Translation as (Re)Configuration: "Confucius" as the Jesuits' Orientalization of "*Kongzi*" in the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*

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1. The Company of Jesus and the *Rujia* (儒家)[1]

In 1687, the Society of Jesus published in Paris the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*—or *Confucius, the Philosopher among the Chinese*—a volume of approximately 600 pages. This work contained three of the four Ruist classics (四书, literally "four books") translated into Latin,[2] accompanied by extensive scholarly commentaries to facilitate the understanding of European audiences for whom the text was conceived. The book constituted the final systematization attempt that the Jesuits carried out following over a century of intercultural, philosophical, and religious dialogue with Ruist scholars or "*ru*" (儒) during their missionary labor in China, and was conceived as a way to promote and gain European support in the development and fulfillment of the Jesuits' evangelical enterprise within the Middle Kingdom (中国). At the center of this volume was the discursive figure of "Confucius", an *auctoritas* created by the Ignatians during the translation process which, as we argue here, was different from the Chinese *auctoritas* "Kongzi".[3] We propose here as our hypothesis that the former figure constituted the cornerstone of the Jesuit orientalist (re)elaboration of the Ruist tradition as a whole under a Christian prism. To demonstrate this, it first becomes necessary to trace back in time the dialogic interactions that gave rise to the need for a figure

[1] Within the present *opus* we will opt for the use of the terms "*Rujia*" or "*Ruxue*" (儒家 and 儒学: doctrine or teaching of the *ru*) and "*Litteratorum Lex*" or "*Secta*" (Law or Sect of the Literati) when referring to what is most commonly known under the label of "Confucianism". The first group constitutes the autochthonous denominations used in China since antiquity, while the second group are the locutions coined by the Jesuits themselves. The word "Confucianism" has its origins in the 19th century and was derived from the Latin word "*Confucius*", which was indeed devised by the Company of Jesus. Regarding the use of the word "*lex*", one of its uses during the 17th century was what we would now classify as a religious teaching. Meanwhile, the term "*secta*" did not carry the extreme negative connotations associated with the modern term "sect". Instead, it was a word derived from the verb "*sequi*" (to follow), signifying a body of followers or adherence to a religious or philosophical tradition. For this reason, both terms were interchangeable in the 17th century and were used accordingly (Standaert 1999, 119 & 123). Gernet has already problematized the term "Confucianism" by stating that "[i]n the hypothetical sense that the term "Confucianism" [...] holds any meaning, it is clear that it far exceeds the personality of the great sage Confucius himself" (1999, 90). Furthermore, "[...] to claim the truths associated with the [*Rujia*] as a personal creation of [Kongzi] would be to demean them as being the insights of only one man" (Mungello 1999, 38). In fact, as Ames & Rosemont sustain, it is possible to speak of *Ruxue* before Kongzi himself (1998, 23-24). On this same line, Eno proposed to abandon the denomination of "Confucianism" in favor of adopting the term "Ruism" to capture the nuances of the original denominations (1990, 7). We will also opt for this denomination.

[2] These consists on the *Analects* (论语), the *Doctrine of the Mean* (中庸), the *Great Learning* (大学), and the *Mencius* (孟子). The last text was not included within the analyzed volume. These four books represented the main canon of China's civil service examinations from as early as 1313 until the beginning of the 20th century. The books were to be memorized together with the commentaries of the philosopher and scholar Zhu Xi (朱熹; 1130-1200), who, in his edition, made of the four books the authoritative work of the *Rujia* (Gardner 2003, 2).

[3] Regarding "Kongzi" (孔子) or "Kongfuzi" (孔夫子), which resulted in the latinized form "Confucius" during the 16th century (Cheng 2002, 56), the latter term was most commonly interpreted as being a Jesuit invention but, as Meynard noted: "[r]ecently, Professor Wang Qingjie from Hong Kong Chinese University shows that the term Kongfuzi was not created by the Jesuits, as claimed by Jensen [(1997)], but existed in popular literature as a sign of respect of the uneducated people toward the Foremost Teacher" (Meynard 2015, 78). For a detailed argumentation on this subject against Jensen, vid. Standaert 1999, 123-127. Throughout this thesis we will establish a consistent methodological distinction between the constructs "Kongzi/Kongfuzi" and "Confucius".

that could embody Christianity in China, that is, the material causes that gave rise to the philosopher "Confucius".

1.1. A Brief History of the Jesuit Mission in China and Its Apostolic Duty

The first modern attempt to establish a relationship between Christianity and the Middle Kingdom can be traced back to 1552, when Francis Xavier died in Shangchuan (上川), hoping to receive permission from the Ming (明, 1368-1644) Empire to enter China and spread the Gospel (Mungello 1999, 12; O'Neil 2001, 776; Vu Thanh 2019, 401). This privilege was granted in 1583 to Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci (O'Neil 2001, 3351), figures who, along with other Italian Jesuits, played pivotal roles in shaping both the mission in China and its approach, owing to their education in Italian humanism. With this background, "[...] they showed an open-minded attitude towards the foreign culture and tried to accommodate as much as was possible" (Standaert 2001, 309).[4] During the first decade of missionary work in China, the Jesuit Order's main strategy for converting the local population involved adopting the habits of Buddhist monks to spread their teachings. This process, most commonly known as "accommodation", was designed by Visitor Alessandro Valignano and "[...] amounted to an effective and multipronged strategy to adapt the truth of Catholic religion to the reality the Jesuits had to face" (Tutino 2017, 221).[5] In this sense, all Jesuit missions shared the common goal of preaching the one true faith *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* (Rubiés 2007, 243; Rubiés 2012, 63; Tutino 2017, 218; Casanova 2024, 25), a goal that can be traced back to the papal bull that founded the Society of Jesus in 1540,[6] which stated that the Order was:

> [...] [*A*]*d hoc potissimum institutae ut ad profectum animarum in vita et doctrina christiana, et ad fidei propagationem per publicas praedicationes et verbi Dei ministerium, Spiritualia Exercitia et caritatis opera, et nominatim per puerorum ac*

[4] These efforts are clearly reflected in some of their texts, such as Ruggieri's first attempt to translate Kongzi's works into Spanish in 1590, vid. Meynard & Villasante (2018), or Ricci's *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* in 1603, vid. Meynard (2016).
[5] Regarding the role of the "visitor" within the Order, this figure: "[...] ensured that Jesuit life and activity conformed to the Society's "way of proceeding". The visitor, nonetheless, was not simply a policeman but a formulator of policy, an adaptor of the general principles of the Society's Institute to the particularities of each time and place" (McCoog 2019, 3).
[6] Titled *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae* or *To the Government of the Church Militant*.

rudium in christianismo institutionem, ac christifidelium in Confessionibus audiendis spiritualem consolationem praecipue intendat (Societas Iesu 1962, 8-9).[7]

The universalist aspiration found within this document is not "original", but rather something that emerged from the contemporary reflections and debates surrounding the meaning of the "*vita apostolica*" (apostolic life), which, in time, came to be associated with "being sent" to engage in ministry, as the apostles did in *illo tempore*. This mode of life came to be modeled after the *auctoritas* of the *New Testament*, particularly Matthew 10 and Luke 9 (O'Malley 2013, 219), where the first two verses provide the key: "Συνκαλεσάμενος δὲ τοὺς δώδεκα [...] καὶ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς κηρύσσειν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἰᾶσθαι, [...]" (Aland et al. 2014, 230-231).[8] Taking these facts into account, it becomes evident that the origins and objectives of the Order, along with their activities within the Middle Kingdom, were shaped by what O'Malley has termed "apostolic pattern" (2013, 220). This refers to an enduring apostolic influence on their actions within the Church, which encompassed being sent to perform ministry, preaching the Gospel, and offering spiritual consolation so as to heal souls.[9] Such ministry had at its center two figures: the first one being the Nazarene after whom the Society was named, and the second one being Paul of Tarsus, whose missionary work permeates the *New Testament*.[10]

Anchoring their praxis on this apostolic pattern, the Order realized, through years of missionary labor in wide and different contexts and cultures, "[...] that non-European people found it much easier to convert to Christianity if the missionaries made an effort to present Christianity within their native epistemological, religious, and devotional categories" (Tutino 2017, 218; vid. also Pomplum et al. 2020, 468). This epistemic compromise constituted the foundation of the aforementioned "accommodation", a strategy for which the missions in the Orient were known. Nonetheless, we must always remember that such a strategy was also

[7] All translations within this thesis are our own. For extensive texts, refer to the first Appendix. Vid. Appendix 1, text 1.

[8] "Having called the twelve [disciples] [...] [Jesus] sent them to preach the reign of God and to heal [the sick] [...]". For the longer version found in Matthew 10.5-15, vid. Aland et al. 2014, 32-33.

[9] This particular ministry is also highlighted by Casanova as a distinguishing characteristic of the Jesuits in comparison to other Catholic orders (2024, 28). Such sense of purpose can also be found in official documents such as the *Constitutiones cum Declarationibus* (1606), where the ministry is linked to the vow of obedience to the pope. Vid. Appendix 1, text 2.

[10] The figure of St. Peter also had a special place within the Company of Jesus as he is the symbol *par excellence* of the Pope, to whom the Jesuit Order made the fourth vow of obedience. To this figure, for example, Ignatius attributes his healing after being gravely injured at the Battle of Pamplona in 1521. He was particularly devout of the *princeps apostolorum* (De Loyola 2022, 32).

devised due to material and practical circumstances, especially in "[...] societies that were understood to be culturally strong and unlikely to be conquered militarily" (Vu Thanh 2019, 401; Mungello 1999, 59).[11] This, of course, was the case in China, where the Society did not receive substantial support from the colonial powers under which it operated,[12] and this led to difficulties when carrying out evangelical activities (Standaert 2001, 292). At that time, the monopoly on violence was concentrated in the hands of the Chinese, a fact that inevitably forced the missionaries to implement accommodation as the central strategy of conversion. Even then, this endeavor was marked by both internal and external resistance, as well as progress and setbacks.

Ricci met in 1595 with Valignano, where the initial accommodation attempt was rejected upon realizing that Buddhism was also a foreign religion within China and not of equal social status as that of the *Ruxue* (Mungello 1999, 13; O'Neil 2001, 3351).[13] In this encounter, the resolution of adopting a Ruist matrix to pursue the Order's goals in the Middle Kingdom was born (Standaert 2001, 310; Cervera 2002, 216; Standaert 2008, 172; Hsia 2010, 138; Laven 2011, 149; Liu 2015, 72-73). It should be noted, however, that this process began earlier with Ruggieri, who was the one originally charged by Valignano with the mission of settling in China (Meynard &Villasante 2018, 33). Ricci was later charged with the same objective after he and Valignano displaced Ruggieri from the mission (Meynard &

[11] As has been pointed out, China was never properly a colony (Clarke 1997, 17; Gu 2013, 3). Furthermore, the number of Jesuits present in the country during the missionary process ranged from five to fifteen people until 1630, when the Jesuit monopoly over China came to an end. In confirmation of these numbers, O'Neil mentions that "[w]hen Ricci [1610] died, the mission in China had eight missionaries and eight Chinese coadjutor brothers, working in four residences and one mission post. There were also about 25,000 Christians" (O' Neil 2001, 3351). When the mendicant orders arrived in the 1630s: "[...] the average number of missionaries rose to a range of 30-40. This level remained steady for about another half-century, until 1680" (Bays 2011, 22). Such fact underscores that the members of the Society of Jesus did not have any military backing, but only limited financial support from the Church and some European countries, which barely covered the basic living expenses. This situation, however, is more complex depending on the period analyzed. The funds received through various sources varied throughout the mission in response to new and different factors, as Vermote (2017, 128-150) demonstrates. For instance, he highlights the inequalities that sometimes existed between the salaries of the Jesuits working in China within the same period (134).

[12] The Ignatians operated under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese *padroado*, which had emerged from the disputes between the colonial powers of the time—Spain and Portugal. This conflict was settled twice by Pope Alexander VI: in 1481 and 1493, with the publication of the *Inter Caetera* bull. This document established the "division" of the world into the "West Indies" and the "East Indies", using the Atlantic Ocean as the dividing line. It also granted both empires civil and ecclesiastical rights to administer all discovered and undiscovered lands (Boxer 1969, 228-248; Mungello 1999, 5; Ucerler 2008, 153). This system was ratified in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) and prevailed throughout this period, although not without conflicts and violations.

[13] Buddhism first enters China during the 1st century CE. And even though it became a stable religion within the country and even managed to eclipse Ruism during Sui (隋, 581-618) and Tang (唐, 618-690; 705-907) dynasties, this did not happen without resistances. One famous example of such opposition comes from the philosopher Han Yu (韩愈, 768-824) who wrote the *Admonition on the Display of Buddha's Bones* (谏佛骨表) in 819 to convince the emperor of not allowing the exhibition of a supposed relic from Buddha within the Tang Court. He was saved from being executed thanks to his friends' intervention (Yao 2003, 245).

Villasante 2018, 47-51; 59-60). According to Rubiés, the methodological shift started between 1584 and 1588, with Ruggieri's translation of the Ruist classics:

> [H]e embraced 'the doctrine of the literati and rulers of China' as a moral education according to nature, and also inserted (anachronistically) an explicit rejection of Buddhism within the *Analects* of Confucius, who became (not unlike the medieval Aristotle) 'the philosopher', one capable of recognizing rationally a universal cause called *Tien* [sic; 天], '[h]eaven', that was equivalent to God (2020, 525).[14]

Under the design of this new accommodation strategy, the Christian interpretation of the *Rujia*'s philosophical corpus was valued as a return to Kongzi's "original" teachings, long obscured by centuries of contact with Buddhism, which, under this narrative, became the Jesuits' greatest adversary and perverter of the Christo-Ruist truth (Cervera 2002, 212, 234; Laven 2011, 161; Fontana 2011, 62, 220-221). It is within this framework that the Portuguese Jesuit Duarte de Sande stated: "*Sit aliqua inter eos de futura vita mentio et de praemiis bonorum, malorumque poenis; sed omnia quae dicunt erroribus sunt referta*" (1590, 395).[15] Ruggieri himself remarked: "While the Devil inhabits many kinds of idols and shrines in China, Buddhism is particularly pernicious [...]" (Hsia 2010, 94).

While acknowledging Ruggieri's role as the first to develop this approach, Ricci was responsible for the execution of this strategy after Ruggieri's return to Europe. This ultimately led him—and thus the Order—to be admitted to the imperial court in Beijing (北京). However, we must consider that this strategy was also developed from a deep understanding of the realities the Jesuits had faced during their first years engaging with Chinese culture:

> The early missionaries [...] soon realised on arriving in China that they were dealing not with a primitive culture, but with a civilisation as old as, indeed perhaps even older than, that of Europe, and whose people inherited a language, a literature, and a belief

[14] It should be noted, however, that: "[t]he Christian reading of Ruggieri's translation is not excessive and refers only to a few paragraphs. [...] [His work, nonetheless,] provides an interpretative framework that was later followed by Ricci and other Jesuits in China for two hundred years" (Meynard & Villasante 2018, 78). On the particular point of "*tian*" vid. López Angelini (2024).

[15] "There is some mention among them [Buddhists] of the future life and of the rewards for those who are good, of the punishments for those who are wicked; but everything they say is replete with errors".

> system that were as complex and as sophisticated as those of Western Christendom. It was pointless therefore to seek simply to strip away the old [Ruist] beliefs and terminology, and to replace them with those of the Christian faith. Some sort of accommodation was necessary, some compromise, at least in terms of the exterior rituals. What Ricci and his successors sought to do, therefore, was "to interpret this cult rather than to suppress it" (Guy 1963, 45), to act not as outsiders seeking to impose on the native Chinese a totally alien set of doctrines and practices, but to infiltrate the very heart and soul of China by first adopting the learning and the habits of a scholar-bureaucrat, or mandarin, and then subtly adapting the Catholic rituals to [Ruist] customs and practices (Clarke 1997, 41).

Thus, the tradition of the *Litteratorum Lex*, identified with that of the ruling class, became the ideal instrument for propagating Christianity throughout China. This explains why the Jesuits learned the language through the reading and translation of the *Rujia*'s Four Books. In this sense, the Jesuits continually turned to the ancient Ruist tradition with the intent of appropriating it for their own purposes through accommodation.[16] This method was also motivated by the Chinese distinction between "orthodox" and "heterodox" cults, a classification that determined whether a cult was regarded as acceptable or subversive within the Middle Kingdom.[17]

Nonetheless, the still debated success of this enterprise did not mean that there was a common agreement on the method that was to be used in order to spread Christianity.[18] In this regard, we can recall the abovementioned De Sande, who, even though he conceded that the *Litteratorum Secta* was the Chinese doctrine closest to the Christian truth, still condemned it as "*idololatria*" (1590, 395), "idolatry". Despite the internal tensions within the Order, Ricci's interpretation predominated throughout his life and after the exile imposed on the Company in 1617, due to his successor, Nicolò Longobardi's epistemological shift, in which

[16] As Asad notes: "[t]o write about a tradition is to be in a certain narrative relation to it, a relation that will vary according to whether one supports or opposes the tradition, or regards it as morally neutral. The coherence that each party finds, or fails to find, in that tradition will depend on their particular historical position. In other words, there clearly is not, nor can there be, such a thing as a universally acceptable account of a living tradition. Any representation of tradition is contestable. What shape that contestation takes, if it occurs, will be determined not only by the powers and knowledges each side deploys, but by the collective life they aspire to-or to whose survival they are quite indifferent" (1986, 17). This fact will be particularly relevant when considering the opposing perspectives on the *Rujia* or the accommodation policy. It must also be acknowledged that this thesis presents a specific perspective on the Ruist tradition and on the Jesuit Orientalist interpretation of it.

[17] Vid. *infra* Chapter 4.

[18] On the success of the enterprise, vid. Mungello's perspective (1999, 46).

he declared that the *Rujia* should be treated as an idolatry (Cervera 2002, 236-238; Standaert 2008, 172). This position did not arise solely from Longobardi but from an extensive inquiry he conducted, in which many voices were revealed to oppose Ricci's interpretation. The divergent opinions were conducted toward unification at a conference in Jiading (嘉定) in 1627 (Standaert 2001, 311). The accommodation policy was further consolidated within the Company after the arrival of the mendicant orders to the Middle Kingdom during the 1630s. These groups disapproved of the Company's adopted method, as the Jesuits had opted for "[...] a tolerant attitude towards certain [Ruist] rites, like the ancestral worship and the veneration of [Kongzi], which they declared to be 'civil rites'" (Standaert 2008, 173). These were the very same practices that had previously led De Sande, Longobardi, and others to label them as "idolatrous". The theological differences between the two camps led the mendicant orders to petition for a series of papal interventions, which began what later came to be known as the "Chinese Rites controversy". The Ignatians' stance on this matter was the following:

> [...] [S]ince genuine monotheism had existed in a relatively pure state at least until the time of Confucius, their role as missionaries essentially consisted in reawakening the old faith, documenting its ''prophecies'' regarding Christ, identifying its goal and fulfillment as Christianity, and eradicating the causes of religious degeneration such as idolatry, magic, and superstition. Ritual vestiges of ancient monotheism were naturally exempted from the purge and subject to "accommodation" (App 2010, 29).

On the other side of the spectrum, the mendicant orders held that:

> [...] [D]ivine revelation came exclusively through the channels of Abraham and Moses, that is, the Hebrew tradition, and was fulfilled in Christianity. This meant that the *Old* and *New Testaments* were the sole genuine records of divine revelation and that all unconnected rites and practices were to be condemned. From this exclusivist perspective, the sacred scriptures of other nations could only contain fragments of divine wisdom if they had either plagiarized Judeo-Christian texts or aped their teachers and doctrines (App 2010, 29).

This controversy, which lasted until the early 18th century, ultimately failed against the Company of Jesus "[...] with a papal condemnation of the rites and a rejection of the

Jesuits' policy in 1704 (a rejection reiterated by papal decree in 1715 and 1742 [sic], lest there be any doubt)" (Bays 2011, 28; vid. also Mungello 1999, 61).[19] The papal condemnation dealt a serious blow to missionary activities in China, since even though it did not prohibit the Jesuits' missionary activities, it forced them to readapt their strategies, implemented for more than a century and which had become void. The issue was further complicated by the Chinese Imperial government, which began a period of Christian persecutions from 1707 onwards,[20] driven by the evident internal conflicts within the Church and by the embassy from Charles Thomas Maillard de Tournon that condemned the rites in 1704. This change in policy led to the:

> [E]xile of the missionaries who defied official mandates, looting or confiscation of churches without pastors, fear and confusion among the neophytes for whom disloyalty to the throne was punishable by death, and the unleashing of the innate xenophobia of provincial magistrates that had previously been controlled by the clear pro-Christian favoritism of the imperial court (O'Neil 2001, 780).

Ultimately, the suppression of the Company of Jesus in 1773 ended two centuries of missionary labor in China, where the limits of adaptation to another culture and practices were continually debated within Christianity. It would not be until 1939 with the document *Plane Compertum Est* by Pius XII that the Chinese Rites controversy would be put to an end after three centuries with the permission to attend to Ruist rites (1940, 24),[21] and especially with the "[...] abrogation of the oath against the Chinese rites, which was required of all missionaries to China and the surrounding areas" (Minamiki 1985, 200) and which was established in 1715. Finally, it paved the way for the process of inculturation of the Christian faith into the local culture (Ticozzi 2009, 14-15).[22]

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[19] The rejections stemmed from the constitution of Clement XI, *Ex Illo Die* (1715), and the Papal Bull of Benedict XIV, *Ex quo Singulari* (published July 11, 1741).

[20] It must be noted that: "[t]he position of Jesuit accommodation became less tenable after the Manchu invasion of 1644, as the Chinese reverted to a stricter sense of orthodoxy during the Qing (清, 1644-1911) dynasty" (Mungello 1999, 23-24).

[21] Vid. Appendix 1, text 3.

[22] Both "accommodation" and "inculturation" pertain to the transmission of Christianity to "non-Western" cultures. The key theological difference lies in the directionality of the action: "[w]hereas with accommodation, those who present Christianity adapt themselves and their message to the dominant cultural idiom, with inculturation, the receivers of the outside religion transform its practices according to their patterns" (Brockey 2014, 469).

1.2. Literature Review and Work Methodology

The *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* ascribes itself to the period of the Chinese Rites controversy. The book was conceived during the period of the Jesuits' house arrest in Guangzhou (广州), most commonly known as "Canton", between 1666 and 1671—due to a conflict regarding the imperial calendar in which only four Jesuits were spared (Standaert 2008, 170)—and was mainly prepared by Flemish Jesuit Philippe Couplet (Standaert 2001, 313). The text, centered around the figure of "Confucius", translates three of the four Ruist classics, specifically, those attributed to the Chinese philosopher, and was conceived for a European audience.[23] This is why the text was completely written in Latin with explanatory notes and commentaries, and did not include the Chinese originals. We must also take into account that, unlike other texts, it was published in Paris. As such, it became one of the most influential books regarding the transmission of Jesuit knowledge of the Middle Kingdom to Europe (Mungello 1999, 60).

Therefore, this work has been largely overlooked by academic criticism to date, as will be made evident by the short number of authors who have analyzed it. In fact, mentions of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* appear in works related to the Jesuit activities in China. However, these references do not examine the volume and its complexities. They overlook issues related to the resignification carried out by the Ignatians in their translation of the Chinese originals. Furthermore, the content of the volume is never directly quoted. Thus, Clarke, for example, states: "[t]hey [the Jesuits] also translated some of the classical texts of [Ruism] into Latin [...] under the title *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*" (1997, 40). The author subsequently assumes the significance of this text for European Enlightenment thought, particularly regarding the construction of the distant and exotic "otherness" that China represented at the time, but without delving into the mechanisms through which this influence was configured. In a more critical approach, Frainais-Maitre argues that Couplet further developed the idea proposed by Ricci, presenting "Confucius" as a figure who had prepared "pagan minds" for the reception of Christianity (2013, 46-47) and concludes: "[i]n order to further their goal of converting the Chinese, they constructed [Kongzi] as a monotheist who believed in God through the concepts of *tian* [天, heaven] and *Shangdi* [上帝, the lord on high]" (2013, 46-47). This assertion, however, is an indirect citation of Perkins (2004, 19), who refers to the aforementioned idea without assigning it much importance and dismisses it swiftly, once again, without quoting examples. In this same

[23] The first sentence of the preface directly refers to the narratee as "*Europaeus Lector*" (Couplet et al. 1687, ix). Vid. Appendix 2, image 3.

approach, which references the text without engaging with it, are the works of Rubiés (2007, 264; 2018, 877; 2020, 507), which emphasize that the tome was conceived within the context of the Chinese Rites controversy to defend the Jesuits' evangelical mission against their numerous adversaries. Similarly, App (2010) engages mainly with the introduction and some commentaries referring to Buddhism written by Couplet, but not with the Ruist corpus itself. Finally, the work of St. André (2013) examines early European representations of the Chinese language, focusing on the portrait of the Chinese philosopher featured after the preface of the *opus*, but not on its textual content (61-84).[24]

The only cases to date that examined the publication while acknowledging its significance within Jesuit and Chinese Studies are Meynard's contributions (2011; 2015), especially his translation, which edits one-fifth of the Latin volume, including a trilingual—Chinese-Latin-English—version of the *Analects*, along with the *Vita Confucii* (*Life of Confucius*) and a detailed introductory study. However, it does not include the other texts or the commentaries from the original. Despite this limitation, it has served as a cornerstone for our initial exploration of the translation process, as presented in: López Angelini, 2024, where we provide textual evidence of the linguistic and philosophical resignification process regarding "*tian*" (天, heaven) and "*tianming*" (天命, mandate of heaven) by the Jesuit scholars.

Consequently, our present study—as stated *supra* in our hypothesis—aims to demonstrate how the Jesuit translation process created the literary figure of "Confucius" within the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* by (re)signifying that of "Kongzi". Through this discursive method, in which the analyzed case constitutes the conclusive point, ready to be presented to Europe as a whole, the Society of Jesus managed to build their orientalist reading of the *Litteratorum Secta* and its philosophical tradition, upon which they hoped and managed to advance their evangelical enterprise. Given the substantial corpus of the volume, we propose to focus our research on analyzing the discursive construction of "Confucius" as an *auctoritas*, which we consider to be something entirely different from the *auctoritas* "Kongzi", erected by the Chinese scholars throughout the centuries. To this end, we will concentrate our efforts on analyzing the *laudatio* to Louis XIV together with specific passages from the *Analects* and the *Vita Confucii* included in the aforementioned volume.

[24] Vid. Appendix 2, image 5.

Our work will adopt orientalism as its primary conceptual framework. Instead of considering it as an "institution" as most scholars tend to do, we will proceed to redefine it as a "dispositive" (Agamben 2011; Moro Abadía 2003; Belin 1999; Foucault 1994; Deleuze 1990) that highlights how the "West(s)" has constructed both a "horizon of Orients" and itself through its interactions and engagements with a multiplicity of otherness(es). We will also not confine our reflections to the already discussed—albeit central—theses of Edward Said (1979; 1985; 2001). Instead, we will engage with a broader spectrum of definitions proposed by both critics and followers of the American-Palestinian scholar (e.g. Bhabha 1983, 1994; Clifford 1988; Lowe 1991; Rocher 1993; Clarke 1994; Macfie 2000, etc.), in order to redefine the conception of "orientalism" itself without falling into the reductionism or oversimplification characteristic of Said's initial formulations. This orientalist approach will permeate the entirety of our work, as will become evident, for to navigate the history or a specific mode of orientalism is to (re)enact the dispositive of orientalism itself within our present.

The present thesis will be divided into four main chapters. The first chapter will introduce both the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* and the *Lunyu* (*Analects*), while also introducing the literary figure of "Kongzi". The second chapter will explore orientalism as a theoretical framework, aiming to redefine its boundaries and applications in order to shape it into a useful tool for the proposed analysis. The third chapter will examine the figure of "*auctoritas*" especially as it was used by the Church. By doing so, we will be able to establish a clear distinction between the figures of "Kongzi" and that of "Confucius", who were constructed by two entirely different traditions and, thus, constitute separate discursive entities with divergent perspectives. To demonstrate this, we will refer to the *Vita Confucii* and some passages of *Analects*, contrasting the Chinese text and its Latin translation. The fourth chapter will further delve into the tome and the configuration of "Confucius" by analyzing the introductory *laudatio* directed at Louis XIV and its particular configuration of the monarch of France, "Confucius" and the narrator identified as Philippe Couplet, a literary *alter ego*. Within this same chapter we will specify how "Confucius" serves as the central *axis* of the entire orientalizing dispositive enacted through the translation process. Lastly, we will present the considerations that arise from our research, while engaging with current debates on how we approach alterity and the human sciences.

2. The *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* and the *Lunyu* (论语, *Analects)*

The textual corpus of our thesis requires an introduction to its contents, structure, addressees, and objectives, as our analysis will stem from those. This chapter seeks, thus, to introduce both the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* and the *Analects*. It will also present the literary figure of "Kongzi", central to the development of its Jesuit counterpart "Confucius".

2.1. The *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*

The extensive volume was published in 1687 in Paris. The subtitle was "*Scientia Sinensis Latine Exposita*": "The Chinese Knowledge Presented in Latin",[25] a fact that already configures the text within the horizon of expectations, since it emphasizes that, in it, the European reader will find a description of the totality of Chinese wisdom, centered on the figure of a certain "*Confucius*", the "philosopher among the Chinese". In this way, the text excludes *ab initio* the category of "*scientia*" from everything that is not directly related to this specific literary *persona*.[26] This fact perfectly explains why, out of the Four Books, the *Mengzi* was excluded from the translation: it is the only one not attributed to "Kongzi" or centered around him. Lastly, the fact that this work was written in Latin expressly reflects that the direct destinataries were the European scholars and intellectuals. It was not a tome for the non-educated in Latin, which at the time still constituted the language of sciences in Europe.[27] We can evidence, then, that with this *opus* the Company was trying to promote the ancient Chinese Ruist culture among the European intelligentsia—and thus its missionary enterprise—since this specific group was the one to hold both knowledge and power in the continent.

In the front page, after the four authors of the book are indicated as responsible for the translation and edition of the work,[28] it is stated that: "*Iussu Ludovici Magni* [Louis XIV (1638-1715)]*, Eximio Missionum Orientalium & Litterariae Reipublicae bono e Bibliotheca Regia in lucem prodit*".[29] This means that the publication of the tome was personally authorized by the French king, who had often given monetary backing to the Jesuits missioning into the East during the 17th century, and was published for the further

[25] Vid. Appendix 2, image 1.
[26] Such as Buddhism, Daoism or Neo-Confucianism (宋明理学, lit. "Song-Ming [dynasty] Study of Principle").
[27] However, a reduced and distorted French translation was published in Amsterdam in 1688 under the name *La morale de Confucius, philosophe de la Chine*.
[28] These were Prospero Intorcetta (1625-1696), Christian Wolfgang Herdtrich (1625-1684), François de Rougemont (1624-1676) and Philippe Couplet (1623-1693), being the last one the main editor and writer.
[29] "By the command of Louis the Great [Louis XIV (1638-1715)], for the exaltation of the Eastern Missions & for the good of the Literary Republic, it [the book] comes into light from the Royal Library".

enlightenment of the literate world. To additionally remark the backing of the king, the work was published by the Royal Library "*cum prilegio Regis*"—with the King's privilege or prerogative. Such support to the Jesuit enterprise explains the laudatory epistle directed to "*Regi Christianissimo*"—for the most Christian king—an honorary title specially referred to the French kings (Du Cange 1883, 319).[30] After the *laudatio*, the book offers an extensive preface (pages ix to cxiv) destined to explain the origins of the book and the purpose of the edition, to give cultural and philosophical content of the Chinese "sects" and place the Chinese within Europe's own Christian tradition.[31] This can be seen in some excerpts that seek to safeguard the truth of Christianity and the Jesuits' own theological perspective against their opponents in the Chinese Rites controversy at the time. The "*paragraphus quintus*" provides a perfect example of this,[32] where "[*p*]*robatur Sinensis diluvio fuisse proximos, adeoque notitia cultuque veri Numinis in ipso ortu imbutos*" (Couplet et al. lxxiv).[33] This introduction ends with the portrait of "Confucius",[34] and his biography titled *Philosophorum Sinensium Principis Confucii Vita*—Life of Confucius, the First among the Chinese Philosophers.[35]

The translated books commence with the *Da Xue* (大学)—*Great Learning*—transliterated as "*Ta Hio*" and renamed as *Scientiae Sinicae Liber Primus*: [*t*]*he First Book of the Chinese Wisdom*.[36] The *Liber Secundus* is *The Doctrine of the Mean* or *Zhong Yong* (中庸)—"*Chum-yum*" under the Jesuit pen.[37] The third translation compiles the *Lun Yu* (论语) or *Analects*.[38] The Jesuit transliteration is the same as the actual *pinyin* transcription system, but they translate the name to Latin as "*Raciotinantium Sermones*"—*The Teachings/Discourses of Those Who Reason*".

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[30] Vid. Appendix 2, image 2.
[31] Vid. Appendix 2, image 3.
[32] Vid. Appendix 2, image 4.
[33] "It is proven that the Chinese were close [in time] to the [Biblical] Flood, and thus were imbued from their very origin with knowledge and worship of the true Deity". This thesis derives from Martino Martini's (1614-1661) book: *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* (1658)—or *First Ten* [*Books*] *of Chinese History* (vid. Appendix 2, images 14 & 15)—where the narrator explicitly states: "*Et iam inde a Noeticis temporibus Dei notionem Sinas primos habuisse crediderim, ut illa aetate non multo posteriories, aut forsan etiam pares*" (Martini 1658, 2): [a]nd I would believe that even from the time of Noah, the earliest Chinese already possessed a notion of God, so that they were not much later than that age—or perhaps even contemporary with it.
[34] Vid. Appendix 2, image 5.
[35] Vid. Appendix 2, image 6. This was the third assigned title, since this short biographical text was first published within the *Sapientia Sinica—The Chinese Wisdom*—in 1662 under the name *Vita Confucii, Principis Sapientiae Sinicae—Life of Confucius, Prince of the Chinese Wisdom.* The subsequent publications changed it, first, to *Vita Confucii—Life of Confucius* (1667-1669)—and, finally to the abovementioned title in its inclusion to the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (vid. Meynard 2015, 18).
[36] Vid. Appendix 2, image 7.
[37] Vid. Appendix 2, image 8.
[38] Vid. Appendix 2, image 9.

The tome continues with a chronological table of the Chinese monarchy, spanning from 2952 BCE to 1683 CE, which derives much of its information from Martino Martini's *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* (1658).[39] The initial section of the table encompasses the period before the Common Era, followed by a comprehensive genealogical table detailing the "three imperial family lines" of the Chinese monarchy.[40] Subsequently, the book proceeds with a second chronological table, outlining the Chinese kings and their reigns from the first year of the Common Era until 1683 CE.[41] Finally, the text concludes with a detailed map of China.[42]

As can be seen from the brief description of the book's structure, the central focus is on the translations of philosophical texts, while the surrounding documents serve to compensate for the readers' lack of knowledge about this particular culture and its philosophical traditions. Simultaneously, the additional "paratexts" (Genette, 1989) serve to inform potential readers about the successes of the Jesuit missionary efforts in the Middle Kingdom, while also sharing their theological perspective—an aspect that must be understood within the context of the Enlightenment (Clarke 1997). As such, the Jesuits felt the need to address their multiple adversaries with this book by answering their critiques: first, those who belonged to other orders and who questioned their accommodation method within the Chinese Rites controversy. Second, intellectuals of the Enlightenment, who were, at the time, criticizing the theological doctrines of the Church. Finally, it must be noted that the book introduces, for the first time to the European reader, the Chinese philosophical tradition—inevitably under an external, orientalized form. The text provides the first access to Ruist texts for European scholars, thereby becoming part of the academic archive of premodern orientalism.

2.2. The *Analects* and the Literary "Kongzi"

Considering that this thesis delves into the construction of "Confucius" within the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, we find ourselves in the need to refer to the *Lunyu* for two main reasons: first, because it is through contrasting the Chinese and the Latin versions that the specific nuances of the Jesuits' orientalizing interpretation will emerge; second, although this work will reference other texts within the analyzed volume, the references to the *Lunyu* are

[39] Vid. Appendix 2, image 10.
[40] Vid. Appendix 2, image 11.
[41] Vid. Appendix 2, image 12.
[42] Vid. Appendix 2, image 13.

continuous. This is no accident, for even within the Ruist tradition, the *Analects* occupies a preferential place. The Jesuits, who fully understood this, continually referred to the text, albeit reinterpreting its contents through their own biases and their own (re)conceptualization of the *Litteratorum Lex*'s tradition. This is why, in order to ascertain any insights about the *Lunyu*, it is first essential to reference "Kongzi", as his figure will be central not only to the Chinese scholarly tradition but also to the orientalist framework employed by the Society of Jesus. There is a clear rationale for why the volume that serves as the focus of this thesis is titled "*Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*". His importance was clearly understood and recognized by the Jesuit missionaries for advancing their religious cause.

"Kongzi's" significance as a historical figure is truly remarkable, to the extent that Ames & Rosemont compare him to figures such as Jesus of Nazareth, Buddha, and Plato (1998, 11; vid. also Cheng 2002, 56).[43] This comparison stems from his profound influence not only as a philosopher within his own country but also due to his far-reaching impact across both temporal and spatial dimensions. In fact, Ruism has been the dominant cultural tradition in China for the past two thousand years. It is crucial to remember that the *Rujia* "[...] was promoted as the state ideology in the Han Dynasty [(202 BCE-9 CE; 25-220 CE)], its ideas about ritual were integrated into the state religion and played an important role in the development of the imperial theo-political system" (Yao 2000, 193). The imperial exams instituted during this period remained the norm without interruption until 1905. These rigorous and challenging tests were required for anyone aspiring to enter the state as a civil servant, and part of their content was rooted in the texts of the *Rujia* (Fairbank 2006, 67), among which the *Lunyu* held a central place. The text was commented upon for two millennia. Furthermore, this tradition extended beyond China to countries such as Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and the United States. In other words, Ruism remains a living tradition today, with Ruist scholars present across the globe. Its remarkable adaptability has enabled it to withstand numerous adversaries throughout history, including Daoism, Mohism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Marxism, among many others (Ames & Rosemont 1998, 31). It is important, then, to return to the origins of this philosophical tradition, as the *Analects* is narratively made of the sayings and discussions of the "Master" (子) with his disciples.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that the facts pertaining to "Kongzi's" biography come from what the *Lunyu* reveals. As scholars note, not much is known about the

[43] Yao even dedicates a brief chapter to the parallels and differences that can be drawn between the philosopher and Jesus of Nazareth, and, by extension, between Ruism and Christianity (1996, 53-66).

historical figure, since most references come from the *Records of the Historian (Shi ji*, 史记), "[...] compiled around 100 BCE [the traditional death of "Kongzi" is dated at 479 BCE] by the Grand Historian Sima Qian [司马迁],[44] much of which clearly consists of legend and literary invention" (Slingerland 2003a, xx; vid. also Lau 1979, 161; Ames & Rosemont 1998, 14; Gernet 1999, 90; Csikszentmihalyi 2002, 134; Rainey 2010, 11-16).[45] As such, one should not consider the "facts" as historical, but literary. That is: the biographical facts provided allow us to delve into the literary character "Kongzi" to better understand the source material titled *Analects*. It is clear from this declaration that we align ourselves with what Eco has called "*intentio operis*"—the intention of the text—(1995, 35), and which:

> [...] [D]oes not appear on the textual surface. [...] Thus, it is only possible to speak of the intention of the text as the result of a conjecture on the part of the reader. The reader's initiative basically consists in making a conjecture about the intention of the text. [...] How can one prove a conjecture about the *intentio operis*? The only way is to compare it with the text as a coherent whole. This idea is also old and comes from Saint Augustine (*De doctrina christiana*):[46] any interpretation of a certain fragment of a text can be accepted if it is confirmed—and must be rejected if it is refuted—by another fragment of the same text (Eco 1995, 76-77).

The irrelevance of the "material author" and thus the "*intentio auctoris*"—the intention of the author—is evident, since textual interpretation, within this paradigm, becomes a strategy: "[...] aimed at producing a Model Reader conceived as the ideal correlate of a Model Author (who appears only as a textual strategy)" (Eco 1995, 78).[47] It constitutes

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[44] For a detailed analysis on the death of "Kongzi" vid. Brooks & Brooks 1998, 263.

[45] On the particular "Kongzi" of Sima Qian vid. Lau 1979, 181-194 ,Csikszentmihalyi 2002, 136-138 and Klein 2018, 241-267. For a translation of the biography, vid. Lin (1938) or Yang & Yang (1979). The great number of biographical sources led Lo to postulate two models of "Kongzi": the historical one and another one that is the result of the perceptions that evolved throughout Chinese history (2014, 55). Hunter, focusing more on textual analysis, postulates a second "Kongzi", different from the first one found in *Analects*, a "[...] figure referenced in thousands of passages scattered across more than a hundred different early sources, including transmitted texts and an ever-increasing number of manuscript finds" (2017, 12). These facts, however, do not constitute a problem in itself as our interests for the present thesis lie in the *auctoritas*, a literary figure, and not on the "historical" man. Thus, this study will not focus in recovering the man of "flesh and bone", but his literary configuration present within the materiality of the analyzed texts. In Hunter's terms, we will focus our efforts on the first "Kongzi", the one configured within the *Lunyu* (2017, 2).

[46] Augustine of Hippo addresses the interpretation of biblical texts, focusing on various instances of ambiguity that may arise during scriptural reading. Vid. the beginning of "*Liber Tertius*", but particularly paragraph 3.7: "*Textus ipse quasdam ambiguitates resolvit*"—"The text itself resolves certain ambiguities" (Martin 1962, 81).

[47] Regarding the concept of "Model Reader", this figure refers to: "a set of textual instructions, which are manifested on the surface of the text [...] in the form of statements or other signs" (1996, 23-24), a "[...] textual strategy" (1981, 89). This figure is entirely distinct from the empirical reader, who, within this framework, "[...]

an interpretive hypothesis that is presented when we witness the emergence of the subject of a textual strategy as the text itself presents it, and not when, behind the textual strategy, the hypothesis of an empirical subject is posed, one who perhaps wanted or thought or wished to think something different from what the text, once referred to the relevant codes, tells its Model Reader (Eco 1981, 93). The "author" is buried under the sign of his own irrelevance. This explains why we do not consider "Kongzi" within its historical materiality but within its textual-literary materiality. The same principle will apply *a posteriori* for the case of the Jesuits' "Confucius".

Returning to the literary "Kongzi", he was born in the state of Lu (魯) being traditionally accepted the year 551 BCE.[48] He was "[...] of humble economic background (9.6), and seems to have been a member of the scholar official (*shi* 士) class, the lowest of the three classes of public office holders" (Slingerland 2003a, xx). The data provided does not reflect more than the "Kongzi" "[...] who emerges from the hodgepodge of sayings, dialogues, anecdotes, and other miscellanea called the *Lunyu*" (Hunter 2017, 2). In fact, it is important to note that the historical man did not write anything of what is attributed to him. It is through the *Analects* that the tradition has constructed what we now consider to be his vision, his teachings, and his life.[49] This is how we know many of his disciples who appear within the book, each one of them with different values and capacities. We also know that, within this narrative, he left the kingdom of Lu together with them (3.24) thus beginning with "[...] the practice of independent philosophers traveling from state to state to persuade political leaders that the particular teachings developed in their academies were a practicable formula for social and political success" (Ames & Rosemont 1998, 15). This practice would be followed by his most prominent successors: Mengzi (孟子, 372-289 BCE) and Xunzi (荀子, 313-230 BCE). We do not possess any explicit details regarding the Master's death within *Analects*. Other sources express that later in life, he returned to Lu after failing to secure a

is merely an actor making conjectures about the type of Model Reader postulated by the text" (Eco 1995, 77). Textual cooperation in this context occurs between the Model Reader and the Model Author, both of whom are discursive strategies rather than individual subjects (Eco 1981, 91). Thus, within this theoretical conception: "[t]he text, so to speak, 'knows' that its Model Reader will make erroneous predictions (and helps him formulate such erroneous predictions)" (Eco 1981, 243), since the text is conceived as "[...] a machine for producing possible worlds: that of the fable, those of the characters of the fable, and those of the reader's predictions" (Eco 1981, 243).

[48] For a detailed analysis, vid. Brooks & Brooks 1998, 263-267.

[49] Chan, considering the historical *persona*, affirms that: "[...] the fact that the *Analects* is the most reliable source of [Kongzi's] teachings is accepted by practically all scholars" (Chan 1969, 18). Yao adheres to this declaration nearly thirty years later: "[t]he most authentic source for our knowledge of [Kongzi] and his teaching is a book called *Lun Yu* [...]" (1996, 28).

high-ranking position at other courts, where he passed away without having attained more than minor state posts throughout his lifetime (Slingerland, 2003, xxiv).[50]

The *Lunyu*, thus, was not authored by the philosopher himself. It is generally accepted—the "traditional view"—that it was written by his disciples and their followers, who compiled the "records" that document the words and actions of their Master. This process of redaction and edition spanned a considerable period of time, "[...] extending at least past the death of the disciple Zeng Shen (曾参), [...] and datable to ca. 436 BCE, over forty years after Confucius's death" (Eno 2018, 40; vid. also Legge 1966, 1; Chan 1969, 18-19; Lau 1979, 220; Brooks & Brooks 1998, 203; Bauer 2009, 62; Yao & Zhao 2010, 57; Csikszentmihalyi & Kim 2014; Goldin 2018; Klein 2018). Makeham also supports this hypothesis, adding that the *corpora* centered on the Master may have existed prior to "Kongzi's" death. However, we can only speculate as to who might have produced and disseminated such material (2018, 33). The "revisionist" hypothesis speculates that the *Lunyu* is a compilation that was undertaken during the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE-9 CE) (Hunter 2017; 2018, 67; Kern 2018, 269). Both hypotheses are, at best, probable, as we still lack sufficient archaeological evidence to decisively favor one over the other. In recent decades, however, numerous discoveries have been made that have helped to reveal an earlier image of Ruism and even the *Analects*. In this regard, the Dingzhou (定州) bamboo slips provide a notable example. Discovered in 1973 within a tomb sealed around 55 BCE, this fragmentary text was published in 1993 (Ames & Rosemont 1998, 290). The text provided a fragmentary version of the *Analects* that does not differ significantly from the later received versions. Thus, the discovery allowed for a degree of reinterpretation of the *Lunyu*'s corpus. Ames and Rosemont (1998) incorporated the document into their translation; Slingerland (2003) references several key distinctions in his own edition. It should be noted, however, that:

> The date of the tomb in which the bamboo and silk texts were found is basically the latest date of these bamboo and silk texts, but is not the date which [sic] they were written. Other than this, the date which [sic] these texts were copied is not the same as the date which [sic] they were written (Wang 2021, x).

[50] For in-depth studies on "Kongzi's" biography, vid. Lau 1979, 161-195, and Brooks & Brooks 1998, 263-294.

Thus, we can be certain that the *Lunyu* was edited as a text prior to 55 BCE. The enduring literary figure of "Kongzi" within the analyzed volume can be seen as a consistent presence, spanning over two millennia, yet already well established by the 1st century BCE. This fame explains, for example, the phenomenon of the state-sponsored cult of "Kongzi" that emerged during the Han dynasty (Shryock, 1966). It also highlights the significance of the tradition against which later the Jesuits sought to engage and (re)configure. Furthermore, it underscores the importance that the *Analects* held within the Chinese tradition and why the Jesuits chose Ruism as the means to spread Christianity in the Middle Kingdom. The conflicts that emerged from the dialogical relationship established during the 16th century are also shaped by this fact, as, from the perspective of the literati, it was the Christians who were regarded as outsiders, those same missionaries who were trying to convince them to return to the "true teachings" of "Confucius".

3. Orientalism Reconfigured: from Institution to Dispositive

This chapter will explore orientalism as a theoretical framework, aiming to redefine it as a "dispositive" in contrast to the considerations of most scholars, who evaluated it as a type of institution anchored on a specific chronological period.

3.1. Orientalism as an Institution

In the context of contemporary orientalist studies, most critics tend to describe orientalism as an "institution", a perspective that was first articulated by Edward W. Said in his seminal 1979 work of the same name, in which he defines it as follows:

> Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point [o]rientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, [o]rientalism as a

> Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (Said 1979, 3).[51]

This foundational observation presents an apparent issue for our current study: the author locates the origin of this institution in the late 18th century. However, this does not imply that orientalism did not exist prior to that time. In truth, Said himself acknowledges that "[b]y and large, until the mid-eighteenth century [o]rientalists were Biblical scholars, students of the Semitic languages, Islamic specialists, or, because the Jesuits had opened up the new study of China, Sinologists" (Said 1979: 51).[52] This statement serves to emphasize the fact that "[...] there was an [o]rientalism before the empires [...]" (Rodinson 1988, 131), as the French historian argues when criticizing Said's corpus selection and his swift dismissal of the cases of India and China in favor of the Islamic world. To address this gap within the institution of orientalism, App introduced the term "premodern academic orientalism" to refer to the earlier, largely unexplored phase that later facilitated the emergence of modern orientalism. These studies were closely linked with the development of Biblical studies and theology, but in areas outside this domain, they were primarily cultivated within the context of Christian missions (App 2010: xii).

Given these considerations, we could assert that, from a historical standpoint, our research aligns with premodern orientalism. And indeed, that is the case. However, our aim is not to write a history of orientalism within these pages, which is why we believe such an approach would be insufficient if we intend—as we do—to examine the processes through which the Jesuits constructed the orientalist literary figure of "Confucius". Verily, a history of orientalism proves insufficient as it does not problematize the structural bases of orientalism in itself. Therefore, it becomes necessary to reevaluate it as a whole, not as an institution, but as a "dispositive", a broader mechanism responsible for the institution considered by scholars.

[51] This definition is the third one provided by Said, but it is the one that structures most of his analysis, dedicated to evidence how this institution was born and permeated France, Great Britain and most recently, the United States.

[52] Chan states that: "As the early missionaries were also the first sinologists or more accurately, those missionaries pioneered sinology, it is not an exaggeration to say that they provided the language of discourse and, for a long time, also the criteria for evaluation [of that same discourse]" (2010, 12).

3.2. Orientalism as a Dispositive[53]

To be able to define "orientalism" as a dispositive, we find ourselves in the need to first declare what we understand by "dispositive" to avoid the risk of emptying the concept of meaning. This issue is raised in light of the increasingly common practice of employing the term without providing a clear theoretical definition, which results in superficial applications—a concern previously addressed by Moro Abadía (2003, 43). Such practice originates in two aspects inherent to this specific term: first, its polygenetic origin and, second, its great plasticity, "[...] which has ultimately turned it into a 'catch-all word' that 'allows for an elegant and concise explanation of what would otherwise require the use of arbitrary circumlocutions'" (Belin 1999, 252); (Moro Abadía 2003, 31). It must be noted that the term was not coined by Foucault,[54] but he devised the use that has prevailed within human and social sciences. Nonetheless, the French philosopher never defined it explicitly. This is why other scholars sought to understand its meaning with many objectives in mind, such as considering a possible "[...] philosophy of dispositives" (Deleuze 1990, 158). Agamben quotes an interview where the French philosopher gave an approach to a definition:[55]

> What I aim to address with this term is […] a resolutely heterogeneous set that comprises discourses, institutions, architectural structures, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions. In short, between the said and the unsaid, here are the elements of the dispositive. The dispositive itself is the network that we weave between these elements. […] By dispositive, I understand a kind of formation that, at a given moment, had as its predominant function to respond to an urgency. Thus, the dispositive has a dominant strategic function […]. I have said that the dispositive has an essentially strategic nature; this implies that there is a certain manipulation of power relations, either to develop them in one direction or another, to block them, or to stabilize and use them. Therefore, the dispositive is always inscribed in a power play, but it is also linked to a limit or to the limits of knowledge, which give it birth but, above all, condition it. This

[53] The content of this and the following section recovers and enlarges the chapter titled "*Hacia una reconceptualización del orientalismo*" (Towards a Reconceptualization of Orientalism) from our article "Orientalism as a Device of Violence: Representation and Subordination in the Construction of Alterity" (López Angelini, 2025)

[54] Moro Abadía traces the multiple origins of the term to the first half of the 1970s, where he attests to the use of the word by Pierre Schaeffer and, later, by Jean-Louis Baudry (2003, 31).

[55] Also quoted by Belin (1999, 251).

> is the dispositive: strategies of power relations sustaining types of knowledge, and [they] are sustained by them (Foucault 1994, 299); (Agamben 2011, 250).

If, as we read in this quotation, a dispositive includes practically everything,[56] how is it that it still means something instead of being emptied of any signifying feature? If the dispositive, atomically speaking, can be studied as the relation, the "network", that links a heterogeneous amalgam of elements, then we can understand that the dispositive itself acquires its existence in its role as a dynamic web: it becomes what it is thought that same function. What we mean to emphasize here is the fact that this entity is not an "atomical" concept with an independent existence, separated from everything. Its existence depends on the elements it connects in a continuous performative act, always in motion, always changing. In short, it's a relational and non-static concept. As such, it depends on and requires the elements it connects to exist as such. This interrelation among different components serves a specific function within a determined context, which is why a dispositive can be defined as the result of an intersection of power and knowledge that motivates the intertwining of multiple threads.

The relevant question for our inquiry remains: in what way can we consider orientalism to be a dispositive? We contend that the key to understanding this lies in the fact that the concept of dispositive establishes orientalism as a relational concept as well, constantly weaving a great plurality of elements among themselves. This is why we argue that orientalism is something intrinsic to our existence: "[w]e belong to certain dispositives and act within them" (Deleuze 1990, 159). We have always lived intertwined within the threads of orientalism, whose presence is manifested through various other institutions or dispositives in their own right, such as language, as we will have the chance to illustrate. In this connection, we aim to demonstrate how orientalism aligns with the characteristics outlined. Above all, a dispositive is understood as a network, a dynamic entity that continuously links the articulated and the unarticulated, coming into being to address an urgency or a series of urgencies. What does orientalism articulate? To which urgency(ies) does it respond to? We believe the answer lies in the links it constructs to an otherness, or more specifically, to a plural alterity. The dispositive of orientalism is the result of a meeting

[56] Even Agamben reformulates Foucault's statement by defining a dispositive as: "[...] anything that, in one way or another, has the capacity to capture, direct, determine, intercept, shape, control, and secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, and discourses of living beings" (Agamben 2011, 257).

with difference: when an "us" is faced against an unknown "them". This encounter inevitably compels the construction of conceptual bridges that constitute knowledge itself, always inscribed within a network of power relations. Under which parameters do we define and characterize a certain plural alterity? What are the implications of these constructions? Does such alterity possess the right to define itself? How are "our" values considered when we elaborate concepts or categories to define "them"?

This dichotomy between "us" and "them" has fossilized in orientalism under the binomial Occident-Orient and West-East, though the actual terms used are limitless and may vary depending on the context being analyzed—e.g. civilization-barbarism; Global North-Global South, among others. In short: "[...] the 'Orient' is largely an invention or fantasy, a concept that derives from a desire—sometimes a virtually paranoid impulse—to mark differences and define boundaries, to create not only the Orient ('them') but the West ('us') as well" (Kern 1996, 70). This fact is crucial because it is precisely the encounter with alterity that allows for the construction of a plural, identitary self. There is no self prior to the encounter with alterity. Thus, the meeting with otherness allows the construction of the self. "We" (us) are—in its full ontological sense—only in a relation to an "other" (them). It is important to note that we do not consider here an abstract singular "individual", for man is a gregarious being (Aristotle, *Politics*, I; 1253a, 2-3 [1932, 8]). An "individual" constitutes a paradox, an invention of modernity. Thus, this "encounter" is foundational. There is no "before" it.

It is crucial to note, therefore, that orientalism is not a "finished product". It is something that is continuously operating and being (re)constructed. Just as any dispositive, it "[...] is defined by its sense of novelty and creativity, which simultaneously marks its capacity to transform or fracture, benefiting a future dispositive" (Deleuze 1990, 159). As such, it "[...] describes the space of a dispersion, the reality of a multiplicity of elements" (Moro Abadía 2003, 37). In the case of orientalism, new semantic bridges are constantly being built in relation to diverse alterities. Once articulated, these can give rise to other forms of connections, but they will act on a specific "Orient" erected from previous conceptual links—thus, some examples of "Orients" include: the "Egypt" constructed by the ancient Greeks, the "West and East Indies" during the age of colonization or the "Islamic world" that is much present today—and which is quite different from the one that conceptually existed during the Middle Ages—among many others. This knowledge, in turn, enables a subsequent

series of elaborations, such as laws, scientific statements, institutions, and more that operate over this horizon of uncountable "Orients". Both the academic premodern orientalism of App and the modern one exposed by Said are institutions that resulted from this highly complex process, always in (re)elaboration. Thus, orientalism as a dispositive:

1. Defines a series of intimate connections between knowledge and power.
2. Establishes the dispersion of power through a multiplicity of dispositives.
3. Describes the production of modes of subjectivation of the individual through certain techniques (Moro Abadía 2003, 37-38).

The institution of orientalism, as articulated by Said, operates both as a form of knowledge and as a specific mechanism of exercising power and discipline. At a fundamental level, the apparatus of orientalism serves to construct an understanding of a particular form of alterity. It establishes the links that interconnect a variety of elements to conceptualize a specific otherness as an object of knowledge, thereby enabling its apprehension. In this way, it "configures" the other in order to "know" it. However, once this configuration is established—or even during its elaboration—it can and is wielded to exercise power over that specific alterity through various approaches that may range from romanticizing a particular otherness to rejecting it based on racial stereotypes. Here, it is crucial to recall that power relations are never static, but rather remain in a state of constant flux, shaped by dynamic tensions. This brings us to the second point: power cannot be "possessed" in a definitive sense, as it is always shifting through a rhizomatic network (Deleuze & Guattari 1988) forged by various dispositives. With this in mind, we could claim orientalism plays a clear role in the configuration of alterities, but it is not the sole dispositive at play, as language, institutions, laws, and other entities also contribute to a broader interrelational corpus of dispositives through which power continually transforms.

It is important to highlight this particular aspect of orientalism that generates modes of subjectivation, since every dispositive tends toward the production of such modes (Agamben 2011, 261; Moro Abadía 2003, 38). We are thus confronted with a multiplicity of masks, of pluralities that are assumed as one's own in various and distinct contexts, and emerge from the interactions with different dispositives. Through the implementation of a specific process

of subjectivation associated with a particular dispositive, the conversion of the individual into a subject is enabled (Moro Abadía 2003, 41).

Orientalism, considered as a dispositive that intertwines a specific otherness with an "us", necessarily requires instruments that classify and domesticate this alterity in the service of (re)affirming the same, a group's self-identity. The case that we consider within this thesis for the construction of such a structure will be addressed through writing and in writing, as our object of analysis is text in its own materiality. However, there are other instances that we can consider to provide examples by appealing to language. We will consider, as a case in point for illustration of our argument, the word "βάρβαρος" [bárbaros], whose etymology refers to the substantivization of an onomatopoeia related to the manner of speaking (Adrados 1991, 682; Chantraine 1968, 165), and was directed at describing anyone who did not speak the Greek language: "[...] 'barbarian, foreign', particularly referring to the Medes, Persians, etc., as opposed to Ἕλλην [Héllen (Greek)]; it specifically refers to the language; after the Persian Wars, 'brutal, rude', etc." (Chantraine 1968, 164-165).[57] The term provides a reference to a particular instance of subjectivation. It emphasizes the (re)affirmation of Greek identity, initially through the contrast with any other language. It assists in the constitution of the Greek subject based on a difference perceived as ontological, marked through language, and defined by an otherness. Over the course of the term's evolution, it came to disparagingly refer to the other as that which was different, the non-Greek, from a position of superiority. However, it is important to note that this process also entailed the creation of that other within epistemologically assimilable frameworks for the defining culture itself. Thus, the term "βάρβαρος" became, in the Greek language, an instrument that enabled the cataloging of all non-Greek-speaking othernesses. The construction of the other facilitated the subjectivation of the community itself. This process, a product of the dispositive of orientalism, is collective rather than individual, as we have already emphasized. It is also not merely linguistic; rather, it is the result of a multitude of conditions where knowledge intertwines with institutions, historical events, among other factors, much like it was the war against the Medes, which, as

[57] Vid. also the following entries of authorized dictionaries such as the *Dictionnaire Grec-Français*: "[...] foreign, barbarian, that is, non-Greek, in contrast to Ἕλλην [Greek]. [...] [B]arbarous, incorrect, in reference to errors against the correct usage of the Greek language [...] coarse, uncivilized [...], cruel" (Bailly & Egger 1935, 347-348); vid. the *Greek-Spanish Dictionary*: I-In relation to language: 1. unintelligible, barbaric [...]. 2. referring to the Greek language rife with barbarisms, incorrect as used by certain authors [...]. 4. referring to individuals and personification: barbaric, unable to understand or be understood [...]. II. Opposed to the 'Greek' of peoples and countries (often referring to Persian and Asian peoples, including the Trojans) 1. barbaric, foreign [...] (Adrados 1991, 681). Vid. *The Cambridge Greek lexicon*: "[...] (of races, groups of people, individuals) barbarian, foreign (opp. Greek); [...] the barbarian (usu. collectv., ref. to the barbarian enemy [...]) [...]" (Diggle et al. 2021, 272).

noted by Chantraine, led the word to adopt some new nuances. It is important to observe that for this dispositive the presence of the other is a *sine qua non* condition, the construction of one's own identity as a group is carried out through the cataloging of alterity, in such a way that without an otherness, cultural identity cannot be established. Accordingly, there would be no "Greeks" without "barbarians". In the same manner, orientalism seeks to appropriate the other by means of its domestication, fulfilling a specific function inherent to the dispositive, which is to act as a "governmental machine" (Agamben 2011, 261). This is why on this issue Said's work remains relevant, insofar as he emphasized some cases in which orientalism explicitly exercised this authority through a "[...] 200 year old partnership with imperialism" (1985, 98), at least in the cases he analyzed.[58] Thus, orientalism functions as a totalizing dispositive, creating an otherness, a "horizon of Orient(s)",[59] and archives it in a process of subordinating the foreign to the self. Regardless of whether an "Orient" was constituted with colonial interests in mind or not, it is certain that this dispositive seeks the epistemic appropriation of alterity, it seeks to subordinate the other to the self. This process leads to the subjectivation described above.

3.3. The Tripartite Definition of "Orientalism" and its Reformulation

We have thoroughly explained our understanding of a dispositive and how orientalism acts as such. However, to clearly define "orientalism" in our own terms, we must address some of the critiques that have been made against Said within the scholarly tradition. The reason for

[58] While orientalism may indeed have connections with imperialism, one of the most enduring critiques against it was the exclusion of German and Japanese orientalism, which would challenge Said's thesis that orientalism is always linked to an imperial agenda (Clarke 1997, 27; King 2001, 85). We mention this to highlight how such gaps reveal that some of Said's theses are partially valid and only applicable in specific cases. In this regard, Clarke has argued that "[...] while Said is right in his claim that no human knowledge is apolitical, the association of orientalism with colonising power can represent only one part of the story" (Clarke 1997, 26). He himself demonstrated in his work how some Jesuit writings influenced French Enlightenment authors, providing them with tools to criticize the monarchy and the Church as institutions (Clarke 1997, 42-43). This perspective emphasizes that in some cases, orientalism became a counterpoint and a critical tool to address fundamental aspects of Western European culture, thereby undermining its supposed eternal foundations. *Orientalism* is a partial work, as Said himself stated in the 1994 epilogue. He even claimed that the *opus*: "[...] now seems to me a collective book that I think supersedes me as its author more than I could have expected when I wrote it" (Said 1979, 330). This suggests that the work was, and continues to be, an open project, capable of being enriched with criticisms, reformulations, and new contents.

[59] By "horizon of Orient(s)", we refer to the plurality of Orients that the "West" has constructed throughout its history. These can include everything from the disparaged "Persian world" or the praised "Egyptian world" from the perspective of ancient Greece, the "American Orient" constructed by Columbus or Bartolomé de las Casas, the "China" shaped by the Jesuits, the "Japan" of the Meiji era, and so on. The use of the word "horizon" seeks to reflect the idea that those "Orients" are forever at a distance and constitute phantasmagorical entities, they exist as theoretical constructs and narratives in continuous (re)elaboration. Since they are never a finished product, they are therefore never fully apprehendable.

this is that, notwithstanding its characterization as a dispositive, our conception of orientalism paradoxically emerged from a revision of Said's triadic definition of the term.

In *Orientalism*, Said approached and defined the term "orientalism" in three interdependent ways,[60] which have sparked ongoing debates since their introduction to the academic world. The first one refers to the vocable in its "academic" sense: "[a]nyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient [...] either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism" (Said 1979, 2). This initial formulation, which treats orientalism as an activity leads to the second, epistemological consideration: "[o]rientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 1979, 2). We might say that this second definition establishes the foundational basis from which the work of the orientalist is approached. Thus, when an orientalist "does" orientalism, it is from this aforementioned gnoseological distinction. Finally, the author elaborates his already quoted third formulation, which understands "orientalism" as an institution situated in history.[61]

Regarding the criticisms received by Said, we will enumerate those that serve our present purpose: finding a definition of "orientalism" useful for considering the translation process carried out during the Jesuit missions in China. The tripartite conception of orientalism is seen by King as three elements that maintain a relationship with each other, although Said never explains the nature of this interrelation (2001, 83). Clifford went further, accusing Said of failing to provide a definition of the term. According to him, Said would have designated orientalism from a variety of perspectives which are not always compatible with one another (Clifford 1988, 259). In this way, the scholar considered that the second definition, which we designated as "epistemological", took place "[...] as the construct of a questionable mental operation" (Clifford 1988, 260), unlike the first and third, which concerned something called "the Orient". In response to this argument—and distancing ourselves from Said—we affirm that rather than a "mental operation"—which is ultimately irrelevant to an academic study (and, as Clifford hints, unverifiable, since, if it occurs, it takes place within a specific subjectivity that is not measurable)—what matters here, as "orientalism", is the discourse that reveals a distinction between the nebulous categories of "West(s)" and "East(s)", both understood as discursive constructions that are not necessarily

[60] The author reaffirmed these in his article "Orientalism Reconsidered" (Said 1985, 90).
[61] Vid. pages 21-22.

absolute.[62] As Lowe stated: "[t]he binary opposition of Occident and Orient is [...] a misleading perception which serves to suppress the specific heterogeneities, inconstancies, and slippages of each individual notion" (1991, 7). Clarke later echoed this: "[c]rucial terms such as 'East', 'Orient', and 'West' become devices for reducing endless complexities and diversities into manageable and falsifying unities, a semantic artifice which has encouraged us to think in terms of the contrasting of East and West in some eternal transcendent opposition" (Clarke 1997, 10). This classificatory procedure reduces the multiplicity of things described by these terms, as from an excessive and inapprehensible heterogeneity, a reductive but apprehensible homogeneity is derived. Implicit in these arguments, perhaps the most enduring critiques of *Orientalism*, is that Said's description of power relations does not adequately reflect the discursive nature of power, nor the evident differences, contradictions, and counter-hegemonic positions within the orientalist discourse, which cannot be reduced to such binarism (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia 1999, 80). Said, nonetheless, addressed this interpretation in his 1994 "Afterword", stating that he was "[...] radically skeptical about all categorical designations such as Orient and Occident" (Said 1979, 435). A fact that led him to emphasize that the aforementioned terms did not correspond to a stable reality existing as a natural fact, but that all these geographical designations implied a strange mix of the empirical and the imaginative (Said 1979, 436). Based on these points, the author underscores the root of his critique of orientalism to defend himself against the fundamentalist readings of his book in the following terms:

> My objection to what I have called [o]rientalism is not that it is just the antiquarian study of Oriental languages, societies, and peoples, but that as a system of thought [o]rientalism approaches a heterogenous, dynamic, and complex human reality from an uncritically essentialist standpoint; this suggests both an enduring Oriental reality and an opposing but no less enduring Western essence, which observes the Orient from afar and from, so to speak, above (Said 1979, 333).

However, despite Said's defense, such a critique has endured, and one might question the effectiveness of his response when considering some of his statements throughout the rest

[62] This will depend on the corpus under consideration since the orientalist dispositive may employ other elements to construct a particular form of alterity.

of his *opus*, which is an issue already raised by Lowe (1991, 4-5). Continuing with the implications of this argument against Said's text, what the binary opposition of "East"-"West" implicitly establishes is an absolute and closed notion of reality, one that claims to be definable through conceptual and static simplifications. However, we argue that these categories cannot be entirely discarded. Indeed, despite their obvious dangers, such terms constitute the conceptual foundation that allows us to think through and problematize specific processes. The fact that these terms have become entrenched in both academic discourse and popular culture speaks to the conceptual utility they still possess. Within academic contexts, however, this utility remains valid only when used carefully, so as not to reproduce imperialist or colonialist assertions, as Said himself warned. In summary, both terms—"East" and "West" (or "Orient" and "Occident")—remain meaningful signifiers. Moreover, one could argue that reflecting on these involves not only thinking about a specific object of study—a particular "Orient," such as the "China" constructed by the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*—but also critically engaging with the categories, statements, and discourses that have been used to address that object, of which the conceptual dyad in question is a part.

Thinking about the mentioned binarism, thus, becomes an endeavor connected to how a specific object of study has been—and continues to be—conceived. Furthermore, it also connects to how the "otherness(es)" has been conceptualized, particularly in relation to "Europe". The latter remains highly relevant today, as we continue to think within these terms, especially when considering categories such as "the Middle East", "the Far East", among others, all of which continue to reference and derive their meaning from the so-called "Old World", the *axis mundi par excellence* within this discourse. This reflective task allows for the examination of a particular object of study while remaining aware of the terms used—their semantic load and historical mutations—to avoid falling into the same reductionisms or conceptual errors.

The preponderance of "the East" continues to appear through its derivatives. While, there cannot be a category of "orientalism" without a particular conception of "the orien(tal)" and, by extension, "the East(s)" or "the Orient(s)", it can similarly be affirmed that the category of "the West" is a condition of possibility for thinking about one or more "Orients". This idea has been referred to by Paniker and Mignolo as "occidentalism," a conceptual basis without which orientalism could not have emerged (Paniker 2005, 25-27; Mignolo 2000, x, 51, 55, 57, 58, 62, etc.). Said's second definition can be reconsidered with these caveats in

mind not as "[...] a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 1979, 2). It can be rather seen as an epistemological and ontological foundation because it refers to a division of the world into the aforementioned categories that, with certain nuances—or sub-classifications—can be found in a discourse potentially characterizable as "orientalist", either in the academic realm (first definition) or as part of a broader set of institutions (third definition). Said's second definition, as reformulated, becomes the condition of possibility for identifying an orientalist discourse. In short, it represents the substratum for any such proposition or statement: it enables the identification of the areas and discourses where the dispositive of orientalism is at work.

Another relevant critique we need to address, closely related to the previous one, concerns Said's third definition.[63] The problem posed is that, ultimately, orientalism is portrayed as something monolithic and uniformly constructed (Lowe 1991, ix; 4). This issue has been highlighted by other critics as well. Rocher, for instance, argues that:

> Edward Said's sweeping and passionate indictment of orientalist scholarship as part and parcel of an imperialist, subjugating enterprise does to orientalist scholarship what it accuses orientalist scholarship of having done to the countries east of Europe; it creates a single discourse, undifferentiated in space and time and across political, social, and intellectual identities (Rocher 1993, 215).

In this same line, Paniker remarked that: "[...] the discourse on the Orient is more contradictory and diverse than a generalist approach like Said's could ever fully encapsulate" (Paniker 2005, 24; vid. also 32). Indeed, we could not reduce orientalist expressions throughout history to such a simplification without jeopardizing the seriousness and rigor of the analysis. Furthermore, another issue in Said's third assertion is that, as Bhabha points out: "[t]here is always, in Said, the suggestion that colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the coloniser, which is a historical and theoretical simplification. The terms in which Said's [o]rientalism is unified—the intentionality and unidirectionality of colonial power—also unify the subject of colonial enunciation" (Bhabha 1983, 25; Bhabha 1994,

[63] Vid. pages 21-22.

103). This leads to a similar reductionism as the earlier critique regarding the concepts of "the West" and "the East", in that orientalism is postulated as something transhistorical. Within Said's conception, it could be applied homogeneously to a wide range of phenomena throughout history without modifying its core premises, that is, without considering the specificities of the phenomena being analyzed. In this sense, it becomes a static, homogeneous, and essentialist concept, thus falling into a serious reductionism of the very phenomena and discourses it aims to analyze.

Such an approach tends to categorize a broad range of heterogeneous attitudes towards "the Easts" throughout history under the totalizing term "orientalism". It is by this methodological procedure that Young argues that: "[...] in many cases Said finds himself repeating the very structures that he censures" (Young 1990, 127). Having outlined such a critique of the American-Palestinian scholar's third definition, we believe, nonetheless, that it is possible to think of a reformulation, taking into account the perspective provided by Clarke, where he revisits Said's definition in the following terms:

> It may be the case that the role of orientalist discourse within the broad historical sweep of Western global hegemony is to be found, not in any direct support for the aims of empire but in a more subtle, but nonetheless palpable, cultural realm, namely in the desire to appropriate and control Eastern ideas within a Western conceptual framework, [...]. Orientalism on this view may be seen as an expression of what Said has described as 'a kind of intellectual authority over the Orient within Western culture' (1979, 19), as functioning in relation to the discourse of European power as a way not of reinforcing the exercise of any literal control over subjugated peoples, but rather of creating a unified regime of knowledge about the East which enables the latter to be intellectually and culturally subsumed under Western interests. In other words what we may be dealing with here is a form of cultural or intellectual hegemony, which is historically related to Western global political and economic goals, and which has empowered the West to assimilate foreign cultural traditions within its own intellectual parameters, but which at the same time cannot be identified with or comprehended exclusively in relation to purely political and economic factors (Clarke 1997, 206).

Within the logic outlined by the author, orientalism emerges as a dispositive aimed at classifying the entirety of discourses about the "Orients", generating an organized conceptual framework that enables their delimitation and cataloging. It seeks to unify them discursively so that such statements respond to "Western interests", whatever they may be at a given moment. However, this does not imply that these must coincide in a uniform way or be concentrated in one specific area. This dispositive is the one we have aimed to outline in our previous analysis, albeit within a broader scope than the one considered by Clarke, primarily focused on the European Enlightenment. Hence, such "interests" are understood here in a broad sense, which must be specified in each particular analysis.

From this perspective, we revisit Said's third assertion, specifically when he states that "[...] Orientalism is a Western style that seeks to dominate, restructure, and have authority over the Orient" (Said 1979, 3). However, this recovery is made with certain nuances, incorporating the aforementioned critiques. Thus, we state that the orientalism conceived here, based on Said's definition, is a dispositive that, from different vantage points, seeks to configure (or reconfigure), structure (or restructure), and signify (or resignify) the heterogeneity of "Orients" that it constantly updates through its discursive statements in order to generate cultural and intellectual authority over them, (re)creating them throughout this signifying process. This classificatory procedure orders the entire world into a plurality of identifiable units and assimilates alterities into known, secure, and manageable categories, and is useful for a wide range of purposes. It is through this highly complex process that the "orienting fictions" (Shumway 1991) of "the Occident(s)" and "the Orient(s)" were—and continue to be—constituted. The emphasis on the prefix "re" indicates that at times what a particular orientalist discourse does is resignify an "Orient" (or an element, tradition, etc. associated with an "Orient") already configured. Closely related to this dominant conception is the identificatory substratum of a statement or set of orientalist statements, which we derived from Said's second definition and which we had elaborated in the following terms: an epistemological and ontological foundation referring to the division of the world into the categories of "Orient(s)" and "West(s)," which, with certain nuances (or sub-classifications), can be found in a discourse potentially characterizable as "orientalist". This second definition thus becomes subordinated to the third as the condition of possibility for identifying an orientalist discourse; it represents the substrate of all such statements or propositions, although it may not always be immediately apparent.

Since the critiques of orientalism have demonstrated that not all processes occur in the same way, under the same parameters, or with the same objectives, simplifying such attitudes to a colonial or imperial expression would reduce the interpretative richness of each specific phenomenon to a formula that only partially illuminates what is being analyzed. However, the perspective presented here has the merit of considering the objections mentioned above and, by echoing them, incorporating its postulates into a conceptual reformulation. Within this conception, orientalism eliminates the possibility of being charged for being a monolithic or homogeneous discourse used to uniformly classify a wide range of events, discourses, etc. It also negates, as Bhabha suggests, the implication possessed by such an assumption that power and discourse are entirely possessed by the colonizer, thus admitting variations in relation to Said's postulates.

It is evident that, thus far, we have left aside the "academic" definition of orientalism.[64] While we consider this perspective to still be valid today—with the aforementioned nuances—we would like to detail it in an aspect that Said did not distinguish, as he opened the critical field of the discipline. His definition considers as "orientalists" those who create or reproduce certain discourses about the "Orients", which implies delimiting an "Orient" as a way of culturally and intellectually appropriating it. This led to the accumulation of negative connotations surrounding the words "orientalism" and "orientalist"; a point that Said addressed in the 1994 epilogue (Said 1979, 341-342), where he concludes that: "[n]owhere do I argue that Orientalism is evil, or sloppy, or uniformly the same in the work of each Orientalist. But I do say that the guild of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power, which it would be Panglossian to call irrelevant" (Said 1979, 341). However, we believe that today the orientalist can also be conceived as one who studies the discursive materialities of the horizon of Orients produced by the West(s). This role, inaugurated by Said himself, highlights the implications of such narratives by problematizing the dialogues, tensions, fractures and disputes that the West(s) established and continues to establish with the wide range of "Orients" through a multiplicity of discursive and non-discursive practices. We are aware, nonetheless, that since the publication of *Orientalism* the term itself has fallen into disuse due to the aforementioned negative qualifications, which is why today we do not find "orientalists", but rather "sinologists", "japanologists",

[64] Vid. page 30.

"indologists", etc. In any case, the considerations regarding the first definition of Orientalism appear to us as the least relevant for the goals pursued here.

In so far as our conception of orientalism as a dynamic dispositive has already been elaborated and detailed, we are now able to delve into our textual object of study so as to comprehend how the dispositive of orientalism has paved the way through the Jesuit discourse for the construction of "Confucius", a literary device conceived as an authority to advance the evangelical mission.

4. The polemical construction of "Confucius" and "Kongzi" as two distinct "*auctoritates*"

The resignification of the Ruist canon required a significant intellectual and discursive effort, as the Order had to shape these texts into *auctoritates* (authorities) that would support their evangelizing discourse. At the core of this process, we argue, lies the task of constructing a specific figure called "Confucius", different from the Chinese "Kongzi" (孔子). Indeed, to validate their own interpretation of the *Litteratorum Lex*, the Jesuits had to create an *auctoritas*—"Confucius"—that would have upheld a proto-Catholic doctrine in *illo tempore*.[65] Thus, the Order's interpretation was framed not as an "original" product, but as an ancient discourse, the "true" one, previously articulated by the historical Kongzi in times past. Such a discursive construction aided the conversion process, since, on one hand, the Chinese could be convinced through their own tradition; on the other hand, this interpretation established an apology for Chinese culture before European readers, who were reluctant to accept the Jesuit accommodation process. It must be noted, nonetheless, that such an evangelical strategy together with the Jesuits corporate identity within the Middle Country answered to the demands of the Chinese themselves and their own value system: "[i]f the Jesuits in China became who they became, it was also because the 'other' encouraged them actively or passively to become like that" (Standaert 2008, 174). This is especially true in the analyzed case, where the continual intercultural dialogue and its struggles revealed to the

[65] Jensen did not make the distinction between "Kongzi" and "Confucius", but he was right to notice that: "[...] our ["Confucius"] is a product fashioned by many hands, ecclesiastical and lay, Western and Chinese" (Jensen 1997, 5).

Company of Jesus the need to accommodate and the ways in which such accommodation had to be carried out to succeed in their missionary activity:

> No marginal religion penetrating from the outside could expect to take root in China (at least at a high social level) unless it conformed itself to a pattern that in late imperial times was more clearly defined than ever. [Ruism] represented what is *zheng* [正] (‘‘orthodox’’ or ‘‘orthoprax’’) in a religious, ritual, social, and political sense. In order not to be branded as *xie* [邪] (‘‘heterodox’’ or ‘‘heteroprax’’) and to be treated as a subversive sect, a marginal religion had to prove that it was on the side of *zheng*. In other words, the adaptation was not only a choice, but was also, to a large extent, constantly imposed on the Jesuits. In this process, it was the Chinese who occupied the dominant position, since they effectively hosted the foreigners on their own territory, obliging them to adapt to the native culture (Standaert 2008, 174; vid. also Mungello 1999, 38-39).

As such, one can understand the need for the developed discursive accommodation strategy that was implemented from 1595 onwards. To the Chinese listeners, Christianity thus took the shape and “scent” of something familiar. It could be branded not as a foreign religion, but as another branch within Ruism. In this way, it could be judged and evaluated by considering their own canonical corpus, something that facilitated dialogue, notwithstanding the obvious internal tensions within the imperial court, where the Order had to accommodate while, at the same time, had to deal with the demands of their own belief system, the exigencies of the Church and that of the emperors and literati.

4.1. The *Auctoritas* as a Literary Figure

Before we begin with our analysis, it is necessary to specify the meaning of the word “*auctoritas*”, as it was understood from the Middle Ages onward,[66] since it was this meaning that the Church and, by extension, the Society of Jesus later adopted. Within this historical period, the term undergoes a gradual and traceable evolution:

[66] The term originated specifically within the realm of Roman law (Borsari 2010, 457), although it had other applications and meanings that are not pertinent to our current interests. As such, our study will concentrate on the hue that it acquired later, during the Medieval Age.

> Whether "*auctoritas*" is understood in its legal sense or in the broader sense of dignity, it first signifies the quality by virtue of which a person (magistrate, writer, witness, priest) is worthy of credit, consideration, or credibility. By metonymy, "*auctoritas*" then designates the person who possesses this quality; subsequently, through the transposition of the human subject to their external act, [that is,] writing, [...] in which the opinion or will of this subject is expressed: this instrument assumes authority, or, what is the same, it is considered authentic. Naturally, this meaning first applies to official documents: the rescripts of the princes, and later the papal letters, would become *auctoritates*; [...] Through a new metonymy, the text itself is directly called *auctoritas*, no longer merely qualified as possessing authority. An authority is the text itself that we invoke (Chenu 1954, 110).

It can be glimpsed in this course of events how the written text gradually acquires the distinctive characteristics that the term originally postulated for an individual. In this regard, the subsequent development of a written work as an *auctoritas* will be the one to predominate; however, it should be noted that:

> In parallel with the concept of *auctoritas*, the concept of *auctor* develops. The term referred to those writers who were cited—often as a form of argumentation—as a source of authority, truth, and authentic interpretation of the Scriptures and the tradition of the Church. In most cases, producing a text meant reproducing an *auctoritas*, which could derive from the *Old* or *New Testament*, the Church Fathers, or classical writers [...] (Borsari 2010, 458).

This conceptual pair was considered synonymous throughout the entire Middle Ages (Borsari 2010, 465). Indeed, it was common to refer to both the author and the ideas expressed in the texts left behind using the same term. The specific function of the binomial denomination was to establish a common discursive ground on which dialogue could take

place, to constitute a cultural repository to which one could refer in order to communicate. Initially, the bridge sought to be established between intellectuals and the people (Eco 1974, 27). In China, it was used by Christianity to engage in polemics with the *Rujia*. It was a useful strategy that required much effort, particularly to know the language, and then, the canonical authors from the Chinese culture—their own *auctoritates*—under the analyzed terminology. Nonetheless, thanks to these efforts, the Ignatians were able to take part in complex debates on the literati's own philosophical terms. The underlying point of these discussions lay in the following questions: could the Chinese be converted under the Jesuit (re)configuration of Ruism? And, ultimately, could the Order's interpretation of Ruism—anchored on "Confucius"—prevail against that of the *Litteratorum Secta*—anchored on "Kongzi"? To construct a solid *auctoritas* was, then, a mandatory requirement.

It is on this issue that the use of the literary dispositive of *auctoritas* implied a "problem" already noted by Alain de Lille (12th century) in *De Fide Catholica*. When addressing the treatment of the soul in Plato's *Timaeus* and *Phaedo*, he states: "[*a*]*uctoritas cereum habet nasum, id est in diversum potest flecti sensum*", "[*a*]*uctoritas* has a waxed nose, that is, it can be bent in the opposite direction".[67] Thus, the central issue of this figure is established: it can be modified, adapted, or deformed in the pursuit of various ends. Instead of reproducing an "original" meaning within a text, the act of quoting an *auctoritas* produces a displacement so as to adapt the cited text within a new context. This literary figure, then, is always being (re)invented and (re)signified. This is further illustrated by Eco when he states that "[...] the resource takes the form of synecdoche: one author, one unique text represents the entirety of tradition and always functions outside of context" (Eco 2012, 643). The most characteristic example of this is evidenced through the *Bible*, whose fragments become the tool to resolve or justify—to move toward a specific praxis—the most diverse situations: from an individual's actions in response to a specific situation in their own biography, to supporting a political, theological project. Such readings are directed toward the truth that is "hidden" in every act or text, which is always readily available for the most outlandish interpretations. This hermeneutic freedom, forced to a certain degree by the Chinese themselves, will ultimately enable and legitimate the Jesuit method of accommodation.

[67] The original text, to which we were unable to gain full access, is cited by Eco (1974, 27; 2012, 643) and Regalado (2021, 135).

4.2. The Method at the Service of the Gospel

When considering the Jesuit (re)configuration of the figure of "Kongzi", we must examine the following quote from Paniker, which highlights the reasoning underlying the interpretive process of accommodation:

> If there is only one Truth, one Nature, one God, one Path, then what is not that Truth is either false or, more magnanimously, must be an intermediate point, a partial appreciation of that One Truth. Since God loves all beings, His grace [...] extends to all humans; so that other cultures and societies turn out to be 'anonymous Christians', invisible members of the One and True Church (Paniker 2005, 44).

For the Ignatians, the possibilities for missionary work in China, which, as we have seen, was a civilization to which they could not impose their religious perspective, were: either to declare all sects as heresies or to take the appearance of one and consider it as the appreciator of that one Truth. The first path was unproductive, as they did not possess the monopoly on violence or the military aid of colonial powers.[68] The second, therefore, remained as the only logical solution. This led to establishing a Christian reading of the Ruist classics. Such an interpretation eventually turned the statements and doctrines contained in those books into an expression of a proto-Christian thought. This reading also allowed for the preservation of Christianity's universalist aspirations, which could not conceive of an entire civilization never having heard the revealed word—or at least an announcement of it. At the same time, this resignification of ancient Ruism allowed the Jesuits to consider the other sects in China as "false", as in the case of Buddhism, Daoism, and Neo-Confucianism, which, in the Christian reading, had lost sight of the "true" teachings of the Chinese Philosopher. At the center of this entire hermeneutical process, and as its cornerstone, was "Confucius", understood not as the flesh-and-blood man who lived in the 6th-5th centuries BCE, but as a textual construction developed through the dialogic relations that the Company of Jesus established with the *Ruxue* an materialized in their texts through their translations. This is

[68] Proposals to invade China were made e.g. by the Jesuit Alonso Sánchez to Philip II (Meynard & Villasante 2018, 51-54).

why it is important to undermark that we do not align with the aforementioned *intentio auctoris*. As such, it should be noted that:

> The names of authors [...] have no substantial value here. They do not indicate identities or causes. It would be naive to think that "Descartes", "Leibniz", "Rousseau", "Hegel", etc., are the names of authors, the names of the authors of movements or shifts that we designate in this way. The indicative value we attribute to them is, above all, the name of a problem (Derrida 1971, 131).[69]

In this same sense, "Kong[fu]zi" as an *auctoritas* will represent in our study the literary device created by the Ruist tradition over the centuries—a process that continues to this day. If the *auctoritas* of "Confucius" is proposed as the only possible perspective regarding an approach to the "Truth", it will come into direct conflict with "Kongzi". However, the merit of this discursive strategy lay, as mentioned, in its ability to appeal to the Chinese population through their own tradition. This fact is not accidental but arose from deep meditation, as demonstrated by the testimony of the *Vita Confucii*:

> *Intelliget ex his omnibus prudens Lector, quam non inutilis futura sit Evangelico praeconi viri hujus authoritas, siquidem ea apud hanc gentem quae Magistri sui, atque litterarum suarum usque adeo studiosa est, uti quandoque possit (atque vero potest) ad Christianam veritatem confirmandam; quemadmodum videmus Apostolum Gentium*

[69] This same point was emphasized by the French philosopher in *La diseminación* (1975), where writing is considered a testamentary process. In a specific relation to the "author" figure, it becomes evident "[...] the demise of a certain voice, of a specific function of speech, the representative one, the voice of the reader or the voice of the author, which would be there only to re-present [sic] the subject in its inner thought, to designate, enunciate, express the truth—or presence—of a meaning, to reflect it in a faithful mirror, to leave it to transparently appear untouched or to merge with it. Without a screen, without a veil, or of good mercury" (Derrida, 495-496). This perspective aligns with what Barthes called the "author's death" in the sense that the act of writing implies: [...] [t]he destruction of all voice, of all origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space to which our subject arrives, the black-and-white where all identity ultimately vanishes, starting with the very identity of the body that writes. [...] [T]he author enters into his own death (1994, 65-66). Our perspective, then, does not concern itself with "authors", but with discursive constructs found within the materiality of the text, since as Eco demonstrated: "[...] the private life of empirical authors is, in a certain sense, more unfathomable than their texts" (1995, 103).

Poetarum Graecorum authoritate olim apud Athenienses fuisse usum (Couplet et al. 1687, cxxiv).[70]

This fragment perfectly illustrates the Ignatian approach, understood as an effort of resemantization of the figure of "Kongzi" and his "authority".[71] There is a conscious intent to resignify the figure of the philosopher so as to generate a cultural and intellectual authority over the literati's tradition and, by extension, over the Chinese people through the use of their own semantic frameworks. This would be carried out through a reconfiguration of the philosopher as a figure who would have prefigured Christianity. This aligns with a process of discursive unification, applied here to preserve the universality of the Christian discourse, subordinating the ancient Ruist tradition in a way that supports the Jesuit interests and those of the Church, reflected in the evangelical mission. Such a discursive appropriation turns the textual otherness (now constituted in the figure "Confucius") into a partial appreciator of the One Christian Truth, in Paniker's terms. His figure, distinct from the Chinese "Kongzi", stands in opposition to it as its "authentic" counterpart. Thus, "Confucius" becomes a monotheistic thinker, a believer who interprets for a Christian audience terms from his tradition, such as *shangdi* (上帝) and *tian* (天), as denominations for the one and same Christian God (Perkins 2004, 19). In this process, the other—"Kongzi"—is appropriated and integrated into a European framework: he is assimilated and established as the spokesperson of a message foreign to his own culture without losing his authoritative position. The legitimacy of the Jesuit evangelical strategy is authorized within the very discursive context by the *auctoritas* of Paul of Tarsus, one of the apostles of Christianity. Hence, the *Bible* itself authorizes and justifies the Jesuit action conceived in the image and likeness of Paul's missionary work.

Here we see, as Eco pointed out, how *auctoritas* functions outside of context and, in this case, in favor of pursuing missionary goals. In fact, the text quoted is *Acts of the Apostles* 17: 22-34, where the disciple of Christ speaks to the Greeks in the Areopagus, quoting their own poets to transmit his evangelical message: "Εν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν, ὡς καί τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν. Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν" (Aland et al. 2014, 463).[72] The reference takes this specific episode guarded under the authority of one of

[70] Vid. Appendix 1, text 4.
[71] The Latin text uses "*authoritas*", which is a variant of the term "*auctoritas*".
[72] "[...] [F]or in him we live, move, and exist, as some of your own poets have said: 'For we are also of his lineage'". As the *Biblia de Jerusalén* clarifies: "[q]uote taken from the *Phenomena* of Aratus, a poet from

the twelve apostles, an *auctoritas par excellence*, and transfers it outside of its own literary context to that of the Jesuit mission in China during the 17th century. By doing so, the apostolic pattern inherent to the Order stablishes a *continuum* between past and present—between the apostle and the missionaries—and its actual praxis: the method of accommodation promoted by the Jesuit Order is "authorized" (in the sense of "being permitted" by its reference to an *auctor-auctoritas* who legitimizes it). The original context of enunciation is lost in its resignification, which enhances the value of the biblical volume within its own religious context by constructing a series of bridges (temporal, divine, apostolical, practical, etc.) towards the mission within the Middle Kingdom.[73] However, the abovementioned Latin text continues and concludes with a clarification that underscores the riskiness of the Ignatian wager:

> *Unum tamen hic sollicitè cavendum nobis, posito semper ante oculos eorum exemplo, qui Missionem hanc cum singulari virtute prudentiaque fundatam nobis reliquere, ut apud Sinas admodum moderatè commendemus ac laudemus Confucium, ne testimonio nostro atque authoritate, prorsus augescat, maximè apud gentem, natura sane superbam, et aliena fere prae suis contemnentem. Multo magis tamen cavendum nobis erit, ne verbo scriptove damnemus, aut laedemus eum, quem tota gens tantoperè suscipit, ac veneratur, ne huic odiosi reddamur, non nos ipsi tantùm, sed ipsemet, quem praedicamus Christus; atque dum forte contemnimus aut condemnamus eum, qui tam consentanea rationi docuit, quique vitam ac mores cum doctrina sua conformasse creditur, videamur nos Europaei, Sinis saltem, non tam cum Magistro ipsorum, quam cum ratione ipsa pugnare velle, atque hujus lumen, non autem Confucii nomen extinguere* (Couplet et al. 1687, cxxiv).[74]

Cilicia (3rd century BC). Cleanthes the Stoic (3rd century BC) expresses himself in much the same terms" (Ubieta López, et al. 2009, 1619).

[73] This process is common to all texts, and Eco has noted that this inherent openness and dynamism of a work "[...] consist in making itself available to various integrations, concrete productive complements, channeling them *a priori* into the play of a structural vitality that the work possesses even if it is unfinished, and which remains valid even in light of different and multiple outcomes" (Eco 1992, 43). This fact, however, does not mean that a text offers itself to indiscriminate interventions—resulting from an adherence *in extremis* to the *intentio lectoris*. Nonetheless, it is a fact that every *opus* is a work in process, and to quote and *auctoritas* is, at the same time, to "betray" it and to "renovate" it.

[74] Vid. Appendix 1, text 5.

The paragraph shows the methodological awareness that the order had when analyzing the process of construction and discursive resemanticization that they themselves were promoting, and which represented a double-edged sword: a fact that was undoubtedly grounded in a century of missionary experiences in the Middle Kingdom. Indeed, the excessive praise of the master could be detrimental to the Jesuit mission and contribute to the failure of the missionary work, to which all accommodation projects were subordinated. At the same time, and at the opposite extreme of such consideration, "Kongzi" could not be attacked. Not only because the Order was fully aware of the respect the Chinese people had for him, which was felt firsthand when it was expelled from China after Niccolò Longobardi declared the *Rujia* a heresy, but also because the preserved testimonies of "Kongzi" granted him a righteous and noble character, in line with the dictates of the European *ratio* or reason. Thus, the Ignatian approach had to follow an intermediate path: it had to use the master, clothed in a Christian habit, to spread the faith. However, in this process, the Order had to be measured, as it could not elevate the philosopher too much to avoid undermining the evangelical project. The key, then, lay in subordinating his philosophy and message to Christianity.

5. "Confucius" as the Orientalizing *Alter Ego* of "Kongzi"

We have already considered the semantical construction of "Confucius" as a different literary *persona* from "Kongzi". Now we would like to address how the first figure constitutes the *axis* over which the orientalist reading of the Ruist tradition was erected and transmitted to the European readers.

5.1. Political Subordination

We believe that it is important to return to the *laudatio* directed to Louis the Great, as we can find here the orientalist components that will be present throughout the volume. But what is particularly remarkable about this epistle is the hierarchy that is established between Europe and China in the construction of this phantasmagorical and supposedly transhistorical opposition between the "West" and the "East", here embodied in the opposition and subordination of "Confucius" to the French king. As such, this prologue acquires relevance for our present purposes since it underscores the peculiar orientalizing construction of two marked oppositions: first, the literary-paradigmatic figures of "Confucius" in relation to Louis XIV. Second—and derived from the aforementioned—the opposition between a

specific "Orient" (China) and "Occident" (Europe) displayed through both figures. As a nexus between both *personae*, we will find the Society of Jesus personified in the character-narrator of Philippe Couplet, who signs the letter and will make such subordination possible. Let's proceed, then, to one of the first fragments where the philosopher is introduced to the king within the narrative of this letter:

> [...] [*Q*]*uippe qui ab tanto Magistro didicerint Summum coeli, ut vocabat ipse, Imperatorem Regnorum omnium ac Imperiorum moderatorem & arbitrum adorare ac timere, subditos sibi populos aequitate magna & charitate regere, fovere artes, orbem denique Sinensem domi tot iam annos ac militiae florentem, sanctissimis institutis legibusque moderari* (Couplet et al. 1687, iv).[75]

The idealization of the philosopher as a civilizatory figure among the Chinese, portrayed as the one responsible for revealing to his people the knowledge pertaining to God or the "*Summum coeli Imperatorem*", establishes him as the figure of renown *par excellence*. He is credited with instituting not only the true religion (and, thus, acting in a theological domain) but also with benefiting society by fostering the arts (cultural/humanistic domain) and ensuring the rectitude of the state (governmental domain). These superlative attributes would appear to erect "Confucius" as an almost perfect human being. In fact, he is portrayed as the sole person responsible for the flourishing of the Chinese realm. This exaltation of "Confucius" is instrumental to the *laudatio*, since it will be shortly used to establish a clear comparison with the French king, who will also be lauded as a civilizing figure within his own country and in the aforementioned domains. In fact, to make this comparison possible, the philosopher himself is presented as someone "[...] *e Regio Sinensium Imperatorum sanguine* [...]" (Couplet et al. 1687, iii-iv),[76] a fact that makes him comparable to the monarch in status and, thus, makes the future comparison possible.[77] The resource of idealization will serve only to magnify the status of the king, as "Confucius" immediately humiliates himself before him:

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[75] Vid. Appendix 1, text 6.
[76] "[...] of Royal blood from the Chinese Emperors".
[77] The Jesuits attribution of Royal blood to the philosopher is most probably based on the *Records of the Historian* by historian Sima Qian. Such source, among others, "[...] tell the story that Kongzi was descended from a once glorious but now poverty-stricken aristocratic lineage" (Yao 2003, 164).

> *Hic igitur ille Confucius tibi se sistit, REX MAGNE, curis tuis & Regia liberalitate in Gallias veluti deportatus, & ad Maiestatis Tuae pedes provolutus accedit, palam admiraturus sapientiam tuam, & suam illam, etsi apud populares suos incredibili fama & existimatione iactatam, Tuae tamen nihilo secius, quam Soli Stellas, decedere confessurus* (Couplet et al. 1687, iv).[78]

Within this literary paradigm, the Chinese philosopher, considered as the representative of his people, pays homage to the most powerful king of Europe in a moment when Portugal's influence and power were waning. Thus, China symbolically submits itself to the king of France. But we must not avert our eyes from the role of the Society of Jesus within the diagramming of this enterprise, since "Confucius" could only come to France and present himself before the "*REX MAGNE*" in the form of the tome written and edited by the Jesuits during their missionary labor, specifically by Philippe Couplet, the main editor of the text who also signs the *epistola* to the monarch. In fact, his literary persona constitutes the narrating voice found within the letter, as it is revealed at the end: "*Devotissimus atque addictissimus, PHILIPPUS COUPLET Societatis Iesu*" (Couplet et al. 1687, viii).[79] The remark is not unimportant since it establishes a clear triadic relation: the French king—Europe—is able to receive "Confucius"—all knowledge related to China, i.e.: China itself—and have "him" humiliated before his majesty thanks to the intercession of the Couplet-narrator—the Society of Jesus. It is important to note, however, that "Confucius" is a character *in absentia*; his presence is only manifested through the narrator's voice. This explains why he does not have a "self" within the narrative and the character-narrator projects his voice to the king, thus speaking in his place. "Confucius", then, is an absence devoid of any genuine intervention or speech.

Building upon this description, the narrator-Couplet will pledge his allegiance to the French king and to the Church. To the first, by the laudatory letter and the use of the superlative "*devotissimus*" and "*addictissimus*". To the second, by the explicit mention of his place within the Company of Jesus and through his loyalty to Louis, "*Regi Christianissimo*". Such allegiance does not come without tensions, however, as the accommodation strategy devised by the Jesuits put their enterprise in jeopardy because they needed to secure a strong

[78] Vid. Appendix 1, text 7.
[79] "Your most devout and most dedicated, PHILIPPE COUPLET of the Society of Jesus".

figure able to protect and finance them against their opponents. The election of the king of France was a bold, but rational one considering his extreme influence over the papacy.[80]

As can be inferred, not only does this narrative underscore—intratextually—the Society's role in shaping China to an European audience (constructing a specific "Orient" during this process), but also demonstrates—extratextually—how the Jesuits took an active role in appealing to the imperialist desires of the princes at the time in order to secure or to keep on receiving funds for the missions in the East. For we must not forget that China had to be perceived by the Europeans as a desired or even exotic country, but not hostile towards Europe so as to be recognized as a place that could be evangelized through the actions of the Company, an endeavor that brought prestige to its patron. Under this logic, by favoring the Jesuits' enterprise in China, the evangelization taking place *in situ* could be symbolically and materially attributed to the king, who protected the Order and its methods.

The tone of the epistle, then, exacerbates the status of Louis XIV *in extremum* in order to obtain his support and, thus, he is portrayed as the monarch that the philosopher awaited throughout his life, as narrated by the literary Couplet:

> *Haerebit ille, opinor, ad primum aditum atque conspectum, & admiratione simul gaudioque defixus repertum sibi tandem Principem illum dicet, ad quem videndum nequidquam hactenus tanto studio exarserat* (Couplet et al. 1687, iv-v).[81]

The emphasis put into "Confucius'" hypothetical reaction not only further elevates the figure of the king by prefiguring him as the "ideal king", but also echoes the concept of "圣人" as it is referred in *Analects* 7.26: "子曰:'圣人，吾不得而见之矣'" (Zhang 2006, 97),[82] translated as "*Confucius ait: Hominem sanctum ego adhuc quidem non potui videre:* [...]" (Couplet et al. 1687, 42).[83] As Yao indicates, "[*s*]*heng* [圣] means sage, sagacious or wise; *ren* [人], human being. As an expression, *sheng ren* [圣人] means 'a sage'" (2003, 545). Couplet translates the word as "*sanctus homo*", an election by which it attains theological

[80] We must not overlook the significant influence that the king wielded within the Church during his reign. He was one of the main figures responsible for the declining power of the Holy See during the 17th century. This explains the tensions with Alexander VII (1655-1667), the issues regarding religious jurisdictions with Clement X (1670-1676), and his open opposition to the candidacy of the later elected Innocent XI (1676-1689), whom the king did not recognize as Pope until the cardinals approved fourteen points of religious reforms proposed by him. The situation eventually escalated to the point where the rift between the monarch and Innocent became irreparable. Reconciliation occurred with his successors, Alexander VIII (1689-1691), and especially Innocent XII (1691-1700); (García Bazán 2014, 171-173).

[81] Vid. Appendix 1, text 8.

[82] "The Master said: 'A sage [*shengren*], I have never seen one'".

[83] "Confucius said: 'until now I have not seen a saint [*hominem sanctum*]".

connotations that are not present in the Chinese passage. By doing this, the narrator of the *laudatio* is able to link the reference to *Analects* with "the most Christian king". That is, as he was commissioned by the direct command of God, if we attend to the absolutist paradigm which prevailed at the time. Thus, the ideal that the philosopher sought but could not find in his own time and society is, under such logic, embodied in the French monarch of the 17th century. This explains why the kingly figure possesses attributes that echo both in Christianity and Ruism:

> *Tuam denique pietatem, clementiam, aequitatem, illam aquabilem in tanta rerum maximarum & negotiorum mole mentis ac vultus serenitatem atque praesentiam cum tanta Maiestate coniunctam, Principibus universis pro norma & regula esse veliet?* (Couplet et al. 1687, v).[84]

Some parallels can be drawn here between the Latin concepts employed and those of the Ruist virtues. It is important to highlight these, as doing so will allow us to understand how the narrator reinterprets the Ruist tradition and some of its virtues.

In the quoted fragment "*pietas*" evoques "*xiao*" (孝), a virtue that is most often translated as such in the *Analects*' translation within the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*: vid. 2.5; 2.6; 2.7; 2.8; 2.21; 4.20; 19.18 (Meynard 2015, 633). Usually rendered as "filial piety" (Ames & Rosemont 1998; Slingerland 2003a) or, in its reformulation, "family reverence" (Ames 2021; 2023), it entails a collaterality present within the Chinese character itself, "[...] constituted as it is by the combination of the graph for "elders" (*lao* 老) and that for the diminutive "son, daughter, child, youth" (*zi* 子)" (Ames 2021, 78). It refers to the *continuum* "[...] of physical and cultural embodiment from one generation to the next and thus the inseparability of grandparents and grandchildren, fathers and daughters, progenitors and progeny, and how such familial roles can only be learned and lived together" (Ames 2021, 78). It should be noted, nonetheless, that this virtue includes the:

> "[...] [O]bedience to the hierarchical system and authority. In [Ruism], there are five basic relationships: ruler-subject, father-son, elder brother-younger brother, husband-wife, and friend-friend. Three of these refer to the family, although the first

[84] Vid. Appendix 1, text 16.

also carries familial connotations, as the ruler or any governing authority is seen as a father figure to the people (Botton 2021, 31).

Thus, on one hand, the concept of "*pietas*" in relation to the French king aligns with the aforementioned piety, attributing to him the capacity to act toward his subjects in the manner of a father towards his progeny. In this sense, it emphasizes his paternal bond with his subjects and underscores that his actions as a monarch are directed toward the well-being of the people. On the other hand, the Christian meaning of "*pietas*" "[...] can refer to a general attitude of respect, reverence, and appreciation for God and the spiritual life" (Bretzke 2013, 282), or, as defined by a glossator of the *Historia scholastica* quoted by Du Cange: "[*p*]*ietas aequivocum est ad cultum Dei, et ad compassionem proximi*" (1883, 315).[85] Consequently, the connotations of the word highlight the king's position in a theological relationship with God, as his manner of governance is seemingly justified by the divine decree of divinity. At the same time, however, it tends to underscore his relationship with others—those below Louis himself, whom he treats with compassion. Therefore, *pietas*, semantically charged within the Christian linguistic framework and context of enunciation, and as a translation of the term "*xiao*", acquires a deeper meaning by merging both traditions. This nuance will be common to all the translated terms in this passage.

Proceeding with the analysis, the vocable "*clementia*" stands as an equivalent to "*kuan*" (宽). The importance of this term, translated as "generosity" (Legge 1966, 258) "magnanimity" (Slingerland 2003a, 202) or "tolerance" (Lau 1979, 144; Ames & Rosemont 1998, 211) in its substantive form, is emphasized in *Analects* 17.6 as "Kongzi" states: "宽则得众 [...]" (Zhang 2006, 265), which translates as "[i]f you possess *kuan* [宽] then you will win the people [...]". The Jesuits translated the term as "*amplitudo clementiaque animi*" (broadness and clemency of heart) and rendered the whole fragment as: "[*s*]*i magni, liberalis, clementisque animi fueris; iam obtinebis omnes, omnium, inquam, studia, amores, voluntates*" (Couplet et al. 1687, 126).[86] By translating it as "*clementia*", the term acquires the nuance of "leniency" or the "[...] disposition to spare or pardon" (Glare 1982, 369), achieved by acting mercifully towards the people. By showing "*clementia*" to them, the king remarks

[85] "Piety is an equivocal [term]: [it refers both] to the worship of God and to the compassion for those near [to us]".
[86] "If you are of a great, generous, and lenient heart, you will immediately gain all, I mean, the favor, the affections, and the wills of all".

his humane and virtuous disposition toward his subjects, thus winning their hearts effortlessly (无为, *wu-wei*), as Kongzi's ideal, virtuous monarch:

> Once a ruler possessing Virtue takes his ritual place [...] the people will be "caused" to follow the Way in the unself-conscious, noncoercive manner of *wu-wei*: they will simply be drawn spontaneously to take their proper place in the ordered Way, without knowing why or how. Thus, the best way to govern the world is to not govern it: rectify yourself, Confucius says, and the world will follow (Slingerland 2003b, 69)

Within this interpretation, the monarch, who has developed and possesses the Ruist virtues, including the *clementia* from the *laudatio*, "[...] serves ultimately as the key to the salvation of the world as a whole, and is thus responsible for the salvation of the mass of common people who are incapable of achieving salvation through their own efforts" (Slingerland 2003b, 66). Thus, the people follow naturally the monarch since this will lead to their own good, to their salvation at the hand of the "*Rex Christianissimus*".

If we now analyze the term "*aequitas*", it is clear that it refers to "*yi*" (義), as Meynard also notes in passages 13.4; 16.10; 17.23, and 19.1, where the term appears translated as such together with "*iustitia*" (2015, 633). Slingerland argues that this concept: "[...] generally refers to a kind of cultivated sense of what is right and morally proper (4.10, 4.16, 5.16, 15.18, 17.23, 19.1), although at times it has the more specific sense of 'rightful duty' in a political context, as in 18.7" (2003, 241). This interpretation of the term aligns with those of other scholars reviewed by Botton (2021, 31-32) and Ames & Rosemont, who note that such readings aim to depict "Kongzi" as a "[...] 'moral philosopher' in more or less a Western sense" (1998, 66). By analyzing its etymology in detail, particularly its relation to the rite of sacrificing a sheep, they propose that "*yi*" (義) "[...] is one's sense of appropriateness that enables one to act in a proper and fitting manner, given the specific situation" (1998, 67). This nuance, autochthonous to the Chinese term, is significant, for the Canadian philosopher later remarked that with the introduction of the *Rujia* into the Western academy through the Jesuits' missionary enterprise in China:

> "[...] [T]he conventional translation of *yi* 義 has been "righteousness" as in the translation of the Greek *dikaiosunē* [δικαιοσύνη]: "being righteous before God" (as in *Romans* 1:17). Being righteous literally means to be objectively right, especially in a

> moral way, by comporting oneself according to the one standard set by the will of God. Hence, we have the binary of right and wrong (Ames 2023, 249).

The introduction of the term to Western academy, as was translated by the Jesuits, consequently produced a shift in its meaning. This is why Ames, in an effort to better understand the Chinese term, remarked that it "[...] is not 'righteousness' as compliance with some external divine directive but rather is an optimal 'appropriateness' as 'the sense of what is most fitting for all concerned' in this particular communal context" (Ames 2021, 111-112). By understanding the distinction between "*yi*" and "*aequitas*", we can now comprehend that the current usage of the term by the narrator appears to ascribe to it a moral interpretation within a theological perspective—thus aligning with Slingerland's and the traditional Western reading. Under this narrative, the Latin text portrays Louis the Great as a paragon of morality and justice since "*aequitas*" indeed carries the meaning of "[f]airness, impartiality, justice" (Glare 1982, 74), but it also remarks once again the direct relation between such fairness and God, before Whom the monarch is righteous. The divinity justifies the king's status as monarch, while simultaneously, the righteousness of the monarch emphasizes the fact that he was appointed to his position by God.

Going forward towards the last attribute present within the analyzed fragment, the phrase: "*vultus serenitatem atque praesentiam cum tanta Maiestate coniunctam*" evoques the supreme dignity of "*ren*" (仁) as it is described in 6.5: "[...] *illa interior et solida animi perfectio qua fit ut naturale lumen coelitus inditum constanter sequamur* [...]" (Couplet et al. 1687, 29).[87] Ames remarks that "*ren*" (仁) "[...] is made up of the elements *ren* [人] 'person', and *er* [二], the number 'two'. This etymological analysis underscores the Ruist assumption that one cannot become a person by oneself—we are, from our inchoate beginnings, irreducibly social" (2021, 61). This is linked with the Ruist conception that "[e]ach of us is irreducibly social as the sum of the roles we live—not play—in our relationships and transactions with others" (Ames 2011, 96). There are no individuals apart from everything and self-constituted as individualistic logic tends to emphasize. Ruism underscores our relational aspect, which constitutes the core of our being. We are only through our interrelations with others. This explains, then, why "*ren*" or "humaneness" (Yao 2003, 498) can—and is—understood as:

[87] "That interior and steadfast perfection of the soul, which enables us to follow consistently the natural light implanted within [us] by heaven".

> [...] [A]n inner disposition that is realised through one's interactions with others, and even though its *locus* is the self, it is a self that is dissolved of selfishness, expanded through reflection and study and cultivated with ritual praxis. *Ren* is moreover manifested as filiality, generosity and respect for others (Yao 2003, 499).

This rendering explains why Fingarette remarked that "[w]here there are not at least two truly human beings, there is not even one" (1983, 340). We need another in order to be human; there is not an "I", when there is not an "other". Nonetheless, within the context of the passage, it is obvious that the Jesuit reading follows other sources. These are signaled by Meynard, who stated that the Jesuits' definition of "*ren*" in *Analects* 6.5:

> [...] [T]ranslates the comment by Zhang [Juzheng 張居正] (78):[88] "仁乃吾心之全德, 必纯乎天 理而无私欲之累者, 乃足以为仁".[89] Zhang follows Zhu [Xi 朱熹] for whom *ren* is identical to the inner mind. Zhu (86): "仁者, 心之德。心不违仁者" (2015, 226).[90]

In the quoted fragment, "*ren*" is equated to an interior and perfect disposition of the soul by which we follow the divine law or principle, i.e., "*tianli*" (天理, heavenly principle), which in the Jesuits' reading refers to God. This is why when the narrator refers indirectly to the faculty of "humaneness" as an attribute of the king, he underscores the disposition as a monarch but also his capacity to follow the "heavenly principle". Something that can be related to his position as a king, obtained directly from God.

From the analyzed description, we see that the French monarch is portrayed as the direct emissary of God on earth, safeguarding direct relations with Him while also exhibiting

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[88] He served as imperial tutor on two occasions and governed the Ming Empire for ten years (until his death in 1582) due to the youth of Emperor Wanli 万历 (1573-1620). He was the author of important commentaries that the Jesuits retrieved for their Christian reading of the *Rujia* (Meynard 2015, 22-43). Regarding the selection of Zhang as the main commentator of the texts: "[u]nlike most Song and Ming interpreters, Zhang alludes to a personal relationship with heaven and spiritual beings, and this is why the Jesuits chose him as the main interpreter. Clearly, Zhang's understanding of a purposeful heaven and of clever spirits is quite different from the Western conceptions of God and angels. However, the missionaries approved of Zhang for having retrieved from the ancient texts the original faith in God and angels" (Meynard 2015, 40).

[89] "*Ren* [仁] is the consummate virtue of our *xin* [heart/mind, 心]. It must be wholly attuned to the heavenly principle [*tianli* 天理] and entirely unencumbered by selfish desires—only then may it truly be called '*ren*'".

[90] "One who embodies *ren* [仁]—*xin* [heart/mind, 心]'s supreme virtue—will find their *xin* never departing from *ren*" or "*ren* is the highest virtue of *xin*. The *xin* does not go against *ren*".

a paternalistic disposition toward his subjects, who are also the subjects of Christianity. The Jesuit translation of virtues associated with the indigenous Ruist philosophy is thus consecrated to justify the divine right to the throne of Louis XIV and his right to be the *shengren* [圣人], that "Confucius" sought. This character represented the highest ideal for "Kongzi"; within his perspective, it was hardly ever realized (Lau 1979, 13). This process is made possible only through the erudition of the Society of Jesus, whose accommodating framework is subsequently transformed and considered within a Christo-European worldview. It is now time to highlight the final aspect that enables the king to be the desired monarch within the narrative of the epistle:

> *Quoniam vero Philosophus ille sapientissimus, solo naturae ac rationis lumine cognoverat, nihil religione antiquius homini esse oportere, ad eumque scopum unum suam ipse doctrinam disciplinamque referebat, ut mortales vitam omnem e supremi Numinis legibus praceptisque componerent idcirco nihil ipsi prius aut potius fuit, quam ut sectas & peregrina dogmata, quae in populorum exitium, ac Monarchiarum perniciem nata esse dictitabat, penitus profligaret. Hinc eiusdem ea vox, hodieque inter Sinas celebratissima:* Cum hu y tuon*, Oppugna heretica dogmata* (Couplet et al. 1687, v-vi).[91]

This extensive passage first notes that "Confucius", by adhering to the natural light of reason, was able to recognize the significance of religion as the central aspect of human life (*nihil religione antiquius homini esse oportere*). Consequently, the Chinese philosopher directed all his efforts, particularly his teachings (*doctrina*), toward this objective, aiming to align human lives with the laws and precepts of the supreme Deity (*supremi Numinis*). It is for this reason that the *auctoritas* "Confucius" acted against foreign sects and dogmas, seeking to overthrow them, as he believed they were responsible for the destruction of the people (*populorum exitium*) and the ruin of monarchies (*Monarchiarum perniciem*). This statement in the *laudatio* directly references the Latin translation of *Analects* 2.16. Furthermore, the narrator proceeds to quote part of the passage in Chinese, along with its translation, which, as we will have the opportunity to analyze, differs from the translation of *Analects* within the same *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*: "[*c*]*um hu y tuon*", translated as "*Oppugna heretica dogmata*" or "[a]ttack heterodox dogmas". Now this phrase transliterates

[91] Vid. Appendix 1, text 10.

the "*gong hu yiduan*" (攻乎异端) found in *Lunyu* 2.16: "子曰:'攻乎异端, 斯害也已！".[92] Before proceeding with the Jesuit rendering of the passage, one should note that the text in the original Chinese is also problematic. The received editions of the *Analects* present the character "*gong*" (攻), meaning "to attack" (though it can also mean "to specialize in").[93] A variation of this character was found in the fragment of the Dingzhou text. The ancient text provides the homonym character "*gong*" (功), "to specialize in". As such Ames & Rosemont, taking this to be the definitive sense, translate the passage as: "The Master said: 'To become accomplished in some heterodox doctrine will bring nothing but harm'" (1998, 92).[94] Regarding "*yiduan*" (异端), this was translated as "heterodox teachings" by later commentators, arguing that "Kongzi" had in mind Daoism, Yang Zhuism, or Mohism, a reading which is anachronistic in Slingerland's perspective (2003, 13). The Jesuits will follow this majority reading. The Canadian-American sinologist, nonetheless, prefers to render it as "wrong starting point" in his translation, understanding that the term refers to "'minor ways-teachings' (xiaodao 小道) mentioned in 19.4 that threaten to 'bog down' the aspiring gentleman [君子]" (Slingerland 2003a). Accordingly, he renders the passage as: "The Master said, 'Working from the wrong starting point will lead to nothing but harm'" (Slingerland 2003a, 13). We are now in a position to analyze the Jesuit translation of 2.16, which was rendered as:

> *Confucius item ait: Quisquis operam dat peregrinis ac diversis a doctrina Sanctorum dogmatibus, eisque temere instituit alios; huiusmodi novator cito perniciosus erit tam sibi quam Reipublicae* (Couplet et al. 1687, 15-16).[95]

The Ignatian reading follows the line against heterodoxy that has prevailed throughout history. However, a clear difference appears between the passage as translated and the quotation in the *laudatio*, as Meynard also notes in his edition (2015, 132). While the former states "*operam dat peregrinis ac diversis* [...] *dogmatibus*", the latter explicitly declares "[*o*]*ppugna heretica dogmata"*. Both translate the same passage, the quoted "*gong hu yiduan*" (攻乎异端), but the ambivalence in the character allows for a different reading depending on the specific literary context of enunciation. Within the context of the laudatory

[92] "The Master said: 'To attack/specialize in heterodox doctrines, this is harmful indeed'".
[93] "The Master said, 'To attack a task from the wrong end can do nothing but harm'" (Lau 1979, 65).
[94] This was already Legge's interpretation: "The Master said, 'The study of strange doctrines is injurious indeed!'" (1966, 19).
[95] Vid. Appendix 1, text 11.

letter, the bellicose nuance is employed in the construction of "Louis the Great" as the ideal monarch envisioned by "Confucius". This passage will be semantically framed within the context of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 through the Edict of Fontainebleau, which made Protestantism illegal throughout France and led to widespread persecution and migration. The connotation of this reform was to unify Christianity within the country, a goal for which Couplet could advocate. Thus, "*yiduan*" (异端), meaning "heterodoxy", is (re)interpreted as "Protestantism" through the lens of the Jesuits in the context of the post-Reformation era. This is why the narrator of the *laudatio* can convey both his own and "Confucius'" sense of happiness:

> *Quantam igitur afferret homini pietatis amantissimo laetitiam, siquidem ad haec felicissima legis gratiae tempora pertingere potuisset, tua illa Rex tutandae & amplificandae Religionis, extirpanda haereseos, pietatis propaganda cura? Quibus Te laudibus efferret, cum haeresim, hostem illam avitae fidei ac regni florentissimi teterrimam, proculcatam et attritam, edicta, quibus vitam ducere videbatur, abrogata; disiecta templa, nomen ipsum sepultum, tot animarum millia pristinis ab erroribus ad veritatem, ab exitio ad salutem tam suaviter, tam fortiter, tam feliciter traducta, Galliam denique universam sub Rege Maximo & vere Christianissimo Christianissimam aspiceret?* (Couplet et al. 1687, vi).[96]

The narrator emphasizes the joy "Confucius" would feel upon witnessing the France of Louis XIV, his struggle against heresies (*haereseos*) and victory over them, which are regarded as the most detestable enemy of the ancestral faith (*hostem illam avitae fidei [...] teterrimam*). Within such a narrative, France is portrayed as the most Christian kingdom, where the ideal of the Chinese philosopher is realized in the "greatest and truly most Christian king". "Confucius" becomes, under the narrator's perspective, an orientalist literary figure employed to further elevate both the king and his realm in the persecution of the Jesuits' own agenda. Consequently, all writings mutate under the (re)configuration and become deeply intertwined with European contexts. Everything within them refers to familiar categories. Through this orientalist framework, "Confucius" not only discovers the Christian God but, through the Couplet-narrator, also recognizes that his ideal of a monarch has been fully realized in Louis XIV of France, who stands as the embodiment of all Ruist virtues.

[96] Vid. Appendix 1, text 12.

Finally, it is important to note the "benefits" that the king performatively provides to "Confucius" and to the Chinese culture by publishing his *opus* in Europe and in Latin:

> *Quibus porro incedent laetitiis, cum accipient suum illum Confucium tanto a Te in pretio & honore habitum fuisse, ut ei caeteros inter Bibliothecae Regiae libros locum esse volueris? eumdem latio sermone donatum, eius effigiem ac libros necnon etiam & acta principum suorum, non ligneis tantum illis, quibus Sina utitur, tabulis, sed aereis & elegantissimis excusos; eum denique, qui Sinico tantum in Imperio hactenus erat cognitus, iam per Galliam atque ex Gallia per omnem late Europam brevi spargendum, ac tanti ab omnibus, quanti par est, ubique faciendum* (Couplet et al. 1687, vii).[97]

The narrator characterizes the people from the Middle Kingdom as grateful for the reverence the king has shown towards "Confucius"—and implicitly for demonstrating deference to the Company of Jesus, responsible for presenting the philosopher before the monarch—and authorizing the dissemination of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*. Through this action, the fame of the Chinese civilizatory figure will spread throughout Europe in Latin—the language of culture, philosophy, and science at the time—highlighting the honorary status being granted to this foreign—yet not so foreign—philosophy. Furthermore, instead of his fame being propagated in "those wooden blocks used in China" (*ligneis* [...] *illis, quibus Sina utitur, tabulis*), it will be shared "forged in the most elegant copperplates" (*aereis & elegantissimis excusos*). Thus, through the king's action, "Confucius" will be known beyond his own country, first in France and from there throughout Europe. But by doing so, "Confucius'" philosophy will be "elevated" through and within Europe's own hierarchical and epistemological categories, that is, through their own language and the luxurious materials used during the printing process. At every moment, the superiority of the recipient culture is underscored in contrast to the giving culture within this narrative. The Chinese philosopher is absorbed and integrated among Europe's own categories in such a way that, as previously mentioned, he remains a respected figure but not to the point of surpassing Europe.

[97] Vid. Appendix 1, text 13.

5.2. Philosophical and Religious Subordination

We have evidenced the political subordination that operates within the orientalist dispositive constructed by the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*. The Latin translation of the *Analects* will further reveal how "Confucius" was (re)configured as a subordinate in a philosophical and religious sense. We will begin by quoting passage 2.4, which constitutes the "intellectual biography" of the philosopher. The original text states:

> 子曰:"吾十有五而志于学。三十而立。四十而不惑。五十而知天命。六十而耳顺。七十而从心所欲，不踰矩" (Zhang 2006, 13).[98]

In his analysis of the passage, Slingerland divides the evolution described by "Kongzi" into three pairs:

> In the first pair (stages one and two), the aspiring gentleman [君子, in this case "Kongzi"] commits himself to the [Ruist] Way, submitting to the rigors of study and ritual practice until these traditional forms have been internalized to the point that he is able to "take his place" among others. In the second pair, the practitioner begins to feel truly at ease with this new manner of being, and is able to understand how the [Ruist] Way fits into the order of things and complies with the will of [h]eaven. The clarity and sense of ease this brings with it leads to the final two stages, where one's dispositions have been so thoroughly harmonized with the dictates of normative culture that one accords with them spontaneously [...] (Slingerland 2003a, 9).

It is important to take these considerations into account, as the translation of the present text under the Jesuit hand takes on very different connotations. Indeed, the process of linguistic translation chooses not a literal translation, but a commented one. This fact will make the brief passage a more voluminous one. For this reason, we will examine it gradually, paying attention to the textual additions and implications in each fragment:

[98] Vid. Appendix 1, text 14.

Confucius ingenue suis exponens quos in philosophiae studio progressus aetate procedente fecerit, ait: Cum mihi decem essent & quinque aetatis anni, protinus applicui animum ad perdiscenda maiorum virorum instituta sive philosophiam (Couplet et al. 1687, 10).[99]

The resemanticization of this passage becomes relevant when we consider a fundamental fact: the study to which "Confucius" devotes himself is that of philosophy. This fact, which may seem obvious at first glance, is not, since the status of this figure as a "philosopher" is an invention of the Jesuits themselves (Standaert 1999, 127; Frainais-Maitre 2013, 48; vid. also Standaert 2000, 287-317). Such an interpretation of the *Rujia* as a philosophical tradition will be inherited by the Enlightenment but will cease to be used in the 19th century with the rise of colonialism and European scientific racism (Frainais-Maitre 2013, 48; Mugello 1999, 92-94).[100] The examined passage, then, places the philosophical endeavor, here defined as "*maiorum virorum instituta*" (the principles of wise men), at the center of the Master's considerations. These principles, discovered by the ancestors, become the "authorities" of the philosophical discipline being pursued. It is important to note that the Jesuits primarily followed the commentary on the Chinese text by Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525-82), who understood "learning" or "*xue*" (学)—translated as "*philosophia*" in the Latin text—and the *Daxue* (大学, Great Learning) as being the domain of holy and wise men, intended for princes and rulers (Meynard 2015, 118). This description reveals that the path pursued by "Confucius" was reserved for a select few. The text continues by redefining the task to which the then-student applies himself:

Annos triginta natus iam constiti: eas inquam radices egeram ut consisterem firmus in suscepto virtutum sapientiaeque studio, neque res ulla extra me posita avocare animum meum ab illo posset (Couplet et al. 1687, 10).[101]

[99] Vid. Appendix 1, text 15.
[100] The discredit attributed to the philosophical traditions of China—and of the "Orient(s)" in general—, however, extends even to the present day, as can be seen, for example, in the analyses of González España (1999, 37) or Heidegger (2004, 19).
[101] Vid. Appendix 1, text 16.

From this passage, "*philosophia*" is redefined as the study of "virtues" (*virtutum*) and "wisdom" (*sapientiae*). This is the inherent content of the knowledge of the ancestors. The student, then, sets his will on perfecting this area. It should be noted that here there is no reference to the original "standing up" or "taking a place in society", as Slingerland interprets the passage. The final gloss comes from Zhang (Meynard 2015, 119). Let us proceed:

> *Quadragenarius iam non haesitabam amplius: evanuerant dubiorum nubila: connaturales enim rerum convenientias habebam perspectas, & quid singulis inesset perfectionis vel imperfectionis, intelligebam* (Couplet et al. 1687, 10).[102]

Here, Confucius reaps the first fruits after twenty-five years devoted to philosophy. Note that only the first sentence (up to "*haesitabam amplius*" or "no longer hesitated") constitutes the translation of the Chinese text, the rest of the passage is the translation of Zhang's commentary, who stated that "Kongzi" could understand the normative principles underlying things, whether refined or coarse. The terms "refined" and "coarse" are translated as "perfection" and "imperfection", respectively (Meynard 2015, 119). The connotation of this in the context of a Christian reading is evident, as the idea of perfection will correlate with the divine realm, while "imperfection" will correlate with the earthly one.

> *Quinquagenarius protinus cognovi coeli providentiam atque mandatum, & suam rerum singulis a coelo inditam esse naturam, vim, rationem; cujus adeo naturae perscrutabar ipse perfectionem ac subtilitatem; indagabam quoque originem, & quae tandem illius esset causa, intelligebam* (Couplet et al. 1687, 10-11).[103]

This fragment possesses a higher degree of complexity. Initially, the translation of the Chinese text culminates in "*mandatum*" (mandate), however, the character "命" (*mandatum*), which is part of the term "天命" (*coeli mandatum*), is translated twice: first as "*providentia*" and then as "*mandatum*". The rest of the sentence (up to "*rationem*" in the Latin version and

[102] Vid. Appendix 1, text 17.
[103] Vid. Appendix 1, text 18. A first analysis of this fragment, further problematized here, can be found in: López Angelini 2024, 228-230.

up to “thing” in the English translation) forms a large apposition aimed at clarifying the meaning that the Jesuits gave to the term. Indeed, the fact that “*providentia*” is added as a second translation of “*ming*” aligns with the Ignatian understanding of the term “天” (heaven) as a way of referring to God. It is important to remember that providence was established as a central theological doctrine, namely as the “[...] unifying theme that integrated Christian convictions about creation, redemption, and eschatology” (McFarland et al., 2012, 417). Providence posits that “[...] there is a benevolent and purposeful ordering of all events of history. [...] [T]hough not always perceptible to human understanding, there is a divine or cosmic plan to the universe, a reason for everything” (Achtemeier, 1996, 890), or, more simply: it signifies God’s care for his creatures (Freedman, 1992: 520; Butler, 1991, 1147). In this way, the mandate of heaven is configured as the Christian providence, which the passage clearly describes: “I clearly understood the providence of heaven and its mandate, that there is a nature, a force, and a reason imparted by heaven to each thing”. Such a fruit, harvested after thirty-five years of learning and practicing philosophy, reveals how it becomes a theology, as its object and goal are outlined as divinity itself. To grasp providence is to understand that the divine will guides everything, a higher step in the ascetic process inherent to the philosophical endeavor described here. The following sentence leaves no doubt about the nature of such a mandate: “from such nature, I myself examined its perfection and subtlety”. Given the fact of its perfection, it becomes an indisputable principle.

The last sentence of the passage highlights one of the *auctoritates* that the Society of Jesus chose when shaping its theological perspective: Aristotle and, by extension, Thomas Aquinas. This becomes clear in Confucius’ approach to understanding providence: seeking its first and foremost cause, that which sets everything in motion, the *sine qua non* condition of the Christian doctrine: God. We could even assert that the last sentence of this passage is a literal quotation of the quintessential Aristotelian conviction: we claim to know when we know the first cause (*Physics* I, i, 184a 10-11 [1995, 82]; *Metaphysics* I, iii, 983a 25-26 [2022, 36]; II, i, 993b 25 [2022, 140], etc.). With this approach, it is indicated that the philosopher's knowledge, which was already able to distinguish natural harmonies along with the perfection and imperfection of each thing, reached a new sphere of knowledge: providence. Through the investigation of providence, he arrived at the knowledge of the “ὃ οὐ κινούμενον κινεῖ” or the “unmoved mover” in Aristotelian terms: the first and foremost cause that sets everything in motion without itself being moved. The previous stages in the

resemanticization of this passage constituted the preparatory steps to attain the knowledge of God. The text continues:

> *Sexagenario mihi iam aures erant faciles & secundae, expedita scilicet ac peracuta vis intelligendi, & assiduis tot annorum studiis & exercitationibus excultus animus, optimisque praeceptis & disciplinis imbutus, sic ut facile clareque perciperem quidquid alii vel disputarent, vel ipse legerem* (Couplet et al. 1687, 11).[104]

Here, the translation of the Chinese text finishes with "*secundae*" or "receptive". The "*vis intellegendi*" (ability to understand) is synonymous with the concept of "*vis intellectiva*", which is central to scholasticism and, for Thomas Aquinas, refers to the capacity to know (Meynard 2015, 120). This capacity is presented as being free from any hindrance to understanding, so that no knowledge is inaccessible to the philosopher's mind. If we adhere to the Aristotelian conviction mentioned in the previous passage, we can argue that the very act of having understood the first and foremost cause is what enabled the intellect to liberate itself and sharpen the capacity for understanding. Since "Confucius" already knows the cause that is the end toward which all reality tends, his intellect allows him to comprehend the caused causes—those set in motion—by this first mover. Let us proceed to the final fragment:

> *Ad extremum septuagenarius longae meditationis victoriaeque mei ipsius beneficio sequebar quod cor meum appetebat; nec tamen excedebam regulam, seu terminos transiliebam honestatis rectaeque rationis, cui jam sine luctâ molestiâve appetitus meus obtemperabat* (Couplet et al. 1687, 11).[105]

In this final section, we find "Confucius" in complete possession and control of his will. Meynard suggests that the references to "*meditationis*" (meditation) and "*victoriae mei ipsius*" (self-mastery) appear to be Jesuit additions, reflecting their own interpretation of the Christian practice as composed of meditation (prayer) and asceticism (2015, 120). The

[104] Vid. Appendix 1, text 19.
[105] Vid. Appendix 1, text 20.

harmonization that occurs after fifty-five years of philosophical praxis—and whose turning point occurred at fifty—leads, then, to the right action, understood within the boundaries that Christian doctrine defines as such: to not sin, insofar as the will does not transgress the terms of honesty and right reason. The path of philosophy, therefore, points towards sanctification, which was foundational to the definition of "*philosophia*" as the domain of holy and wise men. The understanding that this passage fosters is the cornerstone for the proper comprehension of how the Order (re)configured the literary construct of "Kongzi" into "Confucius". Let us now look at some other excerpts that highlight the configuration of "Confucius" as the *auctoritas*.

In the final sentence of *Analects* 1.8, the master states: "过则勿惮改" (Zhang 2006, 5) or "[i]f you have committed a mistake, do not fear to amend yourself". This brief fragment is translated and commented upon by the Jesuits as follows:

> *Memor interim conditionis humane, quae imbecillis est pronaque in lapsum, & peccare facilis; si te peccare contigerit, tum quidem ne timeas dubitesve corrigere quod peccatum est, & cum nisu quoque ac labore surgere, perruptis generosè vinculis ac difficultatibus, quibus impediri te sentis ac deprimi* (Couplet et al. 1687, 6).[106]

The first notable feature is the choice of the verb *peccare* (to sin) to translate "*guo*" (过, to commit mistakes). The connotation of the Latin word chosen reflects a process of semantic appropriation in the translation. Latin offers other more "neutral" possibilities to convey this meaning, such as "*errare*" or "*delinquere*"—words that do not carry the religious connotations of the term selected by the Order. Therefore, this choice is already significant in the establishment of a Christian "Confucius".[107] Moreover, the Jesuit translation makes a general statement regarding the weak and fallible human condition, which reflects a Christian philosophical anthropology that is not present in the Chinese text (Meynard 2015, 107). In this sense, the translation provides a different interpretation of the type of error referred to in "Confucius'" text. While the "Kongzi's" Chinese fragment speaks of making a mistake in a non-religious sense, the word "*peccare*" links this action to the realm of Christian theology (a

[106] Vid. Appendix 1, text 21.
[107] The choice is almost unequivocal for the occurrences of the word "*guo*" as both verb and noun. Vid. passages 4.7, 7.30, 9.24, 13.2, 14.26, 15.29, 19.8, 19.21, and 20.1. The other variants chosen to translate the term are "*culpa*" (guilt) in 5.26 and "*crimen*" (crime) in 7.16 and 16.1.

similar case to the translation of "*ming*" as "*providentia*"). In this way, the message is transformed, the passage is (re)configured.

A final example we can provide is from fragment 15.29, which states: "子曰:'过而不改, 是谓过矣'" (Zhang 2006, 243) or "[t]he Master said: 'To commit an error and not correct, this is called committing an error'".[108] In the Jesuit version, it is translated as: "*Confucius ait: Peccare nec emendare, hoc ipsum dicitur peccare*" (Couplet et al. 1687, 115) or "Confucius said: 'To sin and not amend, that is called sinning'". Through this process, "Confucius" enunciates Christian concepts from within Christianity itself, transforming not only the text and its meaning but also turning the figure of "Kongzi" into something accessible, something that can be assimilated within the Christian cultural discourse. In sum, the figure from the state of Lu and his teachings are "Christianized" and, thus, "Westernized", in this narrative, becoming Christian doctrines presented under the guise of the quintessential Chinese *auctoritas*.

It is necessary now to return to the *Vita Confucii* so that we may conclude the orientalizing portrait of "Confucius":

> *Omne studium ac doctrina Philosophi eo collimabat in primis, ut naturam ignorantiae tenebris offusam, vitiisque depravatam revocaret ad pristinam lucem atque integritatem, cum qua ab ipso coelo conditam asserebat: Ex quo deinde clemens, et aequa rerum administratio, adeoque felix, et maximè pacatus Imperii status consequeretur; quò autem certiùs attingeretur hic scopus, volebat omnes, obsequi coelo; ipsumque timere, et colere; amare proximum sicut seipsum, vincere se, atque appetitus suos subdere rationi, necquidpiam agere, dicere, vel etiam cogitare, quod ab hac esset alienum* (Couplet et al. 1687, cxix).[109]

This passage is crucial for comprehending the theological framework underlying the philosopher's teachings. "Confucius" posited that there existed an "original" immaculate state of human nature, which was lost due to the corruption of vices. This assertion, which directly references *Genesis* 2 and 3, also resonates with the philosophical anthropology present in the translation of *Analects* 1.8, wherein it was stated that the human condition is

[108] This passage echoes 1.8.
[109] Vid. Appendix 1, text 22.

prone to fall, yet it remains possible to "rise up". The passage further evokes the autobiographical element in 2.4, where the "way" of "Confucius" is analyzed, along with his pursuit of "*philosophia*"—conceived as the study of virtues and wisdom—to perfect oneself. As previously noted, such a path ultimately led to sanctification as its final goal. Consequently, philosophy served as the means by which one could return to a pristine existence, to the realm of the holy men. In this regard, we must consider the concept of "*shengren*" (圣人), which, even within Ruism, "[...] represented the epitome of what it meant to be a human being" (Yao 2003, 545). This term was translated as "*sanctus homo*". Thus, the redefinition of the *Litteratorum Lex* subordinated the philosophical perfection inherent to Ruism to a Christo-theological perspective, wherein philosophy, understood through these parameters, enabled humans to recover their "original" existence, lost due to the fall from paradise. It is essential, however, to note that:

> The claim that Confucius was a saint was problematic in seventeenth-century Europe. First, it suggested that Jesuit missionaries had, on their own initiative and without the approval of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, canonized Confucius. Secondly, it suggested that someone outside of biblical history and the Church, like Confucius, had knowledge of God. The Jesuits held that Confucius knew God only through logic and reason, and thus Confucius reached the philosophical idea of God only by his own personal intelligence and by his inner virtues, in particular that of humility. Never did the Jesuits suggest that Confucius received any kind of special revelation from God (Meynard 2015, 62).

Philosophy, therefore, was bestowed upon humanity by heaven *in illo tempore*, as "Confucius" himself realizes in *Analects* 2.4 when, at the age of fifty, he apprehends heaven's mandate and its divine providence. Through decades of philosophical practice, he becomes capable of conceiving God. This moral perfection, attained through sustained effort, would enable the effortless (*wu-wei,* 无为) achievement of peace within the state and a flourishing government, one that could operate under the direct guidance of heaven. It is for this reason that Louis the Great is extolled in the *laudatio*. He emerges as the supreme paradigm in the Jesuit interpretation of Ruism as a model for Christian absolutism. The continuous praxis within this philosophical framework, subordinated to heaven, would lead to the realization of a utopia, a restoration of the paradise once lost. This constitutes the definitive interpretation that we can derive from the corpus of texts analyzed thus far, where "Confucius's"

philosophy is ultimately subordinated to Christian theology. It is, furthermore, interesting to note how the *Vita Confucii* recovers a Daoist text in order to subordinate "Confucius's" teachings to Christ:

> *Dicere identidem solitus (ut a Sinensibus traditur) Si Fam, Yeu Xun gin* [西方有圣人 (Zhang 2006, 174)]*, virum sanctum in Occidente existere, quod ipse de quo, quove spiritu pronuntiarit, incertum est*.[110]

The fragment comes from the *Liezi* (列子),[111] a Daoist text which is estimated to be from the 4th century CE. The "holy man" was traditionally interpreted to be either Buddha or Laozi (老子) (Meynard 2015, 608), but for the Jesuits, there was no doubt that it referred to Christ. In this way, the Society religiously subordinates "Confucius" to Christ, whose coming he would have conceived *circa* four centuries earlier.

6. Final Considerations: The Dispositive of Orientalism as a Comprehensive Tool of our Relation to Alterity?

Throughout this thesis, we have examined the largely overlooked *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* in order to trace the threads woven by the Society of Jesus in their interpretation of the Ruist tradition. Our aim was to understand how the construction of a literary "Confucius", conceived as an *auctoritas* employed to engage both with the literati and European scholars, resulted in a distinctive (re)configuration of the entirety of the ancient Ruist tradition. We believe that we have successfully demonstrated our hypothesis, namely, that the Jesuit translation process produced the literary figure of "Confucius" by (re)configuring "Kongzi". Through this discursive method, the Ignatians were able to construct their orientalist interpretation of the *Litteratorum secta* and its philosophical tradition, which in turn facilitated the advancement of their evangelical agenda. As demonstrated, "Confucius" was the *axis* of this interpretation. One might argue, however, that the orientalist framework was developed but not fully employed in the pursuit of our objectives. It is in this context that we seek to address this apparent gap and defend ourselves against a potential accusation.

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[110] Vid. Appendix 1, text 23.
[111] For an English translation, vid. Graham 1960, 78.

Our main argument against the issue lies in the fact that everything we have done thus far involves analyzing various threads of the orientalist dispositive, such as the construction of "Confucius" as an *auctoritas* and the subordinations to which it was subjected. Furthermore, not only have we examined how this particular dispositive operated in the construction of the literary "Confucius", but we have simultaneously acted within this dispositive itself. For, to understand orientalism—specifically, to grasp the realities, forces, and discursive strategies that played a decisive role in shaping a particular image of "Confucius", Ruism, and China—it was necessary to engage with the threads traced by orientalism itself, to (re)enact them. Our interpretation of the Jesuit enterprise, therefore, aligns with a scholarly endeavor that is always conceived as part of the dispositive of orientalism.

In our understanding of orientalism as a dispositive, we have highlighted its dynamic nature. Within the specific context of the Jesuit mission in China, the emergence of the orientalist framework is particularly evident through the encounters with an alterity largely unknown to Europe until then. The efforts to link Ruism and Christianity stemmed from the material conditions previously outlined. Therefore, our interpretation of the translation process sought to understand how the orientalist dispositive developed through their efforts rather than to anachronistically criticize the Jesuits' method, a futile endeavor itself.

It has clearly appeared that the encounter with Chinese alterity and the imperative to evangelize, guided by the apostolic pattern, prompted the Order to experiment with various strategies in pursuit of its objective. As a result, a dynamic network emerged that, following an initial failed attempt through Buddhism, interwove Christianity with Ruism. As we have observed, this was never a univocal process. Tensions continually arose both within the Order and the Church, as well as in relation to the literati and the very objectives of conversion itself. In each of these instances, the threads of the dispositive were interwoven to fulfill their function and answer the following questions: how was it possible to categorize and understand Chinese culture within Europe's own paradigms, and how could this particular otherness be comprehended and subordinated to Europe's cultural framework?

The conflict was not only political or theological, but also epistemological. The Chinese and their entire culture represented a challenge to Europe's and the Church's asserted cultural superiority, which had long struggled against and triumphed over other forms of alterity throughout the centuries, as conceived within Europe's own paradigms and narratives. The Chinese empire represented a problem, both politically, theologically, and epistemologically. A response—namely, some form of categorical construction—had to be

formulated in relation to this culture in order to preserve Europe's cultural and religious traditions intact. This explains the Jesuits' urgency to situate the Chinese at the time of the biblical flood, as well as the efforts made to construct a Christian interpretation of Ruism. These actions were part of a broader orientalist strategy to reconcile and integrate Chinese culture into the framework of Christian and European thought. What the Jesuits had discovered in the East could not be ignored, and epistemological certainties regarding the nature and origin of the Chinese had to be established to protect European cultural and theological superiority. The process was highly dynamic, as both internal and external conditions were in a constant state of flux. The Ignatians, thought their discursive construction of the *auctoritas* "Confucius", elaborated the *Ruxue* as a proto-Christian "sect". In this sense, when the Jesuits elaborated this specific otherness, they were also developing a new mode of subjectivation for Europe as a whole, which had to be prepared to receive this new tradition within their matrix. The ethnocentric configuration of Europe was to be maintained while incorporating this foreign element within itself through the inclusion of "Confucius"—and through "him" all that was "salvageable" from China—within the royal library of Louis XIV in the form of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*. This process, nonetheless, produced ruptures. The inclusion of "Confucius" within Europe led to the critiques of the Enlightenment to the immovable principles that the "Old World" sustained as the base of its own "identity", such as the universal authority of the Bible, the discussion on Chinese as the possible sought adamic language, the proclaimed authority of the European monarchs as directly conferred by God, among many other (vid. Clarke 1997; Mugello 1999).

The result of this introduction was the crisis of European subjectivity as the orientalist dispositive produced a new form of subjectivation in relation to this alterity, which had been discovered and could not be ignored. This explains not only why the translated corpus was the center of much debate within the Enlightenment, but also why the scholars at the time felt the need to adopt a position in relation to it. Examples included Wolff, Voltaire, and Quesnay, who could be characterized as sinophiles. Other leading philosophers, such as the baron de Montesquieu and Diderot were critical of China (Mungello 1999, 91). The introduction of China and the orientalized form of a small part of its philosophical corpus represented a direct attack on European ethnocentrism. This movement was not limited to this early period. Indeed, it is worth noting that philosophers like Kant, Hegel, Emerson, Marx and Heidegger, among many others, actively opposed the Chinese philosophical tradition and to its inclusion within the category of "philosophy" itself, and this continues within our own times, where Chinese philosophy is actively rejected—in some cases even not recognized as "philosophy".

It was, thus, not incorporated as part of the Faculties of Philosophy throughout Europe and the Americas. Even at present, if an approach exists, Chinese philosophy is generally delegated to external departments on "Chinese Studies", where philosophy is only superficially considered, or to isolated seminars with an "orientalist perspective" (in Said's imperialistic terms).

The "wound" to European ethnocentrism and to the so-called "Western tradition" that was introduced by the Company of Jesus continues to bleed after five centuries. This is an important reminder of the importance of the dispositive of orientalism as one of the main dispositives within which we develop our lives and careers. Europe as a whole continues to exhibit this bleeding wound daily. This is also the case when considering China as the "dangerous" other, a typical "edge" within the dispositive of orientalism itself that tends towards constructing a specific otherness as a dangerous entity, or as an idealized alterity.[112] China has been constructed as both types of alterities at different moments in history, and thus the question arises: was the Jesuits' orientalizing construction of Ruism able to safeguard Europe's auto-perceived "identity" and its universalist aspirations? *Prima facie*, it would appear that this (re)configuration ultimately failed to achieve its objective according to its own terms, as the Chinese Rites controversy finally failed against the Company. Also, the Enlightenment utilized the Jesuit corpus' which postulated a "natural religion", i.e., a set of "moral truths about right and wrong that were discernible through human reason and without divine revelation" (Mungello 1999, 68) against the Church itself in favour of the establishment of deism, a religion anchored on reason that rejected the authority of both Church and revelation (Clarke 1997, 51; Mungello 1999, 87-88). The dispositive within which the Order operated in the Orient, thus, led to epistemic constructions that were later employed in the pursuit of other objectives contrary to those of the Jesuits' original ones. In this sense, the Jesuit orientalist interpretation of the *Ruxue* marked the beginning of an auto-hetero-deconstructive process that continues today. It established "cracks" in Europe's ethnocentric discourses and auto-conceived perceptions. However, since "deconstruction is that which is, what transpires within the fissures of our heritage" (Chun 2012, 117), it could be said that the Jesuit translation of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* helped to establish fractures which, since then, Europe continues to transit helplessly, often in search of a illusory superiority.

[112] For a detailed analysis vid. López Angelini (2025).

One of the most significant of these fractures that Europe continues to traverse is the abovementioned recognition of Chinese philosophy as a legitimate tradition within their own assumed categories of philosophy, a trauma which has endured within the scholarly field. This is, however, a discussion that only pertains to Europe's prevailing ethnocentrism, which tends to consider any foreign tradition as "alien" or "inferior" while (re)enacting a clear orientalist attitude. The discussion itself is irrelevant to China, as their own tradition does not require—nor has ever required—Europe's validation. The Jesuits, in an attitude *avant la lettre*, acknowledged the value of this tradition, even if they largely reduced it to ancient Ruism and some "Neoruist" interpreters. In this sense, both conceptions can be traced back to the orientalist dispositive: one is shaped by the ethnocentric notion of a racial or cultural superiority, grounded in Europe's claim to have inherited the intellectual legacy of the Greeks, while the other is based on a more egalitarian perspective—albeit motivated by specific religious interests.

These considerations alert us to the need that Europe has had for China throughout its history. Indeed, for Europe, China was a necessity, a way to (re)configure itself. In this sense, the orientalist reading of Ruism as a natural religion, which Ricci inaugurated, served to establish the postulates of Enlightenment and deism within Europe. The influence here is not accidental, but a necessary one. It is, moreover, not an isolated case applying only to China, but to all the Orient(s), such as the "Islamic Orient" or the "American Orient". And this is a point that we wish to emphasize, for if there is one thing that the orientalist dispositive undermarks is that alterity is mandatory in the construction of an "us": in this case, "Europe". No scholarly ethnocentrism can cloud the fact that if Europe is what it is, it is because of its relations to alterities throughout the ages. There would be no "Europe" without them. Even the philosophical tradition on which all European "identity" was constructed recognized diverse Orient(s) as culturally superior.[113] Even Greek philosophy itself was born in Asia Minor, with the philosophers of Miletus. If this is the case for philosophy, what more could be said about Christianity, born with the figure of Christ in Judea? Whereas orientalism as a dispositive has existed throughout history, Europe has continued to move through it and shape itself through its contact with diverse alterities. We could even proclaim that there would be no "Europe" without what was later perceived as "the Orient(s)".

[113] Vid., for example, the remarks on Egypt made in Herodotus's *History* (1977, 282-283) or Plato's *Timaeus* (1992, 163).

In a time when the humanities are valued through utilitarian categories, as if they were merely a commodity to be consumed or something "useless", we wish to underscore the "utility" of this study on the dispositive of orientalism. We are confident we have convincingly shown it by now. However, we aim to deepen our answer as this study opens the question of a situation that has confronted humanity throughout the ages: how do we relate to alterity? No definitive answer is possible, as the dispositive of orientalism itself shows that this is an open, ever-evolving question. But this empirical certainty—the encounter with alterity—may well be the one thing we cannot avoid as social beings. As Ruism remarked, we become human only in and through our relationship with others. Both ethnocentrism, which perceives the other from the position of an ontological superiority, and the modern "individual", which perceives itself as ontologically independent, are but mere abstractions. Man is by nature a gregarious animal, an understanding that is not foreign to "Western" thought, as the Greek *auctoritas* par excellence remarked when he said: "ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον" (Aristotle, *Politics*, I; 1253a, 2-3 [1932, 8]). Yet, the fundamental postulate is often ignored in a European society that tends to conceive itself in ever-evolving individualistic terms. This occurs within academia, where professors often do not stop at the fact that they exist by the grace of having disciples, overlooking the importance of a responsibility that links their existence to others, that is, of their being as relational categories:

> It is acknowledged that relatives are simultaneous by nature, and in most cases, this holds true. Indeed, the double and the half are simultaneous; if the half exists, so does the double. Likewise, if there is a slave, there is also a master—and so it is with all such pairs. These relatives mutually eliminate one another (Aristotle, 7b, 15-21 [2016, 73]).

This evident fact tends to be forgotten within European universities nowadays, which have developed into factories at the service of an ultracapitalist market instead of a place to develop critical thinking, an activity which requires time above all. This shift can be evidenced in the ever-devolving number of total years and hours dedicated to the obtention of a degree, in the fact that more Europeans within academia exhibit a shallow or overly specialized PhD before their 30s and in the separation that has been made between research and teaching, as if they were not two sides of the same coin. This has also continued to stimulate the critique that universities and scholars have distanced themselves from society, its realities and needs. Similarly, growing European ethnocentrism tends to ignore that

“Europe” itself is a foreign product, born from its relation to different alterities. The so-called “Old Continent”, which could be called “young” in relation to most Asian, African, or American cultures, presents itself as a parodical figure, which has even forgotten the postulates upon which its cultural narrative was erected.

Herein lies the value of our critique, which painstakingly evidences the relevance orientalism still possesses, as the dispositive constitutes a comprehensive tool of our relation to alterity(ies) in which our “reality(ies)” constitute a (re)elaboration built upon the efforts of those who came before us and those alterities that constitute the quintessential element within all identity construction. We need to reflect on the past to inhabit our own present, for we are but “*nanos gigantum humeris insidentes*”, or “—dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants”. In this sense, our work represents an attempt to challenge prevailing paradigms by (re)configuring a more nuanced understanding of the knowledge passed down to us and emphasizing its relevance in shaping our present. It is now more important than ever to recover the links between past and present to understand and (re)configure our reality. This involves being aware of aspects as simple as they are fundamental, such as the need to recover the figure of the “teacher” together with its responsibilities in the nurturing of future generations and that of “university” as something distinct from a capitalist company at the service of the “Market”, a structural disease which is rapidly expanding. More ambitiously, it includes a comprehensive, evidence-based, and thorough critique of the tradition and assumptions of work within the academy. We have enacted our critique by transiting Europe’s own fractures from within Europe and the European academic system itself. This, we consider, is the best retribution we can make to the Red Global MA.

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8. Appendixes:

8.1. Appendix 1: Translations and Supplementary Documentation

Text 1:
[...] Above all, instituted for this [purpose]: for the advancement of souls in Christian life and doctrine, and for the propagation of the faith through public preaching and the ministration of the word of God, spiritual exercises, and works of charity, and expressly for the children and uneducated in the instruction of Christianity, and especially to offer spiritual consolation by listening to the confessions of the faithful.

Text 2:
[605] - B. Intentio quarti voti ad Summum Pontificem non tendebat ad locum aliquem particularem; sed ut per varias mundi partes, qui vovebant, spargerentur. Cum enim, qui primi convenerunt in hanc Societatem, ex diversis provinciis et regnis essent, nec eis constaret, inter quas regiones fidelium vel infidelium versari deberent; ne in via Domini errarent, promissionem illam vel votum emiserunt, ut Summus Pontifex eos ad maiorem Dei gloriam et iuxta ipsorum intentionem per orbem discurrendi distribueret; et sicubi optatum spiritualem fructum non invenirent, ut inde in alium atque alium locum maiorem Dei gloriam et animarum auxilium investigando, se conferrent (Societas Iesu 1962, 226).

[605] B. The intention of the fourth vow towards the Supreme Pontiff was not directed towards any particular place; but that those who made the vow might be scattered throughout the various parts of the world. For, since those who first gathered into this Society were from various provinces and kingdoms, and it was not certain to them in which regions of the faithful or unbelievers they should remain, so that they might not err in the way of the Lord, they made that promise or vow, so that the Supreme Pontiff might distribute them to wander through the world, for the greater glory of God and according to their own intention; and wherever they would not find the desired spiritual fruit, they would go from there to another and [then] another place, seeking greater glory for God and assistance for souls.

Text 3:
Plane compertum est in Orientalium Regionibus nonnullas caeremonias, licet antiquitus cum ethnicis ritibus connexae essent, in praesentiarum, mutatis saeculorum fluxu moribus et

animis, civilem tantum servare significationem pietatis in antenatos vel amoris in patriam vel urbanitatis in proximos.

It has been established that in the Eastern regions there are certain ceremonies, although they were formerly connected with pagan rites, which, in the present day, with the changing of centuries, customs, and attitudes, retain only the civil significance of piety towards ancestors, or love for the homeland, or courtesy towards neighbors.

Text 4:
From all these things, the prudent reader will understand that the authority of this man [Confucius] will not be useless for the herald of the Gospel; since that [authority] could sometimes be used (and certainly can) with these people, who continue to learn from their master and his books, to confirm the Christian truth; just as we once saw the apostle of nations [Paul of Tarsus] use the authority of the Greek poets with the Athenians.

Text 5:
Here, however, we must be cautious, for before our eyes is the example of those who, with singular virtue and prudence, founded and left us this mission; so that among the Chinese, we moderately recommend and praise Confucius; lest, through our testimony and authority, [his fame] increase especially among the people, who are of an excessively proud nature and generally dismissive of foreign things. Nevertheless, we must be even more careful not to condemn with words or in writing, nor insult the one whom the entire people receive and revere; so that we do not become hateful to him; not so much to ourselves, but to the very one we preach: Christ. And while we despise or condemn him, who taught so much in accordance with reason, and who is believed to have shaped his life and customs according to his doctrine, we Europeans will be regarded, at least in Chinese lands, as eager not to struggle with their master, but with reason itself; and eager to extinguish the light of it, rather than the name of Confucius.

Text 6:
[...] [T]he reason being that from such a Master [Confucius] they [the Chinese] learnt to worship and to fear the Supreme Emperor of heaven, as he himself called it, of all Kingdoms and Empires moderator and arbiter; to govern the people subjected to them with great fairness and affection; to foster the arts; finally, to manage the Chinese realm, which has flourished

for so many years both at home and in military affairs, with the most sacred institutions and laws.

Text 7:

Behold, therefore, this Confucius presents himself to you, GREAT KING, carried to France by your concerns and royal generosity, and prostrating himself at Your Majesty's feet, he comes prepared to openly admire your wisdom—while confessing that his own, though celebrated among his people with incredible fame and esteem, must nevertheless yield to yours, as the stars yield to the sun.

Text 8:

He will hesitate, I think, at first to approach and see, but struck with wonder and, at the same time, joy, he will say that his long-sought Prince has finally been found, whom he had fruitlessly hitherto burned with such great desire to see.

Text 9:

Finally, might he [Confucius] not desire that Your piety, clemency, equity, and that poised serenity of mind and countenance, Your presence, united with such Majesty, stand as the universal standard and rule for all princes?

Text 10:

For since that most wise Philosopher, by the light of nature and reason alone, had recognized that nothing ought to be more important to man than religion, and to that single end he himself directed his own doctrine and teaching, that mortals should order their entire lives according to the laws and precepts of the Supreme Deity; therefore, nothing was of greater urgency or importance to him than to utterly overthrow the sects and foreign doctrines which he repeatedly declared were born for the destruction of peoples and the ruin of Monarchies. Hence comes his saying, still most celebrated today among the Chinese: "Cum hu y tuon", "attack the heretical doctrines" (Couplet et al. 1687, v-vi).

Text 11:

Confucius similarly says: "Everyone who pays attention to dogmas foreign and contrary to the teaching of the saints [*doctrina Sanctorum*], and who blindly teaches them to others, this kind of innovator will easily harm himself and harm the country".

Text 12:

How immense, then, would be the joy brought to that most devout lover of piety [Confucius], had he been able to reach these most blessed times of the law of grace; [witnessing] Your Majesty's care in protecting and expanding Religion, in extirpating heresy, and in propagating true devotion? With what praises would he extol You, seeing heresy, that most foul enemy of ancestral faith and of this most flourishing kingdom, trampled and crushed; its edicts, by which it once seemed to thrive, repealed; its temples scattered, its very name buried; so many thousands of souls so gently, so firmly, so happily led from ancient errors to Truth, from destruction to salvation? And finally, beholding all of France, under a Greatest and Truly Most Christian King, [made] truly Christian? (Couplet et al. 1687, vi).

Text 13:

With what further joys, then, will they [the Chinese people] advance when they learn that their own Confucius was held by You in such esteem and honor that You willed him to have a place among the other books of the Royal Library? That same man endowed with the Latin language, his image and books, and indeed even the records of his princes, printed not only on those wooden blocks used in China, but forged in the most elegant copperplates; that man, finally, who was hitherto known only in the Chinese Empire, now soon to be spread throughout France and from France through all Europe far and wide, and everywhere to be esteemed by all as much as is fitting? (Couplet et al. 1687, vii).

Text 14:

The Master said: “When I was fifteen, I fixed my will upon learning. At thirty, I took my place in society.[114] At forty, I harbored no doubts. At fifty, I comprehended the mandate of heaven. At sixty, my ear was attuned. At seventy, I could follow my heart’s desires without transgressing what is right”.

Text 15:

Confucius, frankly outlining the progress he had made in the study of philosophy throughout his life, said: “When I was fifteen, I immediately applied my mind to the pursuit of the principles of the wise men, or philosophy.

[114] The Chinese text literally states: “At thirty, I stood up”. We follow Slingerland’s interpretation (2003, 9).

Text 16:

At the age of thirty, I had laid those roots to keep myself firm in the undertaken study of virtues and wisdom, and nothing outside of me could distract my mind from that.

Text 17:

At forty, I no longer hesitated: the clouds of doubt had disappeared; for I had discerned the connatural harmonies of things and understood the perfection or imperfection inherent in each one.

Text 18:

At fifty, I clearly understood the providence of heaven and its mandate, that there is a nature, a force, and a reason imparted by heaven to each thing; from such nature, I myself examined its perfection and subtlety. I also investigated its origin; and, in this way, I understood what its cause was.

Text 19:

At sixty, my ears were docile and receptive, my ability to understand [was] free and sharp, and my mind [had been] cultivated through all the diligent years of study and practice, imbued with the best precepts and disciplines, so that I could easily and clearly perceive what others discussed or what I myself read.

Text 20:

Finally, at seventy, with the benefit of long meditation and my own victory, I followed what my heart desired; I neither exceeded the regulations nor transgressed the bounds of honesty and right reason, to which, without struggle or difficulty, my appetite now obeyed.

Text 21:

In the meantime, remember the human condition, which is weak and prone to fall, and easy to sin; if it happens that you sin, then certainly do not fear or hesitate to correct what is sinful; and with effort and also work, rise up, nobly breaking the ties and difficulties by which you feel hindered and depressed.

Text 22:

The whole effort and doctrine of the Philosopher [“Confucius”] was primarily directed towards this: to restore human nature, obscured by the darkness of ignorance and corrupted by vices, to its pristine brightness and integrity, which he affirmed was bestowed upon it by heaven itself. From this restoration, a gentle and just administration of affairs would follow, and thus a happy and most peaceful state of the empire would be achieved. To reach this goal with greater certainty, he willed that all should obey heaven, revere and worship it, love their neighbor as themselves, overcome their own passions, and submit their desires to reason—never doing, saying, or even thinking anything contrary to this principle.

Text 23:

He [“Confucius”] was accustomed to say repeatedly (as transmitted by the Chinese): “*Si Fam, Yeu Xun gin*”, in the West exists a holy man [*virum sanctum*]. But it is uncertain exactly of whom, or by what inspiration [*spiritu*] he proclaimed it.

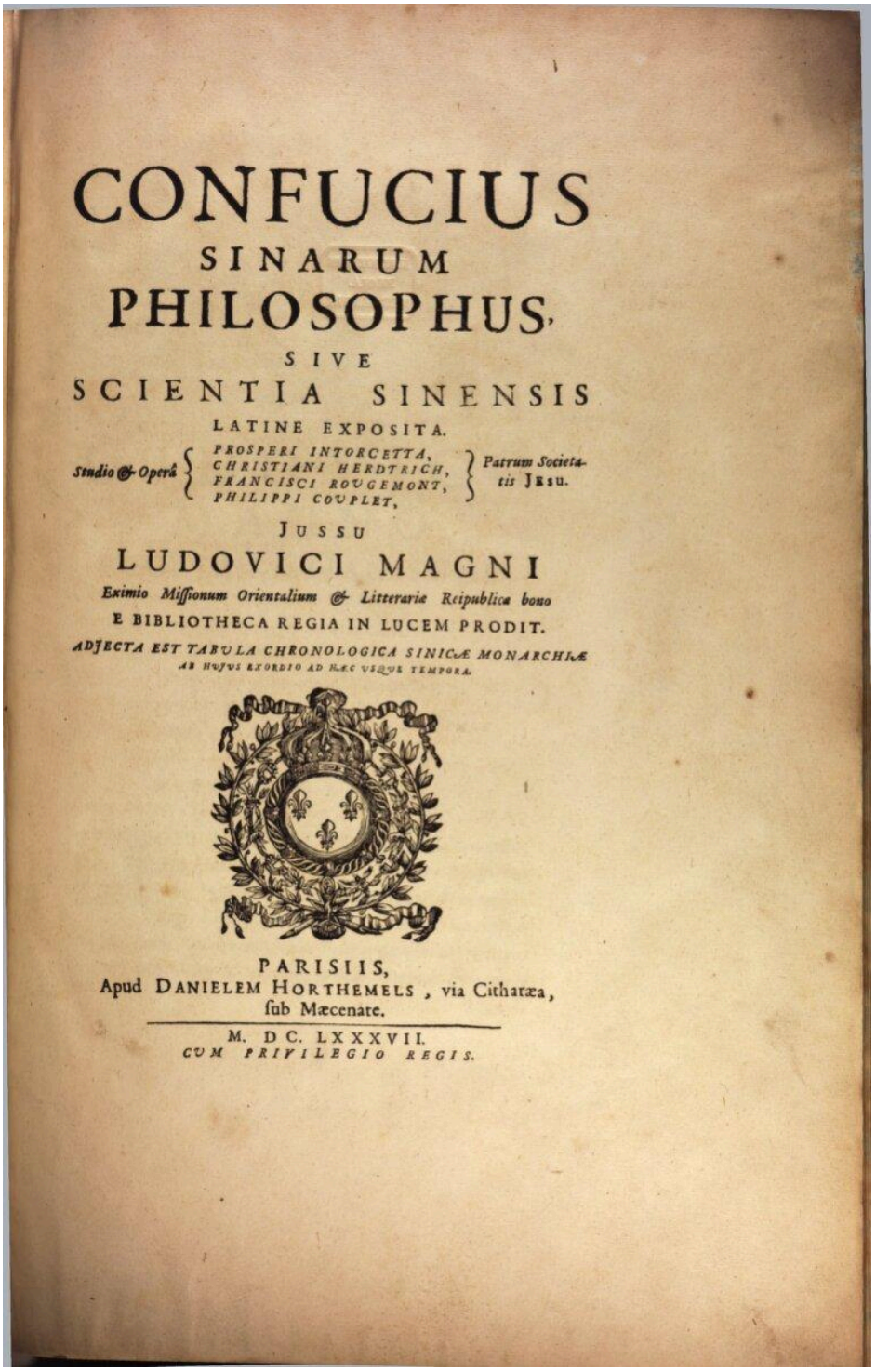
Original Chinese text from the *Liezi*:

孔子动容有间，曰：西方之人，有圣者焉，不治而不乱，不言而自信，不化而自行，荡荡乎民无能名焉。丘疑其为圣。弗知真为圣欤？真不圣欤？(Zhang 2006, 174)

Kongzi was moved for a short while, and said: “Among the people of the West, there is a sage [“*shengzhe*”, 圣者]. He does not govern, yet there is no disorder; he does not speak, yet he is spontaneously trusted; he does not reform, yet his influence spontaneously prevails. How vast and boundless, the people can find no words [for him]! I [“Qui”, 丘: Kongzi’s given name] doubted whether he was a sage [圣]. I do not know. Was he truly a sage or not?

8.2. Appendix 2: Photographic Documentation of Manuscripts[115]

***Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (1687) by Philippe Couplet:**



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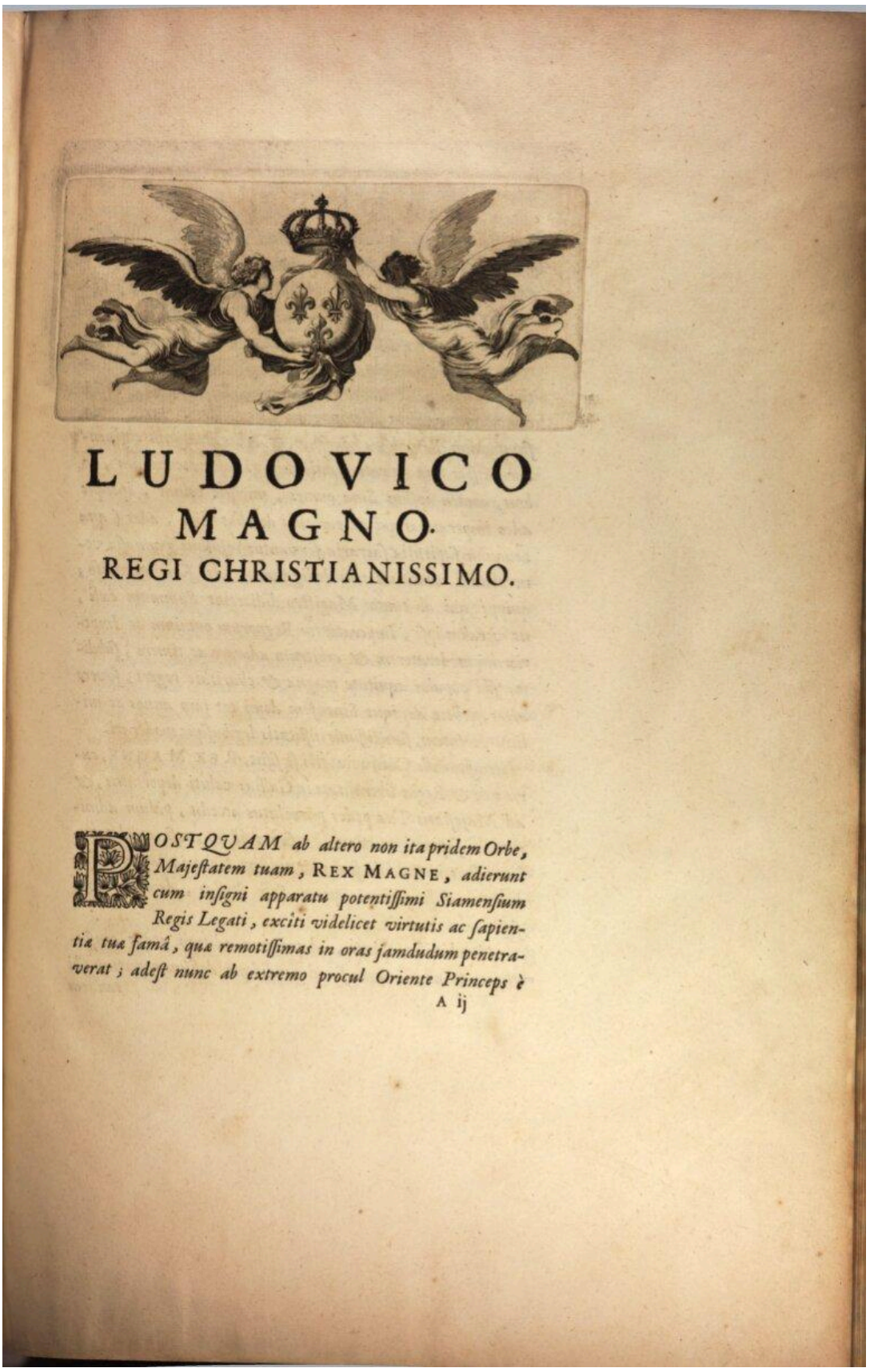
SINARUM
PHILOSOPHUS,
SIVE
SCIENTIA SINENSIS
LATINE EXPOSITA.
Studio & Operâ { PROSPERI INTORCETTA, CHRISTIANI HERDTRICH, FRANCISCI ROUGEMONT, PHILIPPI COUPLET, } Patrum Societatis Jesu.
JUSSU
LUDOVICI MAGNI
Eximio Missionum Orientalium & Litteraria Reipublica bono
E BIBLIOTHECA REGIA IN LUCEM PRODIT.
ADJECTA EST TABULA CHRONOLOGICA SINICÆ MONARCHIÆ
AB HUJUS EXORDIO AD HÆC USQUE TEMPORA.
PARISIIS,
Apud DANIELEM HORTHEMELS, via Citharæa,
sub Mæcenate.
M. DC. LXXXVII.
CUM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.

Image 1: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Cover page (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

[115]All photographic documentation within this appendix was obtained from the online catalogue of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. These images are subject to a Non-Commercial Use license, as outlined in the following link: http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/NoC-NC/1.0/.



LUDOVICO
MAGNO
REGI CHRISTIANISSIMO.

POSTQUAM ab altero non ita pridem Orbe, Majestatem tuam, REX MAGNE, adierunt cum insigni apparatu potentissimi Siamensium Regis Legati, exciti videlicet virtutis ac sapientiæ tuæ famâ, quæ remotissimas in oras jamdudum penetraverat; adest nunc ab extremo procul Oriente Princeps è

A ij

Image 2: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Laudatory letter to Louis XIV (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

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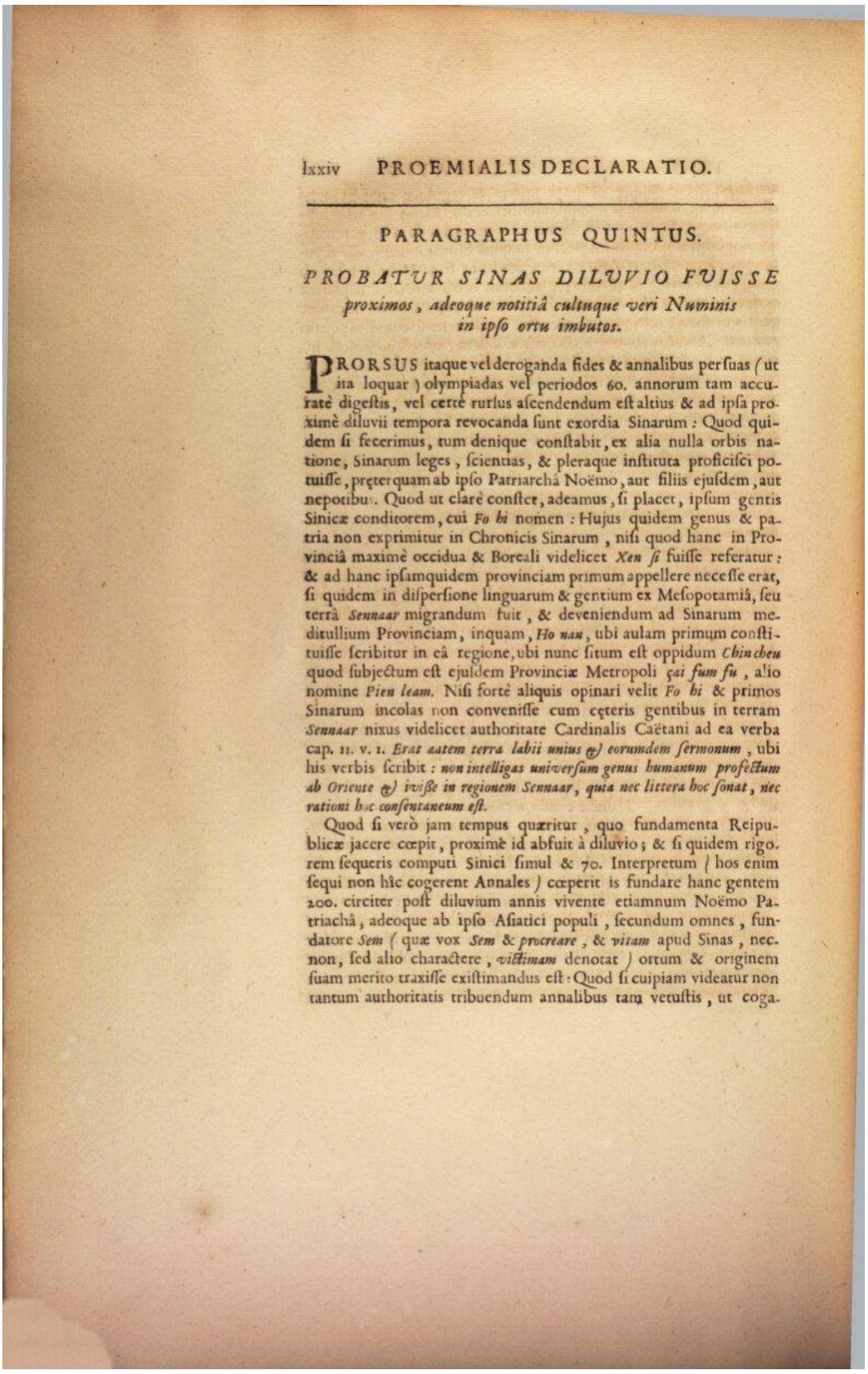
SINENSIUM LIBRORUM, INTERPRETUM, SECTARUM, ET PHILOSOPHIÆ, QUAM NATURALEM VOCANT,
PROËMIALIS DECLARATIO.

VENIAM nobis dabit Europæus Lector, uti ſpero, ſi toto hoc opere, ſed hîc in primis dum totius operis quaſi fundamenta jacimus, multa ſolicitè perſequamur, & quidem minutiùs fuſiuſque quàm perſpicacia multorum ingenia, & talia cum ſint, brevitatis quoque ſtudioſa fortaſſe deſiderent: Quamvis enim placere his lucubrationem noſtram ſanè optemus, & verò ſperemus eruditæ multorum curioſitati non diſpliciturum, præſertim cùm de tantâ tamque politâ & ab oculis terriſque ſuis adeò remotâ antiquitate agatur; quoniam tamen (ut hoc ſemel clareque profiteamur) propoſitum nobis eſt non tam ſervire oblectamento & curioſitati eorum qui in Europa degunt, quam utilitati eorum qui ex Europa lucem Evangelicam ultimis hiſce terris allaturi navigant; prolixitatem quampiam, quæ alias vitio daretur, in hac Laconicæ peregrinæque gentis tanta caligine, non modo veniâ dignam; ſed planè neceſſariam eſſe duximus, & minimarum quoque rerum habendam nobis eſſe rationem; eò etiam magis, quòd placuit non huic tantùm explanationi, ſed omnibus quas in hoc genere alii deinde ſuſcipient, facem præferre, & ea jacere fundamenta, quæ ſubſtructionem iſtam, quantumvis aliorum deinde operâ

Image 3: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Preface (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



lxxiv PROEMIALIS DECLARATIO.

PARAGRAPHUS QUINTUS.

PROBATUR SINAS DILUVIO FUISSE proximos, adeoque notitiâ cultuque veri Numinis in ipso ortu imbutos.

PRORSUS itaque vel deroganda fides & annalibus perſuas (ut ita loquar) olympiadas vel periodos 60. annorum tam accuratè digeſtis, vel certè rurſus aſcendendum eſt altius & ad ipſa proximè diluvii tempora revocanda ſunt exordia Sinarum: Quod quidem ſi fecerimus, tum denique conſtabit, ex alia nulla orbis natione, Sinarum leges, ſcientias, & pleraque inſtituta proficiſci potuiſſe, præterquam ab ipſo Patriarchâ Noëmo, aut filiis ejuſdem, aut nepotibus. Quod ut clarè conſtet, adeamus, ſi placet, ipſum gentis Sinicæ conditorem, cui *Fo hi* nomen: Hujus quidem genus & patria non exprimitur in Chronicis Sinarum, niſi quod hanc in Provinciâ maximè occidua & Boreali videlicet *Xen ſi* fuiſſe referatur: & ad hanc ipſamquidem provinciam primum appellere neceſſe erat, ſi quidem in diſperſione linguarum & gentium ex Meſopotamiâ, ſeu terrâ *Sennaar* migrandum fuit, & deveniendum ad Sinarum meditullium Provinciam, inquam, *Ho nan*, ubi aulam primum conſtituiſſe ſcribitur in eâ regione, ubi nunc ſitum eſt oppidum *Chin cheu* quod ſubjectum eſt ejuldem Provinciæ Metropoli *çai fum fu*, alio nomine *Pien leam.* Niſi fortè aliquis opinari velit *Fo hi* & primos Sinarum incolas non conveniſſe cum cæteris gentibus in terram *Sennaar* nixus videlicet authoritate Cardinalis Caëtani ad ea verba cap. 11. v. 1. *Erat autem terra labii unius & eorumdem ſermonum*, ubi his verbis ſcribit: *non intelligas univerſum genus humanum profectum ab Oriente & iviſſe in regionem Sennaar, quia nec littera hoc ſonat, nec rationi hoc conſentaneum eſt.*

Quod ſi verò jam tempus quæritur, quo fundamenta Reipublicæ jacere cœpit, proximè id abfuit à diluvio; & ſi quidem rigorem ſequeris computi Sinici ſimul & 70. Interpretum (hos enim ſequi non hîc cogerent Annales) cœperit is fundare hanc gentem 200. circiter poſt diluvium annis vivente etiamnum Noëmo Patriachâ, adeoque ab ipſo Aſiatici populi, ſecundum omnes, fundatore *Sem* (quæ vox *Sem* & *procreare*, & *vitam* apud Sinas, necnon, ſed alio charactere, *victimam* denotat) ortum & originem ſuam merito traxiſſe exiſtimandus eſt: Quod ſi cuipiam videatur non tantum authoritatis tribuendum annalibus tam vetuſtis, ut coga-

Image 4: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Preface's *paragraphus quintus* about the deluge (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

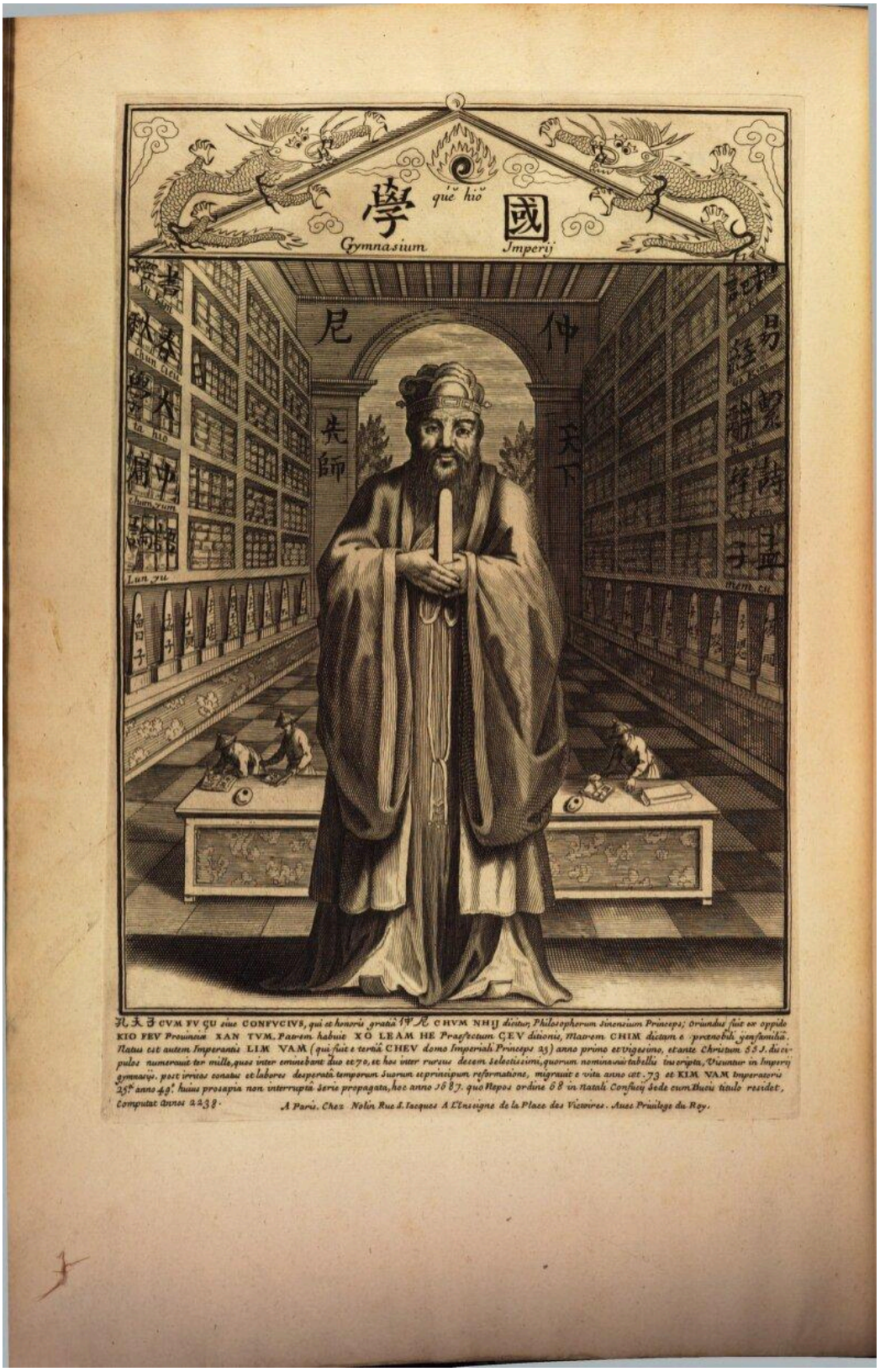


Image 5: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Portrait of Confucius (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

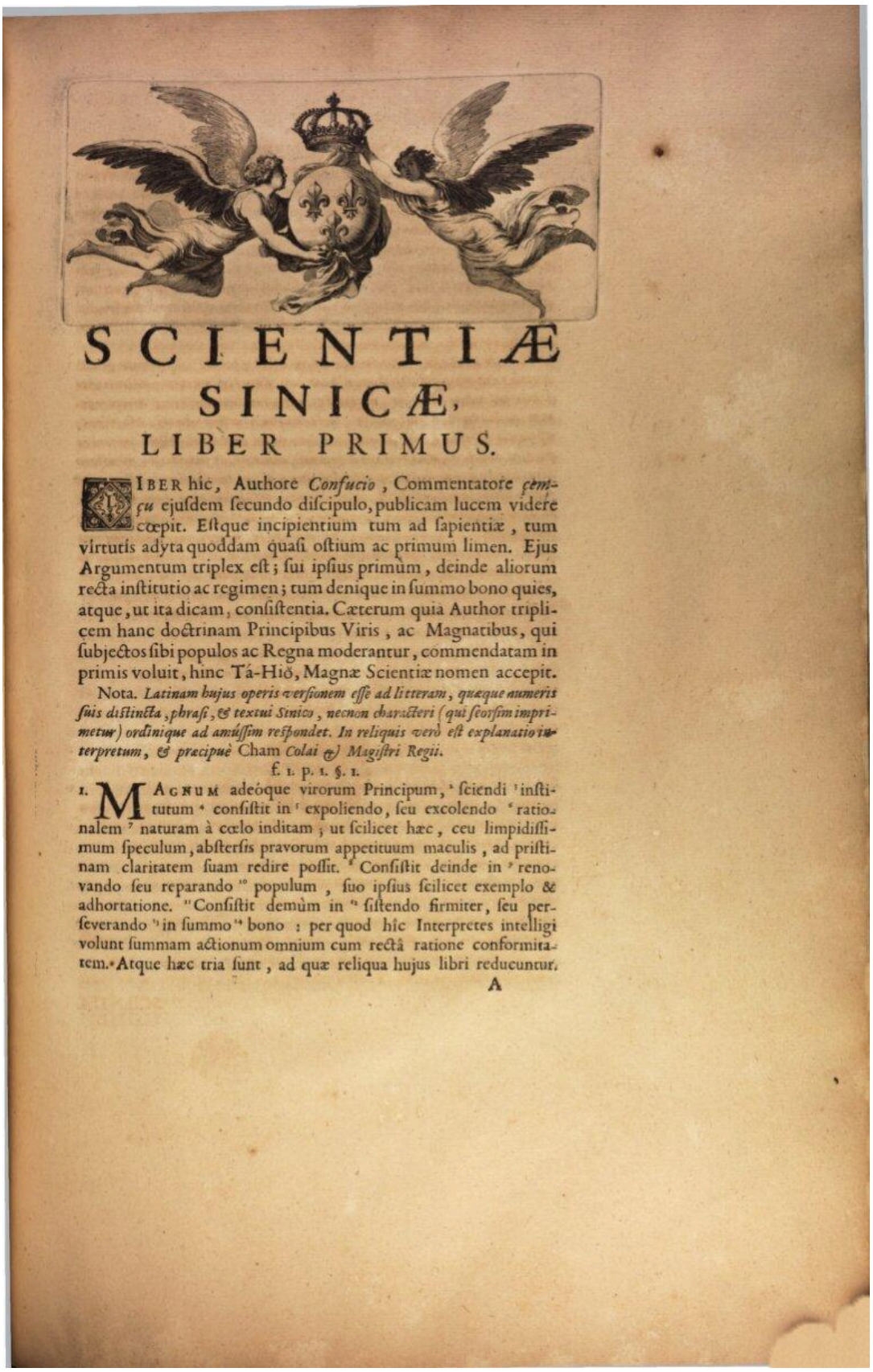
cxvij

PHILOSOPHORUM SINENSIUM

PRINCIPIS CONFUCII VITA

CUM FU CU, *sive* Confucius *quem Sinenses uti Principem Philosophiæ suæ sequuntur, & colunt, vulgari vel domestico potius nomine* Kieu *dicto; cognomento* Chum nhi, *natalem habuit sedem in Regno* Lu, *(quod Regnum hodie* Xantum *dicitur) in pago* çeu ye *territorij* Cham pin, *quod ad civitatem* Kio feu *pertinet; hæc autem civitas paret urbi* Yen cheu *dictæ. Natus est anno 21. Imperatoris* Lim vam. *Fuit hic tertius & vigesimus è tertia Familiâ, seu domo Imperatoria,* Cheu *dicta, cycli 36 anno 47.* Kem sio *dicto; secundo item & vigesimo anno* Siam cum *Regis, qui ea tempestate Regnum* Lu *obtinebat: die 13. undecimæ lunæ* Kem çu *dictæ, sub horam noctis secundam, anno ante Christi ortum 551. Mater ei fuit* Chim, *è Familia prænobili* Yen *oriunda; Pater* Xo leam he, *qui non solum primi ordinis Magistratu, quem gessit in Regno* Sum, *sed generis quoque nobilitate fuit illustris; stirpem quippe duxit (uti Chronica Sinensium testantur, & tabula genealogica, quæ annalibus inseritur, perspicuè docet) ex 27. sive penultimo Imperatore* Ti ye *è 2. familiâ* Xam. *Porro natus est* Confucius *Patre jam septuagenario, quem adeo triennis infans mox amisit; sed Mater pupillo deinde superstes fuit per annos unum & viginti, conjuge in monte* Tum fam *Regni* Lu *sepulto. Puer jam sexennis præmatura quadam maturitate, viro, quam puero similior, cum æqualibus nunquam visus est lusitare. Oblata edulia non ante delibabat, quam prisco ritu, qui* çu teu *nuncupatur, cælo venerabundus obtulisset. Annorum quindecim adolescens totum se dedere cœpit priscorum libris evolvendis, & rejectis iis, quæ minus utilia videbantur, optima quæque*

Image 6: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus - Philosophorum Sinensium Principis Confucii Vita*'s first page (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



SCIENTIÆ SINICÆ.

LIBER PRIMUS.

LIBER hic, Authore *Confucio*, Commentatore *Çem-çu* ejuſdem ſecundo diſcipulo, publicam lucem videre cœpit. Eſtque incipientium tum ad ſapientiæ, tum virtutis adyta quoddam quaſi oſtium ac primum limen. Ejus Argumentum triplex eſt; ſui ipſius primùm, deinde aliorum recta inſtitutio ac regimen; tum denique in ſummo bono quies, atque, ut ita dicam, conſiſtentia. Cæterum quia Author triplicem hanc doctrinam Principibus Viris, ac Magnatibus, qui ſubjectos ſibi populos ac Regna moderantur, commendatam in primis voluit, hinc Tá-Hiŏ, Magnæ Scientiæ nomen accepit.

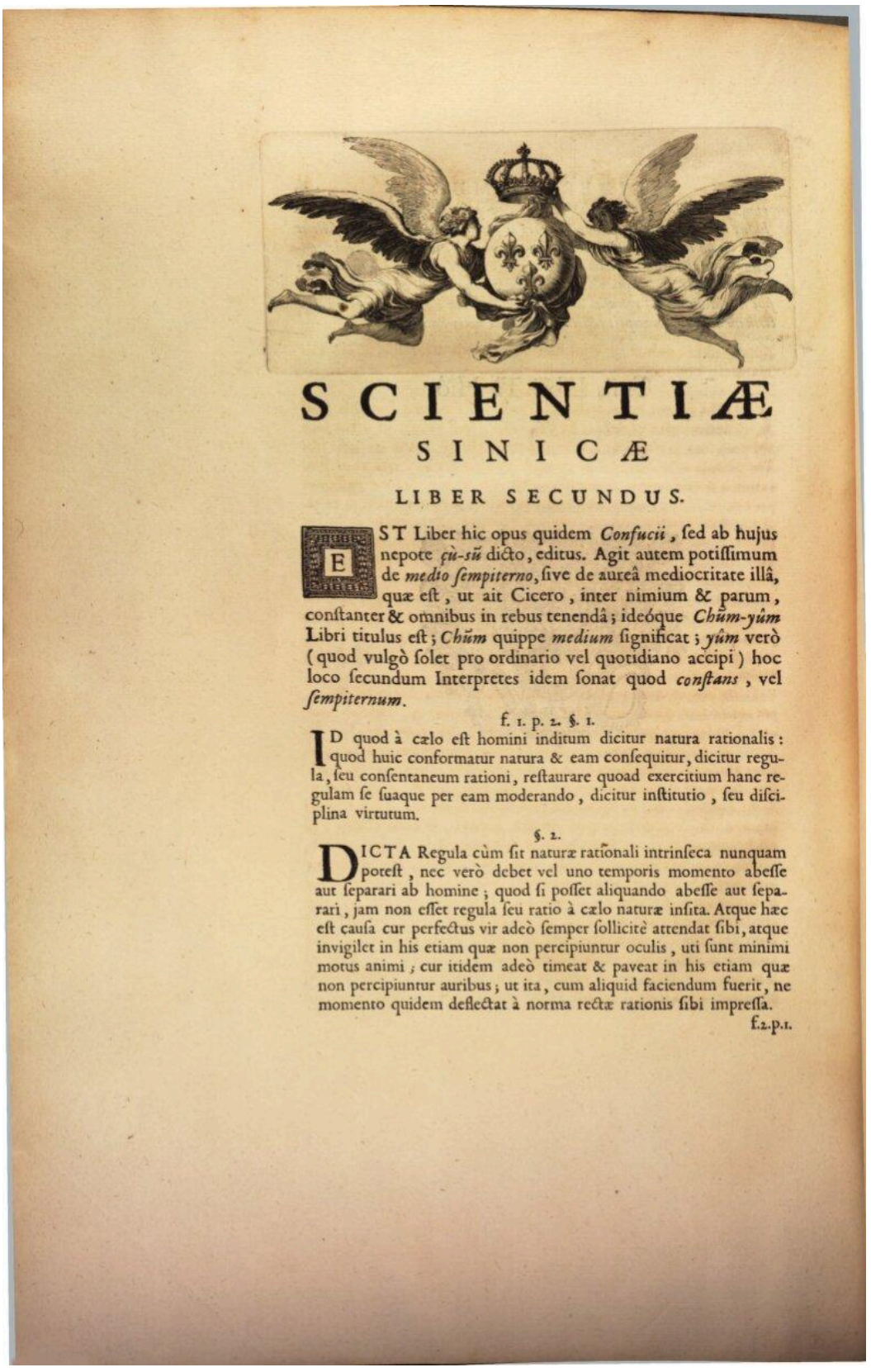
Nota. *Latinam hujus operis verſionem eſſe ad litteram, quæque numeris ſuis diſtincta, phraſi, & textui Sinico, necnon characteri (qui ſeorſim imprimetur) ordinique ad amuſſim reſpondet. In reliquis verò eſt explanatio interpretum, & præcipuè* Cham *Colai &) Magiſtri Regii.*

f. 1. p. 1. §. 1.

1. MAGNUM adeóque virorum Principum, [a] ſciendi [b] inſtitutum [c] conſiſtit in [d] expoliendo, ſeu excolendo [e] rationalem [f] naturam à cœlo inditam; ut ſcilicet hæc, ceu limpidiſſimum ſpeculum, abſterſis pravorum appetituum maculis, ad priſtinam claritatem ſuam redire poſſit. [g] Conſiſtit deinde in [h] renovando ſeu reparando [i] populum, ſuo ipſius ſcilicet exemplo & adhortatione. [k] Conſiſtit demùm in [l] ſiſtendo firmiter, ſeu perſeverando [m] in ſummo [n] bono: per quod hîc Interpretes intelligi volunt ſummam actionum omnium cum rectâ ratione conformitatem. Atque hæc tria ſunt, ad quæ reliqua hujus libri reducuntur.

A

Image 7: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus - Liber Primus, Da Xue* (大学) or *The Great Learning* (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



SCIENTIÆ SINICÆ

LIBER SECUNDUS.

EST Liber hic opus quidem *Confucii*, ſed ab hujus nepote *çù-sũ* dicto, editus. Agit autem potiſſimum de *medio ſempiterno*, ſive de aureâ mediocritate illâ, quæ eſt, ut ait Cicero, inter nimium & parum, conſtanter & omnibus in rebus tenendâ; ideóque *Chũm-yûm* Libri titulus eſt; *Chũm* quippe *medium* ſignificat; *yûm* verò (quod vulgò ſolet pro ordinario vel quotidiano accipi) hoc loco ſecundum Interpretes idem ſonat quod *conſtans*, vel *ſempiternum*.

f. 1. p. 2. §. 1.

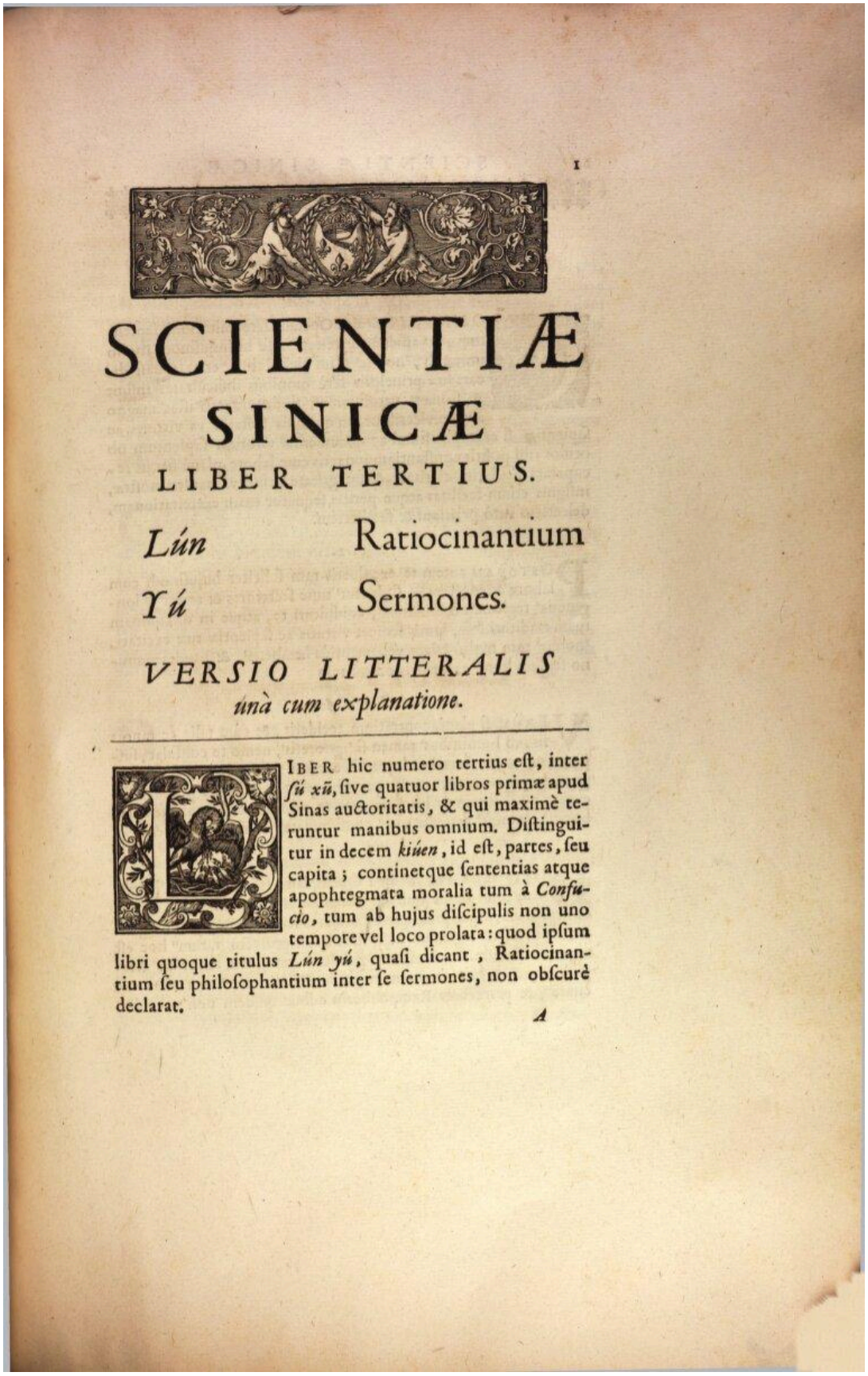
ID quod à cælo eſt homini inditum dicitur natura rationalis: quod huic conformatur natura & eam conſequitur, dicitur regula, ſeu conſentaneum rationi, reſtaurare quoad exercitium hanc regulam ſe ſuaque per eam moderando, dicitur inſtitutio, ſeu diſciplina virtutum.

§. 2.

DICTA Regula cùm ſit naturæ rationali intrinſeca nunquam poteſt, nec verò debet vel uno temporis momento abeſſe aut ſeparari ab homine; quod ſi poſſet aliquando abeſſe aut ſeparari, jam non eſſet regula ſeu ratio à cælo naturæ inſita. Atque hæc eſt cauſa cur perfectus vir adeò ſemper ſollicitè attendat ſibi, atque invigilet in his etiam quæ non percipiuntur oculis, uti ſunt minimi motus animi; cur itidem adeò timeat & paveat in his etiam quæ non percipiuntur auribus; ut ita, cum aliquid faciendum fuerit, ne momento quidem deflectat à norma rectæ rationis ſibi impreſſa.

f.2.p.1.

Image 8: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus - Liber Secundus*, *Zhong Yong* (中庸) or *The Doctrine of the Mean* (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



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SCIENTIÆ
SINICÆ
LIBER TERTIUS.

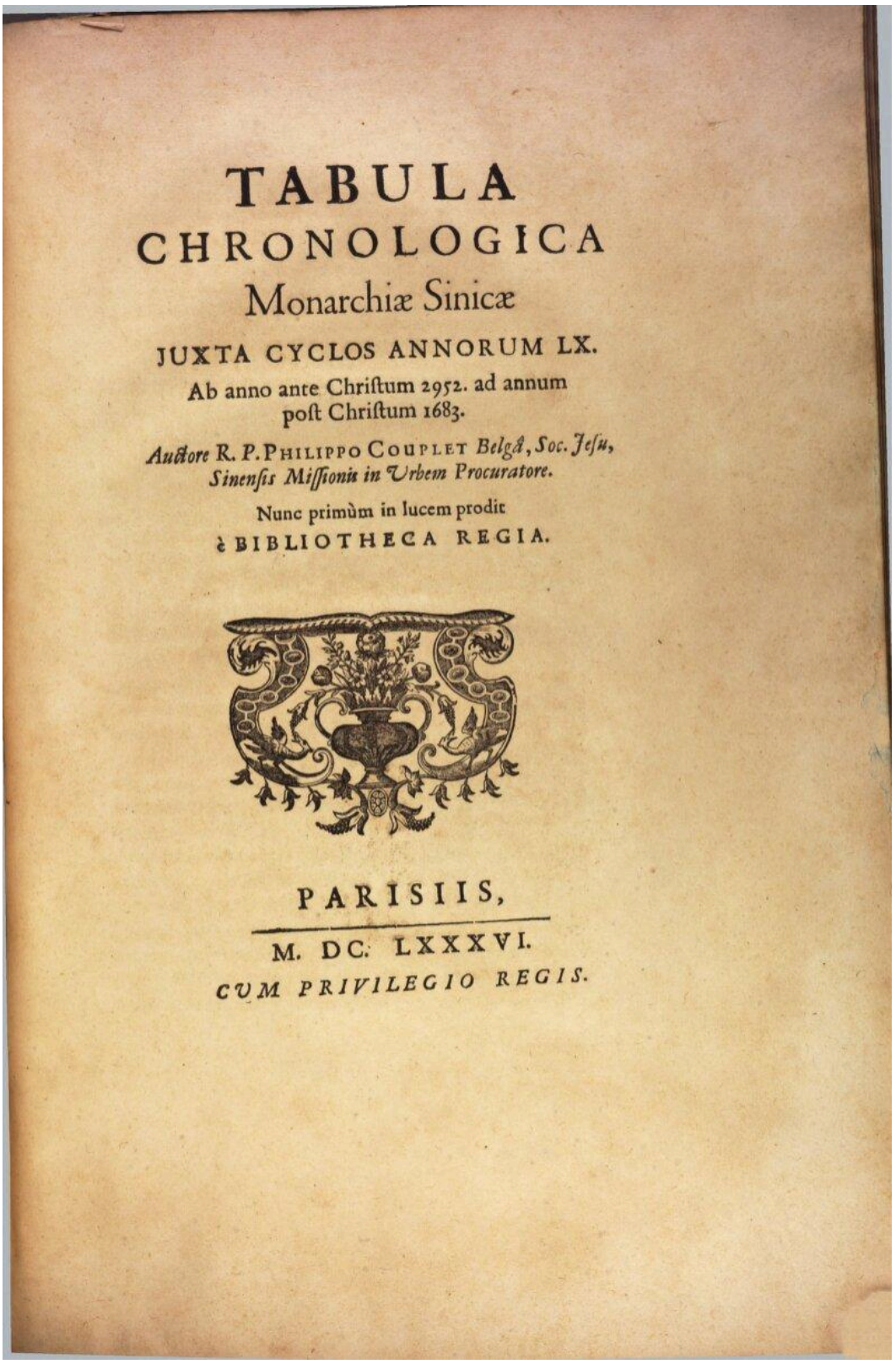
Lún Ratiocinantium
Yú Sermones.

VERSIO LITTERALIS
ùnà cum explanatione.

LIBER hic numero tertius eſt, inter *ſú xũ*, ſive quatuor libros primæ apud Sinas auctoritatis, & qui maximè teruntur manibus omnium. Diſtinguitur in decem *kiúen*, id eſt, partes, ſeu capita; continetque ſententias atque apophtegmata moralia tum à *Confucio*, tum ab hujus diſcipulis non uno tempore vel loco prolata: quod ipſum libri quoque titulus *Lún yú*, quaſi dicant, Ratiocinantium ſeu philoſophantium inter ſe ſermones, non obſcurè declarat.

A

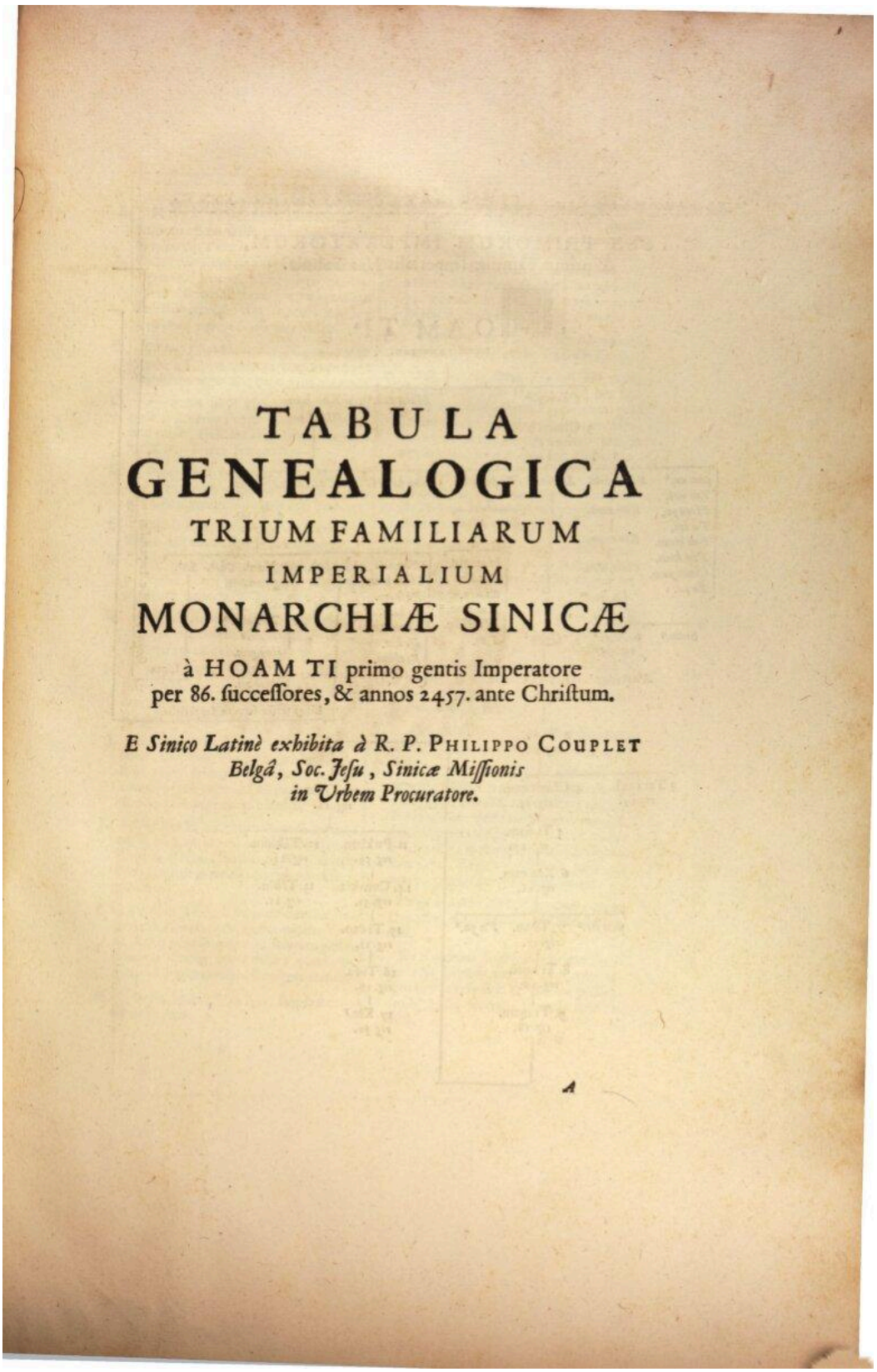
Image 9: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus - Liber Tertius*, *Lun Yu* (论语) or *The Analects* (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



TABULA
CHRONOLOGICA
Monarchiæ Sinicæ
JUXTA CYCLOS ANNORUM LX.
Ab anno ante Chriſtum 2952. ad annum
poſt Chriſtum 1683.
Auctore R. P. PHILIPPO COUPLET *Belgâ, Soc. Jeſu,*
Sinenſis Miſſionis in Urbem Procuratore.
Nunc primùm in lucem prodit
è BIBLIOTHECA REGIA.

PARISIIS,
M. DC. LXXXVI.
CUM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.

Image 10: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* - Chronological table of the Chinese monarchy (2952 BCE-1683 CE) (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

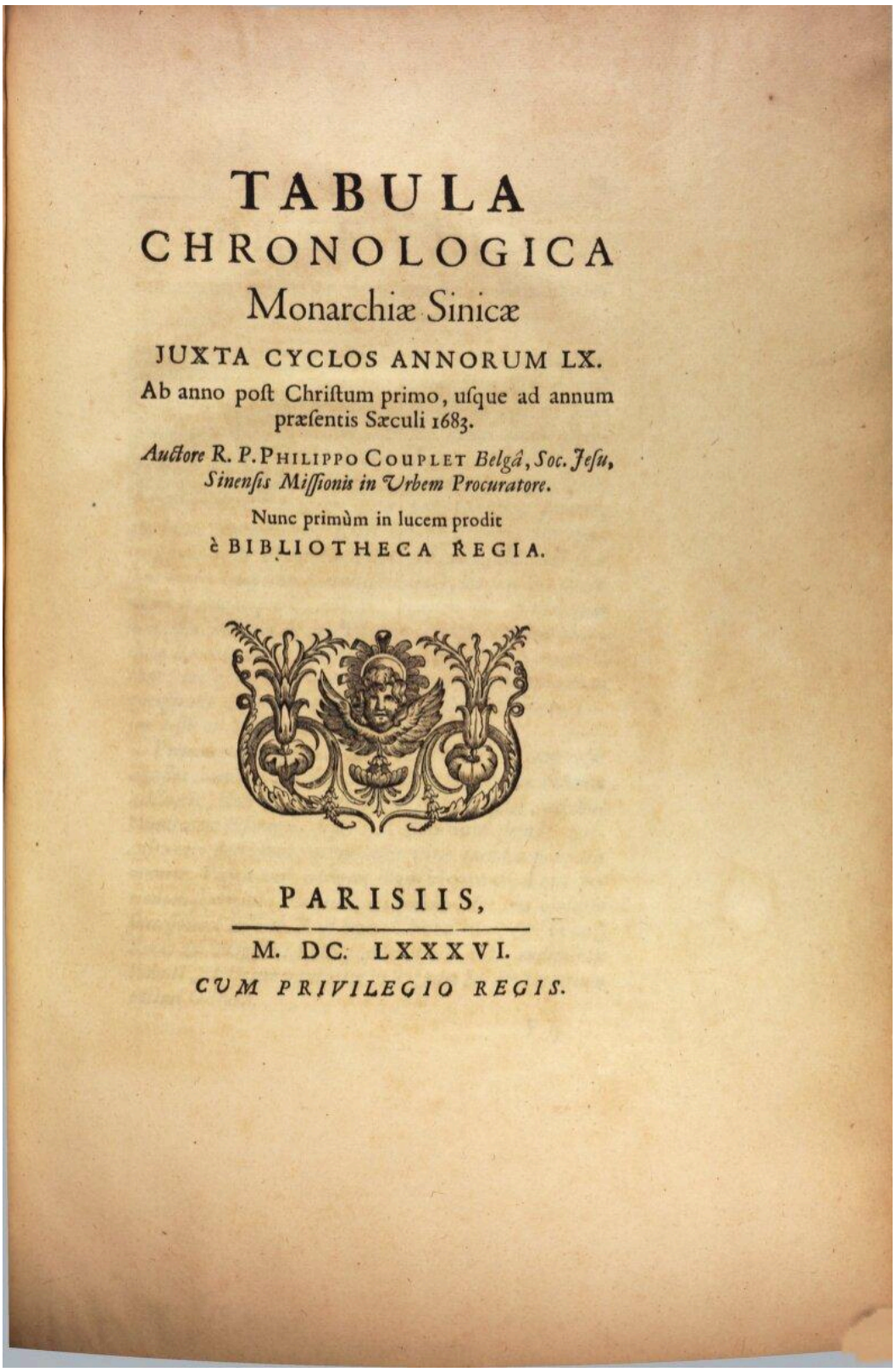


TABULA
GENEALOGICA
TRIUM FAMILIARUM
IMPERIALIUM
MONARCHIÆ SINICÆ

à HOAM TI primo gentis Imperatore
per 86. ſucceſſores, & annos 2457. ante Chriſtum.

E Sinico Latinè exhibita à R. P. PHILIPPO COUPLET
Belgâ, Soc. Jeſu, Sinicæ Miſſionis
in Urbem Procuratore.

Image 11: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophu*s - Genealogical table of the three imperial families of the Chinese monarchy (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



TABULA
CHRONOLOGICA
Monarchiæ Sinicæ
JUXTA CYCLOS ANNORUM LX.
Ab anno poſt Chriſtum primo, uſque ad annum præſentis Sæculi 1683.
Auctore R. P. PHILIPPO COUPLET *Belgâ, Soc. Jeſu, Sinenſis Miſſionis in Urbem Procuratore.*
Nunc primùm in lucem prodit
è BIBLIOTHECA REGIA.

PARISIIS,
M. DC. LXXXVI.
CUM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.

Image 12: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophu*s - Chronologic table (1st century CE-1683 CE) (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

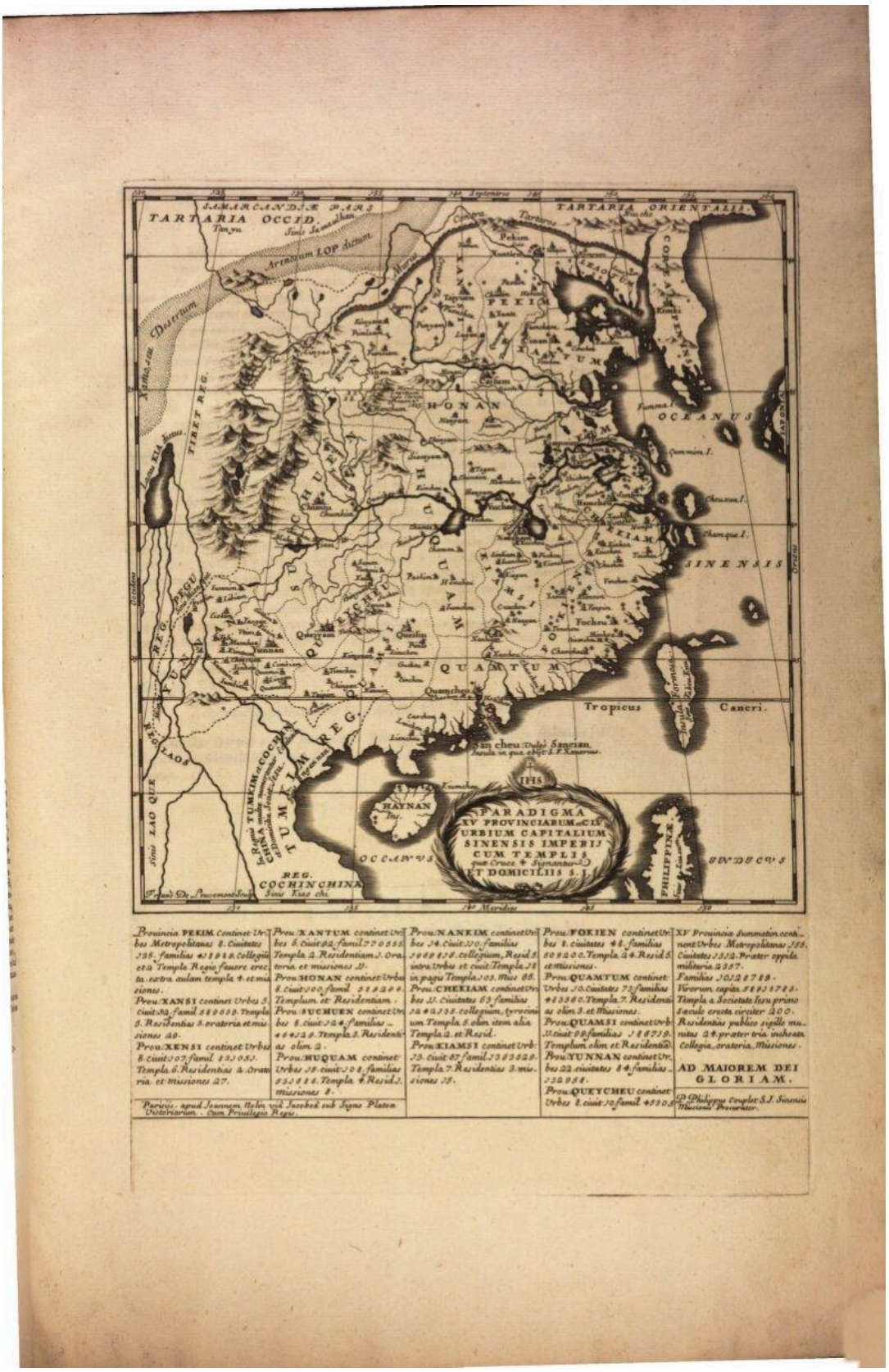


Image 13: *Confucius Sinarum Philosophu*s - Map of China (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).

***Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* (1658) by Martino Martini:**

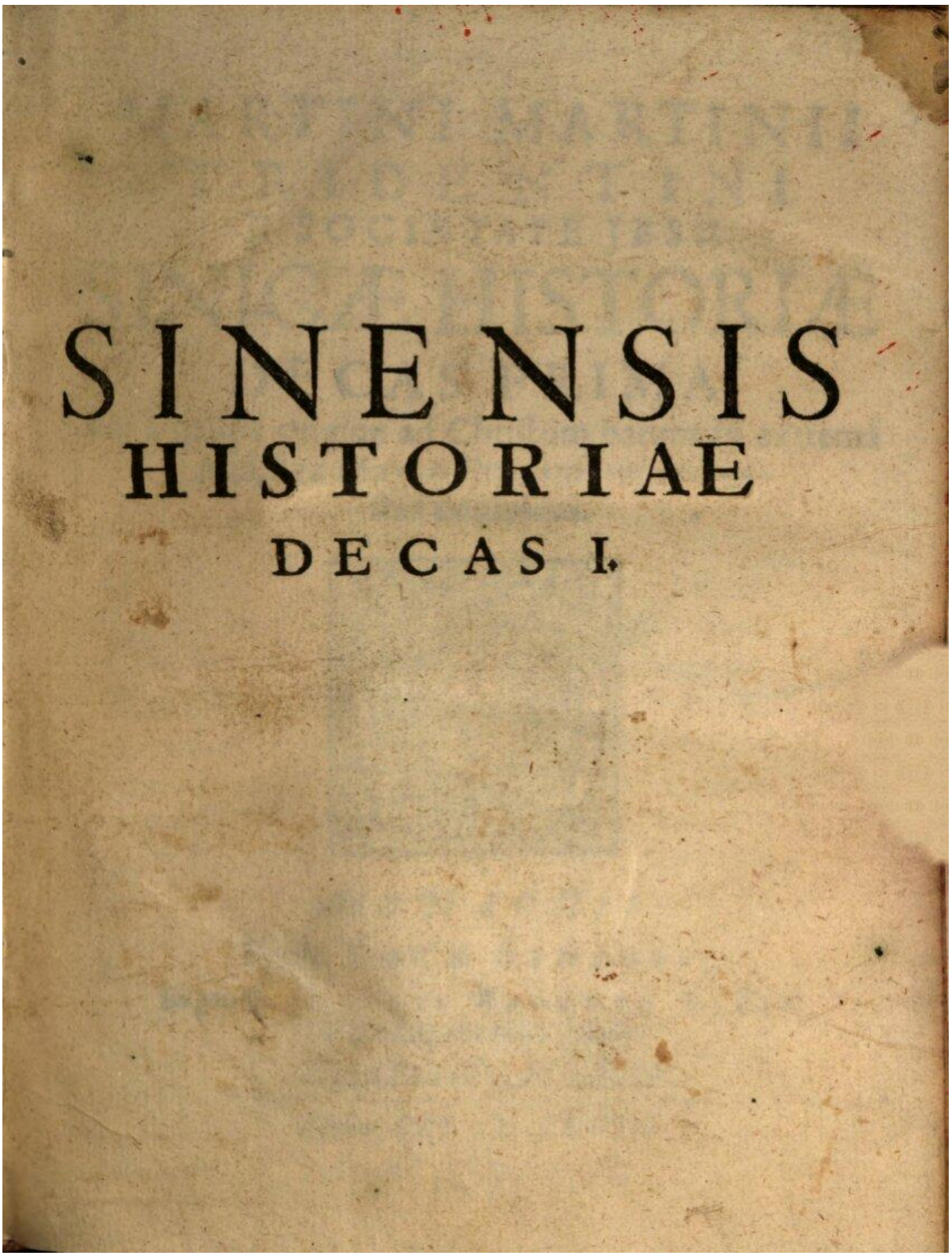
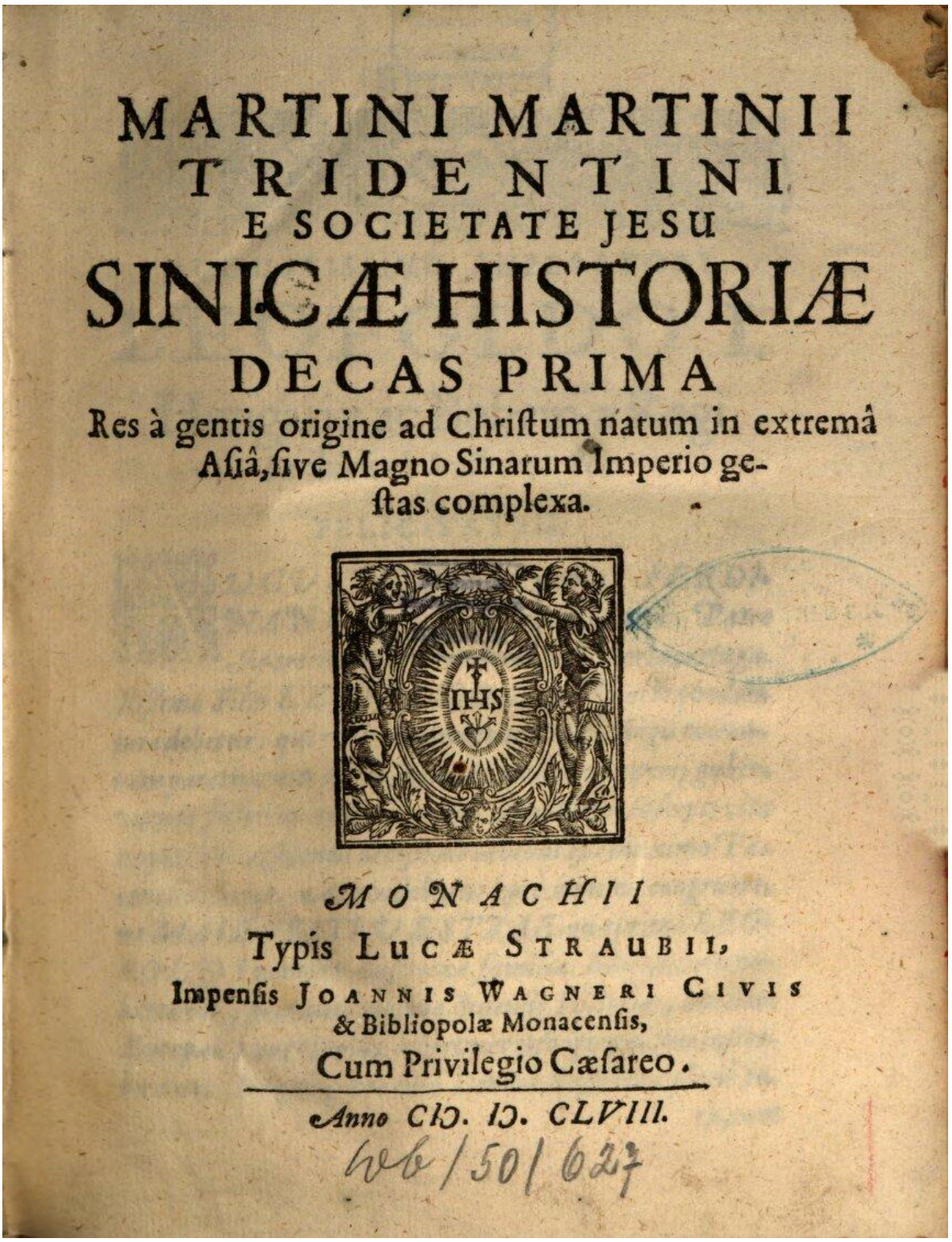


Image 14: *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* - Title page (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).



MARTINI MARTINII
TRIDENTINI
E SOCIETATE JESU

SINICÆ HISTORIÆ
DECAS PRIMA

Res à gentis origine ad Christum natum in extremâ Asiâ, sive Magno Sinarum Imperio gestas complexa.

MONACHII
Typis Lucæ Straubii,
Impensis Joannis Wagneri Civis
& Bibliopolæ Monacensis,
Cum Privilegio Cæsareo.

Anno CIↃ. IↃ. CLVIII.

Image 15: *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* - Cover page (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Non-Commercial Use license).