

Salvation or Condemnation? Vincentius Mascarell's "Apologia" in the Chinese Rites Controversy (1701)

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Abstract: The Mandate of the Vicar Apostolic Charles Maigrot (1655 – 1730) of 1693 had started anew the debate about the meaning of the Chinese rites and terms. The case was brought to Holy Office in Rome. In 1700 several propositions taken from books written on Chinese culture by the two Jesuits Louis Le Comte and Charles Le Gobien were submitted to the Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne in Paris, which condemned several propositions of the books. This caused a huge public debate about Chinese religion and rites among scholars and theologians in Europe. One of the defenders of the Jesuits accommodation policy in China was the Spanish Jesuit Vincentius Mascarell (1660 – 1730) professor for Holy Scripture, biblical chronology and dogmatic in Salamanca and Valladolid. In his "Apologia historico-dogmatica pro primævi veri Dei cultus apud Sinas perennitate & juxta legem naturæ religiose observantia, ab æonymo Pinciano Professore excusata" he tried to support his confreres' attitude towards Chinese chronology and the possibility that already the Chinese of antiquity had known about the true God, a knowledge they had kept for many centuries. By means of his immense erudition concerning church fathers and contemporary theologians Mascarell constructed an ample defense of the condemned propositions, which, however, was never printed.

Key words: Chinese Rites Controversy, Vincentius Mascarell SJ, Chinese chronology, condemnation by the Sorbonne, salvation of pagans

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1. Introduction

The history of the Chinese Rites Controversy is comparably well known, at least on the whole.^① Several topics are covered, namely accommodation of the Jesuits, meaning of the rites for Confucius and the ancestors, the appropriate Chinese term for God, the meaning of Chinese philosophy and ethics. In the 17th century the controversy started inside the Society of Jesus about the right terms for the Christian God and spiritual/religious names, then the question whether the practical rites were superstitious or not was discussed, and finally towards the end of the century everything starting anew with Charles Maigrot's MFP (1652 – 1730) "Mandatum seu Edictum" of March 26, 1693. The Mandate was sent to Europe, where it not only caused several condemnations of the

① For a short overview HCC 1, 680 – 688. The following abbreviations are used; BM = Robert Streit (ed.), *Bibliotheca Missionum* 1, 5, 7 (Freiburg 1929 – 32). HCC 1 = Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*. Volume One: 635 – 1800. (Handbook of Oriental Studies, section 4; China 15/1. Handbuch der Orientalistik, Abt. 4; China 15) (Leiden, Boston, Köln 2001). Migne: PL, and Migne: PG = Jacques Paul Migne: (ed.), *Patrologia Latina*..., 217 vols. (Paris 1844 – 1855), and Migne: *Patrologia Graeca*..., 161 vols. (Paris 1857 – 1866). The Bible editions used are the *Biblia Sacra vulgata editio* (Cabanus Apprippinus 1679) and the so-called King – James – Bible (Oxford 1859). For biographies of theologians the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 2nd edition was used (Freiburg 1986).

Rites (1704, 1710, 1715 and 1742), but also the delegation of the papal Legate Charles – Thomas Maillard de Tournon (1668 – 1710) to China from 1705 until 1710.^② The most important phase of the whole controversy, however, took place in Europe between 1700 and 1710, then the discussion was more or less stopped by Clement XI who forbade the publication of books and pamphlets about the Chinese rites without explicit permission.^③ The discussion was not only of interest to the theologians and missionaries directly involved in the affair, but also to the educated people in Europe, who informed themselves and who often sided with one party or with the other. Well – known in this respect is the Protestant philosopher and universal genius Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646 – 1716). His correspondents, some of them Jesuits in China, supplied him with information and material. His appellation for accommodation to the Chinese culture, however, remained unheard in Rome.^④

The fact that the learned Europe had become the centre of the controversy caused also a shift of the discussed question. It turned to a question which was nearly as old as Christianity, namely to that of the salvation of the infidels, “*salus paganorum*”. There were always two lines within the Church(es): part of the theologians were convinced that everybody outside the church was condemned, and in this case “outside” also meant before the time of the church. Other theologians had a far more merciful attitude: by God’s grace it is possible that also people were saved who did not belong to the Jews or to the Catholic Church, if they believed in God and lived a life of high ethics. From this the following question emerged: is it possible that non – Christian peoples had and have an idea about the one true God? Would this idea or belief be sufficient for them to be saved by God? Should and could missionaries use the people’s own ideas, rituals and rites, to lead them to the Gospel? Was it permitted to integrate the original religious belief of peoples into Christianity, or was it necessary to make a new beginning, a “*tabula rasa*” and tell people that all of their ancestors were condemned without their own fault? Such questions were discussed in Europe in the second half of the 17th century, for example, between Jansenists and the more moderate Jesuits with respect to China. China represented a nation as numerous and old as none of the European nations, that practiced since thousands of years a religion free of superstition and that had a high moral which resembled the Christian moral, but that had no part of the revelation given to Moses, and which had nothing heard of Christianity. Could such a nation be considered lost or to have been saved?^⑤ The place of the fiercest controversy about this question became the theological faculty of the Sorbonne in Paris, where some books written by Jesuits on the topic of Chinese religion were submitted. Some sentences of these books were taken out of their context and condemned.

2. The law of nature (“*lex naturæ*”)

Christianity since its beginnings became more and more a religion of a centrifugal movement. From the revelation in the Old Testament given to the chosen people of the Jews that a Messiah would be sent, this revelation was interpreted as being given to the “new” chosen people of the Christians, who were considered as the spiritual descendants of the Jews, the Judeo – Christians.

② S. Francis A. Rouleau, “Maillard de Tournon, Papal Legate at the Court of Peking, The First Imperial Audience (31 December 1705)”, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 31 (1962), 261 – 323.

③ S. BM 7, # 2609.

④ Rita Wohlschlag (ed.), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Der Briefwechsel mit den Jesuiten in China (1689 – 1714)*. Französisch/Lateinisch – Deutsch. Textherstellung und Übersetzung von Malte Ludolf Balin (Hamburg 2006); Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Der Briefwechsel mit Bartholomäus Des Bosses* (Hamburg 2007).

⑤ Virgile Pinot, *La Chine et la formation de l'esprit philosophique en France 1640 – 1740* (Paris 1937), 104

The Apostle Paul expanded this sphere of the chosen people to demonstrate God's all-embracing will for the salvation of all, i. e. the true meaning of "catholic". In his first letter to the Corinthians 10:32; in the letter to the Galatians 3:28, and Galatians 5:6 Paul developed a scheme of three phases of the world history fitting for all human beings and their religions, namely the "*lex naturalis*" (or *lex naturæ*), the "*lex mosaicæ*", and the "*lex evangelicæ*".⁶⁶ Christianity, also called "law of grace" (*lex gratiæ*) is, of course, the highest level, whereas the "law of Moses", Jewry, is inferior, however, leads to the law of grace. The idea of the "law of nature" is here not to be seen in a juridical meaning, but as a natural theology and moral as described in the letter to the Romans 1:20; "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse,"⁶⁷ and Romans 2:14; "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves."⁶⁸ Without special revelation this law as expression of the "*lex aeterna*" (eternal law) is written into the heart by God. The "*lex naturalis*" existed besides the law of Moses, which was revealed in history and proclaimed outside, i. e. in the written form. With the help of the "inner" law the heathens learned the essential and most important things of the externally positive law.⁶⁹

Many theologians were convinced that the pagans could be saved before or outside the line of revelation if they did by "natural impulse" what was written in their heart.⁷⁰ This doctrine was valid from the church fathers until the end of the 19th century.⁷¹ Defenders of this idea of a law of nature were, for example, Irenaeus of Lyon (died ca. 202),⁷² John Chrysostom (347–407) who clearly distinguished between pagans and idolaters,⁷³ Augustine of Hippo (354–430), who described the doctrine of the three laws,⁷⁴ and mentioned the "Golden Rule".⁷⁵ Jesus himself made the connection between the law of nature, the law of Moses and Christianity: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Mt 5:17).⁷⁶ This law of nature outlived in Augustine's opinion all times and remained valid in the heart of pious people, even after the law of Moses had been written down.⁷⁷ Thomas Aquinas OP (c. 1225–1274) thought that the natural perception of God was validated by the supernatural grace.⁷⁸ A nice example is given by Peter Abelard (1079–1142) in his *Collationes sive Dialogus inter Philosophum, Iudaeum et Christianum*, where representatives of the three laws are discussing. The philosopher is a

⁶⁶ Cf. Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und die Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Leipzig 1924), 259–263.

⁶⁷ "Invisibilia enim ejus spissa, à creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur; sempiterna quoque ejus virtus, & divinitas: ita ut sint inexcusabiles."

⁶⁸ "Cum enim Genes, quae legem non habent, naturaliter ea, quae legis sunt, faciunt, ejusmodi legem non habentes, ipsi sibi sunt lex; qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis, testimonium reddent illis conscientia ipsorum. . . ."

⁶⁹ "Participatio legis aeternae, secundum quam homines bonum et malum discernunt." *Kirchen-Lexikon* 7 (1851), 485f.

⁷⁰ Johann Riedl, *Der Heil der Heiden nach R 2*, 14–16, 26–27 (Münch 1965).

⁷¹ Encyclica "Libertas praesentissimum", dated 20 of June 1888, cf. Henricus Denzinger, Adolphus Schönmelzer (ed.), *Enchiridion symbolarum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Freiburg 1976) # 3747, cf. 3956.

⁷² Irenaeus of Lyon, *Adversus Haereses* IV XIII, 1, quoted after Henry Bettenson (ed.), *The Early Christian Fathers* (London 1982), 101.

⁷³ Johannes Chrysostomus, *Hom. 5 in cap. 2 Epist. ad Romanos* (Migne, PG 40, t. IX, col. 426).

⁷⁴ Augustinus Liber 19 contra Faustum Manichaeum (Migne PL 42, col. 347f).

⁷⁵ *Enchiridion in Pauli 27*, quoted after *Kirchen-Lexikon* 7 (1851), 48f.

⁷⁶ S. Augustinus, *Liber 19 contra Faustum Manichaeum* (Migne: PL 8, ff. 347f).

⁷⁷ Augustinus, *Sermo LXXXI* (Migne PL 5), 500.

⁷⁸ *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 7 (Freiburg 1986), cols. 811–814.

“Gentile” with a natural ethical law, the two others have religious scriptures, but all three of them are devotees of the one God.¹⁹

The question about the law of nature became evident again in the early modern times in the 16th and 17th centuries, when new pagan empires were found with high ethics and morals or when, as in the case of China, such empires were rediscovered. An important factor for the impetus to mission work was the assumption that these peoples were lost, but this seemed to contradict God’s mercifulness. On the other hand non baptized human beings had not to be lost *co ipso*, if they had obeyed the “*lex naturalis*”. However, the “*lex naturae*” was only valid until the law of Christ” was not really spread, and Christianity was the surest way to the eternal salvation. The theological actuality of this doctrine is documented by several books in the 17th century, all published later than Matteo Ricci (1552 – 1610), as Francesco Collinus, *De animabus paganorum libri quinque* (Mediolani 1622),²⁰ Jacob de Boulduc, *De Ecclesia ante legem libri tres in quibus indicatur, quis a mundi primordio usque ad Moysen fuerit ordo Ecclesiae* (Paris 1630), his *De Ecclesia post legem liber analogicus mundum in lucem edidit, in quo ostenditur quanta sit similitudo inter legem naturalem & legem Evangelicam* (Paris 1630), Pascal Rupine de Sainte Marie, *Le Christianisme naissant dans la gentilité. Tome premier; De la foy des gentils de la Loy de Nature, ou sont exposez les mysteres de la Divinité selon la Doctrine des Patriarches, des Egyptiens, des Perses, des Druydes, & des Nations, tome second; De la Religion des Patriarches, and tome troisieme; Du salut des Gentils. Or il est traité de la sainteté des premiers Siecles, de l’Origine des Empires, de la vertu des plus grands Princes, & de la Sagesse des Philosophes* (Paris 1655 – 1659). Collinus extensively dealt with the prophets and saints of the law of nature of old times, but he was convinced that some of these “saints” despite of their position as prophets at the end were not saved at all. In this context the newly found peoples were not mentioned.²¹

Under the presumption that morally high peoples (to which the Chinese belonged according to most missionaries) were the offspring of Noah’s “good” son Shem (cf. Genesis 9:18 – 27) also the Chinese obtained their place in God’s concept of salvation. The primitive revelation given by God to the progenitors of the whole of mankind was valid from Adam until Noah. It contained the exact knowledge about God, but also the promise of the future redeemer. Besides that line of revelation Christian authors as Lactantius (240 – c. 320), Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 263 – 339), Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – c. 215) and Augustine assumed a special revelation outside the Old Testament, which God had given to the Gentiles. They had a kind of prophets, who in mysterious books, comparable to those of the Jews, had spoken about mysteries of the future redemption. In the early Renaissance this teaching became valid again by the books of the philosopher Gemistos Plethon (1360 – 1452), Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463 – 1494), and Marsilio Ficino (1433 – 1499).²²

Such prophets of the gentiles were the Sibyls, Hystaspes, the druids, several Greek philosophers as Plato and Sokrates, Hermes or Merkur Trismegistos, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Zoroaster.²³ Their theology is called “*Prisca Theologia*” or “*Philosophia perennis*”.²⁴ It was assumed that the

¹⁹ Alsted, *Geschicht eines Philosophen, eines Juden und eines Christen* (Frankfurt 1995), 81.

²⁰ *EW* 1, # 408.

²¹ Louis Capéron, *Le salut des Infidèles* (Toulon 1934), 286 – 295.

²² Claudia von Collani, “Das Problem des Heils der Heiden. Die Apologie des P. Vincentius Masorell S. J. aus dem Jahre 1701”, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 45 (1989), 107.

²³ D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology* (London 19/2), 11, 20.

²⁴ Charles R. Schmidt, “Perennial Philosophy: From Augustin Steuchus to Leibniz”, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 505–532; Walker, 1 – 5. S. a. Wilhelm Schmidt – Rippenstein, *Philosophia perennis. Historische Ursprünge abendländischer Spiritualität in Antike, Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Frankfurt 1998).

"*Prisci Theologi*" had written down their prophecies already before the birth of Christ, although in reality these books were written after Christ's birth. ☉ Actually, many church fathers dealt with this teaching. ☉

3. The "lex naturæ" in China

The Jesuits with their theology shaped by probabilism and a positive world view at least until the beginning of the 18th century, but also other missionaries assumed that the Chinese of antiquity were no abject pagans, sent without salvation to eternal condemnation, but that they had a monotheistic religion at least at their origin. Only later the high level of religion deteriorated to the atheism or agnosticism of the contemporary scholars during the late Ming – time, and the idolatry, i. e. Buddhism and Daoism of the common people. ☉ As for the antiquity the Jesuits were convinced that also the light of the law of nature must have been known by the Chinese, and that Confucianism was an expression of the "lex naturæ". ☉ In his so – called diary Matteo Ricci, the pioneer of the China mission, wrote: "*Di dove si può sperare dalla immensa bontà del Signore, che molti di quegli antichi si salvassero nella legge naturale, con quello agiuto particolare che suole Iddio porgere, a quegli che di sua parte fanno quanto possono per riceverlo.*" ("One can confidently hope that in the mercy of God, many of the ancient Chinese found salvation in the natural law, assisted as they must have been by that special help which, as the theologians teach, is denied to no one who does what he can towards salvation, according to the light of conscience.") ☉ Ricci and other missionaries after him believed to have found "traces" of this natural law in the books, in the moral and wisdom of the Chinese people. Only later the deterioration started with the arrival of Buddhism in China, and most Chinese became atheists or idolaters. ☉ According to the missionaries, only the classical "sect of the literati" continued to know a higher *Numen*, but this was more or less destroyed by the philosophy of the Neo – Confucians. ☉ God was known in China under the names *Tiandi* meaning "King of Heaven" 天 or Heaven – Earth 天地. In his famous Chinese book *Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義 Ricci wrote: "There are a few people in the world who, though good now, always behaved morally in the past, and who, though following the truth now, never flouted in the past. The truth I am speaking of is the truth which the Lord of Heaven has engraved on men's minds, and which He ordered sages and worthies to carve on tablets of stone and to record in books. Those who violate this truth are bound to offend the Sovereign on High." ☉

☉ The non – authenticity of the Sibyllin oracles was already proven by David Blondel (1590 – 1655) in his *Des Sibylles célèbres tant par l'antiquité payenne que par les Saints – Pères* (Chamoutin 1649). This doctrine of the "inspired" Sibylline books, however, survived until the 18th century. Cf. Capéon, 365 # 6.

☉ Von Collani, "Museum", 107. S. x. Schmidt – Riggmann.

☉ Prospero Della (ed.), *Fonti Ricciane, Storia dell'introduzione del Cristianesimo in Cina scritta da Matteo Ricci*, vol. 1 (Roma 1942) lib. 1, cap. X.

☉ Philippe Couplet, "Præfatus Declamatio", *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (Paris 2687), lxxx; Claudia von Collani, "Philippe Couplet's Missionary Attitude Towards the Chinese in *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*", in: Jozsum Heyndrickx (ed.), *Philippe Couplet, S. J. (1623 – 1692). The Man Who brought China to Europe* (Monumenta Sinica Monograph Series XXII) (Nottetal 1990), 45 – 48.

☉ *Fonti Ricciane*, vol. 1, lib. 1, cap. 10, § 170. The Italian diary was translated into Latin and published by Ricci's confessor Nicolas Trigault (1577 – 1628) as *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas suscepta* (Augsburg 1615). Cf. Louis J. Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matteo Ricci, 1583 – 1610* (New York 1953), 93.

☉ *Fonti Ricciane* I, # 176; cf. Gallagher, 93f.

☉ Gallagher, 9.

☉ Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (*Tian – zhu Shih – yi*), transl. and intr. by D. Lacrochère and P. Hu Kun – chen, S. J., ed. F. J. Malatesta (*Varietas Sinologicae – Nova Series* 72) (Taipei 1985) § 303; cf. *Fonti Ricciane* I, # 149 and 180.

This attitude towards China and its religion was continued by other Jesuits and missionaries in China. These missionaries believed that if they could tie up Christianity with the vestiges of the “*lex naturalis*”, as documented in the old books of China, the Chinese could easily be led to Christianity. ③ An important exponent of this Jesuit theology concerning China was the Flemish Jesuit Philippe Couplet (1623 - 1692) who edited the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (Paris 1687) and its ample introduction. ④ There were several possibilities how the Chinese could have gained their knowledge about God. They had the “law of nature”, but as descendants of Noah’s son Shem, they must also have received traces of the revelation about the true God. ⑤ This faith was preserved, and already emperor Huangdi 黄帝 (ca. 2697 BC) built a temple for Shangdi 上帝 600 years before Abraham. ⑥ The missionaries had only to study the old Chinese books to find traces of the old primitive religion behind the adulterating commentators, and they could also use the old names for God to help contemporary Chinese to see Christianity not as a new but as a genuine Chinese religion. Therefore, Couplet also pleaded for the names for God “Xam ti” (= *Shangdi*, Emperor in High) and “Tien” = *tian* 天 Heaven for God, which the Jesuits found in the Chinese Canonical books. ⑦

4. Louis Le Comte and Charles Le Gobien in European discussion

When Charles Maigrot sent his confrere Nicolas Charlot (1645 - 1714) to Rome in 1693 to obtain a confirmation of his Decree and a condemnation of the Chinese Rites and terms from the Holy Office in Rome, the question of rites was brought to the European public. ⑧ After 1700 it was no longer a controversy inside the Society of Jesus or between the different orders inside China, or inside the Catholic Church, but a matter for discussion and controversy of the learned and/or the theological circles of Europe. The members of the two parties wrote, translated and edited books and pamphlets pro and con the Chinese Rites in such an extent that Clement XI finally forbade to write about the subject without explicit permission. ⑨ Lacking enough material for the fierce controversy many of the books which appeared in the years 1700 and 1701 had already been written as manuscripts in the 17th century. Some of these manuscripts were edited and translated now. There were, for example, the French translations of the treatises of Niccolò Longobardo SJ (1565 - 1655) and Antonio Santa Maria a Caballero OFM (1602 - 1669), written much earlier and in another context, namely in 1623 and 1668 respectively, which appeared in 1701. ⑩ They made a great impression in the public discussion and significantly influenced the famous *Lettre à Rémond* written by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646 - 1716). ⑪ Other treatises were directly written for the actual

③ Couplet, “*Proemialis Declaratio*”, lxxvii.

④ Thierry Meynard, *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus (1687): The First Translation of the Confucian Classics* (Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu) (Rome 2011).

⑤ Couplet, “*Proemialis Declaratio*”, lxxvii.

⑥ Couplet, “*Proemialis Declaratio*”, lxxvj, lxxvix; cf. Le Comte II (1697), 134.

⑦ Couplet, “*Proemialis Declaratio*”, lxxvix - xciv.

⑧ Charlot reached Rome after a long travel only in the beginning of 1697 and at once submitted his accusations. Claudia von Collani, “Ein Brief des China-Missionars P. Joachim Charlot S. J. zum Mandat des Apostolischen Vikars von Fu - kien, Charles Maigrot M.F.P.”, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 43 (1987), 194. S. BMS, 941.

⑨ Decree, dated 25 of September 1710, s. BM 7, # 2609.

⑩ S. BM 7, # 2160 and 2161.

⑪ The “*Lettre*” was only published posthumously, newest edition: Wenzhuo Li and Hans Peter (ed.), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discours sur la théologie naturelle des Chinois*. Mit einem Anhang: Niccolò Longobardi, *Traité sur quelques points de la religion des Chinois* (Veröffentlichungen des Leibniz - Archivs) (Frankfurt 2002), 113 - 156.

situation.

Charnot fought on two fronts. After submitting the accusation in Rome he used his relations in Paris and to the arch bishop Louis – Antoine de Nouilles (1651 – 1729) to submit the question also to the Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne. He chose several propositions out of the context of Le Comte's and Le Gobien's books to obtain their condemnation.⁴⁰ The theologians at the Sorbonne influenced by Jansenism had a quite rigorous attitude towards the possibility for men outside the Catholic Church to be saved. Without the grace of God even the best works of Christians and even more Non – Christians were invalid, and all people who were not baptized were eternally lost. This pessimistic attitude towards the salvation of men was contrary to that of the Jesuits, and it is therefore not astonishing that a clash of theologies was the result.⁴¹

The Latin introduction to the *Confucius Sinarum philosophus* was quite probably not read by too many people. The new books in French language were published ten years afterwards, namely by Louis Le Comte (1655 – 1728), *Nouveaux Memoires sur l'Etat present de la Chine* I – II (Paris 1696 – 1697), Charles Le Gobien (1653 – 1708), *Histoire de l'Édit de l'Empereur de la Chine en faveur de la Religion Chrétienne; avec une éclaircissement sur les honneurs que les Chinois rendent à Confucius & aux morts* (Paris 1698), and Joachim Bouvet's (1656 – 1730), *Portrait historique de l'empereur de la Chine* (Paris 1697).

The three books by Bouvet, Le Comte and Le Gobien, which appeared a short time after the "mission" of the first French Jesuits was sent to China, became real best – sellers with many editions and translations⁴² and influenced in a large measure the European publicity in favour of the French enterprise, but were also used as a weapon against the Jesuits as an order in the Rites Controversy, because the Jesuits became incautious within. Especially the first two books caused a huge and hot debate about the possibility of the salvation of the Chinese people in old times. The context of these two books was not the newly enflamed Rites Controversy, as it is often stated. Le Comte's book already appeared in 1696, therefore it cannot be an answer to Maigrot's Mandate of 1693, which was sent to Europe secretly and which became only known to the Jesuits in 1697.⁴³ Le Gobien's book appeared in 1698 and aimed at emphasizing the role of the French Jesuits to obtain the Edict of Toleration against the demand of the Portuguese Jesuits in José Suarez' SJ (1656 – 1736) book (which was, however, written in Spanish language).⁴⁴ Whereas Le Comte stayed at least some time in China, namely from the end of 1687 until the end of 1691 when he returned as procurator of the Jesuits to Europe, Le Gobien never left Europe.⁴⁵ The two books together with Bouvet's *Portrait historique* constituted an important part of the politics of the French Jesuits who wanted to become independent from the Portuguese mission. Therefore these books written in French language

⁴⁰ Cf. Finot, 71 – 140; Jacques Davy, "La condamnation en Sorbonne des Nouveaux Mémoires sur la Chine de P. Le Comte, les débats de l'Église", *Recherches de sciences religieuses* 37 (Paris 1950), 366 – 397; René Étienne, *Les Jésuites en Chine; la querelle des Rites (1552 – 1773)* (Paris 1966); David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Studia Leibnitiana Supplementa 25) (Wiesbaden 1985).

⁴¹ Finot, 98 – 105.

⁴² *HW* 5, 933.

⁴³ *HCC* 1, 345, 683; van Collbee, "Ein Brief", 188 – 211.

⁴⁴ *La libertad de la ley de Dios, en el Imperio de la China. Compuesta por el Srno. P. Joseph Suarez, de la Compañía de Jesus, Rector del Colegio de Pekin, corte de aquel vastissimo Imperio. Y traducida de la lengua Portuguesa a la Castellana, por Don Juan de Espinola, &c. Dedicada al Srno. P. M. Thyro Gonzalez de Samalla, Proposito General de la misma Compañía de Jesus* (Lisboa 1696). In the second part of his book Suarez also mentioned the Rites for Confucius and the ancestors, but not as an answer to Maigrot's mandate, whereas the first part of Suarez' book was published by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in his *Novissima Sinae* (1697) in Latin translation, the language of the educated people; 1 149 in the second edition of the *Novissima Sinae* of 1699.

⁴⁵ Mungello, 343; Joseph Dehergne, *Rapports des Jésuites de Chine de 1552 à 1800* (Rome, Paris 1973), 317

emphasized the role of the French Jesuits in the China mission; their relation to the Kangxi Emperor (reign 1662 – 1723), whom they wanted to convert and who seemed to be so close to the Kingdom of God, their role to obtain the Edict of Toleration in 1692, and their attitude towards Chinese culture and religion.⁴⁰

Le Comte's two-volume book is subdivided into 14 lengthy "letters", and so-to-say "addressed" or dedicated to Church authorities and high French nobility.⁴¹ In the second volume of the *Nouveaux Mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine II* (Paris 1697) in "Lettre X" addressed to the Cardinal de Bouillon (= Emmanuel Théodose de la Tour d'Auvergne Cardinal de Bouillon, 1643 – 1715, Cardinal from 1669). Le Comte described the old Chinese religion by repeating and following the line of Couplet's "Proemialis Declaratio" to the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (Paris 1687), but in French language, which brought him a larger publicity, and especially addressed the French nobility.

Also Le Comte considered the Chinese to be the offspring of Noah, in this way the primitive religion was brought to China. Starting with Fuxi 伏羲, the Chinese emperors of antiquity initiated a cult for God, therefore Fuxi had the also name *Paoai* 庖犧, the one who offers sacrifice, a name which would for Le Comte fit for a saint of the Old and New Testament. The third emperor Huangdi 黄帝 (2699 – 2588 BC) built a temple of palace for the Highest Lord of Heaven (Shangdi), which Le Comte audaciously called "the oldest of the universe", because it was 600 years before Abraham.⁴² The fifth emperor Zhuanxu 颛顼 (2490 – 2413 BC) appointed priests and "church Mandarins" ("Mandarins Ecclesiastiques") as masters of the sacrifices. Emperor Diku 帝嚳 (2412 – 2343 BC) and his pious wife, who prayed to God for a son, were for Le Comte another proof of the fact that the antique Chinese were monotheists, and also Wu Wang 武王 (1046 – 1043 BC), who wanted to become the sacrifice for his brother. According to Le Comte, idolatry only came to China under emperor Kaiser You Wang 幽王 (781 – 771 BC).⁴³ For Le Comte Confucius was nearly a Christian; "Sometimes it seems that these were the words of a doctor of the "New law" (of grace) instead those of a man educated under the degenerated law of nature. . ." ⁴⁴ The contemporary Kangxi 康熙 Emperor was described as a God-fearing ruler. Despite his inclination to Lamaism ("il honore certains Bonzes du premier ordre") he was no slave of this doctrine.⁴⁵ On certain days of the year Kangxi was offering sacrifice to Shangdi following the old use.⁴⁶ Le Comte's book was quite successful and had several editions and translations.⁴⁷

Le Gobien (1653 – 1708) was the procurator of the French mission in Paris, where he collected letters and other information from his brethren of different missions, and he also distributed

⁴⁰ See the letters written by Joachim Bouvet written to the French Assistant in Rome, Jean Joseph Guilbert, dated 10th of June 1697 (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vittorio Emanuele, Rome, FG A. 8. 63b, and Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Jap. Sin. 166, 200r-202v).

⁴¹ Toussaint Ezechiel Cardinal de Janson (1631 – 1713, Cardinal from 1690), to the Cardinal de Bouillon and to his sister-in-law, Duchesse Marie Anne Bouillon, née Mancini, (1649 – 1714), to German noble and bishop Wilhelm Egon Graf von Fürstenberg (1629-1704, Cardinal from 1686), to César Cardinal d'Estrees (1628 – 1714, Cardinal from 1671), and Charles Maurin Le Tellier (1642 – 1710). The dedications were for protectors of the Jesuits and the China mission and should help to create friendly relations and feelings towards the order and its missionary intentions and towards the creation of an own French Jesuit mission in China.

⁴² Cf. Couplet, "Proemialis Declaratio", brevis, and brevis.

⁴³ Louis Le Comte, *Nouveaux Mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine II* (Paris 1696), 106 – 155.

⁴⁴ Le Comte II, p. 334: "Il semble quelque fois que ce soit un Docteur de la nouvelle loy qui parle, plutôt qu'un homme élevé dans la corruption de la loy de nature. . ."

⁴⁵ Le Comte II, 150f.

⁴⁶ Le Comte II, 153 – 155.

⁴⁷ RW 5, 4 2714

copies of letters, as, for example, he was mediator between Leibniz and the Jesuits in China. ④ His *Histoire de l'édit de l'empereur* ... (Paris 1698) described the background of the Edict of Tolerance issued by the Kangxi Emperor after a local persecution had frightened the missionaries and the Chinese Christians in 1692. The Jesuits' efforts at the Court for having their Imperial protector grant them help were finally successful. The second part of the book deals with the rites for Confucius and the ancestors. The report about Kangxi's Edict was probably brought by Joachim Bouvet to Paris when he arrived there as the legate of the Kangxi emperor in 1687. ⑤

5. The debate over the salvation of the gentiles in Europe

Several theses from the books of Le Comte and Le Gobien were submitted to the Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne in Paris, namely from Le Comte's *Nouveaux Mémoires*, his *Lettre ... à Monseigneur le Duc du Maine sur les cérémonies chinoises* (bound together with the *Nouveaux Mémoires*) and Le Gobien's *Histoire de l'Édit*. The Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne condemned five of these on 18th of October 1700 as "*fausses, téméraires, erronées, impies, fausses, scandaleuses, hérétiques, contraires à la parole de Dieu, capables de renverser la religion de la croix de Jésus – Christ.*" ⑥ These sentences did not really concern the Rites question but were more of theological nature concerning the question if it was possible to gain salvation without being baptized. The five condemned theses are the following:

1. "The people of China preserved for almost two – thousand years a knowledge of the true God, and honored him in a manner which can serve us an example and us instruction even to Christians." ⑦

2. "If Judea had the advantage of consecrating (a temple to God) richer and more magnificent, sanctified even by means of the presence and by means of the prayers of the Redeemer, is this not a glorious piety to China, of having sacrificed to the Creator in the oldest temple of the universe." ⑧

3. "That the purity of the morality, the holiness of manners and customs, the faith, the interior and exterior cult of the true God, the prayers, the sacrifices, of the saints, of the men inspired by God, of miracles, the spirit of Religion, the purest charity which is perfection and the character of Religion, and, if I dare to say, said the author, the Spirit of God was preserved formerly among the Chinese during more than two – thousand years." ⑨

4. "Be that as it may in the wise distribution of grace that divine Providence has made among the nations on the earth, China has nothing to complain of, since there is no nation that He has more constantly favored." ⑩

5. "Moreover, it is not necessary that his majesty (Chinese) regards the Christian religion as a foreign religion, since it was the same in its principles and in its fundamental points as the ancient religion, of which the sages and first emperors of China professed, worshipping the same God as the

④ Widmer (ed.), Leibniz, *Dreißigstel*.

⑤ Bouvet mentioned the publication of the three books several times in his letters.

⑥ Text of this condemnation in *Lettre de Messieurs des Missions Étrangères au Pape, sur les idolâtries et sur les superstitions chinoises* (n. 1., n. 2.) (1700) (Latin – French) n. RM VII # 2091. S. 2. [Jacques Philippe Lallement S. J.], *Journal Historique des Assemblées Tenues en Sorbonne, Pour Condamner les Mémoires de la Chine* (Paris 1700). The condemnations for each proposition changed in the text.

⑦ Le Comte II, 141.

⑧ Le Comte II, 134f.

⑨ This condemnation is a summary of several sentences in Le Comte. S. Le Comte II, 135, 141, 142, 146, 148, 183, 406, 415, 416, 421, 431.

⑩ Le Comte II, 147f.

Christians worshipped and recognizing as well as they the Lord of Heaven and of the earth.”⁶³

This condemnation by the Sorbonne caused the Jesuits to look for all kind of defense and apologies against this accusation. In China they therefore made a petition to the Kangxi emperor, which he answered in the way the Jesuits had wished, the so-called “*Declaratio Rituum*” and which was published several times in China and in Europe.⁶⁴ Besides that many Chinese scholars and Christians gave their expertise, which were also collected in Rome. At the same time new apologies were written and published in Europe.

6. The “Apologia” by Vincentius Mascarell

Vincentius Mascarell is a comparably unknown theologian, one of the many professors and teachers at Jesuit colleges of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries who followed the line of classical theological teaching and scholasticism. Mascarell was born in Valencia on 8th of April 1660, joined the Society of Jesus on 4th of April 1682 and started his theological studies. Afterwards he became rector in Avila and León, and finally professor for Holy Scripture in Salamanca, a position which he held for fourteen years. Then he taught in Valladolid until the end of his life in 1730. His further subjects of teaching were biblical chronology – an eminent field at that time – and dogmatic. His most important books are *Sacrae dissertationes praesertim chronologicae in divinam Scripturam...* (Vallisoleti 1721–1729) in 5 vols., and his *Tractatus dogmaticus et canonicus de libertate actus divinae fidei* (1719).⁶⁵

Despite the fact that Mascarell never left Spain and despite the fact that he only used traditional arguments for his apology, he was nevertheless an open minded theologian who was interested in world mission and concerned about the fate of other nations. He felt responsible to contribute with his education and possibilities as an expert of scholastic theology and chronology to the acute topic of the Chinese Rites Controversy to help to defend the *Societas Jesu*. The full title of Mascarell’s treatise is “*Apologia historico – dogmatica pro primævi veri Dei cultus apud Sinas perennitate & juxta legem naturæ religiose observantia, ab anonymo Pinciano Professore exarata*”.⁶⁶ The manuscript is to be found in the Jesuit archives in Paris and consists of 41 double pages. The text includes fo 1 until fo 38, on ff. 18 and 19 is a letter written by Bartholomæus Alcazar SJ and addressed to his confrere Fr. Barthélémy Germon SJ (1663–1718) in Orléans dated February 9 1702, which gives some additional information to the manuscript.⁶⁷ Perhaps Germon was responsible for the print of the manuscript, and therefore the manuscript was conserved in a French Jesuit archive.

On the last six pages of the manuscript there are five censorships of the “Apologia” to obtain the necessary “*nihil obstat*”; the doctrine in the manuscript is orthodox and in may be printed. The first censorship is signed by three professors for theology from Valladolid dated 29 of August 1701. The names are comparably unreadable because of their signatures, the name of the third is Ildefon-

⁶³ Le Gobien II, 104–105; cf. BM 5, # 2761. The English translations of the quotations are taken from Mungello, *Curious Land*, 333f.

⁶⁴ Claudia von Collani, “Der Ritenstreit und die Folgen für die Chinesenmission”, *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 90 (2006), 215.

⁶⁵ *Gran Enciclopedia de la Región Valenciana* t. 7 (Valencia 1973), 50.

⁶⁶ ASJP, Fonds Brotier 124. The name of Mascarell is not mentioned on the title page of the manuscript, however, the two letters inside the manuscript call him clearly the author. Also Aloys de Boeker, Carlos Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque des écrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus*, vol. 5 (Lüttich) p. 662f, attributed the manuscript to Mascarell. “Pincianus” is somebody from the city of Valladolid (Pincia), where Mascarell taught theology. S. von Collani, “Mascarell”, 22f.

⁶⁷ Germon had for some time the redaction of the Jesuit journal *Mémoires de Trévoux*. <http://dictionnaire-journalistes.guestbook.fr/journalistes/342-barthelemy-germon> (1 of June 2012)

sus Martinez. The next censorship is dated 2 of September 1701 by Petrus Martinez (?), a professor for exegesis. The third censorship covers one page and is dated October 18, 1701, signed by four lecturers of theology; Josephus Reoyo (?), Michael Gonzalez, Gregorius Martinez and Man (uel?) Rodriguez Marques. The fourth censorship is dated October 16, 1701, signed by Petrus Rodericus Casomannus (?). The fifth and last censorship is written by Dr. Dr. Blasius de Tosulinus (?), dated October 21, 1701. All these censorships had no objections against the contents of the *Apologia*.⁶⁰

The title of the manuscript and also the censorships mention the year 1701. The condemnation of the Sorbonne was on the 18th of October 1700, the first censorship of Mascarell's "Apologia" dates from the end of August 1701. So we can assume that Mascarell wrote his "Apologia" within nine months. This was possible because he could use his knowledge in the fields of exegesis, dogmatic, chronology and patristic without having special knowledge about China. Mascarell's "Apologia" proves that he was well trained in classical scholasticism and in patristic, who could prove his theses with ca. 400 quotations taken from more than 100 Greek and Latin church fathers, but also from contemporary books in Latin, Spanish, Italian, and French language.

Mascarell based his defense not on really new arguments following the old fashioned and established ways of other authors concerning the descent of the Chinese, the world chronology or the doctrine of the three stages of the world etc. In the world view of Europe in the 16th to the 18th centuries all peoples on earth were considered as descendants of Noah, his three sons and their families, the only human beings who survived the great Deluge in the ark (Gen 9: 9-17). They transmitted the true faith and the primitive revelation given by God to the first parents of humanity, Adam and Eve.

The second prerogative was the chronology of the world, which was at that time subject of hot discussions and many calculations. Mascarell was, as most theologians of his times, an adherent of the chronology of the (Latin) Vulgate translation of the Bible which assumed the creation of the world 3700 up to 4000 years before the redemption. These computations were challenged by the Chinese annals which had evidently numbers that were before the great Flood. Therefore theologians were permitted to use the chronology of the Greek Septuagint for China, which took 5200 up to 7000 years for the same epoch. Between creation and deluge 1656 years (Vulgate) resp. 2256 years (Septuagint) were calculated. Mascarell took 4050 years between creation and the arrival of Jesus Christ.

The third prerogative in Mascarell's "Apologia" was the subdivision of world history into three stages; the law of nature (*lex naturalis*, or *lex naturæ*), the law of Moses (*lex Mosaiica*) and the law of grace or law of the Gospel (*lex gratiæ*, *lex Evangelicæ*).⁶¹ In its composition the "Apologia" follows the arrangement of the five condemned arguments of Le Comte and Le Gobien, and each article is subdivided into several paragraphs with proofs.⁶²

1. Article

Populus Sinensis retinuit per duo fere annorum millia cognitionem veri Dei, hincque ex pietate coluit, quæ Christianis posset esse exemplum

The Chinese people conserved the knowledge about the true God for nearly two thousand years and venerated him with a piety which could serve as an example and edification for Christians.

Mascarell started the defense of Le Comte's claim with the question why there could and should not exist one or several peoples outside Judah who venerated the true God and why the Chi-

⁶⁰ ASJP, Boulier 124, ff. 39r-41v.

⁶¹ Von Collani, "Mascarell", 104f.

⁶² Von Collani, "Mascarell", 26-28.

nese could not be such a people.

§ 1. *Veri Numinis cultum extra Judaeam populo alicui invenisse fuisse, ex sacris literis non repugnat sed potius ostenditur*

In the Holy Scripture Mascarell found evidence that peoples existed outside Judah who had the cult of the true God.

Mascarell found the first example of such a people who believed in God outside of Judah in the book of Jonah in the Old Testament. The prophet Jonah was sent by God to the inhabitants of the city of Nineveh to preach so that they would convert. Jonah doubted that his legation would be fruitful, but after his sermon the citizens converted, did penitence and God spared them, because he did not want to damage so many people (Jonah 10:4, 11). Why, so asked Mascarell, should God then not have spared such big cities in China as Peking and Nanking?

§ 2. *Husitas, omnesque Job subditos populos, aut saltem urbem regionis veri Numinis cultum observasse ex sacris paginis probabiliter apparet*

Mascarell's second example for a God-fearing people were the inhabitants of the country of Uz ("Husitae"), the people to which Job belonged. Mascarell stated: "The Husitae and all peoples subject to Job, or at least those in the capital, venerated the true God, as it seems to be probable from the Holy Scripture." For Mascarell Job was a Canaanite, Israelite, or Edomite, which means that Job was a descendent of Esau (Genesis 36),^① an opinion where Mascarell followed Saint Augustine.^② Following the calculations of Juan de Pineda,^③ Agostino Tomielli,^④ Jacques Sallan^⑤ and Denis Pétau (Petavius),^⑥ all of them specialists in the computation for the duration of the world since the creation, Mascarell even gave the exact time when Job lived, namely in the year 2319 after the creation of the world and 1700 years before the coming of Christ.^⑦ On the following pages Mascarell dealt with Job in detail and argued together with the church fathers that Job was the priest king of his people and that his faith was therefore decisive for his whole people.^⑧

§ 3. *Qua mente noto in Judaea Deo plauseri regis vates?*

What did the royal prophet (= King David) mean with "God is known in Judah"?

Paragraph three deals with the meaning of Psalm 75:2, where it is written: "Notus in Judaea Deus et in Israel nomen sanctum eius." ("In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel"). In Cajetan's interpretation it is not written "notus est Deus Judaea" (God is known to Judah), but

① Edomite - inhabitant of Edom.

② *Sacrae Auctoris Augustini episcopi de Civitate Dei libri XXII* (Darmstadt 1981), lib. 18. cap. 47 (volume 2, 330); (Migne PL 41, cols. 609f).

③ Juan de Pineda SJ (1558 - 1637) taught philosophy in Granada and in Seville, success in Córdoba, Seville and Madrid. He became famous for his commentary to Job in two volumes *Commentarii in Job* (Coloniae Agrippinae 1597 - 1601).

④ Agostino Tomielli (Milan 1609), CRSP (1543 - 1622), general superior of the Barnabites, refused a bishopric. He wrote the *Annales sacri et ex profanis praecipua ab orbis condito ad eandem Christi passionem redemptum* (Milan 1609), later expanded to four volumes (Luca 1755 - 57). Mascarell often used Tomielli's chronology.

⑤ Jacques Sallan SJ (1558 - 1641) taught humanities, Holy Scripture and moral theology at several colleges. He became well-known for his six volumes of the *Annales ecclesiastici Veteris Testamenti ab orbis condito usque ad Christi mortem* (Paris 1627).

⑥ Dionysius Petavius (Denis Pétau) SJ (1583 - 1652), humanist, scholar, historian, who provided editions of classical books and church fathers. During his studies of the fathers he found the term of the uncreated grace. Also his book *Liber de doctrina temporum...* was quite important.

⑦ They all were adherents of the chronology based on the Vulgate version of the Bible, i. e. there was a period of ca. 4000 between creation and redemption.

⑧ ASJP, *Revue* 174, ff. 4r - 5v; von Collani, "Mascarell", 28f.

“in Judaea”, i. e. God is acknowledged by all human beings living in Judah. ② It also means, so Mascarell, that God’s power and mercy remains hidden and secret if God does not unveil them himself, as can be read in Isaiah 45:15: “Verily thou art a God that who hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” ③ The Augustinian Jacobus Perez de Valencia even made a figurist interpretation of this verse, ④ namely that David, the “regius vates” (royal prophet), foresaw the victory which would be gained by Christ by his passion, his death and his resurrection in Jerusalem over the devil. The secrets of our redemption were spread from Jerusalem (a figure for the future church) and Judah over the whole earth, which means that all peoples knew about them. ⑤

§ 4. *D. Dionysius, et proclarissimus eius elucidator Hugo de Sancto Victore assertis hucusque egregie suffragantur*

Dionysius and his quite famous interpret Hugh de St. Victor sufficiently continue this line [of argumentation] in an excellent way.

Another topic in Mascarell’s argumentation was the old belief that each nation had an angel responsible for its spiritual and worldly welfare. Here Mascarell took recourse on Dionysius ⑥ and Hugh of Saint Victor (c. 1096 – 1141), ⑦ starting with the triple hierarchy of angels developed by Dionysius, ⑧ who assigned an angel to each people. The archangel Michael was the angel of the Jews, the other angels were the princes of the pagan peoples. Hugo of St. Victor further developed this doctrine based on Daniel 10:13. Also in other parts of the Holy Scripture such angel princes are mentioned. These angels had the duty to educate peoples and to bring them to the veneration of the one true God as Egyptians and Babylonians. ⑨

§ 5. *Idem docuerunt Augustinus & alii Patres*

Augustine and the Church Fathers taught the same doctrine.

As an important witness that not only the Hebrews knew the true God was Saint Augustine. As answer to the question of a certain Porphyrius what happened with men who lived a long time before Jesus Christ, Augustine answered that the only way to salvation is described in the books of the Hebrews (i. e. the Old Testament) where one can read about men who were not descendants of Abraham nor belonged to the people of Israel but who nevertheless participated in the sacrament of the faith. Why, Mascarell argued, should there not be such peoples who were unknown until recent

② Cajotanus = Thomas de Vio OP (1468 – 1524), general superior of the Dominicans, cardinal since 1517, wrote commentaries to Thomas Aquinas.

③ “Vere tu es Deus absconditus, Deus Israel salvator.”

④ Jacob Perez de Valencia OSA (1408 – 1490) a saintly man, prior and provincial of his order, professor at the university of Valencia, since 1486 bishop of Christopolis, wrote *In Canonica concistorum* (Valencia 1486). LThK 5, col. 848.

⑤ ASJP, Broter 124, ff. 6r – 7v.

⑥ Dionysius Areopagites, is said to have lived in the first century as bishop of Athens, where he was member of the Areopagus, mentioned by the apostle Paul. (Acts 17:34). The apocryphal Christian author Pseudo-Dionysius published books, treatises and letters under his name in Greek language in the 5th and 6th centuries. He blended Christian with Neo-Platonic ideas and exercised a great influence on the Christian philosophy and mystic of the Middle Ages.

⑦ Hugh of St. Victor, Augustinian, philosopher, theologian and mystic, lived from the end of the 11th century, died in Paris in 1141. He blended mystic with scholastic. He wrote *Commentariorum Hierarchiam coelestem S. Dionysii Areopagites secundum interpretationem Joannis Scoti* (Migne PL 175; *Hugonis de S. Victore opera omnia*, Paris 1879), where he described the several classes of angels.

⑧ Dionysius Areopagites, *De Hierarchia coelestis* aet. VII, c. 1.2. He described three classes of angels in three departments the first class consisting of Guardians of the Throne, Seraphim, Cherubim, and the third class were the archangels Gabriel, Michael, Raphael. This classification became a dogma with Gregory the Great. D. Johann Christian Wilhelm Augusti, *Lehrbuch der christlichen Dogmengeschichte* (Leipzig 1835), 312f

⑨ ASJP, Broter 124, ff. 7r – 8v. Jean Elmélas, *Vom Geheimnis der Geschichte* (Stuttgart 1968), 57 – 71

times?^⑧

However, elsewhere Augustine wrote about this problem that without the faith in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ also the righteous people of old times could not be justified from their sins and be saved. This was true before the deluge and from there on until the law of Moses and even at the time of the written law; it was valid for the sons of Israel, but also outside of Israel, i. e. for Job.^⑨ Only those peoples could be saved who belonged to the Israelites, in this case, however, not to the fleshly nation but to the heavenly community of the true Israelites. Augustine taught that besides those pagan peoples mentioned in the Holy Scripture there were others who lived following God's laws. This does not mean that Israel had an outstanding position in God's eyes, who was always the true ruler of Israel. This was apparent during the time of the Judges, and also "Abulensis" wrote: "During the times of the judges in Israel, God ruled the Israelites and no human being was lord. Then the kings started and no longer God was the lord but those kings."^⑩

Mascarell felt sure that also pagans by observing the law of nature could attain the eternal salvation, not only those belonging to the state of Israel, for in the Holy Scripture Jews and pagans were described in a figurative way (prefigurati). The church fathers understood stories of the Bible in a figurative way, as, for example, the parable in Matthew 21:28 about the two sons who were sent to the vineyard by their father. These persons were interpreted as figures for Jews and pagans (so Tostado, Chrysostom, Origen, Jerome, Euthymius the Great).^⑪ Especially Mascarell's favorite author Alfonso Tostado ("Abulensis") connected this passage with the letter to the Romans: "Their father is God, who created, owns and guides all, pagans and Jews." In Romans 3:29, where one reads: "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also."^⑫ Tostado interpreted the older son in the vineyard as a figure for the gentiles, because he refused to work in the vineyard, i. e. most pagans apostatize and perform idolatry. Tostado clearly said the greater part, but not all, of them continued to venerate the true God. Actually also the law of nature teaches peoples to adore the one God. Following Jerome, Tostado stressed that only the belief was important, as one can read in the letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews 11:1-3).

After further explanations Mascarell quoted Chrysostom, who defined the term "pagans" in the following way: "You call pagans not those who are idolaters, but those who adore God, who obey the law of nature..." Melchisedek with his people, Job, the citizens of Nineveh and Cornelius (Acts 10) belonged to them.^⑬

Tostado agreed by adding Ptolemy. Actually many heathens understood that their idols were vain, therefore they believed in one God and were saved. It seemed also probable for him that many

⑧ ASJP, Bostier 124, lo 9r.

⑨ Aurelius Augustinus, *Liber de parento originali* lib. II, cap. 24 (Migne PL 44, col. 398): "Itaque sine ista fide, nec est sine fide anima mediatoris Dei et hominum hominis Christi Jesu, sine fide, inquam, incarnationis ejus, ... sine fide ergo incarnationis et mortis et resurrectionis Christi, nec antiqui justis, ut justis essent, a peccatis potuisse mundari." Also Aurelius Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* lib. XVIII cap. 47 (Migne PL 41, cols. 609f).

⑩ "Abulensis" means a bishop of Avila, in this case Alfonso Tostado Ribera (1400 - 1455), a famous Spanish Theologian, who took part at the Council of Basel 1431 - 1449. He wrote commentaries to the books of the Old Testament and Matthew, was doctor of theology, member of the college of Valladolid. In 1449 Tostado became bishop of Avila. For Mascarell he was the most important author with his *Alphonsi Tostadi Hispani, Episcopi Abulensis Opera Omnia* (Venetia 1728). Tostado, *In librum Judicum Praefatio*, quæst. VII: "Unde Judicium non vocabatur domini Israel, nec alioquorum de Israel; sed solum ad judicandum constituti, ita ut haberent jurisdictionem, sed ad dominium."

⑪ Origen of Alexandria, prominent church father (184/85 - 253/254). Euthymius, Saint, also styled the Great (377 - 473).

⑫ Tostado, *Commentaria in Mattheum*, tom 5, quæst. 166.

⑬ Johannes Chrysostomus, *Homilia 5 in cap. 2 Epist. ad Romanos* (Migne PG 60, col. 426): "Gentes autem non idolatras habent, nec sunt qui Deum colunt, qui naturali lege parvunt, qui proster Judaicam observantiam curant, quæ ad piæ religionem spectant, observant; quales sunt Melchisedek et Job, quales sunt Ninivites."

heathens before and at the time of the law of Moses were saved, if they only regretted their sins against God committed by idolatry before they died. ⁹⁹

2. Article

Si Iudaei gloriamur est decusse Deo templum opulentissimum et magnificentissimum et sanctificatum ipsius Redemptoris praesentis, et oratione. Sinis quoque non parum honorificum Creatori sacrificasse in templo omnium antiquissimo

If the Jews have the glory to have dedicated God the most beautiful and splendid temple and to have sacrificed in their prayers in the presence of the savior it is not less honorable for the Chinese to have sacrificed God in the oldest of all temples.

For Mascarell the second claim from Le Comte's book, condemned by the Sorbonne, concerned three questions:

1. Does the assumption that there was an older temple than the temple of Solomon contradict the Holy Scripture?

2. Does the assumption that such a temple could have existed in China contradict the Holy Scripture?

3. If there was a temple in China dedicated to the true God, was it then the oldest one?

Mascarell as a Jesuit answered these questions in a probabilistic way.

§ 1. *Ex sacris literis et Patribus deducitur existisse templum Salomonico antiquius vero Deo sacrum.*

The Holy Scripture and the church fathers give evidence that there was an older temple than the temple of Solomon.

As a proof Mascarell used complicated chronological computations with authors who pretended to have exactly calculated the duration of the life of the patriarchs of the Old Testament. Mascarell as an adherent of the chronology of the Vulgate used contemporary authors relying on old ones. The most important of his authors were Gilbert Générard, ⁹⁹ Jacques Salian, Juan de Pineda and Agostino Tomielli. The question concerning this oldest temple of the world as mentioned in the Bible is answered here only in a short way. The first example is taken from 1 Samuel 1, where the priest Eli is sitting in front of the temple (1 Sam 1:9); this temple is said to have existed in the 2900th year of the earth.

The second example is taken from Genesis 25:22 when Rebekah, Isaac's wife, asked the Lord about the fate of their sons fighting each other in her womb. This happened, as Mascarell's main witness Salian said, in the year 2198 after the creation of the world and 542 years after the deluge. Mascarell refuted the objection that this happened at a place for prayer and not in the temple. ⁹⁹

⁹⁹ ASJP, *Revue* 124, II. 8v - 12v. Tostado, *Commentaria in Genesis* cap. XVII, 247. Question: how is it possible that heathens of the time of the law of Moses can be saved? Answer: if they lived a good life (if they pleased God), if they committed no sin against the law of nature (*juxta naturam*), if they believed into the true God. They could even be saved if they did not believe into Trinity, or if they believed in idols, if they only regretted their sins before dying "*si tamen ante mortem poeniterent eos, talia contra veram Deum commississe*", then they came into the purgatory. "Therefore it is quite probable that many of the gentiles of the time of the law of Moses or before the law of Moses were saved."

⁹⁹ Gilbert Générard OSB (1537 - 1597), orientalist, exeget, bishop of Aix-en-Provence. Mascarell especially used his *Chronographiae Libri IV* (Paris 1580).

⁹⁹ ASJP, *Revue* 124, II. 12v - 14r

§ 2. *Sacris litteris non contradicitur asserens, apud Sinos templum Salomonico antiquius existisse*

The Holy Scripture does not contradict the assumption that the Chinese had a temple which was older than the temple of Salomon

Mascarell started the next step in his argumentation; there existed older temples than the temple of Salomon at peoples who were not Hebrews, but heathens.

The first example is Melchizedek who was priest of the Lord (Psalm 110:4; "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The Jewish author Flavius Josephus assumed that Melchizedek built the most famous temple of the world, which happened in Générard's chronology in 1949 after the creation. ⑧ The objection that Melchizedek was identical with Noah's son Shem (the temple then would not have been a pagan one) ⑨ Mascarell rebutted with chapter 7 of the letter to the Hebrews, where it is stated that Melchizedek had no ancestors (Hebrews 7:3). In Salian's chronology also Job was a priest king of the heathens and sacrificed quite probably in a big temple in the year of the world 2544.

The sacrifice of Cain and Abel and the first murder surely did not happen in a temple, but in the field, for in a temple not even Cain would have dared to kill his brother (Gen 4:3-8). ⑩

§ 3. *Citra theologiam censuram in aliquot vero sensu dici potest, Sinesse templum vero Numini dicatum esse omnium antiquissimum*

Besides the theological censorship in a certain meaning it is justified to say that the Chinese temple dedicated to the highest divinity was the oldest of all temples.

After the deluge Noah sacrificed on a mountain in Armenia, where the arch was landed, but this took place not in a temple but on a temporary altar, which was made of soil as proved by several authors. This happened in the year of the world 1724. For Mascarell it was not sure when and where the oldest temple was built, perhaps in China, perhaps not there. But this was a question which was not dependent to censure. ⑪

In Mascarell's covering letter which contained some accompanying information for the publication of the treatise, there is a remark according to which Mascarell thought that one of the sons of Joktan ⑫ could have built a temple in the empire of China, which was older than Melchizedek's temple. ⑬

3. Article

Moralium disciplina puritas, morum sanctitas, fides, cultus Dei very internus et externus, sacerdotes, sancti homines, ac incipienti a Deo, miracula, spiritus religionis purissimus, charitas, quam religionis nostrae perfectio, et character, et spiritus Dei apud Sinos olim per dies annorum nullis, sed amplius pervenerunt.

The purity of ethics, the sanctity of morals, the interior and exterior cult of God, the priests, the holy by God inspired men, the miracles, the religious spirit, the purest charity, the perfection,

⑧ Flavius Josephus, Roman - Jewish historian (37/38 - 100), wrote *The Jewish War, and Antiquities of the Jews* (*Geschichte der jüdischen Krieger*, übers. v. Dr. Heinrich Clementz (Halle a. a.) lib. 6 cap. 10).

⑨ Concerning this problem Mascarell did not join Testado (*In Genesis Commentario* cap. XI, quaest. 15, p. 165) and Jacques Boul-duc, *De Ecclesia ante legem* (Paris 16302), lib. I cap. 11 (p. 71). Both assumed that Melchizedek was only another name of Shem.

⑩ ASJP, *Beati* 124, ff. 14v-15v.

⑪ ASJP, *Beati* 124, ff. 16v-20r.

⑫ Joktan, descendant of Shem, Genesis 10:24f.

⑬ ASJP, *Beati* 124, fo 18.

the character of religion and the spirit of God were conserved in China for 2000 years and more.

§ 1. *Locis theologicis non adversatur diuturnitas cultus Deo (ut asseritur) per duo annorum millia a Sinis exhibit*

Theology does not contradict the assumption of a cult of God (as it is said) since two thousand years.

Mascardell explored the data about the beginning of idolatry and the gradual reduction from the true cult. He believed that according to several early church fathers, and also to Philo of Alexandria (20 BC – 50 AD), idolatry already started with Tuhah – Cain, a descendent of Cain (Genesis 4; 20) a short time after the deluge, when images of gods were made. Cyrill of Alexandria argued that the descendants of Adam until Shem had adored the true God, but mankind in the 14th generation after Adam started to sacrifice demons and idols. ①

In Genesis 4; 26 Enosh was the first one to call the name of God. Some theologians as Tostado, Martin Delrio, and Manuel de Sù interpreted the passage that the name of God became profane, a thesis refuted by Hieronymus. ② Others argued that idolatry started at the time of Therah, Abraham's father (Genesis 11;27 – 32) in Chaldea in the year 2113 after creation (so Sulian) or under Scrug (Genesis 11;22 – 23), the year 1820 after the creation in Générard's calculation. Jerome considered Ninus, son of Belus, as initiator in the year 2050. ③ In Cyril of Alexandria's opinion Noah's sons did not know any idolatry. ④ Lactantius argued that Prometheus made images of human beings, which was the start of the cult of new gods. ⑤ In Eusebius' chronicle this happened in the year 114 of the deluge of Deukalion. ⑥ The king of the Athenians Kekrops is said to have venerated gods in the year 842 after the deluge. ⑦ That means that the Greek venerated the true God for about 800 years. Perhaps it was the same with the Chinese, because in Sulian's opinion they descended from Joktan, Eber's son, a descendent of Shem (Genesis 10;25 – 31). The sons of Joktan not only reached the Ganges in the Indies, but also China, Japan and America. Joktan is considered as a very humble man, who retired from the world dealing with religious and philosophical things instead. His philosophy of life reached the Far East together with his offspring. During his lifetimes Shem was still alive, who taught piety to his posterity. Sulian calculated the year 2158 of the world for Shem's death. Joktan's brother Peleg (Genesis 10;25, and 11;16 – 17) became the ancestor of the Hebrews.

In Augustine's opinion the Babylonian confusion happened at Peleg's midlife, i. e. 2/3 after the deluge. Until then there existed no idolatry. ⑧

① Cyril of Alexandria, *Adversus Julianum*, lib. I (Migne PG 76, cols. 514f).

② Martin Antoine: Delrio SJ (1551 – 1608), doctor in Salamanca, taught Holy Scripture in Douai, Liège, Graz and Salamanca and died in Leuven. He wrote *In Cantibus Cantuarum Salomonis Commentarius litteralis et criticae Mytilis* (Ingrubert 1604). Manuel de Sù SJ (1530 – 1596) taught philosophy in Alcalá, afterwards Holy Scripture at the Collegio Romano. He wrote *Notationes in totam Scripturam sacram, quibus omnia fere loca difficilia brevissime explicantur*.

③ Hieronymus, *Commentarium in Osee*, lib. I cap. 2 (Migne PL 25, col. 838): "Primum ante Aetiae regnasse Ninum, Beli filium... qui apud Assyrios Ninum sui nominis emulsiu civitatem, quam Hebraei vocant Ninivem... Ille abeuntes Zoroastrem magnum, regem Hactiravian, forti certamine vincens; in tantum pervenit gloriam, ut patrem suum Belum referret in Deum, qui Hebraeis dicitur Bel..." Ninus is considered as the fabulous founder of the Assyrian Empire who built the city of Nineveh.

④ Cyril of Alexandria, + 444, exeget, fought Nestorius. *Adversus libros athei Juliani* lib. I (Migne PG 76, col. 527).

⑤ Lucii Caecilii Firmiani Lactantii, *De divinis institutionibus*, lib. II cap. 11 (Migne PL 6, cols. 313f).

⑥ Eusebii Pamphilii, *Chronicon libri primus*, cap. 20 (Migne PG 19, cols. 216ff).

⑦ Kekrops, mythological founder of the castle of Kekropia. Vulliamz, *Mythologie der Mythen* (Stuttgart 1874, repr. Leipzig 1978) p. 176.

⑧ ASJP, *Revue* 174, # 20r – 23r. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, lib. XVI, cap. 10 (Migne PL 41, col. 488f).

§ 2. *Aliis argumentis idem stabilitur*

Other arguments to confirm this thesis.

The descend of the Chinese from Joktan cannot as easily be proven as the descend of the Assyrians from Assur or of the Hebrew from Eber. ⁶³ In this case even Mascarell's favorite theologian Tostado had no opinion; he did not know where Joktan's sons had wandered. Mascarell, however, is not astonished that none of the old theologians dealt with the lineage of the Chinese, because in former times nobody knew about them.

After a long discourse Mascarell took recourse to Cénébrard as witness for the long duration of the faith. Until the year 2239, so Cénébrard, the "church" was so to say Catholic, for all men knew about Noah as their ancestor and believed in one God, as shown by Melchizedek, Abimelech (Gen 21:22 - 23), and Job and his family. ⁶⁴ For Cénébrard, mankind believed into one God until the time of Moses, i. e. until the year 2544 of the world and 888 years after the Flood. But monotheism not only survived at the Hebrews, but also at the heathens. Mascarell mentioned Jethro, Moses' father-in-law (Exodus 3:1 and 4:18) and the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1 - 13) who lived under the law of nature. ⁶⁵ The Queen visited Salomon in the year 3045 of the world (at least in Salian's chronology). Jonah, who brought the citizens of Nineveh back to the true God lived in this chronology in the year 3212 of the world and 1560 years after the Flood. Also the Persian King Darius was converted by Daniel (Daniel 6:27 - 28).

The religion of the law of nature flourished until the birth of Jesus Christ among the pagans, which is proven by the story of the Mage Kings (Matthew 2:1 - 2). Jesus Christ announced his birth to his friends by means of the star of Bethlehem, so Tostado's opinion. ⁶⁶ They were instructed about it by the prophecy of the prophet "Balaam" (= also Bileam, Numbers 24:17), who was older than Mosca. He was paid to curse the chosen people Israel, but, inspired by God, he was only able to bless Israel in three oracles. In the fourth oracle he foretold the coming of the Messiah: "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." (Numbers 24:17) ⁶⁷

Clement of Alexandria saw in the sermon of Saint Paul before the altar on the Arcopag in Athens, dedicated to the true god (Acts 17:22 - 33), that this was the highest God, the creator of the world and origin of all things. ⁶⁸ This was not idolatry or superstition, as Tertullian (c. 160 - c. 225) and Chrysostom argued. In Augustine's opinion such a veneration outside the church was already useless and futile at that time, only inside the church it was wise and salutary, ⁶⁹ for the law of the Gospel was already valid, which made the law of nature useless. For Mascarell Jerome's (347 - 420) interpretation sounded as if he interpreted Paul's words that also pagan peoples knew well about God's name and majesty, for the Athenians had built an altar for the unknown god.

Tostado, Mascarell's main source, and with him Mascarell were convinced that before the

⁶³ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, lib. XVI, cap. 11 (Migne PL 41, col. 490 - 492).

⁶⁴ Gregor of Nyssa, *Homilia IX in Cantica Canticozum*. (Migne PG 44, col. 974).

⁶⁵ Chrysostomus, *Homilia 43 in cap. Mt 12* (Migne PG 57, col. 459). About the Queen of Sheba cf. Matthew 12:42.

⁶⁶ Tostado, *Commentarius in Evangel. Matth. tom. I cap. 2, q. 10 und 19*: "Eas prophetia et doctrina Balaam instructas appellat, in qua alii PP. conveniunt." (p. 12).

⁶⁷ "Videbo eum, sed non modo; intuebor illum, sed non prope. Orietur stella ex Jacob, & consurget virga de Israel." The whole story is told in Numbers 22:2 - 24, 25. The prophecies are interpreted as the coming of the future Messiah, the story is connected with the adoration of the three kings or Magi from the East.

⁶⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, lib. I cap. 19 (Migne PG 8, col. 806).

⁶⁹ Augustinus, *Contra Gentesium Gentesium*, lib. I cap. 29 (Migne PL 43, col. 463): "Fortasse: ad hoc dicitur, fieri non posse: ut extra Ecclesiam idem ipse unus Deus creditur, sed eodem fidei qua crediturum Christum Filium Dei, . . . etiam in eis qui non sunt in Ecclesia, reperitur."

propagation of the Gospel all pagans of old times could have been saved, because the precepts of the law of nature were sufficient. Examples were philosophers as Sokrates, Platon and others.⁽¹⁾ Many gentiles knew the true God and adored him, however, under different names for his different attributes. They used names as Jupiter, Phoebus, Mars, but also Diana, Minerva and others. After some time also the images became different so that in one temple there were often 20 images and statues to represent one and the same Jupiter. Roman poets as Cato and Vergil clearly mentioned this.⁽²⁾

§ 3. *Religionis apud Sinas assertae attributa perpenditur*

The attributes of the probable religion at the Chinese people are investigated

Mascardell continued that nothing in the Holy Scripture contradicted the assumption that the cult of the true God survived such a long time at the Chinese. In this way faith, hope and charity (as postulated by Le Comte) could have survived the law (of nature) at the heathens, and it is no useless and vain religion, but true and salutary. Besides that peoples outside Judaea not only had a natural cult, but, conform to Augustine, also a supernatural cult, for also heathens can belong to the spiritual Jerusalem.⁽³⁾

For Tostado many pagans were saved before the arrival of Christ, because they were not obliged to the law of Moses, as were the men from the tribe of Jacob.⁽⁴⁾ Chrysostom had the same opinion thinking that the citizens of Nineveh, Melchizedek with his people, Job and the Roman captain Cornelius had been saved.⁽⁵⁾ The law of nature was the reason that also the "pagans" had moral discipline, purity of customs, faith, internal and external veneration of God. This true religion and the observation of the law of nature survived quite probably also in China from the deluge until the arrival of Jesus Christ, as the church father acknowledged and as one can conclude from the Holy Scripture.

In Augustine's and the Venerable Bede's (672/73 - 735) opinion the church did not exclude any time, any place or any human race, in contrast to the synagogue, which as a special part of this church ("ecclesia particularis") and non catholic (i. e. not all-embracing) was limited to a part of time (until the arrival of the Messiah), a special place (Salomon's temple) and one family (sons of Jacob).⁽⁶⁾ Also Cardinal Roberto Bellarmin SJ (1542 - 1621) was convinced that even

(1) Tostado, *Commentarium in Genesim*, cap. 2, q. IV, 81, wrote that it is wrong to state that all human beings before the law of Moses were condemned, for all pagans could be saved before the spread of the Gospel if they obeyed the rules of the law of nature; to love the true God, not to molest the others, which is the whole Decalogue.

(2) Tostado, *Commentarius in Iudicum*, cap. 3, q. XXIII, 47: "The pagans venerated God in several ways, but they believed, that there is one God. Many poets were convinced that there is one single God, who was called Jupiter, and that he had different names because of his different attributes, but that his normal name was Jupiter." This was also the opinion of Cato Uticensis quoting Lucretius lib. 9: "Jupiter est quod cuiusque sideris quocumque vocentis." Vergilius said the same in the *Bucolica*, Ecloga 3: "A Jove principium nascit, Jovis omnia plena." (Publius Vergilius Maro, *Landleben* (München 1981⁴), 18). It seems that Mascardell did not use the originals but his main source Tostado. ASJP, Brot nr 124, ll. 23r-30v.

(3) Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, lib. 18, cap. 47 (Migne PL 41, cols. 609f).

(4) Tostado, *Commentarius in Ruth*, cap. II q. XII, 386.

(5) Johannes Chrysostomus, *Homilia VI*, cap. 2, c. 17 (Migne PG, col. 435).

(6) Venerable Bede OSB (672/73 - 735), doctor of the church, influenced from the school of Canterbury. He used the knowledge about the pagan antiquity for the understanding of the Holy Scripture. He had a global understanding of the church: "Ecclesia enim catholica non excludit ulli tempora, loca vel hominum genera; At Synagoga, ut post particularis ecclesie, non catholicam, alligata erat uni tempore, extra quod non poterat sacrificare; et uni familiae, id est, filijs Jacob." ASJP, *Revue* 174, in 31v4 cf. *Beati Venerabilis, Cantic.* cap. 6 (Migne PL 91, col. 1187).

at the time of the law of Moses pagan peoples could belong to the church. ② Augustine and Bellarmin thought that many of the gentiles could be saved and even were saved at the time of the Old Testament, ③ and therefore really belonged to the church. ④ The same opinion was held by Dionysius Areopagita, Thomas Aquinas, ⑤ Baronio, ⑥ Bozio ⑦ and Sulmeron ⑧.

Mascardell continued mentioning several "Prisci Theologi", i. e. women and men of gentile peoples, who as a kind of prophets announced the future Redeemer, for not only the Hebrews had their prophets, but God had mercy with the heathens giving them their own prophets. The theologians Michael de Medina, ⑨ Sixtus Sinensis, ⑩ Thomas Aquinas, ⑪ Francisco Suarez ⑫ and Cesare Baronio ⑬ found hints given by the church fathers that, for example, the Sibyls belonged to the inspired persons to unveil the secrets of the future law of grace. They are said to have been older than Moses, to have known about God and were flown through with light, so that they quite probably possessed also the other gifts of grace. Augustine mentioned the Sibyl of Erythraea, ⑭ others spoke about the Sibyl of Cumæ. Lactantius counted ten Sibyls and added that they had proclaimed the true God against idolatry. ⑮ The religion of the three Kings proved that the true religion was still alive in the law of nature until the birth of Christ, for Magicians not meaning sorcerers (malefici), as can be seen from the Bible and the church fathers. ⑯

② Roberti Bellarmini Politiani S. J. *Opera Omnia* t. II, ed. Justinus Feber: (Paris 1870), *Controversiarum de Concilio libro quartus ubi de notis Ecclesiarum*, cap. 7 (p. 372): "Ecclesia enim vere Catholica non solum debet complecti omnia tempora, sed etiam omnia loca, omnes nationes, omnia hominum genera."

③ Augustinus, *De predestinatione sanctorum liber ad Prosperum et Hilarium prius*, lib. 1, c. 9 (Migne PL 41, col. 974): "Ita salus religionis hujus, per quam solum ceteris salus vera ceteris primatur, nulli unquam defuit qui dignus fuisset, et cui defuit, dignus non fuisset." - Augustinus, *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali contra Pelagianum et Celestium libri duo*, lib. 1, c. 24 (Migne PL 44, cols. 398f).

④ Robert Bellarmin, *De verbo Dei non scripto*, lib. 4, cap. 4. "Gentiles multi salvati potuerunt et salvabantur tempore testamenti veteris, et non ad Ecclesiam pertinebant." (quoted in Mascardell, in 32r).

⑤ Ibi Thomas Aquinatis *Summa Theologiae*, t. III (Paris 1859), *sententia 2a, 2ae q. 2 art. 7 ad 3* (p. 35): "Utrum explicitè credere mysterium incarnationis Christi sit de necessitate salutis apud omnes."

⑥ Cesare Baronio (1538 - 1607), member of the Oratory of Philippe Nen. Dr. utr. uns, priest, successor of Nen in the Oratory, confessor of Clement VIII; since 1596 librarian of the Vatican library. He wrote the *Annales ecclesiastici a Christo nato ad annum 1198* in 12 volumes (1588 - 1607) and edited the *Martyrologium Romanum* in 1589. Here we use the edition of his *Annales* of Paris 1864.

⑦ Thomas Bozio, OR (1548 - 1610), canon and church historian, wrote *De signis ecclesiae dei libri XVIII* (Kln 1591 - 97) in 7 volumes, and the *Annales antiquitatum*. Here a quotation from *De Signis ecclesiae*, tom. I cap. 8, § 3: "Igitur sciendum plurimos e Gentibus olim consecutos aeternam salutem, quamvis Judaeorum ritum non amplecterentur, ut in epistola ad Romanos scriptum reliquit Paulus, itaque Christus totius, quibus subiecit SS. Dionysius Areopag. et Justinus." Quoted after Mascardell in 32r; cf. BM I, # 187 (8 citations!).

⑧ Alfons Sulmeron SJ (1515 - 1585), one of the first six adherents of Ignatius of Loyola, took part at the Council of Trent.

⑨ Michael de Medina OFM (1489 - 1578), Spanish monk, theologian at the Council of Trent since 1567. He wrote the *Libro de modo in deum fide* (Venetia 1563).

⑩ Sixtus Sinensis - Sixtus of Siena (1520 - 1569), a former Jew, then baptized, was condemned because of heresy, then became Franciscan. Michael Chishert, who later became Pius V. Sixtus dedicated him his *Bibliothèque Sainte. François Secret, Les Kabbalistes chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Paris 1964), 241.

⑪ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 2a 2ae quæst. 176 art. 6 (p. 1214): *Unde Sybillae multae vere profetisunt de Christo.*

⑫ Francisco de Suarez SJ (1548 - 1617), leading theologian of the Spanish scholastic, professor for theology in Valladolid, commented the "Summa" of Thomas Aquinas. His teachings later became the "Suarezianism", important for the Jesuit order.

⑬ Relying on Basilus and Jerome Baronius affirms that the magicians were Chaldeans "eosdem ab Erythraea Sibylla de Christo sensu colentes esse testatur Basilus et Hieronymus." Baronius, *Annales* t. I, 7, Nr. 23.

⑭ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, lib. 18, cap. 23 (Migne PL 41, cols. 579f).

⑮ Lucii Cassidii Florentini *Lactantii divinarum institutionum*, lib. 1, cap. 6 (Migne PL 6, col. 141 - 148).

⑯ Aurelii Augustini *Sermo XIII in Epiphania Domini*, IV (Migne PL 38, cols. 1033 - 1035).

Another wise man outside the Bible was the Persian Hystaspes, who spoke about the redeemer in his oracles.⁴⁹ Peter and Paul praised his prophecies in their sermons to the gentiles.⁵⁰ Some authors even compared the books written by Hystaspes with the books of the Sibyls, both being revealed by God. Mascarell was convinced that Hystaspes also owed the necessary virtues.⁵¹

Paul's sermon on the Areopag in Athens before the altar for the unknown god proves according to Mascarell the duration of the true religion until Christ's birth and even longer. But who was the unknown worshipped god? Some fathers, as Tertullian, Chrysostom and Oecumenicus⁵² were convinced that it was a higher being from the fable (*fabulosum aliquid numen*). Others as Clement of Alexandria,⁵³ – and Mascarell agreed – argued that the Athenians had considered this god as the true creator of the world and highest god. Many philosophers have been saved because they adored the true God even before the announcement of the Gospel by observance of the law of nature.⁵⁴ Therefore, and this is Mascarell's conclusion for this part, also outside of Judah existed the cult of the true God for 2395 years (namely from the flood until the birth of Christ). Therefore, it is possible that the true religion also existed in China until the arrival of Christ as is proven by the Holy Scripture and by the fathers. The true religion is necessary conveyed, as Tommaso Bozio wrote, not in a miraculous, the human intellect surmounting way, but in many ways, which are infused into our souls by the divine charity and wisdom.⁵⁵ Although the church under the law of nature was of a lower level than the synagogue, it was orthodox and therefore sufficient for the gentiles. Why then not for the Chinese? God's grace was sufficient to beware them of idolatry and have them adore the true God. Tostado wrote in the same way: "Many gentiles were saved before the coming of Christ, not only those who were descendent of the house of Jacob." ("Multos de gentilibus ante Christi adventum salvos fuisse, nisi soli isti, qui descendebant de stirpe Jacob.")⁵⁶ Also Chrysostom proved himself to be an adherent of the salvation of the pagans because he wrote that by the observation of the law of nature outside of Judaea many philosophers were saved.⁵⁷

4. Article

Non est quod Sines conquerantur de Divina Providentia, quae dona sua Gentibus sapienter distribuit; cum dona haec ex alijs Gentibus nulla eventustantius inveniantur.

The Chinese have no reason to complain about the divine providence, which contributed its gifts wisely to the peoples, because none of the Gentiles received these gifts more consistently.

⁴⁹ Hystaspes, Persian king and wise man, adherent and protector of Zoroaster (who also belonged to the *Prisci Theologi*). Justin (*Apologia* 1, 20 and 44), Lactantius, (*De Divinis Institutionibus*, VII, 15 and 18) and Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* lib. VI, cap. 43) wrote that he was author of a apocalyptic book, comparable to the Sibyllines and the Hermetica.

⁵⁰ Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata*, lib. 6, cap. 5, German translation: *Des Clemens von Alexandrien Teppiche wissenschaftlicher Darlegung, entsprechend der wahren Philosophie*, I–VII, übers. Otto Stählin (München 1937), 266.

⁵¹ ASJP, *Beati* 124, ll. 32v–33r. Mascarell mentions Socrates, Baruchus, Salustian, Lactantius and Justin.

⁵² Oecumenicus: "Ita multos ante inscriptionem hanc est, Divis Asiae et Europae ac Libyae, Deo ignoto et peregrino." *Commentarius in Acta Apostolorum Oecumeni Tricens in Thessalia opera omnia* (Migne PL 118, col. 738).

⁵³ *Clemente Alexandrini opera quae extant omnia* (Migne PG 8, col. 806ff), *strom.* I, cap. 19.

⁵⁴ Tostado, *Commentaria in Genesim*, cap. 2, n. 114.

⁵⁵ Tommaso Bozio, *De signis ecclesiae dei* (Köln 1592, Lyon 1594, Kilm 1626), lib. 5, arg. 3, sig. 12.

⁵⁶ Tostado, *Commentarius in Ruth*, cap. 2, n. 12, quoted after ASJP, *Beati* 124, fo 31.

⁵⁷ Johannes Chrysostomus, *Homilia 5 in cap. 1 Epistolae ad Romanos*, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos* (Migne PG 60, col. 426), ASJP, *Beati* 124, fo 30r.

§ 1. *Adversus hunc articulum inofficium querelam nec Hebræorum, nec Gentium populus aliquis instituere potest*
Against this article neither the Hebrew nor the Gentile peoples can have any objections

At first Mascarell observed that the Chinese were not especially distinguished in comparison to the other pagan peoples, they only were quite fervent devotees of God before the propagation of the Gospel when all heathen peoples outside of Judah were equal. The Jews did not suffer any injustice concerning the veneration of God by the Chinese since the Chinese are not compared with them, but with other peoples outside the synagogue. Tostado helped to define the term “gentiles” (gentes); in the Holy Scripture gentiles are understood as those peoples who neither with regard to the ancestry nor the rite belonged to Israelites (“scitis quia principes Gentium. . .” Matthew 20:25). In the Holy Scripture all humans besides the Jews were pagans, and the number of the Jews was quite small in comparison to the others. ⑩ This was also Paul’s opinion in the letter to the Romans 3:29; “Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.”

The true God was venerated by the Chinese for 2000 years, while his veneration by the Jews was shorter. In the chronology of Pétau he was revered from Abraham until the arrival of Christ for 2026 years, but from the proclamation of the law of Moses until Christ there were 1530 years (in Pétau) or, in other chronologies, 1508 years. The election of Israel started with Israel’s exodus from Egypt. Besides that also the Jews were not constant in the cult of God, sometimes they dropped off, when they, for example, adored the Golden Calf (Exodus 32) or when they venerated Belphégor (Ba’ul of Pe’or, Numbers 25). During the time of the judges they served Ba’ul (Judges 2:11f; 2:17; 3:12 a. o.).

The objection why not the more constant Chinese or another people but the Jews received so many benefits from God was responded by Mascarell by arguing that God’s donations had not to be in connection with good deeds, as Paul said; “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1 Corinthians 4:7). The Jews received by God’s special care many miracles, revelations, prophecies and other good things. Concerning sainthood they exceeded all other nations, and the example of St. Peter proves similar things, for he betrayed the Lord three times and yet he was chosen. Therefore the Jews exceed all other nations with their sanctity and God’s gifts, the Chinese, however, exceed them in constancy of faith. Their sanctity cannot be doubted, for even David, Magdalena and Augustine declined for some times from God, but were still saints.

5. Article

Non debet Sinarum Imperator Christianam religionem aestimare novam, et insolentem; cum illa habeat principia, et fundamenta eadem, atque antiqua religio, quam profitebantur ante – res Sinarum sapientes, atque Imperatores, qui eundem alium quem nunc Christiani Deum coluere, eundemque Caeli, et terræ Dominum agnoverunt

The Chinese emperor must not consider the Christian religion as something new and insufficient, because it has the same principles and fundamentals as the old religion confessed by the old wise men and emperors of China for they adored the same God as the Christians do and acknowledged him as Lord of Heaven and Earth. ⑪

§ 1: *Erroris nihil, magnam imo probabilitatem præfixus articulus continet*
This article quite probably contains no error

⑩ Tostado, *Commentaris in Mattheum*, ASJP, Brest 174, in 34r.

⑪ Cf. La Gohén, p. 104

Mascarell assumed that China was colonized by Joktan, Eber's son, or his grandsons, who laid there the fundamentals of the true religion.

In Mascarell's opinion this is in accordance with the church fathers and the dogmata, for the true church is older than paganism. This is confirmed by Tertullian,⁶⁰ and by Thomas Aquinas who wrote that many heathens even received a revelation, as could be seen from Job 19:25: "*Scio quod redemptor meus vivit.*" ("For I know that my redeemer liveth.")⁶¹ Augustine mentioned the Sibyls who prophesied much on Christ.⁶² That the true religion is older than the wrong religion is proven from the parable in Matthew 13:24-30, where a man sowed good seed, his enemy, however, sowed tares (weeds, zizania) between; the good seed, thus the true religion existed before the bad seed, i. e. idolatry, was added. Gênébrard wrote that Noah and his sons and grandsons conserved the true old religion and that Noah even received a supplementary revelation (Hebrews 11:7). This religion survived during the following centuries. Noah and his descendents already passed the Christian dogmas, as the dogma concerning the Trinity of persons and the unity of God, the faith into the coming of Christ, the office of the High Priest, the visible indications of the faith as the sacrifice in the Old Testament as typos of the bloody sacrifice of Christ and the bloodless as typos of the Eucharist sacrament (for there were sacraments even in the law of nature).⁶³ There existed temples and religious places and everything necessary for the veneration of God.⁶⁴ Reports about such revelations concerning the future Redeemer Jesus Christ and his virgin mother were given by Jacques Boulduc⁶⁵ and by "Navarrus".⁶⁶ The druids of the old Gauls had erected an altar with the inscription "*Virgini pariturae*" (for the birth giving virgin) before Christ's birth. The church father Justin the Martyr wrote about Sokrates that he was not only saved but that he even was a martyr for the Athenians had punished him with death because he had confessed the one God. Many eminent philosophers of the gentiles were saved in Justin's opinion because they believed in Jesus Christ.⁶⁷

In Gênébrard's and Pétiau's chronologies the heathens received the true religion from Noah and his offspring. After the Flood Noah lived still 350 years (Genesis 9:28) and orally passed down the old traditions, which remained pure until the 11th generation. Therefore the roots of the faith were in the "most noble Empire of the Chinese" very deep, much deeper than the seed of the wrong religion, the Zizania.

Mascarell found the reasons why there were no proofs for the old true religion in China in Greek and Latin. He observed that India and the adjacent regions were settled by Joktan's sons. However, the names of the corresponding peoples were unknown and therefore it was impossible to report about them. These distances were too huge. Also Hieronymus wrote that one did not know the names of the peoples who were the offspring of Joktan.⁶⁸ Mascarell rhetorically asked; if we only

⁶⁰ Quinti Septimii Florentis Tertulliani *Apologétique adversus gentes pro christianis*, cap. 19 und 20 (Migne *PL* 1, cols. 438ff).

⁶¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Somma Theologiae*, 2a 2ae q. 1, art. 7, 313f.

⁶² Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, lib. 18, cap. 23 (Migne *PL* 41, cols. 579f).

⁶³ Paul Deurrier, *Speculum christianae religionis in triplici lege naturali, mosaica et evangelica* (Paris 1666), 390-406.

⁶⁴ Quoted from Gênébrard, lib. 5 of his chronology; ASJP, Broter 124, fo 36v.

⁶⁵ Jacques Boulduc (or Boulduc), capuchin, born in Paris about 1580, famous preacher and author of theological books, especially *Revelata ante legem libri tres* (Lyon 1626), and *De aggio christiano libri tres, quibus declaratur antiquissimi sacramentis Eucharistiae typica mysteria* (Lyon 1640), where he wrote that Adam and Noah already constituted the eucharist.

⁶⁶ "Navarrus" = Martin de Azpiloueta (Dr. Navarrus) OSA (1493-1586), an uncle of Francisco de Xavier SJ, professor for law in Toulouse, Salamanca and Coimbra.

⁶⁷ Justinus, *Apologia II* (Migne *PG* 6, cols. 459-462) and *Apologia I* (Migne *PG* 6, col. 358).

⁶⁸ Testudo, *Commentarius in Genesis*, cap. 10, q. 10, 159; ... *Et cum non fratris ejus Jectan. Sicut autem beatus Hieronymus isti populi nobis ignoti sunt, vel propter novitatem antiquae matritianae, quia propter bella debetis sunt, vel longinquam a nobis sunt, vel aliam populi civitatem.* " *CI*, cap. 10, q. 11

know so few things about these peoples, how can we then dare to judge their deeds following the criteria of our censorship? Nothing in the Holy Scripture or in the church fathers contradicted the five condemned propositions.

Conclusion

The Spanish Jesuit Vincentius Mascarell did evidently not belong to those theologians of his times who were convinced that everybody, who was not baptized, was lost eternally, regardless of his belief and ethics. With their books dealing with the old Chinese religion the Jesuits had come to a field which was quite dangerous, for their adversaries reproached them (and especially Le Comte) to preach Deism or even Socinianism to the Chinese people, i. e. an insufficient faith where one did not need to believe explicitly in the necessity of the redemption by Jesus Christ, in Trinity and other dogmata. Mascarell tried to escape this accusation with the help of a negative proof; nothing in the Holy Scripture contradicts the assumption that the Chinese might have been saved. The Chinese people as offspring of Noah's good son Shem lived in remote areas where they kept the original, pure faith for a long time.^④

For theologians like Mascarell several possibilities existed how mankind outside Christianity could perhaps have been saved:

1. by the revelation given to the parents of mankind, which was traded by Noah and his sons to the Chinese, who are descendants of Noah's son Shem;
2. by following the law of nature written into the heart;
3. by following the instruction and example of certain enlightened men and women, who lived outside the Jewish - Christian tradition, the "*Prisci Theologi*", as the philosopher Confucius in China, who played an important role in the Jesuits' reports as prophet of Jesus Christ.^⑤

Mascarell's "Apo-logia" was written as a tool for the Jesuit order in the Rites Controversy to defend their method of accommodation. This meant not to reject the good features of the Chinese culture and especially things of the Chinese religion and philosophy which seemed to be compatible with Catholicism. Mascarell's attitude was not so much shaped by practical accommodation but by a world view presented and traded by the church fathers. His understanding of the Catholic Church was an "inclusive" one, i. e. the Church in principle embraced all places, times and peoples. In this way other religions of the world were interpreted within the framework of Catholic dogmata and traditions, and in this respect Mascarell followed the line of other contemporary Jesuits in China, as Philippe Couplet (or *Prospero Intorcetta*) in the introduction to the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, the Figurists and others. However, proceeding like this led to negate the otherness of religions in China (old Confucianism is the same religion as the primitive religion of mankind, law of nature) and to refuse it as idolatry and atheism (modern "atheist" Confucianism, idolatrous Buddhism and Daoism).

Mascarell's "Apoloogia" was never printed, perhaps there was not enough time, perhaps it was too learned. The attitude of the Jesuits, however, seem to be confirmed by the Decree "*Nostra Aetate*" of Vaticanum II, where we read: "From ancient times down to the present, there is found among various peoples a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of thing and over the events of human history; at times some indeed have come to the recognition of a Supreme Being, or even a Father. This perception and recognition penetrates their lives with a pro

④ Von Gallani, "Mascarell", 251.

⑤ For example in Martin Martini's SJ (1614 - 1661) *Sinicus Historiae Decus Prima* (Munich 1658), 131f, because he interpreted the Unicorn as a figure of the future Messiah.

found religious sense."⁶⁴

Despite the quite traditional argumentation the ideas and arguments of Mascarell and his brethren have a quite modern appearance because they were open for other non European peoples, who did not belong to Christianity. Many theologians and missionaries had an image of an all-embracing Church being "Catholic" in the literal and best sense: the real spiritual church did not exclude any time, place and people, as was stated by the Venerable Bede or by Roberto Bellarmin. This may seem pretentious but in this way, the old demand "*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" (outside the Church is no salvation) was also fulfilled.⁶⁵ In the course of the Rites Controversy, however, such an image became narrow again by men who were anxious about the purity of the faith and who rather pleaded that the whole Chinese nation and other "pagan" nations to be lost since their beginning if they were not baptized.

In 1968 Joseph Ratzinger, later to become Benedict XVI, wrote: "What concerns us is no longer how the others will be saved. Certainly we know, by our faith in divine mercy, that they can be saved. How this happens, we leave to God. The point that does concern us is principally this: Why, despite the wider possibility of salvation, is the Church still necessary? Why should faith and life still continue to come through her? In other words, the present day Christians no longer question if their non-believer brothers can reach salvation. Overall, they desire to know what is the meaning of their union with the universal embrace of Christ and their union with the Church."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ "*Ita ab antiquo usque ad tempus haereticum apud illos prope insensit quaedam perceptio illius veritatis virtutis, quae curam curam et certissima vitae humanae processerit, immo aliquando cognitio Sacramenti Numinis vel etiam Patris.*"

⁶⁵ Originally, Cyprian of Carthage (200/210 – 258) spoke not about pagans, but about a schismatic church, s. his Epistola 73,21. However, it is no dogma but means that the surest way to salvation is the Catholic Church, but other ways are possible if men do not belong to it because of ignorance. For quotations from church fathers to the topics: <http://www.churchfathers.org/category/salvation/salvation-outside-the-church/> (2 of Jun 2012).

⁶⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, "*Necessità della missione della Chiesa nel mondo,*" in *La Fine della Chiesa come Società Perfetta*, Verona: Mondadori, 1968, 69 – 70

中文题目:

得救还是定罪? 马斯卡雷利在礼仪之争(1701)中的“辩护”

柯兰霓

远东宗教学专家,德国维尔茨堡大学天主教神学专业神学博士,2005年于明斯特大学天主教神学院远东宗教学方向获得教授资格并开始任教职。其后参与爱尔兰根大学、澳门和旧金山利玛窦研究所及“Encyclopedia” of Theologiae GmbH (scientific bio-bibliographies)等研究项目。论著集中于差传历史、差传神学、中欧文化交流及中国礼仪之争。最新论著为: *Vom Jesuiten, Kaiserin und Kanonen. Europa und China – eine wechselvolle Geschichte* (Darmstadt 2012).

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提要: 颜珞(1655 - 1730)在1693年的命运引起了关于中国礼仪及其术语的新争论。此事件被提交到了罗马教宗那里。1700年,从耶稣会士李明和哥比安所写的关于中国文化著作中节选的一些主题被提交到了在巴黎的索邦神学院而被定罪。这在欧洲的学者与神学家中间引起了对中国宗教和礼仪的广泛争论。为耶稣会士在中国的适应策略进行辩护的学者之一,是西班牙耶稣会士马斯卡雷利(1660 - 1730);他是位于萨拉曼卡和瓦亚多利的圣经学、圣经编年史学和教义学教授。在其“Apologia historico-dogmatica pro primævi veri Dei cultus apud Sinas perennitate & juxta legem naturæ religiose observantia, ab anonymo Pinciano Professore exarata”著作中,他试图支持其同行关于中国编年史、古代的中国人可能已经认识了真正的上帝,并且拥有这种知识已经数百年了等观点。通过其关于古代教父以及当代神学家的深刻和广播的学识,马斯卡雷利为那些被定罪的主题构建了充分的辩护,然而,这些论述却从没有机会出版过。

关键词: 中国礼仪之争、马斯卡雷利、中国编年史、索邦定罪、外邦人的得救