to show the metaphorical value of the ability to see. When the Chinese hermit in Fernão Mendes Pinto′s narrative condemns the immorality and brutality of Portuguese pirates, he refers to their "blindness" as the only explanation for the stupidity: "Grande deue ser a tua cegueyra" (218). Even eye size becomes a topic of contention, as Chen Ruqi (陈汝锜) documents a popular belief among Ming literati: "或谓胡眼孔大，薄视中国" (31). "People say that foreigners have broad eyes, so they belittle China."

The effectiveness of the eye metaphor made it plausible for Manuel Dias to act upon the symbolic value of blindness in an apparently neutral scientific text. It is, in essence, the same logic behind Giambattista Vico′s condescending remark on other civilizations:

> Just as a man confined while asleep in a very small dark room, in horror of darkness [on waking] believes it certainly much larger than groping with his hands will show it to be, so, in the darkness of their chronology, the Chinese and the Egyptians have done, and the Chaldeans likewise. (30)

The association of the East with blindness is not the only example with ideological implications in Manuel Dias′s *Tian Wen Lve*. On the topic of time zones, Dias again attempts to permeate his scientific text with cultural and geographical relativism, making subtle suggestions about

the imperfections of local knowledge of the East (864). Dias′s subtlety and tactfulness is representative of a new way of Portuguese presence in the East, in which a delicate balance with much more powerful local powers had to be maintained in order for the Portuguese to survive in the region.

In contrast, for Ming literati, the initial phase of "orientalizing" China by the Europeans obviously lacked the representational judgment that Edward Said proposes to be dominant in the nineteenth century, nor did it spark the "self-orientalism" observed by Arif Dirlik in the twentieth century Asians who developed a more coherent rhetoric by self-identifying as Easterners (96). However, this does not mean that the European manipulation of direction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was purely geographical by any means. As Pang Naiming points out, the Western spatial and cosmological knowledge challenged the foundations of the traditional Chinese world order based on the distinction between Hua and Yi ("Lai Hua" 121). The majority of Ming Chinese shared a monocentric worldview analogous to Western imperialists in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who viewed the binary division of the world not as West versus East, but rather West versus Rest. For Ming Chinese, to change their self-identification from Central Empire to a country in the East required that they recognize Europe at least as an equal, if not superior, which leads to the more complex layers of mapping in distance and scale.

Chapter 2: Perspectives of Mapping: Distance and Scale

Introduction

While spatial location and direction are also flexible elements during the process of the theoretical construction of another nation, distance and scale are often prone to more contention due to the cultural and symbolic values attached. Especially when the nations in question do not border each other, the plentiful room for imagination, manipulation and appropriation conduces to a more prolonged debate on a deeper level. Distance was not just a neutral number, it was the measurement of a variety of qualities, including the level of civilization as well as degree of military threat. The manipulation of the rhetoric on distance was a key strategy in the debate between the pro and anti-European/Christian factions in the Ming court. Meanwhile, both the West and the East were adept in appropriating the long distance of foreigns nations to boost their prestige domestically, emphasizing the cultural superiority that lead to the coming or reaching of the distant nationals. At the same time, the impossibility to fully grasp the spatial dimension of the other due to technological limitations caused a crisis around the question of scale, and conflicting views on concepts ranging from local to global were rife in the intercultural communications between Portugal/Europe and China/East Asia. By examining these layers of scale, we can achieve a better understanding of each side's approach in justifying their own advantage in the great cultural dialogue and contention. This section starts with a look into the visions for universal empire and their obstacles, then changes focus to the clash of multi-continent systems, then to the cultural imagination in depicting national geographics, and ultimately to the conflicts of interests at the local level. Differences abound, but it was also in these more nuanced interactions that we could truly grasp the intricacies of human and organizational behaviors.

Manipulating Distance

"兵者,诡道也。故能而示之不能,用而示之不用,近而示之远,远而示之近。"

"All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near."

Sun-Tzu, *The Art of War* (c. 515-512 BCE)

During the 2018 FIFA World Cup, after the last two Non-European teams, Uruguay and Brazil, were eliminated in the quarterfinals, an image claiming that South America still had a shot in winning the title went viral. The image was based on the actual map of South America, with slight alteration to highlight French Guinea and British Oversea Territories like Falkland Islands. Since France and England both made it to the semifinals, the image suggests that South America had not lost all its hopes of the ultimate glory in modern sports.

Aside from the humor effect, this adapted map points out a certain blind spot in public perception of spatial distance, as well as the arbitrary and fluctuating nature of regional demarcations. When it comes to the sixteenth century, such geographical misconceptions would prove to be another undeniable factor in explaining how countries and civilizations clashed.

When commenting on the language of distance, Michel Foucault observes that "distance and aspect are interrelated in a much closer manner than space and time; they form a network which no psychology can untie (aspect offering not time itself but the moment of its coming forth; distance offering not things in their place, but the movement which presents them and makes them pass)" ("Distance" 106). Foucault′s judgment of the inseparability between distance and aspect, or in his words, "the categories of completion, incompletion, of continuity, iteration, immanence, proximity, distancing" (105), does reveal some of the rhetorical and ideological potentials of distance. For example, as Sellers-García puts it, distance is "less a

question of measurement and more a question of perspective" (1). What was often embedded in cross-cultural interactions in the early modern era, therefore, is a testing ground for the clash and fusion of different views on the perceived distance between the sites from which such views emanate. It is now household knowledge that the very premise of Christopher Columbus′ westward journey that lead to the "discovery" of the Americas was his miscalculation of the distance from Western Europe to China, but fewer people notice how the perceived distance became a focal point of tension in early Luso-Chinese interactions.

In her seminal work *Ulysses′ Sail* Mary W. Helms brings up the role of geographical distance in ethnographic discussion:

> The significance of interchanges of peoples and material goods across geographical distances can be better understood if we know something of the qualities attributed to space and distance in particular situations, or at least appreciate that symbolic qualities of some sort are likely to be attached to concepts of geographical distance and by extension to tangible expressions of experiences with distance. (10)

Helms correctly points out that "cosmic ideologies, including concepts of geographical distance, can be put to use, as we well know, to identify and activate political intents and ideologies" (49). However, her interest lies primarily with the "distancing" mechanism in political discourse, which often uses the distant "outside" to regulate the "inside." It is indeed the norm for a civilization to consider itself the center of culture, and that the further into the periphery one travels, the lower the degree of civility. While Ethnocentrism has many layers and is often manifestation of a complex set of discursive or ideological attitudes, according to Tuan Yi-Fu, it is most potent when a group has a real or delusional self-sufficiency (30). China′s Sino-centric world order of a central empire surrounded by tributary states is built precisely upon such beliefs. Emperor Qianlong′s famous edict to Lord Macartney′s Embassy

in 1793 has been frequently cited to showcase the extent of Chinese narrow-mindedness and their disregard for things from afar:

> 天朝抚有四海，惟励精图治，办理政务，奇珍异宝，并不贵重。尔国王此次赍进各物，念其诚心远献，特谕该管衙门收纳。其实天朝德威远被，万国来王，种种贵重之物，梯航毕集，无所不有。尔之正使等所亲见。然从不贵奇巧，并无更需尔国制办物件。(*Ying Shi* 56)
>
> Swaying the wide world, I have but one aim in view, namely, to maintain a perfect governance and to fulfill the duties of the State: strange and costly objects do not interest me. If I have commanded that the tribute offerings sent by you, O King, are to be accepted, this was solely in consideration for the spirit which prompted you to dispatch them from afar. Our dynasty′s majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country′s manufactures. (Trans. Backhouse and Bland 324-325)

This manifestation of ethnocentrism in the late eighteenth century was most striking for the era of its pronouncement rather than its content, as this phenomenon was by no means unique to the Chinese. Greek historian Herodotus had already commented on the association between geographical distance and degree of civilization in the ancient Persian way of thinking:

> They honour most of all those who dwell nearest them, next those who are next farthest removed, and so going ever onwards they assign honour by this rule; those who dwell farthest off they hold least honourable of all; for they deem themselves to be in all regards by far the best of all men, the rest to have but a proportionate claim to merit, till those who dwell farthest away have least merit of all. (1: 175)

What occurred in early Luso-Chinese interactions, however, is worth special attention for it contains a peculiar case of conflict in relation to distance: The pro-contact side attempted to magnify the distance between the two nations, while the anti-contact conservatives sought to prove that the space in between was in reality much shorter, thus appearing to apply the deception tactic proposed by Sun Tzu outside of military realm. The curious phenomenon was emblematic of Carlo Ginzburg′s observation that "extreme distance leads to indifference," while "extreme closeness can lead either to pity or to destructive rivalry" (49).

Distance, Hypocrisy and Threat

The history of Christian missionary enterprise in China saw many setbacks along the centuries, but one of the first devastating challenges during the Ming Dynasty was the Nanjing Incident of 1616. Shen Que, Vice Minister of Rites at the time, with strong support among high-ranking officials launched a series of accusations at the Jesuits, raising suspicions that they were involved in conspiracy and subverting the state. After several months of heated debate, several missionaries were expelled, and others forced to abstain from preaching and publishing. Many letters and memorials related to this debate have survived until today, and in such a significant controversy both sides attempted to appropriate discourses on spatial distance for their benefit.

The pro-Christian side tended to use the term Tai Xi (泰西, The Furthest West) to refer to the distant land, since to highlight geographical remoteness could imply impartiality as well as authority (Clossey 111). Overcoming such a long distance to come to China proves the technological accomplishment of these foreigners, which should be worthy of Chinese appreciation. Coupled with a rhetoric of admiration that these Westerners professed for powerful China, highlighting distance catered to the ethnocentric sentiment of Ming Chinese who believed in the universality of their Confucian values. At the same time, the emphasis on

the long distance between Europe and China also had the pragmatic utility of assuaging the fear among Chinese literati of a possible European invasion.

In contrast, the anti-Jesuit side sought to prove the hypocrisy of the foreigners by discrediting their claim to have traveled a long distance to China, and at the same time also exaggerated the spatial proximity of Portugal and Spain to Great Ming to caution against their possible aggression. Their point of view was that these foreigners were in fact from Southeast Asia, and had subversive intentions against the Central Empire, as evidenced by the following quote:

> 按，此种出于东北隅，为佛狼机，亦为猫儿眼。其国系干系蜡，而米索果其镇头也。原距吕宋不远，所谓数万里者伪耳。(SCPX 174-175)
>
> Note: These people are from the Northeast and are called Folangji or Maoeryan [Cat Eye]. Their nation is Ganxila [Castile], and Misuoguo [Moluccas] is their *Zhen Tou*. They are in fact not far from Luzon, and what they say about being from tens of thousands of *li* away [from China] is a lie.

In this 1638 essay "Qu Yi Zhi Yan" (《驱夷直言》 "Straight Words to Expel the Barbarians"), Huang Tingshi (黄廷师) puts Portugal and Castile near the island of Luzon. What is interesting in the passage is the use of the term "Zhen Tou"(镇头) to describe the relationship of the Moluccas to the Iberian nation(s). Apart from meaning "town" in Chinese, the character *zhen* is also a term in the traditional East Asian game Go, which was more than just a popular means of entertainment for the cultured. It was a way of life, a must-have skill to be a true Confucian. Therefore, metaphors containing terminologies related to the game abound in texts about a variety of topics, including politics and military actions. In Go terms, *Zhen* is the strategy used to defend against an opponent′s attack towards the center of the board. This play usually combines defense and offense, checking the opponent′s progress while also putting pressure on their lone pieces. To use this term in the context of international politics demonstrates

Huang′s vigilance against the Iberians' possible intrusion into what China considered to be its own sphere of influence, while also implicitly raising the status of those foreigners to be able to be considered as the rival for the Great Ming.

Despite all his allegations that the Iberians had a deceitful nature, Huang does not provide ample evidence justifying his reservations regarding the geographical distance of their homeland. The main advocate of the anti-Jesuit movement, Shen Que, was more eloquent in this matter. In a memorial to Emperor Wanli, Shen directs his suspicion towards the true origin of the continuous funds that kept the missionaries going, arguing that such a monetary network would be impossible to maintain if their homeland were really 80,000 *li* away from China (SCPX 62). In another memorial, Shen suspects that the Folangji were in fact carrying out a military expansion in the name of spreading faith. They were, after all, "a shrewd barbarian state just next door to Fujian and Guangdong. How can it be 80,000 *li* away?" (trans. Zhang Qiong 315-316) "然则闽粤相近一狡夷尔。有何八万里之遥" (SCPX 66).

While many like Huang were using the former Chinese tributary state of Luzon as their point of reference, Shen deliberately moved the location of the aggressor even closer, to the point where it posed a significant threat to the southern provinces of Fujian and Guangdong that were under direct dynastic control. This move was followed by anti-Catholic Chinese scholars Zhong Shisheng (钟始声) and Xu Dashou, who also opined on the true distance between China and the foreign countries. Zhong was confident that he discovered the true origin of the missionaries, which is "a small country near Macau," and the people are "crafty and evil, with the intention to covet the rule of China": "吾亦闻汝之根底矣，生于近香山岙之小国,聪明奸宄，意在觊觎中原神器" (951). Xu in turn cites his fellow townsman Yu Shihui (余世恢), who had personally been to the Portuguese settlement, averring that the missionaries were in fact locals of Macau: "云彼特广东界外香山嚣人"(SCPX 195). From Shen to Zhong and then to Xu, the diminishing distance at which they place the foreigners

curiously corresponds with each author′s increasing degree of suspicion and aversion towards the Christian preaching and their sense of the ideological threat posed by the barbarians.

It is also worth noting that the military personnel were more conservative in their calculation of the true distance between Portugal and Chinese shores. As mentioned above, Zhu Wan, who defeated the Portuguese in the battle of Shuangyu, places Portugal in the island of Sumatra, while Yu Dayou (俞大猷), another prominent general at the time, gathers that Guangdong is in a threatened location because it is "not far from various foreign countries like Annam, Champa, Siam and Folangji" "盖广东去西南之安南、占城、暹罗、佛郎机诸番不远" (190). This calculation obviously contributed to his decision to call for the expulsion of the Portuguese from Macau, despite having successfully cooperated with them to quell a mutiny in Guangdong.

Michel Foucault has asserted that "the gap, distance, the intermediary, dispersion, fracture and difference are not the themes of literature today; but in which language is now given and comes to us: what makes it speak" ("Language of Space" 163-164). In the Luso-Chinese interactions, geographical distance did become the medium to carry symbolic attributes, and how individuals manipulated the distance in their language demonstrated perfectly their political agendas. Su Jiyu (苏及宇)'s rebuttal of Christianity "Xie Du Shi Ju" (《邪毒实据》"Substantive Proof of Evil Poison") reveals one area of serious tension in the supposed Christian exaggeration of the distance: "一此夷诈言九万里。夫诈远者，令人信其無异志，而不虞彼之我吞耳" (SCPX 179). "These barbarians say falsely that they come from a great distance of ninety thousand *li*. They exaggerate the distance in order to lead people to believe that they have no ulterior motives, so as to dissuade us from worrying about their annexing us."

Su Jiyu was quite perspicacious about the conscious use of the soothing effect of distance employed by the Europeans. Matteo Ricci had already grasped the fear-reducing mechanism of the perceived distance. Remarking on the necessity and benefit of using maps to concretely showcase the distance between Europe and China in order to dispel suspicion, Ricci envisions the great boost to missionary endeavors if such visual presentations of distance could be more available:

> There was another [result], and of no less importance. When they saw on the map what an almost unlimited stretch of land and sea lay between Europe and the Kingdom of China, that realization seemed to diminish the fear our presence had occasioned. Why fear a people whom nature had placed so far away from them, and if this geographic fact of distance were generally known by all the Chinese, the knowledge would serve to remove a great obstruction to the spread of the Gospel throughout the kingdom. Nothing has impeded our work more than clouds of suspicion. (*Journals* 167-168)

Ricci′s fellow countryman and Jesuit Lodovico Buglio (1606-1682) uses the same tactic to try to downplay the European threat.

> 从古至今，未闻海外之人谋中国也。海外邻国之人，尚无此事，况以数儒生，离九万里之遥，三年之远航海，谋为不轨。虽至愚者，不应作是想；虽至愚者，亦不能作是语。(Yang Guangxian 128)
>
> From ancient times to modern days, there have never been records of people from overseas seeking to occupy China. If even the neighboring countries have never attempted it from the sea, how can a few disciples of Confucianism, who come from ninety thousand *li* afar, who navigated for three whole years, engage in such a conspiracy? Even the most foolish would not think this [possible]; even the most foolish would not say such things.

Buglio also accentuates the status of Macau as not representing a long-term threat but a temporary solution by branding the Europeans as "Guests from the West" "西客" (130). However, as Zhang Qiong soundly demonstrates, the fact that Portuguese and Spanish had conquered states like Malacca and Luzon, which are so far away from their home base, while also gaining a foothold in Macau in China proper, proves that "proper knowledge of the remoteness of Europe would not suffice to assuage the fears of his Chinese audience" (Zhang Qiong 304). It means that Jesuit missionaries had to come up with other tactics, which Zhang describes as a systematic plan of geographic segregation of "Folangji′s operations in their Asian theater from their European home bases" (304). In the geographical texts produced by the Jesuits of the time, the Chinese appellation of Portugal, Folangji, was almost exclusively used to depict activities in the area traditionally known to China, i.e. the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, whereas Boerduwaer (波尔杜瓦尔), the transliteration of "Portugal", is used to refer to the metropolis in Europe. Zhang concludes that the desired effect was to segregate "the Realpolitik of European colonialism operating in Asia, the consequences of which the Chinese had known and come to associate with Folangji, from the land of Europe, which stood on Ricci′s world map as a model of the Confucian Utopia" (310). In this way, the missionaries were attempting to distance themselves from the tarnished reputation of the Portuguese in the earlier phases of contact, avoiding what Pang Naiming calls the "Folangji Complex" ("Shi Lun" 179) in a Ming court in which suspicion overshadows curiosity about the outside world.

This segregation occurred in the personnel front as well. In an influential study on Christianity in China, George L. Harris astutely observes that, although there were no shortage of Portuguese and Spanish missionaries working on the China endeavor, they rarely took up the most important posts, such as those in the two capitals Beijing and Nanjing. Harris attributes this discrepancy largely to the decision by the high officials of the Church, namely Alessandro Valignano (1539-1604), to distance their enterprise from the terrible reputation held by

Portuguese merchants and pirates in Southern China. Instead, it was usually Valignano′s fellow Italians, most notably Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci, who served as the front men of the Roman Church to Chinese scholars and, eventually, the Son of Heaven (Harris 49-70). Harris goes on to discuss the inevitable failure of some missionaries in their attempt to become naturalized Chinese, for Europe and China possessed different perspectives on the question of national allegiance, but his main contribution, as far as this research is concerned, consists in cautioning the scholarship about the importance of the perception of geographical origin in the major exchanges between the Europeans and the Chinese.

Zhang Qiong, on the other hand, draws on the differentiation made by Ming Chinese scholar Cai Ruxian(蔡汝贤) between the "holy men from West India" and the "barbarians of Macau" (Cai Ruxian 426), arguing that Cai was victim to the Jesuits′ misdirection. Zhang believes such misinformation to be the result of deliberate deception by the likes of Matteo Ricci, who vigorously attempted to downplay their connection with the infamous Portuguese. The well-known motto by Valignano that missionaries were to become "Indians in India, Chinese in China, and Japanese in Japan" (qtd. in Harris 56) does not solely manifest the assimilation project of the Jesuits in confronting advanced Asian societies, but also reveals their conscious effort of blurring their geographical origins.

The strategy was possible due to the discrepancy of the sources of information. It was nearly impossible for the curious Asians to double-check any such claims. The strategy was initially a success, and the Jesuits were able to penetrate spaces otherwise forbidden to foreigners. However, as the interactions went deeper and more information was made available to the Easterners, the geographical cover-up ultimately led to more suspicion by the Chinese, and their rhetorical construction of great distance as little threat was detected by the anti-Christian side as proof of their hypocrisy: "They falsely claim to be from afar, in order to dispel Chinese suspicion." "其诡托远方，以解中国之疑" (Wen Xiangfeng 484). The heavy

reliance on the imbalance of knowledge also hurt the patriotic feelings of the Chinese, to the point that Wei Rui (魏濬, 1553-1625) accuses Ricci′s world map of being "presumptuously imaginative" and not unlike "how painters depict ghosts"(SCPX 183-184) "真所谓画工之画鬼魅也".

This context sheds new light upon why some Chinese texts began to regard the Asian colonies of the European powers such as Malacca and Luzon not only just as a reference point, but the metropolises themselves. The skeptical Chinese literati advocate this latter theory instead of accepting the geographical complications aroused by the appearance of hitherto unheard-of countries, finding comfort in the belief that they are merely inventions by the not-so-distant foreigners. The technological and geographical supremacy of Chinese civilization could be sustained if the irksome barbarians were in fact located inside the world known by the Chinese. The European decision to rely on the soothing effect of distance also backfired in the more suspicious Chinese eyes, as their manipulation was seen as emblematic of their overall untrustworthiness.

Prestige in the Rhetoric on Distance

For those Chinese who took the European words on their distant home nations, the extremely long distance these foreigners had traveled in order to reach the Great Ming was a common theme that astonished Chinese scholars, regardless of whether they were sympathetic towards Catholic teachings. For instance, Li Zhi (李贽, 1527-1602), one of the most well-known Chinese philosophers of that era, had mixed feelings about the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci. He praised Ricci′s intellectual abilities and manners but did not find his endeavors to substitute Confucianism with Catholicism to be realistic (*Xu Fen Shu* 33). However, this conflicting view does not impede Li to repetitively comment both in prose: "西泰大西域人也。到中国十万余里" (*Xu Fen Shu* 33) "Ricci is from the Great Western Region, and (his

nation) is ten thousand *li* from China" and in verse: "回头十万里，举目九重城" (*Fen Shu* 240) "Turn his head and ten thousand *li* has been traversed/ Raise his head and nine-door city [Forbidden Palace] is in front of his eyes" about the vast distance Ricci covered in order to further his learnings. In the poem "Zeng Li Xi Tai" (《赠利西泰》 "To Mr. Ricci of the Furthest West"), Li Zhi passionately compares Ricci to the legendary fish-like creature Kun penned by the great philosopher Zhuangzi (c.369-286 BCE) in his "Xiao Yao You" (逍遥游, "Free and Easy Wanderings"): "逍遥下北溟，迤逦向南征" (*Fen Shu* 240) "Free and easy flying from the Northern Darkness/ Meandering towards the South." In Zhuangzi's story, after having transformed into a gigantic bird named Peng, the creature soared through the sky for 90 thousand *li* and moved from the North Sea to the South Sea. Li Zhi believes that Ricci had traversed even greater distance than Kun/Peng, which is a truly remarkable feat.

Other Chinese scholars also showed great admiration for the long-distance journey that the missionaries endured in order to reach China. However, they offer different accounts of the distance, ranging from forty to a hundred thousand *li*. Differing reports of the distance traveled can be provided by the same person, as evidenced by Ye Xianggao(叶向高), who notes eighty thousand *li* as the distance traversed by Westerners to come to China in a poem: "爰有西方人，来自八万里"(Liu Tong 152-153), but states that Europeans are ninety thousand li away from China in his preface to Aleni′s introduction of world geography:"泰西氏去中国已九万里, 自上古未尝通" (Aleni 13). Similarly, in the two poems dedicated to Matteo Ricci, Li Rihua (李日华，1565-1635) uses ninety thousand *li* in the first poem: "西程九万里，多泛八年槎" (Liu Tong 154), but sixty thousand *li* in the second:"西来六万里,东泛一孤槎" (*Li Tai Pu* 178). Although Fu Weilin (傅维鳞, 1608-1667) tried to justify this confusion by saying Europeans come from different nations, hence the differences in distance (443), the adoption of such numbers reflected more the symbolic value attached to these numbers than a scientific

calculation of the distance. 90 thousand (or 9 *wan*) is the version most adopted by Chinese, probably to make use of the analogy of the number 9 with infinity in Chinese culture. While the first generation of missionaries in China, such as Ricci, vacillated between 80 and 100 thousand *li*, 90 thousand seemed to be the value fixed by later Jesuits like Diego de Pantoja and Giulio Aleni, who grew to understand more of the optimal distancing effect this particular number had over Chinese literati.

On the side of the Portuguese, distance was an important dimension in the evaluation of the success of the Portuguese empire. The official chroniclers were fervent about their nation′s achievements at sea, and as Fernão Lopes de Castanheda comments, the great distance traversed was the one thing not only unmatched but unimaginable by their most glorious ancestors:

> E a da índia foy feita por mar & por vossos capitães, & co nauegação dũ anno & doito meses & de seis ao menos: & não a vista de terra senão afastados trezentas & seiscentas léguas partindo do fim do Occidente & nauegando até ho do Oriente sem verem mais que agoa & ceo, rodeando toda a Sphera, cousa nunca cometida dos mortais, nem imaginada pêra se fazer. (1: 2-3)

Camões also glorifies the extent of Portuguese naval dominance by stressing the remoteness of their furthest zone of control:

> E, sujeita a rica Áurea Quersoneso,
> Até o longico China navegando
> E as Ilhas mais remotas do Oriente,
> Ser-lhe-á todo o Oceano obediente. (2: 54)

Being a first-hand participant in Portuguese expansion, Camões′ preference for the imagery of remoteness is evident in both his epic and lyric poems. While in his sonnets and hymns it is usually associated with the longing for the homeland:

Criou-me Portugal na verde e chara:

Patria minha Alemquer; mas ar corruto,

Que neste meu terreno vaso tinha,

Me fez manjar de peixes em ti, bruto

Mar, que bates a Abássia fera e avara,

Tão longe da ditosa patria minha. (2: 51)

or the beloved lady: "Ah! Senhora, Senhora, que tão rica / estais, que cá tão longe, de alegria, / me sustentais cum doce fingimento!" (2: 331), in *Os Lusíadas* the long distance from the home country is almost exclusively a reminder of national glory, starting in the very first stanza:

As armas e os Barões assinalados,

Que da Occidental praia Lusitana,

Por mares nunca d′antes navegados,

Passárão ainda além da Taprobana;

E em perigos e guerras esforçados,

Mais do que promettia a força humana,

Entre gente remota edificárão

Novo Reino, que tanto sublimárão. (1: 1)

Much of the glory of the Portuguese crown comes, therefore, from its ability to "[ir] dilatando / A Fé, o Imperio," to such an extent that it puts to shame earlier empires:

Cessem do sabio Grego e do Troiano

As navegações grandes que fizerão;

Calle-se de Alexandro e de Trajano

A fama das victórias que tiverão;

Que eu canto o peito illustre Lusitano,

A quem Neptuno e Marte obedecêrão:

Cesse tudo o que a Musa antigua canta,

Que outro valor mais alto se alevanta. (1: 2)

João de Barros was another impassioned advocate of Portuguese imperial feats, and he considered the Portuguese overseas empire to be the greatest ever, not only because they traversed and conquered vast distances, but more importantly because they left behind an administrative framework to govern such distant locations (Barletta 139).

In the above-mentioned texts, the geographical distance between the Eastern lands and Europe transcends the practical value of guiding and orienting the readers, to become an argument for the magnificence of the European political entity and the potential to successfully nullify the obstacles such a formidable natural barrier presented. This effective rhetoric was shared by the Roman Catholic Church, whose universal claim rendered them more than welcoming to peoples from faraway lands being brought under the true faith. When three Japanese Christian boys genuflected, prostrated and kissed the Pope′s feet in 1585 in Rome, according to Luís Fróis, many in the audience were moved to tears, precisely because "they came from remote and distant kingdoms, [and] have come from afar to make their submission to the Pope" (Massarella 334).

It is worth noting, though, that the rhetoric of distance as manifestation of power was not exclusive to the Europeans. While the Portuguese Jesuit Gaspar Gonçalves emphasized the importance of the above-mentioned act of submission from the very remote islands of Japan, claiming that it surpassed the significance of a legendary embassy from India to Caesar, the Japanese daimyos also took advantage of the Pope′s tokens of recognition from afar to expand their own prestige domestically (Massarella 334-335, 349). While sixteenth century Portuguese boast of their far-reaching empire "até as remotíssimas terras da China e ilhas do Japão onde puseram as colunas de Hércules desta sua navegação e descobrimento" (Paulo da Trindade 29-30), Chinese scholars refer to the arrival of distant visitors as proof of the Ming Dynasty′s great

prestige in the world, a theme adopted by Zhu Shilu(祝世禄) in the traditional poetic form of a seven-character-quatrain :

十年一苇地天长，百国来从西海洋。

应是吾君文告远，梯行无处不来王。(220)

[Bodhidharma once contemplated for] Ten years [before he was able to cross the Yangtse River with] a single reed, the land and sky are so long,

A hundred nations come from the Western Ocean.

It should be because our monarch has such a far-reaching reputation of good virtue,

That kings come from everywhere and line up like a ladder.

Christian convert Qu Rukui (瞿汝夔,1546-1610) also elaborates on the link between the good governance of China and foreigners coming to visit it from distant lands:

昔周家积德累仁，光被四表，以至越裳肃慎，重译来献（……)自时厥后，汉通漠碛，唐聘海邦，虽亦殊域并至，德感鲜称（……)洪惟我大明中天，冠绝百代，神圣继起，德覆无疆，以致遐方硕德如利公者，慕化来款(……)” (503-504).

In the ancient times, the Zhou family accumulated merits and benevolence, their reputation reached the four ends [of the earth], so that nations of Yue Tang and Su Shen came to pay tribute via relayed translations. . . . Since then, Han Dynasty went through deserts, Tang Dynasty sought for nations in the Sea, but even if distant nations came, it does not justify these dynasties′ merit. . . . Only our Great Ming is like the Sun at high noon, we exceed all the previous hundreds of generations, we have a continuous line of holy and sagacious rulers, their merit spreads over to land without limit, so that distant people with abundant merit like Mr. Ricci came in admiration of our civilization. . . .

In a memorial to Ming Emperor Chongzhen, even the Portuguese at Macau showed their familiarity with this association of imperial power with distance, as they extol Ming Dynasty′s

prestige in attracting them from afar: “恭遇天朝扫逐胡元，声播及该国，是以多等航海占风，寒暑六易” (Tang *Wei Li Duo* 26). “(We) were humbled to hear that the Celestial Empire had driven back the barbarian Yuan, Your reputation reached our country, so we navigated through winds for three years (to come here).” While Tang Kaijian thinks it possible that the news of dynastic change reached Iberia (*Wei Li Duo* 29-30), it is actually unlikely that knowing the dynastic change Christopher Columbus would still carry with him a letter addressed to the Great Khan (Hulme 36). Since the purpose of the memorial is to remind the emperor of Portuguese loyalty, it is safe to deduce that the quotation above was rather an attempt to attach to imperial Chinese rhetoric, especially the connotation that only distinguished rulers could attract faraway tributaries. By satisfying Emperor Chongzhen′s ego, the Portuguese in Macau were hoping to receive favors in other areas in return. Neither Europeans nor Asians viewed distance merely as spatial measure, and their multifaceted uses of the concept in domestic and bilateral discourses testify to the level of dynamic interactions the two nations were carrying out.

Comparing Scale

"Compare the Middle Kingdom with the area within the four seas—is it not like one tiny grain in a great storehouse?"

Zhuangzi, "Qiu Shui" (Autumn Floods, c. 4th Century BCE)

Since late 80s of the twentieth century, many historians have participated in a rethinking of the past with shifting foci, and scale, or scope, has acquired a seminal role in the "spatial turn" of the social sciences and humanities since the 1990s. Scholars have challenged the traditional notion of geographic scale as "an unproblematic, pre-given and fixed hierarchy of bounded spaces," now conceptualizing it as dynamic and socially constructed (Delaney 93). For many, "scale is process before it is product" (Carr and Lempert 4), so attention must be paid to the different action of "linking, bridging, jumping, bending, finding 'dialectics' and 'relations'" (19). Scale becomes a "relational element in a complex mix" (Howitt 56), and its influence in the construction and dynamics of geographical totalities deservedly receives a lot more scholarly attention.

This shift of hierarchical to relational structure of sizes and levels of scale helps us break free from nationalist discourse, allowing us either to zoom out to see the bigger picture of an entire geographical area or even the globe, or to zoom in on a particular local or liminal space for a more detailed analysis. This collective tendency known as "scale jumping" (Van Schendel 296) could not have happened without breakthroughs in notions of space. The "Blue Marble" picture by astronaut Jack Schmitt onboard the Apollo 17 Spaceship in 1972 is believed to be one of the most reproduced photos of all time, and thanks to wide mass media coverage, these images of the Earth shot from Space are now an integral part of the modern worldview. It is now easier than ever to conceive our planet as something big and small at the same time, and this new perspective is a main influencer in shaping how modern people view earthly spaces.

Although many of the inventions and scientific achievements that contributed to the change in perspective have only been made possible in the past century or so, its origin should be traced back to the so-called "Age of Discoveries". For the first time ever, most of the inhabited parts of the world began to have direct and continuous contact with each other, and for the learned minority of each continent, a true global vision became possible. They were told that the world as they knew it was much larger, and with the cognitive expansion came notions of new countries, oceans, continents and a redefined scope of the world. The "discovery" of the Americas by Columbus has been hailed by many as the beginning of the modern world, even though it may have been a "rediscovery" (Zerubavel 15). For example, Tvetan Todorov argues rather romantically that since the day that Columbus landed on America, "the world has shrunk (even if the universe has become infinite)," because "men have discovered the totality of which they are a part, whereas hitherto they formed a part without a whole" (5). Nevertheless, it is problematic to endow too much significance to a simplified "turning point" in history, as social and conceptual changes never occur over night. As Eviatar Zerubavel suggests, it took the Europeans nearly a century to digest the geographical and theological reconfiguration of the world in the wake of Columbus's "discovery," mainly because it activated a serious "cosmographic shock" (*Terra Cognita* 7).

Europe's encounters with East Asian countries such as China, Japan and Korea, though they sporadically appeared under different aliases in European accounts since antiquity, were actually no less surprising to Europeans of the sixteenth century than those with America, and their completely different but well-oiled societal organization made them stand out among all the new countries that the Europeans encountered. What sets the East Asian encounter apart from the American one, therefore, is the active regrouping of Europe's past knowledge on this area and quick adaptation of newly acquired information into a preexisting conceptual framework. In other words, the Europeans consciously expected to experience a sense of déjà

vu when they explored the Asian mystery. Different individuals had their own mental imagery of what constituted Asia, and they used the information gathered, be they first or second-hand, to fill in the blanks of the projected realities.

What the Europeans seemed to least expect, however, was the geographical scale of the Asian nations. One of the major reasons China was enthusiastically praised by Europeans during the initial phase of contact was due to the immense territories that the Central Empire had under its control. “彼其国，素不知东方有中国之大如此者。” (Zhu Huaiwu 67) “Their country (Europe) had always been ignorant of the existence of such a large nation like China in the East.” For instance, before setting foot onto Chinese shores, Tomé Pires was hesitant about Eastern rumors of the overwhelming size of the Chinese nation. To the best of his knowledge, the land of the dragon could at best be comparable to Portugal:

> Segumdo o que as nações de qua deste leuamte comtam fazem as cousas da china gramdes asy na terra como Jemtes Riquezas pompas estados/ & contas outras que mais se creriã com uerdade averemse em noso portugall q̃q nom na chyna he gramde a terra Da chyna De fermosos cavallos & mulas seg° dizem he em gramde numero. (392)

It took the Portuguese some time to learn about the true dimension of the Great Ming, which to their amazement not only could rival their country of origin, but Europe as a whole. The bewilderment and confusion among the Portuguese in encountering such a vast empire was manifested by their struggle to designate it by an adequate name. Being one of the main authorities on the East, João de Barros was not so convinced himself when he applied the word “great province” to designate China: “A Gram Provincia (se este nome pode ter aquella parte da terra) a que nós chamamos Chin” (*Terceira Década* 44a), probably due to the inherent link with the Roman form of conquest that such a term evokes, one that has received substantial scholarly attention: “A circulation of notions can be observed between geographical and strategic discourses. The region of the geographers is the military region (from regere, to

command), a province is a conquered territory (from vincere)" (Foucault "*Questions on Geography*" 177). Damião de Góis vacillated between "província" (4) and "reino" (56), the latter term was first used by Francisco Xavier (Calado 113), while Barros later adopted the term "império" (*Terceira Década* 46). The author of *Conquista espiritual do Oriente*, Frei Paulo da Trindade (1570-1651), was indecisive before these denominations, calling China a "grande província" (6), "grande império" (46), "grande reino" (50), and even "grande região" (97).

Zóltan Biedermann sees in the semantic flexibility of these spatial terms the very reason for Portuguese writers to adopt them: "it was precisely the blur of concepts that allowed sixteenth century observers to play and experiment with different ideas in their attempts at ordering the vast and confusing realities of the continent" ("Imagining Asia" 48). The reason for this confusion comes from both a lack of historical connection as well as the crisis of representation related to a difference of scale, as showcased by the following comment by Pinto: ". . . deste imperio, ou monarchia, ou como lhe quiserem pòr o nome (porque na verdade todo o q̃ for grande lhe cabe" (266).

When Barros described China, the object of comparison was often Europe as a whole, although it was not exactly the contemporaneous Europe that Barros had in mind, rather the Golden Age of the European continent in the classical antiquity (Saraiva 287). Tvetan Todorov links the Renaissance Europe′s temporal nostalgia for the Greek and Roman times with the spatial decentering following the loss of Jerusalem to the Muslims, and sees the "allocentrism" of the European civilization of the period as enabling the potential "for the Other to become, someday, central" (*Conquest* 109). The sixteenth century also saw the advent of Protestantism and the resulting division and destruction of Christendom. The unitary value that Christendom once carried began to be transferred to the notion of Europe, a space of unclear borders, a myth cultivated by humanists to unite "we Europeans" against the rest. Mark Greengrass seems to

suggest that this "other" is primarily America (27-28), while Donald Lach and others emphasize the Asian counterpart. Whatever the case, the shift in self-identity had much to do with the changing scope of what constitutes both "our land" and the "land that should be ours" resulting from the "discoveries". The newly discovered space could be compensation for the lands lost to the divisions within Christianity or to the Ottomans in the Balkans, and European monarchs were eager to use them as proof of their own greatness. The sixteenth century desire for bigger scale of space is apparent in such outlandishly hyperbolic titles as that of Manuel I of Portugal′s "Senhor da Guiné e da Conquista, Navegação e Comércio da Etiópia, Arábia, Pérsia e Índia, etc", in the motto "Plus Ultra" (Further Beyond) of Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire (Rosenthal 204), and in the inscription "Non Sufficit Orbis" (The World is Not Enough) of a medal of Phillip II of Spain (Geoffrey 10).

On the other side of world, the Easterners, though with varying degrees of skepticism, came to know of the vastness of formerly unknown parts of the world. Some locally produced maps began to deviate from the traditional cartography which Matteo Ricci abhorred:

> True, they had charts somewhat similar to this one, that were supposed to represent the whole world, but their universe was limited to their own fifteen provinces, and in the sea painted around it they had placed a few little islands to which they gave the names of different kingdoms they had heard of. All of these islands put together would not be as large as the smallest of the Chinese province. (*Journals* 166)

Ricci′s criticism is correct in linking the traditional Chinese concept of spatial scale to the level of civilization. Denunciations of the smallness of Europe that sometimes compares it to a "poor island as small as a bullet" "弹丸穷岛" (LMD 432) can often be found in conjunction with anti-Christian rhetoric. In order to pave the ground for their proselytization project in a country with an obstinate belief in its own importance and scale, Christian missionaries were hoping to stir among Chinese literati the sense of self-doubt and insignificance. Spanish missionary

Diego de Pantoja claims that the following paragraph is a genuine reaction from Chinese mandarins on seeing a world map:

> Vehian un mapa muy hermoso y grande que trayamos, y declaramos les como el mundo era grande, a quien ellos tenian por tan pequeño, que en todo el no imaginauan auia otro tanto como su Reyno: y mirauanse unos a otros, diziendo, no somos tan grandes como imaginauamos, pues aquí nos muestran que nuestro Reyno, comparado con el mundo, es como un grano de arroz, comparado con un monton grande. (61-62).

However, with a long tradition of self-sufficiency while lacking a monotheist religion that craves expansion, Asians were not prone to view the vastness of the world as potential for conquest. Many stuck, therefore, to the comfort of the traditional worldview. Although Matteo Ricci′s world map was indeed a useful tool for him to enhance his reputation inside the Ming scholarly cycles (Wills "Maritime Europe" 62-63), Chinese enthusiasm in seeing the "real" world in Pantoja′s observation was more of a performance, rather than the sign of an inner drive to learn from the West. The metaphor of a grain of rice versus a mountain which caught Pantoja′s attention, though perhaps novel to Western ears, was in fact a reiteration of the famous passage "Qiu Shui" (《秋水》"Autumn Floods") by Confucian philosopher Zhuangzi:

> 吾在于天地之间，犹小石小木之在大山也。方存乎见少，又奚以自多！计四海之在天地之间也，不似礨空之在大泽乎？计中国之在海内，不似稊米之在大仓乎？ (243)
>
> I sit here between heaven and earth as a little stone or a little tree sits on a huge mountain. Since I can see my own smallness, what reason would I have to pride myself? Compare the area within the four seas with all that is between heaven and earth—is it not like one little anthill in a vast marsh? Compare the Middle Kingdom with the area within the four seas—is it not like one tiny grain in a great storehouse?" (Trans. Burton Watson 127)

Zhuangzi is best known in the West for his fanciful story of the “Butterfly Dream”, in which the philosopher wondered if he was a man who dreamed of being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming of being a man. This simple but captivating parable, if deprived of all philosophical and ontological rationale, is in fact about raising awareness of differences in perspective. So for Ming scholars familiar with Zhuangzi, the tininess of the Middle Kingdom in relation to the “area within the four seas”, a Chinese way of saying the whole world, does not reflect China′s insignificance as suggested by Jesuits, but rather additional evidence of the supreme wisdom of Confucian teachings on the theme of difference in scale. Zhuangzi himself goes on to expand on this metaphor of the tiny grain and a huge mountain: “If we know that heaven and earth are tiny grains and the tip of a hair is a range of mountains, then we have perceived the law of difference” (Trans. Burton Watson 130). “知天地之为稊米也，知豪末之为丘山也，则差数等矣” (251).

To point out the gap between European perception and what the Chinese actually thought is not to underestimate the impact of Western cartography in the Ming period, but to emphasize the Chinese agency in their reception of novel ideas, which did not necessarily fit the intention of the Europeans. As Cordell D.K. Yee argues, the wide circulation of Western cartography in the Ming period did not automatically transform into lasting influence in Chinese maps. “Wide circulation is not necessarily a measure of influence, and exposure does not always mean adoption” (Yee 177). Miguel Rodrigues Lourenço sees in the development of Portuguese cartography on Chinese littoral area not an “aperfeiçoamento gradual dos conteúdos dos velhos mapas,” but “uma solução de conhecimento sincrónica na aparência, mas onde coexistem elementos incorporados em momentos diferentes e, por vezes, incompatíveis entre si” (16). The same could be said about the process that Chinese cartography underwent, with frequent overlaps between Western and Eastern worldviews and the coexistence of past and current geographical knowledge. It is a dynamic process in both West and East to constantly

sort out information rendered out-of-date by the slow flow of information in cross-cultural contacts.

Ricci and Pantoja′s optimism in expecting the Chinese to revolutionize their tradition on seeing new geographical representations was misguided, partly because Ming Chinese were very shrewd in assimilating the novel into existing frameworks, and partly on account of the Ming Chinese "culture of curiosity". Clunas Craig attributes to this "widespread interest in the novel, the curious and above all the foreign and imported" the cause of European disappointment, for it enabled Ming intellectuals to have "a conceptual framework into which new forms of representation and new forms of script could be comfortably accommodated without serious epistemological disturbance" (173). For instance, a distant member of the Chinese royal family of Zhu mentions Ricci′s world map in his miscellanea of strange and bizarre stories, but all he cites are sensational hearsays of cannibalism, corpses that never decay, people who never have dreams, and falling large conifer cones dealing deadly blows to the unfortunate (Zhu Mouwei 317). The ontological presence in which the Chinese were firmly rooted had not been seriously threatened, and the "Western Learning" was at best viewed as a competing theory, rather than the universal truth. Most of the time, Ming authors who documented those new ideas from the West chose to withhold their own judgment, instead waiting for more knowledgeable scholars to determine its veracity. Giulio Aleni′s world geography receives the following comment: "所述多奇异不可究诘，似不免多所夸饰。然天地之大，何所不有，录而存之，亦足以广异闻也" (Ji Yun 1917) "Much of what [Aleni] says is bizarre and impossible to verify, it seems that there is much exaggeration and overstatement. But the world is so large and can be home to wonderful things, [our] documentation of these stories could also expand our knowledge of wild things." It is also with this reserved doubt that the official history of Ming documented the five-continent division of the world: "其说荒渺莫考，然其国人充斥中土，则其地固有之，不可诬也"(MS 8459).

"Their theory is absurd and impossible to prove, but as there are many of their nationals in China, then they must come from somewhere, this we cannot deny."

Despite all the resistance, at least in the area of the hierarchy of scale, the Western geographic knowledge did prompt the Easterners to begin a theoretical reconstruction. At the global level, the clashes between Chinese Tianxia (All under Heaven) worldview and modern international order based on the Westphalian system, and the rivalry between civilization-state and nation-state, have been extensively explored by recent scholarship. As distinguished historian Hsu Cho-yun observes, Da Qing (大清 Great Qing Empire) as a referent to the Chinese state was only put to use because of diplomatic necessity in dealing with Western countries, when in fact Chinese people at the time only perceived Qing as an icon for a specific era, and not a demarcation in space (8-9). In comparison, the Western impact on Chinese rethinking of the local and the continental, in which the Jesuits played an integral role, still lacks in-depth study. The present thesis seeks to comb through the most widely accepted scales, namely the local, national, continental and global, with special emphasis on the impact of the cross-cultural interactions on the reorganization of such concepts in Chinese as well as Portuguese (and European) materials.

Global: Unity and Discrepancy

K. N. Chaudhuri sees in the trans-continental journeys of Xuanzang, Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta and Fernão Mendes Pinto the creation of two kinds of unities: "one was the unity of discourse, the other the unity of the abstract topological space. Within a single discourse, the dispersion of objects, people, social systems and individual responses to images of space were all brought together by an ongoing epistemology in the first place, which led to the appearance later of a new order in knowledge" (122). Pinto certainly was not the only Portuguese at the time who began to envision the globe as a unified space. The three and a half *Décadas da Ásia* that João de Barros was able to finish during his lifetime were only a fraction of an ambitious

plan to cover Portuguese activities in all four continents. As an "unflinching apologist of the ideology of expansion" (Blackmore 47), Barros undoubtedly had a planetary view of the Portuguese enterprise. When writing about other parts of the world, Barros lamented about Europe and Christianity′s unjustifiably small size: "quasi toda a redondeza da Terra está subdita ao imperio dos Mouros & Gentios: & Europa que he a menos porção em quantidade, em q̃ a Igreja Romana parecia ter congregada a sua grege, ainda este açoute do Turco veo assolar boa parte" (*Decada Primeira* 178a). António José Saraiva deems this regret to be irrelevant to modern readers, choosing to instead highlight Barros′ understanding that the European civilization was by no means universal (284). Nevertheless, it is in order to offset this lamented European smallness that Barros showcases the grandeur of the Portuguese conquest worldwide. In Barros′ narrative, the relationship between the national, continental and the global is a complicated one, with simultaneous links and conflicts. A great deal of the tension comes from Barros′ extension of Ptolemaic space of longitudes and latitudes to other parts of the world, including China (Biedermann "Imperial Reflections" 35-36).

Zoltán Biedermann sees in *Décadas* a symmetry between two mirroring empires. The Chinese one, as Barros believed, extended as far to the West as India, which was coincidentally the furthest East that Alexander the Great had reached. Birdermann emphasizes João III′s imperial intention in Barros′ description of China, "the rebirth of the Roman imperial project—the imperial project, that is— through a process of global reconnection controlled by Portugal" ("Imperial Reflections" 42). Barros did not get his basic facts right, though, for the Chinese expansion into India and their wise retreat never took place. As discussed above, the Portuguese chronicler was unable to trace the Chinese cultural and commercial influences in South and Southeast Asia for reasons other than military expansion. Meanwhile, the Ming court also showed its ignorance in failing to comprehend the Portuguese embassy′s reluctance to acknowledge Chinese supreme status. This parallel shows the discrepancy between two distinct

ways of seeing and organizing space on a global scale, a gap that has yet to be fully filled even in present day.

In a speech addressing the US Naval War College in June 2018, James Mattis, then US Secretary of Defense, tried to hype the growing Chinese threat by comparing the current CCP government′s diplomacy to the Ming Dynasty′s tributary system: “The third category is that of political will, and that is a potential rivalry, with China harboring long-term designs to rewrite the existing global order. The Ming Dynasty appears to be their model, albeit in a more muscular manner, demanding other nations become tribute states, kowtowing to Beijing” (n.p.).

To most Americans living in the twenty-first century, to “kowtow” is a definitive gesture of submission that unquestionably invokes a strong sense of humiliation, and paying tribute is clearly an unbalanced exchange in which scared good people pay protection fees to the villains. For the early modern East and Southeast Asian societies, however, a tributary system was the most accepted form of inter-state relationship, not because of the sheer coercive power by the stronger nations but because all participants could benefit from it. In many instances, a nation could be at the same time on the receiving and giving end of different tributary relations or paying tributes to multiples neighbors at the same time. What Mattis and many others perceive as a symbol of yielding ground was, contrary to current popular belief, seen by the tributary states as an opportunity for both political legitimacy as well as economic gain. Chinese emperors often offered the tributary ambassadors far greater monetary compensations than their tributes′ actual worth. For instance, despite the ritual of submission, Thailand’s tribute mission to the Chinese emperor has been explained by most modern scholars of Thailand as a profit-making enterprise (Winichakul 87). In certain times, foreign enthusiasm for this kind of diplomacy was so high that China had to pose restrictions on how often each country carried out such tributary activities, implementing tally trade system to prevent merchants pretending to be ambassadors, when tensions were high, even denying certain

countries (Mongolia and Japan were the prime examples) this kind of access to Chinese merchandise. Many Sinologists view the essence of tributary diplomacy as one of elasticity and not hard power. For example, Peter Purdue suggests that "we could interpret the meaning of *gong* [tribute] much more accurately if we see ′tribute′ as a kind of pidgin language: an intercultural means of communication through words, objects and human relations" (1009). The flexibility shown in this recent understanding of the "Chinese world order", to borrow John King Fairbank′s term, is essential to grasp the interactions of two world systems in the early modern period initiated by the Portuguese arrival in China. It is necessary to look past the apparent dichotomies to find the common ground for absorption and adaptation, which was far more frequent than outright rejection. To assert that Ming mandarins were all arrogant fanatics convinced of their superiority would be to overlook tentative reformers such as Wang Tingxiang (王廷相, 1474-1544), who condemned the traditional interactions between Heaven and Mankind[12]:

> 天,一也;天下之国,何啻千百,天象之变，皆为中国之君谴告之，偏矣。以为千百国皆应之，而国君行政之善恶，又未必一日月而均齐也。 (803)
>
> Heaven, there is only one; Countries under heaven, there are hundreds and thousands and more. Whenever there is a change in celestial phenomena, it is wrong to suppose

[12] It is notable that four centuries later, Camilo Pessanha would include a poem by Wang Tingxiang titled "Deng Tai" (《登台》"Climbing the Terrace") in his selection of Ming dynasty elegies:

古人不可见	Os antigos mortos, invisivelmente
还上古时台	Vêm ainda ao seu terraço antigo....
九月悲风发	Já sopra da nona lua o vento lamentoso
三江候雁来	De os três rios. Devem estar a chegar os gansos de arribação.
浮云通百粤	Cobrem nuvens a vastidão dos dois Kuangs
寒日隐蓬莱	Declina, pálido, o sol, sobre P′ang-Lai.
逐客音书断	Desterrado da pátria e sem notícias dela,
凭高首重回	Para essas bandas volvo de contínuo os olhos.

(Pessanha16)

It is worth highlighting that the Portuguese poet curiously added a certain trans-nationalism in his translation of the last two verses of Wang. While "pátria" can mean one′s birthplace, the word was mostly used to mean the nation state to which an individual belongs, especially during Pessanha′s era when Nationalistic zeal was in its heyday. Pessanha probably just felt this understanding of the poem resonated the most with his own status of a "desterrado da pátria," however, his perhaps unintentional stretching of the scope of the original poem perfectly echoed the embracing of multiplicity of cultures of the Ming mandarin.

> that all it does is to condemn and notify the Chinese monarch. To think that it corresponds to all the hundreds and thousands of countries, then the administration of the different monarchs is not necessarily all good or evil at the same time.

If Wang Tingxiang′s breakdown of the self-imposed superiority of Chinese civilization may have happened independently of European influence, it is considerably harder to argue the same for Wang Fuzhi (王夫之, 1619-1692). This Confucian philosopher, who witnessed the overthrow of the Ming by the minority Manchu, put forth a bold theory of pluralism in time and space regarding the development of civilizations. At any given time, China′s decline does not exclude the possibility of other civilizations elsewhere being on the rise, while at a particular space the nation would go through cyclical periods of barbarity and civilization:

> 大昊以前，中国之人若麋聚鸟集，非必日照月临之下皆然也，必有一方焉如唐、虞、三代之中国。既人力所不通，而方彼之盛，此之衰而不能征之，迨此之盛，则彼衰而弗能述以授人，故亦蔑从知之也。(467-468)
>
> Before the legendary king of Dahao, the people of China were not unlike groups of deer or birds, but it does not necessarily mean that everywhere under sunshine and moonlight was the same, it must be that somewhere existed a nation like China under the [righteous] Three Emperors. However, it was impossible to make contacts, so when they were in their heyday and we in decline, there was no way to prove it; but when we prosper, they collapse and are unable to spread [their wisdom], so it is still impossible to know of them [here].

The similarity between Wang Fuzhi and Giambattsita Vico′s multiculturalism has been spotted by Xu Sumin, who states that Vico′s mention of Confucius and Wang′s influence by Ricci showcases the two-way transmission of knowledge occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (38). It is crucial that both thinkers chose to resort to their own philosophical traditions to give a cosmological place to the other. Indeed, pro-Jesuit Chinese

scholars like Li Zhizao and Yang Tingyun repeatedly reinterpret the famous saying by Lu Jiuyuan (陆九渊, 1139-1193): “Eastern Sea and Western Sea, same minds and same principles” (东海西海，心同理同) (173). Lu was a Song Dynasty philosopher who founded Xin Xue (心学 School of Universal Minds), and his famous words happened to cater to the need for syncretism between Confucianism and Christianity on a global level.

Continental: Comparability and Fluidity

As Tuan Yi-fu suggests, when depicting the world beyond the homeland, “geography gives way to cosmography” (35). Therefore, when Western geography was introduced into East Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the main discord was in fact between different understandings of the world, rather than regarding just concrete geographical detail.

Self-inflation is human nature when it comes to depicting the world. It is a known tendency for cultures to exaggerate the size of their home region at the expense of neighboring territories. In the Hereford Mappa Mundi from around 1300, the British Isles occupy a significantly larger portion than they should, and in the 1402 Korean map Kangnido (“Map of Integrated Lands and Regions of Historical Countries and Capitals”), which was based on two previous Chinese maps, Korea and China in combination account for more than half of the total landmass. However, in terms of the size of the continents, Europe had long recognized the relatively larger size of Asia, and they had recourse to early Christian legend for an explanation. In St. Jerome′s account, Noah handed out the three continents to his three sons, and the eldest, Shem, naturally received the largest portion which is Asia (Woodward 334). Despite this rationalized acceptance of their smaller size, Europeans in the early modern period were striving to prove that they were at least on a par, if not superior, to the inhabitants of larger continents, and one crucial way of asserting this superior status was to discursively construct their unity.

Eighteenth-century French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau had an interesting argument about Europe, that it was the only continent whose various nations constituted a real society, whereas the other continents had nothing but their "name in common" (Lewis and Wigen 37). Rousseau seems to ignore the obvious fact that the very division of landmass into Europe, Asia and Africa was a European invention, which was more arbitrary than natural. Herodotus already found it unfathomable that "the earth, which is one, has three names, all of [them] women, and why the boundary lines set for it are the Egyptian river Nile and the Colchian river Phasis" (2: 245).

The fact that notions of continents were taken for granted so easily by Rousseau, however, deserves attention as it reflects a common blind spot not exclusive to Europeans. This common deficiency is the tendency to deem practical knowledge not as produced in a specific time and space, but as abstract and universal. Ming Chinese had no idea they were being grouped together with Indians and Persians, and there was no reason for them to accept this arbitrary categorization either. It was not until late nineteenth century that different parts of Asia began to embrace the concept of sharing a certain "Asianness" in the face of the overwhelming European powers, but even today the internal discrepancy among Asian nations is significantly larger than that in Europe.

Martha Lewis and Karen Wigen have pointed out an error in comparative studies, which they call "the fallacy of unit comparability." Their argument is that, "in physical, cultural, and historical diversity, both China and India are comparable to the entire European land mass, not to a single European country," while the adequate object for comparison for a European country is an Indian state or a Chinese province (9-10). When the Portuguese first arrived in the Indian subcontinent, they did not encounter a unified state like the one later achieved by the Mughal Empire, so China was by far the biggest exception in the European reconstruction of spatial notions such as the national and the continental. Kenneth Pomeranz′s comparison between

eighteenth-century England and the Chinese lower Yangzi Delta region in his influential work *Great Divergence*, though not without its own limitations, does provide a fresh perspective on what can and should be compared. However, early modern Europeans were not ready to accept this special type of comparison, because it would be signaling inferiority to the already self-complacent empire in their eyes. To work around the problem, Europeans chose to emphasize their continent′s unity as a tool to earn the Easterners′ recognition.

Several scholars have noted the ambiguity of plural/singular in the European presentation of the concept of Xi Guo (Country/ies of the West) in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. The fact that Chinese nouns are generally not marked for number was seized by Europeans in this deliberately vague presentation. Ou Luo Ba, or Europe, was used flexibly to refer to either the entire continent comprised of dozens of countries, or a single political state (Brook 272). Zhang Qiong goes on to suggest that Ou Luo Ba was used "whenever the distinct and superior civilization of Europe was stressed," while terms like Da Xi Yang (Great Western Ocean) and Xi Guo were put to use "when they accentuated Europe′s westerly location and vast distance from China" (305).

Feigning European unity was a strategy that reached great popularity, if not consensus, among the Christian missionaries in Asia. Giulio Aleni′s adamant equating of the European continent with Christianity, with no allowance for heresies slipping through, is the culmination of such strategies: "凡欧逻巴州内大小诸国，自国王以及庶民皆奉天主耶稣正教，织毫异学不容窜入" (67). "Big or small, every nation in the European continent follows the orthodox Christian faith, from kings to commoners alike, there is no place for even the tiniest heresy to slip through." The deception was feasible because local Asians rarely had means to directly verify such claims. As has been discussed previously, it would take two more centuries for the first Chinese to compose a book about his itinerary in Europe (Fan Shouyi′s 1721 *Shen Jian Lu*), and while Japanese did send the Tenshō embassy to Rome between 1582 and 1590,

the Roman Church and the Jesuit Order made careful arrangements to screen them from any possibility of finding out about the schism within the Church (Massarella 331). The filtration of knowledge evidently worked as intended, for Miguel Chingiva, who was one of the Japanese ambassadors, believed China to be far inferior to Europe in terms of abundance: “Quanto à fertilidade, ela é de facto grande e sem dúvida a maior de todos os países do Oriente, mas de modo algum comparável à abundância europeia, da qual já falei copiosamente” (Sande 714).

Still, such Western discourses had to be extra cautious not to hit the sensitive nerve of the Chinese world view. In Giulio Aleni′s introduction of the concept of Asia to a Chinese readership in the beginning of the seventeenth century, he was obviously attempting to dissuade the potential cosmological shock with eulogies to China:

> 亚细亚者，天下一大州也。人类肇生之地，圣贤首出之乡 (……) 其大者首推中国，此外曰鞑而靼，曰回回，曰印弟亚，曰莫卧尔，曰百儿西亚，曰度儿格，曰如德亚，并此州巨邦也 (……) 中国则居其东南。 (32)
>
> Asia is one of the great continents under heaven. It is where mankind came to be, where sages were first born. . . . China is the first large nation, besides, there are Tartars, Uighur, India, Moguls, Persia, Turks and Judea, all huge states on this continent. . . . China is situated in the Southeast of the continent.

This is not to say that the Ming Chinese were totally unfamiliar with a multi-continental view of the planet, as the Buddhist doctrine also divides the transient world in four dvīpas[13]. The introduction of Buddhism to China constituted the first systematic extraterritorial challenge to Sino-centrism, and geographical concepts like Zhendan (震旦) and dvīpa (Islands, continents) became common in Chinese language. Zhendan is the Indian name for China, which even when translated into Chinese carries over an Indo-centric geographical view, depriving China of the

[13] The Early Buddhist classic divides the world in a different number of parts, but the most accepted version in China is a four-dvīpa system of Pūrva-videha, Apara-godānīya, Jambu-dvīpa and Uttara-kuru.

central position that it believed it occupied (Hu Axiang 432-434). Dvīpa, on the other hand, offers a multi-continental and multi-universal worldview that further belittles China′s claim to centrality. These concepts obviously clashed heavily with Chinese geography and cosmology, which was why the notion of dvīpa was largely ignored in order to minimize Chinese resistance to the localization process of Buddhism. Still, interest in dvīpas surged during the Ming Dynasty, because if the Tianxia system represents the Chinese state of knowledge of the known world, the dvīpa system represents the Chinese reserved curiosity about the unknown. The remarkable boom of domestic tourism during the Ming period also unleashed the Chinese thirst for alien knowledge, which can be demonstrated by the popularity of the fantastic journey of Xuanzang to different dvīpas in the novel *Journey to the West*. While Chinese readers' knowledge of the unknown foreign land lacked the precision and detail necessary to function as "the object of a journey (setting off, arriving, staying, and departing), not to mention an object of conquest, pilgrimage, and commercial endeavor" (Brummett 239-240), the dvīpas did serve as their most sought-after tool to organize the foreign land beyond Chinese influence. As late as the nineteenth century, Chinese literati were still trying to incorporate the western records of America into the Buddhist worldview: "墨利加州当为释典之西牛货州，非臆度也" (Wei Yuan 343). "It is not pure speculation that America is the Apara-godānīya in Buddhist classics."

Jesuit missionaries were aware of this rival conceptualization of the world. Christian sympathizer Xu Shijin (徐时进) astutely noticed a disparity between Christian and Buddhist models of the world, both of which coming from the West in Chinese perspective: "按图，中国犹迤北地，与佛书所称南部州异也" (LMD 11). "According to [Ricci′s] map, China is in the northern part, which differs from the Southern continent [Jambu-dvīpa], as the Buddhist books claim." As Dong Shaoxin points out, Matteo Ricci not only denounced the Buddhist idea

of China′s location in Jambu-dvīpa, but also tried to prove that the four-dvīpa system originated from the Pre-Columbian European Four-continent worldview (23).

These efforts would prove futile in the eyes of the more nationalist Chinese, who felt offended by the diminution that the five-continent system imposed on China′s traditional claim of being the world center. In Ming official history and cartography, there was a constant emphasis on Chinese political and geographical space as unitary (Guan 103), in large part due to the recent memory of a nomadic tribe taking over the entire Chinese space. For them, the concept of multiple continents was a theoretical threat to the sole cultural and geographical center that ought to be China, and they would accept nothing less than the old paradigm of the whole world revolving around China in hierarchical order, a world view clearly stated in the 1461 *Da Ming Yi Tong Zhi* (《大明一统志》*Gazetteer of the Unitary Great Ming*). The compilers attached supreme importance to the Ming Dynasty′s success in the unification not only of China proper but also of all there is under Heaven, superseding all past dynasties in this regard:

> 自古帝王之御世者，必一统天下而后为盛。……元氏以夷狄入主华夏……其地西北虽过于前，而东南岛夷则未尽附。惟我皇明诞膺天命，统一华夷。 (Li Xian i)
>
> From ancient times emperors and kings can only be called magnificent if they unite all land under Heaven. . . . Yuan Dynasty ruled China as a barbarian group . . . . Although their land in the northwest is greater than [it was] in the past, not all the islanders in the Southeast submitted to them. We Imperial Ming are the only ones who bear the mandate of Heaven to unite all of Hua and Yi.

A century later, Shen Que′s rebuttal of European missionaries was also motivated by their disrespect for Ming China′s leading role in uniting the known world, as well as their audacity to vie for competition by claiming to come from a country called Da Xi Guo (Great Western

Nation): “夫普天之下，薄海内外，惟皇上为覆载炤临之主，是以国号曰大明，何彼夷亦曰大西?” (SCPX 59). “In all land under heaven, and in all land within and beyond the seas, [our] emperor is the only ruler that truly bears the weight and brings light, so [our] nation is called the Great Ming, how come these barbarians dare to also call themselves Great West?”

To some extent, these Chinese conservatives shared the later Western “colonizer′s model of the world” and their belief in a type of “geographical diffusionism,” which sees civilizational progress as only possible in a one-way motion out of the center and towards the backward periphery (Blaut 16). At the same time, early modern Portuguese observers also demonstrated certain arbitrary tendencies in their reports on Chinese natural and human geography, which undoubtedly laid the foundations for later European stereotypes about the Asian empire.

National: Confinement and Permeability

“Frontiers can be either walls or windows.”

Adonis (2001)

The first separate map of China by a European appeared in the 1584 edition of Abraham Ortelius′ atlas titled *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. It is believed that the person who made this map was Luiz Jorge de Barbuda, a Portuguese cartographer in the service of Phillip II of Spain, and in this work we can verify the author′s familiarity with first-hand Chinese sources as well as European reports, and all fifteen provinces of the Ming Empire had their names put on the map. It was certainly not a perfect representation, with its accuracy rapidly decreasing as it moved further into the hinterland (Lach 1:818-819). Still, geographers tend to acknowledge that Barbuda′s map was a milestone in European cartography about this far end of the world, and it served as the primary tool for Europeans at the time to visualize China, until Martino Martini′s 1655 *Novus Atlas Sinensis* finally provided a convincing update on the matter (Zhang Hongyang 307).

It is notable that Ortelius′s original 1570 version only depicted the land of Cataio in the same map about Tartaria and India, with no visible artificial structures dividing the borders (Ortelius 47-48). Therefore, one of Barbuda′s major contributions was his visual presentation of China′s Great Wall in the northern border, with Latin annotations explaining its length (1800 miles), and comments on the clever incorporation of natural barriers into the structure. Obviously, the Westerners had access to various written sources, mainly by the Portuguese, about the extraordinary defensive structure in the Far East. The curious failure by Marco Polo to mention the Great Wall in his renowned *Il Milione* has caused some scholars to doubt the authenticity of Polo′s voyages in China altogether (Frances 300), but others put forth the counter argument that the Great Wall that we see today was actually rebuilt during the Ming period (Jackson 83), rendering it impossible for Polo, who visited China a century earlier, to report on the world wonder. Regardless of the true reason behind Polo′s lack of mention of the Wall in his account, the Portuguese observers in the Ming Dynasty now shouldered the responsibility to be first reporters of this future Chinese icon to Western audiences, even though they hardly had any first-hand experience with the Wall situated in the Northern part of the Empire. Whether in João de Barros′ prose: ". . . huma maravilhosa cousa . . . mas agora que por elles ò vimos pintado, feznos grande admiraçam" (*Terceira Década* 44b-45a), or in the Camoenian epic:

> Olha o muro e o edifício nunca crido
> Que entre hum império e outro se edifica
> Certíssimo sinal e conhecido
> Da potência real, soberba e rica (1:365)

the Portuguese exhibited admiration and wonder towards this seemingly impossible human feat, even if they severely underestimated the scope of the project. Fernão Mendes Pinto offers a quite impressive description of the construction of the Wall: it started in the year 570 CE., took

750,000 men, 27 consecutive years to construct, and ended up with a total of 315 leagues (about 1500 miles) in distance (266-267). It is noteworthy that despite Pinto′s best attempt at creating the theatrical effect of exaggeration, his estimates are still too conservative in almost every way: the actual length of the wall is about 13,000 miles; the original date of construction is 214 BCE, and the manpower that was put into the project throughout the years also far exceeded Pinto′s projection. Nevertheless, the depiction of a much-shrunk wall still left a lasting impact in European minds and would soon become the icon of the Asian empire.

Unlike the ocean in the east, the mountains in the west and the marshes in the south, the Great Wall is not a natural barrier. It was never a neutral obstacle, as it was intentionally built by the Chinese to halt the nomadic raids and was consequently branded a distinct form of defensiveness that the Westerners attached to other perceived natural qualities of the Chinese people. The Portuguese authors of the sixteenth century emphasized the link between the Chinese craze for wall building with their supposedly natural inclination towards defensiveness and conservatism. In a 1554 report on China, the anonymous author begins with a description of how defense is the primary concern in Chinese city building: “O modo que os Chinas tem de edificar suas cidades he sempre nos mais fortes sitios junto dos rios impetuosos, principalmente onde fazem maiores voltas, para que lhes fiquem servindo de cercas” (Intino 67). The same author also notes the prudence of the imperial commissioners to always check the status of city defenses before worrying about carrying other duties such as tax collection (68), and justifies this extreme emphasis on defense by describing a historical invasion of China by foreign enemies (70). But despite these attempts to logically justify the Chinese emphasis on impeccable defense, decades of frustration with their inability to penetrate Chinese hinterland led to a growing resentment among the Portuguese towards the Chinese impermeability, especially since even their only foothold in Southern China, Macau, had to operate under Chinese supervision. In 1574, when the number of colonizers in Macau rose past

10,000, a wall between the Portuguese settlement and the mainland, which was known as "Porta do Cerco" among the Portuguese, was deemed necessary by mandarins to keep the foreigners in check (Bitterli 142). Since they now were themselves also behind a wall, the Portuguese in Macau had a paradoxical feeling towards Ming China, as they still relied heavily on the Chinese for survival. As António Bocarro suggests in a 1635 treatise on the defense of Macau, they did not feel that their relationship with the Ming authorities was a balanced one:

> A paz que temos com o rei da China é conforme ele quer, porque, como está tão desviado da Índia e tem um poder tão avantajado a todo o maior que os portugueses poderão lá juntar em número de gente, nunca, por mais escândalos que tivéssemos deles, houve nem pensamento de chegarmos a rompimento, porque só com nos tolher o mantimento consumira a nossa cidade, por não haver parte nem com que os ir buscar. (158b)

It is stemming from this simultaneous feeling of rejection and reliance that later European discourses on the symbolism of Great Wall gradually shifted from awe and admiration to frustration and contempt, as it became more and more associated with stagnation and self-complacency. As Eric Hobsbawm puts it, all historians, consciously or not, contribute "to the creation, dismantling and restructuring of images of the past which belong not only to the world of specialist investigation but to the public sphere of man as a political being" (13). French Enlightenment philosopher Voltaire, though a famous sympathizer of Chinese culture, sees the Great Wall as "monument of fear" that only attests to Chinese people′s patience and not superior genius: "La grande muraille de la Chine est un monument de la crainte. . . . [Elle] attest[e] une grande patience dans les peuples, mais aucun génie supérieur" (*Dictionnaire philosophique* 348). Karl Marx in turn views the Wall as the ultimate stronghold of "ancient reaction and ancient conservatism" (445). However, much of this imagery had to do with the

Portuguese experience and textual and cartographical reports on the China matter, which have largely been neglected.

Another crucial element of Chinese geographical space highlighted by both Barbuda′s map and the texts by the likes of Pinto has to do with their depiction of Chinese waterways. The far-reaching influence of the Portuguese representation has been the focus of a recent study by Michael Pearson, who demonstrated that a certain "Lago de Chiamay," which Barros and Pinto put on to the Asian map as the source of multiple great rivers in Southeast Asia, would prove to be a prominent feature on maps of the region for two centuries despite the lack of any further substantiation (43-45). Zoltán Biedermann has also commented on the geographical distortions in the *Cartas dos cativos do Cantão* that originate from the prisoners′ insistence on China's conquerability, emphasizing the "accessibility of China′s maritime rim and on rivers as a dominant feature not only of the Chinese landscape, but also of social and economic life across the country, while "towns that are not situated near a fully navigable waterway are declared irrelevant" ("Imperial Reflections" 29). Chinese hinterland largely remained a mystery to European visitors during the Ming era, and no Portuguese vessel succeeded in penetrating deep into the inland waterways, but even after the Manuelian dreams of military conquest faded, the Portuguese and other Europeans were still counting on the easy accessibility of the hinterland by water as a possible medium for the spreading of Christian dogma.

It is in this context that we ought to look at the fictional journey of Fernão Mendes Pinto in China's interior. Most notably, he supposedly sailed between the two imperial capitals Nanjing and Beijing on a great river that he called Batampina, which corresponds to the actual Great Canal. It is along this voyage that Pinto introduces to readers some of the most exaggerated stories of Chinese wealth and abundance, but also where he sets up several episodes involving encounters with local Christian communities. In Chapter 91 Pinto meets the

daughter of Tomé Pires, Inês de Leiria; in Chapter 96 he comes across a group of Christians converted by Hungarian hermit Mateus Escandel; and in Chapter 116 he is greeted by Vasco Calvo, one of the prisoners of Cantão, and his family. None of these groups can have their existence verified by a second source, and even in the very unlikely chance that they were not fictional characters, given that scholars tend to believe Pinto only had personal experiences with the littoral cities of China, their encounters would still be nearly impossible. A more sensible way of reading them is to decipher the symbolic meanings of these encounters, as demonstrated by the observation of Luís Madureira: "the cross tattooed on his daughter′s arm is in this sense the derisory simulacrum of the massive steles (padrões) inscribing Portugal′s claim of possession on alien territory" (73).

Antonio José Saraiva stresses that what interests modern readers in *Peregrinação* is "a intenção da narrativa, o que ela exprime sobre a posição pessoal do autor perante o mundo . . . Não é a verdade geográfica, mas outra verdade que só a ficção nos pode dar" (97). However, Pinto′s inventions are based on his personal recollections and materials brought back from Asia and those available back in Portugal (Almeida 163-175), so even his most sensationalist imagination would have certain geographical foundations. Some scholars link Pinto′s rendition of Chinese geography to Barbuda′s China map, which in turn relied on "contemporaneous cosmography derived from Chinese chorography to anchor its fictional depictions within an expanded world" (Safier and Santos 465). It is therefore plausible that the navigability of great rivers throughout China served as a primary condition for Pinto′s representation of the existence and spread of Christian communities in Chinese hinterland.

It is worth noting that Pinto also affirms that "neste império da China tanta era a gente que viuia pelos rios, como a q̃ habitaua nas cidades & nas villas" (274). Despite its seemingly ludicrous claim, this rumor was not invented by Pinto, as it was a commonplace in the early Portuguese documents on China to incorporate a section on the boat people. Duarte Barbosa

observes that “estes chins que vivem de trato e navegação, trazem de contínuo suas mulheres e filhos dentro nas naus, onde vivem sempre, e não têm casas” (219), while Cristóvão Vieira reports the Chinese tendency to aggregate near the rivers: “é muito povoada nestas falidas por onde estam rios, e onde os não há, não hé assi povoado nem o quinto” (Loureiro *Cartas* 43). Decades later, writing in 1590, Father Duarte de Sande still felt the need to disprove the popular belief that “há tanta gente a viver na água como na terra,” but even he believed that “o reino da China é todo cruzado por amplos rios e tem em muitos lugares grandes extensões de água, sendo as barcas e os barcos muito comuns por toda a parte,” and his counterargument is only that there were even more people living in the city or in the fields: “as cidades enxameiam de cidadãos e o campo de camponeses” (Sande and Valignano 38-39).

The boat people, or Tankas, never comprised more than a fraction of the whole population of China, and the easily accessible waterways existed only in a few of the southern provinces and not in the whole nation. The sampling bias was obviously influential in the creation of this recognition, as these are the regions most visited by Portuguese coming off the boats. Furthermore, it was in their navy that the Portuguese found their military advantage against larger Asian empires, to the point that the Chinese attributed to the Folangji the title of “King of Oceans” “佛郎机夷号称海王” (Zheng Shungong 209). Therefore, conscious emphasis by the Portuguese on the heavy Chinese reliance on waterways contains the implication of a possible Portuguese naval invasion both in military and spiritual sense.

The depiction of a foreign nation′s geographical attributes was as much a social construct as it was scientific, and spatial exactitude many times gave way to ideological considerations in the early modern period. A 1590 map produced in Venice depicts the route between Vienna and Constantinople on an almost horizontal plane, flattening the seven intervening degrees of latitude, because “for the mapmaker and his audience, the relative position on the globe of the Ottoman and Austrian capitals was not particularly the point; rather

the journey and its envisioning was at issue" (Brummett 262). Likewise, for Barbuda and Pinto alike, the Great Wall at the border and the waterways in interior China were reflections of the expectation and frustration in the Portuguese desire to enter China. Compared to the more theoretical confrontations on the global and continental levels, the depiction of the Other on the national level demonstrated a more pragmatic orientation.

Local: Agency and Rivalry

Vérité au deçà des Pyrénés, erreur au delà.

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (1670)

Towards the end of the Ming Dynasty, the Chinese perception of the location of Portugal took a fascinating shift. The term Folangji gradually fell out of use, while *Ao Yi* (Barbarian at Macau) is increasingly mentioned. As has been discussed above, this change was partly due to the efforts of Christian missionaries to distance themselves from the negative connotations of the former name, and they were so successful that some Chinese, such as the Christian mandarin Han Lin (韩霖,1596-1649), would mistakenly draw a distinction between *Ao Yi* and Folangji: "The *Ao Yi* are originally from the nation of Boerduwaer [Portugal] . . . Folangji is also the name of a foreign country to the west, it is where Chinese firearms are originally from, and it is wrong to use this name to refer to the barbarians at Macau." "香山澳夷本国，波尔度瓦尔 (……) 佛郎机亦西夷国名，此中国火器所自始，以之称澳夷，非也" (712-713).

Many Ming Chinese seemed to recognize the power foreign merchants held in Macau, and some made conscious attempts to distinguish them from unruly Folangji from earlier reigns. He Zongyan (何宗彦,1559-1624), a senior official with an anti-European attitude, seems to consider the settlement as a self-governed merchant republic (LMD 217). The legal and social structure of Macau during the Ming era was so unique that scholars constantly debated on its true origin and nature. Some treat Ming administration of the Portuguese settlement in Macau

as a continuation of the *Fanfang* (蕃舫 Foreigners′ Quarters) system that dates back to the Tang Dynasty (640-907 CE) (Boxer *Portuguese Society* 51; Jin Guoping "Ao Men" 63), viewing it as a more autonomous administrative region for the Portuguese within the realm of Ming China, while others emphasize the Chinese objection to Portuguese autonomous rule and the struggle between the two sides (Tang "Ming Dai" 54-55). However, relatively little attention has been given to the transformation of the imagery of the Portuguese in the Ming Chinese mindset, especially how they were first perceived as challengers from outside the diplomatic framework of tributary relationships, but later began to be recognized as a semi-autonomous local administrative entity. Late Ming perceptions of the Portuguese cannot be separated from their view on the *Ao Yi*, and it is a fascinating case of how a self-proclaimed center viewed distant foreign nationals living in a local port city at the imperial periphery.

Among all the references to *Ao Yi* in Ming documents, the 1624 memorial by Chen Xichang (陈熙昌) to Emperor Chongzhen is the most illuminating on this particular point, for it makes a comparison between the Portuguese in Macau and a minority group under Ming governance in the Southwest province of Guizhou, namely the Miao People: "澳原无夷，非如黔之有苗种，与齐民杂处也" (829b). "Macau originally did not have any Yi-Barbarians, unlike in Guizhou where the [semi-independent] Miao people always lived side by side with citizens directly under imperial control." Advocating for immediate action to curtail the Portuguese influence in the region, Chen draws on the recentness of the Macau problem as the precondition for a solution that was unavailable in the Southeast. What he suggests is basically a historical reversal to the time before the arrival of the Portuguese, and he bases his reasoning on the possibility of repeat of historical events. While Chen makes the claim that Macau has lapsed from Chinese control to "quietly become a rival country" "隐然成一敌国矣," his line of thought is in reality limited to the domestic context, and rather than treating the Portuguese in Macau as a foreign military threat, he instead looks at them as possible successors of the

historical minority warlords Shi Le (石勒 274-333 CE) and Liu Cong (刘聪？-318 CE): “恐石勒、刘聪之祸复见于今日矣” (830a). “I am afraid that the disasters caused by Shi Le and Liu Cong would reappear today.”

In Chinese historical records, Shi and Liu were ethnic minority leaders who were believed to be deeply fascinated by Han Chinese culture and tried their best to imitate everything Han in their power grab. By comparing *Ao* Yi to Shi and Liu, Chen engaged in substantial cultural hubris by assuming that the Portuguese were the overwhelming beneficiaries in the cross-cultural interactions, a topic which he later expanded. In his account, the *Ao Yi* relied on the Chinese for things as trivial as measurement tools and as advanced as the complete education in Chinese classics:

> 夷无斗、无尺、无秤，则与之较轻重、挈长短。夷不识字，不谙文义，则与之延师训子，甚且插籍纳监，以窃中国衣冠。 (829b)
>
> The barbarians have no bucket to measure grain, no ruler and no scales, then [we Chinese] help them measure weights and lengths. The barbarians do not read and do not understand the [Confucian] texts, then [we Chinese] help them recruit teachers to educate their sons, even fake registration to help them get into Imperial College, so that they can steal Chinese cultural heritage.

It is also interesting to note that this adamantly anti-Portuguese mandarin was a native of the Guangdong province, and so were a lot of the scholars with a more critical attitude towards the foreigner. Lu Zhaolong (卢兆龙) specifically uses his background as being born and raised in the County of Xiangshan, to which Macau belongs, to add to the credibility of his judgment that the *Ao Yi* are “by nature wild, fierce and unpredictable”: “臣生长香山，知澳夷最志,其性悍桀，其心叵测” (Wang Ji 2053). When compared with the following observation by Álvaro Semedo, we notice a related emphasis on a difference in attitudes among Chinese from

different regions of China. The Portuguese Jesuit distinguishes between inhabitants of the interior and local Chinese at Macau and Canton, commenting that the latter were constantly in commercial conflict with Portuguese merchants, but the former were “afáveis, corteses e muito tratáveis” (63):

> Conversam connosco com tanto respeito e decoro que, em qualquer reunião com eles, dão-nos o primeiro lugar, sem outro título, mais que o de sermos forasteiros ou como eles dizem, hóspedes de climas remotos. Em casos de necessidade, como muitas vezes temos experimentado, emprestam aquilo que pedimos, posto que sob penhores, o que é infalível, mas isso sem interesses. (64)

Of course, not all those from the interior were so hospitable towards the Portuguese and the Europeans in general. The first anti-Christian incident happened in Nanchang in 1607, and the most organized and influential Church Incident in the Ming era occurred in Nanjing in 1616. Neither of these locations was a traditional “contact zone” in Mary Louise Pratt′s sense, where “disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (4). There is a difference in the cause of xenophobia sentiments between the hinterland and the border, however. The anti-foreigner movements in the hinterland was in general driven by fear and ignorance, while in border provinces the hostility derived from conflicts of a commercial and political interests. Chinese general Zhu Wan, who wiped out the Portuguese settlement in Shuangyu, lost his life in the subsequent internal power struggle, largely due to the lobbying of the local clans in Fujian and Zhejiang who stood to profit heavily from the cooperation with foreign smugglers. It is reported that, before committing suicide, Zhu Wan cried that “even if the Emperor did not want me dead, people from Fujian and Zhejiang would absolutely kill me.” “纵天子不欲死我 ,闽、浙人必杀我” (MS 5405). Many of these power struggles took place behind the scenes, and a letter by Lin Xiyuan (林希元,1482-1567), a prominent Fujianese scholar-official, remains one of the

few testimonies of the regional rivalry. Lin glorifies Portuguese merchants as a peaceful group who, rather than cause harm, brought many benefits to the livelihood of local inhabitants, as they tended to offer higher prices in their transactions: "与边民交易，其价皆倍于常，故边民乐与为市。未尝侵暴我边疆，杀戮我人民，劫掠我财物" (HMJS 1673a). "They trade with our inhabitants at the border, offering double the normal price, that is why border inhabitants are happy to trade with them. They have not invaded our frontier, nor have they killed our people or raided our treasures."

A more in-depth study of this issue is needed to grasp all the intricacies behind the power struggle among the different regional interest groups, but for the purpose of this thesis, it suffices to demonstrate that interactions at the local level between the Portuguese and Ming Chinese were much more nuanced and dynamic than what the traditional nationalist view has alleged. In 1630, some Ming officials devised a plan to hire Portuguese mercenary cannoneers to assist Chinese military in their war against the Manchu in the North, but when the Portuguese had already traveled deep into Chinese hinterland, this plan had to be aborted, largely because of obstructions by local interest groups in Guangdong who feared losing their monopoly over commerce with the Portuguese (Semedo 193-194; Boxer "Portuguese Military Expeditions" 32).

Power struggles and knowledge discrepancies were frequently intertwined in cross-cultural interactions. Decades later, Lu Xiyan (陆希言), an early Qing Chinese Jesuit, would lament the different attitudes towards Macau in the capital and other locations: "故在朝，则拟墺门为道原。偏在野，则指墺门为界外" (425). "So that those in office [at the capital] consider Macau as the source of Tao, while those in remote lands and out of office claim Macau to be beyond the national frontier." The "Tao" to which Lu was referring was the central government′s decision to hire Jesuit astronomers to revise the imperial calendar but could also

apply to other fields of study. Just as Blaise Pascal′s famous remark suggests, the locality of knowledge was a particularly important aspect in the early modern period.

From location, direction, distance to scale, this dissertation attempts to assemble a well-rounded analysis of the role of space in early Luso-Chinese interactions. These four factors are at the same time the framework of perception and the tools to compete for superiority. However, just as modern Physics must fuse one dimension of time into three dimensions of space to create the continuum which we inhabit, no study about human interactions would be complete without a consideration of the temporal dimension. The next chapter will focus on the patterns of temporal orientation, sequence and rhythm to gain a better understanding of the dynamic exchanges between the West and the East.

Chapter 3: Temporal Disputes: Orientation, Sequence and Rhythm

Introduction

There is no question that our ancestors living in the sixteenth century had a very different view of time from our own. Advances in precision of clockwork, the standardization of time zones and the establishment of the International Date Line, the creation and promulgation of such mass media platforms as the newspaper, television and the Internet that expand our "imagined communities" to encompass the nation and even the entire planet, all of these developments have fundamentally transformed the ways in which we look at time and perceive our contemporaries.

Nevertheless, as long as there are disparities in the level of development in different countries, the age-old tradition of using time as a tool to divide (and potentially discriminate against) human societies will endure. The vestiges of the human inclination to categorize the other as primitive while self-branding as modern remain manifest today, though in a less conspicuous form. In popular divisions such as that between "developed" and "developing" countries and that among the "first, second and third worlds", what we continue to see is the innuendo of a linear time sequence, and what we do not see are clear standards that set them apart. It is striking to see the amount of terminology that in theory should help us to better understand the world, but is in reality framed by cultural and social prejudices. It is even more glaring how much of modern perception of diversity in the world is based on such arbitrary constructions.

The opposite reflection of this linear model of societal progress is revealed when those who are wary of the direction of their own cultures view the current state of other cultures as foreshadowing their society's future. Lévi-Strauss′s famous lament that "what frightens me in Asia is the vision of our own future which it is already experiencing" (*Tristes Tropiques* 150) is emblematic of this reflective concern through juggling with time. "Time is invention or it is

nothing at all" (Bergson 371). Though Henri Bergson′s comment was directed more to the existential basis of the concept of time, it also reveals mankind′s caprice and arbitrariness in labeling other culture′s status according to their own model of historical progress.

It is in this aspect that a study of early Sino-Portuguese interactions with a focus on time continues to be relevant and illuminating in the twenty-first century. Ever since the initial encounters, the two civilizations were obliged to locate each other, not only spatially, but also temporally. Giorgio Agamben speaks of the inherent revolutionary quality of time: "every culture is first and foremost a particular experience of time, and no new culture is possible without an alteration in this experience. The original task of a genuine revolution, therefore, is never merely to 'change the world', but also - and above all - to 'change time'" ("Time and History" 97). In order to ontologically make sense of the other, both sides had to go through their own "revolution in time", making their own evaluation of the level of development of the foreign civilization in relation to their own. They also had to consolidate the legitimacy of their cultural tradition by justifying their temporal superiority to the other, through a mixture of techniques ranging from accommodation and distortion to rejection.

Studies in politics, sociology and anthropology have elucidated that time is "part of the energy in power relations within the human sphere," becoming "an instrument of and an arena of contestation over hierarchic power and governance" (Struve 17). It is often in topics related to time that we find both dialogues and conflicts to take the most diverse forms. My discussion of the impact of the temporal dimension on Luso-Chinese encounters opens with a consideration of the orientation of time, followed by an examination of sequence and rhythm, which constitute the fundamental tools that the two cultures employed to grasp, distort and reinvent the time of the other. The section on sequence focuses on the importance of history in each society and how they attempted to incorporate as much of the other's records in their own historiography, without undermining their own superiority. Temporal sequence was a major

point of contention towards the end of the period of our discussion, and prophecies were employed to distort and reconstruct a new temporal model. At last, the difference in personal and societal rhythms, reflected in the attitude towards clocks as well as the inconsistence between calendars, were the least conspicuous yet still very influential on the outcome of intercultural dialogues.

Dispute of Orientation: Importance of History

"The past is never dead. It′s not even past."

William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (1951)

Temporal orientation refers to the ordering of past, present and future in each society. When comparing early modern European and East Asian cultures, temporal orientation serves as a more fitting angle than the traditional dichotomy of linear and cyclical directions of time. It is generally agreed that mankind regards time in these two ways because both beliefs are deeply rooted in everyday experiences of time. On one hand, the irreversibility of past events as well as the body′s aging process bring about a perpetual lament for the inevitable personal death and decay. On the other hand, there has also been an irrefutable temptation in seeing natural cycles such as night-day and the seasons as emblematic of human activities reflected in the rise and fall of dynasties and nations. As manifested by the one object that most materializes abstract time, the clock represents at once the two concepts of time, as its physical mechanism and design are cyclic, while its social use points to linearity.

The universality of these experiences dictates that the only true difference among cultures and civilizations in different eras is the degree of acceptance of one of these models, and not any model′s total dominance over the other. The traditional division between the linear Christian West and a cyclical dynastic East is only valid in exposing the prevalent trend of a specific time period. In modern times, too often the linearity of time has been given preferential treatment in the power relationships between cultures, as evidenced by its symbol of an arrow, "a masculine symbol par excellence" (Woodward and Lyon 95). Though many experts on China seem to observe a stronger tendency of viewing time in cyclical ways, there are still counterarguments like that of Joseph Needham, who proclaimed that in China linearity dominated ("Time" 71), and that "on the whole China was a culture more of the Irano-Judaeo-Christian type than the Indo-Hellenic" (73).

At the same time, the dominance of the Christian idea of historical teleology does not exclude the existence of theories of cyclical alternations, which in the case of Portugal are best exemplified by Padre António Vieira and Fernando Pessoa′s respective takes on the idea of a "Quinto Império". The Portuguese interpretations were based on the Greek and Roman traditions of the cyclical "Ages of Men," a retrogressive take on human history revived during the Renaissance, along with many other ancient schools of thought in Christian Europe. Europe rediscovered works like Hesiod′s *Works and Days*, in which the author recounts the degradation of mankind from the golden age to silver, bronze, heroic and iron. They also reacquainted themselves with the lament for the declining human strength in Virgil′s *Aeneid*：

"Even a dozen hand-picked men of the build earth produces/ Now would have trouble just hoisting its great mass up on their shoulders" (326). However, the rediscovery of this ancient recessive model of human history was soon replaced by the flourishing progressive view leading up to the Age of Enlightenment. For instance, John Locke proposed a four-stage model of human evolution, from hunting and gathering to animal husbandry, and then from settled farming to commercial organization (285-302). In other words, Locke believed in the elevation to the European model of living was possible for societies that he deemed to be in earlier phases of social evolution, a theory that European colonizers and missionaries naturally found appealing. In Portuguese literature, the evolutionary model also seems to gain the upper hand. If for Friedrich Nietzsche the definition of modern progress is nothing but "go forwards, that is to say further, step by step, into décadence" (78), at least a part of Pessoa (his Álvaro de Campos heteronym) embraced the progress of human societies.

Embracing the Old in the Creation of the New

In António Vieira′s model of world history, a subtle tension in its temporal orientation arises because of the considerable gap between the fourth (Roman) and fifth (Portuguese) empires. Peter Osborne suggests that the emergence of a consciousness of a new age in Europe

developed in the fifteenth century. For him, terms like Renaissance and Reformation were manipulated to denote distance from the previous epoch of the Middle Ages and move closer to Greek and Roman antiquity[14]. In the process, a new relationship between the past, present and future took shape. "Modern is opposed to medieval rather than to ancient, and the modern has a right to preference only insofar as it imitates the ancient" (9-10).

On the other end of the Eurasian landmass, as Axel Schneider points out, it is generally agreed that Chinese people perceived time within the context of a perfect society once achieved in antiquity, at the time of the first three dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou (162). Despite the similar fondness for the lost past, as Robert Lauer observes, there is a fundamental difference between China's and Renaissance Europe's conceptions of time. Unlike the Western myth of Eden that only "provided innocence and Peace, but not a viable social structure," "the Chinese image of the past was potentially replicable in the present" (Lauer 454). The European attempts at mimesis could never be expected to fully recover what was forever lost in the Biblical version of humanity's past, whereas in China, time was not sacred as it was in Christianity, and men needed not resort to St. Augustine′s "distentio animi" (spreading out of the soul) to have a glimpse of the eternal God in the present. Instead, they could wish for and work toward a perfect replica of ancient time. Along with the literary revivalism dominant in the era, Ming Confucian historiography continued the trend of seeking such resurgence by resorting to ancient models, a strategy which had already been implemented for a millennium to compete with Buddhism and Taoism (Lian 25).

These differences underlying the seemingly common veneration of the ancients resulted in contrasting attitudes whenever each side judged the other based on their own models of antiquity. Despite a similar nostalgia for the ideal past, the Chinese were more theoretically ready to incorporate foreign ideas as a means of closing the temporal gap with the ideal past,

[14] Osborne's argument is flawed in that the term Renaissance as a time marker was only adopted by French historian Jules Michelet in the 16th century, but his premise for a collective sense of a new age based on the ancient still holds.

while the Westerners were better poised to use other historiographies as proof of their own superiority.

When the Portuguese made analogies between China and Greek, Roman and even Egyptian civilizations, it was often limited to the material level. For example, Castanheda finds similarities between Chinese temples with Egyptian pyramids: “Tem tambem outras diversas images que adorão & todas em sumptuosos templos, a que eles chamão varelas & sam da feyção que contão os historiadores que forão as piramides do Egipto” (4: 56). Castanheda had no personal experience with either Chinese or Egyptian building styles and was tempted to employ this analogy because the pyramids were such an icon of antique architectural grandeur in the European cultural imagination.

The Chinese, on the other hand, had far more philosophical and ethical concerns. One of the first anti-Portuguese memorials from the Ming officials, the “Memorial to Reject Tributes from Folangji” (请却佛郎机贡献疏) by Qiu Daolong (丘道隆), invokes *Bu Yi* (不义 non-righteousness, injustice) as the primary justification to reject a Portuguese embassy. It is important to note that *yi* had been serving as a guiding principle for international relations since the three earliest dynasties, and had become a fundamental value in the Chinese world order (Pang “Zheng Jia” 166). Meanwhile, the pro-European literati also attempted to justify learning from the West using classical antecedents. Guo Zizhang (郭子章, 1543-1618) had recourse to the ultimate authorities, Confucius and Zuo Qiuming (the attributed author of the Confucian classic *Zuozhuan*), and their open-minded attitude towards learning from foreigners:

> 郯子能言少皞官名，仲尼闻而学之，既而告人曰天子失官，学在四夷；介葛庐闻牛鸣而知其为三犧，左氏纪之于传。孔左何心，而吾辈便生藩篱，不令利生为今日之郯、介邪？(357)
>
> Tanzi, ruler of the Tan nation of Eastern barbarians, was able to recount the ancient bureaucratic titles under the legendary sovereign Shaohao, so once Confucius heard

> about it, he went to learn from him. After this, he told others that once the Son of Heaven lost his knowledge of official titles, [it was necessary] to learn from barbarians from the four directions. Gelu of the Jie nation of Eastern barbarians heard the cattle moo and immediately knew that they would be used as sacrifice in a [Confucian] ritual, and Zuo Qiuming recorded this in his history. Compared to the open-mindedness of Confucius and Zuo Qiuming, we should not erect such a high [mental] barrier, since Mr. Ricci could very well [turn out to] be today′s Tanzi and Jie Gelu.

When Ming scholars used Chinese historical examples to determine the correct way of interacting with the new breed of foreigners, the Western intellectual circles showed more interest in incorporating and manipulating Chinese history for their own agendas. To this end, they often showed a more focused interest in the ancient rather than recent history of the other. Portuguese Jesuit António de Gouvea (1575-1628), for instance, had access to Chinese historiography on all past dynasties, but chose to recount in detail only that of the three earliest dynasties, as he deemed them to be the most intriguing to European audiences (211-212), mainly for the potential to supplement and confirm biblical accounts of the ancient era. Nicolas Standaert concurs that there was a growing interest in chronology both in China and Europe, and suggests that the "updated chronologies of ancient times included in the Chinese texts enabled the Jesuits to interweave them with the European system and fit them in the new universal chronologies" (*Intercultural Weaving* 155). The appreciative glance towards the early history stands in contrast with the overlooking of later historiography, and the reason for this disparity could be attributed to the fact that early history was more prone to manipulation and distortion. English scholar John Webb (1611-1672) was the most adventurous by suggesting that Pangu (盘古), Creator of the universe in Chinese mythology, was in reality the leader of a post-diluvian colony in China, and legendary Emperor Yao to be Janus or Noah (Chen Shouyi 99-100). Spanish friar Juan Gonzales Mendoza, on the other hand, took the

liberty to add Panguna, a female counterpart to Pangu in the story of Creation, so as to make it correspond to the Christian myth of Adam and Eve (34). Portuguese observers were also very creative in their distortion and manipulation of early Chinese history. In João Rodrigues′s letter to a Korean envoy to China in 1630, the Portuguese Jesuit tries to attribute the non-circulation of *Tian Xue* (天学 Learning from Heaven, which encompassed a variety of topics related to Philosophy, Astronomy and Catholicism) in China to Qin Shi Huang's (秦始皇, 259-210 BCE) infamous Burning of the Books:

> 尚有天学，恐秦始皇焚其书失其传也。中国惟信古人，或有差讹，亦为迁就。西国之学，自古迄今，时时参讨，不得其根源不止也。 (Tang *Wei Li Duo* 227)
>
> There is also *Tian Xue*, which I suspect was lost due to the Burning of the Books by Qin Shi Huang. China only believes in the ancients, and even if there are miscalculations, they would adjust [the correct data] to comply [to the ancient model]. At the same time, this area of study has been evolving constantly since ancient times in Western nations and will not end until we find the origin and cause [of the phenomena].

Qin Shi Huang′s iron-fisted strategy earned him the title of First Emperor in a unified and much more centralized empire, but his hostility towards Confucianism became a target of vehement attack by the later dominant doctrine in China. Though there is no further evidence to support Rodrigues′s claim, to use a historical event familiar to East-Asian literati was intended to ease the acceptance of a completely foreign school of thought, and at the same time attest to European supremacy by accusing the Chinese of putting too much trust in ancient texts whereas the European knowledge continually evolves[15].

[15] This debate resonates with a similar contention between the ancients and the moderns occurring in Western Europe in the early 17th century, and the Portuguese expansion has a significant place in the polemics. In Portugal itself there has been reflections on the merits and perils of the expansion to the nation basically from the beginning of their maritime expansion, with key figures like Gil Vicente, Garcia de Resende and Sá de Miranda all having input on the polemic.

At the same time, it is paramount to remember that Qin Shi Huang stands in Chinese history as the dividing figure between the early history of the first three dynasties and later ones. Joseph Needham emphasizes the significance of his unification of China because it ensured "the unity of secular and sacred which no schizophrenia of pope and emperor ever broke up" ("Time" 73). Rodrigues′s matter-of-fact statement actually implies a deeper conflict in matters related to the ancient golden era, as he appropriated the Confucian aversion to calamities such as that of the Burning of the Books by offering a different social model, arguing that the sacred power had the ability to keep the secular in check.

In the Jesuits′ presentation of the dynamics of European politics, the elective selection of the Pope, or "King of Civilization" (教化王) as the Ming Chinese registered it, caught special attention of those mandarins who idealized the pre-dynastic government form, which was based on wise and benevolent rulers voluntarily stepping down when they found a more worthy successor. It is in this context that we should understand Fang Hongjing's (方弘静, 1517-1611) and Ge Yinliang's (葛寅亮, 1570-1646) mistake in interpreting the elective procedure as common practice not just for religious heads but monarchs as well:

> 国不知所谓儒佛，自有经书，能通晓其书有行者举在位。在位者率不娶，王世禅，众所推也，故无无道者。(……) 如其所言，则三五之世且不逮，未由稽之耳。(Fang Hongjing 23)
>
> Their nation did not know of Confucianism nor Buddhism, they have their own classics, and the one with most merit and most knowledge in those classics is elected to be their king. Kings do not marry, they always abdicate, because they are elected by the people, there cannot be an ignorant tyrant. . . . If what [Ricci] says is true, then even [our golden] era of Three [Kings] and Five [Emperors] cannot compete, but we cannot verify their claim.

> 予往日于都中见利玛窦，述其国主皆系传贤，号为教化王 (……) 其教如不祀祖，及杀食之说，虽大悖繆，而国主相传之法则甚善(……) 若再用舜禘尧之法，庙祀传若父子，则人心必愈相安矣。 (Ge 408)
>
> In the past I met with Matteo Ricci in the capital, who said that the kingship of their nation would always be passed on to the most virtuous [successor], who is called the King of Civilization . . . . Their religion is paradoxical and erroneous in not worshiping ancestors and mistaking food for God′s body, but their process of monarchical succession is quite fine . . . . If they also adopted the old ritual of worship that Emperor Shun gave to Emperor Yao, so that their legitimacy carried on as if from father to son, then the population would feel much calmer [about the succession].

In intercultural relations, mistakes in many circumstances are very informative as they showcase the cultural assumptions informing what the participants wanted to believe. Fang and Ge′s mistake reflects their willingness to project onto a foreign country a political system long lost to Chinese culture, a desire made apparent by Fang′s allusion to the model politics used by rulers in the semi-mythical ancient era, as well as by Ge′s suggestion to combine ancient Chinese practices of worship and legitimization with the Western practice of elective succession. One verse composed by Chen Hongji (陈宏己, 1556-1640) summarizes how this longing for the past is projected onto the imagined Western society: “大庭不可见，此国曾足拟” (Wu Xiangxiang 661). “The mythical clan of Da Ting cannot be seen today, but this country (Europe] can be used as an analogy.” The clan of Da Ting is rumored to have practiced elective succession, so the European model was seen by Chen as a contemporary replication of this ancient Chinese political model.

The European Utopia, or ou-topos (“no place”), has at its root the impossibility or non-existence, which stands in stark contrast to Chinese belief in the replicability of perfect models from ancient times. As such, Fang and Ge′s perception of the Papal election systems says more

about their own political ideals and their orientation toward the past. Curiously, there was also an early Portuguese trend in representing the Chinese succession as also taking place by election. Tomé Pires was the first to report on this matter: “Ho Rey da china nom soçede De pay a filho Nem sobrinho somemte por eleicam do conselho de todo ho regño amda semp̃ na cidade De cambara omde o Rey esta & o mandarim q̃ se por estes aproua fiqa Rey” (455). Without enough textual evidence, scholars have speculated this flagrant misinformation to be an anachronistic mistake, referring to either the election of Khan among Mongol nobility before their establishing the Yuan Dynasty in China, or the Chinese legends of virtuous kings passings the throne to the most suitable successors in primordial times. However, even not mentioning the stories of voluntary succession more than four thousand years before, at the time of Portuguese arrival in Southeast Asia, the Mongols had also long been driven out of mainland China by the resurgent ethnic Han Dynasty of Ming. The time gap between these two moments amounts to 150 years (and even more, if we consider the fact that the Mongols had in practice abolished elective succession after Kublai Khan (1215-1294) took power). As slow as the knowledge network would have been in the early modern period, the constant reaffirmation of this account reveals a particular mindset of the Portuguese, accentuating the difference in their observation of the mirroring empire of China. It is only through this perspective that we can understand that, when Castanheda had correctly introduced the Chinese evolution to primogeniture: “Os reys da China soyão de ser antigamente por eleyção, & de pouco tempo pêra ca herda ho filho primeyro de qualquer de suas mulheres & não das mancebas” (4: 58), Camões continues to adopt the election as one of the fundamental cultural images of China, along with the famed Great Wall:

> Estes, o Rei que tem, não foi nacido
> príncipe, nem dos pais aos filhos fica
> mas elegem aquele que é famoso

> por cavalleiro, sábio e virtuoso. (1: 365)

The anachronism is also apparent in European observers′ tendency to view the Chinese Empire as a possible embodiment of Greek philosophers′ ideal state. This is how Jerónimo Osório presents the discussion:

> Nesta altura, disse Metelo: "Se é verdade o que afirma Platão, a saber, que há-de ser feliz a República que confiar a sua direcção aos filósofos, os Chineses devem ser considerados felizes".
>
> "Sê-lo-iam" — respondi eu— "se existisse entre eles uma filosofia bem elaborada. Mas, segundo é fama, cultivam um género de sabedoria complicado por muitos erros e superstições mágicas. Todavia, são dignos de admiração, em entregarem o poder supremo àqueles que consideram os que mais se distinguem pelo mérito da sabedoria." (176-177)

The image of China in these definitions of civilizations resemble that of the ancient Greece and Rome in early modern European discourse. The main criticism that these comments have of Chinese is their superstition, or their lack of Christianity. Despite the commendation of Chinese ingenuity in social designs, what these European reflections ultimately underscored is the advantageous position that the Europeans held, because there were already blessed with the Holy teachings. If the pagan Chinese could achieve a completely successful organization of the state, and if the Europeans valued knowledge as much as the Easterners did, it would be impossible for Christian Europeans not to surpass them.

It is worth noting that the sixteenth-century Western public had a very different idea of history than modern minds. As Peter Burke notes, they were more concerned with morals than facts, and attended more to the general rather than the specific (*Social History* 182). In Chinese culture, histories also carried a moral function, as the assessment of historical facts was meant to reflect the normative order set in the ideal past (Schneider 161), so that past successes and

mistakes could stand as lessons for posterity, as subsequent generations strived to return to the golden age achieved in the first three dynasties. This is why among the dozens of accounts of Portuguese barbarity and even cannibalism by Ming Chinese, Yan Congjian′s note stands out. As cited above, Yan attributes the lack of mention of Portugal in past historiography not only to its remoteness, but also a deliberate choice by Chinese ancestors with ethical concerns, who "detested their inhumanity and wished to obliterate them [from history]" (trans. Zhang Qiong 271). Then why did Yan choose to register their atrocity instead of following the strategy of deliberate neglect? Yan himself did not provide us with a satisfying answer, simply stating that "I am recording this to serve as a reminder for the future" (Zhang Qiong 271). Nevertheless, it is not difficult to deduce that the main reason for changing the earlier strategy of neglect would be the rapidly increasing contacts with these "barbarians." The new phase in cross-cultural contacts required a new tactic to show Chinese moral strength, which can be seen in another theme that was repeatedly associated with the Portuguese in the Ming era, which is their inclusion in the story of Three Evils (三害).

Rewriting Anecdote and the Change of Moral

A widespread anecdote concerning the image of the Portuguese during the Ming period was their portrayal as one of the "Three Evils of Malacca," along with a ferocious sea dragon that devours people to death, and a black tiger that morphs into human form and plunders the market place. What follow are just two of the many versions of this story:

> 佛郎机，黠夷也，猫睛鹰嘴，拳发赤须，而貌皆白，属干系腊国。行贾无所不至，至则谋袭其国人。满剌加海有龙龟，高四尺，四足，有鳞甲，露长牙，啮人立死；山有黑虎，或变人形，入市杀人，合佛郎机为三害云。 (He Qiaoyuan 636a)
>
> Folangji is a cunning group of barbarians with cat eyes, eagle mouth, curly hair, red beard and white skins, they belong to the nation of Ganxila [Castile]. Their wandering

merchants go everywhere, and once they arrive at a place, they [make a] plan to attack the local people. There is a dragon-turtle in the Malaccan sea of more than one-meter in height, it has four feet, armor-like shells and long teeth, and once it bites people, they die immediately. There is also a black tiger in the mountains that sometimes shifts into human shape and goes to markets to kill people. These two creatures, combined with Folangji, are called the Three Evils.

后佛郎机破满剌加，入据其国，而故王之社遂墟。臣隶俛首，无从报仇，久乃渐奉为真主矣。古称旁海人畏龟龙。龟龙高四尺，四足，身负鳞甲，露长牙，过人则啮，无不立死。山有黑虎，虎差小, 或变人形，白昼入市，觉者擒杀之。今合佛郎机，足称三害云。 (Zhang Xie 67)

Later the Folangji captured Malacca and seized its territory, and the altar of soil of its previous rulers turned to ruin. Their officials and subjects yielded and had no way to get revenge, so after a long time they began to treat [the Folangji] as their true overlords. There used to be records of people [living] by the sea being afraid of a turtle-dragon, that is more than one-meter-tall and has four feet, armor-like shells and long teeth, and bite every person that passes by, killing them immediately. There is also a black tiger in the mountains that is smaller [than an average tiger], it sometimes shifts into human shape and goes to market at daylight, if someone found it, it would kill them. Now combined with Folangji, they [can rightly] be called the Three Evils.

Those familiar with the Chinese literary tradition would immediately recognize this anecdote as a rewrite of the legend of Zhou Chu (周处）(236-297 AD) recorded in the *Book of Jin* (晋书). Zhou was a formidable bully in his youth, and the locals listed him as one of the three evils together with, coincidentally, a dragon and a tiger. Zhou volunteered to kill the dragon and tiger, but when several days passed and neither he nor the beasts were seen again, the local population were led to believe that he had perished together with the monsters. Ecstatic, the

common folks threw a grand celebration for the deaths of all three evils. After seeing the extent to which he was disliked by the locals, Zhou finally had an epiphany, and went on to become a man of integrity with a fruitful political career (Fang Xuanling et al. 1569-1570).

The story was already over a thousand years old in the sixteenth century, but the time gap did not diminish its popularity during the Ming dynasty, thanks mainly to its inclusion in *Shi Shuo Xin Yu* (《世说新语》*A New Account of the Tales of the World*), a best-selling collection of historical anecdotes comparable to the Greek *chreias*[16], which saw a whopping twenty-six editions during the Ming Dynasty alone. Zhou Chu's dramatic life also became the subject of an opera by Huang Boyu (黄伯羽) titled *Jiao Hu Ji* (《蛟虎记》*Legend of the Dragon and Tiger*).

It easily strikes any reader that the new version with the Portuguese, when compared to the original, lacks any Bildungsroman element. The Portuguese, unlike Zhou, did not show any sign of remorse, but unabashedly continued their reign of terror in Malacca, at least in the Chinese mindset. It is important to note that not all accounts of Malacca during the Ming Dynasty referred to these three evils, as some accounts only included tales of the black tiger and small dragon. Yan Congjian for example focused on the aspect of the metamorphosis of the tiger, claiming it strange to see animals possessing the ability to transform into human shape in a short period of time: "予尝闻牛哀化虎，搏杀其兄；涪民变虎，夜食其豕；未闻以虎化人者。兽之化人，(…) 皆年久成精，而今随常可变，亦甚异哉" (290). "I have heard that Gongniu Ai shifted into a tiger and killed his brother; I have heard that a man from Fu shifted into a tiger and ate his pig at night; I have never heard of a case of tiger shifting into man. [In the stories] of beasts metamorphosizing into men,… they can only do so after a very long time, so it is very strange to see that they can now make the shift so casually." What this

[16] A *chreia* is a very short anecdote about a certain character designed for use in rhetoric, and its exercise was popular in Ancient Greece.

fact suggests is that the inclusion of the Portuguese is a later addition, which went through what Hayden White terms the "poetic process" of "fusing events, whether imaginary or real, into a comprehensible totality capable of serving as the object of representation" (*Tropics of Discourse* 125). The moral implications are the main emphasis here. On one hand, there could still be some hope in civilizing the barbarian and letting him repent just as Zhou did, since now they have first-hand knowledge of the great Chinese culture. This seemingly over-the-top optimism comes from the Chinese confidence in the civilizing power of Confucian doctrine, which could explain why in some accounts, the Portuguese left the city of Malacca after its capture and let the former sultan return to power. "佛郎机将以其地索赂于暹罗而归之，暹罗辞焉。佛郎机整众满载而去，王乃复所" (Huang Zhong 4). "The Folangji wanted to give the land [of Malacca] as a bribe to Siam and return home, but Siam refused. The Folangji reorganized and left with their ships laden [with loot], and the king [of Malacca] returned to its capital." This was certainly misinformation, as the Portuguese had held on to Malacca since its capture by Afonso de Albuquerque in 1511, and only in 1641 was it taken by the Dutch. It could have been solely a transmission mistake, but as shown above, these mistakes are valuable in revealing what the Chinese had hoped for, which was a naïve dream of maintaining the regional order as it existed before the Portuguese arrival.

On the other hand, there could also be a more obscure form of criticism of the Portuguese, for to err is forgivable, but to refuse to correct oneself may suggest degeneration beyond redemption. Both the original anecdote and Huang′s opera had Zhou′s repentance at the core of the story, which echoes Confucius′ precept that "men of noble character. . . should not be afraid to correct their own mistakes". "君子 (……) 过则勿惮改" (4). While Zhou Chu′s account fascinated ordinary readers with its fantastical elements and impactful plot twists, it received critical acclaim mainly for advocating the Confucian teachings of constantly seeking self-correction and self-improvement. For Ming Confucian scholars, Zhou Chu was more than

just a historical character in an ancient history book, but the "exemplary figure" as Ernst Robert Curtius characterizes it, "the incarnation of a quality" (60-61). The compilers of the *Book of Jin* list Zhou Chu′s "克己厉精，朝闻夕改" (Fang Xuanling et al. 1586) "self-control and dedication, [as well as the fact that] once he recognized [his own mistakes] in the morning, he began to change them in the evening," as the primary reason to document his life in the official historiography. Qi Biaojia (祁彪佳, 1602-1645), a well-known late-Ming scholar-official, commended Huang Boyu′s theatrical rendition mainly because it corresponds to the teaching of Confucius: "黄伯羽取周孝侯除三害事，有合于过勿惮改之义，作者思深矣" (48). "Huang Boyu bases his drama on the story of Zhou Chu eradicating the Three Scourges, which echoes the [Confucian] teaching of 'Do not be afraid to change once you realize you are wrong', so there are a lot of thoughts behind this choice of theme. "By hinting at the Portuguese failure up until that moment to comply with the moral standards set by Chinese ancients, which had been achieved long ago by an individual immersed in Confucian surroundings, Ming authors were subtly consolidating the temporal superiority of the Chinese civilization through this particular emplotment.

The moral effect of the story of the Three Evils becomes more illuminating when compared with how the Europeans chose to represent the fantastical tale in Malacca. In Tomé Pires′ *Suma Oriental*, there were already mentions of local inhabitants of Malacca recounting the abundance of wild animals: "segumdo afirmam os naturaẽes De gramdes momtarias dalifamtes braũos mujtos de lioees de tigres he Doutros anjmãaos mostruosos E alijmarias de casa nom como as nosas somemte servos" (470). His failure to register any report of dragons was probably due to a lack of understanding of its cultural meaning in Asian societies. However, in the 1602 version of Matteo Ricci's world map, on the eastern coast of Malacca there is a legend stating the following: "There are flying dragons twining around trees in the land of Malacca. The dragon is no more than four to five feet long and is often shot by people." "满剌

加地常有飞龙绕树，龙身不过四五尺，人常射之.” This short phrase is actually densely packed with cultural connotations. It is evident that Ricci provides no information about this Southeast Asian hub that could suggest a Portuguese presence, which complies with the Jesuits' selective screening of knowledge discussed by Zhang Qiong. At the same time, it has been argued that in this annotation, Ricci was deliberately attempting to deconstruct the Chinese cultural tradition. In Chinese accounts, the creature that Zhou Chu slayed is actually a species called Jiao (蛟),which was believed to be a species inferior to the authentic dragons called Long (龙). Ricci instead used the term “Flying dragons,” which was traditionally associated with royal power. Therefore, to stress the dragon′s miniature form as well as its fragility could be a subtle warning to the Chinese, that they may not be as grandiose as they believed, and they were not the sole civilization that everyone in the world looked up to. The message was made more powerful through the subtle innuendo that Malaccan people, be they nationals of a Chinese tributary state or Portuguese settlers, could kill a creature deemed god-like in Chinese culture (Zou 288-289). When writing this short legend, Ricci might have had in mind the story of Saint George slaying the dragon as a means of having local inhabitants convert to Catholicism. Slaying the flying dragon could symbolize Ricci′s self-imposed mission to bring to the Chinese the light of the one true faith.

Dispute of Sequence: Tactics for Rearrangement

> And as the Governor-General rewrote time (made his longer, made ours shorter), as he rendered invisible our accomplishments, wiped out traces of our ancient civilizations, rewrote the meaning and beauty of our customs, as he abolished the world of spirits, diminished our feats of memory, turned our philosophies into crude superstitions, our rituals into childish dances, our religions into animal worship and animistic trances, our art into crude relics and primitive forms, our drums into instruments of jest, our music into simplistic babbling – as he rewrote our past, he altered our present. And the alteration created new spirits which fed the bottomless appetite of the great god of chaos.
>
> Ben Okri, *Infinite Riches* (1998)

"With age comes wisdom." This old saying has been applied not just to individuals, but collective entities such as cultures and nations as well. Sizable social groups are always inclined to exaggerate the length of their own history in order to demonstrate superiority, because "ancient lineage adds luster and legitimacy." Peter Stearns points out the ambiguity of different peoples′ belief in their origin dates and stories, which were "not necessarily untrue, they were simply not clearly true" (35). The uncertainties concerning national and civilizational origins provide enough leeway for later manipulation. Giambattista Vico summarizes the tendency to stretch history as a "conceit of the nations," pointing out that every nation "has had the same conceit that it before all other nations invented the comforts of human life and that its remembered history goes back to the very beginning of the world" (55).

The length of a culture′s history thus becomes an essential measurement of its relative position in the world. Modern China often boasts of having the longest continuous history among all existing civilizations, though the term "continuous" is loosely defined to accommodate dynasties like Yuan (1271-1368) and Qing (1644-1911), when ethnic minorities conquered the Chinese heartland. Back in the sixteenth century, the popular belief that Western

learning originated from China also had its root in the belief that Chinese history preceded that of the Europeans, and for some, the barbarian states themselves all had Chinese ancestry: “外国虽夷，然揆厥所元，则皆中国帝王及贵臣之苗裔矣 (……) 天育异类，必使中国人显赫其地，以开创之，始知君臣上下，相沿至今矣” (Luo Yuejiong 13-14). “Although foreign nations are [now] barbarians, if we trace their origins, then they are all descendants of Chinese emperors and noble ministers. . . . When the Heaven breeds an alien species, it always makes Chinese people prominent in their lands and then founders [of new nations], and only after that could [the barbarians] know the hierarchical order between monarch and subjects, between what is superior and inferior, and they carry on [this model] until today.”

The antiquity of Chinese civilization would prove to be one of the major arguments in the attack on Christianity. Xu Dashou used the biblical assertion that the world was only seven millennia old to denigrate European ignorance and hypocrisy:

> 谓七千年前无世界，是有今不许有昨天矣。天主亦但有七千年寿，是禁人莫思而实可思，禁人莫议而实可议矣。而但吓愚流曰不可思议，此又譬之向黄口小儿说暗室有鬼，不可窥瞷，瞷则祸人，稍有智者照之立破耳。 (SCPX 213)
>
> Saying that there was no world seven thousand years ago is like saying there is a today but there could not be a yesterday. This means that the Lord of Heaven is also only seven thousand years old, and even though they forbid people to think, it is something thinkable; even though they forbid people to discuss, it is something discussable. Their only purpose is to intimidate the foolish into believing that this question is beyond human imagination, but in reality it is just like telling children that there is a ghost in the dark room and constrain them from peeking, scaring them, saying that if they do, then the ghost will haunt people. This trick can be easily exposed by an intelligent person.

In Chinese temporal constructions, seven millennia and yesterday are not quite so distinctive concepts, as traditional Chinese estimation for world history was much longer than the biblical one. Yang Guangxian, a leading figure in the anti-Christian movement in the late seventeenth century, used the length of Chinese documented history as a key argument against Western chronology, asserting confidently that it had been "nineteen million three-hundred seventy-nine thousand and four-hundred ninety-six years" since the creation of the system of Ganzhi, a Chinese sixty-year cyclical regulation of time. "若耶稣即是天主，则汉哀以前尽是无天之世界，第不知尧之钦若者何事，舜之察齐者何物也" (Yang Guangxian 23). "If Jesus was the Lord of Heaven, it would mean that the world before Emperor Ai of Han [27 BC to 1 BC] did not have Heaven/Sky, then to what did King Yao pay respect and submit, and how did King Shun promote the study of astronomy?"

Jiang Dejing (蒋德璟, 1593-1646), who achieved the position of Prime Minister under Emperor Chongzhen, was one of the many mandarins who accused Christianity of plagiarizing Confucian ideas, and his main argument was that their lord Jesus was born much later than such Chinese sages as Confucius, who had already laid a solid foundation for Chinese civilization: "比读其书，第知其窃吾儒事天之旨，以为天主，即吾中国所奉上帝，不知其以汉哀帝时耶稣为天主也" (SCPX 139). "Once I read their books, I understood that they stole our Confucian principle of honoring the Heaven, and created their 'Lord of Heaven,' when in fact it refers to the Chinese *Shang di* [Supreme God], and I did not know that they consider Jesus, who lived in the period of the Emperor Ai of Han, to be their 'Lord of Heaven'".

The power of Chinese confidence in the longevity of their civilization is apparent in the fact that none among Ming literati accepted the European chronology to the degree that Honda Toshiaki (本多利明, 1744-1821) did, who literally based European superiority on their older chronology. According to the eighteenth-century Japanese theorist, the main reason why China and Japan could not produce perfect institutions such as the ones present in Europe was their

relatively short civilized history in comparison to the Egyptians (Keene 60). Blinded by his belief of European historiography which traced Western civilization back to ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, Toshiaki failed to see through the ideological agendas at work in the appropriation of the oldest known civilizations. Therefore, he felt disheartened for the East Asian nations, because how could China with three thousand and Japan with one thousand five hundred years of civilization compare to the six-thousand-year old Egyptian social arrangements?

It is obvious that Toshiaki reached exactly the opposite conclusion from those reached by Xu, Yang or Jiang, but one aspect they shared was their automatic association of civilizational antiquity with a more powerful position in world politics. The establishment of sequential priority thus proved to be one of the most potent ways in which perceptions of the past were made to influence the present.

Crisis Management: Rejection and Accommodation

The dispute of two distinct historiographies between China and Portugal in the early modern era meant that the self-proclaimed temporal advantage from both sides was under threat from foreign historical accounts. To mitigate the impact, a combination of strategies of rejection and accommodation comes into play to guarantee each nation′s own legitimacy. As Edward Shils notes, “traditions are stubborn. For foreign cultural influences to be accepted, its superiority has to be proven. . . . Whatever might have been the other considerations which led to the assimilation of the alien traditions, some of the acquisition of the alien traditions must be attributed to the evident superiority of those traditions to the indigenous ones” (241). As neither side could enforce their historiography through clear military dominance in the fashion of European global hegemony during the age of “high imperialism” in the nineteenth century, the acculturation process would take a long time to develop.

It seems that from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, Europe was more active in seeking self-coherence in its own chronology, while also attempting to expand its temporal bounds. In conjunction with new discoveries in Egyptian and American chronologies, a continued interest in early Chinese history by European missionaries put forward a serious challenge to Christian preeminence in world history. But as Deleuze and Guattari brilliantly articulate, the need for order could overshadow other concerns:

> We require just a little order to protect us from chaos. Nothing is more distressing than a thought that escapes itself, than ideas that fly off, that disappear hardly formed, already eroded by forgetfulness or precipitated into others that we no longer master.… That is why we want to hang on to fixed opinions so much. We ask only that our ideas are linked together according to a minimum of constant rules. (201)

For early modern Europeans like Álvaro Semedo, the craze for order is manifested by dismissing Chinese chronology of the primordial times as incorrectly calculated. "Enganam-se nas épocas da sua cronologia com erros notáveis porque o imperador Yao, com o qual começam a dar crédito nas suas histórias, segundo o cômputo mais favorável da criação do mundo até Noé, dão-no por nascido doze anos antes do Dilúvio" (196). In this great game of rejection, the Great Deluge became a focal point of contention, because, more than any other biblical event, it demanded temporal exclusiveness, as Noah′s Ark supposedly carried the sole survivors on Earth after the divine punishment. It should be the absolute new beginning of human history, so any challenge proposed by Chinese historiography needed to be nullified. Said Ali Akbar Katai, a Muslim ambassador of the Timurids to Ming China in the early fifteenth century, was very surprised upon hearing the Chinese claim that Noah′s flood never touched their land (9). In Fernão Mendes Pinto′s tale of the foundation of Beijing, the Portuguese adventurer went even further, because in his story the Chinese king would have explicitly used the year of the Deluge as the only temporal reference: "que aos tres dias da oitaua lua do anno de seiscentos

& trinta & noue despois que o Senhor de todo o criado manifestou aos que entaõ viuiaõ no mundo, o aborrecimento que tinha aos peccados das gentes, alagando a terra cos rios do Ceo para cumprir com sua justiça" (263). Pinto had no indication, nor did he care enough to find out, that the Chinese could well have had a completely different temporal marker for their founding story.

Many cultures around the globe preserve similar tales of an ancient flood, and China is of no exception. However, contrary to the Western emphasis on the divine cause of the disaster, the Chinese legend focuses on human sacrifice, endeavor and ingenuity to overcome the enormous natural obstacle. Because these stories are very much ideologically and theologically charged, a heated debate took place when the two sides learned of each other's versions of the primordial event. Xu Dashou attacks Christian reasoning about the Deluge by pointing out the inconsistency between the supposedly all righteous and powerful God and his too emotional reaction in choosing to wipe out the entire human race:

> 又诡言，耶稣前已有费略、罢德勒之天主，尧时洪水系彼怒喷。且无论上世淳庞，至德不怒。纵使有怒，岂有不怒于蚩雾桀风，而怒于尧天禹洛者？ (SCPX 193-194)
>
> They falsely claim that there was a Lord before Jesus called Fei lue [Filius] and Ba De Le [Pater], and the Deluge in the era of Yao was His doing out of fury. First, a creature of supreme ethics should never get angry, because He should be pure and honest. Even if He should get angry, why would he be angry not in the era of tyranny under Chiyou and Jie, but choose to express his anger in the era of the benevolent Yao and Yu?

For Xu, the Old Testament God′s wrath lacked both temporal and ethical coherence, for He meted out his punishment in a time of righteous governance in China under the famed Yao and Yu, but not during reigns of terror under iconic tyrants Chiyou and Jie. This ethical

dissonance was used by Xu to counter the universal claim of Christianity, reducing the Christian God to a partial and at most local divinity with apparent anger management issues.

This mismatch between Western and Chinese ancient history was also exploited by Chen Houguang (陈侯光): “我中华溯盘古氏开辟以来，如伏羲、神农、黄帝、尧、舜，世有哲王，以辅相天地，未闻不肖如亚当、厄袜者也” (SCPX 248). “Since Pan Gu created the universe, we Chinese have always had sagacious rulers, like Fuxi, Shennong, Emperor Huang, Yao and Shun, to help support the Heaven and Earth, and we have never heard of unworthy figures like Adam and Eve.” Chen′s claim is more aggressive in that it polarizes the Chinese and European foundational figures as he unconditionally praises all ancient Chinese rulers, but the same premise of rejecting Christian universalism remains. For the Ming Chinese, the Christian explanation for the Deluge is characteristic of their irritating parochialism.

In contrast, European missionaries viewed the Chinese account of the Deluge as insufficient in discussions about its true cause. Álvaro Semedo notes this difference with disapproval: “os chineses, se bem que nos seus livros fazem longa referência a essas águas, sua regularização e o benefício que a sua correcção trouxe ao reino, não mencionam, porém, qualquer motivo e origem das referidas águas” (196). The reference that Semedo encountered would probably be a Confucian account of the event. It is notable that the ancient Chinese legend of Yu taming the flood contains plentiful mythical elements, but they were filtered out by the author of the Confucian Classic “Yu Gong” (《禹贡》“Tribute of Yu”) in the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) (Gu Jiegang 1-2). Jesuits have been known for their dedication to mastering local languages and cultures in order to facilitate their missionary endeavor. Since “Yu Gong” is part of *Shang Shu* (《尚书》*Book of Documents*), which is one of the four fundamental Confucian works, it was highly likely for Semedo to be familiar with this Chinese classic.

"Yu Gong" was considered the Confucian ideal for the organization of geographical space. The Nine-Province system (九州) deals with internal divisions inside China, while the Five Circles of Domain (五服) regulates the world according to each place′s relative distance to Chinese capital. This system is believed to have been adopted in the early Zhou Dynasty, or in other words, the golden age in the Confucian view when harmony and order were the norm throughout the empire. Yu′s taming of the flood, if seen from a Confucian perspective, represents Chinese ingenuity and courage to transform the world to suit human needs, highlighting the subjective initiative of Chinese ancestors when most parts of the world resorted to divine protection. Though Semedo′s *Relação* contained abundant information about China, his way of thinking never departed from his Christian background. Therefore, Semedo was unimpressed not only with the Chinese version of the primordial flood, but also their perception and organization of space, all of which were aspects that he deemed unnecessary to introduce to Western audience.

However, to outright ignore or reject Chinese chronology was not indisputable solution. Europeans were presented with a dilemma, since they were genuinely impressed by the systemization and detail of Chinese historiography. If carefully incorporated, the early Chinese historical accounts could greatly enrich the Western narrative of world history. Portuguese Jesuit Gabriel de Magalhães (1609-1677), for example, singles Chinese chronology out from all historiographies, for while all other ancient civilizations have come to an end, the Chinese lineage is like a great river that never runs out of water: "Il faut avoüer qu′il n′y a point d′Etat au monde qui se puisse vanter d′une suite de Rois si ancienne, si longue, & si bien continüée. Ceux des Assiriens, des Perses, des Grecs & des Romains ont pris fin, au lieu que celuy de la Chine continuë encore comme un grand fleuve qui ne cesse jamais de rouler ses eaux"[17] (75).

[17] While Magalhães' original work was written around 1668 in Portuguese, titled D*oze excellencias da China*, the manuscript was partly burned. The remaining text was taken to Europe by French Jesuit Philippe Couplet in 1681, and was translated, annotated and reorganized by Abbé Claude Bernou for it to be published under the title of *Nouvelle Relation de la Chine* in 1688.

Magalhães goes on to confirm the veracity of Chinese early history by suggesting its cross reference with biblical accounts, especially the correspondence between the long life of the first Kings and that of the Abrahamic Patriarchs: “On peut ajouter que la certitude de cette Chronologie est confirmée par beaucoup de circonstances conformes a l′Ecriture Sainte, qu′elle contient, & qu′on ne trouve dans aucune autre Histoire; par exemple, la longue vie des premiers Rois pareille a celle des Patriarches du temps d′Abraham” (81-82).

By giving credit to early Chinese historiography, Magalhães was also using this foreign source to boost the credibility of the Holy Scripture, elevating the fantastical narrative of the long lives of the first Kings to the level of a universal trait common to this specific ancient era. Magalhães was conscious of the effectiveness of his assimilation strategy, for he duly records the Chinese enthusiasm upon hearing Christian preachers using Chinese historical figures and events to make their arguments more persuasive: “Les Chinois se rendent d′abord à cette raison, tant parce qu’elle leur paroît convaincante, qu′à cause du plaisir qu′ils reçoivent de voir que nous nous servons de leurs Histoires & de leurs exemples pour prouver la verité de nôtre Religion” (115). The usefulness of Chinese early history was also the reason behind Álvaro Semedo′s concession that, though the Chinese made a small computing error, their chronology was actually internally coherent: “se bem que haja erros nas épocas da história desses imperadores e seguintes, é certo que as coisas vão coerentes nas suas sucessões” (196).

French philosopher and sinologist François Julien put forward the controversial claim that the concept of “*Shi*” in China, unlike the Western concept of “time,” tends toward the aspect of “le moment-occasion,” while lacking the abstract concept inherent to Western philosophy (34). This dissertation does not delve into this debate, but Julien′s way of looking at time as opportunity would be a fitting entry point to analyze the European response to the threat which Chinese temporality posed to the Biblical notion of history. The intuitive need to hold on to an old temporal order, coupled with the substantive challenge/opportunity offered

by Eastern chronology, compelled a more flexible approach by the Catholic Church. “Crises imply an examination of past actions in order to learn or unlearn elements of the current context” (Roux-Dufort 111). Following such predecessors as Eusebius and Augustine, who strove to counter the claims to antiquity of Egypt and Babylon, the Spanish Augustinian Jerónimo Román, in one of the accounts of China that were published in the late sixteenth century, suggested that it was simply a matter of understanding that, in ancient times, they counted years in a different way, not necessarily according to the Sun′s rotation (Rubiés “Discovery” 77-78). In 1637, the Church officially permitted the use of a Septuagint-based chronology in the missionary endeavors in China (Van Kley 362), mainly because this translation of the Bible by Greek-speaking Egyptian Jews “adds fifteen centuries and budgets a 37% increase for the total length of world history” (Ramsey 491), compared to the traditional Vulgate version of the Bible, thus enabling a reconciliation with Chinese accounts of its primitive era. This flexibility was crucial in creating enough leeway to assert Western temporal priority for the Chinese as well as the Europeans themselves, making it possible to incorporate Chinese history into the biblical narrative of Noah′s sons spreading across the globe. Only when such order was formally established, could Christian missionaries take advantage of the Chinese veneration for the ancient time, in order to weave a solid theory of the decay of the East following the Chinese loss of their divine knowledge.

Two approaches were suggested on the European side to turn the Chinese exception into a useful component in their grand narrative. Scholars have pointed out that Christian theology encouraged anthropological monogenism and cultural diffusionism in the early modern period (Rubiés “Travel Writing” 252), mainly because they could serve as side evidence of the superiority of Christianity. At first, the Europeans attempted to demonstrate that China received the teachings of Jesus via Thomas the Apostle in the first century CE. Although modern scholars have proven that “the tradition of Thomas′ sea voyages to China

belongs to an old and firm tradition which existed long before Vasco da Gama discovered the sea route to India" (Tubach 295), the Portuguese reports were still the main promoters of the link between the apostle and the oriental empire. João Rodrigues was convinced that the apostle had been to China because it would be logical for him to visit the most prominent and extensive empire in the region (2: 145), while Gabriel de Magalhães suggests that he whom the Chinese called Tamo (达摩 Bodhidharma), who is credited as the transmitter of Zen Buddhism to China in the fifth or sixth century CE, was in fact St. Thomas, after a series of corruptions in pronunciation and miscommunication (Magalhães 347-349). When the Chinese seemed unimpressed by this proposition, some Westerners chose to further the historical link and argued that the entire Chinese race descended from Noah.

European attempts to incorporate Asian chronology into their Biblical narrative of history were manifest in their translation of Christian concepts into Chinese. As the Chinese language is comprised of tens of thousands of characters, it enables almost infinite possibilities of homophones, and the translators had a lot of liberty in translating foreign concepts phonetically. By looking at the choice of words that the Jesuit missionaries and their Chinese collaborators adopted in their translation, we can identify a tendency to deliberately choose characters with positive Confucian connotations.

In the final decade of the sixteenth century, Catholic missionaries shifted their accommodation strategy in China from representing themselves as Buddhist monks to assimilating Confucian ideas, as the latter′s emphasis on humanism and disregard for religiosity provided ample room for transplantation and complementation. This change of tactics affected how Christians chose to translate Western ideas into Chinese. In the 1584 *Dicionário Português-Chinês*, believed to have been compiled by Ruggieri and Ricci, terms like freyra (104b), Igresia (108a), mortorio (120a), padre (126b), Paraíso terreal (127a) and Santo (142b), were all assimilated into the Buddhist or Taoist cultural framework, and were translated as

Nigu (尼姑 nun), *Si* (寺 pagoda), *Zuo Gongde* (做功德 do merits or virtues), *Seng* (僧 monk), *Tianting* or *Foguo* (天霆 Buddhist Heaven;佛国 Country of Buddha) and *Xian* (仙 Immortals in Taoist legends), etc. However, after the falling out with Buddhism, only a few concepts still evoked Buddhist connotations, and they became predominantly negative. The most notable of such terms was Satan, which was translated as *Sha Dan* (裟殚). The word *Dan* (to exhaust, to dedicate) appears to be a neutral pick. However, the first character *Sha* has a strong Buddhist connotation, as it only appears in the phrase *Jia Sha* (袈裟) to transcribe the Sanskrit word kāṣāya, which means the robe of Buddhist monks and nuns.

The falling out between Christianity and Buddhism took place on a variety of ideological battle grounds, and one of the most crucial fields was that of sequence. Even though Buddhism had been founded six centuries prior to Christianity, the Jesuits still accused the former of being an inferior knockoff of the true gospel. The fact that proponents of Christianity and Buddhism accused each other of plagiarizing key religious, cosmological and cultural concepts caught considerable attention by Chinese as well as Portuguese authors at the time. Diogo do Couto raised doubt over the similarity between the story of Buddha and the history of the life of Josaphat, to the point that he speculated that the two figures might be just one person, and that the Buddha story was but an imitation of the Christian legend:

> Vendo nós esta historia, estiuemos cuidando, se terião os antigos Gentios destas partes em suas escrituras conhecimento do sancto Iosaphat, que foi conuertido por Barlão, que em sua lenda temos ser filho de vm grande Rey da India, & que tiuera a mesma criação, & todos os mais termos que temos contado da vida deste Budaõ. . . .E como nos temos della, que fora filho de vm grande Rey da India, bem pode ser, como ja dissemos, que fosse este o Budaõ, de que elles contaõ tantas marauilhas. (123-124).

Matteo Ricci also charged Buddhists with plagiarism, which caught the attention of a few Chinese sources: “琍玛豆常言：“彼佛教者，窃吾天主之教，而加以轮回报应之说以惑

世者也” (Xie Zhaozhi 76) “Ricci often said: ′The so-called Buddhism stole from our Catholicism, and added the theory of Samsāra [cycle of death and rebirth] and Karma to delude the population′.”

At the same time, the rebuttal by Chinese monks also centered on the question of sequence and how Christianity was contradicting itself in its arrangement of temporal events:

> 彼辈开口便斥佛为魔鬼，所创天主之义反全然窃佛。(……) 又以佛从兜率天降生于西域，遂诡言天主亦从天降生于西洋。又以汉明帝梦佛，遣使求佛，即诡言天主生于汉哀帝时。盖以哀帝在明帝之前，遂硬窃明帝所梦之佛为天主。(Shi Jiji 265)
>
> They open their mouths and condemn Buddha to be the devil, but their creation of teachings of the Lord of Heaven completely steals from Buddhism. . . . Based on Buddha′s advent from Tushita [a spiritual realm] to the Western Region, they falsely claim their Lord of Heaven to descend from Heaven to Western Ocean. Based on Emperor Ming of Han’s [28-75 CE] dream about Buddha and his envoy to seek after Buddhism, they falsely claim their Lord of Heaven to be born in the era of Emperor Ai of Han. Because Emperor Ai predates Emperor Ming, they forcibly twist the Buddha whom Emperor Ming saw in his dreams as the Lord of Heaven.

Following the rupture between Catholicism and Buddhism, Confucianism was vehemently sought after as an ally by Jesuit missionaries, and more Confucian concepts were employed by the translators of Christian classics. Some scholars have suggested that the reason for Amen to be translated as *Ya Meng* (亚孟) was due to the phonetic influence of Cantonese. However, the translation could as well have been focused on the literal meaning of the words. Ya could mean “second to” and was also used as the short form for *Ya Xi Ya* (Asia). When used together with the character Meng, however, it immediately reminds those familiar with Chinese culture of Mencius (孟子, 372-289 BCE), one of the most influential Confucian theorists who was often

called *Ya Sheng* (亚圣 the Second Sage [after Confucius]). At the same time, Adam was translated as *A Dan* (阿聃), the specific character *Dan* being the name of Laozi (571 BCE-?), founder of philosophical Taoism and a deity for its religious branch. *Sacerdote* had a translation combining phonetics and meaning which was *Si Duo* (司铎), with Si meaning "in charge of," and Duo "copper bell", which was rung in antiquity when an educational or political decree was announced to the public (Shi Youwei 220-221). The assimilation of Confucian sages and political ideals into translated Christian dogma sought not only to facilitate the acceptance of Western knowledge by Chinese scholars, especially Confucian literati, but more importantly, to contribute to the circulation of the theory that Chinese civilization originated in the West. Matteo Ricci led this trend among Jesuit missionaries, though it was a constantly evolving idea in the next decades. In an early Qing document on the origin of human race, Chinese ideas of *Yinyang*, *Wuxing* and legends of Fuxi are mixed with biblical tales of Adam and Eve, Noah and the Deluge:

> 未有天地之先，昊天之主宰，无声无臭，于穆不已; 以其全能，命阴阳二气，火气水土四元行，开辟乾坤，造成万汇; 乃将土化为人祖，男则名亚当，女则名厄袜，配为夫妇，以传人类。父子公孙，代代相继。传至诺厄，洪水之世，由诺厄夫妇三子三媳八人，传至第十三代子孙，名号伏羲者，乃始入中华，为首御物之君，华地始有居民。从兹至今，朝代年纪，一一可考，与西历参对，符合无差。 (Hu Huanhuang 225)
>
> Before there was Heaven and Earth, the Supreme Deity had no voice and no smell, and was solemn without end. He was all powerful, and He ordered the two *qi* of *Yinyang* and the four elements of fire, air, water and earth to open the Universe and created everything. He molded earth into the founders of the human race, the man was named Ya Dang [Adam], the female was named E Wa [Eve], they were paired as a couple to

> carry out the human lines, and generations succeeded each other with fathers passing on to sons and grandsons. After Noah and the era of the Deluge, from the initial eight people of the couple of Noah, his three sons and three daughters-in-law, thirteen generations passed, and a man named Fuxi came to China and became the first ruler of the land of China, this was how we got the first inhabitants. From then on, dynasties and annals are well documented and verifiable with the Western calendar, and there are no mismatches.

This bold theory of the entire Chinese race with ancestral roots in the West became one of the main points of contention in the 1664 incident, in which the Christian side suffered another serious blow, with missionaries being expelled and some Chinese Christian mandarins executed for treason. Even after recovering their influence in the Qing Court, the Catholic Church never sought to promote this idea again in China. This shows how sensitive the question of sequence and originality was in the Sino-European interactions, and how any suggestion of innovation in this regard was to fight a seemingly unwinnable uphill battle.

Nevertheless, this kind of battle was also often unavoidable, because once the antiquity of one′s own civilization was established in order to acquire more prestige domestically and abroad, it would be a logical pursuit to compete for the prestige of being the inventor or discoverer of important aspects of material and intellectual life. In the case of imported goods or an idea that was apparently superior to the domestic one, the struggle to determine the true place of origin became much more heated. For example, while the western clock was a hot item in Ming China, independent historian Yao Lv (姚旅, ?-1622) chose to emphasize the Chinese precursor to the chime clock offered by Matteo Ricci: “近西域琍玛窦作自鸣钟，更点甚明，今海澄人能效作，人谓外国人巧于中国，不知宋蜀人张思训已为之” (Yao Lv 215). “Recently Matteo Ricci of the Western Territories made a chime clock that made clear sounds on the hour, and people from Haicheng can copy it, it is said that the foreigners are

more dexterous than the Chinese, but they do not know that Zhang Sixun from the region of Shu in Song Dynasty had already made it." Western mathematics and astronomy also proved to be sometimes superior to the indigenous Chinese tradition, but Huang Zongxi (黄宗羲, 1610-1695) was adamant about the science of mathematics in the West being derived from China: "尝言勾股之术乃周公商高之遗而后人失之，使西人得以窃其传" (Quan Zuwang 524). "[Huang] once said that the Pythagorean theorem was discovered by Zhou Gong and Shang Gao [Early Zhou mathematicians from around the tenth century BCE], but posterity lost it, and the Westerners were able to steal our heritage."

This internalizing process in the battle for origins was by no means limited to Chinese literati who did not want to lose face. Japanese scholars tried to develop a theory that their nation was the home of the heliocentric belief (Szcześniak 58), and Europeans also had to make a convincing argument about their superiority to Asia, where nations as well as religions often preceded their Western counterparts. The Portuguese in particular adopted a special method to manipulate temporal sequence, which is best exemplified in their use of prophetic narratives.

Prophecy as Manipulation of Sequence

> Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.
>
> *New International Version* 1 Cor.14:4-5

The early wrestling for temporal superiority between China and Europe in general revolved around sequence, which put the latter in a more vulnerable position scrambling to modify its own account to mitigate the threat to this temporal ascendancy posed by early Eastern accounts. What made the Portuguese stand out in this struggle was their wide use of prophecy to negate and even reverse the balance of power in terms of temporal sequence. China

itself was no stranger to the manipulation of messianic rhymes for political gain, especially during the tumultuous years of dynastic transitions, and one of the most famous rhymes in Chinese history, “石人一只眼,挑动黄河天下反” “Do not say that the stone man has only one eye; when it is dug up, the empire will rebel,” was widely popular during the Red Turban Rebellion at the end of the Mongol reign, which ultimately led to the founding of Ming Dynasty. However, once these turbulent years were over, the ruling regime would generally limit the publication and circulation of more systematic prophecies for the sake of social stability. In comparison, prophecy and politics seemed to enjoy a tighter relationship in Portugal. The Portuguese tradition of using prophecy for legitimization in official historiography could be traced back to Fernão Lopes, who presented the ascension of João I as “an event prefigured by supernatural signs and his cause as a divinely justified war”, “the advent of the Seventh Age” (Macedo 10). Hélder Macedo sees in “this rational use of the visionary tradition” (15) what distinguished Portuguese Renaissance culture from D. João I to D. Sebastião, when the prophecy was consciously used as a political tool in the grand narrative of the regime. Shankar Raman notes the necessity of prophecy in human life as it “performs the task of linking the timebound to the timeless, of anchoring the instability of human meaning in the stability of a truth outside history” (“Back to the Future” 141). Portugal′s peripheral position in Europe led to a more accentuated sense of insecurity and fragility, which would be carried over to their ephemeral ascension into the center of world stage in the “Age of Discoveries.”

What was new during the Portuguese maritime expansion into other continents, however, was the attempt to put prophetic narratives into the locals′ mouths, turning their subjugation and the Portuguese domination into preordained events. Camões expertly employed this strategy in his legitimization of the Portuguese maritime enterprise. In Canto 4 of *Os Lusíadas*, the personified Ganges and Indus warned D. Manuel of the hardship and sacrifice his men would face in conquering India, but this warning served more as a challenge

than an intimidation, for the two personified rivers candidly reveal that they foresaw an outcome in which the Portuguese king would subdue all the other people:

Custar-te-hemos com tudo dura guerra
Mas insistindo tu, por derradeiro,
Com não vistas victórias, sem receio
A quantas gentes vês porás o freio. (Camões 1: 147)

The invitation by the iconic figure of the Orient not only to be conquered but also to be represented serves as mitigation and justification for the brute force used by Portuguese colonizers in opening up the space as well as substituting the local time and history. As Shankar Raman keenly observes in his reading of this passage, "by ′faining′ a prophecy that ′the strange folk, and savage nations vast′ cannot themselves utter, the brutality of colonial history assumes the mantle of heroic inevitability" (*Renaissance Literatures* 113). When Vasco da Gama later enters a Malabarian temple and sees frescos of ancient Indian victories, the interpreter explains to him a local prophecy of an inevitable future defeat to foreigners:

Os Portuguezes vendo estas memórias,
Dizia o Catual ao Capitão:
Tempo cedo virá, que outras victórias
Estas, que agora olhais, abaterão:
Aqui se escreverão novas histórias
Por gentes estrangeiras que virão;
Que os nossos sábios magos o alcançárão,
Quando o tempo futuro especulárão. //
E diz-lhe mais a mágica sciencia,
Que para se evitar fôrça tamanha,
Não valerá dos homens resistencia;

> Que contra o Ceo não val da gente manha:
> Mas tambem diz, que a bellica excellencia,
> Nas armas e na paz, da gente estranha
> Será tal, que será no mundo ouvido
> O vencedor, por glória do vencido. (1: 244)

The prophecy insists on the futility of Indian resistance, which put the locals in a vulnerable position in relation to the invaders, who were clearly the Portuguese. At the same time, the emphasis on the incomparability between India′s glorious past and the future deeds of the foreigners de-historicizes the local, while giving a larger meaning to the Portuguese time. Not only will the foreigners be the ones tasked with the writing of history, they also will be doing it in the Indian "lieu de mémoire" (Nora 7), and thus for all purposes wiping out any reference to the local collective memory and history.

If the Portuguese were eager to claim a reserved ticket to the conquest of India by divine arrangement, it would not be a surprise if they had hoped to have been similarly fated to conquer the other Asian giant. After all, the prospect of controlling the Chinese southern province of Guangdong alone moved Cristovão Vieira to claim, "por certo que hé mor honrra que a governança da índia" (42). Conveniently for them, Iberian sources report a widespread Chinese prophecy about the future conquest of China by foreigners. The tale usually introduces a Chinese prophet or monk that predicts an invasion and conquest by some strange looking people. The details vary from source to source, with Mendoza describing the conquerors as having big eyes and long beard:

> An ganado los deste linage, alos Tartaros, muchas tieras despues que los echaron de la China, las quales estan de la otra parte dela muralla. Dios por su misericordia, los trayga al conocimiento de su Santa Ley, y cumpla un pronostico que ellos tienen, con el qual son avisados, que han de ser señoreados, de hombres de ojos grandes, y de barbas largas,

> y que vendran a mandarlos, de reynos muy remotos, y apartados, que parece señala a los Christianos. (Mendoza 56)

Similarly, Portuguese historian António Bocarro adds that the prophesied invaders would have cat-like eyes: “E como tem huma profescia de que os há-de conquistar, huma gente de olhos de gato, e estes tinham os olandezes, fazem mais dificuldade em os admitirem con seus reinos, e particularmente pellos terem por ladrões piratas do mar, nome que eles grandemente abominam” (159b). Spanish friar Pedro de Alfaro Custodio notes another detail in the eagle-like nose:

> . . . por tener una profecia dicha por boca del demonio, y la tienen por muy cierta, por aver verificado otras muchas cosas que con ellas les dixo, en la qual les anunciava, que avia de venir tiẽpo, en que serian sejetos a una nacion, cuyos hombres tendriã muchas barbas, y narizes largas y aguileñas, y los ojos grãdes, ye gateados (en que se differẽcian de ellos, que por marauilla hay hombre que tenga mas de hasta veinte pelos en la barba, y las narizes chatas, y ojos muy pequeños: y asi quando quieren vituperar a uno, y dezille una grande injuria, le llamã ojos de gato). (Mendoza 260)

All these characterizations were indeed traits the Ming Chinese typically used to describe the facial features of Europeans. However, although Chinese culture was no stranger to millennial discourses on the coming of a sage to herald a new era (Duara 173), it is still hard to believe that anyone would voluntarily project their salvation unto barbarians with a stigma of piracy, pillage and even cannibalism. Moreover, if a prophecy concerning the future conquest of China by cat-eyed people was indeed spreading like wildfire, it would probably impact the Royal courts′ approach to dealing with these foreigners. On the contrary, such an impact could not be verified by existing documents. Towards the end of the Ming dynasty, military defeats in the Northern front actually led to a gradual opening-up to Portuguese ideas and weaponry, and in a desperate attempt, some members in the Royal family of the Southern Ming regime even

converted to Christianity, which would be unimaginable if they had viewed the bizarre looking Portuguese as serious threats.

The remote chance of a Chinese origin of this prophecy creates a conundrum, since as Jonathan Green suggests, because "the rules of prophecy as a textual game required that the text had to be found, although willful editing and a disregard for original context were permissible", most early modern prophecies "involve transformation of an existing text rather than the unbounded creation of new ones," while "invention out of whole cloth seems to have been the exception" (172). The more logical explanation for the origin of this prophecy, therefore, would be to locate its palimpsest in an earlier European report. Sixteenth-century Spanish chronicles of the conquest of America could be an inspiration, especially the part about how Incan people initially mistook the conquistadors for their light-skin god named Viracocha (Cieza de Leon 11). The nearest reference, however, comes from an anonymous Portuguese source from 1554, a text which some scholars have attributed to Fernão Mendes Pinto. In it the author tries to justify the Chinese defensive mindset with a past conquest of China by white men with long beards in an undetermined Year Eight:

> Achão en seus livros antigos sen saberê que homẽ os escreveo, que hũ ano de oito, não fazendo declaração se de oitenta ou se de oitocentos, nẽ em que era, que el Rei da China perdera seu reino e que ho ganharão homẽs brancos de barbas cõpridas e per esta causa tem grande vigilância na corroboração dos muros e en terem mui fortes as cidades. (Intino 70)

Raffaella D′Intino speculates that this event was the Mongol invasion of 1550, but offers no explanation for the discrepancy of Year Eight with Chinese temporal calculations, which generally records that year as the Year Thirty of Emperor Jiajing. A more plausible guess would be that it refers to the Battle of Tumu in 1449, which resulted in the capture of the Ming Emperor Zhengtong by Mongol forces, and is thus often seen as the turning point in the Ming′s

relation with the outside world. “From this time on, China, in effect, renounced the expansionist and more assertive policies associated with the Yung-lo [Yongle] emperor and his immediate successors” (Rossarbi 235). The problem is that this battle also did not befall on the eighth year of Zhu Qizhen′s reign, who succeeded his father′s throne in 1436. However, this time the discrepancy could be partially explained, because many historical accounts of the incident usually have the ascension of the Mongol leader Esen as a starting point of the narrative, which indeed took place on Year Eight of Zhu Qizhen′s reign (1444 CE) (Huang Yu 59; Gu Yingtai 471)

It is worth noting that Matteo Ricci also attributed Chinese xenophobia to the fear of the Tartars, but he seemed to suggest an earlier event, the overthrow of Song Dynasty by Mongols who founded Yuan, as the ultimate cause of Chinese suspicion: “[B]ecause the Chinese, beyond all other people in the world, are suspicious of strangers. This is particularly true of them since the time they lost their entire empire and served under the yoke of the conquering Tartar” (*Journals* 128). Consequently, there is also the possibility that the 1554 text could be referring to this distant memory, because the eighth year in the Chinese cyclical system Ganzhi is the year Xinwei (辛未), which happens to fall in 1271, the Year Kublai Khan established Yuan Dynasty.

However, it is more difficult to discern the source of the part about “white men with long beards” in Chinese records. Again, we should not exclude the possibility that it was pure invention from the anonymous Portuguese author, especially if his identity was indeed Pinto the “prince of liars,” who in multiple instances in *Peregrinação* invented historical documents when he claimed to be quoting from Chinese sources. We have already discussed Pinto′s fictional account of the origin story of China, in which he subjected Chinese chronology to the biblical one. Apart from that, Pinto also claimed to have read in Chinese chronicles the story of a blind king, who constructed granaries throughout the country to prepare for famine, which

pleased God greatly who miraculously let the king regain his sight (327-328). In reality, the theme of recovering eyesight was an Arabic or Indian Buddhist tradition, which had little echo in Chinese culture. What is ingenious about Pinto is not his compliance with the rules of historical reference, but his ability to combine this background on the actual Chinese social infrastructure (granaries as a precaution for famine) with an Abrahamic emphasis on the omnipotence of God.

In addition, the 1554 report differs from the fictional *Peregrinação* in that the former was provided as part of an official document for a Jesuit priest, therefore it is necessary to first consider the possibility that this specific piece of information had an actual source. A plausible explanation for the enigmatic reference to facial hair could be that the author, or whoever translated for him, failed to grasp the polysemy of the character Hu (胡), which other than signifying "beard" was also a generic term for the Eurasian nomad groups that often had Caucasian heritage. Messages constantly undergo deliberate alteration or unintentional distortion in the process of translation in early modern intercultural relations and exchanges. In a study of a mid-sixteenth century Chinese map obtained by the Spanish in 1571, Lee Yu-Chung points out a similar translation error due to the phenomenon of polysemy: the country of Five Indias was mistakenly translated as "cinco islas con la forma de sellos," because the character *Yin* (印) in the country name *Yin Du* (India) could also mean "seal" or "stamp" (19).

If the widely reported prophecy indeed originated in the texts by the anonymous Portuguese, this suggests that the prophecy went through considerable modification, not only changing its referent from Mongols to Europeans, but also shifting from a historical account to a projection into the future. Furthermore, while the prophecy maintains and even adds detail to the description of facial features, it leaves out the part about the invaders being white, which is a curious phenomenon in its own right.

The majority of Ming Chinese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had at best a fuzzy idea of the newly-arrived foreigners that claimed to come from a distant and unknown continent, and among the small portion of literati who had personal experience with or had read about the Portuguese or Jesuit missionaries, none found the newcomers′ skin color to be notable. What they often chose to highlight were instead their noses, eyes and sometimes hair color. It was only when compared to the enslaved Africans that the Europeans′ whiteness received special mention: "黑鬼即黑番鬼，(……)如中国之奴仆也，或曰猛过白番鬼云" (Cai Ruxian 430). "The Black Devil are black foreigners. . . . they are like servants in China, some say that they are braver than the White Foreign Devils."

Many early European reports on East Asia also categorized the skin color of most Chinese and Japanese people as white, mostly due to their apparently high level of civilization. Distinguished psychologist Erik Erikson famously used the term "pseudospeciation" to denote "that while man is obviously one species, he appears and continues on the scene split up into groups. . . . which provide their members with a firm sense of unique and superior human identity - and some sense of immortality", and Erikson himself highlights the implication of this denotation in attesting to "how closely perceptions of race are bound to the question of time" (214). In the subsequent centuries, the "pseudospeciation" based on skin color would be developed to a substantial level, with white Europeans seeking to establish a succession of evolutionary stages for the different races, according to which they ruled supreme, while yellow people remained "stagnant and frozen in a permanent state of childishness, subhumanity, or underdevelopment" (Keevak 7-8). But back in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Europeans were still striving to be seen as an equal and worthy counterpart by the Chinese. This anxiety explains the European attention to rumors of Chinese disregard for the Western culture, whether through the aforementioned circulation of the belief that Chinese people taunted Europeans as having only one eye, or in this case, of being afraid of Europeans

conquering China in the future. In a similar instance of ethnocentrism, Brás de Albuquerque, in a deliberate attempt to glorify his father′s Afonso de Albuquerque′s deeds, made up an episode in which the Chinese emperor showed great interest in and high respect for the Portuguese Viceroy:

> E posto que o Rey da China tinha já sabido pelos Chins que vieram de Malaca tudo o q̃ passara, folgou de ouuir o embayxador, & muito particularmente lhe perguntou pela pessoa & autoridade do grande Afonso Dalboquerq̃, & os Portugueses q̃ homẽs eram, & o modo q̃ tinham no pelejar. O embaixador como era homẽ discreto, deulhe muyto boa rezã de tudo, de que ficou muito satisfeito. (385)

By juggling with temporal sequence and distorting history for prophecy, the Iberian authors were expecting to achieve multiple goals. Firstly, it served as a pretext and an incentive to better rally the court to engage in military actions against the Chinese Empire. In the same way that the prophecy from the Malabar should encourage the Portuguese to dedicate more resources to the Indian front, a guaranteed final victory in China as confirmed by an Eastern sage should hopefully spark renewed interest in this region. Secondly, it was also justification for the temporary setbacks in the laborious attempts to penetrate China. By attributing the difficulty to Chinese xenophobia aroused by their looming conquest by Europeans, those in charge of the Asian front in Spain or Portugal were exonerated from blame, since it was only a question of time until they ultimately succeeded.

The prophetic mode reached its peak in European documents in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the initial dreams of repeating the quick subjugations of local potentates in America, Africa and other parts of Asia gradually faded. In this sense, the probably made-up prophecy was at once a sign of cultural megalomania, feeling self-important enough to assume that distant people would fear their inevitable defeat, and a result of frustration by nations getting desperate to shake up the regional order which remained

impervious to their attempted intrusions. Gone was the naive optimism of Tomé Pires that a single Malaio or Javan junk could destroy twenty Chinese ships (456), and broken was Cristovão Vieira′s promise of a smooth conquest because Chinese people were fed up with their brutal regime and "toda a gente está esperando por portugeses" (59). After decades of limited success on the China front, the Iberians sought another avenue that could potentially lead them to the imperial capital.

The prophecy is a prime example of Benedict Anderson′s observation about medieval European idea of time, "something close to what Benjamin calls Messianic time, a simultaneity of past and future in an instantaneous present" (22). The guarantee of the future conquest as told by a Chinese prophet in the past has crucial implications to the present, and it is in their interpretation of the practical meaning of the prophecy that the European sources diverged the most. The Castilian missionaries were more accepting of the prophecy, as they found solace in the eventual triumph of their gospel in this land long immersed in paganism. Pascale Girard, for example, calls the prophetic vision of Mendoza as "prophétisme conquérant" (173), because it deprived Chinese history of any distinctiveness, subordinating China to Western time. On the contrary, the Portuguese accounts chose to emphasize the negative impact of the xenophobic sentiment of the Chinese public, as the authors lacked the religious zeal and were more practical in their expectations of cross-cultural contacts. The comment by António Bocarro is the most interesting, as it obviously attempts to distance his fellow countrymen from the description, claiming that it referred exclusively to their rivals, the Dutch. Ever since the Dutch arrived on the Chinese scene in the early seventeenth century, the Portuguese in Macau consciously attempted to distance themselves from the unruly *Hong Yi* (红夷 Red Barbarians) in the minds of Ming Chinese. In a treatise explaining the differences among Western cannons, Gonçalves Teixeira compares the Ming officials′ mistake in viewing the Portuguese as *Hong Yi* to wrongly suspecting one′s own son of being a thief (Han Lin 95). Catering to the Chinese

paternalistic discourse of international relations, the Portuguese were trying to play the role of an obedient vassal while vilifying the Dutch as a potential threat to the Middle Kingdom.

These attempts became necessary because the Ming Chinese were generally unable to distinguish between the two European nations, and sometimes also labeled the Portuguese as Cat-eyed and eagle-nosed. The official history of Ming documents the appearance of the Portuguese as "long in stature with a high nose, cat eyes, eagle mouth, curly hair and red beard" "其人长身高鼻，猫眼鹰嘴，拳发赤须" (MS 8434), and in Chen Xichang′s memorial from 1624, Folangji and "Cat-eyed people" were used in conjunction to refer to the merchants in the outpost of Macau (829b). Part of this insistence was rooted in the Chinese tradition of attributing geographical location and direction as key factors in determining the diversity of human physical appearances. The *Wuxing* system, which I have briefly introduced in the previous chapter, treats the (more sculpted-like) high nose and deep eyes of people from the West as manifestation of those body part′s affinity with *Jin*, an element/quality associated with weaponry and cutting:

> 西戎之人，深目高鼻，衣而无冠者，鼻主肺，肺金也，故高；目，肝也，肝为木，金之所制，故深；金主裁断，故发断无冠。(Xiao Ji 141)
>
> The people of the Western barbarians have deep eyes and high nose, they dress [in clothes] but do not wear hats, [that is because] the nose is related to the lungs, and lungs are dominated by the element of *Jin*, so their noses are high; the eyes are related to the liver, and the liver is dominated by the element of *Mu* [wood], which is naturally restrained by *Jin*, so their eyes are deep; *Jin* directs cutting, so they cut their hair and do not wear hats.

Note that this organization of space focusing on facial features is as deeply rooted in Chinese culture as the racial discourse based on skin color is in Europe. Therefore, it could be argued

that the prophecy was a joint enterprise between two cultures, with China providing the spatial elements and Europe the temporal modifications.

Lastly, it is also important to note that in some Portuguese prophecies of conquest, the agency granted to local people was primarily used as proof of Portuguese superiority on military as well in moral grounds. In Fernão Mendes Pinto′s account of the first Portuguese arrival in Japan in 1543, he makes a subtle suggestion of Portuguese moral impunity. The lord of the island of Tanegashima was shocked to hear where these foreigners came from, suggesting that "que me matem se não são estes os Chenchicogis de que está escrito em nossos volumes, que voando por cima das agoas tem senhoreado ao longo dellas os habitadores das terras onde Deos criou as riquezas do mundo, pelo que nos cayrá em boa sorte se elles vierem a esta nossa com titulo de boa amizade" (389). The term "chenchicogi" was used by Japanese to mean "Indians," and in this account Pinto seems to suggest the misunderstanding had come from local people′s own misconception, and the Portuguese merely "respondemos mais conforme ao gosto que nelle viamos, que não ao q̃ realmente era verdade" (390), justifying this deception in this way: "foy necessario ajudarmonos de algũas cousas fingidas por não desfazermos no credito que elle tinha desta nossa patria" (390). After verifying Portugal′s territorial and material abundance, the Japanese lord told his subjects: "certo q̃ se não deue de auer por ditoso nenhum Rey de quantos agora sabemos na terra, senão só o que for vassallo de tamanho Monarcha como he o Emperador desta gente" (391).

What underlies this conversation is the author′s secret desire for Easterners to willingly accept European superiority. It is notable that the daimyo went so far as to suggest that the only way of achieving happiness would be to become a vassal of Portugal, and Pinto deliberately emphasizes how the daimyo based this conclusion on the reported wealth and power of the distant nation as recorded in Japanese books rather than reported by mouth by the Portuguese, thus absolving the Portuguese from the sin of deceit.

Dispute of Rhythm: How to Measure Time

"Everything is rhythm; the entire destiny of man is a single celestial rhythm, just as the work of art is a unique rhythm. "

Maurice Blanchot after Hölderlin, *The Infinite Conversation* (1969)

Orientation and sequence are both intrinsic qualities of time that often appear on the front page of intercultural interactions. Cultural differences in rhythm, on the other hand, are often less apprehensible despite their profound impact on social life. One major reason for the initial friction between Ming China with the Portuguese, especially after a generally positive first encounter by the fleet of Fernão Pires de Andrade, was Simão de Andrade′s ignorance of and disrespect for Chinese social rhythm. In Henri Lefebvre′s words, "the discordance of rhythms brings previously eurhythmic organisations towards fatal disorder" (*Rhythmanalysis* 16). Chinese records almost exclusively used the verb 突入 (suddenly/unexpectedly entered) to describe their shock and indignation at Andrade′s intrusive actions in the southern province of Guangdong (MS 8430). Along with his kidnapping of Chinese children and erecting a fort without permission, Simão′s misdeeds were noted by historical accounts from both sides as fatal to the recently established bilateral ties (Fok 41-42).

Successors to Simão de Andrade were confronted with the same risk of causing discordance in a vast empire whose primary concern was maintaining harmony. However, whether in the foundation and survival of the city of Macau, or in the insertion of missionaries into the Chinese royal court, a lot of the achievements in interaction with the Chinese were also the result of making use of consensus in social rhythm, or finding solutions to conflicting views on tempo.

Rhythm and Clock

In Henri Lefebvre′s proposal to found a new science of rhythm analysis, he focuses on the clash between social (artificial) rhythms with biological (natural) ones and their impact on

everyday life (*Rhythmanalysis* 9, 39-43). The French philosopher traces the introduction of abstract everyday life to the invention of watches in the West, arriving at the conclusion that "this homogeneous and desacralised time has emerged victorious since it supplied the measure of the time of work" (73). In terms of Sino-European interactions, Western mechanical clocks have indeed served as a facilitator in breaking the ice. While China had its own long history of sophisticated clock-making, the dominant Confucian doctrine always looked down on craftsmanship and technical innovation, which often resulted in technological breakthroughs being overlooked and soon forgotten. During the Ming Dynasty, much of the previous knowledge of clock-making had indeed been lost. It is in this context that Michele Ruggieri found the clocks to be the most suitable gift for mandarins in the Guangdong province, which earned the Jesuits enough favor for them to be allowed to stay in China and build churches in the interior (Spence 137-138). Decades later, Álvaro Semedo documents that the interest in mechanical clocks was also the main reason Matteo Ricci and company were introduced to the Ming emperor for the first time in 1601: "Ao ver o relógio, que era uma máquina de muito trabalho e artifício e desconhecida dos chineses, por que sabia que por si mesmo dava horas e, como não funcionava, mandou chamar, imediatamente, os nossos [padres] ao palácio para o consertar." (313)

The effectiveness of this exchange in establishing personal relations with upper-class mandarins of the Chinese society was such that it became a form of "clock diplomacy" in the Late Ming and early Qing era (Tang *Jesuits* 280). Apart from the practical considerations, Christian missionaries were also giving away clocks in hopes of transmitting the metaphor of divine creation embodied in the artifact. Bishop Nicole d′Oresme, an influential French science writer in the fourteenth century, introduced the metaphor of a perfect clockwork universe, which was created by God, the perfect clockmaker (Boorstin 71). Nevertheless, this metaphor seemed unable to travel across the cultural barrier into Chinese. As Jacques Gernet soundly

demonstrates, the idea of a creator God was simply alien to China, because "the missionaries taught of the existence of a static world, created once and for all and limited in both space and time, concepts which they tied in with their theory of the existence of a creator God. The Chinese, on the other hand, believed the world to be the product of a ceaseless evolution, limitless in extension and duration" (212).

Scholarly opinion differs on the significance of clocks in early modern societies. While Catherine Pagani notes that both European and Chinese societies in the sixteenth century mostly treated the clock not as timepieces, but more as "status symbols, as decorative items, and as personal adornments" (6), Daniel Boorstin argues that in the West, the spread of the clock "came from community needs - which meant the need for publicity and portability" (77), unlike in China where its primary target was the royal family. What seems to be the consensus, however, is that the disciplinary and standardizing impact of the clock in the Foucauldian sense had yet to overshadow the life rhythm of most of the population. The greatest obstacles that the open-minded Europeans and Chinese had to overcome were the rhythmic differences between their respective societies, which involved cognition of the velocity of the passing of time as well as the measured units in the cycles of time. At the national level, the biggest conflict took place between the Chinese era names and the Christian Anno Domini system.

Era Names and Anno Domini

Prior to embracing the Common Era in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, East Asian societies generally reckoned years using a combination of era names, which were tied with specific monarchs, together with the Chinese sexagesimal cyclical system called *Gan Zhi* (干支, literally Trunks/Stems and Branches). *Gan Zhi* is comprised of two Chinese characters, the first of which comes from a pool of ten *Gan*, while the second a zodiacal sign from a series of twelve *Zhi*. Independent nations under the Chinese world order shared the same calculation for *Gan Zhi*, and while each nation had respective era names for domestic use, the Chinese era

name was generally acknowledged in diplomatic correspondence with the Middle Kingdom. As JaHyun Kim Haboush observes, Korea′s acceptance of the Chinese emperor′s reign title system in 650 CE marked their inclusion into the Sino-centric time system and their acceptance into Sinosphere (119), which only ended in 1894, following the defeat of Qing in the First Sino-Japanese War. On the contrary, Japan started to use its own era names in official documents sent to China in the seventeenth century, which enraged the Ming diplomats as it was perceived as a blatant affront to Chinese supremacy (Toby 359-362).

East Asia functioned well for millennia without a single era-count system like Anno Domini, which attests to the political effectiveness of "era name" plus *Gan Zhi* system. Such a system was possible because none of the popular belief systems included a revealed religion that presupposed an almighty God who had created everything (Sato 290, 299-300). The spiritual sector in the East was never elevated above the secular, therefore it was natural for the time system to revolve around the emperors instead of a divinity, as it did in in the West. When Dionysius Exiguus invented Anno Domini in Europe in the sixth century to replace the earlier regnal years, stating that "we have been unwilling to connect our cycle with the name of an impious persecutor, but have chosen rather to note the years from the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Finegan 132), East Asian societies chose to replace the old regnal year system with "era names" (年号). This granted the emperor even more power, since he could change the era name multiple times during his reign. The establishment of the Ming Dynasty saw the shift towards the "reign name", or the practice of "one emperor one era name," but the emperors themselves still had enough agency in choosing a typically two-character name that would highlight their political agenda[18].

As Sato Masayuki observes, "the era names system is premised on the very existence of Chinese ideographic characters. The ideographs made possible the development of the East

[18] The complete list of Ming Emperors' Era Names can be found in the Appendix.

Asian philosophy of chronology that counting years is an act not of assigning an ordinal number to a year, but of coating a year with a meaningful name" (286). This endowment of special meaning to each era name was a unique East Asian tradition, and its paramount status in Chinese culture makes it an inevitable battleground for legitimacy during periods of civil war or dynastic transition, in which multiple polities could claim mandate at the same time and deny the others′ era name. Decades after the last emperor of the Southern Ming regime was killed, the remnant forces still used its era name Yongli, and Korean Joseon Dynasty continued to adopt the era name Chongzhen of the Ming′s last emperor centuries after the fall of Beijing in 1644. In both cases, the rejection of the Qing Dynasty calendar was linked with their political stance, which demonstrated their emotional and cultural attachment to the previous polity.

Because of its uniqueness and complexity, it was understandable that early European visitors to China had difficulty grasping this special mode of compartmentalizing time. As discussed above, the anonymous Portuguese source in the middle of sixteenth century found it puzzling that Chinese history books would date an important event with a mere Year Eight, and the perplexed author offered his own interpretations that were nowhere near the truth: "não fazendo declaração se de oitenta ou se de oitocentos" (Intino 70). In a map of China sent to Madrid by the governor of Manila, there is a legend that contains a reference to "Chenghua Renchen" (成化壬辰). Chenghua was the era name for Emperor Zhu Jianshen between 1464 and 1487, and Renchen is ranked twenty-nine in the sixty-year *Gan Zhi* system. In combination, Chenghua Renchen refers to the year of 1472 CE. The translators to Spanish however either found it impossible to deliver faithfully to the Western audience such a complex Chinese temporal reference, or they were unable to convert the year to the Anno Domini system, so instead they offered some random information about the region in question, completely deviating from the original script (Lee Yu-Chung 15).

In *Peregrinação*, Fernão Mendes Pinto appears to understand somewhat that the Chinese used the years of the reign of the current emperor to count time but failed to register either the correct era name or the cyclic year. When Pinto travelled around Asia, the man on the Chinese throne was Emperor Jiajing, who held the mandate for forty-five years between 1521 and 1567 CE. Jiajing (嘉靖) was short for Jiajing Yinbang (嘉靖殷邦), which literally means "to pacify the nation with beautiful indoctrination." However, Pinto′s presentation appears to be a liberal use of exotic titles for pomposity: "aos sete dias da quarta lũa, dos vinte & tres annos da cadeyra do filho do Sol" (242), and "aos noue dias da setima lũa dos quinze annos da cadeyra & cetro do leão coroado no trono do mundo" (244). Unlike in Europe or the Middle East, neither scepter nor lion possessed significant symbolic meaning in Chinese royal etiquette. Pinto was apparently resorting to symbols of his own culture to fill out the gap of knowledge about an alien civilization, which was a common practice in an era of slow movement of information. However, *Peregrinação* also contains observations and prejudices about another rhythmic pattern, which is the Chinese calendar.

Gregorian Calendar and Chinese Calendar

If the Anno Domini System represented the perception of time in the longer duration, what could be called "Western time" or "Christian time" in the early modern era also contained the short-term and day-to-day practice registered by the liturgical calendar. Based on the solar Gregorian calendar, time in the West was organized around a seven-day cycle in which Sunday, or the Day of the Lord, occupied the paramount position (Menegon 196). In contrast, the Chinese way of organizing time was a lunisolar calendar that lacked the equivalent of a "Sunday". The breaks from work that mandarins were entitled to enjoy ranged from every five to thirty days in different dynasties, while much of the workforce basically had no experience of a rest day.

These differences had a lasting influence on how each side viewed time. Eviatar Zerubavel points out that "temporal arrangements are closely interlinked with group formation. A temporal order that is commonly shared by a group of people and is unique to them functions both as a unifier and as a separator" (*Hidden Rhythms* 70). Therefore, it is natural to question how the perceived difference in calendar impacted the early interactions between Europe and China, and more importantly, how the two sides chose to narrow or maintain the gap.

As Sato Masayuki observes, calendar was a highly valued political weapon in East Asian societies: "ideology required that a newly founded dynasty revise the calendar: a dynastic change represented, according to the Chinese Weltanschauung, the Mandate of Heaven, and the calendar was meant to indicate this" (291). Matteo Ricci was apparently conscious of the symbolism that introducing a new calendar embodied, which was why he was hesitant about letting others publish his translation and adaptation of the Gregorian calendar into Chinese (Menegon 197). Despite its restricted circulation, the liturgical calendar still became a capricious variable in the Chinese rhythm of life. Nicolas Standaert summarizes this change brilliantly:

> Thus, by introducing a new calendar in China, the missionaries did not just accommodate some technical aspects of a neutral division of time. They consciously or unconsciously challenged what was the basis itself of ritual life: the transformation of natural time into *cultural* and therefore *cultual* time. The introduction of a ′Sunday′ and of Christian religious feasts made people live according to a time rhythm different from the one practised in Buddhist or Taoist communities of effective rituals. ("Christianity" 10-11)

To some Ming Chinese, the Western calendar posed a theoretical threat, as the power to revise the calendar was regarded as one of the basic sources of authority for the regime. Zhu Guozuo (朱国祚, 1558-1624) expresses his concern in a poem:

吾思历象由羲和　I ponder that calendar comes from Xi He[19]

纵有岁差良不多　Even if there is precession, the difference is not much

岂容小邦定正朔　How can we tolerate a tiny state to dictate the start of each year and month?

倒置列宿成愆讹　Their inversion of stars creates errors and confusion. (22)

Errors and confusion were indeed the norm when two systems of calendar clashed. João de Barros for example documented a rumor that the Chinese Empire generally only received foreign ambassadors "aos quinze dias da lua," which was chosen by astrologists "pera que os negócios sejam em seu contentamento & proueito" (*Terceira Década* 157b). While it is part of Chinese tradition to arrange for important events on the most auspicious dates in a special calendar designed for this very purpose, these days would not follow a fixed interval as Barros suggests, which is the kind of error one may commit in translating a temporal concept across cultural divides. Like Barros, in an attempt to lure the readers with Chinese exuberance, Fernão Mendes Pinto found himself also trapped inadvertently in the conundrum of calendars. Pinto states that a pagoda in the city of Pocasser (a Chinese city presumably in the eastern province of Jiangsu) "está armado no ár sobre trezentos & sessenta pilares cada hum de hũa pedra inteyra," and "estes trezentos & sessenta pilares tem os nomes dos trezẽtos & sessenta dias do anno" (249). Since Chinese calendar is based on the calculation of a combination of solar and lunar movements, its year length is constantly in fluctuation, with an insertion of a 13th leap month every second or third year. To this effect, it was unlikely that Chinese people would have attached any meaning to the three-hundred and sixty pillars as suggested by Pinto. In previous sections we have seen that Pinto repeatedly alluded to the lunar calendar in China, and here one finds another instance of too much imagination based on too little real knowledge, which speaks of the author′ cultural tendency to treat pieces of information on the foreign

[19] Xi He is the Goddess of Sun and Calendar in ancient Chinese mythology.

nation merely as embellishment for his narrative, rather than searching for a genuine understanding of the Eastern way of life.

Barros and Pinto both took for granted that the European time system was applicable in other parts of the world, even though there had been reports about the particularity of the Chinese calendar as early as mid-sixteenth century. Galeote Pereira already notes that the Chinese New Year starts later in the year: “Mas a principal e maior festa que se faz entre eles é o primeiro dia do seu ano, que é o primeiro da lua nova de Fevereiro. E começam o ano de Março a Março, como antigamente contavam os filósofos até ao nascimento de Cristo, e é a sua era do reinado do seu rei” (28). However, Pereira′s analogy of the Chinese calendar to the old Roman calendar is also problematic, as it embodies the typical Portuguese and, by extension, European prejudices in their comparison of cultures. Firstly, he gave the birth of Jesus a seminal position in history, so much so that it caused the Romans to start their years in a different month, when in reality this change from March to January took place in 153 BCE, and the cause had nothing to do with the coming of the Savior, but the urgency caused by the Celtiberian uprisings that forced that year′s consuls to take office earlier than the traditional date of 15 March. Pereira′s approach, though on a lesser scale, resembles St. Augustine’s in deeming the advent of Christ as the only milestone that redefines the meaning of human life (Assmann 66-67). According to St. Augustine, Christians were the privileged few blessed with a way out of the loop of history, the only group with a sense of direction, which obviously rendered followers of other religions inferior by default. How Galeote Pereira presented the information on Chinese calendar was similarly suggestive of Chinese backwardness. What was left unsaid, but was easily perceptible, is the condescending tone in the remarks on other cultures that supposedly continued to use outdated practices long abandoned by their own ancestors.

This self-ascribed superiority was by no means unique to Europeans, as we may easily find an echo of it in Chinese culture. Du You (杜佑,735-812 CE), an influential historian in the Tang Dynasty, made the following comment on the relationship between cultured China and the barbaric outsiders: “缅惟古之中华，多类今之夷狄” (4980). “I would venture to maintain that the China of ancient times was frequently of a kind with the non-Chinese of the present day.” Du went on to recount a variety of customs that had existed in China in the ancient era while still being integral parts of the life of the barbarians of his time. Du then sees in the spatial allocation an explanation for this temporal difference : “其地偏，其气梗，不生圣哲，莫革旧风” (4980). “Their land is in a corner, and the *qi* there is obstructed, sages did not come into existence, nobody changed their old customs.” In his narrative, Du “gives China a ‘history’, a past that can be defined as qualitatively different from the present, and simultaneously this implies that he did not accord such a concept of history to the *yidi* [barbarians]” (Haeseleer 152).

This traditional Han Chinese temporal hubris faced a theoretical challenge following the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty. For the first time in history, a polity with a non-Han political core effectively ruled the entirety of China’s territory and beyond. In the official call to arms against the Mongol regime, the later-to-be first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang, had to resort to an anonymous ancient saying, “barbarian regimes never last more than a century” “胡虏无百年之运” (*Tai Zu Shi Lu* 401), to validate their cause for rebellion. By limiting the effectiveness of the Mongol regime to a short time frame from an historical perspective, the damage to traditional Chinese historicity was reduced to a minimum. The Yuan era was seen more as an exception than a historical norm, and Ming collections of information on overseas regions continued to depict the outsiders as time-less Others. It is illuminating that when Europeans came to Chinese shores, after checking previous records and failing to find any reference to said nations, the general reaction of Ming officials was to doubt their true

origin, suspecting them as disguising themselves as coming from other nations known to China. Despite the constant evolution achieved by Chinese civilization, they still believed in the stagnation in the outside world, unable to accept the scale of the unknown as well as the coevalness of the foreign.

Johannes Fabian observes that time "is a carrier of significance, a form through which we define the content of relations between the Self and the Other" (xxxvii), and he suggests that the "denial of coevalness," "a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse" (31), is the global form of cultural distancing. The most effective method of rejecting the coevalness rests in the obsessive justification of the Other′s stagnation, because how fast time passes in a society constitutes a crucial sign of civilizational status. Both the East and West are home to popular sayings that claim a different time rhythm between the earthly and heavenly realms. In Second Epistle of Peter, the Apostle reminds his followers that, "with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day (2 Peter 3.8). In Chinese culture, more emphasis is given to the insignificance of mundane time, with the saying "one year on earth, one day in heaven"(天上一日，地上一年) popularized by mythical stories and the legendary novel *Journey to the West*. If the religiosity is stripped from these claims, their common premise appears to be a conjectured different rhythm of time between distinct spaces.

China was singled out by many early modern European observers as distinct from its Western Asian neighbors. However, Ming China was still perceived within the framework of Asia, and as was the tradition after the European Renaissance and the "Age of Discoveries," the dichotomy between ascendant Europe with declining Asia was on the rise, so the old denotations of Asian immobility and stagnation were still central in European representations of the Ming Empire. Discourse on immobility focuses on China′s spatial closure, and stagnation highlights Eastern temporal backwardness. These two fields would continue to be explored in

the following centuries by the ever more confident Europeans. Voltaire would go on to compare the level of scientific development of the Chinese to that of the European Middle Ages, citing the superstitious respect for Antiquity and tight regulations in education as the main reason: "Nous avons vu qu′elles [les sciences] se sont fixées à la Chine, au même point de médiocrité où elles ont été chez nous au moyen âge, par la même cause qui agissait sur nous, c′est-à-dire par un respect superstitieux pour l′antiquité, et par les règlements même des écoles" ("Essai" 185). English poet Alfred Tennyson would also bluntly affirm that "better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay" (192). Ultimately, such value judgments resulted in total negation of Eastern historicity, where "the distinction between the Present and the Past disappears" (qtd. in Pagden 355).

Early modern Portuguese narratives of course lacked the theoretical organization of the later imperialist discourses, but it is safe to say that it already contains the desire to prove temporal superiority by making an argument for their own rapid development, which stood in contrast to other culture′s alleged stagnation due to hopeless infatuation with past glories. The Portuguese, or sometimes the Christians as a whole, were eager to announce their success in succeeding other nations, races and religions as the predestined champion of history. It is a common trope in expansionist texts of the time, as evidenced by its adoption in chronicles by João de Barros and poetry by Luís de Camõe, to see the scope of Portuguse empire as unprecedented. Frei Paulo de Trindade proudly compares Portuguese navigation with those extolled deeds of ancient empires, which were in fact "tão curtas e limitadas que iam à vista da terra," while the Portuguese "engolfando-se pelo mar largo veio fazendo seu curso por espaço de cinco mil léguas, que tantas há de Portugal à Índia, fazendo-se antípodas da sua própria Pátria, cortando duas vezes a linha, descobrindo tantas e tão várias províncias, nações e reinos quantos há em todo este Oriente." It is notable that Trindade views the "remotíssimas terras da

China e ilhas do Japão" as the limits of Portuguese expansion, "onde puseram as colunas de Hércules desta sua navegação e descobrimento" (29-30).

For Medieval Europe, the Pillars of Hercules represented the division between the familiar and unknown worlds, as shown by the inscription "Ne Plus Ultra" ([Go] No More Beyond) rumored to be engraved on these symbolic rocks to discourage sailors from venturing further South. Therefore, the success that Portugal had in relocating the Pillars of Hercules to the Far East attests to the unprecedented nature of Portuguese overseas expansion in both spatial and temporal terms.

Trindade′s contemporary D. Frei Amador Arrais, a sixteenth-century Portuguese ecclesiastical writer, was sufficiently confident to proclaim the Portuguese as God's new chosen people in the following comment on Portuguese expansion in the East: "Cousa certa he que nam fez Deos menos mimos & fauores ao pouo cristão, que ao Hebreo, em cujo lugar o substituyo. . . . Tais sinais, & visões do ceo se virao em guerras trauadas cos nossos, q̃ fezerão cõfessar aos Barbaros q̃ pelejaua Deos por nòs cõtra elles; como antigamẽte confessarão os Egypcios que Deos era da parte dos Hebreos" (133a-b). Arrais shows a certain anxiety in relation to time in his repeated affirmation of the Christians' spiritual succession to the Hebrews. According to Jacques Le Goff, the New Testament's one true innovation to Judaic thought is that "the appearance of Christ, the fulfillment of the promise, the Incarnation give time a historic dimension or, better still, a center" (31). However, it was this very temporal center that was found to be in a precarious condition. Islam, with the help of their formidable military might, was threatening Christianity′s temporal superiority, as Prophet Muhammad not only inherited but also substituted the roles of Abraham, Moses and Jesus. At the same time, Chinese wealth and their history that extended into the antediluvian era constituted another major menace to Portuguese claims of uniqueness. Because of this, early Portuguese reports

on China in the sixteenth century seldom depict it as a dynamic entity, but rather as a stagnated giant, despite all the positive things that they had to say about the oriental empire.

As characterized by Claude Levi-Strauss, "cold societies" are the people "seeking, by the institutions they give themselves, to annul the possible effects of historical factors on their equilibrium and continuity in a quasi-automatic fashion." In contrast, "hot" societies "resolutely internalize the historical process and making it the moving power of their development (*Savage Mind* 233-234). This relativization of history so prevalent in post-World War II era has an early modern precursor in the accounts of the interactions between Portugal and China. Despite their knowledge of China′s long tradition of written historiography, the Portuguese still depicted the Middle Kingdom as a "cold" society containing "people without history." The lack of European interest in Chinese calendar is indicative of this trend.

As Eviatar Zerubavel observes, Daniel Defoe′s "satirical portrayal of Robinson Crusoe′s habit of keeping track of the days of the week (and his naming of the first person he encountered "Friday") far away from civilization is highly suggestive of [the] coercive power (of the "standard system of units of time and standard time-reckoning and dating frameworks") once internalized" ("French Republican Calendar" 868). In contrast, despite Pinto′s claim of having been "treze vezes catiuo, & dezasete vendido" (13), in numerous Asian and African societies, many of which held a different time system from the Christian one, it never occurred to the Portuguese adventurer that he might need to subscribe to a different calendar. Pinto took the universality of the Western temporal system for granted, in the same form of self-contradiction which leads him to put the words of Christian dogma into the mouths of Asian subjects, while incessantly describing and commenting on the exotic idolatry of the same people. When Pinto created the chronology of early Chinese history, he also stuck to biblical calculations that the Great Deluge took place some 600 years after the Creation (263), and denounced the Chinese books on origin of the world because they "dizem infinitas mentiras"

(282). Overall, Pinto showed little interest in getting past superficial hearsay about Chinese temporal measurements or their calendar and was content with holding up the illusion of an omnipresence of Christian time.

This false sense of universality was shared by most of his contemporaries, as was most vividly demonstrated in the Portuguese accounts of miracles in battle. João de Barros suggests that devout Catholic Duarte Coelho was saved in the battle of Tunmen in 1521 because he and his crew prayed on the birthday of St. Mary on 8 September, and She answered the call: "acodio com hũa trouoáda que pera nós foy a popa & aos imigos causa de se derramárem & perderem algũs" (*Terceira Década* 160b). Elsewhere around the world, there have been numerous cases in which the locations "discovered" by European powers were named after the date of the first encounter, which were often dates of symbolic meaning in Christianity, such as Christmas or Easter. While such activity did not happen in China, European voyages were still consistently associated with important Christian dates. Fernão Mendes Pinto, for example, sets the miraculous appearance of fish to the shipwrecked Portuguese on the Ilha dos Ladrões on the day of the "festa do Arcanjo de São Miguel" (151). This emotional attachment to the religious calendar stands in sharp contrast to his failure to describe any lunar calendar festivity in China, only once mentioning "festas notaueis que esta gẽte costuma fazer em algũs dias abalisados do anno, em que tẽ muytos regozijos, & passatempos, porem ao modo gentilico, quais saõ todos os seus costumes" (364) in a Tartar city. This short and generic introduction is very uncharacteristic of Pinto′s generally minute description of dates and numbers, which shows the level of indifference to this important aspect of Eastern rhythms of life.

On the contrary, Ming China was more open to absorb Western techniques to adjust the solar part of their calendar. As has been discussed above, the astronomical science was one of the few aspects in which China was willing to admit its inferiority to the West, although not without suggesting how much Westerners owed China for its original development. In a long

memorial appealing to more translations of Western books on calendar and other sciences, Li Zhizao shrewdly uses the double meaning of the era name Wanli to strengthen his argument: “(……) 御历纪元，命曰万历；则亿万年无算之寿考，与亿万年不刊之历法，又若有机会之适逢， 事非偶然；而其绍明修定之业， 当有托始于今日者” (HMJS 5321a). “…The current imperial era name is Wan Li. It is not a coincidence that Your Majesty′s countless years of rule meets the calendar that has not been revised for countless years. It is destiny that a revised calendar should befall upon your Majesty′s rule starting today.” Wanli literally means tens of thousands of calendars, and by extension is used as a blessing for the longest reign, although the fact that Emperor Wanli would indeed become the longest reigning emperor (1572-1620) in Ming Dynasty is not the core point here. As a Christian convert himself, what Li Zhizao attempted to do was to convince the emperor that it was his calling to revise the calendar for future generations, and in order to accomplish this grand enterprise, it was first necessary to accumulate astronomical knowledge both domestically and from abroad, thus enabling the spread of European and Christian ideas in China. Once again, the Chinese agency is proved by the combination of local temporal patterns in the era name with foreign influences in the Gregorian Calendar.

Conclusion: Intercultural Chronotope

"天下事变每生于两情不通。"

"It is often because of lack of communication and comprehension that terrible incidents happen in the world."

Ye Quan, *Xian Bo Bian* (c.1565)

Early Luso-Chinese interactions constitute an important yet little explored aspect of the formation of the modern world. Through failures and successes, both China and Portugal accumulated some much-needed experience in overcoming cultural barriers and in attempting to assert superiority via rejection or assimilation. Scholars from both sides had to reexamine their literary, cultural and scientific traditions in an unknown context, and the outcome of said contextualization would set the tone for later encounters with other nations as well.

While Henri Lefebvre claims that the production of space in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe is in essence an expulsion of time (*Production of Space* 96), this dissertation argues that it was a simultaneous production of spatial and temporal imagery of the other, which encompasses traits like location, distance, direction, scale, orientation, sequence and rhythm, that served as foundations for the great Eurasian encounter. Both participant nations had agency in this production, and whether friendly or hostile, whether willing or forced, they were engaged in combining local tradition with outside influence to gain the upper hand in this influential cultural dialogue.

After reviewing both the temporal and spatial aspects of Sino-Portuguese interactions, we have arrived at the appropriate time and space to reevaluate some key episodes and figures from the perspective of the chronotope. In the about 150 years of this initial phase of contact, temporal-spatial notions were in many cases the unsung hero or the unknown villain, so this last section revisits some key figures during these interactions to demonstrate the ever-present yet under-the-radar involvement of the chronotope.

Simão′s Misdeeds

While Tomé Pires, the first Portuguese ambassador to China, was waiting for the opportunity to formally meet with Emperor Zhengde in Beijing, a major falling-out between the two sides took place. Simão Pires de Andrade, captain of a small fleet for China in 1519, has traditionally been blamed by Chinese and Portuguese historians alike for being the main culprit for the deterioration of bilateral ties. There is no question that Simão did many things wrong, but aside from personality flaws that Armando Cortesão characterizes as follows: "não só tinha pouco tacto como era vaidoso, caprichoso e violento" (Pires and Rodrigues 32-33), his biggest violation and offense in the eyes of the Chinese were actually related to space and time. He erected a fortress and bought Chinese children without the Chinese authority's consent, "nam lhe parecendo que offendiam nisso à cidade (de Cantão)" (Barros *Terceira Década* 159a), thus violating what the Chinese deemed as their spatial sovereignty. He recklessly sailed up to Guangzhou, disrespecting the waiting time set by Chinese officials, because he considered the request for a delay as an act of insolence, without having an exact knowledge of the vastness of Chinese territory nor of the time needed to correspond with Beijing at the northern border from the Southern province of Guangdong. He then disregarded the commercial custom of first-come first-served, forbidding ships from other countries that arrived prior to his fleet to conduct trade, "o qual cáso pelo modo com que se fez foy caufa de grande escandalo" (Barros *Terceira Década* 159a).

Simão′s aggravating actions were perceived by the Chinese in conjunction with other reports about Portuguese insubordinations, which again fell under the categories of space and time. Afonso de Albuquerque′s invasion of Malacca, a Ming tributary, was obviously seen as an intrusion into the Chinese sphere of influence, despite João de Barros′ efforts to mask it as revenge for the mistreatment dealt to Chinese merchants by the Muslim ruler (*Terceira Década*: 51a). This military projection also started the rumor that Portugal was a Southeast Asian nation

near Malacca, which largely framed how Chinese literati viewed the international dynamics in the region. Meanwhile, the Portuguese reluctance to return Malacca to its original ruler in the face of Chinese demands was perceived as a refusal to return to a previous time of regional harmony. It is no wonder, then, that these newcomers from the sea were deemed as unwanted spatial intruders, as "Mongols of the Sea" (Burbank and Cooper 151), as well as despised as temporal barbarians, one of the "Three Evils" of Malacca, incompatible with Zhou Chu who was brave and wise enough to repent from his misdeeds. Simão de Andrade and his infamous actions are an epitome of the lack of spatial and temporal understandings between two proud yet distinct cultures, which constituted the underlaying cause for the more perceptible conflicts in ethical, commercial and ceremonial protocols.

Pinto′s Destination

If the episode of Simão de Andrade reveals the extent of damage that temporal and spatial conflicts could cause in bilateral relations, Fernão Mendes Pinto′s peregrination in the East demonstrates a certain effort to fuse Western time with Eastern space in his search for an attainable destination.

St. Augustine famously admonished Christians to make "a pilgrimage through time" rather than maintaining loyalty to physical places in the mundane world (Sennett 130). For Christians, "time had an end, a *telos*" (Le Goff 31). While commenting on Pinto′s singular work, Thomas Hart carries on the Augustinian conception of time when he considers the title "Peregrinação" to be thoroughly appropriate for "a record of a pilgrimage, a spiritual journey," of which "the destination, which gives retrospective meaning to the whole journey, is Mendes Pinto′s discovery that what had seemed mere accident, the caprice of Fortune, is really a manifestation of God′s Providence" (49). Despite the dubious circumstances of Pinto′s introduction into, and later departure from, the Order of Jesus, in the current version of Pinto′s spiritual journey, which some believe to have undergone alteration in the hands of the

Portuguese Inquisition, the death and burial of Francisco Xavier is arranged to be the climax of the adventure. Just as Giorgio Agamben views the advent of Messiah as both "redemptive" (*Time that Remains* 30) and "apocalyptic" (62), Xavier′s death scene serves in Pinto′s narrative as both a sublime moment of spiritual baptism, and at the same time the epiphany of disillusionment with the Portuguese enterprise in the East. It is also of paramount importance, therefore, that before Xavier′s death in the island of Shangchuan (Sanchão) in the Chinese coast, the Jesuit speaks explicitly of his expectations of the Final Judgment:

> E quanto a falar a dom Aluaro como me dizeis, já naõ pode ser, nem já nesta vida nos veremos mais elle & eu, porem vernosemos no valle de Iosafat no dia da tremenda Magestade, quando Iesu Christo Filho de Deos & Senhor nosso vier julgar os viuos & os mortos, diante do qual estaremos elle & eu a juizo, & lhe será tomada conta da razão que teue para me tolher yr pregar a infiéis Christo Filho de Deos posto na Cruz por pecadores. (682)

As has been noted in previous sections, Pinto was rather unfazed by Eastern concepts of time and held true to a fundamentally Christian and Western temporality, which demands a clear orientation towards the future. His *Peregrinação*, therefore, constitutes his legacy to posterity: "por erança deixo a meus filhos (porq só para elles he minha tenção escreuella)" (13), as well as his preparation for the future end-time.

Meanwhile, some scholars are more sensitive to the role that space plays in Pinto′s pilgrimage. Joan-Pau Rubiés emphasizes that Pinto′s book of travels and pilgrimage "is a catalogue of sins and a message of repentance as much as a glorification of an eventful life set in a colourful geographical background" ("Oriental Voices" 33). What made Pinto′s narrative particularly intriguing and distinctive is the unparalleled distance of his journey on land and in the sea; the extension of the Eastward pilgrimage from the Holy Lands to the Far East; and the disruption of the spatial scale in the constant chameleon-like identity shift along his journeys.

Steven Gonzagowski offers a different reading of the meaning of the title, emphasizing the etymology of "peregrinus" in Latin designating a foreigner or "from other parts", and proposes that the main theme of Pinto′s narrative was to imply that "it is the Europeans in Asia who are the true foreigners" in the region, and "the dissonance between this foreignness and the European presumption that only the Other can be foreign that serves as the aim of his satire" (34). Fernão Mendes Pinto possessed the rare ability to introspect the alienness of oneself, one that foreshadows Arthur Rimbaud′s thinking on identity and alterity: "Je est un autre" (I is another), and spatial realities and representations in the East played a crucial role in his formulations. In sum, although the pilgrimage that Pinto attempted to achieve had Christian time as its *telos*, the interactions between Western and Eastern concepts of space were not only the theater of this physical and spiritual journey, but also the crutch onto which Pinto held along the way.

Tang Xianzu′s Curiosity

Pinto was in Asia mainly in the 1540s and 50s, which was a difficult period of intercultural understandings between Portugal and China due to the lack of official channels of contact. The establishment of Macau in 1557, however, opened new opportunities for exchange, so when the great Chinese playwright Tang Xianzu visited Southern Guangdong in 1592, he was able to have a richer cultural experience with the foreigners within the new framework of space and time. In Chapter One I have already analyzed how Tang′s vision of Portugal was impacted by the cultural direction of the West and its associated Buddhist connotations. Being a devout Buddhist himself, Tang nevertheless was conscious of the differences between the European dogma and existing Buddhist teachings, which he duly registers in one of the poems he composed in memory of a meeting with two Westerners, whom many believe to be Italian Jesuits Matteo Ricci and Francesco dePetris:

二子西来迹已奇，黄金作使更何疑。

自言天竺原无佛，说与莲花教主知。 (*Shi Wen Ji* 440)

The two men coming from the West is a marvelous feat

There is no doubt that gold is what serves as their medium and goal

They allege that there is no Buddhism in the land of Tian Zhu [India]

Please tell this to the Buddha on the lotus throne

Although Tang was amazed by some of the cultural artifacts that the European missionaries brought to China, when it comes to religious practices, he merely sniffs at the foreigners′ attempt to belittle Buddhism. Curiosity obviously does not equal acceptance, and it is important to note that although he used Macau as the location of one of the more important scenes in his acclaimed play *Mu Dan Ting*, the Christian-style settings like the churches, clerics and cassocks are converted to Buddhist pagodas, monks and kāṣāyas (119). In the same scene, Tang also criticizes the court′s avarice towards treasures from faraway lands while neglecting talented scholars inside the realm, which is a subtle use of the rhetoric of distance as a countermeasure to European projection of power or loyalty with distance. “(生)老大人，这宝物蠢尔无知，三万里之外，尚然无足而至；生员柳梦梅，满胸奇异，到长安三千里之近，倒无一人购取，有脚不能飞！” (122) “Liu (Sighs): Your Honor, these gems are mere insensate things, yet lacking feet they came here from ten thousand miles away; while I, Liu Mengmei, cherishing my ambition within a thousand miles of the capital, can find no purchaser, no winged feet to reach my goal!” (Trans. Toril Birch 114)

Rodrigues′s Persistence

The coexistence of wonder and rejection in the assimilation of European ideas in Tang Xianzu′s artistic creation demonstrates well Craig Clunas′s observation about the Ming literati′s “culture of curiosity,” which enables the Chinese to comfortably accommodate foreign ideas and artifacts without undergoing serious epistemological disturbance. The prevalence of this culture in China was in a temporal parallel with what Peter Burke proposes as an “age of

curiosity" in Europe, when "novelty lost its pejorative associations and became a recommendation" (*Social History* 111). As Burke further suggests, there was a "crisis of knowledge in late seventeenth-century Europe," "a short period of confusion or turbulence which leads to a transition from one intellectual structure to another" (*Social History* 203). Due to their close encounters with Eastern ways of thinking, the missionaries in Asia were at the forefront of this transition, and although prior to the time period suggested by Burke, the life and works of Portuguese Jesuit João Rodrigues could very well epitomize this internal struggle and breakthrough.

A renowned missionary, translator and diplomat in East Asia, João Rodrigues lived in Macau for the last twenty-three years of his life after he was cast out of the Japan Mission in 1610, and he also repeatedly visited the Chinese hinterland for diplomatic missions. In his *Historia da Igreja do Japão*, Rodrigues actually covers a wide array of topics related to China, to the point that Francisco Roque de Oliveira considers the portion on China "a treatise inside a treatise" (135). Even after this manuscript was finished around 1627, he still worked on a parallel text called *Breve aparato pera a Historia de Japam melhor se entender*, which he constantly revised and updated with information on China until his death in 1633. Because of his criticism of Ricci′s use of inherently Chinese words in the translation of Christian concepts such as God, the Angels and Soul, "termos escuros que tinhão outro sentido differente do que parecíam soar as palavras" (qtd. in Pina 48), scholars tend to view João Rodrigues as "one of the most determined opponents of the assimilation of ancient Chinese traditions to Christian ones" (Gernet 255). However, Rodrigues was by no means a staunch conservative who rejected all accommodation methods, and his treatise on China reveals a more nuanced representation of time and space.

On one hand, the Portuguese Jesuit traces the foundation of China to around the time of the construction of the Tower of Babel and proposes that the primitive scientific knowledge

reached China from Babylon about the same time (1: 162-166). In this way, Rodrigues incorporated Chinese chronology into Christian time, and at the same time established a sequential advantage by claiming originality of knowledge for the West. In terms of temporal rhythm, unlike Fernão Mendes Pinto, Rodrigues was a keen observer of the Chinese calendar and documented in detail its particularities, with the clear objective of proving the superiority of European astrology and thereby the correctness of Western learning as a whole (2: 112-132). On the other hand, he was also able to let himself be assimilated into the Chinese discourse of distance and power in his memorials to the Emperor. He self-identified as "西鄙远人" (inhabitant of the distant Western corner) (Tang *Wei Li Duo* 7), and created and stressed an imaginary common ground between Christianity and Confucianism in terms of their respect for order, loyalty and discipline. Rodrigues′ advanced age also served as a testimony to his extreme loyalty to the Chinese Emperor (he was nearly seventy years old when he embarked on his last trip to Beijing), which catered to the Chinese culture′s reverence and respect for the old as well as the Taoist belief in spiritual immortals.

It is a pity that the campaign to hire Portuguese mercenaries to fight against the Manchus, in which Rodrigues played a pivotal role due to his fame as mediator between cultures, was aborted in the end, and it is even more of a loss that Rodrigues′ works on China and Japan, in manuscript form, remained largely unread until the twentieth century. He was emblematic of the achievements and limitations of cultural understandings between China and Portugal, and between East Asia and Western Europe, in which issues related to time and space were not just the background but also the major influencers in this great encounter.

Appendix

List of Ming Dynasty Emperors

Reign years	Given name	Reign name	Temple name[1]
1368–1398	Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋	Hongwu 洪武 *Vastly Martial*	Taizu 太祖
1398–1402	Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆	Jianwen 建文 *Establishing Civility*	Huizong 惠宗
1402–1424	Zhu Di 朱棣	Yongle 永乐 *Perpetual Happiness*	Taizong 太宗 Chengzu 成祖
1424–1425	Zhu Gaochi 朱高炽	Hongxi 洪熙 *Vastly Prosperous*	Renzong 仁宗
1425–1435	Zhu Zhanji 朱瞻基	Xuande 宣德 *Proclamation of Virtue*	Xuanzong 宣宗
1435–1449 and 1457–1464	Zhu Qizhen 朱祁镇	Zhengtong 正统 *Proper Reign* and Tianshun 天顺 *Conforming to Heavenly Plan*	Yingzong 英宗
1449–1457	Zhu Qiyu 朱祁钰	Jingtai 景泰 *Peaceful Fortune*	Daizong 代宗
1464–1487	Zhu Jianshen 朱见深	Chenghua 成化 *Accomplishing Civilization*	Xianzong 宪宗
1487–1505	Zhu Youcheng 朱祐樘	Hongzhi 弘治 *Great Governance*	Xiaozong 孝宗
1505–1521	Zhu Houzhao 朱厚照	Zhengde 正德 *Rectification of Virtue*	Wuzong 武宗
1521–1567	Zhu Houcong 朱厚熜	Jiajing 嘉靖 *Admirable Tranquility*	Shizong 世宗
1567–1572	Zhu Zaiji 朱载垕	Longqing 隆庆 *Great Celebration*	Muzong 穆宗
1572–1620	Zhu Yijun 朱翊钧	Wanli 万历 *Longest Reign*	Shenzong 神宗
1620	Zhu Changluo 朱常洛	Taichang 泰昌 *Grand Prosperity*	Guangzong 光宗
1620–1627	Zhu Youjiao 朱由校	Tianqi 天启 *Heavenly Inspiration*	Xizong 熹宗
1627–1644	Zhu Youjian 朱由检	Chongzhen 崇祯 *Honorable and Auspicious*	Sizong 思宗

List of Portuguese Monarchs of the House of Aviz and the House of Habsburg

Reign years	Name	Nickname
1385–1433	D. João I	*o Bom ou o da Boa Memória* *the Good or the one of Happy Memory*
1433–1438	D. Duarte	*o Rei-Filósofo ou o Eloquente* *the Philosopher or the Eloquet*
1438–1481	D. Afonso V	*o Africano* *the African Conqueror*
1481–1495	D. João II	*o Príncipe Perfeito* *the Perfect Prince*
1495–1521	D. Manuel I	*o Venturoso ou o Felicíssimo* *the Fortunate*
1521-1557	D. João III	*o Piedoso* *the Pious*
1557–1578	D. Sebastião I	*o Desejado* *the Desired*
1578–1580	D. Henrique	*o Casto* *the Chaste*
1580–1598	D. Filipe I	*o Prudente* *the Prudent*
1598–1621	D. Filipe II	*o Piedoso* *the Pious*
1621–1640	D. Filipe III	*o Grande* *the Great*

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