

# The Virgin Mary *and* Catholic Identities in Chinese History



Jeremy Clarke

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To the Chinese Catholic communities—past, present and future



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# Introduction: Chinese Catholic identities in the modern period

The Catholic Church in China is surprisingly large, comprising millions of believers. The figure of more than twelve million is not a large number in Chinese terms, given the immensity of China's population.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, it represents a substantial number of adherents. Some of these Catholic communities can trace their history some 400 years back to the entry of European missionaries during the late Ming dynasty (from 1583 onwards). The history of these communities defies simplistic renderings, involving such things as the interplay of transnational politics with domestic power struggles, and the effects of rising Chinese national consciousness on the growth of local theologies. The intricacies of this history are especially evident from the beginning of the modern period, which commences with the First Opium War (1839–42).

During this epoch, Chinese Catholic communities emerged from the protection of the French government to become a church that governed its own affairs.<sup>2</sup> This transition took place in 1926, with the first consecration of Chinese bishops since the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> From this point onwards, the communities were no longer missionary jurisdictions solely under foreign leadership. And since 1949, Chinese Catholics have experienced the various cycles of control and loosening imposed by the ruling atheistic Chinese Communist Party. Believers from the four other legal religions in China have likewise endured these conditions.<sup>4</sup> The narrative strands around which an historical account of these communities can be woven are therefore many. The interactions both within the Catholic communities and between these communities and other groups and institutions are so complex that, rather than representing only a few different yet intertwined discursive threads, they can be more properly described as being like a snarled clump of yarn.

Doreen Massey used this strangely apt conceptualization to describe the complex relationships that arise where a small minority is affected by outside forces:

Whatever view one has of domination/resistance, there is somehow an implied spatial imaginary. Thus the view (a), which envisages an opposition of domination and resistance, might take the form of a central block under attack from smaller forces. In contrast, the view (b), which envisages entanglement may call to mind a ball of wool after the cat has been at it, in which the cross-over points, or knots or nodes, are connected by a multitude of relations variously of domination or resistance and some only ambiguously characterisable in those terms.<sup>5</sup>

Since the beginning of the modern period, many works about the history of the Catholic communities in China have relied on the type of binary imaginings mentioned as view (a) by Massey.<sup>6</sup> Not all these books and articles are based on a “domination/resistance” binary; some other formulations include “colonial/indigenous”, “Catholic/Communist” and “foreign/local”.<sup>7</sup> Themes such as the strong rural nature of the Chinese Catholic church or the place of the communities in the context of emerging civil society are considered.<sup>8</sup> Other works choose to evaluate the communities according to the amount of religious freedom they enjoy.<sup>9</sup>

Such formulations draw attention to otherwise under-studied aspects of this period of history. At times, nevertheless, the narratives built around these constructions ignore, or pay scant regard to, other factors, thereby obscuring complexities. To avoid the dangers of such frameworks, some authors have written micro-histories, focusing on a particular individual or region.<sup>10</sup> To be fair, the sheer size of the country, the immense population, the differences among the communities and the diversity of the historical accounts all combine to make a complex whole. It is hard for any narrative to avoid all the difficulties presented by this conglomeration of factors.

Let us consider, for instance, an historical narrative that uses the colonial/indigenous binary to analyse the Chinese Catholic communities. Such a narrative describes the growth of the church communities in terms of a local church seeking to overcome the colonial impulses of its missionary leaders. The interactions between Chinese priests, seminarians, sisters and lay catechists, on the one hand, and their foreign congregational leaders, vicars apostolic and bishops, on the other, are characterised as unequal and humiliating. The Chinese religious are portrayed as weak individuals on the periphery, while the

strong foreign leadership figures constitute a fixed centre, what Massey calls a “central block”.

The device then drives the historical narrative. The hagiographical account of Vincent Lebbe is a case in point.<sup>11</sup> Lebbe, the champion of a local church, is placed in opposition to French missionary bishops in China, who are portrayed (in the main) as unreflective agents of imperialism. The Chinese priests, whom Lebbe is seeking to help, remain largely voiceless. In its attempt to elucidate the growth and development of the communities, this kind of storytelling isolates certain aspects of the modern history of Chinese Catholics. Yet it distorts the historical narrative, because the interactions both within the communities and with other agents or institutions are too multilayered for such a simplification to work.

The life of one Chinese priest, the late bishop of Shanghai, Ignatius Gong Pinmei (better known in some circles as Cardinal Kung), exemplifies some of these complexities, illustrating the diverse historical, societal and ecclesiastical threads that must be brought together within any narrative account of the Chinese Catholic communities in the modern period.<sup>12</sup> Gong Pinmei was born in 1901 to a long-standing Catholic family in the then rural Pudong district of Shanghai (on the eastern side of the river). Baptised as an infant, he received his secondary education in the famous Catholic district of Xujiahui (Zikawei in the Shanghai dialect) at St Ignatius College, which was staffed by French and Chinese Jesuits. Gong was ordained in 1930, becoming a secular priest and serving the Catholic communities of the Shanghai vicariate.<sup>13</sup>

At the time, the French Jesuit Augustus Haouisée administered this region. Upon Bishop Haouisée's death in 1949, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome decided to split the vicariate into four parts—the dioceses of Suzhou and Shanghai and two apostolic vicariates, one to be run by Jesuits from the Californian Province and the other by French Jesuits from the Paris Province, which had been sending men to China since 1842. Gong was appointed the first bishop of the Suzhou diocese in 1949, which thereby began its life as an independent region led by its own Chinese bishop.

In August 1950, Gong was installed as bishop of Shanghai at the Cathedral of St Francis Xavier, at Dongjiadu, although he retained his position as the apostolic administrator of Suzhou. His appointment as bishop of Shanghai was effectively a promotion in that Shanghai was the larger city and had a longer and more prestigious Catholic history. After his installation, Gong proceeded to denounce the Communist authorities. By this time, the Communists were

seeking to split the Chinese Catholics from their international co-religionists, having already expelled or forced out many of the foreign missionaries. A few years earlier, in the nearby vicariate of Xuzhou in 1947, for example, Communist troops had burnt to the ground several church-owned buildings, including a school and a large stone church in Tangshan. French-Canadian Jesuits administered this vicariate.<sup>14</sup> Chinese Catholics were thus under no illusions as to what the future held if the Guomindang lost the civil war.<sup>15</sup>

From the time of his appointment and in the face of this political reality, Bishop Gong actively sought to invigorate and encourage the Catholics of Shanghai and, indeed, the Catholic communities throughout all of China. He did this through his public preaching, his support of popular lay associations like the Legion of Mary, and his promotion of such communal displays of church life as processions and outdoor liturgical services.

In 1951, he led a pilgrimage of Shanghainese Catholics to Sheshan (also known by its name in the Shanghai dialect, Zose), in order to reconsecrate the Chinese Catholic communities to the protection of Mary, Queen of China.<sup>16</sup> On the night of 8 September 1955, officials from the Shanghai Bureau of Religious Affairs arrested him. His seizure was part of an elaborately organized operation: approximately 300 of the Chinese Catholic laity and nearly twenty priests and religious were all arrested on the same night.<sup>17</sup> After five years in prison, Bishop Gong was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1960, and was not released until the mid-1980s. He remained under house arrest for the first few years after his release from prison.<sup>18</sup> In 1988, he was finally released from confinement. In 1991, Pope John Paul II announced that Gong had been named a cardinal *in pectore* (literally “in the breast”, therefore in secret) several years earlier in 1979.<sup>19</sup> He was allowed to leave the country in the early 1990s to join relatives in the United States of America, where he died in 2000.

Gong’s appointment to the see of Shanghai in 1950 made him the first resident Chinese bishop of a Catholic community that traced its roots to 1608, when an Italian Jesuit, Lazzaro Cattaneo, established a community there at the request of the Ming-dynasty scholar Paul Xu Guangqi (1562–1633).<sup>20</sup> Bishop Ignatius Gong was at the vanguard of a church community that was moving towards true local leadership; in some ways this was what he symbolized because of Shanghai’s significance as a global city. Yet, at the same time, he neither criticized his training by foreign missionaries nor devalued the centuries-long contributions of these missionaries to the local church.

He was at once Chinese and Catholic, neither being a puppet of colonialism nor a proponent of the cessation of relationships with international Catholic communities. He strongly rejected the establishment of a so-called “independent” or “patriotic” church and opposed attempts by the now-ruling Communists to limit religious freedom. Thus, binaries such as colonial/indigenous or foreign/patriotic do not capture adequately the multiplicity of influences present in Gong’s personal history. These factors were overlapping, rather than opposing, forces in his life and work. As such, they are best described as complementary rather than contending narratives.<sup>21</sup> They were entanglements, in Massey’s words, much like a “ball of wool” comprising many “knots and nodes”. The task, therefore, is to seek a way whereby these knots do not restrict any recounting of Chinese Catholic stories or force an oversimplification of the remarkable histories of Ignatius Gong Pinmei and his fellow Chinese Catholics.

There exists an old adage that the faith of a community is revealed in the manner in which the community comes together in worship—*lex credendi, lex orandi*, “the law of believing is the law of praying”. Attention to the faith expressions of a community can reveal much about that community and give clues to its beliefs, structures and identity. One way to examine the outpourings of faith is to analyse the use of imagery, tangible indications of the various devotions that exist in the Catholic world, whether in the form of statues, paintings or rosary beads. Changes in the imagery provide clues to the emergence of new identities, thereby assisting in the unravelling of the complex entanglements that have characterized the history of the Chinese Catholic communities.

The indigenization of Christian images in China evolved over many centuries. Prior to the disappearance of most foreign missionaries by the end of the eighteenth century, and the concomitant wave of persecutions that decimated many communities or forced them to become more circumspect in their worship, there was a rich tradition of using local styles and techniques in the ritual art that is so central to private and public Catholic devotion and liturgy.<sup>22</sup> This tradition traces its roots to the beginning of the Franciscan missions to China during the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), which marked the second stage of Christian evangelization in China.<sup>23</sup> These early missionaries used religious images to assist in the propagation of their message. Prominent among these were paintings and statues that depicted Mary, usually with the infant Jesus. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, these Marian images were graphic examples of the process of indigenization, which in theological terms is called

inculturation.<sup>24</sup> From the treaty period in the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, however, the process of indigenization stalled.

This was for at least two reasons: the process met opposition from Catholic missionaries, and certain sections of the Chinese Catholic communities expressed a preference for European-style imagery. These two factors continue to be influential, as is evident when one considers the devotional and artistic images that are popular within Chinese Catholic communities in the present period. While the dynamic of adaptation and reaction is not unique to China, the debates in China between those who support the use of local designs and those who prefer foreign styles have had strong effects, especially on the development of the identity of the Catholic communities. The ramifications of these discussions move beyond the simple question of the appropriateness of one style of artistic representation over another. Rather, the essential issue encompasses two crucial questions.

First, how is it possible to be Chinese and Catholic? Clearly, as the example of Ignatius Gong outlines, one can indeed be both Chinese and Catholic at the same time. This is also shown by the continued presence of millions of Catholics in China, even after systematic attempts to suppress this faith community in the middle years of the twentieth century. The ongoing growth of the Catholic communities is also proof that, for contemporary Chinese citizens, being Catholic and Chinese is a real possibility and choice.<sup>25</sup> This gives rise to the second question: How might the special features of the Chinese Catholic identity be best represented via images?

The answer to this question depends upon the extent to which the viewer, or more specifically the believer, agrees with the proposition that it is appropriate to address Christian themes in different artistic ways, according to the culture within which one lives. Disagreement over this proposition and the place of imagery has given rise to extensive debate over the centuries, sometimes resulting in violent clashes. The iconoclast controversy is a classic example, occurring from the early part of the second century, encompassing the Constantinian Peace of 313 (when Christianity was declared legal by the Edict of Milan), and continuing throughout the eighth and ninth centuries.

During this controversy, those who supported the use of religious imagery in Christian worship, the “iconodules”, or lovers of icons, were ranged against the “iconoclasts”, or destroyers of icons. The iconoclasts’ opposition to the use of icons was expressed not only in statements prohibiting their use but also, at times, in the deliberate destruction of such icons. These debates can be said to

have concluded, in a formal sense, when, “on the first Sunday in Lent 843 the Empress Theodora restored the icons for the last time with a procession that in the eyes of posterity marked ‘the triumph of Orthodoxy’”.<sup>26</sup>

While one side had won the field, and literally marked its supremacy with a victory march, this is not to say that the sentiments of the other side were forever laid to rest. Indeed, these sentiments are strongly held in many contemporary Christian communities. Granted, it is a long way from the first-millennium Christian communities of Corinth and Constantinople to the third-millennium Catholic communities of Shanghai and Shijiazhuang: this historical and geographical distance necessarily affects the comparisons that can be drawn between these different worlds. Even so, it is possible to note several points of similarity. In numerous ways, the reasons why many contemporary Chinese Catholics prefer European-style painting to an indigenized version resemble the reasons why the iconoclasts of the first millennium were uncomfortable with the (then) newer representations of Christian imagery.

At the core of the debate over imagery is the question of what is correct in both doctrine and praxis. That is, both sides argue that their preferred manner of representation is the only proper form, doctrinally, and that this form or style is therefore the only acceptable means of artistic expression. They argue that their preferred image or style is the only way that doctrinal truths may be portrayed. This strongly held position on what is orthodox proves to be a primary animating force for the community. Their devoted adherence to, and resolute defence of, their version of orthodoxy and orthopraxis consequently marks the communities. More often than not, a key result of this perception of orthodoxy is either the maintenance of an old tradition in the face of something new or a return to a more traditionally recognizable form in opposition to an experimental, newer model. Thus, to return to China’s Catholic church, for many believers, an ancient Marian painting like *Salus Populi* is preferred to one that seems to have incorporated Guanyin imagery; statues of Mary are more likely to be replicas of the image of Our Lady of Lourdes in a stone grotto rather than a Chinese Madonna in a bamboo grove.<sup>27</sup>

For the iconoclasts of the ninth century and the more traditional Chinese Catholics of the modern period, the intellectual defence of such perceived orthodoxy usually relies on scriptural exegesis and on the complex theology of the patristic period.<sup>28</sup> Many of these arguments are erudite to the point of abstraction and are simply too dense to have been studied at depth by most believers. They are also not germane to the present discussion. In the judgement

of Henry Chadwick, the arguments of the iconoclasts failed to convince the majority of believers because the reasoning upon which their conclusions were based was too complex to be understood easily.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the arguments were not without valid insights. During the early centuries of Christian history, there had indeed been a rapid assimilation of contemporary artistic models that seemed to incorporate non-Christian motifs and mores. The practice of borrowing or altering such images was widespread, and this angered numbers of believers.

For instance, the “representation of Christ as the Almighty Lord on his throne owed something to pictures of Zeus . . . [and] . . . (p)ortraits of the Mother of God were not wholly independent of a pagan past of venerated mother-goddesses.”<sup>30</sup> Such mother-goddesses included Isis, who was often portrayed cradling her child Horus on her lap.<sup>31</sup> The iconoclasts reacted strongly to such adaptations, troubled as they already were by artistic representations that conveyed religious themes. On the other hand, the iconodule position recognized that people’s worship was aided rather than hindered by representative imagery. They also thought that it was appropriate for such representative imagery to employ local styles and forms. By the end of the ninth century, the iconodule position had triumphed politically and theologically. Nevertheless, given that the issue of imagery continues to divide communities today, it was a flawed triumph. As far away as China, believers still have sensitivities that are reminiscent of these earlier concerns.

Anxieties about what constitutes an appropriately Christian Chinese image underlie the noticeable opposition of some Catholics in twenty-first-century China to newer religious imagery. Not all Chinese Catholics who are wary of newer artistic forms are members of the old Catholic villages or families; many younger, recently baptized Catholics also oppose the new styles. Their expressions of opposition have created a chiasmic situation, ironically, whereby imported European images have become the preferred norm for some Chinese Catholics, while Chinese-style paintings are considered bizarre and foreign.

Put simply, these Chinese Catholics question the ability of such modern, Chinese-style representations to represent the truths of Catholicism “correctly”, in what they perceive to be the orthodox manner. Such Chinese images are also considered to be unable to facilitate “authentic” expressions of worship. The Chinese-style images, Marian or otherwise, are said to lead people away from true Christian worship. The relative merits of this argument, that non-European art cannot accurately portray Christian themes, seem less significant

than the fact that such arguments exist and are held with sufficient passion as to engender outright opposition to other styles.

## **Marian devotions in the Chinese Catholic church**

A study of the development of Christian images in China therefore offers much scope for discussion about the Chinese Catholic communities. It might also be a means of avoiding the problems encountered by other approaches to this history and might thereby go some way towards doing justice to “the hopes and the joys, the griefs and anxieties” of the Chinese Catholics.<sup>32</sup> The field of imagery is obviously so vast, however, that there is the danger of simply replacing one set of complexities with another.

A way out of this tangle was suggested to me some years ago when a Chinese friend asked me whether it was true that Christians believed in Jesus and Catholics believed in the Virgin Mary.<sup>33</sup> Her question highlighted the fact that it *is* possible to describe and identify Chinese Catholic communities through some of their faith practices, notably their strong devotion to Mary, the mother of Jesus (a devotion, needless to say, that does not make them believe any less in Jesus, or make them anything other than Christian).

As my friend had noted, Marian pieties are indeed popular among the Chinese Catholic communities. In fact, it is not overstating the case to suggest that Marian devotions are a constitutive part of Chinese Catholic identity. They range from the recital of rosaries in front of Marian statues, and during the devotion known as the Stations of the Cross, to the establishment of Marian shrines in large city cathedrals and in small country villages. Marian pilgrimages have existed on Mainland China since 1850 and continue to involve large numbers of pilgrims.<sup>34</sup> These take place not only during May, the traditional month of pilgrimage (“Mary’s month”, in Catholic parlance), but also at other times as well. One of the earliest and perhaps most famous of the pilgrimage locations, Sheshan, has also been the site of significant events like the consecration of the Chinese Catholic church to the protection of Mary.

Marian paintings and posters are usually displayed in official settings, above church altars or on church walls, as well as in private houses. Personal devotional items like rosary beads, liturgical calendars or prayer cards featuring images of Mary are also very popular. Popular baptismal names include not only Mary, but also the names of female saints associated with Marian devotions, for instance, Bernadette.

The Catholic devotion to Mary is of course not limited to China. In *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje*, Sandra Zimdars-Swartz argues that Mary is popular among Catholic communities for at least two reasons. On a personal level, Mary is seen as a tender and concerned mother who calls her children away from the brink of disaster and offers them safety and comfort under her sheltering mantle. On a social level, however, Mary is presented as the leader of a mighty army of spiritual warriors ready to do battle with the forces of evil.<sup>35</sup>

For Chinese Catholics, the fact that they have survived many periods of persecution throughout their history has given them a strong belief in Mary's protective mantle, something discussed in Chapter 3. More recently, they also believe that Mary has helped them live through the hardships imposed by an atheist government that initially sought to destroy them. Prayer groups like the Legion of Mary were front-line forces that sought to protect Catholics from such hardship.

Mary also offers a feminine aspect to the Christian story: in the context of a church where only males can hold positions of formal leadership, this is not to be discounted. In China, there is also a link between the Buddhist bodhisattva Guanyin and the Virgin Mary, as discussed in Chapter 1: this is another possible reason for the popularity of Marian devotion among Chinese Catholics.

Examining the cult of Mary within Chinese Catholic communities, at both the social and personal levels, therefore offers a way to narrate the modern history of the Chinese Catholics. While other difficulties are encountered through this approach, for instance the challenge of describing personal (and therefore subjective) liturgical acts in an objective way, at least the various binaries described above are mostly avoided. Jean-Paul Wiest's history of the work of the Maryknoll Society argued that "understanding the history of the Catholic Church in China requires not only examining the methods of the missionaries, but also their theology and their understanding of mission—in sum, the spiritual legacy of the missionaries."<sup>36</sup>

The popular Marian piety of the Chinese Catholic communities has been a major spiritual legacy of the missionaries since the time of the Jesuit presence at the end of the sixteenth century: a close study of this devotion enables many of the complexities of the relationships within the communities to be disentangled. Hopefully, a richer narrative will thereby ensue. Lest this seem mere artifice, the following examples can stand as illustrations of the possibilities created by utilizing just such a thematic framework.

At the personal level, Marian devotion is especially strong in the countryside. There are Marian apparition accounts, for example, from the village of Donglu in Baoding, in Hebei Province (a stronghold of Chinese Catholicism.) Yet, there are also accounts of Marian apparitions in Beijing at the time of the siege of the North Church (Beitang) during the Boxer Uprising in 1900.<sup>37</sup> While many Marian shrines are in small country towns and villages, the existence of a popular Marian shrine only a short bus ride's distance from Shanghai also shows that the Marian cult cannot simply be characterized in terms of a rural/urban binary. We are thereby invited to develop a more nuanced understanding of rural and urban Chinese Catholic life, and to appreciate the commonalities across Catholic communities in both areas.

At the social level, Mary is seen in her role as a patron, for example during the formal consecration of the Chinese Catholic church to Our Lady Queen of China at the Plenary Council of 1924, held in Shanghai.<sup>38</sup> Acts like this are occasions by which a local church develops its own distinctive identity. They are also acts that irrevocably link the local communities with the universal body of the church, because Marian devotion transcends national boundaries. That is to say, these communities are at once Chinese and universal. They are not communities existing in isolation from the broader church; such consecrations both celebrate and commemorate this fact.

The way in which images of Mary have functioned within Chinese Catholic communities is also illuminating. In the 1930s and 1940s, for instance, faculty members and students in the department of art at the recently established Catholic University of Peking, as it was known, were involved in a deliberate attempt to create Chinese-style Christian art, which I discuss in Chapter 5.<sup>39</sup> These artists' endeavours resulted in new Marian representations, including paintings of Mary in Chinese locations and dressed in Chinese attire. (Obviously not all the work produced here was Marian, but it is significant all the same that a large amount was.)

Such paintings are examples of the Marian cult operating at both the social and personal levels. A key aspect of these artworks was the depiction of Mary as a patron who was accessible to everyone. The production of new Marian images also enhanced the social role of Mary, because many of these images were reflections upon, and means of promoting, pious themes that were already popular among Chinese believers. These images were collected both by parishes and by individuals, and were thus used as objects of communal and personal devotion. The images at once developed local attributes and also

provided assistance to individual Catholics in their prayer life. Some of these images can still be found today.

Likewise, Marian statues also helped strengthen and aid devotion. For instance, statues of Our Lady of Lourdes appeared throughout China's Catholic communities, in both urban and rural settings, after the introduction of this devotion to China in the early 1860s. These statues showed Mary with European features, clad in a white dress with a blue belt, as Mary was purported to have appeared in 1858 at Lourdes, France.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, on the one hand, Mary's image as it was painted at Furen represented a sinicized form of Catholicism (one encouraged, ironically, by the Italian priest Costantini). Yet, on the other hand, a French image (the Lourdes statue) was the focus of nationwide personal devotion. Studying the cult of Mary allows these seeming contradictions, which have been reduced to binaries at other times, to be explored more deeply.

This work therefore explores the role of Mary, both as patron and as source of spiritual consolation during the modern period in China. As patron, Mary encapsulates the attempt at an institutional level to foster a unique identity among the Chinese Catholic communities. As a source of spiritual consolation, Mary provides one means by which Chinese Catholics have been able to endure times of great stress and hardship.

Although there are many ways to study this cult—there is, after all, an area of theology known as Mariology—this book describes the development and promotion within Chinese Catholic communities of a national devotion to Mary. Paintings, statues, prints, wall posters and prayer cards are devotional objects that make use of imagery to assist Catholics in their communal and personal prayer life. I explore the use of such images in order to trace the development of identity within the Chinese Catholic communities, especially during times of change.

First, I describe the way in which different images have portrayed the devotion to Mary at various points in the history of the communities. Then I explore the manner in which this devotion has been promoted and utilized by church leaders in China (both Chinese and non-Chinese) as a way of strengthening Chinese Catholic communities.

Simply, by examining the cult of Mary among Chinese Catholics, it is possible to understand something more about the development and ongoing growth of these communities, even in spite of the attempts to make them disappear.

# **Part 1**

## **Images of Mary in China before 1842**



# 1

## Chinese Christian art during the pre-modern period

The oldest and most significant of the Christian relics discovered in China are a number of decorated stone monuments—including a memorial stele and several tombstones. An image of the Madonna and child is among these works, featured on a headstone bearing the date 1342.<sup>1</sup> This memorial was found in Yangzhou in the early 1950s. These stone monuments are almost all examples of sepulchral art, like much of the *ante pacem* Christian art discovered in the Mediterranean littoral.<sup>2</sup> Graydon F. Snyder showed that the work that has survived from this earlier period of Christian history includes frescoes, sculptures, funerary art and coins.<sup>3</sup>

The existence of such works is unsurprising, because the various stone materials used to make these types of monuments (especially tablets and objects like headstones, sarcophagi and statues) obviously have a greater chance of longevity than any works that may have been created on paper, silk or wood. This is particularly evident when one considers paintings in China more generally. In 847, for instance, Zhang Yanyuan wrote the *Records of Famous Paintings of All the Dynasties* (*Li dai ming hua ji*), which “lists more than 370 painters active over the previous 500 or so years, giving biographical anecdotes about them, characterizations of their subject-matter and style, and ranking them according to their talents.”<sup>4</sup> Yet for all the extensive knowledge about these painters, barely anything of the paintings themselves remain. The oldest surviving works on materials other than stone, apart from murals like those found at Dunhuang, seem to be from no earlier than the tenth century.

The earliest example of Christian iconography in China is a cross inscribed on the Nestorian stele found in Xi’an. This stele bears the date 781. The majority of the early Christian images discovered in China, however, date to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These appear on stone monuments in the collection known as the “Christian tombstones of Quanzhou”. These

stones, numbering around forty, commemorate both Nestorian and Latin Rite Christians and are part of a significantly larger collection of fourteenth-century tombstones found in the coastal city of Quanzhou.<sup>5</sup> The Yangzhou Marian stone was therefore not made in isolation.

Quanzhou was an important port during the Yuan dynasty. It was known by various names in Western-language documents from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, most of which were variations of the word Zayton (from which the term satin is derived). These various appellations gave rise to much conjecture as to the correct location of the city.

Zayton, Zaitun, Zeithum, Cayton [was] the great port of Chinese trade with the west in the middle ages; that from which Polo sailed on his memorable voyage; that at which Ibn Batuta landed, and from which Marignolli sailed for India, is mentioned by nearly all the authors who speak of China up to the fourteenth century inclusive. A veil falls between China and Europe on the expulsion of the Mongols, and when it rises in the sixteenth century, Zayton has disappeared.<sup>6</sup>

Marco Polo and John Marignolli were travellers from Western Europe, the former a merchant and the latter a Latin Rite missionary. Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta was a Muslim adventurer from another port city, Tangier, in Morocco, and spent twenty-nine years in the middle decades of the fourteenth century travelling the world. All three left writings about their journeys to and in China. Several of the Franciscan missionaries to China of the early fourteenth century, notably Andrew of Perugia (Andrea da Perugia, also known as Andreas de Perusia, d. 1332) and Friar Odoric (Odoric da Pordenone, or Odoricus de Porte Naonis, ca.1265–1331) also recorded their comments about the town of Quanzhou, and in some cases, about the city of Yangzhou as well.

Between 1322 and 1328, Friar Odoric lived in China and visited Quanzhou on his journey to the northern capital.<sup>7</sup> He was impressed by its size, and described it as being “twice as great as Bologna . . . [where there was a] great plenty of all things that are needful for human subsistence.”<sup>8</sup> Henry Yule noted, “From this port sailed the expeditions of the Mongol sovereign against Java and Japan.”<sup>9</sup> The considerable number of Islamic funerary monuments from the same period, as well as stones that commemorate members of the Hindu, Manichean and Buddhist communities attests to the vibrant and cosmopolitan nature of this “noble city”. Judging by the number of tombstones that have

survived, the Islamic community in Quanzhou was significantly larger than the Christian communities.<sup>10</sup>

The Christians in Quanzhou belonged to either the Nestorian church or to the Latin Rite. Franciscan missionaries served this latter group, who were predominantly Western Europeans although their number also included some Armenian Christians. The difference between these Christian sects might seem rather insignificant, yet the distinction was real for the members of the communities themselves, at least as evidenced from some of the writings left by Franciscans like Friar Odoric and John of Montecorvino (Johannes de Monte Corvino, 1247–ca.1328).

The Nestorian community in China (which traced its history to the Tang dynasty, 618–907) had experienced much hardship at the end of the ninth century; it is unknown whether or not they disappeared altogether.<sup>11</sup> What is known is that after 845 there was a forced laicization of all the clergy of non-indigenous religions, including Buddhism.<sup>12</sup> This ruling must have had its impact on the life of the Nestorian communities, at least those that were further into the hinterland of China. Whatever the exact effect of this ruling, the presence of this community was seen again by the time of the Mongol empire. Nicolas Standaert argues that “there is at present no strong evidence to support a continuity between the Nestorians of the Tang and those of the Yuan dynasty. If any Christians of Tang descent survived the following centuries, their presence passed unnoticed.”<sup>13</sup>

The increase in trade during the *Pax Mongolica* during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, along the famous land and maritime silk roads, is the obvious reason for the re-establishment of these communities. While small by Chinese standards, the number of Nestorian Christians was not insignificant, with communities in at least Cambalec (effectively, modern Beijing), Quanzhou and Yangzhou.<sup>14</sup> According to Marco Polo’s writings, there was also a community at Hangzhou.<sup>15</sup>

Organized Latin Rite communities came into being through the work of Franciscan missionaries. The first known Franciscan to settle permanently in China was John of Montecorvino, who arrived in Cambalec some time after 1294 and died around 1328.<sup>16</sup> Pope Nicholas IV (1288–92) had sent him as an emissary to leaders in the East. The pope, himself a Franciscan, wished for the Roman church to extend its work eastward. The reinvigorated contact between China and the outside world during the Yuan dynasty made possible just such

a movement into China. This missionary push was also in response to overtures made by some of the Mongolian leaders.<sup>17</sup>

Some years after John's arrival in Beijing, the Franciscans also established a community in Quanzhou. This community consisted of two churches by the time Andrew of Perugia wrote his letter in 1326, and had added another one by the time of John of Marignolli's visit there in 1346 or 1347.<sup>18</sup> Odoric noted, on his journey north some time in the mid-1320s, that there was also a Franciscan house at Yangzhou.<sup>19</sup> The Franciscan friars very much believed that their religious order "was the divinely inspired *renovatio* of the evangelical life in the last age of the world"; this belief underpinned their missionary endeavours.<sup>20</sup> They were determined to spread the Christian message so that all could share in the joy that would accompany the imminent final days. The art works employed by the Franciscans therefore reflected this belief in Jesus' role as the beneficent judge and protector at the *eschaton*, the end time. Christians believe that Jesus was assisted in this role by the prayers of his mother Mary.

Like the Nestorian communities, the Latin Rite communities were established in towns and cities that were significant in terms of trade. As these Yuan-period Latin Rite communities came into being later than the Nestorian ones, their beginnings were also affected, on occasion, by the reactions of these other, older communities. John of Montecorvino's first letter to his Franciscan companions in Europe, dated 1305 and written after his arrival in Cambalec, contained some comments about the Nestorian community in the capital. In his view, they were clearly opposed to his presence there and to his missionary activities:

The Nestorians, a certain body who profess to bear the Christian name, but who deviate sadly from the Christian religion, have grown so powerful in those parts that they will not allow a Christian of another ritual to have ever so small a chapel, or to publish any doctrine different from their own . . .<sup>21</sup>

Another work, *The Estate and Governance of the Grand Khan*, purportedly written around 1330 by the Dominican, Archbishop John of Cora, also recorded this mutual dislike:<sup>22</sup>

And certes he [i.e., John of Montecorvino] would have converted that whole country to the Christian Catholic faith, if the Nestorians, those false Christians and real miscreants, had not hindered him and done him hurt.<sup>23</sup>

This same document maintained that the “Nestorians are more than thirty thousand, dwelling in the said empire of Cathay, and are passing rich people, but stand in great fear and awe of the Christians.”<sup>24</sup> The Franciscan-led missionary journeys into China occurred at a time when other Europeans were also entering China. This included the already mentioned Polo brothers from Venice, although the existence and popularity of the trade meant that there were almost certainly other non-Nestorian Christians among the merchants. At times, their families also accompanied these merchants. The number of believers in the Latin Rite community was less than the estimated 30,000 Nestorians. In addition to taking the initiative to establish communities themselves, at other times the Franciscans also responded to the pastoral needs of this group of non-Nestorian Christians, as the following passage illustrates:

[A]nd in this city [Zayton] a rich Armenian lady did build a large and fine enough church . . . the lady assigned it, with a competent endowment which she had provided during her life and secured by her will at her death, to friar Gerard the Bishop and the friars who were with him . . .<sup>25</sup>

The presence of such wealthy Christians, and the ongoing vitality of the trade towns, resulted in the notable growth, and even splendour, of the Latin Rite communities.

This background makes possible several deductions about the Quanzhou Christian tombstones, which were discovered by Chinese archaeologists, among them Wu Wenliang, in the late 1940s.<sup>26</sup> First, they provide important extra-textual proof of the existence of these different Quanzhou Christian communities. Among the mostly Nestorian tombstones, the tombstone of Andrew of Perugia is the most obvious example of one belonging to a Latin Rite Christian, although there are a few other tombstones with Latin inscriptions. The inscriptions on the tombstones, which are in “Syro-Turkic (Turkish using Syriac script), Phag-spa (a script based on Tibetan and Chinese), Chinese and Latin”, also attest to the diverse origins of the Christian community.<sup>27</sup>

Second, it is reasonable to suggest that there were common iconographic forms employed by the two Christian communities. This is because the Christian stones predominantly utilize the cross resting on a lotus flower, under which swirling clouds are portrayed. Apart from the clouds, these features are strongly reminiscent of the Xi’an Nestorian stele. The use of such imagery on the front of Andrew of Perugia’s monument, which features an engraved pair of angel-like creatures supporting a figure sitting on a lotus

flower, indicates that the smaller Latin Rite community was not averse to the use of Nestorian iconography.

It can be argued that the Franciscans allowed this to occur, as we know that they had the financial independence to commission the building of their “very fine churches” and also the ability to influence the form of the finished structures. Furthermore, around 1305, John of Montecorvino had commissioned an artist to produce six pictures “illustrating the Old and New Testaments for the instruction of the ignorant; and the explanations engraved in Latin, Tarsic and Persian characters that all may be able to read them in one tongue or another.”<sup>28</sup> This shows that he was very aware of the didactic power of imagery, as presumably were his fellow Franciscans: they were not likely to let things just fall to chance. Therefore, that this imagery was used suggests that the use of such imagery was allowed. This is rather remarkable, given the observed antagonism between the communities.

Admittedly, this commonality of imagery might also have occurred simply because the same artisans were involved in the production process—they knowingly or otherwise transferred artistic motifs between the differing religious traditions. Features like flowers, angels and clouds also appear on the Quanzhou Buddhist tombstones, for instance: their presence supports this possibility. The shape of the tombstones, and indeed some of the other artistic imagery on the stones (such as the representations of coffins) “have very close parallels among the Moslem and Christian tombstones in Quanzhou.”<sup>29</sup> While these parallels could be the result of purposeful acts of copying, they could equally have been accidental. Their existence increases the likelihood, nevertheless, that significant borrowing of motifs did take place.

Richard Rudolph sees these parallels as, more simply, instances of “happy faults” rather than the result of deliberate choices. He suggests, “There are many examples, especially in art made for export, where the Chinese craftsman has unwittingly added oriental characteristics or made errors when copying a European design.”<sup>30</sup> He cites Chu-tsing Li to the effect that “motifs generally survive in stages of copying, while styles usually do not.”<sup>31</sup> Logically, however, it is as easy to accept that this transference of imagery was deliberate as it is to argue that it occurred accidentally.

Such types of interactions are more frequent in communities where several different cultures co-exist. This is particularly the case in settlements along trade routes. These melting pots of culture blend everything from spices to bloodlines. The earliest Chinese Christian art forms, after the unique Xi’an

monument, likewise display this culture of adaptation, in that they incorporate design features from several religious traditions. This borrowing occurred even when the relationships between the different faith communities were not especially harmonious. Even in times of hostility, evidence of hybridity can be found. Such adaptation took place between two recent foreign religious communities, the Nestorian and the Latin Rite Christians. Significantly, it also existed between a new foreign religion, Christianity, and an older one, Buddhism. This brings us now to the image of Mary, found on one of the two Latin Rite tombstones discovered at nearby Yangzhou. This stone is a fascinating expression of the rich culture of adaptive appropriation.

### **Katerina Ilioni of Yangzhou**

These two tombstones date to much the same period as the Quanzhou tombstones. The first stone, bearing the name Katerina Ilioni, is inscribed with the date 1342, indicating that she outlived Andrew of Perugia by a mere nine years. This tombstone was discovered in November 1951. The second tombstone, which bears the date 1344, was the memorial for Anthony Ilioni, brother of Katerina, and was uncovered in either 1951 or 1952.<sup>32</sup> These Yangzhou monuments are important both for the texts inscribed on them and for their carved images. In this way, they are similar to the Xi'an Nestorian stele and the Quanzhou tombstones. The Xi'an Nestorian stele records one of the oldest appearances of a Christian cross in China; likewise, these Yangzhou tombstones show the earliest surviving definitive image of Jesus Christ and the earliest known image of Mary discovered in China.<sup>33</sup>

Katerina's stone bears an image of the Madonna and child, while Anthony's stone has an image of Christ at the Last Judgement. This engraving of Christ reflects the eschatology of the Franciscan missionaries, who believed that they were living in the days before the final judgement.<sup>34</sup> The two artistic representations also display significant blending of Western themes and Chinese styles. The tombstones of Quanzhou have been studied by a number of scholars, such as John Foster, Wu Wenliang and Chen Dasheng.<sup>35</sup> There has also been a notable increase in research on the Nestorian eastward expansions during the Tang and the Yuan dynasties, as reflected in the number of projects and publications recently undertaken.<sup>36</sup> Rather fewer scholars, however, have studied these Yangzhou stones at the same depth.<sup>37</sup> Jesuit historian Francis

Rouleau was the first to bring this stone to the attention of the world (see the accompanying illustration).

The first stone was discovered when the old city walls of Yangzhou were being torn down so that their material could be used in the construction of roads throughout the city. These walls had originally been built in 1175, then reconstructed in 1357, and finally expanded in 1557.<sup>38</sup> A work-gang uncovered this headstone in the process of dismantling the section near the south gate of the wall. Luckily, the stone came to the attention of a local Yangzhou antiquarian, who made a rubbing of it.<sup>39</sup> Recognising the Christian nature of the stone, this man took the rubbing to Chinese Jesuits in Yangzhou (foreign missionaries had been forced to leave the city by this time). It seems as though this man was Geng Jianting: it is unclear why Francis Rouleau does not mention his name, but he may have been trying to protect him, in the early years of the People's Republic, from the taint of having had contact with Christians.

Geng Jianting gave a rubbing to these Jesuits as an act of gratitude for their translation of the stone; they in turn sent it to a fellow Jesuit, the aforementioned Rouleau, at Xujiahui in Shanghai. In June 1952, the theology faculty of Xujiahui had become part of the exodus of those foreigners and Chinese who had left Shanghai after the defeat of the Nationalist army. Rouleau thus never saw the stone itself, although as noted in *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550–1850*, both stones are on display in the Yangzhou Museum.<sup>40</sup>

The stone was oblong; the original was estimated to have been around seventy centimetres long and over forty-seven centimetres wide. It had three types of markings: an inscription about Katerina, some religious illustrations and an ornamental border around the whole stone.<sup>41</sup> The inscriptions on both tombstones were in Latin, a further indication that the Ilioni family were not members of the Nestorian community, which would have used Syriac. At the beginning and end of the inscription are simple Maltese crosses etched into the stone. Translated, the text reads:

In the name of the Lord Amen here lies Catherine daughter of the Late Sir  
Dominic de Viglione [read Ilioni] [she] who died in the year of the Lord  
One thousand three hundred forty-two in the month of June.<sup>42</sup>

The pictures that decorate Katerina Ilioni's headstone are based on the story of the martyrdom of St Catherine of Alexandria, Katerina's namesake. The stone portrays three aspects of the story:<sup>43</sup> Saint Catherine being prepared for torture and death (on "her" wheel); being beheaded; and miraculously transported by

angels to a grave on Mount Sinai. The Madonna and child are depicted at the top of the headstone, thus appearing as though gazing down upon the events below from their heavenly plane.

While the pictorial representation “might easily have been copied from one of the popular illustrated medieval hagiographies”, Rouleau saw elements in the decorations on Katerina’s tombstone that suggest hybridity, reflecting the process of inculturation.<sup>44</sup> He bases his argument on the fact that the seat used by the Madonna and child is a type of Chinese sitting platform, and the angels are represented with Chinese artistic motifs.

In the view of C. P. Fitzgerald,

by the T’ang period three pieces of furniture used for squatting or lying upon were in use [in China] . . . there was the ancient low ch’uang, a bed for sleeping; the also ancient t’a, smaller, for squatting upon; and the newer wooden k’ang used in the warmer south in the same way as the brick bed of the north. . . . It was large, but had no back nor arm rests, a simple flat platform, raised about one foot or eighteen inches from the floor on strong legs.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to these three types of platforms, the latter two of which needed to be placed near walls so that people could sit or squat on the platform and lean against the wall behind them, there evolved one other type of sitting platform, prior to the widespread addition of seat backs. The new form was a type of stool, which initially began as a step used to assist “the aged or infirm to get up on to the raised k’ang”, but which evolved into a sitting platform in its own right.<sup>46</sup> These steps grew higher, “so that one sat on them, feet on the ground.”<sup>47</sup>

The use of this latter type of seat on the Yangzhou headstone, as opposed to a fixed frame chair (the evolution of which “began in the T’ang dynasty and was consummated in the Five Dynasties and early Sung period”), represented a Chinese adaptation of the original story as it appeared in the Christian hagiography.<sup>48</sup> Mary and Jesus are shown on a seat small enough to be the evolved stool, with Mary’s feet either just on or dangling above the floor. The platform is clearly not long enough to be a *chuang* or a *kang*, but even so it is unmistakably a Chinese-style seat.

There were further adaptations as, in Francis Rouleau’s opinion, “some of the facial lineaments have a definite oriental touch.”<sup>49</sup> As to the angels, he remarks “their legs taper off to a point and [look] somewhat as if they were enclosed in loose, flapping pillow-cases . . . a standard characteristic of the treatment of spirit forms.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, by placing a Chinese-looking Madonna and child on

a Chinese seat, the story was shown to have taken place outside of Europe and had been removed from its more traditional setting.

Finally, Rouleau sees the addition of ornamental floral motifs as a standard Chinese visual technique.<sup>51</sup> Richard Rudolph, on the other hand, argues that the flower design “is not of Chinese origin and its use here does not imply Chinese influence.”<sup>52</sup> At any rate, while Rudolph might be correct in arguing that its source lies elsewhere, the flower had become a localized motif for the communities at Quanzhou and Yangzhou, as shown by the frequency with which it appears, not only on Nestorian and Latin Rite tombstones but on Buddhist ones as well. Within the Buddhist communities, certainly, the lotus flower had taken on great significance, given its role in the conversion story of the Buddha and its perceived association with purity.<sup>53</sup>

This first tombstone has great historical significance for two main reasons. It indicates that Christians in Yangzhou utilized the image of the Madonna and child as a votive iconographic image. That is, just as Saint Catherine was believed to have been transported by angels of God to a heavenly place, so too was Katerina Ilioni believed to benefit from the protection and care of the Virgin Mary and her son Jesus. Our Genoese merchant’s daughter was partaking in the joy of the *parousia*, as the Franciscan missionaries had preached. Second, the imagery on the tombstone reveals a willingness within this Latin Rite community to use both European and Chinese artistic devices in conveying religious themes. The Christian tombstones of Quanzhou show that this had been occurring in that nearby city as well. The earliest Marian image in China, therefore, is an example of hybridity, and an indication of a community that was open to influences from outside its own narrow confines.

## **Madonna and Guanyin**

Apart from the Yangzhou and Quanzhou tombstones, there are very few other artistic remnants of this early period of Christian history in China.<sup>54</sup> Even so, the most important vestige of the Franciscan period is a purported influence on Chinese Buddhist artistic representation. That is, it is argued that Catholic Marian images disseminated by the Franciscan missionaries exerted an influence on the development of “child-giving Guanyin” (*songzi* Guanyin) iconography.

In order to discuss this evolution, it is important to recall, briefly, the manner in which Marian iconography had evolved. Since the time of the *ante*

*pacem* period in Western Europe, there had been many changes in the way that Mary was portrayed. Graydon F. Snyder argues that, although “events connected with the birth of Jesus have been popular subjects in Christian art from the beginning[,] [the] manger scene does not occur before Constantine and, in my opinion, neither does the annunciation.”<sup>55</sup> Depictions of Jesus in this period, which often consisted of the young Jesus as well as symbolic images used to represent Christianity (for instance anchors, ships and fish), emphasized victory in times of antagonism and insecurity in a hostile world. From the time of Constantine’s conversion, these images underwent significant change. As mentioned in the introduction, the young Jesus was often now shown on the lap of his mother, “who herself sat on a throne . . . much like the iconography of Isis and Horus.”<sup>56</sup>

According to Henry Chadwick, such Marian devotion became all the more pronounced at the beginning of the fifth century:

The first known church dedicated to her is at Ephesus where the council of 431 was held. In the next decade Pope Sixtus III (432–440) built the great church of St Mary Major in Rome with its superb mosaics on the walls and the triumphal arch. . . . Those on the triumphal arch show the Annunciation, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the Magi offering gifts and visiting Herod, Herod ordering the massacre of the Innocents, and an apocryphal story of Christ in Egypt.<sup>57</sup>

By the late thirteenth century, certain artistic representations of Mary had become the most frequently used of the Marian images.<sup>58</sup> These were based on archetypal stories or images, including the story of the annunciation or the image of the Madonna and child.<sup>59</sup> One example of the mother-and-child genre was the Madonna of humility, which was popular among the Franciscans.<sup>60</sup> The Marian image on the front of Katerina Ilioni’s tombstone conforms to the Madonna of humility type.<sup>61</sup>

It appears either that the artists who created Buddhist statuary in China from the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries onwards borrowed this image or that the Madonna of humility at least influenced the development of similar iconography in Chinese Buddhism. This period of cross-fertilization occurred in those trading cities of China where there was substantial contact with Christians. Such towns included Yangzhou and Quanzhou, as discussed, as well as the seaside town of Zhangzhou, in Fujian Province.

Yü Chün-fang has written extensively about the possible connection between the Madonna and child and the child-giving Guanyin (*songzi* Guanyin), as had Derek Gillman some years earlier and Sepp Schüller before that.<sup>62</sup> Both Yü and Gillman note that Guanyin—or in Sanskrit, Avalokitesvara—can be either male or female. “According to the ‘Universal Gateway’ chapter of the Lotus Sutra, Guanyin can appear in as many as thirty-three different forms in order to save different types of people. Among these forms, seven are feminine: nun, lay woman, wife of an elder, householder, official, Brahmin, and girl.”<sup>63</sup> Likewise, in the Surangama Sutra, of the thirty-two forms in which Avalokitesvara appears, six are female. Yü argues that the process of feminization had begun in the Five Dynasties period and was completed by the time of the Ming dynasty, when Guanyin had become completely sinicized and was overwhelmingly portrayed as a female.<sup>64</sup>

Yü Chün-fang argues that it is from around the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that Guanyin also begins to be depicted holding a child:

The power to grant children is mentioned as one of the many powers of Guanyin in the ‘Universal Gateway’ chapter of the Lotus Sutra. Prior to the Ming, however, the depiction of Guanyin, even in feminine forms, never included a male child held either in her arms or placed on her lap. The religious basis for this iconography came from Buddhist scriptures, but its artistic rendering might have been influenced by the iconography of the Virgin.<sup>65</sup>

Yü Chun-fang does not provide significant evidence for this, but her statement strongly echoes Derek Gillman’s arguments in relation to another example of cross-cultural adaptation from this period, the Zhangzhou ivories, discussed below.<sup>66</sup>

The decline of Christianity in the early Ming, and the restrictions placed on trade within some of the cities where Christians had lived, put paid to the production of Madonnas and other Christian objects, not least because there was no longer a market for them<sup>67</sup>—production later resumed, as discussed below. While production of certain images of Guanyin continued, there seems to have been a surge in her popularity from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>68</sup>

When trade with Christian communities grew during the later Ming, images of the Madonna and child began again to be produced. During this period, the largest Christian communities in Asia existed outside China, especially in Macau and the Philippines. This was because the Portuguese had become the

forceful and, at times, violent new entrants to the trading hubs of Southeast Asia in the early years of the sixteenth century. Later, the Spanish also became participants in this trade, having come to the Philippines via Mexico. The rise in the production of Madonna images heavily influenced the manner in which *songzi* Guanyin images were produced. The ivory statues manufactured at Zhangzhou, in coastal Fujian Province, are examples of what can result when interactions of this nature take place.<sup>69</sup> These deliberate borrowings become more evident when one considers the development of trade in Southeast Asia throughout the sixteenth century.

Such trade took place on a significant scale and was immensely rewarding financially. The commerce contributed to the rise of a Chinese diaspora, as “Chinese trading communities sprang up in entrepôts throughout the region to handle the business.”<sup>70</sup> This was more than just a case of traders making their way to China, as had happened earlier during the Mongol period. Chinese merchants themselves were now travelling abroad to seek such encounters.<sup>71</sup>

Official Chinese regulations had sought to restrict and control such trade, but to little overall effect. Seasonal surreptitious trading “between Chinese and Portuguese had become a regular occurrence by 1549, when traders met to trade on Shangchuan Island (which the Portuguese called Sao João), southwest of the Macau peninsula. From there they stepped to Macau and established a legal treaty port in 1557 . . .”<sup>72</sup> This newly sanctioned port led to increased trade, which in turn obviously increased the interaction between Chinese and foreigners. This interaction accelerated the production, dissemination and consumption of religious images and articles. Much of the production of religious items took place in the Fujianese coastal towns, especially Zhangzhou.

Some merchant accounts of the interaction between Spanish and Chinese traders in Manila display the sheer diversity of the various items for trade. Fernando Riguel, the Philippine governor’s notary, recorded the items brought by Chinese merchants in 1574:

A year ago there came to the port of this city three ships from China, and to the neighbouring islands five more. Those which came here brought merchandise such as is used by the Chinese, and such as they bring here ordinarily. The distance from the mainland is not great, the voyage lasts about eight days . . . They brought specimens of many kinds of goods peculiar to their country, in order to arrange the price at which they can be sold—such as quicksilver, powder, pepper, fine cinnamon, cloves, sugar, iron, copper, tin, brass, silks in textiles of many kinds and in skeins, realgar, camphor, various kinds of crockery, luscious and sweet oranges;

and a thousand other goods and trifles quite as many as the Flemish bring. Moreover they brought images of crucifixes and very curious seals made like ours.<sup>73</sup>

This extensive record also proves that the Chinese entrepreneurs were now trading religious goods. It is impossible to tell exactly when the production of Christian images resumed, assuming that production most likely ceased at the end of the Yuan dynasty. It is clear, however, that the manufacture of Christian items began again after the re-entry of Europeans into these markets. The growth of trade in these goods was significant, as were the interactions that took place as a result of such commerce.

A Chinese quarter existed in Manila by 1580. Many of these Chinese merchants and their families were from the Fujianese port cities. This Chinese community not only sold religious articles but produced them as well, thereby increasing their own profits. This situation delighted the Spanish living in the Philippines, as illustrated by the following comments from the then bishop of Manila, Bishop Salazar, in a 1590 letter to the king of Spain:

What arouses my wonder the most is, when I arrived no Sangley [a term for a Chinese person, especially one from the Fujianese trading ports]<sup>74</sup> knew how to paint anything; but now they have so perfected themselves in this art that they have produced marvellous work with both the brush and chisel, and I think nothing more perfect could be produced than some of their ivory statues of the Child Jesus which I have seen. This opinion is affirmed by all those who have seen them. The churches are beginning to be furnished with the images which the Sangleys made and which we greatly lacked before; and considering the ability displayed by these people in reproducing the images which come from España, I believe that soon we shall not even miss those made in Flanders.<sup>75</sup>

The rapid growth in the number of churches and Christian communities throughout the region, as a result of the presence of the Spanish in the Philippines and the Portuguese in Macau, meant that this trade in religious imagery likewise continued to expand. The trade was not just limited to the communities of the South China Sea, however; from the Philippines, some of these products reached as far afield as Mexico and then made their way to Europe. The comments of both Salazar (on ivories) and Riguel (on crucifixes) reveal that, while it is true that some goods were provided by the Manila workshops, the majority were produced in Fujian. Many of these images were of Mary—"almost all of the churches in the island were adorned with images,

nearly all of which were of the Mother of God.”<sup>76</sup> This is also the view of Derek Gillman, who writes that “woodblock printed breviaries, illustrated with holy figures, and brought by the missionaries from Mexico, were sent over to the mainland to serve as models for Sino-Christian ivories.”<sup>77</sup>

The Chinese artisans then adapted these models. This process of adaptation was partly a result of the tools that were then in use, as well as of the range of techniques known to the Chinese carvers and the materials available to the workmen. In addition, the artists’ own aesthetic intentions and sensibilities clearly influenced the final works. In the light of Salazar’s contention that the works made by the “Sangleys” of Manila were perfect reproductions of the original models, any deviations from the original—over and above those determined by the differences in tools and the materials—were probably intentional changes. This contrasts with Richard Rudolph’s earlier assertion (about the Yangzhou tombstones) that such adaptations were the result of error.

The objects designed for Chinese homes and markets, mentioned in the local gazetteer and described in great detail by Craig Clunas as “congratulatory figures of a number of popular Buddhist and Daoist deities . . . the maternal Guanyin being one of their most important lines”, were in fact produced in response to the initial demand of foreigners for Christian, especially Marian, figures.<sup>78</sup> The merchants of these seaside ports were always alert to potential new markets. In Derek Gillman’s view, the profitability of this overseas market and the availability of a new material, ivory, stimulated the establishment and development of a domestic market for similar goods.<sup>79</sup> He claims that the Zhangzhou sculptors “recognised in the images of the Virgin and Child enough of Guanyin to realise that the Christian images could serve as models for domestic ivory carvings.”<sup>80</sup> Yü Chün-fang makes a similar point some years later when she states, “since the same artistic communities produced these religious images, it is not surprising that the Madonnas looked somewhat Chinese, and the Guanyins looked almost ‘Gothic’ . . .”<sup>81</sup>

The similarities between these images were more than the culmination of a process whereby slightly different images were produced for two geographically close but distinct markets. Rather, the similarities were the result of a unique image from one religious world, the medieval Christian Madonna and child, exerting a strong influence on the production of another image, *songzi* Guanyin, in a different religious milieu. Chinese Guanyins that showed a bodhisattva holding a child drew their imagery from the Philippine ivory Virgins.

This adaptation was achieved through such alterations as “removing the cross from the rosary and replacing it with a tassel, by emptying the Infant’s hand of the orb or dove and adding a few Chinese details, such as a high collar and arching Buddhist scarf.”<sup>82</sup> Just as Chinese products became popular later in Europe, as a result of the lure of the exotic and the profitability of the “other”, so too did the ivory figures carved in the Fujianese coastal towns become popular and much sought after, especially among Chinese communities heavily involved in international trade.<sup>83</sup>

A closer examination of the imagery itself enables both the trade and the process of adaptation to be dated with some degree of accuracy. As seen with the Madonna and child on Katerina Ilioni’s tombstone, the probable archetype for this image was a Madonna of humility. There is no rosary in this painting. In a general sense, pious devotions, and the artistic imagery associated with them, were very much dependent on the missionaries who introduced them. As noted previously, the Franciscan missionaries often used the Madonna of humility; at the time of the Yuan dynasty many of these Franciscans were Italian.

The dominant foreign influence in the Philippines during the late Ming dynasty, however, was Spanish. This meant that there was a significant Dominican presence in the Philippines. Later in the seventeenth century, there were numbers of Jesuits as well. The Dominicans had a particular devotion to the rosary, believing that Mary had appeared to Saint Dominic and given the rosary to him in the twelfth century, asking that the rosary be recited as a prayer of the church. Paintings depicting this scene, while not uncommon, mostly only appeared in specific geographic regions, usually where Spanish religious were numerous. Prior to the late sixteenth century, there were few universally popular examples of Marian statues with the rosary in her hand. This was soon to change.

The Feast of the Holy Rosary was instigated in 1573; one year later, in 1574, the Dominican General Chapter advocated a widespread promotion of the rosary.<sup>84</sup> From this time onwards, Marian statues produced for the Christian markets in the Philippines also included statues showing Mary holding a rosary. Given that ivory was not used by the Zhangzhou carvers prior to 1573, the production of ivory statues of Mary holding a rosary clearly occurred as a result of the devotion promulgated by the Dominicans. Devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary was very successfully promoted, at least in the Philippines. As one example of the extent of the devotion, when Jesuits were banished from

Spanish territory (including the Philippines) in 1767, one of their small chapels was furnished with, among other things, “wood and ivory images of the Virgin with the Rosary”<sup>85</sup> (see the accompanying illustration).

During the late seventeenth century, the city of Zhangzhou lost the prominence it had earlier held as a trade city.<sup>86</sup> By this time, commerce had also increased in the port of Guangzhou in Guangdong Province. Unlike at the end of the Yuan dynasty, however, this did not cause the production of Marian images to stop. Rather, although the manufacture of ivories decreased in number, Marian images and Marian portraits were now produced in other media, such as woodblock prints. In China, these new forms of artistic representation began to arouse unprecedented levels of interest in Christian art.

### **Marian images during the late Ming dynasty**

In December 1582, the establishment of a Jesuit community in Zhaoqing, Guangdong Province, initiated the next significant step in the process of artistic hybridization. Two Italians, the priests Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) and Francesco Pasio (1554–1612), first founded this community. They were forced to leave the city in early 1583 and return to Macau, however, after which Pasio was sent to work in Japan. In September 1583, the Jesuits were able to return to Zhaoqing, and another Italian priest, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), took Pasio’s place. Ricci has become synonymous with Jesuit works in China since the time of the late Ming dynasty.<sup>87</sup> Their entry this second time marked the beginning of the third period of Christian history in China.

During the sixteenth century, prior to the existence of this household, contact between missionaries and individual Chinese had largely been limited to markets and trade fairs. At times, these encounters took place illegally on the coastal outskirts of China at places like Shangchuan Island. The Guangzhou trade fair was a notable exception as it occurred on the mainland. These exchanges were intermittent, consequently, where they occurred at all. Although numbers of foreign missionaries, including Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits, had attempted to stay in China during the sixteenth century, the Jesuits’ arrival in Zhaoqing marked the beginning of another period of sustained contact between Western nations and China.<sup>88</sup>

The significant difference between this attempt and others before it was that local authorities approved the Jesuits’ arrival. These sixteenth- and seventeenth-century interactions were characterized by an openness to

adaptation, in marked contrast to prevailing attitudes in present-day Chinese Catholic communities.

The newly arrived Jesuit missionaries displayed various religious images in their home at Zhaoqing, including a painting of Mary on the wall over the chapel altar. This was a replica of the famous Our Lady that legend had attributed to the hand of the evangelist St Luke (although it is most likely a sixth-century painting.) Although this work is properly known as *Salus Populi Romani*, it is also variously known as the Madonna of St Luke or the Madonna of Santa Maria Maggiore (from the name of the church in Rome where this painting is displayed).<sup>89</sup> According to Thomas Lucas, “the rapid spread of the missions of the Society of Jesus led to the widespread diffusion” of this image.<sup>90</sup>

This Marian image was very popular, not only among Romans, but also among the Jesuits who lived and studied in Rome before they headed off to the missions. The third Father-General of the Jesuits, Francis Borgia (1510–72), “petitioned and received extraordinary permission from [Pope] Paul VI to have an exact copy made” for one of the important Jesuit houses in Rome.<sup>91</sup> Many other replicas were made from this copy, ranging in style from painted reproductions to printed images “on silk, paper and metal.” As Gauvin Bailey writes, “Thanks to the Jesuits [the *Salus Populi Romani* image] probably enjoyed wider currency than any other image on earth by the turn of the seventeenth century.”<sup>92</sup>

The dissemination of this image was a deliberate programme of the Jesuits: they reproduced it in vast quantities, distributing it where they could. For these reasons, there was a copy at Zhaoqing, which aroused the interest of the Chinese townspeople who visited the Jesuit residence. Ricci made the following comments in his journal:

When people come to visit the Fathers, Magistrates and other holders of literary degrees, the common people, and even those who offered sacrifice to idols, everyone in short, paid reverence to the Madonna in her picture above the altar, with the customary bows and kneeling and touching of the forehead to the floor. All this was done with an air of real religious sentiment. They never ceased to admire the beauty and the elegance of this painting; the coloring, the very natural lines and the lifelike posture of the figure.<sup>93</sup>

The admiration for Western-style painting, and this Madonna in particular, was no doubt due partly to its novelty. The Jesuits’ painting also reminded many viewers of *songzi* Guanyin: the likeness served to increase the painting’s

attractiveness in the eyes of the beholders.<sup>94</sup> The number of images the Jesuits had in their houses in China was limited, mostly because of physical restrictions on how much could be transported from Europe as well as the cost of such transportation (and the danger of shipwreck or piracy).

Once this initial supply was exhausted, it was difficult to procure enough additional images to match their needs, even once they managed to establish art workshops in their mission territories. The missionaries were quick to try to replenish their supplies from local sources, the most famous examples being the establishment of an art workshop at Nagasaki, run by the Italian Jesuit brother Giovanni Nicolao between 1603 and 1614, and then at Macau once Nicolao was expelled from Japan. Regardless of these difficulties, however, the Jesuits were not averse to giving away some of their precious images.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, they constantly demanded that more copies be sent to them from Europe.

There are several reasons why Jesuits parted with their images. They thought that doing so served a catechetical purpose and helped to educate the recipients about certain aspects of Christian doctrine. They also realized the value of giving these paintings as gifts so as to gain some advantage for their missionary work, whether by cementing a friendship or delighting a patron. Gift-giving was not only a key part of Chinese culture; it was also a central feature of the Jesuits' apostolic tactics.

It was through one such encounter with a patron that an early Chinese replication of the Zhaoqing Marian image was produced. After many years moving northwards through the country, Ricci was finally on his way to the capital in 1600, the climax of his "eighteen year ascent to Beijing". Ricci had in his possession "oil paintings of Christ and the Virgin, an illustrated Bible, a cross inlaid with pearls, two clocks, a clavichord, and the 1597 edition of *Teatrum Orbis Terrarum* [Theatre of the World]", all of which were to be presented as gifts to the imperial court.<sup>96</sup>

Along the way, however, "in Jinan . . . the wife of the governor saw and admired the image of the Virgin and wished to send in a painter to make a copy of it."<sup>97</sup> Ricci happened to have a copy in his possession already: it was this copy that was given away instead. A Chinese convert, about whom not much else seems to be known, had apparently produced this previously copied work. Craig Clunas argues that Ricci did not wish for the Chinese painter chosen by the governor's wife to make the copy, because he wanted to make sure that the imitation was completed correctly.<sup>98</sup>

Ricci had had some experience of copying prior to this—a map of the world he had drawn some years earlier (the famous *mappomundo*) had been widely copied and circulated without his permission—and so Clunas' argument is persuasive. The fact that Ricci gave four prints to the Cheng brothers for copying and distribution (as explained below) would suggest, however, that Ricci sometimes allowed works to be copied, perhaps when he thought that such copying would be done proficiently and when it would redound well for the Jesuits. Alternatively, he might have felt in some way obligated to the merchants Cheng. At any rate, all one can say with confidence is that there existed one or more duplicates of the Zhaoqing version of the Madonna of St Luke and that one of these was left in Jinan.<sup>99</sup> The cultural interactions of this period were therefore capable of producing images that were not only significant for their subject matter but also for the aesthetic portrayal of such subjects.

There were times when the Jesuits were not happy with the effects caused by the publicly displayed paintings and copies of the Madonna. They had gradually come to the understanding that the image of Mary in the house at Zhaoqing caused the local Chinese townspeople to believe that the foreigners worshipped a woman, perhaps Guanyin or another female goddess. In the main, this situation and other examples of misunderstanding were caused by the Jesuits' inability to explain adequately what they wished to communicate. These experiences made them all the more determined to become fluent in both the local language and the local visual imagery.

Our focus on the ways that the early Jesuits in China sought to communicate the role and significance of Mary, especially iconographically, illustrates not only the ongoing process of Marian representation in China but also the development of the Jesuits' understanding of the culture within which they were living. While the Katerina tombstone of Yangzhou and the Zhangzhou ivories are immensely important for what they suggest about the Catholic communities of that time, they now stand unfortunately apart from their time and place. Without a broader context for these works (who produced, commissioned, paid for them and so on) it is hard to draw definite conclusions. Even so, certain tentative conclusions may be attempted.

Thankfully, the artistic productions from the late Ming onwards are accompanied by textual evidence that provides information about the communities for and by whom they were produced. These artistic works, and the associated documentation, illustrate the emergence and development of a tradition that

was open to the Chinese-style representation of Christian themes, especially Marian ones.

During the late Ming dynasty, another significant Madonna and child appeared, in a work known as *Master Cheng's Ink Garden* (*Chengshi Moyuan*). Like the other, earlier images, the Cheng Madonna is striking both for its subject matter and its representational style. It was also a clear example of the Jesuits' overall missiological strategy of using images to aid their preaching. Their desire to propagate a clear doctrinal message prompted the further development of a Chinese Christian style of representation. At the same time, they needed to ensure that their message was propagated in a way that was acceptable to the local culture, and would not cause them or their message to be declared heterodox.<sup>100</sup> Consequently, the missionaries were actively involved in the development of this style. The process of adaptation, however, was also partly the result of the inventiveness of the Chinese artists themselves. The missionaries of this era did not have as much influence over these processes as the Franciscans of earlier times seemed to possess.

The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Jesuits produced catechisms, prayer books and devotional works explaining the various tenets of Christianity.<sup>101</sup> For the greater part, they were able to control the publication of these works. They exercised their censorship, where they could, in order to avoid further confusion. They especially wished to prevent the continued divinization of Mary (the sense that Christians worshipped a woman) and to limit the ongoing conflation of Madonna with Guanyin.

The Jesuits had been involved in publishing from their earliest days in China. In many ways, publication was a distinctive feature of Jesuit ministry everywhere, although the *Constitutions* of the Society do not indicate the importance given to this work.<sup>102</sup> Michele Ruggieri, even though he was considered to have been only mildly competent in Chinese, had written a catechism in 1583 or 1584.<sup>103</sup> As the Jesuits' language ability improved, they refined their works and corrected previous errors. Ruggieri's work was soon replaced, for instance, by a catechism written by Ricci, which he had begun in 1595 and eventually published in 1603. This catechism became a popular and effective work and was reprinted four times between 1603 and 1608, with copies being commissioned and paid for by friends of Ricci.<sup>104</sup>

Gianni Criveller notes an important distinction evident in the works produced by Jesuits in China; he also argues that authors like J. S. Cummins and Jacques Gernet who "still claim that the Jesuits concealed the Christian

character of Christianity” have overlooked this important distinction.<sup>105</sup> Criveller considers that the works fell into two categories: catechisms and *doctrina Christiana*. The catechisms were “preliminary presentations of basic Christian philosophical concepts in dialogue with Confucian scholars, and in dispute with Buddhists and Daoists . . . [whereas *doctrina Christiana*] was a full account of Christian truth for catechumens and believers.”<sup>106</sup> Another way of defining this distinction, following Jozef Jennes, is that there were works of apologetics and works consisting of “booklets for Christians.”<sup>107</sup> Both types of publications served a specific purpose; they also sought to achieve their aims through the use of images and illustrations.

The role of illustrations and images in aiding catechesis had long been recognized, especially in China, as evidenced by the fact that, as early as 1305, John of Montecorvino commissioned the production of illustrated biblical scenes. The Jesuits had been using images with great missiological effect in other parts of the world, for example in Rome in 1593. In that year, the Society of Jesus had commissioned a work to accompany the theological and biblical commentary, *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia quae in Sacrosanto Missae Sacrificio toto anno leguntur*, known as *Images from the Gospels*.<sup>108</sup> Jeronimo Nadal, one of the earliest Jesuits, had written the commentary, yet the accompanying illustrated work was not published until after his death in 1580. Ricci praised this illustrated work highly because he found such images particularly useful when discussing doctrine:

This book is even of greater use than the Bible in the sense that while we are in the middle of talking we can also place right in front of their eyes things that with words alone we would not be able to make clear.<sup>109</sup>

The Jesuits intentionally used imagery to aid their programmes of catechesis, as shown by the widespread distribution of the Madonna of St Luke and the establishment of art workshops, mentioned earlier. They had done it in Europe, and they would now do it in Asia. In those parts of the world where they were teaching in a language different from their maternal tongue, the images were particularly helpful, if not essential. As Jeffrey Chipps Smith writes,

Jesuit image theory . . . fully subscribed to the affective power of art. Art had the potential to engage the senses, the intellect, and the spirit of the individual. The Society made art, like education or prayer, available to aid the individual, but it was up to that person to act or, equally, not to act. When the Jesuits and their artists devised pictorial cycles for their churches or prepared prints for the edification of their diverse audiences,

they were remarkably cognizant of viewer reception. . . . Put simply, Jesuit art is instructive regardless of its style or level of sophistication.<sup>110</sup>

The Jesuits commissioned numerous artists to work on this programme.<sup>111</sup> Ricci's preference for the *Images from the Gospels* is a powerful indicator of just how effective and valuable the prints were said to be, given that he had a bible known as the Antwerp Polyglot Bible in his possession, considered by many at the time to be priceless.<sup>112</sup>

### The Madonna in *Master Cheng's Ink Garden*

The Jesuits were not alone in realizing the value of the woodcuts in their possession as shown by the fact that *Master Cheng's Ink Garden* featured four Christian images based on pictures the Jesuits had brought with them.<sup>113</sup> A version of the Madonna was among these images. This publication is a wonderful example of late Ming ingenuity and an abiding interest in the "other". Jonathan D. Spence's work *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* recounts at some length the process by which these four European prints were included in this publication.<sup>114</sup>

These foreign images were unique in China at the time. Woodcuts of Christian themes were judged to be worthy—and probably quirky—inclusions in a book that collected together various designs for use on ink-cakes. This miscellany, as Bailey refers to it, "included some of the earliest colour prints in China . . . [as well as] stone rubbings of fantastic phenomena relating to the heavens and earth, Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, as well as exotic and precious objects."<sup>115</sup> The prints provided by the Jesuits were thus not the only images or objects included for their novelty value.

Cheng Dayue and his brother Cheng Shifang were entrepreneurs and manufacturers from Anhui who were apparently "locked in a bitter commercial rivalry with another manufacturer named Fang Yulu."<sup>116</sup> They decided to copy Fang's earlier idea of producing a massive collection of images, in order to provide templates for ink-cake designs and so that consumers could possess various famous and beautiful images, even if these were only copies. Realistically, most of the purchasers of the book would have bought it only for its aesthetic value and perhaps for the social status conveyed upon the owner of such a novel work. Craig Clunas describes this venture as one of several "luxury publishing projects" of the late Ming, including *Master Gu's Pictorial Album* (*Gushi huapu*) and the aforementioned work of Fang, entitled *Master*

*Fang's Album of Ink Cakes (Fangshi Mopu)*.<sup>117</sup> Cheng Dayue had met Ricci in Beijing and requested from him some examples of Christian imagery that would be suitable for this proposed work.<sup>118</sup>

Ricci apparently saw this as a wonderful opportunity for disseminating Christian themes, perhaps the best chance the missionaries had yet had. They had often remarked upon the power, in China, of publications in general and the printed word in particular and had expressed their desire to utilize this medium as much as they could. Ricci had in fact written in 1608 to an old Jesuit companion in Europe, Girolamo Costa, "How much could be done in China through the publication of books."<sup>119</sup> Ricci was almost unable to fulfil Cheng Dayue's request, however, because the best of the illustrations at his disposal, those of the Nadal collection, were far away in the Jesuit community at Nanchang, to the south in Jiangxi Province. Ricci nevertheless made the most of what he had at hand and gave four illustrations to Cheng.

These four pictures consisted of three engravings by the Wierix brothers and "a version of the miraculous *Nuestra Senora de Antigua* in Seville Cathedral, produced at Arima in Japan under Jesuit auspices in 1597."<sup>120</sup> A painting school had been established at Arima in 1583 under the care of the professional painter and Italian Jesuit, Giovanni Niccolo. (As mentioned above, he then established another workshop at Nagasaki some years later, and then another one at Macau.) Each of these schools were created in order to produce images for liturgical, catechetical and missiological use throughout the places in Southeast Asia where the Jesuits worked. Gauvin Bailey described this workshop in Japan as an "art academy, referred to in the sources as a 'school' or 'seminary' of painters, but [which was] known to scholars fancifully—and erroneously—as the 'Academy of St Luke'."<sup>121</sup> Niccolo's workshop was prolific, not only in the manufacture of works, but also in training painters, several of whom then played a significant part in the work of the Jesuits in China.<sup>122</sup>

The contributions by Ricci to Cheng's work were examples of the rich cultural and economic exchanges that occurred throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an incredibly international epoch. The Italian missionary had given to the Cheng brothers an image of Mary that had been produced in Japan. This image was in turn based on a print copied from an original painting in the Catholic cathedral in Seville, Spain. Furthermore, once Ricci gave the prints to the Chengs, the process of adaptation continued, as the artists commissioned by the publishers also made their own changes to the images now in their hands. In Bailey's view, "although these engravings are

far from elegant—the artist is uncomfortable with Western pose and gesture, and the figures are stiff and awkward—they are a true translation since they introduce Chinese motifs and use Chinese technique.”<sup>123</sup> The illustrations in the Chengs’ work were produced by at least two Chinese artists: Ding Yunpeng, an illustrator, and Huang Lin, an engraver.<sup>124</sup>

While Ricci and the Jesuits had little or nothing to do with the way the Christian images finally appeared, they would presumably have been delighted with the wide dissemination of the images brought about by the success of the Cheng publication. This work “capped the achievement of [Cheng’s] great competitor Fang Yulu, who had included a number of foreign or obscure scripts in his *Fangshi Mopu*, ‘Master Fang’s Album of Ink Cakes’ of 1588.”<sup>125</sup> *Master Cheng’s Ink Garden* was very popular and circulated widely around the country. The Christian prints contained in the work, the Marian image among them, would thus have received much attention.

As a result, this woodblock print of the Madonna and child represented another significant stage in the process of adaptation and transmission of Chinese Christian images. In all likelihood, it was also the most widely known of all the Chinese Christian images produced to that time (given, again, the connection in people’s minds with Guanyin). The previous images, especially the Yangzhou tombstone and the Jinan painting, were mainly intended for smaller audiences and had probably only been viewed by small numbers of people. While the Zhangzhou ivories had an international sphere of influence, because of the manner in which they were traded in China, the Philippines and beyond (for example, Mexico), such a sphere of influence was arguably not as large or influential as the market reached within China by the publication of *Master Cheng’s Ink Garden*.<sup>126</sup>

The Madonna from Seville appeared in the Chengs’ publication dressed in a flowing robe, holding Jesus in her arms, effectively nursing him on her side. Both Mary and Jesus have haloes; angels appear in the background. The Latin captions from the Spanish original were also retained in their original positions, inscribed both within the arc of Mary’s halo and running across the bottom of the print. Perhaps more than any other feature, the retention of this foreign text revealed the desire of the Cheng brothers to include the exotic and the unique, as presumably few of the purchasers of the book, if any, would have been able to read Latin.<sup>127</sup> The consideration of whether or not the text could be read was most likely largely irrelevant for the two Chengs, as this

work was envisaged as a triumph of the visual arts, rather than as a literary text to be studied.<sup>128</sup>

The Chinese adaptations included in the main a sinicization of the faces, as in the earlier Yangzhou tombstone and the painting in the Field Museum, as well as some simplification of the background. One again notes the absence of a rosary in Mary's hands, illustrating that the original Seville painting did not come from the devotional tradition that promoted the rosary, even though it was a Spanish painting.

## **Marian sodalities**

Like the Franciscans in China before them, the early Jesuit missionaries found the use of images helpful not only in representing Christian themes, including Marian devotions, but also in educating neophytes, especially about Mary's role. Ongoing education was seen as critical for the continued growth and development of the Catholic communities. It was not enough merely to baptize an individual or groups of people; rather, the missionaries desired to nurture a continuing relationship with such communities. Several factors made it difficult to deepen these relationships, however, not the least of which was the effect of the limited number of priests for such a vast territory and for the growing numbers of communities.

This small band of priests was constantly obliged to travel to the numerous Christian households or villages in order to administer the sacraments. Even with the increase in the number of Chinese priests, which happened slowly from the late seventeenth century onwards, this situation remained the same until the early 1900s. In looking for ways to solve this difficulty, the missionaries used means that had proven successful elsewhere, for instance in rural France and Germany during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or in situations where the ongoing animation of the faith communities could not be left to the male religious alone, sometimes for reasons of propriety, like being left alone with women.<sup>129</sup>

The establishment of Marian congregations, also known as sodalities, was one way of meeting this difficulty. They were prayer groups founded to "help members who lived in remote villages and who were deprived of the convenience of attending devotions in church on feast days."<sup>130</sup> The missionaries considered that the best means of consolidating the faith of Catholic communities and thereby ensuring their long-term survival was the promotion of a vibrant

prayer life, coupled with a solid catechetical education. In China, these congregations began in Beijing in 1609. Ricci started these sodalities as a means of deepening the faith life and devotional practice of the Christian community in the capital. Other missionaries around the country followed suit. In 1610, João da Rocha began a congregation in Nanjing, Lazzaro Cattaneo established one in Shanghai, and other missionaries formed others at different stages throughout the countryside.<sup>131</sup> By 1664, “the congregations numbered about 400 and the number of members in each congregation about 100.”<sup>132</sup>

The first sodality was deliberately established with forty members on 8 September, the traditional feast day of the birth of Mary.<sup>133</sup> Meetings consisted of a brief homily from the accompanying priest, discussion on spiritual points raised by members of the gathering, especially issues that were troubling the new believers, and a review of the acts of charity that had been performed and that needed to be performed by the members. These procedures and associated regulations were printed in a small booklet. In the case of this first congregation of Mary, the rulebook was drawn up in Chinese by a Chinese Christian known by his baptismal name of Luke and was then revised and edited by Ricci.<sup>134</sup>

Later sodalities printed their own rules, using both this book and the rules suggested by other missionaries. (It must be noted that not all the sodalities were dedicated to Mary; there were also ones to St Francis Xavier, St Joseph and so on. Even so, the Marian congregations were very important.) The homily by the priest became less important as the faith knowledge of some of the members became more extensive and they were able to meet the questions of the other members without recourse to the missionaries. The members of the sodalities also administered the acts of charity that were an integral feature of the congregations and consisted of such things as visiting the sick and the isolated, and helping the poor. The provisioning of funeral ceremonies for those otherwise unable to pay was one major way that paupers were assisted: it was a much-appreciated service.

Some practical consequences of these sodalities were that the missionaries were thereby freed for different activities; neophytes in otherwise inaccessible locations were able to receive catechesis. David Mungello argues that the sodalities also planted the seeds of the conflict that burst forth in the nineteenth century between the French missionaries and the Chinese Catholics in Jiangnan, insofar as the groups contributed to a strong tradition of Chinese lay leadership.<sup>135</sup>

The success of these congregations in the seventeenth century (and beyond) was based on the fact that they were a powerful means of keeping the communities together and of sustaining their shared identity, especially in isolated or difficult circumstances. In establishing these groups in China, the Jesuits “merely reinforced a traditional pattern within a Chinese context . . . [as there had long been] . . . lay organisations that aimed at mutual help, charitable works, and moral improvement.”<sup>136</sup> Various societies existed at the end of the Ming dynasty; new forms of benevolent societies also came into being at this time.<sup>137</sup> There were a number of lay fraternities or groupings within the Buddhist world, for activities like “reciting the Buddha’s name” and “for releasing life”. In Fujian Province, where Giulio Aleni worked extensively, “the converts took as their model the Daoist, Buddhist and Neo-Confucian associations.”<sup>138</sup> In some cases, notable converts to Catholicism had been active members of such groups, for example, Yang Tingyun in Hangzhou.<sup>139</sup>

Like the Catholic congregations, these Chinese societies had a philanthropic function. Both the religious societies and the more secular benevolent societies were involved in activities such as paying for funerals, helping the sick and poor, and setting up places where people could obtain food. For the Christians, these social activities made the congregations popular groups to join: the sense of shared community that was created by membership in the sodality helped keep these groups together. The Christian groups were not considered foreign entities because of their similarities to the local philanthropic societies.<sup>140</sup>

In this way, the Marian sodalities managed to cross the cultural membrane and permeate the life of Chinese Catholic communities. In so doing, they further strengthened the devotion to Mary within those communities. The sense of community also assisted in the process of catechesis. The use of images was a prominent feature of the programme of faith education, alongside the recital of Marian prayers and the explanation of doctrine.

### **João da Rocha and the rosary**

Members of these congregations and sodalities often searched for a deeper understanding of their faith and for a more strongly felt sense of common identity and community. The Jesuits wrote or translated numerous works on prayer to meet these needs,<sup>141</sup> in addition to the catechisms written by Ricci and others.

In 1619, João da Rocha wrote a book of instructions about how to pray the rosary (called *Songnianshu guicheng*): it was one example of the works produced for leaders of the sodalities. This work also featured several Chinese Christian art works.<sup>142</sup> The publication of da Rocha's work reveals the growth in popularity of the rosary at this time, in response to the determined international campaign by the Dominicans. Ignatian spirituality also had a strong Marian focus, so it is not surprising to find the Jesuits supported the promotion of the rosary as well.<sup>143</sup>

João Rocha was well aware of the Nadal collection of gospel images and utilized them to good effect.<sup>144</sup> Unfortunately, while it is known that one or several Chinese artists produced the art works in da Rocha's manual in China, their identities have been lost over time. The publication *Songnianshu guicheng* contained fourteen illustrations, all of which reveal how these well-known images from one culture underwent adaptation to another, in ways as notable as those of Zhangzhou, slightly earlier.<sup>145</sup>

The original European images have been transformed into Chinese scenes through the utilization of a large number of Chinese artistic motifs.<sup>146</sup> A close analysis and comparison of the annunciation scenes contained within both Nadal and da Rocha demonstrates this transformation well (see the illustrations). First, it is apparent from the subject matter, the placement of the figures and the interaction between these figures that the Nadal work was clearly the model for the later image.

The angel enters from the left-hand side of the frame and addresses Mary, who is in a kneeling position in the lower right foreground of the image. In both engravings, the angel holds a symbol of purity in his right hand (a lily) and gestures towards Mary with his left. In turn, as she hears these momentous words from her position of supplication, she raises both hands in front of her heart: the gesture and positioning of the hands is the same in both cases. The similarities do not end there: there is the use of a building, the situation of Mary inside her chamber, the fact that she is shown at prayer and that her room contains both objects of devotion (a prayer book) and domestic labour (sewing materials). Finally, in addition to the use of the halo around Mary's head, a sense of the numinous is created through the use of clouds and heavenly creatures (Gabriel in both instances and, in Nadal's version, other angels as well). Thus the da Rocha version was attentive to the original as regards most of its important details.

Yet not everything in the new version imitates the original: it is in the dissimilarities that one can discern some of the ways that the foreign images were transposed for the benefit of local neophytes.

Perhaps most importantly, Mary is clearly shown as a Chinese woman in da Rocha's version. In addition to her visage, she is in Chinese robes and her chamber is complete with Chinese furnishings. Her prayer position is one of kneeling on the ground, which was more natural than raising oneself up on a *prie-Dieu* (as these items were known in Europe), and her prayer book rests on a tall side-table, rather than on the desk of the *prie-Dieu*.<sup>147</sup> Certain items have undergone a kind of "translation by cultural equivalence"; thus, in Nadal there is a bed with a curtain, while in da Rocha there is an elevated platform in the bedchamber, which may function as both a resting place by day and a sleeping place by night. The sewing materials are those that were in use in each culture; the artistic method by which clouds were depicted has remained true to each cultural norm.

The next most important point of difference is the fact that the engraving in da Rocha's book hones in on one central aspect of the annunciation and not on eight points, as represented in Nadal's version, where the letters A to H appear both in the picture itself and in the explanatory section below the engraving, where each letter corresponds to a line of text. In Nadal's work, the story of the annunciation evolves over time and space. It begins in the upper corners of the engraving, and the action first takes place on the heavenly plane. At letter A, the angels are summoned, God pronounces that Christ must become incarnate and Gabriel is designated as the messenger. At F, God becomes flesh. Gabriel then breaks the heavenly bonds and descends to Mary's bedchamber, as indicated by letters B and C. (Letter D designates the pious medieval belief that Mary's house was subsequently moved to Loreto, Italy). Letter E indicates that Gabriel is now in the earthly dimension and is ready to announce the good news to Mary. G and H deal with the consequences of the incarnation. Thus, Nadal's engraving, with its alphabetic formulations and multiple images, is an incredibly involved and sophisticated theological depiction of several major Catholic beliefs. Each of these points encourages the viewer to pause at all the stages of the mystical process.

In sharp contrast, the engraving in da Rocha's work employs multiple traditional devices to situate the story totally in the here and now of the Chinese viewer's experience. Lacking any written text, the teaching aspect of the work is conveyed entirely visually; the central image is not cluttered with multiple

stories occurring in other parts of the painting. In China, the Christian teaching has become more succinct and wholly representational.

As will be seen in later chapters concerning the work of the twentieth-century Chinese Christian artists, many of the devices employed here are standard ones from the world of Chinese painting. First, there is a noticeable emphasis on representing aspects of nature, such as palm trees, scholar rocks, and mountains receding into the distance (discussed below). Second, the use of perspective is important. The heavenly world is shown to have broken into this one through the transformation of the angel Gabriel—as represented in Nadal by letters B and C—into the dove of the Holy Spirit appearing from a cluster of clouds.<sup>148</sup> While the depth of field provided by the opening at the back of the house (as opposed to the closed room in Nadal) allows viewers to gaze into the distance, it also invites viewers to focus their gaze instead on the events occurring at the centre of the engraving.

Through these customary devices, the new believers—the ones being taught to pray the rosary—were asked to reflect upon the mystery of God becoming man from the perspective of people in the Middle Kingdom. As a result of the artistic transformation of Nadal's engraving, the Christ event is no longer foreign to Chinese Christians, as the scene has lost its exotic (and busy) feel and has become part of a familiar world. Arguably, the Chinese version is also more immediately accessible, and thus effective, than its predecessor.

After João da Rocha's work, there appeared the *Tianzhu jiangsheng chuxiang jingjie* [Explanation of the incarnation and life of the Lord of Heaven], which his fellow Jesuit Giulio Aleni had written.<sup>149</sup> This publication succeeded, and was the culmination of, Aleni's earlier publication *Tianzhu jiangsheng yanxing jilüe* [The Life of Our Lord], which consisted of text only and had been produced two years earlier, in 1635. Like da Rocha's earlier book, these two works also drew on the *Images from the Gospels*: they were a commentary and a set of accompanying illustrations.

Whereas Nadal's commentary was accompanied by 153 illustrations, Aleni's work had only fifty-eight images. As Aleni's aim was to preach about the Lord of Heaven, there was a marked emphasis on illustrations that depicted scenes from the life of Jesus. This does not mean, however, that Mary disappeared altogether. In fact, the final image in this work was an illustration entitled *The Coronation of Mary*. Although this picture was also based on an engraving found in Jeronimo Nadal's work, the new work was a significantly adapted version of the original (both may be viewed in the accompanying illustrations).

Whereas previously Mary and Jesus, the apostles and the act of coronation were all portrayed in separate panels, the Aleni version blended them all together. The angels on high and the multitudes below all viewed the crowning of Mary at the same time. In addition to the apostles, who were retained from the previous image, “there is a large group of at least fifteen Chinese, mixed with the European personages, among whom Aleni inserted the Pope, recognizable from the Tiara, and also a European sovereign.”<sup>150</sup>

The Chinese people included scholars, a soldier and a young child. Their nationality is clearly evident from their clothing and their visages. European and Chinese believers alike thereby joined together in witnessing the elevation of Mary to the highest heavens. Giulio Aleni was indicating, as clearly as possible, that the church was both universal and Chinese. Mary was the queen of all.

We see, therefore, that traditional Western representations of Christian stories about Mary had been adapted to the Chinese reality, from the time of the Yangzhou tombstone in 1342 to this rich period at the end of the Ming dynasty. The process of adaptation resulted in the manufacture of Marian images in ivory at Zhangzhou, in at least one Chinese painting at Jinan, woodblock prints at Anhui, and illustrated prayer manuals in Fujian. The annunciation now took place in a Chinese building with Chinese furniture; mandarins observed the coronation of Mary. The Madonna had now pitched her tent in the Chinese land.

There had emerged in China an ever more developed tradition of Chinese Christian art, which can trace its roots to at least the fourteenth century. The Chinese depictions of Marian devotions discussed in this chapter reveal an attitude of mind that was both flexible and open. A coherent and orthodox theology also underpinned these works. The woodcuts of da Rocha and Aleni were neither isolated instances nor moments of fortuitous experimentation. Rather, they were the results of deliberate choices made by European missionaries and their Chinese companions. This suggests, among other things, that the Chinese Christian communities identified themselves as both Christian and Chinese.

While Chinese Christians (and even non-Christians) still sought European Christian paintings, statues and engravings that depicted biblical stories and lives of the saints, these European-style objects did not prevent the growth and development of Chinese-style representations. The European identity did not stunt the developing Chinese Christian identity. The two artistic traditions

existed side by side; both were esteemed and praised. By the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the situation had changed significantly. An overwhelming preference for European-style Christian art developed, which in turn had a negative impact on the growth of a Chinese Christian identity. The following chapter, which resumes the history of the Catholic communities in the nineteenth century, explores the possible reasons for this.

Admittedly, it may seem strange now to jump straight to the middle of the nineteenth century. But while the history of Catholicism in China since the entry of the European missionaries in the late sixteenth century continued unbroken into the present century, the Catholic communities experienced much hardship during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This was because imperial governments instituted successive persecutions. During this period, the number of foreign missionaries arriving in China was much smaller, and the local clergy (small in number but impressive all the same) were severely overworked. Sadly, the records for this period are also rather sparse.<sup>151</sup> Consequently, given that the focus of this work is the evolution of Chinese Catholic identities, especially as portrayed in artistic works, with a further focus on representations of Mary, the next chapter resumes this narrative around the time of the Opium Wars, when the church began to grow rapidly.



## **Part 2**

# **The Chinese Catholic Church since 1842**



## 2

# After the treaties

The Treaty of Nanjing marked the cessation of the First Opium War, fought between Great Britain and China. The fact that this formal agreement, signed on 29 August 1842, was “imposed by the victor upon the vanquished at gunpoint, without the careful deliberation usually accompanying international agreements in Europe and America”, undoubtedly contributed to the outbreak of the Second Opium War in the next decade.<sup>1</sup> Although signatures were exchanged on board the British naval vessel HMS *Cornwallis* on that date, the process of ratification by both nations’ rulers, the Daoguang Emperor (r. 1820–50) and Queen Victoria (r. 1837–1901), was not completed until the end of the year. The actual implementation of the provisions of the treaty occurred even later.

Among the thirteen articles of the treaty, some of the main provisions were the opening of five ports—Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai—the cession of Hong Kong Island, and the imposition of an indemnity.<sup>2</sup> There were also numerous provisions regarding trade, which, after all, was chief among the underlying reasons for the war in the first place. As stated by Immanuel Hsü, “Opium, the immediate cause of the war, was not even mentioned—the question of its future status cautiously avoided by both sides.”<sup>3</sup>

This treaty did more than cede Chinese trading rights to the British and create foreign enclaves in treaty ports. It also began a process by which the slow and furtive entry of Christian missionaries was transformed into a numerically significant and legally sanctioned enterprise. The growth of the Catholic Church in China had slowed down after the persecutions and restrictions it experienced from the mid- to the late 1700s, which had dramatically decreased the number of foreign missionaries able to enter the country. This did not mean, obviously, that there were no more clergy for the Catholic population, as there was a significant number of Chinese priests by this time, but it did mean that these Chinese priests were usually overworked and were not replaced

when they died.<sup>4</sup> In the case of the Jesuits, for instance, their suppression in 1773 also meant that there were simply no more members of the Society to be sent on mission anywhere, let alone to the towns and villages of China.<sup>5</sup>

The legal return of the missionaries was not a major aim of the war; the treaty did not even include religion as one of its main provisions. Even so, by Christmas 1842, Fr. Napoleon Libois was able to write that it seemed “easier than ever to get into China.”<sup>6</sup> Libois, a French priest of the Society for the Foreign Missions of Paris (*Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris*, or MEP), was based in Macau and was the procurator of his congregation.<sup>7</sup> This meant he was responsible for the material and spiritual support of his fellow Foreign Missions missionaries who were already in China or on their way there. His predecessor, Fr. Pierre-Louis Legrégeois, had resided in Macau for almost thirteen years, from 1828 to 1841, and had performed a similar role.<sup>8</sup> Their society had much experience getting men into China, therefore; they welcomed the changes brought about by the new situation.

Insofar as the Western countries (that is, the United States of America in addition to the European powers) thought their own cultures more developed and civilized than the Chinese, the new possibility for Western religions to be preached without hindrance was certainly welcome. There are too many references in the primary literature of the period for there to be much doubt that many of those who came to China, or reported on what they experienced there, saw a nation and culture they considered as inferior to their own. Two small examples will suffice to illustrate.

An interpreter for the British forces was quoted as saying that “a more subtle, lying and thievish race it never was my luck to live amongst.”<sup>9</sup> The missionaries too, both Catholic and Protestant, were guilty at times of a similar sense of cultural superiority. The Catholic missionary Fr. Jean-Henri Baldus was a French Lazarist who had worked in China since the beginning of 1835 (and thus technically there without formal permission), and who died in Jiujiang, Jiangxi Province, in 1869.<sup>10</sup> Father Baldus reputedly developed very good Chinese-language skills over the course of his thirty years in China, which suggests at least the possibility of openness to the host culture. He had written to his fellow Lazarists in Paris in 1840, nevertheless, about his experience of China and the Chinese; importantly, that he wrote five years after his entry would suggest that he was writing from a position of experience and not from the first flush of missionary enthusiasm: “I think in all things they are decidedly inferior to the Europeans, whom indeed the Lord seems to have regarded as his second chosen people.”<sup>11</sup>

The passage of time did not ameliorate these negative views; if anything, in some quarters, they were intensified. In 1889, Jean-Baptiste Aubry, a Missions Étrangères priest, wrote that Chinese culture was “from all points of view a monstrosity that was not only anti-Christian but anti-human, and the religion nay religions of China were monstrous, absurd and the most ridiculous in the whole world.”<sup>12</sup> Clearly, Ricci and his confreres had been some kind of exception.

Shortly after some of these “chosen people” had imposed themselves upon China’s hospitality, the United States and France also signed treaties with China—in July and October of 1844, respectively—deliberately including religion in the terms. The Treaty of Wanghsia (Wangxia) with the United States not only banned the opium trade but also stipulated that citizens of the United States of America could operate hospitals and churches in the newly opened treaty ports.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, according to article 22 of the Treaty of Whampoa (Huangpu) with France, Catholicism could now also be propagated legally. The Treaty of Tianjin, signed in 1858 at the end of the Second Opium War by the British and French on one side and the Chinese on the other but not ratified until 1860, expanded this freedom to include freedom of movement throughout China for all missionaries, Catholic or Protestant.

The emperors Kangxi in 1717 and Yongzheng in 1724 proscribed the practice of Christianity in China. These edicts noticeably affected the Catholic communities. Kenneth Latourette wrote “after what looked like a promising growth in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century brought adverse conditions which for a time seemed to presage a third extinction of the faith.”<sup>14</sup> This did not mean, however, that all foreign Catholic missionaries left China. It also did not result in the total cessation of missionaries crossing the borders; the established communities did not in fact wither away. One of the enduring myths of this period was “that by the time the war [the Opium War] broke out the Catholic Mission to China had shrunk almost to nothing.”<sup>15</sup> Clearly, this was not the case.

While the communities at Beijing had certainly been affected by the imperial proscriptions and ongoing persecutions (as well as by the effects of the Chinese Rites Controversy), the experiences of communities in other parts of the country were not as drastic. As shown by David Mungello, for instance, some of these communities continued to flourish.<sup>16</sup> It was true, nevertheless, that the increase in the number of Christians during this time was remarkably slow. Peter Ward Fay estimates that by the beginning of the 1830s there

were around 200,000 converts throughout all of China, while David Mungello maintains that, by the time of the Jesuits' return, there were almost 250,000 Catholics.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the exact numbers, which are of course hard to determine, the Catholic communities continued to receive the sacraments from their priests, both Chinese and foreign, and were guided by their lay leaders.

Foreign Catholic priests therefore continued to enter China even before the outbreak of the First Opium War. Unlike their Protestant counterparts, moreover, they did not limit themselves to the littoral ports but had spread throughout the hinterland. Several factors made this possible. In the main, the celibate Catholic religious had greater mobility than the Protestant missionaries, who often had to consider, in addition to their personal situation, the well-being and safety of their families. This absence of family and the long history of Catholic missions meant that, once Catholic missionaries left their homeland, they would rarely, if ever, return. (While this was also true for many individual Protestant missionaries and their families, it was nevertheless an institutionally understood reality for Catholic religious.) Two quotations from sources written slightly later in the nineteenth century illustrate well the Catholic missionary's total commitment to being sent abroad for life:

In 1885, Major Knollys is on board a steamer on his way up the Yangtze and: "I notice a tall Chinese figure seat himself at the table, very humbly, very quietly." This turns out to be Pere Gannier, a Jesuit priest who has devoted himself to a missionary life in China . . . "And how long do you expect to remain out?" I ask. "*Toute ma vie, Monsieur*" with a rather melancholy smile . . . "I have left for ever all who are near and dear to me." "What a sacrifice" I involuntarily exclaim. "Yes" he assented "and yet I feel perfectly happy, and without a vestige of regret. But I admit this is an un-natural kind of happiness, and can only be attained by divine grace."<sup>18</sup>

To the amazement of European travellers during the nineteenth century, female European Catholic religious had also entered into such a compact:

A short distance from Zikawei [Xujiahui in Mandarin] is a house of education and an orphanage under the care of some Sisters. The Superior, a young lady of most pleasing exterior, a soft and yet intelligent face, did the honours of her establishment with the grace and easy manners of a person in the highest society. Her French is the pure Parisian of the Faubourg St Germain, from where she came to bury herself in this terrible solitude, and to consecrate the best years of her life, her health, and probably life itself to the arduous duties of her vocation.<sup>19</sup>

Catholic missionaries like this refined Parisian sister and the grace-filled Father Gannier were usually working in well-established Catholic communities. As such, outsiders like the good major may have overestimated the arduous nature of their duties. That is, while their life was indeed tough and they were a long way from their natal homes, they were still among another kind of family.

Protestant missionaries, on the other hand, had only come to China at the beginning of the nineteenth century; the non-Catholic Christian communities were still young at this time. The Protestant missionaries were consequently not as geographically dispersed by the time of the treaties. Peter Ward Fay considers that the greater mobility of the priests could also be explained by the fact that they were not hampered by official governmental positions or responsibilities. This was not true for the Protestant missionaries, who often had to find some salaried work, mainly as a way of sustaining themselves. For instance, the first Protestant missionary in China, Robert Morrison, had secured a job as a translator for the (British) East India Company in Guangzhou in 1809. This was two years after he had first arrived in Macau, having experienced great difficulties in learning Chinese and in obtaining gainful work. Such employment affected the ability of the Protestant missionaries to venture far from European spheres of influence, especially before the treaties.

The Catholic clergy had certainly ventured far and wide; by 1839, at least twenty-nine French Catholic missionaries were living throughout China.<sup>20</sup> Based on research in the archives of two predominantly French religious congregations, the Lazarists and the Foreign Missions of Paris, Peter Ward Fay discovered that, in addition to those clergy based in Macau, either because they were engaged in language training as they prepared to enter China or because their role was to support those actually inside China proper (that is, those working within the office of their congregation's procurator), these twenty-nine Frenchmen were located throughout Jiangxi, Hubei, Fujian, Sichuan and vaguely "somewhere about the lower Yangtze."<sup>21</sup> They were even based in Mongolia.

French missionaries, however, were not the only European Catholic clergy at work in the interior. By the 1830s, there were procurators stationed at Macau for four of the missionary groups involved in China. In addition to the procurators for the French Lazarists and Paris Foreign Missions, there were also procurators for the Portuguese Lazarists and the Spanish Dominicans. The priests of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith also had their own procurator.<sup>22</sup> Due to the desire of Pope Gregory XV and subsequent

popes to wrest control over the missions from Lisbon, at the time of the Opium Wars there were large numbers of Frenchmen in their ranks. Finally, there were also Italian Franciscans working in Hunan and Shaanxi: these too made their way through Macau.

In the main, the missionaries travelled to their stations in China via the more accessible Macau and the sea-routes that emanated from there, although contact did occur between the Catholic communities in Sichuan and in what is modern-day Vietnam. Missionaries would take a vessel some way up the coast and then travel overland. Alternatively, once they reached Macau by sea, they would travel by land, according to the route chosen by their assistant.

Relying on the traders who sailed these China-bound vessels had its share of challenges and difficulties, as ever since the days of Francis Xavier's unsuccessful attempted entry to China in the mid-sixteenth century. The restrictions experienced by traders at this time, as Chinese officials attempted to limit the entry of opium into Chinese ports and towns, had deleterious side effects on the ability of Catholic mission congregations to send their men to the Catholic communities within China. The most effective methods of travel for their men—accompanying the opium smugglers on their coastal voyages from Macau—were also often illegal and dangerous. These smugglers were predominantly British, and therefore not likely to be Catholic, but they were willing to take the missionaries with them. Consequently, by the time of the outbreak of the First Opium War, a relatively incongruous situation had developed in which “opium and Catholics were beginning to move not simply along the same routes but in the same vessels.”<sup>23</sup>

The newly signed treaties encouraged the arrival of a new generation of foreign missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant. Although the Catholic missionaries who were already in China came from many of the countries that made up Catholic Europe, a large number of the newly sent Catholic religious were French. The members of this national group brought with them more than just “the universal faith” and memories of home. These missionaries also had in their possession many popular French devotional images. Such objects were instrumental in the missionaries' catechetical programme and also served to remind the religious of their nearest and dearest far across the globe. These faith objects were subsequently displayed more frequently than the existing images, some of which had Chinese features.

It is obviously important not to overstate the French influence on the Chinese Catholic church, given the role played by Belgian, German, Irish and

North American missionaries, for instance, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Even so, the French influence was significant and far-reaching, not only because of the effects of the protectorate but also because of the numbers of French missionaries (especially in leadership positions), the places where the French congregations worked, and the role of their printers, seminaries and communication networks. At the First Vatican Council (1869), for instance, ten of the fifteen bishops from China were French; in 1885, seventeen of the thirty-five Catholic missions in China were entrusted to French congregations; even by 1914, of the 1,500 missionaries in the country, 850 were French.<sup>24</sup> Although missionaries from the other nationalities had their own devotions, French devotions were both particular (especially used by French missionaries) and universal (used by all), and so were present throughout the whole country. As such, they provide rich material for reflection.

Many of these new images were Marian in nature; consequently, these French Marian images soon overwhelmed the images of Mary that had been produced in China. As distinct from previous periods, however, French sisters and nuns that now travelled to China as well also introduced some of these devotions. For instance, the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul arrived in China in 1847, followed later by the Society of Helpers in 1867, and a group of Carmelite Sisters (from Laval) arrived in 1869. The French religious certainly had a large variety of images to choose from: this was but one consequence of the vibrancy and popularity of Marian devotion within France at this time, for both men and women.

## French Marian devotions

In Paris alone, within a kilometre's radius of the heart of the city, the Cité Island, there were several major Marian shrines. Each of these shrines had a distinct devotional focus and iconographic representation of Mary, if not indeed several representations. In each of these churches there existed one particular Marian image from which the church derived its name. This key image was the only one recognized as the image of the particular devotion associated with the church.

These shrines included Our Lady of Paris (*Notre Dame de Paris*), on the island itself, Our Lady of Good Deliverance (*Notre Dame de Sainte Espérance*) on the left bank of the river Seine, and Our Lady of Victories (*Notre Dame des Victoires*), on the right bank. These three shrines, and others besides, were

popular as pilgrimage destinations for French (and European) Catholics in the nineteenth century and even earlier. Although the French Marian images shared many common details, such as the frequent use of the mother and child, among these various representations were notable differences, such as the physical position of Jesus in relation to Mary.

At *Notre Dame de Paris*, for instance, there are several representations inside the church itself and a different one again on the cathedral's stone façade. The statue located inside the church shows Mary holding Jesus on the left side of her body, almost as though she is lifting him up into the air. In the image at the Good Deliverance shrine, Jesus is nursed on Mary's left hip, whereas in the image of Our Lady of Victories, Mary supports her young son at her right side as he stands on an orb or a globe, perhaps representing "all things in subjection under his feet."<sup>25</sup> In the statue at the cathedral church of Notre Dame, Mary is the only one wearing a crown, whereas both mother and child are crowned in the two other images. Jesus is portrayed as an infant of indeterminate age in each of the statues, although clearly older than a baby. Finally, both mother and child in Our Lady of Good Deliverance are black: this representation thus falls into the category of statuary known as the "Black Madonna". Thus, these three statues in churches barely two kilometres' distance from each other show marked similarities yet also significant differences, illustrating the rich diversity of the Marian devotions in Paris and beyond.

The various iconographic features reflected specific characteristics such as the history of the locally based devotions, although artistic licence and the skill of the artist also influenced the appearance of the final work. One of the most famous Marian images of recent times, Our Lady of Lourdes (*Notre Dame de Lourdes*), well illustrates this point. This image, which originated in the French Pyrenees, dates back to the late 1850s but traces its origins to other, earlier images. The devotion associated with the southwestern town of Lourdes emphasizes the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception (see below.) Marian images that illustrate this particular characteristic therefore portray Mary by herself, without Jesus. The representation of this aspect of Marian piety in the Lourdes image was due to the central place of the Immaculate Conception in the apparition accounts of a local shepherd-girl, Bernadette Soubirous.

Given that devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes became popular throughout France during the latter part of the nineteenth century, this statue was readily found in many Catholic churches within France. It could also be seen in individual homes, more usually as small replicas but sometimes in larger versions as

well. Simply, this image was ubiquitous in the French Catholic world in the late nineteenth century. The French missionaries entering China in the years after the Treaty of Tianjin were thus increasingly likely to bring with them statues, paintings, pictures and holy medals featuring Our Lady of Lourdes. This image played an important role in the lives of all the missionaries, regardless of where they came from in France. The establishment of numerous Lourdes-type shrines throughout China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries point to the importance that this image already had in the devotional lives of the missionaries who travelled to China.

The numerous other Marian devotions in France had a more geographically specific appeal. Statues and images that belonged to these traditions were most likely introduced to China by missionaries who had a special attachment to the region where such devotions were popular. The region might be the missionary's hometown or region, or the place where he or she had had a particular spiritual experience. Equally, the missionary's religious congregation may have been established there, or the particular devotion of the region may have played a significant role in the congregation's foundational story.

It is for such reasons that the devotion to Our Lady of Victories (the most famous shrine of which was in Paris) was particularly popular among missionaries who either came from Paris or had a special attachment to the capital. The Marian pilgrimage in Shanghai, for instance, was significantly influenced by French Jesuits from the province of Paris, so much so that the first image used for this pilgrimage was a copy of the statue of Our Lady of Victories from the church of this name in Paris. A Chinese Jesuit based in Shanghai painted it (as discussed below).<sup>26</sup>

Two other popular devotions usually associated with the northern parts of France, namely, Our Lady of Treille (which originated in the city of Lille) and Our Lady of Liesse (from the small town of Aisne, north of Paris) could thus be found in China in places where the missionaries who came from these areas of France worked. A church built in the province of Guizhou in 1876 by Foreign Missions priests, for example, was named the Church of Our Lady of Liesse, suggesting the northern origins of the missionaries stationed there. This was even though the seminary and mother-house of the Society for the Foreign Missions was in Paris, at Rue du Bac. Another example is the seminary at Xianxian in Hebei Province. Jesuits from the northern French Jesuit province of Champagne had founded this training centre, and they entrusted this work to Our Lady of Treille.

Until the appointment of Gong Pinmei in 1950, French Jesuits administered the Catholic Church in Shanghai. It is understandable, therefore, that in addition to the French Marian devotions that enjoyed a national and even an international following, like the devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes, devotions that were more representative of the Parisian Catholic communities, like that to Our Lady of Victories (based in Paris), also became popular in Shanghai. The prevalence of these European images, however, came at the expense of Chinese images, insofar as the French images were displayed in greater numbers and were reproduced more often. The vibrant and innovative evocations of local imagery that were popular in the late Ming and early Qing periods, which had been the product of centuries of cultural interaction and negotiation, were now increasingly replaced by scenes imported wholly from afar.

There are at least three reasons why the importation of European images was as successful as it was. First, there were the residual effects of what is known as the Chinese Rites Controversy, with an attendant emphasis on hierarchical church structures; second, the pervasive cultural arrogance of the victorious Europeans exerted an undeniable influence; and, third, the three Marian events that had occurred in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century had far-reaching effects on international Catholic communities, including those of China.<sup>27</sup>

### **The effects of the Chinese Rites Controversy**

Many of the European missionaries who arrived after the treaty period exhibited a fear of, or at least wariness about, the foreign and the unknown. Such cautiousness was especially evident in regard to the practice of religious devotion and the proclamation of Catholic doctrine. It had not always been the case, but now that the missionaries were arriving in greater numbers the Catholic clergy in China felt under greater scrutiny as regards their orthodoxy. This sense of being watched was one product of the Chinese Rites Controversy.

The missionaries of the period immediately prior to the treaties often worked in the remote countryside and were largely removed from observation of any kind. They were forced to become culturally and linguistically comfortable in their new surroundings. In many ways, this was because they had no other choice, although their selflessness cannot be discounted. These religious were also obliged to adapt to the daily life of rural Chinese Catholics, because

there was not yet a church organizational structure large and public enough to provide them with the necessary solace and support.

Although there were perhaps almost 250,000 Catholics in China, these believers were spread throughout the length and breadth of the country; the missionaries' residences were thus usually located many hundreds of kilometres from each other. The situation after the treaties was quite different, for now missionaries could spend much of their time in large compounds such as that located at Xujiahui in Shanghai, where they could live in the European style, speak European languages and eat Western food. The missionaries of the pre-treaty period, by contrast, had literally left their fellow Europeans behind. Some of these missionaries went to great lengths to adapt to the local culture, occasionally to the surprise of their Protestant counterparts.

Edward Squire, a pioneer Anglican missionary, saw these attempts at cultural adaptation as yet another example of Catholic doctrinal laxity. The Church Missionary Society had sent Squire to the south of China in 1836, as their agent:<sup>28</sup>

The deceits they [the Catholics] practiced simply to be able to live and move among the Chinese—washing their faces with tea to render the complexion yellow, dressing in thick-soled shoes and robes with long sleeves, eating with chopsticks, wearing false queues—seemed to him all of a piece with the accommodations they were so ready to make in matters of doctrine and ritual.<sup>29</sup>

Squire was not to know, arguably, that an aversion to “doctrinal accommodation” was one major consequence of the Chinese Rites Controversy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This was especially so for those missionaries who arrived in ever greater numbers after the Opium War treaties. There was a marked avoidance of anything that resembled syncretism, or the indiscriminate blending of philosophies or religious traditions, especially when it came to liturgies and religious devotions. (For instance, the manner in which Chinese Catholics remembered their dead continued to be problematic.)<sup>30</sup>

This is not to say, of course, that many of the new missionaries did not continue to try to blend in with the local culture as much as they could, by wearing Chinese clothing and eating local cuisines. This was particularly in the case of those orders, like the Foreign Missions, whose members had been working in China throughout this period of supposedly retarded growth. Among the newly arrived groups, the readiness to adapt was less marked.

All the missionary congregations now lived with obvious and more rigidly imposed limits and restrictions.

There are photographs taken between 1875 and 1877 by Auguste-César Billouez, a priest of the Society for the Foreign Missions, that illustrate well the adaptations and experimentations still occurring in parts of the country in the decades immediately after the treaties.<sup>31</sup> They show the missionaries in their everyday dress, resplendent in the “robes with long sleeves” and “false queues” that so irritated Squire (the queues were attached at the back of the hat). They also capture the fascinating churches built at this time by the Society for the Foreign Missions. The churches in these photographs experimented with local style and, as such, were different from most of the structures being erected in other parts of the country.

The Church of the Sacred Heart and the Church of the Holy Mother in Guizhou were examples of hybrid church architecture; they reveal that, in some cases at least, the missionaries were still prepared to engage in a certain amount of adaptation. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, such experimentation and adaptation was relatively rare, as will be seen in Chapter 3. The willingness to adapt to local culture was also rare among those communities where the European presence was most strongly established, like the treaty ports, and among those religious orders upon whom the demands of Rome were most pressing, as was the case with the Jesuits. By the 1920s, the overwhelming preference for European-style ecclesial structures prompted the first apostolic delegate to China, Celso Costantini, to write at length about the need for the development of a localized church architectural style.

Thus, while there may well have been openness when it came to morning congee and a few church constructions, the deliberate avoidance of syncretism worked in general against such flexibility. At this time in China, therefore, when the Rites Controversy still exerted its influence over Catholic activities, many of the new generation of Catholic missionaries were wary of any real or profound accommodation. Various scholars and missionaries have considered the bitter dispute about Chinese Rites as the issue most responsible for the slow growth of Christianity in China, from the period initiated by the formal prohibition of Christianity until the increase in missionary numbers brought about by the treaties. This blight on the history of the Catholic Church in China affected the daily life of the communities in several ways.

Father Joseph Gabet described one aspect of the divisions that the Rites Controversy had caused among missionary groups. This French Lazarist

missionary had been working in Manchuria and the north of China since 1835.<sup>32</sup> After he left China, Gabet wrote a letter entitled “The Catholic Missions in China in 1846, a glance at the state of the Missions in China, presented to the holy Father Pope Pius IX.”<sup>33</sup> Although Father Gabet’s views have come to be seen as prescient, they were largely ignored until the twentieth century. In 1848, he wrote directly to the pope, pleading for the work of the Catholic communities in China and explaining why it was that the growth of the church and the development of local clergy, in particular, had been so slow. Regarding the Rites Controversy and the disputes between the missionary groups, Gabet noted, “the arguments among the missionaries are the principle and greatest obstacle to the success of the missions, and often are the cause of their entire ruin.”<sup>34</sup>

Far away in the Vatican City, however, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith sought to deal with this problem by exerting direct control over the missionaries who went to China, including especially those missionaries who belonged to missionary orders and congregations like the Lazarists and the Jesuits. They thereby hoped to prevent further quarrels among the congregations and put a stop to any scandalous doctrinal accommodation. Strict and universal obedience to Rome’s eighteenth-century position on the Rites Controversy was thereafter demanded of all the missionaries. The Rites Controversy is still discussed in missiological circles, and scholars continue to write articles and books on the subject. The issues covered by these works are hotly contested and beyond the scope of this study; it is probably more helpful just to provide a summary of the Vatican decisions.<sup>35</sup> It is significant to note, however, that until a revision of policy in the early part of the twentieth century (as discussed below), missionaries even had to pronounce a vow to obey the Vatican’s position on the Chinese Rites. The eighteenth-century quarrel had long-term implications.

In 1715, Rome definitively stated its final position on the controversy. Principally, ancestor veneration was to be banned as the church decided that this practice was religious rather than civil in content and as such was an act of worship forbidden to Chinese Christians. This and other decisions were pronounced in the apostolic constitution of Pope Clement XI, *Ex illa die*.<sup>36</sup> This limited, for instance, the adaptations to cultural practices that had been allowed by groups like the Jesuits (for instance, ancestor veneration). For the many missionaries in China who were dismayed by this constitution, there appeared to be a clause that allowed some flexibility in the pastoral application

of this constitution. Naturally enough, this led to confusion and further debate in China, with the result that, in 1742, Pope Benedict XIV issued another statement on the Rites Controversy. This final statement was the bull *Ex quo singulari*: it was even stricter than the first statement. Any loopholes—perceived or otherwise—were forcefully closed. Benedict XIV's bull left no grounds for either well-meaning misunderstanding or wilful obfuscation:

... we enjoin and strictly command that they [the missionaries] not only observe exactly, totally, absolutely, inviolably and inflexibly each and all of the items which are found in this our constitution, but also see to it with every effort and zeal that they be observed by each and everyone who in any way comes under their care and direction, and let them neither dare nor presume to resist or oppose this constitution of ours in any of its parts under any excuse, reason, circumstance, or pretext.<sup>37</sup>

Rome had spoken, forcefully and unequivocally, affecting both the missionaries based in, and those who were yet to go to, China. Given the persecutions and restrictions placed upon Christians from 1724, fewer and fewer missionaries arrived in China after this time. There was nothing the missionaries could now do in terms of abiding cultural adaptations. Furthermore, after the promulgation of *Ex illa die*, the missionaries were forced to take an oath of obedience to the ruling. The missionary concluded the oath by laying his hand on the bible, saying “[T]hus, touching the sacred Bible, I promise, vow and swear. In this way, may God and this holy Bible help me.”<sup>38</sup>

A century later, the first Jesuits to return to China (after the Society of Jesus had been restored in 1814) also swore their obedience to the position taken by Benedict XIV. In fact, the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda ensured that they did so; because of the ongoing influence of the controversy and the rigid control enforced by Propaganda, they had little choice but to obey.<sup>39</sup> Whereas Billouez and his fellow MEP priests working in southwestern Guizhou experienced some degree of freedom, this was decidedly not the case for the returning Jesuits.

The Rites Controversy was formally brought to an end in 1939, when Pius XII ratified the apostolic letter *Plane compertum est*, which was written with the Chinese church in mind by the very Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith that had demanded the missionaries swear the oath of obedience.<sup>40</sup> This letter stated:

It is abundantly clear that in the regions of the Orient some ceremonies, although they may have been involved with pagan rites in ancient times,

have—with the changes in customs and thinking over the course of centuries—retained merely the civil significance of piety towards the ancestors or of love of the fatherland or of courtesy towards one's neighbours.<sup>41</sup>

The missionaries in China were now freed of the obligation to take an oath against such rites. The first French Jesuits who returned to China in the mid-1800s, however, were still obliged to touch the bible and solemnly promise to be obedient. It was abundantly clear that if these pioneers had not sworn the oath, the Society of Jesus would not have been able to return to China at this time.

The demand of fealty exerted its constant pressure on subsequent decisions. Since the issue of the rites was still an unresolved matter for missionaries in China (at least in the sense that they were obliged to follow an old ruling), the Jesuits were thus in a difficult situation from the very beginning of their return to Shanghai. Their necessary adherence to the position defended by Propaganda affected their ability to interact in China with those for whom these practices were most significant, namely the educated and ruling class. Their relationships with influential Chinese, that is, those who were best placed to help them, were thereby constrained. Their oath-taking also affected the Jesuits psychologically.

They were now on the alert for examples of local Christian art that seemed to be examples of syncretism. They viewed with concern engravings and paintings of Mary sitting in a Chinese house or clothed in a manner reminiscent of Guanyin because their oath of obedience made them vigilant about anything that seemed tainted by superstition. In the language of the theologians involved in the original controversies, anything that “manifested the appearance of superstition” heightened the anxieties of the Jesuits. Such anxiety clearly affected how they sought the development of a Chinese Catholic identity, and where they placed their energies. Early after their return, for instance, they started a French-language school, over which they could have greater control, rather than a university, which would attract scholars who practised ancestral devotion.

The Jesuits were also aware “exactly, totally and absolutely” that it was in their best interests to maintain good relations with the church leadership in Rome. They knew that they were reliant on its support for their continued presence in China. In 1833, Bési had been sent from Rome as the nominated successor to the aged bishop of Nanjing diocese, the Portuguese Lazarist Pirès-Pereira. Prior to Bési's episcopal appointment, the Lazarists had had the

juridical right of serving the communities of the lower Yangzi valley, because these communities were within the administrative boundaries of the diocese of Nanjing. Bési's appointment was an attempt to wrest control of this region from the Portuguese, and reduce the influence of the *padroado*.

Through 1838, Bishop Bési had requested that some Jesuits be sent to him in the lower Yangzi valley.<sup>42</sup> He made this request at the prompting of local Catholics even though the Lazarists, especially the Portuguese, opposed the long-held wish. Prior to this, Chinese Catholics had already petitioned both Rome and the Jesuit General to send Jesuits once more to their communities. According to Louis Wei Tsing-sing, in May 1832 Chinese Christians in Beijing had written to the Jesuit Father-General Roothaan, asking that he send some Jesuit priests to their communities. The following year, all the Chinese priests working in Beijing wrote to Pope Gregory XVI, condemning the behaviour of the Portuguese priests among them; in the same year, the Beijing Christians wrote to the pope demanding the return of the Jesuits and the removal of the Portuguese priests. Then, in 1833, a separate group of Chinese Christians, this time from Hubei, also wrote to the Jesuit General requesting the speedy return of Jesuits to their midst. In September 1834, fifty-one Christians from Jiangnan petitioned Gregory XVI in much the same way their co-religionists from Beijing had done, both criticizing the actions of Pirès-Pereira and pleading for the return of the Jesuits.<sup>43</sup>

The older bishop had undermined his own cause, and that of the Lazarists in general, by not even residing in Nanjing, preferring instead to stay in Beijing. Bishop Pirès-Pereira had appointed two vicars apostolic as his assistants, but they did not live in the diocese either, being based in Macau. The ongoing requests of the Christians of Jiangnan for an improvement in the way they were represented and served by their church leadership only roused the anger of their absent bishop. He “sent a scathing pastoral letter to the Jiangnan Christians defending the rights of the Portuguese king and the Portuguese Lazarists while denying the possibility that the Jesuits could return to Jiangnan.”<sup>44</sup> A resolution to this unseemly dispute was finally provided by the death of Pirès-Pereira in 1838. The Lazarist bishop's demise was timely for Bési, the Jesuits and the Chinese Christians—in fact, for all but the Lazarists.

Rome acted quickly by subdividing the three dioceses of China (Beijing, Nanjing and Macau) into twelve new vicariates, placing these under the control of Propaganda. The following year, in 1839, “Bési was then named titular bishop of Canope and vicar apostolic of Shandong. Because Bési was the closest vicar

apostolic to the diocese of Nanjing (Jiangsu, Anhui and Henan Provinces), he became the administrator of the diocese and returned to Jiangnan in 1841.<sup>45</sup> His request for Jesuits to replace the Lazarists in Jiangnan was also approved by Rome. In 1840, having been invited to respond to this opportunity, the Jesuit Father-General Jan Roothaan assigned the Paris province with the task of sending some men to China. They were to be religious who were capable of undertaking a great task. Sébastien Fouillot, the provincial of Paris, chose Claude Gotteland, Eugène-Francois Estève and Benjamin Brueyre.<sup>46</sup>

The nineteenth-century return of the French Jesuits held some interesting similarities to the first arrival of French Jesuits to China in the late seventeenth century. At that time, in 1685, Louis XIV had sent six Jesuits to China as his “royal mathematicians.” These mathematician-priests sailed from Brest in a vessel under the French king’s command. The vessel the Jesuits took in the nineteenth century, the *Erigone*, was also at the service of the French state; the Queen, Marie-Amélie of Bourbon, arranged passage for them on it. The voyage was shorter than the ones made by their confreres in the seventeenth century, yet it still took the Jesuits fourteen months to reach their destination.<sup>47</sup> While material support was freely given and even more gratefully received, it is understandable that the Jesuits felt obligated to their different benefactors in varying degrees.

They were also beholden to authorities elsewhere, given that significant Roman support for Bishop Bési’s requests and Propaganda’s opposition to Portuguese pretensions had been instrumental in enabling the Jesuits to resume their work in China. While their relationship with the French state did not prove detrimental in the early stages, their dependence on Roman support would create difficulty for the newly arrived Gotteland and his two companions. Naturally enough, the ecclesiastical manoeuvres in Rome did not endear Bési to either the Lazarists or their supporters; in some quarters the returning Jesuits were regarded with suspicion. Their presence was also actively opposed at times, as revealed by the already-cited pastoral letter by Pirès-Pereira to the Christians of his diocese. When the Jesuits did return, there was a reluctance to give back to them churches and properties previously owned by the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits knew full well that the Lazarists opposed their return to China, although with the reorganization of the hierarchical structure of the church in China in 1838, and the continued undermining of the *padroado*, the Lazarists’ previously strong position was diminished by the time the Jesuits returned.

The Lazarists had good cause to feel as though they were being unfairly treated. After the suppression of the Jesuits, the French Lazarists in China had been ordered by Rome, in response to a request of the French government, to take responsibility for the Jesuits' works. In 1783, the Holy See issued a decree to this effect; Louis XIV and the Parliament of Paris approved it in 1784.<sup>48</sup> Some of these ministries had become major endeavours and were regarded as jewels in the crown of the Chinese Catholic church. By the early 1860s, for instance, the library based at the North Church (the Beitang) in Beijing had over 5,000 volumes in its collection. Some of these were rare books that dated from the earliest collections built up by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Jesuits.<sup>49</sup> It was not unreasonable therefore that the Lazarists were less than eager to relinquish some of these enterprises, especially as, at the time, the Lazarists themselves had a steady supply of religious labourers for their Chinese vineyards.

Fr. Baldus, mentioned above, had written from Macau in 1835 that he found himself "in the company of fifteen missionaries, most of them French, waiting for a favourable moment to pass on to their respective destinations."<sup>50</sup> While not all of those waiting with Baldus were Lazarists, his letter nevertheless indicated an increase in the number of men being sent eastwards from Europe, even on the eve of the treaty period. After the treaties were signed, the numbers continued to increase. Pirès-Pereira's letter and the opposition of some of his fellow Lazarists to the return of the Jesuits can thus present an unfair picture of the Lazarists' work among the Catholics of the lower Yangzi valley.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, the Society of Jesus was restored only in 1814, with the promulgation of Pope Pius VII's bull *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum*. The apostolic confidence of the Jesuits was still fragile as a result of their recent experiences; they had not yet fully regained their sense of independence. This was especially so regarding their proposed work in China. The painful memory of Pope Clement XIV's bull, *Dominus Ac Redemptor*, which saw the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 and the arrest and death in an ecclesial prison of their general, Father Lorenzo Ricci, served as a powerful reminder to the Jesuits of their precarious position. Consequently, the returning French Jesuits were reluctant to antagonize the Roman leadership. At least in this initial stage, they were all the more mindful of heeding the prescribed stance against the Chinese Rites.

Faced with this web of complex relationships, the Jesuits had no desire to give cause for others to accuse them of allowing heresies, such as those associated with the Chinese Rites Controversy. Whereas the Jesuits of the sixteenth

through to the eighteenth centuries had mostly been innovative supporters of Chinese culture and had been creative in seeking ways to adapt to it (that is, to inculturate the gospel), they were timid in the face of centralized ecclesiastical pressure immediately upon their return in the mid-nineteenth century. Such timidity was further reinforced by their dependence on the support of the leadership in Rome.

This delicate situation was complicated by the fact that Gotteland, Estève and Brueyre were going to an empire that was being threatened by the European powers. The subsequent defeats in the two Opium Wars and the subsequent treaties encouraged a widespread feeling of superiority towards China among most foreigners. As Soetens observed, "Between 1842 and 1887 there were 17 treaties between China on the one side and on the other eleven states of Europe as well as the United States of America."<sup>52</sup> Needless to say, for both the European traders and the European missionaries, this sense of dominance was not the best foundation for an amicable relationship.

### **A sense of cultural superiority**

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, European cultural arrogance was the second major influence that led to a preference for European images and statues among the Chinese Catholic communities. This sense of superiority was partially caused by the prevailing economic and political realities within China during this period. The European missionaries were obviously formed by their times, which did not always engender receptivity to other cultures or respect for the people of such cultures. Many of them all too frequently subscribed to a Eurocentric sociological perspective. Regrettably, they applied a missiological model that was Eurocentric as well. The visible differences between European and Chinese standards of living (at least according to the situations witnessed in the towns and marketplaces where the missionaries worked), and the military supremacy of the European nations, caused many of the missionaries to forget that, in orthodox theology, all are equal in the sight of God. While it was true that the Rites Controversy had put an end to widespread experimentation and adventurous adaptation in China, the controversy was not the main cause of the Eurocentrism that reigned within much of the church hierarchy. Such Eurocentrism was promoted, instead, by a secular gunship diplomacy that encouraged as well a spiritual assault on China.

In 1835, Bishop Pirès-Pereira wrote a letter about the Chinese priests of his diocese that illustrates the dismissive view that some missionaries held of the Chinese people..

. . . [Y]ou know the character of Chinese priests who love to live in their own manner, that is, without rules and without obedience. They invent new falsehoods, they lie to the Christians in opposing the Europeans. You are forewarned. You should not receive their letters and you should not believe all that they say, because these are lies.<sup>53</sup>

In such a climate, for all their presumed intellectual consent to the notion that Jesus died for all, the European missionaries did not agree that he, or his mother, could be clad in Chinese clothing or adopt Chinese hairstyles. If Chinese priests could not be trusted to tell the truth, nor could Chinese-style paintings or statues represent the real Jesus or the true Mary.

Admittedly, even if the European missionaries had been able to escape the tyrannies of cultural conceit, the earlier tradition of openness and adaptability had not survived in any marked way. The situations that had shocked Protestant evangelists like Edward Squire were actually exceptions to the rule. That is, the spirit of adaptation was rarely found in anything beyond the hybridized experimentations of missionaries like Auguste-César Billouez and his fellow MEP missionaries mentioned above. It was very possible that a late nineteenth-century missionary who was open to Chinese culture would not even know about the earlier tradition of representation. Two of the major examples of this earlier period described in Chapter 1—the Yangzhou tombstones and the Madonna in the Field Museum—were not even rediscovered until the twentieth century.

The length of time required for missionaries to become immersed in and knowledgeable about their host culture, let alone competent in its language, meant that only a minority of missionaries acquired the requisite skills for delving deeply into the Chinese Christian works printed in the earlier period. Chinese Catholics like Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi (both of whom lived in the late Qing and early Republican periods) note this fact in their writings, as did the Belgian sinophile Vincent Lebbe in the early twentieth century. Lebbe advocated the creation of an indigenous Chinese church hierarchy (an advocacy which restated arguments advanced by Joseph Gabet some seventy years earlier and by Matteo Ricci and Alessandro Valignano implicitly some centuries before); this indicates that, by the early part of the twentieth century, most missionaries were not linguistically competent enough to read these books.

This sorry state of affairs was not always the fault of the missionary. The small number of priests in proportion to the number of Catholics was vastly inadequate for the sacramental activities expected of them. At the time of the return of the Jesuits to Shanghai, there were 150 priests (fifty European and 100 Chinese) serving approximately 250,000 Catholics throughout China.<sup>54</sup> While communities like those in the lower Yangzi valley and others had developed a rich tradition of encouraging the role of local catechists, when a priest visited or lived in a community, his workload was nevertheless quite strenuous. Usually his obligations involved much travel from village to village (often difficult journeys in themselves) followed by long hours of work at each location.

Julien Bertrand wrote of his experiences as a young priest in the countryside during the late 1830s,<sup>55</sup> a career summarized by Peter Ward Fay. Bertrand had left Paris in April 1833 and was in Sichuan by September 1835, having spent some time at the Foreign Missions College in Penang, in what is now Malaysia. His initial period of language-learning was therefore quite brief. Bertrand's first assignment in China was to a region of about 150 square kilometres,

consisting of one continuous mountain cut by monstrous ravines. It was Bertrand's custom to begin a tour of this district each year towards the end of September, after the worst of the hot weather, taking with him a catechist and the few articles necessary for the administration of the sacraments.<sup>56</sup>

The priestly ministry that Bertrand performed was much the same as of the peripatetic missionaries of centuries past, and which still continues today in parts of rural China: namely, celebrating mass, listening to confessions, visiting the sick and preparing them for a "good death". Importantly, his work also included administering baptisms and confirmations. These took place after a period of catechesis, which was taught by the priest, usually aided by a catechist. The catechist would attempt to translate into the local language those terms and concepts that the priest was unable to convey. The tours through the district were tiring, repetitive and lonely. Even for the most optimistic and cheerful personalities, these journeys could often be dispiriting. Bertrand's letter of 10 August 1840 reveals his own sense of discouragement:

Moving always on foot, baked by the sun and drenched by the rain, devoured by mosquitoes, forced to sleep on straw, given nothing to eat but pork or fowl with vegetables (because the country produced neither bread nor wine), [and] without the diversions of friends or books . . .<sup>57</sup>

Young, healthy and enthusiastic (at least initially), newly arrived missionaries like Julien Bertrand were often rapidly sent into the mission field. They had usually undertaken only a brief period of language training, even though their relative youth would have made learning the language somewhat easier. Their pastoral obligations made studying the Chinese language and culture challenging and difficult. It is indeed a credit to the conscientiousness of many of these missionaries that they did learn to speak the language over the course of their lives.

The French women who, as religious sisters (like the one from Faubourg St Germain, mentioned earlier), came to work with the Chinese Christians (especially the “virgins”, as those women who consecrated their lives to Jesus were known, although they were not part of a religious congregation) and to carry out all manner of charitable work, also faced their own struggles with Chinese language. Again, in the midst of their rigorous work schedules in schools, dispensaries and orphanages, many of these women tried their best to become conversant in the languages of their adopted land. The words of Louise Bruneau, whose religious name was Marie de Sainte Brigitte, reveal the despair many of them felt. In 1870, she wrote to her mother superior back in Paris:

I believed at this moment, that to my chagrin I would never be able to learn Chinese since for me it was just too difficult. It was because of this that our good Father Foucault gave to me for my particular examen [a form of meditation used in Ignatian spirituality] God’s acts of confidence and love.<sup>58</sup>

Yet for all the hardship borne by those like Louise Bruneau, it must be acknowledged, nevertheless, that by the latter part of the nineteenth century and especially into the twentieth century, many European missionaries did not even try to develop these talents. Some were simply overwhelmed by their obligations and the difficulties and needs of the apostolate. Others were underwhelmed by Chinese culture and were now living in what amounted to Catholic compounds, protected by the provisions of the treaties and the sense of superiority concomitant with them. The theology courses were taught largely in Latin; the liturgy too was also said in Latin, thereby placing further limitations on the ability of missionaries to perfect their Chinese skills.

Even for the most talented and receptive sinophile-missionaries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, works like Cheng Dayue’s Ming miscellany probably remained unknown to all but an exceptional few. The catechisms and prayer books of João da Rocha and Giulio Aleni, the other major printed works

of the previous period, were held by the various European archives of some of the missionary orders, as well as in some libraries in China (like the one at the North Church in Beijing), but this did not necessarily guarantee their widespread use or even awareness of their existence on the part of the ordinary missionary. It seems reasonable to argue, moreover, that in a community that was already cautious about questions of orthodoxy and, furthermore, under oath to enforce this orthodoxy, the non-Chinese-style representations would still have been preferred.

The concept of “inflated difference” may explain the nineteenth-century preference for European-style art. Nicolas Standaert, relying on the earlier insight of Vernon Ruland, summarizes the concept as when “the minority group, pressed to consolidate its own identity, is prone to dis-identify with others and play up otherwise negligible differences between those inside and those outside its boundaries.”<sup>59</sup> During the late Ming and early Qing periods, differences between Chinese Christians and others (such as Buddhists or syncretistic groups) were exaggerated so as to establish the Christian identity in China, a process that was prompted by issues of survival. They tried to show that they were neither a dangerous sect nor a version of Buddhism, but rather a group fulfilling Confucian principles. That is, they tried to show their differences from one major religion with which they were often compared yet in a way which did not get them declared so foreign as to be dangerous, hence their appeal to the Confucian tradition. By the middle of the nineteenth century, in contrast, the question of survival was not as pressing. This was because the treaty provisions concerning religion provided a measure of protection for Christians. Consequently, during this post-Opium War period, the strategy of inflated difference was employed in order to develop an orthodox identity.

Since the Catholic missionaries, Jesuits or otherwise, had to convince the Vatican that they were portraying orthodox Christianity rather than a Chinese hybrid, they again highlighted and enlarged points of difference (real or otherwise) between Christianity and other religions in China. Statues that seemed to blend Guanyin and Mary were not favoured by the church leadership, even if individual missionaries had escaped from their own culturally restricted view of the world and interpreted these statues in ways congruent with Catholic doctrine. Thus, any differences between Christian and Buddhist statues were accentuated.

Intriguingly, when it comes to the important question of reception, the question of cultural arrogance becomes less relevant. A sense of cultural

superiority had caused the importation, production and display of these images, but it was an attraction for something new that led to their popularity among Chinese Catholics. Just as the brothers Cheng had sought unique images from Ricci in their pursuit of the exotic in the Ming dynasty, so too did the Chinese Catholic communities of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries prefer the new European Christian images, including Marian ones. While groups like the Boxers came to oppose these statues and the religion they portrayed as symbols of foreign domination, Chinese Catholics appreciated these statues for their aesthetic beauty. An unintended consequence of this liking for the “other” was an increased turning away from the earlier, localized styles. The unintended neglect of the local style and a strong preference for the foreign style combined to leave a deep imprint on Chinese Catholic communities.

### **The influence of Marian events in Europe**

There was at least one other reason for the successful importation into China of French- and European-style Marian and Christian images during the nineteenth century. In addition to the far-reaching shadow of the Rites Controversy and the ever-present effects of cultural arrogance, conscious or otherwise, there was also the influence of three great Marian events that occurred over a thirty-year period in the middle of the nineteenth century. These events undoubtedly helped the spread of the French Marian images.

The first of these occurrences was the Marian apparitions in Paris associated with “the Miraculous Medal” in 1830. This influenced the second event, the 1854 declaration in Rome of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX. Finally, there were the Marian apparitions that Catholics believe occurred in 1858 at Lourdes.

The abiding influence of these Marian events effectively meant that the images associated with them, and their subsequent international popularity, overwhelmed any other styles or representations of Marian themes. Over the course of the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Chinese Madonna was progressively pushed to the background. The collective impact of these three Marian events was enormous, not only in France but internationally as well. In many ways, the reverberations of this impact can still be sensed today, especially among Chinese Catholic communities. Given the significance of these

three incidents, it is important to consider them at some length, especially in relation to their impact on popular Christian iconography.

In 1830, in the first of these three events, there were Marian apparitions on three occasions at the Convent of the Daughters of Charity at Rue du Bac, in Paris. This, at least, was the belief of Catherine Labouré, a young religious sister who had been praying in the chapel at these times.<sup>60</sup> Catherine believed that the Virgin Mary had appeared to her and conveyed several messages to her. The hagiographical rendering of this story is that Mary exhorted Catherine to ask that everyone pray to her. People were to seek Mary's intercession to receive divine "graces". These graces would be given in abundance, not just to people in France but to believers throughout the whole world. Mary also instructed Catherine to make a medallion, which was to represent Mary and would be inscribed with a number of symbols and words.

Catherine's spiritual director, the Lazarist priest Father Aladel, was the only person in whom she confided about these apparitions. Once he was sure that she was telling the truth, Aladel told his bishop about the apparitions; the bishop gave Aladel permission to proceed with the so-called divine request. At this time, they did not disclose Catherine Labouré's identity. The first of these medals was produced in 1832.

An image of Mary was placed on one face of the medal, where she is shown standing on a half-globe representing the world; her feet are crushing a serpent, representing Satan and the power of evil. Around this image were the words *O Marie conçue sans péché priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous* (O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee). According to Catholic belief, the immaculate one, is especially able to intercede on behalf of all other humans with the triune God, but most especially with the first two persons of the Trinity, both God the Father and God the Son.

The medal proved to be remarkably popular and was linked with some supposed miracles early in its existence. Aladel made 2,000 medals in the first batch, which were distributed by the Daughters of Charity, Labouré's congregation, in June 1832. In this year, Paris had seen a deadly outbreak of cholera, which killed over 18,000 people.<sup>61</sup> A number of people who received this first medal claimed to have been brought back to full health by it. It therefore began to be called the "miraculous medal"; the image was believed to have certain powers, especially if it was worn on the body (usually attached to a necklace). For this reason, and because of the strong culture of pious devotions (the

recitation of daily prayers like the rosary for instance), the medal became much sought after.

Within a few years, according to records held by the Daughters of Charity, there were one million medals in existence; by 1836, some of these had made their way to the United States.<sup>62</sup> By 1839, there were around ten million medals; at the time of Labouré's death in 1876, there were said to be one *billion* medals in existence, to be found throughout all of France, much of Europe and, indeed, all over the world.<sup>63</sup> There was a special link between devotion to this medal and the third major Marian event, the Lourdes apparitions, because Bernadette Soubirous, the seer of these apparitions, was said to be in the habit of wearing this medal around her neck.

A number of religious congregations that would have a significant history in China were present in this district in Paris. The Lazarists had their main house on Rue du Bac, as did the Society for the Foreign Missions, while the Parisian Jesuits were in the vicinity at Rue de Grenelle and Rue de Sèvres. Another female congregation, the Society of Helpers, was established nearby at what was Rue de la Barouillère (now Rue St Jean Baptiste de la Salle). Members of each of these religious orders and congregations, therefore, experienced the popularity of the medal at first hand; most probably personally visited the chapel at the Daughters of Charity convent on Rue du Bac.

The important consideration, especially in a work that is primarily historical rather than theological in focus, is not what actually happened in the chapel in 1830, but the effect of the story that was subsequently told of this event. In this sense, Paul A. Cohen's 1997 work on the Boxer movement of 1900, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience and Myth*, is instructive.<sup>64</sup> He argues that the historian must make use of each of these three ways of explaining or of "knowing" the past. In some ways, he considers that "in terms of their bearing on ordinary human lives", the experience of an event and the myth that is then built up around this episode "are far more pervasive and influential."<sup>65</sup>

The miraculous medal became talismanic for the French Catholics, and for others. The sheer number of medals in existence, the rapidity with which they were disseminated to the international Catholic communities and the proximity of numerous religious groups to the actual site of this confluence of experience, event and myth also aided the influence of the medal. This was to have lasting effects, not least on the importation into China of foreign Marian images.

One such effect of the popularity and the perceived efficacy of this Marian devotion was its observable influence on the second major Marian event of the nineteenth century. This was the declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary by Pope Pius IX in 1854. The belief was centuries old, dating back to the earliest days of the Church; it was the subject of treatises from the patristic period of church history onwards. Nevertheless, the widespread devotion to the Immaculate Conception of Mary in the nineteenth century was largely a result of the popularity of the miraculous medal. The devotion's increased popularity also had a distinct influence on the timing of the pronouncement of this dogma. The words of the bull contained phrases that seemed to refer directly to Catherine Labouré's visions.

This bull, officially published in Latin, was subsequently promulgated in most of the known languages of the day. There still exists a commemorative version of the bull, written in numerous languages and accompanied by rich illustrations, which can be viewed at the Museum of Treasures in Lourdes. Accompanying the Chinese text in this commemorative edition is a picture of Mary where she is dressed as a Chinese woman, thus revealing that not all people in the Catholic world were hesitant to use Chinese representative forms at this time. This commemorative work was produced in Rome and, even then, it was something of a rarity. Unfortunately, there is no known record of this celebratory work or ones like it making their way to Chinese Catholic libraries (as yet): it must therefore remain as a curiosity. It is ironic, however, that at a time when European images of Mary were being transported to China in great numbers, a Chinese version of Mary was depicted in Rome and eventually made its way to Lourdes.<sup>66</sup>

The third major Marian occurrence of the age was the series of apparitions that were held to have happened at Lourdes in 1858. Catholic belief holds that Mary appeared eighteen times between 11 February and 16 July to a poor country girl, Bernadette Soubirous. Mary is reported to have appeared in a cave-like grotto, alongside the stream known as the Gave. Bernadette maintained that the most important of the many messages delivered during these apparitions was the exhortation for her to pray for the church. She was to encourage others to pray in a spirit of penitence. Mary told her to petition the local priests of Lourdes to build a church on the site of this apparition.

Bernadette maintained that the apparition of Mary had declared that she, Mary, was the Immaculate Conception. During the course of these apparitions, Mary is said to have led Bernadette to a source of water hitherto unknown,

the finding of which was then believed to have been a miracle. The water itself is believed to contain special powers. It is not so important whether or not these events occurred (something which has been debated at length from the date of the apparitions themselves), but that they were believed to have occurred and were widely spoken about as being so. Using Paul Cohen's terminology again, the apparitions comprised a series of events, which Bernadette then experienced.

The new source of water and the perseverance of Bernadette in the face of harsh, sceptical and stringent questioning rapidly bestowed upon the accounts an impenetrable aura of truth. The myth is the cult of Our Lady of Lourdes and the miraculous powers that the shrine, and the holy water from the spring, are said to be capable of transmitting. The apparitions and the reputed miracles associated with Lourdes quickly became known among the people of the local region. In late July 1858, the bishop of the diocese of Tarbes appointed a commission to examine the matter. This commission conducted exhaustive enquiries, stringently questioned Bernadette and presented their findings to the bishop. In 1862, he pronounced that he believed the apparitions to be authentic. People began to journey to Lourdes from further afield in France; in 1873, national pilgrimages were instigated.<sup>67</sup>

Just like the miraculous medal, which had quickly spread throughout France and Europe, the pilgrimage to Lourdes also became internationally famous and popular. By 1908, the fiftieth anniversary of the apparitions, more than 5,000 groups of pilgrims had reportedly organized visits to Lourdes, numbering close to five million people.<sup>68</sup> As records were not kept prior to 1867, and the accounts recorded only the numbers of people who made the pilgrimage as members of a group, the actual numbers would have been significantly higher.

Chinese Christian travellers to France noticed the popularity of this cult and, indeed, the popularity of Marian devotions in general. One such pilgrim was Catherine Ou, a Chinese member of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, who lived in France for around twelve months in 1888 and 1889. Marie Saint Paul Miki, as she was known in religion, had many adventures during her time in the homeland of her religious congregation. Her letters to the community of religious sisters she left back in Shanghai attest to her wonderment at what she saw. She was even mentioned in the French newspaper *Figaro*:

When Mother General heard this piece of news she announced it to all the mothers during daily recreation. "Listen to me for a minute", Mother-General said. When she noted that "Our Mother Miki is in *Figaro*,"

immediately all the mothers clapped their hands together and cried out “what an honor for Mother Miki” while I, Mother Miki, could only say to myself ‘my soul glorifies the Lord.’<sup>69</sup>

Her reactions show something of the piety that was such a strong part of the daily life of the Chinese Catholics. During Sr. Miki’s time in France, she had the occasion to see much of the country, especially on her initial journey from the port of Marseilles to the mother-house of the Helpers in Paris. She would have seen much of this landscape in pictures brought over by her French fellow religious, and she undoubtedly would have heard them extol the beauty of their distant homeland. Now this young woman from China saw it with her own, religiously inspired eyes:

The consolation of my soul is now this, to have seen throughout the whole length of our journey the presence of large numbers of churches, and at such times we made the sign of the cross so that the good God would bless us . . . In seeing all these churches I came to the understanding that the Holy Virgin loves France very much. I am not astonished at this anymore.<sup>70</sup>

Regrettably, our bedazzled pilgrim does not write the reasons why she thought it was that the Virgin Mary would not have loved France, but at any rate it is clear that she is impressed by the apparent Catholic nature of the country (as evidenced by the churches) and surmises from this that Mary must indeed have favoured the land of her religious superiors.

She was not alone among her compatriots to have been struck with admiration by French Catholic pieties. As one tangible example, a particular relic housed in the Museum of Treasures at Lourdes reveals the Chinese Catholics’ belief in the efficacy of Our Lady of Lourdes and illustrates again the global popularity of this piety and its pilgrimage destination. This relic is an embroidered silk banner decorated with an image of Mary as she appeared at Lourdes, flanked by kneeling pilgrims wearing Chinese clothing, and above the image of Mary there is a phrase (in Chinese characters): “To Our Lady of Lourdes from the diocese of Jiangnan, in gratitude for her protection”. The date on the banner is 1900, which was the year the Boxer uprising swept through the countryside. As will be shown below in Chapter 3, foreigners and Chinese Christians were a particular focus of the bloody Boxer enmity. In the minds of these Catholics, Mary had protected them from the harm posed by these attacks.<sup>71</sup>

The Lourdes images had an influence on church art throughout the world. These images included references to the young shepherd girl (often

accompanied by the sheep in her care), to the river Gave, to the miraculous spring of water, to the grotto in which the apparitions are held to have occurred, and of course to the image of Mary as it was relayed by the seer Bernadette. Later, the design of the basilica itself also became well-known. The widespread adoption of these images was not only because of the fervour of the pilgrims in France, an intensity reinforced by the reputed occurrence of numbers of miracles, but also because French missionaries took this devotion with them overseas. As seen with the case of Mother Miki, on rare occasions Chinese Catholic travellers carried these devotions with them as well.

In China, for instance, Mary was now depicted in statues and paintings as she had appeared at Lourdes. That is, she was dressed in white with a blue belt around her waist and with a rosary in her hands. She was situated in a grotto, with or without Bernadette kneeling before her. The replicas were not only two-dimensional paintings and drawings but also took the form of shrines and grottoes. Where there was no cave or stone overhang that could play the part of a grotto, one was constructed from whatever stones or materials were available, with a statue of Mary placed inside. These grottoes were at first established by French missionaries, but, within a short period of time, Chinese Catholics began building and maintaining their own. Chinese Catholics were delighted to have a place of their own where they could give honour to Mary: it did not matter where such grottoes were built, or who constructed them.

The popularity of such Marian pieties, both before shrines and in other religious devotions, is reported in much missionary literature of the period, from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. For instance a memoir written in 1855 by the Jesuit missionary, Fr. Nicolas Broullion, listed the various devotions popular among the Jiangnan Catholics and notes the importance of Marian piety:

I must add that properly speaking devotion is not unknown to our Christians: the Sacred Heart of Jesus receives the most fervent homage, and the feast is celebrated with enthusiasm; Saint Joseph, patron of China, Saint Ignatius, patriarch of the missionaries of Jiangnan and Saint Francis-Xavier, patron of the diocese of Nanjing, are all honoured with solemn novenas. But above all it is the trust in Mary that is the source of the most abundant graces for our Christians.<sup>72</sup>

The French Lazarist missionary Paul-Marie Clerc-Reynaud wrote in 1916 about his visit to a Catholic minor seminary in the town of Citou in Jiangxi Province:

I visited the grotto of Lourdes, which Fathers Henri Crapez and Pierre Estamp had built at the foot of a little hill on the seminary's property . . . The work resembled the countryside of the Pyrenees; all that was lacking was the river Gave and the liveliness that is provided by the pilgrims who visit there. The little mountain where the grotto is situated is very agreeable. There the students, some sixty of them, vividly chant a canticle before the statue of the Virgin at the end of recreation every evening . . . [This] little grotto is the first of its kind elevated in the vicariate of east Jiangxi in honour of the Virgin of Lourdes.<sup>73</sup>

These grottoes maintained their popularity as the century progressed. A newsletter of 1936 proudly reported the construction of a Lourdes-style grotto in a Shanghai parish entrusted to the Californian Jesuits:

Our Lady of Lourdes grotto was recently completed by Messrs Le Sage and Deward. It is built of brown stone that rises to a height of about fourteen feet and has a niche about six feet in height. Rose arbors and concrete benches will provide shade and a resting place for those performing devotions there. Two parishioners Mrs I Min Hsu and Miss K. Clement have just presented for the grotto a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. It stands about five feet six inches high and will be blessed in the near future.<sup>74</sup>

Admittedly these types of Lourdes grottoes were built all around the world from Boston to Sydney, not just in China. Even so, the grottoes built in China were certainly important in the promotion of European-style representations of Mary. The grottoes must also be seen in their broader Chinese Catholic context, where much importance was also placed on devotions like the rosary, the stations of the cross or the popular Marian paintings, holy cards, and medals brought over by the foreign missionaries. Since grottoes also took some effort to build (and were thus beyond the capacity of many communities), they were not as ubiquitous as the smaller, card-sized images. Furthermore, pilgrimages to such grottoes, or ones like them, were established only after some years; while two of the most famous, Sheshan (outside of Shanghai) and Donglu (in Hebei), were begun in 1868 and 1908, respectively, others were undertaken much later. The second war against Japan also made the Shanghai pilgrimage dangerous to undertake. The grottoes were nevertheless undoubtedly a significant influence on the development of both the identity and devotional life of Chinese Catholic communities.

The Marian image as portrayed in the miraculous medal, and as conveyed in the descriptions of Bernadette and then represented in the many

pictures, statues and grottoes, was explicitly European. At Rue du Bac and in the hilltop village of Lourdes, Mary was definitively not wearing Chinese clothing and certainly not shown resting on a Chinese-style seat. The popularity of the European Marian devotions, combined with the many French missionaries in China after 1842 and the influence they exerted throughout the Chinese church, meant that, among the many representations of Mary available to the communities, the images of Mary from the French Pyrenees, the streets of Paris and from northern France duly became some of the most dominant ones throughout all of China during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### 3

## Our Lady of Donglu

Marian images in the French style had a significant and arguably negative impact on the creation of a Chinese Catholic identity. The periods of anti-foreign hostility that occurred with increasing regularity throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century reinforced this identity. As stated above, the Christian and Catholic communities were ready targets for such attacks. The antagonism of non-Christian Chinese towards Chinese Christians and foreign missionaries was partly caused by the unequal provisions of the numerous treaties and by the cultural arrogance of many of the foreigners in China. Where Catholic communities survived these outbreaks of violence, which often culminated in bloody pogroms, Marian devotions tended to grow in prominence and fervour.<sup>1</sup>

The Marian pilgrimages to Sheshan and to Donglu, in Hebei Province, are two examples of such devotions. The images associated with both have become famous. Confusingly, the Donglu Mary is now the older of the two images, even though the Sheshan devotion is older than the pilgrimage to Donglu. This is because the present image at Sheshan is markedly different from its original form. The Donglu Mary has also exerted a greater direct influence on the development of the official image for the devotion called Our Lady of China. The pilgrimage to Sheshan and the image associated with it are significant in their own right; both are well loved within the Catholic communities. Nevertheless, the Donglu image has had a greater influence on the Catholic communities in China.

This Marian devotion grew in fame as a result of the preservation of the Catholic community in times of adversity. The Chinese Catholics attributed their survival to the salvific intervention of Mary. Donglu Village and the stories associated with it have become key defining features of Catholic communities in China. It is reasonable to say, in fact, that Our Lady of Donglu

has become iconic for the Chinese Catholic church. Given the origins of this devotion in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is not surprising that the image is largely European in style. Its origins display the multiple ways that the Catholic communities were (and are) in negotiation with their surrounding culture, regardless of the conscious levels of awareness about this process of dialogue.

The village of Donglu is in the prefecture of Baoding in the province of Hebei, southwest of Beijing. This province contains one of the highest concentrations of Catholics in China; the church traces its origins to the missionary work of the late Ming and early Qing periods. The Catholics were most often found grouped together in country villages as a result of the missionary strategy of seeking to convert large numbers of families within one village, if not in fact the whole village, rather than just one or two individuals and their families. The strategy was based on the pastoral insight that it is easier to maintain one's faith in a communal setting than as an individual, particularly if the surrounding village or culture is opposed to the expression of the Christian faith.

One consequence of this evangelical strategy, however, was that when waves of anti-foreign or anti-religious hostility swept the countryside, it was easy to attack the Catholics because they were readily identifiable by where they lived. This was especially true of the large market town of Donglu, where almost all the inhabitants were Catholic. According to missionary accounts of the early twentieth century, the Catholic population there numbered over 2,500 people.<sup>2</sup>

Work by Joseph Esherick and others has also shown that the opposition to Catholics and Christians that erupted throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was not just caused by anti-foreign sentiment, although this did certainly play a role.<sup>3</sup> These scholars have argued that the rise in the number of Catholics in certain areas also threatened local economies, especially where Catholics were grouped together. This is because Catholics refused to participate in village festivals that revolved around the local temple cults. These festivals were major events in the life of a village and also included a type of village tax, which was used for such things as infrastructural repair as well as for the funding of charitable works and prayer services, either in honour of the ancestors or in thanksgiving for good harvests.

Catholics refused to pay this tax because of its link with non-Catholic rituals. Consequently, other villagers thought they were not only paying more than their fair share but also subsidizing those who paid nothing at all. The Catholic practice of marrying other Catholics, even if this meant pursuing spouses in

other villages, likewise threatened local community harmony, because this custom destabilized well-established local relationships among families and clans. Such divisions among rural communities fostered dangerous tensions.

There was much hostility and violence throughout the late nineteenth century in China, especially in the rural plains around Beijing and Tianjin. The reasons for this were complex, but one common consequence was that the Christian communities of all traditions usually bore the brunt of the widespread dissatisfaction and outrage. Donglu was no exception: it was attacked both during the time of the Taiping Rebellion in the middle of the century and then later in 1900 during the rise of the Boxer movement.<sup>4</sup> Afterwards, Catholics believed that Mary had saved them from destruction on both occasions.

The Chinese Catholic church already had strong Marian dimensions, as discussed previously. These features were especially evident in those areas where the church was well established. The central place of Marian devotions like the rosary and the role of groups like the Marian sodalities helped develop these characteristics. As seen in the previous chapter, the arrival of the French missionaries, especially in the period initiated by the treaties, and their enthusiastic promotion of popular French Marian devotions like that of the miraculous medal, the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Lourdes, had only added yet more layers to this rich culture of faith. The Chinese Catholics were accustomed to turning to Mary in times of peace, so it was all the more understandable that they would seek her intercessory prayers in their potential hour of death. After each wave of persecution, the Catholics drew solace from their survival and attributed their deliverance to the fact that Mary had heard and answered their prayers.

In this regard, the events of the years 1899 and 1900 proved critical to the development of the identity of the Donglu Catholics. These events also positioned Marian devotions at the centre of the faith life of the community. After the ultimate survival of the Chinese Catholics, Mary's role was elevated to that of protector of all the Catholic communities. The Catholic communities experienced Mary's traditional titles of Our Lady Help of Christians and Our Lady of Victories as being true in deed as well as in word. The experience of this one Catholic community encapsulates how this situation arose and reveals the manner in which Marian devotion became even more central to the life of the Catholic communities throughout the country.<sup>5</sup>

The Boxer movement has often been regarded as "as a 'religious uprising' with anti-foreign aims . . . [or as] . . . an anti-foreign (or anti-imperialist)

movement that expressed itself in religious terms . . .”<sup>6</sup> Mark Elvin states, however, that it “appears that the link between Boxerism and the religious and foreign irritant usually supposed to have caused it is nothing like as strong as it should be to serve as a convincingly sufficient explanation.”<sup>7</sup> Paul Cohen argues that, in addition to the undoubted anti-foreign aspects—the backlash to the concessions of the unequal treaties and the cultural chauvinism discussed above—the economic and ecological conditions of the final years of the millennium were also contributory causes to the Boxer movement.

In the years immediately prior to the eventual uprising, there had been periods of drought, which had resulted in widespread unemployment and famine. These in turn had led to great anxiety among the population, especially among the rural poor. These harsh conditions made it attractive to the peasantry to join groups like the Boxers. An observation by the United States Minister to China, Edwin H. Conger, about the situation in Zhili (modern Hebei) in 1900 reflects the complex mixture of factors:

The present conditions in this province are most favourable to such a movement [that is, the Boxers]. The people are very poor; until yesterday [May 7] practically no rain has fallen for nearly a year, plowing has not been and can not be done, crops have not been planted, the ground is too dry and hard to work in any way, and consequently the whole country is swarming with hungry, discontented, hopeless idlers, and they . . . are ready to join any organization offered.<sup>8</sup>

Those Chinese who were deemed to have sold their birth right by becoming Christian and their foreign companions were convenient scapegoats for people’s ills; as conditions got worse, bands of Boxers scoured the countryside looking for victims. In Hebei, the Catholics of Donglu were a definite focus of the Boxer forces, suffering a number of attacks. Although many Catholic villages organized private militia among themselves and threw up earthworks around their walls and so on, the eventual salvation of the community was believed to have been as the result of Mary’s protection.<sup>9</sup> According to contemporary missionary bulletins and reports, the Donglu Catholics maintained that Mary appeared to them several times during the siege of their church, and that these apparitions over the church were “instrumental in protecting them from a series of Boxer assaults between December 1899 and July 1900.”<sup>10</sup>

A remarkably similar story was told by the survivors of the siege of the North Church (Beitang) in Beijing, which lasted from 16 June to 16 August 1900. This siege resulted in the deaths of more than 400 people, including more than

160 children.<sup>11</sup> During the course of this siege, over 3,000 Chinese Christians huddled behind the walls of the church compound. Alongside them were thirty French marines, led by the twenty-three-year-old Lieutenant Paul Henry (who died in the siege), eleven Italian soldiers led by the even younger twenty-two-year-old soldier, Lieutenant Olivieri, and numerous French and Chinese priests and sisters. Overseeing everything was the elderly French Lazarist bishop of Beijing, Bishop Favier.<sup>12</sup>

Over a two-month period, they endured bombardments from the latest cannon and bullets from modern repeating rifles. The Boxers fired down on the Catholics from ladders and scaffolds that were secured behind the Imperial City walls. The beleaguered Catholics also survived mine attacks, flaming rockets and starvation through lack of food. The steady depletion of food supplies was the greatest threat to life as the siege continued. Their survival was attributed to the appearance of a woman in white, the Virgin Mary, over the walls of the church.<sup>13</sup>

In 1901, Bishop Favier described this experience during a visit to his fellow Lazarists in Paris:

Every night during those two months, the Chinese directed heavy gunfire at the roofs of the cathedral and the balustrade surrounding it. Why? Wondered Paul Henry and the missionaries. There was no one there to defend the cathedral. After the liberation, the pagans [*sic*] provided the key to this mystery: 'How is it,' they said, 'that you did not see anything? Every night, a white Lady walked along the roof, and the balustrade was lined with white soldiers with wings.' The Chinese, as they themselves affirm, were firing at the apparitions.<sup>14</sup>

Such stories of divine intercession spread throughout the Catholic communities. Just as Mary had provided assistance at Shanghai in 1870, so too did she now appear at Donglu and Beijing, in 1899 and 1900. In their minds, the Chinese Catholics could only attribute their survival to Mary's providential aid.<sup>15</sup>

There were, of course, also more tangible causes for their survival, including the foresight of Bishop Favier in stockpiling food, the bravery and determination of the soldiers in their midst, and the eventual arrival of the allied troops. The Catholics knew full well that the successful intervention of the foreign troops, firstly at Tianjin and then at Beijing, ensured the initial cessation of attacks on the communities and then their ultimate delivery. The military and political victory also enabled the Chinese Catholics to rebuild their

infrastructure (churches and so on) from monies taken out of the indemnities forced on the Chinese court following the cessation of hostilities. These indemnities totalled £675 million; the Catholic share of this was substantial.<sup>16</sup> This money ensured that churches could be rebuilt that had been severely damaged during the attacks, as, for instance, the famous South Church in Beijing (the Nantang, built on the site of Ricci's first church).<sup>17</sup>

Most importantly, however, the defeat of the uprising meant that the already complex story of faith was now overlaid with another stratum of meaning.<sup>18</sup> Accounts of miraculous delivery in times of genuine hardship and danger now accompanied powerful, community-building pious acts such as the chanting of rosaries and the making of pilgrimages. This dramatic overlay of meaning had at least two significant consequences.

First, the archetypal story of faith was strengthened: Mary the blessed one would intercede with God on behalf of those who prayed to her. As a result, the acts of piety that embodied this belief became more popular. Second, the new story strengthened the Catholic sense of identity. In a positive feedback loop, the bolstered identity encouraged greater practising of the religious devotions, which in turn led to a deepening of the original sense of identity. Each reinforced the other.

The Marian dimensions of the communities had become a major force that would continue to animate the believers. The momentous act of delivery from harm was recorded in prayers and in images (such as the banner donated to the shrine at Lourdes, mentioned earlier). The Donglu Catholics produced a portrait embodying their devotion to Mary that has been among the most famous of the Chinese Marian images ever since.

Rather than a traditional title like Our Lady of Victories or Our Lady Help of Christians, or even the less well-known appellation, Our Lady of Sorrows, the image was simply called Our Lady of Donglu; it was commissioned just eight years after the end of the uprising, in 1908. The image had grown out of the belief in the merciful role played by Mary in the life of the Donglu Catholics. At the time the commission was carried out, the loss of life among Catholic families throughout China was still sorely felt. There was a perceived need among the communities to commemorate both Mary's assistance and the memory of their martyred townsfolk.

Surprisingly, the painting also owed its origins in no small part to the rise in popularity throughout China of representational imagery (both portraiture and photography) during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early

part of the twentieth century. In particular, the empress dowager's utilization of these forms of imagery exerted a surprising influence on the Donglu Catholic painting. In fact, an oil portrait of Cixi was used as one of the main models for the Catholic Donglu painting. Several photographs of Cixi that deliberately portrayed her as Guanyin, were also noticeable influences. This painting of Mary was thus not only a product of religious violence (caused by a combination of such factors as drought and foreign incursions) but was also a reflection of traditional China engaging wholeheartedly with the modern technology of photography.

### Visual influences on the Donglu portrait

Cixi used imagery in a premeditated fashion for her own purposes, mostly to present herself as a benign and kindly ruler. She first commissioned a photograph of herself in 1903, and not long afterwards agreed to sit as the subject for an oil portrait.<sup>19</sup> Many factors prompted Cixi to use these media. These ranged from considerations of state to the fact that both forms of representation were diversions that gave full expression to Cixi's playful and inquisitive nature. For all their performative power, photographs and portrait paintings still had value as entertainment. The process of dressing up for a painting or photograph, especially as elaborately posed as these first examples were, was also a form of imperial recreation. Simple vanity, too, could not be discounted, in that photographs and paintings could be used to control how one was represented. Cixi was certainly able to control the process of image-making within palace walls. According to contemporary accounts, Cixi seemed to acquire a greater understanding of the power she held as the subject as each new image was produced. The process of learning is reflected in the manner in which she then displayed and circulated the images.

In the world of 1903, the commissioning of portraits was a very thorough and considered affair. The respective memoirs of "Princess" Der Ling (hereafter Yu Deling) and Katharine Carl both describe the process—with some not-so-minor discrepancies—by which Carl came to be the first official portrait-painter of Cixi. Read next to each other they provide a valuable insight into the merging together of all the different impulses that led to this painting. Carl's memoir also illustrates the development of Cixi's understanding of the visual media. Yu and Carl's accounts also reveal, yet again, an unexpected connection with French society and culture. The French connection was instrumental in

bringing about Cixi's embrace of portraiture as a means by which her image would be widely disseminated. While this connection was not as pronounced as, for instance, the deliberate importation of statues and images of Our Lady of Lourdes, the extent of the French resonances in the story of the Cixi portraits is interesting, especially since these portraits later influenced the creation of the Donglu Mary.

Arguably, there also seems to have been strong prompting from another international source. In no small degree, Cixi's first official portrait came about through the endeavours of Susan Conger, the wife of the U.S. State Department's Minister to China, Edwin H. Conger. Susan Conger had grown to respect Cixi during her time in Beijing and continued to cultivate a relationship with Cixi after the court's return to the imperial city in January 1902. The court had fled with great haste from the foreign troops who had entered Beijing to relieve the legations during the Boxer Uprising. Conger continued to visit the palace even in the face of opposition from the wives of other foreign diplomats.

Such opposition was revealed in a letter written by Mrs Archibald Little.<sup>20</sup> Properly known as Alicia Bewicke Little, she had arrived in China in 1886, after her marriage to Archibald Little, an English missionary who later became an entrepreneur. Alicia Little commented on Susan Conger's visits to the imperial court, and articulated the discomfort this brought to some members of the broader populace:

The American Minister's wife speaks of 'my friend the Empress Dowager' or 'Her Majesty.' But at each fresh foreign visit to the Old Buddha, as the Chinese call the Empress Dowager, Chinese Christian women weep and protest bitterly, thinking of their murdered relations, whom they esteem as *martyrs*.<sup>21</sup>

Susan Conger wanted not only to rehabilitate Cixi's standing among the foreign women who inhabited the capital but also to transform the empress dowager's public image, especially as it was portrayed in the popular press. In June 1903, Conger wrote to her daughter about her plans:

For many months now I had been indignant over the horrible, unjust caricatures of Her Imperial Majesty in illustrated papers, and with a growing desire that the world might see her more as she really is, I had conceived the idea of asking her Majesty's permission to speak with her upon the subject of having her portrait painted.<sup>22</sup>

If this is really how things took place, then Mrs Conger successfully planted within Cixi the idea of commissioning a flattering portrait so as to present a positive image to the world.

The idea would not have borne fruit, however, without Yu Deling, who was a daughter of the diplomat, Yu Geng.<sup>23</sup> The Yu family had spent several years in France; Deling had experienced much of contemporary European culture during this time, everything from debutante balls to street protests.<sup>24</sup> In 1900, the family had also travelled to the Vatican and visited Pope Leo XIII.<sup>25</sup> The Catholic connection was not insignificant:

[Yu Deling] received a Western education, first attending missionary schools and later enrolling in the *Sacré Coeur* convent in France. She was taught foreign languages by private tutors, became a Catholic and was baptized Elizabeth by Monsignor Favier.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, upon her return to China, Yu Deling felt obliged to deny her Catholicism to Cixi. Yu Deling kept in her bedroom in the imperial court an oil portrait of herself that had been painted during her time in Paris.<sup>27</sup> In Yu Deling's account, when Cixi saw the portrait, it convinced her of the representational power of portraiture.<sup>28</sup> As chance would have it, Katharine Carl, the very artist Conger had already suggested to Cixi had painted the portrait in question.<sup>29</sup> Carl had trained in Paris and was related to the U.S. Commissioner of Customs, who was then stationed in China. Carl herself was already living in Shanghai at the time that Yu Deling's portrait was being used to support Conger's plan. Cixi eventually agreed to the project, and to the presence of Carl in the imperial court. Not long afterwards, on a day deemed suitably favourable, Katharine Carl began the painstaking task of painting the empress dowager's portrait.

Fulfilling the commission was as involved and considered a work as the machinations that had led to its commission. From 1903 to 1904, Katharine Carl spent nine months living in the court as she worked on the portrait. Her reminiscences provide a fascinating insider's account of life in the palace. We read of the empress dowager's "pet dogs, the flower teas she drank from a jade cup, her fondness for walking in the rain, her passion for theatricals."<sup>30</sup> Even the most favourable reviewer considers Carl's recollections to be shaded by the fact that "the artist fell more and more under the Empress' spell . . . [as her task, which] began as a demanding but straight-forward commission, soon became a labour of love."<sup>31</sup> Yet, in addition to describing her enchantment with life in

the empress dowager's palace, Carl also described the amount of control Cixi exercised over every aspect of the actual portrait.

There were directions about how the portrait should be painted (so as to incorporate traditional Chinese conventions) and clear guidelines about what could or could not be included. Even the painting schedule itself was determined by the astrological calendar, with work beginning on a propitious day, and rest decreed on those dates that were less favourable. Susan Conger had hoped the painting would present "a little of the true expression and character of this misrepresented woman", whereas Cixi herself seemed determined that the representation should be as much of her devising as possible.<sup>32</sup> Carl eventually painted four portraits-during her nine-month stay at the court, the most famous of which was the painting destined for display at the St Louis Exposition, held in 1904.

Carl described her first portrait at length (not the one that was eventually sent to the Exposition).<sup>33</sup> Far from showing the formidable yet diminutive empress dowager in proportion to the sumptuous imperial objects which surrounded her, Carl was forced to paint Cixi life-sized, in robes of her choosing and with only the objects she wished displayed. Simply, Cixi controlled not only when she was to be painted but also how she was to be portrayed:

The tip of one small embroidered shoe, with its jewelled, white kid sole resting on a dragon footstool, showed under the hem of her gown. The head was a three-quarters view, with the eyes looking at the observer. A jardinière, with her favourite orchid, stood behind the Throne at the right . . . The canvas was four by six feet in size; and there was thus no place for any of the emblems or insignia of Her Majesty's rank, save that she was clothed in her official costume of Imperial yellow.<sup>34</sup>

This first portrait satisfied Cixi so much that she allowed the artist to extend her stay in the court and complete some more paintings. Katharine Carl recounted Cixi's enthusiastic embrace of portraiture: "Before I finished the first one she told me she wanted 'many', and suggested my passing the rest of my life out in Peking."<sup>35</sup> The three later paintings, especially the one finished by 19 April 1904 and delivered to St Louis by June of the same year, illustrate the development of Cixi's grasp of the medium.

In this St Louis version, which was then presented as a gift to the United States government after the exposition, Cixi is looking directly at the observer, meeting the viewer's gaze, rather than being shown in the three-quarter view of the earlier portrait. She had specifically chosen elaborate and beautiful

robes that depicted her exalted position and included symbols to indicate her imperial rank. Displayed in the background is an embroidered screen decorated with nine flying phoenixes. These mythical birds were believed to have much symbolic power, reputedly appearing only in times of peace and having benign relationships with all the other creatures. The symbol of the phoenix also stands for the feminine and thereby represents the empress, in the same way that the dragon represents the emperor.<sup>36</sup> Other multivalent symbols were liberally displayed in this painting, for instance, peacock feathers, two roiling dragons fighting for a pearl, ceremonial fans and stalks of bamboo. These symbols were deliberately included to show Cixi's rank and power.<sup>37</sup>

The finished painting was exhibited in an elaborate stand in a pavilion inside the palace. Its first public viewing provides further evidence of Cixi's understanding of orchestrated representation, for she desired that people view the finished work and then praise her. The pavilion where the painting was displayed was the building that had been reserved as Carl's studio. The first people invited to view the finished portrait were the same foreign-legation ladies who had expressed their displeasure with Conger's frequent visits to the empress. The siren call of a visit to the court easily overcame the sensitivities of the diplomats' wives to the ululations of Chinese Christian women weeping for their martyrs. The young Chinese women who lived in the court accompanied these curious Westerners. Carl's words neatly capture the way in which the showing was both an exhibition and an event:

The ladies were, of course, much interested in seeing this long-talked-of picture—the first ever painted of Her Majesty—and the novelty of the precedent, as well as the interest of a visit to the Palace, favorably predisposed them, and they expressed themselves as most interested in the work, finding it a good likeness. The admiration it received from the young Empress and the Ladies of the Court was almost embarrassing, and the eunuchs said it was so lifelike when they passed the windows that it inspired the same awe Her Majesty's own presence did.<sup>38</sup>

Pleased with the success of this viewing, Cixi then exhibited it to the prince and men of the court the next day, although for reasons of propriety it was removed from the interior of Carl's lodgings in the female quarters, where it had been shown to the women. The positive outcomes of each of these exhibitions led Cixi to increase the number of people allowed to view her portrait. Formal showings took place at the Chinese Foreign Office, prior to the portrait's departure overseas. Those invited to attend included not only Chinese

officials whose rank was not high enough to have been allowed to view the portrait inside the imperial court but also members of the foreign diplomatic corps, from the ministers to the staff of the legations.

The painting was transported from Beijing to Tianjin by train, from Tianjin to Shanghai by boat and from Shanghai to San Francisco by a Pacific Mail steamer. This journey was an elaborate and formal exercise marked by all the trappings of official pomp and diplomatic concern. The viceroy of the province met the special train at Tianjin; at each step of the way high officials, from governors to imperial commissioners, were responsible for accompanying the painting. The case within which the portrait was carried was likewise elaborately decorated in imperial colours and insignia. At no stage was the work conveyed in anything other than a specially commissioned carriage. On 19 June at 9 p.m., the painting was finally displayed on its specially built easel in the Palace of Fine Arts at the St Louis World Exposition.

At this juncture, the imperial commissioner of China toasted Cixi, and the health of China, with sparkling champagne. The fulfilment of the commission, the extensive planning that went into the picture's trans-Pacific voyage, and its subsequent unveiling all show that Susan Conger's plan to counter the misrepresentations of Cixi had been transformed into an international event of representative and cultural significance. Cixi's image represented the rehabilitation of a ruler and the hoped-for prosperity of the nation.

The world fair attracted a staggering twenty million visitors between its opening in April and its conclusion in November 1904.<sup>39</sup> In all likelihood, a large number of these visitors had the chance to view Carl's work. Once the image was on public display, however, not all people were as enamoured of the actual painting as most viewers in Beijing appeared to have been. One person stated, for instance, that "in it we fail to see the little old woman, five feet high and seventy years old, who sat for so long upon an usurped throne . . ."<sup>40</sup> According to Carl's own account, once Cixi saw her other paintings, she preferred these versions to the St Louis one as well.<sup>41</sup>

During Carl's stay, Cixi also embraced photography. At the second showing of the St Louis portrait, Cixi had requested that one of the Manchu men of the court take a photograph of the image.<sup>42</sup> This man was Yu Xunying, a brother of Yu Deling; while his sisters had studied modern dance in Paris, he had learned photography. The empress dowager was delighted with both the result and the speed of the new technology, especially as she was all too well aware of the length of time that Carl's sittings had taken.<sup>43</sup> Carl wrote that Cixi then

organized numerous photographs of herself to be taken (although Yu Deling maintains that she had already commissioned this series before this point).

## Photographs of Cixi

The first Chinese photographed appears to have been Qi Ying, a Qing official, who had had self-portraits taken in Macau in 1844.<sup>44</sup> This was only five years after the process of photography had been revealed at a formal showing before the French Academy of Sciences in Paris in 1839.<sup>45</sup> According to Edwin K. Lai, the first commercial Chinese photographer working in Shanghai, Luo Yuanyou, was operating from the late 1850s onwards.<sup>46</sup> By the time of the Yu siblings, therefore, photography in China had been known and enjoyed for almost sixty years; its impact on contemporary culture was thus wide-ranging.

John Clark's work on the interactions among artists in modern Asia shows that this new technology had reached Asia rapidly and then circulated among the various artistic centres, especially in Japan and China. He maintains that photography arrived first in India, between 1839 and 1840 (via British photographers) and thence made its way to Japan. Clark also argues that the diffusion of improved printing techniques, which influenced the general public's ability to use the medium of photography, was likewise slower in China than it was in Japan:

Photogravure, which is necessary for high-quality printing of photographs for magazine purposes was first used in Japan in 1906, [and] . . . arrived in Shanghai in 1923 . . . [T]here is a complex set of relations between Europe, the United States, Japan and China in the transfer and development of high-speed and high-volume printing technology, with most of the Japanese developments preceding developments in China by ten to fifteen years, especially in the use of techniques for mass-producing photographic imagery.<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, this did not prevent those with money from making use of the expensive new techniques, especially in the vibrant commercial world of Shanghai, and also Macau. By the middle of the 1860s, the new technology had become a leisure pursuit for the wealthy; the photographs produced by them also aroused the interest of poorer classes.<sup>48</sup> The photographic industry came to be centred on Shanghai, with the establishment of photographic studios in the city, which had grown rapidly as a treaty port after the Opium Wars. Régine

Thiriez's work shows that the photographers working in the treaty ports were both Western and Chinese.<sup>49</sup>

These studios "not only took photographs but sold them individually or compiled their own photographic albums for sale. Taking photographs and collecting these albums were costly activities of the upper class."<sup>50</sup> As a result of its popularity among the upper-class Chinese, photography was also closely linked with the culture of leisure.<sup>51</sup> At the time, some of the principal entertainments among the upper classes involved courtesans, whose beauty was captured in numerous, widely circulated photograph albums. The ease with which photographs could be possessed and circulated was as important as the vivid, yet controlled, representational aspect of the photograph itself.<sup>52</sup>

Laikwan Pang argues that, not long after the commercial production and consumption of courtesan photo collections, photography became attractive also to women of greater means, including women who lived in the imperial court. Although Cixi had become aware of photography in the 1860s, she apparently only saw a portrait-style photograph for the first time while strolling through the room of Yu Deling, in 1903. The seclusion of the palace would be one reason why Yu Deling's claim does not seem too unbelievable.<sup>53</sup> John Clark has argued that the mass production of portrait photographs did not occur until later and that early examples were not widely circulated. It is hard to believe, however, that residents of the imperial court did not have access to the courtesan books that were popular among the upper class. Some high-ranking officials had already sat for portraits themselves.<sup>54</sup> Whatever Cixi's exposure to photography prior to this moment, it does seem as though the few photographs in Yu Deling's possession fascinated her, just as Yu Deling's oil portrait had earlier.

Yu Deling maintained that Cixi arranged to have her photograph taken and that these prints were the first ones of the empress dowager. Cixi embraced photography with enthusiasm and brought to bear all the resources of the palace at her disposal. She appreciated the aesthetic value of the technology, and made good use of it to disseminate her chosen images to the public. Sun Yanjing reported that Cixi distributed over 100 poster-sized copies of her favourite photograph.<sup>55</sup> Cixi was very aware of the propagandistic potential of the medium, moreover, ensuring that her photographs were also reprinted in a smaller format and posted in public. By 1904, Cixi had even allowed an advertisement to be placed in *Shi Bao* (時報, The Eastern Times), offering "true imperial photographs of the Empress Dowager of the Qing dynasty,

which could be bought at the Sima Road post-office in Shanghai.”<sup>56</sup> That these images were distributed rather freely attests to the desire of the court to wage a propaganda campaign aimed at improving their position in the eyes of the general public, and also to the fact that such images were probably not readily available before.

The series of photographs in which Cixi portrayed herself as Guanyin remain the most significant illustrations of Cixi’s embrace of photography. They also exerted an influence on the Our Lady of Donglu painting. Cixi left nothing to chance in the creation of the series: “This image had been planned meticulously, as documented in an internal report recording in detail the various kinds of decorations, characters, and settings Cixi demanded for this photograph.”<sup>57</sup> Like the portraits, they were deliberate performative acts.

Cixi consciously appropriated the image of Guanyin, and sought to claim the benevolent characteristics associated with the female bodhisattva. Cixi sought to promote a sense of piety and goodness, deliberately utilizing the stasis of the photographic image to transcend the troubled political and ecological conditions of China at the turn of the century and to diminish her own role in the events of these times. She sought to suggest a personal metamorphosis in the same way that, earlier, she had allowed the Boxers to use their magic to try to transform the times.

Laikwan Pang oversimplifies the complex history of the sinicization and feminization of Avalokitesvara, in stating that “Guanyin was quickly embraced as a goddess once imported to China, and she is popular among Chinese because she embodies the ideal of motherhood: she is depicted as being kind, caring and loving.”<sup>58</sup> In fact, her indigenization was hardly a rapid process, evolving as it did over a number of centuries; the personality traits of kindness and compassion were derived from a number of sources, as shown in Chapter 1. As discussed already, it is also possible that the ideal of motherhood as embodied by the child-giving Guanyin was a result of cultural negotiation between Buddhist images and the Franciscan importation and dissemination of the Madonna of humility in the thirteenth century. Even so, it is significant that Cixi wished to employ the image and ideal of Guanyin. It is reasonable to conclude, as Pang does, that this was in order to represent herself in a way vastly different to her prevailing caricature as a harsh and unfeeling despot.<sup>59</sup>

It is also possible to suggest that, because the Qing rulers had supported the Boxer Uprising, they needed to restore their good standing among sections of the Chinese population, as well as among the foreigners. The court’s unseemly

flight from the imperial city during the foreign powers' attack on Beijing, as well as the punitive monetary indemnities levied by the same, was an embarrassing humiliation that needed symbolic redress. By appropriating the iconic power of the Guanyin cult, while at the same time using the new technology, the Qing court astutely attempted to restore public opinion, as well as a sense of its own heavenly mandate. It was a clever move, taking place at the very time that other modern technologies and movements were eroding the court's perceived legitimacy.

As argued by John Clark, "photography was both a technical means and a carrier of a discourse of images that was immensely powerful and met, or generated, many demands for it in the Asian societies it encountered."<sup>60</sup> Cixi seems to have realized that photography enabled the rapid and widespread dissemination of images that showed her radiating benevolence. Although Clark has argued that it was not until the 1920s that mass production of photographic images occurred with any great ease in China, it is certainly true that mass production did nevertheless take place prior to this, as seen by the 1904 advertisement selling copies of Cixi's image.<sup>61</sup>

A further advantage of the new technology was that photographs could survive for a long period, whereas paintings were costly both to preserve and to reproduce. Furthermore, paintings could be viewed only by a limited number of people at any one time, even under exceptional circumstances such as an exhibition or a world fair. It was also difficult to view a painting at leisure in the same way that a photograph album could be taken out at whim.

The power of photography was well-known to Catholic missionaries, as shown by the fact that some orders had already been using this technology to keep historical records of their work.<sup>62</sup> The French female religious order, the Society of Helpers, used to designate one of their number as the house historian, a key part of whose role was to take photographs of daily activities. These would then be circulated back in France and beyond, as a means of educating their friends and fellow sisters about what they were doing and as a way to raise further support for their works. The circulation of photographs of Cixi within China, especially as the child-giving Guanyin, reinforced the power of images, and emphasized to missionaries the need to make continued and more deliberate use of such tools themselves.

The church had long circulated images via media like holy cards and medallions (including the miraculous medal). The manner in which courtesans, upper-class ladies and even Cixi had utilized photographs within a much

broader context was, nevertheless, relatively new. Just as Cixi saw that the use of photography could help dictate how she was imagined by the people, so too did the missionary at Donglu realize that he could combine the Cixi photographs (and the impulse behind them) with traditional Catholic Marian devotion to bring about a more powerful and resonant image of a Chinese Mary.

There were obvious difficulties in using photography to present certain Christian subjects: for instance, someone needed to act as Mary. While Cixi deliberately presented herself as an *alter* Guanyin, thereby seeking to claim the personality traits associated with the bodhisattva, the church did not want to hold up a living person as Christ or Mary. The missionaries had learned from the Jesuits' experience at Zhaoqing in the sixteenth century, when the *Salus Populi* painting had convinced some people that the Christians deified a woman. They had no desire to circulate images and photographs that might result in such confusion. The anxieties caused by the Rites Controversy also influenced the situation. The missionaries had to be careful yet creative, therefore, in how they employed the medium.

As mentioned earlier, missionary groups harnessed the power of photography by taking images of their places of work, such as newly built church structures, or scenes of apostolic activity and even portraits of Catholic personages (famous or otherwise.) These were then sent back to their home communities and widely circulated, as postcards and in publications (many missionary congregations published their own works). All the religious groups in China (and elsewhere) were quite active in using this means of communication. Such photographs revealed the missionaries' desires to introduce their endeavours to diverse supporters in their own countries and illustrate the progress of the church, even in tumultuous times. (They also showed daily life in the towns and villages where they worked, thereby affecting the ways in which their readers imagined China.) Like the extensive and deliberate dissemination of the printed image of the Madonna of St Luke in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was a conscious missiological strategy designed to increase support for the Catholic communities in China, as well as in Europe itself, and to nurture a strong sense of Catholic identity.

Cixi's enthusiastic adoption of portraiture and photography thus occurred at a time when Catholic missionaries were also engaged in producing edifying imagery. The success of the imperial photographs and portraits provided further impetus to the Catholic Church's own efforts. The desire of the Donglu Catholics and their resident missionary to possess a painted image of Mary was

one consequence of these stimuli. They wanted a portrait as beautiful and as impressive as any other image; they now had the means to procure one, and a model to use as a guide.

### **Liu Bizhen's painting**

The Donglu Catholics' longed-for painting was produced in Shanghai, at the art workshop of the Society of Jesus, based at T'ou-sè-wè (土山灣, Tushanwan in Mandarin).<sup>63</sup> This workshop was one of the many works of the Jesuits in Shanghai situated at their complex at Zikawei (Xujiahui). Tushanwan was in fact an orphanage; the work produced at its various workshops had become famous throughout the country.

Tushanwan had taken over, and expanded upon, the operations of another orphanage, established in 1848 at a village known as Tsa-ka-wei (Caijiawan) on the outskirts of Shanghai.<sup>64</sup> These orphanages were a response of the Catholic missionaries to the plight of the large number of infants whose parents had died or become homeless in that year, principally as a result of severe flooding. The orphanages also housed and educated the many orphans that had either been left to the care of the Jesuits or who had been saved from roadsides and other places of destitution. Two Franciscans, Fr. Pellicia and Fr. Schettino, had initially run the Tsa-ka-wei orphanage; they had handed over its administration to Fr. François Giaquinto, SJ in 1851. He ran it for six years before being sent to a new mission elsewhere; his replacement at the orphanage was Fr. Louis Massa, SJ. Massa was at Tsa-ka-wei until 1860, at which time he and several Chinese Christians were killed by Taiping troops.

In 1861, Fr. Giaquinto returned to Shanghai to resume his directorship of the orphanage, a post he held until his death, aged forty-six, in 1864.<sup>65</sup> In this year, the orphanage was closed and the orphans were moved to Tushanwan in November. Fr. Emil Chevreuil, SJ, became director of the Tushanwan orphanage in 1865, holding this position until at least 1868. Construction of spacious new premises began at Tushanwan in 1864, being completed, in several stages, by 1875. On 11 July of that year, a French Jesuit, Fr. Foucault, blessed Tushanwan's new buildings and workshops during a solemn opening mass. At this time, there were 200 orphans at Tushanwan and around 100 adults were employed in the various workshops.<sup>66</sup>

The Chinese female religious, the Presentandines, and the French female religious, the Society of Helpers, cared for the many female orphans. The female

orphanage was across the creek from the Church of St Ignatius at Xujiahui; there was much interaction between the two establishments, although the girls were trained to do work that was more gendered in its focus, trades like embroidery, sewing and the operation of a laundry.

At Tushanwan, the Jesuit priests and brothers worked as master-craftsmen: the boys in their care learned various trades from them, including woodwork, metalwork, printing and painting. In the process of learning these skills, which would provide the students with a livelihood once they were old enough to leave the orphanage, the young artisans (and their teachers) produced a variety of religious and secular goods. The sale of these goods helped offset the operational expenses of the orphanage. Some of the orphans, in fact, chose to remain working in the various departments of Tushanwan once they had reached adulthood.<sup>67</sup>

The art workshop began operations at Tushanwan in 1867, although Spanish Jesuit Jean de Dieu Ferrer had been teaching art to students at Xujiahui since 1852, and from 1865 Brother Peter Lu, SJ (Lu Bodu 陸伯都) had been in charge of teaching the orphans to paint.<sup>68</sup> Lu, who joined the Jesuits in 1862, had himself been one of Ferrer's earliest pupils and continued Ferrer's work after his death in 1855. In addition to supplying works for local and regional churches and attracting curious day-trippers from among the Europeans resident in Shanghai, the workshop also began to attract interest from among local Chinese artists.<sup>69</sup> The goods produced at Tushanwan also became well-known outside the country. Several pieces of furniture and four large scroll paintings, for instance, were sent to San Francisco for yet another world fair, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915.<sup>70</sup> The extent of the activities at Tushanwan was revealed in an advertisement in the 1937 publication *A Guide to Catholic Shanghai*, which proclaimed that the orphanage would "fill personal orders at moderate prices and could supply stained glass, fancy lamp shades, hand-carved furniture, silver plating, steel work, artistic bookbinding, sacred vessels, statuary and paintings and printing services."<sup>71</sup> In fact, the vast majority of Catholic publications produced in Shanghai, including this guide-book itself, were produced by Tushanwan's printing house, which was established in 1870.<sup>72</sup>

It is no surprise that the Donglu-based missionary turned to the Jesuit workshop in Shanghai for a new and especially beautiful image of Mary, commissioning the work from the painters at Tushanwan in 1908. Some years later, in 1925, an extensive account of the origins of this painting was published,<sup>73</sup> at a

time when there was an ongoing debate among the church communities about the appropriateness of utilizing Chinese clothing, symbols and stylistic devices in Christian paintings and statuary. The apostolic delegate Celso Costantini (of whom more later) initiated this debate, in no small part because of the currents of nationalism sweeping the nation, and especially Shanghai, at this time.<sup>74</sup> The account of the painting's origins is the earliest and most extensive description in existence, although the author was anonymous.

The Donglu missionary “dreamt of equipping his church with a beautiful painting of the Holy Virgin, who was much honoured by the Christians.”<sup>75</sup> We have seen already that the Catholics of Donglu praised Mary because they believed that she had protected them as recently as 1900. The missionary in question was a Lazarist priest named René Flament; he was encouraged to pursue his dream by “the words and gifts of Monsignor Jarlin, the vicar apostolic, and Monsignor Fabrègues, who was director of the district of Baoding.”<sup>76</sup>

Rather than leave the design solely to the whim of the painters at Tushanwan, Fr. Flament mailed a photograph of the Katharine Carl portrait of Empress Cixi to the head of the orphanage's art workshop.<sup>77</sup> This is yet further proof of the influence of the Katharine Carl painting and the effectiveness of photography as a propaganda device. It also supports the proposition that the Chinese court had circulated these photographic images widely, as part of their campaign to ameliorate the public image of Cixi. That this photograph was in the possession of a priest in rural Hebei by 1908 seems to counter John Clark's argument that mass circulation of photographs did not occur in a widespread fashion in China until the 1920s. Although the Lazarist missions had an efficient communications network within China, and Baoding was an important and busy railway station—which means therefore that Flament could have received a copy of this image from a fellow Lazarist travelling through Baoding—the already-mentioned existence of an advertisement in *Shi Bao* (The Eastern Times) regarding the public sale of these photographs in Shanghai in 1904 also seems to contradict Clark's argument about circulation. It thus seems less plausible to suggest that Flament just happened to possess a photograph of this painting than to argue that these copies had begun to circulate throughout the country, even if only in a limited way.

A Chinese Jesuit religious brother and artist, Liu Bizhen (Siméon Liu), painted this image for Flament.<sup>78</sup> When Liu was a child, his father had been taken away in a boat by the Taiping rebels on the outskirts of Shanghai and was never seen again.<sup>79</sup> Liu's family was Christian; he was allowed to enter

the college of St Ignatius at Xujiahui when he was quite young. He received his artistic education from the Jesuits, especially Jean de Dieu Ferrer, at the Xujiahui complex. Brother Ferrer was a sculptor by profession, having completed his own artistic studies in Rome prior to joining the Society. He was assisted by an Italian Jesuit priest, Fr. Nicholas Massa, one of four Jesuit brothers of Luigi Massa, who was killed at Tsa-ka-wei orphanage.<sup>80</sup> Nicholas Massa had trained as a painter in Europe. Both he and Ferrer not only trained generations of artists and artisans after their arrival in Shanghai (Ferrer arrived in October 1847) but also produced much religious art for the various chapels and churches of the Jiangnan mission, as did his many students after him. He also drafted the plans for the original church at Xujiahui.

Liu must have learned more than art from Ferrer because, like Lu before him, he subsequently became a Jesuit himself, entering the Society on 7 September 1867. He began working in the painting department in 1870, after completing his two-year novitiate. He was admitted to final vows on the feast of St Ignatius, 31 July 1878.<sup>81</sup> For many years, Brother Liu was the director of the painting workshop at Tushanwan, a position he took over from Brother Lu upon his death in 1880. Liu was still head of the department in 1908, at sixty-five; he died in 1912.<sup>82</sup> The efficient administration of the workshop and the popular work of first Ferrer and Massa, then Lu and Liu, as well as their many students, ensured that the painters of Tushanwan had a national reputation. Between them, the two Chinese Jesuit brothers directed the painting workshop for almost sixty years.

As mentioned above, Liu Bizhen used the photograph of Carl's portrait as a model for his oil painting, incorporating additional suggestions made by others, including Father Flament, who had made the commission. Like Cixi, Mary was seated on a throne and dressed in a sumptuous blue and yellow Manchu court garment.<sup>83</sup> Although there was only one subject in the Carl painting, namely Cixi, here the child Jesus appeared with Mary. He stood on the throne, beside Mary's leg, and was likewise clad in rich vestments. Liu had any number of models for this depiction, as mentioned in Chapter 2, ranging from Our Lady of Paris to Our Lady of Treille. It is not known why Jesus was shown in this fashion, as opposed to in some other way.

The original image painted by Liu Bizhen does not seem to be extant; it was most likely destroyed at some time in the century after its production.<sup>84</sup> It is known, however, that many copies of the image were produced in subsequent years, especially after the Shanghai Plenary Council of 1924, when

Celso Costantini ensured a greater circulation of the image.<sup>85</sup> Some of the reproductions were themselves replicated from other copies, and a number of changes occurred in the process of transmission. Nevertheless, it is possible to note the essential features of Liu's work, once one examines a number of these reproductions and considers that evidence in the light of both "Notre Dame de Chine", an article printed in 1925, and Joseph Lapparent's article of 1941.

Two of the images shown here were produced at the Tushanwan orphanage. They are both ordination cards, commemorating the priestly ordinations at Xujiahui of two North American Jesuits: Charles Simons in 1933 and John J. Brennan in 1946. They feature a colour reproduction of Liu's painting on one side, with the title of the image printed in traditional Chinese characters. Simons' ordination card bears the title *Zhonghua Shengmu* (中華聖母—that is, Our Lady of China, literally Heavenly Mother of China), while Brennan's bears the invocation *Zai Tian Zhongguo zhihou wei wodeng qi* (在天中國之後爲我等祈, "Heavenly Queen of China, pray for us"). The mark of the Tushanwan print-shop (TSW) is on the front of both cards; the 1946 memorial card also bears the number 212, which presumably corresponds to the number of this image in the Tushanwan printing catalogue. On the reverse side of both cards are details of the ordinations (time and place), accompanied by the words of a customary Catholic blessing on one (in English and Chinese) and a quotation from Psalm 115 on the other (again in both English and Chinese).<sup>86</sup>

A third, non-colour reproduction of Liu's painting, now at the archives of the Paris Foreign Missions' Society at Rue du Bac, was produced on their behalf.<sup>87</sup> When or where this image was produced has been hard to determine, although for several reasons it too appears to have been a later copy, produced at earliest in 1924 and perhaps even after 1949; the image is referred to as *Notre Dame de Chine* rather than *Notre Dame de Donglu*, suggesting it was produced after 1924, for reasons to be discussed in Chapter 4. Above the image is printed the mission society's name, *Missions Étrangères de Paris*, suggesting that the Foreign Mission Society produced this image for non-Chinese-language audiences, not only to promote solidarity with the Chinese church but also to promote their own work. The lack of other evidence, however, makes it hard to say more than this. There are artistic differences, discussed below, that suggest this copy was a later version.

The fourth image discussed here is entitled Our Lady of China and appears on the website of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, in an opinion piece about a Marian mosaic installed at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the

Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. The website copied this image from a Chinese edition of the *Missale Romanum* (although no publication details are provided).<sup>88</sup>

As mentioned, all the images show Jesus standing on the throne, just to Mary's left. In every image, except the one on the Cardinal Kung Foundation website, Jesus' arms are extended slightly from his side, with palms upturned in a gesture that is both a greeting and an act of blessing. A photograph showing the interior of the Donglu church, with the painting hanging in its original position above the main altar, also shows Jesus' hands in this position, as does the earliest of the reproductions on show here, Charles Simons' ordination card of 1933.<sup>89</sup> Taken together, these two facts strongly suggest that this was the original posture as painted by Brother Liu. In the later Cardinal Kung Foundation reproduction, Jesus raises his right arm at a slightly higher elevation than his left one, creating a lopsided effect. His hands are still shown palm upwards.

There are many features of this image that suggest that Liu drew on European paintings for his inspiration. Therefore, at first glance, it is tempting to say that the Our Lady of Donglu painting is more European in style than Chinese. For instance, Mary and Jesus both wear jewel-encrusted crowns, traditional symbols of European royalty; Mary also holds a sceptre in her hand. Whereas Katharine Carl used traditional Chinese symbols of authority in her painting, such as phoenixes and dragons, Liu used Western symbols to indicate the high status of the Madonna and child, such as bejewelled crowns and a sceptre. Furthermore, Mary's visage is not especially Chinese, while the face of Jesus is decidedly European. The floor of the room in which the throne is situated also features black and white square tiles in a checkerboard design, reminiscent of numerous Renaissance paintings.<sup>90</sup>

In addition, two of the reproductions (the one from the Paris archives and the Cardinal Kung Foundation website) both portray the throne as having straight, rectangular carved legs. In both these reproductions, too, the wall behind the subjects features a quatrefoil design that is again more suggestive of European origins than of a Chinese setting. Two pillars appearing to be constructed of either wood or stone, and which are decorated with a simple angled incision that curves its way around the pillar, flank the back walls in both these prints. Both versions show the pillars resting on square pedestals that seem to be made of coloured marble and which are clearly visible behind the throne.

Finally, in both these later prints, it is possible to glimpse background scenery through the windows on either side of the backing wall, although the terrain and the flora are too indistinct for one to be able to say whether the scene has been set in Europe or in China. There are further subtle differences in the scenery depicted in these two reproductions as well. For instance, the foliage protruding from behind the back wall is slightly more shrub-like in the Cardinal Kung Foundation reprint than in the MEP image; while there is a mountain in the distance in the Kung website image (on the painting's right-hand side), there is only a large tree in the same place in the MEP image.

Yet a close examination of the two older images—the 1933 and 1945 ordination cards—show that Liu did in fact fill his painting with many Chinese references. While the European influences are evident, so are the Chinese ones. Once one looks for these influences, it is possible to see that Liu has very successfully taken a relatively traditional Western religious representation—Mary and Jesus on a throne—and, influenced by Carl's use of Chinese symbolism, created something new: Our Lady in China, Our Lady of Donglu.

These Chinese features, which by the time of the Missions Étrangères and Cardinal Kung Foundation reproductions had been lost in transmission, include the manner in which the throne is depicted, the design featured on the rear wall, the pillars that buttress the back wall, and the foliage and scenery visible through the rear windows. There are again subtle differences between the images on the two ordination cards, which suggest that Liu's painting had become a prototype that was copied over and over by the artists at Tushanwan.<sup>91</sup>

While the portrayal of Mary seated on a throne was a common motif in European religious paintings, Liu Bizhen translated this motif into a distinctively Chinese context. For instance, just as the unknown artist at Yangzhou had done centuries before him, Liu Bizhen used a Chinese-style seat to inculcate this image. There are at least two observable ways in which this seat qualifies as a Chinese-style chair rather than as a European throne with token Chinese qualities: the actual physical structure of the seat and its decorative ornamentation. C. P. Fitzgerald's work, *Barbarian Beds: The Origin of the Chair in China* (cited in Chapter 1), argues that there were two kinds of chairs in China: a type of folding stool and an item known as the *huchuang* (胡牀), or barbarian seat. Katerina Ilioni's tombstone displayed the barbarian seat. The latter history of the chair in China saw the development of a fixed back, which became attached to the flat seat.

When the need arose one could lean against the support attached to the rear side of the seat. Thus, the functionality of the Chinese fixed-back was determined by the fact that one could sit and lean at the same time. To this end, such seats were usually deeper than they were tall. As Fitzgerald notes, the Chinese noun for chair, *yi* (椅), is also derived from a verb meaning “to lean”, reflecting the evolution of this piece of furniture. Liu Bizhen’s Mary is shown sitting on such a seat, which is reminiscent of the seat on the Yangzhou tombstone, except for the fact that the throne now featured a largely ornamental backing. In all the available images, the seat backing is shown without arms; that is, it is something against which only Mary can lean. The very depth of the throne may have also been one of the reasons Liu Bizhen shows Jesus standing on this seat, rather than being cradled by Mary.<sup>92</sup> In all the images, the throne seat cushion is covered in red Chinese silk, with decorations imprinted on it.

The ornamentation of the throne is likewise significant. Simons’ ordination card, the earliest image, shows an elaborately carved dragon on the seat back, which appears to be riding the rail of the seat with a pearl clasped in one of its claws. The next image also shows a dragon in the same position, although by now the carving has become less elaborate but no less distinct. By the time of the Missions Étrangères image, the woodwork along the top of the seat backing has clearly been decorated with carvings but the decoration cannot be made out. The last image likewise shows a carved back but without a discernible design feature. The earliest images thus show Chinese figurative motifs, a dragon and a pearl, which possessed imperial symbolism. The pearl also symbolized feminine beauty and purity, which from a Christian perspective was an apt choice for a painting of Mary.

Although the seat legs on the earliest images were also noticeably Chinese in style, by the time of the latter images they had lost this distinctiveness in the process of transmission. As Fitzgerald notes,

Chinese chairs have vertical legs connected near the ground with horizontal cross-pieces, both at the sides and at back and front. In later pieces there is a form of cabriolet leg, curving outwards from the attachment to the seat, but with the foot recurved inward, so that the leg itself bulges outwards, but the foot is no further forward, or backward than the point where the whole leg attaches to the seat. This is the opposite to the form of the Greek chair.<sup>93</sup>

The throne legs on both Simons’ and Brennan’s ordination cards are shown curving outwards and then inwards again, although the ornamental carving on

both is different. The curved throne leg on the Simons card seems to feature an elaborately carved lion, while the Brennan card shows a simpler, yet arguably more elegant design, with the beading on the leg twirling into a *ruyi* (如意) mushroom cloud shape at the inside top and bottom. The thrones on the other cards, however, reveal straight legs with rather geometrical design features. It is ironic, therefore, that by the time the image had become generally accepted as showing a Chinese Mary and child Jesus, several of the distinctive Chinese designs had been lost in the process of duplication. It is easy to see how one could think the image more European in style, if one relied on later reproductions, even as it was universally regarded as a Chinese picture.

Several other key Chinese features were lost over the years. The Chinese calligraphic design on the back wall was transformed into a quatrefoil, and the columns buttressing the back wall changed from distinctively Chinese to generically Western. In the earliest images, the columns are like the *huabiao* (華表) columns used inside or in front of Chinese palaces, being round, made from white marble and featuring carved dragons and clouds. Interestingly, the columns in the Brennan card are more elaborate than in the earlier Simons card (showing that features were also embellished in later copies), although by the time of the other images they have lost this especially Chinese feature. The foliage protruding from behind the back wall is clearly a climbing rose in both the Simons and Brennan cards, with some of these roses resting on the sill of the window behind the throne. By the latter images, this plant had become much more indistinct. Although the distant mountains visible through the windows in the earliest reproductions are reminiscent of the scenery in much Chinese landscape painting, the key Chinese features in these prints are the Buddhist pagoda (a *ta* 塔), visible in the middle distance on the left-hand side of both images; the scholar stone in the left-hand foreground in the Simons image (replaced by a tree in the other three images); and the Chinese buildings in the middle distance, visible in both reproductions.

Taken together, these many features definitively place Mary and Jesus in a Chinese setting. Liu Bizhen's portrait, therefore, can quite rightly take its place alongside the Chinese Christian art produced at Yangzhou, Zhangzhou (and other parts of Fujian), and later at the Catholic University in Beiping (Beijing).<sup>94</sup> Thus, although Liu's work had features in common with other European examples, it was nevertheless hybrid in form, as it utilized both Western and Chinese techniques and symbolism. More importantly, it was painted at a time when other regal images—the photographs of Cixi as Guanyin and of

the painted portrait—were also being circulated. In this way, the connection between the images was as much, if not more, the result of shared historical context rather than visual similarities. The imperial court had an empress dowager; the Chinese Catholics had their heavenly mother and child, their *Zhonghua Shengmu*.

The finished work was regarded with much delight, so much so that the Jesuits were apparently tempted to keep the painting at Xujiahui. Nevertheless, they kept their side of the contract; the painting was transported to Donglu by train. This journey, too, was similar to the way that Cixi's own portrait had triumphantly left Beijing some years earlier. The new Marian image arrived at Donglu on 17 March 1909; Fr. Flament subsequently displayed it in the church, behind the main altar.<sup>95</sup> It replaced another image of Mary that had been painted by a local Chinese virgin (that is, a consecrated woman). This “had a certain grace”, although it was not as attractive as the new work.<sup>96</sup> The earlier image had already helped popularize the cult of the Virgin Mary within this Catholic village. Fr. Flament hoped that this much-longed-for new painting would likewise be a successful means of strengthening the already significant devotion to Mary.

Liu Bizhen's image subsequently became famous throughout China. The church at Donglu had already been a place of pilgrimage for Catholics from nearby villages (as a result of the apparition stories recounted earlier). It now became well-known throughout all the Chinese Catholic communities. This increase in fame likewise saw an increase in the number of visitors. The author of the 1925 article noted that the Donglu Catholics were justifiably proud of their Christianity and of their pious devotion to the Holy Virgin: “[There was] nothing as touching as listening to the endlessly repeated invocation, chanted with an engrossing and moving insistence, Heavenly Holy Mother, Queen of Donglu, pray for me.”<sup>97</sup>

The chants, the pilgrimages and the rosaries, in particular, ensured that devotion to Mary (especially as associated with Donglu) became even more deeply held. The adoption of this image as the one used for depicting Our Lady Queen of China (at Shanghai in 1924) was yet further evidence of the painting's success. The complex cultural interactions that took place within the Chinese Catholic communities are well illustrated by the people involved in creating this iconic Chinese Catholic image. A French missionary commissioned the work from a Chinese Jesuit painter. In turn, Spanish and Italian missionaries had taught the Chinese Jesuit how to paint. The Chinese brother used Chinese

stylistic devices to depict a Catholic devotion from a rural market town in the north of China. The original model for this work, furthermore, was a photographic reproduction of an oil portrait of the empress dowager that had been painted by a United States citizen.

Like the images we have seen in earlier chapters, this Marian image from Donglu was nothing if not the result of deliberate, complex and international exchanges. There was nothing accidental about how such a hybrid painting had come into existence, just as the various other Marian images produced in China from the thirteenth century onwards were likewise products of their cultural contexts. The process of international exchange was both approved and much lauded. These exchanges resulted in a painting that was a conscious attempt at representing Mary in a Chinese way, using local techniques and symbols. In the light of the debates about the appropriateness of Chinese Catholic art in the late twentieth century, this is all the more significant.

Throughout the early part of the twentieth century, there was a deliberate and conscious programme of indigenization led in many ways by Rome, even in the face of marked opposition from many European missionaries in China. The Our Lady of Donglu painting was a famous harbinger of the plan to strengthen the local church. This movement towards increased localized expression owed much to the pioneering work of the Belgian Lazarist, Vincent Lebbe, as is shown in the next chapter. Vincent Lebbe's work, and the assistance he was given by Chinese laity and clergy alike, helped bring about an indigenization of Catholic leadership, which in turn helped sponsor a new Chinese Catholic identity.

## 4

# The rise and fall of the French protectorate

The influence of the French and European missionaries on the Catholic Church in China was particularly pronounced during the mid- to the late nineteenth century, as seen in Chapter 2. If the period prior to the Opium Wars was the time of the Iberian churches, the age of the *patronato* and the *padroado*, then the Opium War treaties began the age of the French church. For this reason, this era has also been called the time of the French protectorate. While the history of the Chinese Catholic Church can be viewed through many lenses, given the political influence of the French government and the widespread presence of French religious men and women throughout the whole length of the country, focusing on the impact of the French church on Chinese Catholicism is both helpful and instructive.

The French influence was evident in many ways. There was the increase in the number of male and female French missionary congregations arriving in China. Famous French devotions and pieties (especially Marian ones) were introduced widely and adopted quickly by the Chinese Catholic communities. Finally, French ecclesiastical leaders also exerted control over the Catholic local communities.

As seen in Chapter 2, not all the missionaries who arrived in China came from France (or were Catholic) but a significant number were.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, at the end of the nineteenth century and even until the time of the First World War, the influence of the French missionaries was the most pronounced. The period of the French protectorate was brought to a close with the publication in November 1919 of an apostolic letter on missions written by Pope Benedict XV, *Maximum Illud*.<sup>2</sup> This letter both castigated missionaries for the ways they had kept local churches in a subservient position and demanded the development of local church leadership.<sup>3</sup> The effects of the protectorate, however, lingered for some years after this.

Naturally, not all the French influence was negative. Bishop Ignatius Gong Pinmei, mentioned in the Introduction, provides a moving testament of this. He was a Chinese Catholic who had been schooled both by French missionaries and Chinese religious, and a diocesan priest who began his clerical work under a French religious bishop. At the very beginning of what was to be his significant and powerfully symbolic ministry as a bishop, foreign missionaries and representatives of the old Chinese Catholic families, as well as Chinese priests and members of the foreign Catholic community, were all present at Gong's episcopal ordination in October 1949 (for the see of Suzhou). On this occasion, Bishop Gong began his remarks in French, later switching to Latin to address his fellow Chinese priests.<sup>4</sup> His address was full of praise and gratitude for the Jesuits of Shanghai:

My reverend Fathers, the Society of Jesus has taught me from baptism until the episcopate. I entered the Holy Church under the robe of your blessed Father: he whose name I bear. Since then, there has not been a single day when I have not been under the maternal providence of the Society.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, as a more modern example, there was a celebration marking the centenary of the Catholic Church in the region of Xian County (in Catholic literature referred to as Xianxian, in French materials as *Sienhsien*), in Hebei Province in 2006. The introduction of the Christian faith to the people of Xian County was regarded as one of the major and enduring contributions of the pioneering French missionaries. The Chinese bishops and priests who gave speeches at this celebration took great care to make special mention of the enduring and beneficent contributions of the foreign missionaries to the region. The legacy of Marian piety and the construction of many fine church buildings throughout China, albeit in foreign style, are also reminders of some of their contributions.

Even so, the age of Gallic influence contained much that was less helpful to the growth of a Chinese church, especially in the decades after the treaties as the French missionaries became more entrenched throughout the country and the position of the international powers became more dominant in general.

In *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, Joseph Esherick notes that the attitude of the Christians was one reason contributing to Boxer opposition to foreign missionaries and to Chinese Christians. The terms of the protectorate had enabled the Christians' sense of inviolability, which led to culturally arrogant and even morally abhorrent behaviour, whereby missionaries beat Chinese

servants, readily allowed themselves to be carried around in sedan chairs as though they were of high rank, or intervened in local disputes. They intervened in local judicial processes even when the innocence of the Catholic party was questionable.

In 1871, the American minister in Beijing, Frederick Low, commented on the attitudes of the Catholic missionaries and concluded that they were not always blameless:

Roman Catholic missionaries, when residing away from the open ports, claim to occupy a semi-official position, which places them on an equality with the provincial officer: that they would deny the authority of the Chinese officials over the native Christians, which practically removes this class from the jurisdiction of their own rulers; that their action in this regard shields the native Christians from the penalties of the law, and thus holds out inducements for the lawless to join the Catholic church, which is largely taken advantage of.<sup>6</sup>

In recent years, several works by scholars sympathetic to the Catholic Church in China have made note of the ways in which the behaviour of the French missionaries seemed in accord with Minister Low's reflection.<sup>7</sup> The French church was indeed caught up in a movement that was hard to separate at times from French imperialism; many Chinese—the so-called “rice Christians”—did become baptized as much for material as for spiritual gain. The association with foreign powers tainted Chinese who joined the church.

In the early 1930s, Celso Costantini summarized the feelings of opposition among educated Chinese that had arisen from the closeness of the relationship with the French government:

I wish merely to state that the study of the missionary problem has brought me to this conclusion: A largely diffused and decisive movement of conversions in China will not be created until Chinese thought has been reached and illuminated, until, that is, the cultured and elevated classes free themselves absolutely from the prejudice that Christians place themselves in the entourage of the foreigner for material advantages.<sup>8</sup>

At this time, furthermore, there were few voices within the church that spoke up against the behaviours that grew out of the era of the French protectorate. The missionaries who voiced their concerns have rightly come to be regarded as prophetic. Chapter 2 mentioned the prescient but little-known work of the nineteenth-century French Lazarist missionary, Fr. Joseph Gabet. His letter of 1848 to Rome, “A Glance at the State of the Missions in China”,

lacked the influence that some later publications exerted. Nevertheless, Gabet showed that some missionaries were alert to the problems of the time.<sup>9</sup>

Most other missionaries of the mid- to the late nineteenth century either did not see the problems created by such an environment, becoming progressively inured to the conditions within which they were living, or felt too bound up in their duties to find an alternative approach. It was not until the arrival of a remarkable missionary, Vincent Lebbe, that a new voice arose that was strong enough to highlight the negative effects of the French and European dominance of the Chinese church. Chinese Catholic voices also came to be heard within the shocked silence caused by Lebbe's passionate utterances. Significantly, not all ears in the European church were closed to these concerted cries.

Lebbe was born in 1877 in Ghent, Belgium, to a devout Catholic family. As a boy he had been so impressed by the story of the life and martyrdom of Jean Gabriel Perboyre, a Vincentian missionary to China, that he chose the confirmation name of Vincent, and reputedly declared, "I will go to China and die a martyr's death."<sup>10</sup> He became a Lazarist in 1895. Although Lebbe was Belgian, his early training as a religious was in Paris. He was therefore able to understand the cultural conditioning of his fellow missionaries and to act from within that society's ecclesiological and cultural framework.

The major historical work on Lebbe is a 1953 hagiography by Jacques Leclercq, translated as *Thunder in the Distance*.<sup>11</sup> The many activities with which Lebbe was involved during his life included organizing Catholic social welfare programmes, publishing the first Chinese Catholic weekly newspaper in 1912 (called the *Guang Yi Lu*, or *The Royal Way*), speaking at public lecture series, and galvanizing Chinese resistance to the Japanese invasion. He even became a stretcher-bearer on the battlefield. This impressive list, however, does not include the most influential activity undertaken by Lebbe: his wholehearted and vigorous promotion of the local Chinese church. He was outspoken on this issue from his earliest days in China, immediately identifying with the Chinese priests and seminarians, even to the point of donning the clothing worn by them rather than the cassocks favoured by foreign missionaries. He also "moved among the ordinary people just like one of them, refusing to travel on horseback, in sedan chair, or in rickshaw as most other missionaries did."<sup>12</sup> Lebbe's attitude rapidly attracted the attention of his superiors; their paternal amusement at the newcomer's enthusiasms quickly turned to indignant anger.

Such defensiveness was understandable, since, while most missionaries were perhaps aware of the stark contrast between their lifestyles and the gospel

imperatives of inclusiveness and hospitality, they were unable (or unwilling) to change their culturally conditioned modes of behaviour. The support of the Western powers was seductive: many missionaries felt that it was precisely their protected position that enabled them to assist the Chinese Catholics. This sense of achieving some good for others only entrenched the status quo among the missionaries. Lebbe's radical rejection of this lifestyle stimulated increasingly entrenched European, especially French, opposition. Some of his superiors wished to send him back to Europe in order to limit his bad influence.

The Lazarist superior of the seminary, Fr. Guilloux, argued against banishing Lebbe, recognizing that Lebbe's actions were the result of a young missionary's zeal. He thought that Lebbe's passion for China and things Chinese would soon peter out, in the same way that such passions had likewise diminished in other missionaries in the past. Although Guilloux spoke from his lengthy experience in China, in Lebbe's case he was proven wrong. Lebbe's abhorrence of the European sense of superiority never lessened; his embrace of Chinese language and culture never wavered.

Lebbe persisted in his promotion of the Chinese church, even in the face of strident opposition. He endured much heartache and suffering, including the feeling that his superiors misunderstood him. Some of them believed that the Chinese church was still too young to be led by native priests. These superiors obviously considered the era of the protectorate to be the beginning of the church's activities in China, thereby dismissing centuries of Chinese Catholic history. Lebbe put his response to such views into writing and gave this report to his bishop, Monsignor Reynaud. His report expressed all that concerned Lebbe about the missionary work in China and was, in effect, his own *apologia pro vita sua*.

The issues Lebbe addressed were ones that the pontiff dealt with decisively only a few years later, even using the same words and phrases. Lebbe's missive revealed how pervasive the French influence had been. It was an influence that necessarily left its mark on the identity of the Catholic communities:

The entire history of the church tells the same story: only a national priesthood can really understand a people's soul and see into it and convert it. No nation, not a single one, has ever been converted by a foreign priesthood . . . It follows from this that the missionaries' first duty is to create this priesthood—beginning with the lower ranks, if you like, but taking every possible step toward providing it with leaders, bishops, drawn from its own fold. And that is precisely what is not being done, and never has been done.<sup>13</sup>

Much of the church leadership within China disagreed with Lebbe; as a result, he felt significantly isolated from his fellow missionaries. He was lucky to be assisted in his endeavours, however, by other remarkable people, among them his friend Anthony Cotta, another Lazarist based in China whom he had met in the seminary in Paris, and Chinese figures like Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo, as well as the Chinese clergy and seminarians, some of whom were to become the first Chinese bishops.<sup>14</sup>

Lebbe was also assisted by the fact that his conflicts with the congregational leadership and with the French protectorate came to the attention of church leaders in Rome. Letters had been sent to Vatican officials (both by Lebbe and by others mentioned above) explaining the deleterious effects of the French protectorate on the activities of the church. The leadership in Rome had been aware of this situation for some time: under Leo XIII, they had already tried to lessen the power of the French. Although the correspondence from Lebbe and others was influential in bringing about a gradual transformation, it did not ease the situation in the short term.

While to Lebbe and his supporters the pace of change in China seemed slow, other events occurred that helped bring about a new direction in missionary activity. From the late nineteenth century onwards, a number of popes, once aware of the methodological inadequacies and scandalous behaviour of some missionaries around the world, had sought to bring about behavioural and structural changes. Leo XIII had attempted to reduce the power of the French, especially the French-dominated Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith. Pius X had also tried to encourage a better approach to the missions. He managed to reduce the power of Propaganda by restricting its jurisdiction to only non-Christian lands. Although he would be remembered for the manner in which he opposed modernism, it was actually during Pius' pontificate that "the scientific study of Catholic missiology began."<sup>15</sup> In Rome, this created a favourable climate for the reformist approach advocated by Lebbe.

The faraway world of Asia had become progressively closer: another contributing factor that led to the Vatican's eventual adoption of Lebbe's position. As Stephen Schloesser notes, "technological innovations in communications and transportation had been radically altering perceptions of space and time since around 1880, giving the impression of a shrinking world."<sup>16</sup> Previously, it had taken months, if not years, before events in mission fields like Asia had been communicated to Rome. By the early twentieth century, however, ocean liners traversed the world more quickly than ever before, and the combination

of wireless and cable enabled hitherto unimaginably rapid communication to occur on an international scale. Schloesser makes the point that, “in 1912, the distress call sent by the wireless operator of the sinking Titanic was relayed along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to New York and then (via cable) to Europe. By early morning the whole world had heard of the disaster.”<sup>17</sup>

In earlier centuries, the majority of the missionaries had rarely returned to Europe from their mission stations in Asia; if they did, it took a long time for them to make the journey, which was as dangerous as it was lengthy. The four young Japanese Christians who comprised the Tensho Embassy to Europe in 1582, for example, did not return to their home country until 1590, having spent months at various ports waiting for convenient sea connections.<sup>18</sup> While with the increased use of steamships passengers no longer had to rely on the vagaries of the trade winds, in the late nineteenth century travel between Europe and Asia still took months. Fr. Languillat, the superior of the Jesuit mission at Shanghai from 1864 until 1878, returned to Europe twice during his time as superior. The first time was to participate in celebrations in Rome commemorating the 1,800th anniversary of the martyrdom of saints Peter and Paul, although Languillat also used this visit to gather more recruits for the work in Shanghai. His first journey took six months, from March until December 1867.<sup>19</sup> By contrast, Lebbe’s own journey in 1901 from Marseilles to Tianjin took little over a month.<sup>20</sup>

One consequence of this shrinkage of time and space was the ready and rapid availability of information about events occurring throughout the Catholic missionary world. New methods being used in Africa, for instance, could be communicated rapidly to Asia—along with criticisms of the same. The pope most responsible for changing the church’s approach to missionary activity was Benedict XV, whose pontificate commenced in 1914, shortly after war broke out in Western Europe. The dangers and terrible effects of rampant nationalism were evident for all to see. Towards the end of the First World War, the Vatican also learned for itself the negative effect of the French protectorate in China, and the extent to which the French authorities would try to protect their privileges.

In a move that shocked the China-based French leaders, both civil and ecclesiastical, the Vatican sought in July 1918 to establish relations with the new Chinese republic. They proposed that a nuncio travel to Beijing and that a Chinese official be sent to the Vatican. According to Jacques Leclercq, the French vigorously opposed this exchange, claiming that the proposal was a

result of German meddling. The French officials brought pressure to bear on the Chinese government: the exchange did not take place. Even so, this experience made the leaders in Rome all the more aware that, if change was to occur in the Chinese church, it would have to be imposed from the outside.<sup>21</sup>

## **Benedict XV and *Maximum Illud***

Following the end of the First World War and the Versailles Peace Treaty, events began to move rapidly. In 1919, Rome appointed Monsignor de Guébriant, a Paris Foreign Missions priest and bishop of Guangzhou, to make a comprehensive report on the situation of the church in China. He was sent to visit the major dioceses in China and talk with as many people as he could. The consultation took place between September 1919 and March 1920. Even though the Vatican had a genuine desire to see an objective report written by an experienced and respected missionary, the leadership in Rome was not prepared to wait to implement its plan to modernize mission approaches.<sup>22</sup> Even as Guébriant made his way around China, Benedict XV was writing an apostolic letter that would fulfil the dreams long held by Lebbe and those who felt like him. Issued in November 1919, this letter was called *Maximum Illud*. It marked the beginning of the end of the protectorate.

Apostolic letters are written to address issues of ethics and doctrine. The text of the letter usually takes the form of “exhortations, commendations or warning[s].”<sup>23</sup> As one contemporary Catholic scholar notes, the popes “word their doctrine with extreme precision for a definite historical context, so that the doctrine will not necessarily take on meanings beyond those needed for the question to be treated here and now.”<sup>24</sup> Even though *Maximum Illud* had a broad focus in addressing international issues, the situation of the church in China was one of the key issues that Benedict XV addressed. Benedict stated that a greater emphasis had to be placed on the recruitment of local clergy and that native hierarchies had to be established. That is, he demanded that bishops be appointed from local communities rather than chosen solely from the ranks of the foreign missionaries. The language of his apostolic letter left no room for misunderstanding or for later obfuscation; in fact, it repeated much that Vincent Lebbe had stated in his own writings, which had been circulated in Rome in the years preceding the publication of this encyclical.

The language of the Pope's letter was both exhortative and critical. Benedict, who spoke with all the authority of his position as head of the church, demanded change:

The native clergy is not to be trained in order to assist the foreign missionaries in humbler offices, but in order that it may be equal to the accomplishment of its divine task, and in course of time duly assume the government of its own people. For since the Church of God is catholic, and cannot be a stranger in any nation or tribe, it is proper that out of every people should be drawn sacred ministers to be teachers of the Divine law and leaders in the way of salvation for their own countrymen to follow.

Yet in spite of this urging on the part of the Pontiffs, it is to be deplored that there are regions in which the Catholic faith has been introduced for centuries, without any indigenous clergy being as yet to be found there, except of a lower class; and that there are certain nations, which have long been illuminated by the light of faith, and have emerged from a savage state to such a degree of civilization that they possess men who excel in all the varieties of the civil arts, yet, after many centuries of the influence of the gospel and of the Church, can show no bishops to govern nor priests to teach their own countrymen. It is clear, therefore, that there has been something wanting and unsuitable in the method up till now employed in some places for the education of clergy for the Missions . . .<sup>25</sup>

Even though the pope was advocating equality among the Catholics of all nations, especially when it came to citizenship in the church, his language and conceptualizations about other cultures may seem Eurocentric to modern eyes. Leaving this aside as a product of the times, the force of Benedict's support for radical change in the missionary approaches employed in China (and elsewhere) is clear. His letter was more than just a clarion call for change; it also contained a programme for reform.

He addressed the learning of languages in another section of the letter, for instance, stating that the missionary must be competent in the language of the culture within which he was living. He criticized activities that were linked more to national than spiritual interests. In this regard, the French protectorate was clearly a target of his criticism:

We have been greatly grieved by certain publications on the subject of missions, which have appeared in the last few years, in which less desire is apparent for the increase of the Kingdom of God than for the influence of the writer's own country.<sup>26</sup>

For all the weight of these words and the fact that the early years of the twentieth century had overcome the restrictions of distance in previously unimaginable ways, the foreign missionaries in China were not going to relinquish their positions without a fight. Many of them were convinced that malcontents like Lebbe and Cotta, and ingrates like Ma and Ying, had misinformed Benedict XV of the situation.<sup>27</sup> They thought the easiest thing to do, therefore, was to ignore the letter. Rome may have spoken, but Rome was far away. The prevailing attitude was that, while developing a Chinese hierarchy was a commendable goal, it could only be achieved over time. At the plenary council of the Chinese church in 1924, there were still no Chinese bishops, even five years after the publication of the encyclical.

Other missionaries were much more pragmatic in their opposition to the principle of ordaining Chinese priests as bishops. This attitude is well illustrated in the following extract from an article by an Italian Salesian missionary, Fr. Garelli, published in 1926. His piece begins with the rhetorical question, "Why is it that there is not yet a Chinese church hierarchy?" He then quotes a statement from a bishop in 1911, which argued that Chinese clergy had no formally recognized positions:

Before the mandarin the Chinese priest, or even a Chinese bishop, is simply a subject. For the European on the contrary, the international treaties guarantee inviolability for his person and his home. Any offence in law cannot be dealt with by the Chinese authorities but only by the missionary's Consul. It is for this reason that the European missionary is able to live a tranquil life, going about his work of evangelisation, and can give to his church the same protection that he himself enjoys. The same cannot be said for the Chinese priest, even in terms of security for his person.<sup>28</sup>

Benedict XV wished to oppose exactly this type of supercilious reliance on the foreign protection secured by the Opium War treaties. He was not able to see his will prevail, however; he died in January 1922, before his programme of reform was properly implemented. Benedict nevertheless started the process by which the church's missionary methods would be modernized, not only through publishing his letter but also by identifying priests of ability in the Vatican hierarchy and diplomatic corps who could be appointed to positions of responsibility.

Benedict was instrumental in the advancement of the men who would be the next three popes: Achille Ratti (Pius XI), Eugenio Pacelli (Pius XII) and Angelo Roncalli (John XXIII). This had striking ramifications for the church in

China: Benedict's immediate successor, Cardinal Ratti, became a powerful supporter of the movement to modernize the methods of evangelisation. Achille Ratti ascended the papal throne in February 1922. Six months later, perhaps conscious that the implementation of *Maximum Illud* was being stymied in China, Pius XI appointed an Italian, Celso Costantini, as the apostolic delegate to China. It was the first time such an appointment had been made. An apostolic delegate is an ecclesiastical as opposed to a civil official. That is, a delegate is the representative of the pope, whereas a nuncio is involved with state-to-state relations (and is thus the Vatican ambassador to the relevant nation). While it was a wily move in many ways, it was also a master-stroke for two main reasons.

First, by appointing Costantini delegate to China rather than nuncio, Pius XI avoided the diplomatic manoeuvring that had prevented Benedict XV's earlier attempt to exchange representatives with China. Some nations, including, presumably, France, did make representations in Rome about Costantini's appointment. Yet, because Pius XI had made a church appointment rather than a civil one, there was nothing the consuls or their governments could do. Although the time might not yet have been right for the appointment of a nuncio, Pius XI's genius was to keep the momentum for change going.

The second significant aspect of this appointment was the personality of Costantini himself. Costantini successfully shepherded the Chinese church towards maturity, helping transform it into a church that was no longer merely missionary but one that became fully localized. This movement was in no small part due to the force of his character, his openness to the reform programme initiated by Benedict XV, and his genuine interest in the task at hand. It was also largely because of his gentle diplomacy and his ability to wend his way through the problems that had previously stymied reform that he achieved as much as he did.

A number of decisions made in Rome at this time greatly aided Costantini. These were aimed at ensuring that the movement throughout the world towards local church leadership progressed in significant ways. In 1923, Pius XI appointed an Indian Jesuit priest, Francis Tiburtius Roche, to be the first bishop of the newly created diocese of Tuticorin on the south coast of India. The aim of creating this new diocese, formally enacted through the apostolic brief *Quae Catholico Nomini*, was to enable indigenous clergy to assume responsibility for their church communities. When Roche was consecrated bishop, he became the first Indian bishop of the Latin Rite. Pius XI was determined that

the Chinese church too would soon have its own bishops. The Chinese clergy, however, first needed to have dioceses over which they would be responsible.

Prior to this, missionary congregations had been reluctant to allow a carving up of administrative districts, which would have brought about a diminution of their personal authority and their congregation's influence. Costantini was instrumental in creating new juridical territories that could be administered by Chinese clergy. He "convinced two European bishops to turn over part of their mission territories to two Chinese prefects apostolic."<sup>29</sup> These men were Odoric Cheng Hede, a Franciscan, and Melchior Sun Dezhen, a Lazarist. Pius installed them on 29 March 1924. Both men were mature in their priestly vocation and in age, with Cheng having been born in 1873 and Sun in 1869.<sup>30</sup> Cheng's prefecture, formed by dividing the vicariate of Hubei, was called Puqi. Sun Dezhen was given control of Anguo, created by dividing Baoding Prefecture in Hebei. Baoding, where Donglu was located, was a highly symbolic and populous Catholic area.

In making these appointments, Pius moved the church irrevocably towards a situation in which there could be Chinese bishops. Pius took similar actions all around the world, unsettling old complacencies in the process. As Peter Fleming noted, "[w]hen Pius began his pontificate, not one mission diocese had its own native bishop. At the time of his death in 1939, there were forty native bishops."<sup>31</sup> The move towards local leadership in China was at the deliberate expense of the French protectorate.

Celso Costantini was ideally placed to encourage the transition to local leadership. Indeed, he was responsible for ensuring it occurred at all. Upon Costantini's departure from Rome in September 1922, Cardinal Willem van Rossum, prefect of Propaganda, had been very clear about his tasks in China,<sup>32</sup> telling Costantini, "You must implement the missionary programme of *Maximum Illud* and convene a plenary conference."<sup>33</sup> From the very beginning of his appointment, Costantini did all he could to fulfil these tasks. His love for Chinese culture and his openness to new methods of evangelization are revealed in some of his earliest letters to missionary bishops throughout China.

An excellent example of Costantini's gentle yet passionate support for developing a Chinese Catholic identity is a letter addressed to the prefects apostolic Galvin and Walsh, dated April 1923. They were both members of two new missionary groups, the Columban Fathers and the Catholic Foreign Missionary Society of America (also known as the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, or, simply, Maryknoll). As such, they represented a changing of

the guard in terms of missionaries going to China. These groups had been formed only in the first part of the twentieth century. The Maryknolls recruited their men, and later women (the Maryknoll Sisters), from the United States; although the Columbans were originally founded in Ireland, they also accepted members from the United States and, not long afterwards, Australia. Edward Galvin was an Irish Columban priest, while James Edward Walsh was a Maryknoll missionary.<sup>34</sup>

In his letter "*L'Universalité de l'art chrétien*", Costantini shared with Galvin and Walsh his views on the best types of church structures to be built in these missionaries' prefectures. He noted:

From Guangzhou to Beijing, in all the important cities in China, the churches have been constructed in the neo-gothic or neo-roman style, and less frequently with classical order; all of them have copied, with greater or less liberty, the models of the occident.<sup>35</sup>

Costantini only rarely found church structures that somehow suggested an ancient pagoda or that sought to find a Chinese style. The Cathedral of St Joseph in Guiyang, Guizhou Province, was one such church. It had been built in 1876.

In his letter, Costantini asked the two missionaries, "Must we continue in this fashion?"<sup>36</sup> His emphatic answer was, "I respond without hesitation: no." He then outlined his view of the role of art and architecture in creating a national church identity and his hopes for new construction. Costantini was not interested in a merely faddish hybridity; he had spent much of his life working with visual media and reflecting upon their influence. In fact, prior to entering the seminary, Costantini had been an artist. He had published books on aspects of art history, including "a handbook of Christian art in 1908 . . . and a special study on the depiction of the crucifixion in 1910 . . . as well as, prior to his departure for China, editing a periodical devoted to Christian art."<sup>37</sup> Costantini was thus as well qualified as any other church official to outline such a vision—in many ways he was in fact the most qualified to do so.

Although the letter is of great significance, it is too long to quote in its entirety. It is the clearest statement of Costantini's missiological approach, illustrating that even though only six months had elapsed since he arrived in the country, he had developed a strategy, which he then sought to implement during the next ten years he was the apostolic delegate in China. The letter also reveals, through courteous language and considered argument, some of

the reasons why Costantini was so effective at implementing the programme of reform desired by Benedict XV and his successor Pius XI. Both the existence of a new missiological approach and the implementation of Rome's programme of reform helped stimulate new expressions of identity within the Chinese Catholic communities.<sup>38</sup> These expressions took the form of beautiful and creative new imagery. The following quotation summarizes Costantini's approach:

I have no intention of passing criticism on the work that has been done to the present; it is certain that each one has acted to the best of his ability; but since the missions must continually develop, I believe that it is beneficial to establish certain principles for the construction of future churches.<sup>39</sup>

Costantini described the development of church architecture from the time of the Constantinian Peace in the fourth century, and showed that the styles employed since then had constantly changed. He referred to precedent, citing three examples where the church leadership had encouraged the use of local artistic forms. Costantini named the example of Pope Gregory the Great's directive to Augustine in 596, regarding the preservation of the temples of worship already in existence; the statement issued in 1659 by Propaganda to missionaries heading to churches of the East; and a statement of Propaganda in 1922 recommending the promotion of local artistic forms, where these were appropriate. In particular, the 1659 statement is instructive:

Do not search for any reason to persuade the people to change their customs, except where these are overtly contrary to religion and to morality. What would be more absurd than to transplant France, Spain, Italy or any other part of Europe into China? It is not Europe that you are to take with you, but the Faith, which does not reject nor condemn the usages or the customs of any people, providing these are not perverse, but which wishes to preserve and guard them with all the respect which is owed to them.<sup>40</sup>

Costantini thus argued that the underlying principle of adaptation was not up for debate, having already been established by these and other examples. He stated, rather, that it was now opportune to develop the processes by which such a principle might be applied in China. He considered the question from four angles: "from the artistic point of view, the religious point of view, the historical point of view and from the point of view of what is practically possible."<sup>41</sup> Costantini illustrated his grasp of diplomacy in showing that he understood

not all things were readily achievable. Mary S. Lawton summarizes the four general principles that constituted Costantini's argument in the following way:

Western art is a style unsuited to China. Western art in mission areas gives the impression that the church is a foreign religion. It has always been the policy of the Church to adopt local art forms and incorporate them into the Christian tradition. Chinese art (and culture) offers favourable possibilities for adaptation.<sup>42</sup>

Costantini was not above being critical when he thought it necessary, as when he derided the slavish use of European styles of ecclesial architecture in China:

Within the Gothic style, the roofs come to a rapid point in order to hasten the fall of snow from them, and the rising gothic spires are in magnificent harmony with the countryside of Northern Europe; but I am not in any way able to say the same about the gothic towers that I have seen nestled among bamboo groves during my journey throughout China.<sup>43</sup>

Costantini's support of the programme of reform went much further than academic discussions about aesthetics and architecture. He fulfilled the remaining aspiration van Rossum had entrusted to him in Rome. The completion of this second task he achieved only one year after his letter to Walsh and Galvin, and barely two years after he had been appointed to China.

## Shanghai Plenary Council, 1924

Costantini called for, planned and then chaired the first plenary council of the Catholic Church in China, held in Shanghai between 15 May and 11 June 1924.<sup>44</sup> It began with a mass of the Holy Spirit and concluded with another solemn mass on 12 June. At the opening mass, a relic of Blessed Robert Bellarmine (as he was then) was placed on the altar in St Ignatius Church, Xujiahui. Those of the assembled faithful who did not know that Bellarmine had had personal correspondence with the famous seventeenth-century Shanghai Catholic, Paul Xu Guangqi, certainly knew of it by the end of the service. There were many such symbols of the longevity of the Chinese church evident throughout the course of the gathering.<sup>45</sup> The council was a momentous event in the life of the Chinese Catholic community, marking yet another major step in the movement towards the creation of a locally led church. Various activities of the council reinforced the marked Marian identity of the Chinese Catholic church, both administrative (through the establishment of national prayers) and symbolic

(such as pilgrimages). Thus, as the Chinese Catholic church grew in stature and maturity, so too did its Marian identity become more pronounced.

As noted, the Marian pieties and devotions practised within the Chinese Catholic communities reflected strong French influence.<sup>46</sup> Thus, as the Chinese church grew in independence, one could expect that there would be a visible change in the ways in which these pieties would be expressed. The events of the council seemed to suggest that such change would continue to occur throughout the twentieth century.

Once the council had been called, Pope Pius XI sent a letter to Costantini discussing the importance of the synod. He said that this council would be

One of the grandest of the lights shining among the splendors of the church and that it would be engraved on the memories of future generations. In bringing this project to realization, it seems to us that one can see the very ashes trembling of those who, in centuries past, spent their lives working and, courageously and generously, even pouring out their blood to bring the people of China to Jesus Christ.<sup>47</sup>

The council called together all the leadership of the Catholic Church in China. Given the patriarchal nature of the church at the time, this obviously meant a gathering of male clerics, thereby excluding not only the local superiors of the numerous female congregations but also non-priestly male orders in China, like the Marist Brothers. (Thus, even though some of the female religious congregations had been in China for decades, newer male groups like Maryknoll and the Columbans were present while they were not.) Those invited to attend consisted of all the vicars apostolic and the prefects apostolic of the missions in China, the superiors of the priestly orders, the abbot of the Cistercian monastery at Yangjiaping (called Our Lady of Consolation) and the bishop of Macau.<sup>48</sup>

It was an amazing feat to bring together all these clerics from the far-flung corners of the country. At the preliminary session, Costantini proposed sending a telegramme to the pope and to Cardinal van Rossum in Rome, informing them of the successful gathering of most of the invitees. Those who had not arrived were prevented from doing so due to sickness, encounters with robbers on the road or because flooded rivers had become impassable.<sup>49</sup>

The journey of the bishops of Yunnan and Sichuan, is illustrative of the difficulties involved:

They were twenty days on horseback, until they came to the nearest tributary of the Yangtse; then by raft, sampan, sailboat, and a succession of steamers, covering another period of thirty-one days they arrived at

Shanghai. They traveled downstream all the way, made unusually quick connections, and had no mishaps; yet the trip took fifty-one days. Going back upstream they expect to make it in slightly over two months.<sup>50</sup>

The council was able to inform Rome almost immediately of its commencement, yet some journeys within China were still dauntingly long. The world had become smaller in some ways, but not in others. The fact that the council members were even able to come together was a remarkable achievement, and a testimony to the participants' genuine sense of mission, whatever the lack of alacrity some showed in adopting new ways to carry out that mission.

The Chinese church leadership was obviously overwhelmingly foreign at this time, Cheng and Sun's appointments notwithstanding. The very presence of these two Chinese priests, nevertheless, was a sign of the changes being wrought by the leadership of Costantini and Pius XI. Costantini had increased the number of Chinese representatives in other ways, as is evident in the attendance list.

In addition to the fifty-nine vicars and prefects apostolic, there were a number of others present in their capacity as religious superiors, theologians or consultants. Given that Costantini appointed these specialists, it is thus no surprise to find the names of at least seven other Chinese priests.<sup>51</sup> Costantini had also requested that the Chinese clergy send some representatives of their own choosing.

The seven Chinese priests were the secular (that is, diocesan) priests James Zhang, from Chagar and Peter Zheng from Zhili; Aloysius Chen, a Franciscan from Shaanxi; two Lazarists, one, Joseph Hou, from Zhejiang and another, Joseph Zhou, from Zhenting County in Henan; and two Jesuits from Shanghai, Luke Yang and Firminus Sen (or Shen in Mandarin).<sup>52</sup> Led by Odoric Cheng and Melchior Sun, this small group was the vanguard of Chinese church leadership; collectively, they represented the unstoppable movement towards a truly local church. Barely two years later in 1926, in the penultimate steps towards the long-hoped-for goal of Chinese church leadership, Pius XI published another missionary encyclical and ordained six Chinese as bishops.<sup>53</sup>

The plenary council marked an occasion when the church in China sought to revitalize and reorganize its administrative structures—an especially timely and important endeavour, given the massive changes that had occurred in the last twenty years in China, including among other things, the collapse of the Qing dynasty (1911), the foundation of the Republic of China (1912) and the May Fourth reform movement (which, in a general sense, lasted from 1917 to

1921). A key plank of the May Fourth Movement was the treatment of China at the post-war conference in Versailles. Internationally, the world was still recovering from the First World War; the League of Nations was in its infancy; and the implementation of the proposals contained in *Maximum Illud* was yet to occur in any widespread fashion.

It was imperative that the church in China respond to these local and international events. If there had not been a priest-diplomat of the quality of Costantini, it is more than likely that the Chinese church leaders would not have come together. In so doing, the Catholic church illustrated its desire to move with the times and not to become any more irrelevant or alien to the bulk of the Chinese people than it may have already appeared.

Two decades later, one of the most negative effects of the attempted suppression of religious communities in the period after the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 was the manner in which the ongoing development of a local Chinese Catholic church was severely restricted. The combination of oppressive control (as evidenced in the numerous arrests and even deaths of leading church leaders) and the subsequent retreat by the communities into a ghetto-like existence greatly hindered the programme of indigenization.<sup>54</sup>

The modernization of these communities was also largely halted by the policies of the new government, especially in the countryside. Attempts to resume the modernization of the church after the introduction of economic liberalization at the end of the 1970s were met with suspicion and hostility (by both church members and others). This opposition has most often been expressed by those who do not have sufficient knowledge of the activities occurring in the early part of the century, such as the programme of reform brought about by the papal encyclicals and by the work of the foreign and Chinese church leaders at the Shanghai council.

One of the council's simplest acts brought about the most significant and long-term result: it unanimously adopted a proposal put forward by Costantini that China be consecrated to the Most Holy Virgin Mary.<sup>55</sup> The consecration meant that church leaders were placing the needs, hopes and prayers of their communities (and the whole of the Chinese people) at the feet of Mary in a special way, seeking her intercession and help. While they had always done this at the communal level, it was now done in a formal, officially sanctioned way.

There were two main impulses for the consecration: the strong Marian pieties that had spread out from France in the late nineteenth century and which had taken root in China, and the belief held by Chinese Catholic communities that

Mary had been a consistent and salvific presence in their midst. As seen above, these impulses are most clearly evident in the story of the Donglu painting, and in the Sheshan and Donglu pilgrimages. Through this act of consecration, the council articulated and recognized in the deepest symbolic way possible these strong devotions and the prevailing belief of the Chinese Catholics.

The dedication occurred at the end of the council, on 11 June 1924.<sup>56</sup> After each bishop had prayed for his own diocese or vicariate, all the participants read out a common formula of consecration. A French Jesuit, Monsignor Lécroart, vicar apostolic of Xian County, had composed this formula in French and Latin. It concluded with a threefold invocation, which consisted of an invitation and a response, according to the common ritual form of such prayers. The first two invocations were traditional and universally applicable—"Help of Christians, pray for us", and "Mary, mother of grace, pray for us"—but the final invocation was entirely new and specific to the Chinese people. This invitation was "Heavenly Queen of China" and, in Latin, the bishops and priests then responded with one voice, "Pray for us".

Fittingly, the council finished on the day of Pentecost, which according to Christian belief celebrates the moment that the Holy Spirit descended on the first Christians, giving them gifts and graces, empowering them to go to all nations and spread the good news in all languages.<sup>57</sup> In 1924, Pentecost fell on 12 June and the celebration took place at St Ignatius Church, Xujiahui.

It was clearly an emotive and impressive occasion. One religious sister based at Shengmuyuan (the garden of the Holy Mother), an orphanage in Shanghai run by the Helpers of the Holy Souls, wrote back to the head office of her order in Paris describing the occasion:

The mass was celebrated by the apostolic delegate [Costantini]. After the mass, he came and knelt down at the foot of the altar, and all the bishops read loudly with one voice the consecration to the holy Virgin. It was moving to see these veterans of the apostolate, these laborers—some of whom are indeed demi-martyrs . . . who represent all the religious families: Franciscans, Cistercians, Jesuits, Dominicans, Passionists, Augustinians etc. . . . repeat with one heart, in the language of the church, that they were confiding their Christian communities to Mary.<sup>58</sup>

Two days later, Costantini ascended Sheshan on the outskirts of the city. He was accompanied by a significant number of the council fathers, even though some had already begun their journey back to their vicariates. They renewed the consecration, this time before the statue of Our Lady at Sheshan.

The actual image used at Sheshan was not identified in journals of the time. If the prayers of consecration were said in front of the shrine halfway up the hill at Sheshan, the image here was that of the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. If, however, the prayers of consecration were said in the church on the summit of the hill, then it was intoned in front of one of two images, a statue or portrait of Our Lady of Victories or one based on Our Lady Help of Christians. This latter image was reproduced often in the pre-1949 period and was clearly associated with Sheshan.<sup>59</sup> One other possibility is that the new image of Our Lady of China was carried in front of the procession in the form of a portrait and the invocations were repeated in front of it. It is known without doubt that the most well-known modern image of Our Lady of Sheshan, where she is holding Jesus above her head, had not yet come into being, and thus could not have been used.<sup>60</sup>

It is more than likely that Costantini led the gathered faithful behind a banner or portrait of the newly designated Our Lady of China image, whether or not they had other images in their possession. Based on modern-day practice, which does not differ greatly from pre-1949 practice, the entourage would have paused in front of the Marian pavilion halfway up the hill, where the new prayers would have been pronounced; they then would have made their way up past the stations of the cross, intoning the rosary; and upon entering the church would have placed the banner or portrait at the front of the church, perhaps to one side in the Marian chapel. There it would have been alongside the other Marian image (or images) in use and further prayers would have been made. Thus the new devotion was not displacing the previous ones, even physically, but was placed alongside them.

Whereas in China there had already been the beginnings of local Marian devotions, such as Our Lady of Donglu and Our Lady of Peñha, there were still many shrines representing foreign devotions, like Our Lady of Treille or of Liesse and so on.<sup>61</sup> The newer, localized pieties had arisen out of the experiences of the people. The bestowal of additional titles upon Mary reflected the way people sought to overlay words onto these experiences. The new invocation, Our Lady Queen of China, was Costantini and the council fathers' way of recognizing the special Marian identity of the Chinese Catholic communities. In so doing, they were enunciating on a national scale the prayers and hopes of these various communities.

By creating both a new invocation and a new title, the council reinforced the Marian identity of the faith communities, and popularized Marian devotions

even further. This particularly strong local devotion was to bind the Catholics together into the future and sustain them in difficult times. For all the optimism of the council, its members were well aware that their communities lived constantly with the threat of persecution. A specifically Chinese devotion, which had grown out of Chinese Catholic experiences, was therefore all the more attractive to the faithful.

New titles demand new images, as seen by the expanding diversity of Marian imagery discussed in Chapter 2. Costantini, as thoughtful in this as he was in other regards, visited the Tushanwan orphanage workshops on 22 May 1924, when the council had already begun its meeting. (This shows that the consecration of the church to Mary several weeks later on 11 June was a premeditated act.) At Tushanwan, Costantini asked to see images of the Holy Virgin. From the many presented to him, he was attracted to the image that Brother Simon Liu had painted in 1908, namely the Donglu portrait. “We must popularize this image,” he declared.<sup>62</sup> Father René Flament, for whose community the image had been painted, willingly consented to the image of Our Lady of Donglu being circulated more widely around China under the title Our Lady of China. Costantini demanded that a large number of these images be printed for distribution by 12 June, the anticipated final day of the council. They were to carry the Chinese title *Zhonghua Shengmu* (中華聖母: Our Lady [Holy Mother] of China).<sup>63</sup>

We have seen how thirteenth-century images of the child-giving Guanyin seemingly resembled European images of Mary, in a mixture of superscription and copying. This episode from the twentieth century shows that the Europeans also did such copying: the image chosen for Our Lady of China was partly based on a painting of the empress dowager, presented as a reincarnation of Guanyin. The new Marian image became well-known within China through the dissemination of holy cards and reproductions in church magazines and journals. It also inspired countless other versions of Chinese-style Marian images. This was especially so following the establishment of the Christian art school at Furen University in Beijing in the next decade, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Some other images have threatened to supplant the Donglu image as the one most usually referred to as Our Lady of China, a situation that has caused much debate in some Chinese Catholic circles.<sup>64</sup>

The adoption and use of the Donglu image by the council, at the prompting of the apostolic delegate, guaranteed its official status. It was given even greater recognition when, in 1928, Pius XI accepted it as the image to accompany the

devotion to Our Lady of China. This obviously does not prevent other images from using this title, but just as there is an accepted iconographic form for Our Lady of Lourdes or Our Lady of Czestowa (in Poland), for instance, so too is the Donglu-derived Our Lady of China the model to which others either allude or from which they depart.

The bishops and priests gathered at Shanghai were very productive, enacting over 850 church decrees.<sup>65</sup> Fr. Francis Ford, a U.S. citizen there in his capacity as superior of the Maryknoll missionaries, reported on the events of the Council in the following terms:

What struck me forcibly was the businesslike attitude of the Council. Except for the three ceremonies—the solemn opening, the Requiem Mass for the deceased Bishops, and the final act of the Council—there was a total absence of the liturgical splendour that usually accompanies church services. The Bishops came and went, on foot, in the third-class compartments of the tramcars or in automobiles, each with a portfolio tucked under his arm like any businessman. They assembled at the stroke of the clock in the different committee rooms, without confusion or noise or unnecessary chatting.<sup>66</sup>

One of the business-like acts of reorganization was the “decision to launch three permanent committees: a Commission on Schools, Books, and Press; a Commission to translate the Holy Scripture in the ordinary Chinese language . . . and a Commission to Develop a Uniform Text of Catechism and Prayers.”<sup>67</sup> As sensible as this decision was, it was ambitious in that the people with the requisite skills needed to perform the task of translating scripture and coordinating a catechism were not yet available. Thus, the translation commission could not begin immediately; it was not until 1929 that the catechetical commission began its work. This was further proof of Vincent Lebbe’s criticisms, that too few foreign missionaries had learned the local languages well enough and that the local clergy had not been trained to the highest possible standards. Nevertheless, the commissions were eventually established; in 1928, the commission on schools, books and the press came together.

## **Synodal Commission**

The group that dealt with schools, books and the press quickly became known as the Synodal Commission. It was a type of centralized advisory body with responsibility for coordinating church activities, for investigating more

effective ways of proceeding and for communicating these findings to church communities around the country. The activities coordinated by this body were incredibly diverse, ranging from education to communications, which even included advice to churchgoers about popular movies. Priests were seconded to these activities according to their skills and abilities. Their vicariates and congregations were to release them with as little inconvenience and as much alacrity as possible.

The commission consisted of five members, under the direct responsibility of the apostolic delegate.<sup>68</sup> It was initially based in Beijing, and worked very much as a team. The great diversity of the group, both in terms of the nationality of its participants and in their congregational membership, was another revealing example of Costantini's diplomatic wisdom. The men came from France, Germany, the United States and China; there was a Jesuit, a Divine Word missionary, a MEP priest, a Lazarist and an oblate of St Dominic. Each member was there in his own right, in recognition of his particular skills, and was initially appointed for three years.<sup>69</sup>

The major work of the synod, as these activities evolved, consisted of producing a new monthly publication called the *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, referred to hereafter as *The Digest*.<sup>70</sup> This task was entrusted to Theodore Mittler, a German Divine Word missionary. Its *raison d'être* was described in Mittler's first editorial to its readership, *Au Lecteur* [To our reader]:

Not to be an organ of pure science, but of practical science, not to theorise in the abstract but to provide genuine information. In short, the synodal commission, through this digest, wishes to be an '*agent de liaison*' [a means of connecting one with the other]. The program of the Digest was to encompass the three great chapters enumerated in the text of the constitution of the synodal commission: education, press and Catholic youth.<sup>71</sup>

In order to achieve its aims, the commission welcomed articles from readers, accepting them in the four languages of the periodical: Latin, French, English and Chinese. Where an article in one of these languages was deemed particularly significant or interesting, a summary was produced in Latin. Letters and official documentation from Rome as well as from the office of the apostolic delegate were usually printed in Latin as well. The periodical became ever more international in character; by January 1940, it had begun to feature articles in German and Italian.<sup>72</sup>

The use of so many languages in the official periodical reflected at least two things. First, it showed that the church in China was still noticeably

international, which in turn indicated the diversity of the foreign presence at this time. Second, it revealed that finding a common language among such a mixed group was an almost impossible task. This had also been a challenge at the council, given that the different Chinese dialects and accents prevented Mandarin from being used as the official language. The use of Latin proved the only solution. After the council, Ford reflected wryly, “Even the two native Chinese Bishops spoke different dialects.”<sup>73</sup>

The Synodal Commission lasted in a formal sense until 1946, when the church hierarchy in China was finally established with the elevation of the Divine Word priest, Bishop Thomas Tian Gengxin, as the first Chinese cardinal. After this, a further reorganization occurred, in which the commission was transformed into the Central Catholic Bureau, and the *Digest* into two publications: a multilingual publication called *China Missionary* and a Chinese-language periodical called *Tu Sheng* (徒聲, the voice of the clergy), both founded in 1948.

In the years after the council, the commission contributed greatly to the growth and formation of the Chinese Catholic communities, as well as bolstering those markers that comprised a uniquely Chinese Catholic identity. The *Digest's* articles were incredibly diverse and interesting, at once erudite and practical, and covering all manner of subjects. They did not, however, have a particularly political focus until the church began suffering persecution. The articles of a random issue in 1938, after the Japanese invasion, included notes on the history of the Chinese clergy and the Lazarists between 1697 and 1900 by Henri Crapez, a Lazarist missionary; a manual of initiation to be used by catechists and neophytes; an article about Laozi and Daoism; and an item about the French press in China.<sup>74</sup>

The Plenary Council of Shanghai laid important structural foundations in authorizing the reorganization of the church and in establishing and supporting the commission. These contributed to the survival of the Chinese Catholic church into the future. The role played by these foundations was especially evident in the difficult period mid-century when foreign missionaries were deported, Chinese priests and bishops were arrested, and church communities were placed under great duress. The Chinese Catholic community was able to withstand the best attempts to subvert or erase it, sure in an identity strengthened by the programmes initiated and supported by the commission, as well as by the increased adoption of pious devotions to Mary. The structures were

definitely weakened, but the distinctive Chinese Catholic character was still clearly visible.

The composition of the council was an indication of the universal nature of the Catholic faith as well as of significant changes taking place in the church, both in China and internationally. If such a council had been called during the height of the French protectorate, which is to say the latter years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, the participants would have originated from continental Europe, almost without exception. Predominantly, they would have been from France or from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany and Belgium.

By the 1920s, however, the countries of origin of the foreign missionaries in China had undergone a significant change. The Maryknoller Francis Ford was accompanied at the council by his fellow Maryknoll missionary James Edward Walsh, who was present there in his capacity as the newly named prefect apostolic of Kongmoon (Jiangmen, in Guangdong Province).<sup>75</sup> Ford described the impressive range of nationalities present in Shanghai:

The diversity of the races was another striking feature. In very few places outside of China can such a profusion of tongues be found, and surely nowhere else today could nationals of all countries lately at war meet on a common footing of peace and charity as at the International Settlement of Shanghai. This neutral ground insured a total absence of political flavour in the council and safeguarded the religious aspect of the meeting. Among the Bishops present nineteen were French, ten Italian, five Spanish, five Belgian, four Dutch, two German, two Chinese; America was represented by our own Monsignor Walsh and delegates of the Passionists and Franciscans; Portugal, Austria and Ireland each had a representative, and there were, besides, eight Chinese consultants.<sup>76</sup>

The reasons for these notable differences are found both in the decline of the numbers of seminarians in the traditional sending nations, like France, and the rise in new missionary zeal among other nations, like the United States, Canada and Ireland. The change is instructive because it illustrates that the need to modify the approach to church leadership in nations like China was not caused only by the situation in the host nations. It was also affected by the reduced ability of the foreign churches, especially among the traditional missionary nations, to supply workers.

Jean-Paul Wiest has studied the decline in the numbers of missionaries sent by France, and a previously prominent order, the Paris Foreign Missions

Society.<sup>77</sup> Throughout the last years of the nineteenth century, this organization sent on average sixty-two men per year to the missions in the “Far East” (which meant east of India). The dramatic deeds of Christians during the Boxer Uprising, and the hagiographical accounts of the priests who served them, caused a rise in the number of missionaries sent in the first years of the twentieth century, buoyed by a spirit of missionary enthusiasm. Between the years 1900 and 1903, the average number of missionaries sent to the Far East increased to seventy-three each year.<sup>78</sup>

There was not, however, a corresponding increase in the number of men entering the seminary. This obviously had an effect a few years down the pipeline, especially given that it was rare for all who entered the religious life to complete their training. Wiest attributes this decline, in part, to the great changes in the sociopolitical climate of France, not least the law of 1898 separating church and state. (This had the ironic consequence of making France itself anti-clerical, while it remained the protector of the church in foreign lands.) Consequently, in 1904, there were only fifty-four missionaries sent by the Paris Foreign Missions, and “by the end of the decade the number of departures had dwindled to only twenty-one. This was the beginning of a drastic decline in French missionary vocations that World War One would only accentuate.”<sup>79</sup> Without new missionaries, the French protectorate was dead, although it took some time for the French clergymen in China to realize this.

The early part of the twentieth century was marked by the energetic endeavours of missionaries from newer church congregations, or from newer nations. Many of these congregations and orders had been formed only in the earlier part of the twentieth century. They constituted a new wave of energy that flowed from countries that had previously been missionary territory themselves, or which had previously been turned somewhat inwards. In 1911, for instance, a letter had been sent to archbishops of the United States, encouraging them to promote overseas missionary vocations among their church communities.

Until this time, there had been no systematic promotion of such international missionary activity in the United States. This is not to say, as James Reed did in his study of U.S. mission activity from 1911 to 1915, that there were no American missionaries abroad during this time.<sup>80</sup> Peter Fleming conclusively showed that Reed overstated his claim since, by the 1920s, U.S. missionaries had been working in places like the Philippines, British Guyana, the Bahamas and Belize.<sup>81</sup>

Nevertheless, the American church was becoming aware that there was more to be done, encouraged by church communities elsewhere. The letter of 1911 contained a quotation from a speech by the British church dignitary Cardinal Vaughn (who was himself quoting another influential church leader, Cardinal Manning) concerning the need to send people beyond one's own community's borders:

It is quite true that we have need of men and means at home; and it is *because* we have need of more men and more means, by a great deal, than we as yet possess, that I am convinced we ought to send both men and means abroad. If we desire to find the surest way to multiply immensely our own material means for works at home, it is by not limiting the expansion of Charity and by not paralyzing the zeal of self-denial.<sup>82</sup>

The older orders were also encouraged to go beyond their established boundaries. The superior general of the Jesuits, Vladimir Ledochowski, wrote to the Jesuits of the United States, for instance, asking them in no uncertain terms to send men to work in foreign mission fields. He especially meant that they supply men for China.<sup>83</sup> Ledochowski wrote this letter in 1916:

World War One had deprived the missions of so many European Jesuits, the American Jesuits should prepare themselves to take their place after the war's conclusion. He further argued that because Catholicism had begun to flourish in the United States, American Catholics must now come to the aid of the missions . . . [and further] the United States had an obligation to Europe because European missionaries brought Christianity to America and now it was time to repay the debt to Europe . . . He challenged American Jesuits to stop the dissemination of Protestant missions by establishing more Catholic missions.<sup>84</sup>

Whether they went overseas to spread the good news, to repay old debts, or to counter other religious movements, the new missionaries began to fill the gaps left by the lack of French ones. In time, even the districts that had long been French-administered were divided into smaller sections, which were then given to the new arrivals, as well as to Chinese secular clergy. The diversity of nationalities represented by the priests present at the Shanghai Council therefore reflected changes that had been occurring. The council also acted as a harbinger of future changes.

Such changes came quickly; again, Rome was heavily involved in bringing them about. Although Pius XI was pleased with the Shanghai meeting and with Costantini's efforts, he still thought the church in China was moving too slowly.

On 8 February 1926, he wrote an encyclical entitled *Rerum Ecclesiae*. Even though it was addressed to a universal audience, the missive focused particularly on China. This encyclical often quoted the earlier missionary document, *Maximum Illud*, and built upon its words, clearly expressing disappointment that the aims of Benedict XV had not yet been fully realized: “[W]e are still a great distance from the goal which we have set for ourselves.”<sup>85</sup> *Rerum Ecclesiae* constantly repeated the need to build up the numbers of local missionaries. It suggested ways that the bishops could achieve this and criticized them for frustrating such efforts:

Before everything else, We call your attention to the importance of building up a native clergy. If you do not work with all your might to attain this purpose, We assert that not only will your apostolate be crippled, but it will become an obstacle and an impediment to the establishment and organization of the Church in those countries.<sup>86</sup>

And, later:

Certainly you should not allow the native clergy to be looked upon as if they were a lower grade of priests, to be employed only in the most humble offices of the ministry. These priests have been admitted to the same priesthood that the missionaries possess, they are members of the selfsame apostolate. On the contrary, you should prefer the native priests to all others, for it is they who will one day govern the churches and Catholic communities founded by your sweat and labor. Therefore, there should exist no discrimination of any kind between priests, be they European missionaries or natives, there must be no line of demarcation marking one off from the other. Let all priests, missionaries and natives be united with one another in the bonds of mutual respect and love.<sup>87</sup>

In 1926, Pius XI wrote another letter, *Ad ipsos Pontificatus Primordiis*, directly addressed to the bishops in China, in which he specifically indicated that his earlier encyclical had been directed towards the church in China. He deplored the fact that the abuses criticized in *Rerum Ecclesiae* could be found in China, and spoke against the negative attitudes and tardy responses that were characteristic of the Chinese church leadership. Pius could not be any clearer in his support for the indigenization of the Chinese church. He took the final step left open to him and intervened personally in the establishment of a Chinese episcopacy.

When Vincent Lebbe first arrived in China in 1901, he could scarcely have dreamed that, in a quarter of a century, Chinese priests would become vicars

apostolic and bishops, that the French protectorate would be removed, that the Chinese church would meet in council for the very first time, and that the Chinese devotion to Mary would give rise to a new Marian honorific, Our Lady Queen of China. As a result of Pius' intervention, Chinese Catholics had taken their place as equals within the international church. In October 1926, six Chinese priests were ordained bishops and given responsibility for vicariates in their own country. In order to highlight the great significance of this event, the pope himself conducted the ordination at St Peter's Basilica in Rome.

After the episcopal ordination of the Chinese Dominican priest Luo Wenzao in the seventeenth century, the Chinese church had waited centuries for the next Chinese bishop. Yet a mere three years later, Pius XI elevated another six Chinese priests to the episcopate, again at St Peter's in Rome; three more followed in 1931, four in 1932 and another one in 1933.<sup>88</sup>



## Part 3

### Images of Mary in the early twentieth century



## 5

# The Furen art department

One of the traditional (and logical) ways to help a local church develop its independence is to train and educate the leadership to a particular standard. The leaders would then be aware of their church's own history, as well as of its place in the broader history of the Catholic Church. By the early twentieth century, some of the most influential foreign missionaries united with Chinese Catholics in their lament over the poor standard of education offered by the church, especially at the tertiary level.

Arguably, the church's lack of involvement in the world of higher education was a further example of the lingering malaise caused by the Rites Controversy, as the missionaries had felt that any involvement in further education would have brought Catholics in China into contact with the elite of Chinese society, exposing them to Chinese ritual practices specifically banned by Rome. The priests in the rural areas had little time for anything other than the time-consuming and physically demanding work they were required to do, with both the established communities and the increasing number of neophytes. The difficulties involved in acquiring competency in the language, especially in its written form, also prevented the engagement of large numbers of missionaries in the academic apostolate. The lower standard of training for Chinese priests meant that, even though they might be expected to have a natural advantage because of their linguistic superiority, this was no guarantee that they could engage in intellectually sophisticated conversation.

The foreign female religious who came to work in China faced the same challenges. The following quotation from Sr. Marie Sainte Brigette (the religious name of Louise Bruneau, a member of the Helpers of the Holy Souls) is illustrative of these challenges. She arrived in China in 1869, admittedly, as a forty-three-year-old, beyond the optimal age for learning any foreign language. In 1870, she wrote back to the superior general of the congregation in Paris:

“The Chinese language is the most abstract and the most difficult that I know, and learning English is a mere game compared to learning Chinese.”<sup>1</sup>

Defeated by such challenges, she returned to France the next year, where she worked for another twenty-six years, now more comfortable—and productive—in her own culture. She at least was able to return home. Countless other missionary men and women must have laboured daily, for years, in a world of minimal comprehension.

At this time, some of the China-based foreign missionaries were instrumental in advocating for reform of the Chinese church; the surprisingly supportive Vatican hierarchy and its representatives encouraged them in their activities. The unofficial leaders of the Chinese Catholic communities were also outspoken in demanding change. Two of the leading Chinese Catholic intellectuals involved in this process were Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo. As early as 1912, they collaborated in writing a letter to Pope Pius X in which they discussed this issue at length.

Ying Lianzhi (1866–1926) was one of Vincent Lebbe’s great supporters in Tianjin: he had provided much assistance with the establishment of Chinese-language Catholic newspapers. Ma Xiangbo (1840–1939) was a highly educated former Shanghainese Jesuit.<sup>2</sup> Their letter began by tracing the history of missionary endeavours in China and emphasized the role of education in that history, especially during the so-called golden age of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. The letter adopts a tone of righteous indignation regarding the situation in the modern period:

Since China had never had a saint such as St Francis Xavier, who could do miracles to gain a hearing for the church, the use of scholarship as an instrument of persuasion along the pattern set by Ricci, Schall, Verbiest and Aleni, was essential . . .

In fact in China Protestant missionaries from England, Germany and America have promoted scholarship and opened universities. It is only the Roman Catholic religion that still does not have such activity. Is that not a very sad fact? If you look at Beijing, not only does the Church have no universities, it doesn’t even have any secondary schools or higher primary schools. There is only one French primary school, whose fees are so high that only people outside the Church can afford to send their children there, and when they have finished their studies their only option is to depend on French people in China to make a living.

In the former Qing dynasty the Imperial University was offered to our missionaries to manage. Who would have thought they would refuse to

take it on, and so it had to be given to Protestant missionaries. For this reason, followers of Protestantism from the late Qing period have taken up official positions in the government, a tendency that is becoming more and more evident at present, while it is only our Church that is neglected.<sup>3</sup>

The lost opportunity they were referring to was an offer made during the nineteenth century to the French Lazarist Bishop Mouly, then bishop of Beijing, to open a school for engineers and diplomats.<sup>4</sup> Joseph Schmidlin argued that the bishop had declined this offer for two reasons: Mouly claimed not to have the men for this task and, furthermore, he thought this sort of apostolate was not a suitable task for Catholic missionaries. While it might have been true that the bishop did not have the necessary men at his disposal, his comments indicated a very narrow view of where missionaries could work. The church had not so much lost as squandered a valuable opportunity.<sup>5</sup>

Ma and Ying's letter of 1912 confirmed that the educational situation had changed little since Mouly's time. That is, few of the missionaries sent to China had the requisite academic credentials to engage in this type of apostolate. They also noted that, as a result of the manner in which the work of the church had been concentrated in the countryside, large numbers of Chinese Catholics were themselves largely uneducated: "Those who can write a few lines of prose are as rare as the morning star."<sup>6</sup> They pleaded with the pope to send some genuine scholar-missionaries and to support the opening of a university in a city like Beijing so as to educate both Catholic and non-Catholic students. They thought that such a work would not only offer sound education but also provide an example to others and a service to society.

In Rome, Ma and Ying's cries did not fall on deaf ears. Even so, the church's academic standing was bolstered a number of years (and several popes) later than these reformers would have wished. Costantini and Pius XI had to intervene to bring about a Chinese episcopate; their involvement was just as critical in the establishment of a Catholic university in the capital. Several things caused the delay. These included the effects of the First World War in general and on the international church especially, the glacial pace of change in the church in China, and the need for popes Benedict XV and Pius XI to bring about other more significant changes first, such as the ordination of Chinese bishops. The report of Monsignor de Guébriant (mentioned in Chapter 4) "was in substantial agreement with Ying's conclusions, especially with a reference to the need of a Catholic university in North China."<sup>7</sup>

Ma and Ying had begun their own programme of establishing tertiary-level Catholic-administered institutions in China, even before de Guébriant had completed his report. They were able to achieve this because, in addition to being well educated and cognizant of Western cultures, they were both politically astute. Some years prior, for instance, Ma had already been successful in promoting tertiary education in Shanghai. His personal history is rather complex. He was educated in both the increasingly criticized classical system and also in the secondary college established by the newly returned French Jesuits. His life spanned the collapse of an empire, the establishment of a republic, the period of warlordism, the invasion of Japan and then the descent into both global and civil war.

In the period after the First Opium War, Ma was among the first of the children of the long-standing Catholic families of the lower Yangzi valley to join a newly returned religious congregation. At the same time, he felt that the order discriminated against him. (Elsewhere, Chinese academics and reformers began to be more vocal in articulating a greater sense of national consciousness, thus Ma was not alone in his opposition to European officials and teachers.) Even though he was appointed the first Chinese headmaster of St Ignatius College at Xujiahui immediately after his ordination (in 1871), he still perceived resistance to his plans and hopes from his French confreres. He held his position until 1875, and left the Jesuits in 1876.<sup>8</sup>

Ma Xiangbo had joined the Jesuit missionaries from the Province of Paris. In many ways, for the Catholics of the lower Yangzi valley the Jesuits had been esteemed more highly in their absence than they were after their return, because the memories of the group of men who had served in previous centuries were still untarnished. The Catholics considered the newly returned French missionaries, however, to be affected by the compromises the Jesuits had felt they had to make, as described in Chapter 2. Consequently, the relationship between the rejuvenated and growing Chinese Catholic communities and the foreign political and commercial representatives became problematic.<sup>9</sup>

This did not mean that daily interactions between Chinese Catholics and the missionaries were hostile, of course. Community celebrations like ordinations, pilgrimages, processions, the opening of new churches and ceremonial masses were all met with great communal joy. The episcopal ordination of Auguste Haouisée at Xujiahui, in 1927, was one example, all the more significant because it took place somewhat later. The missionary literature recorded that, in addition to numerous foreign dignitaries and the French marines,

not a single Chinese official was absent on this occasion. The mayor of Shanghai, the general commandant of the district, the commissioner for foreign affairs and the prefect of police had all received invitations and were in attendance.<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of such occasions of celebration, however, this close relationship between the French officials and the Catholic Church was difficult, especially in the eyes of reformers like Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi, who thought it was detrimental to Chinese Catholics. For Ma Xiangbo, the feeling of being treated like a second-class citizen and the sense of being prevented from initiating educational programmes (that would contribute as much to the advancement of China as to the benefit of local French-owned firms) eventually saw him leave the priesthood. For a number of years, he also ceased to be a member of the Society of Jesus. Thus, when Ma and Ying wrote their letter to Pope Benedict XV, they were not just involved in pious correspondence; they were also showing their passionate commitment to bringing about change in their own lifetimes.<sup>11</sup>

The collapse of the Qing dynasty, the rise of republican sentiment and the increased outspokenness of Chinese intellectuals encouraged the desire of educated Chinese like Ying to govern their own affairs. They also had the strong sense that the times they were living in made it difficult to present the best aspects of Catholic humanism. It was hard to show Catholicism as being independent from the history of the unequal treaties or the pecuniary interests of some foreigners. The climate of the times worked successfully to cloak even the most ardent of missionary newcomers with the garb of the status quo (as witnessed in Chapters 2 and 4). Stasis quickly overwhelmed any impetus for change. It took remarkable individuals like Vincent Lebbe and Antony Cotta to escape from this cloying and oppressive environment. Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo had already realized this; Ma, in particular, knew it from first-hand experience because he had trained, worked, eaten and prayed alongside fellow Jesuits caught in just this situation. As a result, Ying and Ma were both determined to make the most of the possibilities open to them.

To this end, Ying followed his friend and mentor's lead. From 1912 onwards, he became involved in establishing two institutes of higher learning, despite not yet having heard from the pope. Since Ma and Ying had lived for many years in a church that did not have the best history of listening to local voices, they were clearly not deterred by the lack of response from Rome. In late 1912, Ma and Ying used their influence to urge members of Ying's family to convince

the “Princess Ge Laqin of the imperial house, to obtain permission from the imperial family [to give permission so that they] might operate a Girls’ Industrial School.”<sup>12</sup> They established this school in Beijing.

In the next year, Ying created an academy of Chinese letters, also in Beijing. He called it *Fu Ren She* (the academy for developing virtue). The choice of this name encapsulated all of Ying’s desires to advance the well-being of both church and nation through education.<sup>13</sup> Above all else, Ying and Ma were reformers whose religious affiliation was important to them. Ying had established this school with the aim of developing

a group of Catholic young men, who would be as cultured and as well-educated as any other class or circle in China, and whose conversation would redound to the glory of Holy Mother Church and to the good of their native country.<sup>14</sup>

Ying collected books for the school’s library and funded its operations from his own pocket. Unfortunately, the academy ceased operations in 1918. Although there were several reasons for this, chief among them was the burdensome financial cost of running such an establishment. Ying was not overly dispirited by the school’s closure, however, because he had successfully shown that not only must the establishment of tertiary institutes be attempted but that it could also be achieved.

Many in the Catholic leadership now realized that the establishment of institutions of higher learning was both possible and essential; Ying encouraged them to be more decisive in their support for these works. The movement towards founding a genuine Catholic university in China gathered pace when George Barry O’Toole, a Benedictine oblate from Pennsylvania, arrived in Beijing on 18 October 1920.<sup>15</sup> He was there specifically to investigate the possibilities of opening a Catholic university. He spent several months as Ying’s guest. During this time, O’Toole saw that Ying and Ma’s proposals had great merit. He returned to his abbey via Rome, where he made a report about what he had seen and experienced. Afterwards, some time in 1921, Benedict XV requested the international head of the Benedictines, Abbot Primate Fritz von Stotzingen, to consult with the Benedictine leadership in the United States concerning establishing a university in China. Ying Lianzhi’s efforts were beginning to bear fruit.

## The creation of the Catholic University of Peking

Benedict XV died in early 1922. Fortunately his successor, Pius XI, was equally supportive of the reform movement in mission nations; he especially encouraged the steps being taken in China.<sup>16</sup> Pius XI donated a substantial sum of money towards the creation of a university as a way of sustaining the momentum created by Ying and O'Toole. Through Propaganda, he also encouraged the Benedictines in the United States, to assume responsibility for such an institution. The new pope's honest analysis of the situation regarding the education of Catholics in China was one of the decisive causes that led to the opening of the university. This is recognized in the following quotation about him:

Despite the frequent occurrence of civil wars, Communist uprising, bandit raids, floods, droughts, earthquakes, and the many other plagues which have devastated the country and impeded the work of the missionaries, the campaign of evangelisation in China has made greater progress under the leadership of Pius XI than had been previously recorded during any equal lapse of time. A mere enumeration of the outstanding services rendered by the reigning pope to the missionary movement in China would require more space than is now at my disposal. It must suffice to remark here that his Holiness, with that accuracy of judgement which has characterised all his diagnoses of the church's ills and needs, recognised from the first that the greatest weakness of the missionary movement in China was to be found in the inadequacy of the educational program which it sponsored, or rather, in the fact that it seemed to lack such a program altogether.<sup>17</sup>

The Benedictines of the United States rose to the challenge. Their response was another example of how the ranks of missionaries in China were now being filled by priests and sisters from nations outside Europe. The Abbey of St Vincent in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, willingly agreed to take responsibility for this project. It was one thing to deliberate on such projects in North American abbeys, however, and another thing to bring this project to completion in China. On 8 July 1924, Fathers Ildephonse Brandstetter and Placidus Rattenberger arrived in Beijing. They were the first two monks sent as part of the massive undertaking; Ying Lianzhi and Celso Costantini went personally to meet them. The next year, in February, Fathers Stehle and O'Toole arrived. They would become chancellor and rector respectively of the new Catholic University of Peking.<sup>18</sup>

An academy of Chinese studies was founded in October 1925, as a preparatory venture. Its Chinese name was the one that Ying had previously chosen for his own academy—Fu Ren She. Even though his health was failing due to the spread of cancer, Ying still became dean of the academy. In November 1925, a curriculum was written for the academy, including subjects in the departments of literature, philosophy and history. Although Ying Lianzhi died in January 1926, he had lived to see his hopes fulfilled.<sup>19</sup>

By July 1927, a School of Arts and Letters had been added to the School of Chinese Studies, earning the administrators the right to call their institution a university. They continued to use the name that Ying had chosen alongside their English title. After this, government regulations concerning registration of universities changed and, in 1929, were more rigorously applied. The administrators needed to add another department, the faculty of philosophy, in order for the work to keep its status as a university. In August 1931, the Catholic University received permanent recognition as a fully accredited university.<sup>20</sup> The dream of Ying and Ma and others had become a reality.

The church's reluctance to act in the nineteenth century had earlier cost it the chance of running a university in Beijing. It is not entirely true to say, however, that members of the church communities had made absolutely no contribution to academic life in the post-Opium War period. Nevertheless, these contributions were not part of an integrated programme. What had been achieved was largely the result of the work of outstanding individuals rather than of inspired or visionary leadership. The notable educational and intellectual achievements ranged from work in the fields of research and publishing, to contributions in the areas of natural history and impressive work in meteorology and astronomy.<sup>21</sup> Prior to the establishment of the Catholic University of Peking, Ma Xiangbo had already been instrumental in establishing a university in Shanghai, which was administered by French Jesuits from 1903 onwards. It was called Zhendan or Aurora, meaning the sun rising in the east.<sup>22</sup> French Jesuits from the province of Champagne had also opened a Higher Institute of Industrial and Commercial Studies at Tianjin in 1922, which was granted university status in 1925.<sup>23</sup>

As diverse and impressive as these efforts were, they paled in comparison with the higher education programmes run by Protestant missionary groups.<sup>24</sup> Ying and Ma made this point forcefully in their letter to Pius XI. Even once the new university was established, the number of Catholic universities in China

was brought to only three, including the two Jesuit-run institutions in Shanghai and Tianjin.<sup>25</sup>

In 1931, Celso Costantini delivered a speech, “The Church and Chinese Culture”, which revealed his hopes for the new university:<sup>26</sup> “[C]ontinuing in China the glorious traditions of the Benedictine family, [Furen] would be a centre of high culture, religious and humanistic, and a castle of the things of the spirit.”<sup>27</sup> The Benedictines certainly laid firm foundations for such a castle, although the initial inspiration and labours of Ying Lianzhi had greatly aided their endeavours. They were successful in averting the danger of 1929, when changes in government regulations almost resulted in them losing their university registration. They also sent an impressive number of men to the university, drawn from monasteries all over the United States.

Between the arrival of Fathers Brandstetter and Rattenberger in 1924 and the momentous year of 1933 (when the Benedictines were forced to withdraw their men), twenty-six Benedictines worked at the university as administrators and teachers. According to the research of Wu Xiaoxin, they came from ten different monasteries, including nine from the founding monastery of St Vincent’s Archabbey.<sup>28</sup> Most importantly, the Benedictines also contributed a great amount of financial support. The cost of financing an institution like this could be excessively high, as Ying Lianzhi had learned in the past.

Less than two years after Costantini’s encouraging words, and just ten years after the General Chapter of the American-Cassinese Congregation had agreed to take responsibility for the university, the congregation found it could no longer continue its undertaking. In 1933, the Benedictines were forced to withdraw. Quite simply, the establishment of the university had financially crippled the Archabbey of St Vincent. They had taken out loans to raise the necessary money and were now facing bankruptcy at home. A financial report of 1933 noted that “from February 1, 1925, to June 1, 1933, three million dollars were spent on the establishment and operation of the University, of which over one third came from loans, throwing the monastery into heavy debt.”<sup>29</sup> The crucial difference between this situation and Ying’s earlier experience, however, was that the university managed to stay open, because on 20 June 1933, ownership of the university was transferred to the Divine Word Fathers of the United States.<sup>30</sup>

Furen was able to continue to “grow as a centre of high culture and a castle of the things of the spirit” without either the threat of closure or a decline in its educational standards through a lack of sufficient funds. Now that the

university's future was secure, Costantini's other great hope could be achieved: to develop Chinese-style Christian art. After all, if the artists were to represent Chinese Catholic identities, then they would need to paint the popular Chinese Catholic devotions.

## **The emergence of Chinese Christian art**

Celso Costantini continued to use his personal influence to ensure that the university would be a success. The train of events that began with the successful plenary council in Shanghai in 1924 greatly empowered his position. The council was followed by the encyclical of 1926, a subsequent papal letter addressed to the missionary bishops, the ordination of the six Chinese bishops in Rome (again in 1926), and the publication of the first of the Synodal Commission's digests in May 1928. Costantini now had the mandate to do as he wished.

The delegate's influence was felt greatly in the area of fine arts, in no small part because of his own professional background as an artist and art critic. Furen University had established a fine arts department, within which a school for Christian art was established. Even though some artists had produced work in previous periods, the concept of Chinese Christian art was still very much a novelty. There had not yet been a systematic development of a local style in Chinese Christian communities because of opposition from some European missionaries and the popularity of other images.

Since 1867, the artists at Tushanwan had painted Christian art for churches and private devotion. Much of the work from this workshop, however, was copied either from other paintings or from photographs. These works usually imitated Western themes and did little to develop local sensibilities, *Our Lady of Donglu* being a notable exception. A guidebook to Shanghai produced in the early twentieth century described the methods employed by the Jesuit teachers at the time: "The boys are taught drawing and tracing, and they copy pictures for ecclesiastical subjects for churches and for schools and private purchasers."<sup>31</sup> Although such copying did not encourage artistic individuality, the workers acquired basic skills through these types of repetitive activities.

The influence of Tushanwan was also felt beyond the Catholic community. The art historian Michael Sullivan maintains that he was "told by [the artist] Pang Xunqin many years ago that the Jesuit Fathers gave informal tuition in drawing from casts and in landscape painting to several of the pioneers [of

modern Chinese art].”<sup>32</sup> The art historian John Clark also notes that, in China, there were two complementary movements in the development of a group of professional artists. At a national level, there were attempts to develop professionals through the training of art teachers, while at a more local level there were regional private art schools focused around individual teachers: “These [schools] were to some not yet fully understood extent the inheritors of a longish series of transfers of Western art models and some art education practices via missionaries active in Shanghai since the mid-nineteenth century.”<sup>33</sup>

The pioneers Sullivan refers to Chinese artists who were developing what has come to be known as *xihua*, Western-style painting,<sup>34</sup> in contrast to *guohua*, which has been variously called the traditional, academic, classical or national style of Chinese painting, as exemplified, for instance, by the palace school. In Claire Roberts’ words:

the term *guohua* came into use in the early twentieth century, at a time when many Chinese intellectuals had lost faith in the traditional social, political, and cultural systems and sought to embrace that which was foreign and therefore perceived as modern.<sup>35</sup>

The Chinese art world was engaged in a substantial debate about the role of art and culture and the need to find a suitable way of describing what was happening at the time. As Geremie Barmé notes,

one of the dilemmas from the early years of the twentieth century for artists and critics alike was finding a suitable language with which to describe their work, be it traditional-scholar art or the products of Western-inspired reform.<sup>36</sup>

If the role of the Jesuits at Tushanwan was to teach some artists the skills that led to a development of a new style, it was only a small and accidental part of their activities. Their primary function was the production of objects of devotion, not nurturing a generation of avant-garde artists. Costantini wished to develop just such a generation of artists, however, which would assist in building a castle of things of the spirit.

Costantini well understood the powerful role exerted by art departments in academic settings: “They turn what may have been acquired in semi-private or autonomous learning situations with a teacher or more broadly in an atelier into a publicly recognised discipline . . .”<sup>37</sup> Costantini wished to develop acceptance for Chinese expressions of Catholic faith that would incorporate the key features of the Chinese Catholic identity, including Marian devotions.

His views on the need to develop local styles of Christian artistic expression were well-known within Chinese Catholic communities. In 1923, he had written to the apostolic vicars Walsh and Galvin, quoted above. This letter was republished in full in the 1932 *Digest of the Synodal Commission*.

Since the beginning of the French protectorate, there had been only a few examples produced of locally styled Christian art. Even in architecture, where a local style had been somewhat better exemplified (as described in Chapter 2), there were as many if not more churches still being built in European style. The construction of St Theresa's in Shanghai is a case in point:

When the Communists invaded Shanghai in 1927 the property and assets of the mission were in grave danger of being destroyed. To avoid such a calamity the missionaries sought divine protection and promised to build a large church if the mission institutions were spared. The Communistic menace was eventually overcome and the long-needed church of St Theresa in the crowded commercial quarter of the Sinza [Xinzha] district was begun on October 3, 1930 under the able direction of Fr F. Maumus, S.J.<sup>38</sup>

The church was opened the next year on the Feast of St Theresa, co-patron of the missions, on 1 October 1931.<sup>39</sup> The complex included a large secondary school for girls, an elementary school for boys and a dispensary. Contemporary photographs of the exterior (taken during construction) and the interior (around the time of the grand opening) reveal that, although the church was built in a very Chinese section of Shanghai, such a structure could easily have been found in the streets of Paris.

The absence of Chinese Christian representations in the field of visual imagery was even more remarkable.<sup>40</sup> From 1925 to 1927, a Scheut priest, Father van Dyk, drew a series of forty illustrations to accompany a catechism designed to be used with children and illiterate adults—one of only a few attempts at developing a Chinese-Christian visual vernacular during this period.<sup>41</sup> A contemporary report claimed that, apart from the commendable activities of the artists at Tushanwan, nowhere else in the Chinese Christian world could such work be found.

Van Dyk's images were of traditional themes; perhaps because his illustrated catechism was such a novelty, he did not employ any radical artistic innovations. He included only theologically orthodox scenes, perhaps because as yet there had been no formal retraction (or clarification) of the papal statements concerning the Chinese Rites. Thus, these forty illustrations

included depictions of the life of Christ, illustrations to accompany the Ten Commandments, the “divine Majesty” during the scenes of judgement, and an image of “the Holy Virgin that, as it is represented, must irresistibly attract the Christians to this devotion.”<sup>42</sup>

There was almost the same situation within the Protestant communities. Daniel J. Fleming maintained that “among the earliest modern Chinese Christian paintings are those in the hospital of the Church Missionary Society, Hangchow, produced a few years before 1900.”<sup>43</sup> These works, by Tai Chien and his son Tai En Ch’uan, reportedly consisted of ten paintings based on the parables of Jesus, including such stories as the return of the prodigal son and the wise and foolish virgins.<sup>44</sup> It is unknown what happened to these paintings in the years after Fleming’s book was published. He reprinted two paintings: although the black-and-white printing is indistinct, we can see Chinese clothing and scenery. The story has been portrayed as though it took place somewhere in China, not in France or Holland or Palestine.

An art society called St Luke’s Studio had come into existence in 1926 at Nanjing. The Studio was relatively small, however; it was more an appreciation society than a vibrant workshop or an art school. It consisted of four individuals: two Westerners, I. L. Hammond and Louise S. Hammond, and two Chinese artists, Xu Sanchun and Shen Zhigao (T. K. Shen).<sup>45</sup> Xu did most of the painting, as he was considered to be the better artist.<sup>46</sup>

The St Luke Society merged with the Church Art Cooperative Society, which had been formed in 1934. This cooperative produced a number of “Christmas cards, such as the Adoration of the Magi and the Madonna of the Radiant Sun. The latter has also been reproduced as a wall scroll in the Chinese style.”<sup>47</sup> They likewise produced a Chinese edition of a life of Christ, *The Life of Jesus of Nazareth*, which contained eighty illustrations by the Scottish landscape painter and etcher William Hole (1846–1917).<sup>48</sup> Apart from Chinese-style bindings, however, this publication did not contain Chinese motifs. On this evidence, therefore, the situation in the Protestant communities seemed as underdeveloped and haphazard as in the Catholic world.

The art department at the Catholic University of Peking was thus at the forefront of the movement to develop Chinese Christian art. It benefited greatly from Celso Costantini’s expertise and support, even from before its establishment in 1930. The professors and students produced work that contributed greatly to the identity of the Chinese Catholic church, and influenced

how a broader public, both in China and abroad, perceived Chinese Catholic communities.

Members of the Catholic intelligentsia like Ying Lianzhi had sought to gain prestige for the university by linking it with the academic traditions of the past. They recruited well-known scholars, including Chen Yuan and Zhang Weixi.<sup>49</sup> The extent to which these positions were simply sinecures is unknown, but they were aimed at gaining an air of respectability for the new venture. Obviously, such luminaries could only have been recruited by the Chinese Catholics, and not by the newly arrived missionaries.

Interestingly, the art department attracted a few members of the former imperial family, the Aisin Gioro clan.<sup>50</sup> These princes were considered knowledgeable artists in their own right, especially in the *guohua* style. Pu Jin chaired the department, at least nominally. He was a second cousin of Puyi, the Xuantong (and Last) Emperor.<sup>51</sup> From 1936, Pu Jin's younger brother Pu Quan taught painting in the department.<sup>52</sup> Pu Jin was dean of the department until 1949; in many ways this appears to have been a nominal position as he rarely appeared in the classroom, preferring to instruct students at his home, if at all.<sup>53</sup> Pu Quan taught more often than his older brother, at least in the early 1940s. He too worked at the university but taught some foreign students at his home.

Pu Ru, a cousin of these two classically trained artists, was also a painter of note.<sup>54</sup> All of them had been educated in the academic, or classical, style of the palace school,

characterised above all by an exquisite and often painstaking refinement, combined with a tendency towards decorativeness and—in so far as the words can be applied to Chinese art at all—a certain degree of realism.<sup>55</sup>

This refinement was the product of centuries of tradition, whereby painters followed the styles of former masters. Unfortunately, however, the tradition had become hidebound—described as “stiflingly conservative” by some—and the painters who came from the palace, whether members of the imperial family or the anonymous painters employed there, did little more than maintain it. Sullivan encapsulated this descent into imitation during the latter years of the Qing dynasty:

Educated Chinese were fearful of change, their art reflecting the belief that tradition must be preserved at all cost. The brilliant individualism of the early Qing masters had become a faint memory, while even the

Sino-European manner taught by the Jesuit artist Giuseppe Castiglione, who between 1716 and 1766 served three emperors and devised a cunning synthesis of Chinese technique and Western realism, had degenerated into the level of competent copying.<sup>56</sup>

The members of the imperial family who taught at Furen, or who were at least officially associated with it, belonged to the late Qing and showed the influences of their court training. Pu Quan, for instance, was “a sound follower of the orthodox landscape style of the seventeenth-century master Wang Hui . . . [and who] painted in the manner of Castiglione whose works he must have known well from the many examples of it in the imperial collection.”<sup>57</sup>

Although Pu Quan had not grown up in the Forbidden City, his home was nearby, as he had spent his early years in a smaller palace to the east.<sup>58</sup> Accustomed as they had been to a life of insular opulence, the Pu cousins were unable to deal with the change in their identity from imperial princes to republican artists. Their indulgent lifestyles were as comically tragic as they were depressingly sad. A former student of Pu Jin and Pu Quan said that “they lived in a little world of their own as their palaces became more and more impoverished. They were all spoiled and irresponsible, with no idea how to manage their affairs, unstable, quick in their enthusiasms, recklessly extravagant.”<sup>59</sup> Sullivan completed the picture:

Pu Xuezhai [that is, Pu Jin] loved gambling and had dozens of dogs, which he could not afford to feed. [Pu Ru] reputedly had a despotic concubine who forced him to paint for his meals—which must have been expensive, because all the brothers loved good food and, it was said, would pawn their last gown for a fish.<sup>60</sup>

They pawned more than just gowns, selling many of the imperial treasures left in their possession. It might seem odd that an institution that sought to be a bulwark of Catholic spiritual culture would allow such dissolute princes on their staff. The fact that the Catholic Girls' College of Furen came to occupy the former palace of Gongwangfu (Prince Gong's mansion), which Pu Jin had inherited, suggests that the administrators of Furen may have been prepared to tolerate certain behaviour in return for other benefits.<sup>61</sup> Regardless of the opprobrium associated with their vices, Pu Jin and Pu Quan could indeed paint—the new art school needed teachers, no matter the conservatism of the style they transmitted or their personal foibles.

Nevertheless, Costantini and the administrators of Furen University ensured that not all the teaching was left to these few; Costantini was personally

involved in finding other individuals to work alongside them. He especially wanted to find artists who could assist in the development of the Christian dimension of the art department, as well as of the university as a whole. Consequently, he co-opted several foreign missionaries who were also trained artists, including two Benedictines, Adelbert Gresnigt and Basile Dobeiaer. The Dutchman Gresnigt was an architect who built many Chinese-style churches around China, and who had received his training as a painter at the Beuron school in Germany.<sup>62</sup> There was also the Scheut priest Edmund Van Genechten, a painter and printmaker (who had already produced a few Chinese-style Christian images, mentioned above) and a Divine Word brother, Berchmans Franz Brückner, a watercolourist.<sup>63</sup>

Brückner compiled a photographic archive of the works produced at the art school. During the time that he was in Beijing, from 1933 to 1949, the collection apparently consisted of around 350 photographs.<sup>64</sup> In addition to the incongruous group of spoilt Chinese noblemen and foreign religious, a number of lay foreign artists or art historians also taught in the department. By 1946, there were also female teachers on the staff. Sr. Bernwardine and Miss Kao Li-fang, for instance, taught “applied arts IV for seniors.”<sup>65</sup> While the Catholic Church in China was undoubtedly a late participant in the tertiary apostolate, the university quickly made impressive contributions to sinology because of the work of the academics, Chinese and foreign, on the faculty.<sup>66</sup>

During the second Sino-Japanese War (1937–45), a number of German academics replaced the French nationals on the staff. The alliance between Germany and Japan meant that the employment of German citizens enabled the administrators to keep the university operating as normally as possible. Some of these German academics were either already well-known or subsequently gained recognition. They included Max Loehr, Gustave Ecke and Wolfram Eberhard.<sup>67</sup> There were also young Chinese teachers in the art department who had come to Costantini’s attention through their participation in the various art groups, or painting institutes, that were emerging in Beijing. In later years, several of Furen’s art teachers were themselves graduates from the university.<sup>68</sup>

Chen Yuandu was a young painter working in Beijing whom Costantini had identified as a good role model for young students. They had first met in 1926. The recruitment of Chen to the fine arts department had important consequences for the development of Chinese Christian art, especially within the Catholic world, for he became a figurehead for the movement.

In recent years (both in China and elsewhere), a form of amnesia about the works of the church in China during the early decades of the twentieth century has developed. This forgetfulness has been most noticeable in regard to the development of an inculturated style of art. Even though a substantial amount was written about Chinese Christian art in the republican period, in the main these articles have been neglected. Consequently, common mistakes appear in the literature or the same few sources are referred to repeatedly, without reference to studies in other languages.<sup>69</sup> This situation obviously limits any analysis of the movement. Before talking about the works themselves, or the roles of various artists within this movement, it is necessary to survey the material that relates to this art, beginning with the time that Chinese Christian art first began to be discussed as a movement.

One of the first serious discussions about the possibility and appropriateness of an indigenous Christian style took place in a special edition of *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* published in May 1932.<sup>70</sup> This issue was devoted to a wide variety of artistic themes, including ecclesiastical regulations governing church art, Chinese architecture (religious and otherwise) and the universality of Christian art. The issue provided examples of Christian art in India and included an article about Christian painters in Japan. There were also photographs of some churches built in Chinese style, as well as a large number of reproductions of Christian art by artists living in China. Some of these images were seen for the first time and by a wide audience in this issue.

The journal also contained reproductions of seventeen works by “Luke Chen”, Chen Yuandu. Among them were relatively traditional renderings of scenes depicting the Stations of the Cross (numbers nine, ten and thirteen), in which the subjects in the paintings have Chinese features but the scenery is not noticeably Chinese. There were also paintings that portrayed Christian stories in a Chinese setting, several Madonna and child images among them, including one called *The Virgin and Infant*, which was set in a bamboo grove, and another called *Mater amabilis* (the lovely Mother), where Mary is shown seated in a Chinese-style building with Jesus cradled on her lap. There was also a work entitled *John of Montecorvino Meets the Emperor and Presents a Crucifix to Him*. Fittingly, this was hung in the offices of Costantini, who, like Montecorvino, was also a Roman emissary. There were two further images: by a Chinese painter, Siai Hsue-tcheng [*sic*], who apparently worked in the vicariate of Anguo, and by the Scheut priest van Dyk, from his catechism series described above.

Within China, discussion about the progress of the Furen art department appeared in the missionary magazines and bulletins of the period, especially after the public exhibitions of works produced at this school. Such reporting and discussion also occurred beyond the boundaries of the Catholic communities. In 1938, for example, *The Chinese Recorder*, the famous American Presbyterian Mission magazine (published for over seventy years, until 1941) featured at least one article that included photographs of the artists Lu Hongnian and his former professor Luke Chen, as well as some black-and-white reproductions of several works.<sup>71</sup>

Although several reports and articles were published outside China, especially once the paintings themselves began to be shown overseas, it appears that the first international study of these works was by Sepp Schüller.<sup>72</sup> In 1936, he produced a French book, *La Vierge Marie à travers les missions*, in which he presented examples of Mary's portrayal in different mission regions.<sup>73</sup> Schüller's examples were from places as diverse as Java and Mexico, Japan and the Belgian Congo. He devoted a number of pages to China, describing the evolution of the Furen art department. He said that the department was under the leadership of Luke Chen, although Pu Jin was the titular chair at the time. Schüller also presented a number of examples by Dobeiaer, Genechten and the Chinese painters.<sup>74</sup>

In 1938, Daniel Johnson Fleming published *Each with His Own Brush: Contemporary Christian Art in Asia and Africa*.<sup>75</sup> Like Schüller's earlier work, it covered subject matter that extended beyond China and the Catholic world. Fleming was rather removed from the activities of the Furen artists in Beijing, however, in that he was a Protestant theologian based in New York.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, he was very sympathetic towards the Catholic missionary endeavours in China and their artistic enterprise. His introductory essay discussed aspects of indigenous art, while the remainder of the book included reprints of pictures from around the globe. He introduced twenty-seven works from China. Regrettably, all these reproductions were in black and white: while each print had a small accompanying comment underneath it, there was little in the way of description about the colours used or the materials employed.

Some time before 1943, a smaller work appeared, called *The Life of Christ by Chinese Artists*.<sup>77</sup> This work featured a very brief introduction about the artists of the Furen art department who painted in Chinese-Christian style, namely Luke Chen, Lu Hongnian and Wang Suda. There were twenty-four paintings reproduced in black and white, and some aspects of Chinese painting were

introduced. As the book was specifically focused on Jesus, the works were based on the infancy narratives, Jesus feeding the 5,000, preaching to the crowds from the water and taming the tempest on the lake.<sup>78</sup> Although the reprinted works do not carry attributions, the introduction identified the artists of three paintings. One of these, *Seeking Shelter*, painted by Lu Hongnian in 1935, formed “part of Professor Sepp Schüller’s fine collection of Christian art and in 1939 was in his museum at Aachen.”<sup>79</sup>

The most comprehensive study on the Chinese Christian art department was written by Fritz Bornemann, a Divine Word missionary, at a time when most of the Catholic apostolates in China were beginning to feel the restrictions of the new Communist (atheist) government, and when the future of Furen University was uncertain.<sup>80</sup> It contained a summary of the development of the Christian art movement in China as well as some brief biographies of the main artists, especially in the foundational years. Bornemann included some rare photographs of the artists, presumably from the archive collection of his fellow Divine Word missionary, Berchmans Franz Brückner. The book contained numerous reproductions of these works, including some colour plates. Bornemann also explained the way in which the paintings were signed, providing examples of the various ink seals used by the artists. Academics and researchers have drawn heavily from this work.

Finally, one of the more recent English works on this subject is a 1995 article by Mary S. Lawton,<sup>81</sup> which utilizes the work of both Bornemann and Fleming. Since then, more information has come to light.<sup>82</sup> Mary Lawton did not have the opportunity to view any of the paintings by the Furen artists and seems to have based her conclusions on the reproductions in Fleming’s work. Unfortunately, this limited what she could say of them: “because Chen’s paintings are available for study only in black-and-white reproductions, it is impossible to evaluate his sense of colour . . .”<sup>83</sup> Yet two of Chen’s works were reproduced by Bornemann in colour—*Madonna with Virgin Musicians* and *The Last Supper*—suggesting that Lawton might have had access only to the text of Bornemann’s book.<sup>84</sup>

Daniel Johnson Fleming’s pioneering work was more a theological reflection on missiology than an essay on art history. Although he used some of the contemporary missionary literature, his book is valuable because he provided a comparative study of the Christian art being produced internationally: “This is the first attempt, as far as the author is aware, to bring together pictures of Christian paintings from various lands.”<sup>85</sup> Fritz Bornemann had the advantage of writing his study almost twenty years after Fleming and was therefore able

to draw on more resources, from missionary literature to interviews with the individuals involved. He had access to the personal records of the Divine Word missionaries, not just of the men and women who worked at the university administration but also those who taught in the art department. Bornemann was also able to meet these missionaries when they returned to Europe.

The Furen artists expressed their newly developed understanding of their Chinese Catholic identity through their paintings. Importantly, the department produced a large number of images with Marian themes, which strengthened the Marian identity of the Catholic communities even further.

### **Celso Costantini and Luke Chen Yuandu**

Luke Chen Yuandu is a significant figure, not only because he worked in the new genre of Chinese Christian art, but also because he taught many of the painters who later produced work in this style. He was born in 1901 or 1903 and came to Beijing when he was seventeen.<sup>86</sup> His career illustrated the importance of patronage, just like many an artist before and after him. First, Jin Cheng agreed to tutor him. Jin Cheng had founded the Hu She Painting Society, one of the groups of scholar-painters formed in Beijing in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>87</sup> Chen's acceptance into this group by the much older Jin was important, because membership brought Chen into contact with many other painters and with new techniques. Although Jin had studied law in England, he was also interested in painting and modelled himself as a scholar-gentleman in a studied attempt to maintain the literati tradition. As Michael Sullivan observes, "Jin Cheng was not a great painter, but he was a competent one, a wealthy patron and an effective educator and organizer."<sup>88</sup>

Under Jin's guidance and assistance, Chen began to advance in his mastery of technique. Jin included Chen's works in several art exhibitions shown in Beijing during the mid-1920s, prior to Jin's death in 1926 at the relatively young age of forty-eight. The pieces exhibited included several paintings of Guanyin.<sup>89</sup> At one of these shows, Chen's work came to the attention of Celso Costantini, who took an interest in the young artist, not only in terms of his development as an artist but also as a person. Why this occurred is unknown. He lent Chen "copies of the best examples of religious paintings from the Italian schools as well as a copy of the New Testament."<sup>90</sup> In 1929, at the request and encouragement of Costantini, Chen attempted to make his first Chinese-style Christian painting, a seated Madonna and child.<sup>91</sup>

It is not surprising that Costantini encouraged Chen to paint a Marian image, especially if we recall the events of 1924, when Costantini had deliberately promoted the church-wide adoption of a painting of Our Lady Queen of China. In fact, the popularity of Marian piety in Chinese Catholic communities almost necessitated that Chen paint a Marian picture. Later, he painted four more works based on Christian themes, all of which were connected with, and showed, the long history of Catholicism in China, namely, *The Arrival of John of Montecorvino*, *The Blessing of the Khan by John of Montecorvino* and *The Preaching of Blessed Odorico*. He also painted *St Theresa of the Infant Jesus*. As we have seen, the Franciscan missionaries were active in China during the fourteenth century; Theresa was a popular saint in China, not only because she was French but also because she had recently been named as co-patron of the missions.

In 1930, Chen obtained a teaching position at Huabei College in Beijing. Through the good graces of Costantini, he was also employed in the art department at Furen University, working alongside Brother Brückner and the two princes. At some stage, this became his main occupation. His acceptance as a teacher was in recognition of the skills he had now acquired. Chen continued to study Christian art, particularly as displayed in the European books Costantini lent him. These books had a particular emphasis on the Italian masters, such as Fra Angelico and Filippo Lippi. Missionary literature of the time recorded that Chen also wrote to Costantini at the beginning of 1932, stating that he wished to make “greater sense of his life and to study the truth of the Catholic religion.”<sup>92</sup> He began to undertake religious instruction from a Chinese priest who worked as the secretary for the apostolic delegation in Beijing. Later in the same year, on the Feast of Pentecost, Chen received “baptism, confirmation and first communion from the hands of His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate of Beijing, Celso Costantini.”<sup>93</sup>

Chen Yuandu’s reception of the sacraments of initiation was regarded as the modern equivalent of the famous conversion of the early Qing artist, Wu Li. Chen took the baptismal name of Luke (perhaps bestowed on him by Costantini). The choice of this name is quite symbolic because of that saint’s role as the patron of painters.<sup>94</sup> Whenever articles were written about the painters at Furen, Chen was referred to as Luke Chen (or Lukas or Lucas or Lujia, a Chinese phonetic approximation of Luke), rather than Chen Yuandu. Even though Chen used a seal that bore the inscription Lujia, he also continued to mark his works with a seal that featured his Chinese name, perhaps

indicating that his paintings were directed towards two worlds: the Christian world and the modernizing, secular world of the reformers.<sup>95</sup>

Chen's teaching position at the Catholic University enabled him to have a significant influence on the development of Chinese-style Christian art, not only in terms of having the necessary financial support for his endeavours but also in terms of having students who could then contribute to the movement. Costantini's patronage was influential in publicizing the work of Chen and his protégés, even outside China. In 1933, four colour reproductions of Chen's paintings were printed in Italy.<sup>96</sup> Three of these works featured the themes of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, the adoration of the shepherds and the annunciation. Some of these reproductions then made their way back to China in the form of ordination cards.

More Christian paintings in the Chinese style were produced. The art students began to prepare to hold public exhibitions of their works, around the same time that the granting of permanent university status in 1931 ensured the university's immediate future. It was also when Costantini was vigorously encouraging debate about the appropriateness of adaptation, especially in the arts. Some of the works, both in their original forms and as reproductions, were also made available for purchase.

The initial exhibitions held during the Christmas season each year were annual shows that displayed the students' work to their peers and a limited number of interested guests. Brother Brückner proposed that Christmas be the theme for the exhibition of 1933.<sup>97</sup> Over the next few years, several painters made their debuts at these end-of-year exhibitions; two of them later became the mainstays of the movement. Wang Suda painted his first Christian painting, a nativity scene, for the 1934 show, while at the Christmas exhibition in 1935 Lu Hongnian displayed his *Seeking Shelter*, which became one of the most well-known of the images from this early period.<sup>98</sup>

Some of Chen's paintings were shown at the Third International Exhibition for Religious Art in Rome in 1934, while in China the first large-scale public exhibition of Chinese Christian art was held the next year in Shanghai, including works by Chen and a number of his students.<sup>99</sup> Costantini and the well-known Chinese Catholic priest Paul Yu Bin suggested that the artists hold this exhibition: their encouragement is another example of the role of patronage in promoting these young artists.<sup>100</sup> The exhibition was held on the occasion of the National Congress of Catholic Action in September.

By the late 1920s, Shanghai had become a vibrant cultural centre. Whereas the Beijing art societies and art exhibitions were important in the early part of the twentieth century, the establishment of the Republican capital at Nanjing in 1926 shifted the cultural focus south. Political activists, young artists and returned academics all rubbed shoulders in the crowded streets of Shanghai. In Geremie Barmé's words, "Shanghai was the epicentre of imperialist activity and commercial influence in China, not to mention the grand salon for the nation's exotic cosmopolitans . . ." <sup>101</sup> In the main, these exotic cosmopolitans were students who had been overseas, either to Japan or further afield to Europe. Collectively, they exerted a great influence on the development of art in China, and especially Shanghai. <sup>102</sup>

These developments brought about a series of national art exhibitions, which sparked national debates. <sup>103</sup> The first national exhibition was held in 1919 bringing together traditional-style art (*guohua*) and Western-style painting (*xihua*). <sup>104</sup> Subsequently, "after the Nationalist government was established in Nanjing the first official National Art exhibition, sponsored by the Ministry of Education and opened by Cai Yuanpei, was held in Shanghai in 1929." <sup>105</sup> In Beijing, the liberal educator Cai Yuanpei had established the Apollo Society, a Western-style painting society, in the early 1920s. <sup>106</sup> The contemporary or modern style of art and the rise of a generation of artists capable of working in this style continued to gather pace during the 1930s, even as some of the artists who favoured the more traditional styles expressed their dissatisfaction with the work being done in oils, and sought to create a contemporary Chinese way of working within the traditional medium. During the first six months of 1937, forty-five exhibitions took place in Shanghai, including a number of individual shows. <sup>107</sup>

The Catholic exhibition of 1935 should therefore be seen in the light of the growing popularity of more experimental styles of art and of the search for a way of expressing a newfound national consciousness. It might seem as though these works were doing nothing new because, even though they contained new subject matter, they were still examples of *guohua*. In this sense, it can appear wrong to link this body of work with new groups like the Apollo Society. However, it is in the essence of what they were doing that the similarity exists.

*Xihua* painters were seeking to become more than competent copyists of famous works, while the Furen painters like Chen and his companions were attempting to create their own way of expressing their Christian faith and thereby go beyond the Eurocentric limitations placed on the depiction of

religious subjects.<sup>108</sup> They were seeking to create a new genre within an old form. As Chinese Catholics, they were seeking to create art most suited for others like them.

Sadly, Costantini, whose health was becoming a concern, did not get to see the 1935 Shanghai exhibition; he was called back to Rome in 1933 to be the secretary of Propaganda Fide. His successor was another Italian priest, Mario Zanin, who supported Costantini's efforts wholeheartedly and continued his programme of reform. The Shanghai exhibition was a watershed: while there had already been a limited number of paintings or artistic representations of Christian themes in Chinese styles in the modern period, the event marked the first time that an exhibition was held on such a scale. A number of Chinese painters, as opposed to just Chen Yuandu alone, exhibited their work on this occasion; Costantini's plan to develop a school of such painters was beginning to bear fruit.

One visitor to this exhibition recorded some of his reactions to the works on display.<sup>109</sup> Although these comments were generally favourable and balanced, they also articulated the disquiet felt by many Catholics in China, both foreign and local, who were unsettled by the attempts to develop a genre of Chinese Christian art. It is worth noting that this disquiet is still a prevailing emotion within Catholic communities today. The anonymous author of these comments (who was more than likely a male foreign missionary) considered that, while "the paintings were very pleasing to the eye, painted with sure and certain hands, with delicate colours, and with a composition and a conception most agreeable . . . [the question remained] . . . was it ecclesiastical art?"<sup>110</sup>

The author's criticisms concerned both the choice of subject matter and the style of representation. To the author, several of the paintings, which bore titles like *The Flight into Egypt* or *The Appearance of the Angels to the Shepherds* (both very traditional subjects), seemed more to be occasions for painting pleasant wintry scenes than for portraying Christian subjects: "The people played a secondary role."<sup>111</sup> This suggests that the classical style as practised by teachers like Pu Quan (within which landscapes played an important function) exerted a significant influence on the younger artists. Nevertheless, there were several examples of angels appearing to the shepherds, a representation of Jesus entering Jerusalem, and many Madonnas, "tranquil and delicate in design, which could be counted amongst the best of the exhibition."<sup>112</sup> The author conceded that much thought had gone into the works and that the paintings

seemed to be works of piety and devotion but, on the whole, he remained unconvinced of their worth as Christian ecclesiastical art.

The author considered that the pursuit of a style that could be labelled as “Chinese church art” (*l'art d'église Chinois*) was something to be encouraged, but he did not feel that the paintings in this exhibition achieved this aim. He thought that such art needed to be capable of expressing the verities of the faith, clearly and comprehensibly. Such art could not be faddish or able to be understood only by a few. In his view, church art

is an art that is simple and vigorous. The highest expression of such art is able to found in the ancient mosaics that one can admire in many of the basilicas in Italy: the sweeping surfaces are full of bright colours, with a simple composition boldly executed.<sup>113</sup>

He argued that these examples had educated the faithful throughout the centuries, and that Chinese church art should turn to such works for inspiration. He thought paintings on silk or paper scrolls were inherently incapable of conveying the truths of Christianity with the necessarily graceful force. This is not to say that he believed there was no possibility of presenting Christian beliefs in Chinese style—“models exist, most notably in the mural paintings found in Buddhist pagodas, or in Taoist ones”—but he was certain the artists of Furen were utilizing the wrong medium.<sup>114</sup>

Others disagreed. Some argued that Chinese styles could not be used at all, basing their opposition on a culturally determinative position, that is, that Jesus was not Chinese and therefore could not be portrayed as such. Others thought it was worth persevering with the attempts being made by Chen and his students. Nevertheless, there were also those who agreed with the author about the quality of the paintings, and thought it was better to have no art at all than bad art.

Finally, there were some who felt that the works were not yet of a high standard, but that it was important to keep faith with the project all the same. Daniel Johnson Fleming cited two such reflections from the period: one concerning Christian art in general and another about the indigenous art movement that had helped inspire the establishment of the Furen art department.<sup>115</sup> Fr. John J. Considine, assistant general of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America (that is, the Maryknolls) wrote,

compared with the vast proportions of the mission world, the amount of existing local [i.e. Chinese] Christian art is relatively small, and except in a

few cases, as yet it is not outstanding from the viewpoint of quality. It is the idea which is great. It is the dream of tomorrow, rather than the spectacle of today, which makes enthusiasm.<sup>116</sup>

The chairman of the Protestant Church Art Society, Dr. Zhu Youyu, also thought that the works were not yet of a high quality:

At present there is no widespread public for the works of Chinese painters even within the church itself, and none outside it. The works so far produced are little better than what is known among connoisseurs as 'artisan' grade, and mainly intended for pedagogic purposes in religious education.<sup>117</sup>

Views like these did not deter the apostolic delegates, Costantini and his successor Zanin, however; in fact, such considerations only made them become even more supportive of the enterprise. A second exhibition was staged at Furen itself, from 6 to 8 December 1936; most of the works that had been shown earlier were presented again. Although these paintings were destined to go to Rome, fifty of them were displayed for three days before they left China's shores. All the painters from the first generation of artists had works on display: Luke Chen with eight, Wang Suda seven, Lu Hongnian and Xu Jihua six each, with the remainder being done by Li Mingyuan and a few other unnamed artists.<sup>118</sup> Mario Zanin opened the exhibition himself, speaking of the "role of art in expressing the nobility of the human intellect and in advancing human morality."<sup>119</sup> His speech was met with sustained applause, showing at least the support for the venture if not for the actual works.

In 1938, another showing took place, at the Peking language school, in response to the invitation of Dr. Pettus, director of the College of Chinese Studies.<sup>120</sup> On this occasion, Luke Chen presented eight works, Wang five, Lu six, Xu Jihua and Li Mingyuan two each, with two other works painted by other unnamed students or graduates. The showing was greeted with enthusiasm, as described later by one of the Furen faculty, Adelbert Gresnigt:

When one of the master artists of Peiping recently exhibited a new group of canvasses, there was widespread excitement and interest. As far as Peiping was concerned the stir was as important as would be the appearance of a new method before the critics of the Royal Academy in London or corresponding circles in New York, Paris or Berlin.<sup>121</sup>

The stir was not limited to the Beijing Catholic world, as support and encouragement was shown by numbers of Protestant missionaries, who also bought

many of the works (those not destined for Rome). To the delight of the artists, these sales ensured that the exhibition was a financial success. The two showings thus began to create a market for this kind of work. People soon placed orders for reproductions of already painted works. These purchase orders were further illustrations of the importance of both patronage and a market in the development of the new art movement.

The practice of copying was quite normal: many ateliers, students or artisans were involved in mass-producing copies of famous works. Advertisements for Tushanwan, for instance, proudly stated that the students produced paintings on demand, copying them from a photograph, a picture or other paintings. The exhibition held in Shanghai in 1935 displayed several paintings on similar themes, which suggests that the art school made use of a number of prototypes. The curriculum for students in the fine art department even included a class called “Natural Scenery II”, which taught styles and techniques through the copying of famous masterpieces. The course consisted of five hours of classes each week and was conducted by the princes Pu Jin and Pu Quan.<sup>122</sup>

Those who supported the development of this style of art were publicly thanked for their assistance:

Continuing with the subject of Chinese Christian art, we take advantage of the opportunity to give a word of thanks to Reverend Edward Bödefeld OFM, for making Chinese Christian art better known and appreciated in China. It is a deplorable fact that native Christian art which has already gained esteem in Europe, must wander about as an orphan in its own country.<sup>123</sup>

In January 1937, in an article in *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, he enthusiastically discussed the Shanghai exhibition of the previous year (1935) while encouraging his fellow missionaries either to purchase some of the already painted works or to commission new pieces. A number of rectors of seminaries around the nation quickly responded to Bödefeld’s suggestion, including a fellow Franciscan, Elias Carosi. Carosi was rector of the regional seminary in Shaanxi, which was called John of Montecorvino Seminary. He wrote to the art department on 17 February 1937, commissioning an image of John of Montecorvino for his seminary. Others did likewise, requesting a number of different subjects.<sup>124</sup> The Catholic University itself also commissioned several pieces for the numerous chapels on its property.

At this stage, Luke Chen was still the best known of the artists. In 1938, thirty-three of his paintings were sent to Budapest for the thirty-fourth

International Eucharistic Congress. At around this time, dealers in Vienna also requested works from Chen, although these orders do not seem to have been carried out. A year earlier, in 1937, the department as a whole had sent seventeen works to the Paris World Fair (the *Exposition Internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie moderne*). This collection was displayed in the international mission pavilion: thus the Chinese Christian paintings, examples of a type of art previously barely imaginable by many missionaries and considered to be poor in quality by some, were now in the company of works produced by some of the most famous artists in the world. The Paris exposition included pavilions built by architects Alvar Aalto and Albert Speer, the architect of the Third Reich; Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* was also shown for the first time at this exposition. It is reasonable to assume that some of the more than thirty million visitors to the exposition also viewed the seventeen works from Furen.

These various exhibitions showcased the works of Chen Yuandu and his students. The paintings of the students were favourably reviewed, in some cases very much so; it was widely considered that the students would outstrip their master in time.<sup>125</sup> The most well-known artists of this foundational period, apart from Luke Chen, included Wang Suda, Lu Hongnian, Xu Jihua and Li Mingyuan. Sepp Schüller's work listed an oil painting, *Mater Purissima*, as the work of a student called Paul Lin.<sup>126</sup> His name does not appear in any other available literature of the period; thus he must remain unknown at present.

Fleming's collection contained a reproduction of a work *Madonna of the Snowy Willow Tree* by "Yueh Han Chan Peng", about whom little is written.<sup>127</sup> Schüller also includes one reproduction by the "young Chen Peng", displaying "qualities of simplicity without any trace of European influence."<sup>128</sup> It is more than likely that they are the same person. *Yuehan* is one way the Christian name John is rendered in Chinese. Apart from guessing that this artist was Christian, in the absence of further information we can only note that, in addition to those whose work has survived, there were others involved in painting Christian themes.<sup>129</sup>

Although the Catholic University did not last long in the form in which it was established, being formally taken over by the new government in the early 1950s, there were at least two generations of painters that emerged from its art department: the artists of the period from 1933 onwards and then the painters who joined them later.

This second batch of artists came to the public's attention in the 1940s. This presumably indicated that, by this time, or at least from this time onwards,

they had already graduated.<sup>130</sup> Liu Yanbin, for instance, was one of a group of seventeen women who began their studies at the Furen art department in 1939. They were the first women enrolled; their graduation year was 1942. Liu stated that she was encouraged to pursue Christian themes in her art by Fr. Harold Rigney, the rector of the university. While her autobiographical essay suggests that she was producing such art in the late 1940s and early 1950s, no examples of her work from this period have yet come to light.<sup>131</sup> From the mid-1940s, Liu worked as a part-time assistant in the art department at Furen.

The paintings in the Ricci Institute collection were painted at the fine arts department of Sacred Heart Church, Guanganmen as noted by the inscriptions on the paintings themselves.<sup>132</sup> Monica Liu has suggested, in an appraisal of these paintings for the Ricci Institute, that this workshop or department was attached to the art department at Furen.<sup>133</sup> Strangely, there is no reference in the missionary literature of the period to a Sacred Heart church or chapel at Guanganmen, or indeed to any church near here.<sup>134</sup> The nearest church was at Xuanwumen, South Church (the Nantang), formally known as the Church of the Immaculate Conception and not known as the Church of the Sacred Heart.<sup>135</sup>

The painters working at this workshop were Hua Xianxian, who also signed his paintings Lujia Hua (Luke Hua), Lu Biyun, Bai Huichun (also known as Bai Kang), Francis Gao Jichang and Wang (or Huang) Zhengyang. Li Mingyuan also painted for this workshop. He was a member of the first generation and had graduated earlier than his peers. There are also pieces in the collection by Lu Hongnian, so it is possible that he was also involved with this workshop, or at the very least had ongoing connections with the next generation of students. Monica Liu suggests that some of the works from this workshop also showed the influence of Wang Suda. At any rate, while there is barely anything written about this workshop or the later generation of students, there exists ample biographical information about some members of the first generation.<sup>136</sup>

Li Mingyuan was the first of those associated with the Chinese church art movement to graduate from Furen University, but less is known about him than about some of his companions. Li finished in 1933 and was thus at Furen in its earliest years, as the fine art department had been established only in 1930. As such, Chen would have taught Li only for the latter years of his degree, if at all. Li was born in 1906 in Laishui, Hebei Province.<sup>137</sup> Upon graduation, Li worked as a calligraphy instructor at the Furen middle school run by the Divine Word missionaries. This was not an uncommon career path for art graduates from

Furen University, and it perhaps explains how the graduates from the different years were able to stay in contact with each other. Fritz Bornemann's collection of reproductions shows only one of Li Mingyuan's works, painted in 1940, *On the Bridge during the Flight*.<sup>138</sup>

In 1935, Xu Jihua was the next to graduate. He was born in 1912 at Daxing in Hebei Province. His first Christian work was also at the suggestion of Brother Brückner, for the Christmas show of 1934. In these early years, he was perhaps the most enthusiastic Christian of the first generation, producing a postcard series based on images of the twelve apostles. The painting of Judas shows him holding a bag containing the thirty pieces of silver, while a demonic creature taunts him.

The next to graduate were Wang Suda and Lu Hongnian, about whom much more is known. Wang was born in 1910 or 1911, in the province of Zhejiang, into a family that prided itself on having an artist in every generation. Although he began painting at an early age, he did not study art formally until he entered Furen at the age of twenty-one. Prior to this, however, he had participated in the Beijing Artists' Society; several of his works had been exhibited in shows in Singapore and Japan.<sup>139</sup> The fact that he had been exhibited overseas reveals that the art worlds in Asia were quite interconnected. Wang used one or several of three seals on his work. These seals were inscribed Wang Suda, Suda and Can Yü. As mentioned earlier, his first Christian painting, a nativity scene, was completed, in 1934, for the Christmas exhibition organized by Brother Brückner.

Lu Hongnian was born in 1914 at Taicang in Jiangsu Province. Like Wang, there were generations of artists in his family; in recent years there had been high-ranked public officials in his family. Although the family moved to Beijing when Lu was barely one year old, he never forgot his origins, as shown by his custom of often signing his works Taicang Lu Hongnian. He was apparently interested in sketching and painting from an early age.<sup>140</sup> Once Lu Hongnian had begun to acquire a reputation as an artist, a journalist from *The China Recorder* interviewed his mother:

As a child I had to watch him to keep him from drawing pictures on all my walls. Even when I sent him to wash his face and hands, he would stand drawing pictures on the cake of soap until I would become so exasperated!<sup>141</sup>

Lu did not restrict himself to Christian themes, as noted by Mary Lawton, who found Lu's name in Ellen Laing's updated supplement to the reproduction lists

of Osvald Sirén and James Cahill.<sup>142</sup> Wang Suda and Lu Hongnian both entered Furen in 1933 and graduated in 1936. They were therefore still students at the time of the Shanghai exhibition, and were recent graduates by the time of the one held in Beijing.

In 1940, Wang Zhengyang, of the second cohort of graduates, completed his studies. It is likely that both Chen Yuandu and Wang Suda had taught him. Not much is known about Wang Zhengyang except that he came from Xu Shui in Hebei Province. In addition to work produced through the already-mentioned Church of the Sacred Heart fine arts department at Guanganmen, he also painted a work depicting St Joseph for a church of the same name at Guangze in Fujian Province. This church was in the vicariate coordinated by the Salvatorians.<sup>143</sup> He apparently also painted Christian motifs onto porcelain in a workshop at Tangshan.<sup>144</sup>

Another member of the second generation was Huang Ruilong, who was born in 1914, at Xiu Shan in Sichuan Province. He too graduated in 1940 from Furen University. Fritz Bornemann includes one reproduction of Huang's work, an *Adoration of the Magi*, which he painted in 1939.

Like their teacher Luke Chen, all the students of the first generation eventually became Catholics, as far as one can tell from the available evidence. Xu Jihua, who was reputedly a pious and devout man, was converted in 1932 (the same year as Chen), the first year of his studies at Furen. He took the baptismal name of Carl. Wang was baptized on Christmas Eve, 1937, and took the name George.<sup>145</sup> While Marie Adams noted that Lu had not yet begun a programme of catechesis at the time of the Shanghai exhibition, Mary S. Lawton has discovered that Lu Hongnian eventually did become a Catholic. He took the name John the Baptist.<sup>146</sup> The date of his conversion has yet to be discovered.

Some of the painters signed their work with their Christian names, and also added the phrase "this was reverently painted by . . ." The publicity associated with their exhibitions did not rapidly translate into an improvement in their standard of living even though, at least initially, their work gained a certain degree of national and international recognition.

By 1938, Wang Suda had procured a job in the art department of Furen. Tragically, Xu Jihua was much less fortunate. He died in great poverty in either 1937 or 1938.<sup>147</sup> Lu also found a job upon graduation, working as a calligraphy instructor in the secondary school run by the Divine Word missionaries.<sup>148</sup> Later, in 1944, he too joined Wang and Chen at Furen; by 1946, he was secretary of the department.<sup>149</sup> Several students from the department worked as art

instructors at the secondary school attached to the university. Perhaps it was a way to ensure these painters did not end up in the same parlous circumstances as Xu Jihua.

Although they produced their work for undoubtedly complex and diverse reasons, there were also some quite specific reasons the Catholic Furen artists painted the works they did. For instance, it is reported that Lu Hongnian said:

the thing that turned him toward religious pictures was the coming into possession of the Sunday school coloured picture cards which Christian friends gave to his mother. These he treasured with the hope of someday painting this type of picture himself.<sup>150</sup>

When he was quite young, he had reportedly asked his mother why it was that, “if Jesus loved all people, there were never any Chinese children with Jesus in the images”. His mother replied that, although Jesus loved everyone, the art had come from Europe and therefore only included European people. Lu then decided to become an artist and paint religious pictures that would include Chinese children as well.<sup>151</sup>

Chen Yuandu was also explicit about the religious aspect of his art. He described his painting as both an extension of Chinese artistic techniques as well as a means to spread the Christian message. In this regard, he partially exemplifies Dr. Zhu Youyu’s comments that much of the religious work was more suited for pedagogical purposes:

I believe that when I paint the wonders of Christianity according to the ancient rules of Chinese art, the painted objects exert an externally new and strange effect, so that at the same time I enrich to a marked degree the old laws of Chinese painting . . . If I can represent the teachings of our holy church in pictures according to Chinese art, and by means of such natural impressions draw the Chinese to know God, why should I not render so useful and enjoyable a service?<sup>152</sup>

## 6

# The Chinese dimension to the Furen Christian art

The teachers, students and graduates of the Furen art department now produced lively and evocative examples of Christian images in local style. In this way, they resumed the work of artistic adaptation that had occurred in the time of the Zhangzhou sculptors and in that of João da Rocha and Giulio Aleni, discussed in Chapter 1. Whereas in the age of the French protectorate the French statues, paintings and pieties had overshadowed Chinese Christian images, these Chinese images now began to reappear. Chinese Christian communities and influential missionaries supported their return, as did numbers of foreign Catholics. The work of these artists is reproduced in a number of publications, of which the Society of the Divine Word priest Fritz Bornemann's *Ars Sacra Pekinensis* has the richest collection, containing ninety-nine reproductions, including several in colour.<sup>1</sup>

There was much debate, however, about the quality of the Furen artworks and whether or not the dream of the future was sufficient reason to persevere with the work of the present. Bornemann argued that there were significant reasons why the enterprise should be continued, insisting that the works already produced could indeed be called Chinese ecclesiastical art.

Essentially, he argued that there were five distinct reasons why the works should be considered both ecclesiastical and Chinese. They were Christian because of their subject matter. They were Chinese for the following reasons: first, the unique Chinese characteristics evident in the format and materials used to create the art; second, the use of traditional painting techniques; third, the inclusion of aspects of the natural world such as trees, shrubs and so on; fourth, the deliberate use of Chinese flora and fauna in the scenes the artists chose to depict (even in a traditional Christmas scene, for instance); and finally, the substantial representation of Chinese objects like buildings, tools, musical instruments and furniture.<sup>2</sup>

Given that Bornemann was neither an art historian nor, seemingly, even an amateur artist, his judgement was most likely based on the opinions of other writers, including people like Berchmanns Brückner, his fellow Divine Word missionary who was an artist. It is also helpful—and indeed necessary—to consider these arguments in relation to the paintings and works of art as well.

The Furen graduates mostly used Chinese calligraphy brushes to paint onto paper and silk scrolls, even though their art training had included Western painting techniques: the artists were obviously making conscious decisions about both the medium and the method they employed. Furthermore, the scrolls were mostly vertical, with the cloth, silk, or card borders typical of Chinese paintings. Examples of paintings in the vertical format include Chen Yuandu's *Mary, Queen of the Angels* (1938) and Lu Hongnian's *Our Lady's Lantern Festival* (1936; see the accompanying illustrations). Examples of paintings in horizontal format include works from the Guanganmen workshop, like *The Angel Visiting the Shepherds* by Luke Hua (Lujia Hua) painted in 1948 (not shown here).

The artists almost universally employed traditional painting techniques and visual tropes to depict water, clouds, branches, grass, figures and so on. This included techniques like using the empty spaces of the scrolls to create a sense of distance, as was common in the *shanshui* (mountain and water) genre, and applying ink in certain formulaic ways. Such time-honoured methods were described in classic manuals like the *Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* (*Jieziyuan Huazhuan*), published in the late seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup>

These traditional styles were the strengths of Furen professors like Pu Quan and Pu Jin; it is therefore no surprise to find that the curriculum was heavily weighted towards these techniques. The *Furen Yearbook* of 1946, for instance, reveals that first-year students were obliged to take fourteen hours of tuition each week within the Chinese painting section of the department. These hours were given over to courses on practical calligraphy, on seal-making (the stones or pieces of jade carved with a signature or defining mark) and on the depiction of living creatures, flowers and birds and natural scenery. This last subject, called “animate beings”, involved “training in the fundamental techniques of landscape painting, composition of simple pictures and a general introduction to brushwork.”<sup>4</sup> Several years after the establishment of the university, Chen Yuandu and Lu Hongnian taught the class on animate beings, while Pu Jin and Pu Quan were listed as teaching the calligraphy and scenery classes (perhaps in their homes). Given the emphasis in the classical tradition on the painting of

landscapes, it is not surprising that such aspects of nature were almost always included in the Furen artists' paintings.

In addition to the classical artists who painted *shanshui* scenes, there were also artists renowned for their representations of birds, flowers, trees, rocks or bamboo. Some artists even specialized in, for example, painting only one type of flora. Thus, just as there are masters of birds and flowers, so too were there experts in the painting of bamboo, as in all the celebrated styles. Each genre likewise had its own methodology, for instance, painting only in monochrome or only using a certain type of brushstroke. The masterpieces in each genre were used as exemplars, both to imitate and to allude to in new work. The classical background of the senior, princely professors at Furen, not to mention their personal familiarity with the best examples of traditional classics in the imperial palace, meant that the young students were provided with a thorough grounding in the appropriate forms.

As a further elucidation of the importance of nature in Chinese art, it is helpful to focus on the use of bamboo in particular. One work included here, Lu Hongnian's *Seeking Shelter*, was painted in 1936. It depicts Joseph and his pregnant spouse seeking a place to lay their heads, and is a helpful and beautiful example of the form.

As Laurence Sickman and Alexander Soper noted so magisterially decades ago, bamboo had come to signify more than just a spiritual union with the natural world. Rather, in part because of its shape and its hardiness, it came to possess a deeper and much weightier symbolic meaning:

The graceful, elegant plant came, in China, to symbolize the perfect gentleman, the superior man (*chun tzu [junzi]*), the man who, like the pliant, but resilient trunk of the bamboo, bends to the times, adapts himself to society, but retains unaffected within himself his moral character. The slim, pointed leaves as they hang motionless on a still day or bend and twist with every breeze, or stream out like banners in the wind, are a fascinating delight to watch and a challenge to any artist.<sup>5</sup>

Lu Hongnian's work (unfortunately shown here only in black-and-white reproduction) depicts the well-known Christmas scene, in which Mary and Joseph have travelled to Joseph's ancestral village for the purposes of a census and are knocking on the outer doors of a house. It is clearly a cold, wintry day: even though it is hard to work out what colours were used in the original work, there is a strong use of contrasting light and dark that add to the bleakness of the scene. There is snow on the thatched entrance way, Joseph's footsteps are

shown in the snow collected on the ground, and a huddled Mary is turning away from the door, too weary to wipe down her own outer garments. Both are dressed in simple Chinese clothing; there is a meagre bundle at their feet, knotted together. The needy couple elicits the viewer's sympathy, regardless of the viewer's knowledge of the biblical story.

It is in Lu Hongnian's skilful portrayal of bamboo, however, that one can see the emergence of a truly Chinese style of Christian art. The figures of Joseph and Mary are shown almost completely framed by branches and fronds of bamboo. The branches enter from the left-hand side of the vertical scroll and lead the viewers' eyes towards the figures in the middle of the scene. The forlorn figures are surrounded by a heavy mass of leaves, displayed in starkly contrasting monochrome. One's gaze is brought from the lower left-hand corner of the work in towards the figures in the middle. Yet, they can only be seen as through a bamboo grove, darkly; the thickly assembled bamboo leaves, with their alternating shadings, add great pathos to the scene. There is no room at this inn; as suggested by Lu Hongnian's work, the righteousness of Joseph causes even the very bamboo (that symbol of the superior man) to shudder at his plight.

One reason for the emphasis on the natural world was undoubtedly the metaphysical principle that nature is infused with the numinous; a principle held by Buddhists, Daoists and indeed even Christians. In Sickman and Soper's words, again, "Inasmuch as the First Principle, the Buddha-nature, pervaded all things it was as much revealed in a blade of grass as in a mountain range, in a bird on a branch as in the flight of the Dragon, in the rush of a waterfall as in the roar of the tiger."<sup>6</sup> In China, even today, certain mountains are considered to be sacred within both Buddhism and Daoism. In Confucianism, harmony was not only expressed through right relationships between people but also between humanity and the world. The Confucian tradition also taught that self-improvement could come about through a reflection upon nature rather than upon more worldly affairs. An essay on painting from the eleventh century answered its own question about the value of being at one with nature:

Why does a virtuous man take delight in landscapes? It is for these reasons: that in a rustic retreat he may nourish his nature; that in the carefree play of streams and rocks, he may take delight; that he may constantly meet in the country fishermen, woodcutters and hermits, and see the soaring of the cranes and hear the crying of the monkeys.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to including various animate beings or geological features as deliberate accompaniments to the scene, the works of the Furen artists often

portrayed Christian stories set outside buildings, like the flight to Egypt, the angel appearing to the shepherds and, in a delightfully imaginative piece, Lu Hongnian's *Our Lady's Lantern Festival*. The surrounding scenery was thus an essential and logical aspect of the painting. Even when scenes occurred in a house, for instance in the many paintings about the annunciation, a plant in the house would be included (as in Lu Hongnian's *Annunciation* of 1946, included in the illustrations), or the viewer would be able to see the garden or the surrounding countryside through a window (as, for instance, in Chen Yuandu's *Madonna at the Window*, painted in 1933).

These inclusions had raised the ire of the anonymous reviewer of the Shanghai exhibition, who thought there was too much attention paid to the scenery. It seems, however, that criticism of this type missed the important cultural reasons for including natural scenery. If the artists had not included nature in their work, they would have failed in both their desires: their paintings would not have been truly Chinese and, therefore, they would not have fulfilled Costantini's desire to bring about an ecclesiastical art that gave full and genuine expression to the particularities of the Chinese world, in a Christian way.

Paintings that displayed traditional Chinese landscape stylistic devices, like mountains receding into the distance, sometimes with clouds or space providing the sense of perspective, included, for instance, Huang Ruilong's *The Adoration of the Magi* (1936), as well as *The Flight to Egypt*, painted by Luke Chen in 1938, and *Holy Family at Work*, produced by Wang Suda in 1939. *Madonna in the Garden* (1936), by Wang Suda, also included a carved stone of the kind used in Chinese gardens as a decorative device, a custom that dated to before the Song dynasty.<sup>8</sup>

A brief examination of Huang Ruilong's *Adoration of the Magi* (included in the illustrations) enables this integration of Christianity with Chinese natural motifs to be seen more clearly. The magi are shown making their way through a complex and daunting mountain range. The large scale of the painting enables the painter not only to create a sense of connection with nature but also to do it in a way that moves one beyond the realities of nature.

That is, although the towering mountain forms are vivid and realistic, the depth of field and sense of perspective, provided by the use of lighter ink washes to represent clouds and mist, actually invites viewers to use their imaginations to fill in the voids created by this use of space and colour. The atmospheric effect of a close attention to nature has in fact freed the viewer to move

beyond the real and into a mystical or fantastical world, whatever his or her religious background.

This is accentuated in Huang's painting by the fact that the artist has not even included the holy family. The viewer has to imagine the one whom the magi so arduously seek. Yet, the work is still clearly a "wise men from the East" painting, as a star is shown descending upon a hut in the middle foreground on the left. The star has a clear reference to the nativity.<sup>9</sup> This work thus displays Huang's skills in landscape painting to good effect, while still reflecting upon a major Christian story.

Although, at first glance, there is some truth to the criticism that the people have become marginal to the picture, one can argue that this is a remarkable painting because of the way it presents an unusual perspective of a well-known scene. Rather than emphasize the exotic gifts, or the magi's distinctive clothing (even though, it must be said, one of the kings does ride a camel), Huang's version concentrates on the difficulty of the journey and, thereby, the depth of wonder that prompted them to undertake it. Furthermore, in a culture that placed great value on friends visiting from afar, the painting has important and powerful underlying resonances.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, Lujia Hua's own painting of the *Visit of the Magi* (shown in the accompanying illustrations) stands in fascinating contrast, because here the Chinese aspects are in the inclusion of figures in Chinese clothing and visiting a Chinese house. While Huang has concentrated on the essence of the story, Hua has taken the classical Christian representation and transposed it to his own world.

In 1934, Lu Hongnian painted *Crossing the River during the Flight* (unfortunately not included here). It ingeniously translates the story of the flight to Egypt to a Chinese context: the family escapes its pursuers on a boat through river marshes. Just as European artists rendered this story by illustrating European fields and crops in the background, while Central American artists used their own iconographic style to depict this same theme, so too has Lu Hongnian used Chinese scenery for the same effect.<sup>11</sup> Given the ongoing popularity of the classical Chinese novel *Water Margin*, it is not too bold to suggest that there may well be allusions in this painting to the legendary band of heroes who hid in the watery marshes during their fight against a corrupt government.<sup>12</sup> If this is so, then Lu Hongnian has managed to convey to a Chinese audience in a Chinese way the dread brought about by Herod's tyranny. The author of the *Life of Christ* in Chinese images found this river scene intriguing, noting its shift to a Chinese context and stating that it "is as independent of any

Western treatment as it is ignorant of the weary sand between Bethlehem and El Kantara.”<sup>13</sup>

The ferocious storm on the lake that frightened the apostles sleeping in the boat is likewise ingeniously and vividly rendered by Wang Suda in *Jesus Calms the Storm* (1937; included in the illustrations). The roiling waves are not only suggestive of distinctive Chinese techniques but also reminiscent of Katsushika Hokusai's *Great Wave off Kanagawa*, one of the most famous works from the Japanese *ukiyo-e* school of painting.<sup>14</sup> In addition to how the tops of the waves fly out like birds on the wing, so too does the angle of the fishing boat echo that of the boats in Hokusai's print. One significant difference is that in this work Jesus is shown to be mastering the elements, whereas in Hokusai's work the humans are reduced to anxious faces huddling before nature's might.<sup>15</sup>

There was a concerted effort by the artists to show distinctly Chinese items of flora (and more rarely fauna). At times, the paintings can seem almost whimsical; the bamboo, pines, acacia and banana trees, or sheep, parrots and cranes, can seem merely part of the background scenery. At other times, the natural features provide critical framing for the human subjects. In addition to its use in *Seeking Shelter*, discussed above, bamboo is included as part of the background in Chen's *Madonna at the Window* (1933), in his *Holy Family with Angels* (1934) and in Lu Hongnian's *Annunciation* (1946; included in the illustrations). The foliage thereby serves an important artistic role by drawing our attention to the situation of the biblical characters. The pines in Wang Suda's *The Good Samaritan* (1937) stand as decorative parts of the scenery (while yet situating the story in China) whereas in his *Flight into Egypt* (1935), the scene is dominated by the snow-clad branches of the pine tree in the middle of the painting. The heavily laden pine adds to the poignancy of a family fleeing through winter's cold.

A variety of Chinese flowers and shrubs, including peonies and the la-mei flower, are represented. The la-mei shrub, among the earliest to bloom around Christmastime in northern China, was included in several nativity scenes.<sup>16</sup> Thus, in both Lu Hongnian's *Cave at Bethlehem* (1940) and Wang Suda's *Holy Night* (1946), the la-mei blossoms are just beginning to open, adding a touch of colour to the scene. This second painting is also set in a cave, although more open to the elements.

The peony flower is used in at least two different ways.<sup>17</sup> A peony has been included in the rear of Chen's *Jesus before Pilate* (1942), behind Pilate's right shoulder. This work thus emphasizes Pilate's secular authority as an imperial

governor, not only through his official clothing and the grand furniture in the painting, but also through the use of this prestigious flower. In a different example, Wang Suda's *Queen of the Angels* (1935), the heavenly majesty of Mary is emphasized through the insertion of a large peony bush to the left of Mary's feet, in among the swirling clouds and the joyful angels.

In yet another example from Wang Suda, his *Annunciation* of 1946 (illustrated here), a large curtain hanging from the ceiling of the outer porch is drawn back to allow the viewer to see the angel Gabriel appearing to a kneeling Mary. The curtain is extensively decorated with peonies, adding to the grandeur of the scene. Finally, in another *Annunciation* (by Lu Hongnian, painted in 1946, and mentioned above), there is an exquisitely rendered pot of orange daylilies on a low table in front of the kneeling Mary. Although each component part of the painting shows great attention to detail, this small feature in the foreground could easily stand on its own as an example of the Chinese flower style. That it is included as a small yet beautiful part of one of the most important Christian stories shows how far the wishes of Costantini, and indeed the aims of the artists themselves, had been achieved. This *Annunciation* most certainly deserves a greater audience than it has had to date.

Yet for all that, flowers and trees were not always included. Wang Suda's *Pentecost* (1946), for instance, deliberately avoided the use of nature. While the absence of any foliage or flora was strange in a cultural sense, in this case it can be suggested that this was an ingenious inversion of a traditional custom. The Pentecost story concerns the visit of the Holy Spirit to the dispirited and frightened disciples gathered in a closed upper room. This visit gave the disciples the strength "to go out to all the world and proclaim what they had experienced."<sup>18</sup> The total absence of the external, natural, world only reinforces the shut-in effect and the overwhelming fear felt by early followers of the crucified Jesus, who have met in secret. Since Wang was baptized in 1937, he could no longer be considered a neophyte; the lack of nature, otherwise almost always evident in his work, could only have been intentional.

The Chinese fauna represented included (among other things) bird species, the kind of donkeys found in China and fat-tailed sheep. This breed was common to north China, or, at least, having fat tails was a common physical feature resulting from the fact that sheep tails were not docked. Sheep can be seen in Chen's *The Angel and the Shepherds* (1936), and there are two examples of donkeys in Chen's *She Laid Him in a Manger* and *The Child in a Crib*, both

painted in 1938. The Guanganmen collection also includes an undated painting by Luke Hua entitled *Mary Playing with a Parrot*.

The fifth and final Chinese aspect that Bornemann commented upon was the Chinese physiognomy of the human subjects (which varied from being quite pronounced to only slightly noticeable), and the distinctively Chinese clothing, hairstyles, furniture, utensils, food, musical instruments and buildings in the various paintings.

These items were unmistakably Chinese, yet their inclusion did not detract from the essential aspects of the Christian story. The depictions of buildings ranged from a simple rural hut or inn in Lu Hongnian's *Seeking Shelter* (1935) to a rich man's banquet hall in Luke Chen's *Dives and Lazarus* (1937). Luke Chen's *Madonna at the Window* depicts Mary cradling Jesus, inside a garden pavilion. The two are framed by a curved window of the type often found in Chinese pavilions.<sup>19</sup> Lu Hongnian's *Our Lady's Lantern Festival* (1936; shown in the illustrations) takes place on the terrace of a large house, complete with marble balustrade and elaborately decorated roof columns.

Objects took all forms and served many purposes. Chen Yuandu's *Our Lady, Queen of Angels* takes a familiar and traditional, Western means of referring to Mary, yet totally transforms both the angels and Mary into heavenly Chinese creatures. The faces, the flowing robes, the bunched hairstyles and the rendering of clouds are all unmistakably Chinese. Yet it is not enough to show Chinese angels merely at rest, as clearly the tradition indicates that they would be engaged in some form of celebration. Thus, rather than have hosts of angels crying *hosanna*, Chen limits his heavenly chorus to eight female musicians, playing Chinese musical instruments in homage to the child Jesus, who is shown as attentive and alert. As viewers gaze at this work, they are invited to imagine hearing music made with the four-stringed pipa, a flute, cymbals, bamboo pipes and the peculiar ten-piece cloud gong (*yunguo*) suspended from a wooden frame.<sup>20</sup>

Wang Suda's *He Was Subject to Them* (1940) imaginatively shows Jesus serving his parents at table. Joseph and Mary sit at a table upon which is a typical setting complete with chopsticks and soy sauce or vinegar bottles. The servant in Luke Chen's *Wedding at Cana* (1941) is carrying a Chinese-style water bucket, and there are Chinese carpentry tools in the painting *He Was Subject to Them*, as well as in the *Holy Family at Work* (1939) and one undated painting entitled *St Joseph*, both by Wang Suda.

In short, through a close analysis of these paintings, it is possible to uncover an endless number of items as diverse as Chinese flora, fauna, landscapes, buildings, formal gardens and daily utensils (both of the kind used by ordinary people as well as by the wealthy and educated) that all reveal the extent to which these painters sought to portray the Christian story in a Chinese way. Although church officials argued about the effectiveness of these paintings, both as works of art and as truly Chinese pictures, the meticulous attention to quotidian details is undeniable.

It is thus all the more interesting, therefore, when the artists did not change or sinicize certain aspects of the Christian story. Two clear instances are found in different representations of the seminal Christian story of the annunciation. In numerous examples, the Holy Spirit is depicted as a dove and the angel is shown giving a lily to Mary, or at least placing one near her. Other paintings of Marian scenes also include a lily, shown held in the hand or placed in a container, as for instance Chen's *Holy Family with the Angels* (1934), which has lilies in a vase and peonies in the angels' hands. It is possible to argue that, given that the Chinese Christian artistic movement was still in its foundational stage, perhaps these symbols might have evolved into something else later. Alternatively, these symbols might well have been considered unchangeable. Just as Jesus' death had to happen on a cross, so too did the Holy Spirit have an immutable symbolic representation; likewise, the purity of Mary was always to be represented by the placement of lilies.

Even the earliest Chinese versions of the annunciation, discussed above, maintained the use of a dove to represent the Holy Spirit. Whereas the dove image is derived from the bible, and thus has a long history of standing for the Holy Spirit in Western art, in traditional Chinese symbolism the dove was capable of holding several meanings:<sup>21</sup> "The Chinese believe the dove to be eminently stupid and lascivious, but grant it the qualities of faithfulness, impartiality and filial duty."<sup>22</sup> The Chinese artists of Furen perhaps thought that the portrayal of the Holy Spirit as a dove was so iconic as to be able to overcome these contrary values. Likewise, the artists seemed happy to keep the lily, which did not symbolize purity in Chinese art, unchanged as well.

### **Art as a catechetical tool**

Scholars of the Furen artists have pointed out that one important function of their works was to serve as catechetical aids. It was hoped that they would serve

a similar function as the effective and immensely popular Stations of the Cross devotion. These works were painted for display in churches and chapels but were also to be placed in people's living rooms as adornments in a neophyte's home. They were to be regarded as "bibles for the poor".<sup>23</sup> The content of the paintings was largely biblically based, with a strong preference for the infancy narratives and for representations of the Madonna and child. In Bornemann's view, certain images of saints were difficult to portray in a Chinese style because the images were too tied to the life history of that saint. (Although, as seen above, the portrayal of moments in Chinese Christian history like the arrival of John of Montecorvino was excepted, for obvious reasons.)

The French saint, St Thérèse of the Little Flower (Thérèse of Lisieux), was one notable exception. She could be removed from a specific geographical context as a result of her official designation as co-patron of all the missions. Thérèse consequently became very popular in China, with many churches built in the early part of the twentieth century named after her. A common depiction of Thérèse shows her holding bunches of flowers, which she then allows to fall from her hands, like so many graces showering the faithful. One ordination card shows Thérèse kneeling before Mary and the infant Jesus and entreating them to look after China (included in the illustrations), while petals and blossoms fall to the earth from Thérèse's arms. This card clearly reveals how a subject that originated in one region could nevertheless become popular in another place. While the card is European in style and the figures are depicted as European (without any substitution of Chinese features) the focus is still very much on China, as shown through the placement of Mary and Jesus above a map of China. Localization had thus occurred through the use of context rather than through the adoption of certain styles.

Earlier, Daniel Johnson Fleming had argued that Chinese cultural mores were evident not only in what was painted but also what was not. Mary Lawton cited Fleming's argument, that there were not many versions of the well-known story of the prodigal son, for instance, because "an incident in which 'the father ran to meet him' would have never occurred in China and so an important point would have been lost in the exposition."<sup>24</sup> She also stated,

there are very few Ascensions or Crucifixions and, again, these are painted by only one or two men. Such rarity of themes so prevalent in the West is, in part, in deference to the general proclivity of the Chinese to avoid the depiction of physical suffering in art. Moreover, a similar aversion to nudity meant that the image of a semi-clad Christ suspended upon the

cross would have offended the traditional sense of decorum and contravened the degree of respect felt to be due to Him.<sup>25</sup>

This seems to overstate the case and to underplay the influence of other factors. While it is true that there are not many known depictions of the prodigal son story, there did exist a number of examples where this story had been rendered in Chinese style. For instance, there is a *Prodigal Son* among the paintings at the Protestant mission hospital in Hangzhou, and another example painted by Chen Yuandu in 1936. This latter example even shows the father as having left the house in order to greet his wayward son. Although Confucian values emphasized filial piety, this did not automatically mean that the father would not express his joy at the return of his repentant child. The painting was completed for a Christian audience as a catechetical tool, furthermore, such that the emphasis was placed on Christian teachings and not on Confucian values, even if it meant countering a hitherto strongly held cultural value.

It is likewise not entirely true that there were only a limited number of paintings featuring the crucifixion. The overall number of painters involved in the movement to develop Chinese Christian art was not actually large (for all the emerging importance of this movement), so there is not anything particularly significant in the fact that the crucifixion was painted by only one or two of the artists, to our knowledge. Bornemann's collection included three crucifixions, one painted by Luke Chen and two by Wang Suda; it is also known that numerous versions of the Stations of the Cross were painted by a number of the artists.

Alongside the rosary, the Stations of the Cross devotion was the most popular of the Christian pieties practised by Chinese Catholics. A printed, sinicized version of the crucifixion had been produced in China very early in the church's history, as seen in Chapter 1. Based on what we know about Costantini's knowledge of Christian art, it would have been most unlikely that he was unaware of this version or did not come to know of it over time. The crucifixion, consequently, was an ever-present image on pilgrimage paths, on rosary beads, on church walls, on altars and on the interior walls of buildings. This can be seen in a photograph of Wang Suda painting in his home; behind him, a crucifix hangs on the wall.<sup>26</sup> Remember, too, that Catholic prayer, either private or communal, also usually begins with the individual making the sign of the cross with his or her hand. Simply, the story of the crucifixion was very widely known and there were images of it everywhere within the Chinese

Christian communities. At this time, therefore, it was not painted as frequently as some other subjects, perhaps because of its very ubiquity.

One of the goals of those involved in painting Christian art was to develop a genre that ensured that many of the Christian stories became better known and appreciated. The images that were rarely displayed, or the stories that had not been told in Chinese style, were precisely the ones that were to be made more readily available through the works of these artists. Thus, instead of crucifixions, one finds subjects like the wedding at Cana and the story about Lazarus and Dives. Yet, in addition to painting those stories that had not often been depicted, the artists also painted the most popular devotional themes: various moments in the life of Mary, as well as stories from the hidden life of Jesus, especially during the time of his infancy. They did this whether or not these stories were based on biblical accounts, inventing, in fact, some scenes, as for instance the charming *Our Lady's Lantern Festival* mentioned above. The angels here are not talented female musicians, as in Chen's painting discussed earlier; rather they are impish young cherubs climbing trees and waving lanterns as they surround Mary and her child. In all likelihood, the sheer popularity of the infancy stories (which obviously included a Marian focus) likewise limited the number of crucifixions that were painted.

It does not seem likely, either, that "a traditional sense of decorum" limited the number of paintings of crucifixions, especially showing a semi-clad Jesus. As early as 1915, the Chinese art world, of which the Furen artists must be considered at least a small part, had already been engaged in depicting nude figures:

... the nudes in Liu Haisu's exhibition created something of a scandal. By 1922, however, the Ministry of Education had given the nude its official sanction, and in October of that year, an exhibition of Western-style paintings was held, including nudes and others oils by Wu Fading and Li Chaoshi.<sup>27</sup>

Initially, the Chinese Christian painters had drawn their inspiration from a number of classical Western artworks that did not lack for semi-clad figures: thus it is unlikely that the artists' engaged in self-censorship on this subject. Rather than prudishness, the artists' general catechetical aims, combined with the overwhelming popularity of other images as well as an awareness of the likely destinations and intended role of these works, were more likely the main causes for a preponderance of paintings on subjects other than the crucifixion.

The crucifixion paintings that do exist strikingly illustrate the manner in which the fundamental Christian stories were portrayed in a Chinese way through the utilization of the various cultural adaptations described above. The inclusion of distinctly Chinese scenery, flora, fauna and so on did not alter the identifiable and essential core of the stories. Jesus' death, therefore, was not portrayed as anything other than a man being nailed to a cross. Within these limits, however, the story was expressed in a Chinese way. This was achieved both through the artistic techniques employed by the painter and by the particular depiction of the scene. As mentioned, Wang Suda painted the crucifixion at least twice, judging from the available reproductions: in both examples one can see different cultural adaptations. Unfortunately, the only available reproductions are in black and white. (Wang's 1940 *Crucifixion* is reproduced here in the illustrations.)

The first example, painted for the Catholic mission at Xianxian in the twenty-ninth year of the Republican period (i.e., 1940), included Chinese characters written on the plaque fixed to the top of the cross. The phrasing is too indistinct to make out in the reproduction but presumably sticks to the original sense. The earlier *Crucifixion* of 1937, on the other hand, retains the more traditional inscription *INRI*.<sup>28</sup>

The Xianxian *Crucifixion* portrays one of the soldiers wearing a Japanese-style sword. This is a fascinating touch, insofar as China was still at war with Japan (1937–45). Thus, just as Roman troops were hated in first-century Palestine for being occupiers, so too did the Chinese citizens despise Japanese soldiers, especially the real atrocities that had been perpetrated by them.<sup>29</sup> The portrayal of the executioners of Jesus as Japanese could only have heightened the emotional response of viewers to the crucifixion of Jesus.

In the earlier version, however, the soldiers are dressed in Ming-period soldiers' uniforms, complete with a quiver of arrows. This not only gives the scene an historical sense but also locates it in a specific Chinese context. Fortunately, Marie Adams described this other *Crucifixion* at length:

Wang's pictures are full of colour, but in such detail that the bright reds and blues do not stand out as do those of Mr Chen. While the *Crucifixion* is a picture that should be seen in the original rather than in a small print, it shows very well Mr Wang's style. On the left, the group of Jesus' friends are dressed quite simply, while the group of soldiers casting lots for his garments are the ancient, much bedressed ones and give Mr Wang a full chance to work in detail and colour. While at first the picture may not

appeal to most Westerners, it does to the Chinese. Student groups spend a long time in the study of this picture and some of them have said that nothing has ever made the crucifixion as real to them as this picture.<sup>30</sup>

This comment reveals how these works did in fact achieve one of their aims: to introduce Christian stories in a way that made them real and understandable to Chinese people. It was hoped that an emotive engagement with the story would create receptivity to the message conveyed by the painting.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, although the quotation describes the observations of only one viewer, these words show that the question of reception was a complex one and that Chinese Christian art was more than just a fad promoted and supported only by a few Westerners. These works, and the reception of them, therefore reveal aspects of the Chinese Christian communities. In the same way, the choice of thematic content illustrates key identifying characteristics of the Catholic communities.

While there were many paintings of more obvious biblical subjects like the annunciation and the nativity (to be expected given the intentionally catechetical nature of the works and the popularity of the infancy narratives), there were also a number of paintings on other aspects of Jesus' life, showing, among other things, the multiplication of the loaves, the parable of the rich young man and the washing of the feet at the last supper. There was even a portrayal of Peter being given the keys to the kingdom, which although a metaphorical expression used by Jesus, has subsequently become a symbol of the papacy. This was, therefore, a decidedly Catholic painting.

## Marian paintings

The largest number of paintings portrayed scenes that were not based on scriptural stories, but were, rather, largely imaginative reflections on the life of the holy family, creative representations of the Madonna and child or simply paintings of Mary on her own. Some of these show influences from painters presented as models for Chen and others. In the main, these painters were European and, predominantly, Italian. Sepp Schüller saw traces of Raphael, Fra Angelico and Filippo Lippi in some of Chen's works, in the paintings on such themes as the annunciation and the visit by the shepherds, as for instance in the position of the subjects and the choice of furniture. While later paintings may take the same themes, however, it is possible to detect in them the increasing maturity of the artists and their confidence in adapting the original settings.

Although the paintings were important catechetical tools overall, they were also windows into the soul of the Chinese Catholic communities. It is for this reason that there was a preponderance of non-biblical thematic content. It is no accident that the artists painted so many images of Mary, given the central place of Marian piety and devotions in the life of Chinese Catholics. Once Chinese artists were engaged in creating a Chinese Christian religious style, they were obviously also going to express this style through works that honoured Mary. The result was a creative and imaginative engagement with the fundamental Christian stories, as well as a promotion of the devotion to Mary, Queen of China.

While a number of these Marian paintings were based on traditional biblical stories, as mentioned above, there were as many (if not more) paintings that did not represent canonical stories. The biblical accounts featuring Mary included portrayals of the annunciation, the adoration of the magi, various aspects of the nativity scene (finding shelter, visiting shepherds, or being in the manger and so on), the wedding at Cana, Mary at the crucifixion and a painting of Pentecost that featured Mary as well. Other paintings portrayed traditional aspects of the Marian cult that are extra-biblical, for instance, Our Lady, Queen of Heaven; Mary, Star of the Sea; Mary Queen of the Angels; Mother of the Redeemer; the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Immaculate Conception. There was even a painting that depicted a potentially heretical devotion to Mary, as wife of the Holy Spirit.<sup>32</sup>

Other paintings, while more imaginative still, were nevertheless orthodox in their theology, simply placing Mary in Chinese environments, wholly removed from first-century Palestine or from other traditional cultic settings. Thus one can find works entitled *Mary at the Window*, set in a Chinese garden, *Madonna with the Dove* (where the dove does not represent the Holy Spirit as it lacks the halo of light, a traditional symbol of divinity or sanctity), *Madonna under the Blossom Bough*, *Madonna in the Garden*, *Madonna under a Willow*, *The Red Madonna* and the two aforementioned pieces, *Our Lady, Queen of Angels*, in which the angels play Chinese instruments, and *Madonna and the Lantern Festival*, where angels carrying lanterns surround Mary and the child Jesus and celebrate a particular and popular Chinese feast.

Some non-biblically derived Marian paintings had explicitly Chinese titles or content. One reproduction in Bornemann's collection was entitled *Our Lady of China* (different from the original 1908 image) and another was called *Mary, the Protector of China*. Wang Suda painted both these works. In 1942, Wang

also painted an altarpiece for one of the chapels at Furen entitled *The Chinese Martyrs*, which showed Christians who had been killed in China kneeling at Mary's feet. Chen also had painted an altarpiece with the title *Mary, Patroness of Indigenous Clergy*. This title and the painting itself were especially evocative because of the way in which Chinese clergy had been kept from positions of responsibility well into the twentieth century. Just as the 1926 ordination of the six Chinese bishops by Pope Pius XII showed Chinese priests to be the equal of clergy everywhere, so too did this devotion show that Chinese seminarians had as much right to claim Mary as their patron as any other group of men training for the priesthood.

Thus, one can see that these paintings from Furen not only illustrated the fundamental and traditional pieties of Chinese Catholic communities, but also were critically engaged in expressing the Chinese church's emerging individuality. Luke Chen, Wang Suda, Lu Hongnian and several others began to be well-known within the Chinese Catholic communities. Their works were also used on all manner of church occasions, ranging from prayer cards at ordinations to devotional artwork in family homes. The work from the artists of Furen was a major response to the needs of the times, especially as the needs of the church communities had been articulated by Costantini. The emergence of a Chinese Christian style of church art was thus also a critical part of the movement towards a Chinese Catholic identity. This movement found expression in other parts of the country at the same time; again, many of these expressions took the form of Marian devotions. One of the most important of these was at Sheshan, Shanghai.

### Sheshan Shengmu

There had been at Sheshan since 1867 a small Marian shrine, which consisted of a painted reproduction of the Parisian image of Our Lady of Victories. This was originally inside a small octagonal chapel, constructed by a French Jesuit with a great devotion to Mary. The original painting was done by one of the Chinese Jesuit artists at the Tushanwan workshop at Xujiahui.<sup>33</sup> In the next year, 1868, there was an official inauguration of a formal Marian pilgrimage. The pilgrimage took on greater significance, however, after the bloody events of June 1870, when twenty foreigners, including ten sisters and two priests, were killed in Tianjin. The Jesuit then in charge of the Jiangnan mission, Agnellus della Corte, was replacing Fr. Languillat while he was back in Europe for the

First Vatican Council. Fr. della Corte made a private pilgrimage to Sheshan to pray for the safety of all the Christians under his care.

He prayed at the grille in front of the little shrine, reputedly saying, “My good mother, our mission is in danger. Save us and I promise that we will build you a beautiful church on the same place as the little chapel.”<sup>34</sup> He then returned to Shanghai. The persecution did not eventuate. In the minds of the Catholics, there was only one reason for this: Mary had heard della Corte’s prayer. Construction soon began on a larger church. Upon his return from Europe in 1871, Fr. Languillat blessed the first stone of this church; in 1873, the sanctuary was opened. To a large extent, the construction of the new church was funded by the Chinese Catholics of the lower Yangzi valley. Later, the Jesuits installed a more substantial image, a statue based on the same Our Lady of Victories image. The pilgrimage continued to grow in popularity, especially during the traditional Marian pilgrimage month of May, with the feast day of 24 May, Our Lady Help of Christians, drawing large numbers of the faithful.<sup>35</sup> This pilgrimage developed substantially over the years.

Three small pavilions were built at a slightly lower level of the hill. These contained statues of Our Lady of Lourdes (built in 1897 in Gothic style and shown in the illustrations), Jesus of the Sacred Heart (built in 1904 with money donated by Mrs Bell, an American Catholic) and St Joseph (built in 1905).<sup>36</sup> They were connected to the church on the summit by a path that snaked its way to the top of the hill, and by two slightly more direct but steeper paths built at the side of the Stations. The Stations of the Cross marked each turn of the zigzagged path. Later, a smaller chapel was also built near the three pavilions, halfway up the summit.<sup>37</sup> Alongside the private and public prayers made in front of these three pavilions, the Stations of the Cross devotion held a special, privileged place in the prayer life of the Chinese Catholics.

In November 1935, over 3,500 Catholics gathered for the consecration of a grander basilica. A new and unique Marian image crowned this structure. Fr. Léonard, a French Jesuit based in Shanghai, designed the statue, which was known as Our Lady of Sheshan and weighed 1,200 kilograms. It was cast in Shanghai at the workshops of a Franco-Chinese firm, Kiou-sin, in the south of the city, near the cathedral of St. Francis Xavier’s, at Dongjiadu.<sup>38</sup> Fr. Francis-Xavier Diniz, one of the Jesuit architects who worked in Shanghai, was the project manager overseeing the construction of the new church. Its design was based on the work of Fr. de Moorloes, a Scheut priest, although the actual plans were drawn up by a Shanghai-based company.<sup>39</sup> The cupola deliberately

alluded to the famous church, Sacre Coeur, on top of the Montmartre in Paris, reminding us again of the influence of France on the life of the Chinese Catholic church.

The work of construction began in 1924, the first stone was blessed in 1925 and the church was completed and consecrated in 1935. Fr. Diniz died a few years later in July 1943. The new statue departed from all previous models, as it sought to embrace fully the spirit of the age and thereby express a local sensibility. In this way, in terms of artistic intent, the statue was not only akin to the paintings beginning to emerge from Furen, but its design also met the challenge Costantini had put before the church communities to develop a Chinese Christian style.

Unlike the Donglu portrait or the various Madonnas in the Furen paintings, the Sheshan Mary is not especially Chinese-looking, in either the garment she wears or in her visual features. Yet, nor is she overly European. As in the Donglu image, but not the Furen ones, Jesus is more European than he is Chinese. However, the designer has incorporated Chinese motifs in other ways. Most notable is the way that the snake has been changed to a vivid dragon, forcefully pinned under Mary's feet. The Queen of China stands upright on top of this beast, as an indication both of the suppression of evil but also, more pointedly, of the overthrow of all non-Christian beliefs throughout the land.

Mary holds the infant Jesus up above her head in outstretched arms, proudly displaying him to the region all around, thereby symbolically claiming these lands for her son. The church was twenty-two metres high overall; thirty-eight metres high from the base of the church to the foot of the statue. The statue itself was four metres, eighty centimetres high. From much of the surrounding countryside, people would have been able to see the Sheshan church at least and most likely make out the mother-and-child statue on its crest as well (see the new statue in the illustrations).<sup>40</sup>

Earlier chapters have shown that there are several basic styles of Marian statue, although one must be mindful that there are only so many ways a mother can be depicted holding a child. Insofar as any statue of a mother and child can be reminiscent of all other statues of mothers and children, it is possible to say that the Sheshan Shengmu has links with all of these. Most especially, there are artistic links with the type where Mary cradles Jesus on her lap or holds him in front of her. Many examples are found in France; given the undoubted French influence on the Shanghai Catholic community, let alone on the Sheshan

basilica (with its clear reference to the church crowning Montmartre), it is likely that such images served as prototypes for the new design.

The cradling motif is evident in such French devotions as Our Lady of Beauvais, in the north of France; Our Lady of Chartres, at the famous cathedral in this city; Our Lady of Gargilesse, at Naillac (in the central part of France); and Our Lady of Treille, at Lille, where Mary cradles Jesus, as he sits on one of her legs. The French devotions that depict Mary holding the infant Jesus, as opposed to cradling him, do not appear as frequently, yet include such ones as Our Lady of Grace (especially as found in Honfleur) and Our Lady of Deols (at Chateauroux, although Mary both cradles and holds up Jesus). Such designs include Notre Dame de Paris and a statue of Our Lady at the Church of St Eustache, Paris.

While there were many devotions with motifs of cradling and holding, there were not any in fact (at least among the most popular and famous ones) that portray Mary holding the infant Jesus in front of her, held over her head. The unique *Sheshan Shengmu* is thus a powerful expression of a church that had grown in confidence and self-awareness. These communities likewise felt themselves held up in the protective embrace of Mary, particularly during the difficult times of recent memory. The design, construction and consecration of this statue atop the new church at Sheshan brought all the Shanghai and Chinese Catholic communities into the presence of the Queen of China, as members of the community created by her son, Jesus. The new basilica and image began to be reproduced in magazines and on prayer cards, and were distributed extensively, not only in China but also to overseas communities.

The development of local-style expressions of Catholic devotions, at Furen and in places like Sheshan, continued apace during the 1940s, serving as an important means by which the identity of the Chinese Catholic church manifested itself and became stronger. There were still European-style Marian images in use in the Chinese communities, like the statues of Our Lady of Lourdes or Our Lady of Victories, but these now existed alongside the newer Chinese-style versions. Sadly, the movement towards a truly Chinese Catholic church was in many ways cut short by the events occurring after the 1949 declaration of the People's Republic of China.

# Conclusion

This book has explored the question: How are Chinese Catholic identities expressed through images? In answering this question, I have paid specific attention to the way Marian devotions are portrayed artistically, showing that there has been a rich tradition of sculpting, engraving and painting in an interpretive and accommodative style, ever since the early fourteenth century. Even though there was a period from the mid-nineteenth through to early twentieth centuries where European (especially French) images were prevalent throughout the country, there was a return to a local Chinese style in the early decades of the twentieth century. As previous chapters have shown, the products of this style were playful yet prayerful, poignant and powerful representations of popular Chinese Catholic devotions.

Nevertheless, a final question remains: If the identities of Catholic communities had matured to a point where Catholics were as comfortable praying before Chinese Madonna-and-child images or statues as before European-style ones, why is it that there is a pronounced dislike of Chinese Christian imagery in the period after economic reform?<sup>1</sup> It has not been my intention to write a history of Chinese Catholic communities since 1949, since this period has been extensively studied.<sup>2</sup> Even so, insofar as I have argued that the identities of Catholic communities can be described in terms of the images that portray aspects of their faith life, it is important to offer some conclusions as to why the movement in China towards local artistic expression of both universal and Chinese devotions has halted so dramatically.

There seem to be two reasons: first, in the period since economic liberalization, the earlier histories of the Catholic communities have become relatively unknown, not only to those outside the country but also to many Chinese Catholics themselves; second, the Chinese Catholics (and Christians more generally) endured persecutions and hardships from the earliest years of their

interactions with the Communist Party of China.<sup>3</sup> One Western historian, Beverly Hooper, cited the following figures:

Estimates of the total number of Catholic and Protestant missionaries killed by advancing communist troops between 1946 and 1948 ranged from 60 to 100, the overwhelming majority Roman Catholics. According to a Jesuit report of early 1948, during the years 1946 and 1947 alone the communists had killed 49 priests, looted or destroyed over 500 mission stations, confiscated 40 churches for their own use and looted or destroyed another 200, and closed down over 1000 mission schools.<sup>4</sup>

These difficulties only increased in the formational years of the People's Republic. The precariousness of the situation facing many Catholic communities, especially after the mass arrests in Shanghai in 1955, forced many of them to worship in isolated places or in surreptitious ways.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the Catholics were often separated from their official leaders (bishops, priests, sisters, brothers and lay catechists) and from the achievements of the programme of inculturation. Over the decades, this separation had a negative effect on the popularity of Chinese-style pious images, whereas the older European images maintained their popularity.

Modern Chinese Catholics' knowledge of the histories of the Catholic communities is relatively limited, although there has been an improvement in recent years (especially through the extensive use of websites among the Chinese Catholic dioceses). This relative lack of knowledge is especially the case at a popular level, as opposed to among members of the academic elite (many of whom have received training overseas).<sup>6</sup> This is evident, for instance, regarding knowledge about the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. While many modern Catholics have heard of Matteo Ricci, not many know about João da Rocha or Giulio Aleni, Shen Fuzong or Liu Yunde. Arguably, there is an even greater collective amnesia or ignorance regarding the early part of the twentieth century. That is, while the names of Vincent Lebbe and Ma Xiangbo are recognizable to some, the names and activities of Chen Yuandu, Wang Suda and even Celso Costantini may be largely unknown.

Aspects of the programme of reform and localization have slipped from consciousness, even though the Vatican had accepted and supported this movement (and continues to do so).<sup>7</sup> Thus, while Chinese Catholics know much about the development of the Chinese episcopate (the question of bishops in China continues to be, after all, a pressing issue), they remain largely unaware of the development of Chinese-style Christian art. They also do not

have the language abilities, or even the opportunities, to access the European-language works that describe this history.

Many actions and pronouncements revealed the official approval for such art, not the least of which was Costantini and, later, Mario Zanin's crucial support for this movement in the early years of its development. More striking still, however, was the fact that, once the plenary council had said its prayers of consecration to Mary, Our Lady of China, Costantini circulated an official image for this devotion. As we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4, this image contained a number of Chinese features and was the product of surprising cultural interactions occurring at the time. Confidence in the use of Chinese-style images for the most important Catholic devotions continued to grow, even as these devotions became more and more an official part of the liturgical calendar.

In 1941, for instance (as discussed above) May 31 was nominated as the official day for the annual celebration of the devotion to Our Lady Queen of China. From this time onwards, there was a vast outpouring of Chinese-style Christian images (especially Marian ones) from the workshops of the artists associated with Furen. The images were widely accepted, not only by the official leadership but by the people as well. This last point is significant because it is sometimes argued, I believe incorrectly, that these images did not gain the acceptance of the people.<sup>8</sup>

Even though the establishment of a Chinese episcopacy took some centuries, after it took place local leaders began to be appointed much more rapidly and in many more regions. The number of Chinese priests increased at the same time as the arrival of foreign priests in China slowed. In 1925, for instance, there were around 1,800 foreign priests and 1,220 Chinese priests. By 1948, there were 3,090 foreign priests and 2,698 Chinese ones.<sup>9</sup> Between the years 1939 and 1948, the number of foreign priests had only increased by 100, whereas within this time 646 Chinese men had been ordained—more than five times the number of Chinese priests who were alive at the turn of the century.

Even though there were fewer than thirty Chinese bishops by the late 1940s, this was still an impressive increase in twenty years.<sup>10</sup> Given the standard level of training needed before a person could be appointed bishop, it is a remarkable indicator of the pace of change. Furthermore, some of the most influential Catholic strongholds had Chinese leadership after the Vatican established the hierarchy. Beijing and Nanjing were declared archdioceses in 1946; Tian Gengxin and Yu Bin were named as their respective leaders. A few years later,

Gong Pinmei was appointed the bishop of the diocese of Shanghai in 1950. The appointment of a cardinal was the final step in the establishment of a Chinese hierarchy, occurring in 1945 when Thomas Tian Gengxin, a Divine Word missionary and (at that time) apostolic vicar of Qingdao, was named China's first cardinal. He was formally elevated to the College of Cardinals on 18 February 1946, and on 11 April was appointed to the newly created archdiocese of Beijing.<sup>11</sup>

These Chinese ecclesiastical leaders approved of the attempts to express Chinese Catholic identities in new artistic forms. This did not mean, however, that they neglected or purposefully downplayed the significance of traditional European pieties and their representations. We have seen how Bishop Gong Pinmei reconsecrated the church to the protection of Mary in 1951 while on a pilgrimage to Sheshan, where he led the people in prayer before the Our Lady of Lourdes pavilion. Nevertheless, the Chinese Catholic communities were very proud of the fact that they were both Catholic and Chinese, expressing this in any number of ways. In 1949, for instance, Cardinal Tian Gengxin wrote "A Leaf from my Missionary Handbook" and addressed it to all the priests and seminarians in China:

What the Church teaches is the constant and unchanging Truth. It remains always the same in spite of the change in time and circumstances. It is the Eternal Truth. But the method and tact employed in propagating the Church's doctrines, however, should be adapted to the peculiar needs of the times and the people; they should vary or be adjusted accordingly, or otherwise they fail to answer the prevailing needs, and fail, consequently, to win the hearts of the people. The single key to missionary success is adaptation to the people and circumstances. It is the maxim to be followed by every zealous missionary.<sup>12</sup>

Art works that illustrated Christian themes in Chinese ways were examples of just such adaptations; Cardinal Tian and others supported exactly this type of activity. Ordination cards contained images of Chinese Christian art, chapels and churches featured paintings displaying these themes, and prayer cards were issued with these types of images printed on them.

After the Nationalists were defeated in 1949, both Cardinal Tian and Archbishop Yu Bin sought exile in the United States, perhaps believing that they could generate more support for the Chinese Catholics from there. (Yu Bin had always been politically active and was a keen admirer of the Archbishop Francis Spellman of New York, having travelled with him when Spellman

visited China in the 1940s).<sup>13</sup> Once there, Cardinal Tian issued a prayer card on behalf of his fellow Catholics still in China. He knew full well that the Our Lady of Donglu painting was the image that had been officially approved as the Our Lady of China image; yet he chose to print one of the newer Furen paintings on the card. The prayer on the reverse side of the card explicitly sought Mary's intercession:

Almighty and eternal God, Comforter of the afflicted, and Strength of the Suffering, grant that our brothers of China who share our faith, may obtain, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our Holy Martyrs, peace in Thy service, strength in time of trial, and grace to glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>14</sup>

Cardinal Tian's use of this image on his prayer card showed the extent to which these images had been received by the Chinese leadership as well as by the people themselves. That is, Cardinal Tian would not have used an image that was not accepted by his fellow Chinese Catholics, or which would arouse anger among the communities or alienated the very people for whom he was asking others to pray. Nevertheless, even though there was official support for such images, the use of this particular image has been problematic in the modern period. At the National Basilica in Washington DC in 2000, for instance, a mosaic of the image on Tian's prayer card was made and ceremoniously unveiled as an image of Our Lady of China, even though certain members of the diasporic Chinese Catholic community opposed giving it this name. They stated correctly that the official image was the one originally painted for the Marian devotion of Donglu, yet their rigid opposition to the use of the term Our Lady of China for any other image reveals not only their limited knowledge of Chinese Catholic history (especially the work of the Furen artists) but also their desire to restrict the ongoing development of Chinese Catholic identities.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, the sufferings endured by the Catholic communities, both in the early decades of the twentieth century and in the years after liberation, have strengthened the Marian identity of Chinese Catholic communities.<sup>16</sup> The older European Marian images (predominantly statues) were the ones that survived this period, while the paintings from Furen and the like were either wilfully destroyed or removed, thereby slipping from public consciousness. Popular devotions like the rosary and the Stations of the Cross could be done in secret, without the need for an image. Historically, these devotions were most often associated with a European image, like Our Lady of Lourdes, rather than the newer Chinese-style ones (remembering that these images existed

harmoniously alongside each other before 1949 and were not considered to be in competition with each other). When public recitation of these devotions could occur again, therefore, the older European images resurfaced, were obtained anew from overseas or were manufactured locally.

After 1978, the newer Chinese-style images were not reproduced immediately, both because the artists were dead (Chen Yuandu died in 1966, for instance, although whether his death was part of events associated with the Cultural Revolution is not yet known) and because the originals had been lost from view, at least within China. Those images that have made their way back to China are often viewed as faddish and not having the same value as those European images that were used in prayer during difficult times. Certain individuals simply oppose images of this kind because they do not know the history or hold a more rigid theological position with regards to the appropriate way of portraying Christian themes (returning us to our initial discussion about icons and orthodoxy). For them, it is difficult to accept a Chinese Mary holding a child with a topknot or a Guanyin-type figure hovering over a map of China.

If the vision of a local church shared by Ma Xiangbo, Celso Costantini and others is to be seen anew, individuals like them need to emerge and there must be support for such a programme at all levels of the Chinese church. Whether such a situation will occur is a question for another time. Suffice to say, from the era of the Franciscan missions in China through to the time of the twentieth-century artists at Furen—and now, too, during these first decades of the twenty-first century—for Chinese Catholic communities, there is still something about Mary.

# Notes

## Introduction: Chinese Catholic identities in the modern period

1. Statistical figures in China are notoriously difficult to ascertain and to verify. The figure of more than twelve million is the best estimate based on research by Jean-Paul Wiest, who states that “the Catholic church population is estimated at 12 million plus”, in “Catholics in China: The Bumpy Road towards Reconciliation”, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 27, no. 1 (January 2003): 5; the Holy Spirit Study Centre estimated that there were ten million Chinese Catholics, “Estimated Statistics of Chinese Catholic Church, 1996”, *Tripod* 16, no. 96 (1996): 70. Donald MacInnis stated “there are an estimated 5 million to 12 million Catholics today, up from 3.3 million in 1949”, in “From Suppression to Repression: Religion in China Today”, *Current History* 95, no. 604 (1996): 284–304. Finally, I follow Wiest, *op. cit.*, in talking of one Catholic church in China, thereby avoiding unhelpful and inaccurate binaries like “underground” and “patriotic”. China’s population is estimated in 2011 to be over 1.3 billion people (<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/chin.pdf>).
2. The churches were placed under French protection as a result of the Treaty of Whampoa (Huangpu), signed in 1844, and the Treaty of Tianjin, signed in 1858, discussed in Chapter 2.
3. A Chinese Dominican priest, Luo Wenzao, was consecrated a bishop on 8 April 1685 and appointed vicar apostolic of Nanjing, which was elevated to a see in 1690, with Luo as its first bishop.
4. The five official religions are Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Christianity and Catholicism.
5. Doreen Massey, “Entanglements of Power, Reflections”, in *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance*, edited by J. P. Sharp et al. (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 282–83.
6. This stage of history has also been called the late imperial or the late Qing period; see, for instance, John K. Fairbank (ed.), *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 10, *Late Ch’ing, 1800–1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). The term “modern” incorporates both the time during and after the opium war treaties,

- the reform periods around the time of the fall of the Qing and then the Republican period. Some examples include Yan Kejia, *Zhongguo Tianzhujiào Jianshi* [A history of the Catholic Church in China] (Beijing: Zongjiao Wenhua Chubanshe, 2001); James T. Myers, *Enemies without Guns: The Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China* (New York: Paragon, 1991); Laszlo Ladany, *The Catholic Church in China* (New York: Freedom House, 1987); and Eric O. Hanson, *Catholic Politics in China and Korea* (New York: Orbis Books, 1980).
7. For the colonial/indigenous binary, see, for instance, Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Clash of Cultures*, translated by Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and several of the speeches concerning religious policy in Li Weihan, *Tongyi Zhanxian Wenti yu Minzu Wenti* [Problems of the United Front and problems with nationalities] (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1981). For the Catholic/Communist binary, see *Dalujiào Nan Sishi Zhounian Jiniankan* [Memorial publication on the anniversary of the Mainland church's forty years of suffering] (Taipei: Jiu-Ba Bianji Weiyuanhui, 1995); François Dufay, *En Chine L'étoile contre La Croix* (Paris: Casterman, 1955); and George N. Patterson, *Christianity in Communist China* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1969). For a more general collection of essays, see Jason Kindopp and Carol Lee Hamrin (eds.), *God and Caesar in China: Policy Implications of Church-State Tensions* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004). Paul Philip Mariani, *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011) is another example of this. Lastly, see Gu Weimin, *Zhongguo Tianzhujiào Biannianshi* [The annals of the Catholic Church in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 2003) and Claude Soetens, *L'Église Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997).
  8. See, for example, Eriberto P. Lozada, Jr., *God Aboveground: Catholic Church, Postsocialist State and Transnational Processes in a Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). See, as one example, Richard Madsen, *China's Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
  9. See Wang Zuohan, *Zhongguo de Zongjiao Wenti he Zongjiao Zhengce* [The religious problems and religious regulations of China] (Beijing: Zongjiao Wenhua Chubanshe, 2002); Angelo S. Lazzarotto, *The Catholic Church in Post-Mao China* (Hong Kong: Holy Spirit Study Centre, 1982); Kim-Kwong Chan and Eric R. Carlson, *Religious Freedom in China: Policy, Administration, and Regulation—A Research Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: Institute for the Study of American Religion; Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute for Culture, Commerce and Religion, 2005); *Freedom of Religion in China* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1992); *Continuing Religious Repression in China* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993); and *China: State Control of Religion* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1997).
  10. See Song Haojie, *Lishi shang de Xujiahui* [Zikawei in history] (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenhua Chubanshe, 2005); *Jinri Tianzhujiào Shanghai Jiaoku* [Catholic Church in Shanghai today] (Shanghai: Tianzhujiào Shanghai Jiaoku Guangqishe Chuban,

- 2000); Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins, & Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2009); Jean-Paul Wiest, *Maryknoll in China: A History, 1918–1955* (New York: Orbis Books, 1988); Adrien Launay, *Histoire des Missions de Chine: Mission du Kouang-si* (Paris: Têqui, 1903); Jean Lefeuvre, *Les Enfants dans la ville, chronique de la vie chrétienne à Shanghai, 1949–1955* (Paris: Casterman, 1956); Gianni Criveller, *The Martyrdom of Alberico Crescitelli: Its Context and Controversy* (Hong Kong: Holy Spirit Study Centre, 2004); and Dorian Malovic, *Le Pape Jaune, Monsignor Jin Luxian, soldat de Dieu en Chine Communiste* (Paris: Perrin, 2006).
11. Jacques Leclercq, *Thunder in the Distance: The Life of Père Lebbe*, translated by G. Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958).
  12. For more, see Mariani, *Church Militant*, or the Cardinal Kung foundation website: <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/>
  13. That is, a priest serving a diocese and directly answerable to the bishop of that diocese, as opposed to being a member of a religious order or congregation and answerable to that group's "provincial", congregational leader or "superior".
  14. See, for instance, Rosario Renaud, *Le Diocèse de Süchow (Chine), Champ apostolique des Jésuites canadiens de 1918 à 1954* (Montreal: Les éditions Bellarmin, 1982), pp. 349–56.
  15. Catholics throughout the world were also very much aware of what had been happening in Europe, with the show trials of the archbishop of Zagreb, Aloysius Stepinac, in 1946, and the Hungarian cardinal, Jozsef Mindszenty, in 1949, the publication of Pope Pius XI's 1937 document *Divini Redemptoris* (which opposed atheistic communism) and the intervention of the Vatican in the Italian elections of 1947, when it denounced communist candidates. See, for instance, Norman Kogan, "Italian Communism, the Working Class and Organizational Catholicism", *The Journal of Politics* 28, no. 3 (August 1966); Dermot Keogh, "Ireland, the Vatican and the Cold War", *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 4 (1991); and Robert A. Ventresca, "The Virgin and the Bear: Religion, Society and the Cold War in Italy", *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 2 (2003).
  16. The initial consecration had occurred after the first plenary council of the Catholic Church in China, held in Shanghai in 1924. See Chapter 4.
  17. See, among other things, contemporary newspaper reports from *Jiefang Ribao* and *Renmin Ribao* as reprinted in *Dalujiao Nan Sishi Zhounian Jiniankan; L'Église des Écrasés, Shanghai 1949–1955* (Paris: Imprimerie Commerciale d'Yvetot, 1955); and Hanson, *Catholic Politics in China and Korea*, p. 73.
  18. See Malovic, *Le Pape Jaune*, p. 283.
  19. See Madsen, *China's Catholics*, p. 42.
  20. While Luo Wenzao was the bishop of Nanjing, which incorporated the mission territory of Jiangnan (and therefore Shanghai), he was not based in Shanghai. The missionary literature refers to this area as Jiangnan (or Kiang-nan), but it is more

- helpful to describe it as the lower Yangzi valley. See Song, *Lishi shang de Xujiahui*, pp. 16–17.
21. See David E. Apter and Tony Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994) regarding the role of narratives in a Chinese political context.
  22. For a general history of this period of persecution, see Jean Charbonnier, *Histoire des chrétiens de Chine* (Paris: Desclée, 1992).
  23. The first stage occurred during the Tang dynasty (618–907).
  24. Inculturation is a neologism invented in the mid- to the late 1950s by a French Jesuit theologian at Louvain University to describe the process by which the Christian gospel comes to be expressed in a way that is intrinsically natural to whichever culture it is in. A simple definition of this is “the ongoing dialogue between faith and culture or cultures”, as stated by Alyward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (London: G. Chapman, 1988), p. 11. The early Jesuit missionaries in China were certainly culturally sophisticated, but they were not practising inculturation, arguably, insofar as there were still Eurocentric biases to what they were doing; reflection upon their activities, however, has given rise to the new missiological understanding and, therefore, praxis of inculturation, especially in the late twentieth century.
  25. This growth in the last decade is evident from a number of sources. For instance, according to UCA News (Union of Catholic Asian News), 13 April 2007, at Easter that year there were around 6,000 baptisms in only twenty-six of the nearly 100 dioceses in Mainland China. Two small examples also illustrate the sheer growth of the church: at the Easter Vigil in 2005 at the South Church (Nantang) in Beijing, I observed around eighty people receiving baptism, most of them between the ages of late adolescence and late middle age; a priest in southern China lamented to me in 2009 that he did not have many baptisms that year, only around seventy or eighty.
  26. Henry Chadwick, *The Penguin History of the Church*, vol. 1, *The Early Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 282.
  27. The *Salus Populi* image is discussed at greater length in Chapter 1. This fact was confirmed during interviews and conversations I undertook during fieldwork in Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai between 2005 and 2010.
  28. This period lasted from the end of the first generation of Christians, that is, from the beginning of the second century to around the middle of the fifth century. It is called the patristic period because the “church fathers”, or *patres*, wrote their theological works during this time.
  29. See Chadwick, *The Penguin History of the Church*, vol. 1, *The Early Church*, p. 283.
  30. *Ibid.*
  31. Such borrowing is also evident in the development of church architecture and mural art; see, for instance, Carl H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building: Excavations at Dura-Europos* (Locust Valley, NY: J. J. Augustin, 1967); and Graydon F. Snyder,

- Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985).
32. This phrase is taken from “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, promulgated by Pope Pius VI, December 7, 1965”, in Walter M. Abbot (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II*, no. 1 (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), p. 199.
  33. In Chinese, this distinction is *Jidujiao* (Christianity) and *Tianzhujiao* (Catholicism), which is a result of the different linguistic terminology employed by the various Christian groups in the modern period. This distinction is also maintained legally, insofar as both *Jidujiao* and *Tianzhujiao* are regarded as legal religions in the People’s Republic of China rather than as superstitions. They therefore comprise two of the five legally recognized religions.
  34. The first shrine was called the Presentation of Our Lady, in the Luan vicariate in Shanxi Province. The earliest Marian pilgrimage in a Chinese context was to the shrine of Our Lady of Peña in Macau, which dates to 1622, according to J. de la Largère, “Les Pèlerinages à la S.Vierge en Chine”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, no. 261 (May 1935): 225–31. In May 2006, I observed the pilgrimage at Sheshan during fieldwork research and found that pilgrims had come to Shanghai from as far away as Guangzhou, Hebei and Xiamen (Fujian Province).
  35. Sandra Zimdars-Swartz, *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 18–19. For a comparison of the way that Mary is viewed in another specific context, see, for instance, Robert Westerfelhaus and Arvind Singhal, “Difficulties in Co-opting a Complex Sign: Our Lady of Guadalupe as a Site of Semiotic Struggle and Entanglement”, *Communication Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (2001): 95–120.
  36. Wiest, *Maryknoll in China*, p. xiv.
  37. See Chapter 3.
  38. This act of consecration, which was repeated in 1951, is described at greater length in Chapter 4.
  39. This university, called Furen in Chinese, had been established at the end of the 1920s, partly at the instigation of both the papal diplomatic representative in China, Celso Constantini, and two important Chinese Catholic laymen, Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo. It received formal recognition in 1931. Publication details for works published at the university called it the Catholic University of Peking, but listed the place of publication as Pei-ping. See Chapter 5.
  40. This is discussed in Chapter 2.

## Chapter 1 Chinese Christian art during the pre-modern period

1. The other monuments include, in order of antiquity, a Nestorian stele from Xi’an erected during the eighth century, tombstones from Quanzhou and Inner Mongolia dating to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and one other tombstone found at Yangzhou, also from the fourteenth century. Two paintings

found in the region of Turfan in the early 1900s also possibly represent Christian themes. These were painted some time between the ninth and eleventh centuries. There also exist some objects known as the “ordos crosses”, although there is debate about their Christian origin. These are possibly from the thirteenth century. While there is now increased interest about this history in China itself, the seminal works on these Christian artefacts are in European languages. For information on these other monuments and crosses, see Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*, Vol. 1: 635–1800 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 11–16 and 52–61; Ken Parry, “Angels and Apsaras: Christian Tombstones from Quanzhou”, *Journal of the Asian Arts Society of Australia* 12, no. 2 (June 2003); Gianni Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China: The Jesuits’ Presentation of Christ from Matteo Ricci to Giulio Aleni* (Taipei: Ricci Institute for Chinese Studies, 1997), p. 151; Henry Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1915) vol. 1, Series II, vol. 38, especially pp. 106–7 (where the notion that the Xi’an stele was a forgery is conclusively dispatched); and Arthur C. Moule, *Nestorians in China, Some Corrections and Additions* (London: China Society, 1940), p. 22. For discussion on the possible paintings of Christ found by Aurel Stein at Dunhuang, see Roderick Whitfield and Anne Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, Chinese Art from the Silk Route* (New York: George Braziller, 1990), pp. 20 and 31; and Monique Maillard, “Le religions du salut occidentales”, in *L’Asie Centrale, Histoire et Civilisation*, edited by Louis Hambis (Paris: Collection orientale de l’imprimerie nationale, 1977), pp. 105–14.

2. The term *ante pacem* refers to the period prior to the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, around 312, when there were numerous persecutions against Christians throughout the Roman Empire.
3. See Graydon F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985).
4. Cited in Craig Clunas, *Art in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 45.
5. The term “Nestorian” refers to the Christian community that traced its roots to the “Antiochene school” of the fourth and fifth centuries. This community has also been referred to by Paul Rule as the East Syrian or Persian branch of the Eastern Christian church. Rather than change the original references, the term Nestorian will be used, despite its difficulties. See M. Joseph Costelloe, “Nestorian Church”, *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, vol. 10 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1967), p. 343; and Paul Rule, “On Being Chinese and Christian: Some Idiosyncratic Reflections on the History of the Catholic Church in China”, in *Light a Candle: Encounters and Friendship with China: Festschrift in Honour of Angelo S. Lazzarotto P.I.M.E.*, edited by Roman Malek and Gianni Criveller (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumentica Serica, 2010). For more on this collection of stones, see Wu Wenliang, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike* [Religious inscriptions of Quanzhou], revised by Wu Youxiong (Beijing: Kexue Chubanshe, 2005) and “Christian Tombstones of Zayton”, *BabelStone* (<http://www.babelstone.co.uk/Quanzhou>).
6. Henry Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 2, series II, vol. 33, p. 183, n. 2.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

8. Ibid., p. 184. Subsistence here obviously has a more generous meaning than is ascribed to it today.
9. Ibid., n. 2.
10. See *China Heritage Newsletter* 5 (March 2006) (<http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org>).
11. See Moule, *Nestorians in China*, and Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 63.
12. Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 63.
13. Ibid.
14. See Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 2, series II, vol. 33, p. 210.
15. Cited in Yule, p. 199, n. 3: “there is one church only, belonging to the Nestorian Christians.” A comprehensive list of all the Nestorian settlements in China during the fourteenth century, complete with their locations and status, is provided in Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, pp. 109–11. See also Yule, “Sketch Map showing the metropolitan sees of the Nestorian Church and some of the Latin missionary bishoprics of the fourteenth century”, in *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, p. 23.
16. See Henry Cordier, “Introductory Notices”, in Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, p. 5, n. 1, where he argues the exact date of entry is difficult to pinpoint with any accuracy. There had been at least two other journeys made by Latin Rite Christians prior to this. The first of these, between the years 1245 and 1247, was led by the Franciscan John of Carpini (Iohannes de Plano Carpini, 1182–1252) and the second, from 1253 to 1255, was led by another Franciscan, William of Rubruck (1215–after 1257). See Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, pp. 46–47 and, among others, Igor de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), pp. 125–43.
17. Although there is more recent scholarship about this period, these diplomatic exchanges were magisterially discussed in de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans*, pp. 144–59, and Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, p. 4.
18. See Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, p. 229.
19. Ibid., vol. 2, series II, vol. 33, p. 210.
20. E. Randolph Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1975), p. 37, as cited in Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 87.
21. Cited in Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, p. 46.
22. See Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, pp. 36–37, and Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 48. This was a collection of contemporary accounts about China, even though speculation exists as to whether the author ever went to China.
23. Cited in Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, pp. 100–101.
24. Cited in Yule, p. 102.
25. Cited in Yule, p. 72.
26. See Wu, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike*, and Parry, “Angels and Apsaras”, p. 4.

27. Parry, “Angels and Apsaras”, p. 4.
28. Cited in Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 3, series II, vol. 37, pp. 53–54.
29. Richard C. Rudolph, “A Second Fourteenth-century Italian Tombstone in Yangzhou”, *Journal of Oriental Studies* 13, no. 2 (1975): 135.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Cited in Rudolph, p. 135, n. 16.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 134, maintains that both were found in 1952. Standaert argues that both were found in 1951 (*Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 59). Francis Rouleau was aware only of the first stone at the time of his major work and so is silent about the date of discovery for the second stone (“The Yangchow Tombstone as a Landmark of Medieval Christianity in China”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 17, nos. 3/4 [1954]: 346–65).
33. Given the uncertainty surrounding the painting discovered at Dunhuang in 1908; see Roderick Whitfield and Anne Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, Chinese Art from the Silk Route* p. 19, n. 45.
34. While an awareness of the “end times” is a noticeable feature of Christianity, at different times in Christian history some (like the Franciscans) have had a more pronounced focus on it than others.
35. John Foster, “Crosses from the Walls of Zaitun”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 86, nos. 1/2 (1954): 1–25. Wu, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike*, and *Quanzhou Yisilanjiao shike* [Islamic inscriptions of Quanzhou] (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1984), cited in *China Heritage Newsletter* 5 (March 2006).
36. The journal *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, for instance, has carried several articles on Tang- and Yuan-dynasty Christians in issues published in 2005 and 2006.
37. The first article to appear was written by Francis Rouleau, in 1954; Geng Jianting wrote the first Chinese-language article in *Kaogu* 8 (1963): 449–51. Later works like de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to Genghis Khan*, and Rudolph, “A Second Fourteenth-century Italian Tombstone in Yangzhou”, also treat these stones. There has been considerable debate about whether the name on the tombstones was Viglione (or variations thereupon) or Ilioni, with the definitive argument for Ilioni being put in 1977 by Robert S. Lopez, “Nouveaux documents sur les marchands italiens en Chine à l’époque mongole”, as cited in Antonia Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550–1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), p. 341, n. 8. Some later works, like Lauren Arnold, *Princely Gifts and Papal Treasures: The Franciscan Mission to China and Its Influence on the Art of the West 1250–1350* (San Francisco: Desiderata Press, 1999), rely on Rouleau and thus continue to use, incorrectly, Viglione. Gu Weimin does not translate the surname; see *Zhongguo Tianzhujiao Biannianshi* [The annals of the Catholic Church in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 2003), p. 44.
38. Francis Rouleau, “The Yangchow Tombstone”, p. 348.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

40. Antonia Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550–1850*, p. 341, n. 8. Not wishing to leave things to chance, I visited the museum in 2009 to be told that the stones were definitely in the museum but that the person with the key to the room where they were stored was away at the time!
41. Rouleau, “The Yangchow Tombstone”, p. 352.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 353.
43. The hagiographical story of Catherine’s life and death can be read in various lives of the martyrs or the late thirteenth-century work by Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, translated and adapted from the Latin by G. Ryan and H. Ripperger (New York: Arno Press, 1969).
44. Francis Rouleau, “The Yangchow Tombstone”, p. 355.
45. See C. P. Fitzgerald, *Barbarian Beds: The Origins of the Chair in China* (London: Cresset Press, 1965), p. 47.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
49. Rouleau, “The Yangchow Tombstone”, p. 355.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 355.
51. The Xi’an monument and many of the Quanzhou tombstones were similarly decorated with floral features, as seen in the illustrations in Wu, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike*.
52. Rudolph, “A Second Fourteenth-century Italian Tombstone in Yangzhou”, p. 135.
53. See, for instance, Masaharu Anesaki, *Buddhist Art in Its Relation to Buddhist Ideals, with Special Reference to Japan, Four Lectures Given at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1915), pp. 3, 4, 15 and 16, as cited in C. A. S. Williams, *Chinese Symbolism and Art Motifs: A Comprehensive Handbook on Symbolism in Chinese Art through the Ages* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2006), p. 254.
54. Johannes Prip-Moller has argued, on the basis of certain architectural features, that the Linggu Monastery outside of Nanjing was in fact originally a Franciscan church complex; see *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, 1935, pp. 654–56. A beautiful horse was given to Khan Ozbeq (r. 1313–41) by John of Marignolli in 1342: this act was recorded for posterity in a poem and a painting. See de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khan*, pp. 193–95.
55. Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, p. 58.
56. *Ibid.*
57. Henry Chadwick, *The Penguin History of the Church*, vol. 1, *The Early Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), pp. 281–82.
58. For the development of the Marian cult more generally, see Louis Réau, “La Vierge”, section II, in *Iconographie de la Bible*, vol. 2, *Nouveau Testament*, in the series *Iconographie de L’Art Chrétien* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957) and Miri Rubin, “Mary”, *History Workshop Journal* 58 (2004): 2–16.

59. For the story of the annunciation, see especially “The Gospel according to Luke”, in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New Revised Standard Version), edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1:26–38.
60. Probably the best known example of this style was painted by Fra Angelico in the fifteenth century, later than the Franciscan period in China.
61. Interestingly, the Madonna of humility does not hold a rosary, for reasons that will be discussed below.
62. Although there is much recent scholarship on this aspect of exchange, these are the seminal sources. See Yü Chün-fang, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). Her work has been drawn on heavily by, among others, Lauren Arnold, “Guadalupe and Guanyin: Images of the Madonna in Mexico and China”, public lecture at the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco, 2005. Derek Gillman “Ming and Qing Ivories: Figure Carving” in *Chinese Ivories from the Shang to the Qing*, edited by W. Watson (London: British Museum Publications, 1984), pp. 35–52. The work of Sepp Schüller, *La Vierge Marie à Travers les missions* (Paris: Les Editions Braun and Cie, 1936), preceded those of Yü and Gillman.
63. Yü, *Kuan-yin*, p. 294.
64. Yü, *Kuan-yin*, p. 294. See also Laurence S. Sickman, and Alexander Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 194, for discussion of other artistic representations of Guanyin in China.
65. Yü, *Kuan-yin*, p. 259.
66. Alexander Soper, also argues that several of the Buddhist scriptures and texts themselves may have been influenced by Christian writings, in addition to the influence of texts from the Ancient Near East. “Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China”, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 19 (1959): 150.
67. As noted by Nicolas Standaert, “The establishment of a new Chinese dynasty alone, however, does not account for the end of the Roman Catholic missions to China.” There were reasons associated with their roots in Europe, including, among other things, dissension within the Franciscan order. See Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 97.
68. Clunas, *Art in China*, p. 128.
69. See Lu Dake, “Zaoqi Putaoyaren zai Fujian de Tongshang yu Chongtu” [Trade and conflicts: Portuguese in Fujian during the early period], in *Zhongxi chuqi, Er bian* [The first stage of encounter between China and the West, Vol. 2], edited by Shen Dun (Zhengzhou: Daxiang Chubanshe, 2002) and Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 121–29, for discussion of the development of trade during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
70. Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, p. 121.
71. There had of course been the famous voyages of Zheng He in the fifteenth century, but these had not led to the establishment of large Chinese trading communities

- elsewhere. See Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405–1433* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007).
72. Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, p. 124.
  73. Cited in Derek Gillman, “Ming and Qing Ivories”, p. 37.
  74. See Gillman, p. 38.
  75. Cited in Gillman, p. 38.
  76. From a letter written by a Philippines-based Jesuit in 1604, cited in Gillman, p. 40.
  77. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
  78. Clunas, *Art in China*, p. 129.
  79. According to Gillman’s research, the local gazetteer of 1573 has no mention of ivory, whereas by 1628 there were numerous mentions of its widespread use. See Gillman, “Ming and Qing Ivories”, p. 39.
  80. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
  81. Yü, *Kuan-yin*, p. 259.
  82. Gillman, “Ming and Qing Ivories”, p. 41.
  83. During the late Ming dynasty and into the Qing dynasty, Chinese artisans began producing goods made of everything from silk to porcelain specifically for the European market, often upon demand, utilizing motifs that were entirely foreign.
  84. This is the highest authority of the Dominicans, consisting of friars who represent the different geographical regions.
  85. See Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542–1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), p. 9.
  86. This was one consequence of Qing-dynasty troop movements against the Taiwan-based rebels under the leadership of Coxingha (Zheng Chenggong, 1624–62). See Gillman, “Ming and Qing Ivories”, p. 48.
  87. The year 2010 marked the 400th anniversary of the death of Matteo Ricci, in Beijing; there were numerous exhibitions and books about him. See, among others, Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City, 1552–1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
  88. There are numerous histories of this period, focusing on various aspects of the story. These works are too numerous to mention; as an introduction, see the three-volume work, Pasquale M. D’Elia (ed.), *Fonti Ricciane: documenti originali concernenti Matteo Ricci e la storia delle prime relazioni tra l’Europa e la Cina (1579–1615)* (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1942–1949); an English translation of Ricci’s journals by Louis J. Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matteo Ricci, 1583–1610* (New York: Random House, 1953); and a general history of Christian missionary activity in the late Ming dynasty by George Dunne, *Generation of Giants: The Story of the Jesuits in China during the Last Years of the Ming Dynasty* (London: Burns and Oats, 1962). See also Liam Brockey, *The Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579–1724* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007) and the work of Ronnie Hsia, mentioned above. A digital copy of the 1615 edition of Ricci’s journal is available (<http://ricci.bc.edu>).

89. See Thomas M. Lucas, SJ, “Virtual Vessels, Mystical Signs, Contemplating Mary’s Images in the Jesuit Tradition”, *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 35, no. 5 (November 2003): 20.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
92. Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 8, as cited in Lucas, “Virtual Vessels”, p. 22.
93. Cited in Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 154–55.
94. Paul Rule, “Fusion or Confusion? Learning the Grammar of the Object”, paper presented at the seminar *Fusion 1700: Jesuits in the Qing Court*, held at Oakland Museum, California, 2000.
95. A point made by Henri Bernard-Maitre in “L’art chrétien en Chine du temps du Père Matthieu Ricci”, *Revue d’Histoire des Missions* 12 (1935): 199–229.
96. Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 175.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
98. *Ibid.*
99. Scholars have discussed at length whether a painting in the Field Museum, Chicago, is a Madonna or a Guanyin painted by the late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century artist Tang Yin. Since the time of Berthold Laufer, the possibility has been raised that this is a copy of one of the Madonnas Ricci had in his possession, or the copy of a copy. See, especially, Berthold Laufer, “The Chinese Madonna in the Field Museum”, *The Open Court* 26 (1912): 1–6; Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*, p. 175, and illustration no. 92; Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, photo caption, no. 48. Chen Huihung, however, has attributed the work to the eighteenth century. For more of Chen’s work, see “Chinese Perception of European Perspective: A Jesuit Case in the Seventeenth Century”, *Seventeenth Century* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 97–128.
100. This was a difficult task and one at which the Jesuits did not always succeed, as evidenced by the numerous waves of persecution that the early Christian community experienced. See, among many articles, Adrian Dudink, “Nangong shudu (1620) Poxie Ji (1640) and Western Reports on the Nanjing Persecution (1616/1617)”, *Monumenta Serica* 48 (2000): 133–265.
101. See Albert Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome: A Descriptive Catalogue, Japonica-Sinica I–IV* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), for an indication of the sheer number of works which were written in Chinese, both by the Jesuits and their neophytes.
102. See John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 114–15.
103. Albert Chan argues that Ruggieri’s Chinese was better than he has been given credit for; “Michele Ruggieri SJ (1543–1607) and His Chinese Poems”, *Monumenta Serica* 41 (1993): 129–76. For a more recent re-reading of Ruggieri’s role, see Yu Liu, “The True Pioneer of the Jesuit China Mission: Michele Ruggieri”, *History of Religions* 50, no. 4 (May 2011).

104. Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, p. 73.
105. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 84. He is referring to Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Clash of Cultures*, translated by Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), and J. S. Cummins, *A Question of Rites: Friar Domingo Navarrette and the Jesuits in China* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1993).
106. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 40.
107. Cited in Criveller, p. 40.
108. Geronimo Nadal, *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia quae in Sacrosanto Missae Sacrificio toto anno legunter* (Antwerp: Martin Nuyts, 1595).
109. Cited in Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1984), p. 62. See also Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, pp. 233–38.
110. Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship: Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 8.
111. These included Bernadino Passeri, who made many of the final drawings, and Jan, Jerome and Anton Wierix, who transformed these drawings into woodcuts. The Wierix brothers were assisted by Jan Collaert and Adrian Collaert and Charles de Mallery (Carel van Mallery). See Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship*, pp. 41–42. The Wierix brothers were among the most famous engravers at the time and were in much demand in the book-publishing hub of Antwerp.
112. As noted by Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 93. So successful was this illustrated commentary that, in 1605, the Society of Jesus was subsequently inspired to commission the young painter Peter Paul Rubens to produce representations of the life of their founder, Ignatius of Loyola, in imitation of this earlier work. This later publication was first published in 1609 and consisted of over seventy engravings. It too became a useful missiological tool around the globe.
113. This was published in 1606 although Criveller states that this was published in 1588; *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 236.
114. Jonathan D. Spence's ingenious work is drawn on heavily by later works like Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, and Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*. Even so, not everyone enjoyed Spence's work, with one famous reviewer considering it a "bibelot".
115. Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 98.
116. Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*, p. 173.
117. Craig Clunas, "Review of Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*", *China Review International* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 92.
118. Bailey and Clunas have a slight disagreement concerning the date of this meeting.
119. Cited in Dunne, *Generation of Giants*, p. 94.
120. Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*, p. 173.
121. Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 66.
122. The most noted of its graduates who worked in China was Ni Yicheng (also known by his European name, Giacomo Niva or Niwa, 1579–1638). Ni Yicheng was born of a Japanese father and a Chinese mother, and became a Jesuit himself in 1608.

123. Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 98.
124. Ibid.
125. Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* pp. 174–75. In *Art in China*, Clunas writes, however, that this book was published in 1589. Even so, whatever the exact year, it is significantly earlier than the Cheng publication. Harry Vanderstappen contends, rather, that “these same four woodblock prints appeared later” in Fang’s work (cited in Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 98). This perhaps refers to a second printing by Fang, which had therefore incorporated the productions in the earlier production by the Chengs.
126. Conversely, however, the ivories are probably more widely known and studied today, at least in European languages, than this Chinese bestseller from the seventeenth century.
127. While it is true that the eighteenth-century French Jesuits Domenic Parennin and Antoine Gaubil began a Latin language school in Beijing for future Manchu diplomats in the year 1729, this was yet many years in the future.
128. Spence, *The Memory Palace*, p. 265, contends, in what is seemingly an amusing example of eisegesis, that instead of engraving the words of greeting “*Ave Maria, gratia plena*” (see “The Gospel according to Luke”, in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 1:28), the engraver caused a misprint, resulting in the Latin word *lena*, meaning a woman who allures or entices, instead of the actual word *plena*, meaning full.
129. See Smith, *Sensuous Wonder*. St Jean-Francois Regis (1597–1640) provided one model for this type of ministry.
130. Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, p. 459. These were known as *shengmu hui* in Chinese.
131. See Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, p. 460, and Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, pp. 456–60.
132. Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, p. 460.
133. This is the same date on which Bishop Gong and others were arrested many years later, in 1955. See *Dalujiào Nán Sīshì Zhounian Jiniānkān* [Memorial publication on the anniversary of the Mainland church’s forty years of suffering] (Taipei: Jiu-Ba Bianji Weiyuanhui, 1995) and Paul Philip Mariani, *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).
134. Cited in D. de Gassart, “Esquisse historique sur les congregations de la Sainte Vierge dans l’ancienne mission de Chine”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 8, no. 1 (1935): 35.
135. See David Mungello, “The Return of the Jesuits to China in 1841 and the Chinese Christian Backlash”, *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* 27 (2005): 9–46. See also John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, p. 195, where he notes the role of the confraternities in Japan during the times of persecution from the seventeenth century onwards. Such lay leadership was one reason the communities stayed together.
136. Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, p. 456.

137. See especially Joanna Handlin Smith, *The Art of Doing Good: Charity in Late Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
138. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 150.
139. Yang Tingyun is known as one of the three pillars of the Chinese church, referring to this period during the late Ming dynasty. Missionaries sheltered in his house in 1611 during a persecution. See Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His Life and Thought* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988).
140. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 151.
141. See especially Criveller, p. 151. For a lengthy discussion of these, see Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, pp. 457–60.
142. Chan and Criveller argue that da Rocha's work was published in 1619; see Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, pp. 70–71, concerning the difficulty of dating this work, and Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 237. On the other hand, Bailey puts the date at 1608; *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 102.
143. The biography of St Ignatius reveals his attachment to Marian devotion; the *Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius* includes numerous prayers (colloquies) that concern Mary. For instance, the Fourth Week of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius begins with a contemplation about “the appearance of Christ Our Lord to Mary.”
144. He Qi initially maintains that the late Ming artist Dong Qichang (1555–1636) used Nadal's commentary as a guide and produced the artwork to accompany da Rocha's text. Later, however, He Qi states that it was either Dong Qichang or one of his students. See He Qi, “Four Historical Stages of the Indigenization of Chinese Christian Art”, *Asian Christian Art Association*, 2000 (<http://www.asianchristian-art.org/news/article5a.html>). Likewise Criveller suggests Dong Qichang as the painter; see *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 237. Berthold Laufer noted that Dong Qichang “was indebted to the Jesuits for a number of European subjects which he copied with his brush”, but there is not enough evidence to suggest that he was in fact the artist engaged in the da Rocha work; “The Chinese Madonna in the Field Museum”, p. 1. Dong Qichang's life and work has been well documented; see, among others, Wai-kam Ho (ed.) *The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, 1555–1636*, 2 volumes (Kansas City and Seattle: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in co-operation with the University of Washington Press, 1992). If Dong had been the artist on this publication, then the scant attention paid to this is a significant lacuna in the literature.
145. Cited in Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents*, p. 72.
146. See Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions*, p. 103, and the extensive discussion in Chapter 6.
147. *Prie-Dieu* is French for “pray [to] God”. The item of furniture is basically a cross-beam (sometimes padded) for kneeling on, with an elevated armrest or desk on which to lean or for placing devotional objects. In a culture that regularly practised kneeling before one's superiors, to be elevated during that position (even however slightly) would seem odd.

148. These swirls of cloud are found throughout traditional Chinese art. The use of this style can also be seen in the print of the story known as the “calling of St Peter”, which was also published in *Master Cheng’s Ink Garden*. See “The Gospel of Matthew”, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 14:29. The calling of Peter was one of the three other prints Ricci had given the Cheng brothers.
149. Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions* p. 102.
150. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, p. 240.
151. See Louis Wei Tsing-sing, *La Politique missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1842–1856: Louverture des cinq ports chinois au commerce étranger et la liberté religieuse* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1960), pp. 90–95.

## Chapter 2 After the treaties

1. Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 190. See also Harry Gregor Gelber, *Opium, Soldiers and Evangelicals: Britain’s 1840–1842 War with China, and Its Aftermath* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 133.
2. John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 10, *Late Ch’ing, 1800–1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 212.
3. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, p. 190.
4. Claude Soetens cites the work of Léon Joly, who writes “in 1860, 43% of the priests in China were Chinese”; *L’Église Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997), p. 70.
5. See below for more about the implications of the suppression of the Society of Jesus for the Chinese Church. For a general history of this period of church history, see Louis Wei Tsing-sing, *La Politique missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1842–1856: Louverture des cinq ports chinois au commerce étranger et la liberté religieuse* (hereafter *La Politique missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1842–1856*).
6. Libois to Directors, 17 December 1842, ME 304, cited in Peter Ward Fay, “The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War”, *Modern Asian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1970): 128.
7. The role of procurator was to become especially important again, for all the congregations, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, as missionaries in China became increasingly shut off from international contact.
8. Fay, “The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War”, pp. 119–20, n. 11.
9. Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840–1842: Barbarians in the Celestial Empire in the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century and the War by Which They Forced Her Gates Ajar* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), p. 226.
10. St Vincent de Paul founded this missionary congregation of priests and brothers, formally known as the Congregation of the Missions (C.M.), in Paris in 1625. Hence they are often known in English as the Vincentians. In French-speaking countries, they are popularly known as the Lazarists because Vincent de Paul

lived at the Priory of Saint Lazare in Paris. The Lazarists first arrived in China in 1697, with a presence in Beijing from 1711. The three dioceses of China—Beijing, Nanjing and Macau—were under the authority of the Lazarists (prior to a reorganization in 1838). This meant they were under the authority of Portuguese Lazarists, in accordance with the terms of the *padroado*, which had been granted by the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. By the Opium War treaty period, there were a number of Lazarists in China.

11. Cited in Fay, *The Opium War*, p. 385, n. 15.
12. J. B. Aubry, *Les Chinois chez eux* (Tournai: DDB, 1889), p. 140, cited in Claude Soetens, *L'Eglise Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle*, p. 10. Author's translation.
13. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, p. 191.
14. Kenneth Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age: A History of Christianity in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, vol. 3, *The Nineteenth Century outside Europe: The Americas, the Pacific, Asia, and Africa* (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1961), p. 444.
15. Fay, "The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War", p. 117.
16. David Mungello, "The Return of the Jesuits to China in 1841 and the Chinese Christian Backlash", *The Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* 27 (2005): 9–46. Nicolas Standaert, *Handbook on Christianity in China, Vol. 1, 635–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 9–46.
17. Fay, "The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War", p. 118, and Mungello, "The Return of the Jesuits", p. 16.
18. Cited in Bertram Wolfertan, *The Catholic Church in China from 1860–1907* (St Louis: Herder, 1909), p. 291.
19. Cited in Wolfertan, p. 353. These were *Les Religieuses Auxiliatrices des Ames du Purgatoire*, also known as the Society of the Helpers of the Souls in Purgatory, or simply the Society of Helpers. They arrived in Shanghai in 1867.
20. Fay, "The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War", p. 118.
21. *Ibid.*, n. 8.
22. Usually known as "Propaganda", from an abbreviation of their Latin name, *Sacra congregatio Christiano nomini propaganda*. Pope Gregory XV founded the order at Rome in 1622, as the Vatican's own missionary group, in part as a reaction to the control exerted by the Portuguese crown over the so-called mission territory, which they enjoyed by virtue of the *padroado*. Propaganda had a significant history in China. One of their more famous priests in China was the Italian Matteo Ripa (1682–1746), who worked as an engraver and painter at the Kangxi Emperor's court in Beijing between the years 1710 and 1723.
23. Fay, "The French Catholic Mission in China during the Opium War", p. 121.
24. See Soetens, *L'Eglise Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle*, p. 79; Wei, *La Politique missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1842–1856*, p. 95; and Louis Wei Tsing-sing, *Le Saint-Siège, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Léon XIII: Le projet de l'établissement d'une Nonciature à Pékin et l'affaire du Pei-t'ang 1880–1886* (Schönebeck/Beckenreid: Administration de la Nouvelle Revue de science missionnaire, 1966), p. 12.

25. “First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians”, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New Revised Standard Version), edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 15:27.
26. Gabriel Palatre, *Le Pèlerinage de Notre-Dame-Auxiliatrice à Zô-sè, dans le vicariat apostolique de Nan-kin* (Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Mission Catholique, 1875), p. 30.
27. There are many works on the Rites Controversy, and some are mentioned below. Essentially, the issue revolved around the interpretation of Chinese ancestor worship and the use of Chinese classical terms as equivalent terms for Christian theological concepts. The official Jesuit position was that the veneration of ancestors was not a religious act but a civil rite and that the use of Chinese words for God was not confusing or flawed, whereas others, including the Dominicans and Franciscans, disagreed. The Vatican was forced to decide; the bulls promulgating these decisions are discussed below.
28. The Church Missionary Society was founded in England in 1799 as an evangelical missionary organization (<http://www.cms-uk.org>).
29. Cited in Fay, *The Opium War*, p. 108.
30. Regarding the history of Christian funerals in China, see Nicolas Standaert, *Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange between China and Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).
31. Billouez (1846–77) was a Belgian MEP priest who worked in the vicinity of Guiyang, Guizhou Province. He was also an engineer and a photographer. As well as being in charge of the construction of the Church of St Joseph at Guiyang, one of his other tasks was to visit the various works run by the Society for the Foreign Missions to record missionary activities for posterity. The photographs are in the MEP archives in Paris.
32. Joseph Gabet (1808–60) was the often forgotten companion of the noted storyteller Abbé Huc. This priest, Father Everiste Régis Huc (1813–60), another French Lazarist priest, wrote the classic work, *Travels in Tartary, Thibet and China, 1844–1846* (originally published as *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans la Tartarie, le Tibet et la Chine pendant les années 1844, 1845, 1846*), which continues to be printed into the present century.
33. This publication was in French, *Les missions Catholiques en Chine en 1846, Coup d'Œil sur l'état des missions de Chine présenté au Saint-Père le Pape Pie IX* (Récits d'hier à aujourd'hui series) (Paris: Valmonde, 1999). Author's translation.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Author's translation.
35. For a comprehensive analysis see David Mungello (ed.), *The Chinese Rites Controversy: Its History and Meaning*, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XXXIII (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1994); for other positions, see J. S. Cummins, *A Question of Rites, Friar Domingo Navarette and the Jesuits in China* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1993) and George Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy: From Its Beginning to Modern Times* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985).

36. Vatican documents, which are always in Latin, take the first few words of their text for their title. *Ex illa die* means “from that day”.
37. Cited and translated in Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy*, p. 73.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
39. See Wei, *La Politique missionnaire de la France in Chine, 1842–1856*, p. 92.
40. Interestingly, the secretary of Propaganda in Rome at this time was none other than Celso Costantini, who was instrumental in promoting the growth of a local ecclesiology in China in the 1920s and 1930s. See Chapter 3.
41. Translated in Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy*, p. 197.
42. I am indebted to David Mungello’s research on this period; see his “The Return of the Jesuits”, for more information.
43. See Wei, *La Politique Missionnaire de la France en Chine, 1842–1856*, pp. 82–84.
44. Mungello, “The Return of the Jesuits”, p. 13.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
46. In addition to David Mungello’s work, see Joseph Burnichon, *La Compagnie de Jesus en France. Histoire d’un siècle, 1814–1914*, vol. 3, 1845–1860 (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1922), p. 290. While Brueyre signed his name in this way, many of the secondary sources, including Wei’s *La politique missionnaire de la France in Chine, 1842–1856*, list his surname as Bruyère.
47. They first sailed to Manila, and then transferred to another vessel that took them to Macau. Here they found themselves unwelcome by the Portuguese authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical, and so arranged passage on a British vessel that took them up the southern Chinese coast to Ningbo. In addition to the free passage to China on a trustworthy ship, the queen also covered the cost of transporting the Jesuits’ luggage from Paris to Brest. They were also enabled to make their own journey to Brest without payment. See Joseph Burnichon, *La Compagnie de Jesus en France*, pp. 290–91.
48. See Wei, *La Politique missionnaire de la France in Chine, 1842–1856*, p. 39.
49. See especially Hubert Verhaeren C. M., *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de Pé-tang* (Pékin: Imprimerie des Lazaristes, 1949).
50. Cited in Fay, “The French Catholic Mission in China”, p. 118.
51. As noted by David Mungello, “the five or six Chinese priests who served the Catholics of Jiangnan were supported by a small pension derived from the property of former Jesuits. The pension was paid annually from Macau by Portuguese Lazarists.” Such fairness in terms of the allocation of confiscated Jesuit resources was not always as evident, for instance, in Europe or other parts of the world; “The Return of the Jesuits”, p. 14.
52. Soetens, *L’Eglise Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle*, p. 17. Author’s translation.
53. Cited in Mungello, “The Return of the Jesuits”, p. 14.
54. The number of priests is provided by Mungello, “The Return of the Jesuits”, pp. 16–17.
55. Bertrand was a Paris Foreign Missions priest who began his work in Sichuan in 1835, and eventually spent almost thirty years in China. During his lifetime,

he saw the legitimization of missionary activity and the growth of the church communities.

56. Fay, *The Opium War*, p. 101.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
58. Letter from Marie St Brigitte (Louise Bruneau) to the Mother Superior, sent from Shengmuyuan, 1870; private correspondence held in archives of Les Auxiliatrices. Bruneau returned to France in 1871, yet remained a sister until her death in 1897.
59. Nicolas Standaert, “Jesuit Corporate Culture”, in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences and the Arts, 1540–1773*, edited by John W. O’Malley et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), p. 356.
60. For more on apparitions of Mary, see, among others, E. Ann Matter, “Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in the Late Twentieth Century: Apocalyptic, Representation, Politics”, *Religion* 31 (2001): 125–53.
61. Alistair Horne, *Seven Ages of Paris* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), p. 218.
62. As early as 1836, Jean Gabriel Perboyre (a Lazarist missionary in China) was distributing these medals to Catholics in China. See Thomas Davitt, “John Gabriel Perboyre”, *Colloque* (Journal of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Mission) 6 (Autumn 1982): 37.
63. Even into the twenty-first century, the Marian shrine at Rue du Bac continues to receive thousands of visitors, some merely curious, others on a pilgrimage.
64. Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
65. Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, p. xii.
66. This image is in the Museum at Lourdes.
67. The first basilica was consecrated in 1876, as requested during one of the apparitions, although it was soon found to be too small for the vast numbers of pilgrims visiting the site each year. This structure was built above the grotto in which the apparitions had taken place, on what is known as the rock of Massabielle. Another church, the Church of the Rosary, was erected at the foot of this basilica and was completed in 1901.
68. “Notre-Dame de Lourdes”, *Catholic Encyclopedia* (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09389b.htm>).
69. Journal of Mother Miki, 24 January 1889, held in file 5 CH 5 in the archives of the Helpers of the Holy Souls.
70. *Ibid.*
71. See Chapter 3 for further discussion and contemporary accounts about the role of Mary during the Boxer uprising. Notwithstanding the sense that Mary had protected them, many Christians and the missionaries with them lost their lives at this time. Richard Madsen makes the point that Daoist beliefs about healing waters could also have influenced the popularity of the Lourdes devotion in China.
72. Fr. Broullion SJ, *Missions de Chine. Mémoire sur l'état actuel de la Mission de Kiangnan 1842–1855* (Paris: Julien, Lanier and Cie, 1855), p. 77.

73. Monsignor Clerc-Reynaud, *Les missions Catholiques*, no. 2441, 17 March 1916, p. 130. Author's translation. Clerc-Reynaud became vicar apostolic of eastern Zhejiang in 1910 and, just before his death in 1926, vicar apostolic of Ningbo.
74. *The China Letter* 21 (September 1936): 2. *The China Letter, the American Jesuits on the Mission of Shanghai*, also known as *China, Letter of the American Jesuits in China to the Friends in the States* was printed by the Californian Province of the Society of Jesus, San Francisco, California. Like other missionary newsletters and bulletins before and after it, it contained news of the activities of the missionaries and of the church in China in general, partly to provide information, but also to present edifying examples of the various works being conducted. *The China Letter* was also published to maintain support, spiritual and financial, for the ongoing activities of the mission.

### Chapter 3 Our Lady of Donglu

1. See “The Jesuit martyrs of Hebei” and “The Franciscan Martyrs of Hunan and Shanxi”, in Anthony E. Clark, *China's Saints: Catholic Martyrdom During the Qing (1644–1911)* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2011).
2. *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, number 141, 1925, p. 172.
3. Joseph W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). See also the essays by Alan Richard Sweeten, “Catholic Converts in Jiangxi Province: Conflict and Accommodation, 1860–1900”; Charles A. Litzinger, “Rural Religion and Village Organization in North China: The Catholic Challenge in the Late Nineteenth Century”; and Roger R. Thompson, “Twilight of the Gods in the Chinese Countryside: Christians, Confucians, and the Modernizing State, 1861–1911”, all in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, edited by Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
4. The Taiping Rebellion occurred between 1851 and 1864. See Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (London: HarperCollins, 1996).
5. For more on the Boxers, see, in addition to the works of Joseph Esherick and others already mentioned, Albert François Iéphonse D'Anthouard, *Les Boxeurs, La Chine contre L'Étranger* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et cie, 1902); Mark Elvin, “Mandarins and Millenarians: Reflections on the Boxer Uprising of 1899–1900”, in *Another History: Essays on China from a European Perspective* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1996), Chapter 7; and Dianne Preston, *Besieged in Peking: The Story of the 1900 Boxer Rising* (London: Constable and Company, 1999).
6. Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 98.
7. Elvin, “Mandarins and Millenarians”, p. 208.
8. From a letter written by Edwin Conger, dated 8 May 1900, cited in Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, p. 281.

9. See Clark, *China's Saints*, for examples.
10. Cited in Paul A. Cohen, "Boxers, Christians and the Gods: The Boxer Conflict of 1900 as a Religious War", in *China Unbound: Evolving Perspectives on the Chinese Past* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 118.
11. Preston, *Besieged in Peking: The Story of the 1900 Boxer Rising*, p. 208.
12. Henry's heroic deeds resulted in a street being named after him in the French Concession in Shanghai.
13. The similarity between Guanyin apparition stories and Marian apparitions is striking. See, among others, Yü Chün-fang, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), Chapter 3 and p. 192; Maria Reis-Habito, "The Bodhisattva Guanyin and the Virgin Mary", *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 13 (1993): 65–66. For the more general story of appearances of Guanyin, see, among others, Glen Dudbridge, *The Legend of Miao-shan* (London: Ithaca Press, 1978).
14. Cited by the webpage <http://www.catholictradition.org/Mary/peking.htm>. This website cites another apparition account from *Annales de la Mission*, vol. 65, p. 533.
15. For a broader discussion of apparition accounts at a time of societal upheaval, see Robert A. Ventresca, "The Virgin and the Bear: Religion, Society and the Cold War in Italy", *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 2 (2003); and, more generally, E. Ann Matter, "Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in the Late Twentieth Century: Apocalyptic, Representation, Politics", *Religion* 31 (2001).
16. Kaori O'Connor, "Introduction", in Katharine Augusta Carl, *With the Empress Dowager of China* (London: KPI, reprinted 1986), p. xxv.
17. Susan Naquin lists the damage done by the Boxers to churches in Beijing; *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 683–85.
18. Praesenjit Duara describes this concept of overlaying as superscription, in "Superscribing Symbols: The Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War", *Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 4 (1988): 778–95. I have been greatly helped by Duara's conceptualization.
19. The two first-hand accounts of these commissions contain some slight differences, especially in relation to chronology and causes. Yu Deling, states that Cixi was photographed before Katharine Carl came to the palace to paint her portrait (*Two Years in the Forbidden City* [London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1912], pp. 216–25), whereas Carl recalls that the portrait was painted prior to any photographs (*With the Empress Dowager of China*, p. 305). I suggest that Carl was unaware of the earlier photographs. Sterling Seagrave, in a caption to a photograph between pages 332 and 333, maintained that Cixi posed for this photograph in 1898; *Dragon Lady: The Life and Legend of the Last Empress of China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992). This photograph includes Yu Deling, who was sometimes erroneously called a princess but did not become an attendant in the imperial palace until 1903 (Seagrave, p. 412). Thus, this group photograph can only have been taken from 1903 onwards, and not

1898. This does not mean of course that Cixi was not in other portraits before this. An essay by David Hogge also analyses the engagement of Cixi with photography; “The Empress Dowager and the Camera: Photographing Cixi, 1903–1904”, *MIT Visualizing Cultures* ([http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/empress\\_dowager/index.html](http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/empress_dowager/index.html)).
20. Alicia Bewicke Little was a supporter of the reformer Kang Youwei, and so was more than happy to portray Cixi in a negative light. Seagrave describes some of Little’s activities in China; *Dragon Lady*, pp. 9–10.
  21. Alicia Bewicke Little, cited by O’Connor, “Introduction”, p. xxv.
  22. *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.
  23. Yu Geng was a capable diplomat and had been China’s minister to Japan immediately after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. He was then appointed the Qing minister to France in 1899. See Koon-ki Tommy Ho, “Yu Deling”, in *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Qing Period, 1644–1911*, edited by Clara Wing-chung Ho (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), pp. 263–66. Seagrave wrote of Yu Deling that she was “educated at missionary schools in China and France, spoke English and French fluently and was no stranger to liaisons” (*Dragon Lady*, p. 412).
  24. In another of her memoirs, Yu Deling describes some of their cultural experiences. For instance, in the company of her sister, Yu Rongling, she had studied dance in Paris with Isadora Duncan, who would later become famous as one of the founders of modern dance, and learned piano at the Paris Conservatoire; *Kowtow* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1930), p. 271.
  25. Ho, “Yu Deling”, p. 264.
  26. *Ibid.*, p. 263. As Yu Deling wrote, this was the same Bishop Favier who survived the siege of Beijing (*Kowtow*, p. 308). She had been baptized by him some years previously.
  27. Yu, *Two Years in the Forbidden City*, p. 107.
  28. *Ibid.*, pp. 206–9. This is slightly different from Katharine Carl’s version, as is to be expected given that they both liberally use subjective voice.
  29. See Seagrave, *Dragon Lady*, pp. 409–11, for further biographical details about Katharine Carl.
  30. O’Connor, “Introduction”, p. xxviii.
  31. *Ibid.*, p. xxix.
  32. *Ibid.*, pp. xxvi–xxvii.
  33. Kaori O’Connor, , suggests that the St Louis portrait was the first one painted but the frontispiece has a portrait that does not match Katharine Carl’s description of this painting; moreover, Carl states that the St Louis portrait was not the first one completed (“Introduction”, p. xxvii).
  34. Carl, *With the Empress Dowager of China*, p. 162.
  35. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
  36. C. A. S. Williams, *Chinese Symbolism and Art Motifs: A Comprehensive Handbook on Symbolism in Chinese Art through the Ages* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2006), p. 315.

37. Seagrave describes these symbols at length; *Dragon Lady*, p. 410.
38. Carl, *With the Empress Dowager of China*, p. 295.
39. The fair was also known as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, so named because it commemorated the centenary of Thomas Jefferson's purchase of this land from the French government. The number of people who attended the fair is supplied by the St Louis Convention and Visitors Commission ([http://www.explorestlouis.com/factSheets/fact\\_worldsFair.asp?PageType=4](http://www.explorestlouis.com/factSheets/fact_worldsFair.asp?PageType=4)).
40. As cited by O'Connor, "Introduction", p. xxix.
41. It was perhaps this fact that prompted the court to commission another Western painter, Hubert Vos, to paint further portraits in 1905. By this stage, Katharine Carl had left China. See Luke S. K. Kwong, "No Shadows", *History Today* 50, no. 9 (2000). Although Vos' paintings did not have the same historical significance as Carl's St Louis portrait, they are instructive in revealing the extent to which Cixi was willing to exert control over the production of images of her. See Sterling Seagrave, *Dragon Lady*, pp. 414–17 for a description of Vos' time in the palace and his finished paintings.
42. Carl, *With the Empress Dowager of China*, p. 296.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 305. Fascinatingly, according to Yu Deling, Cixi soon so tired of sitting for the portrait that Yu Deling posed as the life model for everything except for Cixi's facial expressions. Yu Deling also maintained, as mentioned above at n. 19, that Cixi had already had some photographs taken of her by Yu Xunying; *Two Years in the Forbidden City*, p. 239.
44. Laikwan Pang, "Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China", *Journal of Women's History* 17, no. 4 (2005): 56–85; for more on the development of photography in China, and East Asia in general, see John Clark, *Modern Asian Art* (North Ryde, NSW: Craftsman House/[Tortola, BVI]: G+B Arts International, 1998), pp. 144–48. See also the essays in *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China*, edited by Jeffrey Cody and Frances Terpak (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2011).
45. These early photographs were known as daguerreotypes, taking their name from the man who invented them, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851). Much of Daguerre's success was due to his business partnership with another inventor, Nicéphore Niépce, who had died in 1833.
46. Edwin K. Lai, "The History of the Camera Obscura and Early Photography in China", in Cody and Terpak, *Brush and Shutter*, p. 27.
47. Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, p. 145. Régine Thiriez notes that *The Far East*, established in Yokohama in 1870, included photographic prints; *Barbarian Lens: Western Photographers of the Qianlong Emperor's European Palaces* (New York: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1998), pp. 31–32.
48. Laikwan Pang, "Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China", p. 58. Yet, both Thiriez and Dikotter make the point that technological progress also made photography accessible to the working class as well; Régine Thiriez, "Photography and Portraiture in Nineteenth-Century China",

- East Asian History* 17/18 (1999) and Frank Dikotter, *Exotic Commodities: Modern Objects and Everyday Life in Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
49. Thiriez, “Photography and Portraiture in Nineteenth-Century China”, p. 81. Cody and Terpak’s *Brush and Shutter* also lists a number of these photographers. Neither of them focuses on the numbers of missionaries who were also active photographers during this time.
  50. Pang, “Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China”, p. 58.
  51. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
  52. European photographers like Felice Beato and John Thomson, who both spent time in China in the 1860s, had also recognized the value of preserving both significant and quotidian moments of history in photograph albums. Some of Beato’s more famous photographs, 100 of which were taken during the Anglo-French North China expedition of 1860, were collected into private albums and purchased by the officers and generals involved in this expedition. See David Harris, *Of Battle and Beauty: Felice Beato’s Photographs of China* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999). Thomson also worked in China in the 1860s and 1870s and sought to sell his work more broadly, both to journals like *The China Magazine* and through the publication of collected works, for instance his four-volume work, *Illustrations of China and Its People*, published in 1873 and 1874. See Stephen White, *John Thomson: A Window to the Orient* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1986).
  53. Pang, “Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China”, p. 64. Thiriez also notes the number of foreign photographers working in Beijing in the late nineteenth century, in addition to Beato and Thomson; *Barbarian Lens*, pp. 10–11 and 17–33. It seems as though Cixi had thus avoided photography until seeing the Yu Deling portraits and meeting her brother.
  54. John Thomson took a portrait photograph of Prince Gong in Beijing in 1871, during Thomson’s visit there. See White, *John Thomson: A Window to the Orient*, p. 26.
  55. Sun Yanjing et al., *Wan Qing yiying* (晚清遺影) [Photographs from the late Qing] (Jinan: Shandong Huabao, 2000), p. 73; cited in Pang, “Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China”, p. 64.
  56. 時報 *Shi Bao* (The Eastern Times), 12 June 1904. Author’s translation. I am grateful to Laikwan Pang for the original citation.
  57. Pang, “Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China”, p. 64; see also Yu, *Two Years*, pp. 224–25.
  58. Pang, “Photography, Performance, and the Making of Female Images in Modern China”, p. 64.
  59. *Ibid.*
  60. Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, p. 146.
  61. Thiriez notes that the journal *The China Magazine*, begun in Hong Kong in 1868 (yet terminated in 1869) included photographic prints; *Barbarian Lens*, p. 31. John Thomson, mentioned above, had taken some of these images.

62. As evidenced, for instance, by the photographs taken by Auguste-César Billouez as early as 1875, discussed above. See also Frédéric Garan, who discusses the way that the editors back in France used the photographs sent by missionaries; “*Les missions Catholique ont-elles trahi les missionaries en Chine? Photographie missionnaires et usage journalistique*”, in *Une Appropriation du Monde: Mission et Missions XIXème–XXème siècles*, edited by Claude Prudhomme (Lyons: Publisud, 2004), pp. 179–221.
63. Works that were painted here were often just signed with the letters TSW, rather than the name of the individual artist.
64. See Joseph Servièrè, *L'orphelinat de T'ou-sè-wè: son histoire, son etat present* (Zikawei, Shanghai: Imprimerie de l'orphelinat de T'ou-sè-wè, 1914), p. 3.
65. See the *Catalogus* of 1863 and *Catalogus* of 1865. A catalogus is the Jesuit annual directory, listing the location of all the Jesuits of a province; it is an internal document. The formal title of the version cited here is *Status Missionis Nankinensis Societatis Iesu*, which was printed in Paris and then, once the printing press began in Shanghai, at Zikawei.
66. See *Relations de la Mission de Nan-king, II, 1874–1875* (Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Missions Catholique, 1876), p. 70. For more on the charitable work of Christian missionaries, especially as regards orphanages and the work of the French Holy Childhood Association, see Henrietta Harrison, “A Penny for the Little Chinese: The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843–1951”, *American Historical Review* 113 (February 2008): 72–92.
67. For instance, each day there were 650 people to feed at the orphanage, according to the article “Un Vieil Orphelinat”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 269 (January 1936): 183–84.
68. One of the earliest histories of Tushanwan is contained in *Relations de la Mission de Nan-king, II, 1874–1875* (Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Missions Catholique, 1876). Although there are an increasing number of academic references to the art workshop of Tushanwan, for instance in several of Michael Sullivan’s works, there is yet to be a full-length study devoted to it. References are also contained in the work on Shanghai artist Ren Bonian by Yang Chialing, *New Wine in Old Bottles: The Art of Ren Bonian in Nineteenth-century Shanghai* (London: Saffron Books, 2007). For information on Tushanwan, Yang relies on several early twentieth-century Chinese-language publications, including Lin Zou, *Xuhui Jilue* 徐匯記略 (Shanghai: Tushanwan yinshuguan, 1933), Chapter 13. Details in these works differ from the earlier and more contemporaneous accounts in both the *Relations* and Joseph Servièrè’s history of 1914. Consequently, the weight of evidence seems not to be with Lin Zou et al. One example is the fact that the art workshop and teaching school began at Xujiahui, not Dongjiadu, and the buildings were finally finished in 1875, not 1867.
69. Such interest is beyond the scope of this book and is part of an ongoing project, but some of the Chinese artists who were assisted by or influenced by the Jesuit teachers at Tushanwan include Ren Bonian, Xu Beihong and Zhang Chongren.

- The Jesuits also produced a number of books that helped Chinese students acquire Western techniques. Brother Liu Bizhen was responsible for some of these, as was Fr. Adolphe Vasseur, SJ, another Jesuit priest who taught art at Tushanwan.
70. Not to be outdone, elaborate pieces of embroidery, needlework and bound photographic albums produced at the girls' workshops were delivered to Rome for the Mission Exposition of 1924 and 1925, held at the Vatican.
  71. Anonymous, *A Guide To Catholic Shanghai* (Shanghai: T'ou-sè-wè Press, 1937) p. 56. In fact, although their names were not recorded in this work, the book was produced by a number of Californian Jesuits for the use of visitors to Shanghai who made their way there after the 33rd Eucharistic Congress in Manila in February 1937. My thanks to Paul Mariani, SJ, for this reference.
  72. Each year on average the print-shop published fifty works in European languages, producing between 25,000 and 75,000 copies, and sixty Chinese-language works, with runs of between 250,000 and 350,000 copies; "Un Vieil Orphelinat", pp. 183–84.
  73. An anonymous article entitled "Notre Dame de Chine", *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 141 (May 1925): 171–73.
  74. In May 1919, there was a large protest in Beijing as part of the May Fourth Movement); in May 1925, there was a large strike in Shanghai; I discuss both in Chapter 4 below.
  75. "Notre Dame de Chine", *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, 1925, p. 172. Author's translation.
  76. *Ibid.* Flament would later become the president of the inaugural synodal commission (see Chapter 4). Author's translation.
  77. *Ibid.*
  78. Joseph de Lapparent, "Notre Dame de Chine-Regina Sinarum, Historique", *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, 1941, pp. 359–60. His name was also written in missionary literature as Liu, Lieu and Liou. Lapparent wrote this concise history of the image so that there would be no further debate about its origins. His article drew on the earlier article of 1925. Liu Bizhen was born on 2 February 1843 and died 31 July 1912.
  79. See *Cent Ans sur le Fleuve Bleu une mission des Jésuites* (Zikawei, Shanghai: Imprimerie de T'ou-sè-wè, 1942), p. 218.
  80. Ellen Johnstone Laing lists Nicholas Massa as a brother, as opposed to a priest. While he began his Jesuit life as a brother he later studied to be a priest; *Selling Happiness: Calendar Posters and Visual Culture in Early-Twentieth Century Shanghai* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), p. 62.
  81. Index to *Catalogus Provinciae Franciae*, 1900.
  82. He is listed as director in the catalogue of the French Jesuits, *Catalogus Provinciae Franciae*, 1908, "Missio Sinensis in Province Nankinensi", p. 53. Showing the ideally ever-present religious aspect of the Jesuit vocation, he was also responsible for ensuring that the charges in his care were saying their prayers (*visit. orat. et exam.*) in the Jesuit shorthand used in province catalogues.

83. Lapparent, “Notre Dame de Chine-Regina Sinarum, Historique”, p. 359. The photographs of Cixi as Guanyin show her either standing or sitting and accompanied by court attendants dressed as Buddhist figures. She is also photographed in a field of lotuses, a Buddhist symbol of purity. There are no attendants or lotuses in the Donglu painting. It thus seems reasonable to accept both the anonymous article and Lapparent’s account, that the painting, and not the staged photographs, provided the model for Liu’s work.
84. During fieldwork in 2010, I visited Donglu and made a point of enquiring from local Catholics about the original painting. No one seems to know what happened to it. The painting on display is a more recent copy, and there is a statue outside the church based on the original image. The church itself has also been moved from its original location, so it seems as though the fate of the original painting remains unknown.
85. See Chapter 4.
86. Brennan’s card used the traditional blessing, “May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, descend upon you and remain forever”; above this, Brennan had written a personal note of appreciation to a fellow Jesuit. The quotation from psalm 115 represents the sense of thanksgiving Simons felt at the time of his ordination.
87. I discovered this image during a research visit to French missionary archives in January 2006.
88. Cardinal Kung Foundation website ([http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/christmas\\_greetings2002.htm](http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/christmas_greetings2002.htm)). See the conclusion for further discussion.
89. The Donglu church reproduction was printed in *Les missions Catholiques* magazine, published some time between 1908 and 1924. Although the features of the painting are indistinct in this reproduction, the position of Jesus’ arms is clear. See below.
90. See, for instance, Giovanni Bellini’s painting of the Madonna and child, produced in 1505, which is in the church of San Zaccaria, Venice.
91. One way in which students at Tushanwan were instructed in painting techniques was by the process of continuously copying old paintings. An undated photograph from the archives of the Californian Jesuit Province shows that the Donglu Mary (which by the time of the photograph could already have become Our Lady of China) was one of the images to be replicated by students. Californian Jesuits displayed a wooden version of this Our Lady of Donglu image as part of the Tushanwan materials at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915.
92. The fact that Jesus was shown as a young boy and not an infant would have also made a cradling motif incongruous.
93. Fitzgerald, *Barbarian Beds*, p. 35.
94. See Chapters 5 and 6.
95. See J. M. Trémorin, “Les Pèlerinages à Notre Dame de Tonglu”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 229 (September 1932): 174–75.

96. See “Notre Dame de Chine”, p. 172. The virgins were Catholic women who consecrated themselves to a type of religious life without being formally part of a congregation.
97. *Ibid.* Author’s translation.

#### Chapter 4 The rise and fall of the French protectorate

1. Catholic missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word (*Societas Verbum Dei*, hence the letters S.V.D.) had, for instance, arrived in China in 1879. Although this group was founded in 1875 at Steyl, in Holland, they were effectively a German order. Less frequently, they are also referred to as the Steyler missionaries. By 1888, Divine Word missionaries were able to free themselves from the automatic protection of the French government and choose their own protector. This occurred after negotiations with the Chinese government, as well as with the pope; they quickly put themselves under the protection of the German government. See Joseph Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 80. For the French reaction to attempts to diminish the role of the protectorate, see Louis Wei Tsing-sing, *Le Saint-Siège, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Léon XIII: Le projet de l'établissement d'une Nonciature à Pékin et l'affaire du Pei-t'ang 1880–1886* (Schöneck/Beckenreid: Administration de la Nouvelle Revue de science missionnaire, 1966), p. 30.
2. This is also often referred to by its English name: “On the propagation of the faith throughout the world.”
3. This begins with the appointment of local priests to positions of authority and is finally achieved when archdioceses are established and there is an indigenous cardinal. Usually, the first position of responsibility is the position of prefect apostolic, whereby the man named is responsible for a missionary district, without yet being named a bishop, although the prefect “acts as direct representative of the pope”. Jean-Paul Wiest, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis: Digests of the Synodal Commission of Catholic Church in China, 1928–1947, Guide to the Microfiche Collection* (Bethesda, MD: Congressional Information Service, 1988), p. xvi, n. 2. This is usually because the district is too small to be a diocese. It is the first step to becoming a bishopric, however, and once the district grows to the size of a vicariate, the prefect is usually, but not always, then named bishop. A vicariate essentially functions as a diocese; when it reaches a certain size, it is then usually formally called a diocese.
4. See “Discours de S. E. Ignace Kung”, *China Missionary Bulletin* 2 (3), no. 2 (February 1950): 136–38.
5. This speech was reported in “Discours de S. E. Ignace Kung”, p. 137. The “blessed Father” refers to Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits.
6. Cited in Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, p. 83.
7. See, for instance, Angelo Lazzarotto et al., *The Boxer Movement and Christianity in China* (Taipei: Furen University Publishing House, 2004).

8. Celso Costantini, *The Church and Chinese Culture* (New York: Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 1931), p. 7. In this regard, the latter arguments of communist propagandists about the role of the church as a colonial power hold some truth, although there is obviously much in such a critique that is merely hyperbole.
9. As shown in Chapter 2, by the 1830s Chinese Catholic priests and their communities in Beijing and Jiangnan had already expressed their displeasure with the behaviour of foreign missionaries.
10. Jean-Paul Wiest, “The Legacy of Vincent Lebbe”, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 1999, p. 33. Perboyre was an avid supporter of the Miraculous Medal devotion.
11. Jacques Leclercq, *Thunder in the Distance; The Life of Père Lebbe*, translated by George Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958). See also Wiest, “The Legacy of Vincent Lebbe”.
12. Wiest, “The Legacy of Vincent Lebbe”, p. 34.
13. Cited in Leclercq, *Thunder in the Distance*, pp. 198–99.
14. Although Lebbe’s was the more significant role, Cotta was important in helping develop a local church. Cotta was an Egyptian by birth who entered the Lazarists in Paris and arrived in China in 1906. He ended his days as a chaplain at the Maryknoll seminary in New York, having eventually fallen afoul of the Lazarist leadership through his vigorous support of Lebbe’s ideals. Both Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangbo are discussed below, in the section that describes the foundation of Furen University.
15. Mary Elsbernd, *Papal Statements on Rights: A Historical Contextual Study of Encyclical Teaching from Pius VI-Pius XI (1791–1939)* (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1985), p. 345.
16. Stephen Schloesser, “Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II”, *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 280.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
18. The famous Jesuit Martino Martini’s return to Rome in the seventeenth century involved imprisonment and, upon his release, a journey over land through much of northern Europe before his eventual arrival in Rome, almost two years after he had set out. His return to China again took almost two years and also involved him being imprisoned for yet another period.
19. Joseph de la Servière, *La Nouvelle Mission du Kiang-Nan, 1840–1922* (Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Mission, 1925), p. 35.
20. In 1922, Costantini’s journey from Venice to Hong Kong took longer, as it began on 12 September and finished on 8 November. See Claude Soetens, *L’Eglise Catholique en Chine au XX e Siècle* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997), p. 109.
21. Louis Wei Tsing-sing shows that this was not the first attempt to establish direct relations between the Vatican and China; *Le Saint-Siège, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Léon XIII*. See also Corinne de Ménonville, *Les Aventuriers de Dieu et de la République* (Paris: Les Indes Savantes, 2007), which examines the role of the French consuls in protecting Catholic missionaries.

22. Guébriant submitted his report in June 1920. See Soetens, *L'Eglise Catholique en Chine au XXe Siècle*, pp. 82–84.
23. See “What Is an Encyclical?”, in Anne Jackson Fremantle, *The Papal Encyclicals in Their Historical Context* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s and Sons, 1956), p. 25.
24. “The Papal Letters in their Historical Context”, in Fremantle, *The Papal Encyclicals in Their Historical Context*, p. 14.
25. *Maximum Illud*, as translated and cited in Leclercq, *Thunder in the Distance*, p. 211. For the Latin versions, see the Vatican website.
26. Cited in Leclercq, *Thunder in the Distance*, p. 211.
27. See *ibid.*, pp. 214–40.
28. Father Garelli, “Pourquoi la Chine n’a pas encore une hierarchie ecclesiastique chinoise?”, cited in *Les missions en Chine* 2980, 6 August 1926, p. 381. Author’s translation.
29. Wiest, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, p. x.
30. *In memoriam Concilii Plenarii Sinensis, Catalogus Vicariorum et Praefectorum Apostolicorum, 1924* (Shanghai: T’ou-sè-wè, 1924). This small memorial booklet does not have page numbers.
31. Peter J. Fleming, *Chosen for China: The California Province Jesuits in China, 1928–1957: A Case Study in Mission and Culture* (doctoral dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA 1987), p. 50.
32. Cited by Wiest, in *Collectanea*, p. ix.
33. Celso Costantini, *Con I Missionari in Cina*, vol. 1, p. 3, as cited in Wiest, *Collectanea*, p. ix.
34. *Contra* Mary S. Lawton, who states that Galvin was a member of Maryknoll; “A Unique Style in China: Chinese Christian Painting in Beijing”, *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 472.
35. Celso Costantini, “L’Universalité de l’art Chrétien”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 5, no. 5 (1932): 410. Author’s translation.
36. Costantini, “L’Universalité de l’art Chrétien”, p. 410.
37. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 472, fn. 8.
38. More importantly, this development of a Chinese Catholic identity was occurring at a time when Chinese students and intellectuals were arguing and agitating forcefully for a strengthening of an independent China. Costantini and other church officials were well aware of the passions aroused by the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and by the strikes of 1925 in Shanghai.
39. Costantini, “L’Universalité de l’art Chrétien”, p. 410. Author’s translation.
40. As cited in *ibid.*, p. 411. Author’s translation.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 412. Author’s translation.
42. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 472.
43. Costantini, “L’Universalité de l’art Chrétien”, p. 413. Author’s translation.
44. As far back as 1851, there had also been a gathering of bishops in Shanghai, which met to discuss such things as the number of ecclesiastic provinces and the formation of catechists and so on, but this was the first plenary council.

45. For more about the daily events of the council, see Louis Wei Tsing-sing, *Le Saint Siège et La Chine: de Pie XI à nos jours* (Sotteville-lès-Rouen: Allais, 1971), pp. 108–16.
46. As this thesis focuses on the church communities in China, the broader effects of the French influence is not examined. See, among others, Guy Brossollet, *Les Français de Shanghai, 1849–1949* (Paris: Belin, 1999) and John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 10, *Late Ching, 1800–1911, Part I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
47. *Les missions de Chine* 129 (May 1924): 162. Author's translation.
48. The Cistercian monastery became famous later because of the death march forced upon the monks by the troops of the Communist Party's Fifth Route Army in the late 1930s, and the total destruction of the abbey. See James T. Myers, *Enemies without Guns: The Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China* (New York: Paragon, 1991), pp. 1–13.
49. See "Le Concile Plénier de Shanghai", *Les missions de Chine* 130 (June 1924): 202.
50. Francis X. Ford, "Report on the General Council at Shanghai, June, 1924", in *Maryknoll Mission Letter, China*, Vol. 2, *Extracts from the Letters and Diaries of the Pioneer Missioners of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America* (New York: MacMillan, 1927), p. 344. Ford, who later became a bishop, was arrested as a spy in April 1951 and died in 1952 in prison in Guangzhou. See Wiest, *Maryknoll in China*, pp. 395–401.
51. There is some confusion here. Jean-Paul Wiest states that there were thirteen Chinese present, Sun and Cheng and eleven others ("Introduction", *Concilium*, p. x) but the memorial of the council lists only seven, in addition to the prefects apostolic.
52. *In memoriam Concilii Plenarii Sinensis in civitate Shanghai habitii mens, Maio ac Junio, Anni 1924*.
53. Both are discussed below.
54. For the unfolding of events after 1949, see Paul Philip Mariani, *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).
55. See Joseph de Lapparent, "Notre Dame de Chine-Regina Sinarum, Historique", *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, 1941, p. 359.
56. See Ford, "Report on the General Council", p. 344.
57. "Acts of the Apostles", in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New Revised Standard Version), edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1:22–2:6.
58. Box 6 CH, *Lettres de Chine*, 13 June 1924, held in the archives of the Helpers of the Holy Souls.
59. The image was associated with Sheshan because the traditional feast day for this devotion, 24 May, was one of the main pilgrimage days for the Catholics. Each year, thousands visited Sheshan on this day.

60. It was designed when the new basilica at Sheshan was opened in 1935, and is described in Chapter 6.
61. The Our Lady of Peñha pilgrimage was at the shrine of this name in Macau. This shrine was the first site of Marian pilgrimage in China, dating back to 1622. See Joseph de la Largère, “Les Pelerinages a La S. Vierge en Chine”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, no. 261 (May 1935).
62. Anonymous, “Correspondence and Renseignements”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pekin*, 1941, pp. 359–360.
63. Later reproductions also carried the title in Italian, *Nostra Signora della Cina*, or in English, Our Lady of China.
64. For example, one outspoken opponent of other images is the Cardinal Kung Foundation, the U.S.-based Chinese Catholic Church advocacy agency. At times, their comments can seem less than helpful.
65. Wiest, “Introduction”, *Concilium*, p. x.
66. Ford, “Report on the General Council at Shanghai, June, 1924”, pp. 342–43.
67. Wiest, “Introduction” *Concilium*, p. x.
68. Wiest, *Concilium*, p. xi.
69. See Wiest, *Concilium*, p. xi.
70. Wiest, *Concilium*, p. xi.
71. Theodore Mittler, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 1, no. 1 (May 1928): 3.
72. Wiest, “Introduction” *Concilium*, p. xi.
73. Ford, “Report on the General Council at Shanghai, June, 1924”, p. 343.
74. See *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, September to October 1938.
75. Walsh held the distinction of arriving at the council on 7 June, a week before it was to end. He was appointed head of the Central Catholic Bureau in Shanghai in 1948, was arrested in 1958, and eventually released in 1970. See Raymond Kerrigan, *Bishop Walsh of Maryknoll: A Biography* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1962).
76. Ford, “Report on the General Council at Shanghai, June, 1924”, p. 343. Ford names Sun and Cheng as “bishops” which, in a sense, they were, although in light of the events of 1926, this is, strictly speaking, inaccurate. The official memorial of the council lists, *contra* Ford, seven Chinese advisers.
77. Jean-Paul Wiest, *Catholic Images of the Boxers*, paper presented at the International conference on the Boxer Movement and Modern Chinese Society, Jinan, Shandong, 7–11 October 1990. Used with the permission of the author.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
80. See James Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy, 1911–1915* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1983).
81. See Peter J. Fleming, *Chosen for China*, pp. 59–60, where he rebuts Reed at length. One Missouri Province Jesuit had even been working in Macau by 1891.
82. Cited in Wiest, *Maryknoll in China*, p. 17.
83. Fr. Ledochowski was general of the Jesuits from 1915 to 1940.
84. Peter J. Fleming, *Chosen for China*, pp. 61–62.

85. *Rerum Ecclesiae, Encyclical of Pius XI on Catholic missions to our venerable brethren, the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries in peace and communion with the apostolic see*, no. 19 ([http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_28021926\\_rerum-ecclesiae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_28021926_rerum-ecclesiae_en.html)).
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Rerum Ecclesiae*, no. 23.
88. In 1947, thirty Chinese seminarians were sent to the Urban College of Propaganda Fide. See John Molony, *Luther's Pine* (Canberra: Pandanus Press and Australian National University, 2004), p. 175. These students were destined to be the new leaders of the Chinese Church and, in the normal scheme of things, would have become bishops later in their careers. After 1949, however, many of them never returned to China.

## Chapter 5 The Furen art department

1. Letter held by the archives of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, box 7 China 1, concerning Seng-Mou-Yeu, 1870. Translated by the author.
2. Ma had left the Society in the latter part of the nineteenth century because he felt he had been badly treated by the French priests. See Ruth Hayhoe and Lu Yongling (eds.), *Ma Xiangbo and the Mind of Modern China, 1840–1939* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1996) and Zhu Zhao-Ning and Guy Brossollet, *Chronique d'une Illustre Famille de Shanghai, Les Zhu, 1850–1950* (Paris: Éditions Rive Droite, 2002), pp. 27–31.
3. Ma Xiangbo, “A Letter to the Pope Asking Him to Promote Education in China”, in Hayhoe and Lu, *Ma Xiangbo and the Mind of Modern China*, pp. 220–21. Donald Paragon claims that this letter was actually written by Ying; “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926) and the Rise of Fu Jen University”, *Monumenta Serica* 20 (1961).
4. Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 168.
5. The offer must have been made some time between the years 1861 and 1868, when Mouly was bishop of Beijing. See Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 186, where he quotes from Joseph Schmidlin’s *Catholic Mission History*, and p. 186, n. 68.
6. Ma, “A Letter to the Pope”, p. 221.
7. Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 207.
8. A family history about the Zhu family, which was related to Ma through his older sister Marthe, notes that both Ma Xiangbo and his younger brother, Ma Meisu, left religious life because they had succumbed to the temptations of the table and of love, as instigated by another brother, Ma Jianxun. See Zhu and Brossollet, *Chronique d'une Illustre Famille de Shanghai*, p. 27.
9. See David Mungello, “The Return of the Jesuits to China in 1841 and the Chinese Christian Backlash”, *The Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* 27 (2005): 9–46.
10. Anonymous, *Les missions Catholiques* 3078 (1928): 44–45. Author’s translation.

11. The businessman Lu Baihong was another Chinese Catholic who was active in Shanghai Catholic circles in the early twentieth century. He also had not been hesitant in writing to the pope and to the leaders of various religious organizations when he wished to request something: on one occasion, he asked the Jesuit General to order the Californian Jesuits to open an English-language secondary college in China. Sometimes referred to as the “Chinese St Vincent de Paul”, because of his charitable donations, his work was more usually in the form of support for the continuing activities of the church in China, especially in the field of social ministry. His life, however, is outside the scope of this work.
12. Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 200. Permission was needed from the imperial family to use their land for the school.
13. The academy’s name is an allusion to a saying in Chapter 24, Book 12 of the *Analects of Confucius*: “junzi yi wen hui you, yi you fu ren”, which James Legge translated as “the superior man on grounds of culture meets with his friends, and by their friendship helps his virtue.” As cited in Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 213, fn. 167.
14. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 210.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 207.
16. As is shown in Chapter 4.
17. Anonymous, *Collectanea Commissio Synodalis*, 1934, p. 984.
18. See Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 209.
19. Its English name, MacManus Academy, was given in honour of Theodore F. MacManus of Detroit, a benefactor who had contributed a substantial amount of money to support it. See Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 210.
20. See Wu Xiaoxin’s unpublished dissertation, “A Case Study of the Catholic University of Peking during the Benedictine period (1927–1933)” (University of San Francisco, 1993), p. 78.
21. For instance, the journal *Variétés Sinologiques*, published at Tushanwan, included the sixteen-volume work by Fr. Henri Doré (1859–1931), *Recherches sur les superstitions en Chine*; the Heude Museum, which focused on natural history, had been founded at Xujiahui between 1881 and 1883 by the Jesuit Pierre Heude and contained valuable collections. In Tianjin, Father Emile Licent had opened the Museum of Prehistory (Musée de Préhistoire) in 1925; it held fossils found in the Ordos Plateau, Mongolia. Joseph-Marie-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the famous French Jesuit palaeontologist, worked at this museum. From 1873 onwards, accurate monthly astronomical reports, including meteorological warnings, were issued by the Jesuits’ observatory at Xujiahui. See Georges Soulie de Morant, *L’Épopée des Jésuites Français en Chine* (Paris: Grasset, 1928), p. 278. The French Jesuit most famously involved with this meteorological work, Fr. Louis Froc (1859–1932), became so well-known that he was widely referred to as “Fr. Typhoon”. His *Atlas of the Track of 620 typhoons, 1893–1918* showed how extensive the Jesuits’ involvement with such work was. Fr. Froc had a street in the French Concession named after him. Other orders and congregations also had notable scholars in their midst.

22. This university had a student body of “around 400 people, with twenty-two professors, of whom eighteen were European, and they awarded bachelors, masters and doctoral diplomas in civil engineering and medicine.” See de Morant, *L'Épopée des Jésuites Français en Chine*, p. 286.
23. L'Institut des Hautes Etudes Industrielles et Commerciales, or, simply, Hautes Etudes. See Thomas D. Carroll, “The Educational Work of the China Catholic Mission”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, I (1928), p. 135.
24. In Beijing alone, Protestant missionary groups established the North China Union College in 1867, the American Methodist Episcopal Peking University in 1902, the North China Women's College in 1905, the Union Medical College in 1907, and the non-denominational Tsinghua [Qinghua] in 1911. See Paragon, “Ying Lien-chih (1866–1926)”, p. 203, n. 134.
25. By the time of the declaration of the People's Republic of China in 1949, only one more Catholic university had been created, Aurora University for Women, also in Shanghai. Aurora opened in 1933 and was run by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart (Dames du Sacre Cœur). A School for Women had also been opened within the Furen complex in the same year, by the female religious order, the Servant Sisters of the Holy Ghost, also known as the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters. This female order had been established in 1889 by the founder of the Society of the Divine Word, Fr. Arnold Janssen, to assist the Divine Word order in their missionary work.
26. Celso Costantini, *The Church and Chinese Culture* (New York: Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 1931).
27. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
28. Wu, “A Case Study of the Catholic University of Peking”, p. 110.
29. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 108.
30. This was likely the reason the Divine Word's sister congregation came to be in charge of the female students at the university. The transition was difficult for the Benedictines who were working at the university at the time, especially for those such as O'Toole and Brandstetter who had been involved since the foundation, who had held such high hopes for the enterprise and who had worked selflessly to establish and run it. The handover, nevertheless, was for the best of all those concerned.
31. Cited in Michael Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 30.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
33. John Clark, *Modern Asian Art* (North Ryde, NSW: Craftsman House/[Tortola, BVI]: G+B Arts International, 1998), p. 160.
34. According to Michael Sullivan, such painters who were perhaps helped by the Tushanwan Jesuit painters included Xu Beihong and Xu Yunqing; *Art and Artists of Twentieth Century China*, p. 30.
35. Claire Roberts, “Tradition and Modernity: The Life and Art of Pan Tianshou (1897–1971)”, *East Asian History* 15/16 (June/December, 1998): 68; cited in

- Geremie Barmé, *An Artistic Exile: A Life of Feng Zikai (1898–1975)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 246.
36. Barmé, *An Artistic Exile*, p. 245.
  37. Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, p. 163.
  38. Anonymous, *A Guidebook to Catholic Shanghai* (Shanghai: T'ou-sè-wè Press, 1937), p. 13.
  39. Theresa had joined Francis Xavier in this role as a result of a papal declaration issued by Pope Pius XI in 1927. For details concerning the church, see also Zhou Fuchang et al., *Shanghai Zongjiao Zhilu* [A travel guide to religion in Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 2004).
  40. The earlier woodcuts commissioned by Giulio Aleni, while inspired, were adaptations of other works rather than original pieces. It is true that a number of original painted works had been completed in the seventeenth century by the painter Wu Li, or Wu Yushan, one of the Six Masters of the Late Ming and Early Qing (also known as the Four Wang School), who was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1683. He had produced a number of works on Christian themes in Chinese style, and also written poetry that integrated Christian teachings, but he was a unique genius. Wu Li's works failed to give rise to a Chinese Christian style of painting; by the beginning of the twentieth century, they were rarities.
  41. Apart from one reprint in an issue of *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, published in 1932, the rest of these images are elusive. See “Un Catéchisme en images pour les Chrétiens Chinois”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, 1927, pp. 368–76.
  42. See “Un Catéchisme en images pour les Chrétiens Chinois”, p. 369. Author's translation.
  43. Daniel J. Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush: Contemporary Christian Art in Asia and Africa* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 11.
  44. Fleming's work uses Wade-Giles here without characters, so I will not guess at the pinyin equivalent.
  45. T. K. Shen and Frances M. Roberts, “Christian Art in China”, *The Chinese Recorder*, 1937, pp. 164–66.
  46. Shen went to Oxford in 1929 to study theology and art; while there, he realized he was not destined to be successful as a painter. He finished his theology studies, returned to China and eventually became a well-known Anglican bishop.
  47. Shen and Roberts, “Christian Art in China”, p. 165.
  48. This was a popular work among Protestant church communities; since its publication in the first decade of the twentieth century, there had been several new editions, including, by 1916, a version in Spanish.
  49. Chen Yuan was a historian who had also been a minister of education. Zhang Weixi had been the president of the Chinese Geographical Society.
  50. For this complex family tree, see Shelagh Vainker and James C. S. Lin, *Pu Quan and His Generation: Imperial Painters of Twentieth-Century China* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2004), p. 96. The Pu cousins were all great-grandsons of the Daoguang Emperor.

51. He was also known as Pu Xuezhai, 1893–1966.
52. He was also known as Pu Songquan, 1913–91.
53. Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth Century China*, p. 6. One of his young female students, Zeng Yuhe (Tseng Yu-ho, later Betty Zeng Yuhe Ecke), later came to fame as a modernist painter. See Michael Sullivan, *Modern Chinese Artists: A Biographical Dictionary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p. 211.
54. He was also known as Pu Xinyu, 1896–1963.
55. Sullivan, *Chinese Art in the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), p. 37.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
58. Vainker and Lin, *Pu Quan and His Generation*, p. 7. See also Geremie Barmé “Wangfu: The Princely Mansions of Beijing”, *China Heritage Quarterly* 12 (December 2007).
59. Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth Century China*, p. 7.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 37. In this earlier work, he does not identify which cousin had the concubine, but does so in his later work.
61. The Girls’ College began in 1933. Ironically, it was also said that the Wierix brothers, who worked on Nadal’s *Illustrated Gospels*, were as often in the local tavern as they were at their etchings.
62. This school, founded by Benedictine monks in the late nineteenth century, was established to produce religious art.
63. See Lorry Swerts and Koen De Ridder, *Mon Van Genechten (1903–1974), Flemish Missionary and Chinese Painter: Inculturation of Christian Art in China* (Leuven: Leuven University Press and Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 2002).
64. Mary S. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China: Chinese Christian Painting in Beijing”, *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 474, n. 14. This collection of photographs is housed at the Divine Word archives in Rome, along with volumes of the *Furen Yearbook* and other assorted materials.
65. *Furen Yearbook*, vol. 8 (Beijing: Catholic University of Peking, 1946), p. 101. I know nothing more, yet, about these teachers.
66. The journal *Monumenta Serica*, for instance, was first published at Furen University.
67. The biography of Gustave Ecke illustrates, as one example, something of the quality of the teaching faculty at Furen. Ecke was employed primarily as the professor of Teutonic and Slavonic literature but also taught a course on the history of Western art in the art department. It is interesting to note that he also became an expert in Chinese art and artistic production. Ecke published a comprehensive book on Chinese hardwood furniture in 1944 while on the staff at Furen. For a time, this publication became a standard reference for the subject, going through several reprintings. Ecke married one of his former students, the painter Zeng Yuhe. Ecke had first been at the University of Amoy (Xiamen), from 1923 to 1928, then at Tsinghua, 1928–1933, and at Furen from 1935 to 1949. After this, he joined the great exodus of foreigners who left China in the late 1940s. See Sullivan, *Art and*

- Artists*, p. 107. James Cahill's obituary for Max Loehr states, *contra* Sullivan, that Loehr taught at Tsinghua; *Journal of Asian Studies* 48, no. 1 (February 1989): 240.
68. One of the stages of art education is the employment of graduates of art schools; Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, pp. 163–164.
  69. Apart from references in the Furen student newsletters, I have not yet found primary source material in Chinese about this movement. What exists seems to draw on foreign-language sources, apart from an article by Anthony S. K. Lam, "The Image of Jesus in *Kung Kao Po*, 1928–1930", in *The Chinese Face of Jesus Christ*, vol. 3a, edited by Roman Malek (Sant Augustin: Monumenta Serica and China-Zentrum, 2002) which focuses on the Hong Kong Chinese Catholic newspaper. Hopefully more such material will come to light.
  70. *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 5, no. 5, 1932.
  71. Marie Adams, "A New School of Christian Art", *The Chinese Recorder* 69, no. 12 (December 1938): 615–18.
  72. At that time, Schüller was the curator of the Museum of the Missions at Aix-la-Chapelle, which is also known by its German name, Aachen.
  73. The original publication was entitled *La Vierge Marie a travers les missions*. He also published a German article in June 1936 in *Die Katholischen Missionen*, about the Shanghai exhibition of 1935.
  74. He was also a subscriber to *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* and wrote a brief response from Aix-la-Chapelle to an article that reflected on the Shanghai exhibition of 1935, showing that the interest in this school was international as well.
  75. Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*.
  76. At the time Fleming was writing, there was still substantial separation between the Christian churches.
  77. This was published at some time by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, an Anglican missionary organization with headquarters in London.
  78. Based on the texts in "The Gospel of Mark", 6:30–44; the "Gospel of Luke", 5:1–3 and "The Gospel of Mark", 4:1–33; "The Gospel of Luke", 8:22–25; *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New Revised Standard Version), edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
  79. Anonymous, *The Life of Christ by Chinese Artists* (London: Society for Propagation of the Gospel, ca.1940), p. 1. See the images at the end of this chapter.
  80. Fritz Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis. Die chinesisch-christliche Malerei an der Katholischen Universität (Furen) in Peking* [The sacred arts in Peking: Chinese-Christian painting at the Catholic University in Peking] (Mödling bei Wien: St Gabriel, 1950).
  81. Mary S. Lawton, "A Unique Style in China: Chinese Christian painting in Beijing", *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 469–89.
  82. Further information exists in church archives in France and the United States of America. There is also a collection of twenty-six framed and five unframed paintings, which were painted by students, graduates and associates of this school in

- the late 1940s. These are held at the Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History at the University of San Francisco. Fr. Thomas Lucas, SJ, was the curator of an art exhibition that featured these paintings, “Icons of the Celestial Kingdom: Christian Scrolls from Pre-revolutionary China from the Collection of the Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History”, 21 April to 31 July 1998 (<http://www.usfca.edu/library/thacher/icons/index.html>).
83. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 478.
  84. Additional material also appears in French-language resources like *Les missions Catholiques*, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* and the multilingual *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis in Sinis*.
  85. Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*, p. 9.
  86. Sullivan, *Modern Chinese Artists: A Biographical Dictionary*, p. 20, states that he was born in 1903 in Meixian County, Guangdong Province, and died in 1967. The biographical details here are summarized from Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, pp. 476–77.
  87. Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China*, p. 7. See also Sullivan, *Modern Chinese Artists: A Biographical Dictionary*, p. 71. Jin Cheng (1878–1926) was also called Jin Gongbo, or Kung-pah King.
  88. Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China*, p. 8.
  89. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 476.
  90. Anonymous, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 229 (September 1932): 431. Author’s translation.
  91. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 476. Anthony S. K. Lam’s article discusses at length whether or not Chen was experimenting with Christian themes prior to meeting Costantini; “The Image of Jesus in *Kung Kao Po*, 1928–1930”, pp. 1156–58. Lam argues that the publication of paintings by Chen in the Hong Kong Catholic newspaper *Kung Kao Po* in late 1928 shows that Costantini’s encouragement was a later factor in Chen’s development as a Christian painter.
  92. Anonymous, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 229 (September 1932): 431–32. Author’s translation.
  93. *Ibid.* Author’s translation.
  94. This was because of the legend that the evangelist Luke had painted several images of the Virgin Mary, including the *Salus Populi Romani* (see Chapter 1).
  95. See Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, pp. 21–24.
  96. See Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 477.
  97. According to Lawson, p. 477.
  98. Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 88.
  99. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 477.
  100. Yu Bin became the bishop of Nanjing (ordained in September 1936) and later again became a cardinal in Taiwan, having fled China after the establishment of the People’s Republic.
  101. Barmé, *An Artistic Exile*, p. 202.

102. See Ralph Croizier, “Post-Impressionists in Pre-war Shanghai: The *Juelanshe* (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republican China”, in *Modernity in Asian Art*, edited by John Clark (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1993), pp. 135–54. In the same book, Clark also emphasizes the significant role of Japanese artists and art schools in the early twentieth-century art movement in China.
103. See Croizier, “Post-Impressionists in Pre-war Shanghai”, concerning these debates.
104. Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China*, p. 58.
105. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
107. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
108. See John Clark’s discussion on the art historical processes of what he calls “relativisation or othering, transfer, assimilation, transformation, innovation, and double-othering”; *Modern Asian Art*, pp. 23–25.
109. “Quelques considerations sur l’art religieux Chinois”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 9, no. 2 (February 1936): 211–13.
110. *Ibid.*, p. 211. Author’s translation.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 211. Author’s translation.
112. *Ibid.*, p. 211. Author’s translation.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 212. Author’s translation.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 212. Author’s translation.
115. Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*, p. 4. I am grateful for the initial citation in Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 480.
116. Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*, p. 4.
117. *Ibid.*
118. Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 12.
119. Anonymous, “Expositio Artis Sacrae Indigenae”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 10, no. 1 (1937): 5. Author’s translation.
120. As reported in *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 11, no. 1 (1938): 45.
121. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 618.
122. *Furen Yearbook*, vol. 8 (1946), p. 99.
123. Anonymous, “Chinese Christian Art”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 11 (1938): 45.
124. See Edward Bödefeld’s article in *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 10 (June 1937): 608–13.
125. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 616.
126. Schüller, *La Vierge travers les missions*, p. xiii.
127. Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*, p. 29.
128. Schüller, *La Vierge travers les missions*, p. xiii. Author’s translation.
129. It is hoped that further work in Chinese-language archives will add to the information presently available.
130. See Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, concerning the phenomenon of graduation cohorts, p. 165.

131. *The Paintings of Magdalena Liu and Francis Zhang*, exhibition catalogue (no other publication details). This catalogue is in the library of the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco.
132. These had made their way to France in the late 1940s or early 1950s and were then procured by the present institution in the early 1990s.
133. Monica Liu, *Chinese Sacred Art*, internal report produced for the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco.
134. See, for instance, *Les missions de Chine, Seizième Année 1940–1941* (Beijing: Imprimerie Lazariste, 1942). This was a catalogue of almost all church personnel and church institutions in China.
135. I have also been unable to find in the secondary literature any reference to such a workshop, so it is not possible to elaborate further, or even guess about either of these supposed institutions, except to note that the paintings are generally accepted to be from the pre-1949 period and, as a collection, they are consistent in listing the workshop in the manner described.
136. Marie Adams introduced two of the earliest artists, Wang Suda and Lu Hongnian, in her 1938 article. Fritz Bornemann provided other biographical detail about these two and added some brief biographical notes about both Li Mingyuan and Xu Jihua, from the first generation, and Wang Zhengyang from the second group. Apart from Chen Yuandu, Michael Sullivan does not mention any of these other painters in any of his works on Chinese painters of the twentieth century. His biographical note on Chen Yuandu, in *Modern Chinese Artists*, p. 20, states that he was a *guohua* painter, but this seems to disregard the Christian aspects of his work.
137. Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 213.
138. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
139. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 616.
140. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 478.
141. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 617.
142. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 469.
143. Also known as the Society of the Divine Savior, founded in the late nineteenth century by a German priest, Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, 1848–1918.
144. Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 225.
145. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 616.
146. See Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 617 and Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 479.
147. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 617. Yet, see “Chinese Christian Art”, *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis* 11 (1938): 42–47, which disagrees with Marie Adams.
148. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China”, p. 470.
149. See *Furen Yearbook*, vol. 8 (1946).
150. Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, p. 617.
151. Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 150.
152. Cited in Daniel Johnson Fleming, *Each with His Own Brush*, p. 12.

## Chapter 6 The Chinese dimension to the Furen Christian art

1. Daniel Johnson Fleming included eighteen black-and-white reproductions in his book. Sepp Schüller's work also contained a number of the Furen works, including one not seen elsewhere, *Mary Patroness of the Indigenous Clergy*, reproduced in colour. The archives of the Paris Province of the Society of Jesus and the archives of the Foreign Mission Society of Paris (MEP) both contain reproductions of images produced at this time. There are descriptions of several works in church literature, including numbers of black-and-white reproductions. These described pieces by Chen and his students, as well as works by foreign artists like Edmund van Genechten. The Ricci Institute at the University of San Francisco possesses a small collection of original Chinese Christian scrolls, which means that, in addition to the various reproductions, some actual paintings can be studied. Marie Adams reported that, by 1938, there were also 150 pictures available in photographs (from the Brückner collection). The Catholic University Press had also produced prints in two and three colours that were available for purchase from the university. An ordination card from 1935 contains a reprint of one of Luke Chen's works, showing not only that some of these prints were already circulating among the Catholic communities but that they were being put to good use as well. While Bornemann's collection contained many of the paintings produced by the Furen artists, it is certain that there were other works that have not survived in any of these locations, but which might yet survive, either within China or in foreign collections, like archives, libraries and personal collections. The author is grateful to the Society of the Divine Word for permission to reprint a number of these images.
2. I have summarized Bornemann's arguments here as they have largely disappeared from scholarly discourse.
3. See Mai-mai Sze, *The Tao of Painting: A Study of the Ritual Disposition of Chinese Painting; with a Translation of the Chieh Tzu Yüan Hua Chuan; or, Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting, 1679–1701* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956).
4. *Furen Yearbook*, vol. 8 (Beijing: Catholic University of Peking, 1946), p. 98.
5. Laurence Sickman and Alexander Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 295.
6. Sickman and Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China*, p. 260.
7. Kuo Hsi, *An Essay on Landscape Painting [Lin chuan kao chih]*, translated by Shio Sakanishi (London: John Murray, 1935), p. 30.
8. For further information on scholar stones, as these decorative pieces are known, see Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 73.
9. See "The Gospel of Matthew", in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New Revised Standard Version), edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2:1–2.
10. The first statement in the Confucian classic, *The Analects*, emphasizes the value of learning, of the delight that is achieved through the arrival of distant friends and

- the merit gained by a virtuous man being unknown by his peers. For a translation of this, with commentary, see Simon Leys (trans. and notes), *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997).
11. As showcased in the exhibition “Sacramental Light: Latin American Devotional Art”, on works from the School of Cuzco, held from 22 January to 22 April 2007, at the University of San Francisco, Thacher Gallery (<http://www.usfca.edu/uploaded-Files/Destinations/Library/thacher/archive/Sacramental%20Light.pdf>).
  12. Also known as *All Men are Brothers*, or *Shuihu zhuan*.
  13. Anonymous, *The Life of Christ by Chinese Artists* (London: Society for Propagation of the Gospel, ca.1940), p. 2.
  14. Hokusai lived from 1760 to 1849. John Clark, in *Modern Asian Art*, and others have highlighted the significant influence of Japanese artists and art schools on Chinese artists in the modern period.
  15. As described in the Christian text, see “The Gospel of Mark”, in *The New Annotated Oxford Bible*, 4:35–41.
  16. *Flos chimonanthe*, a type of plum blossom, which was also known as winter sweet.
  17. Peonies had traditionally been associated with the emperors and were thus used to symbolize royalty or power.
  18. See “Acts of the Apostles”, in *The New Annotated Oxford Bible*, Chapter 2.
  19. See Clunas, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*.
  20. Traditionally, this instrument was used in Daoist religious ceremonies, so Chen was being either a little naïve or rather daring in including this, possibly opening himself and others to accusations of syncretism.
  21. See, for instance, “Genesis”, 1:2, and “The Gospel of Mark”, 1:10, in *The New Annotated Oxford Bible*.
  22. C. A. S. Williams, *Chinese Symbolism and Art Motifs: A Comprehensive Handbook on Symbolism in Chinese Art through the Ages* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2006), pp. 144–45.
  23. Fritz Bornemann, “Introduction”, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis. Die chinesisch-christliche Malerei an der Katholischen Universität (Furen) in Peking* [The sacred arts in Peking: Chinese-Christian painting at the Catholic University in Peking] (Mödling bei Wien: St Gabriel, 1950).
  24. Cited in Mary S. Lawton, “A Unique Style in China: Chinese Christian Painting in Beijing”, *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 475.
  25. *Ibid.*
  26. This photograph is in the Californian archives of the Jesuits.
  27. Michael Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 58.
  28. See “The Gospel of John”, in *The New Annotated Oxford Bible*, 19:19.
  29. After the fall of Shanghai in 1937, there was the infamous Nanjing Massacre in which perhaps around 300,000 people were killed by the Japanese troops. See, among many works on this topic, the essays in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (ed.), *The*

- Nanking Atrocity, 1937–38: Complicating the Picture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).
30. Marie Adams, “A New School of Christian Art”, *The Chinese Recorder* 69, no. 12 (December 1938): 616.
  31. As can be seen in Chapter 1 regarding the Jesuits’ use of art in their catechetical endeavours.
  32. It is heretical, theologically speaking, from a Christian perspective, because this devotion is an example of anthropomorphism whereby the Holy Spirit is understood solely in human terms and relationships, thereby misrepresenting its role in the human realm, as well as incorrectly equating the role of Mary with the persons of the Trinity. See Bornemann, *Ars Sacra Pekinensis*, p. 111.
  33. Gabriel Palatre, *Le Pèlerinage de Notre-Dame-Auxiliatrice a Zô-sè dans le vicariat apostolique de Nan-kin* (Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Mission Catholique, 1875), p. 30.
  34. *Ibid.*, p. 75. Author’s translation.
  35. Although the image was based on Our Lady of Victories, Our Lady Help of Christians was the title used in prayer (until the devotion to Our Lady of Sheshan and Our Lady of China became more formalized). For a partial evolution of this pilgrimage, unfortunately outside the purview of this book, see (in addition to Gabriel Palatre’s work) Fr. Royer, “A Pilgrimage in China”, *Letters and Notices* 10 (1875): 97–101; Anonymous, “Le Pèlerinage de Notre Dame a Zo-cé”, *Relations de Chine* 1 (May 1903): 81–97; J. de la Largère, “Les Pèlerinages a la S. Vierge en Chine”, *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 261 (1935): 225–31; and E. Chevestrier, *Pèlerinage a Zoce*, 1938, an unpublished manuscript held in the Paris archives of the Society of Jesus. On 5 February 1941, Cardinal Salotti, prefect of the Congregation for the Rites [*sic*], declared 31 May as the official feast day for the devotion Our Lady Queen of China. See *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, 1941, p. 301.
  36. This information is contained in a memorial pamphlet published in Shanghai in 1947, entitled *Notre Dame de Zo-se* [*sic*], held in the Jesuit Roman archives.
  37. In 1901, a new building was built for the Jesuits’ observatory as well.
  38. *Relations de Chine*, 1936.
  39. According to his obituary, in *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, September 1943, Diniz was born in Shanghai in 1869 to a European Christian family who had moved there from Macau. He completed his secondary education at St Francis Xavier College at Hongqiao and then became an architect in Shanghai, under the direction of one Mr. Dowell. He later joined the Society of Jesus when he was twenty-seven, in 1896, and was ordained a priest in Shanghai in 1905. From 1900 to 1910, he was involved with the building of the church at St Ignatius, Xujiahui, designing the building as well as supervising its construction. This church was consecrated in 1911. Diniz then completed his Jesuit training in Europe (his tertianship, the final “spiritual” year), at Canterbury in England, and took the opportunity to refresh his architectural knowledge. Upon his return to Shanghai in 1913, he continued to be involved in designing churches throughout the Jiangnan mission,

as well as designing the first building at Aurora University and the new building at St Ignatius High School. There is another biographical note on the work of Fr. Diniz in *Le Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, no. 226, June 1932.

40. A new statue was erected in 2000 to replace the statue toppled during the Cultural Revolution, and therefore Mary is again visible for all to see. Oral history accounts among Shanghai Catholics state that the Red Guard who was responsible for toppling the statue from its summit (which entailed painstakingly burning holes in the metal base with a blowtorch) fell to his death.

## Conclusion

1. The period of economic reform was initiated by the third plenum of the eleventh Party Congress in November 1978.
2. There are several kinds of works about this period, as mentioned in the introduction, for instance, Gu Weimin, *Zhongguo Tianzhujiao Biannianshi* [The annals of the Catholic Church in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 2003) and Yan Kejia, *Zhongguo Tianzhujiao Jianshi* [A history of the Catholic Church in China] (Beijing: Zongjiao Wenhua Chubanshe, 2001). There are also collections of essays about this period, for instance, Jean-Paul Wiest and Edmond Tang (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Modern China, Perspectives* (New York: Orbis Books, 1993) and Daniel H. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Other works, even though they contain important information, are more subjective in their approach. See, for instance, Jean Lefeuve, *Les Enfants dans la ville, chronique de la vie chrétienne à Shanghai, 1949–1955* (Paris: Témoignage chrétien, 1956); *L'Église des Écrasés: Shanghai 1949–1955* (Paris: Imprimerie Commerciale d'Yvetot, 1955) and Ignace Thiry, *La passion des frères Maristes en Chine* (Genval, Belgium: Éditions Marie-Médiatrice, 1956).
3. See, for instance, James T. Myers, *Enemies without Guns: The Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China* (New York: Paragon, 1991), pp. 1–17 concerning events in 1947. From the very first issue of *China Missionary*, 1948, the magazine published a martyrology of bishops, priests and sisters who had been killed in recent years in China. In September 1949, this magazine changed its name to *China Missionary Bulletin* and moved to Hong Kong.
4. Beverley Hooper, *China Stands Up: Ending the Western Presence, 1948–1950* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986), pp. 38–39.
5. The concerted efforts by the ruling Communist Party to oppose religion in this period is discussed in Li Weihai, *Tongyi Zhanxian Wenti yu Minzu Wenti* [Problems of the United Front and problems with nationalities] (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1981), Su Youyi, *Zhongguo Jindai Jiaonan Shiliao (1948–1957)* [Historical materials concerning the religious difficulties in China in modern times, 1948–1957] (Taipei: Furen Daxue Chubanshe, 2000), and Lyman Page van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History* (Stanford: Stanford

- University Press, 1967). The campaigns themselves were announced in numerous articles in newspapers of the period, for examples, see *Jiefang Ribao* (5 September 1951) and *Renmin Ribao* (19 February 1951 and 24 May 1951).
6. Groups in the United States, and elsewhere, regularly sponsor priests and sisters for academic studies; the United States China Catholic Bureau often invites these students to present their work at national conferences.
  7. See, for instance, “Message of John Paul II to the Participants to the International Conference ‘Matteo Ricci: For a Dialogue between China and the West’”, *News and Features* (Roma: Curia Generalis Societatis Iesu, 2001), vol. 29, Special Issue, December 2001, and the recent “Letter of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in the People’s Republic of China”, delivered on 27 May 2007, the Solemnity of the Pentecost.
  8. This is a common view expressed by Catholics in Beijing and Shanghai, as I discovered in my fieldwork between 2005 and 2010.
  9. “Catholic Census of China, Summary of the Principal Statistics, 1947–1948”, *China Missionary Bulletin* 1 (2), no. 2 (November 1949): 203. Columba Cary-Elwes states that there were 2,676 Chinese priests and 3,015 foreign ones; *China and the Cross: Studies in Missionary History* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957), p. 241.
  10. See Richard Madsen, *China’s Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 33, where he states that less than twenty percent of China’s dioceses were led by Chinese bishops.
  11. Richard Madsen, *ibid.*, says that Tian was already bishop of Beijing when he was appointed cardinal. Jean Charbonnier says he was still in Qingdao at this time (*Guide to the Catholic Church in China, 2004* [Singapore: China Catholic Communication, 2004], p. 610), as does Fr. Tellkamp, “Der Erste Missionskardinal”, in *Die Katholische Missionen* 1 (1947): 4–9. See also the page on Cardinal Tian at the website *Catholic Hierarchy* (<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/btienk.html>) and Peter Barry, “60th anniversary of Catholic Hierarchy in China”, *Tripod* 26, no. 143 (2006).
  12. Thomas Cardinal Tien, “A Leaf from My Missionary Handbook”, *China Missionary Bulletin* 1 (2), no. 2 (November 1949): 217.
  13. Eric O. Hanson, *Catholic Politics in China and Korea* (New York: Orbis Books, 1980), p. 87.
  14. From the Christmas newsletter of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, 2002 ([http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/christmas\\_greetings2002.htm](http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/christmas_greetings2002.htm)).
  15. It is interesting to wonder how vocal they would be if they knew that this image was based on a painting of the empress dowager, “that odious woman” and “that awful old harridan” who was widely described as being anti-Christian. See George Ernest Morrison, *Diary*, 13 January 1902, as cited in Sterling Seagrave, *Dragon Lady: The Life and Legend of the Last Empress of China* (New York: Knopf, 1992), p. 12. Seagrave’s book shows that the legend of Cixi’s evil character was largely the

result of deliberate malice. As seen in Chapter 3, Yu Deling maintained that Cixi was not favourable towards Christians.

16. A history of this period would include the activities of the Legion of Mary in China (see *Maria Legionis*, especially 1948–52) and would encompass Vatican initiatives like the pronouncement of a Marian Year of 1954 and the letters about the situation in China sent by Pope Pius XII in 1951, 1954 and 1958 (*Evangelii Praecones, Ad Sinarum Gentem* and *Ad Apostolorum Principis*). Such a history would also recount numerous testimonies of ordinary Catholics, both of Chinese laity and foreign missionaries that describe the way in which they believed that their lives were saved through Mary's intercession. See, for instance, Robert W. Greene, *Calvary in China* (London: Burns and Oates, 1954) and Jean Monsterleet *Martyrs in China*, translated by Antonia Pakenham (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956).

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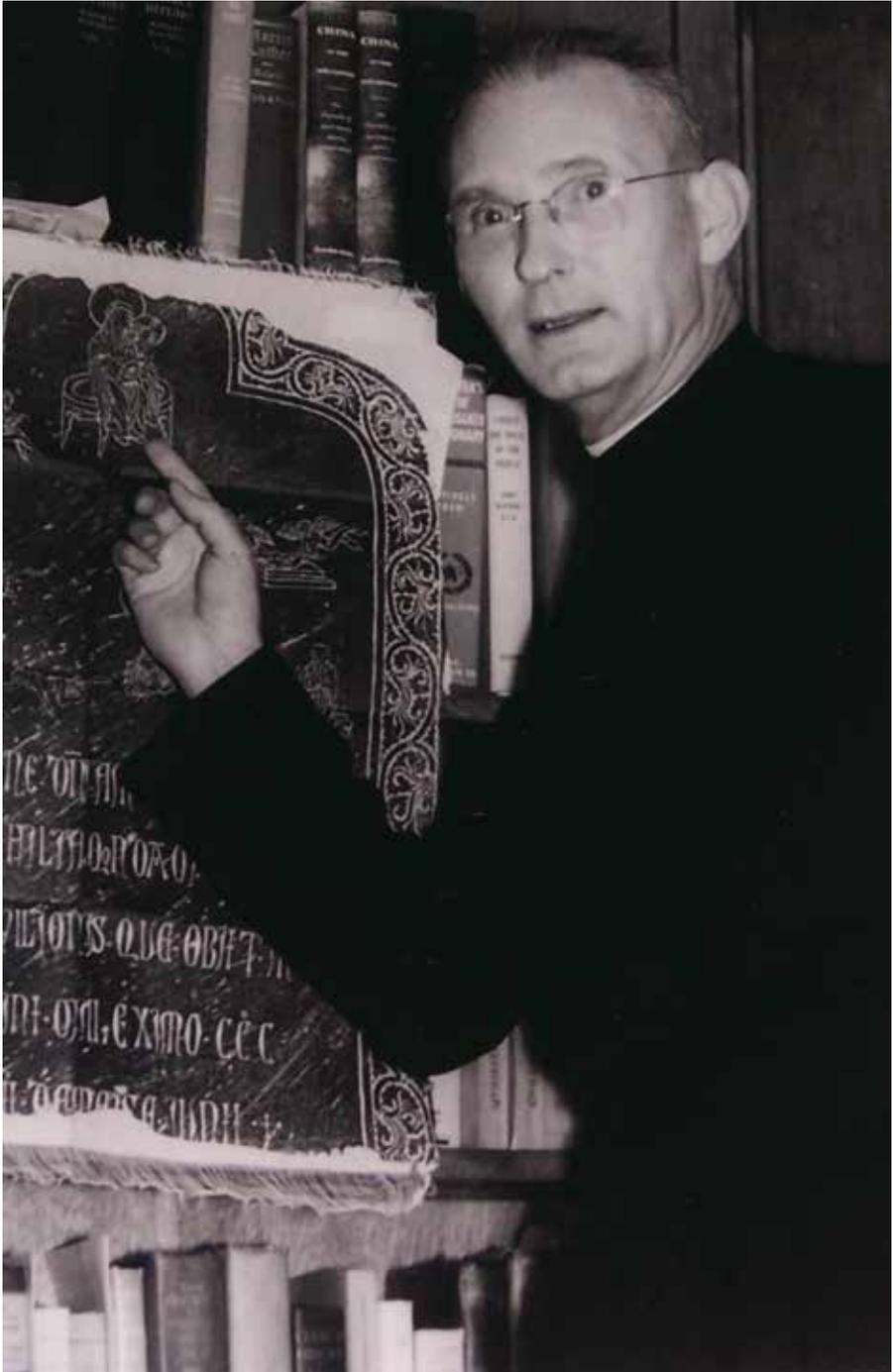
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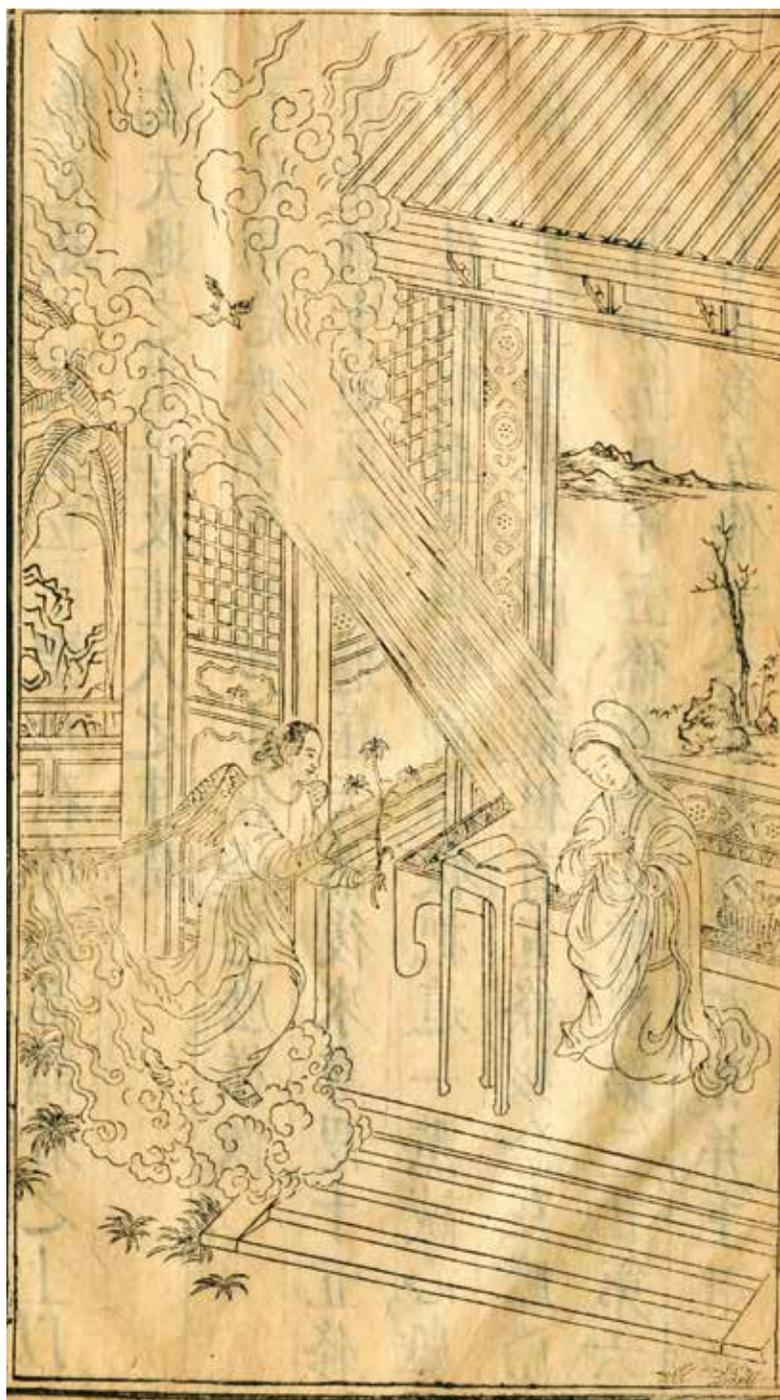
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**Image 1** Fr. Francis Rouleau, SJ, standing in front of a rubbing of Katerina Ilioni's tombstone (photograph from California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



**Image 2** *The Annunciation*, from Joao da Rocha's *Songnian guicheng* [How to pray the rosary] (from the Getty Research Institute, used with permission)



Image 3 *The Annunciation*, from Jeronimo Nadal's *Adnotaciones et meditationes in Evangelia* [Images from the Gospels] (from the Jesuitana collection of the Burns Library, Boston College, used with permission)



Image 4 *The Coronation of Mary*, from Giulio Aleni's *Tianzhu jiangsheng chuxiang jingjie* [Explanation of the incarnation and life of the Lord of Heaven] (from the Cudahy Rare Book Collection, Loyola University Chicago, used with permission)



Image 5 *The Coronation of Mary*, from Jeronimo Nadal's *Adnotaciones et meditationes in Euangelia* [Images from the Gospels] (from the Jesuitana Collection of the Burns Library, Boston College, used with permission)



**Image 6** Our Lady of the Rosary, Lourdes (photograph by the author)



**Image 7** Praying before the Our Lady of Lourdes grotto, Xianxian, Hebei (photograph from California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



**Image 8** Sisters from the Society of Helpers of the Holy Souls and from the Presentandines (photograph from the archives of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, used with permission)



**Image 9** Shrine to Our Lady, Xujiahui (photograph from California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



**Image 10** Chinese Catholics praying before the Our Lady of Lourdes grotto, Xujiahui, 2006 (photograph by the author)



**Image 11** Prayer card produced by the Paris Foreign Missions showing Our Lady of China (from private collection)



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在天中國之后為我等祈

T.S.V

Image 12 Ordination card for Fr. John Brennan, SJ (from the California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



中 華 聖 母

OUR LADY OF CHINA

T S W

*Fr. Jos. King S. J.*  
"What shall I render to the Lord, for all  
the things that he hath rendered to me?"

(Ps. 115).

Souvenir of my  
Ordination and First  
Holy Mass  
at  
St. Ignatius Church  
Zikawei, Shanghai  
June 10th., 11th., 1933  
Charles D. Simons, S. J.

主賜我多恩，將何以報焉？（聖咏一一五）

薛嘉祿敬贈

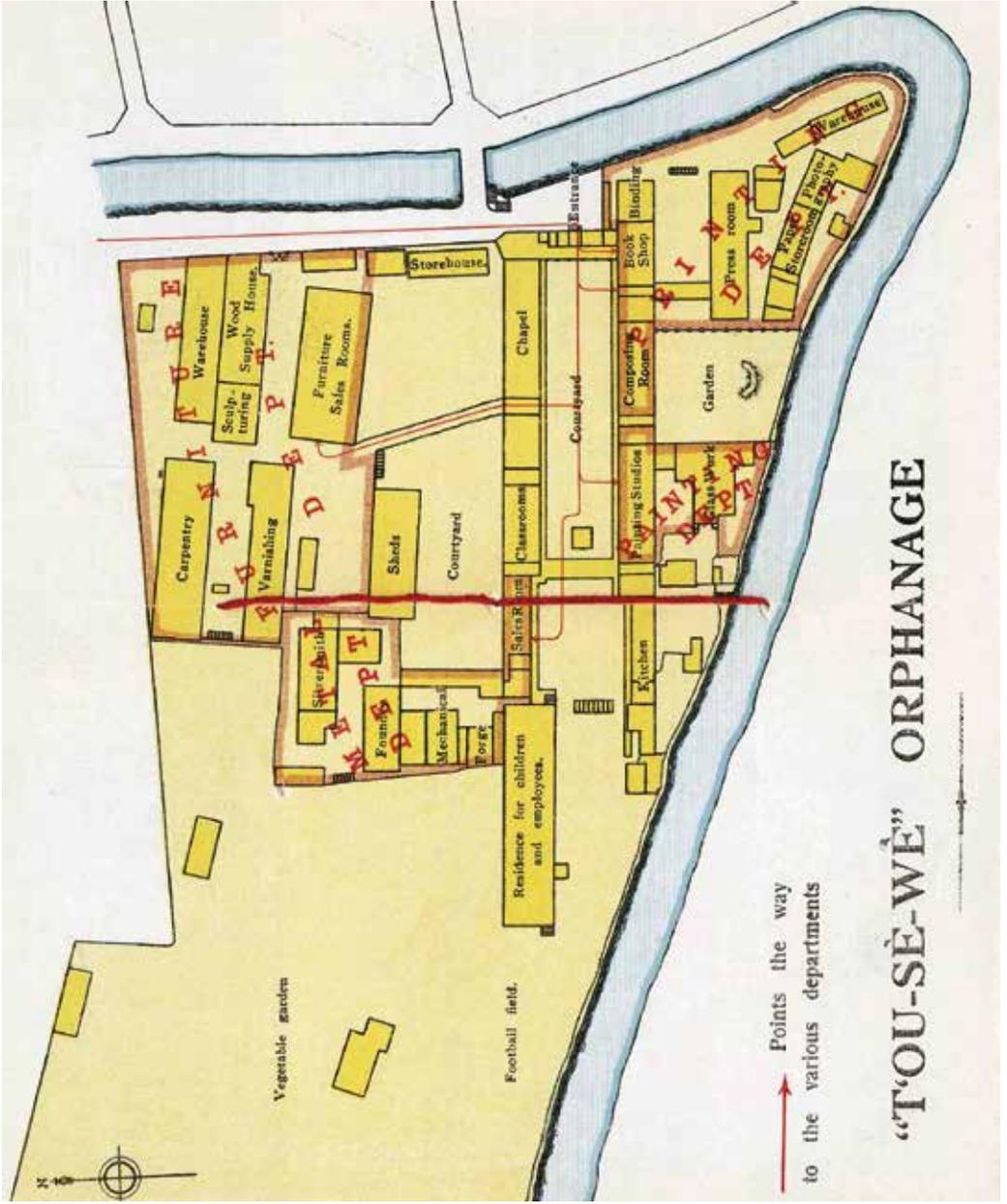
晉鐸首祭紀念

一九三三年  
六月十一

徐家匯

Image 13 Ordination card for Fr. Charles Simons, SJ (from the California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)

Image 14 Map of the Tushanwan orphanage (from the California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



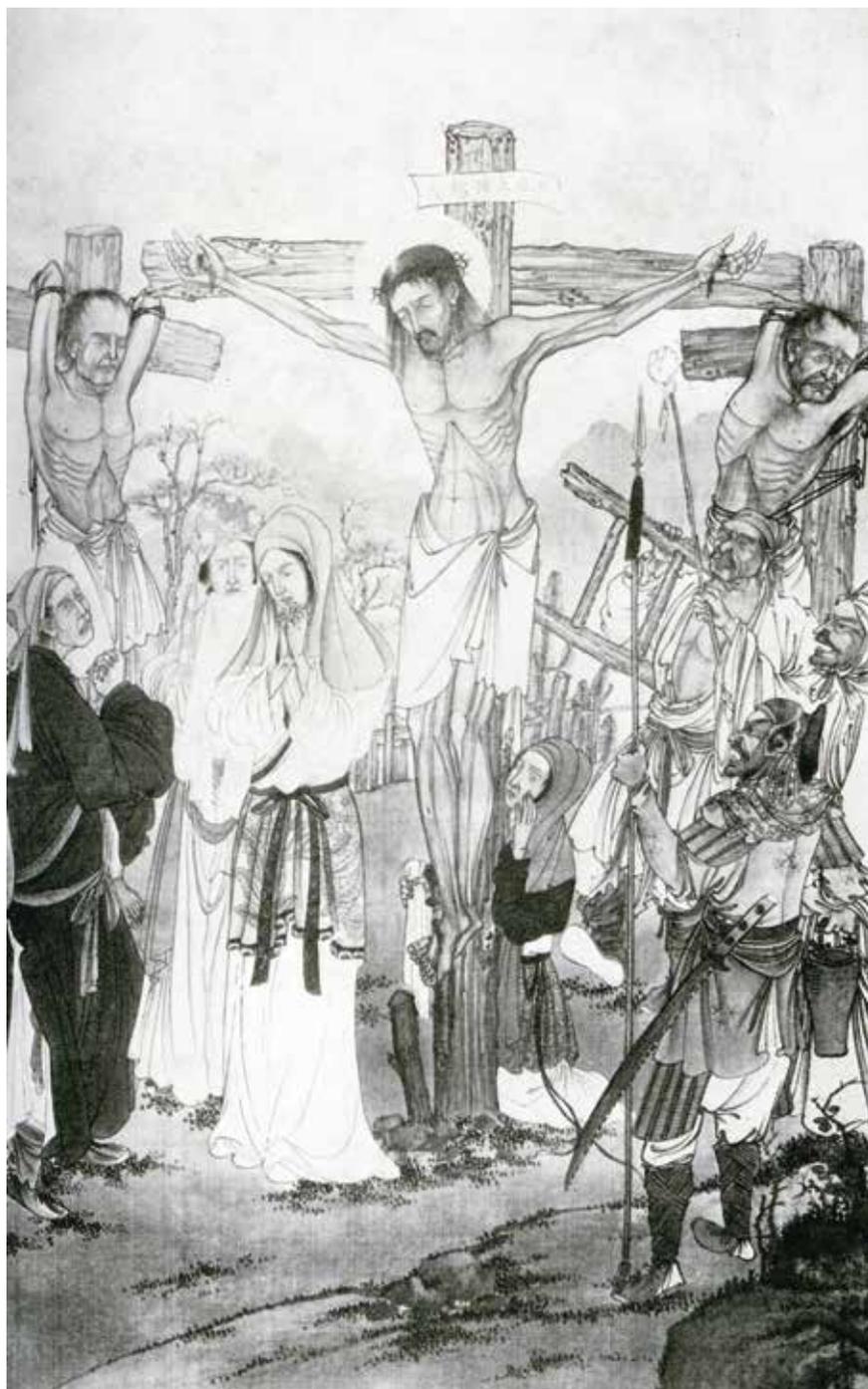


Image 15 *Crucifixion* by Wang Suda (from the archives of the Divine Word Missionaries, used with permission)



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Image 22 *Jesus Calms the Storm* by Wang Suda (from the archives of the Divine Word Missionaries, used with permission)



Image 23 *Visit of the Magi* by Lujia Hua (from the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco, used with permission)



Image 24 *Madonna and Child* by Lujia Hua (from the Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco, used with permission)



Image 25 Marian shrine at Sheshan (from the California Province Jesuit Archives, used with permission)



**Image 26** Our Lady of Sheshan, atop the Sheshan Basilica, Shanghai (photo by the author)