

## THE ECONOMY OF THE SPANISH FRANCISCAN MISSION IN CHINA DURING THE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: THE FUNDING SOURCES, EXPENDITURES, LOANS AND DEFICITS\*

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### ABSTRACT

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Spanish Franciscans, remained active in China as an important missionary force. With unremitting efforts, they gradually established their own mission in the provinces of Shandong, Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Jiangxi, etc., and achieved outstanding results. However, these missionaries dedicated to the religious enterprise were bound to encounter many economic difficulties, not only to secure the missionaries' own primary living conditions, but also to carry out missionary activities. For a long time, researchers paid relatively little attention to the economic dilemmas of missionaries, especially those related to the Franciscans. This work tries to utilize the missionary letters and reports to analyze the economy of the Spanish Franciscans in China during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

KEY WORDS: Spanish Franciscans; economy; 17<sup>th</sup> century; China.

## LA ECONOMÍA DE LA MISIÓN FRANCISCANA ESPAÑOLA EN CHINA DURANTE EL SIGLO XVII: FUENTES DE FINANCIACIÓN, GASTOS, PRÉSTAMOS Y DÉFICITS

### RESUMEN

En el siglo XVII, los franciscanos españoles permanecían activos en China como una fuerza misionera muy importante. Con esfuerzos incansables, establecieron gradualmente sus propias misiones en las provincias de Shandong, Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Jiangxi, etc., y lograron resultados sobresalientes. Sin embargo, estos misioneros dedicados a la empresa religiosa encontraron muchas dificultades económicas, no solo para garantizar las condiciones básicas de la vida diaria, sino también para llevar a cabo las actividades misioneras. Durante mucho tiempo, los investigadores han prestado relativamente poca atención a los dilemas económicos de los misioneros, especialmente esos relacionados con los franciscanos. El presente trabajo intenta utilizar las cartas e informes misioneros, y analizar la economía de los franciscanos españoles en China durante el siglo XVII.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Franciscanos españoles; economía; siglo XVII; China.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the Age of Discovery, the dissemination of Christianity across the world came along with Spain and Portugal's colonial expansion. The missionaries who harboured a devout faith and evangelized in Asia, Africa and America were a fundamental driving force. In East Asia, while the Jesuits were already evangelizing in China, the Spanish Franciscans, taking the Philippines as a transit stop, were also preparing to enter this Asian country to found their own mission here. After several attempts, Antonio de Santa María Caballero [利安当, Li Andang] succeeded in 1633. More than ten years later, Caballero arrived in the province of Shandong and began to evangelize there together with another Franciscan Buenaventura Ibáñez [文都辣, Wen Dula]. However, the lack of financial aids and qualified personnel greatly hindered their missionary enterprise. To solve the problem, in 1662 Ibáñez travelled back to Europe to seek help, and meanwhile he recruited eight new missionaries to join the Chinese mission. Although unfortunately, Caballero had died before they returned to China, the new group settled in Guangdong. Through many years of hard work, the sphere of influence of the Spanish Franciscans was finally reaching out. Up until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they had already set up missions in the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Shandong, and Jiangxi, etc., and they had become a not negligible force.

The authors of this paper believe that the Franciscans can be divided into new and old generations by the second arrival of Antonio de Santa María Caballero in China in 1649, because the two generations demonstrated different understandings toward China, as well as distinct evangelization methodologies. The old generation of Franciscans followed the European-style without any adjustment, preaching in the streets and criticizing the Chinese people's beliefs and from time to time colliding with the government and the locals. On the other hand, the new generation gradually grasped the reality of this country, and they began to learn Chinese culture, as well as try various other missionary methods. After the burst of the Chinese Rites Controversy, their mindset tilted toward that of the Jesuits and were willing to stay in China for mission.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, it has been considered that only the Jesuit order was able to establish fruitful bridges of cultural understanding for mission and intercultural relations. However, during the last decades, it has been seen how other religious orders that preached in China, especially the Franciscans, gradually incorporated mechanisms of social and cultural interaction more adapted to the characteristics of Chinese society at that time. In this article, we graduate this process of learning and deepening in the adaptation strategies to the cultural forms and the Chinese social dynamics by the Franciscans. The first generation of Franciscans has already reached some levels of knowledge and cultural contact. However, it was the second generation of Franciscan missionaries who progressively deepened in turning this linguistic and cultural knowledge into a fundamental tool in their missionary task.<sup>4</sup>

Academic discussions about the Franciscan mission in China is relatively rare. With respect to missionary's fund-

ing issue, Chinese scholars, such as Kang Zhijie [康志杰] and Tang Kaijian [汤开建], have made some analysis, but they mainly are centered around the Jesuits, giving little words to the Franciscans.<sup>5</sup> Based on a private account book of the Jesuits François de Rougemont [鲁日满, Lu Riman], Belgian scholar Noël Golvers systematically sorted out the economic and financial situations of this Jesuit and his mission.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese researcher Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] also talked about the sources of the Franciscans' funding with convincing data. He not only highlighted the decisive influence of donations from the Spanish Crown to the mission, but also analyzed three sources in the time of Antonio de Santa María Caballero: capital from the Province of San Gregorio in Manila, subsidies from the Jesuit Johann Adam Schall von Bell [汤若望, Tang Ruowang],<sup>7</sup> and donations from the Chinese believers.<sup>8</sup> However, topics such as the funds' usage and distribution and Franciscans' solutions to financial shortages have not been elaborated further.

It is necessary and beneficial to look closely at the whole picture of the Franciscans' mission in order to thoroughly understand the Christian missionary history in China during the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties, and to bring it back to life. At the same time, consulting books and articles written by Chinese scholars allows for a more comprehensive view of the subject, since it is China who witnessed the history of cultural interactions between the missionaries and the social environment around them.

Therefore, this article, taking a step further from the research of Cui Weixiao and other scholars, and based on a large number of missionary letters and reports, tries to analyze the economy of the Spanish Franciscans in China during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>5</sup> Kang Zhijie pointed out that the income of the Jesuits in China mainly came from the Western subsidies, the support of the Chinese literati, the donation of the believers, the salary of the missionaries who worked for the emperor in the court, and the rewards of the emperor. She also mentioned that the Jesuits opened money shops to obtain income. See: Kang Zhijie [康志杰] 1994. Tang Kaijian utilized both Chinese and Western historical materials to sort out the economic sources of the Jesuits. In addition to those mentioned by Kang Zhijie, he paid special attention to the profits of the Jesuits from the raw silk trade and the rental of real estates. See: Tang Kaijian [汤开建] 2001. In another paper, Kang Zhijie analyzed in detail the activities of the Jesuits in Beijing in the 18th century to open money shops. She believed that wealth is the lever of religious development. The Jesuits operated the money shops mainly to back up the expansion of their missionary career. See: Kang Zhijie [康志杰] 2016. Besides, she also conducted an analysis of Ricci's economic activities, indicating his economic principles, such as "living within your means" and "taking what is despised by others", and proposing that Ricci received the official salary without being an official, which was a major feature that distinguishes him from his successors. See: Kang Zhijie [康志杰] 2019a, 123-128. Recently, her monograph on the economic activities of missionaries was published. The time span of this book extends from late Ming to the dawn of People's Republic of China in 1949, and the spotlight is still focused on the Jesuits. See: Kang Zhijie [康志杰] 2019b.

<sup>6</sup> Golvers 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592-1666), a German Jesuit who arrived in Macau in 1619. Later, he was sent to mainland China to preach the gospel. When Caballero opened the Franciscan mission in Shandong, the Jesuit worked in the royal court of the Qing Dynasty and had a good relationship with the emperor and the upper mandarins, so he was able to occasionally subsidize Caballero. For more information about this Jesuit, see: Pfister 1932, 162-182; Malek 1998.

<sup>8</sup> Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 419-429.

<sup>3</sup> Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 327-348.

<sup>4</sup> The missionary methods of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, as well as their understanding of Chinese culture is not the subject of this work. For more information and analysis, see: Cummins 1978, 1993; Villarroel 1993; Gernet 1982. The book of Gernet has been translated into English and Spanish, see: Gernet 1985 y 1989.

## 2. THE INCOME SOURCES

First, it is noticeable that there was quite a degree of diversity regarding the income sources of these Franciscans. In the time of Antonio de Santa María Caballero [利安当, Li Andang], money shortage was a constant headache for the mission, since, at that moment, the Franciscans did not yet have stable sources of funding. Consequently, the amount of money in their hand was always very volatile and had no guarantees.<sup>9</sup> The new generation of Franciscans, in contrast, had regular funding, which can be summarized as “basic fixed funds plus random supplementary funds”. The generally stable funding was a solid foundation that supported the continuous development of the mission. Their basic financing sources can be sorted into three types.

One main source was the money provided by the Spanish Crown. As we mentioned earlier, when Caballero evangelized in Shandong, due to lack of human resources and money, he entrusted his companion Buenaventura Ibáñez to return to Europe to recruit more missionaries and seek funding. Buenaventura left in 1662, and upon arriving in Spain, he visited the Empress Maria Anna of Austria. In addition to requesting permission to recruit eight more Franciscans for the Chinese mission, he also pleaded that 1,500 pesos of the Treasury of México be allocated each year to support the mission. The Empress promised to finance them for five years, and the term could be prolonged if the mission was to be continued.<sup>10</sup> As time went by and the Franciscan mission in China developed, at the request of the missionaries, the Crown kept its promise and extended the aid on a five-year cycle.<sup>11</sup> In 1689, King Charles II decided to continue financing the mission for another ten years and ordered to increase the number of beneficiaries to 20 and the amount of annual subsidy to 140 pesos per person.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this periodic royal financing was granted exclusively to the Spanish Franciscans who were sent to China from the Philippines. Neither the Spanish missionaries of other orders nor the Italian Franciscans (such as Bernardino de la Chiesa [伊大任, Yi Daren]) who were sent by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith were entitled to this aid. Thus, this funding arrangement became an outstanding economic benefit that distinguished Spanish Franciscans from other missionaries. According to the data recorded by the Franciscan José Navarro [恩懋修, En Maoxiu], up until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the total amount had reached 80,000 pesos.<sup>13</sup> Thanks to these funds, the Franciscans were freed from their mendicant life, and they could dedicate themselves to real evangelical work. However, what needs to be pointed out is that this conclusion is based on comparisons with their previous situation, and the improvement of financial position was in

relative terms. They still needed to worry about economic constraints while carrying out their mission. In fact, due to inefficient transportation and social instability, rarely did the money arrive in time.

Also, the granting of funds followed strict rules. It was stipulated that the Treasury of México's money could not be sent out until the treasury officials received a certificate stating the number of Franciscans in China with their signatures.<sup>14</sup> As a result, whenever the certificate took too long to reach Mexico, missionaries in China fell back into misery. Even though the money was sent out on time, as its pathway crossed Manila first, sometimes unexpected events, such as embezzlement, could delay it further. For example, in 1685, the Provincial misappropriated 500 pesos that could have been dedicated to the Chinese mission. The acting Commissary of the Chinese mission Agustín de San Pascual [利安定, Li Anding] was angry, his uprightness urged him to ask the Provincial to pay them back.<sup>15</sup> Agustín's attitudes derived from their tough economic situation. It was such a massive loss for them that even after two years, when Francisco Agnete was elected Provincial, Agustín still insisted on frugality.<sup>16</sup>

Sometimes, there were even disputes. For example, in 1688, Buenaventura Ibáñez told Miguel Flores that he received 1,000 pesos annually. However, the royal family's funds should have been 1,500 pesos per year. To know the details, Ibáñez wrote to Mexico for three consecutive years for explanations and was only to be told that Mexico had retained 500 pesos each year to avoid loss during transportation, a response that astonished and aggrieved Ibáñez greatly.<sup>17</sup> Although details about this dispute remain unclear to us, it undoubtedly reflected the fact that the funding from the Crown was not as stable and secure as it had been imagined in the first place.

Due to such accidents, the Franciscans were often stuck in financial crises. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that funds from the Crown provided the new generation of Franciscans with a more comfortable and peaceful life than their predecessors.

The second primary financing sponsor was the Province of San Gregorio of Manila. As researcher Tang Kaijian [汤开建] pointed out, besides daily expenditures, “there was also a great need for money to build churches, print books, establish convents and schools, relieve the poor, and even bribe local officials”.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the Crown subsidy was far from enough and Manila funding became necessary.

In comparison to the Crown's aid, the Province's had no such strict and mechanical rules. The amount and intervals of grants were quite flexible, always adjusting to the financial situation of the Province and the real needs of the missionaries in China. For example, in 1686, Agustín de San Pascual received 200 pesos with which he decorated the church.<sup>19</sup> Ear-

<sup>9</sup> For more information about the economic situations of the Franciscans in the time of Caballero, see: Mungello 2001, 14-18.

<sup>10</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Autobiographia, 31. Mart. 1690”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 320-321. This trip of Buenaventura Ibáñez in Europa is not the subject of this work. For more details, see: Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 171-180.

<sup>11</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Provinciale, 30. Nov. 1685”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 285.

<sup>12</sup> “Fr. Jaime Tarín: Estado de la misión en el año de 1695”. In: Maas 1917, 121.

<sup>13</sup> “Joseph Navarro: Epistola ad Legatum Hispaniae Apud S. Sedem, 6 Ian. 1699”. In: Mensaert 1975, 354.

<sup>14</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Michaellem Flores, 24. Febr. 1686”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 292.

<sup>15</sup> “Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad PP. Defenitores, 8. Nov. 1686”. In: *Ibid.*, 601-602.

<sup>16</sup> “Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 28. Sep. 1687”. In: *Ibid.*, 614.

<sup>17</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Michaellem Flores, 1688”. In: *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>18</sup> Tang Kaijian [汤开建] 2001, 73.

<sup>19</sup> “Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 15. Nov. 1686”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 609.

lier, when Guangdong Franciscans prepared to buy a house outside the city and adapt it to the Church of San Francisco, Buenaventura Ibáñez received 1,000 pesos from Manila.<sup>20</sup>

However, due to various reasons, this money was not a steady source either, which left the missionaries in a precarious situation. For instance, in 1679, 1,000 pesos that were destined for the Chinese mission were stolen. In order to minimize the loss and potential damage as much as possible, Ibáñez had to ask the Provincial that the Province and the group of Franciscans in China share the loss equally.<sup>21</sup>

The third financial backing came from *Hermandad de la Santa Misericordia*, a lay association founded in Manila.<sup>22</sup> It was annual funding, which sometimes helped the Franciscans to go through economic crises, although the amount was not as large as those of the previous sources. For example, in the same year in which the Provincial embezzled money, the mission would have stalled if this association did not bail them out.<sup>23</sup> The Franciscans did not specify the exact amount of this money, but according to Agustín de San Pascual, it was enough to support three missionaries.<sup>24</sup> He also pointed out that, in this period, each one needed approximately 140 pesos per year.<sup>25</sup> So it is estimated that the almsgiving would be at least 400 pesos each year.

In summary, the three financing means mentioned above were the most basic ones, and together they played a pivotal role in driving the mission forward. However, with the interruption of many unforeseen events, such as those that have been discussed, it was clear that these basic subsidies were not adequate. Consequently, additional funds became indispensable, which can be divided into two types:

Firstly, devotees, including both Spanish in Manila and Chinese, offered the missionaries financial help in times of need. These donations were not regular, but somewhat random and accidental. Each donation varied greatly in quantity, and each had a specific objective. In other words, a given alms was dedicated to a specific event or purpose. For example, the church of Huizhou [惠州] was erected with the financing of a general named Antonio Nieto, who also donated 500 pesos each year for the maintenance of the church and the living cost of its missionaries.<sup>26</sup> In Fujian, the church dedicated to San Pedro de Alcántara in Taining [泰宁] was built by Pedro de la Piñuela in 1681 with the alms of Juan de Vargas de Hurtado, the governor of the Philippines of that period.<sup>27</sup> In addition, there were some sporadic donations. For example, Lucas Estevan [王路嘉, Wang Lujia] received alms of 100 pesos from the devotee Juan Ventura, and another devotee named Quintero sent Agustín de San

Pascual 50 pesos each year.<sup>28</sup> However, just as it happened to the relief of the Crown, the alms of the devotees were also subject to misappropriations. In 1703, Piñuela, a man who rarely complained, expressed his anger because Manila withheld 3,400 pesos from 4,000 pesos that a benefactor had left for the mission and only sent 600 to China.<sup>29</sup>

Except westerners, the Chinese mandarins also gave alms to the Franciscans on some occasions. For example, Shang Zhixin [尚之信]<sup>30</sup> financed them to set up the first Franciscan church in Guangdong (Church of Our Lady of the Angels) and the Church of San Francisco outside the city walls. When Antonio de Santa Maria Caballero erected the first church of his order in Shandong, he received a 150 pesos donation from the local mandarins.<sup>31</sup> Apart from this, the Chinese Christians also did everything possible to help the preachers. These believers themselves were not usually in a very good economic situation, so rather than money, they donated items that the Franciscans needed, which can be seen as another form of financing. In 1679, when Agustín de San Pascual just arrived in Shandong, a province which he set foot on for the first time, he received some fish from a Chinese Christian.<sup>32</sup> In the same year, Pedro de la Piñuela was in Fujian, preaching the gospel alone. Believers there not only helped him with manual labour, but also offered him rice.<sup>33</sup> In addition, one of the two churches built for women in Nan'an [南安] of Jiangxi Province and put up by Piñuela was altered from a house offered by a local Christian. This help coming from the poor Chinese, no matter how insignificant it may seem, gave the missionaries great consolation when they were in economic crisis.

<sup>28</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 25 de enero de 1683". In: Alcobendas 1933, 158; "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Miguel Flores, Cantón, 6 de ... de 1688". In: *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>29</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 25. April. 1703". In: Wyngaert 1942, 364.

<sup>30</sup> In the early years of the Qing Dynasty [清] (1644-1912), the imperial court still did not have enough influence to fully control the entire country, so it took the measure of letting the Han ethnic group govern itself [以汉制汉, Yihanzhihan], naming some mandarins and surrendered generals of the Ming Dynasty to rule the southern provinces. The government granted Wu Sangui [吴三桂] the title "Prince of Pingxi" [平西王, Pingxi wang] with the governorship of Yunnan and Guizhou provinces, to Shang Kexi [尚可喜] the title "Prince of Pingnan" [平南王, Pingnan wang] with the governorship of Guangdong Province, and Geng Zhongming [耿仲明] the title "Prince of Jingnan" [靖南王, Jingnan wang] with the governorship of Fujian Province. These three feudatory princes were so powerful that they could even recruit their own armies and set the tax rates in their provinces. When Buenaventura Ibáñez returned to China and entered Guangdong in 1672 with Francisco de la Concepción [卞世芳, Bian Shifang] and Jaime Tarín [林养默, Lin Yangmo], the administrative and military powers of the Province were in the hands of Shang Zhixin [尚之信], firstborn son of Shang Kexi [尚可喜], who at that time was so old and sick that he built another mansion to live in and let his son govern the province. See: Zhao Erxun [赵尔巽] 1977, 12856.

<sup>31</sup> In the letter to the Provincial, Caballero indicated that the mandarins had given him 150 taels of silver. But in another letter four years later, the amount mentioned was 130. The only certain thing is that raising the church cost him 150 taels. See: "Antonius A. S. Maria Caballero: Epistola ad P. Provinciale, 24. Ian. 1652". In: Wyngaert 1933, 410; "Antonius A. S. Maria Caballero: Epistola ad P. Provinciale, 18. Iun. 1656". In: *Ibid.*, 445.

<sup>32</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 18. Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 492.

<sup>33</sup> "Pedro de la Piñuela: Carta al P. Provincial.- Loyuenhien, 6 de enero de 1680". In: Maas 1917, 35; "Pedro de la Piñuela: Carta al Miguel de Santa María.- Loyuen, 7 de febrero de 1680". In: *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>20</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Informe al P. Provincial, Fr. Bernardo de la Concepción, Cantón, 20 de marzo de 1679". In: Alcobendas 1933, 116.

<sup>21</sup> "Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Michalem A. S. Maria, 24. Mart. 1680". In: Wyngaert 1936, 222; "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Bonav. Ibáñez, 26. Nov. 1679". In: *Ibid.*, 507.

<sup>22</sup> About the founding of the association, see: De Huerta 1865, 554-556; Maldonado de Puga 1742, 17-20.

<sup>23</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad PP. Definitores, 8. Nov. 1686". In: Wyngaert 1936, 602.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 28. Sep. 1687". In: Wyngaert 1936, 622.

<sup>26</sup> "Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Laurentium A. Plagis, 4. Mart. 1681". In: *Ibid.*, 234-235.

<sup>27</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Relatio sui Ministerio, 30 Dec. 1684". In: Wyngaert 1942, 290.

Secondly, they received help from the missionaries of other orders, above all, the Jesuits. At first, the Jesuits tried to prevent mendicants from entering China, but this attitude did not mean that they did not provide any help<sup>34</sup>. For example, when Antonio de Santa María Caballero arrived in Shandong Province, he was confronted with many difficulties. In this case, the Jesuit Johann Adam Schall von Bell offered him the grant from Beijing [北京]. In a letter, Caballero mentioned that "Father Juan Adam sent 20 taels to me from Beijing, even though neither had I served him anything, nor had I indicated my needs"<sup>35</sup>. Also, Caballero was a good friend of the Jesuit Jean Valat [汪儒望, Wang Ruwang]. In Ji'nan [济南], capital of this province, these two and the Dominican Domingo Coronado had a perfect collaboration. If they wanted to visit their churches in other places, they never left all at once but took turns, to keep an eye on the work in Ji'nan.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it can be believed that the successful opening of a new Christian mission by Caballero in this province was attributed in part to the help of these Jesuits. His successor in the province, Agustín de San Pascual, also benefited from the kindness of the Jesuits: "I owe the thanks to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus in the court, who gave me alms of 12 taels of silver and a garment, with which I have (something to rely on) until the help that Brother Br. Bernardo brought".<sup>37</sup>

It is worth pointing out that these sources mentioned above were closely related to the Manila Galleons. As noted, the Spanish always took the Philippines as a transit station for the Chinese-Spanish trade. The galleons transported a large variety of Chinese and Japanese products to New Spain and Europe. At the same time, they brought silver and resources to the Philippines to trade with China and to support the colonization in the Far East. In this sense, the galleons that were in charge of transporting the subsidy of the Spanish Crown were those who kept the Franciscan mission in China afloat. At the same time, after the Spanish founded the city of Manila in the Philippines, they frequently experienced shortages of resources. Unlike in Latin America where the colonizers developed the plantation economy, there was

not a similar system in the Philippines or other resources that could bring considerable income until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the situation improved with the prevalence of cane plantation. In this case, the Province, some religious staff and devotees participated in Galleons trade and a part of the profits gained from these trades were directly dedicated to maintaining the mission. It can be believed that without the Manila Galleons, the Franciscans in China would have lost a large part of the funds for their missions.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, it can be concluded that the financial situation of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Franciscans presented a duality. On the one hand, the financial sources of the missionaries were broader and more diversified than those of their predecessors. This model (basic fixed financing on the one hand and random supplementary funds on the other) functioned as the backbone of the mission, providing the major part of the total funds. But on the other hand, all these subsidies could not be granted in a stable manner, which often forced the missionaries back into financial dilemmas.

### 3. THE USE OF ECONOMIC FUNDS

Similarly, the uses of the funding were also diversified. However, to understand this issue thoroughly, it will be essential to speak of the exchange rate between two monetary units that coexisted at the time in the letters of the Franciscans: Peso and Tael. Tael [两, liang] is a monetary unit whose value varied in different eras. In the Qing Dynasty, one tael contained 35 grams of silver. At the same time, the Peso used by these missionaries was the *Peso de ocho* (Piece of eight), which was widely used in Europe, the Americas and the Far East. Thanks to the enormous deposits of silver discovered in America, millions of *Pesos de ocho* were minted over several centuries during the Spanish presence in this territory, and the Manila Galleons transported these coins annually from Mexico to the Philippines for commercial purposes.<sup>39</sup> In general, one peso contained 25.56 grams of silver. Therefore, it can be calculated that one tael was equivalent to 1.3 pesos. This exchange rate was shown in some letters from Piñuela. In the year 1680, when he referred to the purchase of the church of Jiangle, the missionary indicated that the price was 113 taels,<sup>40</sup> whereas, in a report written in 1684, he opted to use another monetary unit to record the cost of the same purchase: 150 pesos.<sup>41</sup> From this example, we can see that the exchange rate was 1.3 peso per tael.

However, sometimes, the missionaries did not strictly follow this conversion rule. The researcher Noël Golvers be-

<sup>34</sup> There was a dual relationship between the Jesuits financed by Portugal and the Franciscans sent by Spain. On the one hand, they were all Christian missionaries, so they helped each other frequently. But, on the other hand, due to secular affairs and national ascriptions and emotions, the Jesuits did not welcome the participation of the Franciscans in the Chinese mission. The Portuguese government rejected that the Spaniards shared the benefits obtained from the trade with China and the Jesuits, likewise, feared that Spanish beggars would snatch their successes, and even damage China's religious enterprise with their reckless preaching measures, which the Franciscans had shown in their attempts to enter China in the previous years. For more analysis, see: Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 67-71, 85, 114-116. For more information about Franciscans' attempts to enter China, see: Cervera Jiménez 2014; Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 61-106.

<sup>35</sup> "Antonius A. S. Maria Caballero: Epistola ad P. Provincialem, Nov. 1653". In: Wyngaert 1933, 428. The original text was written in Spanish: "El P. Juan Adam me envío, sin haberle yo servido en nada, ni significadole mi necesidad, me remitió desde Pequin 20 taes".

<sup>36</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Sebastianum Rodriguez, 16. Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 483; Greslon 1671, 190; Pfister 1932, 281.

<sup>37</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Michaellem A. S. Maria, 20. Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 501. The original text was written in Spanish: "El agradecimiento se lo debo a los padres de la compañía de la corte, que me hicieron una limosna de doce taes de plata y un vestido, con que tengo hasta que llegue el socorro que trae el hermano Fr. Bernardo".

<sup>38</sup> For more analysis on the relationship of the missionaries in the Philippines and the Manila Galleons, see: Wang Zhihong [王志红] 2017. The author believes that the missionary's participation in the trade of the Manila Galleons had two motives. On the one hand, it was pushed by the shortage of the missionary funds, and on the other hand, the desire to pursue secular prosperity also urged them to take part in the trade. Most importantly, the Spanish missionaries effectively developed their evangelizing enterprise with the profits they obtained from these trades

<sup>39</sup> For more information about the role of the *Peso de ocho* in Asia and the economic relations between New Spain and China, Japan, Korea, as well as the Philippines, see: Valdés Lakowsky 1987.

<sup>40</sup> "Pedro de la Piñuela: Carta al P. Miguel de Santa María.- Lo-yuen, 7 de febrero de 1680". In: Maas 1917, 36.

<sup>41</sup> "Pedro de la Piñuela: Carta - Relación sobre sus trabajos apostólicos desde el año de 1676 hasta el de 1684.- Chianglo, 30 de diciembre de 1684". In: *Ibid.*, 46.

lieved that the rate should be 1.4. This conclusion was based on a narrative by Agustín de San Pascual and was justified by the descriptions of other missionaries such as Buenaventura Ibáñez.<sup>42</sup> As Noël Golvers mentioned, Father Agustín once explained that 60 taels of silver were 84 pesos,<sup>43</sup> and in another letter, 10 taels were 14 pesos.<sup>44</sup> In addition, Buenaventura Ibáñez reported that 16 taels were 23 pesos, 700 taels were 980 pesos, 100 taels were 140 pesos, 972 taels were 1,360 pesos, and 2,970 taels were 4,160 pesos.<sup>45</sup> In these cases, the exchange rate was practically 1.4.

The exchange rate adopted by these missionaries to make the conversion was often ambiguous and floating. For example, Father Agustín also gave another version of the exchange rate. When he spoke of a purchase of a house, he indicated that “it was bought with 1,000 taels, which were 1,334 pesos when exchanged to pesos, according to the exchange rate at that time. Besides, in order to sign on the document of the sale, it would cost 50 taels, which were 80 pesos”.<sup>46</sup> In this same short paragraph, there is the inconsistency of two different exchanges rates: 1.33 and 1.6. Bernardo de la Encarnación offered yet another possibility, noting that he had brought 500 pesos, which were approximately 450 taels.<sup>47</sup> In this case, the exchange rate would be 1.1.

In short, these different exchange rates were only inaccurate references. As the number (1.6) mentioned by Agustín de San Pascual can hardly be found in other documents, it can be stated that the exchange rate was generally between 1.1 and 1.4, and in most cases, the rate was 1.4. Therefore, in the subsequent analysis, 1.4 will be used for all calculations.

In the use of economic funds, the priority was given to the basic maintenance of the missionaries' life. This expense was huge, since the group was composed of eight, nine or more than ten Franciscans in most years. Well, how much money was needed each year to support a preacher? On this question, there was some disagreement among the Franciscans. For example, Agustín de San Pascual indicated that to sustain one person in Fujian, 50 taels per year would suffice.<sup>48</sup> However, this opinion was refuted by Bernardo de la Encarnación [郭纳壁, Guo Nabi] and Pedro de la Piñuela:

He says: with 60 pesos a minister is sustained in China, it is an error, or it will be true excluding travel

<sup>42</sup> Golvers 1999, 565.

<sup>43</sup> “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 29. Iulii. 1675”. En: Wyngaert 1936, 434.

<sup>44</sup> “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Sebastianum Rodriguez, 16. Mart. 1679”. In: *Ibid.*, 487.

<sup>45</sup> “Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Miguel de Santa María, Cantón, 24 de marzo de 1680”. In: Alcobendas 1933, 139; “Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 7 de enero de 1683”. In: *Ibid.*, 155; “Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 25 de enero de 1683”. In: *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>46</sup> “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Michaellem A. S. Maria, 20. Mart. 1679”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 497. The original text was written in Spanish: “se compro en 1000 taes, que reducidos a pessos, segun la quenta desta tierra, son 1334 pessos, pues para firmar la escritura de la venta les a de costar 50 taes, que son 80 pessos”.

<sup>47</sup> “Bernardus ab Incarnatione: Epistola ad Provinciale, 19 Dec. 1679”. In: Wyngaert 1942, 385.

<sup>48</sup> “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 29. Iulii. 1675”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 433.

expenses across the ministry, expenditures and living expenses of the novice and servants. For all this, 100 pesos per year are necessary.<sup>49</sup>

In the year when we came, he [the Father Agustín] wrote that a minister could sustain himself with 50 or 60 pesos. [...] but later he noticed that it would not be enough for sustaining a church with two or three persons.<sup>50</sup>

Perhaps the main reason for this discrepancy was that Agustín de San Pascual did not include incidental expenses in his budget, such as viaticum. Talking about the annual expenses of the Jesuits in his book, Noël Golvers also quoted the opinion of Agustín de San Pascual, pointing out that:

in his [...] letter from Fukien of 29 July 1675, Friar A. de San Pascual calculated that the amount of 50 ‘pessos’ (i.e. patacoons) —approximately equal to (50 x 0.7 = ) 35 taels— would cover the basic needs of one (Franciscan) missionary, if living during a whole year in frugality, accompanied by two ‘moços’ (‘domestics’) to serve Mass, with all costs for food, clothes, wax for the church services, payment of the ‘boys’ and all other common expenses included.<sup>51</sup>

Then, according to another report of the same Franciscan, Golvers carefully added that “even Franciscan sources speak of 60 *pessos* / patacoons, i.e. 60 x 70 = 42 taels, and this sum increased considerably when all the expenses for the church and pastoral services (*‘ministerium’*) and for one novice (*‘dogico’*) were included, then easily rising to 100 or 120 *pessos*, i.e. 70 or 84 taels”.<sup>52</sup>

It must be noted that the data mentioned in this report (‘100 or 120 *pessos*’) was calculated based on local prices when he was in Shandong province in 1678, while the letter of 1675 mentioned above in which Agustín de San Pascual affirmed 50 ‘*pessos*’ was written in Fujian province. Since the price levels of the two places as well as the years were different, they cannot be simply analogized. Nonetheless, as the two Franciscans insisted, if incidental expenses were added in the budget, 50 pesos were evidently insufficient. The most reasonable conclusion is that the sustenance of each Franciscan in China required about 100 pesos a year, approximately at the same level as the Jesuits.<sup>53</sup>

Of course, the price constantly varied according to the years and the provinces, so it is difficult to generalize the ex-

<sup>49</sup> “Bernardo de la Encarnación: Carta al P. Provincial.- Ningte, 19 de diciembre de 1679”. In: Maas 1917, 6. The original text was written in Spanish: “El decir: con 60 pesos se sustenta un ministro en China, es error o será verdad excluyendo caminos que se andan concernientes al ministerio, pagas y sustento del dogico y sirvientes. Para todo esto son necesarios largos 100 pesos al año...”

<sup>50</sup> “Pedro de la Piñuela: Carta al P. Provincial.- Ningte (Provincia de Fokien), 1 de noviembre de 1677”. In: *Ibid.*, 31. The original text was written in Spanish: “El año que nosotros venimos, escribió [el P. Agustín] que un ministro con 50 o 60 pesos se podrá sustentar [...] mas después echó de ver no podía bastar por sustentar una iglesia con dos o tres personas”.

<sup>51</sup> Golvers 1999, 594.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>53</sup> Prospero Intorcetta [殷铎泽, Yin Duoze] reported that the minimum living cost of a Jesuit missionary in China was 100 pesos per year. See: *Ibidem*. But Agustín de San Pascual believed that the Jesuits spent more than the Franciscans. See: “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 29. Iulii. 1675”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 434.

penses of the Franciscans scattered throughout the country. For example, in 1680, Buenaventura Ibáñez informed Manila that the annual expenditure of each one was 100 pesos. However, with the progressive increase in price, seven years later, Agustín de San Pascual pointed out that the expenses were at least 140 pesos.<sup>54</sup> As this section focuses on the use of funds rather than price changes in China during the Qing Dynasty, it is not necessary to devote more space to explore the specific number of their expenses. In general, taking into account the fact that the Crown only assigned 150 pesos to each one for maintenance (years later, this number dropped to 140), it is estimated that the expenses for daily life made up a considerable part of the funds.

Except living expenses, buying houses and churches also accounted for substantial proportion of spending. For instance, the church of San Francisco in Guangdong cost them 1,000 taels of silver, and the church in the village of Jiangle, Fujian Province, 200 taels, etc. Next, we will take a look at some statistics about the expenses to erect some churches, according to the scattered data in the letters and reports of the Franciscans:

**TABLE 1**  
**Expenditures for erecting churches of the Franciscans**

Province <sup>55</sup>	Prefecture, city or town	Expenses (pesos) <sup>56</sup>
Fujian [福建]	Ningde [宁德]	80
	Taining [泰宁]	100
	Jiangle [将乐]	150
	Longkou [龙口]	20
Guangdong [广东]	Guangzhou [广州]	Donated by Shang Zhixin [尚之信]
	Guangzhou (extramural) [广州城外]	1,000
	Huizhou [惠州]	300
	Chaozhou [潮州]	312
Jiangxi [江西]	Ganzhou [赣州]	600
Shandong [山东]	Ji'nan [济南]	150
	Qingzhou [青州]	112
	Ji'ning [济宁]	600
Jiangsu [江苏]	Nanjing [南京]	1,400
Zhejiang [浙江]	Hangzhou [杭州]	210

Data source: Wyngaert 1933, 1936, 1942; Maas 1917.

In addition to purchases of houses, the Franciscans had to hire assistants if they were to carry out the evangelical enterprise in a culturally heterogeneous country that is far away from the Philippines and Europe. Jaime Tarín men-

tioned the spending of the churches, and indicated that “five assistants were necessary for each church: a sacristan who was responsible for closing and opening the church, as well as cleaning it and maintaining a good atmosphere for visitors; a porter who took care of the house; a cook; and two catechists who walked the villages, looking after the missionary”.<sup>57</sup> However, due to adverse economic conditions, the Franciscans were not able to hire enough assistants at the same time. In most cases, each church only had a maximum of two or three of them.

These assistants firstly played the role of servants, who simultaneously shouldered various responsibilities, such as sacristan, porter or cook. Not only did they take care of the missionaries in daily life, accompany them on the trip, but they also assisted the Masses.<sup>58</sup> Buenaventura Ibáñez reported in 1681 that they had a servant named Francisco, who guided the new missionaries to enter China, took care of them on the way and then stayed in the church after arriving in Guangzhou [广州] to help the preachers there.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the servants also acted as messengers between these mendicants and the Philippines. They did not just collect and deliver the letters between both parties, but often transported money and things requested by their employers from Manila to the mainland. During his stay in Fujian, Pedro de la Piñuela also employed such servants. In a letter to the procurator, he introduced a servant named Domingo, who had gone to Manila, and Piñuela asked the recipient of the letter to look after him.<sup>60</sup> In 1678, when the Franciscan Bernardo de la Encarnación and the Dominican Pedro Alarcón came to China, Piñuela sent two servants to receive them.<sup>61</sup> All these young men, “in general, were selected among the most devout baptized young men”.<sup>62</sup> Beyond the stable employment relationship developed between Franciscans and their assistants, they also built mutual trust for each other. For example, except working for a long time for the Franciscans, Domingo even spent two years in a Franciscan convent in Manila.<sup>63</sup>

The Franciscans had to pay them. In 1653, Antonio de Santa María Caballero reported that he paid his servant in Shandong six or seven pesos per year.<sup>64</sup> When Buenaventura Ibáñez was in Fujian in 1654, he mentioned that the annual salary for one servant was five taels (seven

<sup>57</sup> “Fr. Jaime Tarín: Estado de la misión en el año de 1695”. In: Maas 1917, 122. The original text was written in Spanish: “cinco mozos son precisos para cada una: un sacristán que cuida de cerrar y abrir la iglesia, de asearla y dar buen despacho a los que vienen a ella; un portero que cuida de la casa; un cocinero y dos catequistas que andan por los partidos, cuidando al religioso”.

<sup>58</sup> “Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Sebastián Rodríguez, Emuy, 10 de septiembre de 1654”. In: Alcobendas 1933, 13.

<sup>59</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Laurentium A Plagis, 4. Mart. 1681”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 238; “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Laurentium A Plagis, 19. Mart. 1681”. In: *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>60</sup> “P. Fr. Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad P. Laurentium, 20. Dec. 1678”. In: Mensaert, Margiotti & Rosso 1965, 1148-1150.

<sup>61</sup> “Petrus de la Piñuela: Relatio sui Ministerii, 30. Dec. 1684”. In: Wyngaert 1942, 284-285.

<sup>62</sup> Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 417.

<sup>63</sup> Buenaventura Ibáñez did not specifically list what Domingo did in the convent. See: “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad P. Laurentium A Plagis, 19. Mart. 1681”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 239.

<sup>64</sup> “Antonius A. S. María Caballero: Epistola ad P. Provinciale, 3. Ian. 1653”. In: Wyngaert 1933, 421.

<sup>54</sup> “Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Miguel de Santa María, Cantón, 24 de marzo de 1680”. In: Alcobendas 1933, 139; “Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 28. Sep. 1687”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 622.

<sup>55</sup> To facilitate readers’ understanding of the geological locations, all provinces in the tables strictly follows the administrative areas in today’s China regardless of historical changes in the past.

<sup>56</sup> The number does not include the cost of decorating and reforming the church.

pesos),<sup>65</sup> and in 1679, Agustín de San Pascual said that he paid 15 pesos annually to each of the three servants he hired in Shandong,<sup>66</sup> a province where according to him, prices were generally higher than in Fujian. This information, combined with clues from other missionaries, proves that despite some fluctuation and differences across areas and years, one servant required at least 7 pesos as annual salary.

The second type of assistants were Chinese catechists. As christianity was a new and exotic religion for the Chinese,<sup>67</sup> explaining the unheard concepts to Chinese audience was painstaking. Therefore, how to bridge the Chinese-European cultural and religious chasm became imperative. In addition, since they faced mainly undereducated people, sermons appeared to be unintelligible and boring to the common people, and often failed to attract their attention. So Chinese catechists were indispensable. Broadly speaking, they were intellectuals who knew the foreign language and had devoted themselves to Christianity. They could help the Franciscans to explain the doctrine using the more vivid and colloquial local language. Moreover, they were often sent to the target areas in advance to prepare and motivate the villagers for the preaching the next day.<sup>68</sup> As Agustín de San Pascual admitted, these catechists were those who mastered the evangelizing work excellently, without whom the Franciscans could not even work.<sup>69</sup>

The third type of assistants were language teachers, as the Franciscans valued language learning greatly and sometimes they would hire a teacher particularly for this task. For example, when Buenaventura Ibáñez was in Fujian, he had a teacher and paid him ten taels (14 pesos) a year.<sup>70</sup> But this was not a fixed arrangement. When funds fall short, this work fell on the shoulders of the catechists.

As to the catechists' remuneration, Bernardo de la Encarnación mentioned in 1679 that in Fujian, he had to cover the living expenses as well as an extra annual salary of ten taels to the teacher, with whom he learned the language and carried out his evangelical work.<sup>71</sup> Agustín de San Pascual indicated that the monthly salary of the catechist that followed him in Shandong was one peso,<sup>72</sup> and in another

letter he offered more details on this subject, informing that he had spent 20 taels every year on a catechist: "And a catechist needs 12 taels per year for living expenses and 7 for his salary, and other things cost another tael annually, which will add up to 20 taels (equivalent to 28 pesos)".<sup>73</sup>

Considering that Fujian's expenditures were lower than in Shandong, a conservative estimate can be made: the minimum annual expenses for a catechist was approximately 15 taels (21 pesos), which consisted of five taels of salary and ten taels for daily expenses.

Except usages of funds mentioned above, viaticum was also required if they visited other churches or travelled elsewhere to start new missions. For example, in 1680, when Piñuela preached the gospel in the villages of Fujian, he could hardly return to his church due to lack of money.<sup>74</sup> Sometimes, the travelling expenses became considerable if the distance was long. For instance, Agustín de San Pascual and Miguel Flores spent as high as 100 pesos on their trip to Shandong from Fujian.<sup>75</sup>

The above mentioned aspects were the most significant expenses of the Franciscans, and other sporadic expenses, in turn, were diversified, including reforming the church, buying firewood and charcoal, printing books, and even giving alms to the poor Chinese.<sup>76</sup> These were very similar to those recorded by the Jesuit François de Rougemont in his private account.<sup>77</sup> In addition, since the Franciscans had a hospital and a pharmacy in Guangzhou, they also needed to dedicate a part of the money to maintain its operation and take care of the sick.<sup>78</sup>

#### 4. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE USE OF THE FUNDS

The mismatch between the modest funding and diversified spending needs often led to deficits. Hence, the missionaries were very scrupulous about the allocation of funds.

First, they adhered to the principle of thriftiness. There were at least four aspects to the so-called thriftiness. To begin with, they lived a simple life, never spending an unnecessary penny. When Pedro de la Piñuela was preaching in Fujian, he chose the hardest life, not buying even a bit of meat and eggs: "To do what I did, I suffer from severe hunger, living almost as a beggar to the point that I cannot buy dinner. Instead, even though today is the day for meat, I

<sup>65</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Sebastián Rodríguez, Emu, 10 de septiembre de 1654". In: *Alcobendas* 1933, 13.

<sup>66</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 18 Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 491.

<sup>67</sup> Nestorianism [景教, Jingjiao] entered China in the Tang [唐] Dynasty, and the Franciscans began to preach Christianity in the Yuan [元] Dynasty. However, the area of their activities was very limited and they could not spread the religion throughout the country. After a series of social instabilities such as wars, Christianity almost completely disappeared, and it was gradually forgotten by the people. In this sense, when the missionaries arrived in China in the 16th century, Christianity was once again something new for the Chinese.

<sup>68</sup> According to Agustín de San Pascual, this was a frequently adopted approach in the evangelization in China. See: "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 18 Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 491.

<sup>69</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Noticia de la mision serafica de China". In: *Ibid.*, 749. For more analysis about the servants and catechists, see: Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 416-419.

<sup>70</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Sebastián Rodríguez, Emu, 10 de septiembre de 1654". In: *Alcobendas* 1933, 13.

<sup>71</sup> "Bernardus ab Incarnatione: Epistola ad Provinciale, 19 Dec. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1942, 380.

<sup>72</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 18 Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 491.

<sup>73</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad P. Michaelem, 15 Oct. 1688". In: *Ibid.*, 662-663. The original text was written in Spanish: "y un catequista a menester de sustento al año 12 taes y siete de su salario, y con otras cosas de entre año lleva otro tae, que viene a ser veinte taes, que son 28 pesos".

<sup>74</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 6. Ian. 1680". In: Wyngaert 1942, 274.

<sup>75</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 27. Nov. 1678". In: Wyngaert 1936, 478.

<sup>76</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 18. Mart. 1679". In: *Ibid.*, 490-491.

<sup>77</sup> *Golvers* 1999, 600, table 7.3.

<sup>78</sup> "Fr. Jaime Tarín: Carta anual y breve relación de las cosas pertenecientes a nuestra misión seráfica de China, correspondiente al año de 1693". In: *Maas* 1917, 111. For more information about Franciscans' hospital and pharmacy in Guangzhou, see: Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 204-231; Dong Shaoxin [董少新] 2008, 89-99.



have many times collation because I do not dare to buy half a catty of fish or some eggs".<sup>79</sup>

Agustín de San Pascual also experienced similar situations in 1677. Due to lack of funds, he hardly ever bought fresh meat for himself and his servants, relying only on vegetables and pickled fish.<sup>80</sup>

Besides, Kang Zhijie pointed out in her paper that Matteo Ricci adhered to the spending principle of "taking what is despised by others".<sup>81</sup> As a matter of fact, this was also a crucial component of the economic views of the Franciscans in China. For example, in 1678, the Franciscans planned to expand their mission to the outside of Guangdong city. They found a house with a size and location ideal for building a church. The house was originally owned by an official of Guangzhou, who, however, was later decapitated because of a crime he had committed. Consequently, his house was confiscated. Considered tokens of misfortune and associated with adversities, houses of this kind were disliked by the Chinese. In this situation, the house had been left unattended, in which few buyers were interested. As a result, the price fell below the market average. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Franciscans immediately made the decision to buy it.<sup>82</sup>

Why this type of practices, whether carried out by Matteo Ricci or the Franciscans, could be accepted by the westerners was because that Christianity did not connect these houses to ill omen. The missionaries made use of the differences between Chinese and Western religious beliefs to subtly minimize the costs and maximize the benefits.

Moreover, there was another convincing evidence for their thriftiness: they consciously paid attention to the price discrepancies of various living necessities in the Chinese and Philippines market, so that they could achieve optimal cost-efficiency. For example, when Buenaventura Ibáñez wrote to his superior and asked him to send some cocoa to make chocolate, he specifically emphasized not to send cinnamon and sugar, because it would be cheaper to buy in China.<sup>83</sup> Pedro de la Piñuela even asked Manila to send him some cocoa seeds so that he could directly grow it in China.<sup>84</sup> This precise knowledge of prices enabled them to spend every penny efficiently, guaranteeing the reasonable use of funds.

Finally, they also made many efforts to avoid squander. Since the Manila procurator did not know the real situation in China, sometimes he bought useless things for his colleagues in China. Agustín de San Pascual complained about this waste in a letter: "Some stamps bought for us cost 180

pesos of the mission and of the four parts, three served us nothing".<sup>85</sup>

For the Franciscans who constantly faced economic problems, 180 pesos was not a small amount, was more than half of the money with which Agustín de San Pascual bought the house of Chaozhou [潮州] in the same year: 240 taels (around 336 pesos). To avoid unnecessary waste, Agustín again advised Manila to assign a procurator who was specifically responsible for the Chinese mission.<sup>86</sup>

Despite their frugality on multiple fronts, they were rather generous on necessary spending and investments, however.

On the one hand, they gave priority to guaranteeing the daily life of the missionaries, who no longer lived in a mendicant way. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Confucian literati constituted the ruling class of the society and religions were not nearly as pronounced. Seeing how literati and religious personnel were treated differently, the new generation of Franciscans "began to accept honorific names such as 'Laoye' [老爷] or 'Xiangong' [相公] called by the Chinese people, because they had already realized that if they lived in the same way as Chinese literati, they would be respected by the mandarins and admired by common people. Furthermore, the mandarins and the people would like to hear and accept their preaching, which facilitated the spread of Christianity in China".<sup>87</sup> Based on this apprehension, they opted for a more decent life, desisting from walking barefoot and begging for food. Thence, whenever new financial aid arrived, the Commissar always first sent out allowances for the daily expenses of each preacher. Then he would consider new plans to develop the mission with the remaining money.

Besides, as employers, the missionaries never skimmed on servants' wages so that they could establish long-term and stable employment relationships with them, which, as mentioned earlier, was crucial for European missionaries in culturally heterogeneous China. However, the missionaries had more considerations. Compared to the benefits that this benign employment brought to them, the breakdowns of such relationships would exert far more adverse impacts.

The identity of "foreigner" was a fact that they could not avoid. Their exotic face came, in a certain sense, to be their original sins and, in that time, Chinese often associated it with evil and ominous. For example, Chinese people described that the foreigners "had sheep eyes, monkey faces, lustful heart and beast behaviour".<sup>88</sup> In addition to their ethnically peculiar presence, the missionaries' religious identity also invited enmity and suspicion. The Qing Dynasty was an era full of ethnic conflicts, since it was founded by the Manchus by slaughtering thousands of Han people. What is more, Manchus threatened everyone to follow their hairstyle and Manchu dress [剃发易服, Tifa yifu] with decapi-

<sup>79</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad P. Michaelem A S. Maria, 7. Febr. 1680". In: Wyngaert 1942, 276. The original text was written in Spanish: "Yo por hacer lo que hize padesco grande hambre, ando quasi como mendigo, que no alcanzo con que comprar que çenar sino que aunque sea dia de carne, haga muchas vezes colación por no atreverme a comprar medio cate de pescado o unos guebos".

<sup>80</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 20. Aug. 1677". In: Wyngaert 1936, 443.

<sup>81</sup> Kang Zhijie [康志杰] 2019a, 125.

<sup>82</sup> "Iacobus Tarin: Historia y relacion". In: Wyngaert 1942, 105-106.

<sup>83</sup> "Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Provinciale, 20. Mart. 1679". In: Wyngaert 1936, 198.

<sup>84</sup> "P. Fr. Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad P. Laurentium A Plagis, 1. Ian. 1679". In: Mensaert, Margiotti & Rosso 1965, 1151.

<sup>85</sup> "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad PP. Definitores, 8. Nov. 1686". In: Wyngaert 1936, 602-603. The original text was written in Spanish: "... unas estampas que se nos compraron, en que se gastaron 180 pesos de la mission y de las quatro partes, las tres no nos sirven".

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 603. Miguel Flores was elected the first procurator for the mission of China. See: "Augustinus A S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 28. Sep. 1687". In: *Ibid.*, 621.

<sup>87</sup> Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2007, 20.

<sup>88</sup> "羊眼猴面, 淫心兽行". See: Wang Minglun [王明伦] 1984, 157.

tation, which was regarded as a heavy blow towards the culture and custom of the Han ethnic group as well as their ethnic dignity. That was why the Han people frequently rose up against the Manchus with the slogan of “overthrowing Qing and recovering Ming [反清复明, Fanqingfuming]”, hoping that the Han ethnic group would reign again. Most of these rebellions disguised themselves as religious groups, so the rulers closely surveilled all religions and their sects. The concurrence of the ethnic and the religious identity put the missionaries under the spotlight where much unwanted hostile attention was drawn to them. As Agustín de San Pascual reported in a letter to his superior, most of the Chinese distrusted foreigners. In their eyes, the evangelization was only another mask under which they were secretly conspiring to overthrow the Crown.<sup>89</sup> This theory was not limited to certain social classes, but instead widely believed among all Chinese, which even led to social unrests from time to time. For example, in 1606, a rumour proliferated in Macao saying that the Jesuits, together with the Portuguese, Dutch and Japanese, were first planning to kill Chinese inhabitants in Macao, then conquer the entire country and elect the Jesuit Lazzaro Cattaneo [郭居静, Guo Jujing] as the new king.<sup>90</sup> This rumor caused such panic among Chinese residents that the Portuguese authority in Macao sent representatives to explain and promise to Chinese mandarins that in no case would they intend to rebel against and invade the country.

At the same time, there were also rumours saying that missionaries could perform alchemy.<sup>91</sup> If the missionaries deducted the employee’s remuneration, it would inevitably leave them with a bad reputation for being greedy. In such a suspicious and disputable atmosphere, the Chinese were prone to attack the missionaries and Christianity with any excuse. For this reason, in addition to paying the servants in time, the Franciscans spent money on many things to maintain a relatively peaceful relationship with the locals. To be specific, they bribed officials with exotic gifts in order to obtain political protection; they relieved the poor to build a benign image; they established specific churches for women so that they would not be accused of having allowed “*nan-niu hoen-cha*”.<sup>92</sup> In summary, the missionaries were not stingy on spending money to improve their public image. It was more like a necessity rather than a choice.

## 5. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FUNDS

Since the 1680s, the number of Franciscans in China usually remained above ten persons. So, the proper allocation of funds was directly related to the fate and vitality of their mission, because whether the funds were fairly and sufficiently delivered to each missionary would affect their morale. So, their first distribution principle was to match the

actual needs of every person instead of pursuing absolute equality.

One of the studies indicated that the Crown financed ordinary expenses of the Franciscans. At the same time, the cost for new churches and religious supplements were covered by the Province of San Gregorio de Manila.<sup>93</sup> This statement is not irrefutable. The distribution of the funds never followed mechanical rules, but depended on several factors, such as the total amount of money received, the different price levels in each province, the degree of urgency of each work, etc. On many occasions, in addition to essential maintenance, the Crown subsidy was also assigned to evangelization activities. Regarding the amount of money allocated to each Franciscan, although in principle the funding from all parties was provided for the entire missionary group, the Commissary did distribute it differently according to the actual situation of each missionary. In one letter, Buenaventura Ibáñez defended that this method was very reasonable and refuted the idea of absolute egalitarianism in distribution:

I think I should warn you and your successors that you should not tie the hands of a Commissar for doing what he should do [for the good of the mission] because of complaints from one of the missionaries about his Commissar regarding the alms. I say this because if there had not been any complaints, you wouldn’t have demanded our brother Commissary Fr. Francisco de la Concepcion, according to him, to distribute the alms given by our Catholic king equally among all the missionaries. [...] So, if what the king provided us was distributed equally, with what could a Commissar cover the mentioned extravagant expenses? If the religious staff take some money from his yearly allowance to travel, the rest wouldn’t suffice to support him for the year. [...] The Commissary already knows how much silver each minister needs to get through a year in his ministry depending on (the prices in) the place he stays in. Those who live in areas where living and clothing cost more need more financial help than those living in areas with much lower prices. So, if brother Commissar does not give him the same amount of money as he gives others (due to different living costs), on what ground would this person complain?<sup>94</sup>

This principle was effectively implemented in the long term, because it made more sense than equal and mechanical distribution.

<sup>89</sup> Cui Weixiao [崔维孝] 2006, 264.

<sup>90</sup> “Bonaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Provinciale, 30 Nov. 1685”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 283-285. The original text was written in Spanish: “... jusgo por acertado de advertir a V. C. y a sus sucesores que no por quejarse uno de los misionarios de su comissario en orden a su socorro, aten las manos a un comissario para hacer lo que deve [en bien de la mission]. Digolo, por que, sin haver precedido alguna quexa, no hubiera V. C. mandado a nuestro hermano comissario Fr. Francisco de la Concepcion, segun el dize, que el socorro que nos da nuestro catholico Rey, lo reparta entre todos los misionarios igualmente. [...] Pues, si lo que nos da el Rey se reparte con todos igualmente, ¿con que acudira el comissario a los dichos gastos extravegantes? Si el religioso, de lo que se le da para el sustento de un año, ha de hacer su viaje, ya no le queda para pasar el año; [...] El comissario ya sabe quanta plata ha menester cada ministro, para pasar el año en su ministerio, segun donde esta; el que esta donde el sustento y vistuario cuesta caro, necessita de mas socorro que el que esta donde se sustenta y se viste con mucho menos ¿pues que razon tendra este de [quejarse si el hermano] comissario no le socorre con la cantidad que socorre a otros?”.

<sup>89</sup> “Augustinus A S. Paschali: Relatio missionis seraphicae, 4. Oct. 1688”. In: Wyngaert 1936, 647.

<sup>90</sup> Pfister 1932, 52.

<sup>91</sup> Ricci & Trigault 1621, 122.

<sup>92</sup> “P. Fr. Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Thomam Pereira, 28. Iunii. 1690”. In: Mensaert, Margiotti & Rosso 1965, 1191 “*nan-niu hoen-cha*”: 男女混杂 [Nannü hunza]. The phrase refers to the fact that man and woman who have not married stay in the same place, which was a taboo in ancient China.

Moreover, another principle should be discussed. The Franciscans in China were a complex group, because they were composed of the Spaniards sent by the Province of San Gregorio of the Philippines and the Italians sent by Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (representing different political forces), or from a different perspective, the religious friars and the laity (representing different religious identities). Even so, in spite of different backgrounds, national ascriptions and secular conflicts, the Franciscans gave priority to the mission and distributed the money to those who needed it more urgently, regardless of their nationality.

For example, when Pedro de la Piñuela took over as Commissary in 1699, the financial status of the mission was very bad, with almost nothing left from his predecessor José Navarro.<sup>95</sup> In that case, he asked Manila to send money, and meanwhile, he racked his brains to search the most efficient way to allocate the pitiful funds. Above all, he asked that a part of the relief be given to the Italian Franciscans, in order to guarantee the development of the mission, because, according to Piñuela, the money that the Sacred Congregation had given them was not enough. He also asserted, again and again, that Antonio de Concepción [安多尼, An Duoni], a lay surgeon, was entitled to receive allowances so that Manila would send him some money. Similarly, Piñuela also sent money to other missionaries in response to their needs. For example, he sent 25 pesos to Bishop Bernardino de la Chiesa [伊大任, Yi Daren] who was in Beijing [北京] where the cost of living was very high. To Bernardo de la Encarnación, who was already old, he gave him ten pesos and some necessary objects. Finally, through his efforts, Piñuela ensured that everyone was satisfied.<sup>96</sup>

#### 6. THE TEMPORARY COUNTERMEASURE FOR THE DEFICIT: LOAN

However, the funding sources mentioned above still fell short from time to time due to various reasons, including late arrival, embezzlement and so on. Under such circumstances, the Franciscans were forced to borrow money from others.

The first option was to ask the Chinese Christians or the missionaries of other orders for help. For example, in the year 1683, when Agustín de San Pascual arrived in Nanjing [南京] after a long trip from Shandong Province, his viaticum had been exhausted and could not continue the trip to Guangzhou. With no other remedy, he borrowed 15 taels of silver from a local Christian.<sup>97</sup>

Pedro de la Piñuela also borrowed four taels from Louis Quémener during his stay at Nan'an [南安] and 100 taels from Charles Maigrot [颜瑄, Yandang] in 1702 as well as another 50 pesos the following year when he intended to buy a house in Zhangpu [漳浦] of Fujian Province.<sup>98</sup> Besides, Piñuela mentioned several borrowings from unspecified lenders in his letters.<sup>99</sup> Buenaventura Ibáñez pointed out

in 1683 that the mission owed 514 pesos to the Dominican Order.<sup>100</sup> There were countless examples like these. The advantage of this option was that there was no need to pay interest, since it was considered mutual aid between orders, or between missionaries and believers. However, the disadvantage was evident. These people were also not rich and could not provide large loans. That is why, when the Franciscans needed money to support the entire missionary group, they had to resort to another option, even though it was against their wills. This was to borrow money from strangers (or professional creditors), who charged remarkable amount of interest.

Buenaventura Ibáñez spoke several times about the interest of the loan. In 1679, he indicated that the interest averaged around 40 per cent and even when the rate dropped, it never fell below 30 per cent.<sup>101</sup> In 1683 and 1685, he noted that the interest was 36 per cent.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, if it is calculated with an average rate (36 %), the interest that should be paid along with the principal balance was not a light burden. Here, we present the debt situation of the years 1681 and 1682, to look at their economic burdens:

**TABLE 2**  
*The debt situation of the Franciscans in 1681 and 1682*

	Creditors	The principal balance (taels)	Use	The interest (taels)	In total (taels)
1681	a Chinese	700	Living expenses	252	952
		0		252	252
1682	the same Chinese	800	Living expenses	288	1088
		500	House purchases	180	680
	the Dominicans	367	Not specified	154 <sup>103</sup>	521
In total (taels)					3493

Data source: "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Procuratorem missionis, 7. Ian. 1683". In: Wyngaert 1936, 244-245; "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Procuratorem missionis, 25. Ian. 1683". In: *Ibid.*, 247, 251-252; "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 7 de enero de 1683". In: Alcobendas 1933, 154-155; "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 25 de enero de 1683". In: *Ibid.*, 157, 161.

In: Wyngaert 1942, 281; "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 25. Sept. 1699". In: *Ibid.*, 318.

<sup>100</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 25 de enero de 1683". In: Alcobendas 1933, 161.

<sup>101</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Informe al P. Provincial, Fr. Bernardo de la Concepción, Cantón, 20 de marzo de 1679". In: *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>102</sup> "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Procurador de la Provincia de San Gregorio, Cantón, 25 de enero de 1683". In: *Ibid.*, 157; "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Carta al P. Provincial, Fr. Francisco de San José, 30 de noviembre de 1685". In: *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>103</sup> As indicated, in general there was no need to pay interest if they borrowed money from the missionaries of other orders. However, here the money of the Dominicans was also part of the debt that his order was carrying, so the Franciscans had to pay interest as well.

<sup>95</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 25. Sept. 1699". In: Wyngaert 1942, 318.

<sup>96</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 8. Maii. 1700". In: *Ibid.*, 339-345.

<sup>97</sup> "Augustinus A. S. Paschali: Epistola ad Provinciale, 3. Mart. 1684". In: Wyngaert 1936, 533.

<sup>98</sup> "P. Fr. Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Car. Maigrot, 15. Sept. 1702". In: Mensaert, Margiotti & Rosso 1965, 1208; "P. Fr. Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Car. Maigrot, 18. Nov. 1703". In: *Ibid.*, 1211-1212.

<sup>99</sup> "Petrus de la Piñuela: Epistola ad Provinciale, 24. Ian. 1684".

According to the exchange rate disclosed by Buenaventura Ibáñez in the letters mentioned above, one tael was equivalent to 1.4 pesos, so the total debt was approximately 4,890 pesos. Given their indebtedness, the same Franciscan insisted that Manila send them 5,500 pesos for the year 1684. It should be noted that his calculations were not entirely precise. In a letter of January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1683, he only counted for that year's interest (252 taels, i.e. 352 pesos) generated from the principal balance (700 taels) borrowed in 1681, leaving out the interest of previous year which should have been paid, as well as the debt owed to the Dominicans. For this reason, he reached a false number of 3,808 pesos in debt. In the letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month, although he realized the 252 taels (352 pesos) interest in 1682 was missing, he still omitted the debt to the Dominican Order. Then, he said that the debt was 4,160 pesos and asked Manila to send 5,500 pesos, so that after subtracting the debt and 800 taels (1,120 pesos) for the sustenance of 1684,<sup>104</sup> there would still be 220 pesos left. At the end of this letter, although he finally informed Manila of the debt owed to the Dominicans, he still requested the same amount of money. In that case, the Franciscans fell into a dilemma. If they paid all the debt in one go, they would only have 610 pesos left by the year 1684, almost half of the regular budget. But if they gave priority to the living expenses of that year (1,120 pesos), the remaining would not be enough to repay the debt, and the unpaid part would generate new interest in the following year.

It must be recognized that the debt was so enormous that, even if they stopped buying food and cancelled all religious activities, only up to four times of the Crown's subsidy could be enough to liquidate it and maintain the mission. If, unfortunately, the money arrived with delay again, the interest would go up immediately. For this reason, the Franciscans always warned Manila that they always needed advanced financing.<sup>105</sup> Thus, the missionaries never dared to borrow money from strangers unless they had no other remedy.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Like missionaries of other orders, the Spanish Franciscans in China who were dedicated to religious undertakings were also forced to face economic issues. Thanks to Buenaventura Ibáñez's trip to Europe in the 1660s and the improvement of the Philippines economy, the new generation of Franciscans received more stable financial supports than their predecessors. They were granted with not only the funding of the Spanish Crown, but also the assistance of the Philippine provincial and the *Hermanidad de la Santa Misericordia*. During financial crises, they could also get help from believers and priests of other orders. This model of "fixed basic funding plus random supplementary funding" played an important role in ensuring the development of the missionary enterprise. However, due to complex factors, these

funds often did not arrive on time to meet their needs as they were expected. Besides, the cost of maintaining the missionary work was enormous. Building new churches, guaranteeing the food and clothing, hiring servants and catechists, printing books, paying travel expenses, etc., would incur large amounts of capital shortage. The priests were forced to use and distribute the money in the most practical and reasonable way. They kept their feet on the ground, adapted to local conditions, and uniformly dispatched resources, to meet the basic needs of each priest scattered in different parishes. Once the funds ran up, in order to avoid ruining the evangelical enterprise, loans became the last plausible option. Concerning the minor shortages, they often turned to believers or missionaries of other orders. But once the amount escalated, they had to lend from the professional lenders, but in this way, they needed to pay interest as high as 30-40 %.

The diversified funding was the fundamental guarantee of the Franciscan missionary work. This article is a preliminary exploration of this issue. Despite facing many economic pressures, the Spanish Franciscans in the 17<sup>th</sup> century adopted various means to overcome difficulties and support the mission. Their enterprise had been developing and had achieved good results, until the reign of Emperor Yongzheng [雍正], who eventually officially prohibited Christianity.

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<sup>104</sup> According to Buenaventura Ibáñez, for the sustenance of all priests in 1684, they needed at least 800 taels of silver. See: "Buenaventura Ibáñez: Epistola ad Procuratorem missionis, 7. Ian. 1683". In: Wyngaert 1936, 244

<sup>105</sup> "Franciscus A Conceptione: Epistola ad P. Provincialem, 5. Martii. 1685". In: Wyngaert 1942, 50.

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