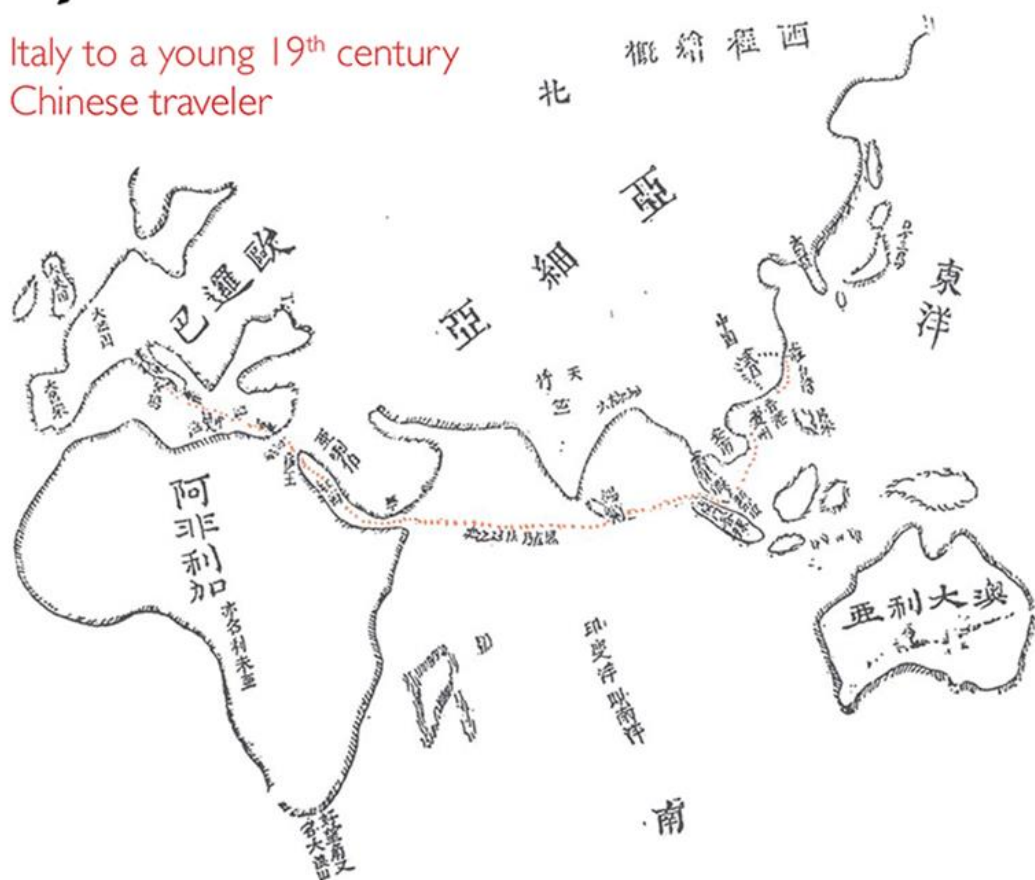


In the garden of the world

Italy to a young 19th century
Chinese traveler



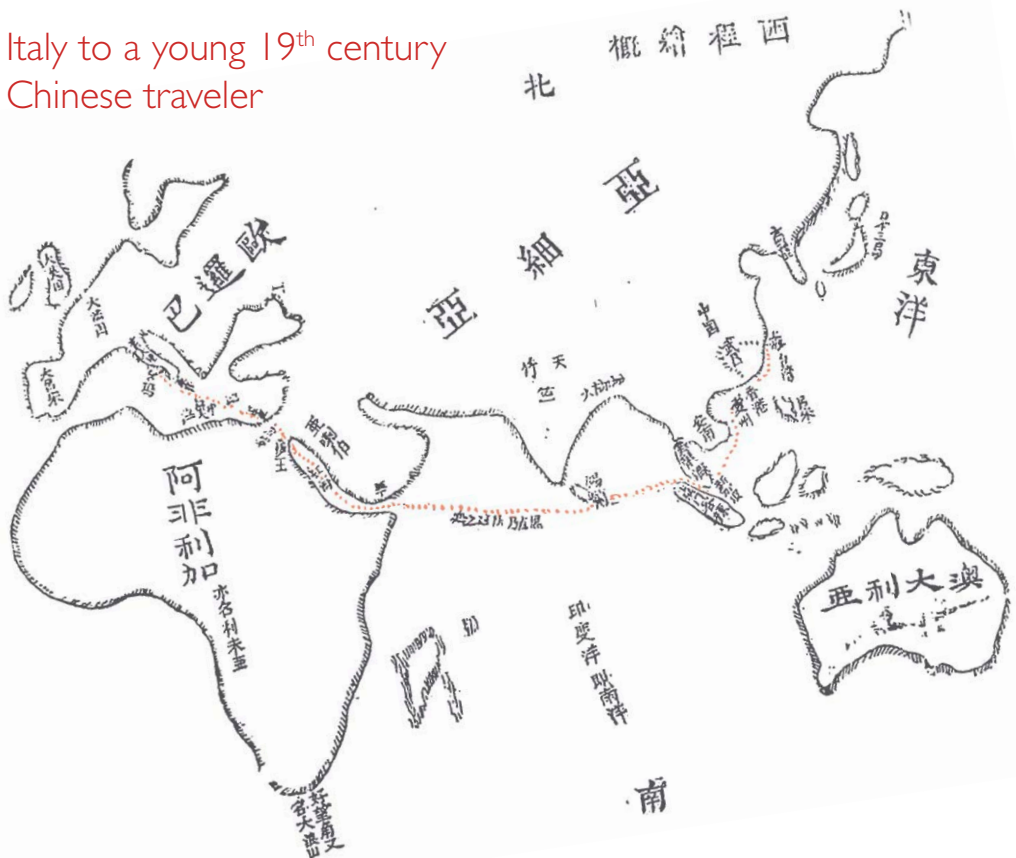


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Miriam Castorina

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Chinese traveler



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MIRIAM CASTORINA

In the garden of the world

Italy to a young 19th century Chinese traveler

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In loving memory of Francesca Minutiello

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Back in 2007, just a few months before I was due to discuss my PhD thesis, my laptop, two different devices (on which I had saved all the documents) and a hard copy of the first twenty pages of my work were stolen. In those years, cloud services were not common and so, in the blink of an eye, I lost three years' work and all hope of succeeding in the field of Chinese Studies. In despair, I had to re-translate and re-write in six months the 400 pages of my thesis and finally discussed it in April 2008. Subsequently, even if I continued my research focusing on the cultural flow between Italy and China, I totally abandoned the research I had conducted for the previous three years on a young Chinese traveler and his journey to the West.

Now, more than ten years later, I find myself once again attempting to honor the same young Chinese man and his personal story with this book, the publication of which would not be possible without the support of the Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology at the University of Florence, which in part sponsored the cost of the publication.

This book is not the translation of my PhD thesis but a new critical version in which I have updated much of the information and refrained from inserting all the translations of the original text. Nevertheless, parts of the original Chinese account have been translated here, so as to give a taste of the unique nature of the work I will present in the following pages.

In these years many scholars have helped me with their advice, shared knowledge and research experiences, especially my tutor Professor Federico Masini, Full professor at Sapienza University of Rome, to whom I will always be grateful, firstly for having initiated me into the magical world of Sinology and secondly because it was he who introduced me to the Chinese travel account presented here.

Most of my research was conducted in archives and libraries in Italy, (Rome and Venice above all), and in China (Beijing), thanks to the three-year grant I received from Sapienza University of Rome. My research then continued in Peking University, especially in the time spent working there as an Italian lecturer and visiting scholar between 2014 and 2015. My gratitude goes not only

to my colleagues and teachers of Sapienza and Peking universities but also to all the administrative staff who helped in many other ways, especially in the then Faculty of Oriental Studies, where I spent some of my best years, both from an academic and a personal viewpoint.

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Some very difficult passages in Chinese would have been unintelligible without the precious and constant support of Zhang Tongbing and Sun Pingping, who helped me to interpret and translate them as well as tracing the original classical quotation in the text when I was unable to.

My deep gratitude also goes to my colleague and friend Valentina Pedone, Associate Professor of Chinese language and literature at the University of Florence, who always encouraged me to write this book and alleviated with joy all my doubts and uncertainties.

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Finally, I must thank family and friends who have supported me over the years, especially my husband Paolo De Troia and my children, Beatrice and Andrea, whose contribution is priceless.

ABBREVIATIONS

- CH *Ci Hai* 辞海. 1999. Shanghai: Shanghai cishu.
Chinese Serial MATSSURA, Akira 松浦, UCHIDA, Keiichi 内田慶市, and SHEN, Guowei 沈国威. 2004. *Kaji kanchin no kenkyū* 遐邇貫珍の研究, 1853~1856. Suita-shi: Kansai Daigaku Shuppanbu.¹
- CY *Ci Yuan* 辭源. 1995. Beijing: Shangwu.
- HDC *Hanyu da cidian* 汉语大辞典. 1990-93. Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian.
- MDMC *Museo delle missioni cattoliche*. Torino.
- XYBL *Xiyou bilüe* 西遊筆略.
- ZRDC 1991 *Zhongguo renming da cidian* 中國人名大辭典 [Great Biographical Dictionary of China]. 1991. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji.

¹ The page number used in the book refers to the *Chinese Serial* page numbers of the anastatic copy published inside this work.

PRELIMINARY NOTES

Though in possession of the 1863 edition, in the passages of *Brief account of the Journey to the West* given in translation and in other parts of the book, I almost always referred to the 2003 edition as it is easier to consult and has punctuation which facilitates the translation work. At the same time, I have used traditional form characters within the book for consistency, with the only exception being in the reference books quoted at the end, where I used the original writing for Chinese articles, books and essays when published in simplified characters in mainland China. As for transcriptions, the *pinyin* romanization has been used throughout, except for some personal names in translated sources (in Italian or other languages) and for Joseph Kuo, for whom I preferred the Wide-Giles romanization to distinguish him from his elder brother.

In the translated passages some sentences are written in a different font: they are marginal notes by the author in the original text which I decided to differentiate in this way. As for classical quotations from the Classics (*Mengzi*, *Lunyu*, *Zhuangzi*, etc.), I often refer to James Legge's translations but sometimes I used my own translation and not his. In this case, and also for poems, I often consulted the Chinese version of the Classics available online and provided in the Chinese Text Project (<<https://ctext.org/ens>>).

*(Brief) and (entirely) personal considerations on the difficulties of translating Chinese literary works*¹

If translation can be perceived as a “negotiation”, I would venture to define the translation of literary Chinese texts as “the art of approximation”. I would use this definition to summarize the arduous task of those who, like me, after a

¹ I decided to insert here the final paragraph of my PhD thesis' *Introduction* written in 2008. Even if more than ten years have passed, these words are still valid and representative of the translation work I undertook at that time.

few years of study are about to undertake the translation of a work – unknown and of a certain length – from Chinese to Italian. Although the millennial longevity of the (written) language of the “Middle Kingdom” may be misleading due to the illusion of an immutable solidity and stillness, only after going more in-depth into Chinese Studies does this longevity itself give the Chinese language its most aleatory traits. Furthermore, if we examine the late 19th century lexicon, sixty years before the May Fourth Movement (*Wusi yundong* 五四運動, 1919) the Chinese language still almost appears as an uneven, stratified and varied set of words which, in the majority of the cases, have survived for centuries if not for thousands of years. Therefore, at the end of the 19th century, not only had some lexemes already acquired new semantic nuances, but they had also often taken on another meaning and/or another syntactic function that may no longer have anything to do with the original lexeme.

Paradoxically, therefore, I believe that an ancient text – and by antiquity I refer here to an entity that goes from the Han to the Tang periods – may be more “decipherable” than a pre-modern text thanks to greater “rationality” and to a syntactic clarity that sometimes give ancient texts a halo of spatial and temporal permanence, certainly amplified by the ‘pictographic’ nature of the Han language.

Naturally I am aware that this idea of mine also derives from the fact that it is this classical language which is taught, for the most part, in the university courses of Chinese philology which, in the long run, contributes to creating a kind of familiarity between students and texts belonging to that period.

As for the language used at the end of the 19th century therefore, a translator must remember that it is often a collection of learned quotations, stereotyped formulae, dialectal expressions and neologisms, the latter born from the need to narrate the encounter between East and West and perhaps surviving only for a moment in time and in the pages of a single work. At this point, the translator is obliged to interpret certain passages by examining different hypotheses, working by exclusion, going back over and over again and leaving the meaning of a word or of a sentence hanging even for weeks. This difficulty in interpretation, which can also be found in any translation regardless of the source language, becomes more acute within the distance in spatial and temporal coordinates.

On addressing the translation of *Brief Account on the Journey to the West*, therefore, I found myself facing the aforementioned difficulties. Undoubtedly, from an interpretative viewpoint, the most challenging task was the translation of the poems. First of all, I must stress that, despite the temptation to do so, I have never tried to embellish the text, which in part – and I am not afraid to admit – is deathly boring. Secondly, the “ugliness” of the verses in translation is also attributable to my almost total lack of poetic afflatus. Thirdly, as yet there are no systematic treatises on the late-Qing poetry to be consulted. In

the compositions of the Chinese author, therefore, I found myself sometimes embarrassed (as were the two mother tongue teachers who helped me in interpreting some particularly obscure lines) of not being able to trace the subject, the main verb and so on.

Although the prosodic forms have remained intact for centuries, the corpus of literary quotations to draw from has widened out of all proportion. The need, in an aspiring Chinese man of letters, to memorize the Classics and, at the same time, to study the most famous *shi* 詩 and *ci* 詞 of the Tang and Song periods, makes the late poetic compositions an interlocking game of one quotation after another from Confucius, Mencius, Zhuangzi, poetic anthologies and anecdotes relating to characters and events of Chinese folklore and tradition. These references are not always obvious for a contemporary reader, especially when that reader is not Chinese.

Later in the translation of the work, some of these passages appeared clearer once I understood the implicit quotation in them; for some poems, however, a free translation has been preferred once the general sense had been deciphered.

Lastly, given the distance in space and time, I resorted to the use of the past for the translated passages, although it sometimes makes the reading slower and can be felt as inappropriate, as in e.g. “today we did”, “tonight I went”, et-cetera. This seemed to me the most effective solution and was somehow suggested by the reading of other famous “Italian journeys”.

INTRODUCTION

On September 14th 1859, a young Chinese traveler named Guo Liancheng 郭連城 (1839-1866) from a small village far from the capital, landed in Civitavecchia, Italy, after a long journey of overland travel and months of navigation. He was only 20 years old and was in the company of an Italian priest, Luigi Celestino Spelta, who had taken the young convert under his wing in the Christian community he was responsible for in the province of Hubei. Guo was of course not the first Chinese man to visit Europe, since many before him had been to the continent, some as slaves, some in the company of European priests and others for reasons unknown, whose journeys have left no trace in the pages of history.

The young traveler had a particular family background, coming from a *literati* family and being a student of a Seminary in Wuchang run by Italian priests, already present in the area for at least one hundred years. Before leaving the motherland, he decided to keep a daily journal of his experience far from home, starting from day one, 6th April 1859, and ending the day he finally returned home safe and sound on 27th July 1860. His journal was published a year after his return under the modest title of *Xiyou bilüe* 西游筆略 (Brief Account of the Journey to the West, hereafter also indicated as *XYBL*). The title echoes the most celebrated of Chinese novels: the *Xiyou ji* 西游記 or *Journey to the West*, a journey undertaken centuries before by the Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (600-664) in search of sacred scriptures in India. But what was Guo Liancheng searching for? The most relevant motive of his travel is religion but, as the pages of his account prove, the journey would not have been possible if the author had not been a talented and open-minded man.

With “*In the garden of the world*”: *Italy to a young 19th century Chinese traveler*, my ultimate goal is to put Guo Liancheng’s personal life and travel account at the center of the academic discourse on the cultural exchanges between China and Europe and, in particular, between China and Italy. Guo is one of the many forgotten and often unknown Chinese travelers who made up the history of these exchanges but his contribution is not manifest or has not been taken into due account. In the volume the “West” is often and consciously used to refer to Europe despite the fact that it is a very vague and outdated word. This choice

is dictated by two reasons. The first one is that, before Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) put a light on the East-West dichotomy discourse, all the European sources refer to an imagined Other (East) which can be found in the documents cited here. The second reason is that also in Chinese sources, the term "West" is treated in the same way, embracing a geographical area which changes along with political changes and geographical knowledge. While in ancient times the Chinese "west" was associated with the mythological figure of *Xiwangmu* 西王母 (Queen Mother of the West) which grew in popularity after the opening of the silk routes around the 2nd century BC (Knauer 2006: 63), later, with the spread of Buddhism, the "West" was identified with Indian territories. Travel accounts on Buddhist pilgrimages to India, however, have only been briefly mentioned and not considered in this volume. In the 19th century, when Guo Liancheng's story takes place, the "West" was a general term to indicate European countries including Russia but also North America. "Westerners" then were the prototype of the Other: unfamiliar, exotic, dangerous (especially after the Opium wars) and even if Chinese people had heard of it, Europe was still an unknown quantity. China, in fact, was aware of the Ancient Roman Empire and vice versa since the flow of people, products and knowledge through the Silk routes was almost constant in the past. It was only after 1600, however, and in particular thanks to the Jesuit mission, that Europe and China truly began to have a deeper knowledge of each other.

To fully understand the story of Guo Liancheng, therefore, the first chapter of this volume explores the history of the Chinese "journeys to the West", to highlight similarities and differences between Guo and his predecessors, especially those who left an account of their experiences in Italy, in order to fully appreciate Guo Liancheng's contribution to the history of cultural contacts between Italy and China. Even if there is no such a thing as a Chinese Marco Polo, it is worth taking into consideration the many Chinese men who came to Europe and left some traces of their passage since this 'presence' is often not fully recognized. The first Chinese were probably slaves, bought in the Far East as the work by Gil reconstructs (2012). Later they were students or 'apprentices' of the new Christian religion which had come from the West, as will be illustrated. The second paragraph of chapter one is then dedicated to the Chinese first-person accounts on Italy up to the 19th century, to limit the area of interest of this volume. It is fair to say that, starting from the 1840s, Chinese *intelligentsia* was more and more interested in publishing works on geography and, in particular, on the West.¹ In any case, unlike Guo's *Brief Account of the*

¹ Such as, for example, *Si zhou zhi* 四洲志 [Gazeteer of the Four Continents]; *Haiguo tuzhi* 海國圖志 [Treatise on the Maritime Countries] by Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-185),

Journey to the West, these geographical works were compiled with a different purpose and do not contain personal experiences or first-hand knowledge of the West. Only at the end of the 19th century, anthologies of Chinese travels in Europe and the United States began to be published but Guo Liancheng's account is not included there nor in later collections.²

The second chapter examines the Catholic community in China at that time, with a particular focus on the Italian mission in Hubei. In order to do so, some documents relating to this community and to the 1859 journey to Italy have been used as a 'guideline' through Guo's life and travel. These documents, mainly written in Italian or Chinese, are presented for the first time in an English translation and may help to better understand the life conditions of Catholics in China at the beginning of the 19th century through first-hand Chinese accounts. Apart from the language, the decision to translate some texts in full is also due to the fact that many of these documents cannot be easily consulted outside Italy and sometimes archives are closed to the public. While various countries of the West were trying to approach China by force of arms, the Catholic mission in China followed its own path, though mostly in secret and facing many problems and persecutions. Moreover, the life of this community was also followed closely in Italy, thanks to some Catholic publications which reported on the situation. The 19th century was a century full of internal and external conflicts for the Chinese government, as the many uprisings of the time prove. Together with internal dissents, the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) also had to face the increasing attempts by European countries to enter the Chinese market and eventually face the entrance of their military forces. To avoid foreign aggression, the Imperial court was hostile towards the Christian faith, so that its followers were persecuted even in the most inland regions. The last part of the chapter is dedicated to a central figure of the Catholic community of Hubei and of the Italian account by Guo Liancheng: Luigi Celestino Spelta (1818-1862), an Italian Bishop who was the author's mentor and spiritual guide.

Chapter three is fully dedicated to the author and his *Brief Account of the Journey to the West*. To give a biographical profile of the young Chinese convert, various sources on Guo Liancheng's life have been reported, while the second

published for the first time in 1844 and enlarged in the following years, or *Yinghuan zhilüe* 瀛寰志略 [Brief survey of the Maritime Circuit, 1849] by Xu Jiyu 徐繼畲 (1795-1873).

² See, for example, Wang Xiqi 王錫祺. 1897. *Xiaofanghu zhai yudi congchao* 小方壺齋輿地叢鈔 [Geographical series of the Xiaofanghu studio]. Shanghai: Zhuyitang; and Zhong Shuhe 钟叔河. 1985. *Zouxiang shijie congshu* 走向世界丛书 [From East to West]. Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 10 vols.

part of the chapter goes into detail about the book and the journey itself. Apart from the fact that it was ignored for a very long period, *Brief Account* has other peculiarities: it has been published several times in Chinese but also has an abridged version in Italian published in excerpts in the periodical *Museo delle Missioni Cattoliche*. The various editions of the book as well as its style and sources are then presented here. *Xiyou bilüe* 西游笔略 or *Brief Account of the Journey to the West* is a one of a kind travel account, which succeeds in combining Chinese and Western literary traditions. The author, in fact, follows a “Chinese pattern” to record his travel experiences, and especially the tradition of *biji* 筆記.³ The closing part of the chapter is a brief summary of the journey itself and the eventual arrival in Italy.

In the fourth chapter, I review Guo Liancheng’s account on Italy, and the experiences he gathered there. For this reason, after a short introduction on the route followed by the young convert and the Piedmontese bishop, I have decided to divide their journey into three parts: a part dedicated to their visit to northern Italy, the sojourn in Turin and then the diary of the days spent in Rome. This division is due to the fact that, in my view, the different places and stages of his journey share common features, so while northern Italy was “the garden in the garden” of the world according to the author, Turin and Rome represented two different aspects of the Italian culture of the time and also two different aspects of the author’s Italian experience. While Turin was the city of the king and the symbol of incoming modernity, Rome was the capital of the Pope and of the Holy Religion to which Guo had converted. Thus, for each part, I have selected some excerpts of the travel account and translated them from Chinese in order to be fully appreciated. In his account, Guo Liancheng is not only very diligent in explaining the Western world with its technological innovations to his compatriots, he also enthusiastically illustrates the extraordinary cultural and artistic heritage of Italy.

Chapter five is divided into two parts and brings together some linguistic and cultural considerations on the contents of *Xiyou bilüe*. In the first part, I have analyzed some of the internal features of the book and its particular style, which is a brilliant example of late-Qing China writing. It is in fact a perfect balance between tradition and modernity both in style and in content. The link to Chinese tradition is guaranteed by the abundant use of Classical quotations and the profuse presence of poems; the modernity can be seen in the ma-

³ The genre *biji* 筆記, literally “brush notes”, is mainly made of jottings on various subjects which flourished under the Song dynasty (960-1279). The form of *biji* often gave authors the opportunity to talk freely about an unlimited range of topics, from philosophy, to politics, to literary criticism and so on.

ny scientific explanations given in the book. Guo Liangcheng, in fact, wants to share knowledge and innovative methods with his people and he draws the majority of his explanations from Western sources published in Chinese. This way of writing is unique for the time, and even more unique is the fact that Guo Liancheng quotes his sources and that his excerpts are often taken from both Jesuit and Protestant writings. The second part of the chapter is a short analysis on the linguistic innovations in *Brief Account of the Journey to the West*, where the author, one of the first to describe Europe to a Chinese readership, is obliged to use or create new words and expressions. For this very reason, and since some passages of the account were hard to understand at first due to this linguistic situation, I have decided to add three appendixes at the end of this volume, including Toponyms, Neologisms and new expressions, and Anthroponyms which can be found in *XYBL* as I have understood and translated them.

CHAPTER 1

CHINESE JOURNEYS TO “THE WEST”: GUO LIANCHENG’S PREDECESSORS*

Before looking at Guo’s ‘adventure’, it is necessary to take a closer look at the Chinese travelers who had embarked on a journey to the “West” before him. Of course, as already clarified in the *Introduction*, China’s West comprised an enormous geographical area which included not only Europe but also India and all the regions of Central Asia. Yet, in this book the word ‘West’, when used, must be considered as a quasi-synonym of Europe and, after 1800, comprising also North America.

In contemporary Chinese Studies, the history of cultural contacts between China and Europe is one of the main research fields to which both Western and Chinese scholars have devoted their efforts in order to describe, analyze and better comprehend the range of these cultural exchanges. As far as we know, these two “geographical opposites” – China and “the West” – had known each other for a very long time,¹ at least since the first centuries AD when, from the distant lands beyond the Urals, the *Seres*² began to sell their silk products as far as Rome through the mediation of Persian merchants. Many scholars and writers have fantasized about this “missed encounter” (Bertuccioli, Masini 1996: 1), and probably still is more to come on this subject.

For the first thousand years of the Christian era, “Westerners” who arrived in China were mainly Middle-Eastern merchants or Syrian Nestorians. Although

* This paragraph is partly taken from two articles of mine (Castorina 2007 and 2017).

¹ Though no longer up to date, the work by Sir Henry Yule (1866) is still precious for English readers thanks to its pioneering value in this regard. In the first part, Yule gives a first attempt to pinpoint the earliest traces of China and Chinese knowledge in ancient Greek and Latin sources. For his reconstruction of the intercourse of China and the “Western Nations previous to the discovery of the Sea-route by the Cape”, see the “Preliminary Essay” in Yule (1866, XXXIII-CXLIII).

² *Seres* was the name given by Romans to people from East and Central Asia, known for their silk production (Bertuccioli, Masini 1996: 10). The name must be related to the word for “silk” both in Greek and Latin languages: *sērikós* σηρικός and *sericum* respectively.

they left no trace in personal accounts, they are nevertheless still visible in Chinese culture.³ According to Chinese historical sources, the Romans were the first to venture into China. According to scholars (Zhong 2000: 6-7; Bertuccioli, Masini 1996: 4-5), there were a total of six Western expeditions to China before 1091, even though there is no evidence of the two presumed embassies arriving in 162 and between 280-289 respectively. Although the so-called “Silk Road” continued to be travelled for years almost without interruption, two more centuries were to pass before the exchanges from and to China would recommence or at least find space in written evidence in Chinese and Western sources, starting from the well-known *Il Milione* by Marco Polo (1254-1324).⁴

If we look at the Chinese sources, historical records describe an expedition led by Gan Ying 甘英 in 97 AD. This expedition had the task of establishing direct trading contacts between the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 BC) and the reign of Da Qin 大秦 (Great Qin) but, once on the threshold of Europe, the Chinese official decided not to proceed further. Persian merchants were interested in maintaining the monopoly of commerce between East and West while “the anxiety of the Romans to rid themselves of dependence on the nations of Persia for the supply of silk” (Yule 1866: xlvi) was growing. Therefore, in this already intricate balance of powers, Gan Ying was told that the journey was very dangerous and full of perils and that the sea was inhabited by dreadful creatures – half fish and half human – able to drive men mad with their voices. Here Zhong (2000: 4-7) has put forward an interesting comparison with Homeric sirens. After Gan Ying, there is little written information available on Chinese travelers abroad, at least not before the Song dynasty (960-1279) when more wide-ranging travel accounts began to appear, and no longer only in the form of annals or memorials to the Emperor. They finally found a place in literature, whereas prior to this moment, narrative on foreign countries had verged for the most part on a fantastic dimension.⁵

During the Song dynasty, on the other hand, travel literature became an independent literary genre and at the same time began to “leave room for more pro-

³ Among others, Shen Fuwei (1996) underlined the great importance of foreign contribution within the cultural exchange with China. Mainly through lexicon analysis and historical evidence, Shen traced back signs of the influence of Western culture in apparently indigenous elements which can date back even to the beginning of the Christian era.

⁴ Many studies, books and articles have been published on other European travelers in the East and can now be consulted as a reference. Due to limited space, however, they will not be mentioned here.

⁵ The first Chinese work dealing with the world outside China is *Shanhaijing* 山海經 [Classic of mountains and seas], a sort of mythogeography whose stories and legends survived for centuries in the Chinese imagination. One of the first translations of the book is the Italian version by Riccardo Fracasso (1996).

saic subjects, like import trade, bilateral relations and the court policy” (Foccardi 1992: 60). In addition, the flourishing economic situation of China around the 10th century led to the diffusion of this new literary genre even outside the government and the *literati* circles. That is why, according to Bertuccioli and Masini, the most curious and interesting information of that time can be found in “works written by individual and often forgotten authors” (1996: 31). That is the case of Zhao Rugua 趙汝适 (1170-1228) who compiled a sort of handbook for international trading while working as superintendent at Quanzhou customs (Fujian). His work, entitled *Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志 [A Description of Barbarous People],⁶ sums up all the information he had been able to gather from oral accounts by merchants and sailors coming from all over the world. In particular, he concentrates his attention on information related to the most commonly exchanged staples of the time.

To have a general idea of the production of Chinese travel literature on the countries beyond the boundaries of East and Central Asia, we can refer to many anthologies and collections edited in China and abroad, especially those by Wang Xiqi 王錫祺 (1897) and Zhong Shuhe 钟叔河 (1985) as already mentioned in the *Introduction* to this work. The interest that these works focusing on Chinese travels to foreign places aroused in scholars – especially at the end of the 19th century and for the entire 20th century – was not limited to China but also led to many publications by international experts of Chinese Studies, like Édward Chavannes, Henry Yule, and many others.⁷

In many anthologies of Chinese travels to the West, Rabban (‘Master’) Bar Sauma (Ba Suoma 巴璵馬, ca. 1230-1294) appears to be the first traveler from China to make a written record of his journey.⁸ Bar Sauma was a Uighur Nestorian monk, appointed as “Visitor-General of the Nestorian congregations in the East” (Mirsky 1965: 175). He left China with the younger Rabban Marcos (1245-1317), also known as Yahballaha III, Patriarch of the Church of the East, who was the one to suggest Bar Sauma as the first ambassador to Europe to Arghun (1258-1291), the Mongul Ilkhan of Persia. Bar Sauma reached Naples on June 24th 1287 (Montgomery 1927: 20) and once in Europe, he met the Pope and several European rulers (Zhong 2000: 35-36; Mirsky 1965: 175).

⁶ On this work see Hirth and Rockhill (1911).

⁷ For a brief bibliography see Strassberg (1994: 424, note 10).

⁸ Bar Sauma’s account was translated into English twice by James A. Montgomery (1927) and by E. A. Wallis Budge. 1928. *The Monks of Kublai Khan*, London: Religious Tract Society. An Italian translation has been published recently: Pier Giorgio Borbone. 2009. *Storia di Mar Yahballaha e di Rabban Sauma. Cronaca siriana del XIV secolo*, Lulu Press: Moncalieri. For a recent study on this voyage see Rossabi (2010), who also briefly illustrates the discovery of the Syriac manuscript (Rossabi 2010: xv).

The account of his journey, however, is written in ancient Syrian language, it was translated into Chinese only in 2009⁹ and cannot therefore be considered as strictly “Chinese” since it has had no influence on the Chinese panorama.

Travel literature of the Ming period (1368-1644) is maybe the most famous outside China, mainly thanks to the seven expeditions of Admiral Zheng He 鄭和 (1371-1434).¹⁰ However, Chinese fleets apparently never actually arrived in the European ‘West’, rather in Africa (Foccardi, 1992: 126). Therefore, in spite of some fascinating studies which affirm that the Admiral and his fleet reached the Americas in 1421 (Menzies 2002), their arrival left no trace in history unlike Colombo’s search for the ‘Indies’, so these travels had a completely different impact on the cultural sphere from which they originated.

With the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 16th century, there was an increase in the volume of exchanges between East and West, not only in the field of trade, technology and science but also in the field of culture. Europe played the leading role and, as a matter of fact, the end of the Ming and the first half of the Qing dynasty are generally regarded as a period of recession and closure for China. It is no wonder then, that Chinese travel literature also witnessed a significant decline, at least until the first half of the 1800s. Nevertheless, before that period, it was mainly Chinese Christian followers to leave written accounts on their experiences abroad.

As Mungello noted, compared to the thousands of Europeans who traveled throughout China between the 16th and 19th centuries, Chinese people arriving in the Old Continent amounted to only two or three hundred (2013: 91), most of all concentrated in Rome or Naples for religious reasons. In some cases, they moved to London and Paris. These ‘religious’ travelers, as Zhang Zhi (2014) appropriately defines them, gave an important contribution to European sinology but rarely left an account on their experiences.

⁹ Zhu Bingxu 朱炳旭 (tr.). 2009. *Laba Suoma he Make xixing ji* 拉班扫马和马克西行记 [The account of the westward travel of Rabban Bar Suoma and Markos]. Zhengzhou: Elephant Press.

¹⁰ Even though Zheng He’s memorials ‘mysteriously’ disappeared, we have come to know of his feats through two works: *Yingya shenglan* 瀛涯勝覽 by Ma Huan 馬歡 [English translation by J. V. Mills. 1970. *Ying-yai Sheng-lan: The Overall Survey of the Ocean’s Shores (1433)*. Cambridge (England): Hakluyt Society at the University Press]; and *Xingcha shenglan* 星槎勝覽 (1436) by Fei Xin 費信 [translated by J. V. Mills, revised, annotated and edited by Roderich Ptak. 1995. *Hsing-ch’a Sheng-lan: The Overall Survey of the Star Raft by Fei Hsin*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz]. On the disappearance of Zheng He’s documents, the chronological discrepancies of his expeditions, the obscurities regarding his life and, above all, the fact that he is never mentioned by Ma Huan and Fei Xin, see Foccardi (1992: 106-110).

In short, taking into account religious and non-religious Chinese travel chronicles¹¹ to the West, the situation is as follows. After the aforementioned account by Bar Suoma, brief references to some fleeting Chinese presences in Europe can be dated to the mid-17th century, when some Asian people were forcibly taken to Europe. They were prisoners captured during Portuguese incursions on the Asian continent and then taken to Lisbon (Mungello 2013: 91) where they were sold as servants. On this topic, the story of the Chinese slave of João de Barros (1496-1570) is exemplary since he is often cited as the first to act as a translator for written works on China (Mungello 2013: 91; Brockey 2012: 76). A recent study by Juan Gil has shed new light on these early ‘migrants’, dating the first ‘arrivals’ to the 1620s (Gil 2012).

In the 17th century, traces of Chinese people in Europe are relatively more precise so their stories can be partially reconstructed. One of the first Chinese men to have a small space in this history is Emmanuel de Siqueira (Zheng Manuo Weixin 鄭瑪諾維, 1633-1673), the “first Chinese-born Jesuit”, who arrived in Rome in 1649 with Alexandre de Rhodes SJ (1591-1660) and was educated first at the Roman College and then in Coimbra, where he was ordained priest, probably in 1664.¹² Emmanuel went back to China in 1671 but unfortunately died two years later without, as far as we know, sharing even a page of his knowledge on the West with his fellow countrymen.

Zhang Zhi (2014) indicates Andreas Cheng or Chen (Chen Ande 陳安德 or Zheng Andele 鄭安德勒) to have been among the first Chinese travelers to arrive in Europe. Andreas left China from Macau in January 1651 with the Polish Jesuit Michał Boym (Bu Mige 卜彌格, 1612-1659). Here too there is very little written evidence of his life and stay in Europe, and none of it was left by him personally. While in China, Andreas Cheng had been entrusted with pleading the cause of the Ming before the Pope by some members of the imperial family who had converted to Catholicism (Fang 2007: 214). Andreas belonged to a high-lineage family and presumably also had the military title of *youji* 游擊, roughly similar to the rank of commander, as suggested by Paul Pelliot (1935: 112). Presumably, the young man remained at Boym’s service throughout his sojourn in Europe, from his arrival in Venice to his transfer to Rome from where, in March 1656, they trav-

¹¹ An interesting English anthology of Chinese travel accounts on the West, was published by *Renditions* a few years ago, but it contains only journeys made in the 19th century neglecting all the previous journeys. See *Renditions: Chinese Impressions of the West*, Nos. 53 & 54 (Spring & Autumn 2000).

¹² A biography can be found in Francis Rouleau. 1959. *The First Chinese Priest of the Society of Jesus: Emmanuel de Siqueira, 1633-1673 (Cheng Ma-no, Weihsin)*. Rome: Institutum historicum S.J.

eled back to the East. The route, however, was dotted with unexpected events and disasters, so much so that the Jesuit died during the journey at the age of 47. The young Andreas always remained beside him and it was he, the “faithful Andrea” (Dunne 1962: 347), who buried him at the Tonkin-China border in August 1659.

Little is known about Domenico Siquin, who arrived in Europe in 1652 with Martino Martini (Wei Kuangguo 衛匡國, 1614-1661) who “used him as a domestic handyman, secretary, interpreter and living dictionary” (Bertuccioli 1998: 520). On the other hand, Michael Shen Fuzong 沈福宗 (c. 1658-1691) gained a certain reputation in Europe. The son of a doctor, he received a different education from his Chinese predecessors and succeeded in having a greater influence on the newborn European sinology. Arriving in Europe with Philippe Couplet (Bo Yingli 柏應理, 1623-1693) in September 1684, they moved to Paris where they were received with great honors by Louis XIV. Later he went to Oxford and collaborated with Thomas Hyde (1636-1704) in cataloguing the Chinese books for the Bodleian Library and also met King James II.

After Arcadio Huang and Louis Fan, who will be presented in the next paragraph, it must also be remembered that in 1722 Jean-François Fouquet (1665-1741) brought Jean Hu (Hu Ruowang 胡若望) with him to Europe. Here, the Chinese convert was to face a very harsh time and was confined to an asylum for two years. He eventually returned to China in 1726 and his troubled life inspired an interesting short novel by Spence (1988).¹³

Apart from these religious travelers, who often wrote nothing about their experiences, Chinese readers could of course refer to other works regarding the West. The most famous of all is undoubtedly the *Zhifang waiji* 職方外紀 [Record of the Places Outside the Competence of the Office of Geography, 1623] by Giulio Aleni (Ai Rulüe 艾儒略, 1582-1649) or other books written in Chinese by other missionaries, like the *Kunyu tushuo* 坤輿圖說 [Illustrated Explanation of the Entire World] by Ferdinand Verbiest (Nan Huairan 南懷仁, 1623-1688). The first, in particular, is quoted in almost all the travel accounts recorded by Chinese officials in the second half of the 19th century.

Before the compilation of comprehensive geographical works which followed the first Opium War, one of the most read opuses on the West (Caltonhill 2000, 159) was a small volume based on the oral account of a blind seaman. The travel account is the *Hailu* 海錄 [Records of the Seas] by Xie Qinggao 謝清高 (1765-1821), published in 1820.¹⁴ Despite the fact that it may be the first personal account on the West, as Caltonhill underlines:

¹³ All the data on Hu’s life in Europe are in documents written by Fouquet himself.

¹⁴ Xie’s travels probably date back to 1782, see Zhong (2000: 35). The account was written by Yang Bingnan 楊炳南 and Li Zhaoluo 李兆洛 (1769-1841) “whom Xie met in Macao two years before his death” (Tsui 2010: 45).

Xie’s narrative encompasses the Southeast and the Pacific (this section is most detailed), India, Africa, Europe and America. Many place names are rendered unrecognizable by their convoluted linguistic route to written Chinese. The only European countries described in more than a few sentences are Portugal and England; it is possible his actual travel was limited to these (Caltonhill 2000: 159).

Though full of curious and interesting notes on the West, according to this author, Xie’s account is misleading since it focuses only on the “exotic” surface of the European countries without a real idea or consciousness of what it describes. It is fair to say, as also Tsui points out, that “the interest shown by [...] intellectuals revealed that by the end of the 18th century, some intellectuals had already acknowledged the need to know more about the world by first-hand experience rather than relying on old texts” (Tsui 2010: 45).

In relation to ‘first-hand’ experiences, Lin Zhen 林鍼 (1824-?) was one of the first Chinese travelers to have his impression on the West published. He learnt English in Xiamen and went to New York to teach the Chinese language. In 1849, Lin edited *Xihai jiyou cao* 西海紀游草 [A Draft of my Journey to the Western Seas], a short volume on his experience written in *pianwen* 駢文 (a rhythmical prose rich in parallelisms). As Tsui notes, “owing to his partial understanding of the West and Western technology, his explanations of what he saw, such as electricity and telegrams, were written as if he was trying to explain magic tricks” and he “gave limited explanation of the objects he saw and values he observed” (Tsui 2010: 100-101). According to Zhou (2003: 2), this work does not contain real impressions or descriptions of the West and belongs to another literary genre, not the travel genre.

1. Chinese first-person accounts on Italy up to the 19th century

The first Chinese traveler to write something about his experiences in Europe, is Arcade Huang (Huang Jialüe 黃嘉略, 1679-1716) whose first name is cited in Western sources as Arcade, Arcadius, Arcadio and his surname is variously transcribed as Huang, Hoang, Hoang, Hoangh, Hoange, Ouang, Hom, Hoam (and more).¹⁵ He, the first “interprète chinois du Roi-Soleil”, had an important role in spreading the Chinese language in Europe since he compiled the first

¹⁵ In 1986, Xu Minglong published an article in which the name Huang Jialüe appeared for the first time, and from that moment on it began to spread in academic circles. Arcade Huang’s real Chinese name, however, as an autographic letter proves, was Huang Risheng 黃日升 (Xu 2014: 3). His life inspired semi-academic writings, see Elisseeff (1985) and Spence (1992).

Chinese-French lexicon and the first grammar of the Chinese language together with Nicolas Fréret (1688-1749) and, later, with Étienne Fourmont who eventually took all the credit for the works on the Chinese language. If on the one hand, Huang had a great influence on the European Sinology, on the other hand, he did not have the opportunity to go back to China and share his knowledge with his compatriots. Even so, we have to assume that this was his wish, since he left an unpublished manuscript, *Rome diary* (*Luoma riji* 羅馬日記).¹⁶

The first to compile a complete report on the West is probably Fan Shouyi 樊守义 (1682-1753), better known by his Christian name of Luigi or Louis Fan who “was the first Chinese person to write impressions of Europe and the Americas” (Meynard 2017: 21) in a work entitled *Shenjianlu* 身見錄 [Report about What I saw in person, 1721], the “first travel account on Europe” (Fang 2007: 502). He arrived in Europe with the Italian Jesuit Francesco Giuseppe Provana (1662-1720)¹⁷ in 1708 and sojourned and studied in Italy between 1709 and 1719. Apparently, once in China and “at the request of the court” (Meynard 2017: 27), he wrote a report for the Emperor which, however, was never published.¹⁸ Nonetheless, there is no actual evidence of such a report in the Chinese archives. Maybe because of the literary inquisition by Emperor Kangxi 康熙 (r. 1662-1722) or perhaps because it was lost, as some scholars assume, Fan’s account was never published nor included in the Imperial collection (Liu 2010: 114; Piastra 2012: 42). Therefore, in my opinion, it is not hazardous to assume that Fan’s official report never circulated in the East, and so it added no information to the knowledge about Europe. In addition, even if the value of *Shenjianlu* is undeniable, Fan Shouyi only did the bare minimum to describe the outside world to the court; his report, as Bertuccioli writes, is “quite diligent but without feeling, there is nothing personal” and, again, “it is an account drawn up for bureaucrats” (1999: 347-348).

¹⁶ The authorship of this manuscript is very recent, and it is to be ascribed to Xu Minglong. The diary, which is incomplete, has been entirely transcribed in Xu (2014: 389-405) and it has been partly described and translated in Italian in Castorina (2017: 669-673).

¹⁷ In Pfister, he is indicated as Joseph-Antoine Provana, Chinese name Ai Xunjue 艾遜爵若瑟 (1932: I, 477, no. 205).

¹⁸ In 1936, in the pages of the *Quarterly Bulletin of Chinese Bibliography* (Chinese edition), the scholar Wang Chongmin 王重民 stated he had found a manuscript copy of the work in the Italian National Library of Rome Vittorio Emanuele II, a manuscript that was later lost (Bertuccioli, Masini 1996: 198). Two Chinese scholars though, namely Yan Zonglin 閻宗臨 and Fang Hao 方豪, were able to publish the Chinese text before its loss respectively in 1941 and 1953. An Italian translation of the book is Bertuccioli (1999).

Last but not least, it is fair to mention the one hundred and six Chinese students who sojourned in Naples between 1724 and 1887 in the famous *Collegio de' Cinesi* (Chinese College).¹⁹ Unfortunately, apart from spreading the Gospel, it seems they neither wrote anything about their lives in Italy nor tried in any way to share their experiences abroad with others. Bertuccioli sadly notes that

Apart from some short manuals to learn Chinese, published in the 19th century, there is no Chinese translation of some masterpiece of Italian or European literature, no exposition in Chinese of the experiences gathered abroad, no treatise, either in Italian or in Chinese, on some aspects of the Chinese culture or on some classic of that literature: in short, nothing that would show in them a sincere interest for the culture of the country where they studied or to present to foreigners that of their motherland (Bertuccioli, Masini 1996: 194).

Some scholars believe that this is due to the fact that “when these students returned to China, they spent most of their time in meditation and were seldom involved in the development of scholarship and politics” (Tsui 2010: 44). Probably the question is more complex than this and depends to a great extent on

¹⁹ After a period working at the Chinese court as painter and engraver, Matteo Ripa (1682-1746, Chinese name Ma Guoxian 馬國賢) became convinced that it was necessary to form a Chinese clergy in Europe. Having overcome countless problems, in 1724 he succeeded in founding an institution known as *Collegio de' Cinesi* or *Collegio della Sacra Famiglia* (College of the Sacred Family), officially approved in 1732. The history of this ‘enterprise’ can be read in Ripa’s memoirs. Since the bibliography on the Chinese College is very rich, I include here merely an essential one, which only includes primary sources. Ripa, Matteo. 1832; 1983. *Storia della fondazione della Congregazione e del Collegio de' Cinesi*, 3 vols. Napoli: Istituto universitario orientale (I.U.O.), [facsimile reproduction of the 1832 edition, Napoli: dalla Tipografia Manfredi], partially translated into English: Ripa, Matteo; Prandi, Fortunato. 1844. *Memoirs of Father Ripa, during thirteen years' residence at the court of Peking in the service of the emperor of China: With an account of the foundation of the college for the education of young Chinese at Naples*. London: J. Murray. Additional first-hand information can be found in Ripa, Matteo. 1991. *Giornale (1705-1724): 1. 1705-1711*, edited by Michele Fatica. Napoli: Istituto universitario orientale; Ripa, Matteo. 1996. *Giornale (1705-1724): 2 1711-1716*, edited by Michele Fatica. Napoli: Istituto universitario orientale. In 1869, the College became the Royal Asiatic College (Real Collegio Asiatico) and was then suppressed in 1888 in favor of a laical institution with the original name of Regio Istituto Orientale, later renamed Istituto Universitario Orientale and nowadays Naples University “L’Orientale”. The existing bibliography on the College is rather substantial but unfortunately, it is mostly in Italian.

the fact that the majority of these students (later priests) was educated in Latin and Italian and was unable to write (or read) in passable Chinese.²⁰

From a chronological point of view, the collections on Chinese travels to the West at this point usually skip directly to the first Chinese embassy of 1866. Around the year 2000, however, two scholars “discovered” – almost at the same time but in two different libraries – a short travel account entitled *Xiyou bilitie* 西游筆略 [Brief Account of the Journey to West] by an unknown author named Guo Liancheng. These two scholars are Michele Fatica from Naples University “L’Orientale”, who found the book in the Vatican Apostolic Library, and Zhou Zhenhe from Shanghai Fudan University who discovered a copy in Paris and edited a new version of the book in 2003.

Although Guo left China a few years after Lin Zhen, he is never mentioned in any extensive collection of Chinese travel accounts on the West, edited both in China and abroad, despite the fact that his book possesses some features which differentiate it from previous Chinese travel accounts.

First of all, it is a personal and unofficial account unlike that of Fan Shouyi; it is written in plain prose in order to narrate the author’s daily impressions and experiences unlike Lin Zhen’s; it was published for the first time in 1860, so it is the first Chinese first-hand travel account on the West to be published (and presumably read) in China. Last but not least, it was almost ignored for more than a century.

As Zhou Zhenhe underlines, even if *Brief Account* is “too poor in exotic atmosphere” nevertheless, considering the period in which it was written, “it is an unprecedented and outstanding travel book” (Zhou 2003: 1). In addition, Fang Hao points out that “During the Xianfeng period, Chinese people going to the West were relatively few, [so] this book can be regarded as the very first one to set a trend” which despite the “laconic style”, is really “a rarity” (Fang 2007: 627-628).

²⁰ For a first analysis of the Chinese language level of these students and of the history of Chinese language teaching at Naples, see Castorina (2014) and (2016).

CHAPTER 2

GUO LIANCHENG AND THE CATHOLIC MISSION IN HUBEI

The 18th century was a complicated and difficult period for the Catholic mission in China. The problematic Chinese Rites controversy,¹ the suppression of the Society of Jesus and the expulsion of missionaries from China, had led to a significant decrease in the cultural flow between China and the West. At the beginning of the 19th century, Catholic missionaries were officially banned from entering the Celestial Empire, even though Catholic priests, mostly Lazarists and Franciscans, continued to secretly arrive in the Celestial Empire throughout the first half of the 19th century.²

1. The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the Chinese mission

To manage and preside over missionary activities throughout the world, the Church gave birth to a new reality: the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, now The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples).³

One of the main reasons for the creation of this new institution can be explained by the progressive rivalry within the system of the *Padroado* or Missionary Patronage (Metzler 2000: 145). If this system had proved – at first – to

¹ The bibliography regarding the controversy is too extensive to be mentioned here. The last important contribution is by Claudia von Collani, “The Jesuit Rite Controversy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits*, ed. by Ines G. Županov (Online Publication Date: May 2018): 891-917.

² On the role of foreign underground missionaries in the late Qing dynasty, see as a reference Standaert and Tiedemann (2001: II, 126-132).

³ As Tosi underlines (1999: VIII, n. 7), a history of the Congregation has not yet been written. One of the fundamental works to begin with is Metzler, Joseph, 1971-1976, *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide memoria rerum. 1622-1972*, 3 vols. Roma-Freiburg-Wien.

be extraordinarily effective in the propagation of Christianity in the territories/colonies shared out between the two great powers of patronage (i.e. Spain and Portugal), the “intimate union and connection between political power and missionary Church, between colonialism and mission, appeared to be, in the long run, more and more disadvantageous”, since the “colonized peoples” (Metzler 2000: 145) were not able to distinguish officials from missionaries and discern political power from religion.

The first to perceive the need to reform the system was Francesco Borgia (1510-1572), who suggested to Pius V Ghislieri (1566-1572) that a “Congregation of Cardinals for the spiritual affairs of the Missions” must be set up (Metzler 2000: 146). The project failed, however, mostly because of opposition from Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) who would not tolerate any interference in the management of the missionary affairs of his empire.

Nearly a hundred years later, the honor of founding the Sacred Congregation of *Propaganda Fide* was bestowed on Pope Gregory XV Ludovisi (1554-1623). On 22nd June 1622, he officially established this new reality with the bull *Inscrutabili Divinae Providentiae*. From the very beginning, along with the concern of maintaining the faith following the Reformation in European countries, the main tasks and objectives of the Congregation were propagating the Christian faith throughout the world, managing missions outside Europe and, last but not least, promoting the formation of a local clergy. Accordingly, the Church of Rome tried to elaborate a specific strategy focusing not only on the formation of an indigenous clergy, but also supporting the study of the languages and cultures of those countries. To achieve this objective, the Holy See carried out various activities such as, for example, the birth of new ‘multi-ethnic’ institutions – like the *Collegium Urbanum de Propaganda Fide* – or the compilation of works aimed at the discovery of these exotic and distant lands. One of the most representative of these works is Ingoli’s *Relazione delle Quattro Parti del Mondo* [Report on the four parts of the world, 1631].⁴ At the same time, the Congregation also had to financially support foreign missions and missionary activities.

Despite the ‘ethnological’ interest which characterized the Congregation from its very foundation, and despite the resolve not to compel non-Europeans “to change their customs, their way of living, their habits” – since there would have been “nothing more absurd than wanting to bring France or Spain or Italy, or the other parts of Europe to China”⁵ –, it was within these guidelines that the

⁴ See Ingoli, Francesco, 1999, *Relazione delle Quattro Parti del Mondo*, ed. by F. Tosi, Urbaniana University Press, Città del Vaticano.

⁵ These two quotations are taken from the *Istruzione* of 1659, quoted in Metzler (2000: 147).

Question of Rites arose. While the Jesuit missionaries in China dealt mainly with the upper classes following Ricci's example, 19th century Catholic and Protestant missionaries focused on spreading the Gospel among low-middle classes.

In 1798, after the French Revolutionary Wars, *Propaganda Fide* experienced one of the most difficult periods of its history. It was in fact temporarily suppressed. The transfer of its administrative offices and of the archives to France in 1808 "led to the paralysis, and often to the disposal of some missions" (Trinchese 1998: 569). Its activities however were resumed as soon as Pope Pius VII Chiaramonti (1742-1823) returned to Rome in 1814 after being taken prisoner by the French when the Napoleonic troops had invaded the city in 1796. From 1815 onwards, missionary initiatives thrived also thanks to the "foundation of new and specific associations especially in France and Italy" (Trinchese 1998: 570). These associations, as I will later illustrate, did much to raise funds to support the Catholic missions and proved fundamental for the very survival of the missions themselves.

This premise on the Congregation, though superficial, is important for a more complete understanding of Guo Liancheng's travel account, since many people and institutions mentioned in his journal are more or less linked to *Propaganda Fide*. At the same time, it was indirectly through this institution that Guo was able to obtain a Western education.

Before analyzing the situation in Hubei, the author's province of birth, it is necessary to add some information which can help to contextualize his work.

Because of the scant success of the China mission (Metzler 2000: 152), Stefano Borgia (1731-1804), Secretary of the Congregation,⁶ had been insisting on the nomination of local bishops for a long time. His suggestion, however, met with two major obstacles. The first was the opposition of Portugal, unwilling to renounce any of its privileges granted by the *Padroado* system. To elude this opposition, Rome decided to turn to the system of Apostolic Vicariates (1680). In this way, the Vicar became the head of all religious orders within the foreign missions and the only authority to respond to. To be sure of this, all the missionaries leaving for the Far East were obliged to make a vow of commitment to *Propaganda*.

Later however, the Vicars themselves appeared to be the second obstacle to *Propaganda's* original plan for an indigenous church. Though often engaged in the formation of a local clergy, in actual fact, they rejected the idea of the establishment of an ordinary ecclesiastic hierarchy (Metzler 2000: 153). On

⁶ He was Secretary from 1770 to 1789. Later, he was appointed as pro-prefect and then chosen as prefect (1798-1804).

the contrary, they often seemed to be inclined to “lean on the great European powers” (Fatica 2011: 50).

It is fair to add one more detail on the initiatives introduced in Europe to support foreign missions. On May 3rd 1822, Pope Gregory XVI Cappellari (1831-1846) consented to establish the *Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi* (Society for the Propagation of the Faith). This institution, established by Marie Pauline Jaricot (1799-1862) in Lyon, had the main aim of raising funds to support the missions abroad and made extensive use of the press to spread word of its activities. In fact, the very same year of its foundation, the *Œuvre* began to publish a periodical entitled *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* (Annals of the Propagation of the Faith) on the model of the Jesuits’ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* and counted other editions (Tiedemann 2009: 251) in ten European languages (Fatica 2001: 61). In 1868 a second periodical began to be issued by the Society with the title of *Les Missions Catholiques: bulletin hebdomadaire illustré de l’Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi* (Paris, 1868–1964) and, on this model, other publications followed in Europe, among which an Italian edition printed in Milan, Rome and Naples (Fatica 2001: 61). The *Œuvre* had a branch in every important Italian city, where it put forward some specific activities to raise funds for foreign missions. Among these activities for example, in 1858 Giuseppe Ortalda (1814-1880) organized in Turin an exhibition of objects and artefacts from all around the world – also described in the pages of Guo Liancheng’s account – and it was the pretext with which to undertake the publication of the weekly magazine *L’esposizione a favore delle missioni cattoliche affidate ai seicento missionari sardi*, which, modelling its title on the French edition, was renamed in 1860 *Museo delle missioni cattoliche* (from now on MDMC), the first periodical in Italy entirely devoted to missionary activities. This periodical, a supplement of the above-mentioned *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, contains documents which proved to be fundamental for the study of Guo Liancheng’s life and travel.

2. Guo Liancheng and the Catholic mission in Hubei at the beginning of the 19th century

The origin of a Catholic evangelization of the Chinese province of Hubei can be traced back to 1587.⁷ From that date, it is possible to distinguish, as was common practice in the period, three different ‘ethnic’ missions: Portuguese, French and Italian. The latter was run by missionaries sent by *Propaganda Fide*.

⁷ See also Gubbels (1934).

A fourth, founded by the Paris Foreign Missions Society in 1688, later died out due to the persecutions of the 18th century (Spimpolo 1962: 23-24).

The establishment of the Apostolic Vicariate of Hu-Guang 湖廣,⁸ previously dependent on the diocese of Nanjing, was formally instituted through the *brevis E sublimi Sedis* by Pope Innocent XII Pignatelli (1615-1700) on 15th October 1696. As previously mentioned, the Italian mission was led by missionaries sent by *Propaganda Fide*. Johannes Müllener CM (Mu Tianchi 穆天尺, 1673-1742)⁹ was the first to fulfil the role of Apostolic Administrator of Hu-Guang and Guizhou (1719) after being made Bishop of Myriophythe and Vicar Apostolic of Sichuan and the adjacent regions in 1715. Deeply involved in the creation of a native clergy, he left the Hu-Guang mission to the first group of Chinese priests he had educated according to *Propaganda* guidelines. As a matter of fact, the diocese answered to the Vicar Apostolic in Sichuan and in 1696 it was firstly assigned to Giovan Francesco Nicolai OFM (Yu Tianming 餘天明, 1656-1737)¹⁰ who however was already on his way back to Europe at the time of his nomination. In around 1762, the Vicariate was suppressed and absorbed into the Apostolic Vicariate of Shanxi and Shaanxi but in 1838 the Hu-Guang Vicariate once again gained independence thanks to the brief *Ex Debito Pastoralis Officis* by Pope Gregory XVI Cappellari (1765-1846). According to Spimpolo, this independence further reinforced the spread of Catholicism in the region (Spimpolo 1962: 24). As a consequence of the above-cited *brevis*, Giacomo Luigi Fontana MEP (Ping 馮, 1780-1838),¹¹ already Vicar Apostolic of Sichuan, was appointed Vicar Apostolic but died before he could take on the assignment. Later on, the mission was run by priests educated in Naples at the

⁸ The term Hu-Guang refers to a large area including the four provinces of Hubei 湖北, Hunan 湖南, Guangxi 廣西 and Guangdong 廣東. In Latin sources, it is often transliterated as Hu-kwang or Hukwang.

⁹ Born in Bremen in a noble but poor family, he received his first education at the Jesuit College in Osnabrück. In 1697, he followed his teacher Lodovico Appiani (1663-1726), a Lazarist, to the Far East. In Madras, Müllener joined the Congregation of Lazarists. During his long stay in China, he had to cope with many problems, not least, the fact that he was arrested and sent back to Europe. He mainly worked in South China, especially in the province of Sichuan. For details on his life, see von Collani (2016).

¹⁰ Also known as Giovanni Francesco Nicolai, Giovanni Francesco Nicolai of Leonessa, Giovanni Francesco de Nicolais. For a detailed biography see Mensaert, Margiotti, and Rosso (1961: 3-18).

¹¹ For the Chinese name see “Metropolitan Archdiocese of Hankou 漢口,” <<http://www.gatholic.org/dioceses/diocese/hank0.htm>> (01/2020).

college of the Sacred Family of Jesus Christ (Chinese College) together with some Italian Dominicans (Spimpolo 1962: 25-26).

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the position of Catholic missionaries in China was very fragile and bristling with difficulties. Many Christians – Europeans or Chinese – were persecuted, arrested, tortured and killed. It is not an exaggeration to affirm that the Hu-Guang mission was one of the oldest and most active Catholic communities among all the “clandestine” missions of the time.

The strength of the faith of this community is once again confirmed in the notes by Guo Liancheng, whose family was personally involved in the persecutions, as will be illustrated in the following pages.

The very first Vicar of Hu-Guang was Giuseppe Rizzolati (Li Wenxiu 李文秀, 1799-1862)¹² who, despite the French Treaty of Whampoa (1844) and the 1846 edict which legalized Christianity, was exiled to Canton in 1848, and then took refuge in Hong Kong where he continued to follow the mission from afar.

At the time when Rizzolati was assigned to the Vicariate, the Christian community of Hu-Guang counted 18.000 devotees scattered randomly all through the region. Five priests – all from the Congregation and college of the Sacred Family at Naples – plus the Bishop and the Vicar, took care of the mission, which consisted of six worship rooms and six schools to teach the doctrine (Spimpolo 1962: 29-30).¹³ Thanks to his continuous efforts and in spite of all the persecutions – from which “his admirers saw that he always pulled through miraculously intact and dignified” (Spimpolo 1962: 31) – Rizzolati was able to make the mission flourish and even to establish a seminary.

Even if the seminary was in an area considered out of reach of the Mandarins, the community was not in peace. Many Chinese converts lost their lives

¹² Also named Giovanni Domenico Rizzolati, born in Clauzetto, province of Pordenone, in 1799, in 1820 he entered the Order of Friars Minor (OFM) and in 1827 left for China where he worked for 12 years in Shanxi-Shaanxi vicariate. In 1878, he was exiled to Canton. From there, thanks to the help of an American consul, he was able to leave for Hong Kong. In 1854, he was called back to Europe by *Propaganda Fide* and died in Rome in 1862. Sartori (1926: 46) gives him the Chinese name of Li Wenxiu 李文秀, but in Guo's *Brief Account* he is always remembered as Li Ruose 李若瑟. On his life see Sartori (1926: 46-47, no. 101).

¹³ Spimpolo quotes in full a report on the situation of the Vicariate by Francesco Saverio Maresca (Zhao Fangji 趙方濟, 1806-1855). See: “Il P. Francesco Maresca, della Sacra Famiglia, Pro-Vicario di Mons. Rizzolati, risponde a un questionario in cui dà relazione sulla Missione nelle provincie del Hukuang, l'anno 1841 (Arch. Sectio B, 612-1)” (Spimpolo 1962: 183-190).

for their faith. Rizzolati, therefore, found himself forced to move the seminary on two further occasions, finally succeeding in establishing it at Wuchang¹⁴ where he was able to lodge his pupils. Soon after, however, the seminary was once again dispersed (Spimpolo 1962: 35).

On April 11th 1856, Hu-Guang was split into the two Vicariates of Hubei and of Hunan by Apostolic decree (Sartori 1926: 1).¹⁵ The first was entrusted to Luigi Celestino Spelta (1818-1862), coadjutor of Francesco Saverio Maresca (1806-1855);¹⁶ the latter to Miguel Navarro (1809-1867).¹⁷ Spelta is a central figure in Guo Liancheng's account, as will be revealed in the following pages.

After his nomination, Spelta began to take an active part in the mission's administration, establishing a temporary seat and the seminary respectively in Tianmen 天門 and Yangjiahe 楊家河. He also instituted a college, which "would be the breeding ground from which to choose seminarists, train catechists, artisans and healthcare assistants" (Spimpolo 1962: 42).

The seminary in Yangjiahe village is, presumably, the place where Guo Liancheng received his education and it is also the starting point of his journey to Italy.

¹⁴ Wuchang is meant as a part of Wuhan 武漢, provincial capital of Hubei region, which is the fusion of three pre-existing towns: Wuchang 武昌, Hankou 漢口 and Hanyang 漢陽.

¹⁵ The Vicariate was further divided into three in 1870: North-West Hubei (*Huveh Occiduo-Septentrionali*), South-West Hubei (*Huveh Occiduo-Meridionali*) and East Hubei (*Huveh Orientali*).

¹⁶ Francesco Saverio Maresca entered the Chinese College at Naples in 1823, then studied the Chinese language in Rome with Raffaele Umpierres (on Umpierres as a Chinese language teacher in the Collegio Urbano, see Castorina 2016). In 1838, he left for China where in 1847 he was ordained Titular Bishop of Soli, and appointed Coadjutor Bishop of the apostolic administrator Ludovico de Besi (Luo Leisi 羅類思, 1805-1871) and administrator of the Nanjing diocese. Due to illness, in 1855 he returned to Naples and died soon after (Kuo 1917: 24-27). Sartori gives him the Chinese name of Ma Zhende Zixiu 馬真德自修 (Sartori 1926: 36, no. 74).

¹⁷ Miguel Navarro entered the Franciscan Order in 1828, arrived in China in 1843 and began to help Rizzolati with whom he was exiled to Canton in 1848. Coming back to China secretly, he administered the Vicariate of Rizzolati when he was in Hong Kong and in 1856 was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Hunan. He died in China in 1867 (Sartori 1926: 40-41, no. 86). In Sartori he has the Chinese name of Lu Huairan Dehua 陸懷仁德華, while in *XYBL* he is always called Monsignor Fang (*Fang mu* 芳牧 or 方牧) by Guo.

3. Popular uprisings and persecutions against Christians

As previously mentioned, after the Rites Controversy, the position of Catholicism in China had become even more complex. Formally, priests were no longer permitted to enter China and the last Jesuit¹⁸ working as director of the Board of Astronomy died in 1805 without being substituted. Around 1830, small Catholic communities still existed but, as already illustrated above, they were scattered and geographically distant from one another. From the imperial point of view, Christianity tended to upset public order and ideological loyalty to the court, which explains why it was regarded so unfavorably. Christianity was associated with those cults and secret societies who wished to subvert the Manchu power and, just like these sects, was persecuted.

Therefore, at the beginning of the 19th century, the increasing activities by Triad groups (*sanhehui* 三合會) or Heaven and Earth Society (*Tiandihui* 天地會),¹⁹ and by the White Lotus Society (*Bailianjiao* 白蓮教)²⁰ coincided with a growing persecution against Christians. In particular, Christianity in general was linked with the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64), and the Nian Rebellion (1853-1868).

This foreign religion had arrived with the increasingly demanding pressure by Western forces, pressure which eventually led to the two Opium Wars in 1839 and in 1856 and to the ratification of the so-called Unequal Treaties, so that it was impossible not to perceive missionary activities as something other than another form of ‘invasion’.

Without going into the details and questions which led to the collapse of the Chinese Empire, it is useful to remember that with the Nanjing Treaty of 1842, Christian missionary activity was legalized in the so-called “Treaty ports”, i.e. port cities opened to foreign commerce, thus greatly favoring Protestants over Catholics. The latter, also taking advantage of the Whampoa Treaty signed in 1844, settled at Xujiahui 徐家匯, a village just outside Shanghai at the begin-

¹⁸ The Portuguese José Bernardo de Almeida (Su Dechao 素德超, 1728-1805), who held the position on the Astronomical Board from 1796 to 1805. See Pfister (1934: II, 886-888) for details on his life as a missionary.

¹⁹ The Triads were and still are criminal groups active mainly in Southern China and Southeast Asia. Some scholars link their foundation to late Ming loyalist opposition to the newly-established Manchu empire (ter Haar 1998: 18). On the history of Triads see also Murray (1994).

²⁰ The White Lotus was a secret and millenarian society whose origins can be traced back to Northern China. Although religious in nature, the sects within the White Lotus always had the function of opposing the rulers. For example, they supported the “the so-called White Lotus uprising of 1796-1804 in the Sichuan-Hubei-Hunan border region” (ter Haar 1998: 232).

ning of the 1840s. Xujiahui became a sort of ‘stronghold’ of Christianity in China, as Guo Liancheng’s account also confirms.²¹

The aforementioned edict of 1844 allowed priests to reside in treaty ports and forbade them to venture inland, and this is the reason why some missionaries, such as Giuseppe Rizzolati mentioned in the previous paragraph, were arrested and expelled from China.

This rough preamble is necessary in order to contextualize *Brief Account* and to have a better understanding of some excerpts from Guo Liancheng’s journal.

In particular, as already underlined by Michele Fatica (2001), the Taiping Rebellion and the persecution against Christians affected Guo Liancheng himself. Between the years 1857 and 1860 in fact, Taiping rebels made it as far as the city of Wuchang, with the objective of occupying Hanyang and Hankou on the opposite side of the Yangzi river. On January 12th 1853, Wuchang was seized by the rebels and from that moment on, the city was won and lost many times until falling again under the control of Imperial troops.

Even if the group of travelers led by Spelta departed in a “relatively quiet atmosphere” (Fatica 2001: 53), there were many disturbing signs of the ongoing hostilities, as can be read in *XYBL* three days after having left Yangjiahe:

April 9th 1859. Sunny. In the afternoon, I wandered around the Horse King temple with Bishop Spelta, where we saw the sanctuary’s remains. In Wuhan, a never-ending succession of turmoil caused by war: everywhere there are tiles smashed into pieces and broken bricks. Once back on the boat, overwhelmed by misery, I sighed a poem in the *qili* form. [...] (Guo 2003: 1).

Persecutions progressively worsened in Hubei, as can be inferred from two different documents. On 7th October 1859, while in Voghera (Northern Italy), Guo Liancheng notes in his diary:

²¹ Evidence of this community activity and spirit, also from a cultural point of view, can be found in *XYBL*, for example in the first *juan* of the book (May 22nd – June 14th, 1859. Guo 2003: 8-14). During his stay in Shanghai, Guo met many people. One night, for example, thanks to a Jesuit father, he discovers the fabulous “Western Ocean mirror” (*xiyangjin* 西洋鏡), then he visits the area of Yangjingbang: the cathedral of Xujiahui (whose Seminary hosts “more than one hundred scholars, all young men of great talent [...]”, Guo 2003: 11) and St. Mary’s Church (*Shengmu tang* 聖母堂), a cemetery with a church annex (Pfister 1932: I, 228) in the southern area of Shanghai. The group of travelers led by Monsignor Spelta, in addition, did not visit only Catholic locations, they also visited the Mohai Academy (*Mohai shuyuan* 墨海書院), run by London Missionary Society missionaries, which had been founded only a few years previously (Guo 2003: 13).

[...] Today we received a letter from Monsignor Navarro in Hunan, which reported that the Catholic Church of Beixiang at Jinshan, Hubei, has been demolished by the local riffraff and also that the people who have embraced the Religion have been humiliated (Guo 2003: 62).

In addition, Fatica quotes (2001: 55) another letter – dated July 9th 1859 – Spelta would have received from Miguel Navarro on 17th October 1860 (instead of 7th, as Guo writes), describing the persecution going on in the region. Navarro writes:

Most Venerated Monsignor,
Your departure from Hu-pè [Hubei] was truly unpropitious.
The very day after you left your beloved people, *venerunt lupi rapaces non parcentes gregi* [ravenous wolves came and did not spare the flock].²² The new Christianity at Mei-kia-ho [Meijiahe 梅家河?], which you nurtured with so much care and hard work, was horribly abused and brutally oppressed by the Imperial attendants. The new church with its annexed presbytery has been destroyed; the neophytes were dispersed, robbed and ruthlessly battered. Thirteen Christians were seized, beaten and tempted to apostasy, but their perseverance triumphed. The indigenous priest Gioanni B. Icen,²³ missionary of this new flock, is to be the prey of our enemies' voracity: a hundred *scutes* have already been promised to whoever consigns him to the civil authorities. That is what is happening behind the praised peace treaty between the Anglo-French powers and the Celestial Emperor! Let us pray, let us hope, but only in God.²⁴

Paul Guo – father of the young author – was unfortunately involved in this new wave of arrests. According to the historical reconstruction by Fatica (2001: 55-60), Paul was one of the first Chinese Christians to fall into the hands of the Mandarins.

Another letter by Spelta (MDMC 1860, 6: 81-82) perfectly exemplifies the atmosphere of those days, full of anguish and pain for the Christian community:

What we feared has actually happened. As soon as I arrived in Rome, a sheaf of letters from my mission of Hu-pè was presented to me: I opened it, glimpsed the letters, and oh!, how much misfortune! My beloved Vicar General Monsignor

²² *Acts*, 20: 29.

²³ Chen Ruohan 陳若翰, born in Hanyang (Hubei), studied at the Seminary of the Vicariate of Hubei. Imprisoned in 1859 with Guo Liancheng's father, Paul Guo, was able to escape the following year. He died in 1871. Cf. Sartori (1926: 68-69, no. 11).

²⁴ The letter, quoted in Fatica, was published in *L'esposizione a favore delle missioni cattoliche affidate ai secento missionari sardi*, 45, November 6th 1859: 706-707.

Baccarani of Modena, appointed Bishop of Magida, surrendered his soul to God; the Christianity of Mei-kia-hio has been completely destroyed, the faithful taken captive, battered and robbed of all their belongings; the dear young boy Luigi Celestino, so loved by me for his excellent qualities and baptized by me just last year, is forced to live wandering in the mountains to avoid cruel death; and to crown it all, many of my missionaries are lying at death's door, others worn out and exhausted by enormous and continuous efforts. Well, my dear Canon, to hear such news my eyes filled with tears, and my heart, to hear of such hardship, is more desolate than ever. [...] I would like to write at length recalling, with a thankful and grateful heart, all the unequalled kindnesses and courtesies I received in Piedmont from His Lordship and from the religious Brothers of the [Virgin of] Consolation, as well as from the good Turinese people, and also from my beloved fellow countrymen in Voghera, and from my dear friends in Moncalieri, Broni and Tortona; but you see, I am short of vigor and of time too. [...].

Rome, Aracœli, January 26, 1860.

To the Director of the Propagation of the Faith in Turin

On 7th June 1860, while Spelta and Guo are on their way back to China, there is a first inspection at Yangjiahe by an imperial officer. Ten days later, the entire city of Wuchang is papered with announcements of a reward for anyone assisting in the arrest of Faustino from Piacenza,²⁵ an Italian missionary working there. He was Spelta's vicar, since he had taken over from Spelta at the Seminary while Spelta was in Italy. And while Burgazzi continued to remain in hiding, Father Chen and Paul Guo were in charge of running the seminary (Fatica 2001: 56). They were then questioned on June 16th; Paul was arrested on 20th June (about a month after his son had returned home) and taken to Wuchang's criminal jailhouse. Paul repeatedly refused to apostatize and after being moved many times he was definitively exculpated thanks to the Peking Treaty of November 1860 (Fatica 2001: 60).

²⁵ Also known as Faustino Burgazzi, Faustino da Piacenza or Giambattista Burgazzi (1818-1860). Burgazzi had a hard time in China and probably had to change his name from time to time so as not to be recognized. According to Sartori (1926: 13, no. 17) his Chinese name was Wu Zhengle 吳正樂, born in Piacenza on July 5th, 1818. He arrived in the Vicariate of Huguang in March 1866, and in 1859 was made Speltas's pro-vicar, administering the mission while the bishop was away. He died on July 7th, 1860, in the district of Tianmen, in the old Christian community of Qiwutai 七屋培 (Sartori 1926: 13). For further reference see: Micheli, Angelo. 1932. *P. Faustino Burgazzi da Borla, O. F. M., Vicario Generale dell'Hu-Pé (Cina): 1823-1860*, Salsomaggiore: Stabilimento Grafico Termale [non vidi].

These ‘persecutory acts’ were not directed against Christianity as such, rather they were targeted at ‘the foreigner’ at a time when China was in the midst not only of popular uprisings but also increasing Western incursions carried out to the beating drum of the Unequal Treatises.

Guo Liancheng is a witness to all these historical events, so his journal can also be considered an interesting historical source to understand what was happening in those years. For example, after the so-called Peace Treaties of Tianjin in 1858, Anglo-French frigates anchored in front of Dagu port, near Tianjin, waiting for imperial ratification. Tired of eagerly awaiting the Emperor’s signature, in June 1859 French and British soldiers once again attacked the Dagu Fort, but this time, unlike the previous year, the Chinese military promptly responded. The Imperial Army, led by Prince Sengge Rinchen (Sengge Linqin 僧格林沁, 1811-1865), reacted swiftly and obtained a fair, if temporary, victory. News of these events filtered through to the “Italian group”, as we apprehend from Guo’s account:

[Alexandria] September 3rd 1859. Sunny. A telegram arrived this evening reporting: «Before heading for Beijing, China, the Anglo-French ships were intercepted and driven back by Prince Sengge Rinchen near Tianjin. Tomorrow the French consul will arrive in the city by train, and so on». (Guo 2003: 45)

And again:

[Alexandria] September 5th 1859. Sunny. Today the French consul has arrived here. He states that China violated the “Tianjin Treatise” provoking anger in all the countries of the Far West. (Guo 2003: 46)

This is just one of the many references to historical events which can be found in Guo’s *XYBL* and which he invariably reports in his journal, not without some concern. This is the panorama which permeates all of Guo’s diary and which every now and then ripples the calm surface of his Italian peregrinations.

4. Luigi Celestino Spelta OFM (1818-1862)

Looking at the extant sources, very little is known about Spelta’s life. In addition, in the Chinese sources there is some confusion about his Chinese and Italian names. Professor Zhou Zhenhe (2003: 1) gives readers a Chinese name probably taken from Fang Hao (2007: 629), where the bishop is called Xu Boda 徐伯達. In *Brief account of the Journey to the West*, instead, the young pupil always calls his master Xu Leisi 徐類思. In addition, Zhou Zhenhe transcribes

the bishop's Italian name as "Ludovicus-Cel. Spelta" (2003: 1) but it is not clear where that "Ludovicus" comes from.

More accurate details can be found in Italian sources. Sartori (1926: 52-53, no. 117) solves the Chinese name issue by calling him Xu Leisi Boda 徐類思伯達. The scholar writes that Spelta was born in Montebello of Voghera, near Tortona, on 9th April 1818. In 1845 he was sent to China, where he was consecrated Bishop *in partibus* of Tespie by the Neapolitan Francesco Saverio Maresca in 1848. In 1855 he also served in the Nanjing episcopacy for three months. The following year, Spelta was appointed as the first Vicar Apostolic of Hubei and as *Delegatum Generalem Ordinis pro omnibus Francescanis in Vicariatu de Hupeh existentibus; eodemque tempore a S. Congregatione de Propaganda Fide facultatem accepisse Conventum Novitiatu aperiendi in suo Vicariatu, indigenasque ad Ordinem recipiendi*.²⁶ On January 24th 1860, Pope Pius IX Mastai-Ferretti (1792-1876) appointed him as Apostolic Visitor of all Chinese missions (Sartori 1926: 53). He died in the city of Wuhan on 12th September 1862. In his note, Spimpolo (1962: 48) adds that the Pope:

appointed Spelta – *«pietate, consilio, doctrina, studioque catholici nominis probatissimum»* – as Apostolic Visitor of all the Missions of China and adjacent reigns with all its associated rights, among which that of convening the Apostolic Vicars to discuss the needs of their missions in order to accomplish Propaganda's aims and then refer back to Rome. At the same time, [the Pope] handed him a letter of commendation to the Emperor Xianfeng, in which the Sovereign Pontiff asked for protection and free transit for his delegate through the Imperial provinces. A gift was of course included: a large, artistic clock.

Moreover, when working on my Ph.D. thesis, I carried out some research in the municipality of Montebello della Battaglia,²⁷ hometown of Spelta, with the aid of Roberto Piacentini, then member of the City Council, who ran a blog on the city.²⁸ Thanks to Piacentini's help and through some cross-references with the priest of Montebello, Fr. Luciano Faravelli it has been possible to trace additional data on the life of Monsignor Spelta, starting from his name.

In the baptismal certificate and in the Family Status certificate, he is recorded as Luigi Spelta, though in different sources he is simply named Celes-

²⁶ General Delegate of the Order for all the Franciscans in the existing Vicariate of Hubei with the faculty from the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* to open in this Vicariate a Novices Convent, and to receive natives into the Order.

²⁷ Formerly in the province of Voghera, now province of Pavia.

²⁸ <<https://montebellodellabattaglia.wordpress.com/>> (01/2020).

tino.²⁹ The latter is obviously the name he had chosen after taking his vows. The Chinese name Leisi can be considered as a phonetic transcription of both the Latin Aloysius (Louis) but also of the second and third syllable of Celestino (Coelestinus, in Latin). The first hypothesis is more plausible however, since other priests named Aloysius share the same Chinese characters.³⁰ Further biographical details are also available in *Biografie e Profili Vogheresi* by Alessandro Maragliano (1850-1943), a vernacular poet, where we read that Spelta had been “a pupil in the College-boarding school of Voghera, his birthplace, which he honored with his apostolic zeal in such distant districts” (Maragliano 1897: 399). Maragliano also writes in a footnote: “From his brother Carlo, friend of our family, we learnt how he [Celestino] was a very close friend of Camillo Cavour,³¹ who held him in high esteem” (Maragliano 1897: 399, n. 1). This passage once more confirms what Guo Liancheng had already made clear in his journal, though maybe not entirely consciously: Luigi Celestino Spelta was well connected not only with the Roman Church but also with the Italian élite of the period, and it is not by chance that he and his young pupil were received by the future king himself: Victor Emmanuel II of Italy (Vittorio Emanuele II, 1820-1878).³²

In a letter he sent me in 2007, Fr. Faravelli conveniently sums up Spelta’s life, drawing some additional data from the documents stored in the parish of Montebello:

[...] His petty bourgeois family was from Montebello. His father Alessandro who was born here on November 21st 1780, married Cristina Pignacca, a 19-year-old girl from a wealthy family, native of Casteggio, on 1st October 1809 in Voghera. He had a dye works business (at that time, they grew a fair amount of woad in the countryside between Voghera and Montebello). His brother Carlo, quoted in a note by Maragliano, was a notary.³³

Apart from these notes, the most vivid portrait of the bishop comes of course from his young companion in the pages written by him.

²⁹ See, for instance, de Montgesty (1925).

³⁰ For example, Aloysius Sorzani (Gao Leisi 高類思) in Sartori (1926: 52).

³¹ Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour (1810-1861), was a leading figure in the Italian unification.

³² For the account of this encounter, dated November 18th 1859, see Guo (2003: 70) and the translation given in Chapter 4. Unfortunately, apart from a brief appreciative note on the banquet, Guo Liancheng does not add anything of interest on the king.

³³ Letter dated November 11th 2007 sent to me by Fr. Luciano Faravelli, parish priest in the Church of Saints Gervasius and Protasius (Montebello) at the time.

Luigi Celestino, as Maragliano writes, had studied in Voghera. Once back in his motherland in the company of his young Chinese acolyte, the Italian prelate could not help casting his mind back to those distant days, lapsing into his warm childhood memories. It is Guo Liancheng himself to give us a faithful portrait of this moment:

October 1st 1859. Sunny. Before noon, Spelta's parents came in person to Montebello to visit the Monsignor. His father's name is Alessandro, his mother's is Cristina, both are in their seventies. As soon as the mother saw the bishop, she could not help but weep for joy. From this, it is possible to see the hardships of missionary work. In the afternoon, bishop Spelta took me for a walk in the city: he accurately showed to me the house he was born in, as well as the places where he had received the baptism, where he had studied and played, it was exactly [as the saying goes] "it seems only yesterday I was riding the bamboo horse, and now I look and see a white-haired old man".³⁴ (Guo 2003: 61-62)

Fr. Faravelli also helped me to recover Spelta's Family Status certificate (Fig. 1 and Tab. 1) and the baptismal certificate of the future missionary to China (Fig. 2). Roberto Piacentini also sent me a picture of the Spelta family home in Montebello (Fig. 3).

Table 1 – Transcription of Spelta's Family Status certificate.

#	Name	Age	Occupation
2068.	Spelta Alessandro	41	Dyer
	Cristina <i>wife</i>	30	
	Carlo <i>son</i>	10	
	Maria <i>daughter</i>	7	
	Luigi <i>son</i>	9	
	Eugenio <i>son months</i>	4	
	Benvenuti Pietro	25	apprentice
	Laviotti Rosa	21	maid

³⁴ In the text: *jide shaonian qi zhuma, kankan you shi baitouweng* 記得少年騎竹馬, 看看又是白頭翁. The sentence is a common saying taken from the *Zengguan xianwen* 增廣賢文 [Enlarged Writings of Worthies] (n. 280). The text was used for children's primary education and includes popular sayings, proverbs, aphorisms and famous quotations all arranged rhymed pairs. The date of compilation and the author are unknown, but the book was widely circulating during the late Qing.

Figure 1 – Spelta’s Family Status certificate.

28.8.	Spelta Alessandro	41	Montore	Dono	1
	Giustina moglie	30			1
	Carlo figlio	10			1
	Maria figlia	7			1
	Luigi figlio	5			1
	Eugenio figlio mas	2			1
	Benedetto figlio	25	garzone		1
	Luigiella	2	servante		1

Figure 2 – 1818 - April 9. Baptism certificate of Spelta Luigi (later Celestino). Source: Archive of the Cathedral in Voghera.

Classe Domini Millesimo Centesimoquinto Decimo Octavo Die nona Aprilis
Episcopus sacrosanctae Synodi in Compedio cathedrae Petri in Civitate Romae
Abbas Cathedralis et Synodalis Collegiate sancti Laurentii Castellae Vigonensis Episcopi sui Speltati
notum habeat Curia hanc Secundo patet. ex d. Alessandro pater et Caroli
Speltati
Mariae Antoniae
Speltati
1818
et d. Primitivo signaco q. d. Caroli Augustini suorum parvulus in unum positum et nomen
Antonii Antonis Jacobus; Augustinus pater d. Caroli Speltati pater et Antonii
Marcus Modesti Belli, et d. Mariae Beatae Speltati mater q. d. Caroli signaco suorum parvulus
Antonii

Figure 3 – Spelta’s family home during the 19th century. Source: Archive of Montebello della Battaglia.



Apparently, the idea of traveling back to Italy was due to Spelta's health, but of course there were other important things ongoing and, as mentioned above, when in Rome, Spelta was appointed Apostolic Visitor by the Pope and was given all the power and authority this appointment allowed him to exert. On February 2nd, the Pope gave him, as Pontifical Legate, an official letter and some gifts for the Chinese Emperor Xianfeng 咸豐 (1831-1861).³⁵

Unfortunately, the letter never arrived in the hands of the Emperor because Spelta, busy with his travels throughout the Chinese missions, died before having the time to accomplish the task. He only had time to write a report on the general situation he had found in China.³⁶

The Italian bishop also had the task of stipulating an agreement with the Chinese government both to protect the indigenous Catholics and to free the Roman Church from the French "protectorate". Furthermore, he was supposed to establish direct diplomatic relations with the Celestial Empire but, as previously mentioned, his early death prevented him from accomplishing these delicate tasks.

Furthermore, before being appointed, Spelta had already distinguished himself for his faith and zeal. In fact, not only did he actively contribute to the mission but he was also the leader of a very particular enterprise. In some sources (de Montgesty 1925: 99-101; and Spimpolo 1962: 47), Spelta is remembered as an important "mediator". In order to allay the dissensions between *Propaganda* and the Lazarists of Paris, in fact, he "had generously offered to identify the tombs" (Spimpolo 1962: 47) of two French martyrs: Francis Régis Clet (1748-820) e Jean Gabriel Perboyre (1802-1840).³⁷ This 'reconnaissance mission' took place just before the journey to Italy. According to de Montgesty (1925: 99), in order to identify these tombs, Spelta went to Mt Hong 紅山 looking for witnesses. After unsuccessful attempts, the Italian Monsignor was able to get in touch with the undertaker who had buried the corpses and with a woman whose father had taken part in the burial (de Montgesty 1925: 100). In any case, the final and decisive proof came from the tombstones. After the discovery of a short fragment of Clet's epitaph engraved in red Chinese characters, and on the promise of a reward to anyone able to recover the rest of it, Spelta finally succeeded in putting the tombstone back together. It read: "Fran-

³⁵ On the letter to the Emperor, see Cubeddu (2009).

³⁶ *Osservazioni generali del Visitatore ap. della Cina su le necessità delle Missioni Cinesi* [General account on the necessities of China missions written by the Apostolic Visitor of China]. In SCPF Archives, Acta 1874, vol. 242, part 2, Cina, pp. 247-275.

³⁷ On the lives of these two French missionaries, see de Montgesty (1925).

cis Lieou, Society of Saint Vincent”, with the date of the martyrdom: February 18th 1820 (de Montgesty 1925: 100).

It must be noted that even if Guo writes about their stay in Mt Hong and about the two French martyrs, in his account there is no reference to the discovery of the tombs, so it is possible that they were ‘found’ some time before the departure from Italy. Guo writes:

April 10th 1859. Sunny. Went to Mt Hong to visit the tombs of the two martyrs Clet and Perboyre. After noon, went back to the boat.

Over the past few years, here in Mt Hong government troops and rebels have fought one battle after another, the dead are countless and even the pagoda of Temple Baotong has been destroyed by soldiers.

*With my companions to mount Hong, on an outing of spring,³⁸
My eyes filled with those desolate graves all in the spring green.
Upon the spoiled pagoda, my feelings unclear,
I read the missing tombstones and shed tear after tear.
How many soldiers to the battlefield went?
On foot, in a dream, to birthplaces they returned.
Only those who for their imperiled country are ready to die,
fame and true blessings will show to mankind. (Guo 2003: 2)³⁹*

The discovery of Clet and Perboyre’s tombstones was of course another ‘point’ in favor of the soon-to-be Apostolic Visitor of China, Msgr. Celestino Spelta. And he must have had certain political skills if, as Spimpolo writes, his “influential position [...] greatly affected the treaty signed in Peking in October” (1962: 49).⁴⁰ Once back in China, unfortunately, the Monsignor was worn out by all the travel, responsibilities and illness as Guo Liancheng also records in his journal many times. The bishop was in such poor health in fact, that the company was at times compelled to stop.⁴¹

³⁸ *Taqing* 踏青 in the text, also known as *chunyou* 春遊. The term refers to spring outings traditionally taken around the Qingming Festival, also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, when the Chinese pay homage to their ancestors by going to clean their gravesites.

³⁹ I have tried to follow a rhyme scheme though the original pattern goes *abca defe* where *a* and *e* not only follow the rhyme but are also homophones.

⁴⁰ The treaty is the Convention of Beijing, signed on October 24-25th 1860.

⁴¹ See for example May 23rd 1859, where the author writes: “[Spelta] is now sick in bed” (Guo 2003: 9) or the letter he sends home, where he mentions the Msgr. has also been sick in Egypt (Guo 2003: 58). See also *Museo delle Missioni cattoliche*, which reads: “Our readers will welcome with pleasure the news of the arrival of Monsignor

Luigi Celestino Spelta died on September 12th 1862 in Wuchang. At his funeral in Hong Kong, an epigraph stood out: *Virtutibus omnibus praeaelso meritis plurimis cumulado* (Spimpolo 1962: 50).

Despite the fragmentary biographical data on Celestino Spelta, in his travel account Guo is able to give full credit to the Bishop, describing him in all his humanity and with all the respect that a young student could nourish for his mentor.

Spelta in China, after a prosperous journey. The poor health of our beloved countryman caused much fear for the outcome of such a long journey. Heaven received our prayers and came to the aid of the most zealous missionary Bishop, [...]”. (MDMC 1860, 31: 482).

CHAPTER 3

GUO LIANCHENG AND HIS JOURNEY TO THE WEST

The Guos were a *literati* family, but Guo Liancheng's cultural background was even richer: he received both a traditional and a Western education. If the family background explains his love for Tang and Song poetry, his education in the seminary run by the Italian Franciscans in Hubei gave him the opportunity to learn Latin and the rudiments of European science to such an extent that he was even able to make extensive use of Western sources in his journal.

Guo is an attentive observer of the Western world and, as far as it is possible for a young Chinese convert, he tries to give a comprehensive description of the 'exotic' world he is travelling through, as well as its habits and culture. In his attempt to provide his countrymen with a general idea of the West, he also inserts some drawings and illustrations in his travel account.

1. Biographical notes on Guo Liancheng

The limited information available on Guo Liancheng's life comes from his younger brother Guo Dongchen 郭棟臣¹, from now on referred to also as Joseph Kuo, to distinguish him from his elder brother. As previously mentioned, in 1921 Kuo edited a new and "revised" edition of his brother's travel account: the *Zengzhu Xiyou bilüe* 增註西游筆略. This edition, though not the original, was at least reviewed by Fang Hao who, in his *Zhongguo Tianzhujiao shi renwu*

¹ Guo Dongchen, also called Songbai 松柏, better known in Italy as Giuseppe Maria Kuo, born on 11th February 1846 in the district of Qianjiang 潛江 (Hubei province), took his vows in Naples on 30th July 1871, was ordained priest in September 1872 and returned to China the following year. Called back to Italy by *Propaganda Fide* in 1886, he returned to his motherland once and for all in 1892. He died in Hankou on 2nd January 1923 (Kuo 1917: 10; Sartori 1926: 77, no. 35). Guo Dongchen wrote various works both in Italian and in Chinese, relevant for the history of the Italian mission in China and the history of the Chinese College in Naples. For further reference in English see Fatica, Pizzuti (2011) and Guida (2017).

zhuan 中國天主教史人物傳, briefly mentions the work, “probably a second edition” (Fang 2007: 627). In this revised version, Guo Dongchen added an essential note to the first page which gives important information: “My elder brother was Peisheng, Christian name Peter, also named Liancheng. Born in Qianjiang, Hubei, in the 19th year of Daoguang, he was educated at the Chongzheng Academy.” (Guo 1921: 1).²

As far as I know, this note is the only one to give Guo Liancheng’s date of birth (1839), from which it can be inferred that when the young man left for Italy, he was just 20 years old. Guo Liancheng had a traditional upbringing and, coming from a Christian family, began to take interest in Western learning thanks to the education he was given in the Seminary of Wuchang. In 1859 he joined the group led by Msgr. Spelta heading to Rome. Before the discovery of the original text a few decades ago, only the second edition of the book was known (i.e. the 1921 version by his younger brother Guo Doncheng), as Fang Hao’s pages prove. But even so, the 1921 edition also fell into oblivion shortly afterwards.

Another detail on Guo Liancheng’s biography can be found in a letter Msgr. Spelta addressed to Father Faustino Burgazzi,³ who was acting Pro-Vicar General at that time, on April 21st 1857:

Beloved Fr. Faustino,

I write this letter with tears in my eyes to deliver the sad news of the capture of my beloved pupils. Just this morning they were snatched from my hands by a cruel gang of attendants led by a Mandarin. Your Reverence can well imagine my utter dismay, sorrow and pain! Father Hoan in jail; Father Alessio⁴ likewise and this morning a further painful event: the imprisonment of my dearest children Father Hian and teacher Guo.⁵

² This author is sure that the Chongzheng Academy (*Chongzheng Shuyuan* 崇正書院) can be identified with the seminary established by Italian Franciscans in Wuchang, also known with the name of *Tianzhujiao Edong daimuqu zongxiuyuan* 天主教鄂東代牧區總修院 (General Seminary of Eastern Hubei Catholic Vicariate). See also the next paragraph and Zhang Zhi (2014: 29, n. 4).

³ See Chapter 2, note 25.

⁴ Alessio Filippi OFM (Dong Wenfang 董文芳, 1818-1888), born in Modena, took holy orders in 1841, arrived in China in 1845 and was assigned to the Vicariate of Hu-Guang and later to that of Hubei. Filippi had many troubles during those years, he even spent a few months in jail. In 1869 he became pro-vicar of bishop Eustachio Zanoli and, after the further subdivision of the territory, was elected Pro-vicar of South-West Hubei and bishop *titularis* of Paneadis (Sartori 1926: 27, no. 51).

⁵ The letter is kept in the Franciscan archive in Marghera (*Sectio B*, 323-52) and quoted in full in Spimpolo (1962: 195).

“Teacher Guo” is none other than Guo’s father, always mentioned in Italian sources as Paul Guo. The imprisonment was not long, to the great relief of the Seminary Rector, Giuseppe Baccarani.⁶ The following day in fact, he wrote to Burgazzi:

My dear,
Please dry your tears and give thanks to God, the Virgin and our St. Anthony of Padua with all your heart. Our extreme grief has been transformed into true joy. Our dearest pupils who to our horror were taken to court like criminals yesterday two by two, tied to each other’s queues, tomorrow will return to Jan-kia-ho [Yangjiahe] with Fr. Siang and other Christians who were arrested together [with them]. But oh, how much dearer to us than before! They have already confessed their faith in Christ to the tyrant’s face. This man ordered them to tread on the cross and they answered: “We would rather have our heads cut off than tread on the sign of our Redemption”. (Spimpolo 1962: 195-196)

In secondary sources,⁷ Giuseppe Baccarani is indicated as Vicar General and Rector of the Seminary. Thanks to this, it has been quite easy to identify him with the Father Tian or revered Mr. Tian (Tian *mu* 田牧 and Tian *gong* 天公) often mentioned in *XYBL*, who had been one of Guo Liancheng’s teachers in the seminary.

The above episode may help understand why Guo Liancheng was chosen among many to accompany the Italian missionary Luigi Celestino Spelta. First of all, as a teacher in the Seminary, his father held an important position inside the Christian community of Hubei, and secondly, he distinguished himself for his faith even in dangerous situations.

Professor Fatica alludes that the Christian conversion of Paul Guo, “professor of Chinese literature” (MDMC 1861, 17: 68), should be considered more as a second choice, a convenient arrangement, rather than a response to a genuine desire to embrace the Christian *credo*. The main motivation behind Paul’s conversion could have been the relocation from Qianjiang to Yangjiahe since, as the toponym Qiangjiang 潛江 suggests (literally “submerged by the river”), it was probably not a particularly healthy place to live (Fatica 2001: 57). Fatica’s hypothesis comes from a letter by Msgr. Spelta published in the magazine

⁶ Giuseppe Baccarani OFM (1824-1859), Chinese name Tian Wenzao Ruose 田文藻若瑟, born in Modena, arrived in Hong Kong in 1856 as Secretary of Bishop Rizzolati and later appointed general Vicar of Msgr. Spelta. In 1859 he was elected bishop *titularis of Magida*, but died the day before the consecration in the old residence of Wangjiazha 王家榨 in Yincheng 應城 on September 2nd. See Sartori (1926: 8-9, no. 5).

⁷ For example, in Spimpolo (1962: 42; 195).

Museo delle Missioni cattoliche where the priest reports on the interrogation between a Mandarin and Paul Guo which took place on June 16th 1860. When questioned about their reasons for moving to the residence of Wangjiazha in fact, Paul answered: “because our village is all in the water and living there is not good, and also because here we teach the Christian doctrine to the children” (MDMC 1861, 17: 68).

As Fang Hao observes, Guo Liancheng “could have been a man of letters” (Fang 2007: 627) and actually, throughout all his *Brief Account*, he often quotes Chinese Classics (for the most part poems from Tang and Song repertoires) combining them with Western texts on science and technology. The book is in fact rich in passages taken from foreign authors which, in contrast to what is usually to be found in Chinese works, are quoted almost every time. Revealing his sources can therefore be regarded as Guo’s distinguishing feature, a rare if not unique trait in Chinese literature, not only for his time, and deserves special consideration.

As for the Classics, it is fair to say that in Chinese travel writing a constant cross-reference to classical literature is typical. This is especially true considering that in Chinese culture an historical or a natural site, paraphrasing Strassberg, is often an ‘inscribed landscape’, which not only links the traveler to Nature, but also “inextricably” links him to its literary past (Strassberg 1994: 6).⁸

Guo Liancheng seems to fit the part of the Chinese traditional writer perfectly, as can be seen from his *Introduction* to his book entitled *Xiyouji zixu* 西游記自序 (Author’s preface to the Journey to West) which immediately recalls the famous *Xiyou ji* 西游記 attributed to Wu Cheng’en 吳承恩 (1504-1582).⁹ It seems very improbable that the young convert had not read “the” journey to the West, and we can assume that the title was later changed to the more modest *Brief Account of the Journey to West* by the publisher.

Guo Liancheng’s knowledge of traditional Chinese literature confirms, in this author’s view, Fang’s opinion about the possibility that Guo was a “man of letters”, and is compatible with the fact that his father is always remembered as “the teacher” at Wuchang Seminary.

Even if we do not know the exact nature of the *ratio studiorum* at that Christian school, we can learn more on Guo’s educational background thanks to sev-

⁸ Due to limited space, I will not discuss here the features of Chinese travel literature or its peculiarities *versus* the Western tradition.

⁹ The *Journey to the West*, best known abroad as *Monkey* thanks to the abridged translation by Arthur Waley (1889-1966), is considered one of the Four Great Classical Novels by Chinese literary critics of all times. Published in the 16th century, it narrates the journey of a legendary pilgrimage to the “West” (India) in search of Buddhist sacred texts.

eral sources. Not only the fact that he is at ease with the Classics but also his knowledge of science and language. Guo himself affirms that he has a basic understanding of the Italian language. As soon as he came ashore in Genoa he writes: “September 30th 1859. [...] When I came ashore, local people all came around to look at me. Seeing that despite my strange clothing, I could understand their idiom, they all came nearer to inquire after me.” (Guo 2003: 61)

Guo’s comprehension of the Italian language is also evident in another annotation, dated December 31st 1859 (Guo 2003: 75) where, for the delight of his readers, the young traveler does his best to translate a popular traditional rhyme on months,¹⁰ adapting it to a Chinese audience:

A Western year, it has twelve moons,
Like in China, you’ll be sure.
Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November.
All the rest have thirty-one,
February has twenty-eight alone.
Except leap year: that’s the time,
When February’s days are twenty-nine.

西年十二月，其數同中原。
Xi nian Shi'eryue, qi shu tong Zhongyuan.
四六九十一，卅日皆圓全。
Si liu jiu shiyi, sari jie yuanquan.
餘月增一日，此數亦易言。
Yu yue zeng yi ri, ci shu yi yi yan.
惟逢第二月，二十八日焉。
Wei feng de Eryue, ersheba ri yan.
四歲二月間，二十九回還。
Si sui eryue run, ershijiu huihuan.

In addition, the Turin edition of *Propaganda’s* magazine, *Museo delle Missioni cattoliche*, published two letters written by Guo father and Guo son respectively, both addressed to Father Giuseppe Ortalda. In the case of the father, the Italian title given to the letter states that it is a translation (*versione*) of the original, while for his son it is reasonable to think that the letter was written by Liancheng himself, since no annotation of a translation can be found. Here are the above-mentioned letters (MDMC 1861: 18, 90-92), given in translation.

Translation of a letter by a Chinese confessor of the Faith¹¹

On the sixth moon of this year (1860) my son Peter returned here and told me all of the wonders he had seen and heard, and more [he told me] of all the goodness, kindness, hospitality, and tender love your Excellency had shown him; I cannot find the words or means to suitably thank you from this faraway land. Furthermore, the medals and crowns you deemed worthy to send to us, we re-

¹⁰ The rhyme exists in many European languages, but it seems more reasonable to me that Guo’s translation comes from the Italian, or at least from Latin. Moreover, every language has different versions of it. The third line differs from the traditional one, it can be literally translated as: all the rest add one day, and this number is also given in the [Book of] *Changes*.

¹¹ The arrest narrated here has already been mentioned before (see Chapter 2, § 3).

ceived with the utmost pleasure and gratitude and we greatly thank you for that. I am so desperately sorry not to be able to repay the goodness – so noble and kind – that you have shown us. We will therefore pray to God that He will reward you, protect you and keep you safe, you and all your worthy family. In our province of Hu-pé [Hubei], Christianity is, as always, troubled by frequent persecution and oppression by pagans. On the fourth moon of this year, I was taken – together with a missionary named Giovanni Battista Ceng – by the governor of In-cen [Yingcheng], a third-grade city, and detained in prison for about two months, then we were taken to the supreme judge, who spoke to us in this way: Do you wish to live? Well then, recant your Faith. We then answered: we cannot, in all conscience, and we do not want to stray from the true faith we have embraced for the special favor of God. Rather, all the people on earth should adore Our Lord, who created the Universe. Hearing this, the Prefect flew into a rage, and ordered a sound beating for both of us: I was sentenced to two hundred blows, while the above-praised missionary received five hundred, after which his slashed thighs were dripping with vivid blood.

Following this inhuman behavior of the justiciary, in the eighth moon I was at last set free; the praised missionary, however, is still in that gloomy prison. With us, my son Peter was also affected. As when I was being released, he came to meet me and, as soon as he arrived at the doors of the court, he was arrested and chained up.

This, your Excellency, is the regrettable condition of Our Holy Religion in Hu-pé; thus, we heartily beg you to remember us in your fervent prayers, so that God may give us powerful faith and the strength to resist the persecutions that always accompany us in this country.

Meanwhile, with the highest reverence and hearty gratitude,
My warm respects to you and your family

your humble servant
PAUL KO, *Bachelor*, AND FAMILY

Letter by Peter Ko, Chinese seminarist

Given the difficulties in communicating with Europe and the ongoing persecutions here, I have been unable to correspond with you before, so I am taking the opportunity to write some lines to you now as it is convenient, in order to let you know what it is happening to us.

The Mandarin of In-ceng, third-grade city, accompanied by armed guards, took my father, Paul, and made my father appear before him together with a missionary named Giovanni Battista Cengi [*sic*]. After being taken to court and found guilty of religion, they were sent to the justiciary to be flagellated and that most iniquitous man cruelly carried out this order. His cruelty towards my father was such that he sentenced him to more than two hundred blows, and the missionary to five hundred. After much suffering my father was set free, and the above-praised missionary was sent again to that first Mandarin, by whom he was arrested. This man, with

irons and tortures and threats, wanted to force this confessor of Christ to destroy our residence with his own hands.

Not only did the aforesaid confessors suffer, but I myself was detained in jail for two days; as having come to town to visit my father, the attendants arrested me at the same door, and brought me to prison in order to prevent me from freeing my father by force (as they believed I would do). My brother Joseph together with four pupils from the seminary will leave for Naples at the beginning of next February.

For the moment, I beg your Excellency on my behalf, to deign to pay my respects to all the people who lavished their kindness on me, above all the Revered Franciscan Fathers of the Sanctuary of the Consolata. My kind regards and best wishes also go to the pupils of the Little House of Divine Providence.¹²

Finally, dear Canon, please accept my warmest regards and my love and respect, From the Seminary of Hu-Pè in China, 1st January 1861,

Your humble servant,
PETER KO

From another text, we learn that Guo also knew Latin, and it is most likely that he had studied it in the Seminary of Hubei. In the “Turin Seminarists’ Reply to the letter by the Chinese Seminarists brought by Monsignor SPELTA, Bishop of Thespis, Apostolic Vicar of Hu-Pè in China”,¹³ in fact, we can read that Petro Ko [*sic*] “*dedit nobis vestras litteras quas idiomate proprio et latino perlegerunt*” [gave us your letters which he read in his own language and in Latin] (MDMC 1860, 4: 59).

Another detail on Guo’s life is given in Spimpolo’s history of the Catholic mission in Hubei:

Before meeting Spelta in China once again, our readers will be pleased to know that a young Chinese seminarist named Peter Kuo accompanied him to Italy and was the sponsor of one of Earl Prospero Balbo’s two elder sons at the Confirmation administered by the Monsignor.¹⁴ (Spimpolo 1962: 48)

¹² Commonly known as Cottolengo, from the name of the founder Giuseppe Benedetto Cottolengo (1786-1842).

¹³ “Risposta dei Seminaristi Torinesi alla lettera dei Seminaristi Cinesi recata da Monsignor SPELTA, Vescovo di Thespis, Vicario Apostolico di Hu-Pé nella Cina”.

¹⁴ Prospero Balbo (1762-1837) was an Italian intellectual and a political figure of the Kingdom of Sardinia. Guo Liancheng’s sponsorship of one of Balbo’s children raises some doubts given chronological discrepancies, since these children must have been old enough to take Confirmation. It is not clear where Spimpolo found this information.

The Confirmation administered by Spelta is corroborated by a manuscript found in the memoirs of Fr. Matteo Simonelli (1806-1872), parish priest of Montebello between 1836 and 1872 and sent to me by Fr. Faravelli.¹⁵ Since the handwriting is quite difficult to read, the manuscript has been transcribed:

1859: On the first Sunday of October, feast of the Most Holy Rosary, Monsignor Luigi Spelta, bishop of Tespie (*in partibus*), missionary in China, arrived here. He pontifically attended Solemn High Mass having celebrated Low Mass this morning and having given the blessing in the evening. He sojourned here for few days with his parents, Mr. Alessandro Spelta and Mrs. Cristina [Spelta], born in Pignacca. Back in Voghera, he returned here on the fourth Sunday (23rd Oct.) and on the invitation of Our bishop administered Holy Confirmation. He left again in the evening and then went to Turin, Rome and back to China as Apostolic Visitor. Alas, exhausted by his efforts, he died there ten months later of illness on 12th September 1862, after thirteen years of bishopric and in the 44th year of his life.

Unexpectedly, Simonelli did not mention a Chinese companion even if, as we learn from Guo's narrative, there was he (Guo 2003: 66). There is no hint, however, that he was anybody's sponsor at Confirmation.

As briefly mentioned above, Guo Liancheng often quotes scientific texts. In my opinion, one of the most interesting traits of his personality is his unusual and natural bent for science, which proves to be of constant interest throughout his journey and will be treated in the following pages.

The news of the death of Guo Liancheng on 5th August 1866 can be found in *Museo delle missioni cattoliche*, which reports the news in 1867. Even though Guo's Christian name is wrong (Paul instead of Peter), this source, together with the date of his death, adds another detail of Guo's life: he had in fact taken vows after his journey to Italy.¹⁶ Despite the high-sounding tone and the rhetorical style, the following excerpt is maybe the best homage that could have been paid to this young and "West-thirsty" Chinese acolyte:

Death of the priest Paul [sic!] Ko

Among our readers, many shall remember the gracious visit to Turin and other Italian cities made in 1859 by the young Chinese seminarist Paul Kuo from Hu-pè, who attended Msgr. Celestino Spelta, bishop of that immense diocese, who had been called to Rome for business regarding the Chinese mission. Paul

¹⁵ The picture of the manuscript was kindly sent to me by both Mr Roberto Piacentini and Fr. Faravelli.

¹⁶ According to Sartori (1926: 77-78, no. 36), Guo was ordained priest on 1st November 1863.

Ko, son of a Chinese literature teacher as well as confessor of the Faith Peter Ko [*sic!*], young and hopeful, brave and as pious as an angel: he is no more! – An ordained priest, he had only worked for a short time saving souls before the Lord called him to receive the reward for his zeal, and to be reunited with his most beloved bishop, Msgr. Spelta, who also succumbed to the sufferings of the apostolate, like a soldier on a battlefield. Paul Ko died of tuberculosis last August, and Msgr. Zanoli,¹⁷ in giving us the sad news of his passing, bestowed on the young Chinese man the most beautiful praise that one could ever desire. After all, those of us who saw him at the Sanctuary of the Blessed Mary of Consolation in Turin serving Holy Mass and other ecclesiastical functions in his candid Chinese costume, cannot be surprised at the praise that the Venerable Bishop of Hupè bestowed upon him. Absorbed in a devout and fervent manner at Mary's feet, Paul Ko seemed to be an angel praying. He was disturbed neither by the people crowding around him attracted by the singularity of his dress, nor by the musical harmonies or the splendor of ornaments with which the Sanctuary is decorated: all new things for a young Chinese man who until then had only seen miserable, bare and humble chapels hidden from pagan eyes. In a week he approached the Eucharistic table many times, and it was so moving to see the good Chinese man – now a brother in Christ to the devout Turin people – amidst the crowd lingering in front of the Blessed Host in such a bearing of adoration to bring to tears and edify us, whose faith has reigned for many centuries and who are instructed by continuous examples of so many virtues! Furthermore, to further testify to Paul Ko's courage and zeal, it should be known that soon after his repatriation he discovered that his father had been imprisoned for his faith, and regardless of the danger, the guards and of cruel persecution, he fled to be by his side, and bore various days of imprisonment with him. – Paul Ko is no more! An amiable young man of 24 [*sic*], an affable speaker, of generous spirit and uncommon talent, farewell! You longed for the moral redemption of your country; maybe you hoped to see this event come to be with your own eyes. To this purpose, you offered your youth, your noble position, all your life

¹⁷ Vito Modesto Eustachio Zanoli OFM (1831-1883), born in Morbirazzo, became priest in 1854 and arrived at the Vicariate of Hubei in March 1856. In 1861 he was consecrated bishop *titularis Eleutheropolitanus* by Spelta and appointed coadjutor of Spelta himself who he succeeded after the bishop's death in 1862. In 1867 Zanoli was called back to Rome from where he departed again for China taking six Canossian nuns with him to Hankou. While in Rome, he asked the Pope for a further subdivision of the Chinese mission after which he was appointed Vicar of Eastern Hubei and soon after apostolic administrator of the South-West Hubei Vicariate. In 1871 he was also in charge as General Commissioner for all the Franciscans in the province. In Hankou he took care of the church of St. Joseph and of the Procura's house. Zanoli died in 1883 at Wuchang and was buried near Spelta on Mount Hong. Sartori gives him the Chinese name of Ming Weidu 明位篤 (Sartori 1926: 56-57, no. 127)

to God. The Lord accepted this sacrifice and, taking you from the stormy sea here below, raised you, so we hope, to rejoice in the revelation of Him. Please then, pray for your troubled country, so that it may soon surrender itself to the Gospel and no longer resist the incitement of Grace. Oh! If only your younger brother Joseph now in Naples preparing himself for the apostolate, may see what neither the brave Msgr. Celestino Spelta nor you did not live to see: the triumphant Cross, a Christian China! (MDMC 1867, 4: 49-50)

The amendment of Guo's name arrived later, by the hand of the Italian missionary Eustachio Zanolì (1831-1883), Spelta's successor, in a letter dated 24th November 1866 and reported in the magazine by the editors. In this document in fact, Father Zanolì added "new details on Fr. Peter Kuo's death (not Paul, as we erroneously announced to you in our number of January 27th)" (MDMC 1867, 10: 150):

Our beloved Fr. Peter Kuo has abandoned us, writes the venerable prelate, to fly to the celestial land. His chest disease, which last year was of no danger according to the opinion of a European physician, last spring worsened significantly and when he went to Ou-Tchang [Wuchang] to receive treatment, there was no longer any cure that could heal him. The many medicines administered allowed him to live two more months but finally, on 5th August, prepared with all the sacraments and with a clear conscience, his good soul departed this earth [...]. Such a loss was most painful because in him, the mission has lost a person who is rare among Chinese people, not only for his skills, but even more for the good natural qualities he possessed. Let us hope that he will pray for us in Heaven, where he has joined his Pastor Msgr. Spelta, and his most beloved teacher, the good Fr. Baccarani. [...]

† F. EUSTACHIO ZANOLI VIC. AP. DI HU-PÈ

The death of Guo Liancheng was a hard blow for the entire Christian community. However, his younger brother Dongchen in a way took on his legacy, playing a fundamental role in the history of early Italian sinology.

2. *The Xiyou bilüe* 西遊筆略 *editions*

Brief Account of the Journey to West was published at least three times in China – in 1863, 1921 and 2003 – plus a fourth reprint in 1973. In addition, an abridged version in Italian was also published in Italy, as illustrated below. Nonetheless, not only was the first edition ignored but the 1921 edition, reprinted as an anastatic version in 1973 in Taiwan, also sank into oblivion. That is why, at least until 2000, Guo Liancheng's travel account is never mentioned or included in any of the most important collections on Chinese travels abroad nor in any academic paper.

Moreover, two different facts lead us to think that there is an earlier edition dating back to 1860. First of all, the 1863 edition's exact title is *Xiyou bilüe Tongzhi ernian xinke* 西遊筆略。同治二年新刻, literally *Brief Account of the Journey to West, New Edition of Emperor Tongzhi's second year of reign* (i.e. 1863; Fig. 1); secondly because in his historical and biographical work on the foreign and indigenous priest missionaries who operated in Hubei, Sartori affirms that Guo wrote a work in Chinese in three volumes, "*ubi signantur quotidianae res perspeatae in itinere suo ad Europam*" which consisted of 147 double *folios* and was printed in Wuchan in the year 1860 (1926: 78). I have searched for this edition but without success. The extant copies of the travel account preserved in Beijing, Rome and Naples which I was able to check, all have the indications *xinke* 新刻 (new edition) in the title and are dated 1863. Prof. Francesco Maglioccola, who has been working in the Catholic library in Wuhan and who I consulted on the matter, also confirmed that no 1860 edition is available there, where I had originally thought it was more likely to be kept.

As for these two editions, it should be noted that they were printed immediately after Guo's return to China. It is important to underline this fact since, even though the book clearly did not receive much attention or have any kind of circulation in China, nonetheless it was available from the 1860s and, in theory, could have been consulted by any Chinese reader eager to learn about the West through first-hand accounts.

In 1921, Liancheng's brother Guo Dongcheng or Joseph Kuo edited a revised and annotated edition of the book, entitled *Zengzhu Xiyou bilüe* 增注西游笔略 [Supplementary notes on Brief Account of the Journey to the West] (Fig. 2).

Figure 1 – *Brief Account of the Journey to West, New Edition of Emperor Tongzhi's second year of reign* (1863).



Figure 2 – *Zengzhu Xiyou bilüe* 增注西游笔略 [Supplementary notes on Brief Account of the Journey to the West; 1921].

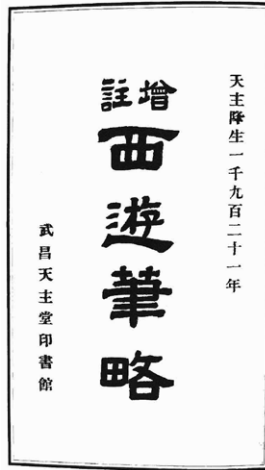
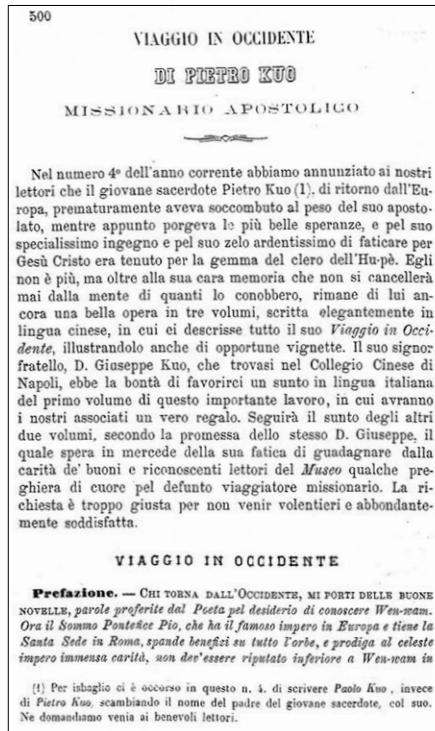


Figure 3 – First page of the abridged Italian version of *XYBL* (1867).



I hoped this edition would help me to clear up some obscure passages or unidentified people and places of the original travel account. Unfortunately, apart from the useful information on Liancheng's date of birth, his brother's additional material was not so useful. On the contrary, Kuo carries out many, often inappropriate, changes to the original text as has already been pointed out by Zhou (2003: 7).

The third edition, based on the 1863 edition, was edited by professor Zhou Zhenhe from Shanghai Fudan University and published in 2003 in simplified characters, adding punctuation. This last version became the reference for my translation work, which I constantly compared with the 1863 and 1921 editions.

What is more, Joseph Kuo also compiled an adaptation of the book in Italian entitled *Viaggio in Occidente di Pietro Kuo. Missionario apostolico*, published in three excerpts in the Catholic periodical *Museo delle Missioni Cattoliche* in 1867 (nos. 32: 500-509; 36: 565-574; 37: 577-582). This abridged version is of very little help for the translator, except for a few toponyms and anthroponyms, but it is of some importance for the history of cultural contacts between Italy and China since the magazine was distributed in Italy and therefore the account probably reached numerous Italian readers (Fig. 3).

One last observation: Kuo's Italian adaptation, though stylistically fascinating, turned out to be less useful than I had originally hoped. Even if it was pivotal for identifying some place names and names of Italian people, in most cases the Italian version is missing entire pages of the book. Regarding this last point, I refer to two simple examples to give a better understanding. The Catholic father who in translation is referred to as Father Tian, and whom I identified with Baccarani, is not identified in Kuo's version (MDMC 1867, 36: 572), probably because at the time of the Italian's death, Joseph Kuo was still too young. In this case therefore, I had to resort to other sources. The same applies to other cases such as the identification of the French missionary Bernard Vincent Laribe, whose tomb the group heading for Italy visited a few days after leaving (*juan* I, 22 April 1859), and who is not recognized in the abridged Italian version (Cf. MDMC 1867, 32: 501) but appears in the 1921 edition.¹⁸

¹⁸ The identification derives from the correspondence between his name in Guo's account (i.e. Vicar He or He *zhujiao* 和主教) and the place in which he died. A note by Joseph Kuo also confirmed this hypothesis, see Guo (1921: 6). Actually, in the Italian version the date does not correspond with the original either. Kuo, in fact, writes: 20th April (instead of 22nd), "we visited the tombs of Christian people in the eastern part of the town, among which the tomb of Msgr. Ho, Apostolic Vicar of Kiansi [Jiangxi]". Bernard Vincent Laribe was appointed vicar apostolic of Jiangxi in March 26th 1846 and died in that province in 1850. For the Chinese name of Laribe see Li Donghua (2004: 264).

On the other hand, it seemed very strange to me that Kuo mentions the “Pri-netti” (MDMC 1867, 36: 569) family who played host to the travelers on October 20th 1859 who in *XYBL* is not mentioned in any way (Guo 2003: 66). The same family returns on October 30th and only this time is identified by Guo with the Chinese transcription *Bulileidi* 不利肋弟 (Guo 2003: 68).

These and other discordances in Kuo’s Italian version led me to hypothesize that Joseph Kuo consulted not only *XYBL* but also Spelta’s journal. This would explain many points and information present in the Italian version. In fact, both an *Epistolarium* and a *Diary* by Luigi Celestino Spelta are kept in the Franciscan archive in Venice (Marghera) which Joseph Kuo could have consulted but which unfortunately I was unable to see.¹⁹

2.1 Structure and style of the book

The book is structured as follows: a preface by Lu Xiashan 陸霞山,²⁰ a preface by the author himself and then the travel account in three *juans* 卷 or chapters. It should be noted that the two prefaces follow a different order in the various editions. Sometimes, as in the 1863 copy I referred to in Naples National Library, the author’s preface precedes the preface by Lu Xiashan. In the 1921 and 2003 editions however, Lu Xiashan’s introductory words come first.

The author’s preface is quite interesting, as the young convert endeavors to give evidence of his many talents as per Chinese literary tradition. The short text was written on 5th of April 1859, a day before his departure while the boat was moored at Xiakou:²¹

Once I read in the *Odes*: “Who will return to the West? He will carry good news”.²² This poet admired the language²³ of the virtuous men of the West. At present, Our Pope Pius, guarantor of the doctrine in the West and heir of the Holy See in Rome, spreads the Gospel through the world and brings the light of religion as far as China: it is not vain indeed to believe in the words of the wise men of the West.

¹⁹ According to Spimpolo (1962: 50, note 20) they are kept in Archivium Archidioecesis de Hankow, in Section B, 323.82 and 323.81 respectively.

²⁰ Lu Xiashan, known by the Christian name of Bartholomæus Lu, was born in Kunshan (Jiangsu) on September 1st 1827, and entered Nanjing Seminary before being sent to Naples in 1850 to study as a priest. On his return to China in 1858 he began to work in the Catholic mission of Hubei and died in Wuchang on February 7th 1876. See Kuo (1917: 4-5, no. 76) and Sartori (1926: 80, no. 43).

²¹ Today’s Hankou 汉口 in Wuhan.

²² *Shijing* I. 13. The translation is mine.

²³ The bisyllable *haoyin* 好音, good news, literally designates a “beautiful sound”.

I, Cheng, will keep the memory of the journey to the West deep in my heart and I will think of those people for a long time. In the spring of 1859,²⁴ after having requested it, *Propaganda Fide* officially received the imperial edict announcing that my egregious Monsignor Father Spelta had been authorized to sail to the West and my humble self, unwilling as I was to abandon the Monsignor, was permitted to accompany him. It is by the grace of the Lord that I can satisfy my aspiration to go to the West. Thus, during my journey, I will write briefly about what I see and hear every day, hoping to enjoy the journey and, first of all, naming this book *Brief Account of the Journey to the West*.

A poem follows, thereby introducing the reader to the style of the journal: a succession of poetry and prose. The poem chosen by Guo Liancheng for his preface is definitely not unintentional, since he inserts verses in the style of a *ci* 詞²⁵ on the meter significantly called *Shaonian you* 少年游 (Juvenile Travel):

On a raft, I float on remote seas,
wandering like a seagull.
The *qin* and the sword on a shoulder,²⁶
and several Classics
to pass the autumn.
To Xiao and Xiang waters in Yunmeng come and wait,²⁷
how dare they stay for such a long time?
Overseas scenes,
Alien landscapes,
Oh, please do not disappoint this young traveler.

As for the chapters content, the first and the third *juans* describe the journey from China to Italy and from Italy to China, while the second one is entirely dedicated to Guo's experience in the *Bel Paese*. Moreover, the journal embraces a period that goes from 6th April 1859 to 27th July 1860, when Guo Liancheng finally returns home. During this period of time, the author makes notes almost every day. Fatica underlines that *XYBL* follows a fixed scheme

²⁴ In the text: the spring of *jiwei* year, i.e. the 56th of the sexagenary cycle in the traditional Chinese calendar.

²⁵ The *ci* is a particular form of lyric poetry which makes use of meters derived from a fixed pattern in term of rhythm, tones and length, which is variable.

²⁶ The *qin* 琴 (a stringed musical instrument) and the sword were a man of letters' traditional belongings with which to travel.

²⁷ Xiao Xiang 潇湘 indicates the section where the two rivers join at Yunmeng, Hunan province. The expression could also indicate the ancient region of Chu 楚, i.e. the modern regions of Hubei and Hunan.

that the scholar defines as “bi-modular”: “each description of place or city is followed by an original poetic composition or a quotation, perhaps adapted to the circumstance” (2001: 67).

It is fair to say that sometimes the author’s daily note is very short and runs to just one sentence but each note always opens with the date according to the Chinese calendar and the weather conditions. After giving a brief account of what happened on that particular day, the author is either inspired by a place the group visited or by a particular encounter to write verses or to cite a famous sentence from the past; other times he quotes Western sources to illustrate better and more ‘scientifically’ what he has “heard and seen”. In short, a famous location is followed by a poem, while the mention of something unknown in China is followed by a scientific explanation or by a detailed description. In the first case, which especially occurs when in China, the author conforms to the literary tradition of his country, writing poems to celebrate a particular historical or literary site or a famous character of the past. In the second case, the reader can observe Guo Liancheng’s modernity and erudition. Within the single entry and in his poems, the author also adds some other notes, for example giving the distance covered on that particular day, giving further information on the place or on the people he has previously mentioned or providing geographical or cultural information. These notes can be distinguished by the use of a smaller font size.

In the following pages, a few excerpts are given to exemplify and appreciate the different entries in the travel diary, starting from a very short one:

April 13rd, 1859. Cloudy day.

In the case translated below, Guo and Father Spelta go sightseeing in Poyang Lake, which was and still is a popular tourist attraction. On this day, they go to the Lake-View Pavilion, a wooden structure dating back to the 4th century on the shore of Poyang lake, north of today’s Wucheng town. Zhou Yu, quoted in the note, was a famous general and strategist of the Wu Reign during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280).²⁸

²⁸ Zhou Yu 周瑜 (175-210), also called Mei Zhou Lang 美周郎, studied together with Sun Ce 孫策 (175-200) fighting many battles with him. Sun later became his brother-in-law having both married the daughters of Qiao Xuan 桥玄 (110-184). Zhou Yu managed to defeat Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) during the famous Battle of the Red Cliffs. These events, with their protagonists, are very popular in China thanks to the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義) composed in the 14th century and traditionally attributed to Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中 (1330 ca-1400). See ZRDC (1991: 540).

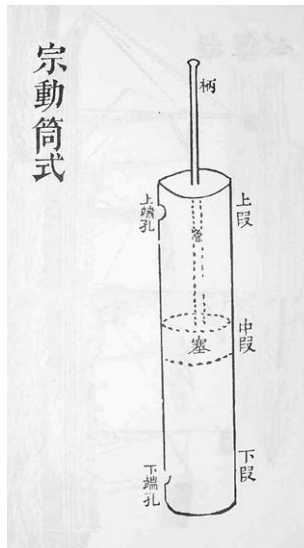
April 24th 1859. Resurrection Sunday. Sunny day. In the morning we went to the Lake-View Pavilion in Wuzhen town. It is the place where Zhou Yu drilled the navy.

To celebrate the place, Guo then composes a quatrain (*jueju* 絕句) entitled *Wanghuting jueju* 望湖亭絕句, quatrain on the Lake-View Pavilion. As I have already mentioned, instead of composing, sometimes the author also quotes brief and famous literary passages:

April 25th 1859. Rainy day. In the afternoon, we changed ship at the mouth of the river. “The creak of the oars, the greenness of mountains and river”. Liu Zongyuan²⁹

Arriving in a new country, Guo often begins with a scientific description taken from coeval geographical works. This is the case of Hainan, Vietnam and many other places, including Italy. On experiencing “new things”, he immediately gives his readers an explanation. During his first journey outside China by steamship, for example, he illustrates the steam engine (Fig. 4) or includes a treatise on the sphericity of the earth and so on.

Figure 4 – “Simplified model of an engine” (Guo 1863: I, 25r).



²⁹ Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819) is a famous poet of the Tang dynasty (618-907). The quoted poem is entitled *Yuweng* 漁翁 (The old fisherman).

The second *juan*, regarding Italy, is of course full of descriptions of churches, landscapes and monuments. Particularly noteworthy are the pages dedicated to the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome.

The journey back is less full of surprises and less interesting for the author himself who employs fewer words in his descriptions. Once in China again (third *juan*), in fact, the journal loses a little of its regular structure, especially in the last few pages. As soon as Guo Liancheng begins to see the shores of Southeast Asia on the horizon, he goes back to composing poems and turns again to lyricism and introspection. On the way back, his arrival is greeted by letters and poetic lines written for the occasion by his friends and brothers.

The book ends with a *Dili cuoyao gangmu* 地理撮要綱目, *Outline of Geography* (Guo 2003: 128-132), mostly taken from *Chinese serial*.³⁰ In this outline, the author illustrates mathematical geography, adding a long explanation on meridians and parallels, physical geography and human geography. The reason for choosing to end his account in this way is well explained in the last paragraph of the work:

July 26th 1860. [...] In my China, there are very few geographical gazetteers and scrolls and what is reported in them is neither exhaustive nor clear. Moreover, what is described therein is about nothing but a small piece of land belonging to the Central Plains; and what is called “the good earth under heaven”³¹, it is only a small portion of the world. Ten years ago, Xu Jiyu compiled a rather complete and detailed work entitled *Brief Survey of the Maritime Circuit* and also the *Geography*, written by an Englishman from Shanghai,³² which is worth reading. Anyone interested in geography, [must] obtain these books and read them: nothing is omitted. (Guo 2003: 131)

As for the style, as I have already mentioned elsewhere, Guo is truly a man of his time and place, particularly in the way in which he inserts lines of poetry every now and then, often rich in rhetorical flourishes and classical references. Both Fang Hao and Zhou Zhenhe note that the style of *XYBL* is quite laconic (Fang 2007: 627) and still rather puerile (Zhou 2003: 4). The poetic compositions in particular suffer the young age of the author and his lack of poetic sentiment which, according to Zhou, “is not pure and sincere enough” (*ibidem*). Fatica is of a different opinion and according to him Guo Liancheng

³⁰ *Chinese Serial*, vol. III, no. 6, June 1855, 1-5.

³¹ *Tianxia diyu* 天下地輿.

³² Respectively the *Yinghuan zhilüe* 瀛寰志略 (1849) by Xu Jiyu, and the *Dili quan-zhi* 地理全志 by William Muirhead (1822-1900).

is endowed “with strong sensitivity and poetic vein” (2001: 67). The same scholar also underlines that given Guo’s age, the temptation to show off his culture is very strong (*ibidem*). This is so true that today’s reader would find himself perplexed by the farraginous and convoluted poems and would have to personally uncover those ‘exotic’ elements that most affect our imagination today in works like these.

It is also worth noting how the author makes use of words and new expressions that had begun to circulate in China just a few years before his departure for the West. The use of these linguistic innovations as well as Guo’s reference to Chinese literary tradition will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

In two cases, it is possible to have a short glimpse of Guo Liancheng’s private life in reading the letter he writes to his father (September 26th 1859) and those he received from his family and friends while in Rome (January 23rd 1860). In the first case, the young author gives a short account of his journey, beginning with:

Honorable Grandmother, dearest Father and Mother, this is your son Liancheng. I presume you have received and read the letters I sent from Shanghai and Hong Kong [where I wrote] safe and sound. Three days after the Mid-Autumn Festival, we finally arrived at the famous land of the Holy Religion and, thanks to God, our journey was safe throughout. Only near Naples there was a storm during the night bringing waves as high as mountains and water that flowed onto the deck. Many were sick on the ship and also your son suffered some sea sickness. Now, I have recovered my strength so please do not worry for me. The return date is set approximately for the spring of next year. I will now give you a brief account of my travel experiences from Hong Kong to Rome, I enclose a geographical map which you can consult while reading. (Guo 2003: 55; 58)

Guo continues with a detailed account on the lands and the countries he had seen along the way. Particular attention is given to the observation of foreign people and their ‘exotic’ products: the short and “reddish” people of Singapore; the luxuriant vegetation of Ceylon; the wonderful natural products of India; the coffee of al-Mukhā; the vermilion shores of the Red Sea and then Suez, Cairo, Malta, ultimately arriving in Rome.

Last but not least, Guo Liancheng also inserts some drawings and illustrations in the diary which can be grouped into three categories: some figures illustrate scientific devices, some are of an ethnographic or cultural nature and some are geographical maps. In his “Introduction” to the 2003 edition, Professor Zhou states that some of these drawings were probably done by Guo himself (2003: 4) and along with my research on *XYBL*, I was able to trace back some of these images, which were previously published in Western sources or Western-related magazines, like the *Chinese Serial* edited in Hong

Kong, and others which would require further study.³³ Below (Table 1) is a list of the illustrations in the 1863 edition with their relative source when found:

Table 1 – List of illustrations in *XYBL* (1863).

Subject	Source
1. “Simplified model of an engine” ³⁴	<i>Chinese Serial</i> 1853/2
2. Steamship	not yet identified
3. Explanatory drawing on the sphericity of the earth	<i>Chinese Serial</i> 1853/2:
4. Astronomical chart	<i>Chinese Serial</i> 1853/5
5. Steam train	not yet identified
6. Freehand drawing of the route to the West (map) ³⁵	probably by the author
7. Music pentagram ³⁶	not yet identified
8. A camel	not yet identified, probably taken from <i>Illustrated Geography</i>
9. Egyptian pyramids ³⁷	<i>Illustrated Geography</i> by R. Quarterman Way
10. Egyptians	not yet identified, probably taken from <i>Illustrated Geography</i>
11. Black man with elephant tusk	not yet identified
12. Lighthouse ³⁸	<i>Chinese Serial</i> 1856/33
13. Thermometer	<i>Chinese Serial</i> 1855/26
14. Barometer	not yet identified
15. Watch	not yet identified
16. Compass	not yet identified
17. Ceylon man eating with his hands	not yet identified
18. Map of the world	not yet identified

³³ This is the English name of the monthly magazine *Xia'er guanzhen* 遐邇貫珍, published in Hong Kong by the Morrison Education Society. See Matsuura, Uchida and Shen (2004).

³⁴ *Zongdong jianshi* 宗動簡式.

³⁵ *Xicheng huigai* 西程繪概.

³⁶ *Xian gepu shi* 絃歌譜式.

³⁷ *Jiayiluo shizhong* 加以羅石塚 (lit. “stone tombs in Cairo”)

³⁸ *Haizhong zhaochuan dengta* 海中照船燈塔.

It is interesting to note that in the 1921 annotated edition, the editor not only adds explanatory notes, but also puts additional pictures in the work, like those of Msgr. Spelta and Pope Pius IX, or omits others, like the freehand map by his elder brother which in the 1863 edition is at the beginning of *juan II*. The editor of the 1921 *XYBL*, having lived in Italy for many years, also inserts beautiful images of the Colosseum, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Church of St. Sebastian, and many other historical sites in Rome in the central chapter, *juan II*.

3. *Guo Liancheng and his journey to Italy*

The well-known definition by Metternich of Italy as a “geographical expression” will not be discussed here but the “Italy” which had arrived in China through second-hand accounts or via Jesuit books, had in fact offered the Chinese audience a panorama which reflects this notion. So, if on one hand Italy was presented in Chinese sources as a geographical expression, on the other hand these sources inherited the idea of a unified Italy as it was perceived in Europe. Italy was in fact, as Mack Smith underlines, an homogeneous entity first from a religious point of view thanks to the unifying power of the Catholic religion at least since Gregory the Great in the 6th century, and secondly from a cultural viewpoint directly derived from a common literary heritage since Dante (Mack Smith 1997: 8). As a matter of fact, political differences existed until 1859, while linguistic and cultural differences among regions and cities are still in existence even after 150 years of unity.

Guo Liancheng's journey to the *Bel Paese* takes place, coincidentally, during the years marking the unity, in a very important period, but not only for Italy; as I will illustrate in the following pages, in fact, Guo is an oblivious bystander of some epochal changes in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Suez. The young traveler is not always conscious of all these differences but nevertheless, as Zhou underlines, reading Guo's *Brief account* is:

[...] like taking a visual tour in a mid-19th century scenario through Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Colombo and Aden, passing through Cairo, Malta, Sicily and Naples, ultimately reaching Rome and other many Italian locations. All these scenarios date back to 150 years ago, and today some of them have already totally disappeared; through this book, however, they seem to come back to life again. (Zhou 2003: 4)

The journey to the West begins from Yingcheng (Wuchang) on the afternoon of April 6th 1859. Other than Guo and Spelta, the travel group included two young Chinese priests: Wenda Luo e Guangcheng Xu.

Emperor Xianfeng 3rd year of reign, 3rd moon, 4th day [April 6th 1859]
 Today, fine rain and gentle breeze. Departure from the Catholic Church of Yingcheng (in *Yangjiahe*, city of Ying)³⁹ in the afternoon with Msgr. Spelta, Mr Wenda Luo 文達羅 and Mr Guangcheng Xu 光承徐 [...] (Guo 2003: 1).⁴⁰

The journey in China is mostly by river up to Shanghai, where the group arrive on May 22nd. There, a British steamship is moored, ready to sail to the West. In this month and a half of travel, the group visit many of the places they pass through by boat, witnessing the turmoil caused by the Taiping Rebellion, as already mentioned in Chapter 2. Apart from the ruins of war though, Guo also has the opportunity to see places he had only heard of through literature, such as the Red Cliffs outside the city of Huangzhou,⁴¹ the Fishing terrace of Yan Ziling⁴² and many others.

³⁹ The name of Yangjiahe comes from the stretch of the river which flows in the actual district of Yingcheng and was the seat of the mission seminary (Spimpolo 1962: 45). From now on, the italics in *XYBL*'s excerpts translation stands for the author's personal notes.

⁴⁰ It should be noted that here Guo Liancheng follows the European custom of putting the surname after the first name and not vice versa as in the Chinese tradition. In his *addenda*, Joseph M. Kuo writes: "Luo Wenda, Christian name Ruo Joachim [Ruo Yajing] 若亞敬, coming from the city of Hanzhong (Shaanxi), born in the 11th year of Daoguang [1831], studied in Hong Kong and was a missionary in Hubei. He died in peace in Jingzhou [Hubei] in the eighth month of the 17th year of Guangxu [1892]" (Guo 1921: 1). It can be read in Sartori (1926: 79, no. 41) that he studied in Wuchang and was ordained priest in 1856. On Xu Guangcheng, Kuo writes: "Xu Guangcheng Paul, born in Gucheng [Hubei] in the 10th year of Daoguang [1830] and took holy orders in the 9th year of Emperor Xianfeng [1859]. Afterwards, he was a missionary in Hubei. He died in Kaishan [Zhejiang] in the 10th month of the 24th year of Guangxu [1899]" (Guo 1921: 1). As cited in Sartori (1926, 86, no. 61), Paul Xu was also targeted by local officials and persecuted, as can be read in a fervent account dated March 15th 1889 by Father Quirin which is reported in "Informations diverses" in *Les Missions Catholique* (1889: 424).

⁴¹ The so-called *Dongpo chibi* 東坡赤壁 or Dongpo's Red Cliffs are situated near the city of Huangzhou 黃州 (Hubei) and must be distinguished from the Red Cliffs near Wuchang where the allied armies of Liu Bei 劉備 (161-223) and Sun Quan 孫權 (181-252) defeated Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) in 208. The Dongpo's Red Cliffs at Huangzhou, however, are the ones to which the poet Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101) – also known as Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 – dedicated two works in the form of *fu*, erroneously believing that this was the site of the famous Battle of the Red Cliffs (CH: 56.2). The most celebrated two *fu*, a particular Chinese narrative genre which mingles poetry and prose, are respectively entitled *Qian Chibifu* 前赤壁賦 (First Ode to the Red Cliffs) and *Hou Chibifu* 後赤壁賦 (Second Ode to the Red Cliffs).

⁴² Yan Ziling 嚴子陵 (I BC - II AD), also known as Yan Guang 嚴光. As a young man, he studied with Liu Xiu 劉秀 (4 BC - 57 AD), founder of Eastern Han Dynasty (25-

The journey is also an opportunity to meet “friends in faith”, to visit the tombs of some Christian martyrs⁴³ and also to commemorate the most famous Chinese convert Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562-1633) at Xujiahui.⁴⁴

Of particular interest is the description of Shanghai, where they stay from May 22nd to June 14th. Previously a small fishing village, once occupied by foreigners some ten years before following the first Opium war (1839-42), the village had begun to grow and develop. Guo Liancheng gives us a glimpse of this process, briefly describing the new world that was materializing at that time, especially in the area of Yangjingbang 洋涇浜⁴⁵ (*juan* I, May 26th 1859). It is fair to say that the description of the newborn city is possibly one of the first in Chinese sources. The same can be said of the descriptions of Hong Kong, occupied by Great Britain in 1842 (*juan* I, June 1860); Aden – “currently sold to the United Kingdom” (Guo 2003: 32) (*juan* I, August 7th 1859) – and finally Suez where, as we can gather from the pages of *Xiyou bilüe*, “Western traders are to start the opening of a channel to connect the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea” (Guo 2003: 32) (*juan* I, January 14th 1860).

220), who reigned as Emperor Guangwu Di 光武帝. After the foundation of the dynasty, Yan changed his name and retreated from public life. Afterwards, the emperor sent for him and offered Yan an office at court, but he again refused and retired to the Fuchun mountains. Many places then took his name: Yan Ling mountains, Yan Ling’s rapids, the fishing terrace of Yan Ling etc. Yan Ziling recurs often in Chinese prose and poetry. Yan Ling’s rapids 嚴陵灘, where tradition has it that he used to fish, are in Zhejiang in the southern area of today’s county of Tonglu (HDC: 3, 548), where Guo and Spelta stopped.

⁴³ Like those of Perboyre and Clet already mentioned above (see Chapter 2.4), and one of a Vicar I identified as Bernard Vincent Laribe (*juan* I, April 22nd 1859). See also p. 43 and note 18 in this Chapter.

⁴⁴ Xu Guangqi, also known by his Christian name Paul Xu, is one of the most famous Chinese converts and the author and translator, together with Matteo Ricci (Li Madou 利瑪竇, 1522-1610), of important scientific and mathematical works. On Xu Guangqi’s biography see Hummel (1943-44: 316-319) and Fang (2007: 71-79). It is interesting to note that the name of the area of Xujiahui, commonly known by its Shanghainese pronunciation of Zikawei or Zicawei, comes from his family name. Literally it means “the Xu family [home] where the [Zhaojiabin and Fahuajing] waterways meet” and it was in fact the Xu family to give the Jesuits the land for the construction of the Jesuit mission complex (King 1997: 458).

⁴⁵ Yangjingbang is the ancient name for the area near the homonymous canal where foreign concessions in Shanghai were established. The term is also sometimes translated as “pidgin” to indicate how the encounters between Chinese and Westerners, which became more intense due to the establishment of concessions, had led to the birth of a new language, commonly referred to as Pidgin English or more correctly Chinese Pidgin English (HDC: 5, 1185).

While travelling in China, Guo becomes acquainted with the new world unfolding before Chinese eyes: he and his group, in fact, not only visit the Catholic community in China, but along the way also spend some time in Protestant churches and libraries both in Shanghai and Hong Kong, where the young traveler acquires some of the books later quoted in and used for his travel account. Guo is so interested in these Western scientific works that he even sends a copy of Richard Quarterman Way's *Diqiu shuolüe* 地球說略 [Illustrated Geography] to Chen Lishan 陳立山, probably a classmate of his at the seminary of Hubei (*juan* II, January 23rd 1860).⁴⁶ The sojourn in Shanghai, therefore, is not only a pretext for taking a simple tour of the city but also the opportunity to take a cultural tour among the many missionary schools that were being established in those years. First of all, Guo visits the seminar (*shuyuan* 書院) in the Jesuit mission complex at Xujiahui, which “hosts more than a hundred scholars: all young men of outstanding talent [who have embraced] the Holy Order” (Guo 2003: 11). A few days later, Guo goes to visit what he calls the Mohai Academy (*Mohai shuyuan* 墨海書院), better known as the *Mohai shuguan* 墨海書館, which is the Chinese name for the London Missionary Press, founded in Shanghai in 1843 as the first of its kind in Shanghai. Many influent missionaries worked here – such as Alexander Wylie, William Muirhead, Joseph Edkins and William Charles Milne – until its final closure in 1877. Not only was the Mohai Academy important as the first modern publishing house in the city, but also as a school since it fostered high caliber figures like Wang Tao 王韜 (1828-1897), Li Shanlan 李善蘭 (1811-1882) and many other young Chinese men who contributed to enriching the mutual knowledge between Western and Chinese cultures. It was here and in many other institutions like this, that the missionaries and their students carried out intense translation work, publishing books on Western politics, science and religion which not only influenced Chinese learning but also Chinese lexicon.

Curiously, Guo Liancheng adds no other comment apart from the fact that he had been there and almost the same happens in Hong Kong, where he goes to the Anglo-Chinese College on July 21st 1859. Here, he merely notes that “inside there are works from astronomy, geography, arithmetics and geometry to medical science books written by Westerners” (Guo 2003: 16). If Guo's reluctance in being more detailed in his description can be explained in the light of the conflict between Catholic and Protestant missionaries, the same reluctance

⁴⁶ Richard Quarterman Way (1819-1895), Chinese name Yi Lizhe 禕理哲, transcribed as Wei Leiche in Wylie (1967: 129-140, no. LXVI). The work was published for the first time in 1848 with the title *Diqiu tushuo* 地球圖說 [Illustrated Geography] and then reprinted in 1856 with the title *Diqiu shuolüe* 地球說略 [Brief treatise on the earth]. See Wylie (1967: 140).

is cancelled out by the recurring use of Protestant sources within the *XYBL* journal. It is worth underlining once again the unique nature of Guo's travel account for his capacity for drawing on both religious sides to compile his journal.

Msgr. Spelta and Guo Liancheng leave Shanghai and travel across the East China Sea "in which a fish called *xileng* lives, whose upper body has the shape of a man or a woman and lower body is a fish tail" (Guo 2003: 15). *Xileng* is clearly a phonetic loan for siren (Σειρήν *Seirēn*) absent from dictionaries but present, with illustrations attached, in Ferdinand Verbiest's *Kunyu tushuo* (Verbiest, 1674: II, Tables, 10r). This booklet, full of images of animals and art works well-known in Europe – like the so-called Seven Wonders of the Ancient World – is maybe Guo's main source, at least for the geography of the world, and is very often quoted in *XYBL* during the journey.

In table 2, derived from the descriptive list in Guo's journal (Guo 2003: 48-49), there is a rough breakdown of the journey from China to Italy given by the author:

Table 2 – The journey from China to Italy (April 6th-September 14th, 1859).

From Wuchang to Wucheng (Jiangxi)	800 <i>li</i> , ⁴⁷ by Yangzi river
Wucheng – Yushan County	660 <i>li</i> , by river
Yushan – Changshan County	80 <i>li</i> , by land
Changshan – Hangzhou	635 <i>li</i> , by river
Hangzhou – Shanghai County (Songjiang prefecture, Jiangnan)	500 <i>li</i> , by river
Shanghai – Hong Kong	2400 <i>li</i> , by sea
Hong Kong – Singapore	4311 <i>li</i> , by sea
Singapore – Ceylon Island	4782 <i>li</i> , by ocean
Ceylon – Aden	6402 <i>li</i> , by ocean
Aden – Suez	3900 <i>li</i> , by sea
Suez – Cairo	450 <i>li</i> , by train
Cairo – Alexandria	450 <i>li</i> , by train
Alexandria – Malta	3000 <i>li</i> , by sea
Malta - Sicily ⁴⁸	550 <i>li</i> , by sea
Sicily – Naples	590 <i>li</i> , by sea
Naples – Civitavecchia	600 <i>li</i> , by sea
Civitavecchia – Rome	150 <i>li</i> , by train

⁴⁷ Chinese unit of length equal to 500 meters or a half kilometer.

⁴⁸ To be read as "Messina".

The journey is illustrated in a map drawn by Guo Liancheng himself (Fig. 5), attached to a letter to his parents in China, and reproduced also in Google Maps (Fig. 6).

Finally, on the morning of 11th September 1859, the young Chinese man arrives in Italy.

Figure 5 – The itinerary map of the journey to the West by Guo Liancheng (Guo 1863: II, 10).

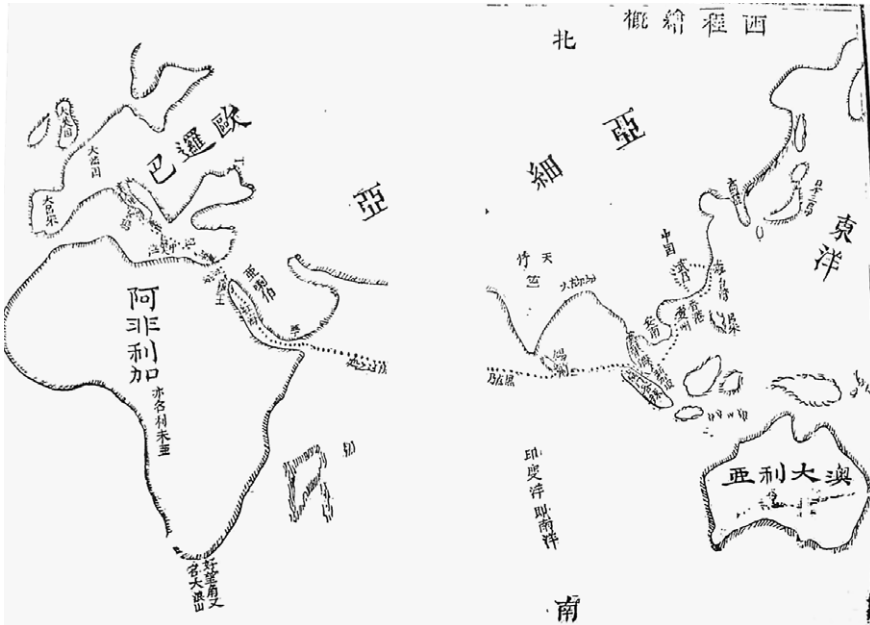


Figure 6 – The route to the West (Google Maps).



CHAPTER 4

GUO LIANCHENG IN ITALY

At first light on September 11th, the ship moors at the “city of Sicily” (*Xijili* 西吉利),¹ i.e. Messina, where Guo Liancheng and Msgr. Spelta lodge in a Franciscan monastery. It is his first glimpse of Italy, and Guo’s description vividly captures the joy of an Italian Sunday:

Sicily is in the country of Italy, Europe. The landscape is pleasing and rich in woods. Palaces and churches are even more astonishing than in Malta. Today is Sunday, soldiers and civilians wear elegant and clean clothes and travel around the streets in carriages or go for a walk in the hills with their friends. The locals, seeing my clothes and my appearance, called to me to accompany them for a ride. Soon after, the moon rose from the mountains to the east. I said: “Tonight in my homeland everyone is enjoying the Mid-Autumn Festival, I don’t know if in your precious country you have the same custom or not”. Everyone told me they did not know [anything about this festival]. Later, strolling in the moonlight to return to the monastery, this line occurred to me: “boundless is the moonlight on foreign countries and China”. (Guo 2003: 47)

On the 13th, the ship arrives in Naples. Guo and Spelta disembark at mid-day and with three hours to spare, they go to visit the Chinese College at Naples that, just a few months later, would host one of Guo Liancheng’s younger brothers, the aforementioned Joseph Kuo.

Naples is in the country of Italy; the mountains are majestic, and palaces stand tall and erect. Seeing it from the sea, it looks like a beautiful painting and it is far better than Malta and Sicily. Everywhere there are stone sculptures that gush water at different heights making it extremely convenient to take the water with your hands. Churches and stone sculptures can be seen everywhere and there are so many famous places and sites inside the city as to be incalculable.

¹ Sicily was the first Italian region ever described in a Chinese source. On this issue, see the interesting article by Renata Vinci (2013).

Outside the city there is a volcano from which bluish smoke rises by day and where flames burn at night. Sometimes the flames have reached the city and set the houses on fire. While our ship was leaving, I could still see the smoke rising from the volcano as a white cloud cutting a path through the air. (Guo 2003: 48)

On 14th September, the ship finally arrives at Civitavecchia and from there the two travelers reach Rome by train thus concluding *juan I*.

As I have already mentioned, *juan II* is dedicated in full to the sojourn in Italy, which has been summarized in the table (Table 1) and in the map (Fig. 1) below:

Table 1 – The Italian sojourn.

Messina	September 11 th 1859
Naples	September 13 th 1859
Civitavecchia – Rome	September 14 th 1859
Civitavecchia	September 28 th 1859
Livorno	September 28 th -29 th 1859
Genoa	September 30 th 1859
Voghera	September 30 th 1859
Montebello	October 2 nd 1859
Montalto (Pavese)	October 5 th 1859
Montebello	October 6 th 1859
Voghera	October 7 th 1859
Arona, Ameno	October 11 th 1859
Sacred Mountains of Orta (Orta San Giulio)	October 13 th 1859
San Giulio Island – Sacred Mountains of Orta	October 14 th 1859
Arona – Cannobio	October 16 th 1859
Arona – Alessandria – Voghera	October 20 th 1859
Montebello	October 22 nd 1859
Voghera	October 23 rd 1859
Broni	October 27 th 1859
Voghera	October 30 th 1859
Tortona	October 31 st 1859
Turin	November 2 nd 1859
Carignano – Turin	November 14 th 1859
Moncalieri – Turin	November 18 th 1859
Moncalieri – Turin	January 12 th 1860
Genoa	January 17 th 1860
Livorno	January 21 st 1860

Civitavecchia – Rome	January 22 nd 1860
Civitavecchia	March 11 th 1860
Naples	March 12 th 1860
Messina	March 13 th 1860

As can be seen from the table above, the stay in Italy can be roughly grouped into three parts: the first part is in northern Italy, the second in Turin and the third and longest part in Rome, which will be treated separately. This ‘agenda’ is due to the fact that Msgr. Spelta, after a brief sojourn in Rome of ten days (October 14th-28th), goes directly to visit his family and only after that does the journey continue, first to Turin and finally to Rome.

Figure 1 – The Italian itinerary (Google Maps).



By chance, Guo Liancheng’s sojourn in Italy takes place between the Second Italian War of Independence of 1859 (26th April-12th July 1859) and the Expedition of the Thousand led by Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) which

would take place only two months after Guo had left the peninsula (Fig. 2). Unfortunately, none of this is in any way recorded in *Brief account of the Journey to the West*, nor does the author seem to know about or understand the political division in Italy at that time. No information about the recent wars and battles on Italian soil, even though both Voghera and Montebello were at the center of the war of Independence just a few weeks before Spelta and Guo's arrival in those places. No comments on the King of Italy who they will meet twice while in Turin and no details on the political projects of Camillo Benso despite his close friendship with Msgr. Spelta (see Chapter 2, § 4). This apparent gap in Guo Liangcheng's *XYBL* is not, in my view, due to a lack of interest but simply to ignorance and language difficulties which did not allow him to fully understand the country he was visiting. Another explanation could be that Spelta, possibly acting for the Pope or at least having a role in the process between the Vatican and the Savoy family, may have asked him not to record anything in the travel diary concerning the political activities the Monsignor was handling.

Figure 2 – The Unification of Italy, 1858-1870. [Source: mapsontheweb]



1. *Guo Liancheng in Northern Italy*

The first month and a half of Guo's time in Italy is spent almost entirely in the north. The ancient town of Montebello, theater of bloody battles, sits on a hill east of the town of Voghera. Here Luigi Celestino Spelta spent his youth and most of his family and friends were still nearby. This particular situation immediately helps Guo Liancheng soak up the Italian lifestyle and, in particular, the wonderful landscapes of northern Italy so that, on this first stage of the journey, Guo's notes are for the most part focused on the natural scenic spots or on the habits of the Italian people.

As already mentioned in Chapter 3, once in Genoa local people surround Guo, attracted by his unusual clothes and by the fact that he could understand their language. Genoa, Guo Liancheng soon discovers, is full of tunnels:

[September 20th 1859] Genoa is located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and is a large port in Italy. All the buildings and churches of this city center are sheltered by mountains overlooking the sea and everything has a majestic appearance. [...] Later we boarded a train. Not long after, the carriage became dark unexpectedly and there was no light except for the glass lamps but then, in a flash, the sun suddenly returned. [...] After the first one, we passed through ten other tunnels all made in this way. Ah! What is the ingenuity of Westerners not capable of! I have heard that recently scientists have been studying a way to get the train up and down without tunnels. (Guo 2003: 61)

They then move on to the city of Voghera, hometown of Msgr. Spelta, where "as soon as his fellow townsmen knew that the Monsignor had returned, and moreover accompanied by a Chinese man, they came to visit him in hundreds" (Guo 2003: 61).

The area of Voghera:

is beautiful and what is more, it is shaped by the labor of man, so as to seem a path of trees and flowers. All the landscapes I saw along the way to get here had something new, even the common houses are red with vermilion fences: they are truly beautiful and exquisitely crafted.² The saying "Italy, garden of the world" is really true! (Guo 2003: 61)

The saying reported by Guo Liancheng, which also gives the name to this book, is in my opinion worthy of note for at least one reason, i.e. the circu-

² In the text Guo's admiration is expressed with a sentence of four characters of difficult translation: *feige liudan* 飞阁流丹, literally: "suspended pavilions and [lacquer] red [so shiny that it seems] to slip away".

lation of ideas between the East and the West, since this sentence not only echoes the idea of Italy commonly spread in Europe – masterfully recorded by Lord Byron (1788-1824)³ – but also recorded it in Chinese sources, contributing to the idealized and bucolic image of Italy that will affect the Chinese readership thereafter.

The author's delight before the beauty of the Italian landscapes does not end in Voghera but continues once again in Ameno, near Lake Maggiore. A short excursion there gives the author an opportunity to reflect on the wonders of nature and men: "October 12th 1859. Nothing in the world can please a man as much as nature with its landscapes, its plants and its trees." (Guo 2003: 63)

Guo and Spelta take a tour on the site and walk on the devotional path of the Sacred Mount Orta, now included in the UNESCO World Heritage list, where the road is dotted with chapels and other architectural elements dedicated to various aspects of the Christian faith. The one-day excursion has the feeling of a pilgrimage, a mystical tour which fills Guo Liancheng with peace and amazement: "If, as the saying goes, Italy is the garden of the world, this place, with the beauty of the mountains and the lake, is the garden in the garden." (Guo 2003: 64)

During the sojourn in the North, Spelta has a lot of friends to visit and every time he brings his companion with him offering him a good opportunity to take notes on the Italian lifestyle and customs and to make new discoveries:

[October 2nd 1859]. Western countries are not very skilled in silkworm breeding and mulberry growing so the people of this country, seeing that my clothes and even the padding of my boots were made of silk, all praised them saying that Chinese clothes and adornments are far more elegant than their own. (Guo 2003: 62)

Garments are also the cause of some misunderstanding in Cannobio, where:

October 16th 1859. [...] Having learned that a Chinese man would arrive today in the wake of a Monsignor, all the citizens gathered on the pier waiting and as soon as I came ashore, they began to follow us noisily. Once in the church, noticing that I knelt down without taking off my hat, they believed that I did not know the rules of propriety, so I said: "The etiquette in my country, China, is to not remove one's hat". I stopped a while to chat with them and then [the people] moved on. (Guo 2003: 65)

³ [...] and now, fair Italy! / Thou art the garden of the world, the home / Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree; [...]. (*Childe Harold Pilgrimage*, IV, XXVI).

Cultural gaps would prove even stronger later when in Turin: “[December 4th 1859]. [...] During the banquet, I told [the guests] that in my country people eat silkworms and dog meat: they all were surprised and did not believe it.” (Guo 2003: 72)

Silk is more than once the topic of the conversations with Spelta’s friends:

October 30th 1859. Fine weather. At four o’clock in the afternoon we took a train and at a quarter past four we arrived in Voghera where we were hosted by the Prinetti family. Tonight, a guest showed me a book entitled *Cansang jiyao*,⁴ telling me that this book was originally in Chinese, and later translated into Western languages, and this is the reason why today Western countries are also proficient in raising silkworms for silk. (Guo 2003: 68)

Having to attend many dinners and banquets, the sojourn is also a chance to make some notes on the Italian culinary culture and on the difference between Italy and China in this regard: “October 6th 1859. [...]. In Italy, there are many vineyards, and regardless of how rich a family is they all have reserves of grape wines of all kinds. This is why in every place I have been, the host has always offered me some wine as [is our custom] with tea.” (Guo 2003: 62)

And again:

[October 10th 1859]. [...]. During the meal, a man named Abel asked me: “I have heard that in your country a sumptuous dinner must necessarily include edible bird’s nests. These nests do not taste good and are also very expensive. It is truly strange that the practice has become customary in your country.” I replied: “You Westerners highly value tea leaves and rhubarb: each place has its peculiarities, what is strange about this?”⁵ (Guo 2003: 62)

Italian people, and even the poor families:

⁴ 蠶桑輯要. The title, given in Chinese in the text is certainly the *Résumé des principaux traités chinois sur la culture des mûriers et l’éducation des vers à soie* (1837) by Stanislas Aignan Julien (1797?-1873) which already had a translation in Italian: *Riassunto dei principali trattati chinesi sulla coltivazione dei gelsi e l’educazione dei bachi da seta. Tradotto dal cinese in francese da Stanislao Julien; e dal francese in italiano da L. Moggi*, A. Colombo, Milano 1846.

⁵ As underlined in a letter from Lin Zexu 林則徐 (1785-1850) to Queen Victoria written in 1839: “Rhubarb, tea, silk, are all valuable products of ours, without which foreigners could not live”, the Chinese were convinced that the ‘Red Barbarians’ could not do without the rhubarb provided by China, which they used as a purifier (Chesneaux, Bastid 1974: I, 103, note 2).

[October 21st 1859] value very much the way they eat. In addition to the living room, there is always another dining room [in their houses], and a pure white cloth must invariably be spread on the table. Forks, knives, glasses and plates: all must be changed after each course, and for each guest. The finest wines are those that come from the most distant places. (Guo 2003: 66)

In addition, as Guo Liancheng later explains, as well as wine, tea and coffee (*jiafei* 茄菲)⁶ are also commonly appreciated in Europe:

[December 11th 1859]. [...] In the West, they do not produce tea. Usually they drink grape wine or *jiafei* water (*jiafei* is a bitter bean). Only well-to-do families use crumbled tea leaves to entertain guests mixing them with white sugar and cow's milk. It is exactly [as the poem goes]:

Tea over wine to my guest on this cold night (because tea is more precious than wine),
the water boils on the iron stove and the fire soon gets red (in the West bamboo does not grow and therefore there are no bamboo stoves).

The usual wind is blowing all around,
*the unusual thing is that I am in a Western town.*⁷ (Guo 2003: 73-74)

2. Guo Liancheng in Turin

Piedmont is Spelta's birthplace, so it is no surprise that he and his young acolyte would spend a few weeks there. What is yet to be clarified, however, is why the prelate would spend so many days in Turin meeting with noble families of the city and even the King. Maybe further research in the future will explain Spelta's role during the time he spent there.

Turin at that time was a growing city, and its modernity can be seen through the pages of *XYBL*. Below is Guo's first description of the then capital city:

November 2nd 1859. [...] Turin is the capital of the Italian region of Piedmont, its palaces and royal residences are seven or eight stories high and extremely beautiful. The streets are wide and flat and run straight as arrows through the city; its citizens are fervent believers and treat people with benevolence. (Guo 2003: 68)

⁶ Please note that the Chinese transcription is due to a different pronunciation of the syllable *jia* 茄 as *ka* in the Hubei topolect.

⁷ Guo adapts his quatrain to that of the Song dynasty poet Du Lei 杜耒 (also known as Du Xiaoshan 杜小山, ?-1225), entitled *Hanye* 寒夜 [Cold Night]: *Not wine but tea to my guest on this cold night, the water boils on the bamboo stove and fire gets red soon. Shining at the window it is the usual moon, there are only these plum blossoms which instead don't look alike.*

Apart from the numerous dinners and parties, the sojourn in Turin is also of a cultural nature. The young Chinese visitor is taken to visit the main attractions of the city. On 3rd November, he has a tour in the “City museum”, the then Royal Museum of Greek-Roman and Egyptian Antiquities, now the Archeological Museum. Having been housed in the Academy of Sciences since 1832, in 1940 it was moved to the current *Museo delle Antichità* because it was divided into two, the latter and the Egyptian Museum, given the quantities of the antiquities preserved there. After a brief description, Guo Liancheng comments on the institution as follows: “November 3rd 1859. [...] People say that this place is like a scientific classic worth reading a hundred times but even twenty years in this museum would not be enough to look through all the things preserved here.” (Guo 2003: 68)

On other days Guo and Spelta go to visit many other places and institutions, such as schools and hospitals but also churches of course, and the Royal Palace, the Royal Armory, a royal factory and some shops. Among the latter, it is interesting to read about a grocery shop in town “selling many Chinese products like paper folding fans, porcelain vases, Huizhou ink, silks and pigments” (Guo 2003: 73). An even more interesting event is recorded on 10th November, namely Guo Liancheng being one of the first Chinese citizens to have his photograph printed in Turin:

November 10th 1859. Fine weather. In the afternoon we visited a place for drawing portraits.⁸ The method used to draw portraits here does not make use of brush and ink, but is a unique system which uses a thin silver plate and a mixture of chemicals which evaporate with the vapors of boiling water, and a glass which works as a mirror, like in a peep box. The shadow of a person is then impressed on the silver plate in every detail: from the pleats of the clothing to their facial features. The same method can also be used to portray landscapes or still-life pictures. The owner [of the place], considering that Msgr. Spelta and I came from such a distant place, invited us to leave our images on the silver plate. Tomorrow he said he would print several copies, so as to allow me to take them with me to China and spread appreciation of this novel and exquisite method of the West. (Guo 2003: 69)

Apparently, the photographer did as he had promised. In fact, as Guo annotates:

January 13th 1860. Fine weather. Visit to the photo studio *see November 10th*. The owner told us that over the previous days many people from Turin had wanted

⁸ *Huixiangsuo* 繪像所. Probably, the word has been coined by Guo Liancheng.

to have my portrait printed, since it is a rarity that a Chinese visitor comes here and everyone he received [in his studio] wanted a copy [of my picture] to hang on the wall as a souvenir. (Guo 2003: 77)

It has been impossible for me to trace one of the copies of Guo Liancheng's portrait, who knows if one still remains in some Turinese household.

Aside from the popularity gained among the common people of Turin, Guo Liancheng also has the opportunity to meet some very prominent Italian figures of the time like the astronomer Francesco Faà di Bruno (1825-1888),⁹ but most of all, the soon-to-be king of Italy. The identification of the former is in Kuo's Italian version (MDMC 1867, 36: 571) since he is called "astronomer *Faya*" in *XYBL*:

January 6th 1860. Fine weather. We went to visit the astronomer Faà di Bruno. The new calculation apparatus he has invented is surprising and completely different from that of the past. One is never bored when conversing with him, and one evening in his company is worth ten years. Only now have I understood what an excellent person he is. Faà di Bruno is simple in clothing and frugal in food, he is a fervent believer, a skilled astronomer and an excellent musician. (Guo 2003: 76)

On 18th November, Guo Liancheng is introduced with Spelta to the "royal prince" in Moncalieri, who eventually asks him to stay for lunch. This was Victor Emmanuel II (1820-1878), then Prince of Piedmont, Duke of Savoy and King of Sardinia, who would soon ascend to the throne as the first king of Italy (1861). The prince must have been very interested in the young Chinese man, as he later sent one of his painters to him on 20th November to portray Guo's "facial features, which are so different from ours" (Guo 2003: 71). I have tried without success to trace this portrait. In the above-mentioned letter by Fr. Faravelli, he wrote that he had heard from a 93-year-old priest that a "framed portrait of a young Chinese seminarist" had been kept – "no one knows for what reason" – in the Sanctuary of Mount Spineto in Piedmont. Apparently, the portrait had a dedication on the back to Fr. Matteo Simonelli, mentioned in Chapter 3, § 1, corroborating the hypothesis that the portrait must indeed be linked to Msgr. Spelta, even though, as the letter continues, that painting later "disappeared without a trace." Despite all the unsuccessful efforts to locate the painting, it is my opinion, and also Faravelli's, that this "framed portrait of a young Chinese seminarist" was of the young Guo Liancheng.

⁹ Francesco Faà di Bruno was a man of a thousand talents. He was a physicist, an astronomer, a mathematician, a composer and a civil engineer. He also founded some social and educational institutions and later, as a priest, he founded a congregation of nuns. He was beatified in 1988. Celestino Spelta and Guo Liancheng would return to visit him a few days later, on January 9th.

3. *Guo Liancheng in Rome*

The last period of the Italian sojourn is spent in Rome. Here, the splendor of the ancient Roman Empire and of the Holy Religion unfold before the young traveler's eyes. The time spent here is rich in tours through the city visiting churches, basilicas and historical sites according to the best traditions of the European Grand Tour. But most of all, in Rome the young Chinese convert has face to face contact with the Catholic faith and with the most prominent figures at the heart of religious and cultural life of Rome at that time.

During his first stay in the city from 14th to 28th September, he is taken by his bishop to a very important encounter: on September 22nd 1860, Pope Pius IX himself greets Spelta and his young Chinese companion. Furthermore, as can be read in the pages of *Brief Account*, Guo shows the Pope the travel diary he is writing or, at least, as we learn from the account itself, he shows the high prelate the pages dedicated to Italy, winning his praise and encouragement. The passage is not clear though. Guo Liancheng may not have shown the pope the notes on Italy he had written until that moment, but the notes compiled by the Jesuit Ferdinand Verbiest, taken from Verbiest's *Kunyu tushuo* which he included in his diary. These notes, which in some respect are an extract of Giulio Aleni's *Zhifang waiji*, are used extensively by Guo Liancheng, especially to give his readers geographical data, as mentioned before. In any case, these and other notes in the travel account show us that Guo was keeping note of his experiences almost every day, since not only does he show the pope his "Notes on Italy", but he also sends copies of them to China. A letter from his father reported in *XYBL* reads: "however, we have not received nor yet read the *Brief Account on the Journey to the West* you mentioned in your letter, I think it must be [still] in the hands of Mr Wei, I will ask him as soon as he returns home" (Guo 2003: 78).

The account of Guo Liangcheng's encounter with the pope is as follows:

September 22nd 1859. Fine weather. Lunch at the residence of Monsignor De Pesci.¹⁰

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, I presented myself before the pope with Spelta.

The present pope's name is Pius,¹¹ he is endowed with both talent and virtue, and he is 67 years old. Today, seeing me – [a boy] coming from the distant land of the Central Plains – he could not help but rejoice. He asked me: "Son, you sailed a thousand miles, was it not to present yourself before the authority who represents Christ and to visit the historical remains of the first apostles as well?"

¹⁰ The identification is by Kuo, see MDMC (1867, 36: 566).

¹¹ Pius IX, born Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti (1792-1878), reigned as pope for almost 32 years (1846-1878).

Son, may you sincerely believe in the Way of the Lord now and in the future. In the name of the Lord, I bless you and all your people, may your faith and virtue be preserved forever”, and so on. “Son, go back and recount all of this in full detail”. *Said the pope looking at the “Italian notes” of this juan* (Guo 2003: 54-55)

On many of these tours, Guo Liancheng was probably without Msgr. Spelta, who was engaged in religious affairs in Rome, but he found a suitable companion to accompany him, and it was probably this companion, often cited during the days spent in Rome, to act as the young visitor’s personal tour guide. This companion is Joseph Guriel (died in 1890), whose identification is in the Italian version of *XYBL* (MDMC 1867, 36: 566) and who was a Chaldean priest from Salamas (Persia), professor of Syriac and Chaldean languages at the College of *Propaganda Fide* in Rome.

Rome is the scenario of other encounters, above all with priests and prelates, but also with some scientists and astronomers such as Angelo Secchi (1818-1878) and Caterina Scarpellini (1808-1873).

Fr. Angelo Secchi SJ (1818-1878, Sege 瑟格 in *XYBL*), was considered the “father of Italian meteorology,” an astronomer and geophysicist, then in charge of the famous observatory of the Collegio Romano.¹² After demonstrating all the extraordinary equipment of the Observatory and letting the Chinese traveler try some of it himself, Secchi gave him a volume entitled *Register of the Astronomical Observatory of the Collegio Romano*,¹³ because:

¹² He first received a classical education in his hometown, Reggio Emilia, and then went to Rome to study in the famous Jesuit Roman College where he showed great ability in science. In 1848, he moved first to the United Kingdom and then to the United States and once back in Rome in 1850 he was appointed head of the Observatory of the Roman College, a position he held also under the newborn kingdom of Italy until his death. Secchi was a very active scientist, having written more than 700 papers and many books. In particular, he was a pioneer in the field of astronomical spectroscopy, and he is also considered the father of Italian meteorology, having organized a network of observatories and studied climate phenomena. For his meteorograph, he won a gold medal at the International Exposition of 1867 in Paris (O’Neill, Domínguez 2001: IV, 3542-5343).

¹³ *Kuitianlou jishi* 窺天樓記事 in the text. On the historical archive of the Roman Astronomical Observatory, which includes materials from both the Collegio Romano and Campidoglio observatories, see: <<http://www.beniculturali.inaf.it/archivi/roma/#presentazione>> (01/2020).

[February 24th 1860] since the deaths of our Jesuits Matteo Ricci,¹⁴ Emmanuel Diaz¹⁵ and Adam von Bell,¹⁶ all the other Doctors no longer dared to make progress [in the sciences], with the result that the system of measurements and astronomical calculations has progressively been lost. From now on, I hope that China will benefit from those who will give continuity to the path of the previous sovereigns with tolerance towards foreigners: it will be a real blessing for the country. (Guo 2003: 91)

On March 6th, Guo also makes note on his encounter with Caterina Scarpellini,¹⁷ a renowned female scientist of her time who occupied an unusu-

¹⁴ Li Madou 利瑪竇 in Chinese (1522-1610), was one of the first Jesuits in the China mission and without a doubt one of the most influential Europeans in China. Born in Macerata, Italy, in 1522 he then went to study in the famous Roman College and entered the Society of Jesuits. Arriving in Macao in 1582, he immediately began to study the Chinese language and drew up a first map of the world in 1584 and another in 1602, the latter entitled *Kunyu wanguo quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖. Ricci was one of the main supporters of the so-called Jesuit accommodation and, presenting himself as a European scholar, he was at least allowed into the Imperial court, opening a new path of cultural exchange between Europe and China. He is the author of works on religious as well on scientific subjects and co-authored with Xu Guangqi the Chinese translation of Euclide's *Elements*.

¹⁵ Emmanuel Diaz the Younger (Yang Manuo 陽瑪諾, 1574-1659, transcribed as 楊瑪諾 in *XYBL*), Portuguese Jesuit missionary. After six years in Macao teaching theology, he entered China in 1611 but was expelled from the country in 1616. In 1621, he returned to Beijing. Engaged as many other Jesuits in spreading European scientific knowledge, he is the author of various books in Chinese, among which the *Tianwenlüe* 天文略 [Explicatio Sphaerae Coelestis], 1615. See Pfister (1932: I, 106-111).

¹⁶ Johann Adam Schall von Bell (Yang Ruowang 湯若望, 1591-1666), German Jesuit missionary. Sent to Beijing in 1622 to learn the Chinese language, he was soon able to gain the trust of the Qing court after calculating three eclipses. Apart from his work as a missionary, von Bell is above all remembered for being made mandarin by the Emperor and being the first European head of the Imperial Observatory. For other details on his life, see Pfister (1932: I, 162-182).

¹⁷ Astronomer and meteorologist, she was born into a family of scientists and began to study astronomy in her youth. At the age of 18, she followed her uncle Feliciano Scarpellini (1762-1840) to Rome, following his appointment as director of the observatory of Rome University La Sapienza situated on the Capitoline Hill. She wrote many papers and founded the scientific journal *Corrispondenza scientifica in Roma per l'avanzamento delle Scienza* with her husband. A Member of numerous scientific academies, she was decorated with the silver medal by the Italian Ministry of Education (Greco 1875: 446-447).

al position for an Italian woman of the 19th century: she was in fact one of the leading figures of the observatory of Campidoglio. Guo portrays her as “an elderly woman, about sixty years old, [...] An astronomy expert, she is known for having written *Astronomical Observations*”¹⁸ (Guo 2003: 92).

As with Turin, Guo writes in great detail about Rome. Here, the author not only elaborately describes the many churches and monuments, he also narrates legends and stories of the past, which – in this author’s view – is one of the most interesting features of the book. Collectively, these stories form a sort of ‘tourist guide’ for 19th century Chinese travelers. The description of the Basilica of St. Peter on February 14th 1860 is of great value and covers various pages. This description is so rich in details that it could in theory be a translation taken from some tourist booklet of the period.

Describing the site, Guo Liancheng firstly exalts the magnificence of the vista one can enjoy from the *cupola* and then continues in the following order: the square in front of the cathedral; a general description of the church; the façade of the church; the inside of St. Peter’s cathedral; the Vatican grottoes; the Chair of St. Peter, and a brief description of the minor altars. This ‘guide’ is exhaustive and represents an *unicum* in the literature of that time. Here is a short excerpt:

February 14th 1860. [...] If the first time the Basilica of St. Peter may seem big, the second time it seems even bigger; if the first time it seems wonderful, the next time it looks even more astounding. You can never tire of looking at it, even after seeing it a hundred times, and only then do you realize that it is the basilica par excellence. [...] As for all that I have heard and seen with my own eyes, I honestly do not know how many thousands of times I should still come here again to write exhaustively about it. (Guo 2003: 88-89)

Among the many notes on the relics of the Roman Empire, I have chosen the following purely to give a sample of Guo’s ability to provide his readers with historical, religious and cultural data:

January 28th 1860. Fine weather. I went once again to see the massive and ancient walls called *Geluose’a* [Colosseum] [...] These walls, dating back to 72 BC,¹⁹

¹⁸ I was not able to trace the volume, which in the original text by Guo Liancheng is entitled *Kuitian shuo* 窺天說. According to data, it could be a volume published in 1857 and entitled *Osservazioni ozonometriche istituite in Roma nell’agosto 1856 da Caterina Scarpellini all’altezza di metri 60,43 sul livello del mare e Lettera di Paolo Peretti sopra un odore particolare emanatesi dalle cartoline ozonizzate notato nel settembre 1856*, Roma, tip. delle belle arti.

¹⁹ In reality, the construction works began between 70 and 72 BC, by the wish of Titus Flavius Vespasianus (9-79).

were built by the Flavians. They are about six *zhang*²⁰ wide and served as a cage for the wild animals that devoured Christians at that time. [...]. Since then, many tourists have come to visit this place, not only to commemorate the martyrs of the past but also to admire this wonderfully built piece of antiquity. Afterward, Pope Benedict built within it fourteen small shrines as to perform the Holy Stations of the Cross. Even the present Pope Pius has carried out some small restoration works. [...] In the section on the *Seven Wonders* in *Illustrated Explanation of the Entire World* it can be read that²¹ [...]. According to this, [this description] must be that of the Colosseum I saw today. (Guo 2003: 81)

Rome is the city of the best artisans in the world, and Michelangelo, whose name is however not known by the young Chinese traveler, is the greatest of all:

February 12th 1860. [...]. Inside the church there are many marble statues and famous paintings, but none as beautiful as the statue of Moses holding the Tablets of the Law. This white marble sculpture is one *zhang* high and it seems about to come to life. People usually say: “Rome is the city where the best artisans of the world have gathered”, because what it is usually impossible for a man is possible here. (Guo 2003: 85)

To conclude, the experience in Rome can be summarized in two lines written by the author himself on 25th January after a visit to the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls: *If I hadn't travelled the seas to get this far, I would never have believed how many extraordinary artifacts there are in Rome* (Guo 2003: 80-81).

²⁰ Chinese unit of length, equal to 3½ meters.

²¹ Guo quotes in full Verbiest (1674: 19r), where, in the section of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Colosseum is listed apart, as if it were the eighth wonder and, in actual fact, it was included in the list of the new seven wonders of the world in 2007.

CHAPTER 5

THE *XIYOU BILÜE*: SOME LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

This last Chapter will be devoted to some linguistic and cultural considerations. First of all, it will underline how the young traveler's account mirrors the epochal changes occurring in China in the second half of the 19th century. These changes are immediately evident when it comes to the peculiar composition of the account which mixes diction, styles and contents in a balance between tradition and modernity.

As previously stated, Guo Liancheng makes extensive use of Western sources to illustrate scientific theories and discoveries to his Chinese readership. In quoting Western sources, Guo seems aware that the science presented by Protestant missionaries was more up-to-date than that disseminated two centuries before by the Jesuits, therefore, in most cases he uses Protestant works when giving descriptions related to technology and science, while he turns to Catholic sources when wishing to expound matters related to religion or geography. What makes this even more interesting is the fact that in most cases, unlike the usual practice of Chinese writers, the author mentions the books and articles where the excerpts are taken from.

Given that Guo was one of the first Chinese travelers to write an account on his journey to the West, his book is also interesting from a linguistic point of view since the author is often 'forced' to use and create new words to describe the new things he was experiencing. The final part of my analysis will therefore be dedicated to this particular aspect of Guo's travel account, an aspect that I hope can help to give a better understanding of the diffusion of some words in the modern Chinese lexicon.

1. The XYBL between tradition and modernity

As Chinese scholars have already pointed out, Guo Liancheng's *Brief Account of the Journey to the West* is quite laconic and the style is still a little immature (see Chapter 3, § 2.1). It is surely no coincidence the author chose to name it after that *lüe* 略 (sketchy, brief), which perfectly describes the concise nature of his account. While the personal annotations are sometimes rather

sketchy, the travel account is full of poetic compositions and scientific excerpts. In particular, the three *juan* contain more than seventy poems, thirty-one in the first *juan* alone written according to different meters as will be illustrated below, and often omitted in the 1921 edition.

1.1 Tradition: poetry

The diary itself often consists of very short notes and follows a fixed pattern as already mentioned above. After a general depiction of a place, in the majority of the cases there is a poem, mostly *lüshi* 律詩 (regulated verses) or *heyun* 和韻 (“rhyme matching”). The *lüshi* is “undoubtedly one of the most complicated kinds of poetry in the world” (Cai 2008: 161) with its mandatory sets of rules in terms of rhyme, tonal patterning, syntax, structure and word choice. This kind of verse is, together with the *jueju* 絕句 or quatrain, a subgenre of the “recent-style poetry” (*jinti shi* 近體詩), antithetic to the “ancient style” or *guti* 古體. It has a fixed length of eight lines which can be either all pentasyllabic or heptasyllabic. The term *heyun*, on the other hand, refers to a particular genre of rhyme usually composed on formal occasions like banquets or farewells, starting from a “first rhyme” or *yuanyun* 原韻 which sets the prosodic rules. Consequently, all the other writers must follow the same rhyme sequence as the first poem (CY: 0273.1) and, as one can imagine, it is very difficult to reproduce in translation. Apart from these meters, Guo also chooses other forms of poetry as in the *gushi* 古詩 (ancient-style poem) dedicated to the Tempio by Donato Bramante (1444-1514) in Rome (September 15th 1859).

Of particular interest in my view, is the succession of *heyun* poems composed by Guo and his friends and brother as soon as he returns home on 27th July 1860. In fact, on that date the diary contains a total of eleven poems in the form of heptasyllabic *lüshi*. The first poem is by Guo Liancheng, who sets the pattern:

航海西洋西復東，洛陽花信幾番風。
Hanghai Xiyang xi fu dong, Luoyang huaxin ji fan feng,
 名區勝地游人趣，萬國九洲大造工。
Mingqu shengdi youren qu, wanguo jiuzhou da zao gong.
 琴劍歸來秋露白，親朋話到夜燈紅。
Qinjian guilai qiu loubai, qinpeng hua dao yedeng hong,
 塵寰多少滄桑事，都在莞然獨笑中。
Chenhuan duoshao cansang shi, dou zai wan ran du xiao zhong.

*Having sailed Western seas, to the East I come home;
 peony flowers bloom in season, and the stormy winds blow.
 Famous sites, well-known spots to the sightseer's delight,
 the great work of creation in the Seven Seas' flight.*

*Qin and sword¹ have returned in the autumn dawn's white;
friends and brothers are chatting at the red candlelight.
How many big and great changes in this my mortal life,
All of them folding into a one single smile. (Guo 2003: 126)*

This translation is of course not a literal attempt, but the structure, images, rhythm and rhyme that Guo Liancheng sets for this rhyme-matching sequence should be noted. After his, nine other compositions follow written by his friends and priests in the church of Yingcheng and also by his younger brother.² For example, the *heyun* written by the latter is as follows:

馬首今朝幸轉東，滿斟聖酒洗塵風。
Mashou jinzhao xing zhuan dong, manzhen shengjiu xichen feng.
大洋覽畢詩添味，美景游歸話自工。
Dayang lanbi shi tian wei, meijing yougui hua zi gong.
振鐸雖遭俗眼白，吹埧卻喜榴花紅。
Zhen duo sui cao suyan bai, chui xun que xi liuhua hong.
從前多少別離恨，盡釋姜家大被中。
Congqian duoshao bieli hen, jinshi jiangjia dabei zhong.

*This day the best horse luckily turned to the East,
Let us pour the holy wine, wash away dust and wind.³
The sight of the oceans added taste to your script,
And beautiful scenes in traveler's fair speech.
Let us ring all the bells despite others' white dislike,
Enjoy the ancient flutes and the red flowers alike.
The pain of parting of each other is above all others,
but that is fully explained by our love as brothers. (Guo 2003: 127)*

A more detailed analysis would be necessary here to fully appreciate this kind of poetry but of course the given examples are only to indicate in a simplified manner the author's connection to Chinese poetic tradition. Such poems can be found especially in the first and third *juan*, when the young Chinese man is in his motherland and follows the tradition of travel literature. As previously observed, *Brief Account of the Journey to the West* is also full of quotations from

¹ See the opening poem quoted in Chapter 3, § 2.1.

² Shusheng 樹聲 in the text, mentioned also elsewhere in Guo's travel account. My hypothesis is that this was the familiar name for Dongchen, alias Joseph Kuo, who would leave for Naples the following year.

³ In Chinese *jiefeng xichen* 接風洗塵, lit. welcome the wind and wash way the dust, is a figurative expression meaning to give a dinner of welcome (to a returnee from afar).

classical literature, the majority being Tang and Song poems. Guo Liancheng's family background can explain his love and understanding of traditional poetry and the author often quotes classical poems in line with the literary tradition, but he also succeeds in bringing together tradition and modernity. These quotations alternatively help to simplify or complicate the understanding of Guo's verses. See, for example, what he writes on 14th July 1859 while leaving Singapore headed for the immense ocean. Here, Guo paraphrases one of the most famous poems by Li Bai 李白 (699-762), entitled *Down to Jiangling* (*Xia Jiangling* 下江陵). The comparison between the two poems immediately clarifies what has been illustrated above:

Table 1 – Li Bai and Guo Liancheng.

Li Bai	Guo Liancheng
朝辭白帝彩雲間， 千里江陵一日還。 兩岸猿聲啼不盡， 輕舟已過萬重山。	朝辭客邸彩雲間， 十里程途頃刻還。 幾處駒聲嘶不住， 輕車已過萬重山。 (Guo 2003: 24)
At dawn leave Baidi amidst the rosy clouds, A thousand miles to Jiangling, a day to return. On both banks, the endless gibbons' howls, the light boat already passed thousands of mountains crowns.	At dawn leave the inn amidst the rosy clouds, A ten-mile journey, an instant to return. In every place, the endless neigh of foals, the light cart already passed thousands of mountains crowns.

The road in the Chinese hinterland (*juan* I and III) is a pretext for Guo to visit places which are of some importance to classical literature, effectively following the paths of famous poets like Su Shi 蘇軾 (also known as Su Dongpo 蘇東坡, 1037-1101). See, for example the poem on the Red Cliff (Guo 2003: 2), a *topos* in classical Chinese literature strongly bound to Su Shi, or the *huaigu* 懷古 (recalling the past) the author writes at the Han Wengong memorial temple in Guangdong to commemorate Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) (Guo 2003: 2). In this poem, the author practically copies the *Chaozhou Han Wengong temple stele* (*Chaozhou Han Wen Gong miao bei* 潮州韓文公廟碑) by Su Shi line for line.

The last thing to be noted for its connection with the Chinese literary tradition, is how Guo uses an ending *formula* to close his first *juan*: “if you want to know how things will go, wait and read the next chapter”.

1.2 Modernity: technology, science and art

Poetry aside, another distinctive feature of *Xiyou bilüe* lies in the coexistence of both Jesuit and Protestant sources. One of Guo's main endeavors is in exalting the new scientific and technological discoveries made in Europe to his

fellow countrymen. Thus, depending on the case, the author draws his material from traditional Chinese sources or from contemporary European sources. This makes the language of the book – already a mixture of *wenyan* 文言 (classical Chinese) and *fangyan* 方言 (dialect) – much richer in new expressions and words due to the necessity of transcribing toponyms and above all for describing new things, new discoveries, Western art, steamships, steam trains, the telegraph, the printer, and many more. Sometimes Guo simply “copies” these new terms from other sources, sometimes he himself creates neologisms to describe the Western world, especially in the field of art, where no sources or translations existed at that time.

In *Xiyou bilüe* it is possible to find different kinds of essays or notes concerning particular fields, i.e. essays on science or on Western technology, essays on the geography of the world, notes on European habits and traditions, brief descriptions of Western *curiosities*. These short essays are mostly taken from other sources, as can be observed in the table below giving a list of the Western sources explicitly quoted by Guo Liancheng:

Table 2 – List of Western sources quoted in *XYBL*.

Author	Chinese title	other title
Sabatino De Ursis, Xu Guangqi	<i>Taixi shuifa</i> 泰西水法	Hydraulic Methods of the Great West, 1612
Giulio Aleni	<i>Tianzhu jiangsheng yanxing jilüe</i> 天主降生言行紀略	Compendium vitae Christi, 1635
Ferdinand Verbiest	<i>Kunyu tushuo</i> 坤輿圖說	Illustrated Explanation of the Entire World, 1674
Dominique Parrenin	<i>Jimei pian</i> 濟美篇	Perfectoe pulchritudinis liber, 1727
Richard Quarterman Way	<i>Diqiu shuolüe</i> 地球說略	Illustrated Geography, 1848
Joseph Edkins	<i>Zhong-Xi tongshu</i> 中西通書	Chinese and Western Almanac, 1852
Joseph Edkins	<i>Zhongxue</i> 重學	Mechanics, 1859
William Muirhead	<i>Dili quanzhi</i> 地理全志	Universal Geography, 1853-54
Benjamin Hobson	<i>Bowu xinbian</i> 博物新編	Natural Philosophy, 1855
<i>Xia'er guanzhen</i> 遐邇貫珍		<i>Chinese Serial</i> , monthly published between 1853-1856.

These annotations can be categorized according to their contents. I have provided a short list of these essays and their contents which is not exhaustive but only explicative of what Guo chose to incorporate in his travel account.

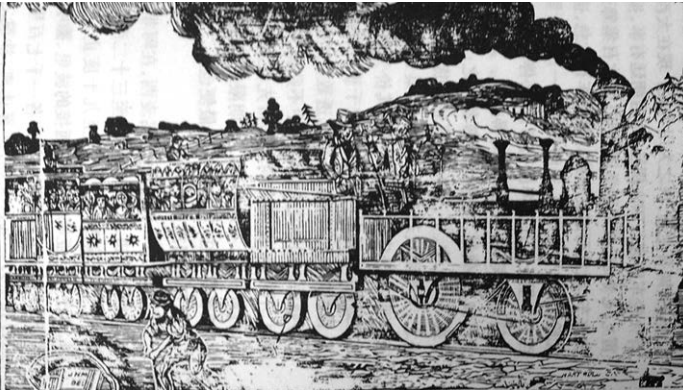
Essays on science and technology

Guo resorts to Western sources written in Chinese, possibly gathered during his journey, especially in Shanghai or Hong Kong.

“Notes on mirages” or *Haishishenlouji* 海市蜃樓記, is taken from Hobson’s *Bowu xinbian* 博物新編 [Natural Philosophy] (1855: I, 45v-46r).⁴

“Brief explanation on the steamship” or *Huolunchuan lüeshuo* 火輪船略說 (Guo 2003: 20-23) is an excerpt from *Chinese Serial* (1853, 2: 8-12) (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – The train. (Guo 1863: I, 47r)



“On the earth round as an orange” or *Di yuan ru cheng shuo* 地圓如橙說 (Guo 2003: 28-33) is entirely taken from “Form of the earth (Communicated)” (*Dixing lun* 地形論) in *Chinese Serial* (1853, 2: 6-8). In particular, the passage seems to be an abridged version of *Outlines of Astronomy* by sir John Herschel (1792-1871) translated into Chinese by Alexander Wylie (1815-1887) and Li Shanlan 李善蘭 (1811-1882). See, in particular, the text and figures in Herschel (1853: 31-32). Wyle’s translation, however, is entitled *Tantian* 談天 and was published in Shanghai in 1859 (Elman 2005: 298).

“The revolution of the earth which leads to day and night” or *Diqiu zhuan er cheng zhouye lun* 地球轉而成晝夜論 (Guo 2003: 34-38) is, as the author notes next to the title, an excerpt taken from *Chinese Serial* published with the title of “The Revolution of the Earth round its own axis, and the Phenomena of Day and Night (Communicated.)” (*Chinese Serial*, 1853, 5: 1-5).

⁴ The title in Guo is *Bowu pian* 博物篇, *Natural Philosophy* by Benjamin Hobson (1867-1873). The original work is in three parts: the first, entitled *Tianwen lüelun* 天文略論 [Outline of Astronomical Theory], was published in 1849 followed in 1855 by the remaining two parts (Wylie 1967: 127).

“On the diving bell” or *Yong-qi zhong shuo* 泳氣種說, and “The diving suit” or *Queshuiyi* 卻水衣 (Guo 2003: 105-107) are again both taken from Hobson’s *Bowu xinbian* (1855: I, 38r-39r).

There are some short descriptions that this author was not able to link to any sources, so it is possible that they are original or that Guo simply reworked someone else’s explanations. This is true, for example, with the “telegraph line”, illustrated by Monsignor Spelta for his young attendant. As a matter of fact, not having sources to search in, Guo is obliged to create a word in Chinese to explain this new Western technology and he chooses the trisyllable *dianyin xian* 電籜線, using the rather obsolete character *yin*. Indeed, as a note by the author illustrates soon after, the disyllable *dianyin* comes again from *Bowu xinbian* (Guo 2003: 39) but in Hobson it is used in the wider sense of electricity and not for telegram, later substituted by *dianqi* 電氣, electricity, and it is still in use (Masini 1993: 167).

Furthermore, Guo Liancheng is one of the first Chinese people, if not the very first, to see a train and to describe it in his pages:

August 14th 1859. [...] In the West the train is used to transport goods and carry traveling merchants, it is a system created about ten years ago. When I first went ashore, I saw in the distance a uniform [line of] buildings, lined up unceasingly, all with glass doors and glass windows. At the beginning, I erroneously thought it was the downtown streets of this place but, as soon as I got closer, I noticed rails and iron wheels below and only then I realized it was a train. After a while, the smoke flew, the wheels moved, it was far better than flying, [it seemed] as if [we were] in the mist of a cloud, just like in the poem: *On both banks, the endless gibbons’ howls, the train already passed thousands of mountains crowns.*⁵ The wit of [Zhuge Liang’s] wooden ox⁶ and the speed of [Guan Yu’s] Red Hare⁷ are nothing in comparison. (Guo 2003: 38-39)

⁵ See the poem translated above.

⁶ Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234) is a famous statesman of the so-called Three Kingdoms Period (220-220). He was the counsellor of Liu Bei 劉備 (161-223) (see note 41 in Chapter 3). The invention of the wooden ox or *muniu liuma* 木牛流馬 (lit. wooden ox and flowing horse) is attributed to him. It was used to transport food supplies for the army and it was believed to be mechanical, although it is more likely that it was moved by a single man (CH: 1402.2). For this peculiarity, the expression is often translated as the “Trojan horse strategy”.

⁷ Guan Yu 關羽 (died in 219) was also a general allied to Liu Bei. Known for centuries for his military value, Guan Yu is considered in folklore to be the God of War and of martial arts. In the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* it is said that his legendary horse, called Red Hare (*Chitu* 赤兔), could run as fast as the wind. (CH: 2193.3).

The train captures the author's imagination to such a degree that he dedicates a two-page essay to describe it: "On steam trains" essay (or *Huolunche shuo* 火輪車說, Guo 2003: 40-42), of which I was unable to trace a source.

New technologies and curiosities of the West

Brief Account is also full of notes on new technologies adopted in the West or simply brief annotations on Western *curiosities*. For instance, Guo is continuously taken by Western "toys", like the "magic lantern" (May 24th, 1859) he takes home to "everyone's surprise" (July 12th, 1860; in Guo 2003: 124). He is also interested in the many "mechanical toys" he sees (October 14th 1859): a pendulum-clock and a machine full of tiny figures, steamships, and trains that move up and down when the mechanism is set in motion. Again, Guo praises novelties like the self-ignition lamps (September 28th 1859), above all for their use in lighting up city streets (November 15th 1859) thanks to the "illuminating gas", as he carefully explains in a short but detailed note on the scientific principle of this system ("On the illuminating gas"⁸, September 28th 1859). Not all the European cities use this kind of gas, some cities – one of his chaperones explains to the young traveler – simply make use of the gas which comes from corpses (i.e. methane). They build a "big box with glass lenses" to open at night and light the house, "far superior to the light of lanterns and candles" (Guo 2003: 60).

Essays on geography

Guo's geographical notes are mainly taken, as far as I was able to discover (even if Guo himself often cites his sources), from the works by William Muirhead (1822-1900), Ferdinand Verbiest, Wei Yuan and Xu Jiyu. In my opinion, this alone makes the book very valuable, even more so when compared to later travel accounts.

Like many of his countrymen before and after him, Guo Liancheng is fascinated by volcanoes (Cf. also Vinci 2013). As soon as the author catches a glimpse of Vesuvius in Naples, he writes a poem to celebrate it (September 13th 1859)⁹ and not satisfied, he also writes a short essay entitled "On volcanoes" (March 12th 1860).¹⁰ His interest in geography remains fervent, and on the return jour-

⁸ *Qingtan erqi shuo* 輕炭二氣說.

⁹ *Fu de huoshan* 賦得火山.

¹⁰ *Huoshan lun* 火山論. The short essay is likely a reworking of similar essays published in different issues of *Chinese Serial*. Cf. "Dili quanzhi jielu 地理全志節錄", English title in the magazine: "The Geological structure of the Earth (from

ney he takes an interesting explanation on oceans from Hobson's *Bowu xinbian* (April 11th 1860) entitled *Yanghai lun* 洋海論 [On oceans].

As previously emphasized, Guo Liancheng valued geography highly and resolved to end his account with a detailed summary on geography, lamenting that "In my China, geographical gazetteers and scrolls are very few and what is reported in them is neither exhaustive nor clear" (Guo 2003: 131).

Cultural and ethnical notes

Guo however does not only "copy" geographical information from others, he also tries to narrate some cultural aspects of the places he is travelling through.

The steamship is the first and best place to gather strange legends and sailors' stories, such as those concerning fishes called *xileng* 西楞 (June 15th 1859), one of which "was caught at sea three hundred years ago" in Holland. Another "sea-man" (*hairen* 海人) was caught in Western seas and his "whole body was human, including beard and eyebrows" (April 16th 1860; in Guo 2003: 110-111).

The boundless ocean hosts mysterious and gigantic monsters, capable of "swallowing up whole ships". Some of them "outlived the Flood", [...] while some "live for a thousand years, they are bigger than the highest mountains and live in the hidden depths of the sea" (July 9th 1859; in Guo 2003: 23). Guo confirms these stories adding that in the past a group of seamen discovered they had landed on a giant sea monster just after they had left it. This of course refers to the famous legend of the Zaratan or Aspidochelone which, as the young author himself writes, is taken both from Verbiest's *Kunyu tushuo* and Wei Yuan's *Haiguo tuzhi*. On the many steamships and vessels Guo travels by he can also overhear conversations and collect very interesting "travel experiences" from other voyagers (April 16th 1860).

Moreover, steamships themselves are something extraordinary:

July 5th 1859. [...] This steamship is much bigger than the boat [that previously took us] from Shanghai to Hong Kong. Its name is *Singapore*¹¹ and it is twenty *zhang* in length, about five *zhang* in width and four or five *zhang* in height. The ship is divided into first, second and third class. First class guests have a bedroom equipped with two or three rooms for the couches and supplied with everything necessary to wash one's face and rinse one's mouth, a tea set and bottles of wine.

Muirhead's Physical geography)" in *Chinese Serial* (1856: vol. IV, no. II, 3r-6r; 1856: vol. IV, no. III, 3r-6r; 1856: vol. IV, nos. IV & V, 2r-4v). In particular, the last issue contains some pictures reproduced in Guo Liancheng's diary.

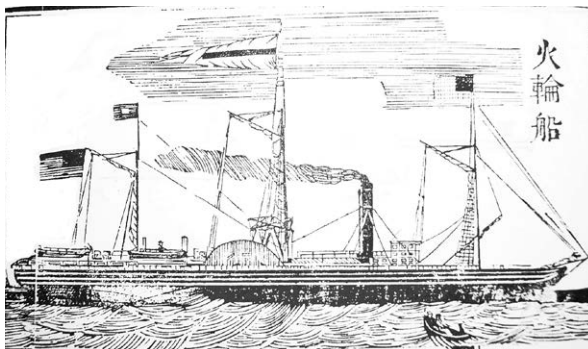
¹¹ Property of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O Line), the *Singapore* was launched in 1850 and sank off Hakodate, Japan, on August 20, 1867. See: <www.poheritage.com> (01/2020).

[The room] is laid with a felt carpet adorned with festoons, a hanging mirror and a wall clock. Outside there is a dining room, a veranda, a studio and a bathroom, and servants appointed to assist the passengers. The second class have one bedroom for two or three guests, a couch for each person, they also have servants waiting upon them and are equipped with everything, the only difference is that supplies are a slightly cheaper than those of the upper class. The third class is on the deck or in the lower part of the ship and [there] the guests prepare their meals by themselves. Livestock on the ship consists of about ten oxen, about a hundred chickens, ducks and pigeons and more than a hundred pigs and a hundred sheep, in order to have animals to slaughter and milk every day. [On the steamship] the staff even include carpenters, tailors and so on. (Guo 2003: 17-18)

The surprises do not end here, as Guo learns as soon as he embarks the *Nubia*:¹²

July 28th 1859. [...] The steamship we went aboard today is called *Nubia* and it is twice bigger than the boat from Hong Kong to Ceylon. The ship is divided into four levels, on the upper stern there are cabins and corridors; the bow is for sailors and workers and livestock. On both sides, guns, cannons, swords and halberds are lined up to guard against pirate forces from the sea. On the second level there are more than fifty guestrooms all decorated in gold and carpeted in felt; bright glass lamps are inlaid in each of the painted pillars [of the room] turning night into daytime. Outside there is a dining room, a bathhouse, a medical room, a drinking room, latrines, etcetera. On the third level, there are all the instrument rooms, and the same on the fourth level. Every day there are musical performances and sumptuous dinners: it is truly a city of the Water Kingdom! (Guo 2003: 27)

Figure 2 – The steamship. (Guo 1863: I, 25v)



¹² *Lubiya* 魯卑亞 in the text. This steamship, like the *Singapore*, belonged to the Peninsular and Oriental Navigation Company. Launched in 1854, it was then sold to the London School of Board in 1877 and renamed *Shaftesbury*. See: www.poheritage.com (01/2020).

Often what interests Guo Liancheng the most is the ‘melting-pot’ he is now coming into contact with:

July 5th 1859. On the ship there are about one hundred sailors, astonishing people coming from every country of the world: some are black as pitch all over their bodies with an appearance very much like that of the fictional Pigsy;¹³ others have long noses and blue eyes; some have curly hair and bristling beards and others are bald; some have their ears pierced; some tie red scarves around their heads; some bind printed cloths around their waist; [...]
(Guo 2003: 18)

Among the different kinds of people he encounters, “black people” (Fig. 3) are perhaps the most surprising to Guo, as can be observed in many passages:

July 5th 1859. [...] Black people do not use a knife and fork to eat and nor do they use chopsticks. When they eat, they all sit on the floor with a large basin full of cold rice, they pour a spicy yellow liquid onto it, then each of them kneads the rice into a ball with their black hands and puts it in their mouth.
(Guo 2003: 18)

In Aden, en route to Europe:

August 8th 1859. [...] Today, after waking from my afternoon nap, I heard the voices of people passing by and singing to each other in return and so I pushed the window open to watch. I saw [people] sailing more than ten skiffs all around our boat who were singing: black mouths opened revealing white teeth singing with whistling voices, of course without expression. Soon after, they looked at me and laughed, placing their hands over their foreheads as in greeting, whispering to each another in who knows what language. [...]
(Guo 2003: 32)

And again, on his way back:

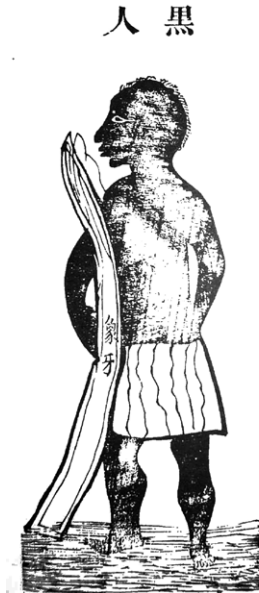
April 11th 1860. [...] Today I heard of an Arab who sells black people as slaves. After his ship passed Aden, the British took [it] and set [the slaves] free, then they destroyed the slave ship. Selling people as slaves is, in fact, strictly prohibited in Europe. (Guo 2003: 103)

¹³ Pigsy or Zhu Bajie 豬八戒, being one of the protagonists of the masterpiece *Journey to the West*, is a very popular character in China (see Chapter 3, note 9).

In Singapore,

July 13th 1859. [...]. The natives' bodies tend to be black in color, they are bald-headed and have pierced ears, their mouths are red as cinnabar. They roll a cloth around their heads and bind a long width of fabric around the lower part of the body as drawers. They eat sitting on the floor, using their hands as chopsticks. There are even those who eat [directly] using their lips. (Guo 2003: 24)

Figure 3 – *Heiren* 黑人. Black man (Guo 1863: III, 8r).



As can be seen from the above excerpts, Guo is fascinated by people, especially when their physical features were hitherto unknown to the author. His notes are very scanty though it is possible to clearly perceive a negative judgment on “non-white” people, especially when relating to their food habits.

Furthermore, while the young Chinese traveler has the opportunity to observe men, he scarcely notices women and, writing in Cairo that “all women cover their faces with a long cloth leaving only their eyes exposed” (August 14th 1859; in Guo 2003: 39), he does not elaborate on this custom and in general does not write anything of note about the different situations of women in Europe, unlike other Chinese travelers just a few years later.¹⁴ In my view, this lacuna could be ex-

¹⁴ The women issue was a “hot” topic in the late Qing so much so that it is possible to find annotations about Western women in almost every Chinese traveler’s account

plained by two factors: the first is that, being among Catholic priests, he was unlikely to come into contact with women. Secondly, unlike the experiences of the Chinese travelers who followed in his footsteps just six or seven years later and who travelled in other parts of Europe and the United States, Guo Liancheng's 19th century Italy was still lagging behind in terms of women's emancipation movements. In other words, the condition of Italian women, especially within the Roman Catholic Church, was neither distant nor different from conditions in the small Catholic community Guo Liancheng had already witnessed in China.

2. Linguistic innovations in *XYBL*

Despite appearances, as many scholars have already shown, cultural exchanges between Catholics and Protestants existed and were intense. This can be seen in some linguistic works by Protestants, which drew on Jesuit sources, and also in the field of Western learning in China, as Benjamin Elman's studies underline (Elman 2005 and 2006).

Other strong evidence of these cultural exchanges can be found in Chinese sources of the period including the travel account by Guo Liancheng. What follows is a short introduction of the lexicon contained in his travel diary. During his long journey abroad, Guo Liancheng is obviously obliged to use new words and neologisms to describe the Western world. In actual fact, after a period of transition, many of these new expressions did not survive and were replaced by more widespread terms. Nonetheless, Guo Liancheng's linguistic innovations and the influence of Western culture on his account can help to capture a glimpse of a period which was rather complex from a linguistic point of view.

When describing the West, the author adopts two linguistic strategies. On the one hand, he makes extensive use of new terms he found in sources written in Chinese by Westerners and, on the other hand, he tries to create new words himself when he has no other alternative.

As previously pointed out, in *Xiyou bilüe* different sources coexist (Jesuit, Protestant and Chinese) and the author, unlike the literary tradition of the time, often informs his readers of the sources he quotes. These sources can be divided into three groups according to their contents (see Table 2 in this Chapter).

When he wants to explain something concerning religion, he makes use of Catholic sources such as Giulio Aleni's *Tianzhu jiangsheng yanxing jilüe*

published at the end of the 19th century. I have dedicated a small volume to those accounts and to these early descriptions on Western women, see Castorina (2008). On Italian women in Chinese travel accounts, see Castorina (2020)

天主降生言行紀略 [*Compendium vitae Christi*] and Dominique Parrenin's *Jimei pian* 濟美篇 [*Perfectoe puchritudinis liber*].

The travel account is also rich in geographical references, and what is unusual is the diversity of the works the author consults and therefore many of the toponyms used in the book already existed. Apart from minor Italian cities and localities, in fact, place names used by Guo are taken for the most part from Wei Yuan's *Haiguo tuzhi*. Among the geographical sources to which the author is most indebted, I indicate here the aforementioned *Kunyu tushuo* by Verbiest, *Universal geography* by Muirhead, Wei Yuan's *Haiguo tuzhi* and Xu Jiyu's *Yinghuan zhilue*.

The third group includes works on Western science and technology (Table 3). The works in the following list are not only quoted in the travel account, but often copied in full in the diary.

Table 3 – Sources on Western science and technology

Author	Chinese title	other title
Sabatino De Ursis, Xu Guangqi	<i>Taixi shuifa</i> 泰西水法	Hydraulic Methods of the Great West, 1612
Joseph Edkins	<i>Zhong-Xi tongshu</i> 中西通書	Chinese and Western Almanac, 1852
Joseph Edkins	<i>Zhongxue</i> 重學	Mechanics, 1859
Benjamin Hobson	<i>Bowu xinbian</i> 博物新編	Natural Philosophy, 1855
<i>Xia'er guanzhen</i> 遐邇貫珍		<i>Chinese Serial</i> , monthly published between 1853-1856.
<i>Liuhe congtan</i> 六合叢談		<i>Shanghae Serial</i> , 1857-1858

For convenience, here I will give only some examples of new words and expressions used in *XYBL*, dividing them into different groups: religion, science and technology, art and architecture. Analyzing the origins of the words for each field, it is possible to have a better understanding of how Guo Liancheng worked in order to explain 'new things' to his compatriots.

Religion

Religious terms are obviously taken from Jesuit or other Catholic sources (Table 4). For the most part they are phonemic loans from Latin because phonemic loans are related to prayer wording and so were already in use in Catholic Chinese communities. Others can be found in other missionary materials, for example in Francisco Varo's *Arte de la lengua mandarina* (1703).

Table 4 – New terms for religion.

Original meaning	In <i>XYBL</i>
<i>Pater</i> (Father)	<i>Badele</i> 罷德肋
<i>Deus</i> (God)	<i>Dousi</i> 陡斯
<i>Filius</i> (Son)	<i>Feilüe</i> 費略
<i>Spiritus Sanctus</i>	<i>Sibiliduo sanduo</i> 斯彼利多三多
<i>Deus</i> (God)	<i>Tusi</i> 徒斯
Amen	<i>Yameng</i> 亞孟
Priest	<i>Duode</i> 鐸德
(Catholic) father; priest	<i>Shenfu</i> 神父
apostle	<i>Zongtu</i> 宗徒
Cardinal	<i>Hongyi zaixiang</i> 紅衣宰相
Christians	<i>Jiaozhongren</i> 教中人
cardinal-prefect	<i>zhujiao yuanzhang</i> 主教院長

The compound *duode* is the contraction of the old *saze'erduode* 撒則而多得, a phonemic loan from Latin coined by Matteo Ricci who later replaced it with the semantic loan *shenfu* 神父 “or “spiritual father”, which is still in use in modern Chinese to indicate Catholic priests. The abridged *duode* had lost its phonemic origin but it was later preferred to *saze'erduode* probably because it was disyllabic. In the *XYBL*, the term *duode* occurs six times while *shenfu* only twice. From this data, therefore, it can be assumed that although *shenfu* already existed, *duode* was preferred in Catholic Chinese communities, or at least Hubei's communities, in the first half of the 19th century.

Art & Architecture

As for works of art and architecture, the young Chinese author created new words himself since there were no such descriptions in the scientific books of his time. European art was still almost unknown in China and therefore the task of describing the West was even more challenging. In this case, Guo Liancheng preferred to use words which already existed in the lexicon, giving them new meaning (semantic loans). See for instance *dachang* (overall situation), *feiquan* (cliffside spring), *zouchang* (come on stage) and *zoudao* (to walk) (Table 5).

Table 5 – New terms for art and architecture in *XYBL*.

<i>dachang</i> 大場	public square
<i>feiquan</i> 飛泉	fountain (<i>arch.</i>)
<i>huaweng</i> 畫瓮	painted niche (<i>arch.</i>)
<i>tidao yuhui</i> 梯道紆回	circular stairs (spiral stairs)
<i>tiqiuchang</i> 踢球場	football field (loan translation)
<i>zouchang</i> 走場	square
<i>zoudao</i> 走道	footpath

Science & Technology

Guo Liancheng uses two words for ‘natural science’: *bowu* 博物 and *gewu qiongli zhi xue* 格物窮理之學, lit. the science which “investigates things and exhaustively masters principles”.¹⁵ While the former was just created to translate Hobson’s *Natural Philosophy*, the latter was older, but still widespread with the meaning of science in a broader sense and, for instance, used to form the word “scientist” as well. In any case, the former is preferred in the *Brief Account*.

On the basis of the *XYBL*, it can also be noted that the disyllabic word 火車 (steam train; still in the Chinese lexicon) which occurs 33 times, is preferred to the longer 火輪車, which appears “only” 13 times.

Table 6 – New scientific and technological terms.

Term in <i>XYBL</i>	Meaning in <i>XYBL</i>	Possible source
<i>bowu</i> 博物	natural science	Hobson 1855
<i>gewu qiongli</i> 格物窮理之學	natural science/ philosophy	De Ursis, Xu Guangqi 1612
<i>gewu zhi shi</i> 格致之士	scientist; Doctor of Science	<i>Shanghae Serial</i> 1857
<i>gewu</i> ¹⁶ <i>chaoxing</i> 格物超性	transcendental physics	
<i>fengyubiao</i> 風雨表	barometer	<i>Shanghae Serial</i> 1857
<i>fengyuzhen</i> 風雨針	barometer	Hobson 1855
<i>guankui zhi shi</i> 管窺之士	astronomer	

¹⁵ The English translation is by Elman (2005).

¹⁶ On *gewu* 格物, see also Masini (1993: 173).

<i>huoche</i> 火車	train	Bridgman 1838; ¹⁷ Wei 1844
<i>huochuan</i> 火船	wheel steamship	Bridgman 1838; ¹⁸ Wei 1844
<i>huolunche</i> 火輪車	steam-train	Bridgman 1838; ¹⁹ Wei 1844
<i>huixiangsuo</i> 繪像所	photo studio	

Some linguistic confusion is visible in the account, since many synonyms coexist. Other than the aforementioned “priest”, Guo Liancheng uses different terms to signify “hospital” or to indicate periodicals in general, as in the examples given below. Hospital, in modern Chinese *yiyuan* 醫院, is alternatively indicated as *bingrenfang* 病人房; *bingrenyuan* 病人院 (now in Japanese lexicon) and *bingyuan* 病院. The mental asylum is instead indicated with *fengrenyuan* 瘋人院, still used today.

Xiyou bilüe can also be useful for dating some neologisms such as those referring to periodicals, which he distinguishes in *qiribao* 七日報, weekly (Sunday journal); *ribao* 日報, daily newspaper;²⁰ and *xinwenzhi* 新聞紙, newspaper.

This kind of analysis, though very sketchy here, allows us to observe the ‘life’ of a word in a period in which its usage was not fixed, and also helps translators interested in late-Qing prose. The analysis of the lexicon of *XYBL* and other travel accounts can therefore prove useful for a more in-depth understanding of the 19th century as an important stage of transition in the process of the formation of modern Chinese lexicon.

¹⁷ Masini (1993: 179). Cfr. Bridgman E., *Meiligeguo zhilüe* 美理哥國志略 [A short history of the United States of America], Canton 1838.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ It is used also in *Chinese Serial* but with the meaning of “daily report” but it is not in *Shanghai Serial* or in *Haiguo tuzhi*. Masini dates it back to 1864 with the publication of *Huazi ribao* 華字日報 (Chinese Mail) in Hong Kong (Masini 1993: 193). The fact that it is used in *XYBL* indicates that the word was already in use in 1859.

APPENDIXES

Appendix I. Toponyms

List of names of places of historical and tourist interest, churches and institutes in *XYBL*:

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>(Annam zhi) Lunai</i>	(安南之) 祿奈	Spratly Island? (Vietnam)
<i>Afeilijia</i>	阿非利加	Africa
<i>Afeilijia haijiao</i>	阿非利加海角	African cape (Cape of Good Hope)
<i>Afeilijia zhou</i>	阿非利加州	African continent
<i>Aiji</i>	埃及	Egypt
<i>Anweiyuan</i>	安慰院	Sanctuary of the Consolation (Turin)
<i>Aodali</i>	澳大利	Australia
<i>Aodaliya</i>	澳大利亞	Australia
<i>Ba'erma</i>	把兒瑪	Parma
<i>Badouya</i>	把都亞	Padua
<i>Baileng</i>	白冷	Bethlehem
<i>Bangfeili yuan</i>	榔非利园	Villa Doria Pamphili
<i>Baoliu yuan</i>	保六院	St. Paul's Church
<i>Baolu shengtang</i>	保祿圣堂	St. Paul's Cathedral (Malta)
<i>Baoluo shuyuan</i>	保罗书院	St. Paul's College (Hong Kong)
<i>Beiluzhi</i>	俾路芝	Beluchistan
<i>Bingzhou</i>	冰洲	Iceland
<i>Biyemengde sheng</i>	必野猛德省	Province of Piedmont
<i>Boyaocha cheng</i>	博药茶城	City of Bologna
<i>Buluoni</i>	卜罗泥	Broni (Pavia)

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>Chuanjiao bu</i>	傳教部	Congregation <i>de Propaganda Fide</i>
<i>Chuanjiaobu shufang</i>	傳教部書房	College <i>de Propaganda Fide</i>
<i>Chuanjiaobu xuefang</i>	傳教部學房	College <i>de Propaganda Fide</i>
<i>Da Lüsong</i>	大呂宋	Spain
<i>Da Shengmu diantang</i>	大聖母殿堂	Basilica of Saint Mary Major
<i>Da Xi</i>	大西	The great West (the West)
<i>Dajitai</i>	大祭台	High Altar (St. Peter's Baldachin)
<i>Dawulinuo</i>	大五利諾	Turin
<i>Dawulinuo</i>	大五里諾	Turin
<i>Delayana (shizhu)</i>	得辣牙納(石柱)	Trajan's Column
<i>Diboli</i>	地伯利	Tiber
<i>Diboli</i>	的波里	Tripoli
<i>Dongyang chuanjiao gongsuoguan</i>	東洋傳教公所館	<i>Propaganda Fide's</i> Asian Office
<i>Dongyang xueguan</i>	東洋學館	Asian College (Penang)
<i>Duo'erduonuo</i>	多爾多諾	Tortona
<i>Duo'erduonuo</i>	多耳多諾	Tortona
<i>Elejiya guo</i>	厄肋濟亞國	Country of Greece
<i>Eriduo guo</i>	厄日多國	Country of Egypt
<i>Folangxi</i>	佛郎西	France
<i>Folangxi xueguan</i>	佛朗西學館	French school (Hong Kong)
<i>Fuguo</i>	弗國	Country of France
<i>Fulangxi</i>	拂琅西	France
<i>Fulangxi</i>	拂郎西	France
<i>Gaoshan</i>	高山	Montalto (Pavia)
<i>Geluose'a</i>	歌羅瑟阿	Colosseum
<i>Gerixijia</i>	哥日西加	Corsica
<i>Geshengjiya</i>	哥生濟亞	Cosenza
<i>Gongsidanding shifang</i>	公斯但丁石坊	Arch of Constantine
<i>Gucheng</i>	古城	Civitavecchia
<i>Haowang jiao</i>	好望角	Cape of Good Hope
<i>Helanda di</i>	喝蘭達地	Holland
<i>Huaqiguo</i>	花旗國	United States
<i>Ji dao</i>	雞島	Gallinara Island

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>Jia'erguda</i>	加爾古大	Calcutta
<i>Jiadalina tang</i>	加大利納堂	Saint Catherine's Monastery (Egypt)
<i>Jialinanuo</i>	加利納若	Carignano (Turin)
<i>Jianuobiyue zhen</i>	加諾彼約鎮	town of Cannobio (Piedmont)
<i>Jiaozong wangchao</i>	教宗王朝	Papal Palace
<i>Jiayiluo</i>	加以羅	Cairo
<i>Jieluwa</i>	結魯蛙	Genoa
<i>Jinxing miao</i>	金星廟	Temple of Venus (Rome)
<i>Ledi</i>	樂德	Rhodes
<i>Liuqiu zhudao</i>	琉球諸島	Ryukyu Islands
<i>Liweiya</i>	利未亞	Libya (Africa)
<i>Liwonuo cheng</i>	李我諾城	City of Livorno
<i>Luoma</i>	羅馬	Rome
<i>Luoma dangjia</i>	羅馬當家	Roman Apostolic Vicariate
<i>Luoma dangjia chu</i>	羅馬當家處	Roman Apostolic Vicariate
<i>Luoma gongshibu zhi kuitianlou</i>	羅馬公事部之窺天樓	Observatory of Campidoglio in Rome
<i>Luoma xueguan</i>	羅馬學館	Collegio Romano (Roman College)
<i>Ma'er dao</i>	瑪兒島	Island of Malta
<i>Ma'erda haidao</i>	馬爾大海島	Island of Malta
<i>Ma'erdinuo tang</i>	馬爾弟諾堂	St Martin's church
<i>Maijia cheng</i>	麥加城	Mecca city
<i>Maixi</i>	麥西	Egypt
<i>Maliya yuan</i>	瑪利亞院	Church of [St] Mary of Graces (Voghera)
<i>Mashan</i>	瑪山	Monte Mario
<i>Mashan</i>	馬山	Monte Mario
<i>Meigui tang</i>	玫瑰堂	Church of [Our Lady] of the Rosary (Voghera)
<i>Meishan</i>	美山	Montebello (Lombardy)
<i>Mengdebailuo</i>	孟德百洛	Montebello (Lombardy)
<i>Mengdeya'erduo</i>	孟德亞兒多	Montalto (Lombardy)
<i>Mengjiali'eli</i>	蒙加利厄利	Moncalieri (Turin)
<i>Mojia cheng</i>	莫加城	Mocha city

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>Moluyu</i>	摩魯魚	Malacca? Moluccas?
<i>Moluyu</i>	摩魯隅	Moluccas
<i>Moxina</i>	默西納	Messina
<i>Naboli</i>	納波里	Naples
<i>Naboli</i>	納玻璃	Naples
<i>Nan Bei Yamolijia</i>	南北亞墨里加	North and South America
<i>Nanbinghai</i>	南冰海	Antarctic Ocean
<i>Nanyang qundao</i>	南洋群島	Malay Archipelago
<i>Napoli</i>	納坡離	Naples
<i>Nubi'a</i>	努比阿	Nubia
<i>Ouluoba</i>	歐羅巴	Europe
<i>Ouluoba zhou</i>	歐羅巴州	Europe
<i>Ping'anyuan</i>	平安院	Convent of [Our Lady] of Peace (Genoa)
<i>Qiweidawu'egeya</i>	期威大五厄格亞	Civitavecchia
<i>Ren'aiyuan</i>	仁愛院	Little House of Divine Providence (Cottolengo) (Turin)
<i>Remuya</i>	熱奴亞	Genoa
<i>Rilusaleng</i>	日路撒冷	Jerusalem
<i>Rudeya</i>	如德亞	Judea
<i>Ruowang dian</i>	若望殿	Cathedral of St. John the Baptist (Turin Cathedral)
<i>Ruowang tang</i>	若望堂	St. John's Co-Cathedral (Valletta)
<i>Ruowang yuan</i>	若望院	Church of St. John
<i>Sebasidiyanuo datang</i>	色巴斯弟亞諾大堂	Basilica of St. Sebastiano (Rome)
<i>Sheng Baolu datang</i>	聖保祿大堂	Basilica of St. Paul (Outside the Walls) (Rome)
<i>Sheng Baiduolu datang</i>	聖伯多祿大堂	St. Peter's Basilica
<i>Sheng Baiduolu dian</i>	聖伯多祿殿	St. Peter's Basilica
<i>Sheng Baiduolu julingyu tang</i>	聖伯多祿居囹圄堂	Basilica of St. Peter in Chains
<i>Sheng Baiduolu shanyuan</i>	聖伯多祿山院	Courtyard of St. Peter's in Montorio
<i>Sheng Fangjige yuan</i>	聖方濟各院	Convent of St. Francis (Ameno)
<i>Sheng Feilibo tang</i>	聖斐理伯堂	Church of St. Maria in Vallicella (Rome)

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>Sheng Mu xuedi dian</i>	聖母雪地殿	Basilica of St. Mary of the Snows (St Mary Major, Rome)
<i>Sheng Ruowang tang</i>	聖若望堂	Cathedral of St. John (in the Lateran) (Rome)
<i>Sheng Ruowang, Baoliu ersheng zhitang</i>	聖若望、保祿二聖之堂	Basilica of Saints John and Paul (Rome)
<i>Sheng Yinajue tang</i>	聖依納爵堂	Church of St. Ignatius (of Loyola, Rome)
<i>Shengjia shuyuan</i>	聖家書院	Sacred Family College (Naples)
<i>Shengmu</i>	聖墓	Holy Sepulcher (Jerusalem)
<i>Shengmu lingbao tang</i>	聖母領報堂	Basilica della Santissima Annunziata (Genoa)
<i>Shengquantang</i>	聖泉堂	Tre Fontane Abbey (Rome)
<i>Shengshan yuan</i>	聖山院	Convent of Sacred Mount
<i>Shengti</i>	聖梯	Holy Stairs
<i>Shengti tang</i>	聖梯堂	Sanctuary of Holy Stairs (Rome)
<i>Shengzhong</i>	聖冢	Sacred tombs, i.e. Vatican grottoes
<i>Shengzuo</i>	聖座	Chair of St. Peter
<i>Shimalali</i>	失靡拉里	Himalayas
<i>Si Hai</i>	死海	Dead Sea
<i>Sumendala dao</i>	蘇門答喇島	Sumatra island
<i>Suyishi</i>	蘇夷士	Suez
<i>Taihu</i>	太湖	Lake Maggiore
<i>Tianshen Maliya tang</i>	天神瑪利亞堂	Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels (Rome)
<i>Tianshen qiao</i>	天神橋	Ponte Sant'Angelo
<i>Tianshenying</i>	天神營	Castel Sant'Angelo
<i>Tiantan yuan</i>	天台院	Convent of Ara Coeli
<i>Wangchao</i>	王朝	Royal Palace (Turin)
<i>Weizengjue hui</i>	味增爵會	Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul (Turin)
<i>Wenduna yuan</i>	文都納院	Church of St. Bonaventure (Rome)
<i>Wogena</i>	我格納	Voghera
<i>Wulinuo hu</i>	勿理諾湖	Lake Velino
<i>Wunuojiya</i>	勿擱祭亞	Venice
<i>Wuzhou fangwu yuan</i>	五州方物院	Museum of Five Continents (Turin)

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese name	Lit. translation or name
<i>Xijili</i>	西吉利	Sicily
<i>Xijiliya cheng</i>	西吉利城	City of Sicily (Messina)
<i>Xinai shan</i>	西奈山	Mount Sinai
<i>Xiqiliaya</i>	西齊里亞	Sicily
<i>Yadeng</i>	亞登	Aden
<i>Yafeilijia</i>	亞非利加	Africa
<i>Yalabo</i>	亞喇伯	Arabia
<i>Yali</i>	亞立	Alexandria (of Egypt)
<i>Yalishan</i>	亞立山	Alessandria (Italy)
<i>Yalishan</i>	亞立山	Alexandria (of Egypt)
<i>Yaluona</i>	亞羅納	Arona (Piedmont)
<i>Yaluona</i>	亞落納	Arona (Piedmont)
<i>Yamolijia</i>	亞墨利加	America
<i>Yamolijia haijiao</i>	亞墨利加海角	American Cape (Cape Horn)
<i>Yamonuo</i>	亞默諾	Ameno (Piedmont)
<i>Yaxiya</i>	亞西亞	Asia
<i>Yesu tang</i>	耶穌堂	Church of the Gesù (Rome)
<i>Yesuhui shi xiuyuan</i>	耶穌會士修院	Professed house of the Society of Jesus (Rome)
<i>Yidaliya</i>	以大里亞	Italy
<i>Yidaliya guo</i>	意大利亞國	Country of Italy
<i>Yidun Rudeya</i>	以頓如德亞	Idumea
<i>Yingjili</i>	英吉利	England
<i>Yonghua shuyuan</i>	英華書院	Anglo-Chinese College (Ying Wa College) (Hong Kong)
<i>Yuanshi</i>	圓室	Tempietto of Bramante
<i>Yuerenhu</i>	悅人湖	Lake Ameno (Lake Orta)
<i>Zeji liya fen</i>	則濟利亞墳	Tomb of Cecilia Metella (Rome)
<i>Zhongguo xueguan</i>	中國學館	Chinese College (Naples)
<i>Zuoli cheng</i>	左里城	City of Pozzuoli

Appendix II. Neologisms and new expressions

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese term	Usage in <i>XYBL</i>
<i>Badele</i>	罷德肋	Father (<i>Pater</i>)
<i>Bayinxiang</i>	八音箱	Musical box
<i>Biyana</i>	必亞納	Piano (<i>mus.</i>)
<i>Bingrenfang</i>	病人房	Hospital
<i>Bingrenyuan</i>	病人院	Hospital
<i>Bingyuan</i>	病院	Hospital
<i>Boguyuan</i>	博古院	Museum
<i>Bojungula dashe ri</i>	博峻古辣大赦日	Indulgence of the Porziuncola
<i>Bolanyuan</i>	博覽院	Museum
<i>Boluomi</i>	波羅蜜	Pineapple
<i>Canjiyuan</i>	殘疾院	Sanitarium for invalids
<i>Changjingtuo</i>	長頸駝	Camel
<i>Changliu</i>	常流	(ocean) current
<i>Cundengfang</i>	寸登方	Cubic inch
<i>Dachang</i>	大場	Square (piazza)
<i>Dianyin</i>	電雷	Telegram
<i>Dianyinxian</i>	電雷線	Telegraph line, telegraph
<i>Dianzi</i>	鉛字	Type (<i>typogr.</i>)
<i>Dishi</i>	地事	Human geography
<i>Dishu</i>	地數	Mathematical geography
<i>Dixing</i>	地性	Physical geography
<i>Dousi</i>	陡斯	God (<i>Deus</i>)
<i>Duode</i>	鐸德	Priest (<i>Sacerdos</i>)
<i>Falawang</i>	法辣王	Pharaoh
<i>Feilüe</i>	費略	Son (<i>Filius</i>)
<i>Feiquan</i>	沸泉	Geyser
<i>Feiquan</i>	飛泉	Fountain
<i>Feiquan penshui</i>	飛泉噴水	Fountain
<i>Fengrenyuan</i>	瘋人院	Mental asylum
<i>Fengyitiaochē</i>	縫衣鐵車	Sewing machine
<i>Fengyubiao</i>	風雨表	Barometer

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese term	Usage in <i>XYBL</i>
<i>Fengyuhanshu zhi xinwenbao</i>	風雨寒暑之新聞報	Weather report
<i>Fengyuzhen</i>	風雨針	Barograph
<i>Gege</i>	哥哥	Coconut
<i>Gewu chaoxing</i>	格物超性	Transcendental Physics
<i>Gewu qiongli</i>	格物窮理	Science (Studies to Exhaustively Master Principles)
<i>Gewu zhi shi</i>	格致之士	Scientist (lit. Doctor who investigates things)
<i>Guankui zhi shi</i>	管窺之士	Astronomer
<i>Guanlie jilun</i>	關挾機輪	Axis (<i>mech.</i>)
<i>Guduyuan</i>	孤獨院	Orphanage
<i>Haigu</i>	海股	Sea strait
<i>Hanshubiao</i>	寒暑表	Thermometer
<i>Haoguyuan</i>	好古院	Museum
<i>Hengxin feng</i>	恆信風	Trade winds
<i>Hongyi zaixiang</i>	紅衣宰相	Cardinal
<i>Huangdao zhi Nan-Bei erxian</i>	黃道之南北二限	Tropics (lit. the North and South limits on the elliptic)
<i>Huaweng</i>	畫瓮	Painted niche
<i>Huixiangsuo</i>	繪像所	Photo studio
<i>Huochuan</i>	火船	Steamship
<i>Huolunche</i>	火輪車	Steam train
<i>Jiafei</i>	加非	Coffee
<i>Jiafeiguan</i>	茄菲館	Café
<i>Jiafeishui</i>	茄菲水	Coffee
<i>Jiangdaoshi</i>	講道士	Preacher
<i>Jiaozhongren</i>	教中人	Christian
<i>Jie</i>	一節	month (Gregorian calendar)
<i>Jiqiao</i>	機竅	Valve (<i>mech.</i>)
<i>Jiufang</i>	酒房	Bar
<i>Jiukong lianzhu qiang</i>	九孔連珠槍	Nine barrel repeating gun
<i>Kuitian jiguan</i>	窺天機管	Telescope
<i>Kuitianlou</i>	窺天樓	Observatory (lit. tower to scan the sky)

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese term	Usage in <i>XYBL</i>
<i>Kuixi</i>	窺戲	Peep box, optical box
<i>Liulianzi</i>	流連子	Durian
<i>Luowenti</i>	螺紋梯	Spiral staircase
<i>Manggusheng, mangli</i>	茫姑生, 茫栗	Mango
<i>Maoyifeng</i>	貿易風	Trade winds
<i>Nan-Bei erji huanxian</i>	南北二極圓線	North and South Polar circles
<i>Nanji zhi xing</i>	南極之星	Crux (lit. Polar Southern star)
<i>Piaoyang da huolunchuan</i>	飄洋大火輪船	Transoceanic steamship
<i>Putao lin</i>	葡萄林	Vineyard
<i>Qianlijing</i>	千里鏡	telescope
<i>Qianmian</i>	前面	façade (<i>arch.</i>)
<i>Qingtan'erqi</i>	輕炭二氣	Illuminating gas
<i>Qiribao</i>	七日報	Weekly magazine
<i>Queshuiyi</i>	卻水衣	Diving suit
<i>Queshuiyi</i>	卻水衣	Waterproof (coat)
<i>Redaodai</i>	熱道帶	Torrid zone (Tropics)
<i>Ribao</i>	日報	Daily newspaper
<i>Sanweiyiti</i>	三位一體	Trinity
<i>Shichenzhong</i>	時晨鐘	Clock
<i>Shishuku</i>	詩書庫	Library
<i>Shuiji huolun</i>	水機火輪	Hydraulic turbine
<i>Shuilunji yuan</i>	水輪機院	Spinning mill
<i>Shuiqin</i>	水琴	Water organ
<i>Sibiliduo Sanduo</i>	斯彼利多三多	Holy Spirit (<i>Spiritus Sanctus</i>)
<i>Suoyin zhi xiang</i>	所印之像	Photographic image (photograph)
<i>Tianwenshi</i>	天文士	Astronomer
<i>Tidao yuhui</i>	梯道紆回	Spiral staircase
<i>Tiqiuchang</i>	踢球場	Stadium, soccer stadium
<i>Tugu</i>	土股	Peninsula
<i>Tusi</i>	徒斯	God (<i>Deus</i>)
<i>Wanwu xiangli</i>	萬物相引	Force of gravity
<i>Wendaodai</i>	溫道帶	Temperate zone
<i>Wengdao</i>	瓮道	Tunnel

<i>pinyin</i>	Chinese term	Usage in <i>XYBL</i>
<i>Wenshi</i>	烘石	Lava
<i>Wulanna</i>	烏闌哪	Uranus
<i>Wuse baoshi coucheng</i>	五色寶石湊成	Mosaic (lit. set of multicolored stones)
<i>Wuse baoshi suocouzhi</i>	五色寶石所湊之	Mosaic (lit. made of multicolored stones)
<i>Xinwenzhi</i>	新聞紙	Newspaper
<i>Xiyang yingxiangjing</i>	西洋映像鏡	Magic lantern
<i>Xunmengguan</i>	訓蒙館	Institute for primary education
<i>Yameng</i>	亞孟	Amen
<i>Yanjunchang</i>	演軍場	Training field
<i>Yaofang</i>	藥館	Pharmacy
<i>Yaxia zhi she</i>	壓下之勢	Pressure force
<i>Ying'erhui</i>	嬰兒會	Orphanage
<i>Yinshui jilun</i>	引水機輪	Water wheel
<i>Yinziguan</i>	印字館	Printshop
<i>Yixueguan</i>	義學館	Public school
<i>Yongqizhong</i>	泳氣鐘	Diving bell
<i>Yuanding</i>	圓頂	Cupola (<i>arch.</i>)
<i>Yueshuguan</i>	閱書館	Reading room
<i>Yuyingguan</i>	育嬰館	Nursery school
<i>Zhaodengta</i>	照燈塔	Lighthouse
<i>Zhaoyuanjing</i>	照遠鏡	Spectroscope
<i>Zhengding</i>	正頂	Zenith
<i>Zhishi</i>	知士	Learned man, scientist
<i>Zhoudao</i>	周道	Orbit
<i>Zirandeng</i>	自燃燈	Self-ignition lamp
<i>Zongdong</i>	宗動	Engine
<i>Zongtu</i>	宗徒	Apostle
<i>Zouchang</i>	走場	Piazza, parvis
<i>Zoudao</i>	走道	Pavement

Appendix III. Anthroponyms¹

Corresponding name	<i>Pinyin</i>	Chinese name in <i>XYBL</i>
(Guo) Junda	(Guo) Junda	[郭] 俊達
(Guo) Paul	(Guo) Baolu	[郭] 保祿
Abel	Yabo	亞伯
Alessandro (Farnese), Cardinal	<i>xiangguo</i> Yalishan	相國亞立山
Alessandro (Spelta)	Yalishan	亞立山
Alessandro VII	Yalishan <i>di qi wei</i>	亞立山第七位
Archimede	Ya'erjimode, Jimode	亞而幾墨德、幾墨得
Baccarani Giuseppe, Fr.	Tian <i>gong</i> , Tian <i>mu</i>	田公、田牧
Barnabò (Alessandro), Mr	Bai <i>gong</i>	伯公
Borghese (Caffarelli Scipione)	Bo'ergese	玻爾格瑟
Bramante	Bulamande	不辣滿德
Brancati Francesco	Fan [<i>sic</i>] Guowang	藩國王
Caesar Yang, Fr.	Chesa Yang <i>duo</i>	車撒楊鐸
Carlo (Maderno)	Jiale	加樂
Chen Lishan	Chen Lishan	陳立山
Clemente XI	Geleimengde <i>di shiyi wei</i>	格肋孟德第十一位
Clet Francis (Regis)	Liu <i>gong</i> Fangji	劉公方濟
Costantino	Gongsidanding	公斯但丁、公斯但定
Cristina (Spelta)	Jisidina	基斯弟納
Daedalus	Dedalu	德大祿
de Pantoja Diego	Pang Diwo	龐迪我
De Pesci, Msgr.	Luo <i>zhujiao</i>	羅主教
Diaz Emmanuel	Yang Manuo	楊瑪諾
Faà (di Bruno Francesco)	Faya	法亞
Feng Luigi	Feng Leisi	馮類思

¹ For Italian personal names or names clearly transcribed following the Italian pronunciation, I have used the Italian rather than the English spelling here. Of course, the appendix does not comprehend all the personal names in *XYBL* but only the ones of the people I was able to identify or that are fully transcribed, sometimes with the titles as they appear in the original text.

Corresponding name	<i>Pinyin</i>	Chinese name in <i>XYBL</i>
Flavio (Titus Flavius Vespasianus)	Fulaweyiao	弗辣未約
Gregorio XIII	<i>shisanwei</i> Ewolüe	十三位厄我略
Guo Juntang ²	Guo Juntang	郭俊堂
Guriel Ioseph	Ruose Gu	若瑟古
Huang Francis	Huang Fangji	黃方濟
Huang Jifu	Huang Jifu	黃吉甫
Isaac	Yisa	依撒
Isidoro	Yixiduo	一係多
Jacob	Yagebo	雅哥伯
Jiang Zhujun	Jiang Zhujun	江竹君
John the Evangelist	Ruowang <i>xiejing</i>	若望寫經
Lazarus	Lazalu	辣匝祿
Lei Mingqian	Lei Mingqian	雷鳴謙
Li Paolino	Li Baolina	李保利納
Liu Yuntan	Yuntan Liu	云壇劉
Luo Antonio	Luo Anduoni	羅安多尼
Luo Guangyi	Guangyi Luo	光義羅
Luo Wenda Joachim	Wenda Luo	文達羅
Luo Yicheng	Luo Yicheng	羅義盛
Moses	Meise	每瑟
Navarro Miguel	Fang <i>mu</i>	芳牧、方牧
Nicolaus V	Nigelao <i>diwuwei</i>	尼各老第五位
Nie Luca	Lujia Nie	路加聶
Paolo V	Baolu <i>diwu</i>	保祿五位
Perboyre Jean Gabriel, Fr.	Dong <i>gong</i> Ruowang	董公若望
Perpetuo (Guasco da Solero)	Bai'erbaiduo	白耳白多
Pilato (Pontius Pilate)	Biladuo	比辣多
Pio (IX)	Biyue, Bi'a	畢約、比阿
Pio VII	Biyue <i>qiwei</i>	必約七位

² Guo Juntang and Tu Zhisong were two Chinese converts who were studying in Roma at the College of *Propaganda Fide* (Collegium Urbanum). Guo Liancheng met them in January 24, 1860 as can be read in his journal.

Corresponding name	<i>Pinyin</i>	Chinese name in <i>XYBL</i>
Pompey (Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus)	Pengbaiyi	朋伯夷
Prinetti	Bulileidi	不利肋弟
Ricci Matteo	Li Madou	利瑪竇
Rizzolati Giuseppe	Li Ruowang	李若瑟
Secchi (Angelo)	Sege	瑟格
Shusheng (Joseph Kuo?)	Shusheng	樹聲
Spelta Luigi	Leisi Xu	類思徐
St. [Francis] Xavier	<i>sheng</i> Shawulüe	聖沙勿略
St. Bernardo	<i>sheng</i> Bai'ernaduo	聖伯爾納鐸
St. Borgia Francesco	<i>sheng</i> Fangjige Boriya	聖方濟各玻日亞
St. Giulio	<i>sheng</i> Ruli	聖儒利
St. Ignatius (of Loyola)	<i>sheng</i> Yinajue	聖依納爵
St. Luigi Gonzaga	<i>sheng</i> Leisi Gongsage	聖類思公撒格
St. Paul	<i>sheng</i> Baolu 聖保祿, Baoliu 保六	
St. Peter	<i>sheng</i> Baiduolu, Baiduoliu	聖伯多祿, 百多祿, 伯多六
Tu Zhisong	Tu Zhisong	涂知松
Vaudagna ³ (Angelo), Fr.	<i>shenfu</i> Jia	神父家
von Bell Adam	Tang Ruowang	湯若望
Wang Francis	Wang Fangji	王方濟
Wang Maichun	Wang Maichun	王買春
Wei Hengde	Wei Hengde	魏恒德
Xavier Francis	Fangjige Shawulüe	方濟各沙勿略
Xu Guangcheng Paul	Guangcheng Xu	光承徐
Xu Guangqi	Xu Guangqi, Xu Wending	徐光啟、徐文定
Yang Giovanni	Yang Ruowang	楊若望
Yu Jiashan	Yu Jiashan	余稼珊
Yuan Junwen	Yuan Junwen	袁峻文
Zhang Wenhuan	Zhang Wenhuan	張文煥

³ The identification is in Kuo's Italian version (MDMC 1867, 36: 570).

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¹ Last access: 01/2020.

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In the garden of the world. Italy to a young 19th century Chinese traveler. On September 14th, 1859, at the first light of dawn, a young Chinese traveler named Guo Liancheng 郭連城 (1839-1866) landed in Civitavecchia, Italy, after a long journey of overland travel and months of navigation. Coming from a small village far from the capital, he was only 20 years old and was in the company of an Italian priest, Luigi Celestino Spelta. Guo was not the first Chinese man to visit Europe but before leaving, he decided to keep a daily journal of his experience, published soon after his return with the title of *Xiyou bilüe* 西游筆略 (Brief Account of the Journey to the West). This book presents for the first time the story of Guo Liancheng, exploring a still little-known aspect of the history of the contacts between Italy and China. Following the pages of Guo Liancheng's journal, the author tries to shed light on its contents and features and to analyze the image of Italy described in the pages of *Brief account of the Journey to the West*, the earliest first-hand account on the *Bel Paese* ever published in China.

Miriam Castorina received her Ph.D. in History and Civilization of East Asia in 2008 at University of Rome La Sapienza. She studied Mandarin Chinese in Tianjin Nankai University and Beijing Foreign Studies University and spent a year as a visiting scholar at Peking University. Her research focuses on Chinese travel literature, on cultural contacts between Italy and China and on the history of Chinese teaching in Italy, topics on which she has published several articles and books.

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