

The First Treatise on Aristotelian Ethics in China and its Origin

Shufeng TIAN

(Sun Yat-sen University, China)

Author: TIAN Shufeng, Associate Professor (specialized in Ancient Greek Philosophy) in the Institute of Western Philosophy, Department of Philosophy of Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, 510275, Office room: 803B XiChang Building, Xingangxi Road 135, Haizhu District Guangzhou. Email: petertiansf@hotmail.com

Abstract: The first treatise on the Aristotelian Ethics in the Chinese language can be traced back to “Xiushen Xixue” (修身西学: Western Learning on Personal Cultivation) in the Late Ming, a work from Alfonso Vagnone S. J. (1566-1640), albeit exchanges between Aristotelian ethics and Confucian ethics may have happened in other forms before this. Unfortunately, this work has not been given due attention in modern theological and secular academic circles, and thus it sunk into oblivion. This article is an attempt to do justice to his endeavor of making Aristotelian ethics known to Chinese at that time. There are two issues in this paper: the first one is concerned with the sources of “Xiushen Xixue”, and the second one deals with his Christianized interpretation of Aristotelian ethical principles. I will approach the second issue mainly by examining the two fundamental ethical concepts, happiness (εὐδαιμονία) and virtue (ἀρετή), and examining how Vagnone adapted Aristotelian ethics to Chinese culture. At a minimum, we can say that it is meaningless to argue if XSXX is just a mixture or hodgepodge of different ethical traditions adapted to the Chinese context, because the meaning and value of XSXX as the first treatise on Aristotelian ethics in the history of Western Learning spreading to East already goes far beyond that question.

Key Words Alfonso Vagnone, Late Ming, Xiushen Xixue, Happiness, Virtue

1. The Targets

Western Learning on Personal Cultivation (in Chinese:《修身西学》, Xiu Shen Xi Xue, henceforth as XSXX), written by Alfonso Vagnone S. J. (1566-1640) between 1637-1639 in Shanxi Province, is seen as the first treatise on the Aristotelian ethics in China^[1]. Thus, XSXX can represent the first encounter between Aristotelian ethic as one of the most popular and choice-worthy moral philosophy in the West till today and Confucian ethic as one of the most authoritative and widespread moral thoughts in East Asia. Vagnone was very familiar with the two ethical traditions and especially a

[1] Other Chinese intellectuals had also taken part in this work by amending, editing or polishing the stylistic formulations in Chinese, such as Lin Han (韩霖), Gun Duan (段袞) and Doushu Wei (卫斗枢) ect. All the citations and extracts are based on the newly published commentary work on XSXX, edited by Thierry Meynard, Jie Tan and Shufeng Tian. 高一志, Xiushen xixue jin zhu《修身西学今注》(Modern Commentaries on Western Learning on Personal Cultivation), (Beijing 北京: Shangwu yinshuguan 商务印书馆 [Beijing, Commercial Publishing House], 2019). Some ideas of this paper come from the article, which I wrote for the commentary work. Please see: pp. 72-129.

faithful partisan of the positive strategy of Mateo Ricci SJ. concerning the attitude towards Confucianism and Chinese philosophical strands. However, the main target of the XSXX does not lie in comparative studies between Aristotelian ethic and Confucian ethic, but rendering the main ethical propositions and Aristotelian ethical tenets into Chinese culture, which was mainly influenced and shaped by Confucianism. [2]

From the analyses of the texts of XSXX, we can know that Vagnone relied mainly on the following two kinds of sources, the first one can be called the direct sources, which are either commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethic* or paraphrases on Aristotelian ethics and can be ascribed to three different authors: the commenatry work *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* of Thomas Aquinas and his *Summa Theologica* in the Middle Ages (1), and the Coimbra commentary work on the *Nicomachean Ethics* written by the Jesuits at Coimbra, Portugal published between 1592 and 1606 called the *Conimbricenses* (2) [3]; and the *De iustitia et iure caeterisque virtutibus cardinalibus* of Leonardus Lessius (1554-1623) published in 1605; the second kind should be called the indirect sources, because Vagnone did not make any direct fererence to that in XSXX, but they are believed to be the direct sources for the commentators of the Aristotelian ethics, certainly the *Nicomachean Ethic* must be this kind, and probably other works of Augustinian and Franciscan ethical tradition also included. The fifth volume of the *Conimbricenses* dealt with the EN, intituled *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Jesu; in libros Ethicorum ad Nichomachum aliquot Conimbricensis cursus disputationes*, 1593 (henceforth as CCEN). In this paper, I will analyze the basic structure of XSXX and deal with the question of how Vagone introduced and rendered the Aristotelian ethics into Chinese culture by examining the two key Aristotelian concepts of happiness (*εὐδαιμονία*) and virtue (*ἀρετὴ*). The threefold relation of XSXX to EN of Aristotle, to Thomas' commentaries (*Sententia Libri Ethicorum*) and CCEN, to the Chinese philosophy in the context of Confucian ethical system, will be treated as the backdrop. Firstly, I will present the basic structure of the XXSX and a brief introduction to its sources: the scholastic tradition presented in *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas and his commentaries work on EN (*Sententia libri ethicorum*) and CCEN; secondly, I will mainly analyze the two main ethical concepts in XSXX, the happiness and the virtue, in order to see in what sense the Aristotelian basic ethical principles are introduced into Chinese culture, and I will also

[2] Paulos Huang, "Dialogue and Critique: The 16th Century Religious Reform and Modernity", *International Journal of Sino-Western Studies*, vol. 12, 1-12. (<https://www.sinowesternstudies.com/back-issues/vol-12-2017/>)

[3] Regarding the relation between the three works, please see: Mei Qianli (梅谦立), (Thierry Meynard), *Wanming zhongxi lunxue de xiangyu; cong Nigemake lunxue dao wanming Xiushen xixue* 晚明中西伦理学的相遇: 从《尼各马可伦理学》到晚明《修身西学》(Encounter between Chinese and Western Ethics in the Late Ming dynasty: From the *Nicomachean Ethics* to Late Ming's Western Study of Personal Cultivation), *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 中国文哲研究集刊 (Journal of Chinese literature and philosophy), 39, 2011, pp. 99-141.

The Coimbra Commentaries are constituted by 8 volumes: (1) *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Jesu in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae* (Commentaries of the Coimbra College of the Society of Jesus on the Eight Books of the Physics of Aristotle the Stagirite, 1592); (2) *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Jesu in quatuor libros de Coelo Aristotelis Stagiritae* (Commentaries ... on the Four Books of the *De Coelo* of Aristotle, 1592); (3) *Commentarii Collegii ... in libros meteorum Aristotelis* (... on the Books of the *Meteorology*, 1592); (4) *Commentarii ... in parva naturalia* (... on the *Parva Naturalia*, 1592); (5) *Commentarii ... in libros Ethicorum ad Nichomachum* (... on the Books of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1593); (6) *Commentarii ... in duos libros De Generatione et corruptione* (... on the Two Books, *On Generation and Corruption*, 1595); (7) *Commentarii . in tres libros De Anima* (on the Three Books of the *De Anima*, 1595); (8) *Commentarii ... in universam dialecticam Aristotelis* (Commentaries ... on the Whole Logic of Aristotle, 1606).

insert some reflections on the question of how Vagnone made use of the Confucian ethical tenets to illustrate his thoughts and what kind of justification can be brought for his doing so.

2. Introduction to XSXX and its Sources

Before returning to the structure of XSXX, we should have a glimpse into the context, in which the XSXX is embedded. The first thing is that Thomas' understanding and commentaries of EN played a determining role in the reception of Aristotle's ethics in the world of thoughts of the late period of the Middle Ages. We can say that Aristotle's EN was one of the most interpreted or commented philosophical works in the Middle Ages^[4], nearly every ten years a new commentary work was written^[5]. Thomas Aquinas has devoted himself in his early academic career nearly ten years to interpret Aristotle's philosophy and writing commentaries on nearly all of the works of Aristotle. Based on the *Super ethica* written by Albertus Magnus (1200-1280), his teacher, Thomas has written a new commentary work on Aristotle's EN, which is *Sententia libri ethicorum*^[6]. Besides, Thomas has also used Aristotelian ethical principles in his exposition of the moral theology in *Summa Theologica*, especially in the first part of the second part (*prima secundae, I - II*). We will see that XSXX bears more similarities with ST. I - II rather than with the CCEN in terms of the basic structure of the text. In the 16th Century, Jesuits has established the Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Iesu (known as Ratio Studiorum; 1565-1599) for their schools. As regards to philosophy, they widely used the Coimbra commentaries on Aristotle's works known as *Conimbricenses* in 8 volumes, the fifth volume is the commentaries on the EN, written based on the commentaries work on EN and *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas.

The second point I want to mention here is that Thomas and Vagnone had used the same positive strategy in dealing with the other non-Christian philosophical tradition or culture. Thomas was searching for the commonalities and complementarity between Christian moral theology and Aristotelian ethical tradition, although some modern scholars criticized him for baptizing Aristotle in his way of interpreting his philosophy, and they pointed out that what Thomas said in the *Sententia libri ethicorum* is not what Aristotle intends to say but his own^[7]; the same thing turned out to be in the case of Vagnone, who has relentlessly endeavored to integrate Christian moral thoughts or theological understanding about the human happiness into Chinese culture, which was mainly shaped

[4] Bobonich, Chris, 'Aristotle's Ethical Treatises', in: *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. by Richard Kraut (Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2006), 15.

[5] Kenny, A., *The Aristotelian Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1978. pp. 1-50; Rowe, C. J., *The Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics: A Study in the Development of Aristotle's Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge Philosophical Society. 1971. pp. 9-60.

[6] Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri ethicorum*, translated by C. I. Litzinger, O. P., *Commentary on the NICOMACHEAN ETHICS* (Henry Regnery Company Chicago Nihil Obstat, 1964).

[7] As regards to the pro and contra positions towards the relation between Thomas's commentaries and Aristotle's EN, please see: Ralph McInerney, *Aquinas on Human Action: A Theory of Practice*, Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1992; René Antoine Gauthier, *The Leonine edition of the Sententia libri ethicorum, Opera omnia 47*, Rome: Leonine Commission, 1969; Francis Cheneval and Ruedi Imbach, *Thomas von Aquin, Prologe zu den Aristoteleskommentaren*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993; Thomism and Aristotelianism, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952; Mark D. Jordan, "Thomas Aquinas's Disclaimers in the Aristotelian Commentaries," *Philosophy and the God of Abraham: Essays in Memory of James A. Weisheipl, OP*, ed. R. James Long, *Papers in Mediaeval Studies* 12, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1991), 99-112.

by Confucian ethics and anthropology, and we can understand his intention by looking into his works and know how eagerly he did strive to make a dialogue possible between Confucianism and the Christianized Western ethical, political, anthropological and pedagogical tradition deeply rooted in the Aristotle's philosophy^[8]. Although Thomas and Vagnone lived in different time and space, they were facing the same challenge and task. Indeed, both of them went beyond a pure religious ethics (based on the Decalogue and the Gospels) but attempted to give a broader philosophical and cultural basis. However, their motivation was different; Aquinas attempted to give Christian ethics a philosophical foundation through the pagan Aristotle; whereas Vagnone expresses Christian ethics through the Confucian discourse. For Aquinas, the choice of a pagan philosopher was a philosophical option; for Vagnone, there was no real choice since he had to conform to the cultural and political imperative of China.

The Christianization of Aristotelian ethical philosophy can be demonstrated in Aquinas's understanding on the main topics in Aristotle's ethics, especially on the concept of the human happiness. For Aristotle, the human being can bring human nature into a full-fledged fulfillment or completion maximally in the activities of contemplation ($\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\iota\alpha$) in this life down on the earth, which he called $\beta\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omega\rho\eta\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ (*vita contemplativa*), the most choice-worthy, the most pleasurable, the most self-sufficient and the most endurable form of life for human being, but also for divine beings^[9]. Aquinas agreed with Aristotle's goal of setting the contemplative life in this world as human happiness, i. e. the highest and best form of human life, but he disagreed with Aristotle insofar as he said that in the life on the earth human being can only reach imperfect happiness, no matter through the life of ethical virtues or through the life of contemplation; as regards to the perfect life, we can reach only it after death, because for Thomas the goal of contemplation or speculation and even all the human desires is God himself, He is the highest and best Good after all^[10]. Contemplation is to become united with God. Apparently, the strategy of Thomas is to find possibilities to graft the christian doctrines into the Aristotle's philosophy, so that the differences might not turn out to be distortions of the latter, but complementary contributions. Aristotelian ethics and Christian moral teachings are not incompatible with each other, but complementary with each other in the sense that Aristotle's philosophy provides basic metaphysical, anthropological and moral psychological grounds, and Christian theological understanding of the happiness was of great help in resolving the classical problem whether the happiness is only to be found in *vita*

[8] Besides XXXX, Vagnone has written also some other works in the field of the ethics: Qijia Xixue (齐家西学, Western Learning on Managing the Family, 1638), Zhiping Xixue (治平西学, Western Learning on Governing the Country and Pacifying the World, ca. 1638), Dadao Jiyan (达道纪言, Aphorisms and Illustrations of the Grand Dao, 1636). Concerning the Works written by Jesuits in the 17th century in Chinese, please see also: Meynard, T., "Aristotelian Works in Seventeenth-century China", *Monumenta Serica* (2017), 65:1, 61-85.

[9] EN X 8-9.

[10] Thomas has presented his views on the happiness in the ST. I-II. Q1-5. They are: De ultimo fine hominis (1), De his in quibus hominis beatitudo consistit (2), Quid sit beatitudo (3)? De his quae ad beatitudinem exiguntur (4), De adeptione beatitudinis (5). Based on the texts, René Antoine Gauthier has compared Thomas' views with the Aristotle's ones. Please see: René Antoine Gauthier et Jean Yves Jolif, *Aristote, L'Éthique à Nicomaque, Introduction, Traduction et Commentaire, deuxième édition avec une introduction nouvelle*, vol. I, Louvain-Paris: Publications Universitaires, 1970; quoted by Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas on Human Action, A theory of Practice* (Washington D. C. : Catholic University of America, 1992), 166-168.

contemplativa or also in vita activa including necessary external goods^[11].

The earliest reference of X^{SXX} in the modern research field can be traced back to an article written by a French scholar, named Hubert Verhaeren, C. M. published in 《Bulletin Catholique de Pékin》 in 1935^[12], and his views can be summarized in the next two points: (1) Apart from translating the theological works, the Jesuits in Late Ming have also written some commentaries on Aristotle's philosophy depending on the Coimbra commentaries. Besides the X^{SXX}, they have also written Lingyan lishao (《灵言蠡勺》: a humble discourse on the soul) derived from Conimbricenses Volume on De anima of Aristotle, Huanyouquan 《寰有诠》(Explanations of heaven and earth), derived from the Conimbricenses Volume on Aristotle's De Coelo, and Minglitan 《名理探》(Inquiries into the principles of names), derived from the Conimbricenses Volume on Aristotle's Categories. (2) After comparing the structure or the contents of X^{SXX} with that of Conimbricenses on EN, he found that there was an apparent homogeneity or coincidence between the two with some unimportant differences. In X^{SXX}, Vagnone has used the threefold distinction concerning the ethical ranges following the Confucian pattern: the personal cultivation (xiushen 修身), the arranging of the family (qijia 齐家) and the governance of the country (zhiguo 治国). This was a kind of coincidence with Thomas's trilogy of the ethical ranges, which were divided into personal ethics, the family ethics and political ethics^[13].

Thierry Meynard does not agree with Verhaeren in point 2, and he shows that the structure of X^{SXX} bears more homogeneity with that of Summa Theologica (Ia IIae and IIa IIae) rather than with that of Conimbricenses^[14]. Moreover, we can see that Vagnone in X^{SXX} has dealt with the human feelings or passions first before turning to the ethical definition of the human action, while the Summa Theologica and Conimbricenses both deal first with human action and then with human feelings. Apart from that, Thierry Meynard has observed that the eleven passions discussed in book 4 of X^{SXX} have no corresponding part in the Conimbricenses, rather they were taken directly from Summa Theologica. Vagnone has made some adjustments in order to be well tuned with the Confucian way of thinking about the ethical issues, because Confucian ethics attribute to passions or feelings much more importance in explaining the human virtues and actions. In order to have a clearer view, the chart can be of a help:

[11] J. L. Ackrill, "Aristotle on Eudaimonia," Amelie Oksenberg Rorty ed., *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 15-34.

[12] Verhaeren, Hubert, *Aristote en Chine*, in *Bulletin Catholique de Pékin*, a. 1935, pp. 417-429. Besides the *Xiushen xixue*, the three other works are the *Lingyan lishao*, the *Huanyouquan* and the *Minglitan*.

[13] the ethics of the individual (*ethica monastica*), the ethics of the family (*oeconomica seu familiaris*) and political ethics (*politica seu civilis*, p. 3). Cf. Aquinas, *Sententia libri ethicorum*, *Lectio 1. 6*.

[14] Mei Qianli (梅谦立), (Thierry Meynard), *Wanming zhongxi lunlixue de xiangyu; cong Nigemake lunlixue dao wanming Xiushen xixue* 晚明中西伦理学的相遇: 从《尼各马可伦理学》到晚明《修身西学》(Encounter between Chinese and Western Ethics in the Late Ming dynasty: From the Nicomachean Ethics to Late Ming's Western Study of Personal Cultivation), *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 中国文哲研究集刊 (Journal of Chinese literature and philosophy), 39, 2011, p. 103.

Xiushen xixue	Coimbra commentary	Summa Theologica Ia Ilae
juan 1: 人意定有所向 Human will determines that it exists an end; 好美 The Good	Disputatio 1: The Good Disputatio 2: The End	Q. 1: Man's Ultimate End
juan 2: 人所向福 Happiness as human end	Disputatio 3: Happiness	Q. 2: The Things that Man's Beatitude lies in. 3: What Beatitude is. Q. 4: What is required for Beatitude? Q. 5: The Attainment of Beatitude
juan 3: 司明 Intelligence; 司爱 Sensitive appetite	Disputatio 4: Three principles of human acts: will, intelligence and sensitive appetite	Q. 9-Q. 21: Action
juan 4: 情 Feelings	Disputatio 6: Feelings of the souls, also called passions	Q. 25-Q. 48: Passion
juan 5: 动行 Actions	Disputatio 5: Goodness and evil of the human acts in general	Q. 49-Q. 54: Habit
juan 6: 德论 General virtues	Disputatio 7: Virtues in general	Q. 51-Q. 61: virtues
juan 7: 智德 Virtue of wisdom	Disputatio 8: Prudence	Q. 55-Q. 61: virtues
juan 8: 廉德 Temperance	Disputatio 9: Other moral virtues: justice, courage and temperance	Q. 55-Q. 61: virtues
juan 9: 毅德 Courage		Q. 55-Q. 61: virtues
juan 10: 义德 Justice		Q. 55-Q. 61: virtues

The question which resource the order of Xsxx coincides at most, is not our primary concern, because it is clear as shown in the chart that Xsxx has kept the basic structure of Aristotle's ethic and discussed the most important issues of EN such as the happiness as the highest good, the elementary constituents of the human action as the intelligence and the desires or appetites, the definition of the action and the virtues. We should not forget the original intention of Vagnone, which did not lie in the exact introduction of the Aristotle's ethics as such, but in making a dialogue possible by using this Christianized interpretation of Thomas Aquinas. That is why he did not use the exact scholastic mode of disputationes in exposing the ethical principles, but argued in a much simplified way of disputationes^[15], because his goal is to make his interpretations easily understood and the complicated argumentation much clearer for the Chinese^[16]. So he hoped that

[15] With respect to the mode of disputationes, see: Wadell, Paul J. (C. P.), *The Primacy of Love: An Introduction to the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas* (Eugene 1992), 29.

[16] German Philosopher and Thomist, Josef Pieper, has made a conclusion, which caught the spirit of the complicated mode of writing disputationes. In true disputation this other person is neither ignored by the speaker, nor bluffed, nor merely "worked over," spellbound, misled or, to put it crudely, "done in." Men who want not so much to clarify as to create a sensation are unfitted for debate and they will avoid it. That point was, as a matter of fact, made as early as the twelfth century in defense of the disputatio. The disputation, it was held, was an excellent means of unmasking empty noise, oratory, "belletristics," and rhetoric, of keeping such devices from obstructing the search for truth and of repressing those who were not interested in the scire but in the sciri, not in knowing but in being known. See: Pieper, J., *Guide to Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 87.

XSXX could function as a kind of preparation work for introducing the moral theology derived essentially from Bible and the Gospels to the Chinese.

3. The Christianized Reading of the Happiness as Beatitude

Vagnone's first step is to determine happiness as the ultimate end of human life by using the teleological arguments in Juan 1 and 2. In order to do this, he began with the concept of "end" and "good" as the Aristotelian ethical tradition usually has done. According to this tradition, we have to begin with the concepts of end and good, if we want to talk about ethics, because it reflects theories about the human good, and the good can be called good for human being, only when it belongs to or has a connection with the end of human desire or intention. To sum up, the human good must be an end desired by human being. Two sides are necessary: one is the subjective desire or psychological capacities, the other is the objective goals, facts and beliefs. If we look into the argumentation of Juan 1 and 2 of XSXX, we find that Vagnone used the same teleological framework to begin his work Western learning on personal cultivation. Vagnone made the claim in Juan 1 that the human intentions and desires must have ends, and these ends are the goods^[17]. Certainly Vagnone was not the first one to find the equivalence of Aristotle's philosophical terminologies in Chinese, but indeed was the first one to craft the central Aristotelian ethical terms. For example, hao mei "好美" was used to refer to the goods. Then he divided hao mei into three kinds: the goods of the soul, the goods of the body and the external goods. I think that Vagnone was indirectly inspired by the Greek idea of "καλοκἀγαθος", which represents the perfect ethical character of a man, even though he did not give any hint to this Greek idea in XSXX. As we know the Greek philosophy and literature had experience such a revitalization, it is highly possible that every well-educated person should have known what "Καλοκἀγαθία" signified. "Καλοκἀγαθία" entails both the goodness and the nobleness of a action. Vagnone might find that hao "好" could refer to goodness, and "美" to nobleness, so hao mei "好美" combines both and could be used for indicating the things, which the human beings desire in a broader sense. Indeed "κάλος" has not an aesthetic denotation in this combination form, but an ethical one, "noble" or "nobleness". Therefore, his translation hao mei is not the ideal rendering of the greek word "καλοκἀγαθος", because mei "美" has not an ethical denotation in the first place. Nevertheless it is the first attempt to render the Aristotelian concept of "τὸ ἀγαθόν" into Chinese context. (above you discuss only "τὸ ἀγαθόν", but not the Chinese translation of "τέλος")

But it led also to the question, what is the ultimate end for human being among so many different goods. In Juan 2, he has done the most important work in his whole project, that is he has justified the claim that the human happiness is the ultimate end. Here he rendered the Aristotelian concept of εὐδαιμονία into Chinese "an fu 安福" (tranquil happiness) or "zhen fu 真福" (real happiness). Vagnone must have translated the word from the Latin "beatitudo", which bore from the beginning religious denotation of divine blessings. "Beatitudo" is not something, which we can attain and retain within our own powers, but something beyond as divine grace from Above. We will not wonder in Juan 2 that Vagnone tried to identify the essence of beatitude with the Creator (God). But

[17] XSXX 2019, pp. 145-150.

before making such a conclusion, he has made a very important hierarchical distinction between the different ends and goods. He called the ultimate or complete end as “zong wei” (宗为) and the subordinate ends as “shu wei”(属为)^[18]. He said that “zong wei”(宗为) is the completion of the happiness of the whole human life, the fulfillment of all the desires of the heart (宗为者, 全生之福之终, 安其心之趋向者也). According to Aristotle, the ends are not more or less the same, but they are hierarchically ordered in such a pyramid-like form with happiness at the top as the most complete end, the instrumental ends at the bottom and the intermediary ends in the middle. The ultimate end is to be desired in its own right and for its own sake; the instrumental goods are always for the sake of other goods, e. g. the money, while the intermediary ends can be desired for their own sake and also for the sake of other ends, e. g. pleasure and intellect^[19]. The order of the ends and goods can be also understood in a circle-like form, in which the ultimate good function like the central good, and other goods depend on it. Without the central good, the other goods will turn out to be not goods at all.

Vagnone has succeeded in establishing the happiness as the ultimate end of human life through the teleological arguments. Next, he tried to delineate that happiness does not depend on external and bodily goods, but only on the goods of soul. His christianized reading of the happiness does not lie in the fact that he located the complete happiness in the good or excellence of the soul, because the other Greek schools and all the commentaries of Aristotelian ethics shared the common view that the soul is the true self, not the body, and the happiness lied in the activities of the soul^[20]. This is also in line with the interpretation of Conimbricenses, “Primum. Esse hominis continetur animo & corpore & esse corporis pendet ab animo, atque ipsum corpus propter animum est. Disp. 3. q. 2. a. 2, p. 23, see also ST Ia. IIae. q. 2. a. 5.).”(Utrum beatitudo consistat in animi operatione; Disp. 3. q. 3, p. 25, and see also ST Ia. IIae. q. 2. a. 7). What characterized Vagnone’s Christianized interpretation of Aristotelian happiness is his illustration of the Christian understanding of happiness by using the Confucian pattern of “体-用”(ti-yong). Basically ti“体” means the essence or principle of a thing, and yong“用” manifests the function of a thing. He said:

“真福之体, 至切实, 至美善; 真福之用, 归于司明、司爱二司焉。至真之美, 非人自有, 自外致之; 然非系神外也, 神自备而致之…至言真福之体, 西之古今圣贤默契焉, 而以造物主当之。盖既为万物所造始, 则必为万物所依归。吾神明知切怀, 则亦将获真福之妙而快足矣。(The essence of the beatitude is the most real, the best with the noblest nature; as regards to the function of the beatitude, it is ascribed to the two capacities, the intelligence and the will… Concerning the nature or essence of the beatitude, the ancient and modern sages in the West unanimously agree with the claim, that Creator God is the ultimate end. Because God was the Creator of the

[18] XSXX 2019, pp. 154-165.

[19] EN I 7, 1197b1-7.

[20] Socrates, Plato and Aristotle all agree with the doctrine, that the soul represents the true self. For Socrates, we should turn to and pursue the virtues by taking care of the soul, while for Plato, the soul is immortal and preexisted before incorporated into the body, thus the virtues are formed by being free from the bodily desires and non-rational appetites. Aristotle has restricted the virtues also into the activities of the soul, not of the body. See: EN II 6. 1107a1-7.

created universe, He must be also the end of the whole universe...)^[21]”.

It is clear that Vagnone followed Thomas' interpretation of the Aristotelian eudaimonism, that is essentially to be found in becoming united with God. Later Vagnone understood the essence of happiness as knowing and loving God, while the function of the happiness was thought to be the activities of the intellect and the will. Here he followed also the scholastic tradition, that according to Thomas, human being can only attain the imperfect beatitude through the activities of intellectual and ethical virtues in this world, and the perfect beatitude can be reached only after our death in the heaven with God. The distinction between the perfect and imperfect beatitude is tantamount to that between the beatitudo supernaturalis and beatitudo naturalis, and Vagone called the imperfect happiness as “zhen fu” (真福, real happiness), the perfect happiness as “quan fu” (全福, complete happiness), because he believed that perfect happiness can we attain exclusively in the Jenseits after death.

Based on this distinction, the scholastic interpretation of the Aristotelian eudaimonism has helped to resolve the tickling problem of which form of life corresponds most to the intention of the eudaimonia in Aristotle. Aristotle has defined the human happiness as the activities of the soul in accordance with the virtue, when there are many virtues, then with the best or the most complete one^[22]. Incontrovertibly the best virtuous activity of the soul is contemplation, therefore Aristotle must refer to the life of contemplation ($\beta\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\rho\eta\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$), when he spoke of eudaimonia. But the problem is what should we do with the life of ethical and political practices ($\beta\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\lambda\iota\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$)? And how should we understand the range of the contemplation? Does the life of contemplation also include the activities of the ethical virtues or only refer to the pure activity of contemplation? Nowadays there are two kinds of interpretations about contemplation, the one is the inclusive reading and the other one is the dominant reading^[23]. The dominant reading identified the Aristotelian happiness with the contemplation alone, and all the other goods and human activities had worth only

XSXX2019,juan 2. Chapter 7. p. 163.

[22] EN I 7,1098a15-20.

[23] For the dominant reading, see: Heinaman (1988), Kraut (1989), and for the inclusive reading, see: Ackrill (1980), Crisp (1994), Cooper (1999), Devereaux (1981), Irwin (1985), Keyt (1983), Roche (1988), White (1990), Whiting (1986). I give a long list of authors, who are interested in this problem, to show that how intensive the debate about the issue is, and each of them tried to make Aristotelian concept of happiness consistent in his ethics, but it remains till today not resolved. They have simply ignored or sidestepped the christian scholastic solution. Heinaman, R., “Eudaimonia and Self-Sufficiency in the Nicomachean Ethics.” *Phronesis* 33 (1988): 31-53; Kraut, R., *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); Lear, G. Richardson, *Happy Lives and the Highest Good, An Essay On Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004). Ackrill, J., “Aristotle on Eudaimonia,” in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*. Edited by A. O. Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, pp. 15-33; Crisp, R., “Aristotle's Inclusive Reading,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 12 (1994): 111-136; Cooper, J., “Contemplation and Happiness: A Reconsideration.” In *Reason and Emotion*, 212-236. Princeton and N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1999. (Originally in *Rationality in Greek Thought*, ed. by M. Frede and G. Striker.); Devereaux, D., “Aristotle on the Essence of Happiness.” In *Studies in Aristotle*. Edited by D. O'Meara, 247-260. Washington D. C.: Catholic University of America Press 1981; Irwin, T., “Permanent Happiness: Aristotle and Solon.” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 3 (1985): 89-124; Keyt, D., “Intellectualism in Aristotle,” in *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, vol. 2, ed. J. P. Anton and A. Preus, 364-387. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983; Roche, T., “The Perfect Happiness.” *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27 (1988) supp., *Aristotle's Ethics*, 103-125; White, S., “Is Aristotelian Happiness a Good Life or the Best Life?” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 8 (1990): 103-143; Whiting, J., “Human Nature and Intellectualism in Aristotle.” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 68 (1986): 70-95.

or not only depending on the fact, if they could promote or make contribution to the contemplation. The inclusive reading becomes widely accepted by the scholars^[24]. It insists on the assertion that indeed the life of contemplation is the happiness, the most pleasurable, most self-sufficient and most enduring life, but since the human being is a composite being with body and soul, he cannot live such a life without the external and ethical goods, and therefore the life of contemplation includes necessarily the external goods. Since the target of the ethic is to become good in human practices and actions in the primary sense, the objects of the ethic must be about the practical things in human life rather than the divine life of God in the Jenseits. In the Middle Age this problem did not turn out to be a big issue, because we cannot attain perfect happiness either in this world through the ethical virtues, or in the life of contemplation, and thus, perfect happiness must be reserved for us after death, because God is the ultimate end of the whole universe.

However it is noteworthy that Vagnone did not show us the process of the argument or the justification behind Thomas' theological or Christian interpretation of Aristotelian happiness, rather he just took the conclusion of this scholastic interpretation. I think the reason for doing this is the consideration that XSSX was a work about the Western ethic in the primary sense, and therefore should function only as a preparatory book for introducing moral theology after that. Hence he would not go too far to interpolate too much theology of creation, sin, grace and Trinity into the work, because doing so would bring him into the danger of being misunderstood and make the XSSX a pure Christian moral work.

4. The Theory of Virtue

For Vagnone and all the proponents, ancient and modern, of Aristotelian ethics, the virtues are the unavoidable path towards the happiness both in the sense of the imperfect beatitude in the Diesseits of this world before death and in the sense of perfect beatitude in the Jenseits after death. The virtues are sine qua non for attaining the happiness in both senses. Hence Vagnone began to deal with the theory of virtue, which could be seen as the pillar of the whole Aristotelian ethical theories in juan 3, 5 and 6. In this part, I will focus on the two points with regards to the features of Vagnone' presentation of the theories of the virtue: (1) the primacy of the non-rational desires (the will) in explaining the human action and in the formation of the ethical virtues; (2) the correspondence between the cardinal virtues and the desires of the soul in the scholastic tradition and the special position of the prudence.

In juan 3, he analyzed the two conditions for producing the virtues from the perspectives of anthropology and moral psychology: one is the intellect, which he called si ming “司明”; the other is the appetite or the will, which he called si'ai “司爱”^[25]. The si ming should refer to the practical reason ($\nu\acute{o}\tilde{u}s$ πρακτικῆ), and the si yu “司欲” should correlate with the ὀρεξις or ὀρεκτικόν. Vagnone has also made a differentiation in si yu, one was called the sensitive appetite or desire (血气之司欲)

[24] Kraut, R., Aristotle on the Human Good, Princeton University Press 1989. Ackrill, J. L., “Aristotle on Eudaimonia” in: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics, ed. by Amelie Oksenberg Rorty (University of California Press 1980), 15-34.

[25] XSSS 2019, pp. 166-174.

and the other rational desire *zhiqi zhi siyu* (志气之司欲), and further he subdivided the sensitive appetite into the anger *fen si* (忿司) and bodily desire *yu si* (欲司). These three kinds of appetites are exactly in accordance with the three forms of the desire in Aristotle: the bodily desire *yu si* “欲司” refers to $\epsilon\pi\theta\upsilon\mu\iota\alpha$, the anger *fen si* (忿司) is tantamount to $\theta\upsilon\mu\acute{o}s$ and the rational desire *zhiqi zhi siyu* (志气之司欲) correlates with $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$. Although we can find an exact correspondence between Vagnone’s three kinds of “*si yu*” and Aristotle’s three forms of the desire of the soul, it does not mean that what Vagnone understood under the term of the “*si’ ai*” was exactly what Aristotle expressed through the non-rational or rational desires. Vagnone identified the “*si’ ai*” with the concept of *voluntas* (the will) in the Augustinian and Franciscan traditions of the Middle Ages. For Aristotle, the desiderative part of the soul, i. e. all the three forms of the desires (the bodily desires, the anger and the wish or the rational desire), are not an independent faculty of the soul, because the non-rational desires depend on the sense-perceptions, especially of the pleasure of the pain and the passions or feelings ($\pi\alpha\theta\eta$) of the soul, and the rational desires depend on the reason. Whereas in the Augustinian and Franciscan ethical tradition, the “*si yu*” or the *voluntas* is an independent faculty of the soul like the reason.

Plato and Aristotle have used the dichotomy of the soul into the rational part and non-rational part to delineate the ethical virtues, but the non-rational desiderative part of the soul cannot be regarded as an independent volitional faculty of the soul, the *voluntas*. Neither Plato nor Aristotle had made the action of the choice a further part besides the rational and non-rational part of the soul. Based on the concept of $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ (rational desire or wish) of Aristotle, Augustine has developed the concept of the *voluntas*, which was used by him to refer to an independent faculty of the soul of assenting or not assenting to our non-rational desires. The act of choice or assent and not assent depends on the act of the will. The will can be understood as a second-order identification or endorsement, and that we choose this good rather than that means we identify ourselves with that greater good and we are not moved by desires which we refuse to endorse^[26].

This conception of the will inspired the voluntarists very much in the Middle Ages, and finally it gave rise to the controversy of the primacy of the two faculties, the will and the reason. The question is, which one played the primary role in explaining the virtuous or ethical action. There are three positions concerning the problem of the primacy, the first position is an intellectual one, and the proponents of this position persistently stood on the claim that the reason was the primary cause of human ethical actions, whereas the *voluntas* was but an intermediary cause. The intellectualists seemed to replace the *voluntas* by appealing to the practical reason, because the cognitive grasp of the nature of the universal good could be the adequate condition for an ethical action. The second position is the absolute voluntarism, which firmly highlighted the primacy of the will. The voluntarists insisted that the will was the primary cause, because the act of choice or assent of the will preceded every act including the act of knowing or thinking. The third position was represented by Thomas Aquinas, who opposed the intellectualists and the voluntarists and tried to find a middle way between the two extreme positions. He opposed the intellectualism, because the intellect alone cannot move or impart movements, and he opposed the voluntarism, because the will itself was a kind of rational

[26] Irwin, T., *The Development of the Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 405-420.

desire, and there was no will completely independent of reason. Therefore, he strongly argued for an inter-dependence of the will and the reason in ethical action; reason provides some certain goals or objects as good, and the will has the force to move or give impetus to act. Reason relates to the will like its final cause, and the will relates to reason like its efficient cause (ST. Ia. q82. a4).

If we look into the argumentation of XSXX, we will find that Vagnone seemed to have adopted the position of the voluntarism and favored the priority of the will. He said that the will (si'ai) was the "decision-maker of the heart" (心之主张) and had the power of control over the body and soul (揽心身之权). In Juan 3, Chapter 2, he affirmed that only the will was the autonomous faculty, and although the intellect knew what the good and the bad, what true and false was, but it did not have sovereignty over the faculties of the soul and body, because its function lied only in deliberation. In order to illustrate the priority of the will, he compared it to the king sitting on the throne to command, and the commands of the will were like the commands of the king, which could move the other faculties to act, while the commands of the reason are analogous to those of teachers, which cannot impart the movements or made other faculties move.

“司爱者, 揽心身之权, 立诸司之中, 正如大君端拱堂皇.. The will has the power of control over the mind and the body, and amid all the faculties it establishes, it is like a monarch on his throne. 司明既啓, 司爱始专志动属司之力, 行命成功焉。是司明之命, 师命也, 弗能动下司之力; 司爱之命, 君命也, 嵩以勅属司之从。属司奉命成功, 司明所酌, 与司爱所欲, 全美矣。(… The will commands all the subordinate faculties to move, and it succeeds in commanding. However, the commandments of the intellect are like ones from the teachers, and cannot move the subordinate faculties, whereas the commandments of the will are like coming from the king, to whom all the faculties subject. ^[27])”

The picture of the will as a monarch on his throne clearly showed that Vagnone layed more weight on the will in explaining the human actions and virtues, so that we can speak of a kind of priority of the will. This can tell us at least two things: first, the way that Vagnone stressed the importance of the will in the formation of the ethical virtues is in accordance with the way that Aristotle highlighted the importance of the non-rational desire in the genealogy of the ethical virtues. The ethical virtues are the results of the achievements of the non-rational passions and desires by listening to the reason, but not of the reason directly. Although Aristotle had not a clear concept of voluntas, but for him, practical reason and desire (ὁρῆσις or ὁρεκτικόν) are the two fundamental elements in the formation of the human action, and thus he did not have the problem of the hierarchical order of the desire and the practical reason. Practical reason makes judgments about the factors for actions, and the desiderative part provides the motivational force, and only the combined work of both can give rise to an action^[28]. Thus the ethical virtues are the results of the harmonization between the rational part of the soul and the irrational desiderative part of the soul, i.

[27] XSXX 2019, Juan 3, Chapter 3-4. pp. 169-170.

[28] EN III 5., VI 7.

e. the results of the non-rational passions or feelings listening to the commandments or orders of the intellect after a long process of habitualization. Therefore, the ethical virtues are not the achievements of the rational part of the soul at all or at least not substantially. In this sense, Aristotle opposed strongly the Socratic tradition that the ethical virtues were identified with knowledge, because having the knowledge of what justice is could not make one act justly.

Second, the priority of the will, on the other hand, makes Vagnone fall into the voluntarism, because he said in *XSXX* several times, that happiness lied in loving God, the act of will, not in knowing God, the activity of the reason. Thomas followed Aristotle, that the activity of the theoretical reason should be regarded as the higher one than that of the practical reason. Although the position of Aquinas is already a complicated issue in itself, but basically we can say that he held the happiness to be the activities of the speculative intellect, not those of the practical intellect. In *ST I-II Q. 3.*, he gave three reasons derived from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* to testify that the beatitude consists especially in an act of contemplating divine things (in *contemplatione divinorum*), the first reason is that the speculative intellect is the best power and its best object is the divine good, which is an object of the speculative intellect and not of the practical intellect; the second reason is that contemplation is especially sought after for its own sake, by contrast, an act of the practical intellect is sought after not for its own sake, but for the sake of an action; the third reason is that the contemplative life is common to both man and higher beings, viz., God and the angels, to whom man is assimilated through beatitude. And Aquinas made a conclusion later that the ultimate and perfect beatitude which we wait for must lie in one's seeing God's very essence (in *visione ipsius divinae essentiae*). Aquinas' responses are undoubtedly inspired by Aristotle's philosophy. Aristotle had also made a differentiation inside the reason, one is the practical reason directed to the things of being pursued or avoided, which can be otherwise; and the other is the theoretical reason directed to the things of eternal truths, which cannot be otherwise^[29]. For Aristotle, theoretical reason is per definitionem superior to the practical, because the objects of theoretical reason are unchangeable, necessary and divine, whereas the objects of practical reason are changeable, contingent and perishable. Thomas and the authors of *Conimbricenses* had also adopted the consequence of this doctrine about the reason, that the theoretical reason had the priority over the practical reason both in the sense of the objects and of the grades of the happiness, because the activity of the theoretical reason represents the much more complete form of the happiness, and the virtuous activities of the practical reason fulfill the criteria of the happiness in a secondary sense^[30]. On the contrary, Vagnone chose the Augustinian and Franciscan ethical tradition and turned away from the Thomas and Jesuit interpretation of the Aristotelian ethics, emphasizing the supremacy of the will.

Concerning Vagnone's presentation of the virtues, two things are worth of mentioning. The first thing is that Vagnone has followed the Aristotelian and scholastic tradition in terms of the division of virtues. The intellectual virtues (*ἀρετὴ διανοητικὴ ἢ*) can be divided into six kinds, and the ethical virtues (*ἀρετὴ ἠθικὴ ἢ*) mainly in four kinds. The six intellectual virtues are the intellect (*νοῦς*), knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*), wisdom (*σοφία*), consciousness (*synderesis*), prudence (*φρόνησις*) and art (*τέχνη*).

[29] EN VI 1139a3-15, De anima, III 9. 432b5-7.

[30] EN VI 13. 1145a7-14.

εχνη), while the cardinal ethical virtues are prudence, justice, bravery and temperance. Clearly we can see that, on one hand the twelve ethical virtues listed by Aristotle are contracted or subdivided into four^[31], and on the other hand, one more virtue was added to the list of the intellectual virtue, the consciousness (synderesis). The cardinal virtues can be traced back to Plato, and they were accepted by Ambrose (340-397) till systematically developed by Thomas Aquinas. Why did the scholastic tradition stress so much the cardinal virtues? According to Vagnone, there are mainly two reasons, the first one is that he believed that the virtues are the necessary and adequate conditions for attaining the imperfect happiness in the Diesseits of this world, and the second one is that cardinal virtues except prudence correspond with the three forms of the desires: the temperance is the virtue of the bodily desires, the bravery is the virtue of the anger and the justice is the virtue of the rational desire^[32]. Prudence has a special position because of its double nature. On the one hand, it belongs to the virtues of the intellect, on the other hand it is also inseparably bound with the ethical virtues, because the prudence is per definitionem the knowledge about the good and the bad for ethical actions in different situations. Therefore prudence spans or stretches over the intellectual and ethical virtues.

The second point is that Vagnone can be considered as the first Western scholar, who tried to render the theories of Aristotelian virtues into Chinese. Although his translation is not popular any longer, yet his endeavour helped the Aristotelian virtues ethic to become understandable for the Chinese literati of that time. The mutual understanding of different cultures and philosophies does not happen in the level of the abstract theories and concepts, but is only possible through the personal dialogues and immersion into the culture, in which one lived as a stranger. This can be applied to Vagnone, and through his translations we can see how deeply he was immersed into Chinese culture, e. g. ling zhao “灵照” for the intellect (νοῦς), jin zhi “近知” for knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), zong zhi “宗知” for wisdom (σοφία), zhi “智” and yi “艺” for prudence (φρόνησις) and art (τέχνη) respectively. All of these words could be of great help for the Chinese readers to catch the meaning as the names suggested. Ling zhao literally refers to the spiritual enlightenment like intuitive knowledge without ratiocination, and means the grasp of the principles of the nature; jin zhi literally means the knowledge won by getting near to the natural things, and he interpreted it as the discursive knowledge about the necessity of the things; “宗知” denotes the knowledge about the final cause of all the natural things; zhi was concerned with the governance of the inner desires and inner emotions, and yi was concerned with the controlling of the outer crafts. All these five words can reflect exactly what Aristotle intended to say under νοῦς, ἐπιστήμη, σοφία, φρόνησις and τέχνη. This shows that Vagnone really spared no efforts to try to write about the Aristotelian ethics into Chinese context.

However, Vagnone has made no direct references to the Confucian cardinal virtues: benevolence, justice, rites, prudence and trustworthiness or faithfulness although he found that the virtues were the crucial points, which the Confucian ethics and Aristotelian ethics have most in common. I think

[31] According to Aristotle, the twelve ethical virtues are: bravery (ἀνδρεία), temperance (σωφροσύνη), liberality (ἐλευθεριότης), generosity (μεγαλοπρέπεια), magnificence (μεγαλοψυχία; which Vagnone translated as 宏德 hong de), tenderness (πραότης), truthfulness (ἀληθεία), wittiness (εὐτραπεία), friendship (φιλία), shame-feeling (αἰδώς), righteous indignation (νέμεσις), justice (δικαιοσύνη).

[32] XSXX 2019, Book VI, Chapter 5, p. 211.

the reason for his refraining from doing so is his worry about the fact that the Confucian and Aristotelian ethics have different approaches to virtues. The virtues are generally inborn and exist in the human mind from the nature according to the Confucian tradition, whereas the Aristotelian tradition showed a less optimistic view about the human nature, that the human being has the capacity to develop the virtues, but not possess the virtues from the nature. That is why he doubted on comparing the both and instead only focused on the Western scholastic tradition, otherwise that would make the issue more complicated and the Chinese literati more confused.

5. Conclusion

We do not know or we have too limited text witnesses or references that tell us what kind of influences Xsxx had exerted on his contemporary Chinese intellectuals or literati and on those after him. One reason might be that he had focused too much on the presentation of the scholastic Aristotelian ethics and provided too little space for the dialogue with the Confucian ethics in the text, so that it might have seemed to his contemporaries too hard or alien to begin with. However, through the examination and the analyses of the texts, we can see what kind of endeavors he had invested to render the Aristotelian ethics into Chinese culture in Xsxx, although what he had presented was a Christianized interpretation of the Aristotelian ethics based on the scholastic tradition, specifically on the interpretations of Thomas Aquinas. However, Vagnone has drawn on the scholastic interpretations only then, when it did not damage the basic structure based on the philosophical argumentation. Clearly he did not intend to write a moral theology, otherwise he would have talked about the theological themes, such as the original sin, grace, freedom, salvation etc. On the contrary, he protected his views usually by using philosophical arguments based on human reasoning in Xsxx, instead of relying on the authority of the Bible. On the other hand, he could be seen as the first Western scholar, who tried to render the basic Aristotelian ethical terms into Chinese by using some Confucian already-existing terms. Although his translations do not find largely accepted then and now, yet the value of Xsxx already goes beyond that. Therefore it is meaningless or not fair to Vagnone to argue if Xsxx is just a mixture or hodgepodge of different ethical traditions written into Chinese contexts, because Xsxx as the first treatise on the Aristotelian ethics in China in the history of the Western Learning Spreading to East will be never questioned.

中文题目:

亚里斯多德伦理学在中国的最早传播

作者: 田书峰, 现任中山大学哲学系外国哲学研究所副教授, 主要研究古希腊哲学、基督宗教哲学。联系地址: 广州市海珠区新港西路 135 号中山大学锡昌堂 803B。电子邮箱: petertiansf@hotmail.com

提要: 意大利耶稣会会士高一志 (Alfonso Vagnone, 1566-1640) 所着的《修身西学》可谓是第一部介绍亚里斯多德伦理学的中文著作, 但是, 这部著作并未受到学界的足够关注, 以至于陷入无人问津之地。本文可视为是对高一志把亚里斯多德伦理学介绍给中国人这件历史的和学术的事件的一个研究尝试, 它主要处理两个问题, 第一个问题是关于《修身西学》的思想来源, 第二个问题主要是关于神学化的亚里斯多德伦理学注释。我主要以两个核心的伦理概念 (幸福与德性) 为线索来探究高一志是如何在中国文化中介绍亚里斯多德伦理学的。经过分析, 我们发现, 对于《修身西学》是否是在中国文化语境中写成的、并融合了不同的伦理学传统的大杂烩的争论是毫无意义的, 因为高一志的《修身西学》作为在西学东渐的历史上首部介绍亚里斯多德伦理学的中文著作所蕴含的意义和价值早已超越了这个争论本身。

关键词: 高一志 (Alfonso Vagnone); 《修身西学》; 伦理学; 幸福; 德性