



Universalitas & Pervasivitas

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)
di A. Pisani

Schede autori Attività missionaria

Nicolas Trigault

Nicolas Trigault (1577–1628) was a Flemish Jesuit, and a missionary to China. He was also known by his latinised name Trigautius or Trigaultius, and his Chinese name Jīn Nígé.

Life and work

Born in Douai (then part of the Spanish Netherlands, now part of France), he became a Jesuit in 1594. Trigault left Europe to do missionary work in Asia around 1610, eventually arriving at Nanjing, China in 1611. He was later brought by the Chinese Catholic Li Zhizao to his hometown of Hangzhou where he worked as one of the first missionaries ever to reach that city and was eventually to die there in 1629.

In late 1612 Trigault was appointed by the China Mission's Superior, Niccolò Longobardi as the China Mission's procurator (recruitment and PR representative) in Europe. He sailed from Macau on February 9, 1613, and arrived to Rome on October 11, 1614, by the way of India, Persian Gulf, and Egypt.[1] His tasks involved reporting on the mission's progress to Pope Paul V,[2] successfully negotiating with the Jesuit Order's General **Claudio Acquaviva** the independence of the China Mission from the Japan Mission, and traveling around Europe to raise money and publicize the work of the Jesuit missions.[1] Peter Paul Rubens did a portrait of Trigault when the latter stopped there in 1617.[3]

It was during this trip to Europe that Trigault edited and translated (from Italian to Latin) **Matteo Ricci's** "China Journal", or *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas*. (He, in fact, started the work aboard the ship when sailing from Macau to India). The work was published in 1615 in Augsburg; it was later translated into many European languages and widely read.[1] The French translation, which appeared in 1616, was translated from Latin by Trigault's own nephew, David-Floris de Riquebourg-Trigault.[4]

In April 1618, Trigault sailed from Lisbon with over 20 newly recruited Jesuit missionaries, and arrived in Macau in April 1619.[1] [5]

Trigault produced one of the first systems of Chinese Romanisation (based mostly on Ricci's earlier work) in 1626, in his work *Xiru Ermu Zi* ("Aid to the Eyes and Ears of Western Literati").[6][7]





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Aided by a converted Chinese, he also produced the first Chinese version of Aesop's Fables... , published in 1625.

In the 1620s Trigault became involved in a dispute over the correct Chinese terminology for the Christian God and defended the use of the term Shangdi that had been prohibited in 1625 by the Jesuit Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi. Another fellow Jesuit, André Palmeiro stated that a mentally instable Trigault had become deeply depressed after failing to defend the use of the term, and had committed suicide in 1628.[8]

Publications

- * De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas, Nicolas Trigault and Matteo Ricci
- Xiru Ermu Zi ("Aid to the Eyes and Ears of Western Literati")
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5. Biography in Chinese at the National Digital Library of China
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* E. Lamalle, "La propagande du P. Nicolas Trigault en faveur des missions de Chine (1616)", Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu IX, 1940, pp. 49-120.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolas_Trigault

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