

ZHANG Xiping

Conversations between China and the West: The missionaries in early Qing Dynasty and their researches on the *Book of Changes*

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Abstract By the early 18th Century, the “Rites Controversy” among the missionaries themselves has evolved into a culture conflict between the Qing Empire and Europe. To make the European missionaries in China follow the rites of Matteo Ricci, Emperor Kangxi had French Jesuit missionaries Joachim Bouvet and Jean Francoise Foucquet study the *Book of Changes* in his royal palace and had further conversions with the European missionaries based on their researches. Not only did this cultural conversation reveal the Figurist’s tendencies, as represented by Bouvet, and the interior conflict among the missionaries themselves after the “Rites controversy,” but also showed Kangxi’s policies towards the missionaries, as well as his attitude towards Western culture and religion.

Keywords Emperor Kangxi, Joachim Bouvet, the *Book of Changes*, the Chinese origins of Western theories

摘要 18世纪初期,在传教士内部发生的“礼仪之争”已经演化为清王朝和欧洲礼仪文化之间的冲突。康熙为使入华传教士遵守“利玛窦规矩”,安排法国来华耶稣会士白晋、傅圣泽等在清宫研读《易经》,并就此与传教士展开对话。这场文化对话,不仅揭示出来华耶稣会士内部出现的矛盾及白晋所代表的“索隐派”的文化倾向,也表现出康熙对待耶稣会传教士的策略以及对待西方文化与宗教的态度。

关键词 康熙,白晋,《易经》,西学中源

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ZHANG Xiping (✉)

Overseas Sinology Centre, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing 100089, China

E-mail: zhangxiping@263.net.cn

1 Introduction

The Jesuits' arrival in China in the late Ming Dynasty is a big issue in the history of Sino-Euro cultural communication. Before the Qing Dynasty, the Sino-Euro communication was already relatively extensive. Under the arrangement of Emperor Kangxi, Bouvet, as well as some other French missionaries, had carried out researches on the *Book of Changes* for over five years, which is an important event in the history of Sino-Euro cultural communication during the early Qing Dynasty. In recent years, scholars in both China and Europe have been studying this historical period and had gained some achievements¹. Due to the esoteric nature of the original Chinese document on Bouvet's research, however, it was inaccessible to most of the scholars and researchers at that time, thus many problems have remained in the relevant researches. Based on the researches of the Bouvet's original document from the Vatican Library collection, with references from the researches conducted by both Chinese and international scholars, this article provides a systemic analysis and study of the conversation between Kangxi and Bouvet on the latter's research on the *Book of Changes*.

2 General condition of Bouvet's research on the *Book of Changes* under the arrangement of Emperor Kangxi

Joachim Bouvet (1656–1730) was among the first group of French missionaries in China. After arriving in Beijing, he served Kangxi in the royal palace with Francois Gerbillon (1654–1707), and won the favor of the emperor. Bouvet started his sinology research at a young age. He returned to France in 1697. Later in one of his public speeches in Paris, he said, “The Chinese philosophy is reasonable, at least, it is as perfect as the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle,” and “the *Book of Changes* contains the philosophical theories of Fuxi, who was the founding father of the monarchy in China and one of the first Chinese philosophers.”² This speech suggests that Bouvet has already done some

¹Claudia von Collani, P. Joachim Bouvet S. J., 1985; John Witek., 1982. Among Chinese scholars, Yan Zonglin was the first one doing research on this subject. He published a series of documents he brought back to China from the Vatican Library on the supplement *Literature, History and Geography of Saodang Newspaper* in 1941, which were adopted by Fang Hao in his works later. See: Yan Shoucheng, 1998; Yan Zongli, Yan Shoucheng, eds., 2003; Ji Xiangxiang, 2001, 347–368; Luo Lida, 1997, Vol. 15, I; Han Qi, 1998, Vol. 16, I; Wu Boya, 2002; Zhang Xiping, 2004, 305–314, Han Qi, 2004, 315–323.

²In lin Jinshui, 1988, 367.

researches on the book by that time, and has realized the position of it in Chinese culture. Six years later, i.e. the 42nd year of Kangxi's reign (1703), Bouvet finished his works *Tianxue benyi*³ on the research of Chinese classics. In his preface, "The action of burning all books commanded by Emperor Qinshihuang caused the original version of the *Book of Changes* to be lost. As a result, the philosophy in the book was lost as well." It indicated the purpose of Bouvet's book was to re-discover the philosophy of the *Book of Changes*. *Tianxue benyi* contains two volumes: *Ze qi jieyi mingjing shuxi tianxue zhiben* and *Zeji shimin lun shangtian gongsu zhiyu*.⁴ Han Yan wrote in his preface for *Tianxue benyi*, "With knowledge from masterpieces to dialects and folk sayings, this book aims to reconstruct a general impression of the philosophy in the *Book of Changes*."⁵ At that time, the study relevant to the *Book of Changes* had already been involved in Bouvet's researches, though he had not paid his full attention to such researches.

The earliest record of the event that Bouvet started to read and study *The Book of Changes* under the arrangement of Kangxi:

On April 9 (lunar calendar), a decree passed to Zhang Changzhu from Li Yu: Bouvet said, "There is a Western man living in Jiangxi who has read many Chinese books. He is capable to give me assistance." You (Zhang and his people) shall pass my messages to all the European men in China, and ask them to try to find this man. I have asked Wang Daohua to help Bouvet to reedit the maps he produced, especially those with Chinese instructions. Attached with this decree, there are some of them, which you shall also take with you when you are looking for that man. If Bouvet wants any man working in Qintianjian for assistance, Wang Daohua shall be responsible for making the appointment according to Bouvet's need. From the Emperor.⁶

³Bouvet's *Tianxue benyi* was collected in both Paris National Library and Roma Vatican Library, the Vols. 7,160 and 7,163 in *Bibliothèque nationale Département des Manuscrits Catalogue des livres chinois careens, japonais etc.* edited by Maurice Courant is *Tianxue benyi*, another version of it is in *Gujin jingtianjian*, numbered 7,161; there are two catalogues in Vatican Library: one in *Catalogo Delle Opere Cinesi Missionarie Della Biblioteca Apostolica vaticana XVI-XVII*, edited by Yu Dong, numbered 25-1; the other is in *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits et imprimes chinois de La Bibliothèque Vaticane*, edited by Paul Pelliot, reedited by Takata Tokio, numbered Borg. Cinese. 3.

⁴Bouvet, 316(14), *Author's Preface of Tianxue benyi*.

⁵Ibid., Han Yan's *Preface of Tianxue benyi*.

⁶The original document has two copies, which have differences in the particular words, e.g. "料理" and "摺理," "use men there" and "want men there." Yan Zonglin chose the copies without any correction. Vatican Library Borg. Cinese. 439(b), see Yan Zonglin, Yan Shoucheng, eds., 2003, 169; Fang Hao, 281.

According to relevant textual research, the date on this decree should be the 50th year of Kangxi's reign.⁷ After Jean-François Foucquet (JFF) came to Beijing to study the *Book of Changes* with Bouvet, Kangxi also showed his concern to JFF's progress. JFF once wrote in his memorial to the throne:

I, as my Emperor's liege, received the decree from Your Majesty in Jiangxi, ordering me to come to Beijing to study the *Book of Changes* with Bouvet. I am ashamed of my superficial mind, and am grateful to the kindness of Your Majesty. Not long ago, I was ill and too weak to make the journey to Beijing via landway. Later on, the Viceroy had a ship prepared with supplies for me, if everything goes well, I shall arrive in Beijing by June 23. I am sincerely eager to go to Beijing and pay respects to Your Majesty in your royal palace; however, I am too sick to make the journey earlier due to the severely hot weather. I count upon the blessings of Your Majesty for my recovery. I have written some articles about the *Book of Changes* together with Bouvet. I am looking forward to Your Majesty's return to Beijing from the summer royal villa to read it.⁸

During Bouvet's study in the *Book of Changes*, Kangxi asked for his situation and progress for many times to show his concern:

On lunar calendar July 5, the Emperor asked, "How is Bouvet's study and translation of the the *Book of Changes* going on?" Wang Daohua answered, "Now they are working on *Zhuanjiu tu* and *Juli tu* in *Suanfa tongzong*." The Emperor said, "I have not been studying the *Book of Changes* for a few months, but I have kept busy with other matters; I studied the *Lülü*, which is the origin of musicology, and have read books about the theories of the quality, volume, scale, whole-tone, half-tone and triplicate-tone of Huang Zhong, the first one of the twelve tones and understood all the explanations in the books. There are some musical instruments, such as clarinet, flute, lute and violin, although they are just for entertainment, the rules of their tones and quality also originate from Huang Zhong. Therefore, the twelve tones are the foundation of musicology. In the same way, Bouvet should read a large variety of books in order to study the *Book of Changes* properly. If you refuse to read some books for your disagreement with the ideologies and opinions in them, neither can you study the *Book of Changes* well. For instance, the records of the auguries of Shao Kangjie, who was a famous expert in the *Book of Changes*, were all written by his disciples rather than by himself. Consequently,

⁷It was mentioned in the memorial to the throne from the Jiangxi Governor Lang Tingji to Kangxi on May 15, the 50th year of Kangxi's reign.

⁸Bouvet, 439(a).

if you do not check various references, how can you find the evidence supporting those records and understand the theories of his auguries? You shall tell Bouvet to read the Chinese classics despite the ideological and religious conflicts. When will your translation of the *Book of Changes* be finished? You shall make sure this work reaches completion. From the Emperor.⁹

According to this document, Kangxi warned Bouvet not to refuse to read the classics because of the “ideological and religious conflicts,” neither to read them objectively. That indicated Kangxi’s awareness of Bouvet’s thoughts and difficulties in understanding the *Book of Changes* as a French missionary.

It is not easy for a European missionary to understand the *Book of Changes*, which is the first book of the six ancient classics. Bouvet thus expressed his difficulties in one of his memorial to the throne:

On (July) 6, I was asked about my progress in studying the *Book of Changes* on the Emperor’s command, but as I am a fatuous foreigner without enough Chinese, I feel it hard to understand the complicated meaning of the Chinese articles, specifically, the *Book of Changes* is among the most complicated Chinese classics. I just started to learn Chinese since I came to China. I sincerely appreciated Your Majesty’s concern on my study of the *Book of Changes*, though Foucquet and I are both ignorant. If Your Majesty’s is so kind to forgive our ignorance and give us more time, I surely will carry a more careful examination of my study with Foucquet and present our achievement to Your Majesty, with the hope of receiving the precious supervision from you.¹⁰

Thus, it can be seen that Bouvet and Foucquet’s study was supervised and urged by Kangxi so closely that they could hardly fulfill the Emperor’s expectations and requirements.

After arriving in Beijing, Foucquet had been studying the *Book of Changes* with Bouvet. The two men reported their progress to Kangxi regularly,¹¹ which was recorded in a document in the collection of Vatican Library:

I was asked in Your Majesty’s decree about my progress in the study of the *Book of Changes*. I am now answering to Your Majesty with sincere respect. The translation and explanations of the *Book of Changes* are indeed too

⁹Ibid., the original document has two copies, Yan and Fang both changed “亦无不本于黄钟所出” into “亦无不本于黄钟而出,” Yan Zonglin, Yan Shoucheng eds., 282.

¹⁰Ibid., Yan changed “half a year” into “half a month.” See Yan Zonglin, Yan Shoucheng, eds., 170; Fang Hao, 281–282.

¹¹John W. Witek, 202.

superficial and coarse to be presented to Your Majesty, however, my Emperor has been so kind to read through my scripture. Recently, I have been studying the illustrations in the *Book of Changes* and feel that I need to refer to other scholars' opinion, because I cannot decided the meaning of the books only by my own understanding. Foucquet holds the same opinion as mine; nevertheless we are not as blessed and wise as Your Majesty. Therefore, we dare not to boast of our current achievement. If Your Majesty may forgive our coarseness, but give us supervision and time, we will pay our full attention to the study and hopefully will be able to present more results to Your Majesty.¹²

It can be guessed from Bouvet's explanation of their difficulties in the study of the *Book of Changes* and their appeal of "supervision and time" that Kangxi had paid much attention to the details of their study. Foucquet was called to Beijing to help Bouvet study the *Book of Changes* in the 50th year of Kangxi's reign, and hereafter having disagreement and conflict with Bouvet,¹³ he was appointed to study mathematics and astronomy by Kangxi. He said to Kangxi in this memorial to the throne in April of the 52nd year of Kangxi's reign:

As a fatuous European scholar who even does not understand Chinese well, I was undeservedly favored by Your Majesty and was given the task of compiling the calendar. Last summer, I got Your Majesty's personal supervision in the Royal Summer Villa, which gave me great inspirations. Now I have just finished the study of *Richan* and am looking forward to having Your Majesty's tutorials this summer. However, since I returned from the summer villa last year, my healthy problems relapsed again and have been torturing me till now, which made me weaker and weaker. I feel dizzy all day long, though in the winter the symptom had subsided, it worsened in the spring. I was not able to sleep, or stay in the sunshine and the wind. Therefore, I am afraid it would be really hard to travel to the summer villa with Your Majesty again. I am hoping I can be blessed by Your Majesty's grace, and stay in Beijing to recover myself, because I felt before that my health would be much better if I stay in Beijing rather than going to other places. Hopefully, I will be well enough to give Your Majesty my humble assistance in the work of compiling the calendar. I am looking forward to Your Majesty's return to Beijing from the summer villa and bestow me with your tutorials then.¹⁴

This document indicated that Foucquet only studied with Bouvet for no more than two years, though he never stopped the study after he turned to focus on

¹² Bouvet, 439(a), the original document was not copied by Yan.

¹³ John W. Witek, 202.

¹⁴ Bouvet, 439(a).

astronomy and mathematics, and had written many theses in the study of the *Book of Changes* and Chinese culture.¹⁵

As a key-member of the Figurists, Bouvet had been in an embarrassing position in the “Rites Controversy”: on one hand, he rejected the attitude of Mission étrangères de Paris towards Chinese culture; on the other hand, he also had controversy with the policies and philosophy of the Jesuits for the hope of implementing the Matteo Ricci’s rites and policies. It has been recorded in his memorials to the throne:

I presented *The General Introduction to the Book of Changes* to Your Majesty. I found that the philosophy of Catholicism and the *Book of Changes* share a lot in common, I thus mentioned some of the similarities in my *Scripture of the Book of Changes*. Then Foucquet arrived in Beijing and started to study the *Book of Changes* with me and added some more points into my scripture. We were informed by the leader of the Jesuits¹⁶ that an order would arrive in China from our European headquarters in May, in which we were to be asked to discuss the quotations from the Bible in *The Scripture*. Our leader¹⁷ has written to us, ‘All the points about catholicism in the books and scriptures you are going to present to the Emperor should be checked carefully.’ It has been a long time that Foucquet and I devoted all of our energy and efforts into the study, while comparing it to the Western classics. *The Scripture* is thus the result of our study and has no conflict with the catholic doctrines at all. However, we have to obey the order of our leader in the Jesuits. We are looking forward to Your Majesty’s opinion in this issue.¹⁸

This event revealed the conflicts inside the Jesuits in the “Rites Controversy”: in order to prove the validity of Matteo Ricci’s policies, Bouvet implemented the methods of the Figurists, and believed in the existence of the miracles in Chinese ancient classics, such as the *Book of Changes*, whereas other Jesuits thought that he had digressed from the mission, because according to him, Chinese philosophies should be the origin of catholicism. As a result, all other Jesuits had required all of Bouvet’s scriptures presented to Kangxi to be checked, which was actually a sign of the church’s challenge to the regalia resulting to Kangxi’s antipathy to the church. Some scholars believe that this is one of the reasons that

¹⁵ John W. Witek, 164–207.

¹⁶ Fang Hao, 282–283.

¹⁷ There was “leader” in the original document.

¹⁸ Bouvet, 439(a–h), see Fang Hao, 282–283.

Kangxi lost interest in Bouvet's study of the *Book of Changes*.¹⁹ With the intensification of the "rites controversy," the conflict between Kangxi and Vatican had been worsened, as well as the conflicts among the missionaries themselves. Therefore, Kangxi became gradually uninterested in Bouvet's study of the *Book of Changes*:

On March 2, the 55th year of Kangxi's reign, the memorials to the throne from Bernard-Kilian Stumpf, Joseph Suarez, Pierre. Jartoux, Dominique Parrenin, Franciscus Tilisch, Kong Lushi, Jean Mourao, P.Cordoso, Pierr-Vincent de Tartre and Yiduliergong were presented to the Emperor and have been returned to Stumpf. The Emperor commanded Zhao Chang, Wang Dahua, Zhang Changzhu, Lee Guoping, Tong Yuxiu and Yiduliergong to tell Bouvet that the Emperor agreed with Stumpf in his point of view in this issue. It does not matter now whether Bouvet would like to continue his study in the *Book of Changes* or not. If he does want to continue, it shall be enough to carry the study by himself rather than to have another man involved into it. Neither should he be in a hurry to do this job. When he finishes the study, he should report to the Emperor. From the Emperor.²⁰

Despite the conflict, Kangxi was still very tolerant to allow Bouvet to carry on his study. From above we could see, from the 50th to the 55th year of Kangxi's reign, Kangxi arranged Bouvet to study the *Book of Changes* by himself during these five years, and helped him to solve the problems in his study at any time. This is an important event at that time. Therefore, the reasons behind it are worthy of deeper research.

3 Kangxi's purposes of having Bouvet to study the *Book of Changes* and its influence

Kangxi's arrangement of Bouvet's study had his own reasons.

One of the main reasons is Kangxi's great interest in science, which had started since the controversy over the compilation of the calendar between Johann Adam Schall von Bell and Yang Guangxian. As he once said:

¹⁹Who did Bouvet refer to as "the leader"? Luo Lida considered the man to be Italian Jesuit missionary Jean-Paul Gozani (1647–1732), however, Han Qi pointed out it was neither Gozani nor Francois-Xavier d'Entrecolles (1662–1741). Because d'Entrecolles was the leader of French Jesuit, the order of having Bouvet scripture checked was from him, but practiced by Cyr Contuncin (1670–1733). Therefore, the one who wrote to Bouvet and had his scripture checked should be Contuncin rather than d'Entrecolles, who was in Jiangxi in 1711 and did not arrive in Beijing until 1722. See John W. Witek, 176–179; Fei Laizhi, 550; Luo Lida, 1997.

²⁰Bouvet, 439(a), Fang Hao, 285.

When I was a child, the Chinese and European officials in Qintianjian never got along and often debated with each other in the presence of the Emperor, and the controversy sometimes resulted into seemingly violent quarrels. Yang and Johann had a bout of observing and testing the shadow of the sun, however, there was no one among my officials present in the palace that know about the calendar except these two. I then thought if I myself knew nothing about the calendar, I would not be able to tell which one of them was right. Therefore, I determined to study hard in science.²¹

Kangxi was probably the only emperor in Chinese history that deeply involved in the study of science.²² Soon after his enthronement, he invited Ferdinand Verbiest to give him private tutorials in astronomy and mathematics; later, he had Jean Francois Gerbillon and Bouvet to tutor him in geometry as well. His interests in science was kept, and he commanded the foundation of Mengyang Zhai:

Now I order Heshuo Prince Yunzhi to found an academic institute in Mengyang Zhai and reedit books about Lülü and mathematics there, in addition to the study of the aulic musical instruments. Zhang Hai, as well as other 44 Provincial Graduates, is good at mathematics, thus they should take an extra examination, and the best one will be appointed as the General Secretary of the Edition Office.²³

On June 17 that year, there is a report from He Su to Kangxi:

Petrus Jartoux, Bernard-Kilian Stumpf, Franciscus Tilisch and Jean Francoise Foucquet have translated the logarithm table into Chinese and named it *Catechism of Mathematic Table*, this version is better than the previous one, which they have sent one copy to me. Stumpf said: "We tried our best to do the calculation and translation work, but it cannot be guaranteed that there is no mistake in our work. We are looking forward to Your Majesty's correction and suggestions, with which we will be able to continue our work. After the whole task is finished, the new edition of the book should contain six or seven volumes."²⁴

This reveals Kangxi's interest in mathematics at that time. At the 51st year of Kangxi's reign, the Emperor went to his Rehe summer palace with the

²¹ *Shengzu ren huangdi tingxun geyan*, 86.

²² Du Wenkai, 1985.

²³ *Qing Shengzu shilu*, Vol. 256, May, the 52nd year of Kangxi's reign.

²⁴ *Kangxi*, 1996, 878.

companionship of Chen Houyao and some others, with whom he discussed the edition of *The Origin of Calendar*.²⁵ The next year, he commanded Prince Yunzhi and his people to “compile the calendar and edit books about mathematics.”²⁶

It is very clear that Kangxi arranged Bouvet to study the *Book of Changes* at the exact time he was zealously involved in the study of European mathematics. There had always been trends in the study of the *Book of Changes*: Yili and Xiangshu. Because the *Book of Changes* is a combination of a symbolic system and a definitional system, both the two explanations hold their own interior proofs and have produced many classics. For instance, there is a large amount of mathematic contents in the works of Xiangshu, as Zheng Xuan said, “Jiugong shu is the oldest matrix in the world.”²⁷ Kangxi was also fairly aware of the Xiangshu’s study of the *Book of Changes*, such as the work of Shao Yong. On the 52nd year of Kangxi’s reign, when he talked about mathematics with Zhao Hongxie, the Governor of Zhili, the Emperor said, “The theories of mathematics are all from the *Book of Changes*, even the European ones. The mathematics in Europe is originally from China, which is called algebra, meaning ‘from the Orient.’”²⁸ It indicated that Kangxi referred his interest in mathematics to the study of the *Book of Changes*. Two months later, he sent his decree to Lang Tingji, the Governor of Jiangxi, calling Foucquet to Beijing to assist Bouvet in his study of the *Book of Changes*.

There are also some documents in the Vatican Library recording Kangxi’s interest in algebra:

This message should be sent to Wang Daohua. Recently, I have been studying the new theories of algebra with my sons since early morning. I could not understand why it is said that they were easier than the old ones. I feel the new theories are much more difficult, and have more mistakes than the old ones. I recommended the old ones to the European men in Beijing to help them edit the logarithm table. You should send this decree with the logarithm table to Beijing and have them studied carefully by the European men. The incorrect points should be deleted. A man told me that a number multiply the same number is unavailable for calculation, which was completely ridiculous and showed his ignorance in mathematics.²⁹

Not only does this show Kangxi’s zeal in mathematic study, but also proves the importance of Bouvet and other European missionaries in his study of

²⁵ Li Di, 1984, 266.

²⁶ Zhao Erxun, Ke Shaowen, Vol. 45, 169.

²⁷ Dong Guangbi, 1987, 14.

²⁸ Wang Xian Qian, Vol. 21.

²⁹ Bouvet, 439(a).

mathematics. Bouvet was given this important task because he and Gerbillon used to give Kangxi geometry lessons in Manchu, and he had been Kangxi's math tutor before, hence Kangxi showed deep trust in him. Besides, his knowledge of Chinese culture was the best among all the European missionaries. Kangxi once said, "Among all the European men in China, there is no one understands Chinese philosophy and culture except Bouvet, though he is still not very good at it."³⁰ That is why Kangxi considered Bouvet the only one that could finish this work.³¹

Bouvet was fairly aware of Kangxi's thought that he mainly carried out his study from the aspect of the *Xiangshu*. He stated in the *General Introduction of Yi shu xiang tu Zongshuo*, "The mystery of the *Book of Changes* is too deep and complicated to grab, fortunately, there is the *Wai Yi shu xiang tu* which can be the key to every mystery in the *Book of Changes*."³² Moreover, in *Yixue waipian*, he said, "It is definitely true that *Shu xiang tu* is closely related to theories of the *Book of Changes*. It is clearer to prove the theories through *Shu*, while *xiang* is even better than *shu*, but the clearest among all should be *tu*."³³

In the Vatican Library collection, there is a schedule of Bouvet's study of the the *Book of Changes* and Kangxi's comments on his thesis, the main theme of which was the discussion of mathematic problems in the *Book of Changes*:

On the 24th day. I corrected the mistakes in the explanation of the original meanings of *Xiantian weibian*, and added notes to *He Luo heyi*. *Tianzun dibeitu* was the origin of *Shi xiantan weibian yi shu xiang tu*. I gave all three books with the *Catechism Calendar* to Li Sanhu and asked him to present the books to the Emperor. The Emperor said he had carefully read all the books and would ask me some questions tomorrow.

25th day, I went to see the Emperor. The Emperor said to me, "Your correction and re-edition of the books are fairly satisfactory. The points I corrected for you are only formal ones. You could give me another copy when you finish."

July 4. I was presented the *Book of Changes* commented by the Emperor, and the new explanation of the fourth part of *Tianzun dibeitu*, which is about different kinds of the landform and the ways of calculating the acreages, and was similar to the origin of *Luoshu fangtu*. We did not finish the discussion about *Da yan tu*. The Emperor told me to put the four parts together and he would ask me questions about the work tomorrow.

³⁰ Chen Yuan, 2004.

³¹ Claudia von Collani., *P. Joachim bouvet S. J.*, 124–133.

³² Bouvet, 317(8), 3.

³³ Ibid., 317(10), 1.

July 6. I presented the new edited *Tianzun dibeitu* to the Emperor, and was given two *Xiantian weibian shizhong zhi quanshufa tu*. I answered the Emperor's questions. The Emperor told Wang Daohua that he felt my work on the *Book of Changes* quite clear. He also asked Wang Daohua to save the new *Tianzun dibeitu* and *Xiantian weibian shizhong zhi quanshufa tu* in the palace, and ordered me to come to the palace to answer his question about the *Book of Changes*.

July 7. I presented the Emperor *Da yan tu*. The Emperor said to me, "Leave *Da Yan Tu* for my reading. You shall conduct another copy and attach it to the book."

July 12. I introduced a table of even number squares in *Luo shu* to the Emperor, and presented the book to the Emperor. In the Emperor's decree he said: "Present the table of even number squares to me as well as with the table of odd number squares, I will read them carefully." Today, the Emperor's eunuch Ye Wenzhong fetched the table of even number squares and the table of odd number square in *Luo shu* conducted by the Emperor himself. The Emperor ordered more versions to be conducted following his sample. Li Sanhu presented two copies of the table of odd number square I conducted today to the Emperor.

Wang Daohua said: "On the 9th, I received with respect the commented memorial to the throne from the Grand Secretary Li Guangdi, as well as an original table and a chapter from the book, which Master Li ordered to present to Bouvet. When Bouvet read it, he praised Master Li's conversance of the theories of the *Book of Changes* and calendar."³⁴

The *Tianzun dibeitu*, *Shi xiantian weibian zhi yuanyi*, *Luoshu fangtu* and *Da yan tu* mentioned above are all Bouvet works on the study of the *Book of Changes* from the aspect of *xiangshu*. For his interest in algebra, Kangxi wanted Bouvet to discover the mathematic mysteries in the *Book of Changes*, at the same time, Bouvet's research deepened his interest in algebra. Just as some scholars pointed out, it is Bouvet's research in mathematics and *xiangshu* during his study of the *Book of Changes* that "helped Kangxi understand the mystery of algebra, and extended his interest in algebra. That is the reason for Kangxi to have a foreigner to study the *Book of Changes*."³⁵ At present, this topic is still under discussion, and the tables and forms Bouvet conducted during his study of the *Book of Changes* are also still in the process of discovery and systemic re-edition.

³⁴ Ibid., 317(4), 22–24.

³⁵ Han Qi, 1998.

Second, Kangxi hoped that Bouvet's research in the *Book of Changes* would be able to prove the theory of "the western civilization originated from China." "The western civilization originated from China" was a very important viewpoint in the cultural communication in the early Qing Dynasty, which has had a great influence over the academic and philosophical development in Qing Dynasty. There is still controversy over the origin of this theory among scholars,³⁶ however, it has been confirmed that Kangxi has already mentioned this theory in his *The Theory of Trigonometry* in the 43rd year of Kaingxi's reign, "Due to the difference between the calendar of today and the ancient time, scholars nowadays were not aware of the calendar. The calendar originated from China and was promulgated to Europe. Then, European men kept the core theories while taking measures and supplements every year to make it more detailed, rather than developing their own one."³⁷

In the 50th year of Kangxi's reign, at his meeting with Zhao Hongxie, the Emperor said, "The theories of mathematics are all from the *Book of Changes*, even the European ones. The mathematics in Europe is originally from China, which is called algebra, meaning 'from the Orient.'"³⁸ This is the first time that Kangxi connected theory of "the western civilization originated from China" with the *Book of Changes*, based on the origin of algebra. Two indications can be found in this talk: first, Kangxi had already studied algebra before his meeting with Zhao Hongxie; second, his first algebra tutor was not Fouquet, who did not arrive in Beijing until April of the 50th year of Kaingxi's reign, i.e. much later after his meeting with Zhao. Therefore, what John Witek thought, i.e. Fouquet presented *The New Methods of Algebra* to Kangxi in August of the 51st year of Kangxi's reign, was absolutely controversial.³⁹

When Gerbillon, Bouvet, Antonio Thomas (1644–1709), Dominique Parrenin (1665–1741) and Pierre Jaxtousgave Kangxi tutorials in European mathematics in the 42nd year of Kangxi's reign, algebra had already been a part of their courses. During this period, some Western mathematic books, including *The Summary of Algebra* and *The Method of Algebra*, were translated into Chinese, while *The Method of Algebra* had various translated versions.⁴⁰ In *Donghua lu*, it was translated as "*The Methods of Algebra*"; in Mei Wending's *Chishui yizhen*, it was translated as *algèbre*, which was used to indicated algebra in mathematical science, originated from *Al-jabr w'al muqabala* by Arabic mathematician Mohammed ibn Musa aikhowarizmi in CE 825. This book considered the

³⁶ Xu Haisong, 2000.

³⁷ *The Royal Corpus of Kangxi*, Vol. 19.

³⁸ Wang Xianqian, Vol. 21.

³⁹ Vatican Library Borg. Cinese 319-4, French version is *Abrege d'algebre*.

⁴⁰ Wu Wenjun, 2000, 326.

founding masterpiece of algebra. “When it was translated into Latin in the 12th Century, it was named ‘*Ludus algebrae et almucgrabalaeque*,’ which would become modern algebra.”⁴¹

Algebra originated from the Orient and then was brought to Europe; therefore, it is not improper for Kangxi to describe it as “from the Orient”. However, here “Orient” should be referred to Arabia rather than China, which was probably Kangxi’s understanding on this point. Some scholars doubt whether it was “a lie of the missionaries to flatter the Emperor,”⁴² yet there is no historical evidence for this indication. Nevertheless, it is proven that prior to Bouvet’s study of the *Book of Changes*, there was already some thoughts considering the *Book of Changes* the origin of Western mathematics. Therefore, it is true that Kangxi’s arrangement of Bouvet’s study of the *Book of Changes* has its particular political aims, because the theory that “western civilization originated from China” was actually Kangxi’s fundamental policy towards Western culture, as well as one of his most important cultural policies during the cultural controversy.⁴³

On his second time to give Kangxi algebra lessons, Foucquet “used *jia*, *yi*, *bing* and *ding* of the heavenly stems to represent known numbers and *shen*, *you*, *xu* and *hai* to represent the earth branches and to represent the unknown (similarly, Descartes used a, b, c, d, etc. to represent the known numbers and x, y, z to represent the unknown); and he also used *yangyao* in *bagua* as the plus sign, *yinyao* as the subtraction sign, and + as the equal sign.”⁴⁴ And when Kangxi asked Foucquet to come to Beijing to assist Bouvet in his study of the *Book of Changes*, he showed his interest in algebra again, which was proved in a document from the Vatican Library:

For the notice of Master Jartoux, Parrenin and Foucquet: the Third Infante gave his order on February 25, said that all the algebra books from Shaolu last year collected by the European missionaries should be checked and sent to the Third Prince as soon as possible. Do not make any delay. Then, the books should be checked by the masters in the three Departments, and sent to the Wuying Palace without any delay. Li Guoping and He Su, February 23.⁴⁵

For the notice of Master Stumpf, Jartoux, Parrenin and Foucquet: tomorrow is the deadline for reports. If you have any questions about the algebra tables, the Emperor will discuss the tables with you; and if you do not have any, the Emperor will ask you some questions about the algebra books. You four

⁴¹ Fan Hongye, 226.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Wu boyu, 2002, 431–435.

⁴⁴ Mei Rongzhao, 1990, 8–9.

⁴⁵ Vatican Library Borg. Cinese. 439(a).

Masters shall come to the Royal Palace in the early morning. Li Guoping and He Su, June 25.

For the notice of Master Fouquet: We heard that the algebra book you were editing had already been finished. Please send it to us immediately so that we can include it in our report tomorrow. Do not be late. Li Guoping and He Su, February 4.

According to the decree of the Emperor on October 18: I sent my decree from Rehe to have all the European scholars to edit the algebra books, how come there is only Fouquet who is doing this job? You should ask all others to join in, too. However, only Fouquet can speak good Chinese. They should finish this task as soon as possible. Wang Daohua.⁴⁶

Kangxi showed his zealous interest in algebra on two occasions. On one hand, it was really due to his interest in mathematics; on the other hand, it was also directly related to his thoughts that “the western civilization originated from China”. In his suggestions to Bouvet, he warned Bouvet to pay attention to rich mathematical thoughts in Chinese classic, and “you must read the classics carefully, and do not refuse to read them just because of religious and ideological conflicts.” In fact, this was his method to lead Bouvet to follow his ideology, just as he told Lee Guangdi, “Have you ever talked with other officials about the mathematical thoughts in the *Book of Changes*? The Western mathematics is quite similar to the *Book of Changes*.”⁴⁷

4 Kangxi’s arrangement of Bouvet’s study of the *Book of Changes* was an important strategy during the Rite Controversy

The Rite Controversy was the most important event in the Sino-West relationship in years of Kangxi’s reigns that played a crucial role in Kangxi’s policy-making towards the Roman Catholic Church.

The Jesuits in the Royal Palace of Qing masterminded a special memorial to the throne in the 39th year of Kangxi’s reign:⁴⁸

The officials of calendar Philippe-Marie Grimaldi, Thomas Pereira, Antoine Thomas and Francois Gerbillo asked the guide from Your Majesty with our

⁴⁶ Vatican Library Borg. Cinese. 439(a).

⁴⁷ *Qing Shengzu shilu*, Vol. 251, September, the 51st year of Kangxi’s reign.

⁴⁸ Li Tiangang, 1998, 49.

sincere respects. We knew that the European scholars who heard about the worship of Confucius and ceremony of offering sacrifice to the ancestors all think there must be some reasons for those rites, and they desire to know about these reasons. According to our witness, Chinese people worship Confucius for he is the example for teachers, rather than for praying for blessings, intelligence, money and power. Similarly, they offer sacrifice to ancestors out of their love to the family and their respect to their ancestors, even according to the Confucianism, this should not be considered praying for blessings. Although they set memorial tablets of ancestors at home, they only do it as a duty of descendants and to show their memorial to them, rather than think their ancestors' soul is on the tablet. In addition, the ceremony of offering sacrifice to the sky is not for offering sacrifice to the concrete sky, but for the creator and master of the whole universe, just as Confucius said, 'The rite of offering sacrifice to the sky is to serve God.' Sometimes God is called 'the sky', is just like sometime My lord is called 'Your Majesty' or 'the Court'. Despite the difference in titles, the one who is referred to is the only one. We were favored with Your Majesty's calligraphy 'respect the sky', in which we found the same meaning. These shabby thoughts are our immature answers. We dare not to judge the answers concerning Chinese culture by ourselves; therefore, we are waiting with respect for Your Majesty's teaching. October 20, the 39th year of Kangxi's reign.⁴⁹

After reading it, Kangxi said: "This memorial to the throne is fairly good. It is in the proper way, which shows respect to the leader of the country, to the parents and to the masters, that is why there is nothing that needs to be corrected."⁵⁰

In the 43rd year of Kangxi's reign, Pope Clement XI made the assessment that the "Chinese rite" was heterodoxy, which must be forbidden.⁵¹ In the 44th year of Kangxi's reign, the Pope's ambassador-at-large Carlo Tommaso Maillard de Tournon came to China. The next year, Kangxi met him in Changchun Garden and gave a decree, "From today, every missionary comes to China must obey the rites of Matteo Ricci, otherwise, he will not be allowed to stay in China and will be evicted out of China." At the same time, he had the European missionaries in China to register with the government and get a permit, and told them "those with the permit will be treated as Chinese."⁵² In the 46th year of Kangxi's reign, Maillard de Tournon formally publicized the Pope's injunction in Nanjing, forbidding Chinese Catholics to offer sacrifice to the ancestors and worship Confucius. In the same year, Kangxi during his royal inspection in the southern

⁴⁹ Huang Bolu.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Sole, Nore, 2001.

⁵² Chen Yuan, No. 4.

China, and said, “You (missionaries) should stay in China to do your work and do not go back to Europe in your entire life.”⁵³ He also sent Antonio Barros, Antonio de Beanvollier, Giuseppe and Raimundo Jose de Arxo back to Rome to explain his religious policies to the Pope. In the 49th year of Kangxi’s reign, Matteo Ripa and Teodorico Perlrin came to China, while Kangxi asked Foucquet to come to Beijing to assist Bouvet in his study of the *Book of Changes*. In the 51st year of Kangxi’s reign, Pope Clement XI published an aide-memoire, confirming the Maillard de Tournon’s injunction in Nanjing. In the 54th year of Kangxi’s reign, the Pope published a *papal bull*.⁵⁴ In the 55th Year, Kangxi denounced Perlrin’s action of mis-interpreting Kangxi’s letter to the Pope at the presence of all other missionaries.⁵⁵ In the following year, Cardus Mezzabarba came to China as the Pope’s ambassador-at-large.

From the timetable above, it is clear that Kangxi arranged Bouvet to study the *Book of Changes* just at the time when the Rite Controversy was at the severest point, i.e. between the visits of Maillard de Tournon and Mezzabarba. That is also the time when Qing and Vatican had a sensitive relationship. Meantime, Kangxi had been thinking about some unified policies and requirements for the European missionaries in China. In the 45th year of Kangxi’s reign, he said in his decree, “Recently, there are a lot of European men coming into China, among whom there are real missionaries as well as some false ones. If there is no rule for them now, I am afraid there will be troubles later. I also feel that some of those men must have a relationship with the Pope, all I can do is to try to help them understand my rules and laws here, and require the new-arrivers to obey those rules.”⁵⁶ Kangxi repeatedly required the missionaries to obey the rites of Matteo Ricci. At his second meeting with Maillard de Tournon, he explained the basic religious policies in China to him, “That Confucianism has dominated China for over 2000 years. From Matteo Ricci, the Europeans coming to China have received protection from the Emperors, and they also obey our laws. If some one in the future is against worshipping Confucius and the ancestors, it will not be possible for Europeans to stay in China anymore.”⁵⁷ Then, he gave his decree to all the missionaries in Beijing:

Henceforth, those who do not obey the rites of Matteo Ricci will not be allowed to stay in China and will be evicted out. In case that the Pope does not allow you to do missionary work for this reason, you, as missionaries, shall stay in

⁵³ Huang Bolu.

⁵⁴ Sole, Nore, *Chinese Rites Controversy: 100 document (1645–1941)*.

⁵⁵ Chen Yuan, No. 7.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 2.

⁵⁷ Luo Guang, 1961, 124.

China to do that. If he blames you for obeying the rites of Matteo Ricci and asks you to come back to Europe, I will not let you leave. On hearing Maillard de Tournon's report, if the Pope criticizes you for sinning against the Lord and disobey him, he will certainly call you back. By that time, I must negotiate with him. I will tell him that you have been in China for years and have got used to situations here just like Chinese people do; therefore, I do not want you to leave. If the Pope convicts you guilty, he will call you back, then I will send a letter to him and tell him you, just as Thomas Pereira, has been working for me for a long time, I certainly will not let them back alive...so I will arrest and execute all European men in China and send their heads to you. If that happens, your Pope will exactly become the king of spirits.⁵⁸

The deeds of some missionaries during the Rite Controversy really enraged Kangxi. One of them is Charles Maigrot, who did not know Chinese language and culture but made irresponsible remarks. Kangxi criticized him as "so stupid that even could not read Chinese, but dare to comment on Chinese politics and culture." "He does not know the language and need an interpreter for communication. Men like him talk about Chinese philosophies, are just like men talk about things happened in a house which he never entered into before. It is totally untrustable."⁵⁹ Another one is Teodorico Perlrin, who juggled Kangxi's letter to the Pope and made the Emperor furious. He claimed that "I will definitely publicize Perlrin's crime to make my laws clear." The Emperor considered Perlrin to be a "conspirator" and an "ignorant flunky."⁶⁰

Bouvet was one of the most trusted missionaries by Kangxi, whom the Emperor called to join many important events during Maillard de Tournon's visit to Beijing to show his trust.⁶¹ Absolutely, Kangxi's arrangement of his study of the *Book of Changes* in such a background was not simply because of his own personal interest, but to set an example for all the missionaries via his study, i.e. they must obey the rites of Matteo Ricci, in addition, "in order to talk about Chinese philosophy and thoughts, one must understand Chinese language and read as many Chinese classics as possible."⁶² This is one of Kangxi's most important strategies of fighting against the Roman Catholic Church during the Rite Controversy and an important political policy to have the missionaries stay and work in China following the Chinese rules and rites. Kangxi also made it clear in his decrees for several times. On May 22, the 50th year of Kangxi's reign, after

⁵⁸ Chen Yuan, No. 4.

⁵⁹ Ibid., No. 11.

⁶⁰ Ibid., No. 12.

⁶¹ Luo Guang, *Roma Catholic Church and Chinese Legatine*.

⁶² Chen Yuan, No. 13.

reading Bouvet scripture, he said, “Bouvet’s quotations in his scripture are too lengthy and overelaborated, on which Maigrot or Mgr Claudus de Visdelou attacked him for this point, Bouvet will not be able to defend himself. If you do not be careful, I will have troubles, so you European missionaries must discuss the problems together without any negligence.” This decree was passed to the missionaries by He Su, who reported to Kangxi later, “I had called Stumpf, Joseph Suarez, Grimaldi, Franz Stadlin and Oacobus Brocard to receive the decree. Suarez, Grimaldi and Stumpf had a discussion, and then reported to Your Majesty: Your Majesty has been endeavored to teach and help us, what we European missionaries cannot express your grace by words. We have heard that the quotations in Bouvet’s articles are too lengthy and overelaborated, what might cause attack from Maigrot and Mgr Claudus de Visdelou, and Your Majesty might also be insulted. We should not neglect it and must have a discussion about it. Your grace is too rich for us to accept. Therefore, we must endeavor together to help Bouvet in his work in the *Book of Changes*, and ask him to cut the over-lengthy parts, and only to focus on the records of reality to report to Your Majesty. Bouvet should write in a proper way, and let Your Majesty know his progress on time; if his writing is not good enough to be presented to Your Majesty, we will ask him to rewrite it.” Kangxi replied with pleasure, “That shall be good.”⁶³

It can be seen from above that Kangxi’s arrangement of Bouvet’s study of the *Book of Changes* was closely related to the Rite Controversy. Kangxi wanted to find some ways to deal with the Roman Catholic Church during the Rite Controversy, because there is not only missionaries like Maigrot and Mgr Claudus de Visdelou who he had to be persuaded, but also the Roman Church. It is absolute that this job is better to be done by a European missionary rather than by a Chinese scholar. Because he was trusted by Kangxi and was good in Chinese classics and language, Bouvet definitely became the best choice for this job.

5 Kangxi’s influence on Bouvet

Bouvet’s study on the *Book of Changes* was tutored directly by Kangxi; therefore, Kangxi’s thoughts had a great influence on Bouvet, and changed his mind in Chinese culture.

In his *The Author’s preface of Gujin jingtian jiantian xue benyi*, Bouvet wrote, “*Tianxue* is the principle about kindness and evil, grace and punishment, fairness and unselfishness. It was created by Almighty God and should be obeyed by all human beings. At the beginning of the world, God influenced human being with

⁶³ *Kangxi manchao wen zhupi zouzhe quanyi*, 725–726.

kindness, that is why people could understand God's teaching. God's teaching was in the hearts of human beings, and at that time, the nature of men did not conflict with the principle of God. Alas! Later on, due to the human's desire and selfishness, we started to be sinned against heaven. Then, human beings disobeyed God's principle and lost the ability of understanding God's teachings. Our merciful God does not want to see the loss of men... so he blesses us with his teaching in the Bible to inspire the foolish men in the world.”⁶⁴ This paragraph was written in the 46th year of Kangxi's reign, from which was reasoned in a Western way but expressed in the Chinese language. It expatiated on the subject of Eden, original sin and redemption of God in a Chinese way. Referred to the understanding of Chinese classics, *Tianxue benyi* was only a limited collection of Chinese folksays with quotations from Chinese classics, while the structure of it was completely based on western theology, which had little to do with Chinese thoughts and philosophy. Wherefore, at the early stage of his study on the *Book of Changes*, Bouvet still clung to his original thoughts, which dissatisfied Kangxi. The Emperor criticized Bouvet in his comments on He Su and Wang Daohua's memorial to the throne, “Bouvet's writing was in improper order and self-indulgent. It was not going to be a masterpiece but only a patchwork of quotations from the classics.”⁶⁵ Here what Kangxi referred as “self-indulgent” is Bouvet's Western logic and his quotations of Chinese classics without understanding of Confucianism. Kangxi also shared his opinions to other missionaries in Beijing, and called Fouquet to Beijing to assist Bouvet in his study. He Su reported on June 10, the 50th year of Kangxi's reign, “Suarez and Stumpf kneed down to read *Your Majesty's* decree: the foreword of the *Book of Changes* written by Bouvet would probably be discussed by the Catholics. Therefore, *Your Majesty* returned this book to him. We missionaries have had a discussion among ourselves and we all feel *Your Majesty's* careful examination, and your love and consideration for us, to which we are so grateful. *Your Majesty* was afraid that none of us could understand the *Book of Changes*, hence the decree first. After arriving in Beijing Fouquet has a discussion with Bouvet, and when *Your Majesty* returns back to Beijing, they will present their work to *Your Majesty*. We are looking forward to *Your Majesty's* teachings.”⁶⁶ It indicated that having Fouquet come to Beijing was not only Kangxi's idea, but also the decision of the missionaries in Beijing. Later on, He Su also talked to Kangxi about his opinion on Bouvet's research, “I and my colleagues kept some paragraphs of Bouvet's writing, for we thought that his writing should be good. When we read it, however, we were surprised that it could not be interpreted.

⁶⁴ Bouvet, *Tianxue benyi*, Vatican Library Borg.Cinese.

⁶⁵ *Kangxi manchao wen zhupi zouzhe quanyi*, 722.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 732.

Your Majesty's decree showed grace and tolerance. We have never studied the *Book of Changes* before, but when we countered with some difficult sentences, we would be able to grasp the meanings after checking the notes. We could not understand Bouvet's writing and the tables he had made. His tables were like the some patterns or the emblems of cults, though I do not know the mystery of it, I do not think they are reasonable. In addition, he quoted from Chinese classics to explain Western religion. *Your Majesty* has already judged him as ridiculous, what we did not know that why we stopped reporting Bouvet's study progress to *Your Majesty*. We are waiting for *Your Majesty's* return to Beijing and to read it by yourself." Kangxi agreed with He Su, commented, "I agree."⁶⁷ He Su's opinion reflected Kangxi's point of view, and showed that Bouvet had not adapted himself into the study of the *Book of Changes* yet, and could not grab the spiritual substance of the *Book of Changes*. The quotation "July 5..." can also prove that. Therefore, Kangxi warned Bouvet to "read carefully" the Chinese classics, and "should not refuse to read them just because of the conflict of religion or ideology."

The proof above shows that in his early stage of study of the *Book of Changes*, Bouvet had been struggling to find intersection of oriental and western thoughts, meanwhile, his understanding of Chinese culture was also very limited. Kangxi's criticism had a great influence on him, which led to the improvement in his later studies, as well as his deeper understanding of Chinese culture. The theories of the Figurist had also got more mature. He talked about the position of the *Book of Changes* in Chinese in *The Author's Preface of Yi Lun*:

Alas! the *Book of Changes* is the foundation for all classics and the origin of all disciplines. In *Zhuan* it is written: the *Book of Changes* is the wisest book. The Confucians of ancient time said it contained the theories of all knowledge, and the very sincerest way of worshiping God. The truth in the *Book of Changes* is complete and perfect without the need of adding anything else into it. In the preface of *Shu jing*, it is written: the books of Fuxi, Shennong and the Yellow Emperor were called the three greatest ancient teachings; the books of Shaohao, Zhuanxu, Gaoxin and Tangyu were called the five classics, and it is often said that the books of Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties, despite some disadvantages in theories, were focused on ceremonies and complicated philosophies, which should be considered as a standard. *Zheng Yi* thought that the books of Xia, Shang and Zhou had a lot of complicated articles and were of the same type as the ancient teachings and classics. In the preface of "Five scriptures" *Tushu bian*, it is written: the Six Scriptures are all knowledge about reasoning, to talk about God, then one should refer to the *Book of Changes*. Are not the 64 Gua

⁶⁷ Ibid., 735.

and 384 Yao about reasoning? Are not they the reasoning of saints? It is known that the knowledge of all classics is covered by the *Book of Changes*. Therefore, it is both the knowledge of God and the knowledge of reasoning.⁶⁸

From this paragraph, it can be seen that Bouvet had already been familiar with Chinese traditional documents, such as *Wujing zhengyi* of Kong Yingda, what was different from the time he wrote *Tianxue benyi*. In one of his letters in 1715, he said, “The aim of my research is to prove to Chinese people, nearly all the fundamental Christian doctrines are contained in the theories of Confucius and their ancient classics. I am honoured to have the privilege to explain to the Chinese Emperor that the teachings in Chinese classics are generally the same as the Christian doctrines.”⁶⁹ Bouvet finally found a channel between Chinese and Christian culture, and linked the two together. Absolutely, his understanding of Chinese culture was deeper than before, however, he had already taken another direction, which was not Kangxi’s expectation.

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⁶⁸ Claudia von Collani. P., Joachim Bouvet S. J. 209.

⁶⁹ Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus, JS 176, f. 340: Bouvet’s letter on August 18, 1715 (copy made by Collani).

- . “Zai lun Baijin de yijing yanjiu” 再论白晋的易经研究 (Another discussion of Bouvet’s research on the *Book of Changes*). In: Rong Xinjiang 荣新江, Li Xiaocong 李孝聪, eds. *Zhongwai guanxi shi: Xin shiliao yu xin wenti* 中外关系史: 新史料与新问题 (The history of Sino-international relationship: New historical document and new questions). Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2004.
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