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明清以來善書叢編 初輯

第一冊

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SINCE THE MING
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QING DYNASTIES.
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1

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明清以來善書叢編 初輯 目錄

第一冊

導言·····	一
五公經·····	一
救劫轉天圖經·····	三五
天台山五公菩薩真經·····	六九
五公經讀本·····	一三一
五公經（五公救世符）·····	一八五
五公末劫經·····	二〇七
五公救劫經符·····	二六七
大聖五公經·····	三一
咸豐版轉天圖經·····	四一七
太上感應篇陰騭文、覺世經心經勸善文合刻·····	四六一
太上感應篇圖說——卷首（卷一）·····	五五七

空中聞叱咤聲，船走如飛。一夜已達廣東。比天微明，船忽不動，已在官埠停泊矣。即日交銀，其事遂解。此事傳述人口，而彭氏家乘中不載。豈南响先生為理學大儒，嫌與方外往來，故諱之也。³¹

此外，也有善書在重刊時會被刊印者刪去神異敘述，本套書收錄的多種《文昌玉局心鑑》就反映這樣的現象！

最後，需要說明的是，善書同名不同內容者不少，清代中葉流行的《救生船》即是其中一例。由於我主編的其它套書已收錄雲南著作刊行《救生船》，以及篇幅考量，此次《明清以來善書叢編》只收錄更有影響力的四川鸞堂著作的《救生船》。又本套書也響應善書出版流通，故復印台灣 1970-80 年代廣為風行的原版《地獄遊記》，作為附錄，免費贈送讀者！另外為方便讀者進一步認識《明心寶鑑》，我們商請 Philip Clart 教授撰寫專文，*The Mingxin baojian* 明心寶鑑 (Precious Mirror for Enlightening the Mind) and Its Transmission in the West，介紹《明心寶鑑》在西方流傳的情況，附刊於後，以供參考！

附記：本文的修正完成，感謝 Philip Clart、侯沖、朱明川的建議！

³¹ 《拍案驚異記》頁 177 (吳船一夜到廣東)，上海大遠圖書供應社，1977 年。此書內題《拍案驚異記》。該出版社專門出版稀見筆記小說。

The *Mingxin baojian* 明心寶鑑 (Precious Mirror for Enlightening the Mind) and Its Transmission in the West

Philip Clart (柯若樸)

Abstract

The *Mingxin baojian*, an early Ming collection of aphorisms and sayings culled from a large variety of sources, is the first Chinese book ever translated into a European language. This first translation was completed by the Spanish Dominican friar Juan Cobo (?-1592) and his Chinese collaborators around 1590; the bilingual translation manuscript was presented as a gift to the Spanish crown prince Philip (later King Philip III of Spain, [1578-1621]) in 1595. It was never published and was only rediscovered in the late nineteenth as MS no. 6040 in the National Library of Spain. It thus had no impact on the early development of Sinology in the West. More influential was the first printed translation of the *Mingxin baojian*, which appeared as tractate no. 4 in the Dominican missionary Domingo Fernández Navarrete's (1618?-1686 or 1689) *Tratados historicos, politicos, ethicos y religiosos de la monarchia de China* ("Historical, political, ethical, and religious tractates on the monarchy of China," 1676), a work that was widely read in Enlightenment-period Europe. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, maxims from the *Mingxin baojian* were frequently employed as illustrative of either Chinese linguistic usage or of Chinese mentalities and moral values. The last integral translation of the text, this time into German, was produced by Johann Heinrich Plath in 1863.

(*Wenyuange shumu* 文淵閣書目, *juan 2*),³ the earliest surviving copy seems to be a Korean edition dated 1454, with the full title *Xinke jiaozheng dazi Mingxin baojian* 新刻校正大字明心寶鑑. Its existence was publicized by Yi Usōng in 1977, ending long-standing speculations that the work had been originally composed in Korea, where it circulated widely in various versions titled *Myōngsim pogam*.⁴ The 1454 Korean edition contains a preface by Fan Liben dated to the year 1393 which, based on the internal evidence discussed by Wang Chien-chuan 王見川 in his introduction to the present collection, is a very likely date for the book's first publication.

The *Mingxin baojian* version available to Juan Cobo consisted of two volumes (*juan*) of ten thematically arranged chapters per volume. Cobo's translation was evidently compiled with the help of Chinese collaborators; it is not quite complete, as apparently parts of the print edition available to him were missing.⁵ The manuscript, titled *Beng Sim Po Cam/Espejo rico del claro coraçõn*,⁶ is bilingual, with Chinese and Spanish ("Castilian") text on facing

If we define Sinology as the study of China through Sinophone sources, then the history of this discipline begins with the first studies and translations of Chinese texts. Usually these pioneering efforts are ascribed to the Jesuits who first took up residence in Beijing in the late 16th century, led by Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) and Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607). However, it turns out that ancestral honours are due to Dominican missionaries in the Philippines, where they worked closely with the Chinese community in Manila. The laurels for the first translation of a Chinese publication into a European language may have to go to Friar Juan Cobo (?-1592),¹ who around the year 1590² in Manila finished his translation of the *Mingxin baojian*, a collection of moral sayings and aphorisms, compiled in the early Ming dynasty by Fan Liben 范立本 (*zi* Congdao 從道) of Wulin 武林 (= Hangzhou). The earliest record of this book is an entry in the catalogue of the Imperial Library compiled in 1441

¹ Various birth dates are given by different authors, such as 1546 or 1547. In his biographical entry on Cobo, Ocio refrains from committing to a particular birth date; he points to the date of Cobo's vows as 1563. See Hilario Maria Ocio y Viana, *Compendio de la reseña biográfica de los religiosos de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas desde su fundación hasta nuestros días* (Manila: Establecimiento tipográfico del Real colegio de Sto. Tomás, 1895), 18.

² Scholars give different dates for the translation's completion. We do have two firm dates: 1592 as the year Cobo was killed on his return from Japan (presumably by aborigines after a shipwreck off the coast of Formosa), and 1595 as the year of the translation's presentation to the Spanish crown prince. The latter date is relevant only if we assume that Cobo's collaborators completed an unfinished work after his demise. However, such an assumption seems unnecessary since a letter from the Bishop of Manila, Domingo de Salazar, to King Philip II of Spain, dated 14 June 1590, stated: "Fray Juan Cobo, the Dominican religious who, as I have said before, knows the language of the Sangleys and their writing (which is what they esteem most) is sending to Your Majesty a book extracted from others brought to him from China. This contact which is already being made between them and ourselves is not a bad beginning for the object we have in view. The book is in Chinese writing on one half of the leaf, and Castilian on the other, the two corresponding to each other." The description fits the *Beng Sim Po Cam* very well and we can thus assume that the translation was already concluded by the summer of 1590. See Piet van der Loon, "The Manila Incunabula and Early Hokkien Studies (Part 1)," *Asia Major* 12 (1966): 16.

³ Van der Loon, "The Manila Incunabula," 19. "范立本明心寶鑑一部," in Yang Shiqi 楊士奇, *Wenyuange shumu* 文淵閣書目, *juan 2 = Wenyuange siku quanshu* 文淵閣四庫全書 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983), vol. 675, p. 156.

⁴ Frits Vos, "A Chinese Book in Korean Disguise: Some Problems Concerning the *Myōngsim pogam*," in *Twenty Papers on Korean Studies Offered to Professor W. E. Skellend*, ed. Daniel Bouchez, Robert C. Provine, and Roderick Whitfield (Paris: Collège de France, 1989), 333-334.

⁵ Hing-ho Chan, "The First Translation of a Chinese Text into a Western Language: The 1592 Spanish Translation of *Precious Mirror for Enlightening the Mind*," in *One Into Many: Translation and the Dissemination of Classical Chinese Literature*, ed. Leo Tak-hung Chan (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 77-78. This article is a translation of the following publication in Chinese: Chan Hing-ho 陳慶浩, "Diyibu fanyi xifang wenzi de Zhongguo shu -- *Mingxin baojian* 第一部翻譯西方文字的中國書——明心寶鑑," *Zhongwai wenxue* 中外文學 21, no. 4 (1992): 72-87.

⁶ Actually, the MS contains several Spanish renderings of the Chinese title. The full text on the title page of the MS is: "Libro chino intitulado Beng Sim Po Cam que quiere dezir Espejo rico del claro coraçõn, o Riquezas y espejo con que se enriquezca, y donde se mire el claro y limpio coraçõn." On the last Spanish page of the MS (p. 153) the title is given as *Rico espejo del buen coraçõn*.

Gospel, of the Christian virtues and of the knowledge of the saints” (*pidiendo a V.A. que desee y procure enviarlos las verdaderas riquezas de fe y Evangelio, de las virtudes cristianas y de la ciencia de los santos*). Thus, the presentation of the translation to the crown prince was intended to stimulate his support for the Church’s China mission. Whether or not the gift had the intended effect on the crown prince and the Dominicans’ mission work in the Far East is hard to say.⁸ For Sinology, however, this gift was unfortunate, as the manuscript vanished unpublished into the royal library. It was only in 1924 that a Dominican theologian, Luis G. Alonso Getino (1877-1941), published a transcript of the *Beng Sim Po Cam*’s Spanish text, i.e., without the Chinese original.⁹ In the introduction, he provided some basic information about Juan Cobo and the manuscript’s history, but unfortunately this first printed edition of Cobo’s work seems to have had no immediate impact on scholarship, perhaps due to its obscure place of publication (apparently a printing shop attached to a Catholic orphanage in Madrid). More influential was French sinologist Paul Pelliot’s rediscovery of the manuscript (no. 6040) in Spain’s National Library in Madrid,

⁸ Though it did seem to help Benavides establish some kind of rapport with the future king, as King Philip III ordered his officials in Manila to provide financial support when Benavides was appointed archbishop in 1602. Diego Aduarte, *Historia de la provincial del Santo Rosario de Filipinas, Iapon, y China, de la Sagrada Orden de Predicadores* (Zaragoza: Domingo Gascon, 1693), vol. 1, chapter 61, pp. 287-288.

⁹ *El libro chino Beng Sim Po Cam o espejo rico del claro corazón*, traducido en lengua castellana por Fray Juan Cobo de la Orden de Santo Domingo, edición e introducción del P. Getino (Madrid: Imprenta del Asilo de Huérfanos del S. C. de Jesús, 1924). On Father Getino, see <http://cienciatomista.dominicos.org/personajes.aspx?idHistoria=10> (accessed on 13 September 2017). Liu Limei notes that in 1892 the Conde de la Viñanza, in his *Escritos de los portugueses y castellanos referentes á las lenguas de China y el Japón: estudio bibliográfico*, had already pointed out the existence of this manuscript, describing it as a “truly precious book, unknown to all foreign bibliographers and sinologues, including the learned M. Cordier.” See Liu Li-mei, *Espejo rico del claro corazón*. Traducción y Transcripción del texto chino por Fray Juan Cobo (Madrid: Letrúmero, 2005), 22. Perhaps it was through Viñanza’s brief note that Getino had become aware of the existence of Cobo’s manuscript.

pages. His transliterations of Chinese terms follow Hokkien (Minnanhua) pronunciation, the dialect prevalent among the Chinese community of Manila. The manuscript was taken to Spain in 1595 by Cobo’s fellow friar, Miguel de Benavides (a.k.a Miguel Benavides de Santa María, 1550s-1605),⁷ and there presented in December to the crown prince, the future king Philip III (1578-1621). The dedication praised the manuscript as the first ever translation of a Chinese work into another language (*El primer libro que en el mundo se ha traducido de lengua y letras chinas en otra lengua y letras es éste*), which is correct if by *otra lengua y letras* we understand European languages only. Benavides describes the *Mingxin baojian* as “a collection and chain of many judgments of Chinese philosophers, all of moral matters and virtues; seeking here to adjust man to the law of nature and to guide him to the perfection and integrity that the natural light reveals to us” (*una colección y cadena de muchas sentencias de filósofos chinos, todas de materias y virtudes morales; pretendiendo aquí ajustar al hombre con la ley de la naturaleza y guiarle a la perfección y entereza que la lumbre natural nos descubre*). However, Chinese wisdom, like that of the Greek and Roman philosophers of pagan antiquity, in vain seeks “to overcome in man all that is born of the body, and to raise the soul and the rational will to the integrity and perfection that the spirit asks for” (*vencer en el hombre todo lo que nace del cuerpo, y encumbrar la alma y la voluntad racional hasta que se posea la entereza y la perfección que el espíritu pide*). This final triumph can only be achieved through “faith, enlivened with charity, and to grace, and to the effective assistance of the Almighty (*Esta victoria a sola la fe, vivificada con caridad, y a la gracia, y a los brazos y ayudas eficaces del Omnipotente es debida*). Hence, Benavides expresses his hope that this gift of “the riches of knowledge and of wisdom and of Chinese virtues” (*las riquezas de ciencia y de sabiduría y de virtudes chinas*) may move the future king “to desire and seek to send them the true riches of faith and

⁷ Various birth dates are given, usually either 1550 or 1552. I follow Ocio’s cautious statement that he “was born in the 1550s” (*nació por los años de 1550s*); see Ocio y Viana, *Compendio*, 6. Benavides served as Archbishop of Manila from 1602 (Ocio, *Compendio*, 7).

appeared.¹³

While the dedication allows us to understand Benavides's intention in presenting the manuscript to the crown prince, why did Cobo first embark on this project? It might be that he sought to familiarize himself with the values of the people he sought to evangelize and to improve his mastery of Chinese, which apparently he achieved very quickly (the translation was finished barely two years after he had started to study the language). However, none of this necessitates a formal translation of the whole text. A convincing explanation for the translation is given by José Eugenio Borao, who argues that the *Mingxin baojian* translation served as preparation for Cobo's second major book project, the adaptation into Chinese of the Dominican friar Luis de Granada's important apologetic work, *Introducción al Símbolo de la Fe*, first published in Salamanca in 1584. The Chinese adaptation was printed in Manila in 1593 under the title *Wuji Tianzhu zhengjiao zhenchuan shilu* 無極天主正教真傳實錄 (Veritable Record of the Authentic Tradition of the True Teachings of the Infinite Lord of Heaven, short: *Shilu*).¹⁴ Borao argues convincingly that the *Mingxin baojian*

¹³ Some studies not yet mentioned include: Lothar Knauth, "El inicio de la sinología Occidental: Las traducciones españolas del *Ming Hsin Pao Chien*," *Estudios Orientales* 5, no. 1 (1970): 1-21; Horiike Nobuo 堀池信夫, "Meishin hōkan o meguru jakkan no mondai 『明心寶鑑』おめぐる若干の問題," *Tsukuba Chūgoku bunka ronsō* 筑波中國文化論叢 16 (1996): 99-113; Liu Limei, "Las parecias del *Beng Sim Po Cam* y sus correspondencias en el *Vocabulario de Correas*," *Paremia* 13 (2004): 167-173; Liu Limei 劉莉美, "Dang xifang yujian dongfang: cong *Mingxian baojian* liangben Xibanya huangjin shiqi yiben kan zongjiao lijie xia de pianjian yu duihua 當西方遇見東方—從「明心寶鑑」兩本西班牙黃金時期譯本看宗教研解下的偏見與對話," *Zhongwai wenxue* 中外文學 33, no. 10 (2005): 121-131; José Eugenio Borao, "La 'Escuela de traductores de Manila': Observaciones sobre traductores y traducciones en la frontera cultural del Mar de China (Siglos XVI y XVII)," in *Historia cultural de la lengua española en Filipinas: ayer y hoy*, ed. Isaac Donoso Jiménez (Madrid: Verbum, 2012), 23-52. This is not intended as a complete list; furthermore, it only includes items to which I had access.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the text, see van der Loon, "The Manila Incunabula," 2-8; José Antonio Cervera Jiménez, "El *Shilu* del dominico Juan Cobo (1593): apuntes sobre su interpretación de algunos conceptos filosóficos chinos," *Revista Estudios* 32 (2016): 496-517.

which he announced in an article in the journal *T'oung Pao* in 1929.¹⁰ However, it was not until the 1950s that interest in the *Beng Sim Po Cam* was sparked in Spain, when Maurus Fang Hao 方豪 lectured on the text.¹¹ Since then, the *Beng Sim Po Cam* has been studied quite intensively and has been made available in printed and online editions,¹² and a number of studies have

¹⁰ Paul Pelliot, "Notes sur quelques livres ou documents conservés en Espagne," *T'oung Pao*, Second Series, vol. 26, no. 1-2 (1929): 43-50.

¹¹ Chan, "The First Translation of a Chinese Text into a Western Language," 67-68; Chan, "Diyibu fanyu xifang wenzi de Zhongguo shu," 72-73. In 1952, Maurus Fang Hao had been inspired by Pelliot's 1929 article to visit Spain and Portugal in search of rare Chinese books. On his return he published a detailed account of his journey, including a description of the *Beng Sim Po Cam*. See Fang Hao, "Liuluo yu Xi-Pu de Zhongguo wenxian 流落於西葡的中國文獻," *Xueshu jikan* 學術季刊 1, no. 2 (1952): 149-164 (part 1), and *Xueshu jikan* 1, no. 3 (1953): 161-179 (part 2). Both parts are reprinted in a later collection of Father Fang's writings: "Liuluo yu Xi-Pu de Zhongguo wenxian 流落於西葡的中國文獻," in *Fang Hao liushi zidinggao* 方豪六十自定稿 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1969), 1743-1790. The sections concerning the *Beng Sim Po Cam* occur on p. 150 of part 1 of the original journal article, and on p. 1745 of the 1969 collection. See also Fang Hao, "Cong Zhongguo dianji jian Ming-Qing jian Zhongguo yu Xibanya de wenhua guanxi 從中國典籍見明清間中國與西班牙的文化關係," in *Fang Hao liushi zidinggao*, 1492-1493. In September 1958, Father Fang gave two lectures in Madrid, the second of which dealt with Juan Cobo and his works ("P. Diego de Pantoja, le sinologue espagnol le plus célèbre, et le P. Juan Cobo, le premier sinologue espagnol"); see Fang Hao, "Ming Wanli jian Manila kanyin zhi Hanwen shuji 明萬曆間馬尼拉刊印之漢文書籍," in *Fang Hao liushi zidinggao*, 1521. According to Hing-ho Chan, this lecture awakened interest in the *Beng Sim Po Cam* and led to the publication of the 1959 reprint edition (see next footnote).

¹² In addition to Getino's edition mentioned in footnote 9: Juan Cobo, *Beng Sim Po Cam, Espejo Rico del Claro Corazon* (Madrid: Librería General Victoriano Suárez, 1959); Manel Ollé (ed.), *Beng Sim Po Cam o Rico espejo del buen corazón: El Mingxin Baojian de Fan Liben* (Barcelona: Península, 1998); Liu Li-mei, *Espejo rico del claro corazón*. Traducción y Transcripción del texto chino por Fray Juan Cobo (Madrid: Letrúmero, 2005); the digitized manuscript can be viewed at <http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/4175596> (accessed on 12 September 2017); a transcription can be viewed at <https://www.upf.edu/asia/projectes/che/s16/bengsi.htm> (accessed on 12 September 2017).

China,¹⁷ the fourth volume of which (“Tratado quarto: De la doctrina moral china”) contained a new translation of the *Mingxin baojian*, this time without the Chinese characters alongside. Navarrete was apparently unaware of Cobo’s earlier effort and produced this translation from scratch. Comparisons of Cobo’s and Navarrete’s translations show the latter to be looser and more interested in a comparative perspective, Navarrete often citing parallels in Western Biblical, scholastic, and classical texts as commentary on the Chinese sayings, thus engaging much more profoundly with the *Mingxin baojian* than Cobo had done. José Eugenio Borao describes Navarrete’s as an approach on three levels:

*Lo que se ve claro es que este traductor se mueve en un triple nivel de lectura, el “literal”, más barroco que en Cobo, intentando otorgar un sentido literario a la frase; seguido de un nivel “aclaratorio”, es decir, interpretativo en clave cristiana; y un tercer nivel, que aquí hemos omitido, de “crítica literaria”, mediante el que hace contrastes con textos semejantes de la literatura Cristiana*¹⁸

What is clear is that this translator moves on a triple level of reading, the “literal,” more baroque than in Cobo, trying to give a literary sense to the phrase; followed by an “explanatory” level, that is, interpretive in a Christian key; and a third level, which we have omitted here, as “literary criticism,” by contrasting it with similar texts of Christian literature

Thus, it is no coincidence that he also demonstrates a better understanding of the collection’s title. Where Cobo had translated *mingxin* 明心 as *buen corazón* (“good heart”) or *claro corazón* (“clear heart”), Navarrete explains the title as follows:

*Espejo precioso del alma: ó espejo precioso, que alumbrá y comunica luzes al corazón, y interior del hombre.*¹⁹

¹⁷ Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1676.

¹⁸ Borao, “La ‘Escuela de traductores de Manila’,” 48.

¹⁹ Fernández de Navarrete, *Tratados*, 173.

translation served as “a vehicle for the acculturation of the *Shilu*”; it was through his work on the *Mingxin baojian* that Cobo developed a Chinese terminology for his apologetic work and also for selecting those parts of Luis de Granada’s work that would most likely touch Chinese moral sensibilities.¹⁵

Thus, while the *Beng Sim Po Cam* may be the first translation into a Western language of a Chinese book, it does not really qualify as the first sinological book in the sense of a work dedicated primarily to the investigation of things Chinese. For Cobo it served as preparation for writing theological texts in Chinese for a Chinese audience; for Benavides it served to convince the Spanish ruling house to support the Dominicans’ China mission. Neither seemed to have had a strong sense that the book was to provide knowledge about China and Chinese mentalities. Thus, the fact that it never was printed is probably not an accident. For Cobo it had served its purpose once work on the *Shilu* had been well underway, and for Benavides once he had presented it at court. Neither Cobo nor Benavides apparently pushed for publication. Therefore, the question whether Juan Cobo might be regarded as the founding ancestor of Western sinology, intimated at the beginning of this essay, ultimately needs to be answered in the negative.

The next translator of the *Mingxin baojian* is another Dominican friar, Domingo Fernández (de) Navarrete (1618?-1686 or 1689). Having arrived in Manila in 1648, he taught at the Dominican university there before moving to Fujian as a missionary in 1659; under the increasingly difficult political conditions caused by the Chinese Rites Controversy, he left China in 1669 and travelled to Europe on a circuitous route, arriving in 1672. He did not return to Asia, but instead was appointed archbishop of Santo Domingo in the Caribbean, in which position he remained until his death.¹⁶ In 1676, Navarrete published his *Tratados historicos, politicos, ethicos y religiosos de la monarchia de*

¹⁵ Borao, “La ‘Escuela de traductores de Manila’,” 42-44.

¹⁶ Ocio y Viana, *Compendio*, 174-176. Anna Busquets Alemany, “Más allá de la *Querrela de los Ritos*: el testimonio sobre China de Fernández de Navarrete,” *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia* 24 (2015): 229-250.

and translation of the *Mingxin baojian*'s title again gives a slightly different twist to the understanding of *mingxin*:

Mim sin piao kien seu pretiosum cordis cognoscendi speculum.²⁴
Mingxin baojian, that is Precious Mirror for Knowing the Heart.

Between them, Navarrete, the Spanish Dominican, and Noël, the Belgian Jesuit, kept the *Mingxin baojian* on the intellectual radar screen of Europe, so to say, and helped reignite interest in it in the nineteenth century, when new missionaries re-encountered the work in China and fresh copies arrived in European libraries. New, generally partial, translations of the *Mingxin baojian* appeared, often in collections of Chinese proverbs and sayings. Excerpts in English translation appeared in *The Indo-Chinese Gleaner*,²⁵ the translator expressing his view that "these sketches are intended in a great measure for those who may study Chinese."²⁶ The sentiment is shared in John Francis Davis's (1795-1890) bilingual collection of *Chinese Moral Maxims* of 1823, many of whose samples were drawn from the *Mingxin baojian*.²⁷ The complete

the Archive in the compilation of his own writings, including the *Philosophia sinica*. See Standaert, *op.cit.*, 77-82.

²⁴ Franciscus Noël, *Philosophia sinica tribus tractatibus* (Prague: J. J. Kamenicky, 1711): "Tractatus III: De ethica sinensi," 17.

²⁵ "Bibliotheca Sinica: No. 1, ... 明心寶鑑 Ming sin paou keän," *The Indo-Chinese Gleaner*, no. 5, August 1818 (Malacca: Mission Press), 157-165. The entry on the "Ming sin paou keän" is signed "Too-yu," a pseudonym used by the journal's editor, William Milne (1785-1822). Milne translates the title of *Mingxin baojian* as "precious mirror to reflect light on the heart, or the mirror of the mind" (p. 160). See the reprint in *Yin-Zhong souwen 印中搜聞 (Indo-Chinese Gleaner, 1817-1822)* (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2009), 167-172. The pdf available on the Internet and produced from the *Indo-Chinese Gleaner* volumes held at the Bodleian Library (Oxford University) unfortunately lacks several pages of the entry on the *Mingxin baojian* (viz., pp. 160-163).

²⁶ *Op.cit.*, 165.

²⁷ John Francis Davis, *Chinese Moral Maxims* (London: John Murray, 1823). In the preface, Davis notes that he completed the translation already in 1818, but that the complications of

Precious mirror of the soul: or, a precious mirror that illuminates and communicates lights to the heart, and man's interior.

Navarrete here correctly renders *mingxin* as a verb-object phrase (which we above translated as "enlightening the mind"). His more ambitious rendering of and engagement with the *Mingxin baojian* would likely have guaranteed his work a wider reception even if Cobo's translation had been available for a European readership. As it is, Navarrete's approach to the text and his historical placement in the age of the Enlightenment combined to gain it a wide readership, amongst others by Voltaire, Leibniz, and Quesnay.²⁰ Both his own intellectual interests and those of his own and subsequent ages thus allowed Navarrete's translation to bring about what Cobo's manuscript was never intended to achieve: namely, the transmission of knowledge about Chinese ethics and mentalities to a European public. In that sense, this finally was a truly sinological achievement.

In the eighteenth century, François Noël (1651-1729) cites the *Mingxin baojian* a number of times in his *Philosophia Sinica* when adducing textual evidence for his analysis of Chinese beliefs, values, and philosophical notions.²¹ He did not use Navarrete's translation, but created his own Latin translations from a Chinese original, most likely the one still kept at the Archives of the Society of Jesus in Rome,²² as the greater part of this Archive's section "Japonica-Sinica I-IV" consists of books brought to Rome from China by Noël and his Bavarian colleague, Kaspar Castner (1655-1709).²³ Noël's transliteration

²⁰ Knauth, "El inicio de la sinología Occidental," 7.

²¹ On François Noël, see Paul Rule, "François Noël, SJ, and the Chinese Rites Controversy," in *The History of the Relations between the Low Countries and China in the Qing Era (1644-1911)*, ed. W. F. Vande Walle (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 137-165.

²² For a description see Albert Chau, *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome: A Descriptive Catalogue, Japonica-Sinica I-IV* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), 180-183.

²³ Nicolas Standaert, *Chinese Voices in the Rites Controversy: Travelling Books, Community Networks, Intercultural Arguments* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 2012), 83-89. In the same work, Standaert also proves conclusively that Noël used specific Chinese books in

We could probably add more examples of the *Mingxin baojian* being used as a source for more or less loosely structured, entertaining, and instructive collections of Chinese proverbs and moral maxims.³⁰ However, I shall end here by addressing the (to my knowledge) last significant endeavour to produce a translation and study of the *Mingxin baojian* as an integral text corpus, namely, Johann Heinrich Plath's (1802-1874) German translation of 1863.³¹ Plath mentioned Navarrete and Noël, but produced his own translation from a Chinese original at his disposal. In addition to compiling a translation of most, though not all, of the *Mingxin baojian*'s text,³² Plath was the first scholar to subject the text to a source-critical reading, trying to trace and evaluate the provenance and authenticity of all individual sayings in the *Mingxin baojian*.³³ In this he was an early pioneer of the modern critical philological study of the *Mingxin baojian*, which has been pursued in the 20th and 21st centuries almost exclusively in scholarship published in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

³⁰ The impact of these translations on European popular culture might also be a worthwhile route of enquiry. The nineteenth-century writer William Dalton (1821-1875) used Chinese sayings as chapter titles in his 1857 adventure novel, *The Wolf Boy of China*; they were likely drawn from John Francis Davis's writings. See Shih-Wen Chen, "China in a Book: Victorian Representations of the 'Celestial Kingdom' in William Dalton's *The Wolf Boy of China*," *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature* 21, no. 1 (2011): 5-6. One might also speculate that the stereotype of the adage-citing Chinese, exemplified in the 1930s fictional Chinese detective Charlie Chan, was influenced by the long history of collecting and translating Chinese sayings as keys to Chinese wisdom and mentality.

³¹ Johann Heinrich Plath, "Proben chinesischer Weisheit nach dem Ming sin pao kien," *Sitzungsberichte der königl. bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München*, 1863, vol. 2: 155-214.

³² He states that he omitted "merely personal statements concerning Confucius and his disciplesas well as imperial decrees and some repetitions" (p. 163). He also admits that Navarrete's Chinese original was "older and more correct" than his own, which he describes as being of indifferent quality, with a number of misprints (pp. 162-163).

³³ Plath, "Proben chinesischer Weisheit," 156-161. Such investigations have been taken up again only much later; see, for example, Zhou Anbang 周安邦, "Shixi *Mingxin baojian* yi shu de dingwei 試析《明心寶鑑》一書的定位," *Fengjia renwen shehui xuebao* 逢甲人文社會學報, no. 16 (2008): 53-87.

title of his work shows his primarily linguistic interest:

Chinese Moral Maxims, with a free and verbal translation; affording examples of the grammatical structure of the language

However, he also acknowledges that "the maxims of a people may be considered as a medium which reflects with tolerable accuracy the existing state of their manners and ways of thinking," and while he expresses doubt whether the values expressed in the sayings are widely practised by the Chinese of his day, he still thinks that "[c]onsidered in this connection, the following Proverbs and Moral Sentences may possess some claim to the attention of the curious."²⁸ The same combination of useful outcomes is claimed by William Scarborough for his *Collection of Chinese Proverbs*, for which the *Mingxin baojian* served as one of several sources:

The probable usefulness of such a book as this I gather partly from my own experience, and partly from the observations of many others. A knowledge of their proverbs is of great value to all who are brought into contact with the Chinese; it is especially so to the Missionary in preaching to them; and even to the general reader, a translation, however imperfect, cannot be without its use and interest. In order that the present compilation may prove useful to those who desire to study both the language and the people of this great empire, I have spared no pains in its preparation; and I feel assured that any faults which may be discovered therein, are not the result of over haste, or carelessness.²⁹

bilingual printing delayed publication. Many of the sayings he also included in his other writings, such as in his *Chinese Novels* (London: John Murray, 1822), though without accompanying text in Chinese. The "novels" mentioned in the title refer to three stories by Li Yu 李漁 (1610-1680), whose translation precedes the last chapter containing the sayings.

²⁸ Davis, *Chinese Moral Maxims*, v-vi.

²⁹ William Scarborough, *A Collection of Chinese Proverbs* (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1875), i.

- by Leo Tak-hung Chan, 67-82. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003.
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