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***Jen In Confucian and Neo-Confucian Thought and
Christian Love: Li Ma-dou's Contribution***

MANUEL B. DY, JR.

It can be said that while Christianity came to the Philippines in the sixteenth century with the sword, it entered China with the clock. Indeed, it was through the clocks, the map, the prism, the astrolabe that Matteo Ricci opened the eyes of the Chinese to another world they used to consider barbaric. Ricci brought European science and Euclidian mathematics to China, but they were only instruments to bring the Good News to the Middle Kingdom. This was of course in keeping with the Jesuit way of evangelization — the use of learning for the greater glory of God.

Following St. Paul's admonition, "be all things to all men," Ricci and his fellow Jesuits learned Chinese, took on Chinese names, studied Chinese customs, and put on the Chinese attire. At first they wore the habit of the Buddhist monks, but later they changed to that of the Confucian literati. Li Ma-dou, Ricci's Chinese name, realized then that the door of entry was not so much clocks and astrolabes as Confucianism.¹ As Fr. Nicolas Trigault, who later followed Ricci and translated his journals into Latin, aptly described China in the sixteenth century,

It is evident to everyone here that no one will labor to attain proficiency in mathematics or in medicine who has any hope of becoming prominent in the field of philosophy. . . . The study of mathematics and medicine are held in low esteem, because they are not fostered by honors as is the study of philosophy to which students are attracted by the hopes of the glory and the rewards attached to it. This may be readily seen in the interest taken in the study of moral philosophy.²

No doubt, Li Ma-dou's contributions to Chinese history and culture were mathematics, geography and astronomy. Neverthe-

The Chinese characters for the philosophical terms in this article are listed on p. 450.

1. Columba Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross* (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1957), p. 98.

2. Nicolas Trigault, S.J., *The China that Was* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1942), pp. 52-53.

less, it can equally be said that by studying and adopting Confucianism, making it "a bridge between the Chinese people and Christ, just as Platonism served as a bridge between the Greek world and Christ in the earliest age of the church,"³ Ricci contributed no less to Chinese philosophical thinking in the sixteenth century.

The aim of this paper then is to describe this encounter between Confucianism and Christianity in Li Ma-dou through a study of their key concepts: *jen* in Confucianism and love or agape, charity, in Christianity. First, I shall examine the meaning of *jen* in Confucius and Mencius. Second, I shall bring out the added meaning of *jen* in the Neo-Confucianist Chu-Hsi and Wang Yang-ming. Third, I will attempt to explicate the meaning of Christian love from Li Ma-dou's *Book of 25 Paragraphs*, as well as from his life and the influence he had on his converts as recorded in his journals. The concluding part of this article will seek parallels and divergences between the two concepts.

JEN IN CONFUCIUS AND MENCIUS

Of the four principal virtues in Confucius' *Analects*, *jen*, *i*, *chih*, and *li*, *jen* is the most important. It has been translated as benevolence, love, kindness, compassion, magnanimity, perfect virtue, goodness, human-heartedness, humaneness, humanity, humility, true manhood, manhood at its best, and man-to-manness.⁴ The character *jen*, is a composite of two characters, also pronounced as *jen* but meaning man, and *erh*, meaning two. Thus, *jen* has come to mean the virtue or principle governing interpersonal relationship.

Confucius is the first to make *jen* the principal virtue, the general virtue that unites all others.⁵ Hardly is *jen* used in pre-Confucian classics, and if ever, only as a particular virtue, the kindness of a ruler to his people.⁶ Confucius refers to *jen* as "mastering oneself and returning to propriety."⁷ Without *jen*, *li* (propriety) does

3. Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross*, p. 98.

4. Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Confucian Concept *Jen*," *Philosophy East and West* 4 (1955): 195.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 296.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 295-96.

7. *Analects*, XII, 2. Translation used is that of Wing-tsit chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963).

not make sense.⁸ "The man of wisdom cultivates jen for its advantage."⁹ The man of jen is "free from evil,"¹⁰ and therefore the superior man "never abandons it,"¹¹ places it above anything else,¹² and "would rather sacrifice his life in order to realize" it.¹³

But what essentially is jen? When Fan Ch'ih, his favorite disciple, asked him about it, Confucius replied, "It is to love man."¹⁴ It is on the basis of this analect that Chinese philosophers, Confucian and non-Confucian alike, have equated jen with love, *ai* or affection, *ch'in*.¹⁵

But what does "loving man" mean concretely? We find many descriptions of a man of jen in the *Analects*. He can endure prosperity and adversity for long;¹⁶ he is "strong, resolute, simple, and slow to speak;"¹⁷ he is earnest, liberal, truthful, diligent, and resolute;¹⁸ he is respectful in private life . . . serious in handling affairs, and loyal in dealing with others;¹⁹ he studies extensively, is steadfast in his purpose, inquires earnestly, and reflects on what he can put into practice.²⁰ Confucius, however, is not a man who says a lot without a thread running through all his sayings.²¹ "The Way (the moral way) . . . is none other than conscientiousness (*chung*) and altruism (*shu*)."²²

Jen essentially is the unity of *chung* and *shu*,²³ or in other words, *chung* and *shu* are the two aspects of jen. Both characters are written with the character *hsin* at the bottom. *Hsin* literally means "heart" and denotes many things: intentions, feelings, cognitive and evaluative activity.²⁴ It means the very core of man, in pheno-

8. *Analects*, III, 3.

9. *Analects*, IV, 2.

10. *Analects*, IV, 4.

11. *Analects*, IV, 5.

12. *Analects*, IV, 6.

13. *Analects*, XV, 8.

14. *Analects*, XIV, 22.

15. Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of . . . Jen," p. 299.

16. *Analects*, IV, 2.

17. *Analects*, XIII, 27.

18. *Analects*, XVII, 6.

19. *Analects*, XIII, 19.

20. *Analects*, XIX, 6.

21. *Analects*, XV, 2.

22. *Analects*, IV, 15.

23. Hwa Yoh Yung, "Jen: An Existential and Phenomenological Problem of Inter-subjectivity," *Philosophy East and West* 16 (1966): 182.

24. Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China* (California: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 50-51.

menological terms, his subjectivity.²⁵ Shu, translated as "altruism," has the character *ju*, above, meaning "just as." Shu therefore means "do or act just as the heart dictates;" in short, the Golden Rule, "Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you."²⁶ Confucius speaks of the Golden Rule in negative terms in some *analects*,²⁷ but it would be inaccurate to say that he did not put it positively. In *Analects* VI, 28, he says,

A man of humanity, (*jen*) wishing to establish his own character, also establishes the character of others, and wishing to be prominent himself also helps others to be prominent. To be able to judge others by what is near to ourselves may be called the method of realizing humanity (*jen*).

Chung, translated as "conscientiousness," on the other hand, has the character chung, meaning "center, middle" above. Together with hsin below, chung literally means "to put one's heart in the center of whatever you are doing." Commentators make this the positive Golden Rule of Confucius.²⁸ In any case, chung means wanting what you really want, being true to oneself.

Chung and shu are by no means separable. Chung is fidelity to oneself, duty to oneself, and shu, one's duty to others. To separate the two would be to make the Golden Rule open to Kant's objection that it is hypothetical and not categorical.

Jen as love, then, for Confucius is love for man, both self and others. It is love for the humanity in man, for what he is, not for what he has or does. The ground for such love is man's nature itself, not the birds and beasts, for "by nature all men are alike; through practice they have become apart."²⁹ In jen and li (propriety) all men "within the four seas (the world) are brothers."³⁰ The *analect* that says "*Jen* is to love man" is also the *analect* that says "Wisdom (*Chih*) is to know man."³¹ When a certain stable was burned down, "Confucius asked, 'Was any man hurt?' He did not ask about the horses."³² And again, Confucius says, "One cannot herd with birds and beasts. If I do not associate with mankind,

25. Or the Filipino concept "Kalooban."

26. *Analects*, XII, 2.

27. *Analects*, V, 11; XII, 2.

28. Hwa Yoh Yung, "Jen: Problem of Intersubjectivity," pp. 182-83.

29. *Analects*, XVII, 2.

30. *Analects*, XII, 5.

31. *Analects*, XIV, 22.

32. *Analects*, X, 12.

with whom shall I associate? ”³³

Because jen is grounded on man himself, then it follows that it is within one's reach. Confucius says, “Is jen far away? As soon as I want it, there it is right by me.”³⁴

This idea of jen as based on man's humanity is reinforced by the often quoted analect regarding Confucius' attitude to supernatural beings and life: “If we are not yet able to serve man, how can we serve spiritual beings? . . . If we do not yet know about life, how can we know about death or the after-life? ”³⁵ Not that Confucius does not believe in God or Heaven (*T'ien*) for he does speak of the Mandate of Heaven (*T'ien Ming*)³⁶ but it is a distant God, a “Heaven which reigns rather than rules.”³⁷

The humanistic basis of jen explains the uprightness or sense of justice of the man of jen. “Only the man of jen knows how to love people and hate people,”³⁸ means that such a man loves the goodness of others but dislikes the evil in them.³⁹ A man of jen will “repay hatred with uprightness and repay virtue with virtue.”⁴⁰ This is in answer to the query of someone, perhaps a Taoist, who asked, “what do you think of repaying hatred with virtue? ” A man of jen is upright, that is to say, impartial. He is guided by what is right, not carried away by his personal leanings.

Although this humanistic basis of jen makes it universal — “Love all men comprehensively”⁴¹ — in application, however, it admits of gradation. One should start with the family, and “filial piety and brotherly respect are the root of jen.”⁴² After all, love begins at home, with those nearest to one in time and space. “To be able to judge of others by what is near in ourselves, this may be the method of achieving jen.”⁴³

This Confucian insight into love as graded is further elaborated by his follower Mencius one hundred years later when he pairs jen with i, righteousness. Mencius says, “Jen is man's mind (heart) and

33. *Analects*, XVIII, 6.

34. *Analects*, VII, 29.

35. *Analects*, XI, 11. Also *Analects*, VI, 20; VII, 20.

36. *Analects*, XIV, 47; XVI, 8; VI, 26; VII, 22; IX, 5; XI, 8.

37. Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book*, p. 47.

38. *Analects*, IV, 3.

39. *The Great Learning*, chap. 10.

40. *Analects*, XIV, 36.

41. *Analects*, I, 6.

42. *Analects*, I, 2.

43. *Analects*, VI, 28.

righteousness is man's path"⁴⁴ and again, "Jen is the peaceful abode of man and righteousness is his straight path."⁴⁵ A path implies priorities, and priorities involve gradation and distinction.⁴⁶ Righteousness, which was not so much emphasized by Confucius, is the virtue that naturally makes distinctions in love. One cannot love everybody equally, although love by nature is all-embracing. By respecting the elders in my family, I can by extension also treat with respect the elders in other families. "Treat with tenderness the young in my own family, and then, by extension, also the young in other families."⁴⁷

By stressing graded love or love with distinctions, Mencius may have been against the bifurcation of jen as internal and righteousness as external, but he was only explicating what is implicit in Confucius — the natural basis of jen. It is unnatural for man to love all alike and to the same degree. The application of jen springs from within man, man's nature, and it is man's nature to love. Mencius says, "Jen is the distinguishing characteristic of man. When embodied in man's conduct, it is the way."⁴⁸ This is reiterated in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, another Confucian classic supposedly written by Confucius' grandson Tzu-ssu, when it says, "jen is jen,"⁴⁹ to be a man of jen is to become human.

Mencius is known for his doctrine of the innate goodness of man, that man's nature is originally good. Practically the whole of Book Six of the *Book of Mencius* argues for this idea. One of his arguments is the intuitive appeal to experience, of the "instinct" in man to save a child about to fall into the well.⁵⁰ The feeling of commiseration is the beginning of jen, and all men have this basic feeling.⁵¹ Another is the innate knowledge of the good (*liang chih*), and an innate ability to do the good (*liang neng*); "children carried in the arms all know how to love their parents . . . they all know how to respect their elder brothers."⁵² For Mencius, to talk of the nature of things is to reason from facts. "The fundamental

44. Mencius, VI, A, 11.

45. Mencius, IVA, 10.

46. Wing-tsit Chan, "Evolution of . . . Jen," p. 302.

47. Mencius, IA, 7.

48. Mencius, VIIB, 16.

49. *The Doctrine of the Mean*, chap. 20.

50. Mencius, IIA, 6.

51. Mencius, VIA, 6; IIA, 6.

52. Mencius, VIIA, 15.

principle (of reasoning from facts is to follow) their natural tendencies"⁵³

But what is "nature" for Mencius of which jen is a constituent? The Chinese character for nature, *hsing*, is written with the character *hsin*, meaning "heart" at the left, and the character *sheng*, meaning "life," or "offspring." Mencius goes beyond his opponent Kao Tzu's understanding of nature as simply "what is inborn."⁵⁴ For Mencius, nature is "what Heaven has endowed,"⁵⁵ such that "he who exerts his mind (heart) to the utmost knows his nature. He who knows his nature knows Heaven. To preserve one's mind (heart) and to nourish one's nature is the way to serve Heaven."⁵⁶ The man of jen by loving his family and extending that love to others would know his nature, know and serve Heaven, cultivate the nobility of Heaven. In Mencius, we detect a close affinity of man and Heaven through love and the other virtues. In fact, Mencius says,

When Heaven is about to confer a great responsibility on any man, it will exercise his mind (heart) with suffering, subject his sinews and bones to hard work, expose his body to hunger, put him to poverty, place obstacles in the path of his deeds, so as to stimulate his mind (heart), harden his nature and improve wherever he is incompetent.⁵⁷

JEN IN CHU HSI AND WANG YANG-MING

Chu Hsi (1130-1200) is considered the greatest synthesizer in the history of Confucian philosophy. After Mencius, the concept of jen evolved to include the influences of Taoism and Buddhism. Chu Hsi's philosophy combines the insights of Chou Tun-i (1017-73), Chang Tsai (1020-77), Chang Hao (1032-85) and his brother Ch'eng I (1033-1107). His greatest achievement, of course, lies in grouping and interpreting the *Analects*, the *Book of Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean* as the *Four Books* which became the basis of the civil service examinations from 1313 to 1905.⁵⁸ It is therefore in Chu Hsi that we find

53. Mencius, IVB, 26.

54. Mencius, VIA, 3.

55. Mencius, VIA, 15.

56. Mencius, VIIA, 1.

57. Mencius, VIB, 15.

58. Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book*, p. 589.

a synthesis of the Neo-Confucian understanding of jen.

The classic saying of Chu Hsi on jen is his interpretation of Chang Tsai's short essay, the *Western Inscription*:

There is nothing in the entire realm of creatures that does not regard Heaven as the father and Earth as the mother. This means that the principle is one . . . Each regards his parents as his own parents and his son as his own son. This being the case, how can principle not be manifested as many? . . . When the intense affection for parents is extended to broaden the impartiality that knows no ego, and when sincerity in serving one's parents leads to the understanding of the way to serve Heaven, then everywhere there is the operation that the principle is one but its manifestations are many.⁵⁹

"The principle (li), is one but its manifestations are many" becomes the metaphysical basis of jen in Chu Hsi's philosophy. Chu Hsi identifies jen with nature and principle, and love as its function. As principle and nature, it is one, but as function, it is many. Chu Hsi says,

Principle is one but its functions differentiate into the many. There are distinctions in love. It is propriety that regulates differentiations and distinctions and it is righteousness that causes all applications to be proper. . . .⁶⁰

Although love's manifestations are many, they are all one because they partake of one principle, the principle of Heaven and Earth. Now, the Principle of Heaven and Earth is identical with the Mind of Heaven and Earth,⁶¹ and the mind of Heaven and Earth is to produce things.⁶² Jen being the Mind of Heaven and Earth, it follows that jen is also the process of production and reproduction. How can jen be said to produce and reproduce? Chu Hsi says,

The mind of Heaven and Earth is to produce things. In the production of man and things, they receive the mind of Heaven and Earth as their mind. Therefore, with reference to the character of the mind, although it em-

59. Ibid., pp. 494-500.

60. *Chu Tzu ch'uan-shu*, 47/33 in Wing-tsit Chan, "Evolution of . . . Jen," p. 316.

61. *Chu Tzu ch'uan-shu*, 49: 23a, quoted in Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book*, p. 642.

62. Chu Hsi, "Treatise of Jen," in Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book*, p. 593.

braces and penetrates all and leaves nothing to be desired, nevertheless, one word will cover all, namely, *jen* In discussing the excellence of man's mind, it is said, "*Jen* is man's mind! In man, it is the mind to love people gently and to benefit things."⁶³

In emphasizing this creative character of *jen* as the process of production and reproduction, Chu Hsi rejects the interpretation of *jen* as impartiality by Chou Tun-i (1017-73) and *jen* as consciousness by Hsieh Liang-tso (1050-1103).⁶⁴ Impartiality and consciousness connote passivity, whereas *jen* is activity. Impartiality "must be made man's substance before it becomes *jen*."⁶⁵

Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529), although an antagonist of Chu Hsi's philosophy with regards to the "investigation of things," extends this creative character of *jen* in his doctrine of "forming one body with the universe." Because of the characteristic of *jen* to grow and produce, the man of *jen* forms one body with the universe:

The great man regards Heaven and Earth and the myriad things as one body That the great man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the humane nature of his mind that he does so. . . . Therefore when he sees a child about to fall into a well, he cannot help a feeling of alarm and commiseration. This shows that his humanity forms one body with the child. . . when he sees tiles and stones shattered and crushed, he cannot help a feeling of regret. This shows that his humanity forms one body with tiles and stones. This means that even the mind of the small man necessarily has the humanity that forms one body with all.⁶⁶

For Wang Yang-ming, this creativity of *jen* is gradual.

The process is like that of a tree which originally appears as a shoot . . . the trunk follows . . . and from the trunk converges the twigs and branches. Below the shoot, moreover, must be a root which can grow. In the root is life. Without the root the tree would die. Love between parents and chil-

63. Ibid., pp. 593-95.

64. Wing tsit Chan, "Western Interpretations of *Jen*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 2 (1975): 116-17.

65. *Chu Tzu, ch'uan-shu*, 47: 196-20a in Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book*, p. 633.

66. Wang Yang Ming, "Inquiry on the Great Learning" in *Instructions for Practical Living*, trans. Wing-tsit Chan (New York: Columbia, 1963), p. 272.

dren, and mutual regard between brothers are the first beginning of humanity, and are analogous to the young shoots of the vegetable world. These first awakenings of love will later extend to embrace the love of all one's fellow creatures, who are, as it were, the twigs and branches.⁶⁷

To summarize, the Neo-Confucian understanding of jen is the metaphysics of jen: jen taken as nature of mind and principle of love, the process of production and reproduction, as impartiality in man's extension of love, and as forming one body with the universe.

CHRISTIAN LOVE OR CHARITY (AGAPE) IN LI MA-DOU

The *Book of 25 Paragraphs*,⁶⁸ written by Li Ma-dou from 1599 to 1604 and published in 1605 through the help and encouragement of his two literati friends, Feng Ying-ching and Hsu Kuang-ch'i, deals with the practice of virtue. It proved to be so popular that it was reprinted three times, to the surprise of Ricci himself. Ricci describes his work in this treatise in a letter to a friend in Rome: I do "nothing but speak of virtue and of living well, with a great interest as a natural philosopher, but [also] as a Christian, without refuting any sect."⁶⁹

Paragraph 13 speaks of jen:

The essence of *jen* consists in honoring and loving the Sovereign Ruler, who is the source of all created things and the real master of all things. The benevolent man (man of *jen*) believes (*hsin*) that the Sovereign Ruler really exists. He also believes that He is most wise and that there is not the slightest trace of error in Him. Therefore he obeys all His ordinances without waiting to be forced. To know how to obey and carry out the commandments of the Sovereign Ruler, this is called wisdom (*ch'ih*). . . . if you think you can disobey the ordinances of the Sovereign Ruler and even use them against Him when you get something you do not want or do not get something you want, then you lack the essence of jen For the sake of gaining an external thing people lose their intrinsic worth,

67. Wang Yang-ming, *Instructions for Practical Living*, sec. 93.

68. The English translation used here is of B. Christopher A. Spalatin, S.J., in his *Matteo Ricci's Use of Epictetus* (Korea: Waegwan, 1975), pp. 26-50.

69. Tacchi Venturi, *Opere Storiche del P. Matteo Ricci*, 2 vols. (Macerata; Filippo Giorgetti, 1913), 2:257, quoted by Spalatin, *ibid.*, p.15.

that is their *jen*. On the other hand, the superior man only considers what depends on himself according to which he discerns what is true glory and humiliation, true fortune and misfortune, while being detached from external things. He decides to acquire and avoid things according to the criterion of justice (*i*, righteousness). Even in the midst of difficulty he serves the Lord on high and commits himself to His principle of perfect propriety (*li*) without even a moment's hesitation.⁷⁰

Writing as a "natural philosopher, but as a Christian," Li Ma-dou adapts *jen* to speak of Christian love. He brings out several interrelated points in this paragraph: the essence of love is the love of God, the Sovereign Ruler (*Shang Ti*); love is the principal virtue that includes wisdom, justice and propriety; love is man's intrinsic worth and perfection. Love is essentially the love of God, but loving God is knowing and doing His will (wisdom), doing what is right and proper. All this means that the love of God necessarily includes the love of fellowman. And this is internal in man, the way he is to become worthy of being man. This is reiterated in Li Ma-dou's other work, *The True Idea of God*, which uses the style of a dialogue between a Chinese intellectual and a Western scholar (Ricci):

The Chinese intellectual: "If it is true [that] self-perfection is for God, not for myself, then isn't it an external learning only?"

The Western scholar: "Is there any self-perfection which is not for one-self? Who acts for God, acts for his own perfection. When Confucius preached charity, he meant loving others by it. I should say that a charitable man is someone who loves God and loves men at the same time. That is to say he is someone who respectfully loves his root without neglecting the branches. Thus, how can we call such virtue an external learning only? Compared with the relationship between God and men, even the intimate relationship between a parent and his/her child can be regarded as external only. As God is within all beings, He should never be considered as an outsider. For him who has a higher aim in life, more noble will be his learning. If an intellectual confines the aim of his life within himself, how can his life reach a higher meaning? How can we say it is of little value? Desire for self-perfection is embedded in our human nature. Therefore, it cannot

70. Ibid., pp. 36-39.

be destroyed. It is close to the Confucian morality in your Chinese classics.⁷¹

Man's self-perfection lies in the love of God which necessarily includes the love of fellowman and living the virtuous life. Christian love means not wanting to be rich, noble or highly esteemed, but "putting aside all the things which are not in your power," doing quietly what you hold yourself responsible for.⁷² Christian love is impartial "towards those you serve, the same toward your wife, toward power, and toward wealth."⁷³ Desire for external things and people and even for learning must be subordinated to the love of God which is the root.

Loving God is obeying His ordinances.⁷⁴ One of the first translations that Li Ma-dou did was the Ten Commandments. The fourth Commandment says, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Li Ma-dou admits that one must begin at home by loving one's parents and brothers (and sisters). Paragraph 14 says that "even if the father and elder brother are evil and wish to harm the son or younger brother, the victim must not hate them in response . . . the Creator has ordained that each man be submissive to his father and older brother. We are not allowed to choose a good or bad father or brother."

But familial love is not enough. Christian love demands love of neighbor, and neighbor is the one in need and includes one's enemies. Paragraph 23 says that "when you encounter a wicked or perverted man, you should say to yourself: 'He thinks that it is necessary for him to act in this way.' Thus you will not be shocked, and you will be mild in temper towards him who reviles you." But to love one's enemy is to forgive him.

Li Ma-dou and the other Jesuit Fathers did not just preach this love of one's neighbor. They bore witness to the truth of this love. Fr. Trigault's account of the early mission, based on Li Ma-dou's journals, provides us with many instances of Christian love.

Their first convert was a man infected with an incurable disease and abandoned in a nearby field by his parents. Ricci and Ruggieri

71. *The True Idea of God*, 7 quoted by John Tong, "Ricci's Contribution to China, A Reflection on the Insights of Two Modern Chinese Scholars," *Tripod* 12 (1982): 114.

72. *Book of 25 Paragraphs*, par. 16.

73. *Ibid.*, par. 12.

74. *Ibid.*, par. 13.

nursed him and later asked him "whether he would accept Christian teaching. . . . He made a gesture of assent and murmured, 'If it teaches you to treat me like this, it must surely be true'." ⁷⁵ In Shiuhing or Chao-ch'ing, Ricci was falsely accused of detaining a boy but was cleared of the charge. The accuser according to Chinese law was sentenced to cruel beating. Ricci knelt before the governor, begging for pardon and remission of the culprit's punishment. ⁷⁶ And again, a certain Martin stole a glass prism and fooled two converts, was caught, punished, and thrown into irons after being beaten. Deserted by his friends and relatives, Ricci took care of him until he died of his wounds. ⁷⁷ In Shao-chou, the parents of the stone throwers interceded with Ricci to appeal to the governor to pardon their sons. "This he did very willingly as a religious, and also to show this heathen people . . . that the Christian does not return evil for evil, and that his law teaches him, if need be, to help and to aid even those who do him injury." ⁷⁸ And again, when the Father was attacked by robbers and the robbers were apprehended, Ricci "instead of seeking vengeance for the affront . . . succeeded in liberating his assailants from a sentence to the galleys and from perpetual servitude." ⁷⁹

This love for one's enemies was one obstacle to Pheu's (P'eng) conversion. He could not understand how Divine Providence could allow good men to suffer from their enemies. His Christian friend, Luke, "explained that even Confucius, the Prince of philosophers, could not escape the criticism of his enemies, and he reminded his friend that their own Chinese philosophers (Mencius) teach that God first tries a man by various tests before selecting him to do great things." ⁸⁰

When Li Ma-dou became known in China as the "wise man from the West," he had to entertain many visitors and return many visits of the literati (as was the custom then). This was especially the case during the doctoral examinations in Peking when about 3,000 intellectuals came to the capital. Li Ma-dou, however, did not limit his association with the intellectual elite, attending ban-

75. Vincent Cronin, *The Wise Man From the West* (New York: D. P. Dutton and Co., (1955), p. 69; Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610* (New York: Random House), pp. 156-57.

76. Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 164.

77. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-89.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 238-39.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 413.

quets. The mission house in Peking "was open to everyone, even to the most lowly In truth it was noticed by Ricci's companions that no matter how busy he happened to be, in the midst of so many occupations, Father Matthew never sent away a poor man. Instead, and as though he had planned it beforehand, he would detain him for a long time in pleasant conversation."⁸¹ Even if "their visits interrupted more serious business, he smiled on them as he did on the most important people who were accustomed to call on him. In fact, it was his constant practice to give more time and more attention to the lowly among his converts."⁸²

This witnessing of love for neighbor of Li Ma-dou influenced the early Chinese Christian community. A number of them replaced the elaborate expensive funeral rites with giving alms to the poor.⁸³ Once, the house of a neophyte was burned down. His neighbors did not help because they resented his giving up the worship of idols. When the nearby neophytes learned of this misfortune, they came with money, materials and labor to rebuild the house so that it turned out better than the previous one.⁸⁴ Trigault's description of the life of the women converts reminds us of the early Christians in the Acts.⁸⁵

. . . these women would come together at times to talk over their Catholic religion, and when they heard of a neighbor, who was also a Christian, they invited her to join their company. They were not disturbed by the fact that the neighbor belonged to a lower class of people, with whom the Chinese aristocracy was not accustomed to mingle. In fact they considered even the peasant women from the villages their equals by the common bond of religion, and that they were no less noble because of their position in life. They invited them to their homes, to their meetings and to meals, nor did anyone criticize them for it. On the contrary, they were admired for their Christian charity."⁸⁶

When Li Ma-dou was dying in May, 1610, "some of the converts prayed that God might take some years off their own lives and prolong the life of their common father."⁸⁷

81. Ibid., p. 393.

82. Ibid., p. 561.

83. Ibid., p. 159.

84. Ibid., pp. 413-14.

85. Acts, 2:42-47.

86. Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 412.

87. Ibid., p. 562.

The most notable of all the converts, of course, was Hsu Kuang-ch'i, whose Christian name was Paul. He was well versed in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and introduced them among the Chinese. Once he invited Fr. Cattaneo to Shanghai during his period of mourning. Fr. Cattaneo, after three days in his house, reminded him that staying in his house would not be best for the advancement of faith because he would only meet distinguished people. Hsu gave the father a new house.⁸⁸ A literati, Hsu was always the central figure at special masses such as the Christmas Eve mass. "He was so attentive to the converts of the lower social classes, that he always invited some of them to sit with him; whereas on state occasions, they had so much respect for the dignity of his high position, that they would scarcely dare to look at him."⁸⁹

To love one's neighbor, especially one's enemy, entails humility. Li Ma-dou tells us in paragraph 9 not to be arrogant and proud of some advantage, and in paragraph 24, he says, "the superior man does not boast about himself; for he who boasts about himself is not worth much. In the midst of other literati he speaks little about the study of virtue but strives rather to put it into practice . . . in the practice of virtue, you should give priority to no one. The more humble a man is, the more he advances." In the practice of love, one must prepare himself from the beginning to be ridiculed.⁹⁰ "When a superior man encounters evil, he will certainly respond with goodness. When he encounters labor, he will respond with endurance. When he meets corruption, he will confront it with integrity. When there are abusive words, he will answer with patience."⁹¹ Li Ma-dou cites the example of St. Francis of Assisi:

Francis, a saint from the western world, always said of himself: "I am the worst sinner in all the world." But his disciples doubted this and said to him: "You always speak in such a false way. Even the superior man cannot be perfect in all things to the very last detail. Do you speak falsely like this just to humiliate yourself? There are murderers, thieves, and lustful men in the world. Such a man you certainly are not. How then can you call yourself the worst sinner?" Francis answered: "I do not speak in this

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 551-52.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 553.

90. *Book of 25 Paragraphs*, par. 8.

91. *Ibid.*, par. 11.

way for the sake of humility but what I say is true. If those murderers, thieves and lustful men had received the same grace from the Lord of Heaven as I have and if they had been trained and educated as I have been, then certainly their virtue would be greater than mine. Therefore will not my evil be greater than theirs?"⁹²

The summation and exemplar of Christian love is Christ's love, the incarnation of God's love. And the substance and symbol of the magnanimity of this love is the cross. Trigault tells us that the Chinese at this time "had no concept of such a thing as a cross. In fact there was no special word in their language to express the idea, and so our Father had to give them a Chinese word for it. In doing so they chose the Chinese character expressing the number ten, which is written in the form of a cross thus †."⁹³ When the eunuch Ma-t'ang confiscated Li Ma-dou's gifts to the emperor and saw the crucifix, he had to explain to him that "the form of the cross was the image of the holiest of men, according to the Christian belief, who chose that kind of terrible death for the salvation of souls."⁹⁴

JEN AND CHRISTIAN LOVE: PARALLELS AND DIVERGENCES

Li Ma-dou admired Confucius for he "noted in the Canonical Books many passages which are favorable to the things of the faith"⁹⁵ and "moral doctrines which for the most part did not conflict with Christian moral teaching."⁹⁶ Trigault speaks of the teachings of the Confucian academy as "far from being contrary to Christian principles . . . but could derive great benefit from Christianity and might be developed and perfected by it."⁹⁷

Where do jen and Christian love or agape converge?

For one thing, both are synonymous in being a principal and universal virtue that embraces all other virtues. For Confucius, jen is *the* virtue, and for Christians, the greatest is love.⁹⁸ Jen is the

92. Ibid., par. 5.

93. Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 183.

94. Ibid., p. 365.

95. Letters, no. 22 (1594) quoted by Columba Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross* (New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1954), p. 97.

96. George H. Dunne, S.J., *Generation of Giants* (Notre Dame Press, 1955), p. 22.

97. Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 162.

98. 1 Cor. 13:13.

norm for establishing an ideal social order, just as the kingdom of God is the kingdom of love.⁹⁹ Both affirm the importance of beginning the practice of love in the family, although by nature, it should extend to all. Jen and Christian love acknowledge the harmony of self-perfection and service to others: chung and shu imply each other, just as to love one's neighbor is to love him as oneself.

Where do jen and agape diverge?

At first glance, *Analects* XIV, 36 may seem to provide us with a contrast. Confucius says, repay virtue with virtue, and hatred with uprightness. Christian love, on the other hand, includes love of enemies.¹⁰⁰ But on deeper reflection, they do not contradict each other. Confucius is not saying that one should hate his enemy but that one should be upright, should hold on to what is right — the impartiality of justice, in other words. Christian love also presupposes justice but not of the human kind, "an eye for an eye." It is rather the justice of God which does not take revenge, which includes forgiveness of sins, going beyond reason, taking the first step towards reconciliation — like the Father of the Prodigal Son.

Jen is based on human nature, on man's inherent ability to love and be loved. Christian love, on the other hand, is based on God's love, God's love for man.¹⁰¹ True, Mencius is quite near to reaching the love of God when he speaks of nature as endowed by Heaven, of jen as knowing Heaven, of Heaven as putting the sage to trial, but perhaps his emphasis on the original goodness of human nature blocks him from comprehending the magnanimity of God's love, of God becoming man to redeem man from sin. Li Ma-dou as a Christian also accepts Mencius' doctrine of the goodness of human nature — after all, God created man good —but he is also aware of man's concupiscence, of his frailty.¹⁰² Christian love, therefore, centers on the manifestation of God's love for man in Jesus. Christ's love, embodied in his teachings and way of life, is the model of man's love. This love is a total personal giving of self to others, especially to the poor, and to friend and foe alike.

99. Mt. 25:31-46.

100. Mt. 5: 43-45.

101. Julia Ching, "Confucianism, a Philosophy of Man," in *China and Christianity, Historical and Future Encounters*, ed. James D. Whitehead, Yu-ming Shaw, N.J. Givernit (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 17.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Christ teaches us to love our enemy, to forgive the offender seventy-times seven, for God is kind to both evil and good and forgives the repentant sinner. This is unthinkable in Confucian jen, for jen is to love men, not to love God, and Heaven in its majesty is not conceived as loving individual men. This was what prevented some Chinese literati like Yeh Hsiang-tao from becoming Christians.¹⁰³ And since jen always takes into account li, propriety, and i, righteousness, the duty rendered to others is performed according to class distinctions, through the agency of a benevolent bureaucracy, with emphasis on the obligations of the inferior toward the superior rather than those of the superior to the inferior.¹⁰⁴

Far from contradicting jen, Christian love extends and completes it. And Li Ma-dou was aware of this, though perhaps gradually. Hsu Kuang-ch'i perceives this compatibility and development in his preface to Li Chih-tsao's *T'ien-chu Shih-i* (*Exposition of the Real Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*):

When Confucius discussed the question of personal cultivation, he began with filial devotion to parents, and extended his discourse to knowledge of heaven. Mencius completed this Confucian concept. To serve one's parents and to work for heaven are the same, though heaven is the root of everything When the philosopher Chu Hsi explained the word *ti* in the *Book of Changes*, he said it meant 'Lord of Heaven.' Thus the concept 'Lord of Heaven' is not something begun by Li Ma-dou. The popular idea is that heaven is too remote to be the subject of intelligent discussion, and since the arrival of Buddhism in China, people have forgotten to show filial piety to their parents. The Confucianists knew much about the Decree of Heaven, Heavenly Reason and the *Tao* of Heaven, and yet they were converted to Buddhism. . . . The learning of Li Ma-dou is based upon the doctrine of service to Heaven. He said: 'Everyone knows that one must serve one's parents; but no one knows that the Lord of Heaven is the great parent. Everyone knows that the sovereign of a country is the legitimate ruler but no one knows that the Lord of Heaven is the Supreme Ruler of the whole world. Without serving parents one cannot be a son; without obeying the government one cannot be an official; without the Lord of Heaven one cannot be a man.'¹⁰⁵

103. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co., 1970), p. 38; Dunne, *Generation of Giants*, p. 113.

104. Latourette, *A History*, pp. 38-39. Also, Ching, "Confucianism," pp. 26ff.

105. Quoted by Carson Chang, *Development of Neo-Confucian Thought* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1962), p. 189-90.

What about the Neo-Confucian jen? It is said that when Ricci studied Neo-Confucianism, he remarked: "This is not Confucius!"¹⁰⁶ Li Ma-dou distinguished the doctrine of the classics from the interpretations given to the text by Chu Hsi's school commentators,¹⁰⁷ including perhaps that of Wang Yang-ming; he promoted the return to the original. What did Li Ma-dou find objectionable in the Neo-Confucian jen? Trigault tells us that the Neo-Confucian doctrine commonly held among the literati asserts that "the entire universe is one in a continuous body, a corpus continuum as it were, together with heaven and earth, men and beasts, trees and plants, and the four elements, and that each individual thing is a member of this body. From this unity of substance they reason to the love that should unite the individual constituents and also that man can become like unto God because he is created one with God."¹⁰⁸ To Li Ma-dou this is a deterioration of Confucianism, reducing it to materialism.

We may surmise that perhaps due to the influence of the Buddhist sects at that time, this materialism or pantheism was in practice actually held by the literati. And yet, if we read Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-ming, jen is metaphysical, the process of production and reproduction, the principle of love, a cosmic love, the creative act of forming one body with the universe. Is this not similar to the Christian love which unites all with the Mystical Body of Christ, or of St. Paul's love "which binds all things together in perfect unity?"¹⁰⁹ Is not the Neo-Confucian jen similar to the concept of a cosmic love of another Jesuit philosopher-scientist in our time who lived many years in China, Teilhard de Chardin? Teilhard speaks of God revealing Himself everywhere as a universal milieu and of Christian love as the hidden energy of the evolution of hominization and convergence.¹¹⁰ And yet, for Teilhard this necessitates the Cross. "Jesus on the Cross is both the symbol and the reality of the immense labour of the centuries which has, little by little, raised up the created spirit and brought it back to the

106. H. G. Creel, *Confucius: The Man and the Myth* (New York: John Day, 1949), p. 258.

107. Dunne, *Generation of Giants*, p. 32.

108. Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 157.

109. Col. 3: 14; 1Cor 12: 12-31.

110. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (London: Fontana, 1957), and *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper, 1959), p. 264.

depths of the divine milieu. He represents (and in a true sense, He is) creation. . ."¹¹¹

CONCLUSION

Much has been said of Ricci's unique approach to evangelization; adaptation and inculturation. By dealing with Confucian jen and Christian love as introduced by Li Ma-dou, we have examined one important instance of his contribution. Li Ma-dou's example shows that the supernatural presupposes the natural, the natural needs the perfection of the supernatural. His way is a proof that the Christian message of love is for all peoples of all cultures. His is an appeal for unity, for a love that binds. This is a testimony of what the late Fr. de la Costa once said:

For Christ faced East as well as West. He has a message of salvation for Asia no less than Europe. Nor need we renounce our Asian origins in order to stand beneath the Cross. It has always seemed to me no small proof of the reality of Christian doctrine that the deepest and most enduring aspirations of Asia find in it not only an echo, not only a reflection, but fulfillment.¹¹²

111. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, p. 103.

112. H. de la Costa, S.J., "The Eastern Face of Christ," *Asia and the Philippines* (Manila: Solidaridad, 1967), p. 168.

Li Ma-dou	利瑪竇	Matteo Ricci	T'ien	天	God or Heaven
jen	仁	benevolence, love . . .	T'ien Ming	天命	Mandate of Heaven
i	義	righteousness	jen	人	man
chih	智	wisdom	liang chi	良知	innate knowledge of the good
li	禮	propriety	liang neng	良能	innate ability to do good
erh	二	two	hsing	性	nature
ai	愛	love	hsin	心	heart
ch'in	親	affection	sheng	生	life or offspring
chung	忠	conscientiousness	li	理	principle
shu	恕	altruism	hsin	信	believe or faith
hsin	心	heart, mind	shang ti	上帝	Lord of High
ju	如	just as		天主實義	The True Idea of God
chung	中	center, middle			