

Sabatino de Ursis' Preface to the *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法 (Hydromethods of the Great West; 1612): The 'Basic Discourse on Hydromethods' (*Shuifa benlun* 水法本論)

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Abstract. *This is the first complete translation into a Western language of Sabatino de Ursis' preface to the Taixi shuifa¹. After a short summary of its contents and some remarks about the origin of this translation, the annotated text, accompanied by the Chinese transcription of the original, will be presented.*

Riassunto. *Questa è la prima traduzione completa in una lingua occidentale della prefazione di Sabatino de Ursis al Taixi shuifa¹. Dopo un breve riassunto del suo contenuto e alcune osservazioni sull'origine di questa traduzione, viene presentato il testo annotato, accompagnato dalla trascrizione cinese dell'originale.*

Introduction

The following text, composed in 1612 by Sabatino de Ursis – or Xiong Sanba 熊三拔 as he was called in the Middle Kingdom – is one of the altogether five existent prefaces to the *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法 (Hydromethods of the Great West), the others being written by four Chinese literati who acted in the production of this book as collaborators or supporters of the Jesuit². Co-authored by de Ursis and the scholar-official and Christian convert Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562-1633), the *Taixi*

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¹ Except for the preface by Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562-1633) that has been published in Italian language within the volume by Giunipero only recently, none of the *Taixi shuifa*'s paratexts has been translated in its entirety thus far. See Giunipero, Elisa (ed.) (2020), *Xu Guangqi e gli studi celesti: Dialogo di un letterato cristiano dell'epoca Ming con la scienza occidentale*, Milano: Guerini e associati (La via della seta; 6), pp. 124-131. In his study about the rhetorical strategies in such texts, Kurtz limits himself to shorter passages of the prefaces by Xu Guangqi, as well as by Cao Yubian 曹于汴 (1558-1634) and Zheng Yiwei 鄭以偉 (1570?-1633), while leaving those by Peng Weicheng 彭惟成 (1577-?) and de Ursis completely out. Cf. Kurtz, Joachim (2012), "Framing European Technology in Seventeenth-Century China: Rhetorical Strategies in Jesuit Paratexts", in Dagmar Schäfer (ed.), *Cultures of Knowledge: Technology in Chinese History*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 209-232.

² For a close examination of all five texts, including de Ursis' preface, see the essay by Sabine Kink "Justifying Collaboration between Chinese Literati and 'Subjects from Afar': The Paratexts of the *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法 (Hydromethods of the Great West; 1612)" in this volume.

shuifa contains not only technical instructions for building hydraulic pumps usable for irrigation in agriculture, but also a systematic discourse on the theoretical aspects of water within the framework of Aristotelian natural philosophy. In his preface, entitled ‘Basic Discourse on Hydromethods’ (*Shuifa benlun* 水法本論), de Ursis embedded this learned treatise into the wider context of the Divine Creation, i.e. the higher plan that was at the basis of the Jesuit perception of the whole cosmos. Therefore, the *Taixi shuifa* can be considered to be one of the earliest treatises representing the concept of the so-called “apostolate of the book”. First established by the Jesuit Visitor Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), and further elaborated by Matteo Ricci (1583-1610) and Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607), this method to use the transmission of Western philosophical as well as useful and reliable knowledge as a means of their indirect and top-down proselytising efforts was part and parcel of the accommodation strategy of the Jesuit China mission³.

By starting out from the heavenly craftsman who at the beginning of his undertaking fabricated the Four Elements out of nothing, de Ursis describes in his introductory text to the *Hydromethods* the well-devised interaction of these fundamental constituents of all things. This elaborate system of “Primordial Elements” guarantees the proper functioning of all phenomena pertaining to the “Myriad Categories” in the world, and can be seen as a visible reflection of the omnipotence of the Lord on High. As regards water in particular, the *Taixi shuifa*’s Western implements for taking hold of this important natural resource are thus nothing but the man-made realisation of the same all-encompassing divine providence. In this perspective, de Ursis appears both as transmitter of the related knowledge to the Middle Kingdom, and at the same time – and much more clearly than in the main text of the *Taixi shuifa* itself – as conveyor of the Christian Creed inextricably linked to it. In addition, that way he not least aspired to repay the favours received from his Chinese hosts, and to contribute to their efforts to benefit their own state and its people.

The English rendering of this preface is one of the outcomes of an ongoing seminar conducted under the direction of Hans Ulrich Vogel at the Department of Chinese Studies of Tübingen University. This seminar is an integral part of the research project “Translating Western Science, Technology and Medicine to Late Ming China: Convergences and Divergences in the Light of the *Kunyu gezhi* 坤輿格致 (Investigations of the Earth’s Interior; 1640) and the *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法 (Hydromethods of the Great West; 1612)”, granted by the German Research Foundation (DFG) for the years 2018 to 2021⁴. It is one of the aims of this project to make available complete text-critical and annotated translations of both Adam

³ For the Jesuit accommodation strategy see for example von Collani, Claudia (2012), *Von Jesuiten, Kaisern und Kanonen: Europa und China - eine wechselvolle Geschichte*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, p. 39f.

⁴ For the homepage of the project see <https://uni-tuebingen.de/en/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/fachbereiche/asien-orient-wissenschaften/sinologie/forschung/kunyu-gezhi-taixi-shuifa-dfg/>

Schall von Bell's treatise on mining and smelting, and de Ursis' *Western Hydromethods*. The translation of the *Taixi shuifa* will be published as a separate volume by Hans Ulrich Vogel, Sabine Kink and Cao Jin, with contributions by Beatriz Puente Ballesteros, Christine Moll-Murata, and others⁵. The translation presented below is thus a pre-release of part of this work that in addition to the complete main text will comprise all other paratexts in English language. All our translations are based on the punctuated facsimile edition of the *Taixi shuifa* containing all five prefaces together with the 6 chapters (*juan* 卷) of the original version in *Tianxue chuhan* 天學初函 (First Collectanea of Heavenly Studies; 1626), compiled by Li Zhizao 李之藻 (1565-1630) and reprinted in *Zhongguo shixue congshu* 中國史學叢書 (Collectanea of Chinese Historiographical Texts; first series 1965)⁶.

Transcription of the original text of de Ursis' 'Shuifa benlun'

水法本論

[FOL. 1A, P. 1549]

昔者造物主之作天地萬物也，如大匠之作宮室器用也。工人造作，必先庀具土木金石，物具而後攻之。所造宮室器用，必也土木金石為之體焉。造物之主備大全能，能以無為有。其始有之物為元行。元行四：一曰土、二曰水、三曰氣、四曰火，因之以為體而造萬物也。非獨為體而已。既生之物，不依四行，不能自存，不賴四行，不能自養。如人一身，全賴四行會合所生，會合所成。身中溫煖，蒸化食飲，令成血氣，是用火行。身中脈絡，出入噓吸，調和內外，是用氣行。身中四液，津潤臟腑，以及百骸，是用水行。百體五內，受質

[FOL. 1B, P. 1550]

成形，外資食物，草木血肉，是用土行也。人身若此，萬類盡然。因此四行為是世界所須至切至急，以故造物之主作此四行遍在世間至廣至足。試觀氣行，塞滿空際，人物有生之類呼吸其中，草木百昌，因緣茁發。又觀火行，因緣于日，溫煖下濟，萬物發生，成熟變化。土則承載萬生，發育品類。水則遍滋羣有，任意斟酌。是此四行隨處可得，任物取

⁵ In the case of this preface, the rendering into English has been prepared by Sabine Kink and was then discussed and revised by Cao Jin and Hans Ulrich Vogel.

⁶ The *Zhongguo shixue congshu* was compiled by Wu Xiangxiang 吳相湘 and published in Taipei by Taiwan xuesheng shuju. The *Taixi shuifa* together with its paratexts is found in vol. 23.3, pp. 1505-1710. Different to the main text, the prefaces originally did not contain punctuation, which was added by us.

資，不若珍寶諸類深藏希有。夫珍寶諸類，不切世用，則深藏希有。水、氣、火、土，世用至急，則遍滿充足。伊誰之力？實本玄功，以是可推，生物之初，必有造物之主。其綜理籌度，悉由仁愛，裁制多寡，具有權量也。四行之論，其理甚廣，其說

[FOL. 2A, P. 1551]

甚長，宜有專書備論，今獨就水行略言其緒。夫四行各有本所，水之本所當是海也。海不遍大地，即又作為流泉、溝洫、江河、川瀆，令平地高山遍有之。又不能遍大地為江河，即又作為地脉旁通潛演，掘地穿井，無不得之。井養之利，足資人用。人力有限，或燻竭之地，水所不至，高原上地，水脉甚深，物生其間，無由滋潤，遂其長育，即又作為雨、露、霜、雪，用霑生養之。于是為海、為川、為井、為雨，皆水之本所。有生之類，受澤于茲，取之無禁，求之至足矣。主宰之恩，猶未既也。復裨人靈承天制用，于是古先迪哲，作為水噐，以利天下，或取諸江河，或取諸井，或取諸雨雪，藉以救災捍

[FOL. 2B, P. 1552]

患，生物養民，積久彌精，變化日新焉。嗟夫！深心實理，巧思圓機，誰令人類得與于斯？斯亦造物之全能乎！學道餘晷，偶及茲事。一二見知，謬相賞歎，仍令各制一噐。夫百工藝事，非道民之本業。竊嘉諸君子哀人之深，勉副其意，仍託筆為書，梓而傳之。倘當世名賢，體天心，立人命，經世務，憂時艱者，賜之堯采，因而裕民足國，或亦遠臣矢心報効之一班也。
萬曆壬子初夏泰西耶蘇會士熊三拔謹撰。

Translation

Basic Discourse on Hydromethods

When in olden times the Lord of the Creation of Things (*zaowuzhu* 造物主) made Heaven and Earth and the Myriad Things, it was like when a master craftsman (*dajiang* 大匠) builds palaces, dwellings, implements, or tools. Before manufacturing, a worker must by any means provide (*pi* 庇) and prepare (*ju* 具) earth, wood, metal, and stone [materials], and only after these things have been prepared will he process (*gong* 攻) them. As to the palaces, dwellings, implements, or tools to be manufactured, one also has to give them [then] a [physical] body (*ti* 體) made from earth, wood, metal, and stone. [However,] the Lord Who Created the Things is complete with everything (*beida* 備大) and almighty (*quanneng* 全能),

and He is able to make something from nothing (*yi wu wei you* 以無為有)⁷. As to the things that were to be there first, He made the Primordial Elements (*yuanxing* 元行)⁸. The Primordial Elements are four: The first is Earth, the second Water, the third Air, and the fourth Fire, and following this He made them into [physical] bodies to fabricate the Myriad Things.

But it is not only that [the Four Elements] were made into [physical] bodies [by Him]. If the things that once have been brought forth were not in accord with the Four Elements, they would not be able to preserve themselves, and unless they relied on the Four Elements, they would not be able to nurture themselves. This is like with a human body, which completely relies on an assembly (*huihe* 會合) of the Four Elements for its being brought forth and formed. Thus, when the warmth inside the body steams and transforms food and drink and makes them turn into blood and *qi*, then this is by means of the Element Fire. When the breath enters and exits through the vessel network (*mailuo* 脈絡) of the human body so that inside and outside are in harmony, then this is by means of the Element Air. When the Four Juices (*siye* 四液)⁹ moisten the [Five] Viscera and the [Six] Receptacles (*zangfu* 臟腑) as well as the Hundred Bones (*baihai* 百骸), then this is by means of the Element Water. And when the Hundred Body Parts (*baiti* 百體) and the Five Viscera (*wunei* 五內) in [their] taking shape by receiving substance are supported from the outside (*waizi* 外資) by food, such as from herbs, trees, blood, and flesh, then this is by means of the Element Earth.

[But not only] the human body is like this, the Myriad Categories [of things] are [also] entirely so. As a consequence, the Four Elements are of utmostly vital and

⁷ Cf. *Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記 (Records of Ritual Matters by Dai Senior; Former Han period 前漢 (206 BCE-8 CE)), 《文王官人》: 華如誣, 巧言、令色、足恭一也, 皆以無為有者也。此之為考志。 Translation by Grynepas, Benedykt (1972), *Les écrits de Tai l'ancien et le petit calendrier des Hia: Textes confucéens taosants*, Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, p. 199: "De quelqu'un qui use d'un langage fleuri et calomniateur, qui est habile en propos, qui se contente d'être respectueux, sans plus, qui en toute occasion de rien fait quelque chose, d'un tel homme on peut dire qu'il est pervers (dans ses intentions)".

⁸ Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption*, II.1: "Now we may agree that the primary materials ... are rightly described as 'originative sources, i.e. elements'... Our own doctrine is that although there is a matter of the perceptible bodies ..., it has no separate existence, but is always bound up with a contrariety. ... Fire, Water, and the like ... [are bodies which] change into one another ...". See http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/gener_corr.2.ii.html

⁹ In Hippocratic medicine, the Four Juices are distinct body fluids, also known as the "Four Humours", namely black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood. A surplus or imbalance of one of them negatively affects the personality or physical health of a person. This theory was closely related to the Aristotelian teaching of the Four Elements. In the third chapter "The Number of the Elements" (*Xing zhi shu* 行之數) of part one of his *Kongji gezhi* 空際格致 (Investigation into Celestial Phenomena; c. 1633), Alfonso Vagnone also talks of the Four Juices as proof that the human body consists of the Four Elements (人身所含四液, 亦應四行, 則驗人身, 亦為四行所結成耳。). We would like to thank Anna Strob, Department of Chinese Studies, University of Tübingen, for pointing this out to us.

utmostly urgent need for this world, and therefore the Lord Who Created the Things made these Four Elements spread on earth utmostly wide and utmostly plentiful¹⁰. Take, for instance, a look at the Element Air. As it fills up (*saiman* 塞滿) the atmosphere (*kongji* 空際)¹¹, all those belonging to the category of living things like humans and animals [can] breathe inside of it, and based on it (*yinyuan* 因緣) herbs and trees and the Hundred Creatures (*baichang* 百昌) sprout abundantly. When one further takes a look at the Element Fire, being based on the sun's warmth it is descending and thus benefiting (*xiaji* 下濟) [the earth], so that the Myriad Things are brought forth, become ripe and are changed and transformed. The [Element] Earth holds and carries (*chengzai* 承載) the Myriad Living [Creatures] (*wansheng* 萬生) and lets species of all kind (*pinlei* 品類) germinate (*fayu* 發育). And the [Element] Water fertilizes everywhere all the kinds [of beings and things] (*qunyou* 羣有)¹², [unrestrained] according to His will (*renyi* 任意) but well-measured (*zhenzhuo* 斟酌). Thus, unlike all kinds of treasures which remain deeply hidden and are rare, these Four Elements can be obtained everywhere, allowing [all] things to gain assistance (*quzi* 取資) [from them]¹³. The reason for this is that all those kinds of treasures are not vital for worldly uses, and so remain deeply hidden and are rare. [Contrary to this,] Water, Air, Fire, and Earth are of utmost urgency for worldly uses, and so they are spread everywhere (*bianman* 遍滿) in ample amounts.

¹⁰ Punctuation different from Zhou Zhenhe 周振鶴 (ed.) (2017), *Ming Qing zhi ji xifang chuanjiaoshi Hanji congkan, di er ji* 明清之際西方傳教士漢籍叢刊, 第二輯 (Collected Works in Chinese Language by Western Missionaries during the Ming-Qing Transition, Second Series), Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, vol. 8, p. 241, who has: 因此四行為是世界所須, 至切至急, 以故造物之主作此四行, 遍在世間, 至廣至足。

¹¹ In the context of the *Taixi shuifa*, *kongji* 空際 literally means “empty delimited region”. For reasons of simplicity the term is translated as “atmosphere” here.

¹² *Qunyou* 羣有: 【1】佛教語。猶眾生或萬物。《文選·王中〈頭陀寺碑文〉》: “行不捨之檀, 而施洽羣有。” {李善}注: “羣有, 謂有色無色, 有想無想, 以其不一, 故曰羣有。” {劉良}注: “羣有, 謂萬物。” {唐} {高適}《同諸公登慈恩寺塔》詩: “香界泯羣有, 浮圖豈諸相。” {明} {徐復祚}《一文錢》: “弘六度, 演三乘, 破億萬羣有之迷。” If not otherwise indicated, Chinese lexemes are taken from Luo Zhufeng 羅竹風 (main ed.) (1987-1995), *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 (Comprehensive Chinese Word Dictionary), Xianggang: Sanlian shudian Xianggang fendian. It is available to us in digitalized form via the portal “Apabi 工具書: China reference books collection” in the CrossAsia project of the State Library in Berlin.

¹³ *Quzi* 取資: 【1】取得凭借、助益。語本《孟子·離婁下》: “資之深, 則取之左右逢其原。” Translation by Lau, D. C. (1970), *Mencius: Translated with an Introduction by D. C. Lau*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, p. 90: “...when he can draw deeply upon it, he finds its source wherever he turns”.

[But] whose (*yishei* 伊誰)¹⁴ power is [behind] this? This indeed has its origin in a divine and far-reaching effort (*xuangong* 玄功), and from this it can be inferred (*ketui* 可推) that at the beginning of the bringing forth of things there necessarily must have been the Lord Who Created the Things. His all-encompassing arrangements (*zongli* 綜理) and His thoughtful plans and schemes (*chouduo* 籌度) entirely spring from [His] benevolent affection (*ren'ai* 仁愛), while His considerate decisions (*caizhi* 裁制) about [appropriate] quantities (*duogua* 多寡) are thoroughly¹⁵ pondered and measured (*quanliang* 權量).

As the principles of the theory of the Four Elements are numerous and its explanations extensive, there should be a specialised book with detailed explications (*beilun* 備論)¹⁶ [on them]. [However], [here and] now [I can] only approach the Element Water and provide a first clue. Each of the Four Elements has its original place (*bensuo* 本所) and that of water should be the sea. But because the sea is not extending all over the Great Earth, He additionally created gushing springs (*liuquan* 流泉), gullies and ditches (*gouxu* 溝洫), rivers and streams, [as well as other] waterways (*chuandu* 川瀆) and made it available everywhere on level ground and high mountains. But as rivers and streams cannot cover the Great Earth all over as well, He also created earth veins (*dimai* 地脉) connecting laterally to hidden underground waterflows (*qianyan* 潛演), so that it is obtained without exception by digging into the ground and sinking wells.

The benefit of wells providing [continuous] nourishment (*jingyang* 井養) [normally] is sufficient to supply human need. [However,] as human strength is limited, water cannot be reached in cases of completely dried up land (*hanjie zhi di* 燠竭之地), while in upper parts of the highlands water veins (*shuimai* 水脉) are lying too deep. [Thus], when things are brought forth there, there is no way [for humans] to moisten [them]. [Therefore], in order to assure their growth and upbringing (*zhangyu* 長育)¹⁷, He moreover created rain, dew, hoarfrost, and snow, in order to soak (*zhan* 霑) and irrigate, and thus bring forth and nourish them. Hence, regardless whether the sea, rivers, wells or rain, they all are original places of water. [In this way,] the [various] categories of living [things] receive moisture

¹⁴ *Yishei* 伊誰: 【1】谁, 何人。This is a rarely used expression found, for example, in the *Shijing* 《詩經·小雅·正月》: 有皇上帝、伊誰云憎。 Translation by Legge, James (1970), *The Chinese Classics in Five Volumes*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, vol. 5, *The She King*, p. 316: “There is the great God, - Does He hate any one?”

¹⁵ For reasons of parallelism with 悉由 in the first part of the sentence, 具有 is read as 俱有 here.

¹⁶ *Beilun* 備論: 【1】详细论述。【2】详细叙列。With the *Kongji gezhi* 空際格致 this “specialised book” was provided by Alfonso Vagnone about 20 years later.

¹⁷ *Zhangyu* 長育: 【2】养育, 使之长大。语出《詩·小雅·蓼莪》: “拊我畜我, 長我育我。”《左传·昭公二十五年》: “爲温慈惠和, 以效天之生殖長育。”

from them, with no restriction in obtaining it and in utmost abundance when seeking for it.

But the favours of the Supreme Powerholder (*zhuzai* 主宰) are still not exhausted (*ji* 既) [with that]. Thus, He further endowed humans with intelligence (*bi ren ling* 裨人靈) for controlling and using [resources] in compliance with the Heavenly Way (*cheng tian* 承天), and hence [those] in antiquity (*guxian* 古先) following [the path of] wisdom (*di zhe* 迪哲)¹⁸ made water implements (*shuiqi* 水器) to benefit All-under-Heaven, sometimes by taking it [i.e. water] from rivers and streams, sometimes from wells, and sometimes from rain and snow. In that way, they provided disaster relief (*jiu zai* 救災) and warded off calamities (*han huan* 捍患), and they brought forth things and nourished the people. By accumulation over a long time [knowledge] became more refined (*mijing* 彌精)¹⁹, and through change and transformation constant renewal (*rixin* 日新) [took place]. Alas! Who is the one who made mankind take a share (*deyu* 得與) in [such] profound intentions (*shenxin* 深心) and true principles, in ingenious ideas and the [innermost] winding handle of the circles [i.e. that on which everything hinges] (*yuanji* 圓機)?!²⁰ This, too, is due to the omnipotence of the [Lord of the] Creation of Things!

In the spare time remaining (*yugui* 餘晷) from studying the [Heavenly] Way (*xue dao* 學道)²¹ I occasionally touched upon these matters. When a few [Chinese

¹⁸ *Di zhe* 迪哲: 【1】蹈智。谓蹈行圣明之道。{明}{方孝孺}《杜士贤赞》：“維聖迪哲，察於人言。” In the *Taixi shuifa*, this is probably an allusion to the cultural heroes of China.

¹⁹ The term *mijing* 彌精 goes back to chapter four, “Alternative Treasures” (*Yibao* 異寶), of the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (late Warring States Period, 5th cent.-221 BC): 其知彌精，其所取彌精；其知彌輪，其所取彌輪。 Translation by Knoblock, John, and Jeffrey Riegel (2000), *The Annals of Lü Buwei: A Complete Translation and Study*, Stanford [Calif.]: Stanford University Press, p. 236: “The more refined one’s knowledge, the more refined one’s choices. The cruder one’s knowledge, the cruder one’s choices”.

²⁰ *Yuanji* 圓機: 【1】犹环中。喻超脱是非，不为外物所拘牵。《庄子·盗跖》：“若是若非，執而圓機；獨成而意，與道徘徊。” {成玄英}疏：“圓機，猶環中也。執於環中之道以應是非，用於獨化之心以成其意，故能冥其虛通之理，轉變無窮者也。” {陈鼓应}注引{李勉}曰：“亦猶《齊物論》‘得其環中，以應無窮’之意。‘執而圓機’，謂執汝圓形之機件以相轉不息，忘去是非。” Translation by Graham, Angus C. (1981), *Chuang-tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and other Writings from the Book Chuang-tzu*, London: Allen & Unwin, p. 241: “Whether you do right, whether you do wrong, through the cycles grip the winding handle in you. Fulfil alone the purpose which is yours, in accord with the Way walk your meandering path”.

²¹ *Xue dao* 學道: 【1】学习道艺，即学习儒家学说，如仁义礼乐之类。【2】学习道行。指学仙或学佛。The expression 學道 is indeed used in this religious sense by the Jesuits. See, e.g., Ricci in his *Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義，“西土來由”：西士曰：民之用功乎聖教，每每不等，故雖云一道，亦不能同其所尚。然論厥公者，吾大西諸國，且可謂以學道為本業者也。 In the translation of Lancashire and Hu this reads as follows: “The Western scholar says: People who believe in our sacred religion express their faith in different ways: thus, although one can say that they all believe the same

gentlemen] learned about this (*jianzhi* 見知), they exaggeratedly (*miu* 謬) rewarded me with appreciation (*shang tan* 賞歎) and thereupon ordered [me] to have one implement of each [type] manufactured (*zhi* 制)²². Now, the art (*yishi* 藝事) of the Hundred Crafts (*baigong* 百工) is [actually] not [part of] the fundamental occupation (*benye* 本業) of [us] People of the [Heavenly] Way (*daomin* 道民)²³. [However,] because I venture to highly praise these [Chinese] gentlemen for the depth of their sympathy (*ai* 哀) for the people and [wish to] undertake strenuous efforts to assist [them] in their intentions (*mian fu qi yi* 勉副其意), I thus asked [my Chinese friends] to write [these matters] down on my behalf (*tuobi* 託筆) and to have this book cut into printing blocks (*zi* 梓) for propagating it²⁴.

doctrine, one cannot say that they all have the same customs. Nevertheless, our countries of the West can be said, on the whole, to regard the 'study of the Way' as their fundamental task". See Matteo Ricci, S.J., *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu Shih-i)*, translated, with introduction and notes, by Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-chen, S.J.; a Chinese-English Edition edited by Edward J. Malatesta, S.J., St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, in cooperation with the Ricci Institute, Taipei, Taiwan, 1985, p. 409.

²² Compare the entry for February 12, 1612 of the "Historia Domus" for the Beijing residence of the Jesuits, where de Ursis writes that he had started to fabricate "os instrumentos" (i.e. the water implements) together with a carpenter (*mō ciām* 木匠). These implements, which were intended to be presented to the Emperor, were completed on April 6. See Biblioteca da Ajuda, Jesuítas na Ásia, Série da Província da China, Cód. Ms. 49-V-5, "Noticias do Anno de 1612". Cf. also the beginning of ch. 5 in *Taixi shuifa*, fol. 1a, p. 1637: 既作水器，諸公見之，每辱獎歎。（“When once I had the water implements made and all the gentlemen [came and] had a look at them, each time I received their admiration and exclamations”.)

²³ *Daomin* 道民【1】信奉道教或加入道教组织者。{清}{姚鼎}《闻禹卿以书名上达几更出山而竟止因寄》诗：“家作道民輸斗米，身惟服食乞戎鹽。”{明}{王世貞}《闲居》诗：“倚酒稱歡伯，看經號道民。”{金}{元好问}《游天坛杂诗》之十：“道民終不忘{天台}，姓字依然在{蜜崖}。”{施国祁}注：“近歲{盧氏}{蜜崖}人跡不及處，有題字云：‘道民{天台}{司馬承禎}過。’” The expression *daomin* 道民 can be found in sources about Christianity in Vietnam. See Zheng Yongchang 鄭永常 (2015), *Xuehong de guiguan: Shiliu zhi shijiu shiji Yuenan jidujiao zhengce yanjiu* 血紅的桂冠：十六至十九世紀越南基督教政策研究 (Crimson Laurel: On the Vietnamese Policy towards Christianity, 16th to 19th Centuries), Xinbei: Daoxiang chubanshe. This book contains two sub-chapters (開放教禁與道民衝突 and 良民道民一體為臣民), which deal with the term *daomin* 道民. This term was used there for religious professionals or priests (*tianzhu jiaotu* 天主教徒), in contrast to *liangmin* 良民 or *pingmin* 平民, the latter two terms designating laymen.

²⁴ Compare the preface by Cao Yubian 曹于汴, fol. 2a, p. 1519: 太史玄扈徐公，軫念民隱，於凡農事之可興，靡不採羅，閱泰西水器，及水庫之法，精巧奇絕，譯為書而傳之。（“[But] as for the Hanlin Academician, Honourable Xu Xuanhu 玄扈徐公 [i.e. Xu Guangqi 徐光啟, 1562-1633], thinking with deep concern about the miseries of the people, there was nothing that he did not pick up and collect with regard to what could be done to promote all the matters of agriculture. Having examined [the descriptions of] the methods of water machines and water reservoirs of the Great West [and finding them] refined, ingenious and most unusual, he translated them and made them into a book in order to pass them on”.) A similar allusion is found in the preface by Xu Guangqi, fol. 5a, p. 1513: 然而諸公實存心于濟物，以命余，其可辭？抑六載成言，亦以此竟利先生之志也。（“However, those [Chinese] gentlemen indeed paid much thought to aiding others and therefore

If those among today's men of great virtue and wisdom (*mingxian* 名賢) that embody the will of Heaven (*tianxin* 天心), establish the Heaven-ordained fate of human beings (*li renming* 立人命), order the worldly affairs (*jing shiwu* 經世務), and are worried about the troublesome times (*shijian* 時艱) bestow [this book] to the firewood gatherers [i.e. the commoners] (*raocai* 藁采)²⁵, then the people will be enriched and the state's [needs] satisfied (*yu min zu guo* 裕民足國), and perhaps I, the subject from afar (*yuanchen* 遠臣), [can] also sincere-heartedly (*shixin* 矢心) repay [at least] a small part (*yi ban* 一班) of the [hitherto] received favours by these efforts (*baoxiao* 報効) [of mine].

In the first summer month [*chuxia* 初夏, i.e. the fourth month] of the year [with the cyclical signs] *renzi* 壬子 of the Wanli reign-period [1612] respectfully composed (*jinzhuan* 謹撰) by Xiong Sanba 熊三拔, Jesuit scholar from the Great West.

ordered me [to make a book out of it]. How could I have refused that? It took six years until the account was completed, but in this way also Teacher Li [Madou]'s [unfulfilled] wish was accomplished".)

²⁵ *Raocai* 藁采: Metaphor for the desirable closeness of the rulers and their officials to the people. Compare the use of *churao* 芻蕘 in the *Shijing* 《詩經·大雅·生民之什·板》: 我雖異事、及爾同僚。我即而謀、聽我囁囁。我言維服、勿以為笑。先民有言、詢于芻蕘。 Translation by Legge, James (1970), *The She King*, p. 408: "Though my duties are different from yours, I am your fellow-servant. I come to advise with you, And you hear me with contemptuous indifference. My words are about the [present urgent] affairs; - Do not think them matter for laughter. The ancients had a saying: 'Consult the grass and firewood-gatherers'".