

*Original Paper*

Reconstructing the Chinese Female Image of the Other: A  
16th-Century Spanish and Portuguese Missionary Ethnographic  
Perspective<sup>(Note 1)</sup>

Gao Bo<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Foreign Languages, Peking University, Beijing, China

\* Gao Bo, School of Foreign Languages, Peking University, Beijing, China

Received: January 14, 2025

Accepted: January 23, 2025

Online Published: January 31, 2025

doi:10.22158/sll.v9n1p61

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/sll.v9n1p61>

**Abstract**

*This paper provides a thorough examination of the depiction of Chinese women in the book *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*, a work by the distinguished Spanish scholar and missionary Juan González de Mendoza. Despite never having visited China, Mendoza managed to compile a thorough depiction of the nation and its people by leveraging the accounts of those who had. This article meticulously examines Mendoza's representations of Chinese women, an aspect overlooked by previous scholars, aiming to define the specific image he constructed and explore the underlying incentives. Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women as opulent, refined, conservative and chaste was influenced by missionaries such as Gaspar da Cruz and Mart ín de Rada. However, his narrative was distinctively idealised and selective in its representation of Chinese society. A key insight is its "first oppress, then exalt" structure, which first depicts the hardships of lower-class women, before highlighting the social welfare systems of the Ming dynasty. This approach minimised their suffering and emphasised the superiority of Chinese society. It reflects Mendoza's broader idealisation of China, which served his missionary aims and Europe's desire for an idealised "other" during times of social and religious upheaval.*

**Keywords**

*China, missionary, female image, Juan González de Mendoza, Gaspar da Cruz, Mart ín de Rada*

## 1. Introduction

The 16th century marked a period of significant cultural exchange between Europe and China, driven in part by the efforts of European missionaries. These missionaries played a crucial role in shaping European perceptions of China. The Spanish missionary Juan González de Mendoza's book *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China* stands out as one of the earliest and most influential works offering a detailed account of China to European readers at that time. Although Mendoza never visited China, he relied on reports from missionaries and traders who had, creating a vivid picture of Chinese society. However, Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women is an issue neglected by current scholars and thus becomes the focus of this paper. The article endeavours to investigate the manner in which Mendoza represented Chinese women and to discern the fundamental rationales underpinning such a representation.

## 2. Mendoza and His Book *the History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*

Juan González de Mendoza was born in the 16th century, and he dedicated all his life to religious missions and was deeply involved in spreading knowledge about distant lands. Mendoza's most famous work, *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*, was one of the earliest comprehensive accounts of China available to European readers in that period. It was written in Spanish and first published in Rome in 1585. Its original Spanish title is *Historia de las cosas mas notables, ritos y costumbres, del gran Reyno de la China, sabidas assi por los libros de los mesmos Chinas, como por relacion de Religiosos y otras personas que han estado en el dicho Reyno* (Mendoza, 1585). The present author translates the title of the above book into English as: *Curiosities, rituals, and customs of the Great Mighty of China—compiled from the Chinese canonical texts and the accounts of missionaries and others who have visited China*. This title reveals a key piece of information: Mendoza never visited China, and his book was compiled from relevant Chinese books and the accounts of European clergymen who had travelled to China. However, this did not prevent the text from causing a sensation throughout Europe as soon as it was published in Rome, and it was quickly translated into almost all the European languages.

Prior to Mendoza's work, numerous European intellectuals had already produced reports and travelogues about China, drawing upon their personal experiences in the region. However, the degree of attention and influence that these texts exerted in Europe was significantly less than that of Mendoza's book. From the geographical discovery in the 16th century to the rise of the Enlightenment in the 18th century, Mendoza's image of China passed down through the ages. In this regard, Lach, a seminal figure in 20th-century historiography, offered the following commentary on the scholarly value of Mendoza's book in his book *Asia in the Making of Europe*: "The authority of Mendoza's book was so great that it provided a reference point and a basis for comparison for all Europeans who wrote about China before the 18th century" (Lach, 1994, p. 744).

Mendoza provides a comprehensive and detailed introduction to China's physical geography, history, politics, economy, military, culture, as perceived by Europeans in the 16th century, to the Roman Catholic Pope and to King Philip II of Spain (Felipe II of Spain, 1527-1598), as well as to European scholars and popular readers, customs, manners, laws, and religious beliefs. It is noteworthy that prior to Mendoza's work, Europeans possessed an incomplete understanding of China. While the clergy and merchants of Marco Polo's era had constrained their conceptions of China to the realm of artefacts, Mendoza elevated his predecessors' imaginings to encompass the institutional and spiritual domains. The significance of Mendoza's book lies precisely in its role in transforming China's image in the West by constructing a more comprehensive representation of China, encompassing the material, institutional and spiritual levels, for the European readers of his time. The work also served as a crucial conduit, facilitating the access of European intellectuals to China and fostering their understanding of the subject.

Mendoza's 440-page book is divided into two parts, each comprising three volumes. The first part provides a comprehensive overview of China's national conditions, with volume 1 offering an overview of China's physical geography, volume 2 addressing Chinese beliefs and supernatural phenomena, and volume 3 focusing on Chinese morality and politics. The second part, which also consists of three volumes, provides a detailed account of the observations of the Spanish missionaries in China from 1577 to 1581, as well as their observations of the Chinese in the Philippines (Mendoza, 1585, pp. 151-440).

Recognising the significant value of this book, this paper employs it as a historical source to redefine the image of Chinese women from the European perspective of the 16th century. Nevertheless, the first edition of 1585 published in Rome was not the one approved by Mendoza (Mendoza, 1585). In 1586, a revised edition was published by Querino Gerardo in Madrid, Spain (Mendoza, 1586). This edition was identified as the final Spanish revision that had been approved by Mendoza himself (Gao, 2019, p. 104).

As this article is composed in English, the research corpus selected herein is the English translation of Mendoza's work by George T. Staunton, which has gained wide acclaim and acknowledgement within the academic community. His father, George Leonard Staunton, accompanied the ambassador of the British mission, George Macartney, to China as vice-ambassador and was granted an audience with Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty. He meticulously documented his observations during the journey in *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* (Staunton, 1799). George T. Staunton was also part of this diplomatic mission and took the opportunity to learn Chinese. He later joined the Guangzhou office of the British East India Company. He is therefore regarded by posterity as one of the earliest British "China experts".

In 1853 and 1854, George T. Staunton edited and published a two-volume English translation of Mendoza's book (Mendoza, 1853) (Mendoza, 1854). Staunton's edition is a reprint based on the first

English translation of 1588 (Mendoza, 1588), which in turn was based on the Spanish revised edition published in Madrid in 1586 (Mendoza, 1586), according to the present author's research (Gao, 2020, p. 150).

Moreover, Mendoza's main historical references were the reports on China by the Spanish missionary Mart ín de Rada and the Portuguese missionary Gaspar da Cruz. The reports used in this paper are from *South China in the Sixteenth Century* (Boxer, 1953), compiled by the orientalist Charles Ralph Boxer. As a translator and editor of this book, Boxer's work was rigorously checked against the original manuscripts and supplemented with additional content, earning him a high degree of recognition in academic circles.

### 3. The Chinese Female Image from the 16th-European Perspective

Firstly, Mendoza described the appearance and clothing of Chinese women in the Ming dynasty as follows:

Their women do apparell themselves verie curiouslie, much after the fashion of Spaine: they use many iewels of gold and precious stones: their gownes have wide sleeves; that wherewith they do apparel themselves is of cloath of gold and silver and divers sortes of silkes, whereof they have great plentie, as aforesaid, and excellent good, and good cheape (Mendoza, 1853, p. 31). (Note 2)

This type of Chinese woman could be seen as emblematic of opulence, refinement or distinction, potentially leading to stereotyping.

Secondly, Mendoza also noted that the Chinese women considered small feet to be the epitome of beauty, so they bound their feet tightly from an early age. The smaller the foot, the more beautiful the woman. However, this practice resulted in their feet becoming almost deformed and partially crippled, making it difficult for them to move around. As a result, they rarely went out and rarely stopped working. He also indicated that this practice had been going on for many years and would continue for many years to come because it was protected by law: any woman who interfered with it or failed to perform it on her daughter would be found guilty and punished (Mendoza, 1853, p. 31).

As we have explained, Mendoza never visited China and his accounts were based mainly on the reports of the Portuguese missionary Gaspar da Cruz and the Spanish missionary Mart ín de Rada. In constructing the image of Chinese women, Cruz wrote: "From their childhood they squeeze their feet in cloths, so that they may remain small, and they do it because the Chinas do hold them for finer gentlewomen that have small noses and feet. This withal is the custom among the well-bred people, and not among the basest" (Boxer, 1953, p. 149). It can be seen that Mendoza expanded on Cruz's account of the custom of foot-binding among Chinese women, without making any derogatory judgements.

Thirdly, Mendoza also portrayed a conservative image of Chinese women with reserved behavior. For example, he pointed out that Chinese women were so conservative and modest that you would never see a woman at the window or outside the door. When her husband hosted a dinner, she would never appear or eat at the table unless the guests were close relatives or friends. When they went to visit their parents or relatives, they travelled in a small litter carried by four people. It was tightly enclosed, with windows made of gold and silver thread and silk curtains, so that although they could see people on the street, they remained unseen. They had many servants to look after them. So it was a rare sight to see a lady of high society in the street. In fact, one might think there were no women in the city at all, as their reclusiveness was attributed to their foot disabilities (Mendoza, 1853, p. 32).

In fact, Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women as chaste and reserved was primarily based on the reports of Portuguese missionary Cruz, as he described:

They commonly keep themselves close, so that through all the city of Cantam, there appeareth not a woman, but some light huswives and base women. And when they go abroad they are not seen, for they go in close chairs; neither when anybody cometh into the house doth to see them, except for curiosity they chance under the door-cloth to look on them that come in when they are foreigners (Boxer, 1953, p. 149).

The manuscript of another Spanish missionary Martin de Rada, was one of another historical reference for Mendoza's writings. Rada also mentioned the conservatism and chastity of Chinese women. Let us read his statement: "The women are very secluded and virtuous, and it was a very rare thing for us to see a woman in the cities and large towns, unless it was an old crone" (Boxer, 1953, p. 282).

In summary, Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women as conservative and reserved was strongly influenced by the accounts of the Portuguese missionary Cruz and the Spanish missionary Martin de Rada. Both Cruz and Rada emphasised the seclusion and modesty of Chinese women, noting that they rarely appeared in public and tended to stay out of sight, even at home. Drawing on these accounts, Mendoza constructed a comprehensive image of Chinese women, centred on their chastity and reticence. Expanding on the accounts of the two missionaries, Mendoza further refined the perception of Chinese women, offering a more elaborate description of their conservative and chaste qualities.

Furthermore, Mendoza also acknowledged the diligence of Chinese women, observing that although daughters were raised in seclusion and not permitted to socialise freely, they were not indolent. Instead, they were engaged in continuous activity to avoid idleness, which was regarded as the origin of all vices, and were prevented from succumbing to this vice. This law was observed by all women, including those in marital unions with governors and high-ranking officials, and it was reputed that even the queen herself was obliged to adhere to its principles. Women were

expected to engage in the production of gold brocade, silk, linen, and other handicrafts, and they were taught to hold those who chose idleness in contempt. Consequently, children were raised in this environment, observing their mothers as exemplary figures, and internalising this commendable virtue as a daily and permanent custom. Idleness was regarded as a truly intolerable state (Mendoza, 1853, p. 145).

Fourthly, Mendoza documented the tragic lives of women from the lower classes. In particular, he indicated in the chapter 20 of volume 3 of part 1:

Such women as do use this facultie are nothing esteemed amongst them, for they are for the most part of the basest sort, as strangers, slaves, or such as have beene bought of their mothers being younge, which is a kinde of perpetuall bondage, yea a great crueltie which is used amongst them there, and yet suffered amongst them. You shall understande, that such as are poore widowes and driuen by necessitie, cannot sustaine themselues, may for the supplying of their want, sell their children and binde them to perpetuall seruitude, the which is permitted in such sort, that there are amongst them rich merchants that deale in no other thing (Mendoza, 1853, p. 146).

At first glance, the aforementioned text appears to depict the lamentable existence of women in the brothel. However, a deeper examination of the text reveals that this is not the primary focus of Mendoza's narrative. Instead, Mendoza goes on to highlight the role of the emperor, who has dispatched special officials to oversee the management of their income, ensuring that these women can enjoy a peaceful and contented old age. Through this narrative structure, Mendoza subtly downplays the miserable experiences of women at the bottom and highlights the superiority of the social welfare system in the Ming dynasty. The following statement by Mendoza provides further insight into this matter:

Whatsoever profite dooth remaine unto these women when they have paid their maister, they give unto the judge their superiour, who doth keepe it faithfully and carefully, and giveth a good account thereof everie yeare unto the visitors. And afterwarde when these women waxe olde, it is repaied unto them againe by order of the said judge. But it is bestowed in such sort, that they shall not lacke, neither have urgent necessitie. But if it so fall out that they should lacke, they will give them a stipend to maintaine them, onely for to dresse and trimme the blinde women, or else they will put them into the kinges hospitall, a place ordeyned for such as cannot helpe themselves (Mendoza, 1853, p. 146).

At this juncture in the discourse, the article has identified a narrative structure in Mendoza's account that can be characterised as "first oppressing, then exalting". The Spanish author commences by delineating the tragic lives of the trafficked children, subsequently transitioning to the affirmation of the superiority of the Ming Empire's social system. This is achieved by highlighting that the girls who were sold, despite having become prostitutes, could still enjoy a

comfortable old age. The article is impelled to continue to question: Given that Mendoza's writings on China were compiled on the basis of earlier reports by missionaries, it is important to determine whether Mendoza's narrative technique was a faithful inheritance of his predecessors' narrative structure, or a cultural rewrite of his own. If the latter, to what extent did Mendoza exercise his authorial subjectivity?

In this respect, the article has found that in Chapter 15 of Cruz's report on China, he also described the miserable lives of women from the lower classes: "in this country of China there is no greater servitude than that of these wenches" (Boxer, 1953, p. 151). Later, he described the tragic plight of widows who had to sell their children to support themselves, and how Chinese law allowed women to sell their own children, but not men, because men were supposed to support themselves and their children (Boxer, 1953, p. 152). In contrast to Mendoza, Cruz forthrightly unveiled the tragic circumstances of Chinese women, without forging any logical connection to the social welfare regime of the Ming Empire. A more thorough examination of Cruz's report is warranted:

All the common women are slaves, being brought up for this purpose from their childhood; they buy them of their mothers, and teach them to play the viols and other instruments of music and to sing. And those that can best do this, because they gain most, are worth more. Those which cannot do that, are worthless. The master either deflower them or sell them. And when they are to be set in the street of the common women, they are written by an officer of the King in a book, and the master is bound to come every year with a certain fee to this officer; they are bound to answer their master with so much every month. When they are old, they make them seem young girls with painting and rouge. And after they are not for that trade, they are altogether free, without any obligation to the master or anybody, and then they feed upon that which they have gotten (Boxer, 1953, pp. 150-151).

It is evident that the aforementioned text portrays Chinese women as being subjected to profound enslavement. Conversely, Mendoza presents a contrasting image of women at the bottom of the social order, enjoying social guarantees.

To summarise, Mendoza constructed a complex and multifarious image of Chinese women. With regard to their appearance and clothing, he portrayed them as being characterised by opulence and refinement, donning elaborate and costly garments that signified a certain level of luxury and elegance. Furthermore, Mendoza emphasised the pervasiveness of foot-binding in Chinese culture, highlighting its deep-rooted social and cultural significance. However, he also underscored the harrowing consequences of this practice, including the severe deformities and mobility restrictions it entailed, profoundly impacting the lives and daily activities of the women who endured it. In terms of behaviour, he depicted Chinese women as being highly conservative and reserved, seldom making public appearances and strictly adhering to the rigid social norms and hierarchies within the domestic sphere. Moreover, Mendoza acknowledged their diligence and the prevalence of women engaging in activities

such as spinning and various handicrafts. This was due to the cultural perception of idleness as a vice to be strenuously avoided.

Nevertheless, Mendoza's narrative diverged considerably from those of his predecessors, most notably Cruz. Cruz had unflinchingly laid bare the tragic and harrowing circumstances that Chinese women endured, such as their subjugation and enslavement, as well as the extreme desperation that drove poor widows to the heart-wrenching act of selling their own children as a means of survival. In contrast, Mendoza either chose to omit or deliberately downplayed these harsher and more unpalatable aspects of Chinese women's lives. In the context of lower-class women, especially prostitutes, Cruz had provided detailed accounts of their abject and brutal conditions as slaves, who were constantly subjected to exploitation and various forms of abuse at the hands of their masters and the society at large. Conversely, Mendoza's narrative technique involved a deliberate structuring of his account, wherein he initially delineated the hardships endured by these women, subsequently transitioning to a focus on the social welfare system purportedly in place during the Ming Dynasty. A pivotal aspect of Mendoza's narrative strategy involved highlighting the role of the emperor in instituting a system of oversight and management of the income of these women by officials, thereby allegedly ensuring their security in later life. This approach, as demonstrated by Mendoza, clearly shows his tendency to idealise the accounts of Cruz and Rada. Through a process of cultural adaptation and selective representation, Mendoza deliberately avoided depicting the less favorable and declining aspects of Ming society. Instead, he established an artificial connection between the tragic fates of women at the bottom of the social hierarchy and the social welfare system, ultimately presenting an overly idealised and perhaps distorted image of China.

#### **4. Roots of the Idealised Image of Chinese Women in the 16th Century**

The following section aims to explore the factors that contribute to the idealised perception of Chinese women. Idealising Chinese women is part of the idealised image of China constructed throughout Mendoza's book. Indeed, the idealised image of China represents Mendoza's writing stance. On one hand, the idealised image of China is not only a reflection of the history of Sino-Western relations and the international economic and trade order in the 16th century, but also a metaphorical expression of Europeans at that time in overcoming its own crises and pursuing an ideal society. On the other hand, the idealisation of China is not a pure praise of China, but has missionary intentions.

Firstly, the author's idealised view of China, which is present throughout the book, can be traced back to a specific historical context: the Ming Dynasty. At the time Mendoza was engaged in the composition of his work, *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*, the Ming Dynasty was experiencing the "Wanli Rejuvenation". During this period, the state treasury's revenue increased, the commodity economy thrived, official governance was effectively rectified, and society was full of vitality. This historical background provided a realistic basis for Mendoza's imagination of China.



The economic prowess of the Ming Dynasty is evidenced by its commanding position in global trade, with a substantial influx of silver into China over an extended period, a phenomenon that has earned it the appellation of the “Silver Empire”. For instance, Quan Hansheng, an expert in Chinese economic history, estimated the absorption capacity of capital by the “Silver Empire” and pointed out that “half or even more of the American silver flowed into China” in the global overseas trade in the 16th century (Quan, 1972, pp. 445-446). Moreover, Gunder Frank, a renowned German scholar and one of the founders of the world-systems theory, also estimated the data on the circulation of silver in the overseas trade exchanges during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, concluding that “Ming Dynasty China accounted for one-fourth to one-third of the world’s silver production, and this silver was in the form of monetary capital” (Frank, 1998, pp. 125-130). Consequently, Mendoza’s acknowledgement of Chinese material and social aspects effectively replicated the global economic and trade order of the 16th century through literary means.

Secondly, our focus should be shifted to the West, where 16th-century European society was undergoing a transition from the ancient to the modern era. This transition was characterised by social unrest, soaring prices and the phenomenon of “great inflation”. The large-scale importation of silver from the Americas by Spain led to domestic hyperinflation, which then spread throughout Europe, exacerbating social instability. Concurrently, religious conflicts were rife, with the ongoing opposition between Catholicism and Protestantism giving rise to international tensions and wars, causing nations to become fractured along religious lines and internal disputes to persist (Braudel, 1953, pp. 516-519). Moreover, the ongoing state of warfare resulted in economic stagnation and the accumulation of government debt. Against this backdrop, the idealised portrayal of China by missionaries such as Mendoza can be seen as a metaphorical expression of Europeans’ desire to transcend their own crises and pursue an ideal society.

Finally, it is necessary to acknowledge the influence of Mendoza’s missionary background on his depiction of China. As previously observed by the present author, Mendoza’s work was characterised by a “sacred orientalism” (Gao, 2024). He crafted an idealised image of China to further his evangelistic goals, seeking to convince European readers that this affluent and rational Chinese society was an ideal setting for missionary work. This strategy reflected the prevailing religious fervour and missionary spirit of his time. The 16th-century Europe was characterised by intense religious fervour, marked by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation movements that swept across the continent. Within this context, the Counter-Reformation sought to expand eastward, with the aim of converting those who had strayed and reclaiming those who had embraced heretical beliefs. Meanwhile, the Age of Exploration also opened new sea routes, providing avenues for religious expansion.

## 5. Conclusion

This article has provided a comprehensive analysis of the depiction of Chinese female image constructed by 16th-century European missionaries, with a particular focus on Juan González de Mendoza's influential work, *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*. By examining Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women, this study has shed light on the complex and multifaceted image profiled by European missionaries of the time. Mendoza's depiction of Chinese women as opulent, refined, conservative and chaste was significantly influenced by the accounts of missionaries like Gaspar da Cruz and Martín de Rada. However, Mendoza's narrative diverged from theirs in notable ways, particularly in his tendency to idealise and selectively represent aspects of Chinese society.

One of the key findings of this research is the identification of Mendoza's "first oppressing, then exalting" narrative structure. This approach allowed him to initially present the hardships faced by lower-class Chinese women, such as those in prostitution, before shifting focus to the purported social welfare systems of the Ming Dynasty. By doing so, Mendoza effectively downplayed the suffering of these women and instead highlighted the perceived superiority of the Chinese social system. This narrative strategy reflects Mendoza's broader idealisation of China, which served both his missionary goals and the prevailing European desire for an idealised "other" during a period of significant social and religious upheaval.

The paper also highlights the innovative aspect of examining Mendoza's work through the lens of gender and cultural representation. By focusing on the portrayal of Chinese women, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural interactions and the formation of gender images in historical narratives. It challenges previous scholarship that has overlooked the nuances of Mendoza's depiction of Chinese women and offers new insights into the motivations and influences behind his writing.

In conclusion, this research underscores the importance of critically analysing historical texts and recognizing the complex interplay of personal, cultural, and religious factors in shaping representations of "others." Mendoza's portrayal of Chinese women serves as a compelling example of how European missionaries constructed and idealised images of China to serve their own purposes, while also reflecting the broader cultural and intellectual milieu of the 16th century.

## References

- Boxer, C. R. (1953). *South China in the Sixteenth Century (1550–1575)*. London: the Hakluyt Society.
- Braudel, F. (1953). *El Mediterráneo y el mundo mediterráneo en la época de Felipe II*. (Translated by Toledo, M., Rocés, W., Simón, V.). México D. F. : Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Frank, G. (1998). *Reorient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

- Gao, B. (2019). Research of the First Edition, the Final Revision and the Chinese Editions of *The Historie of the Great and Mightie Kingdome of China*. *Library Journal*, (2), 95-104.
- Gao, B. (2020). A Textual Research on the English, Chinese and Spanish Versions of *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China*. *Library Journal*, (12), 147-150.
- Gao, B. (2024). Sacred Orientalism: A Particular Mode of Missionary Ethnographic Thinking and Poetics on Juan González de Mendoza's Chinese Ethnography. *Religions*, (12), 1462.
- Mendoza, J. G. (1585). *Historia de las cosas mas notables, ritos y costumbres, del gran Reyno de la China, sabidas assi por los libros de los mesmos Chinas, como por relacion de Religiosos y otras personas que an estado en el dicho Reyno*. Roma: Vicencio Accolti, 1585.
- Mendoza, J. G. (1586). *Historia de las cosas mas notables, ritos y costumbres, del gran Reyno de la China, sabidas assi por los libros de los mesmos Chinas, como por relacion de Religiosos y otras personas que han estado en el dicho Reyno*. Madrid: Querino Gerardo, 1586.
- Mendoza, J. G. (1588). *The historie of the great and mightie kingdome of China, and the situation thereof together with the great riches, huge Citties, politike gouernement, and rare inventions in the same* (Translated by Parke, R.). London: I. Wolfe Edward White, 1588.
- Mendoza, J. G. (1853). *The history of the great and mighty kingdom of China and the situation thereof* (Translated by Parke, R. Edited by Staunton, G. T.). London: The Hakluyt Society.
- Mendoza, J. G. (1854). *The history of the great and mighty kingdom of China and the situation thereof* (Translated by Parke, R. Edited by Staunton, G. T.). London: The Hakluyt Society.
- Quan, H. S. (1972). The Import of American Silver into China during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. *Essays on Chinese Economic History (Volume 1)*. Hong Kong: New Asia College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Staunton, G. L. (1799). *An authentic account of an embassy from the king of Great Britain to the emperor of China : including cursory observations made, and information obtained in traveling through that ancient empire, and a small port of Chinese Tartary; together with a relation of the voyage undertaken on the occasion of His Majesty's ship the Lion, and the ship Hindostan, in the East India company's service, to the Yellow sea, and Gulf of Pekin; as well as of their return to Europe ; with Taken chiefly from the papers of His Excellency the Earl of Macartney ... and of other gentlemen in the several departments of the embassy*. Philadelphia: Printed for R. Campbell by J. Bioren.

**Notes**

Note 1. This paper is a phase result of the general project of the National Social Science Foundation of China, “Study on *the History of the Great Mighty Kingdom of China* and the Image of China from the European Perspective of the 16th Century” (19BWW012).

Note 2. The text quotes 19th century English. The spelling is different from modern English.