



Author: Aleni, Giulio 艾儒略, 1582-1649

Date 1965
Publish_location ---
Publisher ---
Collection Ricci Institute Library
Edition
Language Chinese 中文
Record_type Book (Text in Collection)
Series
Shelf Case X
Call Number BX880.L5 1965x v.1
Description v.1 [p. 9-60]

In: [Tianxue chuhan 天學初函](#), v.1. *Xixue fan* 西學凡 / Giulio Aleni 艾儒略.

Full textual citation see: Ad Dudink & Nicolas Standaert, *Chinese Christian Texts Database* ([CCT-Database](#)).

JapSin II, 23

Xixue fan 西學凡.

By Ai Rulüe 艾儒略 (Giulio Aleni).

One *juan*. Bamboo paper bound in one volume, European style. Reprinted by the Qinyitang 欽一堂, the Catholic church in Fuzhou (Fujian). No date of publication.

There is a label with the title on the cover. The Latin inscription reads: “De Scientiis Europaeis | et de modo studendi.”

There is a preface (six folios) by Yang Tingyun 楊廷筠, dated 1623 (Tianqi 3) and another (three folios) by He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠, dated 1626 (Tianqi 6), an introduction (two and one-half folios) by Xu Xuchen 許胥臣 of Donghai 東海 (Qiantang 錢塘, Zhejiang) and a postscript (one folio) by Xiong Shiqi 熊士旂 of Jinxian 進賢 (Jiangxi). Folio 4r bears the title: 重刻西學凡 (A new engraving of the *Xixuefan*), the name of the author: 大西艾儒略答述 (Narrated by Ai Rulüe in reply [to his readers]) and the place of the publication: 閩中欽一堂梓 (Blocks engraved by the Qinyitang of Fuzhou Fu). Each half folio has nine columns with nineteen characters in the first column and eighteen in the rest of the paragraph. The title of the book is given in the middle of each folio, and the number of the folio is marked below the fish tail. The main text covers the folios 4–20.

Note

Aleni wrote this book at the request of some of his friends who were interested in European knowledge and scholarship. It is an outline of studies then given at European universities, namely: rhetorica 勒鐸理加, philosophia 斐錄所費亞, medicina 默第濟納, leges 勒義斯 (law), canones 加諾搦斯 (canon law) and theologia 陡祿日亞. The text of the Nestorian inscription of 781 is given at the end.

The book received an unfavorable criticism from the editors of the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. Their comments, based on irrelevant information, show misapplied erudition. The fact that they took Nestorianism as identical with Zoroastrianism shows great ignorance on their part (cf. SKTY 3:1630–31).

At the end of his book Aleni revealed an ambitious project which he had in mind, namely, to gather together a number of scholars who would devote their time to the translation of

books into Chinese. It might take ten-odd years for these books to be published, but he was confident that they would come out successfully. Yang Tingyun in his preface gave full support to Aleni's project. He stressed emphatically that one should not let slip the knowledge which Aleni had introduced in his book. "Give me a decade and with the help of scores of hands we shall bring our work to its completion." He spoke of the 7,000-odd volumes that were being sent from Europe to China through the efforts of Nicolas Trigault. Unfortunately both Yang Tingyun and Aleni died before their great project could be realized; it remained only an aspiration.

He Qiaoyuan (zi 稚孝, hao 匪莪) was a native of Jinjiang 晉江 (Fujian). He obtained his *jinshi* degree in 1586 (Wanli 14). During the Chongzhen period he served as vice-minister at the Ministry of Works. He was a man of erudition, with deep interest in his native province and in the history and literature of the dynasty he served. He is known for his *Mingshan cang* 名山藏 (a history of the Ming dynasty), *Minshu* 閩書 (a gazetteer of Fujian) and *Huang Ming wenzheng* 皇明文徵. He was a friend of the missionaries and seems to have taken great interest in foreign things, about which one can find much in his *opera omnia*, the *Jingshan quanji* 鏡山全集 (seventy-two plus five *juan*; preface dated 1641).

Xu Xuchen was native of Qiantang (Zhejiang). This is all the editors of the *Siku tiyao* knew about him, next to the two books he wrote: *Yugong guanglan* 禹貢廣覽 and *Gaizai tuxian* 蓋載圖憲. According to the editors, the latter book derived from Adam Schall, which indicates that he was a friend of Schall or perhaps a disciple of his (cf. SKTY 3:2222). In his preface Yang Tingyun tells us that Xu Xuchen, Xiong Shiqi, and Yuan Zisheng 袁子升 were all his friends and with their collaboration he expected to translate European books into Chinese. Xu's introduction to the *Xixue fan* gives no hint that he was a Christian, but there is no doubt that he was a friend of the missionaries and an admirer of Western studies. According to D'Elia he was a Christian (FR, II, p. 494, n. 2).

Cf. Pfister, p. 135, no. 21; Feng 1938, p. 160; Hsü 1949, pp. 289–294; JWC 1:195; DMB 1:2–6 (Aleni), 507–509 (He Qiaoyuan).

Source: Albert Chan, S.J., *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome*, pp. 303-304.

JapSin II, 23 D

Xixuefan 西學凡.

By Ai Rulüe 艾儒略 (Giulio Aleni).

This is an exact copy of *Jap-Sin II*, 23.

Source: Albert Chan, S.J., *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome*, p. 304.

Multimedia

Subject

[Education--Europe--17th century Learning and scholarship--Europe--17th century](#)