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# EMPIRE AND POLITICS IN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS

SEARCHING FOR A 'RESPUBLICA ROMANOSINICA'

*Edited by Andrea Balbo, Jaewon Ahn  
and Kihoon Kim*

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特相會

ROMA SINICA

DE GRUYTER



## **Empire and Politics in the Eastern and Western Civilizations**

# **Roma Sinica**

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Mutual Interactions between Ancient Roman and  
Eastern Thought

Edited by  
Andrea Balbo and Jaewon Ahn

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## **Volume 2**

# Empire and Politics in the Eastern and Western Civilizations



Searching for a *Respublica Romanosinica*

Edited by

Andrea Balbo, Jaewon Ahn and Kihoon Kim

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## Introduction

The adventure continues. We are very proud to publish the second volume of the Roma Sinica series, entitled *Empire and Politics in Eastern and Western Civilizations*. This book contains the proceedings of the conference we organized in Seoul in September 2019, where we enjoyed the excellent hospitality and organization of our friends in South Korea and of Jaewon Ahn in particular. In the meantime, many things have changed. The COVID 19 pandemic forced us to reschedule our calendar of conferences and to postpone the next one to 2022; at the same time, it compelled us on the one hand to rethink our work processes and, on the other, to confront the difficulty of finding fundamental bibliography for our studies due to the closure of many libraries. With a little Christian and Confucian patience and the help of some collaborators as Dr. F. Lazzarini we have achieved our aims, however. Indeed, here we christen a volume that extends even beyond the scope of the conference by including contributions that were due to be included in our first series volume, *Confucius and Cicero*, but did not reach the editors in time.

Yet, despite the fact that COVID has created obstacles for us, there is some good news: Andrea Balbo (University of Turin) and Chiara Ombretta Tommasi (University of Pisa) have become the Principal Investigators of a project called SERICA (Sino-European Religious Intersections in Central Asia: Interactive Texts and Intelligence Networks), which, thanks to substantial funding from the Italian Ministry of Research and the University of Pisa, will finance further research on the relations between the western and eastern worlds. The project will thereby also facilitate the continuation of this Roma Sinica series, for which the editorial board has already accepted three other works to be published in the next few years. Roma Sinica, therefore, aspires as it develops to become an international point of reference on these issues. This aim is also being strategically pursued by making the series of volumes available open access. It is precisely with these things in mind that the structure of the present volume has been conceived. Its three sections contain essays ranging from the world of Confucian texts (especially within the Language and Rhetoric section) through the history of relations between East and West along the Silk Roads (History and Politics in Eastern Thought section) to the definition of certain relationships between Western and Eastern political thought, including references to contemporary problems (section on Eastern and Western Perspectives in Politics and the History of Ideas). The volume's authors are colleagues from both Eastern and Western traditions and they



have worked with different methods and purposes. But they all offer a result which, we hope, will satisfy their peers and thereby embody a – peaceful – example of an empire of knowledge on which, deliberately, the sun never sets.

Andrea Balbo, Jaewon Ahn, Kihoon Kim

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**Section 1 History and Politics in  
the Eastern Thought**



Gościwit Malinowski

# ***Imperator-Huangdi: The Idea of the Highest Universal Divine Ruler in the West and China***

The existence of fully egalitarian societies devoid of any idea or practice of sovereignty in social relations is a utopian ideal rather than a reality observed by anthropologists. Even the San hunter-gatherer communities of the Kalahari Desert have hereditary chiefs, although their authority is limited and decisions are based on a consensus in which women and men play equal roles.<sup>1</sup> The difficult living conditions in the desert biosphere make it impossible for the San peoples to accumulate surpluses, even limited access to which would result in a stratification within their gift economy into those who have more, and thus are able to do more, and those who have less, and therefore are prone to being dominated by the latter. However, most human societies have for most of their history lived in ecological niches, in which it was easier to obtain or – after the Neolithic revolution – to produce food than in the Kalahari Desert. Under these conditions, a process of social stratification takes place, which is perfectly described by the title of the article by Marshall D. Sahlins: *Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia*.<sup>2</sup> The individual position that the ‘big man’ gains in increasingly hierarchical societies transforms into the hereditary authority of a leader. This process has taken place not only in the remote islands of Oceania but even in modern Gypsy communities, where one of the many leaders of local communities, called *rom baro*, ‘big-man’, was elevated to the rank of *shero-rom*, ‘head-man’ or *baro-shero*, ‘big-head’, combining the functions of leader and arbitrator. At times this has even initiated a dynasty of kings of the Gypsies officially recognized by external parties, such as Michał I Kwiek in Interwar Poland.<sup>3</sup>

The enthronement of the king of the Gypsies in Interwar Poland was sanctified by Orthodox religious rituals. A supernatural element also appeared in other communities whose leaders wanted to base their social position not only on individual merit and personal charisma but also on religious sanction. The Kingdom of Wehali was a ritual center on the south coast of central Timor whose pop-

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1 Marshall (1960).

2 Sahlins (1963).

3 Gontarek (2016).

ulation belonged to the Austronesian South Tetun-speaking area. The leader of the state was originally titled *Nai Bot*, ‘The Great Lord’ or *Nai Kukun*, ‘The Dark Lord’, and in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, he became *Maromak Oan*, ‘Small Bright One or Child of Luminous’, i.e. ‘son of God’.<sup>4</sup>

The institution of the hereditary chief had undoubtedly appeared many millennia before the invention of scripture first recorded the name of such a leader in the first documented language of the world. Here we refer to the Sumerian language, in which the king’s original designation was *lugal*, a compound of *lu*, ‘man’, and *gal*, ‘big’. In creating this name, the Sumerians followed the same concept as the 20<sup>th</sup>-century anthropologists who described the realities of Oceania societies. The oldest inscription with the word *lugal*, ‘king’, to date belongs to the ruler of Kish named Me-bara<sub>2</sub>-si [Sumerian King List: Enmebaragesi] from around 2600 BCE.<sup>5</sup> The later version of his name includes the element *en* ‘priest’, an honorific title used for kings associated with cities sacred to Inanna in the mythical historiography of Ur-Nammu’s dynasty.<sup>6</sup> The word *ensi*<sub>2</sub>, a compound with *en*, originally meant ‘city’s patron deity’, and later ‘ruler, governor’.<sup>7</sup> Enshakushanna (ca. 2500 BCE), King of Uruk, in his title combined both terms (*en ki-en-gi lugal kalam-ma*), ‘lord of Sumer and king of all the land’.<sup>8</sup> This title expresses for the first time the universal claim of the ruler to rule not over one city, but over the country (Sumer), as well as the whole earth. The Akkadian king Sargon expressed the same claim by combining the name of his own city with the name of the country *lugal-ki-en-gi-ki-uri*, which in Akkadian is *šar māt Šumeri u Akkadī*, ‘king of Sumer and Akkad’.<sup>9</sup> The Akkadian *šār(rum)* is the first recorded translation of Sumerian *lugal* into another language, a Semitic name of a king that corresponds to Hebrew *šar*, ‘prince, captain, chief, ruler, chieftain, official’.

The Akkadian Empire (c. 2334–2154 BCE) is the first known regional empire in the history of humankind. It stretched from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea, from the Lower Sea to the Upper Sea. Lugalzagesi, king of Sumer, al-

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4 Barnes (2008).

5 CDLI P222739 [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P222739](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P222739) (seen 2.11.2020).

6 Michałowski (2003).

7 Since III dynasty of Ur (ca. 2100 BCE), only LUGAL is recorded.

8 CDLI P431230 [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P431230](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P431230) (seen 2.11.2020).

9 To be exact, Sargon simultaneously used two separate titles, King of Akkad (*šar māt Akkadī*) and King of Sumer (*šar māt Šumeri*). Only the king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, Ur-Nammu (c. 2112–2095 BCE), combined both titles.

ready boasted power over both seas (c. 2358–2334).<sup>10</sup> The first ruler of the Empire, Sargon [Šarru-ukīn, ‘king established’], declares himself in the Nippur inscription ‘king of Akkad, overseer of Inanna, king of Kish, anointed of Anu, king of the land, governor (*ensi*) of Enlil’.<sup>11</sup> The title of the King of Kish (*šarru kiššat māti, šar-kiššati or šar kiššatim*) was given a new and specific meaning by Sargon: ‘King of Everything’, ‘King of the Totality’, ‘King of All’, ‘King of the Universe’ or ‘King of the World’, an expression of his global ambitions. After the fall of the Akkadian Empire, the term was used sporadically until neo-Assyrian times. It was only Sargon II (722–705) that renewed the title of his namesake. The last ruler to receive this title was Antiochus I.<sup>12</sup>

The fourth ruler of the Akkadian Empire, Naram-Sin (2254–2218 BCE), expressed his universalist ambitions by accepting the title of ‘King of the (Heaven’s) Four Corners [Quarters] of the World’: *lugal-an-ub-da-limmu-ba; šar kibrāti arba’i*.<sup>13</sup> These corners were respectively: Akkad, Elam, Subartu and Amuru, whose conquest was already boasted of by the Sumerian king Lugal-Anne-Mundu of Adab (c. 2400 BCE). This title was occasionally assumed by rulers who were distinguished by their conquests up to Cyrus the Great. Naram-Sin himself did not settle for even the most elaborate royal titles and proclaimed himself ‘the god (DINGIR, *ilu*) of Agade’.<sup>14</sup> He also deified his grandfather Sargon and father Manishtushu posthumously. Thus Naram-Sin is the first known ruler to proclaim himself a god.<sup>15</sup>

Naram-Sin’s successor was his son, Šar-kali-šarri (2218–2193 BCE), whose name meant ‘King of (all) Kings’ and would in the future become a form of denoting the supreme ruler in various languages. It was first used by the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I (1223–1197 BCE), Assyrian *šar šarrāni*, ‘King of Kings’.<sup>16</sup> This title, known in Old Persian from the inscription of King Darius at Behistun (*Xšâyathiya Xšâyathiyânâm*), persisted in the Iranian world regardless of dynastic or religious changes until the fall of the last ruler of Iran (*šāhān šāh*) – Reza Pahlavi (1979). Iranian patterns spread to other cultures, including Ethiopia,

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10 Nippur vase inscription of Lugalzagesi: *CDLI* P431232 [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P431232](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P431232) (seen 2.11.2020).

11 Hirsch (1963).

12 Stevens (2014).

13 Michałowski (2010).

14 *CDLI* P216941 [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P216941](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P216941) (seen 2.11.2020).

15 Hallo (1980).

16 Weidner (1959) 18.

where the supreme ruler of the Solomonic dynasty was called *Nəgusä Nəgäst* in Geez; the last of these was Haile Selassie (1974).

In modern European languages, it is customary to refer to supreme rulers in Iran and Ethiopia as emperors, but the term ‘king of kings’ was already known in Greek (Βασιλεὺς Βασιλέων) from the Hellenistic era.<sup>17</sup> The title of *Rajadhiraja*, ‘King over Kings’, was also known in the Indosphere, but the more popular term was *Maharaja*, ‘Great King’. It was also known in Mesopotamia (*šarru rabu*, e.g., Neo-Assyrian king Sargon II), so that it is impossible to say with certainty whether the Sumerogram LUGAL.GAL, ‘big big-man’, for the Hittite king continues some Indo-European tradition or copies of the Mesopotamian traditions later adopted by the Achaemenids, and from them by the Greeks: μέγας Βασιλεὺς. This title in turn, worn, among others, by the Seleucid rulers, could also have influenced Indian traditions, where the form *Maharajadhiraja*, ‘Great King of over Kings’, is also found.

Also the Egyptian title *pharaoh* (*pr ꜥ3*) etymologically consists of the adjective ‘great, high’ (ꜥ3) and the noun ‘house’ (*pr*). However, initially it referred only to a building, and only from the times of Akhenaton (c. 1353–1336 BCE) was the king referred to by this term. The royal title in Egypt, however, was much more elaborate, consisting of five elements closely related to religious worship. Each ruler of Egypt was, among other things, a living representative of the god Horus on earth.<sup>18</sup> In the Mesopotamian tradition, the rulers’ aspirations to divinity were extremely rare. The innovation introduced by Naram-Sin, king of Akkad, who called himself ‘God of Akkad’ and *dannum*, ‘mighty’, probably did not persist because the reign of his son Shar-kali-sharri, who also wrote his name with the ideogram DINGIR, ‘God’, ended with the disintegration of the empire. The rulers’ aspirations to divinity grew stronger after the reign of Alexander, who combined the Greek traditions of heroes of divine origin with the Egyptian tradition of a king representing the living god. The kings of the Diadochi dynasties, e.g., the Ptolemies and Seleucids, and representatives of the Greco-Bactrian and Greco-Indian dynasties, considered themselves gods. This had an impact on the development of the concept of the god-king in the Indosphere as well: *devaraja*.

Compared to other countries which formed regional and then global empires, Rome stood out due to its form of government. If we believe traditional Roman history, in 509 BCE the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus, was driven out and the first consul, L. Iunius Brutus, was elected. Although Polybius (6.11–18) held that the Roman political system most ideally combined the com-

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<sup>17</sup> Griffiths (1953).

<sup>18</sup> Leprohon (2013) 7–19, 93–95.

ponents of the three forms of government distinguished by Aristotle (monarchy, aristocracy and democracy), in fact, the Roman republic based its founding myth on a profound dislike of monarchy or any form of exaltation of even an outstanding individual. The history of Rome by Cato the Elder was preserved as a collection of anecdotes, as it completely lacks the names of the leaders and politicians, naming no eminent individuals except Hannibal's elephant (Plin. *NH* 8.11). Over time, the dislike of kings turned into contempt when the following Kings of Kings [Antiochus III], Great Kings [Mithradates VI of Pontus; Tigranes I of Armenia], and God Kings [Ptolemies] were attacked by the Roman legions.<sup>19</sup> A somewhat similar feeling of contempt for the Persian monarchy was felt by the Athenians after winning the war of 480/79, but the non-monarchical Athenian empire was pocket-sized and short-lived compared to the Roman empire.

The military successes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BCE caused the emergence of people who could do more than others among the theoretically egalitarian political and military elites of the Roman republic.<sup>20</sup> In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, these Roman *big men* (*dynastae*) were still under the control of the political institutions of the republic. At that time, even the appointment of dictators was discontinued, those who had in the third century taken full control of the republic twenty-four times for six months each time.<sup>21</sup> The enormous civil power in the hands of censors who were elected once every five years was tempered by their collegiality and single term of office. With time, however, systemic restrictions imposed on, for example, candidates for the consulate began to be ignored, and new solutions enabling monarchical power to exist under the republican system began to appear.

The first example of *big man* in Rome was C. Marius (d. 86 BCE), who was elected consul five times in a row in 104–100. His military reforms laid the foundations for other *big men* to exercise quasi-monarchical power. The great rival of Marius, L. Cornelius Sulla Felix (retired in 80 BCE), formally satisfied himself with the restoration of the office of a *dictator legibus faciendis et reipublicae constituendae causa* in 82/81 after more than a hundred years. The ideal underpinning of the dictatorship was only to wear the cognomen *Felix*, 'happy, lucky', indicating the special kindness shown to Sulla by the gods (Plut. *Sull.* 34.2). The rivalry between Sulla's *Optimates* and the *Populares* of Marius and Cinna's faction not only led to civil wars and the proscription of opponents, but also to the first attempt at regional separatism in the empire: namely, the creation of

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<sup>19</sup> Erskine (1991).

<sup>20</sup> Syme (1939) 10–27.

<sup>21</sup> Broughton (1951) 287.



a local state in Spain 80–72 BCE, by a popular, Q. Sertorius, as an alternative to the Roman republic (Plut. *Sert.* 22).

The agreements of the triumvirate were an attempt to arrange relations between *big men* within one republic. Various *triumviri* were initially members of commissions appointed to consider various matters (*triumviri capitales, nocturni, monetales, coloniae deducendae, mensarii*), but the agreement in 60 BCE concluded between M. Licinius Crassus (d. 53), Cn. Pompeius Magnus (d. 48), C. Iulius Caesar (d. 44) aimed to establish a balance of power in the republic between the three *big men*, assigning to each an *imperium* in individual provinces. There they could exercise quasi-monarchical power, theoretically limited by the central power of Rome, and checked in practice by each other *big man* in the triarchy system.

Interestingly, it was around the same time that triumvirates began to appear in the political practice of the Western Han Dynasty, when Emperor Zhao (94–74 BCE), assuming the throne in 87, was unable to exercise personal power because of his minority status. The three co-regents were Huo Guang, and Xiongnu official Jin Midi and general Shangquan Jie.<sup>22</sup> The Chinese triumvirates were clerical and derived from the positions of the three highest officials of the Western Han Dynasty, known as *Sāngōng* (Three Dukes, Excellencies, Ducal Ministries): chancellor, grand secretary, grand commandant. During the Eastern Han dynasty, the system was called *Sānsī* (Three Administrators: the horses, *Sīmǎ* 司馬, i.e. the war; the barefoot, *Sītú* 司徒, i.e. the masses; and the labor, *Sīkōng* 司空).<sup>23</sup> In 208, the warlord Cao Cao abolished these offices and took over the supreme office of the imperial chancellor to Emperor Xian – another emperor who had succeeded to the throne as a child in 189, as the country was ravaged by the Yellow Turban Rebellion, followed by dozens of provincial warlords.

The centralization of clerical power by Cao Cao did not lead to an actual centralization of power. When his son Cao Pi dethroned the last emperor of the Han Dynasty in China, the era of the Three Kingdoms (220–280) began, a triarchy that only the new Jin Dynasty dealt with, after a period of formal disintegration of the state lasting 60 years (in fact, almost 100 years). Political twists and turns in the Roman Empire happened much faster. Fifteen years passed from the establishment of the triumvirate in 60 until Caius Iulius Caesar assumed quasi-monarchical power and the final battle of Munda (45 BCE). His successor, Octavian, dealt with *liberatores*, Senatorial Caesaricides warlords and other *triumviri* in less than 13 years.

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<sup>22</sup> Theobald (2011, accessed 2.11.2020).

<sup>23</sup> Dull (2010).

The victorious Caius Julius Caesar was looking for an appropriate formula to secure not only real but also symbolic, sole-ruling power in the Roman empire.<sup>24</sup> He declared himself dictator three times (49, 48–47, 46–44 BCE), extending as much as possible the term length of this unique republican office. He declared himself consul four times (48, 46–45, 44 BCE), imitating his relative Marius, and going even further when in 45 he declared himself the only consul, the so-called *consul sine collega*. However, these were all temporary solutions. After the victory at the Battle of Munda, Caesar resigned as consul, conferring formal powers on three *consules suffecti*, appointed to people from among his trusted legates. The victorious Roman armies could proclaim their leader *imperator*, which entitled him to triumph in Rome. Caesar was pronounced thus three times in 60, 51, and finally in 45, when the Senate passed a resolution that the *imperator* would become a hereditary title that Caesar could pass on to his descendants. In the same year 45, Caesar also took the honorary title of *pater patriae*, ‘father of the fatherland’, given in 368 to Camillus, the slayer of the Gauls, called ‘the second Romulus’, i.e. ‘re-founder of Rome’, and then dusted off by *homo novus* Cicero in 63. In the same year, Caesar received the lifelong dignity of *pontifex maximus*, ‘the greatest priest’, which in the 40s greatly complemented his claim to quasi-monarchical power in Rome. Despite his unique position, Caesar did not dare to accept the title of king, which was so unpopular in Rome. Caesar had the chance to find confirmation of this sentiment when he organized a show with Mark Antony during the Games; Antony publicly offered Caesar the royal diadem three times and was accompanied by the voice of disapproval from the crowd. Caesar refused three times to accept the diadem, which was met with general applause (Plut. *Ant.* 12). Finally, in early 44, Caesar decided to assume the title of *dictator in perpetuum*. In his case, *in perpetuum*, ‘forever’, meant little more than two months.

The acceptance of the title of king by Caesar – the conqueror of the great king of kings, Pharnakes of Pontus, the god kings of the Ptolemies – would *de facto* lower his prestige as a Roman *big man*. Even the relationship with the Egyptian Queen Cleopatra lowered Caesar’s status in the eyes of Roman public opinion. These Roman moods were perfectly sensed by the heir of Caesar, adopted by the *dictator in perpetuum* grandson of his sister Julia the Younger (101–51 BCE). His name was Caius Octavius, and in 60, when he was 3 years old, his real father – also called Caius Octavius (c. 100–59 BCE) – suppressed the slave rebellion in the city of Thurii and hence received the hereditary cognomen of *Thurinus*, which was also used by his son. In 44, a 19-year-old young man accepted

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<sup>24</sup> Stevenson (2015) 123–165.

Caesar's inheritance and, under the rules, changed his name to the name of his adoptive father – C. Iulius Caesar. To distinguish him from his namesake, he was commonly referred to as Octavianus, a form of adjective ending in *-anus* given in the case of people admitted to a family by adoption to preserve the memory of familial ancestors, e.g., Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus carried this last cognomen to commemorate his natural father Lucius Aemilius Paullus Macedonicus. In two years, from 44–42, C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus transformed himself from an unknown young man to one of the Caesarian leaders in the second triumvirate with Mark Antony and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. When on 1 January, 42 BCE, C. Iulius Caesar became the first historical Roman to be officially deified by the Senate and henceforth referred to as *Divus Iulius*, 'Divine Julius', Octavianus included this in his official name – *Caius Iulius Caesar Divi Filius*.

On January 16, 27 BCE, as the sole ruler of the Roman empire – when one of the remaining *triumviri*, Lepidus, withdrew from political life, and the other, Antony, died trying, together with the Egyptian Cleopatra, to create some synthesis of the Roman republic with the Hellenistic kingdom – Octavianus accepted from the Senate the honorary title of *Augustus* and was thus called *Imperator Caesar Divi Filius Augustus* until his death.<sup>25</sup> In this way, he initiated the unified nomenclature of the sole rulers of the *imperium Romanum* adopted by all his successors: *Imperator* [here the current *Praenomen*, *Nomen* and *Cognomen* of a ruler were added] *Caesar Augustus* or *Imperator Caesar* [*Praenomen*, *Nomen* and *Cognomen*] *Augustus*. Also, *Imperator* became almost a *praenomen* of Roman Emperors, and *Augustus* and *Caesar* became titles similar to a *cognomen* of heirs to this position.

One could say that this is how the 'regnal titulature' of Rome's rulers was created, but the problem is that these rulers, like Octavianus Augustus himself, completely cut themselves off from royal connotations, at the same time assuming all possible republican dignities that secured real power. During his life, Augustus took the office of consul 13 times, of which 8 occurred in a row in the years 30–23 BCE, as he was shaping the foundations of a republican system ruled by one. As a consul, he played the main role in Roman executive leadership, but he shared this office with his nominees as the title of *imperator* began to play a more important role. This originally temporary title by which the soldiers hailed the victorious commander had returned to its original etymological meaning, *nomen agentis* from *imperare*, denoting the scope of powers within which an official could issue orders – *imperium*. In this way, as a permanent *imperator*, Octavianus received a military *summum imperium* belonging to

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<sup>25</sup> Galsworthy (2014) 230–237.

dictators greater than the *consulare imperium* in Rome and the *imperium maius* outside which belonged to the consuls.

In 27, the senate also permanently granted him the title of *princeps senatus*, i. e., the most eminent senator, placed by the censors in the first place on their list of senators.<sup>26</sup> This dignity, established in 275 BCE, was not for life, but for a term of office until the next vetting. The *Princeps* was very competent in organizing the work of the Senate: he summoned and adjourned the Senate decided its agenda and where the session should take place, imposed order and other rules of the session, met in the name of the Senate embassies of foreign countries and wrote in the name of the Senate letters and dispatches. In exercising this dignity, Octavian controlled Roman legislature.

Ancient Rome did not know Montesquieu's tripartite division of power along executive, legislative and judiciary lines. There were at least two further branches of government in Rome. The censors who appointed the senators were appointed every five years for no more than 18 months. It was forbidden to hold this office twice; it was required to hold it collegially because only the unanimous decision of two censors was legally valid. Meanwhile, Octavianus held this office three times, in 28 BCE, by way of preparing, together with his associate Agrippa, the composition of the senate with himself permanently situated in the first place, in 8 BCE as the only censor and in 14 CE along with Tiberius, for whom he wanted to facilitate the succession as a republican monarch. The year 23 BCE was no less important than 27 BCE. It was then that August concluded the so-called Second Settlement, under which he received the prerogatives of another branch of government which had been renewed every year – the lifetime *tribunicia potestas*, and with it sacrosanctity, i. e. the immunity given to a Tribune of the Plebs. In this way, the sole ruler of Rome took over the supreme power in all important republican offices and honors.

Octavianus Augustus did not neglect religious sanction, styling himself as the divine ruler as much as possible in the empire at the time. While, in the Hellenistic East, kings proclaiming themselves gods were considered the norm, in Rome Octavianus wanted to be regarded primarily as the first citizen (*princeps civitatis*), a restorer of ancient virtues, including ancient religious worship, which completely excluded any human claims to divinity ... at least during his lifetime, that is, since Caesar's posthumous deification in 42 BCE also opened the door for Augustus to become a divine ruler. The return from his victorious march against Antony in 30/29 BCE meant that in many cities in Asia and Bithynia he was called the 'saviour god' (*Soter*), a common nickname given to Hellen-

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<sup>26</sup> Galsworthy (2014) 221–222.

istic rulers. In Rome itself, however, such an open divinization of a living ruler was not dared. In the East, Augustus joined the goddess Roma, worshipped since 195 BCE in Smyrna (Tac. *Ann.* 4.56), while in Rome *dea Roma* along with only the *genius Augusti* were worshipped. He would be deified by the senate only posthumously, but the title *divus* was not passed on in his case, giving way to the very name *Augustus* itself, ‘solemn, venerable’ (Enn. *Ann.* 245 M.), from the verb *augeo*.

In the religious sphere, Augustus also secured the priesthood of *pontifex maximus* after the death of the triumvir Lepidus (44–12 BCE). In 2 BCE he was awarded the title of *Pater Patriae* by the Senate. All these titles, dignities and offices would be accepted by successive successors of Augustus, who would come to power in a variety of ways – by the will of the predecessor, such as Tiberius in 14 CE, the will of the military elite after the most unexpected tragic death of his predecessor, like Claudius in 41, or successfully usurped with the help of the provincial military elites, like Galba in 68.

In this way, in the ideological sphere of republican Rome, the office of the ruler of a world empire emerged, towering over all other kings inasmuch as republican Rome had subdued all the great kings, kings of kings, and god-kings within its reach. This happened, if not militarily, then diplomatically, as in 20 BCE, when Augustus recovered the eagles and aging captives from Crassus’ army, which was broken in 53 by the cavalry of the king of Parthia. *Imperator Caesar Augustus* was a new title, tailored for the sole ruler in total separateness from and hostility towards the tradition of the royal power of kingship dating back to Sumer and the Indo-European community, which was so despised by the Romans. Thus, in the propaganda created against Antony, it was brought to the fore that he was, in fact, enslaved by Queen Cleopatra.<sup>27</sup> It is hard to say what would have been worse for a Roman – the idea of serving a woman or of being a king. The world of the Hellenistic East, however, was quite resistant to the subtleties of Roman republican ideology and in official records the first emperor of Rome was referred to in Greek as Ἀυτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ (θεοῦ υἱός) Σεβαστὸς Βασιλεύς. The word *imperator* was translated into a term already familiar from Thucydides: αὐτοκράτωρ, ‘one’s own master’. This word primarily referred to states (poleis) or persons who were free, independent. The very same Thucydides (6.72) already used this expression to signify someone exercising absolute power. Polybius was the first to use this word in the Roman context to convey the name of the *dictator* in Greek (3.86.7). Thus, translating the Latin *imperator* with αὐτοκράτωρ, the Greeks perfectly grasped that the *summum*

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<sup>27</sup> Hekster (2004).

*imperium* was to be associated with this title. This aspect of imperial power would be particularly emphasized in the later Eastern tradition, where until 1917 the ruler of Russia would be called Самодержец цѣсарь / царь in Slavic. The word *Augustus*, a very rare adjective in Latin before 27 BCE, was translated by the Greeks as Σεβαστός, ‘venerable, reverend’, an *adiectivum verbale* from σεβάζομαι, ‘to be afraid of’, a verb already known in the *Iliad* and derived from σέβομαι, ‘feel awe or fear before God, feel shame’. In this case, Σεβαστός was comparable to *Augustus* as a neologism, possibly a very rare word that was revitalized to reflect the Latin *cognomen*. The picture is completed by the unoriginal expression ‘king’, Βασιλεύς, which until the end of the Roman empire in 1453 would be used in the Greek language to denote the Roman emperor, whether in Rome or in Constantinople. When over time it became necessary to demonstrate the uniqueness of this ruler, he would still be called king, Βασιλεύς, while other rulers, e.g. kings of Western Europe, would be referred to in Greek as ῥήγας, borrowing from the Latin *rex*.

Thus, the Greek world did not replace the old royal nomenclature with a new title created by Augustus – it absorbed the title. The adjective Σεβαστός turned out to be particularly popular in this case, serving as a starting point of the name for many Sebasteia towns, as well as the given names – Sebastian, and as an element used to create more and more new court titles in eastern Rome – e.g. σεβαστοκράτωρ/sevastokrator. However, the title Σεβαστός did not become the term for the ruler per se. We find a similar phenomenon in the West, where we have city names deriving from Augustus (*Colonia Augusta*), the name of the month (*Augustus*), derivatives (*Augustinus*), and finally, a renaissance of the very name (*Augustus*), initially given as the noble name of the rulers aspiring to revive the Roman tradition, e.g. King of France Philippe II, called “Auguste” by Rigord (1185). This caught on especially in the Renaissance, with e.g. Sigismundus Augustus (born 1520), king of Poland, named so by his mother Bona Sforza. However, all later languages of non-Greek Europe (and not there only) would alternatively choose either the term *imperator* or *Caesar* for a ruler standing above other kings.

This phenomenon occurs primarily in the Romance languages, but it has also found its way into English, whose vocabulary was strongly influenced by the Romance (*emperor*), and in the Celtic languages, as loanwords from English, French or directly from Latin. The Latin word *imperator* spread for the second time during the modern era, reaching as a loanword from Latin such different languages as Slavic, Baltic, Georgian, German, Arabic, Azerbaijani, Turkic, Persian, Tajik, and Tagalog.

In other languages, the term for ‘emperor’ is dominated by the word *Caesar*, which was the term for the ruler of Rome from the very beginning of the exis-

tence of this dignity. The Greek form *Καῖσαρ* was the starting point for writing this in various Semitic languages. The Middle Eastern, Semitic cultural circle gave rise to forms like *Kays(e)r/Kesar* throughout the Islamosphere, e.g., Malay, Swahili. Iranian culture has spread this name/title throughout pre-Islamic West and Central Asia. The ancient Latin pronunciation was also the basis of the *Kaiser* form in the Germanic and Finnic languages. The palatalized Latin pronunciation of late antiquity is still reflected in the Slavic and Hungarian languages in terms like \**česařb*, \**cesařb* and \**čbšařb*.

In all these languages, the equivalents of the Latin *imperator*, or modern English *emperor*, are derived from the first two elements of the Roman title *Imperator Caesar Augustus*. There are, however, languages in the modern world where the dictionaries for ‘emperor’ give completely different equivalents. They are usually derived from the word ‘king’, so a similar principle of translation as applied by the Greeks to *Imperator Caesar Augustus*, using the term *Βασιλεύς*, ‘king’, applies. The common word ‘king’, however, is often suitably reinforced to reflect the uniqueness of the term ‘emperor’, resulting in the creation of compound nouns which include the noun ‘king’ in a word used for the ‘emperor’. Thus, in the Indian languages spoken by Islamized societies, the Persian term ‘king of kings’ is used: in Urdu and Sindhi, this is *shahinshah*. In the non-Muslim, or only recently Islamized Indosphere, various forms of the word *raja* are used: Skt. *rājādhirāja*, ‘king of kings’; Skt. Pali: *adhirāja*, ‘over king’; Indonesian, Malay: *maharaja*, ‘great king’; Skt. *samrāj*, Pali: *ekarāja*, ‘one king’.

However, two forms that do not contain the word ‘king’ also appear as equivalents of the word ‘emperor’. In the Indosphere, these are: Skt. *cakravartin*, that is ‘wheel-turning’. The second one is *huangdi* 皇帝, ‘magnificent, august God of Heaven’, in the Sinosphere. Therefore, one could argue that all four universal civilizations developed the idea of a universal ruler, greater than kings.

Islamosphere – *Khalifat Rasūl Allāh* – not *malik*

Sinosphere – *Huangdi* 皇帝 – not *wang* 王

Indosphere – *Cakravartin* – not *rāja*

Romanosphere – *Imperator Caesar Augustus* – not *rex*

In the case of the Islamic world, the matter is clear. Theocratic *umma* recognizes God Allah as the king of kings, hence his messenger *Rasul* stands over all kings, as does the successor of the messenger *khalifa*. The Roman emperor is referred to in Arabic as in Greek as ‘king’, *malik*. With time, Muslims accepted the title of Caesar, but it was not a title that dominated other kings, but a specific one, making claim to Roman heritage. And so, in 1453, Mehmed Fatih adopted the term *Kayser-i Rum* as an expression of his control over the recently defeated Christian

state, but this title never replaced the ordinary Turkish *sultan* or Persian *padishah*, and when in 1517 Selim won the coveted title of *khalifa*, the borrowed title was forgotten.<sup>28</sup> The adoption of the title of *Kaisar-i Hind* by Queen Victoria in 1876 (abolished in 1948) was an intercultural experiment to personalize power within the British Raj taken over by the Crown from the East India Company in 1858.

The origins of *Imperator Caesar Augustus* against the background of the anti-royal traditions of the Roman republic have been discussed above, now it remains for us to look at the origins of the other two titles.

The Indian *cakravartin*, ‘wheel-turning’, can be understood in both secular and religious senses. In the former, it means: ‘one whose chariot wheels roll everywhere without obstruction’, i. e. mighty ruler (secular); in the latter, ‘one who turns the dharma chakra – wheel of dharna’, i. e. religious ruler. Moreover, *cakravartin* is not a qualitatively different term from *raja*, king. Sometimes the term king is simply a supplement, as in *Cakravartirāja*, ‘wheel-turning king’; *Zhuǎn lún wáng* 轉輪王.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, only the title of the Chinese emperor can be paralleled to that of the Roman emperor. *Huangdi* 皇帝 has a similar origin to *Imperator Caesar Augustus* inasmuch as it is a self-invented title. In 246, 13-year-old Zhao Zheng, called Ying Zheng in modern historiography, became king of the Qin state after his father as *Qín Wáng Zhèng* 秦王政. In 221 BCE, he unified all Chinese states and took the title he invented *Qín Shihuangdi* 秦始皇帝. It consisted of 秦 the name of the state (*guó* 國), of which he was originally the king, treated in later historiography as the name of the dynasty (*cháo* 朝), 始, ‘beginning, initial, first’, an ordinal, suggesting that successors should simply count their place in the chain of dynastic ancestors (in fact, the Qin dynasty only lived to see the second number) and 皇, ‘shining’ or ‘splendid’, and formerly usually applied ‘as an epithet of Heaven’ (magnificent; sovereign; ruler; superior; royal) and 帝 the high god of the Shang, possibly composed of their divine ancestors (God, ancestor, honorific for deceased fathers, ancestor deity, later God of Heaven). The two final elements of the title alluded to *Sānhuángwǔdì* 三皇五帝, the first divine rulers of the Middle Kingdom, variously translated into English: ‘Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors’, ‘Three Augusts and Five Emperors’, or ‘Three Augusts and Five Sovereigns’. In these English translations, we can clearly see a mirror of the title created by Octavianus in 27 BCE: *Imperator – praenomen; Augustus* – divine adjective.

<sup>28</sup> Wittek (1938).

<sup>29</sup> Schwarz (2009).



To render it in non-Roman terms, it can be noted that 皇 referred to the three primal deities, and 帝 to the five divine rulers, in particular Yellow Emperor *Huangdì* 黃帝, which was a homophone to the title created by King Qin. Thus, in adopting a new title, King Zheng reached back to the very beginning of the Heavenly Kingdom. Interestingly, in 27 BCE, Octavianus considered accepting the honorary title of Romulus instead of Augustus, i.e., the name of the first king of Rome, since he styled himself as the second, re-founder of Rome. Ultimately, however, he abandoned this idea, fearing even a hint of association with royal power, or perhaps fearing the prophecy that the first and last rulers of Rome would bear the same name (which symbolically came true when in 476 Romulus Augustulus became the last Roman emperor in the West). This naming taboo also meant that none of the popes ever took the name of Peter, and the 136<sup>th</sup> pope Pietro Canepanova changed his name to John XIV (983–984) and henceforth the adoption of a new name by the pope became the rule, although only a few predecessors of John XIV had done so.<sup>30</sup>

For the ancient Romans, the imperial title was unique, it could be usurped, it could be shared with a co-emperor, but only within the Roman empire. Not even the most powerful foreign ruler could bear the title of emperor. Medieval Romans were no longer so categorical about these matters. After all, the Greek-speaking Romans from the East used the term βασιλεύς to describe their ruler, the same term used in Greek to describe the lesser kings fighting at Troy in the Homeric *Iliad*. These Latin-speaking rulers were mostly of barbaric origin, as were all emperors from Charlemagne (crowned in 800) on. Consequently, they demanded recognition of the title reconstructed in the West by the Pope, without dynastic or institutional continuity, rather than a monopoly over that title. Therefore, the Roman emperor in the East was referred to as *imperator Constantinopolitanus*, *imperator Graecorum*, and his prestige was deprived not by questioning the title of emperor, but by disabusing him of power over Rome and the Romans. That is, the real ones in Italy. But also, in the West, not everyone took for granted the reconstructed empire's claims to universal power; hence, along with the title of *imperator*, which was undefined, there appeared such terms as *imperator Francorum*, *Alemannorum*, *Italiae*, *Romanorum*, effecting an incidental narrowing of the scope of the Frankish, Saxon or Swabian rulers.

During the Crusades, Abbasid khalifa came to be referred to as the 'emperor': *imperator Babilonicus* (Guibert de Nogent); so too did the Seljuk sultans: *Seljuk Soltanus*, *scicilet imperator Persidis* (Fulcher de Chartres); *Salioc*, *le seignor*

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Petrus Romanus mentioned in the so-called *Prophecy of the Popes* by St. Malachy (c. 1590).

*des Turquemans, empereor d'Aise* (Hayton of Corycus). The transfer of the title of emperor to exotic distant rulers accelerated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century during the Mongol conquests. Hence, Giovanni Pian del Carpine, the first papal legate in the court of the great khan in Karakorum, called him simply the *imperator Tartarorum* (1247). William of Rubruck, another Franciscan, envoy of Saint Louis of France, however, carefully distinguished the Mongol khan rulers from the universal ruler of the West, the *imperator Romanorum* (1253–55).<sup>31</sup> European authors already knew three emperors in the east other than great khan: *imperator Kytaorum* ('Emperor of the Song Dynasty' – Giovanni Pian del Carpine), *imperator Delhi* ('Sultan of Delhi' – Odoric of Pordenone), and *imperator Tartarorum in Perside* (*ilkhan* – Ricold of Monte Croce). In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the geographical horizon was constantly expanding and in 1436 the *mappamundi* by Andrea Bianco distinguished two empires in Europe (*inperium romanorum, inperion romaniam*), and as many as nine in Asia: *Inperium catai; inperion de termaxo; inperion de medio; inperion rosie magna; inperion tartaroron; inperion basera; inperium prete janis; inperium emibar; inperion morati*.<sup>32</sup>

The 16<sup>th</sup> century – the Age of Discovery – is the apogee of new contacts between Europeans and the peoples of other continents, including the newly discovered Americas. American realities attempted to match the institutions known in Europe; hence the highly developed civilizations of Mesoamerica and the Andes, being referred to as the Empire of Montezuma or Empire of the Incas. Even today, the terminology employed for their rulers is far from standardized – should we call the ruler in these cases *emperor* or *king*? Or maybe we should use a local term (Tlatoani, Inca)?

The 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries also witnessed the in-depth reception of knowledge about China within Europe. At that time, doubts arose as to how to render the Chinese title of *huangdi* in European languages. Athanasius Kirchner (*China illustrata* 1667) writes alternately *Rex Sinarum* or *Imperator Sinarum*, and the Middle Kingdom in French is either *Empire du milieu* or *Royaume du milieu*. The fact that the title of emperor, not king, ultimately prevailed, was certainly influenced by the vastness of the country, but also by the knowledge of Chinese history and the origins of the *huangdi* institution. It happened as a result of the unification of the entire Chinese universe under one monarch. In 221, King Qin united all 7 warring-states (only Wey temporarily survived), and in the centuries before there had been even several hundred of these states. The war for unification lasted 10 years (230 – 221). King Zheng of Qin conquered both the states of fairly young tradition

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<sup>31</sup> Mauntel (2018).

<sup>32</sup> Mauntel (2017).

that emerged from the partition of Jin in 403: 230 Han; 225 Wei; 222 Zhao, and the very old states of the early Zhou dynasty, created in 11<sup>th</sup> century: 223 Chu; 222 Yan; 221 Qi; 209 Wey. The Zhou dynasty itself, whose kings had at one time had real sovereignty over other states, and only with time did this become purely theoretical, did not survive to the times of King Zheng, but was abolished by his father Zhaoxiang in 256.

Also Octavianus Augustus, exercising his power in the western provinces, in a short period of only 12 years unified the Roman empire from seven parts: 1) Caesaricide provinces; 2) the territories occupied by Sextus Pompeius; 3) Lepidus provinces; 4) the provinces of Mark Antony; 5) Cleopatra's Egypt; 6) Italy, formally in the power of the Senate; 7) client kingdoms (e.g. Thrace). Of course, it is impossible to compare these often-ephemeral political units with the kingdoms of the Middle Kingdom of the warring states, but the common feature of both King Zheng and the Julian family were claims to divine origin. Caesar derived his lineage from Julius, son of Aeneas and the goddess Venus. Zheng was the 36<sup>th</sup> or the 38<sup>th</sup> King of Qin. The first King, Feizi, died in 858 BCE and ruled much later than founders of Zhou. Nevertheless, the royal family considered Nǚxiū to be their first ancestor; she, the granddaughter of Zhuan Xu, was thought to have become pregnant with Ye the Great, after eating a swallow's egg.

The rulers of the Zhou dynasty were customarily titled *Wáng* 王, 'king', even though they also used the honorable term *Tiānzǐ* 天子, 'Son of Heaven', which no other kings in the Middle Kingdom had done in that time. Nevertheless, when King Zheng created a new title in 221, he no longer satisfied himself with the title of king, but included the word *huáng* 皇 in the scope of his title. Today, these words sound different, but if we look at the etymology of the character 皇, we see that it is a phono-semantic compound (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>a:ŋ): 白 (*bái*, *bó*, 'flame') + 王 (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>aŋ, \*g<sup>w</sup>aŋs).<sup>33</sup> Thus, the character 皇 is a combination of two words, of which, according to the traditionally accepted explanation, the first 白 gives a semantic component, and the second 王 only a phonetic component. It is not without reason that the reconstructed Old Chinese pronunciation of both characters differs only in the length of the vowel 皇 (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>a:ŋ), 王 (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>aŋ, \*g<sup>w</sup>aŋs).<sup>34</sup> It seems, however, that reducing the element 王 to a phonetic component only, in a similar way as with the character 煌, 'bright, brilliant' (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>a:ŋ): semantic *huǒ* 火, 'fire', + phonetic 皇 (OC \*g<sup>w</sup>a:ŋ), is a misunderstanding. In fact, the etymology of 'flame' proposed for 白 is only one of the possible

<sup>33</sup> Baxter/Sagart (2014).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. The alternation of \*-Ø- and \*-j- as morphological infix: 皇 *huang* < *hwang* < \**wan*, 'august, stately' and *wang* < *hwang* < \**w-aŋ*, 'king'. Baxter/Sagart (1997) 61.

meanings, quite rare, derived semantically from the character 煌. Actually, the basic meanings for 白 include ‘white, clear, pure, blank, bright’, and it therefore carries the figurative meaning of ‘eminent, prominent’. Thus, it can be assumed that 皇 is not an entirely new word, and is only phonetically related to *wang*. Certainly, their shared reference to the category of a ruler was not without impact here, but it is simply a modification of the word *king*, a phonetic modification.<sup>35</sup> The lengthening of the syllabic vowel in Old Chinese could take a morphological character, and thus a graphic modification evoked the irresistible association with ‘white king, pure king, bright king’.

The probability of such an assumption is indicated not only by the reconstructed pronunciation of both characters – to which one can always object – but also to the dialectal and foreign pronunciation of both characters as recorded today:

	王	皇
OC:	* <i>g<sup>w</sup>aŋ</i>	* <i>g<sup>w</sup>a:ŋ</i> ,
MC:	<i>fiwɛŋ</i>	<i>fiwaŋ</i>
Mandarin:	<i>wáng</i>	<i>huáng</i>
Hakka Sixian:	<i>vòŋg</i>	<i>fòŋg</i>
Hakka Meixian:	<i>vong2</i>	<i>fong2</i>
Mín Dong Fuzhou:	<i>uòŋg</i>	<i>huòŋg</i>
Mín Nan Hokkien:	<i>ôŋg</i>	<i>hông</i>
Japanese Kanoon:	<i>ō (wau)</i>	<i>kō (Kwau)</i>
Vietnamese:	<i>ườŋg</i>	<i>hoàng, huỳnh</i>
Korean:	왕 <i>wang</i>	황 <i>hwang</i> (왕 <i>wang to be solemn</i> )
Cantonese Standard:	<i>wong4</i>	<i>wong4</i>
Mín Nan Teochew:	<i>uang5 / hêng5</i>	<i>uang5 / huang5</i>
Wu Shanghainese:	<i>hhuaan (T3)</i>	<i>hhuaan (T3)</i>
Japanese Goon:	<i>ō (wau)</i>	<i>ō (wau)</i>
Zhuang:	<i>vuengz</i>	<i>vuengz</i>

Accordingly, the character 皇 would not be a phono-semantic compound (形聲), but a compound ideograph (會意). Synonyms of *Huangdī* 皇帝 such as *Dìwáng* 帝王, *Rénwáng* 人王, *Tiānwáng* 天王, and *Dàwáng* 大王, an exact equivalent of the Indian *maharaja* or the Greek *megas basileus*, speak to this possibility.

<sup>35</sup> Schuessler (2007) 285: uncertain etymology, possibly originally meaning ‘royal’ (derived from ‘royal palace’), belonging to the Austro-Asiatic etyma \**wan* under → *ying4* 馨. Tai *luan* ‘royal’ is a loanword from Khmer (*h*)*lu:əŋ*, ‘king, royal’. Bodman (1980) 107 connects *huang* with → *wang2* 王 ‘king’ (Schuessler p. 507–508). This word may early have converged with → *huang2* 煌 ‘brilliant’.

Therefore, it can be concluded that in the history of humankind title of the Roman Emperor (*Imperator Caesar Augustus*) is unique. It originated in the republican milieu ideologically hostile to kingship, even if the republic was ruled by a de facto monarch. As for the title of the supreme ruler, it can be compared only with the Muslim title *Khalifat Rasul Allah*, which originated from ideas of theocracy. In other cultures and civilisations, the designations for universal rulers always consist of the word 'king', even if those were called 'emperors' in the European tradition. Also the Chinese title *Huangdì* was not originated without ties to the idea of kingship as the supreme leaders of the community.

Sung-Won Lee

# The Character and Heritage of the Qin-Han Empire

## 1 Concepts of Empire

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, long after the 19<sup>th</sup>-century era of ‘imperialism’, discourse about ‘empire’ has again attracted attention. Hobsbawm re-examined an integrated Western modern history centered on Britain and France while critically developing Lenin’s perspective.<sup>1</sup> What sparked interest in recent years was the hegemony of the United States in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the growth of China, which emerged as a major factor in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Niall Ferguson has been the most active in raising concerns about the Chinese Empire in recent years,<sup>2</sup> while Amy Chua makes predications about the new era of the Chinese Empire by illuminating the history of imperial China.<sup>3</sup> In other words, the world is now accepting a new era of Chinese empire as a reality and is also re-examining the history of the Chinese imperial past. In these contexts, what is empire and what is its meaning, and what does the emergence of the Chinese Empire mean for East Asian history?

Since the beginning of human history, numerous ethnic groups, nations, and various historical bodies have risen and fallen, but ‘the real imperial empire’ has been a very limited phenomenon. Nevertheless, the term empire has become an idiom and a rhetorical tool, and we are living in an age of excess regarding the concept of empire. However, the concept is ambiguous, and there exists no consensus about the process of establishing an empire. For example, consider the following definition:

Empire is a political system that governs and controls other peoples. Some empires have formal governance, and some are based on informal influence. Some empires are formed and maintained by force, some are formed by attracting followers with economic interests such as trade, and some are formed by the attraction of culture. In addition, there are cases in which the empire directly expands politically, economically, and militarily. In contrast, there are cases in which the formation and expansion of empires are made by the ‘invitation’ of followers. Therefore, some of the empire’s actions toward the inside and outside of

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1 Hobsbawm (1989).

2 Ferguson (2004a); Ferguson (2004b).

3 Chua (2009).

the empire are imperialistic, which governs and expands with coercion, and some are imperial based on consensus within the empire.<sup>4</sup>

However, the definition seems less problematic. *Wikipedia* defines ‘empire’ as “a sovereign state ... whose head of state is an emperor.” In Western Europe, Octavian (63 BCE–14 CE) was called *Augustus*, ‘the Dignified’, by the Senate in 27 BCE, and it is a fact that Rome became an empire. More precisely, when he became the *Imperator Caesar Divi Filius Augustus*, Rome, ruled by the *imperator* (derived from the Latin word *imperium*, meaning ‘military command’), soon became an empire. East Asia is also very similar in that respect. Qin 秦, one of the nations of the Warring States period, unified the world in 221 BCE, and Qin became an empire when King Ying Zheng 嬴政 (259–210 BCE) took over as a new monarch with a title suitable to his feat, namely Shi Huangdi 始皇帝 (‘the First Emperor’). However, aside from the Emperor or the *Imperator*, or the Sultan or the Caliph, the monarchs are only a part of the character of the empire, not the essence of empire itself. What are the conditions and factors of empire? What conditions and historical elements of empire did Qin and Han 漢 seek to develop or continue? And, finally, what is an empire?

Of course, there are many ways of understanding and approaching the era of Qin-Han as a kind of dynastic history.<sup>5</sup> But from early on, the era of Qin-Han was mostly understood as a shift into a new paradigm called the history of ‘empire’.<sup>6</sup> However, as mentioned above, it is necessary to examine further whether or not the East Asian empire with the ‘emperor-ruling system’ maintained the universality consistent with the essence of the empire.

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4 See *Encyclopedia of Political Sciences* 2002, s.v. “Empire, 제국,帝國”

5 Ebrely (1993) part II, “The Qin and Han Dynasties”; Idema/Zürcher (1990); Sullivan (1999) chapter 5, “The Qin and Han Dynasties”. Of course, just because the term ‘Dynasty’ is used, it cannot be asserted that the authors intentionally excluded ‘Empire’ or the ‘Imperial’.

6 For example, 增淵龍夫, 『中國古代の社會と國家: 秦漢帝國成立過程の社會史的研究』(弘文堂, 1960); 西嶋定生, 『中國古代帝國の形成と構造』(東京大學出版會, 1961); 同氏, 『秦漢帝國』(講談社, 1997); 木村正雄, 『中國古代帝國の形成』(不昧堂書店, 1965); 宮崎市定, 『古代帝國の成立』(創元社, 1969); 好並隆司, 『秦漢帝國史研究』(未來社, 1978); 李成珪, 『中國古代帝國成立史研究』(一潮閣, 1997); 李改元, 『漢帝國的成立と劉邦集團』(汲古書院, 2000); 富谷至, 『文書行政の漢帝國』(名古屋大學出版會, 2010); 鶴間和幸, 『秦帝國の形成と地域』(汲古書院, 2013); Shaughnessy (2000); Loewe (2006); Lewis (2007); Yates/Barbieri-Low (2015). Also M.E. Lewis posits that “From a Western point of view, the entire historical process of China itself is equal to the concept of ‘empire’.”

## 1.1 The Factors of Empire

The most important factor raised when discussing the nature of empire is *integration*. It is said that an empire is a system that emerges through the political integration of various neighboring countries, nations, or peoples, rather than a domain of attribution like the Persian empire, Roman empire, and Mongol empire, etc. ‘Political integration’ in this context refers to a system that has been newly expanded and created within a process of physical conflict including war or conquest and subjugation. In this respect, Qin’s unification of the East Asian world was the most typical political unity of conquest and subjugation, as can be clearly seen from the following report posted by the prime minister, Li Si 李斯, to the emperor.

Once upon a time, the distance of the land of the legendary Five Kings was only a thousand miles in all directions, and even the heavenly ruler could not control the princes outside it. Now, your Majesty raised up a military force to defeat the remaining enemies and calm the world, and the world became a district [郡] or a prefecture [縣], and all laws were unified as one. This is a feat that has never existed since history began, and it was not accomplished by the legendary Five Kings.<sup>7</sup>

At first glance, this quote appears to describe the product of the war of conquest of about 10 years of Qin’s King, Ying Zheng. But in fact, this was the result of the gradual integration process during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, as it were, a season which spanned about 500 years.

The second factor to be considered is the *spatiality* or *size* of an empire. The physical result of political unity is the vast territory of an empire. Of course, there is no absolute criterion: the vastness of an empire need not be more than a few million square kilometers. However, the vastness of the integration of multiple territorial states beyond one territorial state is an essential factor of empire. The most typical example in this regard can be found in the Mongolian Empire, which once expanded its territory to 33 million km<sup>2</sup>. Yet, according to the standard of territorial extent, a great empire encompassing East and West emerged as early as the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Through a 10-year expedition, the young king Alexander (356 – 323 BCE) united the territory of about 5.2 million km<sup>2</sup> from east to west from the Balkans to the Nile, from the Anatolian Peninsula to Persia, and beyond the Hindu Kush Mountains to the Punjabi region of India. His homeland, Macedonia, must then be considered a great empire that was un-

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7 『史記』, 卷6, 秦始皇本紀, “昔者五帝地方千里, 其外侯服夷服諸侯或朝或否, 天子不能制。今陛下興義兵, 誅殘賊, 平定天下, 海內爲郡縣, 法令由一統, 自上古以來未嘗有, 五帝所不及。”



usual for its time. Furthermore, in his realm, many peoples and cultures were fused, leaving the great legacy of Hellenism. On the other hand, however, many researchers do not consider Alexander's 'empire' as such, and the reason for this is clear. It is because the empire after the death of the young king, who was so successful but died young, was brutally divided up already 10 years after its appearance. Alexander's Macedonia has appeared to some like an imperial pavilion upon unsustainable sand.<sup>8</sup>

In comparison, the fact that the territory that Qin united was about 3 million km<sup>2</sup>,<sup>9</sup> and that the largest territorial scope of the Han Empire reached 6.5 million km<sup>2</sup>,<sup>10</sup> suggests that it was not lacking in spatiality as an empire. However, in the case of Qin, despite this feat, Jia Yi 賈誼 criticized his empire, claiming that it became a joke of history since it collapsed in vain after the death of the First Emperor. It seems that he had an early insight into the limitations of Qin's claim to empire, perhaps reminiscent of the difficulties of Alexander's empire.<sup>11</sup>

The third issue integral to the considerations discussed above is the *temporal persistence* or *durability* of a true empire. There is no absolute criterion marking an empire's continuity, such as that it must last more than a few generations or decades. In this respect, the Roman Empire, called the "millennial empire", was the longest and most robustly grown empire. It was an empire that began as a tribal state in Etruria, in the northwestern part of the Italian peninsula, around the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE and continued to evolve itself through a thousand years of monarchy, republic, and finally imperialism. Indeed, Rome was an empire that was not built in a day but was not easily collapsed for that reason. Measured against Rome, like Alexander's empire, the Qin Empire faced obvious limits in durability and may not be called an empire in the true sense. However, as will be discussed later, it is worth noting that today researchers study the Han Empire, the longest dynasty in the history of China and the completion of the ancient empire, on a continuum with the Qin.<sup>12</sup>

The fourth factor of empire is *centralization*. An entity cannot be called an empire unless the human and material resources within the empire are centrally controlled and power concentrated in the emperor. No matter how vast the ter-

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8 Grainger (2007). This study noted Alexander's failure to train a successor and the incompetence of his successors.

9 Taagepera (1979).

10 Turchin *et al.* (2006).

11 『史記』, 卷130, 太史公自書, "六合爲家, 崑函爲宮, 一夫作難而七廟墮, 身死人手爲天下笑者, 何也。仁誼不施而攻守之勢異也。"

12 Scheidel (2009). This study compared the Roman Empire and the Qin-Han Empire under various categories such as politics, economy, military, and society.

ritory, if it is divided and ruled by royal families, vassals, and bureaucrats, it is not an empire but a feudal system. It is clear that the District-Prefecture 郡縣 system, which Qin firstly implemented throughout the territory of his empire, was such a drastic turn of centralization. The centralized District-Prefecture system was the most important system of the emperor's rule, and the most important legacy of the empire. Successive Chinese dynasties inherited it over more than 2,000 years until the Qing Dynasty.

The last important factor of the empire is the *system* that keeps the empire sustainable. The core of a vast empire's ability to last for a certain period of time exists within the system built by that empire. In many respects, such as politics, economy, military, administration, and culture, the system varied in each period and for each empire, but it was clear that only the empire which built such a system could persist. In this respect, too, the Roman Empire was typical. Powerful corps trained as elite soldiers, a provincial system that flexibly operated centralization and decentralization, rational and universal Roman law, magnificent civil engineering constructions such as cities, public facilities, roads, squares, waterworks, etc., which were built by Rome's expansion, and the Christian tradition that embraced aspects of pagan religion all contributed to the Roman Empire's systematicity. Indeed, Rome used a variety of systems. Although somewhat different from the Roman Empire, the important reason to view the Qin-Han Empire as a continuous empire is that the blueprint of the imperial system envisioned by the First Emperor of Qin was intact in the Han Empire. In other words, the empire built the necessary system in order to effectively govern a vast population and diverse cultures within its vast territory from a center for a considerable period of time. In this respect, the Qin empire illustrates how empire is a product of the evolutionary process of history.

## 1.2 The Features of Empire

There are some common features of the great empires that may be discussed from the factors that make up the ideal empire. First of all, the empires of one era were generally *advanced civilizations* that dominated the historical political bodies that existed in the contemporary era. Ancient Persia, Rome, and the Qin-Han Empires, the medieval Islamic and Tang 唐 Empires, the early modern Mongol and Ottoman Empires, and the modern British Empire were more advanced than any civilizations of their respective times. The Qin-Han Empire, along with the contemporary Roman Empire, was in its time the most overwhelming advanced civilization on the Afro-Eurasia continent. At that time, the Qin Empire had a population of about 20 million, and the Han Empire

had a population of about 58 million.<sup>13</sup> The two empires were the world's largest population centers. Of course, population may not guarantee all of an empire's advanced nature, but in terms of 'economy of scale', the size of the labor force was an absolute part of the empire's productive force. Applying today's concept of GDP, China was a region that exceeded 25% of the world's productive power in the period between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. It was the center of an economy that boasted the largest productive power in the ancient world, except for India. Especially important here is the fact that population and economic power absolutely affect military power.<sup>14</sup>

The most notable advancement of the Qin-Han Empire was its highly elaborate political system. The Transformative Innovation 變法 implemented by the nations of the Warring States period, which worked to promote the power of wealthy nations, comprehensively changed the existing social system, which was based on the clan system and the town 邑 system. The main contents of the innovation were the carrying out of a clear census, accurate land surveys, securing cultivated land through wasteland development, fair land distribution, taxation, labor service, and military service collections. Through this innovation, the state organized farmers from large families into small-scale peasant units based on five people and established a national system to take care of both agricultural production and military service.<sup>15</sup> The legal system was reorganized to provide a basis for such a series of policies, the high-level bureaucratic system was established as the subject of policy promotion, and a sophisticated document administration and postal system were implemented.<sup>16</sup> At this time,

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13 Durand (1960).

14 See 'Statistics on World Population, GDP and Per Capita GDP, 1–2008 AD', copyright Angus Maddison, University of Groningen. Of course, there are considerable objections to this. It is said that the economic indicators of the pre-modern era and the post-industrial era cannot be compared equally, and the analysis centering on the size of the population is problematic. China in the 1820s, which had a population exceeding 400 million, was analyzed to be close to 40% of the world's GDP. In other words, after the Opium War there was a great gap between the potentiality and the reality of China, which was thoroughly defeated by the British and European powers. However, there is also an argument that in the pre-modern era, centered on the primary industry, where accurate GDP measurement is not possible, the size of the population is the most important indicator in making these measurements.

15 杜正勝, 『編戶齊民』(聯經出版社, 1990); 李成珪, 『中國古代帝國成立史研究』(一潮閣, 1997).

16 富谷至, 『文書行政の漢帝國』(名古屋大學出版會, 2010).

China was transforming into one of the most efficient and controlled political and social systems in history.<sup>17</sup>

Not all empires were so, but as a rule, the greater the empire in history the more *open* and *inclusive* it was. Since an empire by definition integrated various religions, races, ethnicities, cultures, and languages, conflict and clash, harmony and inclusion intersected, seeking equilibrium. For example, the Qin-Han Empire was by no means an ‘Open Empire’.<sup>18</sup> For a long time, China has been a closed society, and the Qin Empire was no exception. However, the Han Empire became a relatively open empire by actively securing east-west trade routes and participating in intermediary trade after Zhang Qian 張騫 was dispatched to the western world by the Emperor Wu 武帝. Because of this, the Qin-Han Empire was not a ‘Closed Empire’.<sup>19</sup> The Tang Empire in the Middle Ages was inclusive enough to count as an ‘Open Empire’, and its capital Chang-an 長安, along with Constantinople and Baghdad, was a center of civilization in the Middle Ages, much like Persepolis and Rome in the ancient world. The Mongolian empire expanded the horizons of world history in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, embracing multiculturalism within its imperial bounds and advocating multi-ethnicity.<sup>20</sup> More than ever during the Mongol Empire, more objects, envoys, pilgrims and travelers traveled and experienced Afro-Eurasia under the auspices of an open empire.<sup>21</sup> The more politically inclusive and culturally generous empires left a great legacy to humanity.

The last characteristic of an empire was that it served as a kind of *hub of civilization* that conveyed its heritage to future generations by integrating diverse cultures beyond time and space, recreating a new civilization. For example, as the Roman Empire grew, ancient Greek culture, the Oriental traditions of Egypt and Mesopotamia, Alexander’s heritage of Hellenism, and eventually Christianity coalesced to create and perpetuate a Roman civilization. The Roman Empire became the hub of Western civilization, and it has been fully inherited as a European heritage from ancient times to the present day.

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17 Fukuyama (2011). Here, Fukuyama insists that Qin was “the first modern state” in history, and of course there may be controversy over its “modern” nature. However, he presents it based on Qin’s political organization, legal system, economic power, and social liquidity for its time, operating from a political engineering perspective.

18 Hansen (2015) emphasized the openness of Chinese history. However, there may be different opinions on whether China was basically open until the 1600s. In fact, China’s history has witnessed periods of closedness and openness.

19 Grousset (1968), who actively argued that the source of the prosperity of the Korean Empire was openness, viewed that openness as the influence of nomads.

20 Kim (2010).

21 Kim (2005).

The history of the nomadic state has long been mistaken for a history of destruction and looting rather than creation and construction. However, the Mongolian Empire had a profound influence on the Qing Empire by inheriting and developing the tradition of the conquest legacy of the Northern Dynasty 北朝 in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, the Qing Empire succeeded the Ming Dynasty of the Han Chinese dynasty, but in its internationality and inclusiveness it outstripped even the Mongolian empire, showing off its world empire.

However, we are well aware throughout the course of history that, as there cannot be an eternal empire, the Qin-Han empire lost its health and flexibility when forced to ‘despotic’ domination instead of openness and inclusiveness, resulting in its decline and destruction. Today, Chinese people call their ethnic identity ‘Han-zu’ 漢族 and define their scripts and languages as ‘Han-zi’ 漢字 and ‘Han-yü’ 漢語. This clearly suggests a succession consciousness and an identification between the Chinese and the Han, an ancient empire of 2,000 years ago. Let us next examine more closely the process of the emergence of the Qin-Han Empire and what its legacy was.

## 2 The Heritage of Qin-Han Empire

As mentioned earlier, the Qin and Han represent separate dynasties, but the reason researchers see them as a continuous empire is that, although the Qin dynasty collapsed early, its idea of ancient empire was fully inherited and developed by the Han Empire. Therefore, here we examine the legacy of empire which had a profound influence on the history after the Qin-Han Empire. This legacy was formed within the Qin and Han Empires, or rather from the Qin to the Han.<sup>22</sup>

### 2.1 Unification Policies

Empire is maintained as a concrete set of policy and systems, not a product of ideology and will. In that respect, the nations before Qin did not create an empire, because they could not. Administratively, the core of the unification policy was the District-Prefecture System mentioned above. After the unification of his domain, the First Emperor divided his world into thirty-six regional administrative units, Districts, and dispatched District Heads 郡守 in charge of the admin-

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<sup>22</sup> Lee (2020). In this book, the significance and legacy of the Qin-Han Empire are summarized to some extent.

istration and security of each district. Following that, Prefectures were installed under the District Heads, and the Prefecture Heads 縣令 were dispatched to be in charge. Excluding the period of division after the Qin-Han Empire, successive dynasties basically maintained this centralized administrative system until 1911. In other words, after the Qin-Han Empire, Chinese history did not return to the feudal system again.

After the establishment of the empire, the First Emperor distributed equal land allotments to farmers based on equivalent labor forces. In addition, fair taxes, labor, and military service were required. The goods and currency distributed by merchants had to be standardized, and the standards and standard weight of goods made by the engineers had to be constant. The prerequisites for all other systems was the same standard of weights and measures. For this reason, the First Emperor unified the measurements and money. The emperor even unified the width of the wagon wheel, which seems to have been closely related to the maintenance of roads.

The First Emperor is famous for standardising the script, but in fact, the script of each country were not completely different even during the Warring States period. However, the typeface varied among the nations. It has been widely thought that Chinese typeface was made uniform after the First Emperor, but the typefaces of the characters engraved on the relics of the First Emperor period were themselves diverse. However, with the recent discovery of a large number of administrative documents from the Qin-Han era, researchers are paying closer attention to the document administration of the Empire. Since the 1970s, a large collection of documents made of bamboo or wood strips has been excavated in the bordered areas of the Qin-Han Empire, and administrative documents that made up a large number of these illustrations show how the empire's rule was codified through the administration of documents.<sup>23</sup> For example, in 2001, a large number of wood strips were excavated from an old well in Liye 里耶 town, Hunan Province, China, totaling about 38,000 pieces. Analysis of the contents revealed that these belonged to an administrative document written in the Qianling 遷 Prefecture, a member of the Dongting 洞庭 District, on the southern border of the Qin Empire. When ordered by the emperor, documents were handed over to each District, and the documents were handed down from District to Prefecture, from Prefecture to town (鄉, Xiang), and from town to village (里, Li) in a relay. Vice-versa, documents written in Li were passed up to Xiang, Prefecture, District, and the emperor sequentially. The massive wooden strips found in Liye were part of administrative documents received by Qianling Prefecture

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23 王桂海, 『漢代官文書制度』(廣西教育出版社, 1999).

over 15 years of the Qin Empire. In the process of switching from Qin to Han, it seems that the Qianling Prefecture discarded administrative documents in the well. Researchers remain astonished by the massive scale of some of the administrative documents.<sup>24</sup>

Although the letters and fonts were different in various regions, at least the formation of official documents had to be standardised in order for the empire's documentary administration to operate. As we have seen in the paragraph above, the essence of the First Emperor's policy for standardisation of the script was the unification of this document administration. In the end, that turned out to be one of the key systems for maintaining the empire. While document administration was the lifeblood of maintaining the empire, improved road networks and postal systems were the vessels of the empire.

It is well known that Qin dynasty successfully enforced the Transformative Innovation based on the Legalist ideology from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and that the First Emperor admired the Legalist ideology. Recently, as documents containing the contents of the laws of the Qin Empire have been unearthed, it has been revealed that Qin ruled the country with strict laws.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, it is known that the Han Empire ruled the country based on the Confucian ideology. However, in 1983, about 1,100 bamboo strips were found in the town of Zhangjiashan 張家山 in the Hubei Province, China, which contained early laws of the Han Empire.<sup>26</sup> Surprisingly, the laws of the Han Empire coincided almost perfectly with the laws of the Qin Dynasty enacted during the First Emperor's Period. This means that Han basically inherited Qin's system.<sup>27</sup> While the empire was stabilized during the period of the Emperor Wu, the sixth emperor of the Han

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24 The main reports and comments on *Liye* wood strips are as follows. 湖南省文物報告研究所·湘西土家族苗族自治州文物處·龍山縣文物管理局「湖南龍山里耶 戰國-秦代故城一號井發掘簡報」(『文物』 2003-1); 湖南省文物考古研究所 編,『里耶秦簡發掘報告』(岳麓書社, 2006); 『里耶古城·秦簡與秦文化研究: 中國里耶古城·秦簡與秦文化國際學術研討會論文集』(科學出版社, 2009); 陳偉,『里耶秦簡牘校釋』第一卷(武漢大學出版社, 2012)

25 Data and major researches on the Qin Empire law are as follows. 睡虎地秦墓竹簡整理小組,『睡虎地秦墓竹簡』(文物出版社, 2001); 大庭脩,『秦漢法制史の研究』(創文社, 1982); 吳福助,『睡虎地秦簡論考』(天津出版社, 1994); 梅原郁 編『前近代中國の刑罰』(京都大学人文科学研究所, 1996); 工藤元男,『睡虎地秦簡よりみるた秦代の國家と社會』(創文社, 1997).

26 Data and major researches on the Hin Empire law are as follows. 張家山二四七號漢墓竹簡整理小組,『張家山漢墓竹簡(二四七號墓)』(文物出版社, 2001); 朱紅林,『張家山漢簡『二年律令』集釋』(社會科學文獻出版社, 2005); 富谷至 編,『江陵張家山二四七號墓出土漢律令の研究』(朋友書店, 2006); 蔡萬進,『張家山漢簡《奏讞書》研究』(廣西師範大學出版社, 2006).

27 The studies that have comprehensively compared and analyzed the Qin-Han law are as follows. 富谷至,『秦漢刑罰制度の研究』(同朋社, 1998); 廣瀨薰雄,『秦漢律令研究』(汲古書院, 2010); 張忠煒,『秦漢律令法系研究初編』(社會科學文獻出版社, 2012).

Empire, Confucianism was expressed as the basic ideology of education and governance.<sup>28</sup> But within this system, the Han Empire still relied on elaborate laws. Researchers describe this mode of governance in the ancient empire as ‘outward Confucianism, inward Legalism.’ In this respect, the Han Empire upgraded the system of imperial governance by taking advantage of refined Confucian thought while still adopting Qin’s laws. In this way a form of government has been handed down through the successive dynasties of China for over 2,000 years.

## 2.2 The Great Wall and empire realm

If you look at the history of China, it is easy to see that building fortresses exists in the cultural DNA of the Chinese people. Since the end of the Neolithic period, China built walls around villages to prevent external threats and to distinguish the worlds outside and inside villages. The people of the Shang 商 Dynasty described a city surrounded by a wall as a Yi 邑. Inside was a world of humans and civilizations, outside a world of barbarians and violence. This is similar to the ancient Greek and Roman tradition of dividing the inside and outside of the *polis* into the worlds of *civitates* and *barbari*. As the country developed and the population increased, the size of the wall naturally became huge, and in the late Warring States period the northern countries built a huge wall to the north to prevent the rapidly growing nomadic state of the Xiongnu 匈奴 (probably the origin of the Huns). Therefore, it was a natural process for China, as a country of agricultural settlers, to erect the Great Wall. Nevertheless, the size of empire at this time was unprecedented up to that point in history.<sup>29</sup> The First Emperor ordered that the walls of the Warring States, which were built in the border area, should be expanded and supplemented, creating the Great Wall of the Empire. In this way, a whopping 6,500 km long wall was built during the First Emperor’s era. In general, it is said that the Great Wall was built for military and administrative purposes, but the Great Wall was also an ecological boundary line built almost exactly along the boundary between agricultural and nomadic societies. It is an artificial structure that embodies the spatial identity of the Chinese civilization. The Great Wall was the result of thousands of years of development in mainland China, an area called ‘Inner Land’ 內地, resulting in an ‘empire’.

28 金谷治, 『秦漢思想史研究』(日本學術振興會, 1960); 板野長八, 『儒教成立史の研究』(岩波書店, 1995)

29 彭曦, 『戰國秦長城考察與研究』(西北大學出版社, 1990).



A new turning point in the history of the Great Wall was more dramatic during the Han Empire. Emperor Wu confronted Xiongnu on the one hand by dispatching Zhang Qian to the West to make full use of diplomatic tactics, and on the other hand he conquered Xiongnu militarily. In the process, the empire came to affirm the reality of East-West trade on the Eurasian continent's oasis route (the so-called 'Silk Road'). The Emperor Wu set up four Districts in the Gobi Desert on the west side of the Yellow River to dispatch the population, and a new Great Wall was built up to the western end of Dunhuang.<sup>30</sup> For the first time in Chinese history, the 'western regions' 外地 were incorporated into the empire, which became an important precedent for the empire's expansion. Of course, this remote land was not always incorporated into the territory of the empire in later history. However, it became an important turning point in the realm of the empire, and during the period of the Mongol Empire in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the realm of the Chinese empire once again underwent a turn. The reason why the area is not abstract but concrete is that the Great Wall remains solid to this day, and successive dynasties contracted and reconstructed the Great Wall up to the Ming Dynasty.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to the spatial heritage of the Qin-Han Empire, the historical perspective centered on the Guanzhong 關中 area was fixed. The Changan 長安, the capitals of the Qin-Han Empire, are all near Xi'an, and these regions are today the central region of Shaanxi Province in China, the so-called Guanzhong area.<sup>32</sup> This area was rich in natural products and like a fortress of heaven, and it was an area where the capital of the empire could be located. Therefore, the capital of successive dynasties was established before the Song Dynasty. After the Song Dynasty, the capital of the successive dynasties was located in the North China region, south of the Great Wall; except for Nanjing, the capital of the early Ming dynasty, both Kaifeng and Beijing were located in the Yellow River basin. As such, the development of an imperial history centered on the Guanzhong or North China became a legacy of the Qin-Han Empire.

30 王子今, 『秦漢交通史稿』(中共中央黨校出版社, 1994).

31 阪倉篤秀, 『長城の中國史』(講談社選書, 2004).

32 王學理, 『秦都咸陽』(陝西人民出版社, 1985); 同氏, 『咸陽帝都記』(三秦出版社, 1999); 鶴間和幸, 『秦帝國の形成と地域』, 第4章 「秦咸陽城のプラン」; 劉慶株・李毓芳, 『漢長安城』(文物出版社, 2003).

## 2.3 Cultural Hub

As mentioned earlier, the great empire has always served as a cultural hub from the perspective of civilization history. The empire developed through the convergence of previous cultures and then left a distinct legacy for later eras, allowing later historical bodies to have a sense of succession. In this respect, the Qin-Han Empire faithfully served as the hub of civilization. In the previous section, we looked at the standardisation of letters, documents, and laws during the Qin Empire period. It was also noted that the Han empire reorganized the idea of Confucianism as a national philosophy. One very important feature of this involved selecting the main scriptures of Confucianism as the text of national education. This text was expanded to the *Three Scriptures*, the *Five Scriptures*, and the *Thirteen Scriptures*, and became a classic for intellectuals until modern times. The Hundred Schools of Thought in the Spring and Autumn Warring States period was also organized and compiled by each school in the Han Dynasty, becoming an important classic in East Asia.

The compilation of history books was also very important. Sima Qian 司馬遷, who was in charge of historiography during the period of the Han Emperor Wu, compiled a great history book, *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記, by organizing the history of ancient times. Prior to that, each country had its own history books, but this history book was the first official history compiled after the emergence of the empire. It was a great history book, so the standard was presented in the later history books.<sup>33</sup> Official history books compiled by successive dynasties until the Qing Dynasty have been gathered to create a twenty-five part history. In general, Chinese intellectual history is referred to as the culture of ‘Scripture and History’ 經史. There are two axes that make up the culture of intellectuals, one of which is comprised of the scriptures, Confucian documents containing saints’ philosophical thoughts and wisdom. The other is made up of history books, which record many people and events in history, conveying their experiences and lessons. An important opportunity for history to become an axis of knowledge was when Sima Qian compiled *Records of the Grand Historian*. Although he did not use the expression of ‘empire’ in the modern sense, it was clear that at that time the Han Emperor Wu era was recognized as the having achieved the culmination of civilization due to his accumulation of ancient history. His perception of history was also an important motive for writing the book. He made it clear that the central area of China’s history was the Guanzhong area in the Yellow River Basin, and clearly recorded that Chinese

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33 宮崎市定, 『史記を語る』(岩波新書, 1979); 佐藤武敏, 『司馬遷の研究』(汲古書院, 1997).

history had been transformed into a new era after the First Emperor established the Empire. Today we refer to the same people under the rubric of “China”, which originated from Qin (*Ch'in*), and China’s inhabitants express their own cultural identity in Han Chinese, Han Character, Han Languages, etc. Is there a greater legacy than this?

## 2.4 Historical experience of empire

The last legacy of an empire is *historical experience*. Experience is somewhat abstract, but it may be more important than the aspects of legacy mentioned earlier, and perhaps it is the synthesis of all of it. Whether by chance or inevitably, Qin dynasty unified the world and established an empire. Given the centuries-old feudal system, the emergence of an empire could have been an accident. In fact, the Han Empire collapsed in just 15 years. However, those 15 years witnessed fundamental historical changes and left an indelible imprint on Chinese history.

Although there was some confusion in the early days of the Han Dynasty, the Han Dynasty re-established the empire by choosing the First Emperor’s laws and the centralized District and Prefecture system. And over 400 years, the Han Dynasty completed an ancient empire. How did the Han Dynasty and successive dynasties establish an empire, even though there were divisions in its midst? This is not easy to explain.

An empire in a people’s past does not guarantee a return to empire. After the Roman Empire, Europe contained many peoples who were oriented towards building an empire, but realizing this ideal was by no means an easy task. It was increasingly difficult to unite and maintain China’s growing territory into a single empire. As a result, divisions were repeated, but in the end, successive dynasties would re-establish a unified empire. They regarded the history of unity, the history of the empire, an irreversible ‘justice’ because of ‘the history they experienced’. In other words, imperial history itself as experienced by China may be its greatest legacy.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Lee (2020).

Juping Yang

# Co-existence of the Four Empires and the Emergence of the Maritime Silk Road: An Introduction

Around the beginning of Christian era, a new political framework appeared in Eurasia. From west to east, four empires existed side by side at that time: Rome, Parthia, Kushan, and Eastern Han-China. At about the same time a commercial sea route from the Mediterranean to India also emerged. Over the following two centuries it gradually reached the South China Sea. Meanwhile, Chinese merchants also arrived on the east coast of India by sea and land, reaching even southernmost Sri Lanka. This was the so-called Maritime Silk Road. Numerous works have been published about it, including the history of the discovery and use of the monsoon season, important ports, and different kinds of products that were exchanged via this trade route. Debate about its origin in China centers on a series of coastal cities: Hepu 合浦, Guangzhou 广州 (namely Pan Yu [番禺]), Quanzhou 泉州, and even some on the Peninsula of Shandong. Few scholars, however, have focused on how this route emerged within the context of the four empires listed above. This paper attempts to resolve this problem by examining literary sources in Chinese, Greek, and Latin alongside archaeological evidence.

## 1 The political situation of Eurasia and the extension of the Oasis Silk Road by the early first century CE

The Maritime Silk Road was a major branch of the Silk Road. The conquests of Alexander the Great not only inaugurated the Hellenistic Period, but also opened up a new era in the history of civilization: the age of empires. Prior to Alexander's *anabasis*, a transcontinental empire had been established by the Persians. However, in the aftermath of Alexander's campaigns, a series of empires appeared,

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including the Seleucid Empire founded by one of his successors, Seleucus I, in c. 312 BCE, the Parthian empire, which separated from it c. 247 BCE, the Kushan Empire established in the mid-first century CE in Central Asia and India by a nomad confederation from northwest of China, the Han Empire in 206 BCE in China, and the Roman Empire founded in 27 BCE and centered in the Mediterranean.

Before Alexander's campaigns, direct contact between the civilizations of the Mediterranean and East Asia had not been formally established. For example, the Greeks knew nothing of China, and vice versa. It was only as a result of Alexander's conquests and the formation of his empire that regular contact between these ancient civilizations was finally realized. In 128 BCE, a Chinese envoy, Zhang Qian 张骞, arrived in Central Asia where he personally witnessed the legacies of the Hellenistic world, such as Greek-styled cities, coins, Greek specialties, and the Greek language. Zhang Qian's arrival in Central Asia formally opened the Silk Road from China to the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup> From that point onward contacts and exchanges between the ancient civilizations of Eurasia became regularized. The main line of the Silk Road linked China and the Mediterranean world. The southern ports of the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf and India also were joined as a consequence. As early as the time of the Persian Empire, Darius I arranged for a Greek named Scylax to sail down the Indus to search for its estuary around 510 BCE. He even circumnavigated Arabia and sailed the Red Sea, where the Phoenicians began their voyage around Libya (Africa).<sup>2</sup> It was also from the Indus that Alexander's navy sailed into the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. Therefore, when the Silk Road emerged, it naturally joined a network of sea routes that had been used since time immemorial. In this way, the sea routes connecting the Red Sea, Arabia, Persian Gulf, and Indian coasts became a separate branch of the Silk Road.

In the Christian era, the political situation in Eurasia changed dramatically. The Hellenistic kingdoms founded by Alexander's successors had by then completely disappeared in the eastern Mediterranean and India. Rome had become a formidable empire in the Mediterranean. Augustus had inaugurated a new age, the so-called *pax Romana*. The Euphrates served as Rome's frontier in the east opposite the Parthian Empire. Parthia, having spent the last two and a half centuries expanding and consolidating territory, now controlled the whole of the Iranian plateau, bordered by the Euphrates in the west, the Persian Gulf in the south, and Aria and Sistan in the east. The Kushan Empire was just begin-

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<sup>1</sup> For detailed arguments, see Yang (2013).

<sup>2</sup> Hdt. 4.44, 4.42.

ning to be established in the mid-first century CE, with the rivers Amu Darya and the Indus as its center. The Kushans selectively acculturated legacies of the earlier Greco-Bactrian kingdom, and the small Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian and the Indo-Parthian kingdoms.

As for easternmost China, at this point it had just experienced the transition from the Western (Former) Han (西汉 or 前汉) to the Eastern (Later) Han (东汉 or 后汉) dynasty. After a brief period of chaos, China was undergoing a period of political transformation. The emperors began trying to recover control of the Western Regions,<sup>3</sup> as a consequence of which there would be more contacts between China and countries in the west. The Han not only wanted direct contacts with kingdoms like Jibin 罽宾, Wuyishanli 乌弋山离, and Kushan, but was also eager to establish direct contact with empires further west, such as Anxi 安息 (Parthia), Tiaozhi 条支 (Syrian Antioch in the Persian Gulf), and Daqin 大秦 (Rome).

## 2 The role played by the four Empires in creating the Maritime Silk Road

The co-existence of these four large empires led to a temporary cessation of large wars between them, but this does not imply that they halted all communications with one another. On the contrary, trade relations between them became increasingly close by way of the Silk Road. A contest of mercantile interests displaced military confrontation.

### 2.1 The Roman demand for silk and spice

Before the Silk Road, there was a ‘Spice Road’ that ran between the Mediterranean, the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian sub-continent, mainly through the sea routes. However, when silk became familiar to the Romans, love for

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<sup>3</sup> The protector general and the commander of Wuji 戊己校尉, whose duties were to manage the countries in the Western Regions, were appointed in CE 74 by Han Emperor Mingdi: Fan (1965) 122. In the context of the Han Dynasty, Xiyu 西域, ‘the Western Regions’, has two meanings. One signals the area from Dunhuang 敦煌 to Pamir, namely the western part of the modern Gansu Province and the Xinjiang Province. This could be called the Chinese Western Region. The other one stands for the whole area to the west known by China as far as the Mediterranean. This could be called the Big Western Regions.

the cloth became a fashion in Roman society. Pliny once complained that “by the lowest reckoning, India, China and the Arabian Peninsula take from our empire 100 million sesterces every year—that is the sum which our luxuries and our women cost us.”<sup>4</sup> In another passage, he mentions the fondness of Roman matrons for Chinese silk to the extent that they shamelessly display their transparent clothes in public.<sup>5</sup> In a meeting of the senate, Tacitus reports that Quintus Haterius and Octavius Fronto denounced “against the national extravagance.” They appealed to their countrymen to outlaw “Oriental silks” so that they “should no longer degrade the male sex.”<sup>6</sup> In these accounts we find two seemingly contradictory facts. On the one hand, Romans, no matter their gender, craved Chinese silk, and on the other hand, some conservatives did not like it because it soiled Roman morality and depleted currency from the Empire. But there is one problem worthy of mention. In the English translation of the Latin text, *Seres* is mistakenly understood and translated as China. Actually, the Romans in the era of Pliny (23–79 CE) and Tacitus (ca. 56–ca. 120 CE) did not know the exact location of *Seres*. What they did know was that *Seres* was a place where people produced silk, and was a country north of India, the land of the Scythians, somewhere in the remote East.<sup>7</sup> In fact, *Seres* might have been a region that served as a commercial nexus between China and Rome, with Indian or Parthian merchants serving as middlemen in the east-west exchange. The large quantity of Roman coins mentioned by Pliny could not all have flowed into China, because all known Roman coins so far unearthed in excavations in China are Byzantine, dating to the fourth century CE or later. This implies that there was no direct trade between China and Rome, at least in the first and second century CE. But, certainly, there were close trade relations between the Roman Mediterranean and the Indian subcontinent, and even with the Parthians on the Iranian Plateau. Evidently, the sea route was an important conduit through which silk and other commodities from India were transported to Rome. One Chinese historical book states that Daqin (Rome), Anxi (Parthia), and Tianzhu (India) once traded with each other by sea.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in the beginning of first century CE Roman merchants began sailing from the Arabian Peninsula to the coast of India when they ‘discovered’ the monsoon (Hippalus).<sup>9</sup>

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4 Plin. *HN*. 12.41.84.

5 Plin. *HN*. 6.20.54.

6 Tac. *Anm.* 2.33.

7 For general descriptions on *Seres*, see Yule (1915) 183–185, 187–200, 203.

8 Fan (1965) 2919.

9 Generally, its discovery is attributed to a Greek navigator Hippalus in the first century BCE. It is possible that Indian and Arabian merchants knew it earlier still.

Strabo states that “since the Romans invaded Arabia Felix,<sup>10</sup> the merchants of Alexandria sailed with fleets by way of the Nile and of the Arabian Gulf (modern Red Sea) as far as India and that as many as one hundred and twenty vessels sailed from Myos Hormos to India, whereas under the Ptolemys only very few ventured to undertake the voyage and to carry on traffic in Indian merchandise.”<sup>11</sup> The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, written by an anonymous Greek in the mid-first century, describes the voyage from Alexandria via the Nile and across the desert, then from the Red Sea past the Arabian Peninsula to India. He also makes mention of numerous coastal ports and the merchandise that was imported and exported by Roman merchants.<sup>12</sup> This indicates that at least by the first century, Romans had begun directly trading with India by sea. The author of the *Periplus* even tells us that Roman merchants arrived on the eastern coast of India and sailed as far as the estuary of the Ganges. They learned of “a very great inland city called Thina” beyond Bactria in the far north. They also knew that it was through Bactria that Chinese silk was transported to Barygaza,<sup>13</sup> where they purchased it.<sup>14</sup> The Chinese work, *The History of the Later Han Dynasty*, also mentions that Tianzhu had direct communications with Daqin 大秦 (Rome) and had obtained precious and rare items from Daqin.<sup>15</sup> So commercial exchange between Rome and India is verified independently by Western and Chinese sources. Classical goblets and glass pots, as well as statues of Athena, Hermes, Eros, and Serapis-Heracles unearthed in Begram, ancient Alexandria of Caucasus, and Kapisa, could only have come from the Roman Orient, most probably from Alexandria in Egypt. It is not coincidental that Gandhara art developed in the early Kushan period. Its inspiration came partly from Roman art, brought by Mediterranean merchants. Buddhism reached China during the reign of Emperor Han Mingdi 汉明帝, accompanied by statues of Buddha.<sup>16</sup> China had

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<sup>10</sup> Namely the south of Arabia, invaded by Roman general Aelius Gallus under Augustus’s order in 26 BCE.

<sup>11</sup> Strab. 2.5.12.

<sup>12</sup> For the detailed description see Schoff (1912); Casson (1989).

<sup>13</sup> Modern Bharuch 布罗奇, formerly known as Broach, a City at the mouth of the river Narmada in Gujarat in western India. In Chinese it was called 跋禄羯咕婆 by Xuan Zang 玄奘, the transliteration of *Bharukacchapa* or *Bharukaccha* in Sanskrit, transliterated in Chinese also as 婆卢羯车, 弼离沙, and so on.

<sup>14</sup> Casson (1989) 91 n. 64.

<sup>15</sup> Fan (1965) 2921.

<sup>16</sup> See Fan (1965) 2922; Wei (1974) 3025–6. There are detailed descriptions of the early spread of Buddhism within China in these two books. It is said that Emperor Han Mingdi dreamed of a golden person and then sent two ministers to India to inquire about Buddhism. In the end, they brought back the sutras of Buddhism and the statues of Buddha. The Emperor ordered



some indirect contact with the Roman Empire by the first century CE by way of maritime exchange.

## 2.2 The dual role of the Parthians as middlemen on the Silk Road

The term *Seidenstraße* ('Silk Road') was coined in 1877 by the German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen to refer to the routes from China through Central Asia to India. Later the term's meaning was expanded to stand for the routes from China to the Mediterranean. Silk, while only one of the commodities (that were) exchanged, has come to embody all the items that were traded. There is no evidence that any caravan ever traversed the entirety of the overland passage from the Mediterranean to China and back again. Instead, there were many smaller trading networks, cities and countries, which collectively gave rise to von Richthofen's nomenclature. As a result, the various peoples involved in this overland commerce can be regarded in their own way as middlemen who benefited from this system. The Parthian kingdom was one such beneficiary due to its geopolitical situation between Rome in the west and the Kushan kingdom in the east.

Parthia was made known to China by the Han envoy, Zhang Qian, during his visit to the Western Regions. Upon his return to China, he listed Parthia among the countries that he had visited, calling it Anxi 安息 (a transliteration of Iranian *Arshak*, the dynastic name of the Parthian Empire, subsequently adopted by all rulers of the Arsakid dynasties).<sup>17</sup> In his report to the Emperor Han Wudi 汉武帝, he noted that the country "is a big country with hundreds cities, and the people are good at trade. It has its own coins and markets. The merchants used to carry on long-distance trade by land and water routes."<sup>18</sup> This water route is the Oxus River, Guishui 妫水, mentioned in *Shiji*. One scholar has even assumed that "for a period of time the Oxus valley as far east as the site of Kampyr Tepa was in Parthian hands".<sup>19</sup>

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the image of Buddha to be drawn and worshiped throughout the whole country. Conventionally, this event is regarded as the beginning of the Buddhism as well as of Gandhara Buddhist Art in China.

<sup>17</sup> On the coins issued by the kings of Parthia, the legends are Hellenicized ΑΡΣΑΚ or ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ.

<sup>18</sup> Sima (1959) 3162.

<sup>19</sup> Rtveladze (2011) 167.

Around the first century BCE, the Parthian Empire controlled the lands between Bactria and Mesopotamia. It was during the reign of emperor Han Wudi (approximately 141–87 BCE) that Parthia established formal bilateral, diplomatic relations with China and obtained valuable quantities of silk from Chinese envoys and merchants. Due to the lack of firsthand accounts, we know little about the quantity of silk that was brought to Parthia, or how much it cost, or even how much the Parthians charged merchants for traveling their roads. What we know from Chinese records is only that the Parthians obstructed direct contact between China and Daqin 大秦 (Rome) in order to maintain their profit-sharing as an intermediary on the route linking both empires.<sup>20</sup> In fact, the real goal of the Parthians was to monopolize the logistics of the silk trade rather than block the contact between China and Rome. Of course, the centuries-long hostilities between Parthia and Rome certainly contributed to difficulties between the two countries, even at times leading to a cessation of all trade between them. For their part, the Parthians expanded their trading network with Rome and India by developing maritime commercial routes.<sup>21</sup> The Persian Gulf was an ideal location. When Gan Ying 甘英, the Chinese envoy appointed by Ban Chao 班超, the general protector of the Western Regions, arrived in the city of Tiaozi in 97 CE, he was dissuaded from proceeding further by sea to Daqin by sailors on Anxi's western frontier.<sup>22</sup> This account is often taken as evidence that Parthia tried to block direct contact between China and Rome in order to monopolize the silk trade with China. In point of fact, we do not know the real motivation of those sailors, whether it was or was not a ruse, but we can be sure that the Parthians had financial motivation for wanting to control the silk trade. The fact they expanded their sphere of influence to include the sea routes in and around the Indian Ocean indicates the pivotal role that Parthia played in this exchange network.

### 2.3 Kushan Empire: a nexus of trade on the Silk Road

The Kushan Empire was an inland state: to the east was China, to the west Parthia, and to the north were various nomadic groups. Although it did not control the region along the coast of India, the central and northern regions of India

<sup>20</sup> “其王常欲通使于汉，而安息欲以汉缯彩与之交市，故遮阂不得自达。” Fan (1965) 2920.

<sup>21</sup> 大秦“与安息、天竺交市于海中，利有十倍。” Fan (1965) 2919. “安息、天竺人人与之交市于海中，其利百倍。” Fang (1974) 2544.

<sup>22</sup> Fan (1965) 2918.

were under its rule. The southern branches of the Silk Road passed through its territory. Two important branches ran through the sub-continent. One started in the Pamirs and extended through the Xuan Du 悬度 valley, and then passed through Jibin and reached Wuyishanli, marking the endpoint of the southern Silk Road.<sup>23</sup> The other began in Bactria, traversed the Hindu Kush and passed into northwest India and the estuary of the Indus. Commodities from China, the northern steppe, the Arabian Peninsula and the Mediterranean made their way through the Kushan Empire. It is through the Kushan Empire that Chinese silk, furs, and a variety of other products, such as turquoise and lapis lazuli from Bactria, were exported to the west, while western goods, like wine and Roman gold and silver coins, were imported to India and accepted by kings and other elites of the Kushan Empire.<sup>24</sup> The large importation of gold coins from Rome inspired the manufacturing of Kushan gold coinage. The first king of Kushan, Kujula Kadphises (identified as Qiujiuque 丘就却 in the Chinese Annals) even produced bronze coins apparently bearing on the obverse an image of Augustus, the first Emperor of Roman Empire. The third king, Wima Kadphises,<sup>25</sup> issued a large quantity of gold coins during his reign.<sup>26</sup> Because of traditional relations between China and Dayuezhi 大月氏, the ancestors of Kushan, the two kingdoms largely maintained cordial relations, even though the Kushans at one point attempted to interfere with the affairs of the Western Regions controlled by China. Their invasion was decisively rebuffed by the general protector Ban Chao.<sup>27</sup> Acting as a conduit, China imported by way of the Kushans western items from the Maritime Silk Road, such as images of classical deities, Sino-Kharosthi coins produced in Hetian 和田, Xinjiang Province; China evidently accepted the influence of Kushan coins.

Although the Kushans did not control southern India and ports on the estuary of the Indus, a considerable amount of goods passed through the Kushan Empire from this region. The Kushan Empire was an important conduit for the transportation of goods. The sea route, recorded in the *Periplus* grew in importance due largely to the efforts of Bactrian and Mediterranean merchants.

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23 Ban (1962) 3889.

24 See Casson (1989) 75 n. 39, 81 n. 49.

25 According to the Chinese record in the *Houhanshu*, the son of Qiujiuque was Yangaozhen 阎膏珍. However, according to the inscription of Rabatak discovered in 1990s, the second king of Kushan was Wima Takto, the third Wima Kadphises. Whereas Yangaozhen was generally identified with him, some scholars guess that Yangaozhen could be the grandson of Qiujiuque and that the author of *Houhanshu* might have made a mistake.

26 See Thorley (1979); Wheeler (1954) 142; Warmington (1974) 298–302.

27 See Ban (1962) 1575–80.

## 2.4 China, another explorer and pioneer of the Maritime Silk Road

Emperor Han Wudi (approximately 141–87 BCE), drawing on his power and wealth, launched a series of wars against the Xiongnu 匈奴 in the northwest of China, the most dangerous and formidable enemy faced by China since the Qin Dynasty. For this reason, he dispatched an envoy, Zhang Qian, to the Western Regions to form an alliance with the Dayuezhi, a nomadic confederation of tribes that had once occupied the region between Dunhuang 敦煌 and Qilian 祁连 (or the Tian Shan Mountains 天山). After having been defeated by the Xiongnu, Dayuezhi left the area and migrated west. At that same time, the emperor undertook the conquest of the kingdom of Nanyue 南越 in the south of China. With his victory, he reorganized the kingdom into nine prefectures in 111 BCE. Among them, Rinan 日南, Jiuzhen 九真, Jiaozhi 交趾, Hepu 合浦, and Nanhai 南海 adjoined the Sea of South China.<sup>28</sup> We learn in the geographical chronicle, *The History of the Former Han Dynasty*, that beginning with the reign of Emperor Han Wudi, China established direct contact with those countries along the coast of the China Sea in southern China: Duyuan 都元国, Yilumo 邑卢没国, Chenli (or Shenli 谿离国), and Fugandulu 夫甘都卢国. The emperor also entered into relations with Huangzhi 黄支国 on the eastern coast of India, and others that were perhaps island kingdoms: Yichengbu 已程不国 and Pizong 皮宗).<sup>29</sup> Although their exact locations remain problematic, it seems that these kingdoms were generally located in the Indo-China Peninsula, Malaya, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The Chinese government organized a group of ships and appointed officers to manage them along with interpreters. Chinese merchants brought bright pearls, glass and other exotic stones and foreign artifacts or products from these countries in exchange for Chinese gold and various silk fabrics. This record tells us that Chinese silk had reached as far as the eastern coast of India by that time. Unfortunately, the Chinese did not record having met any merchants from Rome. They may have met Roman merchants incidentally in some Indian ports and not realized where they came from, or they might simply have missed each other. From the kingdom of Shan 掸 (Myanmar [Burma]), the king sent a magician or acrobat to the Chinese emperor in 120 CE. He assumed that the performer came from Daqin.<sup>30</sup> If the Shan king was correct, this would make the entertainer the first Roman known to have come to China

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<sup>28</sup> Ban (1962) 1628–30.

<sup>29</sup> Ban (1962) 1671.

<sup>30</sup> Fan (1965) 2851.

by sea. But this is only a single, and dubious, report. In the reign of the Emperor Han Huandi 汉桓帝, some Roman merchants arrived in the prefecture of Rinan (modern central and northern Vietnam) and brought ivory, rhinoceros horns and turtle shell as gifts to the Chinese Emperor in 166 CE. They identified themselves as ambassadors of their king Andun 安敦 (possibly Antoninus Pius, r. 138–161 CE) and requested permission to visit the Emperor in Luoyang 洛阳, the capital of China. Their gifts undoubtedly came from India and were dismissed as commonplace and valueless.<sup>31</sup> The event is historically significant, however, because it marks the first direct contact between China and Rome by sea, and signals the formal opening of the Maritime Silk Road as an east-west link.

### 3 Conclusion

The emergence of the Maritime Silk Road, like the opening of the Oasis Silk Road, was the result of long-term interactions among Eurasian civilizations since the conquests of Alexander. As they became prosperous and powerful, they came into contact, peacefully or violently, with other civilizations. It is the consequence of Alexander's campaigns and the western expansion of the Emperor Han Wudi that Hellenistic Civilization and Chinese Civilization came into contact, albeit indirectly. The arrival of Zhang Qian in Central Asia marked the formal opening of the Silk Road from the Yellow River to the Mediterranean. At the beginning of the Common Era, the rise and co-existence of the four empires led to the formation of the Maritime Silk Road. The desire to explore the unknown world, and especially to acquire wealth from exotica, such as silk and spices, led to the search for newer, easier, safer, and more efficient trade routes to avoid the wars and conflicts, such as those waged between Rome and Parthia. The Mediterranean world was the greatest consumer of Chinese silk and spices from Arabia and India, while Parthia accumulated vast profits as a midway station along this far-flung trading network. For their part, the Kushans hoped to obtain gold and the western luxuries, like wine. The emperors of Han China, beginning with Han Wudi, also aspired to get exotic commodities, including glass, pearls and animals, and attempted to attract foreign envoys and merchants in order to enjoy greater prestige and power.<sup>32</sup> Yet it was the discovery of the monsoon and the technological developments of ship-building and the ability to sail longer distances that facilitated the close interaction not only of

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<sup>31</sup> Fan (1965) 2920, 318.

<sup>32</sup> Sima (1959) 3173.

these four Empires, but of the many more that lay between them. The Maritime Silk Road lasted for well over a millennium until it was surpassed by Vasco da Gama's voyage around the Cape of Good Hope, thus marking the dawn of a new era – the Age of Discovery.



Maurizio Riotto

# Real and Imaginary Characters between Ancient Korea and the Silk Road

## 1 Prologue

Despite the remoteness of its geographical position, the Korean peninsula has often been involved in the major historical events of the Eurasian continent. Located between China and Japan, since ancient times, Korea has represented a terminal point for people and ideas originating in China, Middle East and Siberia/Central Asia, and a starting point toward the Japanese islands, where Koreans have played a major role in diffusing religion, arts and culture. No wonder, therefore, that from one angle many Koreans became the main characters in historical events abroad, and from another these ‘main characters’ were strangers and foreigners who somehow took part in the development of Korean history and culture. Sometimes such characters were real, sometimes they were imaginary. Many occupy an intermediate position between mythologized historical figures and historicized mythical figures.

This essay will deal with certain real and imaginary characters who, in various contexts and in different epochs, represented a link between the Korean peninsula and the land/maritime routes of the Silk Road. These characters have to do with ‘Empires’, ‘Kingdoms’ and ‘Nomads’. I begin with those missionaries who are believed to have introduced Buddhism to the Korean peninsula.

## 2 The monks who introduced Buddhism to Korea

According to the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (‘Memorabilia of the three kingdoms’, traditionally attributed to the Buddhist master Iryōn 一然 [1206–1289] and completed shortly after 1280), a certain Buddhist monk Sundo 順道 (Chinese: *Shundao*) received from emperor Fujian 符堅<sup>1</sup> the order to bring sacred texts and Bud-

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as Shizu 世祖 (r. 357–385). He was the third ruler of the former Qin 前秦 (351–394).



dhist images to the Korean kingdom of Koguryŏ. This episode occurred in the second year of the reign of King Sosurim 小獸林 of Koguryŏ (372) and is generally accepted as the first act introducing Buddhism into Korea, although we can easily imagine that Koreans knew about Buddhism prior to that date.<sup>2</sup>

Shundao was probably a Chinese monk already well acquainted with the Buddhist Doctrine: in any case, his foreign origin is undoubtedly declared by Iryŏn in his song in praise of the missionary:

鳴綠春深渚草鮮  
白沙鷗鷺等閑眠  
忽驚柔櫓一聲遠  
何處漁舟客到煙

Late spring embellishes the Amnok River with green,  
A seagull rests, perching on the white sand.  
Far away you suddenly hear a rinsing of oars:  
A stranger has come, on board a fishing boat.<sup>3</sup>

However, even if Shundao was probably Chinese, surely it was an Indo/Iranian monk who was the Maranant'a 摩羅難陀 that introduced Buddhism to Paekche 百濟 in 384. In the *Samguk yusa*, in fact, he is said to have been a *hosŭng* 胡僧, that is a 'Ho Buddhist monk'. The character *ho* 胡 (Chinese: *hu*), even if generally meaning 'stranger', refers especially to strangers of Indo/Iranian origin. For this reason we can assume that Maranant'a was likely an Indian or Middle-Asian monk who, once having arrived in China as a missionary, was successively dispatched to Paekche by the sovereign of the Eastern Jin 東晉.

The Korean State of Silla 新羅 officially accepted Buddhism around the year 530, that is to say much later than Koguryŏ and Paekche. Nevertheless, we are informed by the *Samguk yusa* that unsuccessful attempts to introduce Buddhism to Silla had already occurred in the course of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The main characters of such attempts were Mukhoja 墨胡子 and Ado 阿道 (also pronounced Adu 阿

<sup>2</sup> In book 1 of the *Haedong kosŭng-jŏn* 海東高僧傳 ('Biographies of Eminent Monks of Korea') T.50, n. 2065, by Kakhun 覺訓 (? – ca. 1230), the second biography is devoted to an anonymous monk from Koguryŏ (who is quoted just as "Mangmyŏng 亡名", that is, literally, 'lost/forgotten name'), who received a letter (of real praise) from the great Chinese master Zhidun 支遁 (314–366). Indeed, Zhidun's letter must have been sent before 366, the year of his death, which means that Buddhism already existed in Koguryŏ before 372, a date which is unanimously considered to be the official beginning of the practice of this religion. After all, dates in such cases can only be a heuristic and didactic tool: to affirm that Buddhism begins in Koguryŏ in 372 or in Paekche in 384 is equivalent to claiming that Christianity began in the Roman Empire in 313 with the edict of Constantine.

<sup>3</sup> *Samguk yusa*, book 3.

頭 and also written 我道). It seems that Mukhoja came from Koguryō, whereas Ado was born in Koguryō to a Chinese father and a Koguryō mother: however, it is possible that Mukhoja and Ado are different names indicating the same person. In this regard, an epigraphic document reported by *Haedong kosŭng-jŏn* 海東高僧傳 ('Biographies of Eminent Monks of Korea') and quoted in the *Samguk yusa* says that Ado came from the country of Ch'ōnch'uk, (which is to say India). As for Mukhoja, the name itself leaves no room for doubt: not only do we find again the character *ho* indicating descent from Indo/Iranian people, but the character *ho* is preceded by the character *muk* 墨, meaning 'dark' or 'black'. Therefore, the word 'Mukhoja' denotes the idea of 'dark foreigner', with probable reference to skin color, making the Indian origin of that monk almost certain.

### 3 The Korean diaspora of the 7<sup>th</sup> century

After the unification of Korea under Silla, between 660 and 668, a great diaspora<sup>4</sup> of Koreans occurred. Many citizens of Paekche and Koguryō were deported to Tang China. Others preferred to migrate towards the territories controlled by the Malgal 靺鞨 and the Turks, as is clearly reported in a dramatic passage of the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 ('Comprehensive Mirror for Aid to Governance'):

高麗舊城沒於新羅餘衆散入靺鞨及突厥隆亦竟不敢還故地高氏扶餘氏遂亡。

(The old cities of Koguryō fell into Silla's hands, while what remained of the people of Puyō dispersed between the Turks and the Malgal, so that they never managed to regain their former land. In this way, the royal clans of Ko and Puyō were completely ruined).<sup>5</sup>

At that time, a noble man of Koguryō became particularly illustrious as one of the main leaders of his people after losing his homeland. This was Ko Mungan 高文簡 (?-?), who married the daughter of Qapaghan (?-716), the powerful *qa-ghan* of the Heavenly Turks (Chinese: *Tujue* 突厥. Korean: *Tolgwōl*) known in the Chinese sources as Mo Chuo 默啜. In the midst of the crisis of the Turkish Empire, in 715 Ko Mungan fled to Tang, where he was warmly welcomed by Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756), who granted him and his Turkish wife an official title.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On the various Korean 'diasporas' throughout history, see Riotta (2015) and (2018).

<sup>5</sup> *Zizhi tongjian*, book 202. Furthermore, the Korean diaspora, forced by the Khitans, following the fall of the kingdom of Parhae 渤海, heir to ancient Koguryō, in 926, should not be forgotten. In this regard see Lim (2013).

<sup>6</sup> As for the sources on Ko Mungan see, among others, *Tang shu*, book 144.

But the Korean diaspora of the first millennium CE was not only caused by war. We have sufficient proof of a massive presence of Koreans in China and Japan during the Three Kingdoms Period/Unified Silla epochs,<sup>7</sup> and many of them voluntarily travelled for purposes of teaching or learning.<sup>8</sup> Foreign scholars and students, monks and generals were welcomed in multicultural Tang China and the Koreans who achieved success there were neither few nor poor-skilled.

Ko Sŏnji 高仙芝 (? – 755. Chinese: *Gao Xianzhi*) was a descendant of the old aristocracy of Koguryŏ. A brilliant general, he was so admired by the Chinese that he was appointed governor of the western provinces of the Tang Empire. His name is linked to one of the most famous battles of antiquity, perhaps the only battle in which a regular Arabian army fought a regular Chinese army. I refer, of course, to the Battle of Talaś River (in today's Kazakhstan) in the 7<sup>th</sup> month of 751. On that occasion, a coalition of Arabs, Middle-Asians and Tibetans at the orders of Ziyād ibn Šālih al-Khuza'ī fought a Tang army led by Ko Sŏnji and reinforced by a strong contingent of Qarluq Turks. The Chinese army, already outnumbered, was finally forced to withdraw after the betrayal of the Qarluq troops, who passed on to the enemy. Four years later, he was accused of corruption and insubordination and sentenced to death.<sup>9</sup>

And what about Hŭkch'i Sangji 黑齒常之 (? –689), a Korean from Paekche? He was a gigantic man, more than two meters tall. A formidable warrior and leader, in the dramatic days of his homeland's fall he was able to bring together the disbanded troops to create an army of 30,000 men capable of valiantly facing the Silla-Tang armies, keeping them in check for a long time and regaining numerous fortresses. Finally forced to surrender, he was nevertheless admired and respected by the Chinese for his courage, and among the Tang he experienced a bright career after the end of Paekche. In command of Chinese armies, he defeated the Tibetans and the Turks, but these striking successes generated the jealousy of his rivals, who cast him in a bad light to the point of causing him to be imprisoned. He ended his days in prison, perhaps dying by suicide.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Kwon (2003), Sin (2003), and Baek (2012). It should also be borne in mind that already in ancient times the population of Japan was powered by Korean elements that came from the peninsula and then assimilated to the locals. In this regard see Yi (1984) and Jang (2009).

<sup>8</sup> See, among others, Cho (2009).

<sup>9</sup> *Tang shu*, book 104, *Xin Tang shu*, book 135, *Zizhi tongjian*, books 217–217. Among the secondary sources, see Yi T. (2008).

<sup>10</sup> See *Samguk sagi*, book 44. Among the Chinese primary sources, see *Tang shu*, book 109, *Xin Tang shu*, book 110 and *Zizhi tongjian*, book 202. Among the secondary sources, see Moon (2008).

As for Yi Hoeok 李懷玉 (732–781), better known as Yi Chǒnggi 李正己, he also was a descendant of one of the many refugees by Koguryŏ. Raised in Yingzhou 營州, not far from the ancient border with Koguryŏ, he came into play in the bloody revolt of An Lushan and its aftermath, which extended beyond the death of the rebel himself. Having become a high military officer in his home region, he entered into good terms with Hou Xiyi 後希逸, who had achieved by force the prestigious office of High Military Commissioner after the death of his predecessor, Wang Xuanzhi 王玄志. In 765, however, it was he who took possession of the post, expelling Hou, but in spite of the brutal means by which he had achieved his goal, he managed to ingratiate himself with the Tang Emperor, who rewarded him with numerous awards and also granted him the new name “Chǒnggi”, by which he remains known. Later he distinguished himself for sending a detachment of troops against the Tibetans and, in 774, for helping suppress the revolt of Tian Chengsi 田承嗣. Again in 776 his troops played an active role in stopping Li Lingyao’s uprising 李靈曜, and this led to his promotion to the first grade of the public administration. In 778 he asked and obtained from the Emperor Dazong 代宗 (r. 762–779) the right to be entered into the register of imperial family; he was the only one to receive this privilege among all the Military Commissioners. In the following months his relationship with the imperial court of Chang’an 長安 began to deteriorate, but before events could take an irreversibly negative turn Yi Chǒnggi died of illness, in the eighth month of the year 781.<sup>11</sup> In any case, it is worth remembering that many civilian and military events in ancient China had Koreans as protagonists.

## 4 Hyech’o, who visited the West

Another character worthy of being mentioned is the Buddhist monk Hyech’o 慧超 (trad. 704–787; also written 慧超; Chinese: *Huichao*). A citizen of Silla, we will probably never know his secular name: ‘Hyech’o’, in fact, is his religious name, being a translation of the Sanskrit *Prajñāvikrama* प्रज्ञावक्रिम or ‘Valour of Wisdom’. As was usual in his time, he went to China to study Buddhism at an early age. Once in China, he cultivated the practice of Tantric Buddhism under Master Vajrabodhi (671–741; Chinese name: *Jingangzhi* 金剛智), who eventually suggested that he go West in search of knowledge and religious literature. Therefore Hyech’o left China by ship, probably in 723, and eventually landed in a region iden-

<sup>11</sup> Facts about Yi Chǒnggi are reported in *Tang shu*, book 124, *Xin Tang shu*, book 213, *Zizhi tongjian*, books 220 *passim*. On the figure of Yi Chǒnggi also see, among others, Chi (2000).

tifiable with the mouth of the Ganges River's. Once landed, he travelled extensively in India, visiting the main places connected with Buddha's life. After that, he continued his journey northward and westward, visiting kingdoms such as Kashmir, Gandhāra and Persia. He returned to China in December, 727, following one of the northern land routes of Silk Road. It seems that after the voyage, he never left China again.

Hyech'o described his travel experiences in a journal today known by the title of *Wang o Ch'ōnch'ukuk-chōn* 往五天竺國傳 ('Record of a Pilgrimage to The Five Regions of India'), whose text was found in 1908 by the French Sinologist Paul Pelliot (1879–1945) in a cave of Dunhuang 敦煌, in today's Chinese province of Gansu 甘肅. Now housed in the National Central Library of Paris, Hyech'o's text lacks some parts, and yet it remains a precious document, and not only because it is the only extant Far Eastern account of the 8<sup>th</sup> century about India. During his travels, Hyech'o was an eyewitness of epochal events, such as the decline of Buddhism in India and the advance of Islam towards the Middle East and Central Asia, within what could be already called a true 'clash of civilizations'. All these events are faithfully reported by Hyech'o, who went so far as to give a brief description of the Byzantine Empire, even if he never reached it.<sup>12</sup>

In the fourth book of the *Samguk yusa*, Iryōn reports a list of Korean monks who travelled to the West in search of Buddhist law. Hyech'o is not mentioned, but many other monks are registered: Arinabalma 阿離那跋摩 (or Ariyabalma 阿離耶跋摩), Hyōnt'ae 玄泰, Kubon 求本, Hyōn'gak 玄恪, Hyeryun 惠輪, Hyōnyu 玄遊 and so on.<sup>13</sup> All of these were authentic heroes of the faith, giving Korea an important role in the spread of Buddhism in East Asia,<sup>14</sup> and the moving poem of Iryōn that remembers them remains a pearl of Korean literature for all time:

天竺天遙萬疊山  
可憐遊士力登攀  
幾回月送孤帆去  
未見雲隨一杖還

<sup>12</sup> Riotto (2010).

<sup>13</sup> Iryōn's list, however, is almost slavishly copied from that which the Chinese master Yijing (635–713) reports in the first book of his *Da Tang xiyu qiu fa Gaoseng-zhuan* 大唐西域求法高僧傳 ('Lives of the Eminent Monks who Sought the Buddhist Law in the West at the time of the Great Tang') T. 51, n. 2066.

<sup>14</sup> Lou (2015) 211 estimates that there were one hundred and seventeen monks who traveled between Korea and China, sometimes even going to India, between the early sixth and early tenth centuries. On Paekche monks in particular, see Best (1991).

Through ten thousand mountain peaks  
 Passes the remote path to India,  
 And there climbed, with extreme pain,  
 The Pilgrims in their great effort.  
 How many times the rising moon  
 Did say hello to the lonely ships?  
 And no one was ever seen returning  
 With his stick, by following the clouds.<sup>15</sup>

## 5 Ch'öyong, the 'physician'

Our next character is an imaginary one, or perhaps the result of a mythologized episode. According to the *Samguk yusa*, Ch'öyong 處容 was a son of the Sea Dragon-God. One day, while King Hōngang 憲康 of Silla (r. 875–886) was returning from a visit to Kaeunp'o 開雲浦 (today the area of Ulsan 蔚山), suddenly a thick fog surrounded him. The weather officer reported that the fog was caused by the Dragon-God of the Eastern Sea, and the King ordered that a temple be built in his honour. (The temple is believed to be Manghaesa 望海寺 or perhaps Sinbangsa 新房寺). At this point, the fog lifted and the Dragon-God of the Eastern Sea appeared with his seven sons, dancing and playing music. One of the seven sons, named Ch'öyong, followed King Hōngang to the capital of Silla to assist him in state affairs. The king arranged for a beautiful woman to be his wife and appointed him to the ninth-ranking official position of *kūpkan* 級干. But one night, when Ch'öyong was not at home, the evil god of smallpox took on his appearance and slept with his wife. When Ch'öyong returned home, he found the evil god still in bed, and he cast a spell while singing and performing a propitiatory dance.<sup>16</sup> The evil god humbly asked Ch'öyong for forgiveness and swore that from that moment he would no longer dare to look at Ch'öyong's face, even if it was depicted in a mask. For this reason, the Silla people used to hang an image of Ch'öyong on their doors and in their homes to ward off disease and misfortune.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Samguk yusa*, book 4.

<sup>16</sup> The *Song of Ch'öyong* (*Ch'öyong-ga* 處容歌) was probably a popular motif and for this reason arrived written with the transcription system called *hyangch'al* 鄉札, where the Chinese characters are used both with ideographic and phonetic value. This makes interpretation very difficult today, and yet the song was successful even after the period of Unified Silla (668–935). On the matter see, among others, Park (2017).

<sup>17</sup> On the contents and the meanings of the tale see, among others, Shon (2018).

This tale, apparently full of shamanistic elements, has been explained in various ways, but one fascinating hypothesis (and perhaps the least absurd one) sees Ch'öyong as a divinized character. Many elements of the tale suggest that Ch'öyong was a foreigner who arrived to Silla following the maritime route of the Silk Road. Indeed, it is a fact that even today the masks of Ch'öyong replicate western physiognomy, with a dark complexion, long face and big nose. In sum, according to the tale, Ch'öyong comes from the sea (and thus he is a foreigner) in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (the period in which Silla starts to be mentioned in Middle Eastern texts) and demonstrates his medical-apotropaic skill by repelling the evil god of smallpox (and it is well-known that in that epoch Persian, Arab and Jewish physicians were considered among the best in the world). We cannot rule out, therefore, that Ch'öyong actually was a Middle-Eastern physician aboard a trade ship bound for Far Eastern regions. Once arriving in Silla, he could have successfully treated some local patients, becoming a kind of 'hero' worthy of being mythologized. What is sure is that, despite its shamanic nature, the apotropaic/cathartic dance of Ch'öyong was represented at the Royal Palace of Korea even during that Chosön 朝鮮 period (1392–1910), characterized by a hyper-Confucian ideology.<sup>18</sup> This dance is still performed today.

## 6 A Case of *philoxenia* in 'Medieval' Korea: Söl Son and King Kongmin of Koryō

Söl Son 偈遜 (Chinese: *Xie Xun*. 1319?–1360) is the main character of a singular case. Of Uighur descent (his surname 'Xie' derives from 'Xienian' 偈輦 [Selenga], an important river of the place of origin of his ancestors), he was a high officer in Yuan 元 China. Of early talent, he soon proved to be skilled in letters and other disciplines such as painting, music (he was apparently an excellent zither player) and the *paduk* 바둑 game. In 1345 he came to the capital Yanjing 燕京 and there passed State examinations with full marks. While in the capital, he became a close friend of the future King of Koryō, Kongmin 恭愍 (r. 1351–1374), who at that time was being held hostage at the Court of Yuan. When the rebellion of the so-called 'Red Turbans' broke out, in order to avoid worse trouble, he took refuge in Korea, bringing with him his entire family and even his ancestral tablets. Meanwhile, Kongmin had ascended to the throne of Koryō 高麗 and was very happy to welcome his old friend. Eventually, Söl Son's family was registered

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<sup>18</sup> See in this regard Choi (2013).

among the citizens of Kyōngju 慶州, though the reason is not clear. Maybe because another famous Sōl family was registered there: it was that Sōl 薛 family that among its ancestors could claim important figures such as Master Wōnhyo 元曉 (secular name: Sōl Sōdang 薛誓幢, 617–686) and his son Sōl Ch'ong 薛聰 (ca. 655–?), the scholar believed to have invented the *kugyōl* 口訣 writing system. Today, the descendants of Sōl Son still exist and represent, together with the Yi 李 of Imch'ōn 林川, the only family of Uighur origin present in Korea.<sup>19</sup>

Sōl Son and his family well repaid King Kongmin's favour. As already stated, he was an excellent scholar,<sup>20</sup> but his immediate descendants became illustrious as well. Sōl Son's son Sōl Changsu 倣長壽 (1341–1399) was a great poet, and his grandson Sōl Sun 倣循 (?–1435) was a distinguished Confucian scholar. Seeds planted in Central Asia had become lush plants in Korea.

## 7 Princess Pari 바리 (Paridegi 바리데기): the 'long march' of a shamaness

Shamanism is undoubtedly the native 'religion' of Korea, and Korean Shamanism shares many aspects of belief with Siberian and Northeast Asian peoples such as the Evenki, Nanai, Yukaghir, Itelmens etc. According to a Korean tale especially diffused along the East coast of the Korean peninsula, the ancestor of Korean shamanesses was a certain princess Pari (also named Paridegi). The tale has several versions (more or less imbued with elements of Buddhist faith, within a syncretism not rare in Korea),<sup>21</sup> but basically it can be summarized as follows.

Paridegi was the seventh daughter of the King of the Realm of Pulla 불나. Because the King had no sons, he was furious at the birth of another princess, Paridegi (or Pari), and therefore ordered that she be sacrificed to the Dragon King of the East Sea. However, the child succeeded in escaping death and was eventually raised by a couple of virtuous commoners.

When she was fifteen, Paridegi came to know that her biological parents, the king and queen, were going to be seriously ill and die the same day as punishment for having abandoned her. She succeeded in reaching the royal Palace, but there was informed that, to save the royal couple, someone needed to undertake a journey to the Netherworld because only there was to be found a medicine able

<sup>19</sup> Riotto (2007) 188–191.

<sup>20</sup> Park (1997).

<sup>21</sup> Among many others, see the edition by Kim *et al.* (2020).



to save the king (often known by the name of Ŏbi 어비) and the queen (often known by the name of Kildae 길대). This was a difficult and hazardous task, and for this reason both the king's officials and Paridegi's six older sisters had refused to undertake it.

Despite having been abandoned in childhood, Paridegi decides to undertake the dangerous journey to obtain the magical medicine, whose guardian is a certain Mujangsŭng 武壯勝. To accomplish her mission Paridegi disguises herself as a man, wearing armour and 'iron-made shoes', and starts the perilous journey from which she will almost certainly not return. On her way, she receives from the Buddha Śākyamuni three branches of flowers and a golden bell (reminiscent of the singing tree and the talking bird of Princess Parizade in the earlier Western version of the story described below). Once in the Netherworld, she passes through all the levels of Hell, and for nine years she puts herself at the disposal of Mujangsŭng, to whom she bears seven sons, the symbolic counterparts to the king's seven daughters. Eventually she comes back to Earth together with Mujangsŭng, only to find that her biological parents have died on that very same day. However, a single drop of the magical water is enough to revive them.

The rest of the tale leads to a happy ending: Paridegi's seven sons become the seven gods of human destinies (*Ch'irwŏn sŏnggun* 七元星君); her adoptive parents become the guardians of Hell's doors; and she herself becomes a Bodhisattva whose mansions are similar to those of Kṣitigarbha/Chijang 地藏, and who, similar to the Greek Charon, serves as souls' guide into the Netherworld.

The story of Princess Pari (Paridegi) evinces various elements in common with Eurasian folklore and folk tales (the abandoned child, the disguise, the search for something). Still, I believe that it may have had a direct prototype in a tale of the *Arabian Nights* (*Alf layla wa-layla*). Later I will explain the reason why. For now, let us summarize the plot of the Middle-eastern tale, which appears in the various editions of the *Arabian Nights* under various titles (*The Tale of the Three Sisters, The Story of the Talking Bird, The Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Yellow Water, The Wicked Sisters* etc.).<sup>22</sup>

The wife of King Khosrōw has two elder sisters who hate and envy her. Whenever she has a baby, the wicked sisters replace the infant with dead animals or pieces of wood. Therefore, the two princes to whom the queen gives birth (Bahman and Perviz) and the younger princess (Parizade) are abandoned by their evil aunts in a canal and eventually found and raised by a pious subject who ignores who their parents are. In the meantime, the king, raging against the

22 My reference here is to the Italian edition, *Le mille e una notte* vol II (1988) 442–477.

faultless queen for her presumed incapacity to bear a child, orders her imprisonment.

Many years pass, and the adoptive parents of the three royal children die. The children keep on living in that house until a certain day when an old and pious woman comes to visit Parizade while her brothers are away hunting. The princess greets her and invites her in to have a meal and visit. The old woman accepts but, before leaving, she says that to perfect the house Parizade needs three things: the talking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water.

When her brothers return from hunting, Parizade tells them all about the visit of the religious woman. Bahman, the eldest brother, leaves home in search of the three magic objects, but fails in his quest and is transformed into a black stone. When Parizade and her remaining brother, Perviz, learn of the tragic news, sets off to accomplish what his brother could not, but like Bahman, he ends up being transformed into a black stone. Finally, Parizade decides to undertake the perilous journey herself. She disguises herself as a man and eventually succeeds in finding the mountain where the talking bird lives. The mountain is covered with black stones that are the corpses of all the men (and the carcasses of their horses) who had failed in their quests. The Black-Stones Mountain of Parizade is a 'Place of Death' that will become, in the Korean folk tale, the Netherworld of Paridegi. By a stratagem Parizade escapes all perils and safely climbs the mountain, and so is able to capture the bird, which tells her where to find the singing tree and the yellow water. Once she finds all the treasures, she pours a few drops of the magical water on all the black stones, which then turn back into humans and horses. Of course, Parizade's brothers revive too.

Parizade and her brothers return home with the three amazing items, and soon they become close to the king, who still is unaware that he is the father of the three. Finally, the king asks to visit Parizade's house and, once there, the talking bird tells him of all that has happened since the birth of his two sons and daughter. The happy ending comes to fruition: the queen is released and fully rehabilitated; the wicked aunts are sentenced to death and immediately executed. Parizade and her brothers are recognized as King Khosrōw's daughter and sons and are then brought to the royal palace to live a new and more blessed life.

The first sign of the foreign origin of *The Tale of Pari(degi)* is the name of its main character. A translation of the name as it exists in Korean is, in fact, virtually impossible, unless we give ourselves to some serious linguistic acrobatics. One such 'acrobatic' is to say that the name *Pari* is connected with the verb *pōrida* 버리다 ('to throw away, to dump, or to abandon'). Thus *Paridegi* would mean, more or less, the 'abandoned one' or the 'abandoned child'. As for *degi*, a popular belief relying on some verses of a song ("대궐 전으로 돌아 나

와, 얘기를 두데기에 싸 가지고 나오는구나”, that is to say, ‘After wrapping the girl in a cloth, [they] leave the Royal Palace’) considers this term an abbreviation of *tudegi* 두데기, a dialectal form of *p’odaegi* 포대기 (‘baby wrapper’), so *Pari-degi* becomes ‘the child put in the wrapper and abandoned’. These etymological hypotheses are highly unlikely.

The situation changes completely when we look at the Middle East’s onomastics. *Parizade* is unequivocally a Persian name formed by two words. The first word is *pari*, which definitely means ‘fairy’. This word is also the basis of the modern Iranian feminine name *Parisa*, which means ‘fairy-like’. The second part of the name is much more problematic. Possibly, the term *zadi/zade* is connected with the concept of ‘happiness’, ‘good luck’, or ‘cheerfulness’. If this etymology is correct, the proper name *Parizade* could be roughly translated as ‘Lucky Fairy’ or ‘Happy Fairy’, but also as ‘similar to a fairy’ or ‘touched by a fairy (and thus lucky)’.<sup>23</sup>

It is a very old and weighty name, already attested in Western classics long before the Islamic era. As a matter of fact, *Parizade* is nothing but the Παρύσατις (*Parysatis*) of the Greek sources.<sup>24</sup> Two women whose name was Parysatis became particularly famous. The first, active between the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, was empress of the Achaemenid Empire as the wife of Darius II (r. 423–405 BCE), who also was her half-brother. A woman of extraordinary energy and influence, she actually decided on most imperial policies instead of her husband and her son, Artaxerxes II (r. 405–358 BCE). But when her second and most beloved son, Cyrus, revolted against his elder brother Artaxerxes, Parysatis supported him, and for this reason, when Cyrus’s aspirations and life came to an end at the battle of Cunaxa (September 401 BCE), she was banished. Nevertheless, she soon managed to return to the imperial court, where she had the opportunity to order the death of the satrap Tissaphernes (396 BCE), an old enemy of Cyrus.

The second Parysatis was the youngest daughter of Emperor Artaxerxes III (r. 358–338 BCE). Captured by the Macedonian army during its victorious campaign against the Persian Empire, she eventually became one of the wives of Alexander the Great (326 BCE).<sup>25</sup> We know little to nothing about her after this marriage: she

<sup>23</sup> On Iranian proper names, see the fundamental work by Benveniste (1966). *Parizade* is hypothesized to derive from the Old Persian \**Paru-šiyāti*, perhaps connected with the Avestan term *pairikā-*, referring to a kind of enchantress. See Schmitt (2002) and the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/pairika> (seen 7.20.2020).

<sup>24</sup> Ctesias *Per.* 44.48–57, 59–62; Xen. *An.* 1.1; Plut. *Artax.* 1–3, and *passim*; Polyaeus *Strat.* 7.16; and Diod. *Sic.*, 14.80.

<sup>25</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 7.4 and Curt. 3.13.

may have been murdered after Alexander's death on the order of Roxana, another Persian (Bactrian) wife of the Macedonian king.

Concerning the origin of the name, therefore, there is no room for doubt. If we exclude the remote possibility of accidental homophony, we must assume that, in Korean, the first (and more important) portion of the name has survived as it was in the original Persian.

Another hint comes from Paridegi's homeland, in many versions indicated as 'Pullaguk' 불나/불라국, or 'the Realm of Pulla'. This fabulous country of Korean folk tales probably has its historical origin in the Kingdom of Pullim 拂臨, to which the Korean monk Hyech'o 惠超 (ca. 700 – 780) refers in his already quoted *Wang o ch'önch'ukuk chön* 往五天竺國傳. To be precise, Hyech'o, who made his journey from 723 to 727, reports the existence of a 'Little Pullim' (*Sobullim* 小拂臨) and a 'Great Pullim' (*Taebullim* 大拂臨). At the time of Hyech'o's journey, the Sassanid Empire had already been crushed by the Arabs and the Byzantine Empire had lost many of its territories in the Near East. *Pullim* is nothing but the 'Chinesized' form of the Arabic/Persian term *Phrūm*, which means 'Rome' and is generally transliterated *Fulin* 拂菻 in the Chinese sources.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, despite the fall of Western Roman Empire in 476 CE, the Byzantines continued to call themselves Ῥωμαῖοι (Romans). The *Taebullim* that Hyech'o mentions is surely the Byzantine Empire, while the term *Sobullim* almost certainly indicates Syria and at least a part of modern Iraq, recently conquered by the Omayyad Arabs but once a border area between the Roman/Byzantine Empire and the Parthian/Sassanid Empire. The term *Pulla* of Korean folklore, therefore, indicates a territory that once was subject to the influence of both Rome and Persia, depending on the historical period: in other words, a territory where a name such as 'Parizade' was not a rare one.

For the rest, both tales have a circular structure (a broken harmony is restored through a series of adventures), within which the various characters act according to the morphology proposed by Propp (sender/receiver, subject/object, and helper/enemy) in his studies on folk and fairy tales. The common themes are easily recognizable and can be summarized as follows:

1. the main character is a last-born princess;
2. she is abandoned immediately after her birth;
3. she is found and raised by pious and faithful subjects;
4. she comes to suddenly know something she had been unaware of;
5. she realizes she has a mission/quest to accomplish;

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, *Sui shu*, book 83 and *passim*; *Tang shu*, book 198 and *passim*; and *Xin Tang shu*, book 135 and *passim*. See also *Tongdian*, book 193; *Song shi*, book 16.

6. in order to accomplish it, she must undertake a perilous journey;
7. she disguises herself as a man and, while traveling, meets an extraordinary character (Parizade meets a dervish/monk, Paridegi meets Śākyamuni) who gives her useful advice and objects (Parizade receives a magic ball, Paridegi receives a magic flower);
8. she finds all the necessary things, fulfilling the requirements of the mission;
9. she revives two members of her family;
10. she starts a new life after the mission and, in doing so, actually revives herself.

In sum, it is highly probable that the character of the tale was originally a Middle-Eastern one, successively arrived to Korea through a long and intricate journey.<sup>27</sup> Another marvellous episode narrated by the Silk Road.

## 8 Antonio Corea

The *Korean diaspora* that followed the Japanese invasions was also the first episode of such a kind recorded by western sources. Thousands of Koreans were deported by the Japanese to Japan, where they became slaves or were sold to foreigners as slaves. The Portuguese Jesuit priest Luís Fróis (1528 [or 1532]–1597), in his *Historia de Japam*, describes the tragedy of the Koreans as follows:

Quantos serão mortos dos corays não se sabe, mas entre mortos e cativos foi sem comparação maior o numero que o dos japões, porque somente os cativos que estão por este Ximo são innumeraveis, afora os que levarão para o Miacó e outras partes.<sup>28</sup>

The number of Koreans who died [in the Korea-Japan war] is not known but, in any case, those who died or were taken as prisoners cannot be minimally compared with the casualties suffered by the Japanese. In particular, even excluding those who were brought to the Miacó [Kyōto] and other areas, only the prisoners here in Ximo [Kyūshū] are simply countless.

As a matter of fact, thanks to the dramatic increase of commercial traffic from Europe and America to the Far East, after Columbus' discovery, Korean prisoners in Japan and China during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries seriously risked being sold to westerners and in at least one case we are sure that this occurred. Francesco Carletti (1573 [or 1574]–1636), an Italian merchant (and not a priest, as sur-

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<sup>27</sup> For a more in-depth discussion on the history of Paridegi see Riotto (2016).

<sup>28</sup> Fróis (1984) vol. 5 599.

prisingly claimed by certain sources) from Florence who had entered Japan in 1597, purchased five Korean young boys during his nine-month stay in Nagasaki 長崎. On this occasion, Carletti clearly noticed the huge number of Korean prisoners, detained in Japan, who were being sold at a very cheap price. On his way back to Italy, he stopped in Goa, India, and here set free all the Korean boys. Four of them probably tried to go back to Korea (we know nothing about their fate), but the last, baptized into the name Antonio, preferred to follow his ex-master to the Netherlands. The ‘surname’ Carletti gave to Antonio was likely ‘Corea’. The relationship between Francesco Carletti and Antonio was that of a father to a son, as proven by the fact that ‘Antonio’ was the name of Carletti’s father and, according to Italian custom, the first son is given the same name as his paternal grandfather.

In the Netherlands, at Middleburg, Carletti and Antonio stopped for a long time due to an attack made upon Carletti by Dutch corsairs’ warships while he was returning to Italy. As his property was entirely confiscated, while in the Netherlands Carletti tried to recover his goods by suing the corsairs (and thereby, indirectly, the Dutch government itself) but, as one can easily imagine, he was able to recuperate only 13,000 florins, a sum of money barely enough to pay for his legal expenses. From the Netherlands the two came to Paris and finally Italy. Despite the enthusiasm generated by this historical fact in Korea in the 1990s (TV reports were given and novels written about this Korean boy), the last record concerning Antonio is found in Carletti’s Travel Journal, possibly written around 1610. The passage reads as follows:

...Tutti erano venduti per schiavi a vilissimo prezzo, e io ne comprai cinque per poco più di dodece scudi, che fattoli battezzare li condussi nell’India in Goa e quivi li lassai liberi. Uno d’essi lo menai con me sino in Fiorenza, e oggi credo si ritrovi in Roma, nominato Antonio.<sup>29</sup>

... All [the Koreans] were sold for slaves at a ridiculous price, and I purchased five of them for just over twelve scudi. I managed to have them baptized and I brought them with me to India, and I set them free in Goa. I brought to Florence only one of them, called Antonio, and I think he is in Rome now.

It is possible that other Korean slaves reached Europe or Middle/South America in the same period. For the rest, the ‘Korean man’ portrayed by Rubens around 1617<sup>30</sup> has sometimes been identified with Antonio Corea, but this was probably a completely different person. Antonio, in fact, had been in the Netherlands from

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<sup>29</sup> Carletti (1989) 102.

<sup>30</sup> The painting is kept in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

1602 to 1605 and we have no proof that he returned there. On the other hand, Rubens was in Italy from 1600 to 1608, a period incompatible with that of the portrait, if it is really to be dated to 1617. For this reason, the man portrayed by Rubens could have been another Korean or, theoretically, even a Chinese (the most reliable hypothesis), a Japanese or any other Far Eastern person. In any case, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century on we start to surely find Koreans in continents other than Asia.

Whatever the truth, there is no doubt that Antonio was one of the first Koreans to have stepped onto European soil. Today, an Italian surname 'Corea' exists, but it seems to have no relationship with Antonio. In old Italian, in fact, the word *Corea* has various meanings, such as 'chorus', or 'the old part of a city', or a particular disease termed, in medical parlance, 'Corea of Sydenham'.

## 9 Conclusions

The characters we have dealt with here only constitute the tip of an iceberg. The Koreans who, voluntarily or not, travelled along the routes of the Silk Road were legions and many of them left important traces in history: in this regard, it is a fact that through the biographies of illustrious personalities reported in the Chinese Historical Annals we can come to know the adventures of many Koreans. Korea, however, was also an arrival-point for people coming from various countries, as demonstrated by linguistic, artistic and anthropological elements to be found within Korean culture today. In sum, Korea was (and still is) a very active part of Eurasia, and if her international role is becoming more and more important, Korea's modern history has a solid foundation and multicultural background over its long past as well.



## Section 2 **Language and Rhetoric**





Attilio Andreini

# Through the Lens of Archaeology: Data Cross-Referencing between Received and Manuscript Sources Related to Confucius and the *Lunyu* 論語

## 1 The *Lunyu*–Centered Interpretations of Confucius

The most recent studies on the historical Confucius<sup>1</sup> (Kongzi 孔子, ca. 551–479 BCE) and on the corpus of early Confucius-centered sources highlight two dominant interpretative approaches, distinct and apparently irreconcilable. But, as I will attempt to demonstrate, these are united by one specific trait. On the one hand, some scholars strive to find enough solid evidence to provide a truly original and ultimately authentic reconstruction of Confucius, free from posthumous and biased interpretations, whether from inside or outside of the Ru 儒 tradition, of which Confucius embodies the highest expression.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, a ‘ka-

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1 In this article I use ‘Confucian’ to refer to anything that can be directly traced back to the figure of Confucius or to his self-identified followers, while I prefer the term ‘Ru 儒’ in place of its conventionally but imprecisely translation – ‘Confucian’ or ‘Confucianism’ – to specify those thinkers who emerged during the Spring and Autumn period (770–453 BCE) as guardians of cultural heritage during the first phase of the Zhou 周 dynasty (c. 1045–256 BCE). The Ru constituted a broad category of experts that performed public religious ceremonies and carried out bureaucratic tasks at a low to middle-range level. These were related to education, rituals and the transmission of a textual corpus which, according to early lore, Confucius and his followers compiled, edited and also partly composed. In such a sense, following Nylan (2001) 2–3 and Scarpari (2010) 11 and (2020) 209, ‘Ru’ might be translated more accurately as ‘Classicists’, or even ‘Traditionalists’, as Pines (2002) 35–37 suggests. While not indicating Confucius as the founder of a genuine ‘school’, Ru celebrated his example by imputing to him the status of supreme guardian and defender of ancient tradition.

2 Among those who trust in the possibility to distinguish, within the *Lunyu*, the original words of Confucius from the later comments made by his disciples, I will mention Chin (2008), who attempted a reconstruction of Confucius’s psychological profile based on elements of the Mas-

leidoscopic' approach inspires a process of historicization in revealing the role of the Master. The latter approach allows for the separate analysis of individual motivations behind the composite portrait of Confucius and the far-from-convergent iconic profiles of him that have been depicted over the centuries.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the distinct aims that animate these two interpretative approaches, I am convinced that there is a precise link between them. This lies in the centrality assumed by the problem of identifying the most reliable sources from which to start. In one way or another, this remains the crucial point: the foundational sources to be referenced in building, consolidating or dismantling the various hypotheses. It is from this point of view that the sense of the two preliminary questions that Michael Hunter poses should be understood, both valid as methodological premises for the research trajectories mentioned above: "(1) what are the earliest sources for Kongzi; and (2) which, if any, of these sources can be relied on for accurate information about him?"<sup>4</sup> In highlighting how closely these two questions are fused, Hunter concludes that "how one goes about answering the latter question determines to a large extent the version of Kongzi one ends up with".<sup>5</sup>

Obviously, any attempt to approach Confucius needs to be correlated with the *Lunyu* 論語 ('The Analects'), a work that has influenced the ways East Asian literary and intellectual traditions have absorbed and, in turn, re-projected polychromatic representations of the Master.

The *Lunyu* entry of the *Yiwenzhi* 藝文志 ('Records of Arts and Letters'), attributed to Ban Gu 班固 (32–92), offers a paradigmatic description of its nature:

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ter's biography emerging from the *Lunyu*-related anecdotal tradition; Li (2007), (2008) is confident at long last of sketching a de-glorified 'true image' (*zhenxiang* 真相) of Confucius; Brooks/Brooks (1998), whose philological approach has fueled a widespread debate, have solicited replies from Makeham (1999), Simson (2000), Slingerland (2000), Schaberg (2001b), Mair (1999), Henderson (1999), Weingarten (2011), and Zhang (2018) 140.

<sup>3</sup> The majority of the supporters of a 'kaleidoscopic' interpretation of Confucius tend toward the view that *Lunyu* is essentially a Western Han (206 BCE–9 CE) text, as intimated by the following scholars: Zhao (1961); Zhu (1986), (1987); Tsuda (1946); Makeham (1996); Csikszentmihalyi (2001), (2002); Haupt (2006); Scarpari (2007); Weingarten (2010); Hunter (2017a), (2017b), (2018); Zhang (2018) 93–174; Li (2019). The attempt to evade an exclusively *Lunyu*-centered analysis of Confucius is motivated by the idea that this text is no more than a portion – and not necessarily the most authoritative one – of a wider repository of Confucian lore preserved in several further sources. It is worth pointing out some key contributions that highlight the complexity and richness of inferences to be made regarding Confucius and the *Lunyu* through an array of insights from divergent angles: Van Norden (2002); Nylan/Wilson (2010); Olberding (2014); Goldin (2017); Hunter/Kern (2018).

<sup>4</sup> Hunter (2017b) 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

《論語》者，孔子應答弟子、時人及弟子相與言而接聞於夫子之語也。當時弟子各有所記。夫子既卒，門人相與輯而論纂，故謂之《論語》。

The *Lunyu* consists of a set of records of Confucius replying to his disciples and contemporaries, and it refers to the discussions among his disciples or the words that they had heard from the Master. At that time each disciple held his own records, and when the Master died his followers arranged their notes together in order to create a compilation which, for all the reasons explained above, has been called “*Lunyu*”.<sup>6</sup>

In stating that the *Lunyu* is “a set of records of Confucius replying to his disciples and contemporaries, and it refers the discussions among his disciples or the words that they had heard from the Master”, Ban Gu was merely confirming what had previously been expressed by both Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE), the official charged by Emperor Cheng 成帝 (r. 33–7 BCE) in 26 BCE with cataloging the imperial library, and Liu Xiang’s son Liu Xin 劉歆 (46 BCE–23 CE), according to whom “all 20 chapters of the Lu 魯 version of the *Lunyu* testify how Confucius’s disciples have recorded [it] as his fine sayings” (孔子弟子記諸善言).<sup>7</sup> In the minds of the most influential Han 漢 (206 BCE–220 CE) bibliographers was a deeply rooted conviction that the Master’s ‘sayings’ (*yan* 言) and ‘talks’ (*yu* 語) were authentically transcribed in the *Lunyu*, and considered so precious due to its vividly preserving the voice of Confucius himself. Moreover, the special significance attributed to the *Lunyu* would also reside in its ability to penetrate into an intimate, everyday, familiar dimension of the Master’s existence, to the point of infusing a sense of familiarity-based trust in the reader. As Levi underlines, it is indeed difficult not to acknowledge a mysterious enchanting power in this text.<sup>8</sup> A further consideration, often taken for granted, must be added, namely the perception that the transmitted *Lunyu* reflects the structure and spirit of the ‘original’ *Lunyu*, if not of the ‘archaic, ancient’ (*gu* 古) version recovered from the wall of Confucius’s house and arranged by Kong Anguo 孔安國 (d. c. 100 BCE).<sup>9</sup> The narrative based on the belief that there exists an unbroken thread

6 *Hanshu* 漢書 (“The History of the [Former] Han Dynasty”) 30.1717.

7 See the preface (*xu* 序) to the *Lunyu jijie* 論語集解 (“Collected Explanations of the *Lunyu*”) attributed to He Yan 何宴 (ca. 190–249), annotated with sub-commentaries by Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010) and included in the Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) edition of the *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏 (“The Thirteen Classics with annotations and sub-commentaries”), 2454.

8 Levi (2003) 2018.

9 Wang Chong 王充 (27–ca. 100) states that the *Lunyu* started to be presented with such a title and took a unitary shape only after Confucius’s descendant Kong Anguo assembled disconnected textual units into a formal collection of sayings attributed to Confucius in order to teach it to his student, Fu Qing 扶卿 of Lu, probably in the early years of Emperor Wu’s 武 武 reign (r. 141–87 BCE). See *Lunheng* 論衡 (“Discourses Weighed in the Balance”) 28.1138. According to *Hanshu*

along which the *Lunyu* unfolded itself over the centuries can be traced to scholars such as Huang Kan 黃/皇侃 (488–545), Liao Yan 廖燕 (1644–1705) and others thereafter, who believed that every word of the *Lunyu* had been either written, or at least approved, by the Master himself.<sup>10</sup>

But, paraphrasing the title of an article by Maurizio Scarpari, the Master really said all that has been attributed to him – or didn't he?<sup>11</sup> To what extent can we believe what the *Lunyu* proclaims? And what effect has the voice that resounds in it had on those who have listened to it? Can we say that it was really understood? How can we to justify, then, the rich derivative and often conflicting exegetical traditions concerning interpretation of the Master's words?

## 2 Questioning the Received *Lunyu*

Before addressing these questions directly, it is worth recalling Philip J. Ivanhoe's queries, because these were similar to Hunter's own premises: "Whose Confucius, which Analects" should we address? Ivanhoe observed that the natural plurality of interpretations that accompanies every single passage of the *Lunyu* is a direct consequence of the status the text has assumed in history. Being an authentic classic, it cannot but have been read in such ways as to lead multiple generations of scholars to pass on ever-expanding speculative horizons, evidently producing a variety of conflictual interpretations which nonetheless congeal and entangle themselves around a pivotal corpus: the center of an exegetical system in perpetual augmentation. The various representations of Confucius and the readings of *Lunyu* provided by He Yan 何宴 (ca. 190–249) and others, through Song dynasty thinkers Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032–85), Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), up to late imperial erudites Dai Zhen 戴震 (1723–1777) and Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1738–1801), express only the most well-known voices within a much larger chorus, a chorus which is,

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30.1706, the sensational discovery of the material used by Kong Anguo to create the so-called *Gu Lun* 古論 ('ancient version of the *Lunyu*' or 'the *Lunyu* in ancient scripts') is a classic case of serendipity. The local ruler Prince Gong of Lu 魯共王 (153–128 BCE) damaged the lecture hall of Confucius's family mansion while he was expanding his own palace and due to this some texts that had been hidden in a wall were discovered, including the *Shangshu* 尚書 ('Book of Documents'), *Liji* 禮記 ('Record of Rites'), *Xiaojing* 孝經 ('Classic of Filial Piety') and *Lunyu*, all written in 'ancient scripts' (*guwen* 古文).

<sup>10</sup> Zhang (2018) 141; Zhao (1961) 1.

<sup>11</sup> Scarpari (2007).

above all, not always ‘in tune’.<sup>12</sup> This, after all, is inevitable. Philosophical hermeneutics helps us grasp how exegesis could deal with such a dynamic context, one in which no written text can come to life unless its interpreters themselves revive it, since the richness of the message it contains is such as to continually germinate new meanings. Within the hermeneutic perspective there is no contradiction between the expectation of univocality of scripture and its proclivity for multiple interpretations, precisely because the hermeneutic condition is nourished by the tension between the past and present, between the singularity of a given text and its openness in regard to meaning. The real purpose then becomes grasping the *sensus plenior* of a written work. In the case of the *Lunyu* and, in a broader sense, of Ru philosophy, Ivanhoe indeed stresses how *true* understanding “requires that one understand the history of the tradition”.<sup>13</sup> The cultural milieu to which any given reader unavoidably belongs is actually infused with pre-existing interpretative orientations, yet, by contrast, every tradition is sustained by the inevitable tension that arises from an injection of alternative perspectives. From such premises, the claim to be able to unveil a *sensus unicus* consequently shatters when confronted with the realization that to return to a pre-critical stage is an utter impossibility. And, above all, even if it were possible to go back to such a precise stage, nothing assures us that we would be in the ideal condition to formulate interpretations that are ultimately authentic and true. In fact, the weight of tradition can be less oppressive than the apparent lightness of a direct ‘naked and raw’ reading of a text, yielded by an ‘immaculate’ eye (the very concept of which is highly dubious).

However, the hermeneutic level does not exhaust the perspective of an analysis of any text. In fact, the plurality of interpretations deriving from the expansion of meaning that a text assumes within the exegetical tradition is flanked by a plurality of forms through which it manifests itself in history. Every discrepancy only expands and accelerates the proliferation of further levels of interpretation that are no longer based on the ‘same’ text but on different versions of what we sometimes find difficult to recognize as such. Indeed, in the case of the *Lunyu*, up to now its exegesis has been based substantially on the received version manifest in twenty *pian* 篇 (‘chapters’), but in the very near future our perception of the text might well be drastically changed following the acquisition of new elements which, as we will see shortly, are poised to exert a profound influence on the field’s research methods.

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<sup>12</sup> For a detailed examination of the exegesis of the *Lunyu*, see Makeham (2004).

<sup>13</sup> Ivanhoe (2002) 129.

### 3 Which *Lunyu*?

Twenty *pian* ('chapters') distinguish the received version of the *Lunyu* from what, as we have seen above, Liu Xin and Liu Xiang identified as the *Lu Lun* 魯論, namely a redaction according to the tradition typical of the Lu 魯 state. However, the fact that the two versions had the same number of chapters does not prove that they actually concur. Such a conclusion should not be surprising, since the existence of multiple versions in early periods have been confirmed by numerous sources, beginning with the *Yiwenzhi*, which, in addition to the *Lu Lun*, lists two more redactions: a *Gu Lun* 古論, the 'ancient' version of twenty-one *pian* recovered from the wall of Confucius's house, and a version of twenty-two *pian* known as the *Qi Lun* 齊論 ('the *Lunyu* version transmitted in Qi 齊 state'). The twenty-one *pian* ('ancient') edition had a chapter entitled *Zizhang* 子張 ('Disciple Zizhang', chapter 19 according to the received version) divided into two parts and the second part included some passages traditionally associated with chapter 20, *Yao yue* 堯曰 ('Emperor Yao said'). Instead, what distinguished the Qi version were two extra chapters, namely *Wen wang* 問王 ('Asking about Rulership') and *Zhi dao* 知道 ('Knowing the *dao*'), which were soon lost.<sup>14</sup> Currently we are not in a position to ascertain the exact degree of uniformity of these three versions with respect to the received version, nor can we say precisely to what extent the sequence of sections/chapters and the wording of sentences contained within were different. He Yan, who assembled all the commentaries written up to his time in the *Lunyu jijie* 論語集解 ('Collected Explanations of the *Lunyu*'), stated that the scholar Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) had the opportunity to consult all the three versions when writing his *Lunyu* comparative commentary, the *Lunyu zhu* 論語注.<sup>15</sup> According to Huang Kan's *Lunyu yishu* 論語義疏 ('Elucidation of the Meaning of the *Lunyu*'), Huan Tan 桓譚 (ca. 43 BCE–28 CE) mentions substantial textual variations between the 'ancient version' on the one hand, and both the *Qi* and *Lu* versions on the other. Discrepancies affected the structure of several chapters and a substantial aggregate of words (around four hundred).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Hanshu* 30.1716. Chen Dong 陳東 argues that the Lu and Qi versions did not exist before the Han, when they were fabricated in response to the growing favor enjoyed by the 'ancient' *Lunyu* version, which Chen Dong believes to be of late-Warring States origins. See Chen (2003a) and Chen (2003b).

<sup>15</sup> See *Lunyu zhushu* 論語注疏 ('The *Lunyu* with Annotations and Sub-commentaries'), *Shisanjing zhushu* ed. 2455.

<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the *Xinlun* 新論 ('New Discussions') attributed to Huan Tan testifies how "the archaic *Lunyu* has twenty-one *juan* 卷 ['scroll', sometimes corresponding to *pian* 'chapter', in the sense of a textual unit used to count the main sections that ancient books were divided into],

Obviously, each version was supported by specific exegetical approaches. In fact, *Yiwenzhi* mentions which scholars were experts on specific versions, including Zhang Yu 張禹 (d. 5 BCE), a figure who played a decisive role in the stabilization of the text.<sup>17</sup> Zhang Yu's biography in *Hanshu* asserts that he studied with some *Qi Lun* specialists, first with Wang Ji 王吉 (also known as Wang Yang 王陽, d. 48 BCE) and later with Master Yong 庸生 (fl. 1st century BCE), and finally tried to reconcile the Qi and Lu editions in order to create his own, the so-called *Zhanghou Lun* 張侯論 ('the *Lunyu* version of Marquis Zhang'), which became dominant as the others slowly faded.<sup>18</sup> Zhang Yu seemed to have taken the Lu version as his main basis and then integrated references from the *Qi Lun* at any point he felt justified in doing so.<sup>19</sup> As proof of the appreciation showed for the *Zhanghou Lun* among the Han literati, suffice it to say that precisely this version was chosen in 175 AD to be engraved in stone, together with other canonical scriptures.<sup>20</sup>

Although the belief is widely shared among scholars that the basis of the received version of the *Lunyu* was set by the 'systematized' text produced by Zhuang Yu, the evidence at our disposal does not allow us to sketch the genesis of the work. That genesis, moreover, certainly does not represent an isolated case in the wide panorama of ancient texts, especially if we consider those assumed to have been written during the Warring States period (453–221 BCE) but actually underwent a radical reshaping or, in some cases, even an *ex-novo* compilation in

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with more than 640 dissimilar characters from the *Qi Lun* and *Lu Lun*" (古論語二十一卷與齊魯異六百四十餘字). See *Xinlun* 9.35. Furthermore, early commentators had noted differences not only concerning the number of *pian*, but also their sequence. He Yan, for example, points out that the *pian* sequence of the ancient *Lunyu* "is not the same as the *Qi* and *Lu Lunyu*" (篇次不與齊魯). See *Lunyu zhengyi* 論語正義 ('Correct Meaning of the *Lunyu*') 24.777. He Yan also notes that, beyond the actual number of chapters, the text of Qi's version itself was in any case more extended than that of Lu's. See *Lunyu zhengyi* 24.774.

**17** *Hanshu* 30.1716–1717. In this regard, according to Zhang Hanmo, the *Zhanghou Lun* 張侯論 'has been passed down to us without major changes. The *Zhanghou lun* is the tip of an iceberg, with the archaic, *Qi*, and *Lu Lunyu* hidden from our view beneath the water.' Zhang (2018) 139.

**18** *Hanshu* 81.3347–3352. Along the lines of *Yiwenzhi*, He Yan's *Lunyu xu* 論語序 also mentions in detail names and titles of those in charge of transmitting both the *Qi Lun* ('Wang Qing from Langye and Yong Sheng from Jiaodong as well as the Changyi Commandant-in-ordinary of the Nobles, Wang Ji', 琅邪王卿及膠東庸生昌邑中尉王吉) and the *Lu Lun* ('Grant Mentor of the Heir Apparent, Xiahou Sheng, the former General Xiao Wangzhi, Counselor-in-chief Wei Xian and his son Xuancheng', 太子大傅夏侯勝前將軍蕭望之丞相韋賢及子玄成). See *Lunyu zhengyi* 24.771–775.

**19** *Suishu* 隋書 ('History of the Sui Dynasty') 32.939.

**20** The *Lunyu* version included in the so-called Xiping 熹平 stone classics was actually written over the years 175 to 183 and is said to have been based on the *Lu Lun* according to Zhang's recension.



the Han period or even later. For many scholars, the non-homogeneity of structure, style and content that characterizes the *Lunyu* is irrefutable evidence of its layered and composite nature, a highly plausible conclusion. This is the reason why the main challenge for contemporary *Lunyu* scholarship is delimiting its pristine core portions. The point is that in order to reach such an ultimate goal we must be able to establish with sufficient certainty the dating of each single pericope, isolating those elements of the text which date to the early phase of the Warring States period and which may reflect the authentic teaching of the historical Confucius. Such a goal, however, risks being thwarted by objective lacunae, as well as by the implicit limits in the investigative methodologies adopted. For example, it is imperative to come to a conclusion regarding the legitimacy of any investigation through micro-dating – that is, fragmenting chapter by chapter, pericope by pericope, the content of the *Lunyu* – in the hope of discovering unequivocal proof in some hidden recess of the text. Likewise, it is worth verifying whether or not, in the face of a lack of firm footholds in terms of chronology, correspondence to criteria both internal and external to the *Lunyu* is able to produce anything but a circular argument whose solidity is nothing more than chimerical.<sup>21</sup>

As hard as it may be to admit, at present we cannot track the oscillation of individual sub-*pian* textual units from the time of their actual composition (by whom and on what date) to the moment when we presume they were concealed along with other archaic-script classics in the walls of Confucius's house, finally to be discovered and subsequently arranged to create the so-called 'ancient' version of the *Lunyu*.<sup>22</sup> In the face of such ineluctable lacunae we can only conclude

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**21** Here I simply mention the criticism made by Zhang (2018) 140–141 of Brooks/Brooks (1998) 201–248 (*Appendix 1*) on their 'accretion theory' of the *Lunyu*. According to Brooks and Brooks, *Lunyu* passages were written and gathered together in different periods, but in the view of Zhang (2018) 141, "their methodology for dating and categorizing passages on the basis of scattered and minimal historical information is highly problematic". Li Zehou and Schaberg have also been very critical of the Brooks/Brooks approach, as emerges from Li (1998) 448–450 and Schaberg (2001a) 131–139. For a more recent reformulation of the 'accretion theory', see Eno (2018). In Eno's interpretation, "an accretion approach can accommodate ranges of dating solutions that fit available evidence while addressing the critical issue of textual disorder in the *Lunyu*". See Eno (2018) 65.

**22** Admitting, with this, that the narrative of the discovery of the twenty-one *pian Lunyu* found within the walls of Confucius's mansion is plausible, despite the contradictory details regarding the event that emerges, for example, from Wang Chong. In the *Zhengshuo* 正說 ('Correcting Interpretations') chapter of his *Lunheng* he says that the event took place during Wudi's reign (r. 141–87 BCE, *Lunheng* 28.1136), but when he talks about the discovery of a *Shangshu* version in ancient script, he dates the facts back to Jingdi's 景帝 reign (r. 157–141 BCE, *Lunheng* 28.1125). Elsewhere, in discussing the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 ('Zuo Tradition of Interpretation of the Spring and

that any *Lunyu*-centered interpretation of the historical Confucius risks being undermined by the fact that the dating and transmission of the *Lunyu* itself are effectively grounded on quicksand. This is simply because the problem of producing a stable chronology of Confucius-related sources is only one aspect of a broader framework in which the dating of ancient texts in general becomes highly uncertain.

What has been said so far should not be taken as capitulation to this apparent dead-end, whither all research on Confucius and *Lunyu* supposedly leads. Far from it. Perhaps never before has the scenario been so rich and enticing. On the contrary, the obstinacy which accompanied the attributions of the *Lunyu* – in entirety or in part – to some obscure author through the imposition of an early date on the text should be seen as the main obstacle to an open and unprejudiced debate. In order to overcome this, there are some preliminary issues that should be subjected to a thorough review. For example, the examination of the tradition of a given text is usually conceived as requiring a sharp distinction between its basic compilation process and its exegesis (produced by later commentators over time). These two stages are kept at arm's length from one another, because they are intended to assess different phases and different agents. However, unless there is certain evidence of actual authorial intervention by a specific number of discrete individuals who operated within a well-circumscribed time span, we can see that the process of textual production was often protracted across time and, in many cases, overlaps with interpretative but also selective activity of exegetes who were not themselves 'authors' *stricto sensu* but who became 'pseudo-authors' by deeply affecting the configuration of the text.

In the case of the *Lunyu* we should perhaps accept the idea that the beginning of exegesis in the Han period coincides with the integration of different recensions into a unified text, without necessarily assuming that its writing had already been completed centuries earlier. From this perspective, the flowering of exegetical literature on the *Lunyu* during the Han dynasty would be contextual to the project of gradually shaping the text that would later be identified as such. It seems highly probable that the exegetes did not limit themselves to commenting on work already 'closed', i.e. established and fully-formed, but rather that they selected and edited textual material according to their own hermeneutical agenda and, by doing so, not only constrained *Lunyu* interpretations produced by later scholars but also conditioned the structure and content that the text

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*Autumn*), Wang Chong mentions that Prince Gong of Lu damaged Confucius's home when Wudi was in power (*Lunheng* 29.1161–1162).

took on over the span of history. In fact, as in the case of Zhang Yu, it seems plausible to assume that exegetical-hermeneutical preferences might have guided his decision to implement extensive interventions throughout the text, thus determining its future transmission.

## 4 *Lunyu* in the Light of Archaeological Data

How new archaeological findings have affected our perception of the *Lunyu* is a topic that has been scrupulously examined in recent years.<sup>23</sup> Here we will simply explore to what extent the elements already known from the received literature about the nature of the *Qi Lunyu* can be integrated with a series of new clues which emerged after the discovery of the tomb of Liu He 劉賀 (92–59 BCE), excavated in 2011. Liu He was a grandson of Emperor Wu 武 (Han Wudi 漢武帝, r. 141–87 BCE) and the ninth emperor of the Western Han dynasty, deposed 27 days after his enthronement and exiled to the Haihun 海昏 Kingdom (located around present-day Nanchang 南昌, modern Jiangxi 江西 Province), where he died as the Marquis (侯 侯) of Haihun. A full archaeological report has not yet been published, but preliminary accounts of parts of an astounding funerary array describe a lacquered ‘dressing’ or ‘covered’ mirror with the earliest known portrait of Confucius<sup>24</sup> and some two hundred wooden tablets and five thousand bamboo strips on which several classical texts had been transcribed. Among them, the archeologists found a bamboo strip labelled M1:2564 A-B, on the *verso* of which (M1:2564 B) the characters *zhi dao* 智道 appear, while on the *recto* (M1:2564 A) a pericope directly addressing Confucius and including the renowned formula *zi yue* 子曰 (‘the Master said...’) had been brushed on.

Such a direct quotation from the Master – with no parallel either in the received *Lunyu* or in other early texts – is written as follows:

孔子智道之易也易=云者三日子曰此道之美也莫之御也...<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Hebeisheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo (1981) and (1997); Lee *et al.* (2009); Kim (2011), (2019); van Els (2009), (2018).

<sup>24</sup> For an in-depth examination of the nature and function of the object in question, see Guo (2019).

<sup>25</sup> The second part of the pericope is quite similar to *Kongzi jiaoyu* 孔子家語 (‘The School sayings of Confucius’) 18.8. “=” is the marker indicating the repetition of the previous graph, so “易=” is intended to convey “易易”. By reading the manuscript ‘literally’, we would have to follow Sanft (2018) and attribute to *yang* 易 its basic meaning ‘brilliant’, which is a perfectly consistent interpretation. However, among those who have already studied strip M1:2564 the belief prevails that 易 should be taken as standing for *yi* 易 ‘easy’, since writing 易 for 易 might be fully compatible

When Confucius realized how easy it could be [to practice] the *dao*, he spent the following three<sup>26</sup> days repeating that it was easy, so easy. The Master [finally] said, “In this lies the beauty of the *dao*, but [unfortunately] no one can master it...”

Aside from the simplicity of acting according to the guiding moral principles transmitted from antiquity (*dao* 道), the passage above reveals at once a sense of awe at the wonder of *dao* and the regret that, however easy, no one is able to practice it unerringly. By looking at other sources reporting Confucius’s words on these specific topics, the text on strip M1:2564 A seems to reassert the exhortation to be passionately committed to *dao* and to consolidate one’s own intentions in order to act in conformity with it. If this were the case, we would be justified in finding a correlation between this and passage 7.30 from the *Lunyu* about the highest virtue, *ren* 仁 (‘humaneness’), on which Confucius expounded “Is *ren* really so far? If I simply desire *ren*, then I will find that it is already here! (仁遠乎哉? 我欲仁, 斯仁至矣)”. He is saying here that everything we need to live according to virtue is already here, available to us: this is the reason why Confucius seemingly sighed in amazement at the realization that in simplicity resides the supreme wonder of a condition that is within everyone’s reach.

It remains to be explained what is the exact meaning of the two words written on the bamboo strip’s *verso*, *zhi dao* 智道, whose presence is justified in light

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with the scribal range of the time. See Yang *et al.* (2016). In conclusion, both readings – 易 (‘brilliant’) and 易 (‘easy’) – are plausible, but the fact remains that the reading *yi* 易 is considered more grounded only because it outlines an interpretation of the whole passage in line with several attestations from the received literature where the *dao* 道 is actually described as ‘easy’ to practice: *Hanshi waizhuan* (‘Outer commentary to Han [Ying’s] recension of the Book of Odes’) 5.184; *Kongzi jiayu* 28.2; *Liji* 61.1683c, 1684b (*Shisanjing zhushu* ed.). A similar passage is also attested in *Xunzi* 荀子 (Master Xun) 14.384. I do not exclude, however, that the graph 易 in the manuscript could stand for the word *dang* 蕩 (where the 易 element is present within its phonophoric ‘?’) ‘vast, large’, ‘easy and plain’, ‘broad and long’, ‘level’, especially in light of the expression *wang dao dang dang* 王道蕩蕩 (‘broad and fair is the *dao* of the king’), attested in numerous ancient sources: *Lüshi Chunqiu* (‘Springs and autumns of Mr. Lü’) 1.4.44; *Mozi* (Master Mo) 16.176; *Shangshu, Hong fan* 洪範 (‘The Great Plan’) 12.190b (*Shisanjing zhushu* ed.); *Shuiyuan* 說苑 (‘Garden of persuasions’) 14.343; *Xinxu* 新序 (‘New arrangements’) 1.5.2/10 (ICS Ancient Chinese text Concordance Series); *Zuozhuan*, Duke Xiang 襄公, third year, 29.1930c (*Shisanjing zhushu* ed.). Instead, Quan (2018) believes that 易 should be read as *yi* 繹, a term that refers to a specific ceremony commemorating the dead, whose protocol included ritual performances held for three days. The meaning of the passage would highlight, according to Quan (2018), the exaltation of the spirit of ‘filial piety’ (*xiao* 孝) that animated the ritual practice defined as *yi* 繹, which consisted of reiterating the offering to the *shi* 尸 (‘the impersonator of the deceased’) of the dishes that were offered the previous day to the deceased themselves. In my view, the interpretation in Quan (2018), although appealing, requires further testing.

26 ‘Three’ actually stands for ‘several’.

of the practice, widely attested in antiquity, of writing the title of a work on the *verso* of such strips. On the basis of the ancient equivalence of the graphic forms 智 and 知 to indicate (depending on context) ‘knowledge’ or ‘to know’,<sup>27</sup> *zhi dao* 智道 might actually coincide with *zhi dao* 知道 (‘Knowing the *dao*’), i. e., the title of one of the two extra chapters that early historiographical sources explicitly align with the *Qi Lun*. If so, at this juncture we can see that the *Qi Lun* took place among the bamboo strips from the Haihun site.<sup>28</sup>

Actually, the content of strip M1:2564 was not new to the scholarly community. In fact, following the excavations conducted in 1973 at the Jinshui Jinguan site 肩水金關遺址 in the northern part of Jinta County 金塔縣 (Gansu 甘肅 Province) by the Gansu Juyan Archaeological Team (Gansu Juyan kaogudui 甘肅居延考古隊), 11,577 fragments of wooden strips were brought to light, thirteen of which have been identified with the *Lunyu*.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, except for a few graphic variations – like the form 知 in place of 智 – the contents of strip 73EJT22:6 from Jianshui Jinguan match that which is recorded on strip M1:2564 A found in Liu He’s tomb at Haihun:

- 孔子知道之易也易=云省三日子曰此道之美也...<sup>30</sup> (Jianshui Jinguan strip 73EJT22:6)<sup>31</sup>

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27 Bai (2008) 118–122.

28 It is no wonder that the first reports about this strip assert that it likely comes from the *Qi Lun*, as stated by Jiangxi sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo *et al.* (2016) 61 and Yang *et al.* (2016). In the Haihun tomb were also reported other wooden tablets defined as *qianpai* 簽牌 (‘inscribed label official tablets’) and *zoudu* 奏牘 (‘memorials to the throne’), among which one – labelled *Lunyu shu dutu* 《論語》書牘圖 (‘wooden board with inscribed passages from *Lunyu*’) – records a few texts matching the received *Lunyu*. According to the excavation team, these passages are assumed to be Liu He’s personal notes (see Wang *et al.* 2016, 70). For an overall discussion on the *Lunyu*-related passages from the Haihun tomb, see Wang (2017).

29 The transcription and critical edition of the Jianshui Jinguan corpus are included in the five volumes of Jianshui Jinguan Hanjian 肩水金關漢簡 (Gansu Jiandu Baohu Yanjiu Zhongxin *et al.* 2011–2015). The (hypothetical) *Lunyu*-related texts found at Jianshui Jinguan were excavated together with other manuscripts that recorded the reigning years of Emperor Xuan 宣帝 (74–49 BCE), such as Benshi 本始 (73–70 BCE), Dijie 地節 (69–66 BCE), Yuankang 元康 (65–62 BCE), Shenjue 神爵 (61–58 BCE), Wufeng 五鳳 (57–54 BCE), and Ganlu 甘露 (53–50 BCE). For an analysis of such *Lunyu*-related passages found among the Jianshui jinguan material, see Kim (2019) 220, 226, where the thirteen passages are divided into two groups: nos. 1–5 include those passages that can be found in the transmitted version of the *Lunyu*, while nos. 6–13 are passages absent in the received *Lunyu*. Wang/Zhang (2017a), (2017b) take for granted that this last group of passages belongs in its entirety to *Qi Lun*.

30 The strip is physically damaged, therefore the text following the graph *ye* 也 – which is partially visible – remains unknown. The main difference compared to the content of M1:2564 A lies in 省 *versus* 者: at first, the graph in *Jianshui Jinguan* 73EJT22:6 was taken as 省, but after the paleographers re-examined the text on the wooden strip it was re-transcribed as 者.

孔子智道之易也易=云者三日子曰此道之美也莫之御也 (Haihun strip M1:2564)

With astounding timing, there had already been those who, even before the discovery of M1:2564 was made public, had been able to identify the contents of strip 73EJT22:6 from Jianshui Jinguang as an excerpt from the long-lost *Qi Lun*.<sup>32</sup> The convergence of the two pericopes is surprising, but this, should not tempt us to draw any hasty conclusions, especially now that archaeological discoveries seem to shed a glimmer of light on the *Zhi dao* chapter and, more generally, on the *Qi Lun*. In fact, the greatest risk now is in over-interpreting the fragmentary data at our disposal and allowing ourselves to enter a frenzied race of precipitously identifying all the presumed *Lunyu*-related passages from Jianshui Jinguang. Some of them were even already classified as surviving excerpts from the other missing chapter of the *Qi Lun*, *Wen wang*.<sup>33</sup> In this regard, there are some things that deserve further consideration. Zhao Jiancheng 趙建成<sup>34</sup> recently undertook a detailed – as well as daring – disquisition on the nature of the *Qi Lun* chapter entitled *Wen wang* 問王 (‘Asking about rulership’), or rather, as suggested by the author, *Wen yu* 問玉 (‘Asking about jade’). Zhao Jiancheng is not the first critic to have believed that the evident graphic proximity between *wang* 王 (‘rulership, kingship’) and *yu* 玉 (‘jade’) misled even the most learned ancient commentators. Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223–1296),<sup>35</sup> later followed by Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629–1709),<sup>36</sup> Duan Yucui 段玉裁 (1735–1815),<sup>37</sup> Feng Dengfu 馮登府 (1783–1841),<sup>38</sup> Chen Hanzhang 陳漢章 (1864–1938),<sup>39</sup> and Ma Guohan 馬國翰 (1794–1857),<sup>40</sup> had already suspected that *Wen yu* was indeed the title of one

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31 In early Chinese manuscripts, the round, black dot ‘•’ at the beginning – i.e., at the top – of the strip is there to mark the opening of a textual unit (usually a sub-*pian* unit).

32 Xiao Congli 蕭從禮 and Zhao Lanxiang 趙蘭香 argued that 73EJT22:6 was an exact fragment of the chapter *Zhi dao* from the *Qi Lun*; however, the justifications cited remain unconvincing. See Xiao/Zhao (2014). I fully concur with the perplexities expressed by Sanft (2018) 191–193 and I especially endorse his cautioning against the risk of drawing rash conclusions about the identification of these manuscripts.

33 Zhao (2017).

34 Zhao (2017).

35 Wang (2011) 182.

36 Zhu (1988) 1084, 1323.

37 Duan (1988) 15.

38 Feng (1890) 1.

39 Unfortunately, I could not verify this information, which I derive from Wang Zhang (2017b) note 5.

40 Ma (1990) vol. 4, 227.

of the lost chapters of *Qi Lun*.<sup>41</sup> A legitimate doubt does actually arise when we look at the content of another strip among the alleged *Lunyu*-related texts from Jiangshui Jinguan:

[...] 之方也思理自外可以知 [...] (Jiangshui Jinguan strip 73EJH1:58)

... as a model<sup>42</sup> of the [...] Through the veins that run on its surface it will be possible to understand [...]

Despite this strip being broken, the writing is clear and the pericope overlaps with a portion of the description through which the entry *yu* 玉 ('jade') is articulated in *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 ('Explaining graphs and analyzing characters'):

石之美。有五德。潤澤以溫。仁之方也。聽理自外，可以知中。義之方也。其聲舒揚。專以遠聞。智之方也。不撓而折。勇之方也。銳廉而不技。絜之方也。象三玉之連。<sup>43</sup>

The beauty of this stone comes from its fivefold virtue. It is, with its smoothness and its glossiness, a symbol of what is mild and gentle; therefore it stands as a model of humane-ness. Through the veins that run on its surface it will be possible to understand its intimate nature; therefore it stands as a model of moral rectitude. Its light sound rises joyfully – it stretches and can be heard far away; therefore it stands as a model of sagacity. It does not give in to pressure and breaks cleanly; therefore it stands as a model of bravery. Neither its sharp point nor its sharp edge hurts; therefore it stands as a model of integrity. The graph 玉 depicts three jade-stones tied together.

Wang Chuning 王楚寧 and Zhang Yuzheng 張予正<sup>44</sup> along with Zhao Jiancheng<sup>45</sup> assert that Xu Shen 許慎 (c. 58–c. 148) absorbed this passage concerning the fivefold virtue of jade, which was originally part of *Qi Lun*, into the *Shuowe jiezi*. The first two scholars go so far as to state that the text on strip 73EJH1:58 from Jiangshui Jinguan corresponds to the *incipit* of chapter *Wen yu* 問玉. However far-fetched such conclusions may seem, there is a further element that argues

41 Building on Wang Yinglin's doubts, Zhao Jiancheng offered the hypothesis that the quotations from *Yi Lunyu* 逸論語 ('Scattered *Lunyu*') preserved in *Shuowen jiezi*, *Chuxue ji* 初學記 ('Notes to First Learning'), *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 ('Imperial Overview from the Taiping [xing-guo] reign') and Li Shan's 李善 (630–689) commentary on *Wenxuan* 文選 ('Selections of Refined Literature') derive precisely from the *Wen yu* chapter which, together with the *Zhi dao* chapter, would have been expunged by Zhang Yu. In Zhao Jiancheng's eyes, the fact that five surviving texts of *Yi Lunyu* are all related to jade does nothing but reinforce this assumption. See Zhao (2017) 15–17.

42 *Fang* 方 means 'model', but also 'direction, orientation', 'scope, sphere', 'method'.

43 Duan (1988) 10.

44 Wang/Zhang (2017b).

45 Zhao (2017).

in favor of a ‘Confucian’ origin of the passage in the *Shuowen jiezi* concerning *yu* 玉. In fact, it is echoed in various Ru sources<sup>46</sup> which, in a more extended form and with significant variants, all rework the same plot. It is a scenario focused on a dialogue between Confucius and his disciple Zigong 子貢 upon the parallelism between the virtues of the exemplary person (*junzi* 君子) and those of jade.

By way of example, herein follows a translation of the version of the event recorded in *Liji* 禮記 (‘Record of Rites’):

子貢問於孔子曰：「敢問君子貴玉而賤珉者何也？為玉之寡而珉之多與？」  
 孔子曰：「非為珉之多故賤之也、玉之寡故貴之也。夫昔者君子比德於玉焉：溫潤而澤，仁也；縝密以栗，知(智)也；廉而不劌，義也；垂之如隊，禮也；叩之其聲清越以長，其終詘然，樂也；瑕不掩瑜、瑜不掩瑕，忠也；孚尹旁達，信也；氣如白虹，天也；精神見於山川，地也；圭璋特達，德也。天下莫不貴者，道也。《詩》云：『言念君子，溫其如玉。』故君子貴之也。」

Zigong asked Confucius, saying: “Allow me to ask why the exemplary person sets a high value on jade, but little on soapstone? Is it because jade is rare, and soapstone plentiful?” Confucius replied: “It is not because the soapstone is plentiful that the exemplary person thinks but little of it, and because jade is rare that he sets a high value on it. In ancient times exemplary persons used to compare their inner virtue to jade. **Smooth and glossy, a symbol of what is mild and gentle – like humaneness**; fine, compact, and strong – like sagacity; it is sharply angular, as though punctilious, yet does not cause injury – like moral rectitude; hanging down (in beads) as if it would fall to the ground – like ritual propriety; when struck, yielding a note, clear and prolonged, yet terminating abruptly – like music; its flaws not concealing its beauty, nor its beauty concealing its flaws – like conscientiousness; with an internal radiance issuing from it on every side – like trustworthiness; bright as a brilliant rainbow – like the sky; exquisite and mysterious, appearing in the hills and streams – like the earth; standing out conspicuous in the symbols of rank – like inner virtue; none under Heaven fails to esteem it – like the *dao*. As is said in the *Ode* (I, xi, ode 3, 1), ‘I am thinking of my lord; how refined he will look, like a jade.’ This is the reason why the exemplary person sets the highest value on it”.<sup>47</sup>

Unknowns surrounding Confucius and the *Lunyu* tradition are still numerous. We only have to wait until the content of the bamboo texts from Haihun become available in order to evaluate their impact on our understanding of the nature of the *Qi Lun*. Should we finally acquire relevant information in regard to the questions outlined above, perhaps we will be able to recover that which is preserved in one of the many missing pieces of this intricate puzzle that is the history of *Lunyu*: namely, the answer to the question: what might have been the subject

<sup>46</sup> See *Kongzi jiyu* 36.1 (chapter *Wen yu* 問玉 ‘Asking about jade’); *Liji* 63.1694a-b; *Xunzi* 3.535.

<sup>47</sup> The translation is slightly based on Legge (1885) 463–464.



matter of one of the long-lost *Lunyu* chapters? Confucius's take on the nature of virtuous rulership (*wang* 王) or his reply to disciple Zigong's question about the qualities of jade (*yu* 玉)?

After all, it has been clear since the very beginning that the Devil – as much as God – is in the details.

Michele Ferrero

# The Latin Translations of Confucian Terminology on Government and Rule in a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Manuscript of Michele Ruggieri, S.J.

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, together with a group of scholars from Beijing Foreign Studies University, I have been transcribing and translating (into English, Italian and Chinese) a manuscript from the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century that contains the first Latin translation of Confucian texts.<sup>1</sup> It comes from the National Library ‘Vittorio Emanuele II’ in Rome (Fondo Gesuitico n.1185/3314). It bears the head-title *A P. Michaele Rogerio collecta*, that is, ‘material collected by Father Michele Ruggieri’. Professor D’Arelli has already studied the historical background of this manuscript,<sup>2</sup> and his articles mention all the details concerning it, so there is no need to repeat that information here.<sup>3</sup>

Michele Ruggieri, S.J. (1543–1607)<sup>4</sup> was the first European Sinologist to live in China for an extended period of time, from 1580 to 1588.<sup>5</sup> He made a widely recognized and significant contribution to the exchanges between China and the West,<sup>6</sup> although his more famous companion, Matteo Ricci, is considered the first Sinologist.<sup>7</sup> Yet probably both worked together on this manuscript. It is a Latin translation of the *Four Books*, which are the pillars of the teaching of Confucius.<sup>8</sup>

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1 Partially published as Ferrero (2019a).

2 D’Arelli (1994), (1996), (1998).

3 So D’Arelli (1998) 164–165: “Il codice ha tre diverse ed autonome paginazioni [...] esclusi alcuni *folia*, la mano della scrittura dell’intero codice è di M. Ruggieri”.

4 Gisondi (1999).

5 As remarked by Nicholas Trigault in the preface to his Latin translation of Ricci’s Journal. See Gallagher (1953) 5.

6 Gallagher (1953) 193–4. See also Ruggieri (1993) 31. From 1502 to 1647 the Kingdom of Napoli, where Ruggieri studied and died, was part of the Spanish kingdom under a Spanish ‘viceroys’.

7 Mungello (1989) 44.

8 One clear and brief presentation of Confucianism can be found in Yao (2000). See also Fung (1952) vol. 1 48–29; Filippini-Ronconi (1964) 39.

This translation by Ruggieri represents a remarkable confluence of eras and traditions. On one side: Confucius and the *Four Books*, the foundation of East Asian thinking and tradition. On the other side: Europe in the late 1500s, between the end of Renaissance and the beginning of the Baroque period, with the approaching revolution of the Reformation, the birth of Nation States and the growing power of nations that could sail outside the Mediterranean Sea to the new worlds of Asia and America. On one side: Chinese language, with its thousands of years of history. On the other side: Latin and its foundational importance for Western civilization and thought.

In this article, I analyze in particular Ruggieri's Latin translation of Confucian terminology on government and ruling, focusing especially on the figures of *kings*, *rulers* and *leaders*. The methodology employed is both simple and enriching for a deeper understanding of languages and perceptions towards leaders and government in East and West. First, I identify three main concepts about government and leadership: the leader himself, the highest authority of a country or an institution; then someone or something recognized as above the leader, a higher power or structure; finally, the powers below the leader: ministers or officers. I approach these categories in the Chinese texts by highlighting some specific Chinese words and expressions. Those texts are then compared with texts about kings, princes or leaders from the Western Classical tradition. Then I analyze the Latin translation of this terminology from Chinese in Ruggieri as a starting point for asking broader questions about ideas concerning power, politics and leadership between East and West.

One of my questions is: is there anything specifically 'Asian' about leadership that was lost or radically altered in the Latin translation? Or, on the opposite, is there anything that is distinctively Western or European or Latin that emerges within the Latin translation? Or, if *leaders* and *chiefs* are the same across language and culture, does it matter how they are called?

My first impression, working on these Latin translations, is that the concept and role of leaders, kings, princes, people in charge, bosses, chiefs and the like does not differ much between the East and West. Unlike some other elements of Chinese culture, the concept of leader or king was easily understood by Western scholars in their first meeting with China.

When we come to the differences between Asia and the West insofar as relation between leaders and people or within a leadership system (forms of control, extension or balance of powers, *etc.*), the topic becomes more complex. It is not just a geographical issue but also a diachronic one. Different times, different forms of exercise of power.

In Confucianism, the hierarchical organization is the foundation of every social structure. As in a family, a father has authority over his children, so in soci-

ety any leader has authority over his subjects.<sup>9</sup> Within this general idea of ‘society as family’ there are different words and terms in Chinese to express various position of leadership.

But basically there is one shared idea of what it means to be a leader. Thus in my article I proceed from the assumption that when this 16<sup>th</sup>-century European scholar translates into Latin some Confucian texts, he recognizes that also in China concepts of authority, leadership and ruling exist. The concept, unlike other concepts in Buddhism or even in Confucianism, is not totally new.

Both traditions in the East and the West agree that a leader should be good, honest, righteous, virtuous, fair, brave, strong, incorruptible and full of positive qualities. Plato and Confucius, Aristotle and Mencius, all summarize the characteristics of an ideal leader: he should be a good man, possibly the best.

In a classical philosophy inquiry about moral reflection,<sup>10</sup> A. MacIntyre analyzes how different cultures and different ages differ on how to identify the ‘best people’, the *aristoi* (physical strength and cunning in Homer, higher wisdom in Plato, fidelity to the king in the Middle Ages and so on). Yet all agree that the leader must be chosen among the best. The same is true in the Confucian tradition.

In antiquity, Judaism and Christianity, in particular, added two elements to the description and identification of who is ‘the best’. This is important because the translator I present here (Michele Ruggieri) was a Christian, a priest, a Jesuit.

One element is the idea of Creation, the other the idea of Original Sin.

Because there is a God who is Creator, all earthly leaders are below him. The Christian Dante Alighieri judges worldly leaders from the point of view of God, and assigns them a place in Hell or Purgatory or Heaven. Any king or emperor is judged by a ‘higher authority’.

Second, no leader, no matter how good, cannot save a society from the consequences of Original Sin. Salvation cannot come from men alone. There is only one Messiah. Only the grace of God can change the human condition. Only one Kingdom has a perfect King. There is only one liberator from oppression. Only one leader who saves and brings to freedom. Only one prince for justice and harmony. Only one mediator between God and Man. As Christianity came to circulate through the later Roman Empire beginning in the fourth century, these ideas became widespread and politically significant in the West.

Following these two principles, Christian philosophical reflection on leadership had to face further questions. If all people are imperfect because of Original

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<sup>9</sup> See Ivanhoe (1990) 5.

<sup>10</sup> MacIntyre (1981).

Sin, does it mean we can accept a leader who sins? If a perfect leader is impossible, what is the meaning and purpose of leadership? From the stories about King David's sins to Jesus' preaching about 'the first must be the last', Christianity has always struggled with a clear definition of who can be leader, how to be leader and to do what.

Augustine's 'two cities', Aquinas' moral argument for killing tyrants,<sup>11</sup> Machiavelli's or Hobbes' description of the dark side of power and authority, Kant's appeal to reason or the modern emphasis on a balance of powers, all stem from a Western Judeo-Christian ambivalence towards earthly leaders.

Before or outside of Christianity, as with Confucius or Plato, the approach is simpler: to offer a moral model of an ideal leader. History shows that both Confucius and Plato gave up on trying to find a real person to fit their standard. They knew they were offering philosophical models, not historical examples. But they hoped, in this way, to encourage people to be better.<sup>12</sup>

From the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the religious Order of the Jesuits, because of their schools and their publications, were fully involved in the search and formation of good leaders.<sup>13</sup>

One question I also ask in passing during my analysis of this Jesuit Latin translations of Chinese texts is: do the words we use to express and signify authority make any difference?

Leaders themselves often like to be addressed in a variety of ways, beyond the usual technical terms that indicate their function within a government. In recent history we have had certain titles that have come to be associated with specific people, not with a specific role in an institution. *Il Duce* (Mussolini), *der Führer* (Hitler), *The Great Helmsman* or *The Chairman* (Mao), *El líder máximo* (Castro), *Vozhd*, 'leader' (Stalin), *Maršal*, Serbian for 'general' or 'leader' (Tito), *El caudillo de España*, 'the Chieftain of Spain' (Franco), *Dear Leader* (Kim Jong-il), *Coronel* (Gaddafi). From the outside it seems each one of these leaders sought out a unique way to be called by this own people. Our generation remembers the scene from the iconic movie *Dead Poets Society* where the teacher tells his students: "Now, in this class you can either call me Mr. Keating, or if you are slightly more daring, 'O Captain, my Captain'".

In antiquity, Augustus was the first to play with the word *princeps*. The title *princeps* during the Roman Republic was held by the leading member of the Senate (*princeps senatus*). Octavianus Augustus used the title to support his claim to

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<sup>11</sup> *Commentary on the Sentences* 1, d44, q2, a2.

<sup>12</sup> Yao (2000) 22.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Höpfl (2011).

be the restorer of republican institutions corrupted by the civil wars of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE.<sup>14</sup> Under his autocratic rule a change in the semantics occurred: *principatus* now meant ‘autocracy’. After centuries of Republic, a Roman leader could never again be called *Rex* (‘King’). But with a different title he could act as one.

*Princeps* became the title used by the Roman emperors from Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE) to Diocletian (284–305 CE). Thus, this period in Roman history is known as the ‘Principate’ (*principatus*). Commodus, the emperor from 177 to 192 CE who inspired the movie *Gladiator*, gave himself many names: *Lucius, Aelius, Aurelius, Commodus*, then, after becoming emperor, took the titles *Augustus, Germanicus, Sarmaticus, Pius etc.* Diocletian (reigned CE 284–305) preferred the title *dominus*, and was soon followed by his successors, perhaps because some people were beginning to worship a different *Dominus*.

The Latin language has many words for different roles of leadership. Most of them originally indicated a precise specific status within an organization, like the army or the Senate. However, in some cases they came to represent the way an absolute leader wanted to be addressed without taking into account the original meaning: *Rex, Princeps, Dominus, Dux, Imperator*.

So, are titles just ‘accidents’, as the Italian writer Alessandro Manzoni says of all names? Or are names all we really possess (*nomina nuda tenemus*), as Umberto Eco reminds us?

Below I analyze the Latin translations of some Chinese words about leadership and power as used by Confucius.

## 2 Anyone above a Leader? (Heaven, God, State?)

Someone exercising power over other people is both reassuring and scary. Reassuring because he offers order and directions. Scary because he might be open to arbitrary or irrational decisions. Therefore, common people always hope that someone can intervene between them and the arbitrary will and whims of a given powerful leader: a God, or a higher power, or a Parliament, or a Constitution. Or a Robin Hood. In Confucianism is there anyone above the leader? If so, how are such Chinese words/ideas as expressed by Confucius translated into Latin by Ruggieri?

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<sup>14</sup> Erskine (2010).

## *Tian ming* 天命 ('the Mandate of Heaven')

This Chinese expression is very much connected with authority, power, leadership and, therefore, politics. The authority of an emperor comes from above, from the 'mandate of Heaven'. The emperor is the interpreter and not the maker of the order of the Universe to which his subjects belong. This order includes also natural phenomena, so that the proper management of floods, draughts, or even earthquakes is a sign that the leader does his job properly. Thus he deserves to be leader. Heaven's mandate is embodied in the principle of 'propriety' (or 'rites') lived out by the sages of the past. Let us look at some passages in Chinese that use the term *Tian ming* and how Ruggieri translates this basic concept into Latin.

This is Ruggieri's translation of the beginning of *Zhong Yong*, one of the *Four Confucian Classics*.<sup>15</sup>

*Est primum hominibus a caelo data natura, sive ratio, deinde agere secundum naturam, sive ex praescripto rationis, et est quaedam veluti via et progressio ad virtutem. Quod autem utrumque perficit et rationem et viam agendi est doctrina, seu praecepta vitae.*<sup>16</sup>

First of all Heaven gives to people a nature, or reason, then to act according to nature, that is according to the rule of reason. This is like a way and movement forward towards virtue. What brings about both reason and the way of acting is the doctrine or instructions of life.

*Tian Ming* in Latin is here translated as: *a caelo data*, a vague and general expression. Ruggieri uses a similar expression for *Tian Ming* in his translation of a passage from the 'Dialogues'

*Confucius ait: Perfectus vir tres reverentias prestat; reveretur lumen nobis a caelo inditum. Reveretur magnos homines; reveretur verba sanctorum hominum. Humiles vilesque homines lumen naturale extinserunt, ideo non illud reverentur; parvum faciunt magnos homines; male tractant sanctorum virorum verba.*<sup>17</sup>

Confucius says: the perfect man reveres three things: he reveres the enlightenment given by Heaven, he reveres great men, he reveres the words of holy men. Mean and low people have destroyed that natural enlightenment and so they do not revere it; they disregard great men and handle badly the words of holy men.

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<sup>15</sup> *Zhong Yong* 1.1. The *Four Books* are: *Zhong Yong* ('The Golden Mean'), *Da Xue* ('The Great Learning'), *Lun Yu* ('Dialogues'), *Mengzi* ('Mencius').

<sup>16</sup> *Zhong Yong* 1.1.

<sup>17</sup> *Lun Yu* 16.8.

In Latin *Lumen a coelo inditum* does not explicitly refer to a connection between Heaven and authority or a recognized hierarchical power. The *lumen* of Heaven in Ruggieri's Latin seems more a generic kind of enlightenment from above than Heaven's official appointment of a leader. The Chinese text means rather: the perfect man respects the 'mandate of Heaven' and the appointment of a leader is part of the overall order of the Universe.

In another passage of the *Dialogues*, *Tian Ming* for Ruggieri is *ratio coeli*:

*Ego quidecim natus annos ad virtutis iter addiscendum mentem animumque converti. Trigesimum agens annum callebam. Decennio maiore nihil omnino erat quod mihi dubium videretur aut obscurum. Decem post annis caeli rationem penitus cognoveram. Decennio item post quidquid esset propositum nullo sumpto ad cogitandum spatium intelligebam. Aetate denique iam devexa septuagesimo vitae anno sine ulla difficultate cuncta ego praescripto rationis suaviter agebam.*<sup>18</sup>

When I was 15 years old, I turned my mind and soul to learning the way of virtue. When I was 30, I was toughened. Ten years later there was nothing at all that to me looked uncertain or obscure. Ten years later, I knew deeply the order of heaven. After ten years, I understood whatever was proposed to me with no need to think too much. In the age declining towards the seventieth year of life, I could do pleasantly and without any difficulty all things according to the rule of reason.

How does the expression *ratio caeli* sound to a Western reader? Surely, Ruggieri struggled to find a proper translation. Also today's English phrase 'Mandate of Heaven' is probably puzzling for many readers.

Ruggieri was influenced by his own philosophical studies, that included Seneca and the Stoics. In one of his letters, in which he talks about the *Four Books*, his companion Matteo Ricci said "[Confucius] è nel morale un altro Seneca o altro autore dei più nostri famosi tra gentili" ('as far as Moral is concerned he [Confucius] is like Seneca o some of the others famous pagan authors').<sup>19</sup>

*Ratio caeli* seems therefore for him not too different from a Stoic *logos*, a higher rationality that inspires wise actions and offers enlightenment. In reality, the original idea of the 'Mandate of Heaven' is stronger than that. In Confucianism Heaven is not a personal God, but an inescapable deterministic necessity. The 'mandate' is a calling to conform to a predetermined destiny. To connect one's authority with the Mandate of Heaven is akin to a Western king receiving the blessing of God himself over his own rule. We can think here of Napoleon who, during the ceremony to become King of Italy in Milan in 1805, placed the

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<sup>18</sup> *Lun Yu* 2.4.

<sup>19</sup> *Fonti Ricciane* 1.55.



crown on his head by himself, saying: “God gave it to me, woe to those who dare to touch it!”

## *Tian xia* 天下 ([Everything] under Heaven’)

One of the most intriguing expressions in Chinese about government is *tian xia* 天下. Literally this means ‘under Heaven’, that is ‘everything that exists on earth’. This expression is used sometimes also to mean ‘China’, because, in ancient times, the Chinese considered China to comprise the entire world that one need be aware of. The idea of a State with borders is a modern one. In antiquity, whether for China or Rome, the extension of territory was not fixed by borders but by the expansion of a civilization, with its laws, administration and control. This was something higher than any individual leader.

In the following example Ruggieri translates this phrase with a simple *regnum*. A few lines below, the same expression, however, is translated as *orbis terrarum*.

*Confusius ait: cum regnum bene constitutum est, urbanitates, festivitates, bella, et expugnationes ex rege exeunt; cum perturbatum est ex principibus, plus minus decem saeculis raro non amittitur. Cum ex urbium prefectis exeunt quinque seculis raro non amittitur; cum domesticis subditi regni dominium arripiunt tribus seculis raro non amittitur; item cum orbis terrarum bene constitutus est harum rerum administratio in urbium praefectis non est posita, et populus quidem hanc de rebus agendi non disserit.*<sup>20</sup>

Confucius says: “When a kingdom is well governed, ceremonies, festivals, wars and military expeditions proceed from the king; when a kingdom is thrown into confusion by the princes, the kingdom is not rarely lost in more or less ten generations. When these things proceed from the officers of the cities, it is not rarely lost within five generations. When the lower subjects of the house seize power over the kingdom, it is not rarely lost within three generations; likewise, when the world is well governed, the administration of these things is not put into the hands of the officers of the city and the people certainly do not discuss how to handle these matters.”

In another passage, talking about someone who refused to accept kingly power, he translates the same Chinese expression with *locus regius*:

*Taipanus ille ad virtutis culmen quaerisse dici potest. Ter enim locum regium recusavit abscondit se; nec populus, ut vocaret cum invenire potest.*<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *orbis terrarum*. Lun Yu 16.2.

<sup>21</sup> Lun Yu 8.1.

Taipanus can be said to have achieved the highest point of virtue. Three times he refused the position of king and hid himself so that the people, when they called for him, could not find him.

## *Tian zi* 天子 ('Son of Heaven')

This is an important element of ancient Chinese tradition. It originated from the Zhou dynasty: since the ruler enjoys the favor of heaven, he can be called 'Son of Heaven'.

Here are some examples of how Ruggieri deals with this particular expression, that for a Christian can be particularly meaningful.

*Confusius ait: cum regnum bene constitutum est, urbanitates, festivitates, bella, et expugnationes ex rege exeunt.*<sup>22</sup>

Confucius says: "When a kingdom is well governed, ceremonies, festivals, wars and military expeditions proceed from the king."

*Zi tianzi* 自天子 means: 'proceeds from the Son of Heaven'. Ruggieri translates this with 'king', *rex*. He does not translate literally the classical Chinese expression 'son of Heaven' (*filius coeli*), perhaps because this would sound too similar to some titles used in the Bible.

Another example here:

*Sciuni magna fuit in parentes observantia. Virtute vir sapiens et sanctus erat, quod ad honores attinet, ascendit ad imperium orbis terrae; quod ad divitias possidet quicquid quattuor maria continent. Habuit antecessores multos itemque successores qui haec adservant.*<sup>23</sup>

The filial piety of Shun was great. He was a man wise and holy for his virtue; as far as honors are concerned, he ascended to the rule of the entire world; as far as riches are concerned he holds whatever the four seas contain; he had many predecessors and likewise many successors who kept these things.

*Quod ad honores attinet, ascendit ad imperium orbis terrae*: literally, in Chinese: "he was Son of Heaven". Many kings of antiquity, in different parts of the world, wanted to be worshipped as nearer to Heaven than their subjects. Jesus in the Gospel teaches that the weak, the poor, the powerless are nearer to God than

<sup>22</sup> *Lun Yu* 16.2.

<sup>23</sup> *Zhong Yong* 17.1.

the rich, the strong and the powerful. Ruggieri's translation avoids the connection with 'Heaven' and uses a more common *imperium orbis terrarum*.

In the following example we see once again that Ruggieri does not translate literally the expression 'Son of Heaven':

*Is primus sacrificavit ab avo Taiguano, et pro avo Guanguano regis ceremoniis neque regias solum ceremonias instituit; sed illas etiam quibus magni duces uterentur, gubernators, eruditi viri et privatus quisque aliqua virtuti conspicuus. Ceremoniae autem haec sunt. Si pro vita functus magnum gessisset magistratum preturam urbis alicuius et eius filius esset liceris [scil. literis] graduatus statuit, ut prius funera fierent qualia praetori convenientia, sacrificium vero fieret ritu graduati viri.<sup>24</sup>*

He was the first from the time of the ancestor Taiguanus to offer sacrifices with royal ceremonies in favor of the ancestor Guanguanus. Not only that: he also instituted royal ceremonies to be used for nobles, officers, scholars and any common person illustrious for some virtue. These are the ceremonies: if in life he had managed his authority as a great officer of the city and his son was a scholar, he decided that the funerals were to be celebrated according to what is incumbent for an officer, but the sacrifice according to the rite which belongs to the Scholars.

Here Ruggieri uses the adjective *regius* for *tian zi*, avoiding any reference to Heaven.

## Guo 國 (*regnum*)

The Chinese word *guo* means 'kingdom'. The main issue here is whether in the original, and in the translation, a kingdom is above the king as a higher entity or is rather his property. In ancient times the idea was that a territory belongs to a king as his property. Yet, the word itself does not present any difficulty in its Latin tradition.

Let us see few examples.

*Lun Yu* ('Dialogues') 11.25:

*Zilus illico repondens ait: "Mille curruum regnum quod alteri maiori regno alligatum sit, simili cohortes et militum legiones exedent, propterea quod annonae caritas, seu sterilitas viget, ego facere ut prope fine terti anni, fortes sint duci ac regi obedire sciant".*

Zilus immediately answered: "If there were kingdom of one thousand chariots that was slave to another greater kingdom, and which soldiers and legions plundered, also because of the scarcity of tax income or because its land was unable to produce crop, I would act in

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24 *Zhong Yong* 18.3.

such a way that by the end of three years the leaders would be strong and would know how to obey a king.”

Besides the word *regnum*, in the second part of the sentence it is worth noting that the expression *regi obedire sciant* appears. Yet in the original Chinese there is no word for ‘king’; the meaning of the expression, debated by commentators, is something like ‘to know which side is in charge’.

In the following text the issue is about a greedy king and bad counselors. Once again Ruggieri employs the word *regnum*.

*Rex, si sua utilitatis causa, totus inhiat divitiis pendet omnino ex pravorum hominum consilio; atque ob eam rationem illos amat. Quo fit ut cum improbis homines regni habeant administrationem, calamitas et damna lucris sequuntur; licet et boni viri adsint, improbis tum obsistere non poterunt; atque ita dicitur regnum non honestis lucris sed indigna et turpi ratione lucrum facere.*<sup>25</sup>

If a king, for his own gain, is coveting wealth with all his might, he depends completely on the advice of bad people and will love them for these advisements. If it happens that he administers the kingdom with bad people, disaster and loss of gain will follow; even if there are good people, they will not be able to resist the bad people; so it will be said: a kingdom acquires wealth not by honest gain but by unworthy and evil ways.

## **Bang 邦 (*regnum*)**

This term means ‘country’, ‘territory under rule’.

In this first example of translation we see that *regnum* can refer to a particular territory. It does not seem in any way to be above the king, as in modern times a State is considered to exist above its leader. In ancient times a kingdom belonged to a king, not vice-versa. The property of the king was a piece of land and its inhabitants. So in Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.1. we find the statement: *Urbem Romam a principio reges habuere*. And at the Treaty of Augsburg in 1555 the expression used was *cuius regio, eius religio* (‘whose territory, his religion’).

*Confucius ad regnum aliquod perveniens, ut audiret quo pacto rex se gereret in administratione, ut ipse sciret petebat ab aliis? Ticumus respondit: Confucius amabilis, facilis, officiosus, frugi, non elatus denique erat animo, ob eam causam frequens ad eum plurimorum fiebat concursus.*<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Da Xue* 11.22.

<sup>26</sup> *Lun Yu* 1.10.

When Confucius arrived in certain kingdom to hear how the king organized his administration, did he ask others in order to learn this? Ticumus answered: Confucius was of a pleasant nature, easy-going, honest, dutiful, not proud; for this reason a large crowd often gathered around him.

*Regnum omni bellorum tumultu liberum, magistratus retinet; bellis vero perturbatum excludit. Haec causa fuit cur mea neptis Naniumo regi in matrimonium daretur.*<sup>27</sup>

The civil officer keeps the kingdom free from the chaos of war; when there was war he separates it. This is the reason why my granddaughter was given king Naniumus in marriage.

*Regnum* is a word with a very broad meaning in Latin. It means ‘kingly government’, ‘royal authority’, ‘kingship’, ‘royalty’, as the entry in Lewis-Short dictionary shows. *Regnum* is any place over which someone exercises his power. The idea that the structure of a state is above the power of an individual leader was not evident in ancient times, and this is reflected in Ruggieri’s translations of Confucian terminology.

### 3 The Leader

Let us now examine some examples of Ruggieri’s translation of the Chinese words in Confucius denoting leadership.

#### *Wang* 王 (*rex*)

*Noli ab ingenuitate amorem concordiamque dishabere; talis enim erat prisorum regum benignitas, qua tum in maximis tum in minimis rebus ex animorum coniunctionem manabat. Qui id quod praestat debet, ingenui hominis officium deserit; humanitatem tantumodo retinet. Atqui humanitas ab ingenuitate seiungenda non est.*<sup>28</sup>

Do not separate love and harmony from nobility of character. This was the quality of ancient kings, so that both in great or small matters love poured out from the harmony of souls.

Whoever is only indebted of what should perform, leaves aside the duty of a dignified man, and retains only courtesy. But courtesy should not be separated from nobility of character.

*Wang* 王 is the main word for ‘king’. Thus Ruggieri uses *rex*. The Latin word *rex* can be considered neuter, neither negative or positive. Roman history began with

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<sup>27</sup> *Lun Yu* 5.2.

<sup>28</sup> *Lun Yu* 1.12.

kings, some were heroes, some were proud and overbearing. Christian Latin associates the word with Jesus himself.

*Xian wang zhi Dao* 先王之道 is translated as *benignitas priscorum regum*. Here *Dao* 道 is rendered with *benignitas*. *Dao* is a very complex term and has been translated with a variety of Latin words, sometimes with different meanings. In the Confucian tradition the examples of the ancient sages are the main source of moral obligation. Centuries of tradition have recognized the value and significance of certain behaviors which become a reference for all. This concept of an ideal virtue derives not from a theory but from an idealized narrative about real people of the past. The model is embodied in a historical figure: this characterizes the Confucian approach to philosophy. It prefers a commentary on someone's actions and deeds rather than a legal or metaphysical exposition of principles.

## **Fu** 府 ('Government')

Originally this Chinese word means: 'government repository', 'warehouse', 'storehouse'; 'stores'. Later: 'organs of state power'; 'official residence'. In general, the term indicates 'government'. Ruggieri once again uses *rex* ('king'). Is there a distinction between a king and a government? A leader and his team? For Ruggieri it seems there is not: he uses *rex* to translate the Chinese word for 'government'.

*Numquam usu venit cum populares qui amant gratitudinem non usque ad finem in ministerio, et principum obsequio persistent; numquam usu venit pecunias publici erarii qui populi pecuniae sunt non esse etiam ipsius regis; perinde ac si ex ipsius essent erari.*<sup>29</sup>

It has never happened that, when the people are grateful, they are not persistent forever in their servitude and obedience to the princes. Never has it happened that the money of the public coffers, that is the money of the people, was not also that of the king himself, as if it were from his own treasure.

In the translation of James Legge: "And never has there been a case where the wealth in such a state, collected in the treasuries and arsenals, did not continue in the sovereign's possession".<sup>30</sup> We can notice here again the ancient idea that the wealth of a kingdom is the wealth of the king. The idea that a leader might have a regular salary like any other government official is an idea that in antiquity would be considered a nonsense.

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<sup>29</sup> *Da Xue* 11.20.

<sup>30</sup> Legge (1960).

## *Junzi* 君子 ('Gentleman')

Probably one of the best known Confucian words is *junzi* 君子. It is used in common language and in proverbs. It indicates the 'prince', the ideal of the good leader with high moral and intellectual qualities. Is it also a title for a specific role of leadership? For Confucius it certainly is: for him a good man always deserves to be a leader. Because of its wide range of use, Ruggieri's Latin translations are many and various. The Chinese word denotes a leader who is necessarily also a good person. In Latin such a word does not exist. In some English translations the word 'gentleman' is used. Often Ruggieri simply renders it as 'a good person', or just 'a person', without specific reference to a role of leadership.

*Nulla potest eius esse auctoritas, qui graviter matureque non agit ac proinde inanem quaedam sapientiam sequetur.*<sup>31</sup>

There is no authority in a person [in Chinese: *junzi*] who does not behave with dignity and maturity and so will follow an empty wisdom.

*Idem. Perfectus absolutusque vir non est uti peculiare ac certum aliquid instrumentum, quo ad unam tantum rem efficiendam utimur, sed est factus ad omnia.*<sup>32</sup>

The perfect and complete man is not like a specific and fixed utensil that we use only to do one thing, but he is made for all things.

*Perfectus absolutusque vir*: this is one of its basic meanings. Legge translates with 'gentleman'. *Junzi* here is a *vir bonus*, in the same sense used by Cicero or Quintilian. It does not necessarily mean someone involved in government but rather someone who is a model of behavior. His qualities are a sense of duty, a love of justice he is not mean, generous, self-controlled, and does not indulge in sensual pleasures; moreover, he is not interested in power and fame at any cost, and looks after his own people.<sup>33</sup>

*Ideo vir bonus et rex ante sibi parat diligenter virtutem; virtutem parta possidet hominum animos possidens hominum animos regnum possidet, regnum possidens habet [divitias]. Divitias, divitias habens habet in sumptus.*<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Lun Yu* 1.8.

<sup>32</sup> *Lun Yu* 2.12.

<sup>33</sup> See also Ferrero (2019b).

<sup>34</sup> *Da Xue* 11.6.

Thus the good man and king carefully cultivates himself with virtue. Having gained virtue he can possess the hearts of people, possessing the hearts of people he possesses the kingdom, possessing the kingdom he has riches.

Here Ruggieri identifies good man and king, according to the ancient ideal I mentioned above.

*Chicantio roganti Confucium de administratione ait: "Interficiam homines irrationabiles aut eos ad rationem traham, quod tibi videtur?" Confucius respondens ait: "Tu gubernans quid necesse habes interficere? Si tu bonitatem amas, populus quidem bonitatem amabit; principis virtus est ut ventus. Plebis virtus est ut herba, vento super herbas flante, illae quidem cadent".*<sup>35</sup>

Chicantio asked Confucius about government and said: "Shall I kill people who do not follow reason, or try to bring them into reason?" Confucius answered: "As you rule, why do you need to kill? If you love goodness, also the people will love goodness. The virtue of the leader is like the wind. The virtue of the people is like grass: when the wind blows over the grass, the grass falls."

Here we have *principis virtus*. The Latin *princeps* corresponds to the English 'prince', a common way to translate *junzi* in English. As mentioned above, ancient Roman leaders liked to play with the word *princeps*. Here, however, it is simply used to specify 'a good leader'.

*In Poematibus est: en en prisci reges non oblivione traduntur. Nunc viri doctrina et rebus gestis clari illorum temporum proceres imitantur; parentum observantes aequales illorum temporum eadem virtute imitantur; plebs adhuc fruitur pace ab iis orbi relicta, lucrum percipit ex eorum temporum legibus ad populi fructum constitutis; ideo ne mortuos quidem mundus eorum potest oblivisci.*<sup>36</sup>

In the *Book of Poetry* it is said: see, see, the ancient kings are not handed over to oblivion. Nowadays men famous for their doctrine and deeds imitate the princes of those times; those who their parents imitate the person of those ancient times with the same virtue; the people enjoy the peace left by them to all the world and profit from the laws of those times, established for the good of the people; thus the world cannot forget them, even when they are dead.

Here we find *rex* for *wang* 王 and *procer* ('noble', 'chief', 'leading man'), for *jun* 君. The good traditions of the past are a source of moral goodness for the people. For Confucius a good tradition alone is in itself a sufficient motivation to be morally good. For a Chinese person even today a tradition is often stronger than a

<sup>35</sup> *Lun Yu* 12.19 Chicantio roganti is probably a mistake. I translate as *Chicantius rogans*.

<sup>36</sup> *Da Xue* 4.6.



syllogism. On the Beijing metro you can hear the loudspeaker reminding people that “to leave a seat to the elderly is a good Chinese tradition”. Tradition, not law, is the motivation for a good behavior. The relation between tradition and morality is one often debated today in the West.<sup>37</sup>

*Carmina dicunt: etiam occulta virtus in rege ad dynastas ad imitationem promovendos valet; tali igitur regnante viro, terrarum orbis in optimo rerum omnium statu feliciter conquisit.*<sup>38</sup>

The *Book of Poetry* says: even a hidden virtue in the king is strong enough to move the princes to imitation; when such a king rules, the entire world rests happily in a perfect situation.

Here *junzi* 君子 is *regnante viro*. The previous two words *rege* and *dynastae* come from the same general semantic sphere. *Dynasta* indicates a ruler or a prince, especially from the East. The recurring idea is that the virtue of the leader is the motivation for subordinates to act properly. In the Confucian tradition good and just laws do not guarantee good government. A righteous and virtuous leader does. The decisions of the leader do not overrule laws: they become laws. This is very different from the foundation of modern democracies, where both the people and the leader must obey laws and decrees that other people have issued.

*Vilis homo potestne principi servire? Hic cum nondum divitias paravit de parandis sollicitus est, cum iam paravit de non amittendis sollicitus est, qui talis est nihil mali est quod non agat.*<sup>39</sup>

Can a mean man serve a prince? When he has not yet gained any wealth, he worries about how to get it, when he has got it, he worries about how not to lose it; there is no evil such a man might not do.

Confucius' question here is whether it is possible for mean and evil people to be at the service of an authority. The expression *shi* 君 here becomes *principi servire*. The same expression in another place is translated with 'king'. In Latin either *rex* or *princeps* denotes a higher authority. The main point is that a *vilis*, a 'cheap', 'mean', 'selfish man' is not a good companion in the service of the superior.

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<sup>37</sup> In MacIntyre (1988) the author offers a persuasive argument that there is no rationality that is not the rationality of some tradition. MacIntyre examines the problems presented by the existence of rival traditions of inquiry in the cases of four major philosophers: Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas and Hume.

<sup>38</sup> *Zhong Yong* 33.5.

<sup>39</sup> *Lun Yu* 18.15.

For Confucius both ruling and obedience require righteousness and an honest character.

*Qui probitatis, quasi formosissimae cuiusdam mulieris amore captus, omnis animi provisionem cavet, ne quod erga parentis officii praetermittat; qui se totus penitusque fingit ad regis imperium, qui cum altero contrahens, fideliter contrahit; hunc ego disciplinae expertem tametsi nihilusque didicerit, non censeo.*<sup>40</sup>

Whoever is taken by the love of righteousness as much as the love for a beautiful woman and takes care with all his own soul, so that he might not omit any duty towards his parents; who totally and sincerely obeys the order of the king, who when dealing with another will keep faith with the agreement; this one, even though he never studied anything, I do not think lacks education.

*Qui se totus penitusque fingit ad regis imperium* (事君,能致其身). The Chinese text could be translated today as: ‘takes good care of the matters of the prince’. Legge translates: “in serving his prince, he can devote his life”. Once again for Ruggieri any leader is simply *rex*.

‘Totally devoted to the service of a king’. Is the same amount of energy in devotion assumed here as it would be towards any superior? Does a private obey his sergeant as he obeys a general? Are there degrees of obedience and service? This is an intriguing question. The Latin translation, with its superlative, seems to imply degrees of obedience (*totus penitusque*).

## **Da 大** (‘great’)

Here we see an example in which in the original text there is no word for ‘king’. The Chinese text simply says ‘the great Iaus’. Ruggieri adds *rex* to explain the status of this great man. However in this case the adjective *magnus* would have been sufficient. It is often used in Latin to indicate leadership, as in *Pompeius Magnus*, *Alexander Magnus*, *Carolus Magnus* or with some Popes.

*Magnus Iaus rex altissimus, altissimum virtutis caelum et magnum dicimus Iaum idem esse; magnanimus amplissimus perfectus est. Hominibus eius laudes fandi verba quoque deficiant; altissimus altissimus eius virtutis cuius vi eius merito florebant cives et claritate iura ac leges data sunt.*<sup>41</sup>

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40 *Lun Yu* 1.7.

41 *Lun Yu* 8.19.

Great was king Iaus, lofty in virtue; we say that he was the highest summit of virtue and great. He was brave, honorable, perfect. People lack even words to describe him. Thanks to him the citizens prospered and rules and laws were given with clarity.

## **Shuai 师 ('Commander-in-Chief', also as adjective, meaning: 'Handsome')**

This word, besides the military use of 'commander', is commonly used in Chinese today to indicate someone handsome.

*Shuai* here is once again rendered with *rex*. In the Confucian tradition the favor of Heaven is a sign that the leader has also the favor of the people. External favorable circumstances (let us think of good rain and weather for farmers) indicate that Heaven favors the leader. Since people spontaneously conform to the movements of Nature, also the people favor the leader. Thus, the leader 'possesses' their hearts. Whoever possesses the hearts of people, possesses the kingdom. The word *shuai* is therefore something more than simply 'king': it is more like 'beloved king'.

*In Poematibus est: Ieni regni rex antequam populus ab eo deficeret superno regni comparari poterat, oportet igitur intueri Ienum regnum; nam magnum caeli mandatum et regni gubernationem e caelo datam non est facilem tueri; ait qui possidet populi animos regnum possidet, qui amittit populi animos regnum amittit.*<sup>42</sup>

In the *Book of Poetry* it is said: the king of the kingdom of Ienus [Yin] could have been compared with a heavenly kingdom, before the people was disappointed by him; it is necessary therefore to consider the kingdom of Ienus [Yin]; in fact it is not easy to preserve the mandate of heaven and the rule of the kingdom given by heaven; who possesses the hearts of the people possesses the kingdom, who loses the hearts of the people loses the kingdom.

## **4 Below Someone, above Someone Else (the Smaller Leaders)**

### **Wei 位 ('Rank')**

This term's basic meaning is 'location' or 'position'. It is used also for one's position in a hierarchical structure, an official post, a role, like the English 'posi-

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<sup>42</sup> *Da Xue* 11.5.

tion' within an organizational chart. In ancient Rome the idea would be more often associated with the army and its leadership structure.

The Chinese text in the example below is quite difficult to understand even for a Chinese reader. The text talks about respecting people's positions. Ruggieri translates the Chinese *wie* with the expression *viros virtute insignes aestimare* implies that a king or leader should respect the positions of his officers.

*Intus sincera virtus; extra ornatus et cultus in vestitu et actionibus; nihil fieri sine ratione, tria haec pertinent ad optimam vitam et morum constitutionem; detractores expellere, obscenas res vitare, divitias contemnere, viros virtute insignes aestimare, haec doctis et optimis viris animos addunt.*<sup>43</sup>

An inner honest virtue is necessary, then a proper appearance, elegant both in dress and manners; do nothing without proper reason. These three things are important for a good life and the foundation of good customs. To expel the disparagers, to avoid indecent behavior, to despise wealth, to hold in high esteem people according to their virtues: these things encourage wise and good people.

## Zheng 政 ('Politics')

This term literally means 'politics', 'any activity connected with government and administration'.

The bureaucratic administrative organization of society is an ancient characteristic of China. Unlike other ancient civilizations, in China it is not the strength of warriors or the fear of soldiers that keep people in order and submission, but the perceived advantages of being part of a complex net of connections. Authority, through an omnipresent but efficient bureaucracy, coordinates the resources by collecting and distributing them in exchange for people's willing obedience. The main difference between this setup and, for example, the Roman or British Empire is the amount and importance of written documents used as powerful tools to control, channel and direct the energy of the people.

*Confusius ad regnum aliquod perveniens, ut audiret quo pacto rex se gereret in administratione, ut ipse sciret petebat ab aliis?*<sup>44</sup>

When Confucius arrived in some kingdom to hear how the king organized his administration, did he ask others in order to learn this?

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<sup>43</sup> Zhong Yong 20.14.

<sup>44</sup> Lun Yu 1.10.

*Porro bona virorum ad administrationem et regimen electio pendet ex vita et moribus illius qui sustinet personam regis. Regis nostri persona bonis moribus instruitur, si per iter virtutis incedit; iter autem virtutibus caritate maxime pietate absolvitur.*<sup>45</sup>

Moreover, the good choice of people for government and leadership depends on the type of life and the habits of the man who becomes king. The character of our king is founded on good habits: that is, whether he progresses or not on the path of virtue. The way of virtue is linked above all to love and to the sense of duty.

Here for *zheng* 政 Ruggieri uses two words: *administratio*, as above, and also *regimen*. Ruggieri then translates *ren* with *caritas*. *Ren* is a very complex concept and one of the bases of Confucianism.<sup>46</sup> In governmental terms it is not so much about love as ‘proper relationship’. It is very different from Christian charity. Proper relation includes, for example, a proper hate for enemies.

*Qui ad virtutis normam ceteros moderatur ac regit; caelesti axi ad septentrionem posito est simillimus; quippe qui certo fixus loco veluti cardo quidam est, quem circum inhaerentes caelo stellae versantur.*<sup>47</sup>

Whoever guides and rules others towards the pattern of virtue, he is like the pole situated in the North; indeed he is fixed on a sure position, like a hinge, around which the stars dwelling in the sky move around in a circle.

Here again we find different words for *zheng* 政: *moderatur ac regit*.

*Qui populos legum imperio moderantur, contumaces parant.*<sup>48</sup>

Those who govern the people with the power of laws produce disobedient people.

Here the Latin for *zheng* 政 is *imperium*. This is a well-known sentence useful for summarizing one of Confucius’ distinctive teachings. As we have said, there is no absolute difference between East and West concerning the leader himself. But there are differences in the relation between laws and power. The Roman tradition sees the laws as a higher, objective, reasonable authority.

This concept was further developed with the spreading of Judeo-Christian thought: in the Bible, kings are always expected to be below the Law and the Prophets. Laws, both civil and religious, can set a limit to the absolute power of a leader, as in the case of the Medieval English *Magna Charta*.

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<sup>45</sup> Zhong Yong 20.4.

<sup>46</sup> Fung (1952); Yao (2000).

<sup>47</sup> Lun Yu 2.1.

<sup>48</sup> Lun Yu 2.3.

The East sees laws as instruments in the hands of the powerful to control subjects. In the West laws restrict absolute power, in the East they increase it. Today these two positions are sometimes termed ‘rule by law’ and ‘rule of law’. For Confucius to rule the people with laws is disgraceful. The virtue of the leader moves people to proper behavior by spreading a strong sense of shame, stronger than any kind of police.

A remarkable element in Confucius’ tradition is the concept of the sense of *shame*. In more popular usage *shame* is often associated with ‘saving face’. In Chinese the word for ‘shame’ is *chi* 耻. This sense of shame regulates the behavior of an individual in society.

### **Chen 臣 (‘Subject’, ‘Minister’)**

What does *chen* 臣 mean? Its basic meaning is someone in a position of vassalage, a ‘subject’. It is the position of someone who recognizes himself as below a higher authority. It can also indicate a ‘minister’. Mencius sometimes calls himself *chen* towards a ruler. Legge translates this with “your servant”, in the general sense of a subject, without specific role. It implies devotion and subservience.

But it also implies that everyone has a specific role in society. And in a Confucian system roles are always hierarchical, vertical. One’s role, their specific expertise, puts the person always above or below anyone to whom they relate. Society is built on this structure. *Chen* 臣 as ‘minister’ or ‘subordinate official’ is someone who has both superiors and subjects. It is the most common role within a structure. In Chinese tradition the worst position is that without anyone below.

Below is the famous description of the Five Basic Relationships, which remain the foundation of social life in China even today. The Latin *rex et subditi* in Chinese is *jun* (the word for ‘leader’ we saw above) and *chen*, which means ‘lower officer’ or ‘subject’.

*In orbe universo communes viae sunt quinque, ad eas ineundas tria requiruntur, hic sunt. Rex et subditi. Pater et filii. Maritus et uxor. Fratres maiores et minores; Et coniunctio inter amicos. Haec quinque sunt viae universae; ad has tria haec requiruntur.*<sup>49</sup>

In the world the ways of social life are five and to undertake them three things are required. Here they are: king and subjects; father and sons; husband and wife; elder and younger brothers; union of friends. These are the universal five ways; to get them three things are required.

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49 *Zhong Yong* 20.8.

In this other example Ruggieri translates *chen* as *praefectus*, clearly because in context the reference is not to subjects but to ministers and officers.

*In libro Cinscius est: rex ait si mihi sit aliquis praefectus rectus et fidelis, nullis artibus instructus, nulla industria praeditus cuius tamen anima omni prava affectio careat et sit benigna proluxaque natura; si sint in regno alii magistratus bonis artibus praediti hisque eque gaudeat ac si ipse praeditus esset.*<sup>50</sup>

In the *Book of Cinscius* [Qin] it is said: the king says: if I have an honest minister, faithful, not expert in any special skill, gifted with no industry, in whose soul however there is no vicious aspiration and who is by nature good and generous; if in the kingdom there are other skillful officers and he rejoices for them, as if he were himself an expert...

*Praefectus* in Latin denotes ‘an overseer’, someone in any position of authority, but not at the top. The formal title can refer to different officials. Their common characteristic was that their power was conferred by a higher authority. It corresponds perfectly to the Chinese word, which implies someone who has people both below and above him.

*Autor ait: “Sciunus quinque viros imperio gubernatores;” Guavus ait: “Ego viros decem gubernantes habui,” Confucius ait: “Quam difficile est alta virtus as sapientia. Tani et Iuii tempore hoc floruit habuit; una feminam reginam sapientissimam. Et [...] ex orbis terrarum tribus partibus duce Iuo servivit, haec regis virtus potest dici purissima ad summum.”*<sup>51</sup>

The author says that Sciunus had five men as ministers. Guavus says: “I had ten men as ministers.” Confucius says: “How difficult to have lofty virtue and wisdom. At the time of Tanus and Iuus it flourished. They also had a queen, very wise. And when [...] was leading three parts of all the world he was still under the leadership of Iuus: this virtue of a prince can be called the most pure of all.”

Here Ruggieri translates *chen* 臣 with *imperio gubernatores*.

*Gubernator* is used also by Cicero as a general term for various forms of authority in society: *quasi tutor et procurator rei publicae: sic enim appelletur, quicumque erit rector et gubernator civitatis* (*Rep.* 2.51).

*Si bonos et doctos viros magni feceris nulla in re dubitabis; si pariter observaveris propinquos nemo fructum trepidabitur, si maxime magistratus honorem habueris, negotiorum multitudinem non obrueris, si relinquo magistratus tamquam membra existimaveris, docti viri cumlati in omni genere humanitatis satisfacient; si populum ex plebem tamquam filios dilexeris; subditi te loco patris habebunt; si omne genus mechanicorum artium adhibueris divitias tibi suppetent in sumptu, si extraneos et advenas tueberis, quattuor partium homines te sibi sub-*

<sup>50</sup> *Da Xue* 11.13.

<sup>51</sup> *Lun Yu* 8.20.

*mittent; si duces et principes cum legatione funguntur tibi cordi erunt, orbis universus te timebit.*<sup>52</sup>

If you will consider good and learned men as great men you will have no doubts. Likewise, if you will respect neighbors, nobody will be afraid for the results. If you will honor officers, you will not consume your many activities. If you will esteem magistrates as members of a body, the learned men all together will satisfy you with all kinds of kindness. If you love the people and the lower class as children, the subjects will consider you a father. If you employ all kinds of artisans, they will provide you with plenty of wealth. If you look after foreigners and visitors, people from the four corners of the earth will submit to you. If you love the leaders and princes when they come as delegates, the entire world will respect you.

Here Ruggieri uses the word *magistratus*. In the In the Lewis-Short entry we read: “There were two kinds of civil offices in Rome, *magistratus extraordinarii* and *ordinarii*. To the former belonged the *dictatores*, the *magistri equitum*, the *duumviri perduellionis*, the *quaestores rerum capitalium*, the *triumviri mensarii*, etc. The latter were divided into the *majores*: the consulate, praetorship, and censorship; and the *minores*, to which belonged the aediles, the quaestors, the *tribuni plebis*, the *triumviri*, etc. Besides these, there were *magistratus patricii*, which, at first, were filled by patricians; and, on the other hand, *magistratus plebei*, which were filled from the plebs; *curules*, who had the privilege of using the *sella curulis*, namely, the consuls, censors, praetors, and *aediles curules*”.<sup>53</sup>

Thus *magistratus* is a very wide term and is a wise choice for a sentence that might refer also to officers in different countries. In fact the point of Confucius’s teaching here is that if you respect the authority and hierarchy of other nations, the world will then respect the hierarchy within your country. It is an accepted diplomatic tradition even today that in international relations a president should be met by a president, even though their states might be very different in size and wealth and population.

*Monsicius ait: qui alit quadrigarum equos, ii sunt singularium urbium praefecti; non alat galinas et sues, ne populi lucrum imminuat; qui est ex eorum familia qui estati epulas nive refrigerant, boves non alat neque oves ob eandem rationem, qui est ex familia eorum qui centum habent quadrigas is est proximus a rege, homines cupidos in magistratu non foveat; qui enim tales fuerunt magistratus et pastores peius faciunt; quod si magistratus depeculatores tolerant nam depeculatores pecuniam tantum regis furantur at hi populis damnum et detrimentum inferunt quod est pluris faciendum; sic dicetur regnum non indignis lucris sed honesta ratione et via lucrum facere.*<sup>54</sup>

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52 *Lun Yu* 20.13.

53 See the entry on Collatinus Web: <https://outils.bibliissima.fr/en/collatinus-web/>.

54 *Da Xue* 11.21.



Meng Xian said: the person who rears the four horses of the chariots is officer of the city; he should not feed hens or pigs, in order not to diminish the benefit of the people. For the same reason, whoever is from a family that in summer refreshes meals with ice should not feed oxen and sheep. Whoever is from a family that has 100 chariots is like a king should not keep greedy people in office; if the officers and the shepherds behave in the same way, they would be bad; if the officers tolerate embezzlers, then embezzlers steal the money of the king and bring ruin and loss to the people rather than gain, and this behavior must be held in high regard. So it will be said: a kingdom will gain benefit not with unworthy gains but with an honest way of life.

Once again *magistratus* translates *chen* 臣. A general term for a general title. Here the Confucian tradition recommends that leaders be chosen among the people who have experience in leadership. This seems self-evident. But history shows how often the motivation to appoint someone to a certain position has little connection with that person's being good at leading and governing.

*Zi regni princeps Chincomus rogat Confusium de administratione qui respondens ait: "Res sit rex, subditus sit subditus, pater sit pater, filius sit filius." Chincomus ait: "Optime dictum! Nam si rex non sit rex, subditus non sit subditus, pater non sit pater, filius non sit filius, licet milii [...] centum habeam illum comedere non valeam."*<sup>55</sup>

Chincomus, the prince of the kingdom of Zi, asks Confucius about government. He replies saying: "Let the king be a king, let the subject be a subject, let the father be a father, let the son be a son." Chincomus said: you have spoken very well! In fact, if the king is no king, if the subject is no subject, if the father is no father, if the son is no son, even if I had hundreds of [...] of rice, I could not eat it".

This is a famous passage, very important in the Confucian worldview of order and hierarchy. For Confucius, the social disorder of his time was the consequence of the lack of clear teaching on the value and meaning of *ren* 仁, proper relationship between human beings'. He believed that the only way to restore order would be to arrange social life according to Propriety, or *Rites*, so that the Emperor would clearly know what a good Emperor should do, the nobles what nobles should do, the ministers what ministers should do, the common people what common people should do. This theory is called by Confucius 'the Rectification of the Names' (正名) and is of the "utmost importance".<sup>56</sup>

*Chen* here is rendered *subditus*, subordinate. 'Let the subordinate be a subordinate' sounds nice and easy. As a matter of fact, a strict hierarchical tradition experiences three common dangers: giving up personal responsibility and allow-

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<sup>55</sup> *Lun Yu* 12.11.

<sup>56</sup> Fung (1952) 59.

ing the superior to decide everything (in this case delaying every decision process); giving up dignity (to the point of pretending not to see reality in order not to offend a superior); and not putting all one's energy into a project (since merit will only accrue to the superior). Motivating subordinates in a strict hierarchical structure is the most demanding and challenging task of a good leader.

## **Gong 公 ('Officer')**

In the same passage also the word 'gong' appears. This term means 'public', 'official', so also: 'officer', 'authorities', 'duke'. Ruggieri translates it with *princeps*.

*Zi regni princeps Chincomus.*<sup>57</sup>

Chincomus, the prince of the kingdom of Zi.

There is here also list of roles and positions, following the question from the gong of Qi, translated in English as the 'Duke of Qi'. In ancient times China had a feudal system with various categories of local leaders. Ruggieri uses the general term *princeps*. In a feudal system the various titles are very important, because they clearly indicate one's place in the hierarchy. But here the actual status of who is asking the question matters not: the answer is important, namely the traditional Confucian idea that only hierarchy guarantees harmony and order.

Let us see one more example of how *gong* is translated.

*Confusius ait: "Cuoncomus Shiancomi a consiliis factus est principis caput, orbem terrarum profecto constituit, populus presentiarum eius beneficio [sic] fuit, demum nisi Cuoncomus fuisset, nos soluta coma, ad sinistram colligaremus vestem idest ad externorum modum, sed non essemus similes."*<sup>58</sup>

Confucius says: "Cuoncionus was made leader by the decision of prince Shiancomus; he organized properly all the world, even the people of today receive benefit from him; if there were no Cuoncionus, we would keep our hair untied, we would tie our dress to the left, as the foreigners do, and we would not be the same."

*Principum caput*: 'head of the princes'. Legge translates this into English with a very modern expression: "prime minister". Ruggieri in his translation is not looking for any specific technical title or position. Here merely wants to denote the

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57 *Lun Yu* 12.11.

58 *Lun Yu* 14.17.

one who was put in charge and who thus made a difference, no matter how he was called.

## *Li* 力 ('Power', 'Strength')

In this last example there is not a specific reference to a leader position as such. The Chinese word *li* 力 means 'strength', 'power', 'energy', 'military power'. Here it refers to military power and leaders, a topic which Confucius does not like to talk about. Ruggieri translates it with *viribus*, explaining it with words such as: *vir, miles, princeps, rex, pugna, bellum*.

Surely military powers are an important part of any system of leadership. Yet here is a visible difference between the Confucian tradition and that of the ancient Romans. Unlike the Roman historians, Confucianism does not like to praise military skill or to describe courageous battles or noble warfare.

*Confucius misteriosa ac incredibilia non loquitur; de viribus ac miles principes, et reges pugnis bellisque non tractat; nec de spiritibus, qui non videntur.*<sup>59</sup>

Confucius did not talk about incredible and mysterious things, he did not discuss military forces such as soldiers or princes and kings, or battles and wars; nor spirits, which are invisible.

## 5 Conclusion

I offer one main idea as a possible conclusion. Both the Eastern and Western classical traditions contain many different words for leadership and positions of authority. Both in Chinese and in Latin these words evoke figures which are somehow important because they touch the lives of everyone below them. Because of their ability to handle, or to manipulate, the system, a leader has great influence over the lives of the people.

However, this comparison of Latin terms shows that Ruggieri, when it comes to Confucius' teaching on leaders, uses common words such as *rex, princeps, regnum* to translate different Chinese words and expressions.

Later, when the Jesuits or others tried to translate religious texts from Buddhism or Taoism, they had a much harder time. In those cases transliteration was often necessary, because Latin, or English, or French do not have precise corresponding words.

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<sup>59</sup> *Lun Yu* 7.21.

Ruggieri uses transliteration only for proper names of people, not for expressions of power and authority. For him in the Latin language there are words with similar meanings to those he wishes to translate, so he does not use transliteration. Ruggieri feels that the words about leadership used by Confucius can be translated in a more vague and general sense without altering the overall meaning of his teaching. Otherwise he would have used a transliteration, as other translators did later on with the word *Khan* for the leader of the Mongols or *Mandarins* for local officials.

Was this done on purpose? Or could he simply not find in Latin a precise word corresponding to the Chinese one? Confucius himself insisted on *the rectification of names*. However, this doctrine is not about which word to use, but on the importance of clear hierarchical relations. Moreover, the translation of words expressing positions of authority can be a complex endeavor. Different historical periods or civilizations used titles that are not easy to translate: Pharaoh, Shah, *consul*, *centurio*.

Translators after Ruggieri, both in Latin and later in English, did the same kind of simplification. A comparative analysis of those translations could be a topic for further studies. Some Sinologists (Mungello among others) claim that in this way those Jesuits presented to Europe an image of China that reduced the cultural differences, to suit their interest as missionaries. Chan (2009) claims that many Western scholars have distorted and misunderstood the cultural and intellectual stance of classic Chinese thought by reading it through a ‘Western’ perspective.

I personally prefer to appreciate the enormous effort of Ruggieri and the first Jesuits to translate Chinese texts and make them available to the West. Ruggieri, like all pioneers, was working in very difficult conditions: no dictionaries (he himself wrote one of the first Chinese-Latin dictionaries), no references, no previous translations to compare with.

It is also very significant that one of the first meetings between Confucius and the West was made possible by the use of the Latin language. For the first time many scholars in Europe got to know Confucius and his teachings. This historically significant event happened through a very human, imperfect, even uncertain Latin translation. After Ruggieri, others tried to do better.



Andrea Balbo

# The *Epistula praefatoria* of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*: A Rhetorical Analysis in Search of Cicero and Seneca

## 1 Purposes and Aims of This Paper

The symbolic meaning that Western modern thought still attributes to Cicero and Seneca is unquestionable. Likewise, while not the only ones, these two authors are points of reference for reflecting theoretically upon Roman antiquity regarding politics and ethics. Hammer (2008) 3–4, for one, says that many scholars believe that “the Romans have ceased to be central to political thought” and adds that “what has become most noteworthy about the Romans is their striking unoriginality”.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is a fact that several political concepts – for instance the idea of *res publica*, the image of the ruler, the role of law, the idea of *concordia ordinum*, the virtue of *clementia* – would not exist as such were it not for the Roman tradition. One could easily provide a list of references that underline the importance of the Classical tradition to the subsequent political debate, for example, back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> In tune

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**Note:** I wish to thank warmly Simone Mollea for the help in linguistic revision.

1 Nonetheless, the same scholar lists as pivotal authors for modern political thought Cicero, Livy, Seneca and Tacitus, and compares them with Arendt, Machiavelli, Foucault and Montaigne.

2 It is necessary to recall that the reception of Cicero in the 18<sup>th</sup> century needs further study and that the following study is inevitably based on the excellent yet dated work by Zielinski (1912) (who did not pay great attention – dedicating only six pages – to the Reformation and Catholic Counter-Reformation, but thought “that each century reveals itself not least of all in its relation to Cicero” [daß sich die Eigenart der Jahrhunderte nicht zum wenigsten an ihrem Verhältnis zu C. lernen läßt]). I am also indebted to the more recent Altman (2015) 1, who writes: “Underlying this *Companion to the Reception of Cicero* is an awareness of the fundamental and irremediable impossibility of the task undertaken here: to paraphrase John 21:25 [Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written], not all of the books in the world could contain the full story of Cicero’s influence.” It is well-known that Cicero influenced the development of social philosophy: consider Jean Bodin (1529/30–1596), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), James Harrington (1611–1677), the author of *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, John Toland (1670–1722), with his *Cicero illustratus* of 1712, where Cicero is defined as an “incomparable Orator, the

with the aims of this conference, my main goal is to identify some rhetorical pillars of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* and, where possible, some passages that suggest the author's possible reading of Classical sources, including Plato and Aristotle and, in particular, two of the main Roman thinkers mentioned above, Cicero and Seneca.

In 1687, the *Confucius*, because it was written in Latin, made available to the *litterati* of Europe a large part of Chinese philosophy while becoming at the same time a masterpiece of Jesuit thought. The work embodies an interaction between Eastern and Western cultures and provides a perfect case-study for understanding how Western culture – Classical, Medieval and Christian – used the education received by the Jesuit fathers to encounter a new tradition. I will return to this book later, because my aim is to use it as a bridge for cross-interpreting not only Eastern and Western cultures, but also Antiquity and Modernity, an endeavor which the title of this conference implies.

In this paper, I will deal in particular with the content of the *Epistula praefatoria*, written by Philippe Couplet – its description can be found below, in section 3. In short, I aim to show that Couplet was deeply indebted not only to the tradition of Medieval Latin, in particular to the theological texts, and to the teaching of the humanists and their recovering of classical texts – many scholars, like N. Golvers, have already demonstrated this – but also to Classical authors.<sup>3</sup> I will therefore identify some examples that can be best explained through direct reference to the Classical tradition, mainly, but by no means exclusively, to Cicero. Indeed, reading the ancient Latin texts of Republican and Imperial Rome not only provided the basic elements of Medieval Latin culture and language under the guidance of the *Ratio Studiorum*, but it also impressed a sort of *forma mentis* onto the many Jesuit fathers who translated Chinese texts into Latin. My study here adds some new hypotheses to some passages of possible Ciceronian influence in the *Proemialis declaratio* (henceforward *PD*) that I proposed in a recent paper.<sup>4</sup>

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best of Citizens, the wisest of Magistrates, and an excellent Philosopher (tr. East)” and Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679).

<sup>3</sup> See Golvers (2012–2015) 3, 21, who highlights that they read “authors from religious congregations – related to the ‘missionary’ aspect of the Jesuit enterprise in China – and those with an academic background, connected to the particular method used for the mission”. It is obvious that the influence of this literature was at least equal to that of Classical authors of school syllabi.

<sup>4</sup> Balbo (2020).

## 2 Beyond Antiquity: Cicero and Seneca as Witnesses of Ancient Political Ideas in Jesuit Thought

Before delving into a deeper analysis, we need to investigate the traces of the reception of Cicero and Seneca among the Jesuit fathers generally. Needless to say, it is impossible to deal here with the entirety of the enormous Jesuit literary production.<sup>5</sup> Let me just take as example Antonio Possevino's (1533–1611) *Bibliotheca*, which, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, represents the 'selected library' of Catholics, i.e. the readings allowed in Catholic seminaries and libraries after the Council of Trent.<sup>6</sup> This work stands at the base of the *Ratio Studiorum*,<sup>7</sup> in which Cicero takes pride of place.<sup>8</sup>

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5 See for instance the *Jesuit Bibliography Online*: <https://jesuitonlinebibliography.bc.edu/terms/subjects>.

6 On the *Bibliotheca Selecta* see Balsamo (1998) and Colombo (2015).

7 The *Ratio studiorum* is one of the most important didactic legacies of Jesuit thought and has been thoroughly studied. I take the examples from the 1599 edition, recalling that the course included a cycle of general culture of eight years, five with a humanistic, three with a philosophical orientation. In the first part, which included the study of grammar, literature and rhetoric, the study of Latin was central; in addition, Jesuits studied history, geography and elements of ancient Greek. The second part dealt with the study of philosophy, enriched by scientific knowledge, concerning mathematics, astronomy, physics and chemistry. This eight-year course was followed by another four-year course of theological specialization (the study of religion), aimed at future priests and those who chose to enter the Jesuit order.

8 Among the "Common rules for the lower classes" the rule 30 says: "The theme for composition should not be dictated *ex tempore*, but should be thought out and generally written out beforehand. It should be modeled on Cicero as much as possible and take the form of narration, persuasion, congratulation, admonition, or the like."

Rules of the teacher of rhetoric: "Cicero is to be the one model of style, though the best historians and poets are to be sampled. All of Cicero's works are appropriate models of style, but only his orations are to be material for prelection, so that the principles of his art may be observed as exemplified in his speeches."

Rules for the teacher of humanities: "1. The scope of this class is to lay the foundations for the course in eloquence after the pupils have finished their studies of grammar. Three things are required: knowledge of the language, a certain amount of erudition, and acquaintance with the basic principles of rhetoric. Knowledge of the language involves correctness of expression and ample vocabulary, and these are to be developed by daily readings in the works of Cicero, especially those that contain reflections on the standards of right living. For history, Caesar, Sallust, Livy, Curtius, and others like them are to be taken. Virgil, with the exceptions of some eclogues and the fourth book of the *Aeneid*, is the matter for poetry, along with Horace's selected odes. To



The final part of the *Bibliotheca Selecta* includes a section on Cicero, where he is compared with other authors (Christian and not Christian),<sup>9</sup> as well as a judgment on Seneca and on other classical authors. Possevino's statements confirm the importance of Cicero, who is described as the greatest orator of Rome at *Bibliotheca Selecta* vol. 2, ch. 18<sup>10</sup> and who also receives greater attention than all other ancient authors.

If Possevino and the *Ratio Studiorum* confirm the Jesuits' interest in Cicero, we could ask ourselves exactly what works of his they read. It would be easy to

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these may be added elegies, epigrams, and other poems of recognized poets, provided they are purged of all immoral expressions.”

**9** The *index* of the second part of the *Bibliotheca Selecta* includes the *Christianae methodi* to acquire many competences in Law, Medicine, Poetry and ends with a specific chapter entitled *Ad Ciceronem collatum cum Ethnicis, et sacris Auctoribus: cuius occasione agitur de Ratione conscribendi Epistolas, et de Arte dicendi etiam Ecclesiastica*.

**10** This chapter was published separately from the other 17 in Padua and in Köln in the same 1593 volume with the title *Cicero collatus cum Ethnicis et sacris scriptoribus*. On p. 18 of the section Possevino writes: *Scio laudem oratoriam Ciceroni ab omnibus sic delatam, vt disertissimus Romuli nepotum fuerit vocatus, quot sunt, quot fuerunt. Post aliis erunt in annis: Scio item a Quintiliano dictum, cuique Græcorum fortiter posse opponi; quod cum sese totum ad Graecorum imitationem contulisset, effinxerit vim Demosthenis, copiam Platonis, iucunditatem Isocratis; in eoq. Lysiae subtilitatem, acumen Hyperidis, Aeschynis sonum, Lælij lenitatem, grauitatem Aphricani, plerique agnouerint. Illustrissimam quoque orationem habuisse pro Quintio, quae fuit prima in eius iuuentute pronunciata, Gellius scripsit. Notum et illud, quod Plinius, libro Epistolarum primo, cum inquit. Ac mihi ex Græcis orationes Lysiae ostentat, ex nostris Gracchorum, Catonisque, quorum sane plurimæ sunt circumcisae et breues. Ego Lysiae, Demosthenem, Aeschynem, Hyperidem; multosq. præterea Gracchis, et Catoni Pollionem, Cæsarem, Coelium, in primis, M. Tullium oppono, cuius oratio optima fertur esse, quae maxima* ('I know that everybody has heaped praise on Cicero's oratorical skills, so much so that he was called "the most skilled in speech of the descendants of Romulus, as many as there are and as many as there were, or as many as there will be in later years". I am also aware that Quintilian said that Cicero might be fearlessly compared with any one Greek orator: indeed, since he did his best to imitate them, he gained Demosthenes' rigour of expression, Plato's copiousness, Isocrates' charm. And many people will have also recognized in him Lysias' precision of argument, Hyperides' incisiveness, Aeschines' lofty style, Laelius' melodiousness, Scipio Africanus' gravity. Gellius wrote that Cicero also delivered a very distinguished oration in defence of Quinctius, and this was the first speech he gave. Furthermore, it is famous what Pliny the Younger said in the first book of his epistles: "He [*scil.* a friend of Pliny's] produces Lysias amongst the Greeks, and Cato and the two Gracchi among our own countrymen, whose speeches certainly afford many instances of the concise style. In return, I name Demosthenes, Aeschines, Hyperides, and many others in opposition to Lysias, while I confront Cato and the Gracchi with Caesar, Pollio, Coelius, and above all Cicero, whose longest oration is generally considered the best" (transl. S. Mollea. Pliny's letter reproduces the translation by B. Radice in the *Loeb Classical Library*).

guess ‘everything’, because in Possevino’s list we come across references to epistles, speeches, philosophical and rhetorical texts, and in the *Ratio Studiorum* we find explicit quotations of some works that were suitable for grammar school.<sup>11</sup> We can now turn our attention to the Eastern world, looking, for instance, at the lists of books contained in Jesuit libraries in the Far East. The excellent work of Golvers (2012) 437–439 provides us with much information, recalling that “among the Latin authors, M. Tullius Cicero – together with Augustinus – obviously has the palm of primacy, in general but also in particular, as an authority in rhetorics, both with theoretical treatises<sup>12</sup> and model speeches.<sup>13</sup> [...] As for epistolography, Cicero was a model as well, together with C. Plinius Secundus, *Epistolae* [...] Philosophical treatises were Ciceronian”<sup>14</sup>. The works found by Golvers seem strictly useful both to religious speculation (as the *De natura deorum*) and to ethical (*Tusculanae disputationes*) or political reflections (*De re publica* and *De legibus*). Moreover, the rhetorical works constitute a real handbook of education for the orator and offer specific examples of great oratorical work, like the *Pro Milone*, which could be effective benchmarks for the student of eloquence, who had to strengthen his skills through the best available examples.<sup>15</sup>

If Cicero is clearly a model for the Jesuits, the situation appears different where Seneca is concerned. In his *Bibliotheca Selecta* (vol. 2, *index s.v.*) Possevino thinks that Seneca “did not pay attention to the announcement of the Truth”

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11 Rules for the highest grammar class: “1. The aim of this class is to achieve complete and perfect knowledge of grammar. The teacher shall therefore review syntax from the beginning, adding all the exceptions. Then he shall explain figures of speech and rules of prosody. In Greek, however, he shall cover the eight parts of speech or whatever is embraced under the name of rudiments, except dialects and the more unusual variations. The reading matter in prose in the first semester shall be taken from the more important of Cicero’s letters *Ad Familiares*, *Ad Atticum*, *Ad Quintum Fratrem*; in the second semester, his *De Amicitia*, *De Senectute*, *Paradoxa*, and the like. From the poets, in the first semester, some selected and expurgated elegies and epistles of Ovid should be taken, and in the second semester expurgated selections from Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, the eclogues of Virgil, or also some of the easier books of Virgil, like *Georgics* [...] and *Aeneid* 7. Greek recommended readings are mainly St. John Chrysostom, Aesop and Agapetus.

12 *De inventione* and *De oratore* are listed in the Chinese libraries.

13 *De domo sua*, *Pro Archia poeta*, *Philippica* 12, *Pro Milone*.

14 *De divinatione*, *De legibus*, *Tusculanae*, *De republica*, *De natura deorum* and a reference to *Timaeus*.

15 It is worth recalling a note by Golvers (2012) 439: “The part of Cicero also in this respect is clearly formulated by Foucquet when he lists his desiderata of books to take from China to Europe in 1720 (CPF Ind. Or. Cina del 1720 SRC 15f. 396v.: *Apparatus in Ciceronem, Epistulae Ciceronis ad Att(icum)*, *Opera Cicer(onis) Philos(ophica)* I vol. in 80 vieux: [in margin [ *comme j’ecris en Latin, ce livres m’aident*”.

(*veritatis notitiam neglexit*) and describes him as a “philosopher in words, without any form of morality” (*verbis philosophus, moribus perditus*), thereby portraying him as an incoherent man.

These words in the *Index* refer to pp. 114–116 of the first volume of the *Bibliotheca Selecta*, where Possevino’s judgment on Seneca is brutal:

*De Seneca, Tacito, Plutarcho et aliis quibusdam primo loquar. [...] cumque Senecae libri inter philosophos ad nostram religionem proxime accedere dicantur, sicuti stoicorum fere apud Graecos alii et praesertim Musonii atque Epicteti, cuius Enchiridion extat, et liber de memorabilibus eius dictis ab Arriano conscriptus, hosce dicimus circumspectissime esse legendos [...]*

*Et quidem Seneca inquit, Deum etiam ingratum multa tribuere: omnia nosse, etiam future; Dei omnia esse: Deum maximum ac potentissimum omnia vehere; fabricandi mundum bonitatem ipsum causam fuisse; eundem Deum, providentia, quam pronoeam Stoici vocant, opus suum disponere, ac sedentem spectare: fato nec preces nec vota nec expiationes nec libertatem arbitrii ullo modo repugnare; Deum probare homines et quos amat recognoscere et exercere: nullam sine eo mentem sanam esse: mortem denique expectandam sine taedio vitae. Quae omnia multo antea vel a Prophetis vel a Christo Domino sapientius pronuntiata fuerant: qui veritatem istarum rerum nec vitae labe neque contrariis sententiis quod Seneca fecit infirmarunt. [...] Sed quid tum postea Seneca? De divina natura more Ethnicorum loquitur, quasi plures sint Dii: fatorum necessitate nimium saepe tribuit: de mundo, ex tempore ne, an ex aeternitate conditus, numve anima, an corpus sit, ambigit: humanum animum, modo ignem tenuiorem, corporeum tamen; modo Deum in humano corpore hospitantem; modo animal vocat; eiusque immortalitatem in dubium revocat: eiusdem affectus et motiones corpora esse et Animalia confingit ut itidem virtutes ac vitia; atque haec postrema omnia paria, sicuti et beneficia: praeterea virtutem neque amitti nec divinitus dari posse; honestum ac beatum nullam accessionem recipere; sapientes omnes esse pares; eos, qui sibi manus consciverunt esse laude dignos; supplicia vero inferorum non agnoscit; ut mittam quae de caerimoniis antiquae Legis aliquibus adversus Iudaeos tangit: quique cum Petrum et Paulum atque per eos Christianae semina religionis erumpentia cernere potuerit, indignum se tamen reddiderit cui splendor veritatis illuxerit.<sup>16</sup>*

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**16** I am going to talk about Seneca, Tacitus, Plutarch and some others first. [...] Although philosophers claim that Seneca’s books are very close to our religion, as is the case with other Greek Stoics like Musonius and Epictetus, whose *Enchiridion* and *Memorabilia* (a book in which Arrian has collected Epictetus’ sayings) have come down to us, I say that these books must be read very cautiously. [...] So, according to Seneca, God also gives a lot to ingrates: he knows everything, including the future; everything belongs to God; God, the mightiest, carries everything; His benevolence caused the creation of the World; the same God, thanks to that providence called *pronoia* by the Greeks, organizes his creation and looks at it while seated: neither prayers nor vows, neither atonements nor free will in any way struggle against His decrees; God commends men, and examines and tests those whom he loves: no mind can be sane without Him: lastly, death should be awaited without boredom of life. All these principles had been enunciated more intelligently long before by prophets or Christ the Lord – and, unlike Seneca, they did not invalidate the truthfulness of these precepts with stains on their lives or inconsistent thoughts. [...] So

In short, it is possible to read Seneca only with great attention, because his *virtus* is *de facto* simulated. Possevino describes Seneca's thought in a very tendentious way, underlining his differences from the Christian fathers and showing that he was close to error and far from truth. Moreover, he includes Seneca in his list only thanks to the epistolary exchange between him and Saint Paul (which Possevino quotes in another part of the text), remarking that the philosopher did not provide any strong instruction to the people who read him. Nonetheless, Possevino demonstrates clear knowledge of Senecan texts, such as *De providentia*, the *Consolationes*, and the epistles to Lucilius, even if he clearly misunderstands some of his doctrine.

That said, it is highly probable that Seneca's work, if not explicitly recommended in Jesuit schools, was known to the most cultivated members of the Company. Yet the 'black legend' which made of Seneca a bad or useless counselor, since all his positive doctrine were already present in the Christian announcement, possibly explains his absence from the *Ratio studiorum* of 1599, which instead includes references to many historians and other Greek and Latin authors.<sup>17</sup>

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why Seneca then? He talks about God's nature in pagan terms, as if there were many Gods; he leaves too much room to the constraint of fate; he is ambiguous as to the origins of the World – was it founded or does it belong to eternity? – and to its nature – is it soul or body? Now he defines it as human soul, now as thinner flame, yet corporeal; sometimes as a God housed in a human body, sometimes as a living creature whose immortality he calls into question; its changes of position and movements are regarded as concrete objects and it shapes living creatures as well as virtues and flaws, which are all equal in importance, as is also the case with benefits. Moreover, virtue can neither be lost nor acquired by divine agency; who is honourable and blissful cannot be attacked; wise men are all equal; those who commit suicide are praiseworthy; he does not recognize the tortures of the underworld, not to mention what concerns some ceremonies against the Hebrews prescribed by an ancient law. In short: he who might have been able to see Peter and Paul and, through them, the sprouting seeds of the Christian religion, nonetheless would have made himself indecorous before him on whom the brightness of truth shone' (transl. S. Mollea).

17 Traces of Seneca in Jesuit culture seem to be connected particularly to the theater and to a didactic purpose: see the *Ratio Studiorum* (*Rules of the Rector* 13): 'Tragedies and comedies, which are to be produced only rarely and in Latin, must have a spiritual and edifying theme. Whatever is introduced as an interlude must be in Latin and observe propriety. No female make-up or costume is to be permitted'. Pociña Perez (2000) studied the importance of Senecan pieces in Jesuit theater and gives as examples of 16<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit tragedies the *Lucifer furens* by P. de Acevedo and the *Mauritius* (anonymous), based upon Senecan tragedies like the *Hercules furens*; the second tragedy is a patchwork based on Senecan and non-Senecan writings.

Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that the *De clementia* received the attention of Jean Cauvin (John Calvin) in 1532,<sup>18</sup> and this fact could hardly leave the Jesuit fathers<sup>19</sup> indifferent. Be it as it may, Seneca was not included in the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, as highlighted by Höpfl (2004) and Braun (2016). Furthermore, Juan de Mariana, in his famous *De rege et regis institutione* (1599), used Senecan texts like *Ad Marciam* and *Ad Lucilium* 90. And Pedro de Ribadeneyra too seems to reveal traces of Senecan influence, perhaps from *De clementia* and *De ira*.<sup>20</sup> Finally, the possibility of reading and using Seneca in Jesuit treatises concerning China was guaranteed by Matteo Ricci himself. As Fontana (2011) 105 remarks, “The Four Books of Confucianism aroused the same interest in Ricci as the Greek and Latin works studied at the Roman College, and he found remarkable similarities between Confucian morality and the principles of Western ethics, as well as a particular affinity between the Chinese philosophy and Stoicism.” He described them in a letter to Superior General Acquaviva as “sound moral documents” [Letter to Claudio Acquaviva, December 10, 1593; OS II, p. 117] and Confucius as “another Seneca, [[Confucius] è nel morale un altro Seneca o altro autore dei più nostri famosi tra gentili” FR, I, ch. V, p. 39]” esteeming him as he had been one of the great Classical thinkers of the West: “In his sound way of living in harmony with nature, he is not inferior to our ancient philosophers”. Ricci does not limit himself to Cicero and Seneca, but in his letters compares elements of Chinese political organization to Plato’s *Republic*, and calls some of the Mandarins ‘Epicurean’. He also deliberately uses Latin and Roman models to ‘translate’ ideas into Chinese culture, probably because he felt such models would have greater impact than images drawn from the Bible. Especially in his treatises *On Friendship* and *Western Memory Techniques*, Cicero, Seneca, Ovid, Plutarch and Quintilian bear far more of the burden than Augustine, Ambrose and Chrysostom.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, this fact should not be overestimated, because, as D’Elia (1952 and 1956) demonstrated and the most recent studies confirm,<sup>22</sup> Ricci’s main sources were the *Sententiae et Exempla* by the Portuguese scholar André de Resende (1498 ca.–1573), better known as a translator of Horace and an archaeologist, and not the texts of ancient writers themselves, which would have been brought with difficulty on his journey to Peking.

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<sup>18</sup> See Battles-Hugo (1969).

<sup>19</sup> Even if Calvin had not yet left Catholicism in 1532, I do not think that in 1687 this will have made a great difference to Jesuits.

<sup>20</sup> Höpfl (2004) 152 n. 54

<sup>21</sup> See Spence (1988) 15 and D’Elia (1952) for the first complete study on Ricci’s *De amicitia*.

<sup>22</sup> See again Tommasi (2020) 76–77.

As a matter of fact, Seneca, even if not recommended, was not prohibited and was used. Further confirmation of this from Meynard (2011) 27 is particularly apt for closing this introductory section: “The Jesuit reading has to be understood along the line of the Western tradition of texts and practices, with its own normative references like the Bible, Plato, Aristotle, Seneca and Aquinas. [...] The *Sinarum Philosophus* manifests an encounter between two living interpretive traditions at one point in history. While Jesuits claimed to present the original meaning of the Confucian classics, an analysis of their translations, in fact, reveals a deep engagement with the interpretations then current in China. They had to come to terms with Neo-Confucianism. Therefore, the *Sinarum philosophus* should not be understood only as a translation and commentary of the ‘original’ classics, but also a discussion between Neo-Confucian and Western philosophy”.<sup>23</sup>

### 3 Rhetoric in the *Epistula Praefatoria*

As is well known, the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* is the first broad presentation of some texts of Chinese ancient thought to a Western audience.<sup>24</sup> The book, printed in Paris in 1687 and edited by Jesuit father Philippe Couplet on behalf of a very important team of other interpreters of the Confucian philosophy,<sup>25</sup> opens with a letter (*epistola*) to king Louis XIV (henceforward *EP*); it then follows the *Proemialis declaratio*<sup>26</sup>, a long (114 pages) and very rich introduction to some important treatises of the Confucian tradition. After the *PD*, we can find a life of

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<sup>23</sup> No trace of Seneca appears in Golvers’ lists.

<sup>24</sup> This is the complete title: *Confucius Sinarum philosophus sive scientia Sinensis Latine exposita, studio et opera Prosperi Intorcetta, Christiani Herdrich, Francisici Rougemont, Philippi Couplet, Patrum Societatis, jussu Ludovici Magni eximio missionum Orientalium et litterae Reipublicae bono e bibilotheca regia in lucem prodita; adjecta est tabula chronologica Sinicae monarchiae ab huius exordio ad haec usque tempora*, Parisiis, apud D. Horthemels, 1687. The text is available at <https://archive.org/details/confuciussinarum00conf>; [http://www.fondazioneintorcetta.info/pdf/Confucius\\_sinarum\\_philosophus\\_sive\\_scien.pdf](http://www.fondazioneintorcetta.info/pdf/Confucius_sinarum_philosophus_sive_scien.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Meynard (2011) 434–438 provides a very useful correspondence table between the manuscript translations, the *Sinarum Philosophus* and his edition, and we can summarize here some starting elements: a. the *EP* is a work of Couplet; b. the first part of *PD* (pp. ix–lix of the edition of 1687) was written by Prospero Intorcetta and revised by Couplet; c. the second part (pp. lx–cxiv) was by Couplet. Golvers 1998 describes very precisely the role of every contributor and of the different phases of translation from father Da Costa in 1665, and down to Intorcetta, de Rougemont, Couplet and others. See also Liščák (2015).

<sup>26</sup> *Operis origo et scopus nec non Sinensium librorum, interpretum, sectarum et et philosophiae, quam natutalem [sic] vocant, proemialis declaratio.*

Confucius, the *Scientia Sinica*, divided into *Ta Hio* (1<sup>st</sup> book, now better known as *Daxue*), *Chum Yum* (or *Zhongyong*, 2<sup>nd</sup> book) and *Lun Yu* (3<sup>rd</sup> book), and a *Tabula chronologica monarchiae Sinicae* (2952 BCE–1683 CE) with a long *praefatio*.<sup>27</sup> The *PD* consists of two parts: the first is dedicated to the books on Chinese philosophy and its interpreters, with particular attention to their schools; the second is instead devoted to the main principles of Chinese philosophy and to the difficulties and success of Matteo Ricci's and Jesuit missionary efforts in the Eastern Empire.<sup>28</sup>

The *Epistola Praefatoria* to king Louis XIV aims to be a great *captatio benevolentiae* by Couplet to the political power, reassuring the sovereign that the new thought is a real political (and religious) opportunity and not a risk. It does not appear in the manuscript of Confucius translations, and thus is a specific and new creation of the editor of the book.<sup>29</sup> In analyzing the language and the ideas of the *EP*, I do not intend to say that Cicero and Seneca are the direct sources of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, but only that they provide a large part of the vocabulary and ideological horizons of the Jesuit fathers and that their other sources (Christian and Medieval texts) draw much on these ancient

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27 The bibliography on these works is vast: I refer to the entries included in Meynard (2011). Meynard's book translates the *PD* and the *Daxue* and I quote his English translation, while I use the Latin text of the editions mentioned above. Another useful book is Meynard (2015).

28 Meynard (2011) 82 divides the declaration into the following chapters. "First part: 1. The Classics and their first Authorship; 2. About the Interpreters of the Classical Books; 3. Short Introduction to the philosopher Li Laojun and his followers, called in China Daoshi; 4. A brief notice about the Sect called Fojiao and his followers; 5. School of the Literati or Philosophers; Basis and Principle established by Ancient and Modern Interpreters; 6. From What Source the Modern Interpreters have drawn a new genre of Philosophy; 7. Specimen of the Chart of the 64 Hexagrams; 8. Explanation of the Fifteenth Figure. Second part: 1. Explanation of the Principles of Things, both Material and Efficient, established by the Ancients and Moderns; 2. Disorder of many dogmas, sects, books and interpreters, making Ricci and the First Heralds of the Holy Law perplexed and troubled; 3. Ricci's deliberation on How to preach the Gospel in China; and his examination of Ancient Documents and Annals; 4. The proof from authentic Chinese Books that There Was No Exchange with Other Nations; 5. Proof of the Flood in Ancient China and of the Early Knowledge and Worship of God; 6. Conservation of the Knowledge of the True God by the Chinese for many Centuries; 7. More Proof that the Chinese knew the True God; 8. Name by Which the Ancient Chinese called the True God. Enquiry about its Etymology and Specificity; 9. The Reason Why the Innovators Cannot Subdue the True Meaning of Shangdi with Their Corrupt Interpretation; 10. Proof from the Examples of St. Paul and Church Fathers that Ancient Chinese Could Name the True God; 11. Evidence drawn, not from the Modern Interpreters, but as Much as Possible from the Original Texts; 12. A Successful Book of Theology by Fr. Matteo Ricci".

29 On Couplet (1623–1693), Flemish Jesuit missionary in China and India, see Mungello (1989) 253–257 and mainly Heyndrickx (1990); also some good reflections are in Meynard (2011) 10–12.

Roman writers. Accordingly, the passages I discuss include hypothetical exegesis.<sup>30</sup>

I insert here the text of the *EP*; I have preserved the *EP* usage of capital letters and forms as caetera; the division of the *EP* into three rhetorical sections is mine.<sup>31</sup>

#### *Exordium*

*Postquam ab altero non ita pridem Orbe, Maiestatem tuam, Rex Magne, adierunt cum insigni apparatu potentissimi Siamensium Regis Legati, exciti videlicet virtutis ac sapientiae tuae fama, quae remotissimas in oras iamdudum penetraverat; adest nunc ab extremo procul Oriente Princeps e Regio Sinensium Imperatorum sanguine, Confucium appellant, uno Sinensium consensu habitus omnium, qui unquam apud eos floruerunt, Sapientissimus et Moralis Philosophiae pariter ac Politicae Magister et Oraculum.*

*Ab huius ore, sicuti quondam pendebant tria Discipulorum millia, ita modo ex eius effatis amplissimum gubernatur imperium, statuuntur leges, Gentis mores et civilia componuntur officia, denique in eius doctrina perdiscenda summorum Reipublicae honorum ac Magistratum obtinendorum spes una et ratio continetur. Huius memoriam, libros, nomen ipsum Sina omnes, mirifice colunt, ipsique adeo imperatores qui ad eas, ubi docebat olim, ades (qua tanquam sapientiae sacraria servantur) eiusque gymnasia venerabundi ventitare non dedignantur: nec sane immerito; quippe qui ab tanto Magistro didicerint Summum coeli, ut vocabat ipse, Imperatorem Regnorum omnium ac Imperiorum moderatorem et arbitrum adorare ac timere, subditos sibi populos aequitate magna et charitate regere, fovere artes, orbem denique Sinensem domi tot iam annos ac militiae florentem, sanctissimis institutis legibusque moderari.*

*Hic igitur ille Confucius tibi se sistit, Rex Magne, curis tuis et Regia liberalitate in Gallias veluti deportatus, et ad Majestatis Tuae pedes provolutus accedit, palam admiraturus sapientiam tuam, et suam illam, etsi apud populares suos incredibili fama et existimatione iactatam, Tua tamen nihilo secius, quam. Soli Stellas, decedere confessurus.*

#### *Narratio*

*Haerebit ille, opinor, ad primum aditum atque inspectum, et admiratione simul gaudioque defixus repertum sibi tandem Principem illum dicet, ad quem videndum nequidquam hactenus tanto studio exarserat. Cum enim egregius ille vir eximium, et qualem informabat animo, Imperatorem suis in libris adumbrasset, ac neminem sane votis suis parem ex avitis Imperii Principibus reperire potuisset, in quem unum omnes regiae illae dotes conspirarent, quique illam numeris omnibus absolutam formam ideamque perfectissimi Principis referret, tunc in eas erupit voces Tái Kí Gîn Expectandus hic Vir hic est, qui veniet aliquando, e divina quadam admirabili sapientia praeditus talem se exhibebit, in quo nihil nostra, nihil publica desiderare vota possint.*

<sup>30</sup> See again Golvers (2012–2015).

<sup>31</sup> Meynard (2011) transcribes in a different way the Chinese words quoted by Couplet and makes some observations about his deliberate misunderstandings in the translation, which underline the concept of attacking heresies while the Chinese actually means ‘pay attention to aberrant teachings’.



*Nonne ille, si modo revivisceret, ac Te, Rex Magne, contemplaretur, illum ipsum esse Te agnosceret, quem prospexisset animo, incredibili gaudio perfusus, voti se compositum esse factum exclamaret? Nonne tuam in administrando Regno amplissimo sapientiam regibus omnibus proponeret, exempla tuis e moribus, leges ex effatis peteret? Tuam denique pietatem, clementiam, aequitatem, illam aequabilem in tanta rerum maximarum et negotiorum mole mentis ac vultus serenitatem atque praesentiam cum tanta Maiestate. coniunctam, Principibus universis pro norma et regula esse vellet?*

*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 praeceptisque componeret, idcirco nihil ipsi prius aut potius fuit, quam ut sectae et peregrina dogmata, quae in populorum exitium, ac Monarchiarum perniciem nata esse dicitabat, penitus profligaret. Hinc eiusdem ea vox, hodieque inter Sinas celebratissima: Cum hu y tuon, Oppugna haeretica dogmata. Quantam igitur afferret homini pietatis amantissimo laetitiam, siquidem ad haec felicissima legis gratiae tempora pertingere potuisset, tua illa Rex tutandae et amplificandae Religionis, extirpandae haeseos, pietatis propaganda cura? Quibus Te Laudibus efferreret, cum haeresim, hostem illam avitae fidei ac regni florentissimi terribilissimam, 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 et vere Christianissimo Christianissimam aspiceret?*

*Non ille tantum profecto miraretur ac praedicaret caetera Galliae tuae miracula, non tot arces omnibus et artis et naturae praesidiis permunitas partim a Te deiectas et captas, partim extractas et erectas; non potentissimas et numerosissimas classes quibus Asiae et Africae terrorem attulistis; non tot victorias de hostibus reportatas, quibus coronidem gloriosissimam imposuisti publicae trophaeum pacis: non visenda illa, in quibus Regium splendorem et magnificentiam tuam explicas, Palatia; non flumina ultra montes transvecta; aperta et juncta maria; non tot atrium et scientiarum gymnasia et seminaria, haec inquam, omnia tantam admirationem Sapientissimo Philosopho non iniicerent quanta haec una Religionis, duce te atque auspice, de Haeresi triumphantis Victoria quam nec tentare quisquam antea sic ausus erat, nec sperare; credere vero vix olim poterit sera posteritas admirari quidem certe ac praedicare nunquam satis poterit.*

#### *Epilogus*

*Ego vero huius unius rei et victoriae tam incredibili fama percipue percussus huc ab ultimis Sinarum oris adveni, magnum me longissimi Oceani feliciter emensa opera pretium fecisse ratus, quod bis oculis ea videre mihi contigerit, quae fama ubique sparserat, quam tamen ipsa re minore esse deprehendi. Quam dulce mihi iam accidit, favente Deo, renavigare tot maria, revisere optatissimam Sinam et illic ista miracula, quorum testis oculatus extiti, predicare! vel eorum certe recordatio tot laborum ac periculorum absterget sensum, memoriam delebit, viam redeunti efficiet faciliorem, et quasi complanabit. Iam mihi videor in medio Neophytorum ad me convolantium laetissimo consessu, atque ipsorum etiam Ethnicorum, renarrare, quae hic viderim, illos arrectis auribus animisque adstare suspensos, obstupescere ad rerum magnitudinem ac novitatem, simulque Tibi, Rex Magne, Religioni, et Galliae congratulari.*

*Quibus porro incedent Laetitias, cum accipient suum illum Confucium tanto a Te in pretio et honore habitum fuisse, ut ei ceteros inter Bibliotheca Regia libros locum esse volueris? eun-*

*dem latio sermone donatum, eius effigiem ac libros necnon etiam de alta principum suorum, non ligneis tantum illis, quibus Sina utitur, tabulis, sed aereis et elegantissimis excussos; eum denique, qui Sinico tantum in Imperio bactenus erat cognitus, iam per Galliam atque ex Gallia per omnem late Europam brevi spargendum, ac tanti ab omnibus, quanti par est, ubique faciendum. Quas illi tum Maiestati Tuae gratias agent, quibus Nomen tuum laudibus universi, quam fausta comprecatione prosequentur! quae vota Neophyti certatim pro tua incolumitate; pro felici rerum omnium, quascumque fueris aggressus, exitu; pro florentissimi Regni ac Religionis Catholica fecundissimo illo cursu nuncupabunt? Et audiet illorum vota fortunabitque Deus Optimus Maximus, talemque Te Gallis et Orbi Christiano diu servabit, qualem Catholica res Ecclesia tota, qualem probi omnes tam tui, quam exteri vovent ac precantur, atque imprimis, qui praeter ceteros esse amat gloriaturque Maiestati Tuae.<sup>32</sup>*

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32 I quote here the translation of Meynard (2011): “O great King, not long ago the plenipotentiary envoys of the King of Siam, no doubt spurred by the reputation of your virtue and wisdom which had already penetrated those distant lands, came to Your Majesty, as never before with all their elaborate trappings, from the other side of the world. Today, a Prince from the noble blood of Chinese emperors approaches from the furthestmost Orient, this Confucius, held, by common acclaim of all the Chinese, to be the Wisest Teacher and Oracle of both Moral and Political Philosophy who has ever flourished among them. There was a time when three thousand disciples hung on his every word, just as now, from his utterance, a huge empire is ruled, laws and customs of the people established and civil positions distributed. Furthermore there is to be found in his teaching both the promise of and rule for bestowal of the highest honors and offices in the State. All the Chinese hold his memory, his books and his very name in awe, up to the Emperors themselves, who are not above paying regular visits to the houses and academies where he once taught, and which are preserved as shrines of wisdom. This is not without reason, since they learnt from this great Teacher to adore and fear ‘the Highest in Heaven’, as he himself called it, the commander of every kingdom and the governor and judge of every empire. From Confucius they learnt to rule their subject peoples justly and charitably, to promote the arts, and finally to govern China, which has prospered for so many years now in times both of peace and of war, by just decrees and laws. Thus, O Great King, this Confucius now places himself here before you, as if transported to France through your care and Royal generosity. Prostrated, he approaches your Majesty’s feet. He wonders openly at your wisdom and recognizes that his own, though enjoying such an incredible reputation and esteem among his people, yet yields to yours, like Stars to the Sun.

This Confucius will, I imagine, find his first tentative impression confirmed, and, rapt with joyful admiration, he will declare that he has found at last that Prince whom he had burned to see with an ardor that had until now been in vain. Indeed, this exceptional man had conceived in his mind such an outstanding Emperor and he had sketched his outline in his books, but yet, amid the ancestral Princes of the Empire, he could find no one who truly conformed to his wishes, no one in whom all the royal talents could be combined. Then, leaving aside those examples, he returned to the absolute form and idea of the most perfect Prince,’ and he pronounced the words: ‘*dai qiren*’ [modern transcription of Chinese words] which means ‘This is the Man to be waited for’: “He is the one who will one day come, and, gifted with such divine and wondrous wisdom, will conduct himself so as to fulfill all our wishes, both private and collective. O Great King, if Confucius could live again and contemplate you, would he not himself acknowledge that you are the one he had foreseen in his mind? Overcome by an incredible joy, would he not ex-

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claim that his wish had been fulfilled? Would he not propound your wisdom in governing a mighty Kingdom to all the kings? Would he not adopt examples drawn from your behavior and from your laws? Finally, would he not want that, amid such a burden of the highest responsibilities and affairs, your piety, clemency, justice, equity, serenity of mind, attitude and your majestic presence should become the norm and rule for all the Princes of the world? Since truly this very wise Philosopher has recognized, by the light of nature and reason alone, that men should revere religion above all things, he conducted his teaching and training towards the single goal that mortals should arrange all their lives according to the laws and precepts of the supreme divine will.' Therefore, there was nothing higher in his list of priorities than thoroughly overthrowing the foreign sects and doctrines by which, he was wont to say, nations were destroyed and dynasties brought down. Even today, his words are very famous among the Chinese: 'Gong hu yiduan' [modern transcription of Chinese words] which means, 'Attack heresies'. Indeed, O King, if Confucius could have reached these happiest times under the Law of Grace', what joy your own care in protecting and promoting Religion, in weeding out the scourge of heretics, and in furthering the spread of piety, would bring to this man who loved piety most of all. With what praises would he exalt you, since he could observe in the whole of France, the most Christian King of all the Christian countries of the world, and under the greatest King, that heresy, this enemy of the ancestral faith and of a flourishing kingdom, has been disgraced, trampled underfoot, destroyed. Confucius could see that the edicts of the past, by which heresy seemed to prolong its existence, were abrogated, the temples torn down, and its very name buried. In contrast, he could see that thousands of grateful souls have been brought back, happy and steadfast, from former errors to truth, from damnation to salvation! This Confucius would not so much marvel at and proclaim all the other miracles of your France: the many citadels, fortified by all kind of protections, both artificial and natural, some of which you cast down and captured, others which you raised and built up,' the powerful and numerous fleets, by which you instilled fear in Asia and Africa, those many victories brought back from your enemies, by which you have placed the most glorious crown upon the trophy of collective peace, those remarkable palaces, in which you unfold your royal splendor and magnificence, those rivers beyond the mountains which you have navigated, and those seas you have opened and explored, so many academies of arts and sciences and seminaries, none of these, I say, could instill admiration in the wise Philosopher as much as this one victory of triumphant Religion over Heresy, under your leadership and auspices.' No one had previously dared to attempt it, or even to hope for it. Though it may scarcely be believed by posterity until some years have passed, truly, this victory will never be enough admired and proclaimed. Being especially struck by the reputation of this affair and by such an incredible victory, I myself have come here from the furthest reaches of China, and reckon that I have won a great reward for my efforts in safely crossing the boundless ocean, because I had the chance to see these things with my own eyes. Their fame has spread everywhere, but even so I discovered it did not do justice to the reality. How sweet it will be for me, God willing, to navigate once again the many seas, to see again my longed for China and to proclaim there those miracles that I have witnessed and recorded! Indeed, this thought will banish the fear of so many hardships and dangers, will destroy their memory and make my return trip easier and almost smooth. I can see myself in the midst of a happy accession of new converts flocking towards me, even of the local peoples themselves, recounting over and over what I have seen here, and they would remain astounded, with keen ears and open hearts. They would be dumbstruck by the importance and novelty of those things and at the same time congratulate you, O Great King, Religion, and France?! What

The letter has 132 lines and occupies 6 pages of the volume, and comprises a speech in epistolary form. It opens up with an address to *Ludovico Magno regi Christianissimo*, which Meynard (2011) 83 n. 1 judges less formal than an official dedication, since he knew the king personally. However, *Christianissimus rex* is the normal form of address to the king of France before the Revolution and the dative is the normal form in Latin. The rhetorical structure is very clear:

a. The long *exordium* (lines 1–33). Here the writer refers to a recent embassy of Siamese ambassadors and announces that another prince from the Far East – Confucius – is approaching the court of the Sun King. Confucius is the *sapientissimus omnium Sinensium*, the founder and creator of Chinese thought: accordingly, his teachings stand in the heart and in mind of every person in China. He reaches Louis XIV’s court and submits himself to his authority. In addition to being informative, this *exordium* reveals the effort to render the reader benevolent and attentive, an important requirement for the beginning of a speech according to Classical treatises. In particular, the *prosopopoeia* of Confucius, imaged as coming to modern France to do homage the King, as well as the apostrophe concerning the King himself, both contribute to the *delectatio* of the reader and to maintaining their attention. Moreover, Couplet inserts here a real enthymeme: since the Siamese envoys were welcomed by the King and since Confucius is more important than they, it follows that Confucius is worthy of a significant welcome by the King. The reference to Confucius makes an effective *transitio* to the *narratio*;

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happiness will they yet discover when they learn that their own Confucius has been held in such honored esteem by your Majesty that you wished him to have a place in the collections of the Royal Library! What joy when they learn that you wished the book to be put into the Latin language, with Confucius’s portrait, as well as the books and deeds of their princes! Moreover, all this is not printed on those wooden blocks used by the Chinese, but on elegant copper plates! What happiness when they find out that you wished his work, until now famous only in the Chinese Empire, to be disseminated in short order throughout France, from there far and wide across Europe, and, as much as possible, everywhere. How they will thank your Majesty; they will tell your Name everywhere, with such praise and such auspicious public supplication! How the new converts will ardently pray for your safety, and for a successful result in all the endeavors you have undertaken! Will they not wish a most favorable future for the most prosperous Kingdom and for Catholicism? The Most Benevolent and Highest God will hear and bless their wishes, and He will duly serve You for a long time in France and all over the Christian world, so that Catholicism and the entire Church, all the honest people in your country and outside, and especially the ones God loves and glories in more than others, will implore and pray on behalf of Your Majesty”.

b. *narratio* (lines 34–96): Confucius announces that the French King is the perfect example he predicted in his writings; religion takes pride of place when it comes to ruling a people and the fight against the heresies is pivotal in this context. France exemplifies perfect action against the enemies of faith and the adversaries of the power of the Sun King. Here references are evidently made also to Christian and Lateantique and Medieval elements, the section almost recalling the adoration of the Three Kings to the infant Jesus or proskynesis to the emperor. It is not strange that here Couplet underlines the importance of the Confucian principles of respect for power and submission to it, both of which fit perfectly with the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV;

c. *epilogus* (lines 97–132): Couplet declares his satisfaction because the King has welcomed the book and expresses the wish that it be used to help in the conversion of the Chinese to Catholicism. A good summary of the topics presented is combined with a strong emotional appeal, which starts from reference to the personal experience of the author, underlining his involvement in the evangelization enterprise and reaffirming his desire to return to China.

This structure is perfectly consistent with the main teachings of Classical handbooks concerning the *exordium*, *narratio* and *epilogus*<sup>33</sup> and demonstrates the careful construction of this speech in the form of a letter. It is perhaps possible to push the analysis little further, in order to underline other points which resonate with Classical sources, Cicero and Seneca in particular.

The initial address includes expressions that might recall Classical features, such as the couplet *virtus and sapientia*,<sup>34</sup> but it is completely impossible to dem-

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<sup>33</sup> See, for instance, Calboli Montefusco (1988).

<sup>34</sup> The association of *virtus* and *sapientia* is very frequent in Cicero (*Verr.* 2.5.50). Particularly important are *Pis.* 35 (because it connects *virtus* and *sapientia* with the *optimus* and *iustissimus vir*, a syntagm perfectly suitable to the French king) and *Inv.* 1.68: *ea enim virtute et sapientia maiores nostri fuerunt, ut in legibus scribendis nihil sibi aliud nisi salutem atque utilitatem rei publicae proponerent.* ('For our ancestors were men of such virtue and such wisdom that when they were drawing up laws they proposed to themselves no other object than the safety and advantage of the Republic,' tr. C. D. Yonge). Even more important is *Rep.* 2.25: *Quo quidem tempore novus ille populus vidit tamen id, quod fugit Lacedaemonium Lycurgum, qui regem non deligendum duxit, si modo hoc in Lycurgi potestate potuit esse, sed habendum, qualiscumque is foret, qui modo esset Herculis stirpe generatus; nostri illi etiam tum agrestes viderunt virtutem et sapientiam regalem, non progeniem quaeri oportere.* ('For even at that period the new nation perceived a fact that had escaped the Spartan Lycurgus: for it was his thought that the king should be not one freely chosen (assuming that the power of Lycurgus could have extended as far as that), but one retained in power, whatever sort of man he might chance to be, if he were but the offspring of the stock of Hercules. Yet our ancestors, rustics though they even were, saw that kingly virtue and wisdom, not royal ancestry, were the qualities to be sought') (transl. C.W. Keyes). *Virtus* and *sapientia* are directly connected with the king. The political language

onstrate the source of such terminology because of the frequent juxtaposition of these two words since late antiquity.<sup>35</sup> More interesting is another element, the *sermocinatio* of the imagined Confucius, which, in a metaphorical sense, represents the arrival of his doctrines in Europe through the medium of *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*, as Meynard (2011) 84 n. 8 already observed. The insertion of this rhetorical device follows the Ciceronian tradition, which – as is common knowledge – has a very strong academic basis and can evince certain similarities with the *prosopopoeia* of the fatherland at *Cat.* 1, or, although without compelling evidence, with the heroic Milo at *Mil.* 72–75. The introduction of Confucius, nonetheless, has a function which is opposite to that of the Ciceronian *sermocinationes*: at *Cat.* 1 the fatherland blames Catilina, while here Confucius praises Louis XIV, but the tones of Couplet's words recalls Cicero's representation. In particular, on page 2, Couplet imagines that Confucius, if he could live again, would take Louis XIV as a model, as we can see in the following lines:

*Nonne ille, si modo revivisceret, ac Te, Rex Magne, contemplaretur, illum, ipsum esse Te agnosceret, quem prospexisset animo et incredibili gaudio perfusus, voti se compositum esse factum exclamaret? Nonne tuam in administrando Regno amplissimo sapientiam regibus omnibus proponeret, exempla tuis e moribus, leges ex effatis peteret? Tuam denique pietatem, clementiam, aequitatem, illam aequabilem in tanta rerum maximarum et negotiorum molem mentis ac vultus serenitatem atque praesentiam cum tanta Majestate conjuncta, Principibus universis pro norma et regula esse vellet?*

Meynard (2011) 84 n. 12 quotes the *captatio benevolentiae* that is suitable to the *exordium*, but here we find the merging of different important elements, in my opinion of Classical origin. In particular, we find a significant mixture of Ciceronian language and Senecan themes.

First of all, let me focus on stylistic aspects: the structure of the passage is highly Ciceronian. The epideictic elements are not far from the initial sequence of the *Pro Marcello*,<sup>36</sup> which also preserves the association of *sapientia* with *clem-*

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of the Jesuit fathers seems to echo Cicero in describing Louis XIV's majesty. Nonetheless, I have to admit that the formula is almost canonical, perhaps because of the ancient origin of its parts: we find it, for instance, in the *Opera oratoria postuma* of cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (see ed. Tromp, Rome 1945, vol. 9 p. 52), who was a Jesuit and was well known to the fathers.

**35** 35 occurrences of the association *virtus et sapientia* appears in late antique pagan literature alone: see [digiliblt.uniupo.it](http://digiliblt.uniupo.it). Moreover, as Meynard (2011) 84 n. 9 suggests, we find here traces of ancient philosophy: I am not sure that the wording is only Platonic, as the editor suggests, but surely we have here some *loci communes* of ancient thought.

**36** *Tantum enim mansuetudinem, tam inusitatam inauditamque clementiam, tantum in summa potestate rerum omnium modum, tam denique incredibilem sapientiam ac paene divinam tacitus praeterire nullo modo possum. [...] 5. Soleo saepe ante oculos ponere idque libenter crebris usur-*

*entia*; furthermore, repeated rhetorical questions are very common in Ciceronian speeches. The presence of two *nonne*, for example, can be referred to *Verr.* 2.2.24 or *Deiot.* 32, but also appear at *Cat.* 1.1. Phrases include *incredibile gaudium*, which recalls Cicero *Fam.* 10.12.2,<sup>37</sup> *in administrando regno*, which in ancient Latin only appears in *Iust.* 29, 1, 8, but is very close to *in administranda re publica* (*Arch.* 14) or *in administranda provincia* (*Fam.* 10.3.1), which became common in later Latin literature,<sup>38</sup> and *prospexisset animo* (*Verr.* 2.3.218, *Pis.* 21, *Cael.* 20), which only appears elsewhere in Livy and is also very rare in late antiquity.

No doubt the rhetorical figures are Classical in format as well. This is the case of the rich *hyperbata* (*te ... contemplaretur, tuam ... sapientiam*) and of the isocolic sequences (*tuam ... sapientiam ... proponeret, exempla ... peteret*). Also Ciceronian is the search for rhythm, as is the case with the dichoreic/dispondaic *clausula in regula esse vellet* or *factum exclamaret*. Yet there are also expressions that cannot be connected with classical Latin here, like *pro norma et regula*, which appears in 18<sup>th</sup> century texts such as N. Orlandini (1554–1606), *Historia Societatis Jesu* 2.8.80 (Rome 1614) or D. Sennert (1572–1637), *Institutionum medicinae libri quinque* 3, 4, 3, 25 (Wittenberg 1611), and *ex effatu* or *effatis*, which seems to belong to a more juridical pattern of expression. Nevertheless, the latter two examples do not compromise the Classical appearance of the passage.

If we pay attention to contents, we observe that *clementia* is a key virtue for the king, together with *pietas*, *aequabilis serenitas* and *aequitas*. The sequence recalls not only the image of the Ciceronian *rector* and of the Senecan king of *De clementia*,<sup>39</sup> but also the lists of virtues of Augustus engraved on the *clupeus aureus* of *R. gest.* 34.20.<sup>40</sup> In the age of absolutism, a Sun King could not but be full of clemency, obviously interwoven with a Catholic view of the virtues.

The following passage on page 3 seems to be particularly built on a Ciceronian model:

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*pare sermonibus, omnis nostrorum imperatorum, omnis exterarum gentium potentissimorumque populorum, omnis regum clarissimorum res gestas cum tuis nec contentionum magnitudine nec numero proeliorum nec varietate regionum nec celeritate conficiendi nec dissimilitudine bellorum posse conferri, nec vero disiunctissimas terras citius passibus cuiusquam potuisse peragrari quam tuis non dicam cursibus, sed victoriis lustratae sunt.*

**37** *Incredibili gaudio perfusi sunt omnes* appears in J. Peperman, *Joannis Ciritae vita et epistolae* 4, but *perfundi* with the ablative modifier identifying joy or satisfaction (*iucunditas, laetitia*) is already Ciceronian: see *Fin.* 2.60 and 5.70.

**38** *Exempli gratia* in *Paneg. Constantio Caesari* 14 or in Boeth., *diff. top.* 2.1183 D. The form in *administrando regno* is very rare in Christian texts as well.

**39** *Clem.* 1.3.3 *Nullum tamen clementia ex omnibus magis quam regem aut principem decet.*

**40** *Et clupeus aureus in curia Iulia positus, quem mihi senatum populumque Romanum dare virtutis clementiaeque iustitiae et pietatis caussa testatum est per eius clupeus inscriptionem.*

*Non ille tantum profecto miraretur ac praedicaret caetera Galliae tuae miracula, non tot arces omnibus et artis et naturae praesidiis permunitas partim a Te deiectas et captas, partim extractas et erectas; non potentissimas et numerosissimas classes quibus Asiae et Africae terrorem attulistis; non tot victorias de hostibus reportatas, quibus coronidem gloriosissimam imposuisti publicae trophaeum pacis: non visenda illa, in quibus Regium splendorem et magnificentiam tuam explicas, Palatia; non flumina ultra montes transvecta; aperta et iuncta maria; non tot artium et scientiarum gymnasia et seminaria, haec inquam, omnia tantam admirationem Sapientissimo Philosopho non iniicerent quanta haec una Religionis, duce te atque auspice, de Haeresi triumphantis Victoria [...].*

First of all, the anaphoric sequence of *non* can be usefully compared with two famous Latin passages by Cicero and Seneca:

- a. the succession of *nihil* in *Cat. 1*: *Nihilne te nocturnum praesidium Palati, nihil urbis vigiliae, nihil timor populi, nihil concursus bonorum omnium, nihil hic munitissimus habendi senatus locus, nihil horum ora voltusque moverunt?*
- b. the sequence of *non* at *Clem. 1.1.3*: *In hac tanta facultate rerum non ira me ad iniqua supplicia compulit, non iuvenilis inpetus, non temeritas hominum et contumacia, quae saepe tranquillissimis quoque pectoribus patientiam extorsit, non ipsa ostentandae per terrores potentiae dira, sed frequens magnis imperiis gloria.*<sup>41</sup>

Yet once again the Ciceronian model is reversed: the rhetorical questions originally raised against Catiline become an opportunity to exalt, in a sort of Priamel, the capacity of the king and to highlight that all his actions are inferior to his love for the true religion. The structure of this section of the *EP* seems very close in framework to the sequence of *non* in the above passage from *De clementia*, despite concepts and words being very different. It seems probable to me that these older passages have exercised a sort of indirect influence via cultural memory upon Couplet's language.

Some elements of the passage might have genuine Classical origins: *duce et auspice* echoes Horace (*Carm. 1.7.3*), but we can also find it in Humanistic authors such as, for instance, Andreas Rapicius (1533–1573, *Poematum* II, 1, 16, in a po-

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<sup>41</sup> 'Do not the nightly guards placed on the Palatine Hill—do not the watches posted throughout the city—does not the alarm of the people, and the union of all good men—does not the precaution taken of assembling the senate in this most defensible place—do not the looks and countenances of this venerable body here present, have any effect upon you?' (tr. C. Macdonald). 'In this position of enormous power I am not tempted to punish men unjustly by anger, by youthful impulse, by the recklessness and insolence of men, which often overcomes the patience even of the best regulated minds, not even that terrible vanity, so common among great sovereigns, of displaying my power by inspiring terror.' (tr. A. Stewart).



etical letter sent to Sigismondus Herberstanus); others, instead, might have post-classical models: *scientiarum gymnasia* appears in the commentary to the *Rule* of Saint Benedict,<sup>42</sup> and the word *coronis* appears in some passages of the Erasmian *Adagia*. This is only another example of the richness of the Latin reading of a Jesuit father who, to address the Sun king, surely had to rely on the resources provided by consummate and shrewd knowledge stemming from model authors consecrated by very ancient tradition.

## 4 Some Final Remarks

My aims have been to show how Classical rhetoric is important for understanding this text and to mark out traces of Cicero and Seneca in a still little-studied context. These traces show how these two authors played a role in the building of this complex and diverse book and, consequently, on the spread of knowledge of Chinese culture across Europe. It is my contention that the presence of Classical authors here cannot be limited to Cicero or Seneca, but that similar enquiries should be made for Sallust, Livy, Tacitus and Augustine; yet this would be another and larger project. Nonetheless, the language and style of the most ‘theoretical’ parts of the *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (here most of all the *EP*) seem to detect the presence of Cicero and Seneca, who are sometimes regarded by philosophers as models for Western thought and were protagonists of the mediations between China and the West, starting at least from Matteo Ricci’s *De amicitia*. In fact, if we scroll through the list of Classical references in the index of Mignini’s 2005 edition, we will find that Cicero is the most cited author and that Seneca’s *Letters to Lucilius*, together with Aristotle’s *Ethics to Nicomachus* and Augustine, occupy a place of honor in the sentences of the learned Jesuit from Macerata. Certainly, as we have seen, there was a level of mediation that occurred between these later texts and their ancient sources, based on the school works and (for Ricci) on De Resende, but this mediation too is worthy of interest: it confirms that and how these two figures continued to act as models in Jesuit formation and how their traces can be considered significant in Couplet’s work.

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<sup>42</sup> 66, 717B: *Ego vero etsi persuasum habeam instituta a S. Benedicto in suis monasteriis scientiarum gymnasia.*

# Aldo Setaioli

## Androcles in China

### 1

Though this paper mainly centers on a sample of folklore as transmitted in both the classical literatures of the West and China, the theme of empire surfaces at the end in connection with contacts between Constantinople and China and the successful attempt to put an end to Western dependence on the East for a prized luxury article like silk.

The story of Androcles and the lion, one of the best-known tales handed down from antiquity, is found in Aulus Gellius, our earliest extant witness of the tale.<sup>1</sup> He, however, declares to have drawn it from an earlier source, namely the Alexandrian grammarian Apion who, in the fifth book of his *Aegyptiaca*, gave a purportedly eye-witness account of the event.<sup>2</sup>

Gellius' narration, though presented as the mere report of Apion's account, is lively and artistically effective. During a *venatio* – a show involving wild beasts and men – in the *Circus Maximus*, the biggest and fiercest of the lions approached one of the men condemned to be thrown to the animals and, wagging its tail, rubbed against his body and started licking him. The name of the man was Androclus (a Latinized form of the Greek name Androcles, correctly given by the later account of Aelianus), and he was the runaway slave of a man of consular station. The emperor was amazed and questioned the slave. The latter recounted that he had fled from his cruel master, then proconsul in Africa, and had taken refuge in a cave, not knowing that it was a lion's den. Shortly thereafter the lion arrived, but instead of devouring Androcles, it showed him its paw, which was pierced through by a splinter. Androcles removed it and cleaned the wound. After that, he lived with the lion for three years. The beast would give him the best parts of the animals he caught, which Androcles, having no fire, dried in the sun, while the lion ate the flesh raw. Androcles then tired of this beastly

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**Note:** The spelling of Chinese terms and names follows the *pinyin* system of Romanization, save when quoting Western authors that use a different system.

1 Gell. *NA* 5.14. Ample bibliography on the story of Androcles may be found in Spina (2008) 220 n. 9.

2 Apion is well known from the pamphlet which Flavius Josephus wrote against him (the *Contra Apionem*). See Dillery (2003). He is quoted by Gellius elsewhere too (*NA* 6.8; 7.8.2; 10.10). For Apion in Gellius see Gamberale (1969) 188–195.

life and left the lion, but after three days was caught by some soldiers and sent to Rome to his master, who had him condemned to be devoured by the wild beasts. The lion he had healed, which had also been caught, recognized and spared him. The story was made known to the people by a written account, Androcles was liberated, and the lion presented to him. After that – Apion’s account concludes – he and the people of Rome used to see Androcles making the rounds of shops and taverns, holding the lion on a thin leash. He was given money, the lion was covered with flowers, and both were acclaimed.

About a century later the same story was related by Aelianus in his work *On the nature of animals*.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Gellius, he tells the story in chronological order, and with the intention of proving that animals are endowed with memory and – we may add – are capable of gratitude. His account differs from Gellius’ in some important details. Androcles’ master is a senator instead of a proconsul, the slave flees for some fault he had committed and somehow reaches Africa (from Rome?). While living with the lion Androcles apparently has fire at his disposal, since he cooks his meat. He leaves the lion because his hair has grown too long and he is tormented by an unbearable itch. When he is condemned, he is thrown to the beasts in a theater (not the *Circus Maximus*), where the lion lies down at his feet. For this Androcles is taken for a wizard and a leopard is launched against him, but the lion defends its healer and tears the leopard to pieces. Androcles is questioned not by the emperor, but by the man who had paid for the show, and after he tells the story both he and the lion are set free.

Aelianus relates the story as factual, and Gellius even reports it as an eye-witness account by Apion. We may point out that several decades before Gellius Seneca briefly mentions a similar incident that took place in a similar situation – in an amphitheater, not a theater or the *Circus Maximus* –, also presents it as an eye-witness account, and includes a detail reminiscent of Aelianus’ report: the lion defended the man from the other beasts. There is no mention, however, of a previous good deed performed by the man: the lion simply recognizes its former trainer.<sup>4</sup> Incidentally, unlike Aelianus, Seneca, as a true Stoic, denies the capability of animals to feel and express gratitude.<sup>5</sup> But ethology problems, though interesting in themselves, are hardly relevant to our purpose.

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3 Ael. NA 748.

4 Sen. Ben. 2.19.1: *leonem in amphitheatro spectavimus, qui unum e bestiariis agnitum, cum quondam eius fuisset magister, protexit ab impetu bestiarum; num ergo beneficium est bestiae auxili-um? minime, quia nec voluit facere nec faciendi animo fecit.*

5 For attitudes towards beasts’ ability to display memory and gratitude (positive in Aelianus, negative in Seneca, neutral in Gellius), see Mastrorosa (2006) 425–428.

Many scholars believe that, in spite of the differences pointed out, Seneca refers to Androcles – which is chronologically possible, because the event had been witnessed by Apion, an older contemporary of Seneca's –, though this seems far from certain.<sup>6</sup> But whether Seneca refers to Androcles or not, his eye-witness report seems to bear out Apion's testimony. Efforts have even been made to identify the emperor that presided over the games during which Androcles was spared by the lion.<sup>7</sup> Some scholars accordingly believe Androcles' story to be factual, whereas others consider it a mere *Wundererzählung*.<sup>8</sup>

It must be conceded that the truth of the story can hardly be unconditionally dismissed. Fierce as lions usually are, episodes resembling the story of Androcles have at times been reported. Aristotle observed that lions are friendly and playful with creatures they are familiar with.<sup>9</sup> In recent times we may recall the lioness Elsa, raised as a cub and released into the wilderness by Joy and George Adamson, who later came back to them with a friendly disposition and bringing with her three cubs of her own. Elsa was celebrated in a book by Joy Adamson and in a successful 1966 movie: *Born free*, directed by James Hill.

A similar story reported as historical fact goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and is particularly interesting for us in view of its striking similarity with a Chinese story we shall presently report. In his *Histoire du Paraguay* the Jesuit father Pierre François-Xavier de Charlevoix recounts the story of a Spanish woman named Maldonata, who in 1536 left the city of Buenos Aires, then being besieged by natives, thus disobeying the orders of the governor. She helped a lioness to give birth and for a time was provided with food by the grateful animal. Later, the governor punished her by having her tied to a tree in the wilderness. There she was assailed by tigers and lions but was successfully defended by the lioness and the young lion she had helped the animal deliver, and because of this she was acquitted.<sup>10</sup> The great Italian poet Giacomo Leopardi, in his col-

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6 Most scholars believe Seneca is referring to Androcles. Most recently see Mastrorosa (2006) 428. An early representative of the opposite view is Thiele (1910) xxiv n. 2; more recently note Spina (2008) 226.

7 For the different identifications of this emperor see Scobie (1977) 19 n. 76.

8 The authenticity of the event is supported e.g. by Mastrorosa (2006) 424; it is denied e.g. by Scobie (1977) 21.

9 Arist. *Hist. an.* 9.44, 629b14: πρὸς τε τὰ σύντροφα καὶ συνήθη σφόδρα φιλοπαίγμων καὶ στερκτικός.

10 Charlevoix (1757) 60–62. See also the English translation in Charlevoix (1769) 45–47. The story appears elsewhere too; for example: *The London Magazine, for May 1769*, 231–232; *Abrégé de l'Histoire générale des Voyages*, Paris 1780, 9–12; *Tales of the Travelers or A view of the World* 79, 1838, 195–196 (with the title 'The Grateful Lioness').

lection of miscellaneous notes known as the *Zibaldone*,<sup>11</sup> rejected the factuality of the story on the grounds of its similarities with the tale of Androcles and other related stories reported by Pliny to be mentioned presently, and because lions (and, we may add, tigers) are not native to South America.

However, it is well known that pumas or cougars and jaguars can be found across the whole continent, and must have been much more numerous in Maldonata's days. Cougars are also called 'mountain lions' in North America, and the jaguar is often called *tigre* in Argentina, where the jaguar hunter is currently referred to as *tigrero*.

Factual or not, Maldonata's story bears close resemblance to Androcles': she is fed by the lioness and is then condemned, like Androcles in Gellius and Aelianus; finally, she is defended from the other animals by the grateful lioness, like Androcles in Aelianus. Her good deed to the lioness, however, is very different: she helps her as a midwife would – a trait we shall encounter in a Chinese story.

Real or not, Androcles' story clearly bears some unequivocal signs of folk-tale, and is accordingly numbered by Aarne-Thompson-Uther as no. 156 in their catalogue.<sup>12</sup>

A very similar story has indeed come down to us in the form of a fable featuring a speaking lion: the tale of *The Shepherd and the Lion*.<sup>13</sup> It corresponds to no. 563 in Perry's index of Aesopic fables<sup>14</sup> and may be a prose adaptation of a fable of Phaedrus'. The man is not named: he is simply 'a shepherd'. The lion speaks to reassure him and to ask for help, and the shepherd draws a thorn from its paw. The shepherd is then thrown to the beasts on a false charge, but the lion recognizes him and again places its foot on his lap. The king acquits both the man and the animal.

This was not the only ancient story about gratitude shown by animals for a good deed received from a man. Pliny the Elder relates three further episodes of this type.<sup>15</sup> Mentor of Syracuse removes a thorn from the foot of a lion in Syria, and in his city a painting documented the event. Elpis of Samos, after sailing to Africa, was approached by a lion, from which he fled by climbing a tree while invoking Dionysus' help. The lion stood agape at the foot of the tree, and Elpis saw that a bone had got stuck in its teeth. He came down from the tree

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<sup>11</sup> Giacomo Leopardi, *Zibaldone* 4264–4265.

<sup>12</sup> Uther (2004) 108–109; see also Uther (2015) 43.

<sup>13</sup> *Leo et pastor*, in Thiele (1910) ccxiii–ccxiv (cf. xxiv–xxv). This is the text of the *Codex Vossianus* (Ademar). In other versions the lion does not speak: Thiele (1910) 154–158.

<sup>14</sup> See Perry (1965) 526.

<sup>15</sup> Plin. *NH* 8.56–60.

and removed the bone. The lion requited his good deed by bringing him the animals it hunted, and when Elpis went back to Samos he built a temple in honor of ‘Gaping Dionysus’ in memory of the event.<sup>16</sup> In a third story a panther is helped by a man to save the cubs she had just delivered from the pit they had fallen into, and gratefully escorts him to safety. In this case, the good deed reminds us of Maldonata’s, though it is not exactly the same. In Pliny’s stories, however, the benefactor is not condemned and later spared by the animal, and thus they correspond only to the first part of Androcles’ story.<sup>17</sup>

In the Western Middle Ages a somewhat analogous story of a grateful lion may be found in Chrétien de Troyes’ romance *Yvain, ou le chevalier au lion* (12<sup>th</sup> cent.), where a lion that the hero saves from a serpent becomes his faithful helper and companion.<sup>18</sup>

Much closer to Androcles’ story is the tale found in the *Gesta Romanorum*<sup>19</sup> (13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> cent.). A ‘soldier’ (*miles*: probably a knight) draws a thorn from the foot of a lion, which is then captured by the king of the country. The knight then offends the king, escapes to the forest, and becomes a bandit. The king sends out an army, catches him, and throws him into a pit to be devoured by a hungry lion – obviously the same one the knight had cured –, which fawns on him, though it had been without food for seven days. The king asks the knight why the lion did not harm him, and the latter tells the whole story. The king then forgives him, and the knight lives virtuously ever after. This story preserves many features of the Androcles tale, though the knight is not condemned to be devoured in the circus, as in the ancient stories, but in a pit. However, the story is followed by an elaborate religious allegory (the knight is the worldly man, only intent on material acquisition; the lame lion represents humankind after original sin, symbolized by the thorn; the king is God; the pit is penitence, which can save a man’s soul). I hint at this Christian allegory, because, as we shall see, the Christianization of the story had begun much earlier, and we shall suggest that it may have had a bearing on one of the ways the tale was recounted in China.

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16 This story is also mentioned by Aelianus, after Androcles’, at the end of *Hist. anim.* 748, where the text is corrupt and would hardly be intelligible without Pliny’s parallel.

17 In the story of Mentor, actually, the only way the lion shows its gratitude after being cured is by not devouring its benefactor. This corresponds to the ‘Phaedrus’ story, where, however, the lion subsequently spares its benefactor in the arena.

18 For the part of the romance concerning the lion see e.g. Brodeur (1924).

19 *Gesta Romanorum* 104 (*De beneficiorum memoria*).

## 2

A number of Chinese tales may be compared with the Androcles story – or rather with the first part of it. Except in one case, in which the benefactor of the wild animal is accused of a crime and is saved by it (though not quite as it happens with Androcles), the beast demonstrates its gratitude simply by providing food for its benefactor, like the lion in the first part of the Western story. There is of course no scene in the arena, a context totally foreign to the customs of China; and several further details are naturally in accord with a Chinese setting. The most conspicuous of these Chinese traits is of course the replacement of the lion with the tiger. In China the tiger, not the lion, is regarded as the king of beasts, who, though fierce, is capable of righteousness and generosity.<sup>20</sup> In general, we may say that the Chinese stories belong in the general frame of tales about gratitude displayed by dumb creatures toward humans for a good turn received. We shall see, however, that several aspects of the Chinese tales appear reminiscent of the related Western stories.

It is not our purpose to determine whether the latter influenced the Chinese narratives, or vice versa. Though some scholars claim that this type of story originated in the East,<sup>21</sup> the prevailing opinion is that it spread Eastward from the West.<sup>22</sup> As far as I am concerned, I shall only remind that the story appeared much later in China, where it is first documented during the Tang period (618–906 CE). I tend to believe that East and West in this case independently developed a common theme, which appears in many folkloric traditions of the world. Only for one particular Chinese version of the story shall we suggest, at the end of this paper, a possible Western influence.

We shall start with some of the stories most unlikely to have been influenced by the West, in that they were handed down by oral transmission in the folklore of the Chuan Miao, a minority inhabiting the mountains between Sichuan and Yunnan, who had no written literature until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>23</sup> Some of their stories and ballads were collected and translated by D. C. Graham. Though there is no way to ascertain when they originated, there can be no doubt that they are authentic folk tales. Three of them<sup>24</sup> deal with tigers requiring

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<sup>20</sup> See Hammond (1996) 194.

<sup>21</sup> See Leach/Fried (1972) 55.

<sup>22</sup> See Brodeur (1924) 492; Scobie (1977) 23.

<sup>23</sup> See Graham (1926). Though the Chuan Miao are related to the Han Chinese, they have linguistic and cultural features of their own.

<sup>24</sup> Graham (1954) 183–185.

the good deeds of humans. They are preceded and followed by requital stories by very different animals: an ant and a lizard respectively. Not surprisingly, they differ from the Western tales more than other Chinese stories handed down through written transmission.

The first story, though it reportedly happened “in most ancient times”, is recounted in the first person, as the narrator’s personal experience. A tiger enters the cave where the Miao people lived and sits by the fire to warm itself. It spares two children that had been given to it, lest it devour adults. Later the tiger shows its paw to the narrator, who extracts a bamboo splinter from it. More than a year later, the narrator gets lost and falls down, exhausted, by a road covered with snow and ice. The tiger arrives and lies down on him, saving him from freezing to death and, as he himself remarks, from other animals too. So, concludes the narrator, “I made up this song to commemorate the event”.

In the second story a Miao healer is asked by a woman to cure her husband, who, she says, had been pierced by a thorn. “If you do not”, the woman adds, “my husband will bite you”. After a long walk, they come to a cave, where they find a huge tiger, in whose paw a pair of scissors had stuck. The healer pulls them out and cleans the wound. He stays with them for the night. On New Year’s Eve the tiger’s wife leaves what she calls a rat at the healer’s door: but it turns out to be “a big fat pig”. So – the story ends – the healer “left this song to commemorate” the event.

Here the tiger gives food to its benefactor, as in many versions of the story, but it should be stressed that the healer deals with ‘weretigers’: the female appears to him as a woman, and therefore speaks, like the lion in the ‘Phaedrus’ fable: the male has a pair of scissors, not a thorn or a splinter, stuck in his paw, an implement that he had supposedly used while in human form. Though mutants of this kind are normally foxes in Chinese lore, weretigers appear elsewhere too.<sup>25</sup>

In the third tale a midwife, who is the narrator’s grandmother, meets a male tiger. She talks to him, asking him to guide her to where he wants her to go. The tiger does not speak, but clearly understands. He leads her to a cave where a female tiger is in labor, but unable to deliver her cubs. Like Maldonata with the lioness, the midwife helps her, and on New Year’s Eve the mother and her young leave a boar at the midwife’s front door.

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<sup>25</sup> In the *Chuanqi* (‘Report of Marvels’), compiled by Pei Xing in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, a Daoist monk is a mutant (a weretiger). He has a tiger skin, which he lends to Wang Juzhen, his fellow traveler. The latter wears it and is able to reach his distant home immediately, but devours his own son, taking him for a pig. See Hammond (1996) 192–193.



We may notice that Miao folklore links these fantastic stories to their collective life, presenting them as personal experiences or as factual events that happened to some relative. Tales and songs serve as medium linking myth and reality.

Another related story, *The Old Woman from Changxing*, may be found in a collection dating back to the Tang period, but only printed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: the *Tangdai congshu*,<sup>26</sup> partially translated by Evangeline Dora Edwards with the somewhat misleading title<sup>27</sup> of *Chinese Prose Literature of the T'ang Period*,<sup>28</sup> where, once again, it appears in a series of stories about grateful animals, between one about a hen and one about a tortoise.

An old woman of Changxing, who was picking mulberry leaves (obviously to feed silkworms: a typical Chinese trait), is kidnapped by a tiger that carries her into a ravine. Apparently unafraid, the old woman scolds the tiger, which shows her a paw with a bamboo splinter deeply embedded. The woman extracts it, and the tiger carries her back. That night it lays a deer by her door.

The closest Chinese parallel to Androcles' story, however, is the tale of Zhang Yuzhou.<sup>29</sup> He was a fisherman who lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. While he was sleeping, a tiger entered his hut. Yuzhou was terrified, but the tiger showed him its left foot with a long thorn stuck in it. He removed it and the tiger made a movement like a bow and rubbed against him like a domestic cat. At night the tiger brought him a huge wild boar, and then further animals for many subsequent nights. The neighbors accused Yuzhou as a wizard to the local magistrate. He told the whole story and an officer was sent to ascertain the truth of it, but when the tiger appeared he was totally acquitted. That night the tiger brought Yuzhou a bolt of silk, and some days later knocked down his hut, thus warning him to move out of an inauspicious location.

As already remarked, this story is the closest to Androcles' tale. Not only does the tiger bring Zhang Yuzhou wild game: it does so many times, just like the lion that supported Androcles for three years. Besides, Yuzhou is accused of being a wizard, like Androcles in Aelian, and the tiger saves him – not by protecting him from other animals, but simply by appearing. So Yuzhou, like Androcles, is acquitted by the authority. The end, however, is different: Androcles and

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<sup>26</sup> Wang (1968) 756. See Hammond (1996) 195, n. 15.

<sup>27</sup> See van Gulik (1940).

<sup>28</sup> Edwards (1938) 276.

<sup>29</sup> It is found in the *Guangyi ji* ('Comprehensive Records of the Extraordinary'), compiled by Dai Fu in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It is included in the *Taiping Guangji*, a collection in 500 volumes, put together in the 10<sup>th</sup> century under the direction of Li Fang and others. Our story appears in volume 429 (3486). The volumes from 426 to 433 contain stories about tigers.

the lion continue living together; in the Chinese story the tiger reveals itself as a supernatural being: it brings Yuzhou a bolt of silk and warns him against the inauspiciousness of his abode.

We may conclude this survey by listing some details that are common to the Western and the Chinese versions of the story.

The tiger of the first Miao story protects the narrator from other animals, as he himself states, besides saving him from freezing to death. This reminds us of Seneca's lion defending its former trainer from the other beasts in the arena, as well as of Androcles's lion saving him from the leopard in Aelianus' account – and also of Maldonata, protected from tigers and lions in the wilderness by the lioness she had assisted, along with her young.

In the second Miao tale, as well as in three we have subsequently analyzed, the tiger rewards its benefactor with animals to be used as food, as in Androcles' tale and Pliny's Elpis story. But in Zhang Yuzhou's case his 'supernatural' tiger also brings him a bolt of silk. We shall presently see a development of this theme in a literary adaptation of the story.

In the third Miao story the benefactor acts as midwife, like Maldonata. But whereas the latter does so by chance, so to speak, in the Miao tale the woman is a professional midwife, asked to assist the laboring tiger in this capacity, just as, in the second Miao tale, the healer is called upon precisely for his ability to heal.

Finally, in Zhang Yuzhou's tale, the hero is mistaken for a wizard, just like Androcles in Aelianus' report, and, like Androcles, is saved by the beast and acquitted by the local authority. Also, the tiger rubs against Zhang Yuzhou, like the lion does in Gellius' account.<sup>30</sup>

It goes without saying that the basic element all Western and Eastern stories have in common is the animal's gratitude for a good turn received – in many cases the same good deed: a splinter or a thorn extracted from the paw by the benefactor (the scissors, appropriately, in the case of the weretiger of the second Miao story). In the third Miao tale the good deed is assistance during delivery, as in Maldonata's story, with the case of Pliny's panther who had lost her newly born cubs closely resembling this situation. We shall soon see that the bone stuck in the lion's mouth in Pliny's Elpis story has a perfect Chinese parallel too.

All these similarities may drive us to consider the possibility of a mutual, or at least one-sided, influence as a likely cause for these parallels. However, to my knowledge, this cannot be demonstrated. All we can say is that the story appears in the West much earlier than in China.

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<sup>30</sup> Gell. NA 5.14.12: *hominique se corpori adiungit.*

One final, and extremely interesting, case is the adaptation – or rather the deft reversal – of the theme in art literature as witnessed in the story of the Zhaocheng tiger, in Pu Songling’s famous collection *Liaozhai zhiyi*, partly translated by H. A. Giles with the title *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*.<sup>31</sup> It was published in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, some decades after the author’s death.

In this story the tiger is not the recipient of a good turn, but the perpetrator of a misdeed, having devoured an old woman’s son, who was her only support. As is fitting for a story included in a collection of bizarre and unbridled imagination such as Pu Songling’s, the tiger, while not speaking, is endowed with a sort of mimicry that permits it to confess its crime. It is therefore the tiger, not the human, that is tried and condemned: it will be obliged to support the old woman in lieu of her son and to take care of her well-being. It does so faithfully, by providing her with the flesh of many animals (as in nearly all the stories we have seen), but also with lengths of cloth (like Zhang Yuzhou’s tiger), and even with money, so that the woman becomes rich. After her death, the local people build a temple in honor of the righteous tiger.

Pu Songling was obviously acquainted with the earlier tiger stories we have mentioned, but cleverly played with the theme to create an original and creative new story.

### 3

We have deliberately left aside one last variant of our story, whose human hero is a saintly Daoist hermit: Guo Wen.<sup>32</sup> He lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, under the Jin dynasty. But the tale we are concerned with was transmitted centuries later, in two different versions. The first is included in the *Jin Shu* (‘Jin History’: 7<sup>th</sup> century CE);<sup>33</sup> the other appears in the *Xianzhuan shiyi* (‘Amended Biographies of Immortals’), compiled by Du Guangting (850–933 CE).<sup>34</sup> In both versions Guo Wen removes a bone stuck in the throat of a tiger (like Elpis does with a lion in Pliny’s story), which repays him with game, as in most versions of the story. The hermit

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31 Giles (1880) 219–223. An Italian translation (‘La tigre di Ciao C’eng’) appears in di Giura (2017) 185–187.

32 See Hammond (1996) 195–196.

33 The *Jin Shu* is comprised of 130 volumes, containing Jin dynasty documents (265–420 CE); it was compiled in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, during the Tang period, under the direction of Fang Xuanling. Our story appears in volume 94 (2440–2441), dealing with ‘hermits and recluses’.

34 It is included in the *Taiping Guangji* (see above, n. 29), vol. 14 (96–97). The first 55 volumes of the *Taiping Guangji* deal precisely with ‘immortals’ – as Daoist saints were believed to become.

is then questioned by the authority (like Zhang Yuzhou). The second version of the story is of special interest to us, because the grateful tiger docilely follows Guo Wen and also carries his luggage: two details we shall soon encounter again.

We must keep in mind that while the Daoist hermit lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, this story about him was written centuries later, when similar stories about Christian saints had been in circulation for some time.

Actually, the Christianization of the story began very early. In the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*, probably composed near the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE,<sup>35</sup> at a time when circus games were still in existence and Christians might easily become their victims, a prominent aspect of Androcles' story received a new Christian twist. Thecla, a female disciple of Paul, is thrown to the beasts in the circus, but a lioness comes to her rescue and saves her from a bear and then from a lion, though the lioness also dies in the fight: here we see several parallels to the stories we have already discussed. When, after many new trials, Thecla remains unharmed, she tells the questioning governor that she is protected by her faith in Christ.<sup>36</sup> There is no previous good deed received by the beast here.

A more fanciful adaptation applies to Paul himself: his previous benefit conveyed to the lion was nothing less than baptism, as recalled in a dialogue between the saint and the speaking lion (like the one in 'Phaedrus' fable), in the arena. Finally, both Paul and the lion are saved by a heavy hailstorm.<sup>37</sup>

However, what is more relevant to us is the way the story of the lion was adopted in – and adapted to – the biographies of some Christian saints, in several ways not unlike the Chinese saintly hermit Guo Wen. The most famous of these saints – and also the earliest – is St. Jerome (347–420 CE), well-known to this day for his lion thanks to countless artistic depictions;<sup>38</sup> but two other saints from late antiquity were connected with grateful lions; Jerome's near namesake St. Gerasimus and St. Sabas. Though the three biographies retain some elements of Androcles' story, the most conspicuous one – the scene in the circus – has obviously disappeared.

Though St. Sabas, whose long life spanned almost a whole century, from 439 to 532 CE, was younger than St. Gerasimus, who died in 476, his biography was

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<sup>35</sup> Partially reconstructed on the basis of Greek and Coptic papyri. See Schneemelcher (1989) and now Barrier (2009). The *Acts of Paul* (Introduction and Text), edited by Schneemelcher, are on pp. 213–270.

<sup>36</sup> Schneemelcher (1989) 245.

<sup>37</sup> Schneemelcher (1989) 253. The lion's baptism is described in an appendix based on an unpublished Coptic papyrus: Schneemelcher (1989) 264–265.

<sup>38</sup> The bibliography on St. Jerome pictured with the lion is extensive; see Spina (2008) 230 n. 37; 232 n. 43.

the first to be written, by his nearly contemporary Cyril of Scythopolis (525–559 CE).<sup>39</sup> The saint, while travelling towards the river Jordan, removed a splinter from the paw of a lion, who then followed him as an earnest servant during the whole period of Lent. The saint then entrusted the lion with the guardianship of a donkey belonging to his disciple Phlais, whom he had sent on a mission. The beast faithfully carried out the task, but the very day Phlais committed a sin,<sup>40</sup> it devoured the donkey. Phlais hides in shame, but St. Sabas seeks him out and guides him to repentance and atonement.

At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Iohannes Moschus (550–619 CE) included in his *Pratum spirituale* the story of St. Gerasimus and the lion,<sup>41</sup> which he relates as reported to him personally by the monks living in a monastery near the river Jordan. St. Gerasimus extracted a reed splinter from the paw of a lion, which, from then on, followed him as a true and trusty disciple. Unlike Androcles, who shared the lion's food, the saint feeds the beast with human fare. The lion is then entrusted with the custody of the donkey used to carry water to the monastery. It proves a reliable guardian, but one day the donkey is stolen. St. Gerasimus thinks the lion has eaten it, and charges it with the task previously performed by the donkey. "From that day", the biographer goes on, "the lion, by order of the old man, carried the pack-saddle holding four pitchers and brought the water".<sup>42</sup> The theft of the donkey is then discovered, and when St. Gerasimus dies the redeemed lion dies heartbroken on his tomb.<sup>43</sup>

Though St. Jerome, as already remarked, lived earlier than both St. Gerasimus and St. Sabas, he was the last of the three to be credited with the healing of a lion, which then became his faithful companion. The story is found in an anonymous biography, probably composed in the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE,<sup>44</sup> which seems to hint at previous miracles of the same type – a possible allusion to the earlier stories of St. Sabas and St. Gerasimus, though these saints had

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<sup>39</sup> See Schwartz (1959). The story of St. Sabas and the lion is on pp. 138–139.

<sup>40</sup> A very specific sin: ἔπεσεν εἰς πορνείαν (Schwartz (1959) 139, 9–10).

<sup>41</sup> Ioh. Mosch. *prat. spirit.* 107; PG 873, cols. 2965–2969. A Latin translation can be found in PL 75, cols. 172–174.

<sup>42</sup> Ioh. Mosch. *prat. spirit.* 107, col. 2968 ἀπὸ τότε ὁ λέων κελεύοντος τοῦ γέροντος ἐβάσταζεν τὸ κανθήλιον κεράμια τέσσαρα ἔχον, καὶ ἔφερον τὸ ὕδωρ.

<sup>43</sup> It may be remarked that Iohannes Moschus ends his account by denying that the story proves that the lion – or any animal – is endowed with a rational soul. It is a Christian position, but akin to Seneca's Stoic idea. See note 5.

<sup>44</sup> *Vita Divi Hieronymi incerto auctore*, PL 22, cols. 201–214. The story of the lion is on cols. 209–213. This biography was certainly used by Jacobus de Voragine (13<sup>th</sup> century) for the chapter *De sancto Ieronimo* [sic] in his *Legenda Aurea*, which ensured the wide diffusion of the legend. In the story of the lion Jacobus' text clearly summarizes the biography.

lived later than St. Jerome.<sup>45</sup> In this story the lion enters the monastery, and though Jerome is the only one not to be afraid and to walk towards the beast, he does not perform the healing himself, but entrusts it to the monks. The lion's paw does not have a splinter or a thorn stuck in it, but is merely wounded by thorns. After recovering, it begins to walk among the monks as a domestic animal. They entrust it with the guardianship of the donkey used to carry firewood (not water, as in St. Gerasimus' story). When this is stolen, the donkey's task is performed by the lion. In this case too the theft is discovered and the lion proudly struts around the monastery, approaching each monk as if demanding acquittal.

In spite of the great success of the story about St. Jerome, also vividly witnessed by the visual arts, it is the least likely to have influenced the Chinese story of Guo Wen. In it the wild animal interacts with the whole community of monks, not just with St. Jerome. It does not act as his servant and disciple, as in the cases of St. Sabas, St. Gerasimus, and Guo Wen. Besides, this story seems to be a later fabrication, as suggested not only by the allusion to previous miracles of the same type but also by its taking up, in reverse order, three details of Gellius' account of Androcles' story, transposed from the mutual recognition in the arena to the lion's proud flaunting of its innocence, once the theft of the donkey is discovered: the use of the rare adjective *gratulabundus*, the bodily contact between man and beast, the wagging of the tail.<sup>46</sup> Last but not least: the Latin West undoubtedly had fewer opportunities for contact with China than the Byzantine empire.

These stories of Western saints are similar to Guo Wen's in that in all a saintly hermit or monk does good to a wild animal. In the stories of St. Sabas and St. Gerasimus the lion follows the saint like the tiger does with Guo Wen. In those of St. Gerasimus and St. Jerome it carries loads, like Guo Wen's tiger in the second version of the story.

Is it then possible that the attribution of the story of the grateful animal to a Chinese saintly hermit may have been influenced by the similar tales concerning Western saints? Cyril of Scythopolis wrote his biography of St. Sabas roughly at the same time as Justinian's order to two monks to smuggle silkworm eggs from

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<sup>45</sup> PL 22, col. 209: *quoddam priscorum simile*.

<sup>46</sup> PL 22, col. 212: *gratulabundus per claustra monasterii ire, singulorum se fratrum vestigiis sternens ... alludens cauda ~ Gell. NA 5.14.12: caudam ... movet hominisque se corpori adiungit ... 14 gratulabundos videres*. Actually, the detail of lying down at the monks' feet may suggest that the author of this biography had some knowledge of Aelianus' account of Androcles too (Ael. NA 7.48: ὑποκλίνας τὸ πᾶν σῶμα ἔρριπτό οἱ παρὰ τοῖς ποσίῃ).

China (mid-6<sup>th</sup> century), as reported by Procopius.<sup>47</sup> Iohannes Moschus' story about St. Gerasimus was written just a few decades later – so both are earlier than the Guo Wen story. Even Jerome's anonymous biography is older than the second version of it. The monks that smuggled silkworm eggs out of China were stationed in India, but, as they told Justinian, they were also familiar with a country beyond, called Serinda, where silkworms were raised – obviously China. They were probably Nestorian monks, and they, or some of their contemporary or later associates, might have spread legends about Christian saints in China, that might have later been applied to local holy men, mixed with Chinese features. Anyway, contacts between China and Byzantium at the time of Justinian, and later on, were not unusual.<sup>48</sup>

There is of course no way to attain certainty, but this seems to be a hypothesis worthy of consideration.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Procop. *Hist. bell.* 8.17.1–8.

<sup>48</sup> See e.g. Feltham (2009); Freewalt (2015).

<sup>49</sup> One different detail is the fact that Guo Wen extracted a bone from the mouth of a wild beast, not a thorn or splinter from its paw. This is reminiscent of Pliny's Elpis story. We may also recall the fable of the wolf and the crane (Perry (1956) 156): Phaedr. 1.8: Babr. 94 (for the *Romulus*, Thiele (1910) 32–35). There was also an old Buddhist (Indian) version of the story; in it the bone is removed from the mouth of a lion, not of a wolf: see Jacobs (1892) 1–2 (the first story).

Francesco Stella

# The New Communication System of Imperial Power in Carolingian Poetry

## 1 Studies on Propaganda Literature

The dynamics of power in the study of ancient literature was one of the main topics in European literary criticism of the 1970s and 1980s. The revival and extension of the theme offered by this conference is a welcome return, which helps to gauge the productive asymmetry of research interests with respect to cultural fashions.<sup>1</sup> Today, cultural studies and the pragmatics of communication seem paradoxically to be drawing closer to the axiological hierarchies of 50 years ago, almost re-enacting the nineteenth-century subordination of literary categories to historical ones. Despite this, many differences in approach and the increase of available information places us before a relatively *new challenge* in terms of method and content: the concept of *propaganda* was resurrected by Alan Cameron in 1970 and taken up by, among others, Mary Withby in 1998<sup>2</sup> or Franca Consolino in 2000<sup>3</sup> and then the medieval conference of Todi 2002<sup>4</sup> or Messina 2007.<sup>5</sup> The concept is now becoming outdated, however, while more complex approaches, such as those of Weber and Zimmermann, work with formulations like *Selbstdarstellung*, ‘self-fashioning’, and *Selbstdeutung*, ‘self-interpretation’ (Hauck).<sup>6</sup> In these cases the expressed or implied subject of an initiative is the power center that promotes, disseminates or favors authoritative communication aimed at creating consensus through a consistent narrative of itself: this was, for the Carolingian age, the point of view privileged by historians interested also in poetic texts such as Percy Ernst Schramm,<sup>7</sup> Ernst

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**Note:** This chapter is a reworking of Stella (2011).

1 Such paradigms led the major philological undertakings of the European historical institutes, after the model of Muratori’s *RIS* or the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*.

2 Whitby (1998).

3 Consolino (2000).

4 CISAM (2002).

5 Castano *et al.* (2007).

6 Weber/Zimmermann (2003).

7 Schramm (1930).



Kantorowicz,<sup>8</sup> Carl Erdmann,<sup>9</sup> Joseph Fleckenstein Helmut Beumann,<sup>10</sup> Karl Hauck,<sup>11</sup> Robert Folz,<sup>12</sup> and Gerd Althoff.<sup>13</sup>

Research that instead favors rhetorical terms such as ‘panegyric’ or *encomium*, which surfaces in the volumes by Claudia Schindler on late-antique panegyric<sup>14</sup> and by Fulvio Delle Donne on the encomiastic compositions for Frederick II,<sup>15</sup> is rooted in the point of view of the *producer* of texts or other artistic creations, who more or less voluntarily develop propaganda narratives about the center of power being addressed and of which a representation is intended. The latter is a less widespread kind of observation made in Carolingian studies, and may be represented by the work of Dieter Schaller,<sup>16</sup> Christine Ratkowsch,<sup>17</sup> Fidel Rädle,<sup>18</sup> Alfred Ebenbauer,<sup>19</sup> and Peter Godman, who in his 1987 *Poets and Emperors*<sup>20</sup> offered a brief but effective overview of Carolingian and Merovingian panegyric in its various forms. This work, while nonetheless in keeping with the traditional line of inquiry about the matter of ‘poetry and power’ as a reflection of the biographies of poets and their personal relationships with their patrons, has still provided no reconstruction of the socioliterary dynamics of the Carolingian age such as that clearly traced through late antiquity by Heinz Hofmann in a long essay in *Philologus* in 1988.<sup>21</sup>

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**8** Kantorowicz (1946).

**9** He dedicated to this topic some contributions in the *Deutsches Archiv* and the posthumous book *Forschungen zur politischen Ideenwelt des Frühmittelalters* (Erdmann (1951)).

**10** Fleckenstein (1962), Beumann (1966).

**11** Hauck (1985).

**12** Folz (1964).

**13** Althoff (2003).

**14** Schindler (2009).

**15** Delle Donne (2005).

**16** Schaller (1995a).

**17** Ratkowsch (1997) dedicated her research to the encomiastic representations of Charles from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to Ugolino Verino.

**18** Rädle (2002).

**19** Ebenbauer (1978).

**20** Godman (1987).

**21** Hoffman (1988). A first attempt is Ferrari (2005).

## 2 Propaganda Literature in the Carolingian Age

### 2.1 The first phase

A preliminary observation concerns the statistical weight of literature directly classifiable as encomiastic in Carolingian production: of a literary heritage comprising about 3200 folio pages in the *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, the texts directly related to an emperor number a few dozen pages. As we know, the real literary monument to Charlemagne is the prose biography composed by Einhard around 825, and the later, more fictionalized one by Notker of Saint Gall, the *Gesta Karoli Magni*. We cannot speak of a contemporaneous celebratory *epos* comparable to the *Chanson de Roland* and all its derivations three centuries later. Charles' presence in Carolingian poetry is pervasive and inevitable, but it is much *less thematized* than might be believed. It becomes a sort of permanent background that every poet recalls, using elements that are significant but accessory to the poem's structure: such built-in features include the invocation, or an occasional homage, or the final prayer, which marks the recitation of the text as part of a concrete occasion and identifies an environment, cultural climate, and/or circle in which an author recognizes himself and within which he is recognized.<sup>22</sup>

Only two works related to Charlemagne are closer to the definition of direct panegyric. The oldest is what is known as the *De Karolo rege et Leone papa*, 'Charles the King and Leo the Pope', an elegant poem or fragment of a poem of 536 hexameters which describes almost in real-time the arrival of Pope Leo III (attacked and mutilated in Rome by political adversaries) in Paderborn, where Charles held the imperial assembly in the summer of 799 and supervised the building of Aquisgrana, the new Rome. The text presents scenes such as the premonitory dream, the reception of the pope, the solemn royal procession, and the hunt, which would remain paradigmatic in medieval poetry.

The other *epos* is the *Annales de gestis Karoli Magni*: 2963 verses by an anonymous Saxon poet, who composed it shortly before 891, almost 80 years after the protagonist's death. This poem versified the annalistic sources on Charles' military and political enterprises in four books of hexameters; then, in a fifth book in couplets, it outlined a hagiographic balance of his historical and meta-historical role, drawing on Einhard's biography and extending into the afterlife. To these

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<sup>22</sup> Rädle (2002) 17: "Selten ist, wie schon angedeutet, das Herrscherlob so frontal wie manchmal bei Alkuin: Die karolingischen Dichter haben die indirekte Annäherung bevorzugt und ihre Rühmung, wo sich das machen liess, sogar ganz ins Objektive verlegt".

works we can add a few smaller and more occasional compositions, originating from individual events: here we can include the little epos of 103 hexameters by the poet known as *Hibernicus Exul*, probably the Irish monk Dungal, which celebrates the victory over the Bavarians headed by Duke Tassilo, and a short poem of 80 lines on the conversion of the Saxons attributed by Schaller to Paulinus, the Lombard grammarian later appointed bishop of Aquileia, who exalts the value of the conversion of a people, albeit by force, within sacred history.

Even at a quantitative level, it is improper to define the dynamics of communication in which these productions operate as a process of *creating a consensus*. Scholars may have overstepped by imagining the activity of Carolingian imperial propaganda in modern terms, which presuppose the existence of a public opinion capable of influencing decision-making processes. It is also difficult to imagine, or at least it is not sufficiently documented, that in the case of Charlemagne there was a direct or indirect commission by the center of power, as was the case with the late-antique panegyrist or in the circles of Messalla or Maecenas. The relationship that emerges in the Carolingian case is of a significantly different nature, with complex differentiations between one sovereign and another and between categories of intellectuals distinguished according to chronology of affiliation and genre of expression; the epistle or the political or theological treatise was understood more as a kind of active primary counsel, while poetry was essentially perceived either as a form of entertainment or as an apparatus of secondary enhancement, even of liturgical sacralization or of other primary sources or public occasions. Naturally this included military or political successes, albeit not predominantly.<sup>23</sup>

With a somewhat forced trivialization we could define this relationship, especially in its first phase, as the *patronage-based development of an identity code* rather than an ideological commission, even though the symbolic clichés take on an ideological effect in subsequent interpretations and rewritings, creating a symbolic system based on three pillars: the apostolic mission of Charles as a converter of pagan peoples, his role as a promoter of letters and writing, and, based on the proximity to the coronation of 800, his construction of a new Rome as a universal political reference-point.

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**23** The chronology of affiliation has an influence because the ways in which the first authors, called to court (by which we mean collaboration with the activities of the central government), are led to formulate expressions of exaltation toward the sovereign and his achievements are relatively different and certainly primitive and more scholastic than those with which groups who entered the court later, or engaged on the same issues but with sovereign successors of Charlemagne, interpret the code already structured by the first arrivals.

To clarify our reference to the feature of *patronage*, I will recall that there exist a number of allusions by Carolingian poets to dynamics of social ascent linked to their own intellectual performances. They often cite the classic precedents of poets who – according to the information transmitted from the lives of Latin literary figures – reaped the benefits of their own efforts as organic intellectuals, such as Virgil and the first Lucan, and contemporaries such as Angilbert, Alcuin, Theodulf, and Einhard, who all benefited with the direction of abbeys or bishoprics. In some cases the negative example of Ovid, who did not receive the sovereign's support, is superimposed or contrasted to these. This mechanism elects the term *praemium* as a lexical topos, but never alludes to direct or indirect requests from the sovereign or his mediators, and beneath the usual cover of pastoral dialogue conceals a contrast of competing groups in the Carolingian circle closest to Charles as well as a dynamic of initiation and admission to his patronage that involves and absorbs an initial hostility. We see a striking demonstration of this in the first of the two *Eclogues* by Moduin, or Muadwin, who later became bishop of Autun and who frequented the court between the last decade of the eighth century and the first two decades of the ninth. Here David is the Arcadian nickname of Charles, the sovereign-poet, while Homer is the poet Angilbert, Flaccus the alias of Alcuin of York, and Nardus the diminutive of Einhard; the new Rome is the palace of Aachen under construction, described by the poet in terms of the Vergilian Carthage.

Charles does not appear to have been a patron, but only a simple recipient and addressee of poetry, in which he took a sincere, active interest, as we also know from other sources and the numerous lyric texts written in his name: intellectual commissions from the hub of power, *haud mollia iussa*, 'not so soft orders', are not lacking,<sup>24</sup> but are mostly presented as efforts of a scholastic, scientific, and theological nature. The emperor repeatedly urged specialists who taught in the palace school or frequented the court for various reasons to improve the linguistic condition of liturgical texts or the philological reliability of the biblical versions in circulation, to draft political-cultural documents, to compile grammar and rhetoric manuals or commentaries on the books of the Bible, to explain astronomical phenomena, or to solve theological controversies. In this sense, Charles' intervention was direct, especially with regard to close collabora-

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<sup>24</sup> An exemplary case is in Wigbod's metric preface to an exegetical manuscript on the biblical Octateuch, where a royal commission is made explicit both in the title (*Carolus rex Francorum et Langobardorum ac Patricius romanorum hunc codicem ad opus suum scribere iussit*) and at the end of the dedication: *haec tibi, rex summe, iussu compulsus herili / servulus, ut potui, devout mind dicavi*. The *iussio* ('order'), however, although expressed in verse, refers to the prose work that follows them.

tors such as Alcuin or Theodulf, and produced advanced legislation, a school access policy that in modern terms we could call democratic, a circulation of books that increased the units of text in circulation and the geographical areas in which there was interest in reading by a factor of ten. In terms of specifically intellectual production, Charles was famous for his curiosity about riddles and mathematical problems, and even more so for his interest in philosophical, astronomical, and theological questions, about which he periodically asked for responses from intellectuals close to the court, sometimes sparking genuine public debates on a subject. A particularly good example is the question about the definition of the *Nothing*, for which we have an answer from Fridugisus, a pupil of Alcuin in Tours.<sup>25</sup> But indirect *requests for poetic composition* that do not belong in the categories listed above, or those distinguished from exchanges of enigmas or from humorous and festive descriptions of court banquets, *do not seem to be demonstrable* or at least are not statistically significant.

Carolingian forms of encomiastic poetry thus respond to a sort of *environmental planning* that is independent of real commissions. They are directed at a center of power that was, culturally speaking, rather disarmed and not able to predetermine a structured ‘horizon of expectations’. It was therefore open to the solicitation of visiting poets, whom Peter Brown referred to as “the first European technocrats”. They were called upon by the sovereign for scholastic-bureaucratic purposes following casual encounters, as was the case for Alcuin; after conquering foreign countries, as for Paul the Deacon and Paulinus of Aquileia; in order to offer hospitality to refugees such as Theodulf of Orléans; or to satisfy curiosity about touring lecturers like the Irish, whose legend (reported by Notker of St. Gall at the beginning of his *Gesta Karoli Magni*) told of how they landed in Calais and opened a commercial stand of ‘cultural products’, of which Charles was the first buyer.

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<sup>25</sup> This habit remained the prerogative of the relationship between the emperor and theologians, a term that for the time was equivalent to ‘intellectuals’, throughout the Carolingian period, as a legacy of the genuine and insatiable curiosity that had been characteristic of the progenitor.

### 3 Extracurricular Forms of Encomiastic Poetry

#### 3.1 Writing Activity

If we abandon the expectation of panegyric articulations of a paraepic type, as a hypothesis of continuity with the Claudian era would require, we can see that there are many other forms of collaboration with power developed by the Carolingian literary forge: the *paratextual dedications* of luxury manuscripts; the *Zirkuldichtung* ('circular poetry') of the new intellectual network; the *inscriptions* for places or personalities by the most representative poets; the funeral *planctus* for emperors, abbots, or dukes; the appearances of the powerful in *visions* of the afterlife such as in Walafrid Strabo's *Visio Wettini* or in Arcadian masquerades such as Moduin's eclogues or the enigmatic *De imagine Tetrici*, also by Walafrid. These are all largely *new forms* that Peter Godman has connected in his book to the era's "adaptation and invention of poetic form in response to political actuality"<sup>26</sup> and to the creativity of poets who "had responded to the legacy of antiquity with a fresh inventiveness that distinguishes their work from the stature of the classics pursued by their contemporaries in the East".<sup>27</sup>

A type of indirect celebration, relatively frequent since the early years of the kingdom, involves the *paratexts* of manuscripts, whose production multiplied within a few decades: dedications, *argumenta*, *subscriptiones*, and *versus scribarum*. In 781 the preface in verse of the Godescalc Evangelistary, commissioned as a gift for the baptism of Prince Pepin in Rome,<sup>28</sup> defines Charles as *studiosus in arte librorum*<sup>29</sup> ('keen on the art of the books'), and in the poetic *subscriptiones* of the Saint Gall copyists Vinidarius and Jacob he is the king who declared war on errors in texts.<sup>30</sup>

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26 Godman (1987) xi.

27 Godman (1987) 184. On the creativity of the Carolingian 'laboratory' see now Stella (2020).

28 Paris B.N.F. n.a. lat. 1203; cfr. Godman (1987) 46, Mütterich (1965) 9–10 and Stella (2005).

29 *Subscriptiones librorum saec. VIII*, dal ms. Paris B.N.F., n.a. 1203 del 781: the first one describes Charles as a warrior against the mistakes of the books *Qui sternit per bella truces fortissimus heros, / Rex Carolus, nulli cordis fulgore secundus, / Non passus sentes mendarum serpere libris, / En, bene correxit studio sublimis in omni*, the second one celebrates the planning ability of a king who promotes the production of future memories: *Inclitus invictum Christi virtute trophaeum / Qui regit, haec fieri Karlus rex namque modestus / mandat ut in seclis rutilet sophisma futuris. / Legit enim famulus stilo anomoque Iacobus*.

30 While not using these subscriptions, Godman (1987) 47 connects expressions of this type that can be also found in Wigbod, Adam of Masmünster, and other writers of dedicatory poems, to the maturation of the cliché of the *rex doctus* ('learned king') formed in the Merovin-

### 3.2 Ceremonial Poetry and the Mythologization of the Saxon Conversion

These forms of indirect praise include the *ceremonial poems* not aimed at the direct celebration of a sovereign but at the height of particular court festivals, such as Easter, following a tradition that goes back at least to the times of Ausonius and Claudian: a significant example is the set of hexametric Greek-Latin poems by the Irish theologian John Scotus Eriugena, which elicited Ezra Pound's admiration. To these religious occasions belong the liturgies of power, studied for imperial antiquity by Sabine MacCormack and for the Middle Ages by Kantorowicz, Hauck, and Elze: these include the institutional *laudes* ('praises') and the paroepic formulas of greeting to the incoming or visiting sovereign, canonized for the *adventus* ('arrival') ceremony in the subgenre of *susceptacula regum* ('receptions of the kings') documented by Walter Bulst.<sup>31</sup> In the Carolingian age, this type of poetic production experienced a proliferation and diversification of forms, genres, and levels that made it characteristic of the cultural and documentary elaboration of the time, and which overlapped with or probably at least influenced the composition of more traditional poetry. For example, Karl Hauck has upheld the role of the epic fragment *De Karolo rege et Leone papa* as a *susceptaculum* – that is, a reception poem – based on its emphasis on ceremonial details, including visual ones. The late Carolingian *Gesta Berengarii* are similar, but despite their clear epic structure they have been interpreted as a kind of textual apparatus or memory for the imperial coronation ceremony of the king of Italy, elaborately described in the fourth book. An early testimony in this sense, but still unknown to Godman, comes from a text in rhythmic verses discovered by Bernhard Bischoff and published by Dieter Schaller, who proposed its attribution to Paulinus of Aquileia: the rhythmic poem, with the incipit *Regi regum*,<sup>32</sup> in 18 triplets of double septenaries, or fifteen-syllables, which celebrate the resurrection of the king of the world and the redemption of the men with whom he inaugurated a new era in history. The concluding invitation to rejoice in the salvation thus obtained is associated with praise for Christ, who with great

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gian panegyricism of Venantius Fortunatus: here we are faced with a case of the critical overestimation of conventional or intertextual processes, which risks obscuring the difference in weight between an isolated instance of flattery, as in the case of Venantius, and a real repertoire of formulations that transform an effective and indeed impressive socio-cultural process into a cliché.

<sup>31</sup> Bulst (1942); Hauck (1985).

<sup>32</sup> It is preserved in the MS. Paris B.N.F. lat. 13027 from Corbie, 9<sup>th</sup> century, which transmits the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville and a few liturgical texts, this one among them.

wisdom crowned *nobis*, (for us, that is, for the community that is singing) the king ‘who subjugated the proud’ and now governs with temperate wisdom and imposes the Christian faith, procuring salvation for the peoples. A final doxology concludes the poem, evidently intended to be sung before the people and the king.<sup>33</sup> Schaller thought it was a hymn composed on the occasion of the Easter festivities that Charlemagne observed in Treviso on 14 April 776, after his victory over the Lombards of Rodgaud of Friuli. Paulinus, whom Charles then summoned to court and to whom he gave land,<sup>34</sup> would have assumed the responsibility of giving voice to the collective sentiment of the Lombard community, which was grateful – at least officially – for its integration into the Frankish dominion and for Charles’ good governance; or rather he would have chosen to use song to spread the representation of the community’s new political-cultural identity into the sovereign’s welcoming liturgy, which probably associated *laudes* like those canonized in official documents<sup>35</sup> with religious hymnodies<sup>36</sup> closely

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33 Edited by Schaller (1995b).

34 MGH: *Dipl. Karolinorum. Die Urkunden der Karolinger* I (1906) 158–159, n. 112. If the hypothesis is correct, this diploma from Ivrea which gives Paulinus the assets confiscated from one Gualdando, son of Immone of Lavariano (the first historical attestation of the relationship between Charles and Paulinus) finds in this poem an extremely important precedent and perhaps a concrete reason for the donation. In Ivrea’s diploma Paulinus is addressed as one of those *qui nostris fideliter obsequiis famulantur* (‘who loyally served us’). And this poetic proof could be the first demonstration of Paulinus’ ‘service’ for the Frankish court as *artis gramatice magister*, (‘master of grammar’), a qualification that could include the composition of official *dictamen*. The new data draw attention to the pilot function that Paulinus authoritatively assumes not only in the elaboration and Romanization of a Proto-Carolingian theology and liturgy, but also in the creation of a political poetry endowed with its own mythopoetic intentionality and a lucid eschatological awareness. The peculiar feature of Paulinus in this is his ability to immediately guess, before the relations of Charles with the papacy are defined and before a theory of Carolingian Christianity is elaborated, the need for a cultural connection between the imperialism of the Franks and the framework of universal history, and to give this political-religious legitimacy a poetic form, a court style that makes constant reference to the theological significance of political fact.

35 Cfr. Kantorowicz/Bukofzer (1946); Elze (1954); more recently Hack (1999).

36 Even Paulinus’ hymn *Congregavit*, still sung in churches today and rightly celebrated as a masterpiece of religious lyric, ends with an invitation to pray for the lives of the Lords, just like the rhythm discovered by Schaller: *Pro vita dominorum exoremus, / Multos ut cum ipsis annos gaudeamus, / Propter quorum hic amorem congregamur*. The holders of political power are celebrated as guarantors of the religious union of the bishops summoned to the synod, which is precisely a rhetorical instrument not only for theological elaboration, but above all for the establishment of a religious policy.



linked to the former with respect to theme and repertoire of images, something which in both cases was based on a sense of royalty.<sup>37</sup>

Some years ago I observed that there exists no evidence that this rhythmic poem is a reference to the Lombards and that in fact – since the hymn seems to celebrate the subjugation of a non-Christian people, while the Lombards were Catholics for 150 years – it could be a celebration of victory over the Saxons. At this historic event Paulinus had demonstrated his sensitivity by composing the aforementioned *Carmen de conversione Saxonum*, 75 hexameters that are very polished with regard to rhetorical structure and the profusion of rare or unique terms, composed on the occasion of the camp of May 777,<sup>38</sup> which inserted the conquest into a universal vision of the historical event. This elevated it to the status of a shift to a new era, an episode in the history of salvation, and marked the king – in an implicit comparison with John the Baptist – as an instrument of the divine plan. The forced mass-baptism of the Saxons, which provoked Alcuin's explicit reservations, is depicted as a liberation – necessarily bloody and indeed meritoriously heroic – from subhuman pagan rites: the event is the object of a fourfold simile, where it is depicted as a passage from wolves to lambs, from griffins and harpies to mild birds, from Molossians to fawns, from tigers and lions to sheep. This conquest will lead, at the end of time, to Charles' election to paradise, described in detail 100 years later in the Poeta Saxo's *Annales*.<sup>39</sup> Karl Hauck considers the poem a sort of solemn inscription that was to be painted or engraved on the walls of the Church of the Saviour that Charles had consecrated in Paderborn at the same convocation of the kingdom.<sup>40</sup>

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37 Schaller (1995b) 210.

38 *Annales Mosellani*, MGH: *Scriptores* 16 p. 496; *Annales Petaviani*, MGH: *Scriptores* 1 p. 16.

39 The text, which was published in the *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* by Dümmler as the seventh poem of Angilbert, was edited again in 1985 by the historian Karl Hauck on the basis of a second manuscript, not known to the previous editor: Hauck (1985) 62–67. The MS is Pommerfelden, Schönborn 2883 of 1494, while the first one, from S. Paul in Regensburg, written about the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, was lost and has been replaced by the print of Frobenius: Alcuin (1777) vol. 2, 615.

40 Schaller (1995c). Hauck proposed an attribution to Llull, the disciple and successor of Boniface, educated in Malmesbury, on the basis of the strong coefficient of imitation with the model of the Anglo-Latin poet Aldhelm. But whoever reads the few remains of Llull's mediocre and uncertain poetry, preserved at the bottom of his letters in the edition of Tangl *Bonifatii et Lulli Epistolae* (edited by M. Tangl, in MGH: *Epistolae Selectae*, I, Berlin 1916) cannot have doubts about the absolute impossibility that it is the same author of *De Conversione Saxonum*. Schaller's proof is much more convincing, and even if the attributions on a stylistic basis may seem fragile and provisional, we know well that they are often more reliable than the 'material' ones of the codices, which did not hesitate to assign Pauline's *Liber exhortationis* to Saint Augustine.

Other scholars<sup>41</sup> have refuted this interpretation by pointing out that there is no evidence of Charles' commission, but in both hypotheses the poem would be a sort of apparatus composition linked to an official and public context, which theologized an event portrayed as purely historical event in other sources.<sup>42</sup> Although the subjugation of the Saxons, begun in 772,<sup>43</sup> would prove to have been partial and superficial, this celebration reveals a precise propagandistic intent, which appears to have been shared early on.<sup>44</sup> In fact, a small constellation of protopanegyrics seems to have formed around this document. These texts are associated with the celebration of victory over the Bavarians and precede the climax of *De Karolo rege et Leone papa*:<sup>45</sup> for example, poem 41 Dümmler by Peter of Pisa, also intended to celebrate the conquest and conversion of the Saxons, the justice of Charles' government, and his activity as a church builder and baptizer of peoples. The isotopies among the various texts demonstrate the existence of *common themes* of Carolingian propaganda that were already converging and attest that Peter of Pisa and Paulinus of Aquileia, and then Angilbert, Dungal, and Moduin, were among the main producers during the first phase of the kingdom. These established a topic, with constants and variables within the genre, destined to be institutionalized in subsequent production. The mechanisms that governed the selection of this symbology are in my opinion quite independent from a structural continuity with late-imperial or Merovingian tradition, and even less with classical tradition, even though individual formulations recover isolated elements: the *comparison with the sun* (which we have seen to date back at least to Lucan) in the *De Karolo rege* and in the first echo of Moduin certainly depends on Corippus, while the bucolic contextualization derives from Vergil. Similarly, the *hunting scenes* of Ermoldus Nigellus or the proemial topology of *De Karolo rege* reuse episodes of Venantius Fortunatus' *Vita Martini*, while the mythology of the *new Rome* shared by Moduin and *De Karolo rege* adapts

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41 Bullough (1991) 133 approves the attribution.

42 In fact, the *Annales Mosellani* report that, 172 years after the death of Gregory the Great and the conversion of the Angles, another large European population passed to Christianity: *MGH SS* xvi, 496.

43 The sequence of events is well reconstructed by Ebenbauer (1978) 10–11: in 772 the assembly of Worms results in a decision to enter into war and the first victory over the Saxons ensues; in 775 the vassallage submission was effected, with the delivery of hostages; in 777 the declaration of dependence was made.

44 The historians did not recognize such planning skills in the early Charles. A synthesis appears in Godman (1987) 40; a new, comparative perspective is Garrison (1994) 131–135.

45 The state of the art is given in Godman *et al.* (2002). Here we use the title adopted by Padberg (1999). A new edition, with translation and commentary, is planned for 2023 in the series of Fondazione Valla (Mondadori).

scenes of the Roman epic, and the metaphors of the *king-poet* exploits the many literary variations of the Davidic figure. Despite such classical features, the selection of central themes – ecclesiastical mission and cultural promotion – responded rather to the need for a recognition of the role of the drafters of these documents, that is of the intellectual class, which was ecclesiastically trained even when it had a secular civil status and was therefore meant to enhance the missionary and cultural function of the king as a self-reflected projection of one's role. This is why, in the poem in which Dungal (that is, the Hibernicus Exul) celebrates victory over the Bavarians, most of the text that has reached us is dedicated to a dialogue with the Muse that serves to emphasize the monumentalizing role of poetry rather than to exalt the hero.

## 4 Propaganda Literature: Second Phase

After 814 there was a change in historical circumstances that saw the centrality and stability of the central power break into continuous conflicts, first between the weak emperor Louis the Pious and the Frankish church and then among Louis' sons contending for the empire. In the past, scholars have believed that these situational dynamics revealed different phases of a cultural policy in which the central impulse became intermittent, regaining intensity with Charles the Bald but without recovering the breadth of scope of Charlemagne's time. However, regardless of the fluctuations of production networks, in my opinion the expressive modalities of the relationship with power, while registering innovations in tone, measure, and frame, continued to be based on a social motivation that remained constant: the *self-referentiality of the intellectual class* in determining literary imagery and its form. In particular, in the following generations, two works comparable in style and function to the Poeta Saxo's *Annales* appeared. One is the double encomium by Ermoldus Nigellus, a Frankish monk following Pepin of Aquitaine who was exiled to Strasbourg in 825. There, in vain hope of being recalled and of obtaining the *munera* ('offices') which he bemoaned as lacking, he wrote a panegyric anepigraph to Pepin in the form of a dialogue between the Rhine river and the Vosges mountains, and a poem *In honorem Hludovici* to Pepin's father, the emperor Louis the Pious. In four books of 2649 lines in elegiac couplets, he recounted above all Louis' deeds in Spain, Britannia, and Denmark, widely reusing topical scenes from the tradition from Virgil to Venantius, but also those of Carolingian creation – such as papal reception and the hunt – and abundant use of epic instrumentation, especially speeches and descriptions. What he added was the factor of irony, unknown to antiquity,

which seems to be one of the most widespread and surprising innovations of Carolingian poetry.

The other work refers to the destiny of one of Louis' nephews, the king of Italy Berengarius I of Friuli. The anonymous *Gesta Berengarii*,<sup>46</sup> possibly composed by a John of Verona, narrates the king's Italic wars in four books of about 1090 lines and describes his imperial coronation of 915 with a steady and elegant style. It merged intertexts taken from Statius and from the *Ilias Latina* without visible literary sutures, and revived, after centuries, the term *panegyricus* – written in Greek in the poem's title and defined, in the glosses that accompany the manuscript, as *licentiosum et lasciviosum genus dicendi in laudibus regum* ('frivolous and insolent literary genre for praises of kings'), based on the trace of a mysterious passage from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* 6.8.6 that seems to dismiss the genre as 'frivolous and pagan'.<sup>47</sup> In taking up the structure of late ancient epic panegyrics without imitating them, and even skipping over their relationship with Carolingian encomiastic, the *Gesta Berengarii* seems to be placed at a stylistically successful but isolated moment of scholastic revival of epic composition, which has been traced back to the classicism of northern Italian culture between the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of each 10<sup>th</sup> century. It is nonetheless connected to the Carolingian system both because of the effort to Christianize the hero and because of the ceremonial function of apparatus composition and the strongly propagandistic orientation in the interpretation of historical facts, even though the relationship between the poet and the recipient has definitively lost the complicity of true court literature.

Just as we saw for the first generation of Carolingians, so also for subsequent ones the encomiastic epic composed from Claudian to Priscian and Corippus is only one, and perhaps the least influential, of the modes of expression of consensus or at least of a common cooperation in consolidating and legitimating power. From the more subtle and sophisticated forms of political poetry developed in the first years of Charles' reign, the second and third Carolingian gener-

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46 See Stella (2009).

47 *Panegyricum est licentiosum et lacinosum genus dicendi in laudibus regum, in cuius compositione homines multis mendaciis adulantur. Quod malum a Graecis exortum est, quorum levitas inscructa dicendi facultate et copia incredibili multas mendiciorum nebulas suscitavit.* Another attestation of this meaning of the term *panegyricus* in the *Expositio in Psalmum 44* by Pascasius Radbert, book 2, PL 120, col. 1029 A: *est repetitio nominis tropice figurata, more panegyrico, quo genus laudatores rhetores et saeculares viri loquuntur, quando suis efferunt praeconiis quod laudare decreverunt.* In the *De universo* or *De natura rerum* by the encyclopedist Rabanus Maurus (15, 2, PL 111, 419 D) the description of literary genres distinguishes an action or imitative genre, which the Greeks call dramatic or mimetic, from an *enarrativum, quod Graeci exegeticon vel panegyricon nuncupant*, in which the poet speaks without *ullius interpositione personae*.

ations instead developed, for example, the paratextual *book dedications* or the parts in verse of the *specula principum*, that is, the treatises of moral and religious counsels to civil authority whose creation was one of the period's main contributions: a small masterpiece in this area is the *De rectoribus christianis*, a prosimetrum composed, perhaps for Lothar II, by the Irishman Sedulius Scotus, which contains poems dedicated to governors of various levels: the emperor Charles the Bald, his wife Ermentrude, the duke Eberard of Friuli, the count Robert, and the bishop Hartgar of Liège. With the latter, his social referent, Sedulius expresses an attitude that is decidedly that of an author with a patron but who is capable of transforming the request for endorsement into an ironic visionary apologue. His work makes use of a sort of bohemian surrealism to go beyond the petty-bourgeois sarcasm of Martial, but remains close to the Latin author due to Sedulius' condition as an urbanized migrant, lost but aware of his intellectual abilities, so valued in the Irish culture of which he felt himself a representative. In many passages of the *carmina* dedicated to the king, Sedulius presents Irish scholars as bearers of uncommon skills, thereby ranking himself among 'the wise men from the West who bring gifts to the powerful of the continent': *Partibus occiduis Scotti veniuntque sophistae, / sophica dona ferunt partibus occiduis* (II 11, 31–32: 'Irish scholars come from the western regions, they bring gifts from the Western regions'). He repeatedly connects them with Greek and Jewish scholars, thus attempting to create a sort of pluralistic mythology of the people of the Book that links their own emerging ethnicities to historical ones and contributes to his own prestige during the process of finding a patron, frequently addressing him in a humorous tone: one example among many is the request to Count Robert for a ram, accompanied by the guarantee that 'we Irish, of whom there are many, know how to eat him well': *Quaesumus ut multis multetur super superbus / Nobis Scottigenis, hunc here fine mandere scimus*.

With this generation, therefore, the dynamics of patronage and the self-referentiality of themes remain constant threads in the system of poetic production imposed by the era of Charlemagne, with changing tones and shades according to concrete situations. This is also confirmed by the persistence of the proto-Carolingian motifs in the *Annales de gestis Caroli Magni*, composed at the end of the long Carolingian era, at the time of Charles the Fat: the historical role that the poet recognizes in Charlemagne is above all that of the *apostle, who converts non-Christian peoples* and acquires new spaces for the universe of faith, but the image that portrays him in his relationship with the writer of the text still remains that of a *promoter, rather than a protector*, of the literacy process. At the

beginning of the fifth book,<sup>48</sup> Charles is not only the king who subdued the Bavarians and the Lombards and converted the Saxons, nor is he simply a sovereign patron who protects, solicits, and rewards poets and intellectuals; he is above all *the king who brought writing to where it did not exist*, and thereby gave a voice to peoples who did not have one. The Poeta Saxo wonders who, if not Charles, deserves recognition for the merit of the *scintillula* that inspires his *scripturae*, for the *scientiola* of art that illustrates them, since his Saxon parents not only were unfamiliar with the teachings of faith, but were entirely illiterate: this dignity, *honestas*, was recently given to the Saxons thanks to Charles, and through this dignity emerges the hope of eternal life. The gift of writing and reading, the subject of numerous poetic passages in this century, is not only a way of expressing the self-awareness of the intellectual class but is also an irreplaceable instrument of definitive moral and social redemption. Writing involves peoples hitherto confined to the provisional nature of oral expression in the processes of civilization, and its propagation becomes one of the qualifying points of the emperor's literary image, one of the original virtues of his poetic aretalogies.<sup>49</sup>

In the constancy of topical selection, what changes is essentially the *tone* with which the class of religious scribes shows the king its awareness of its own influence on the self-representation of power. In the dedication to Charles the Bald of the luxurious Bible of Tours,<sup>50</sup> today ms. 1 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (fond latin), the dignitaries who in the central miniature<sup>51</sup> offer the codex to the king, and who are responsible for the sumptuous apparatus of dedications and poetic introductions to the Bible, remind the dedicatee, in a sort of hymn to *sapientia*, that the model for royalty – as in Sedulius Scotus – is Solomon, whose dignity stemmed from wisdom. Just as the cause is superior to the effect, so is culture superior to the political virtue that it produces, in a sort of expression of the primacy of the intellectual over the powerful that sanctifies the latter only as a reflection of the first and which in my opinion constitutes the apotheosis of Carolingian social restructuring. And the substitution of the biblical model of ideal sovereign – which is also found in Sedulius Scotus and other poets – from David, king-singer and therefore protector of poets, to Solomon, wise king and therefore respectful of intellectuals, confirms the evolution of the same. This attitude of *critical loyalty* finds its climax in the condemnation

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48 Years 888–91. MGH: *Poetae* IV/1 (1899) 1–71. See Isola (1988).

49 As in *De Karolo rege et Leone papa*, vv. 67–77, which enhances the learning of Charles. See the edition by Padberg (1999) and Stella (2002).

50 A more detailed analysis of the text in Stella (1993) 81–91, 154–6.

51 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8455903b/f853.item>.

of Charlemagne to Purgatory in Walafrid Strabo's *Visio Wettini*, the first Western poem exclusively dedicated to a journey into the afterlife. In a line that is a precursor to Dante, the young author, speaking through the protagonist, goes so far as to address the emperor in charge, Louis the Pious, criticizing his father's laxity and inviting him to take decisive action against the moral collapse of the political class.

## 5 Conclusions

A retrospective analysis of the encomiastic tradition, like the one carried out by scholars about the reign of Frederick II<sup>52</sup> or the Renaissance period,<sup>53</sup> tends to reconstruct a millenary continuity in the structure, imagery, and form of the political *Preisgedicht* from the Panegyric of Messalla to Claudian and Corippus up to Peter of Eboli and Ugolino Verino. But it does so by illuminating the shared risk factors so risking to an accessory role to fundamental elements and overestimate marginal links. Around the time of Charlemagne there appeared a rupture and an innovation that do not seem to have been affected so much by genre models as by the restructuring of heterogeneous materials into new configurations conditioned by the social relationships of the intellectual class with the center of power. It is certainly true that most of the imperial virtues listed in *De Karolo rege* were already found in the Panegyric to Trajan or in Ambrose's funeral discourse for Valentinian, and that the Christian re-semanticization of encomiastic topics<sup>54</sup> had already produced potential models in Optatianus Porphyrius' panegyric to Constantine and probably in Paulinus of Nola's lost panegyric to Theodosius. But it is equally true that in the Carolingian age the school *did not pass on* these models, as is shown by the *codex unicus* to which the manuscript tradition of the *Panegyrici Latini* has been reduced, and that in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries the encomiastic function found itself having to rebuild its own code using elements from liturgical, epistolary, bucolic, hagiography, and only peripherally from the epic repertoire.

In the Carolingian age the relationship between poetic activity and power re-formed itself into a totally *new* system of communication, despite apparent analogies with the Augustan era. A different system of social and ethnic rela-

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<sup>52</sup> Delle Donne (2005).

<sup>53</sup> Ratkowitsch (1997).

<sup>54</sup> I studied that in Stella (1988), which followed the essay of Heinz Hofmann in the aforementioned issue of *Philologus*.

tions produced a new tradition that was soon on a path toward a stability based on strong values such as the diffusion of culture and religion, considered interdependent phenomena but also as kinds of knowledge capable of enhancing the social role of authors and legitimizing their prestige. This stability, which persisted even in the face of changing political frameworks and personal relationships, can only be traced back to the persistence of structures of cultural production, with completely different conditions compared to the imperial Roman world: all the producers of poetry, who were also developers of the ideological structure of the new empire, *came from monastic or chapter schools*. The identity of the power that they mythologized in poetry was not a response to the interpretation that a class of magistrates, senators, and civil or military officials could give of its own historical mission to legitimize its role and weight, as it could have been at the time of Probinus and Olibrius, but to the interpretation of the meta-historical mission of power that the class of ecclesiastical intellectuals intended to validate in order to impose its own conditions onto the center of power itself. The accentuation of the hagiographic greatness of Charles as a protagonist of sacred history, compared with his political and military greatness, could certainly make use of expressive tools that dated from the panegyric repertoire in prose and verse. But it depended above all on the interests and on the scale of values of the intellectual class which, from an autonomous position with respect to political power, constructed the myth of a giant of history as a reflection of its own self-awareness.





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**Section 3 Eastern and Western Perspectives in  
Politics and history of ideas**



Mortimer N. S. Sellers

# Empire and Politics in Eastern and Western Civilizations

To speak of ‘empire’ today is to evoke the history of China and of Rome, two great empires that vastly influenced the culture and development of half the globe.<sup>1</sup> The whole world has been touched by their powerful examples, so that even someone writing, as I do, in a distant corner of North America, feels the history and influence of the Roman and Chinese empires every day. Nor are they unique. Something like ‘empire’ has arisen wherever there was wealth and stability to support it. Rome and China had numerous rivals in the East and West who aspired to empire and sometimes achieved it. But Rome and China will remain the focus here because they are the paradigms of Eastern and of Western empire that illustrate the broader proposition. The central and best (and worst) values of empire and politics are congruent and fully present in Eastern and Western civilizations, just as they exist in every civilization that contemplates humanity and justice. Empire, politics, and the principles that rule them can be found in every culture, because they ultimately rest on reason and human nature, which are universal and accessible to every human being.

The English words ‘politics’ and ‘empire’ arise from Greek and Roman experience, but seek to embody universal values, or at least presume to do so. Comparing empire and politics in China and in Rome is not just a descriptive or a sociological exercise, but a normative inquiry. Like the Chinese and the Romans, we must ask ourselves not only what empire and politics are, but what they ought to be, and why we should care. China and Rome both encouraged highly sophisticated scholars, who thought deeply about justice, human nature, and the public good. Small wonder then that they agreed on many things, and that we may learn from their perceptions. The same is true of empire and politics in every civilization. The universal foundations of justice and good order are present in every cultural tradition, even when they do not triumph as they should.

The study of Rome and the Roman heritage that guides European culture, like the study of China and the many cultures of the East, is beautiful in itself, through appreciation of what they were, accomplished, and left behind. But the study and comparison of Rome and China is useful also for the insights the history and ideas of Eastern and Western civilization can give us today, to

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Huiqin Feng and Ellen Pruitt for their suggestions on and criticisms of this chapter.

shape our current world. The concepts of ‘empire’ and ‘politics’ represent human realities that will require consideration as long as there are human societies to discuss them. China and Rome considered them first, and often better and more deeply than those who came after. Modern principles of global justice, reflected in such documents as the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reflect values already deeply studied and understood in China and in Rome, as in many other places and cultures.

## 1 Empire and Politics

The concepts of empire and politics inevitably connect, because both address the structure of society, and how society shall be ruled and made useful. ‘Empire’ concerns the *right* to rule (*imperium*), who rules whom, and where. ‘Politics’ concerns *how* to rule and be ruled (*politika*), in concert with other human beings. Both ideas depend on a third, sometimes expressed with the word ‘republic’ (*res publica*), which is to say the common good or the public welfare, taken as the proper purpose of human society. This clarifies the normative element in politics and empire. Neither is justified unless it serves the public good. Politics is the science by which we seek to establish a just society. Empire is the power conferred on individuals or on institutions in pursuit of a just society. Politics and empire can be good or bad, true or false, legitimate or illegitimate, depending on whether and how well they fulfill their allotted task.

Humans still build and maintain empires today. Societies develop politics and public life. We still evaluate these efforts in the light of the public welfare and the common good. Thus, the history and experiences of Rome and China give us insights into truths about empire and politics that remain useful and – in some cases – inspiring today, because human beings and human nature have not changed. The wide sweep of Roman and Chinese history gives us a vast range of examples and the distance to evaluate them calmly, without partisan emotion. Both empires aspired to global community, and the peace that follows from global authority.

To write in English about Rome and China introduces the pitfalls of translation. Empire, politics, and republic are all English words with English implications. Yet the ideas they express and even the words themselves developed from Roman concepts such as *imperium* and *res publica*, or Greek words such as *politika* and *politeia*. Therefore, English speakers and indeed scholars everywhere in the West, rely on the Roman conceptions of *imperium* and *res publica* and Greek conceptions of *politika* and the *politeia* that are deeply embedded in our history, culture, and ideas. They also represent universal human reality and

universal human questions. The same ideas can be found in China – and everywhere – expressed in words that never correspond exactly. Yet they express the same reality of human needs, desires, and emotions. Every culture can and should share in this community of global justice.

## 2 *Politeia* and *Res Publica*

To speak of Roman politics and empire one must begin with Greece, because Rome's favored models were Greek, both in philosophy and in practice. Plato's *Politeia*, considering the right structuring of the *polis*, profoundly influenced the Romans – and those who followed their example. Plato argued in his *Politeia* that rulers should always serve their subjects' common interest. Or at least he made Socrates say so.<sup>2</sup> In his book on the *Laws*, Plato denied that any supposed laws can be law at all, in any useful sense, unless they serve the welfare of the people as a whole.<sup>3</sup> Cicero adopted this precept from Plato, and gave Plato the credit for insisting on it.<sup>4</sup> 'Politics' concerns the right ordering of government to maintain a just society, establishing the common good.

Roman thought reflected and shared these universal purposes. Cicero wrote his dialogues *De re publica* and *De legibus* to celebrate and modernize Plato's discourses on the State and on the laws. Both insisted that government and laws exist to serve the common good of the people, not their rulers. Magistrates must serve the common good of the *whole* people, not just one faction. Serving one part of the people would betray the rest. Cicero praised Aristotle for having been, like himself, a disciple of Plato in pursuit of the common good.<sup>5</sup> Aristotle followed Plato in believing justice to consist in government for the public welfare, securing liberty against the despotism of private interests.<sup>6</sup> Politics, understood in this way, concerns – or should concern – the science of just government for the good of all those subject to its rule.

Politics, as Aristotle explained it, as Cicero followed him in understanding the problem, and in its best and most useful sense in the Western tradition, is the study and practice of seeking the right ordering of society for the benefit of all. Like Plato, Aristotle criticized government maintained in the factional interest of any one, few, or many citizens. Government in the service of any faction

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<sup>2</sup> Pl. *Plt.* 342e.

<sup>3</sup> Pl. *Lg.* 715b.

<sup>4</sup> Cic. *Off.* 1.85.

<sup>5</sup> Cic. *Leg.* 3.14.

<sup>6</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 3.7.

is tyrannical by definition, and therefore wrong. Better, Aristotle explained, to mix monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy together, balancing one against the other, to prevent any one faction from abusing the power of the State. Aristotle endorsed the sovereignty of the laws,<sup>7</sup> to secure justice, which means the common good of the community as a whole.<sup>8</sup> Politics is the art of perfecting the *politeia* – or the *res publica*, as the Romans would express it.

### 3 The Common Good

The purpose of politics in Roman civilization was service to the *res publica*. *Res publica* signifies the public welfare or the common good, adapting Plato's *politeia* to serve Roman reality. In his discourses *De re publica*, *De legibus*, and *De officiis*, Cicero set out the proper purpose of government as pursuit of the public good, in support of the republic, which is say, a just or well-ordered State. Cicero defined the purpose of government as being to create a harmony from the disparate interests of all members of society,<sup>9</sup> repeating Plato and Aristotle's commitment to help all social groups live worthwhile and fulfilling lives. Put in Chinese terms, the empire should establish a harmonious society (*he xie da tong she hui* 和谐大同社会).

Cicero's commitment to the common good simply follows and elaborates the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. What distinguishes fully Roman and republican doctrine from its Academic and Peripatetic antecedents is not commitment to the public welfare, which they shared, but rather Cicero's attempt to develop a more specific constitutional prescription for securing the republic through popular sovereignty, elected executives, and an independent senate.<sup>10</sup> Cicero's conception of politics was more developed than that of Plato and Aristotle because he paid more attention to the forms and procedures of government. Cicero cared not only for the substance of republican government, which is the public

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7 Arist. *Pol.* 3.13.

8 Arist. *Pol.* 3.1.13.

9 Cic. *Rep.* 2.69: *ut enim in fidibus aut tibiis atque ut in cantu ipso ac vocibus concertus est quidam tenendus ex distinctis sonis, quem inmutatum aut discrepantem aures eruditae ferre non possunt, isque concertus ex dissimilarum vocum moderatione concors tamen efficitur et congruens; sic ex summis et infimis et mediis interiectis ordinibus ut sonis moderata ratione civitas consensu dissimilorum concinit; et quae harmonia a musicis dicitur in cantu, ea est in civitate concordia, artissimum atque optimum in omni re publica vinculum incolunitatis, eaque sine iustitia nullo pacto esse potest.*

10 See Sellers (1998) 43–46.

welfare, but also for the structures and techniques of government, which make the common good real.

Cicero concerned himself with the republican *form* of government. How to discern and implement the common good through well-designed politics became the main focus of his inquiry. Would-be republicans must design institutions through which to control the tyranny of factions and powerful individuals. This would become the greatest political legacy of Rome. Like every other regime that has ever sought power, the Romans claimed to rule for the good of their subjects. Rome surpassed its predecessors in attention to the *mechanics* of public welfare. Political science begins with Roman interest in the optimum constitution of the State.<sup>11</sup> Where Chinese and Confucian tradition focuses on the *principles* of government, the Romans spoke more of the *structure* of government – but the purposes were the same.

## 4 *Imperium*

Empire is a much more distinctively Roman idea than politics. *Imperium* signifies legitimate political or military authority. Later, in the English language, as in many other modern languages that take their vocabulary from Rome, empire came also and even primarily to signify the actual territory over which a person or a polity exercises its legitimate authority. Thus we speak of ‘the Roman empire’ or ‘the empire of the Romans’, but in either case there is an implication of *legitimate* authority. *Imperium* is not simply *dominium* (‘mastery’). Nor is it merely *potestas* (‘power’). *Imperium* claims the moral right to rule and be obeyed. In China, this would correspond to the *tian ming* 天命, securing the legitimate right to rule.

Empire, like politics, derives its legitimacy first and above all from service to the common good. Romans followed Aristotle and Cicero in viewing the exercise of *imperium* in pursuit of anything but justice as tyranny. Livy praised the establishment of an *imperium legum* or ‘empire of laws’, supplanting the *imperium hominum* or ‘empire of men’. He admired the early days of Rome, when *imperia legum potentiora fuerunt quam hominum*.<sup>12</sup> Rome had a republic, Livy suggested, only so long as Roman magistrates maintained the rule of law for the good of the people. When the rule of law died, so too did liberty, and the republic was gone.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See Sellers (2003) 6–15.

<sup>12</sup> Liv. 2.1.

<sup>13</sup> Liv. *praef.* 9.



*Imperium* loses legitimacy unless exercised in the interest of the republic, for the benefit of the people, according to the rule of law.

These simple conceptions of empire and politics, as understood in Rome, could vest *imperium* in the people, in certain magistrates, or even in Rome herself, as Rome began to conquer her neighbors. The concept was extended to give Pompey *imperium maius* against the pirates. Then Augustus and his political heirs claimed *imperium maius* as *principes*, even in Rome. Ulpian asserted that the Roman people had transferred their *imperium* and *potestas* to these now perpetual *principes* or *imperatores*, who became the Roman ‘emperors’ in English idiom.<sup>14</sup> The implication remained that emperors and princes only retain *imperium* because they serve the common good of the people. To do otherwise justified their replacement, by the very people they had ceased to serve.

## 5 The Principles of Empire

‘Empire’ is a Western and a Roman word, embedded in English and many other languages by the weight of centuries of history. Yet we also speak in English of ‘emperors’ in China, where Chinese might have said *huang di* 皇帝. This use of a Western word to describe an Eastern ruler is a necessary element of translation, but also reflects a deeper truth. Many of the same principles can be found in Rome and in China, because they are universal principles, deriving from universal human nature, reflecting human emotions, which are as present in China, or Korea, or any other large Eastern political society as they were in Rome or are in the United States of America or France or any large Western society.

Thus, Eastern and Western civilizations share the concept that government should be for the common good, that politics should seek the common good, and that empires and emperors are only legitimate when they serve the welfare of all those subject to their rule. These principles are universal principles because they are *correct* principles, which therefore can be found in every culture. They supply standards by which we can measure any regime or any political society, because it is these principles alone that properly confer the right to rule. Governments profess to serve justice and the common good (whether they actually do so or not), because to disrespect the public welfare would invite rebellion, and rightly so.

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<sup>14</sup> Dig. 1.4.1: *Quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem: utpote cum lege regia, quae de imperio eius lata est, populus ei et in eum omne suum imperium et potestatem conferat.*

The Eastern tradition of empire has many variants, realized differently in many different lands and different periods of time. They also have many similarities, and among these concepts of ‘empire’ and ‘politics’ not very different to those one finds in the west. As in Western civilization, ‘empire’ and ‘politics’ have been challenged, violated, and contested in the East, without ever receding, at least at the theoretical level. The words and language used were different, but human nature remained the same, and therefore the same fundamental concepts disputed in Rome are present in China and throughout Asia.

## 6 Standards of Legitimacy

The guiding observation made here is that the universal standards of legitimacy that ultimately justify or censure any government can be found in every culture. Empire and the political power of emperors or other rulers is justified because they implement justice to the greatest extent possible. When emperors fail to do so, they lose their legitimate right to rule. Rulers can and often do propose other standards of legitimacy, to justify their unjust regime, but these are neither valid nor persuasive. Thus, every empire *must* claim to serve the common good and all of them have claimed to do so. The highly developed Chinese and eastern imperial traditions necessarily contain the same universal and correct principles that can be found in the West, and specifically in Rome.

The comparison of concepts of politics and empire in Eastern and Western civilizations is instructive because it confirms the universality of the underlying principles. More important, comparison reminds us that the full theoretical foundations for a just political order are present in all political and philosophical traditions. We can always construct a just society out of our own cultural resources, if we so wish, without reference to foreign ideas. Foreign comparisons assist us in discovering the most useful elements of our own tradition.

Comparing Eastern and Western conceptions of politics and empire can also help to reveal which elements in each tradition are underdeveloped or overlooked. This is a subtler point. Looking at my own world from the outside helps me to see it better. Mistakes go unexamined when they are taken for granted. Reflection through comparison clarifies what the fundamental requirements of just politics and legitimate empire really are. Whenever the existing political leaders in the East and West seek to establish a more just society, they have the cultural support to do so.

## 7 The Chinese Empire

When Western writers speak of the ‘Emperor of China’ they refer to the *huang di* 皇帝, who claimed to enjoy *tian ming* 天命, or the ‘mandate of heaven’, to rule for the benefit of all the world. Expressing these ideas in English will be necessarily inexact, just as expressing Roman ideas in English is necessarily inexact. The Latin, Chinese, and English words all echo the same reality, that imperial authority is or should be conditional on properly fulfilling the imperial duty, to serve the common good. Just as Roman and Western conceptions of ‘empire’ and ‘politics’ must accommodate the actual requirements of justice, so Chinese conceptions of the *huang di* 皇帝 and *tian ming* 天命 include the fundamental ethical concepts of a just society, and all that entails.

For example, the concept of *da tong* 大同 in Chinese tradition reflects the same perceptions that guided Cicero and Aristotle in discussing the common good.<sup>15</sup> Some translate *da tong* 大同 as ‘great unity’ or ‘great community’ or ‘great harmony’, essentially, the well-ordered or just society, which is to say, the society that serves the public good best. In the *Li Yun* 礼运 chapter of *Li Ji* 礼记 (‘the Book of Rites’), Confucius (Kong Zi 孔子) is made to speak of the age of *da tong* 大同, when mankind practiced good faith, and lived together in affection. Dr. Sun Yat Sen (*Sun Zhongshan* 孙中) insisted that the purpose of the Republic of China was to bring about *da tong* 大同, the community of all humanity, in much the same way that Cicero spoke of the community of all humanity,<sup>16</sup> or Christian Wolff spoke of the *civitas gentium*.<sup>17</sup>

The Confucian (孔子的, 儒家的) concept of *ren* 仁, often translated as ‘benevolence’, indicates that a well-ordered society begins with care for the welfare of others, or of the people as a whole, and not simply oneself. As in Rome, the position of *huang di* 皇帝 became hereditary in China, without losing its conditional nature. The unjust ruler could lose *tian ming* 天命 (‘the mandate of heaven’), if he did not serve the people well. This justifies a right to replace an unjust ruler, as Mencius (Meng Zi 孟子) explicitly stated,<sup>18</sup> when the ruler ceases to rule with benevolence – for the benefit of the people as a whole. One can compare this to John Locke’s “appeal to heaven”, which may itself reflect the influence of Chinese ideas.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Chen (2011).

<sup>16</sup> Cic. *Leg.* 1.16.

<sup>17</sup> Wolff (1749).

<sup>18</sup> *Meng zi li lou shang* (《孟子·离娄上》).

<sup>19</sup> Locke (1689) II.II.21

Thus all the cardinal virtues and concepts of Roman and Chinese empires and politics find correspondences in the parallel culture. These correspondences are not exact, but they are close enough that each can sharpen and improve its meaning and self-understanding by attending to the other. *Ren* 仁 and *humanitas*, *yi* 义 and *ius*, *li* 礼 and *fas*, *zhi* 智 and *sapientia*, *xin* 信 and *fides*, *de* 德 and *virtus*, *xiao* 孝 and *pietas*, *tian ming* 天命 and the *pax deorum* – these are not the same, but they attend to the same aspects of universal human nature, and draw on the same necessary elements of justice, present in and applicable to every human society.

## 8 The Conflict of Politics and Empire

The concepts of politics and empire in Rome and in China are related and complementary. *Empire* concerns the right to rule: who rules whom, and where. *Politics* concerns how to rule and be ruled: how to construct the best possible structure for society. But empire and politics may also conflict, or differ, because an empire or emperor can dominate and ultimately overwhelm useful politics. This happened Rome and China and will be a risk whenever politics convey power to individuals, which must be done to secure justice. Give power to an *imperator* or a *princeps*, and politics in its most useful sense may recede. *Quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem*<sup>20</sup> is not a good political principle, but it is very appealing to princes.

Both politics and empire have the same object, which is the common good, but their emphasis is slightly different. The concept of empire recognizes the value of political unity, universal values, and coordination, with an emphasis on right answers and the ultimate aims of government. The concept of politics concerns the procedural methods by which we secure justice and the common good in fact. Empire looks to the ends of government, politics to the means of securing them.

Every ruler, every prince, and every would-be emperor who has ever claimed power has readily accepted what I call the ‘republican principle’ of government – that the proper purpose and only justification of government is justice and the common good of the people. Not every emperor so readily concedes what I have called the ‘republican form’ of government – the checks and balances and divisions of power in politics that make real justice possible.

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<sup>20</sup> *Dig.* 1.4.1.

## 9 The Limits of Empire

The word ‘empire’ in English as in other European languages came to have the implication not only of legitimate jurisdiction, but also of universal jurisdiction. Both China and Rome presumed to rule – or at least direct – the entire civilized world. At a minimum the word ‘empire’ implies very broad political and legal jurisdiction, incorporating many different societies and many different peoples. The claim here is that to achieve global justice (*huang quan* 皇权) we will need a global power (*potestas*), or at least a global authority (*auctoritas*, *sheng xian* 圣贤), to regulate our disputes and secure our common welfare.

Both the Romans and the Chinese and other Europeans and Asians and others have seen some value in this approach, securing global justice, or at least regional justice, or at least peace (of some description) and security through the imposition of empire on entire regions of the world. The goal is the broader good of the whole, imposed through the power of the empire, rather than by regional politics. This price of this empire is the loss of politics, raising the question whether justice and the common good are possible without politics, without some recourse to the republican *form* of government.

Now finally it may be possible to imagine an empire without emperors, reconciling the conflict between the emperor and politics that arose both in China and in Rome. Since the conclusion of the Second World War there have been a series of efforts to create international organizations to advance international justice, peace, and security, at the global and the regional levels, such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization of American States. None of these efforts have yet yielded robust international politics, but all have advanced the common good to some extent, extending the global rule of law, without recourse to a single powerful emperor. The legitimacy of these new empires without emperors depends on their service to global justice and the common good of their subjects – just as it did in China and in Rome.

## 10 Conclusion

Comparing Eastern and Western conceptions of ‘politics’ and ‘empire’ remind us that the intellectual foundations for a just society exist in every cultural tradition. There is no exact correspondence between Roman and Confucian principles or vocabulary, but *both* reflect a sophisticated understanding of universal human nature, including the moral requirements of political justice, which are the same

everywhere. This leads to significant similarities in perception and terminology, reflecting inescapable reality.

The task of scholars in every nation is to identify and make known the enlightened and humane concepts of politics and empire that exist in every cultural tradition. This is not to deny the sad and corrupted elements that also exist everywhere in the world, as they do in every human heart. But political decency has also always been present, and deserves our attention. The only legitimate purpose of politics and empire in the East and in the West today, as in the history of China and of Rome, is to serve and create a common good for all the people that they rule. This purpose has long been recognized and deeply embedded in our cultural traditions. We should make it ours.



Weolhoi Kim and Kihoon Kim

# *Pax Romana* and *Pax Sinica*: Some Historical Aspects

## 1 What is the *Pax Romana*?

The term *Pax Romana* is used conventionally as a synonym for the Roman Empire. However, from time to time the meaning of the term seems uncertain, unless clearly defined technically or academically.<sup>1</sup> If the definition and usage of *Pax Romana* are distinguished in this paper at least, then a comparable term, *Pax Sinica*, will also be focused on in the appropriate context. Following from this, the almost-developed *Pax Sinica* in ancient China, especially in the early Former Han Empire (前漢), will be put forward as a particular empire-discourse or justification-ideology for imperial hegemony, which may have been typical of the great civilizations of the classical period.<sup>2</sup>

Although *Pax Romana* might be not an official term for the Roman Empire, the Roman people must have felt that their times, at least after the Battle of Actium (31 BCE), were peaceful ones. From a reading of some *loci classici*,<sup>3</sup> it may be inferred that the periods since Augustus, the first emperor, were generally passed in a state of peace, without war. In this way, *Pax Romana* is descriptive of a certain historical situation—from the time under Augustus to the periods of the Nerva-Antonine dynasty (1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries CE). In some literary contexts,<sup>4</sup> the term is used to refer to the peaceful times that existed under the Five Good Emperors. This condition can truly be described as ‘peace’ under the Empire and emperors of the Romans.

More generally, *Pax Romana* is a term used to refer to other comparable supremacies or dominant nations. The terms *Pax Britannica*, *Pax Americana*,<sup>5</sup> and

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**Note:** This paper is slightly revised from Kim/Kim (2016). The main part of it was originally presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Celtic Conference in Classics, 22<sup>nd</sup>–25<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 at University College Dublin, Ireland.

1 For some conceptual ambiguities regarding the term, see Parchami (2009) 4–8.

2 In this paper, the term ‘classical period’ follows the usage of Nylan (2007) 48 n. 1: from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE.

3 The *Carmen saeculare* of Horace, *inter alia*, is well known.

4 Edward Gibbon’s praise for *pax Romana* is a famous example (Parchami (2009) 16).

5 For the relation to these two hegemonic terms with *Pax Romana*, see Parchami (2009).



*Pax Mongolica* are all derived in some way from *Pax Romana*, and they often refer to the hegemony of a strong power that dominates certain periods or regions in international relations or in politico-diplomatic matters rather than the original meaning of ‘peace’. Likewise, recently *Pax Sinica*,<sup>6</sup> which has (re)entered the scene, appears to be used to explain or evaluate how the present global world order, in which the so-called ‘G2’ have been taking the lead, is working. Which period or which era is most correctly denoted by the term *Pax Sinica*? It could refer, more conservatively, to the Qing 清 Dynasty of the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries or the Tang 唐 Dynasty of the early 8<sup>th</sup> century, both of which may be seen as similar to the ages of the Five Good Emperors of Rome mentioned above. It is usually said that in those eras, China as the Great Empire enjoyed one of its greatest periods of prosperity and a reign of peace, and at the same time dominated the civilization-sphere of East Asia.<sup>7</sup> Among several candidates in the history of China, these two periods are perhaps the most likely to which one might apply the description *Pax Sinica*. In this study, however, by tracing back to more remote ages, we shall examine the applicability of the term to the reign of Emperor Wu (Wudi 武帝; r. 141–87 BCE) of the Former Han. Although his reign was not entirely peaceful, nonetheless it is comparable to the reign of Augustus, i. e. to *Pax Augusta*; for the ‘peace’ of Emperor Wu laid the foundation of the Chinese empires to follow, just as the reign of Augustus did for the Roman Empire. Therefore, this study focuses on a relatively brief period, the early phase of *Pax Sinica* as a counterpart of *Pax Augusta*.

## 2 Advent of the Empire and the Emperor

“Empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people”.<sup>8</sup> According to this definition, nation-states may be the entities opposite to empires, mostly consisting of single nations with single territories. Given such a loose definition, there would appear to have been few

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<sup>6</sup> For a general comparison of Rome and China as the first empires in world history in a broader perspective, see Burbank/Cooper (2010) 23–59.

<sup>7</sup> The tradition or ideology of Sino-centrism (*Zhonghua* 中華) influenced East Asia widely and over a long period. The connotation of the term *Pax Sinica* sometimes overlaps with it. Both of these concepts seem to be descriptive or ideological; a more neutral definition and a distinction between them are needed.

<sup>8</sup> Burbank/Cooper (2010) 8. In contrast, for the difficulty of defining ‘empire’ and of comparing it with the Western concept in the context of ancient China, see Nylan (2007).

empires in world history, and that may be the case. In addition, one might think that an empire should be ruled by an emperor. However, the sovereignty of an empire could be of that of a sole ruler or of a ruling group. If the latter is permitted, although its system of governance was a republic, ancient Rome, at least since the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, can loosely be called the Roman Empire. The mid-late Roman Republic seems to satisfy the terms of this definition. However, strictly speaking, it is usual to label Rome as an empire only from the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, at which time Augustus made an end to the age of civil wars and ruled as though a monarch. It is this point on which the famous expression ‘Roman Revolution’ focuses.

In the year 146 BCE, Rome held sway over the Mediterranean world after defeating its rival Carthage. By expanding its territory and incorporating and unifying new peoples, the Roman world became wider and wider. Because of this growth of scale, however, crises emerged in the political system of the Roman Republic, which had kept the number of its ruling class to a minimum. Of course, according to ancient authorities, moral decadence or corruption of *mores* might have been the cause of the crises. However, the problems of those times arose primarily as a result of the scale on which the ‘citystate’ of Rome, situated on the west coast of the Italian peninsula, had grown into a great country. Problems originated within Rome itself, and civil wars also started from within Rome. The 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE could be described as an age of conflict and discord, and especially of civil wars between factions or dynasts seeking hegemony such as Marius and Sulla, Pompey and Caesar, and Antony and Augustus. These people retained the armies of the empire while the supreme governance, the Senate, was losing its power and authority. Their wars precipitated other wars between citizens. Finally, *Pax Augusta* and the *princeps*<sup>9</sup> put an end to the drawn out civil disorders and raised the Roman people up again.

It is not easy to accept records in the *Res gestae* as historical facts.<sup>10</sup> Rather, it is possible to read this work as an *apologia pro sua vita* or apologetics of *status novus* when it comes to the statements by which Augustus justifies his own achievements. There is no trace of ‘revolution’ at least in the document, but rather of dissimulation and justification. Augustus asserts emphatically the authority of his own position. He also emphasizes the continuity of the Roman Republic, or else the recovery of it. Therefore, the *status novus* which he (re)established is no different from the previous *status quo*. The public offices, honors, and titles

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9 ‘Pax et Princeps’ is the title of the last chapter of Syme (1939).

10 For a skeptical take on this, see Syme (1939) 523–524.

which he held<sup>11</sup> were all legitimate in regard to their procedures because they were determined and proclaimed by the authority of the Senate. Though Augustus appears to be the protagonist of the restoration of the ‘Republic’, he was in reality no better than a monarch. He monopolized all of the *auctoritas* and *potestas*, and in that regard he held all the *potentia* as *de facto* sole ruler. By this exclusive possession of political power, the institutions and actual system of the Roman Republic were centralized within his person, actually reconstructed rather than recovered. Nevertheless, the justifications upon which Augustus relied appealed to tradition and focused on the ‘*status quo*’ which he had ‘re-established’.<sup>12</sup>

The *pax* was one of the most important means of his justification—it was a kind of propaganda.<sup>13</sup> Augustus was said to have brought about peace for the Romans and their empire again. It was quite important to the Roman people that Augustus had ended wars and that peace had been restored. After more than a century, civil disorders disappeared with the building of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* and the closing of the doors in the Temple of Janus.<sup>14</sup> Augustus was a hero and the first citizen of the Roman people, even the son of the (demi-)god whom they themselves had deified. If Augustus had not been there on their behalf, the *libertas* of the Roman people would have been annihilated by military dynasts. He was honored by the people and by the Senate for having protected them and liberated them from enemies within. Consequently, he enjoyed all the honors and titles which could be permitted in and by the *S.P.Q.R.* At the same time he dissimulated well, not wanting to appear as a monarch or tyrant. As a result, he was able to be Caesar after Caesar, Caesar beyond Caesar. The *pax* helped him to be justified as liberator,<sup>15</sup> not a revolutionary.

*Imperator Caesar Divi Filius Augustus*, the honorific *cognomen* of this ruler, had not before been heard, nor did it disappear afterwards. His successors inherited it and his status too; soon, on the other hand, the Roman people approved them as heirs of the *Imperator Caesar, Pater Patriae*, who had brought about *Pax Romana*. “That peace came with a master.”<sup>16</sup> In a broad sense, the Roman Empire regained peace through concentrating and centralizing its core into the

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11 See *R. Gest. div. Aug.* 34–35.

12 The omission of ‘new’ achievements in the *Res gestae* gives such an impression (Witschel (2005) 257).

13 Parchami (2009) 20–24 contends that *pax* was closely connected to the *imperium* of *imperator* Augustus.

14 See *R. Gest. div. Aug.* 12–13.

15 See *R. Gest. div. Aug.* 1.35 and Syme (1939) 506.

16 Lucan, *Bellum civile*. 1.670: *cum domino pax ista venit*.

one person who had overcome the crises that had continued for about a century. The new-old Roman Empire continued after passing through the period of transition between convention and invention.<sup>17</sup>

China as an empire is usually considered to have existed since the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. The Zhou 周 Dynasty (ca. 1045–256 BCE) dominated the mainland of China or the Central States 中原 for a long period, following the Xia 夏 and Shang 商 Dynasties, which to a certain degree overlapped with the mythical era. This dynasty was a central ruling kingdom, commanding other vassal regions. This ruling system was called a feudal monarchy, a system which had been chosen by the dynasty as the territories of the kingdom had grown. So its ruler did not have as much power as an emperor would have. A period of civil wars eventually followed the fall of the Zhou. Among several rivals, the Qin 秦 Dynasty became preeminent and resolved the chaos of the Warring States Period (481–221 BCE) by unifying the whole of China. The ruler of the first empire in the history of China is usually called Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 (r. 246–221 BCE), that is the ‘First Emperor’. One could call him the *rex omnium regum*, the one who defeated every rival kingdom. In his decision to use the title of ‘emperor’ (*huangdi* 皇帝), he is comparable to Augustus, who was the first to monopolize the title of *imperator* in the history of Rome.<sup>18</sup> However, the autocracy and the empire of Shihuangdi, which had been founded on a basis of strong Legalism 法家, collapsed soon after he died. On this point, perhaps he is comparable to Julius Caesar,<sup>19</sup> for both of them defeated their rivals thanks to their military abilities, put an end to civil wars, and unified their world by removing confusion and unrest. Nevertheless, there is a big difference between them. The power of Shihuangdi was reinforced by the suppression of any ideas other than Legalism, and he is said to have ruled by violent means. He became, therefore, a byword for tyranny in the culture of East Asia. He was neither father nor first citizen like Augustus, but rather a master-ruler.

After Shihuangdi’s death, the empire was divided and soon fell into civil disorder again. The Han 漢 Dynasty, which the Liu 劉 family had established, unified China again in 202 BCE. The fall of the Qin Empire was accelerated by the ruling ideology and by its governmental policy in general, which had been also the foundation of the empire. Therefore, the first emperor of the new Han

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17 “The *Pax Romana* was both the extension, as well as the culmination, of the Augustan Peace” (Parchami (2009) 24).

18 See *R. Gest. div. Aug.* 4 and Cooley (2009) 121–123. Augustus had been hailed as *imperator* twenty-four times in his life.

19 Grousset (1953) titled a chapter about the Shihuangdi ‘A Chinese Caesar’.

empire, Gauzu 高祖 (r. 202–195 BCE),<sup>20</sup> chose to repudiate the previous ruler completely and to distance himself from his predecessor. In contrast to this, Augustus had tried to purify the record of Julius Caesar on succeeding him even though the latter had been assassinated as a tyrant, and to preserve the *mos maiorum* and the tradition of the previous Roman Republic. He may have thought that his status could be justified on the basis of precedent. It is interesting that the basis for justifying the Han Empire was somewhat negative, or perhaps passive. Therefore, emperors of the Former Han might have needed to be gentler, more lenient rulers. Thus, the period of preparation in the Former Han Empire may be considered a transitional stage, a gray zone. A harmonious, hands-off attitude was sometimes recommended as an ideal mode of rulership, and for some time Daoism 道家 was prevalent. Interestingly, the name of the capital, Chang'an 長安—it means 'Grand Peace'—which this empire had chosen also hints at some of the ideas of rulers at that time.<sup>21</sup> So, the reigns of emperors Wen (Wendi 文帝; r. 180–157 BCE) and Jing (Jingdi 景帝; r. 157–141 BCE) seem to have come at the zenith of the Chinese peace.<sup>22</sup>

However, the expression *pax* is more applicable to the reign of the seventh emperor, Wu, of the Han Empire. The concept of *pax*, as already noted, has quite a subtle nuance. Most of all, the emperor Wu expanded the territory of his empire during his long reign, an achievement well matched by his imperial title, 'Martial Emperor'.<sup>23</sup> His early policy of conquest and imperial expansion was praised by a scholar-official at that time:

Because now, Your Majesty has annexed All-under-Heaven (*tianxia* 天下), there is no one who disobeys you in the within-seas regions. By looking around everywhere, by hearing all the people, by displaying the wisdoms of all your vassals, you have disclosed wholly the fairness of the All-under-Heaven so that the utmost virtue is being brightened and spread over the regions by you. Since Yelang 夜郎 and Kangju 康居, even though hundreds of miles away, are enjoying your virtue and conversing with you, it is the advent of the Great Peace (*Taiping* 太平).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See the entry "Liu Bang (Gaodi)" in Loewe (2000) 253–259.

<sup>21</sup> Stearns (2014) 28.

<sup>22</sup> 'Rule of Wen and Jing' (文景之治) is the Chinese shorthand for this peaceful period.

<sup>23</sup> Grousset (1953) 54–61 suggests that the *Pax Sinica* was achieved primarily by martial exploits. But in the next chapter, the author proclaims the "triumph of the Literati". For the general and 'modernist' policies in the reign of Wu, see Loewe (1986), esp. 152–179.

<sup>24</sup> Ban (1962), 56.2512. For the Chinese text, see Ban (1962) vol. 9, chapt. 56, 2485–2528. Hulsewé (1993a) provides necessary information about *Hanshu*. In addition, Loewe (2011) is a recent and brilliant study of Dong Zhongshu in general and detailed aspects.

Some time after the emperor acceded to the throne, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (f.l. 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE),<sup>25</sup> one of the foremost Confucian scholars, submitted his own responses to the rescripts of the emperor, documents which record the important phase of the history of the Former Han. The preceding quotation may be compared with the heading of the *Res gestae*:

Below is a copy of the achievements of the deified Augustus, by which he made the world subject to the rule of the Roman people, and of the expenses which he incurred for the state of Rome, as inscribed upon two bronze columns which have been set up at Rome.<sup>26</sup>

Though more detailed research would be needed to compare the two records, and this study has considered up to now just their general common theme of the peace of the empire, it is considered acceptable to treat them both to some degree as official documents. In the response of Dong Zhongshu, the conditions and manifestations of *Taiping* (the ‘Great Peace’) that are cited include the unification of *tianxia* (the ‘All-under-Heaven’), stability in domestic affairs, the realization of the emperor’s supreme virtue, and the obedience of foreign lands; these are presented as symptoms of, so to speak, *Pax Wudica*. Such patterns can be extracted from the passage quoted from the *Res gestae*, expressed briefly as *Pax Augusta*: he conquered the entire world and gave the state of Rome the commonweal. In short, the most important elements of *Pax Augusta* are the expansion of empire, the cessation of warfare, security within the empire,<sup>27</sup> and improvements in welfare. Although a comparison of the two *paces* shows that they cannot be regarded as identical, their conditions appear to share some characteristics of empires, meeting the terms of the definition given above.

However, neither for emperor Wu nor for Augustus did empire and peace remain temporary, nor did they themselves obtain their authority in merely synchronic circumstances. Each man was a *de facto* supreme ruler in his own world,<sup>28</sup> and the emperor Wu was in addition a hereditary emperor. Therefore,

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25 For brief information about him, see the entry “Dong Zhongshu” in Loewe (2000) 70–73 and Loewe (2011) 1–18, and with more detail in chap. 2.

26 *rerum gestarum divi Augusti, quibus orbem terrarum imperio populi Romani subiecit, et impensarum, quas in rem publicam populumque Romanum fecit, incisarum in duabus aeneis pilis, quae sunt Romae positae, exemplar subiectum* (transl. Cooley (2009)).

27 Compare the expression of Velleius Paterculus, *Historiae Romanae* 2.126.3: *diffusa in orientis occidentisque tractus et quidquid meridiano aut septentrione finitur, pax Augusta omnis terrarum orbis angulos a latrociniorum metu servat immunes*.

28 For the traditional and usual definition of ‘empire’ based on the Chinese classics, see Kim (2015) esp. 97.

the latter's emperorship was taken for granted in the imperial hierarchy; there were enough legitimate precedents in the pedigree of the heir to the throne. In contrast, Augustus himself was destined to set a precedent for his empire and the ensuing line of emperors. In regard to this point, there are a number of different ways to justify the diachronic legitimacy in each case. For emperor Wu, it may have been necessary to intensify rather than justify his status by relying on the existing ruling order. In the case of the first emperor of the Roman Empire, on the other hand, it was necessary to purify negative impressions of his adoptive father, to foster a belief that he had been misunderstood as a would-be tyrant, and to justify or dissimulate his own status by relying on the recovery of the Roman Republic.<sup>29</sup> Augustus was in the middle in this case, i. e. between convention and invention. Although he was the guardian of the Republic, the *primus inter pares* among citizens, all competence, power, and authority were concentrated in him as supreme ruler. When his heir would succeed him and assume his status, all the powers that Augustus had obtained would be passed on to the incoming emperor. After his settlement of internal disorder, with the apparently legitimate and constitutional (re)arrangements he had made, the peace of governance and empire discreetly swept away any discontent that may have remained. The people preferred the approbation of *principatus* to wars or hunger, and so his status was approved. The *princeps* was *Pater Patriae*, and he as the father of Roman people obtained legitimacy,<sup>30</sup> eventually becoming the first and the last 'republican' emperor.

### 3 The Agenda and Propaganda for *Pax Sinica*: 'outside Confucian, inside Legalist' 外儒内法

Shihuangdi attempted to centralize the power of the empire by adopting the Junxian 郡縣 system, which was opposed to the feudalism of the Zhou. His policy was then supported by Legalist thinkers, especially Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280–208 BCE).<sup>31</sup> In *The Biography of Li Si* written by Sima Qian, ideas on government and the administrative policies of the Qin Empire appear to have been recast, becoming quite different from the vision and design of Dong Zhongshu.

<sup>29</sup> See *R. Gest. div. Aug.* 8.

<sup>30</sup> Eder (2005) 31–32.

<sup>31</sup> See the entry "Li Si" in Loewe (2000) 228–230. There is an English translation of Sima Qian's *Shiji*, ch. 87, "The Biography of the Chief Minister of Qin," in Sima (2007) 23–51. For textual information on *Shiji* of Sima Qian, see Hulsewé (1993b).

In the Warring States Period, the Hundred Schools of Thought 諸子百家 competed and struggled with each other for superiority by forming alliances with kings and monarchs. Shihuangdi accepted the doctrine of the Legalist thinkers Li Si and Shang Yang 商鞅 and expelled all other schools of thought. This policy resulted in tragic instances of persecution, such as the ‘burning of books and the burying of scholars’ 焚書坑儒. Among several records, *The Biography of Li Si* provides the Legalist design for the Qin Empire in outline;<sup>32</sup> Li Si considered that the emperor, as the ‘Son of Heaven’ (*tianzi* 天子), embodied the law itself; therefore, he was the model, the teacher, and the master-ruler of all people. In other words, the emperor monopolizes all thought and doctrine and is capable of ruling on merit, being the Omnipotent One, since he is equipped with both *scientia* and *potentia*. The law is constituted in his body, enabling him to teach and enlighten his subjects. Therefore, all power converges on him and legitimacy originates from him. The emperor of Legalism was thus defined.

In fact, the design of Li Si was adopted by the first Emperor, and he ruled over the whole of China with the strong centralized power Legalism had granted for his empire, though not for a long time. This monopoly of thought claimed by the Qin Empire was made possible because the demand for ‘Grand Unification’ (*Da-yitong* 大一統) was already in existence during the Warring States Period.<sup>33</sup> However, *Pax Qinica*, if such an expression is intelligible, could not last long, and indeed it may constitute a contradictory concept. Shihuangdi had, like Julius Caesar, abilities which could be used to put an end to civil wars, and he even equipped his empire with imperial splendor. Although he did not, like Julius Caesar, meet a tragic end, he bequeathed the would-be empire<sup>34</sup> in some sense—but Shihuangdi was no Augustus. The fall of the Qin Empire meant also the failure of unification and the ruling system founded on Legalism. Its attempts to establish a new revolutionary empire by suppressing other contemporary thinking and denying the ancient regime were lost.

The Han Dynasty opened up a new age, as we have seen, with the reunification of China after resisting the tyrannical rule of the Qin Dynasty. The general propensity of rulers during the Han Empire was to react against the previous dynasty. Therefore, early in the Former Han period, centralism became relatively loose and there were often struggles, and sometimes even armed conflicts,

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<sup>32</sup> Following are the summaries of Li Si’s first two submitted memorials to the emperor; see Sima (1982) chapt. 87, 2539–2563 and Sima (2007) esp. 25–26, 28–29.

<sup>33</sup> Mutschler/Mittag (2010) 532.

<sup>34</sup> Zhu (2005) 34–36 argues that thus the Qin was a “weak empire”.



among imperial families. At the same time, the revulsion against war and tyrants turned into a wish to return to a peaceful age recalled from the dim past, or, as a solution for these ills, a leaning towards Daoism, which taught the concept of 'non-doing' (*wu-wei* 無爲), a form of escapism. Hence, if the early Former Han could be regarded as peaceful, such a state of peace could not be counted as an achievement of the empire itself.<sup>35</sup>

Initially the Han Empire inherited its territory and institutions from the Qin Dynasty. Later, however, after it had endured more than half a century in a peaceful state as a result of the relaxed policy of the emperors, an emperor who was both young and ambitious ascended the throne, just as Augustus had in the late Roman Republic. Soon, the emperor Wu issued a rescript to his vassals to seek a proper way of governance.<sup>36</sup> Whether the emperor soon thereafter adopted the proposal of Dong Zhongshu or not is not a simple question to answer. In any case, Dong Zhongshu is generally credited as the person who instilled Confucian ideas into the mainstream of governmental ideology in Chinese history. Similar to the ideas of Li Si, his Confucian ideas about the empire and the emperor were realized and institutionalized in part during the reign of the emperor Wu and partly later during the Han Dynasty.

In fact, some elements of the ideas of Dong Zhongshu appear to have become customary at that time. For example, the pattern of justifying the emperor as the Son of Heaven, which had been reinforced gradually since the Zhou Dynasty,<sup>37</sup> can be regarded as a ready-made imperial ideological concept. Moreover, by referring very frequently to the traditions of Confucian thought, he appealed to the emperor to seek his authority and his model in ancient tradition. This differs somewhat from the progressive ideas of Li Si. The authority of emperorship in the rhetoric of Dong Zhongshu appears to have been secured both in the contemporary conditions of that time and in terms of traditional precedents. However, the discussion between him and his emperor, which in general leaves a Confucian impression, likely requires more careful reading. Perhaps traditions held or regarded as originating in the historical past may have been an agenda or a propaganda tool related in some sense to the ideal Confucian empire, as in

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<sup>35</sup> See Zhao (2015b) 64–65, 80.

<sup>36</sup> The emperor's three rescripts are in *Hanshu*, 56.2495–2498, 2506–7, and 2513–2514. Each of the following parts are the responses of Dong Zhongshu, the contents of which are summarized in this paper. One can gain a general idea of Dong Zhongshu's responses to the emperor Wu through the paraphrases of Loewe (2011) 88–100.

<sup>37</sup> Zhu (2005) 30.

the democracy of the Athenian empire as avowed in the renowned funeral speech of Pericles.<sup>38</sup>

It is the emperor Wu who again enhanced the centralized power of the empire. He had by himself, similarly to Augustus, to remove the threat from the opposition within the empire, leaving him to concentrate on rearranging the kingdoms of the imperial families and the provincial system. In weakening local powers and strengthening central authority, Dong Zhongshu's proposal for educational renovation and his emphasis on Confucian education appear to have been an effective and less uncomfortable policy. In the case of Rome, Augustus, after rising to power, did not annihilate or even indiscriminately persecute the intellectuals, clients and/or activists of the opposition, at least in public. Likewise, there is no trace of violent monopolization of knowledge, as in the case of Shihuangdi, in Dong Zhongshu's design of an ideal empire. Nevertheless, some Legalist elements remained in the highly centralized educational system and in the state examinations for recruiting officials. The emperor as the Son of Heaven is still at the core of the concentric circle of empire; he is still a teacher and a master ruler; the people have to obey him as a father and a teacher. However, the emperor can no longer be the absolute source of laws or institutions. Unlike in the emperor of the Qin Dynasty, the ideal ruler as described by Dong Zhongshu has to study and learn the old tradition, to recognize well the 'Mandate of Heaven' (*tianming* 天命), and after that to teach and spread his virtues to the whole world. The emperor Wu was required to accomplish these Confucian duties of the Sage Ruler 聖王.

The Confucian idea of empire as advocated by Dong Zhongshu appears to be similar to the Roman emphasis on *mos maiorum*. Both set a high value on tradition. Respecting the republican tradition and justifying his own status, Augustus never violated the order of Roman law. At the same time, Roman law would facilitate sustainable support for *Pax Romana*. The institutions of empire were also based on laws and traditions. It is said in general that, with the fall of the Republic, the emphasis on rhetoric and oratory that had been an important feature of education began to decline. However, the legacy of rhetoric flowed into school education and into the sphere of law after political liberty began to diminish. Perhaps the most important achievement of *Pax Romana*, in some sense, lies in the voluminous works of Roman law. Moreover, this is not unrelated to the fact that Augustus attempted to maintain the traditional order and to remain within the constitutional tradition. Thus, at least the beginning of *Pax Augusta* was as much republican as it was a product of empire. Likewise, there were

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38 This comparison is developed from Loewe (2011) 121.

two facets of *Pax Sinica* from the time of the emperor Wu: ‘outside Confucian, inside Legalist’ (*wairu neifa* 外儒内法).<sup>39</sup>

## 4 Epilogue: *Pax Sinica* or Sino-centrism

An important contribution of Dong Zhongshu is that he made Confucianism the official discipline of Chinese empires. It is difficult to discern the actual degree of influence that his concept of Confucianism had on the Former Han or on each historical period. From different perspectives, evaluations of him can vary – as a follower of syncretism<sup>40</sup> between Confucianism and Legalism, as a designer of imperial Confucianism,<sup>41</sup> or as a forerunner of the Confucian-Legalist state<sup>42</sup> – but each of these conceptions may belie a one-sided truth. In fact, Dong Zhongshu’s ideas were linked to a Confucian agenda for the Han Empire, especially the foundation of the ‘Imperial Academy’ (*Taixue* 太學),<sup>43</sup> the educational curriculum of which consisted mainly of Confucian classics.<sup>44</sup> The products of this educational system played a major role in the history of China and of East Asia, though as an exclusive cultural ideology.<sup>45</sup>

Furthermore, in a weaker sense, the Confucian worldview should be regarded as one of transparent Legalism: not only had it dominated the Chinese people within their history as the official ruling idea of empire, it also influenced the

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**39** See Clower (2014) 22–23, esp. n. 51. He suggests that the term *ru biao fa li* 儒表法裡 or ‘Confucian on the surface but Legalist on the inside’ refers to the “machievellian Legalist school of statecraft which was one of the competitors to early Confucianism”; the context in which he notes this term is an attempt to explain the conformism of imperial Confucianism.

**40** But for the ‘syncretism’ of Dong Zhongshu on the basis of Confucianism with the universalistic theories of Yin-Yang and Five Phases (陰陽五行), see Kramers (1986) 753–754.

**41** Fairbank/Goldman (2006) 62 describe the ‘Legalist-Confucian amalgam’ as “Imperial Confucianism”.

**42** Zhao (2015a) 262–263 argues that the advent of the Confucian-Legalist state occurred in the Former Han. “Of these early Western Han thinkers, it was Dong Zhongshu whose highly influential synthesis of Daoist worldviews, yin-yang cosmology, and Legalist statecraft was openly centered on Confucian values” (277).

**43** There is a detailed discussion about this in *Hanshu*, ch. 56, in Loewe (2011) 136–148.

**44** For the Five Confucian classics, see Nylan (2001); Loewe (1993).

**45** Though their modest attitudes are careful, nevertheless the detailed study of Mutschler/Mitag (2010) appears to be confident and successful in comparing the ‘historical universalisms’ of the empires of ancient Rome and China.

civilization of East Asia as an inevitable core ideology.<sup>46</sup> *Pax Sinica*, which had been formed virtually since the reign of emperor Wu, developed into a controlling ideology, i.e. Sino-centrism (*Zhonghua* 中華).<sup>47</sup> Greco-Roman civilization is usually referred to as the source of Euro-centralism or Orientalism. Likewise, to trace Sino-centrism back would be to arrive at the early *Pax Sinica*, which has been the focus of this study.

In the history of the civilization of East Asia, especially of what can be termed the cultural sphere of Chinese characters (漢字), China has remained at the core for a long time. Even today, China is referred to by its neighboring nations as the ‘Central Country’ 中國.<sup>48</sup> The term 中國 for China has historical as well as ideological meaning. The division between the civilized and the barbarian, the superiority of certain nations, and the patterns of Orientalism have often been repeated in East Asia.<sup>49</sup> This grand narrative of Chinese empires looked to disappear with modernization, but it can be held to be latent in recent imperial discourse under the newly shaped concept of *Pax Sinica* as a likely counterpart to *Pax Americana* or Euro-centralism. Hence, although Sino-centrism 中華 is a historical concept, it is also ideological, and may create the unwelcome impression of an unequal relationship and bring to the surface the past order of nations in East Asia. On the other hand, *Pax Sinica* as investigated here is comparable to *Pax Romana*, for the examples of stable hegemony in ancient Rome and China were established in both cases by eclectic rulers during periods of transition. For China, *Pax Sinica* is supported by the two foundations of Confucianism and Legalism. The ‘outside Confucian, inside Legalist’ mentality had been perhaps traditionally typical of Chinese people, also serving as a ‘middle way’ of establishing and maintaining an empire. Therefore, it would be interesting to consider the initiatives that have been adopted in *Pax Sinica* in the Peo-

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46 If it is the case that “Legalism was liked by rulers and Confucianism by bureaucrats” (Fairbank/Goldman (2006) 62), it is not strange that the Confucian preference for the periphery was somewhat compulsory in the Sino-centric order of East Asia.

47 Similarly, *Pax Augusta* turned into a hegemonic peace ideology like *Pax Romana*; for a detailed argument about this, see Parchami (2009) 31–57. On this point, one may be able to refer to Sino-centrism as ‘Confucian Imperialism’, not imperial Confucianism. For a detailed politico-historical argument for the influence of Confucianism in East Asia, see Shin (2012) 21–217.

48 Chugoku (中国, Japanese), Jungguk (중국, Korean) and Trung Quốc (Vietnamese) all originate from Zhongguo (中國). In contrast, for the traditional view and a recent different contention about the origin of the name ‘China,’ see Wade (2009); Malinowski (2012).

49 The early name of Korea (Joseon 朝鮮) means the land of ‘morning calm’; and the name of Japan (Nihon 日本) has the land of ‘sun origin’ as the literal meaning in Chinese characters. Both countries are placed in the ‘Oriental’ region in relation to China. See Seth (2011) 16–17.

ple's Republic of China which may permit it to attain hegemony in the global world order.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the present is another period of transition.<sup>51</sup>

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**50** A 'Confucius Peace Prize', which was established by a Chinese businessman in 2010 and was discontinued amidst controversy in 2018, is interesting in this regard (Stearns 2014, 29); Callahan (2008) is also helpful, but it is necessary to read carefully here, since it sets out on the basis of a Japanese perspective which seems somewhat excessive.

**51** See Zhao (2015b) 381. The so-called 'Belt and Road Initiative' (一帶一路) could be considered a byname for *Pax Sinica*. On the BRI, a Chinese government global policy, see Huang (2016) and Clarke (2017).

Ermanno Malaspina

# From ‘Zero Tolerance’ to ‘Turn the Other Cheek’ and Back: Lucius Annaeus Seneca and the Graeco-Roman Roots of a Modern Transcultural Dilemma

I observe with admiration my colleagues who, thanks to their transcultural skills, can afford to read Eastern and Western sources first-hand and, in addition, in the oldest languages of the East and the West respectively. More humbly, my purpose here is to focus on the Western World, and particularly on its Classical period – the only one I have studied in a professional way – and on Seneca, to propose an overall picture, necessarily partial and simplified, aimed at a transcultural political theme, which is pivotal both in the East and in the West *today* (but also *always*, I would say): the dilemma of power gradation, namely the use of either force or gentleness, determination or patience, severity or kindness towards political opponents and/or public enemies. In doing so, I will not introduce any major novelties for understanding Seneca, but I hope to offer an interpretive framework and to showcase some Western ideological constants and recurrences of some utility in building a cross-cultural perspective. This may help scholars with more expertise than mine make full use of these constants by comparing them to the East.

I will divide my paper into five parts: after a short introduction to explain my question and my odd title (“From ‘Zero Tolerance’ to ‘Turn the Other Cheek’”), I examine justice as the Golden Mean between four ethical extremes, taking up Seneca’s thought. In the three following sections, I deal with the ideological outcome of my four-quarter grid, firstly examining the interchange of morally acceptable attitudes, then the opposition of sternness versus cruelty, and in the fifth section the last pair of opposites: mercy and commiseration.

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**Note:** I thank warmly my student Micol Jalla for her judicious remarks and Phillip Peterson for the linguistic revision.

# 1 ‘Zero Tolerance’ and ‘Turn the Other Cheek’

I have deliberately chosen two mottos that belong to unrelated contexts but which easily convey in the social imaginary the two opposite behaviours that I mean to signify.

‘Zero Tolerance’ is a new slogan: the first use of it was recorded in 1972 in the context of US political language: it illustrates a policy that enforces a penalty for every violation of a law.<sup>1</sup> The criminological basis of this procedure is known as the ‘broken windows theory’, a formula coined in 1982 and based on the assumption that any sign of neglect and disinterest (the ‘broken window’) makes it easier for a crime to take place, because it gives the impression that attention is scarce and that, therefore, the repression of a possible crime is reduced or absent; hence the need always to punish, without ever turning a blind eye, even on the lightest of offences.<sup>2</sup> This method, a technique of administering justice and managing public order, became universally known, even beyond the borders of the United States, when it was officially adopted by Rudolph Giuliani as mayor of New York City (1994–2001), with apparent positive results.

On the other side, ‘Turn the Other Cheek’ originates from Jesus’ ‘Sermon on the Mount’ or ‘Sermon on the Plain’ in the New Testament Gospels of Matthew and Luke respectively. These two variants of the saying in the Synoptic Gospels purportedly derive from a *logion* of Jesus present in the famous ‘Q Source’, therefore of very high antiquity and authority:

*Matthew 5.38–42* (‘Sermon on the Mount’):<sup>38</sup> You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”<sup>39</sup> But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.<sup>40</sup> And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.<sup>41</sup> And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.<sup>3</sup>

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1 There is even a Wikipedia page ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zero\\_tolerance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zero_tolerance)) about ‘zero tolerance’, with the following description: “Zero-tolerance policies forbid people in positions of authority from exercising discretion or changing punishments to fit the circumstances subjectively; they are required to impose a pre-determined punishment regardless of individual culpability, extenuating circumstances, or history. This pre-determined punishment, whether mild or severe, is always meted out”.

2 Kelling/Wilson (1982).

3 *English Standard Version (ESV)*. The Greek text reads: ἀλλ’ ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιάν σιαγόνα [σου], στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην; The Vulgate reads: *sed si quis te percusserit in dextera maxilla tua, praebe illi et alteram*.

*Luke 6.27–31*, In the 'Sermon on the Plain': <sup>27</sup> But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup> To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. <sup>31</sup> And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond historical context and theological interpretation, in which we are not interested here,<sup>5</sup> it is evident that we are no longer dealing at the level of public order management, but at the higher level of an ethical imperative, whose radicalism has always challenged the consciences of people, and not only of believers.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, while general ethical rules of two thousand years ago can also be of use today – and actually establish the creed of a part of our community – the policies for managing public order are historically determined and cannot take on an absolute value.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, these two mottos can still be used (this is my intention here) to define, in an immediate and simple way, two extremes of behaviour. On the one hand, the behaviour of one who believes it is right and useful to implement an ethics or policy or action of complete repression (the context is not important now), without exception, and on the other hand of one who, also without exceptions, intends to implement a policy of forgiveness and patience.

Note that in this phase of our inquiry there is still no definitive ethical evaluation of 'Zero Tolerance' and 'Turn the Other Cheek' on the Evil-Good axis; in other words, these two choices do not yet oppose each other as one (always) correct and the other (always) wrong. Rather, one could hold that these two ex-

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<sup>4</sup> *ESV*: τῷ τύπτοντι σε ἐπὶ τὴν σιαγόνα πάρεχε καὶ τὴν ἄλλην; *ei, qui te percutit in maxillam, praebe et alteram.*

<sup>5</sup> See Theißen (1979), Gnllka (1986) *ad loc.*, Hoffmann (1995) – I thank Edoardo Bona for these references.

<sup>6</sup> The quotation of Paul, *I. Cor.* 23 is apt here: “but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles”.

<sup>7</sup> Not to mention the fact that it is not possible to know precisely how in antiquity public order was managed: the administration of justice was radically different from today, because it was often left to private individuals and lacked legal guarantees (for foreigners, for slaves, for the *humiliores* in the Roman empire etc.). The skills that are today the preserve of professionals such as detectives, scientific investigators, special intervention teams and riot control units were in case of necessity entrusted to soldiers through procedures and with competences usually ruthlessly deployed against offenders. To quote only the most recent bibliography, see Ménard (2004), Rivière (2004), Kelly (2007), Brélaz/Ducrey (2009), Urso (2009), Flamérie (2013), Howe/Brice (2016), Riess-Fagan (2016), Davies (2019).



tremes could both be judged either way: positively by someone or in certain circumstances and negatively by others or in other circumstances.

## 2 Justice as an (Unreachable) Balance Centre

Exactly in the middle of these two extremes, equidistant from both and perfect in its essence, lies justice, which consists precisely in not exceeding the moral, political or legal retribution, either towards excess or towards lack. In fact, the Stoic tradition<sup>8</sup> has given to the West the principle that justice is basically *unicuique suum*, ‘to each his own’. This *dictum* appears in Cicero, *Rep.* 3.24,<sup>9</sup> *Leg.* 1.19,<sup>10</sup> and in a more mature form in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (1.1.9 *praef.*):

Ulpianus in the first book of the ‘Rules’: Justice is a constant and perpetual will to attribute to each what is due to him by right.<sup>11</sup>

In this sense, justice is like the sharp edge of a blade, extremely thin and therefore difficult to identify.<sup>12</sup> But the two sides of the knife – to continue with our metaphor – towards the opposites of ‘Zero Tolerance’ and ‘Turn the Other Cheek’ are much wider. It is therefore easy to understand why, in seeking to find where exactly the *unicuique suum* should lie depending on circumstances, people throughout history have preferred to lie down in a more comfortable position, on one side of the ideal of justice or the other: some have inclined to

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**8** The Greek wording is not identical to the Latin, stressing rather that justice is the science (or disposition) that makes it possible to allocate goods to each person in an equitable manner, i.e. according to merit (κατ’ ἀξίαν): *SVF* 3.63, n. 262; 65, n. 266.

**9** *Iustitia autem praecipit parcere omnibus, consulere generi hominum, suum cuique reddere, s<ac>ra, publica, alie<na> non tangere*, (‘justice instructs us to spare everyone, to look after the interests of the human race, to render to each his own, to keep hands off things that are sacred or public or belong to someone else’, transl. J. Zetzel).

**10** *Itaque arbitrantur prudentiam esse legem, cuius ea vis sit, ut recte facere iubeat, vetet delinquere, eamque rem illi Graeco putant nomine νόμον <a> suum cuique tribuendo appellatam, ego nostro a legendo*, (‘And therefore they think that law is judgment, the effect of which is such as to order people to behave rightly and forbid them to do wrong; they think that its name in Greek is derived from giving to each his own, while I think that in Latin it is derived from choosing’, transl. J. Zetzel).

**11** *Ulpianus libro primo Regularum. Iustitia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi.*

**12** It is not the purpose of this article to examine the tautological aspect of this assertion, which brings *iustitia* back to a *ius suum/ἀξία* basis which is, however, no better specified and can be understood in many different ways (see Kelsen (1945) 1. 1. A c. 2).

wards 'Zero Tolerance', or, on the other hand, towards 'Turn the Other Cheek', depending upon convenience.

The positive evaluation of any moral, political or legal rule that aims at a median position and seeks to avoid extremes is a transcultural issue that deserves research *per se*.<sup>13</sup> It also finds an immediate and automatic echo in the Buddhist 'Middle Way' or in the Confucian 'Doctrine of the Mean'; however, I will limit myself to the Greco-Roman world, because I find it risky to build research on decontextualised parallels.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, in this particular case one of the three main components of the 'Doctrine of the Mean' (Chap. 13) is admittedly leniency<sup>15</sup> and the famous related Confucian principle 'What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others' (transl. J. Legge) decisively shifts the point of equilibrium from the abstract centre of the *unicuique suum* towards what we have called the 'Turn the Other Cheek' extreme.<sup>16</sup> This is also a transcultural constant and we will see it reappearing soon in Seneca.

It is now time to go further: our framework began with a bipolarity ('Zero Tolerance' vs. 'Turn the Other Cheek') and has been enriched by a precarious, central point of balance (justice), but it is destined to become even more complicated: as I said, since neither of the two sides of the knife of justice is good or bad in itself as a matter of principle, we can imagine having positive and negative variants on both sides, and therefore no longer two or three elements, but five elements – if not six, should we also add the opposite of justice, namely injustice, to all possible options of the plans that move away from the perfect centre represented by justice.

It is now certain that the knife that we have used so far can no longer work; we need a new visual model, which will be offered by a grid, even if the result is neither virtual reality nor abstract geometric projection, as it might seem, but concrete historical data, thanks to Seneca, an author who so far, at least to my knowledge, has never been called upon for transcultural research, unlike,

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13 See e.g. Zeller (2007) and Chang (2008). Perhaps it is not entirely arbitrary to bring this view closer to Legalism/Fajia and Mohism, because of their interest in a political system governed by objective and impersonal rules, in open opposition to Confucianism (I thank Changxu Hu, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, for directing me to this field of study, with which I was not familiar).

14 See e.g. Parkes (2019). I recommend the cautious approach of Takada (2019).

15 See e.g. Gardner (1998) and Qiubai (2006). It seems to me that the Rules of Property (*Li*) can also be evoked on this occasion, *sed videant doctiores*.

16 To remain within the scope of the *logia* attributed to Jesus, Confucius' sentence just quoted is easily comparable to the 'Golden Rule' in Matt 7.12 ('So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them', *ESV*: Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς) and Luke 6.31.

for example, Aristotle<sup>17</sup> or Cicero.<sup>18</sup> Although he knew nothing about ‘Zero Tolerance’ or the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, Seneca arrived at exactly this pattern with his treatise *On Mercy* (*Clem.* 2.3.1–4.4), dedicated to Nero and written in 55–56 CE, where he outlines a complex system of values to distinguish four concepts, *miseriordia* (‘commiseration’), *clementia* (‘mercy’), *crudelitas* (‘cruelty’) and *severitas* (‘sternness’):

2.3.1 Mercy means ‘self-control by the mind when it has the power to take vengeance’ or ‘leniency on the part of a superior towards an inferior in imposing punishments’. [...] 2 The following definition will meet with objections, although it comes very close to the truth. We might speak of mercy as ‘moderation that remits something of a deserved and due punishment’. [...] 2.4.1 Its opposite, or so the ill-informed think, is sternness. But no virtue is the opposite of a virtue. What, then, is the opposite of mercy? Cruelty, which is nothing other than grimness of mind in exacting punishment. [...] 4 Here it is relevant to ask what ‘commiseration or pity’ is. There are many who praise it as a virtue, and call the man of pity a good man. But this, too, is a mental failing. Not only in the area of sternness, but also in that of mercy, there are things which we should avoid. Under the guise of sternness we fall into cruelty, under that of mercy into pity.<sup>19</sup>

This is Seneca’s outline, which simultaneously opposes two vices (*crudelitas* and *miseriordia*) to two virtues (*severitas* and *clementia*) and two ways to overstep justice (*clementia* and *miseriordia*) to two ways to lag behind it (*severitas* and *crudelitas*).

The precise interpretation of this text would take too long and would not help us much in the analysis we are making here, which is not focused on Seneca himself.<sup>20</sup> What could be said here is that this arrangement is unique in the whole of Latin literature and perhaps also in the ancient world: unique in termi-

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17 See n. 13.

18 Balbo/Ahn (2019).

19 Transl. J.M. Cooper and J.F. Procopé: *Clementia est temperantia animi in potestate ulciscendi vel lenitas superioris adversus inferiorem in constituendis poenis. [...] 2 Illa finitio contradictiones inveniet, quamvis maxime ad verum accedat, si dixerimus clementiam esse moderationem aliquid ex merita ac debita poena remittentem. [...] 2.4.1 Huic contrariam imperiti putant severitatem, sed nulla virtus virtuti contraria est. Quid ergo opponitur clementiae? Crudelitas, quae nihil aliud est quam atrocitas animi in exigendis poenis. [...] 4 Ad rem pertinet quaerere hoc loco quid sit misericordia: plerique enim ut virtutem eam laudant et bonum hominem vocant misericordem. Et haec vitium animi est; utraque circa severitatem circaque clementiam posita sunt quae vitare debemus: <per speciem enim severitatis in crudelitatem incidimus>, per speciem clementiae in misericordiam.*

20 I refer to my commentary in Italian (Malaspina (2004) 388–395) and to the most recent one in English (Braund (2009) 392–401); see also Braicovich (2019).

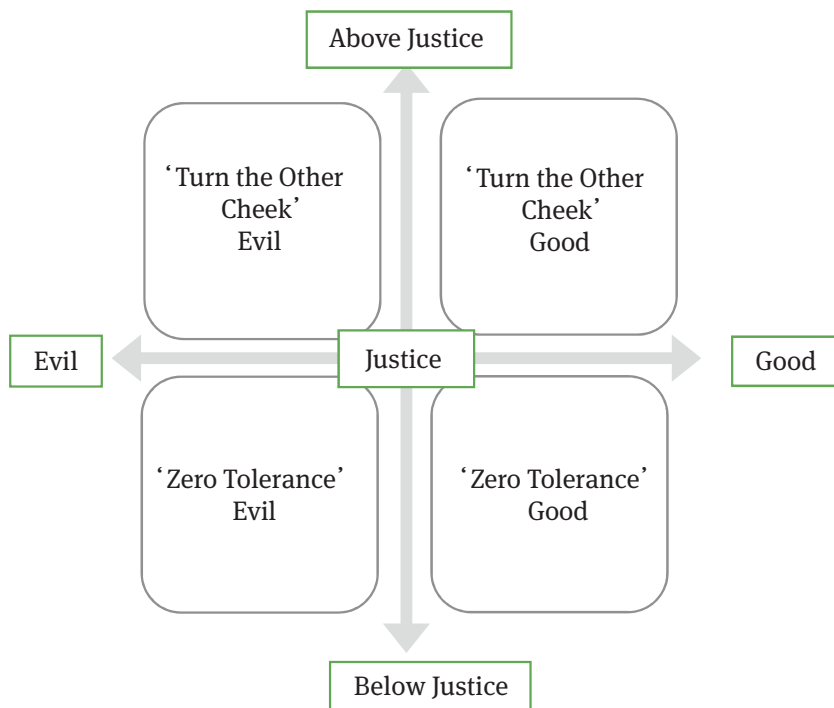


Figure 1: Seneca's system of values (© Malaspina).

nological choice,<sup>21</sup> but also in the distributive clarity with which the four functions are indicated, even beyond terminological issues:

We can now add the Latin *termini technici* to our grid.

Seneca knows that justice constitutes – or should constitute – the perfection of the righteous act and the centre of the scheme (or, using the previous image, the edge of the blade). However, he also believes that at least the prince and/or the wise man must go further in the direction of mercy and that this departure from justice does not constitute a worsening:<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Especially in the difference between *clementia*, presented for the first time as a Stoic virtue and radically separated from *miser cordia* (which is a vice, consistently with Stoic doctrine: *SVF* 1.96, n. 434 = Cic. *Tusc.* 3.21; *SVF* 3.109, n. 451); Seneca was aware that this *differentia verborum* did not exist in the language of his time and he himself respects it only in book 2 of this treatise: see Malaspina (2009) 55–59; 67–74.

<sup>22</sup> *Iustitia* is a rare word in *De clementia*: the most interesting occurrence is 1.20.2, 'There would be no point here in reminding him not to give easy credence, to sift out the truth, to side with innocence

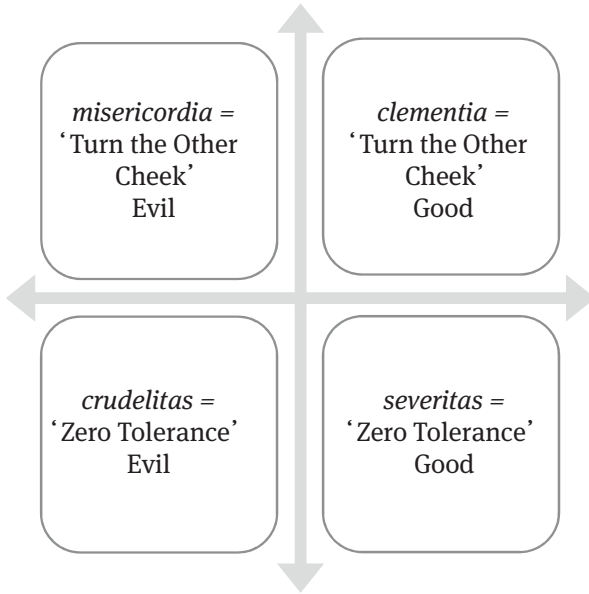


Figure 2: Seneca's system of values with Latin terms (© Malaspina).

Mercy is a virtue equivalent to sternness and justice on the ethical level (as are all virtues), but it is preferable to sternness and justice on a practical and political level, because it alone guarantees the ruler's security (*utile*), reputation (*honestum*) and humanity:

(*Clem.* 1.2.2) We should keep a mean. The balance, however, is hard to maintain, and any departure from parity should tip the scale to the side of human kindness.<sup>23</sup>

and be seen to do so [following Lipsius' emendation *et appareat ut non minorem agi rem*], to realize that the interests of the accused are no less important than those of the judge. All this is a matter of justice, not mercy. What I now urge on him is that he respond to damage openly inflicted on himself by keeping his mind under control, by remitting the punishment if he can safely do so or, if he cannot, by moderating it, and that he should be far easier to placate when wronged himself than when others are wronged', transl. Cooper/Procopé (*Supervacuum est hoc loco admonere ne facile credat, ut verum excutiat, ut innocentiae faveat tet, ut appareat, non minorem agi rem periclitantis quam iudicis sciat: hoc enim ad iustitiam, non ad clementiam pertinet. Nunc illum hortamur ut manifeste laesus animum in potestate habeat et poenam, si tuto poterit, donet, si minus, temperet longeque sit in suis quam in alienis iniuriis exorabilior, text Teubner 2016).*

23 Transl. Cooper/Procopé (*Modum tenere debemus, sed, quia difficile est temperamentum, quidquid aequo plus futurum est in partem humaniorem praeponderet*).

Seneca uses the whole of book 1 of the treatise to explain this concept to Nero, which is echoed outside Seneca by the well-known brocard *in dubio pro reo*,<sup>24</sup> which in turn has been incorporated into the positive legislation by the countries of Western tradition.<sup>25</sup>

The first transcultural spin-off of this scheme lies in the apparent contradiction Seneca imposes between justice and mercy (mercy is more 'just' than justice itself!), which reminds me of the role of leniency within the system of the 'Doctrine of the Mean'.<sup>26</sup> It is legitimate to object that this simplification does not take into account the difference in contexts (political for Seneca, jurisprudential for the brocard quoted above, moral-didactic for the *Zhongyong*) and the motivations behind the same behaviour, but I believe that at a transcultural level it is already an achievement to identify constants or recurrences without losing awareness of the difference between contexts so as not to fall into the simplifications already mentioned.<sup>27</sup> We are also tracing the footsteps of a long transcultural tradition, according to which the two morally acceptable choices (the quarters on the right in our grid) are not equivalent, but mercy is always preferable.

The main obstacle I see in making my analysis completely transcultural (and which comforts me in remaining anchored to my Western focus) is of a terminological nature: the English translation of our Latin terms is already questionable: except for the obliged pair *crudelitas*/cruelty, I have preferred 'sternness', 'mercy' and 'commiseration' (Cooper/Procopé) to 'strictness', 'clemency' and 'pity' (Braund), but I am well aware that this has no absolute value. *A fortiori*, finding a precise correspondent for these terms in Oriental languages is a difficult task for experts and impossible for me.<sup>28</sup>

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**24** The origin of the concept, albeit in a different form, is found in *Digest*, 50.17.125: *Gaius libro quinto ad edictum provinciale: favorabiliores rei potius quam actores habentur* ('the accused are treated more favourably than the prosecutors'; I thank Pierangelo Buongiorno for his help).

**25** E.g. in article 527 of the Italian Code of Criminal Procedure: "qualora vi sia parità di voti, prevale la soluzione più favorevole all'imputato" ('in the event of a tie, the solution most favourable to the accused shall prevail').

**26** See above n. 15.

**27** See above n. 14.

**28** To limit myself to a few considerations about the possible Eastern conceptual counterpart of *clementia*, there is for instance a Japanese word, *kan-yo*, which connotes clemency as well, but it is a neologism invented as a translation of Western concepts at the beginning of Modern Japan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (I am indebted for this terminological clarification to Yasunari Takada, whom I thank). As for China, the term most likely to match is the famous *ren* (Benedikt (1948): "China postulates an overriding virtue which is a condition of loyalty and piety. It is usually translated 'benevolence' (*jen*) but it means almost everything Occidentals mean by good interpersonal relations"). *Ren* is however more often translated as 'humanity' (Mercier (2019) 141):

Thus remaining within the framework of Western culture, we could now examine our four concepts either in their horizontal opposition or in their vertical connection: I mean that one can pass from the virtue of sternness to the vice of cruelty while remaining in the semi-plane of ‘Zero Tolerance’ (and the same for mercy and commiseration); or, vertically, that we can investigate the relationships between the two opposite vices of commiseration and cruelty or between the two corresponding virtues. A comprehensive analysis of all these possibilities, however, multiplied by centuries of classicism, would take much more space than allowed, nor do I imagine being able to master all of this.

I will consequently focus in more detail on some aspects of the horizontal opposition, Evil vs. Good, a bit later, while for the vertical connection I will limit myself to a few notes in the following section.

### 3 Shifting Paradigms While Remaining Morally Correct

Firstly, the coexistence of the two opposing vices of cruelty and commiseration distinguishes the foolish figure of the *stultus* in the Stoic sense, due to the absolute irrationality of the resulting behaviour, while the tyrant follows the more common pattern that would have him always and only be cruel (and lustful),<sup>29</sup> as we will soon see.

On the reverse side of *clementia-severitas*, I recall here that our framework fits perfectly into one of the best-known texts of Latin poetry, *Aeneid* 6.851–853:

Remember thou, o Roman, to rule the nations with thy sway – these shall be thine arts – to crown Peace with Law, to spare the humbled, and to tame in war the proud!<sup>30</sup>

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the (partial) overlap between the idea of ‘mercy’ and ‘humanity’ is, as we have said, also present in the Latin world *clementia* (see above n. 23).

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. *Clem.* 2.5.1, “mercy and gentleness are qualities displayed by all good men, while pity is something that they will avoid”, transl. Cooper/Procopé (*clementiam mansuetudinemque omnes boni viri praestabunt, misericordiam autem vitabunt: est enim vitium pusilli animi ad speciem alienorum malorum succidentis*). For the *topos* of the cruel tyrant, I refer to the proverbial utterance of Accius’ *Atreus*, *Oderint dum metuant* (*Trag.* 203, ‘They may hate me, provided they fear me’): see in general Tabacco (1985).

<sup>30</sup> Transl. H. Rushton Fairclough (*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento / (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem, / parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*)

Anchises' address precisely indicates the ability to shift from the positive extreme that we named 'Zero Tolerance' to 'Turn the Other Cheek'. And this ability is the quality that allowed Rome to establish its empire, with strength when necessary but also with forgiveness and integration. The correspondence between 'to spare' (*parcere*) in Virgil and mercy (*clementia*) in our grid and between 'to tame' (*debellare*) and sternness (*severitas*) is clear and is not necessary to stress further. Here, however, the coexistence of these two opposing virtues cancels the prominent position offered by Seneca to mercy and re-establishes the balance in the middle of the right semi-plane of our scheme: according to Virgil, albeit implicitly, the Romans follow *iustitia* in alternating reward and punishment, so as to establish *unicuique suum* as it should be.

A last point: are there any moral exhortations parallel to Seneca's but aimed at giving primacy to sternness over mercy? In the ancient world, such an attitude is usually negatively connoted, because of the close link between ethics and politics: a systematically exceeding severity is not a virtuous attitude, but the expression of the typical vice of the cruel and lustful tyrant just mentioned.<sup>31</sup> It therefore falls into the quarter of *crudelitas* in our grid, rather than *severitas*. In modern times, however, thanks to the definitive separation of morality and politics, this behaviour found famous supporters, who considered it no longer a vice, but a virtue. Here are just two of them, Machiavelli's *Prince* and Saint-Just:

Upon this a question arises: whether it be better to be loved than feared or feared than loved? It may be answered that one should wish to be both, but, because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved, when, of the two, either must be dispensed with. Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely; they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children, as is said above, when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you. And that prince who, relying entirely on their promises, has neglected other precautions, is ruined; because friendships that are obtained by payments, and not by greatness or nobility of mind, may indeed be earned, but they are not secured, and in time of need cannot be relied upon; and men have less scruple in offending one who is beloved than one who is feared, for love is preserved by the link of obligation which, owing to the baseness of men, is broken at every opportunity for their advantage; but fear preserves you by a dread of punishment which never fails. Nevertheless a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he abstains from the property of his citizens and subjects and from their women. But when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification and for manifest cause, but above all things he must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more

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31 See above n. 29.



quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. Besides, pretexts for taking away the property are never wanting; for he who has once begun to live by robbery will always find pretexts for seizing what belongs to others; but reasons for taking life, on the contrary, are more difficult to find and sooner lapse.<sup>32</sup>

Is there any mention of clemency among the kings of Europe? No: do not allow yourselves to be softened.

Justice is not mercy; it is sternness.

You have no right to be merciful, nor to be sensitive to treason; you are not working for yourselves, but for the people.<sup>33</sup>

## 4 The First Horizontal Opposition: Cruelty versus Sternness

Let us now address the first horizontal relationship, which is also the easiest: sternness versus cruelty. What makes a ‘Zero Tolerance’ action a virtue and what makes it a vice? Or, rightfully and politically, what makes it a lawful en-

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**32** Transl. W. K. Marriott (“Nasce da questo una disputa: s’egli è meglio essere amato che temuto, o e converso. Rispondesi, che si vorrebbe essere l’uno e l’altro; ma, perché egli è difficile accozzarli insieme, è molto più sicuro essere temuto che amato, quando si abbia a mancare dell’uno de’ dua. Perché degli uomini si può dire questo generalmente: che sieno ingrati, volubili, simulatori e dissimulatori, fuggitori de’ pericoli, cupidi di guadagno; e mentre fai loro bene, sono tutti tua, offeronti el sangue, la roba, la vita, e’ figliuoli, come di sopra dissi, quando il bisogno è discosto; ma, quando ti si appressa, e’ si rivoltano. E quel principe, che si è tutto fondato in sulle parole loro, trovandosi nudo di altre preparazioni, rovina; perché le amicizie che si acquistano col prezzo e non con grandezza e nobiltà di animo, si meritano, ma elle non si hanno, e a’ tempi non si possano spendere. E gli uomini hanno meno rispetto a offendere uno che si facci amare che uno che si facci temere; perché l’amore è tenuto da uno vincolo di obbligo, il quale, per essere gli uomini tristi, da ogni occasione di propria utilità è rotto; ma il timore è tenuto da una paura di pena che non abbandona mai. Debbe, nondimanco, il principe farsi temere in modo, che, se non acquista lo amore, che fugga l’odio; perché può molto bene stare insieme essere temuto e non odiato; il che farà sempre, quando si astenga dalla roba de’ sua cittadini e de’ sua sudditi, e dalle donne loro. E quando pure li bisognasse procedere contro al sangue di alcuno, farlo quando vi sia iustificazione conveniente e causa manifesta; ma, sopra tutto, astenersi dalla roba d’altri; perché gli uomini sdimenticano più presto la morte del padre che la perdita del patrimonio. Di poi, le cagioni del tórre la roba non mancono mai; e sempre, colui che comincia a vivere con rapina, truova cagione di occupare quel d’altri; e per adverso, contro al sangue sono più rare, e mancono più presto”).

**33** Translation mine (“Parle-t-on de clémence chez les rois d’Europe? Non: ne vous laissez point amollir”) (Duval (2003) 700); (“La justice n’est pas clémence; elle est sévérité”) (702); (“Vous n’avez le droit ni d’être cléments, ni d’être sensibles pour les trahisons; vous ne travaillez pas pour votre compte, mais pour le peuple”) (704). See also Borchmeyer (1998) 13–14.

forcement and not an indictable crime? For Seneca, the answer was very simple: the 'Zero Tolerance' action performed by the wise man was based on a rational choice and therefore always virtuous.<sup>34</sup> On the contrary, the action of the foolish is based on passions and is therefore always vicious, an answer possible only within the Stoic moral system.<sup>35</sup> Outside of this, what could be the discriminating factor historically? It is certainly not to be sought in the war-peace opposition<sup>36</sup> and often the definition of what is *crudelitas* (to be punished) and *severitas* (to be respected) is recognized only after the end of the conflict by the law of the strongest, established by the winners and based on their own principles and interests, as simplistic and trivializing as this comment may sound.

The legitimacy of a harsh and even cruel retaliation towards a guilty party or a public enemy (i.e., in our grid, the respectability of *severitas*) was never challenged in antiquity, and the Romans themselves seem generally aware of the lawfulness of their behaviour against their enemies, as Livy often reports: usually, his sympathy for the sorrow of the losers is quite pronounced, but most of the time the Romans, from his point of view, act according to justice as victors.

Nevertheless, although less pronounced and clear than in Seneca, Livy also recognises the need for more humane and lenient behaviour, as in the case of the cruel execution of Mettius Fufetius (1.28.11), who was notoriously dismembered by horses running in opposite directions:<sup>37</sup>

This was the first and last time that the Romans applied the kind of punishment that ignores the laws of humanity. In other cases, we can boast that no other nation has decreed more humane punishments.<sup>38</sup>

The polysemous richness of religious texts confronts us with a greater difficulty, because in the same sacred books in which we read 'Turn the Other Cheek' are present passages like 1 Sam. 15:

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**34** Even if, as we have just seen above (sect. 2), *clementia* should for many reasons prevail.

**35** See e.g. Graver (2007) 109–133.

**36** I mean that it is simplistic to say that administering justice in peace towards the citizens by applying 'Zero Tolerance' is an action of severity, while applying it in war against enemies gives rise automatically to actions of cruelty, or vice versa.

**37** It is therefore worth comparing 8.7 with 8.31–33, because Livy is quite explicit in approving the clemency towards Fabius Rullianus and in criticising Torquatus' inflexible behaviour. Livy then describes in dramatic tones, which also reflect his sense of moral disapproval, the massacre of the *dediti*, Aurunci (2.16.8–9) and Ligures Statellati (42.8.2–8); I thank Elisa Della Calce for her help in this point.

**38** Transl. V. M. Warrior (*primum ultimumque illud supplicium apud Romanos exempli parum memoris legum humanarum fuit: in aliis gloriari licet nulli gentium mitiores placuisse poenas.*)

And Samuel said to Saul, “The Lord sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore hearken to the words of the Lord.”<sup>2</sup> Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘I will punish what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way, when they came up out of Egypt.’<sup>3</sup> Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”<sup>4</sup> So Saul summoned the people, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand men on foot, and ten thousand men of Judah.<sup>5</sup> And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley.<sup>6</sup> And Saul said to the Kenites, “Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the people of Israel when they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.<sup>7</sup> And Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt.<sup>8</sup> And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.<sup>9</sup> But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; all that was despised and worthless they utterly destroyed.<sup>10</sup> The word of the Lord came to Samuel:<sup>11</sup> “I repent that I have made Saul king; for he has turned back from following me, and has not performed my commandments.”<sup>39</sup>

These forms of *crudelitas*, which we catalogue today as crimes against humanity and genocide, have no boundaries of time or place:

Mow down everyone universally, without discriminating between young and old, men and women, clergy and the laity – high ranking soldiers on the battlefield, that goes without saying, but also the hill folk, down to the poorest and meanest – and send the heads to Japan.<sup>40</sup>

The Japanese Buddhist monk Keinen described this scene of horror when Toyotomi Hideyoshi's<sup>41</sup> samurais put into practice his order to kill all those who resisted the Japanese troops, including women and children, and to cut off their

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<sup>39</sup> For brevity, I report only the translation (*ESV*), with the commentary of Alonso Schökel (1980) 2, 681: “Alla luce dell’insegnamento di Cristo, l’ordine di Samuele ci sconcerta, ci ripugna. Pur considerato come tappa superata della storia della rivelazione, ancora non ci è del tutto comprensibile [...] Non intendiamo dissimulare lo stupore né reprimere la protesta. Questo capitolo turba un cristiano, in più di un’occasione; e questo turbamento è una componente del suo significato, che ci obbliga a interrogarci”. See also e.g. Josh 6. Religious traditions other than Christianity are no exception to this ambivalence: personally, I have always been shocked by Muhammad’s behaviour during and after the Battle of Badr, as recounted in the *Tarikh-i Balami*.

<sup>40</sup> See Elison (1988) 28 and Hawley (2005) 465–466.

<sup>41</sup> Toyotomi (Nagoya 1536 – Kyoto 1598) is probably better known in Europe for the terrible affair of the *Twenty-six Martyrs of Nagasaki* (1597) and for interrupting the expansion of Christianity in Japan, leaving only the residue of the ‘Hidden Christians’ (*Kakure Kirishitan*) towards 1630.

noses<sup>42</sup> during the siege of Namwŏn in the second invasion of Korea (1596). I do not know if Hideyoshi would be passionate about the question of whether he exercised *severitas* or *crudelitas*, whereas today we would have no doubt about that (just as Keinen had no doubts),<sup>43</sup> even if we have not yet found an answer to our initial question ('What makes a "Zero Tolerance" action a virtue and what makes it a vice'). Even better, we have also discovered too many conflicting answers: the Senecan reason-passion opposition, Machiavelli's amorality,<sup>44</sup> the divine will and often simply the law of the strongest. Theoretically, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should define which punishment/retaliation violates inalienable rights (and thus in our scheme falls under *crudelitas*) and which is an acceptable form of sternness. However, we all know how far we still have to go in practice, precisely from a transcultural perspective; and even from a philosophical point of view, the more rights are multiplied, the less agreement there is on the natural law that should guarantee them: in so doing, of course, we move further away from the perspective of a collective transcultural recognition.

Let us end this chapter with a less bloody corollary: Seneca testifies to the existence of a milder variant of 'Zero Tolerance', which is so widespread that it has become proverbial: even if its motto, *principiis obsta* ('fight the beginnings' of an evil), was coined by Ovid for the frivolous field of love skirmishes to cure the evil of sexual passion,<sup>45</sup> Seneca uses it to heal anger internally and to nip one's negative impulses in the bud:

(*De ira* 1.8.17) It is best to beat back at once the first irritations, to resist the very germs of anger and take care not to succumb.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Toyotomi collected thousands of noses in a large pile known today with the misleading name of the 'Ear Mound', located near his Mausoleum, the *Hokoku-byo* in the Hokoku temple in Kyōto (Turnbull (2008) 81; Affinati (2017) xvii).

<sup>43</sup> "This chronicle details the horrors of war with a level of sympathy unrealized by the vain-glorious accounts presented by samurai eager for rewards or the terse reports typically proffered by Chinese and Korean military censors. From the start of his journey as a physician and spiritual advisor to the Ōta Kazuyoshi, Keinen describes Korea as a veritable Hell, in which slavery, wanton slaughter and general human suffering play major roles. As a result, it is one of the few surviving Japanese accounts that does not glorify the war or the exploits of Hideyoshi's generals and it provides an excellent window through which we can glimpse the suffering experienced by ordinary Japanese soldiers and Korean and Japanese slaves, whose voices have largely gone unheard over the past four centuries, at least in Japan" (Swope (2008) 170–171).

<sup>44</sup> See Alexander (2018).

<sup>45</sup> *Ov. Rem. am.* 91–94; but the concept is obviously older: see also e.g. *Lucr.* 4.1068–1072.

<sup>46</sup> Transl. Cooper/Procopé (*optimum est primum irritamentum irae protinus spernere ipsisque repugnare seminibus et dare operam ne incidamus in iram*).

*De ira* 3.10.17 The best thing, therefore, is to start curing oneself as soon as one is aware of the ailment, to allow oneself the minimum freedom of speech and inhibit the impulse.<sup>47</sup>

## 5 Mercy versus Commiseration

We can finally move on to the opposition between the good version of the ‘Turn the Other Cheek’ principle and the variant to be rejected. We already know that Seneca stresses the opposition between reason and passion: the forgiving behaviour dictated by *clementia* is positive, yet irrational *miser cordia* must be rejected. Certainly, defining commiseration as a vice makes a very strong statement, which, as I have said, is unparalleled in any other author and to which, moreover, even Seneca does not adhere outside book 2 of *De clementia*.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the importance of *De clementia* in the modern history of the so-called genre of *Speculum principis* (‘Mirror of Princes’),<sup>49</sup> what has been transmitted to Western political thought is not Senecan: the term *clementia* obviously remains, no longer as Seneca’s unique virtue, but as one of the numerous qualities of the ruler (at each level, from the king to the abbot of a monastery). On the contrary, the implementation of *miser cordia* towards persons in misfortune is not a flaw, but a merit in the Christian tradition of Western thought, since the radicality of ‘Turn the Other Cheek’ is a pillar of Jesus’ teaching.<sup>50</sup>

Even in the pagan camp we hear early voices that challenge the Senecan position. One which remained quite unnoticed is Pliny the Younger, who harshly criticizes this Stoic position, knowing first-hand the underlying ethical discussion. His personal contribution is very specific (a case of *mors immatura*, the death of a young person, in *Ep.* 5.16.8–10) and concerns the notion of *mollitia*, with which his practical and anti-dogmatic mentality preaches the ‘discovery of interiority’ and anticipates on modern sensibility, understanding and sentimentality. Since life is not based for him on Stoic *autarkeia* but on the relationship of mutual dependence between people, Pliny maintains that death interrupts this connection and therefore that his own well-being (*Ep.* 1.12) and even the well-

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<sup>47</sup> Transl. Cooper/Procopé (*optimum est itaque ad primum mali sensum mederi sibi, tum verbis quoque suis minimum libertatis dare et inhibere impetum*); for a complete analysis of the issue see Malaspina (2021) 181–184.

<sup>48</sup> See above nn. 20 and 21 for bibliographical references.

<sup>49</sup> See Roskam/Schorn (2018).

<sup>50</sup> The seminal paper on the subject is Pétré (1934), to which many other papers and books have been added up to the present: see lastly e.g. Harbsmeier/Möckel (2009), Franchi (2015) and Cavallini (2017).

being of the *sapientes* (*Ep.* 5.16.8) is severely affected by this absence, which in turn causes the *desiderium* (*Ep.* 1.12.10, 5.16.6).<sup>51</sup> To perceive this feeling and to share it with one's neighbour, in short to feel commiseration, even publicly, is thus an attitude that is not only excusable, but also necessary, without the need to resort to the Stoic justification of the *propatheiai*.<sup>52</sup>

He is, indeed, a man of great learning and good sense, having applied himself from his earliest youth to the nobler arts and studies; but all those maxims which he has heard from others, and often inculcated himself, he now contemns, and every other virtue gives place to his absorbing parental devotion. You will excuse, you will even approve him, when you consider what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him as closely in manners as in person, and exactly copied out all of her father. If you shall think it proper to write to him upon the subject of so reasonable a grief, let me remind you not to use the rougher arguments of consolation, and such as seem to carry a sort of reproof with them, but those of kind and sympathizing humanity.<sup>53</sup>

The Plinian refusal of *apatheia* is not related to politics *stricto sensu*, but concerns human bonds, far away also from Aristotelian *metriopatheia*: this belief can be easily shared and broadened to other fields, first of all to politics.

Having come to the end of our research, we can say that Seneca's outline, despite its uniqueness, proves to be a useful tool for interpreting the ethics of politics also from a transcultural perspective. The only modification that needs to be made is that for the Western tradition the quarter assigned by Seneca to *miser cordia* must be occupied by other terms, like 'feebleness', 'weakness' or 'ir-resolution', while *miser cordia* itself, with all its emotional connotations, must be relocated to the quarter of *clementia*, in serene cohabitation with it.

To show this in a more blatant way, we must now make a leap in time, to briefly examine one of the texts – or perhaps *the* text – that more than all others depends on Seneca's *De clementia*: the *Clemenza di Tito*.

This work was primarily a *libretto* written by the Italian poet Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782), with music by Antonio Caldara (Vienna 1734): Metastasio's text

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51 I summarise here for convenience Malaspina (2019) 142–144.

52 For which see Cic. *Tusc.* 3.83, Sen. *Ep.* 99.14–16, 18–19 and Graver (2007) 85–108.

53 *Ep.* 5.16.8–10, transl. W. M. L. Hutchinson (*Est quidem ille [i. e. Fundanus] eruditus et sapiens, ut qui se ab ineunte aetate altioribus studiis artibusque dedit; sed nunc omnia, quae audiit saepe quae dixit, aspernatur expulsisque virtutibus aliis pietatis est totus. Ignoscet, laudabit etiam, si cogitaveris quid amiserit. Amisit enim filiam, quae non minus mores eius quam os vultumque referebat, totumque patrem mira similitudine exscripserat. Proinde si quas ad eum de dolore tam iusto litteras mittes, memento adhibere solacium non quasi castigatorium et nimis forte, sed molle et humanum*).

shows profound obligations to classical authors<sup>54</sup> and, through the *Cinna* by Pierre Corneille (1640), to Seneca's *De clementia* in particular, with surprising agreements and even *verbatim* quotations of the Latin text. His text did not remain always the same: it was the fate of all these *libretti* to be re-shaped, re-written, re-interpreted, following the evolution of the music, the ideas of the composer and often the tantrums of a *prima donna*. When Mozart decided to set *La clemenza di Tito* to music (Prague 1791) after dozens of other composers, he was helped by another Italian poet, Caterino Mazzolà (1745–1806).<sup>55</sup>

Collating Metastasio's and Mazzolà's outputs shows that almost 80% of the text that survived the cuts<sup>56</sup> is exactly the same, without changes, while in the remaining 20%, changes vary from the substitution of an *aria* with another to the deep re-shaping of sections of the plot itself, built around the betrayal and conspiracy engineered by Titus' best friend (Sesto) and promised bride (Vitellia). At the end, although the emperor had every possible reason to sentence both to death, he forgives and forgets everything. In the passage of the final pardon,<sup>57</sup> Titus is on stage with Annio, the best friend of Sesto, who is asking for forgiveness together with his lover, Servilia, the sister of the traitor. The moment is crucial, and this is confirmed by the fact that Mazzolà and Mozart decided to change the text of the aria sung by Annio.<sup>58</sup>

Here are both versions, with my *verbatim* translation:

Pietà signor di lui.

So che il rigore è giusto,  
ma norma i falli altrui  
non son del tuo rigor.

Se a' prieghi miei non vuoi,  
se all'error suo non puoi,  
donalo al cor d'Augusto,  
donalo a te, Signor.

Pity, Sir, on him.

I know that rigor is right,  
but the errors of others  
are not the norm of your rigor.

If you do not do it for my prayers,  
if you cannot do it because of his mistake,  
donate him to the heart of Augustus,  
give him to you, sir.

Tu fosti tradito;  
ei degno è di morte,

You were betrayed;  
he is worthy of death,

<sup>54</sup> See Seidel (1987), Borchmeyer (1998), Buller (1998), Questa (1998) 191–203, Wunderlich *et al.* (2001), Pross (2011).

<sup>55</sup> See Questa (1998) 193.

<sup>56</sup> See Borchmeyer (1998) 11: “Mazzolà hat in Absprache mit Mozart Metastasios Drama auf ungefähr die Hälfte gekürzt, die Zahl der Arien (25) auf mehr als die Hälfte (11) reduziert und die Rezitative mit ihrem diskursiv-didaktischen Grundzug rigoros gestrafft”.

<sup>57</sup> Act III, scene 4 in Metastasio = II.7 Mazzolà = Number 17 in Mozart's score.

<sup>58</sup> The score is for a 'castrate' voice and now it is normally played by a woman.

ma il core di Tito	but the heart of Titus
pur lascia sperar.	leaves us nevertheless hope.
Deh! prendi consiglio,	Come now! take advice,
Signor, dal tuo core:	Sir, from your heart:
il nostro dolore	deem to look
ti degna mirar.	at our sorrow.

Titus, the main character, is in both versions of the opera what Nero failed to be in Seneca's hope: a perfect prince with all virtues: exceptional nobility, self-control, patience – and clemency in the foreground. He is also aware of the burdens of his position, the *nobilis servitus* ('noble slavery')<sup>59</sup> that compels him to refuse pleasures, freedom and personal desires to devote his whole life to the well-being of his subjects. All these virtues stand out compared to the impulsive and incoherent behaviours of the two traitors, Sesto and Vitellia:<sup>60</sup> in synthesis, Titus is apparently a character with whom Seneca would have been pleased.

Nevertheless, when he has to make his final decision, life or death, to what does Annio appeal to urge him to forgive? Neither to his Stoic reason, nor to the *raison d'état* and the National Interest, but to his *core*, his heart, i. e. his *miseri-cordia*, in Senecan terms:

*Clem.* 2.5.1 Mercy and gentleness are qualities displayed by all good men, while pity is something that they will avoid. The fault of a petty mind succumbing to the signs of evils that affects others, it is a feature very familiar in the worst kind of person [...]. Pity looks at the plight, not at the cause of it. Mercy joins in with reason.<sup>61</sup>

And even if Metastasio's and Mazzolà's wording is completely different, this point remains identical in both versions<sup>62</sup>; in the final scenes, Titus fulfils Annio's prayers, in the sense not only of forgiving the diabolical couple, but also of doing so by appealing to his own *core*.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> See Wunderlich *et al.* (2001) 7–8, and Malaspina (2009) 40; 181–182.

<sup>60</sup> This difference of characters is admirably transposed in music by Mozart: see Questa (1998) 200–203.

<sup>61</sup> Transl. Cooper/Procopé (*clementiam mansuetudinemque omnes boni viri praestabunt, misericordiam autem vitabunt: est enim vitium pusilli animi ad speciem alienorum malorum succidentis. Itaque pessimo cuique familiarissima est [...]. Misericordia non causam, sed fortunam spectat; clementia rationi accedit*).

<sup>62</sup> Compare “donalo al cor d'Augusto” in Mazzolà with “il core di Tito pur lascia sperar” and “prendi consiglio dal tuo core”. Even “il nostro dolore ti degna mirar” reminds Seneca's definition of *miseri-cordia* quoted in the preceding note.

<sup>63</sup> I quote an utterance of Titus added by Mazzolà (Act II, scene 11 = Mozart N. 19): “Does Titus' heart produce such senses?” (“Il cor di Tito tali sensi produce?”); some lines below, “But therefore



Since Cinna's Augustus still reacted in Senecan terms of *temperantia* and self-control,<sup>64</sup> the new role of *core* is due to Metastasio, and I do not think the experts on Classical *Fortleben* have yet paid enough attention to it.<sup>65</sup> I find this profound ideological change one of the miracles of our classical tradition, *semper idem, semper alter*: a deliberately Senecan text, whose nature is partly distorted in order to adopt elements that Seneca would never have accepted and which share in the modern emergence of the positive concept of 'emotion', which replaces 'passion', so execrable to Stoicism.<sup>66</sup>

I can only hope that our governors (also in Hong-Kong) draw useful lessons from Seneca (and Metastasio) and that readers have the heart of Titus towards my transcultural proposal.

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I give such great violence to my heart. [...] Long live my friend! even if he is unfaithful. And if the world wants to accuse me of some error, let it accuse me of pity, not rigour" ("Ma dunque faccio sì gran forza al mio cor. [...] Viva l'amico! benché infedele. E se accusarmi il mondo vuol pur di qualche errore, m'accusi di pietà, non di rigore", quite identical in Metastasio, Act III, scene 7).

**64** It is famous in Act V, scene 3 of *Cinna*, the *coup de théâtre* by which Augustus forgives all traitors appealing to his complete command over the world and over himself, but certainly not to his pitying heart: "I am master of myself as well as of the universe" ("Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers"). It is very significant that this sentence is not forgotten by Metastasio/Mazzolà, but inserted at the beginning of the opera and in Annio's mouth, as a predictable requirement and not as the end result of a difficult inner conquest: "Tito has the control of the world and himself" ("Tito ha l'impero e del mondo e di sé", Act I, scene 2 Metastasio/Mazzolà = Number 1 Mozart).

**65** No one doubts that Mazzolà/Mozart's reworking is influenced by Enlightenment ideas and that the different political climates in 1734 and in 1791 (during French Revolution!) explain many idiosyncrasies of the two versions, which have been duly highlighted (see Wunderlich *et al.* (2001), 11–17 and Pross (2011)), but not concerning the new role of the *core*, which predates Mazzolà/Mozart, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. This is not the place for an argument about this, for which I have no competence, but I find that the collation of both texts shows that Borchmeyer (1998) is absolutely wrong when he wants to bring Metastasio closer to Corneille by distancing him from Mazzolà: "Im ursprünglichen Libretto von Metastasio ist die Herrschergüte [...] noch durch die Staatsräson ausbalanciert" (10); "wenn Corneilles Augustus oder Metastasios Titus sich im vorliegenden Fall für die Milde entscheiden, so deshalb, weil deren politische Vorzüge hier eindeutig die der Strenge überwiegen" (13).

**66** See Dixon (2003).

Philippe Rousselot

# ***Ubi solitudinem inveniunt, pacem appellant: French Colonial Empire as Rome's Mirror***

Is it worth thinking about the French Colonial Empire in the light of the Roman Empire? Comparisons and parallels can lead straight to anachronism, a deadly sin for all scholars. And mirroring those two historical entities leads to central and well-known questions like, 'What was the Roman Empire?', or, 'What is an empire?'. On these two questions, the scholarship is already considerable. Our goal here is different: we wish to identify to what extent the main witnesses of French imperialism mobilized their Roman memories to justify or enchant the colonial project.

## **1 From Canada to Algeria**

France had two Colonial Empires. The first one vanished in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; it is beyond the scope of this essay. The first French empire is poorly known and totally forgotten today in the French collective memory. It is always difficult to explain to students why Manon Lescaut was exiled to French America. This great and untold story begins with Jacque Cartier's exploration of Canada in 1534. In 1660, Louis XIV grants New France the status of a royal province and greatly increases the flow of colonists to North America. A century later, the French Empire is no less impressive. France holds one of the largest colonial powers of the world, with colonies spread across North and South America, Asia and Africa. It was a fundamentally commercial empire in the service of a trade war. The colonies literally belonged to large independent firms (*Compagnies*), which had their own money, warships, territories, and a monopoly on products destined for France. Nantes and Bordeaux were the centers of this wealth. In 1763, the Treaty of Paris put an end to the Seven Years' War. France lost everything: Canada, Mississippi, Louisiana, Dominica, St. Vincent, Tobago, Grenada, Santo Domingo, Senegal, its five colonies in India, Bourbon Island and Seychelles. The heart of French politics was in Europe. Versailles did not care about the colonies. To complete this debacle, Louisiana was sold in 1803 to the United States of America by Napoleon I. This huge empire disappeared in a few short decades. Built up by a bunch of adventurers, businessmen and explorers, sometimes all three at the same time, this intercontinental dominion has never been a core policy for

French monarchy nor been embedded in the collective opinion. As soon as it faded, it was forgotten. The reason is quite simple: the First French Colonial Empire failed to be an empire at all. It was never designed to last. Whether or not the loss of this empire caused immense harm to France, public opinion remained insensitive to the disaster. Voltaire spoke for everyone when he said he was pleased to see France rid of those ‘few acres of snow’.<sup>1</sup>

The Second Colonial Empire, which is our subject, started from scratch. Its beginnings were laid in 1830 with the French invasion of Algeria, which was conquered in some seventeen years at high cost: in 1839, Abd el-Kader (1808–1883) proclaimed a holy war against the French invader and the military campaign lasted for eight years. Algeria was the first and greatest step in the French Colonial Empire. Two decades later, in 1854, Napoleon III sent forces to capture the port of Da Nang, beginning the French colonization of Vietnam and South Asia.<sup>2</sup> In 1871, the end of the Franco-Prussian war left France a humiliated power. Napoleon III’s imperialism, mainly directed toward Algeria and Asia, was over, but the advent of the Third Republic opened up new fields for French expansionism.

French positions were strengthened in North Africa: in 1881, France invaded Tunisia from Algeria, and by means of the Treaty of Bardo forced the Bey of Tunis to accept the status of a French protectorate. By the Treaty of Fez, in 1912, a French protectorate was formally established in Morocco. The French turn toward sub-Saharan Africa is spectacular. Regardless of the landing of French Marines in Madagascar in 1883, France settled colonial rule from Alger to Brazzaville, from Dakar to Libreville in less than 15 years. In 1939, roughly one century after the capture of Algiers, the French Colonial Empire covered 13.5 million km<sup>2</sup>, as Anon. (1939) remembers.

This limitless expansion had a strategic geographical centerpoint: the Mediterranean Sea. The First Colonial Empire has been heliotropic: the purpose of the western route was to capture territories in America. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 put an almost definitive end to French expansion in this direction. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 completed the permanent closure of the Atlantic route. In 1831, France – like Great Britain – rediscovered the Mediterranean Sea. It became its new strategic center of gravity, the real starting point of its empire. For the British, things were obvious. The Mediterranean Sea was the new sacred route to India, even before the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. For France, in search

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<sup>1</sup> Voltaire uses this image in several works to talk about Canada. He hated the idea that one could wage war over miserable if not deserted lands. Voltaire (1756) 110.

<sup>2</sup> In 1887, France brought Cambodia and Vietnam into a federation of protectorates under the title ‘French Indochina’, which incorporated Laos in 1893.

of new prestige, Algeria was proving ideal prey. It took twenty days to sail to New Orleans, a day and a half to get to Algiers. This proximity in space and time proved inviting. The French were astonished at this proximity, as had been the listeners of Cato the Elder, who had exhibited fresh figs in front of the senators, just harvested in Carthage three days before, or perhaps just one day.<sup>3</sup>

For Cato, Carthage was too close not to be dangerous. ‘The enemy is at the gates’ was the core message. Of course, in 1830, Algiers did not represent any imminent danger to France. The French king, Charles X, interpreting this surprising closeness differently: it represented for him an unparalleled commercial opportunity and, above all, a matter of prestige. The new expansionism no longer required conquest in Europe and did not imply long voyages beyond the ocean. Forgetting Nantes and Bordeaux, France contributed capital to this adventure toward the South and the African coast: within fifty years Marseille became the second most importance city of France.

Politically, the opportunity was obvious. France had no European competitor in this territory. The fact was that Algeria belonged to the Ottoman Empire, which exercised very light and unconvincing supervision over this region. Finally, France, like Great Britain, had a great interest in further weakening the dying empire of Istanbul: the next step was to be Egypt (and Suez). Enthusiasm reigned early on: France waged war in Algeria in order to free the local populations from the Ottoman yoke. Its disappointment was to be immeasurable because of the native revolt against this new invader. But what we must remember from this starting point is that France believed that it could easily and legitimately conquer Algeria for just one reason. Geography told France that Algeria was its natural hinterland.

## 2 *Ense et Aratro*

This vast undertaking was directed by Marshal Bugeaud (1784–1849) who, far from limiting the conquest to a single military operation, intended to build a colony on the Roman model. The soldiers engaged in this war of conquest were to become farmers, builders and landowners. According to him, the soldier-peasant in the Roman style was the best agent of colonization. Bugeaud’s motto, *ense et aratro*, ‘by sword and plow’, accompanied all his colonization work. Such was Bugeaud’s Roman vision: the soldier conquers and, once demobilized, the veteran cultivates. For many, this ideal matrix gave Bugeaud’s conquest of Algeria a

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3 Three days: Plut. *Vit. Cat. Mai.* 27; one day: Plin. *HN* 15.20.1.

natural aspect that was deeply in line with the French spirit, as if *ense et aratro* was an ancient national motto. Many have believed that colonization has revealed the Roman soul of the French. In a eulogy of Bugeaud, the academician Louis de Loménie (1815–1878) illustrated this idea by maintaining that the soldier-peasant is the type of man who best represents the history of France: ‘We have been, we are still, like the old Romans, and that is our strength, a farming and warlike people’.<sup>4</sup>

Bugeaud, like all the officers of his generation, was nourished in his childhood by Titus Livius, Cicero and Virgil. He waged the war of conquest ‘with his Roman ideas’, sometimes imitating them in his policy toward the natives as well as in the way he equipped the soldiers’ packs or chose the location of camps.<sup>5</sup> Military accounts abound with examples in which French officers set up their camps or barracks exactly on the sites of Roman *oppida*, sometimes by chance, most often by imitation.

In Bugeaud’s mind, as in that of his admirers, the motto *ense et aratro* had two consequences: the first was that the two functions were not simultaneous: the sword first, the plow second. The other consequence was that colonization, on the Roman model imagined by Bugeaud, is military colonization. These two inseparable ideas were at the heart of a vast debate that lasted more than a century. According to Bugeaud, the arrival of a civilian population – essentially administrative and commercial – could only be a second step, as was the case in the Roman colonies. From then on, Bugeaud’s strategy had nothing to reserve for the natives, except the promise of repression in case of revolt.

The Arabs will be forced to remain always on the allotments where they will be placed. How could such a radical change in their situation not often lead to revolt? That is why we must be strong by the constitution of the European population and by the army. Our empire is based only on force; we take, we can take no other action toward the Arabs.<sup>6</sup>

It is easy to detect in this text the methodical application of the Virgilian dialectic of *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*<sup>7</sup> of which Bugeaud and many others

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4 Loménie (1842) 7.

5 Ideville (1881–1882); Plée (1874) 47–48.

6 Bugeaud (1847) 7: “Les Arabes seront forcés de rester toujours sur les carrés où on les aura parqués. Comment un changement aussi radical de situation n’exciterait-il pas souvent à la révolte ? Voilà pourquoi il faut que nous soyons forts par la constitution de la population européenne et par l’armée. Notre empire n’est assis que sur la force ; nous n’avons, nous ne pouvons avoir d’autres action sur les Arabes”.

7 Verg. *Aen.* 6.852: ‘Remember, Roman, these will be your arts: to teach the ways of peace to those you conquer, to spare defeated peoples, to tame the proud’.

maintained a memory. In the 1830s there were many parallels between Jugurtha and Abd el-Kader, the hero of the resistance toward the invader. Bugeaud refined the comparison in a letter of 1837:

Let France remember well that the Arabs are still the Numidians who fought the Romans two thousand years ago, that their enmity is moreover increased by all the hatred that inspires in them the difference of religion (...) Let France imitate the treaties so clear and so laconic which the Romans made when they granted peace to a barbarian nation, and be wary of the Punic faith entangled with the Moslem faith.<sup>8</sup>

Bugeaud's colonial policy very quickly revealed itself for what it was: a fantasy elaborated from a more or less imaginary imperial Rome. However, for these admirers, Bugeaud left the memory of a perfectly successful colonization, and above all, perfectly thought out. The duality between the peasant-soldier and the civilian colonist is very marked in the texts of his later years:

Moreover, history teaches us that in all the countries occupied by the Romans, the military legions began after the conquest by making roads, raising aqueducts, clearing and ploughing the best lands, and it was only after these first works that the patricians with their slaves came to found these splendid colonies that we still admire today in the ruins that we see at every step emerging from the soil, so rich, of our Algeria.<sup>9</sup>

This ideal clashed with reality. From 1840 onwards, the contingent of soldier-peasants was reinforced by a strong European population of civilian origin, whose number quadrupled in some ten years. The ideal sequence from an imaginary Rome – peasant-soldiers first and civilian settlers later – did not come about as planned. Nevertheless, the lasting analogy between Rome and France spread everywhere. The fantasy of an agricultural colonization undertaken solely by veterans animated Bugeaud so much that he hated civilian colonists for a long time. Ironically, this predominance of the military over the civilian went so far as to introduce a preference for the indigenous. In 1874, an officer who

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<sup>8</sup> Ideville (1881–1882) vol. 2, 85: “Que la France se souvienne bien que les Arabes sont encore les Numides qui combattaient les Romains il y a deux mille ans, que leur inimitié est de plus augmentée de toute la haine que leur inspire la différence de religion (...) les traités si clairs et si laconiques que faisaient les Romains lorsqu'ils accordaient la paix à une nation barbare, et qu'elle se méfie de la foi punique entée sur la foi musulmane”.

<sup>9</sup> Delfraissy (1871) 16: “Au surplus, l'histoire nous apprend que dans tous les pays occupés par les Romains, les légions militaires commençaient après la conquête, par faire des routes, élever des aqueducs, défricher et labourer les meilleures terres et ce n'était qu'après ces premiers travaux que les patriciens avec leurs esclaves venaient fonder ces splendides colonies que nous admirons encore aujourd'hui dans les ruines que nous voyons à chaque pas surgir du sol si riche de notre Algérie”.

had spent his entire career in Algeria, General de Wimpffen (1811–1884), defended Bugeaud’s ideal, ‘this beautiful type of soldier-plowman’. He emphasized the difficulty arising from the coexistence of soldier-peasants and the civilian population. As they arrived earlier than expected and were not very well selected, civilians represented a counter-power to the military governor. Animated by an unfavorable prejudice for civilian colonists, neither soldiers nor peasants, all the officers identified themselves ‘with the indigenous interests’ at the cost of an odd divergence from the Virgilian formula:

The subjugated Arabs are the comrades-in-arms of our soldiers and generals. If they were only their defeated, their subjects, we would still prefer them to the undisciplined colonists who balk at any obedience. The Roman motto is a bit like that of our generals in Algeria: *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos!* *Subjecti*, the Arabs; *superbi*, the colonists.<sup>10</sup>

The debate on military colonization as imagined by Bugeaud remained alive for many decades. Indeed, the African colonies were always placed during their first decades under the responsibility of the military.<sup>11</sup> There were many opponents to this imperial vision based on *ense and aratro*. What is striking in examining their arguments is that most of them studied the Roman model at length to contradict Bugeaud and his epigones. Prosper Enfantin (1796–1864), leader of the Saint-Simonian movement, opposed the idea of colonization by soldier-peasants because both Roman and French soldiers were single and never had families. Like most of his contemporaries, Enfantin relied on the parallel with Rome:

When the Romans took over this part of Africa, did they colonize it or simply govern and administer it? (...) Did the Romans transport Roman families to African soil for cultivation, or did they form families with native women to constitute agricultural establishments; or, finally, did they limit themselves to a few local cultures made by military colonists (bachelors), around the occupied points, interesting for the defense of the country? – The examination of these questions will help to determine the meaning that this word ‘colonization’ must have in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

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**10** De Wimpffen (1874) 1: “Les Arabes soumis, sont les compagnons d’armes de nos soldats et de nos généraux. Ne fussent-ils que leurs vaincus, leurs sujets, on les préférerait encore aux colons indisciplinés qui ruent à toute obéissance. La devise romaine est un peu celle de nos généraux en Algérie : *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos ! Subjecti*, les Arabes; *superbi*, les colons”.

**11** This was the case for Algeria as early as 1830. This model concerned all the colonies: Chad had to wait until the 1930s to change its legal status from military territory to colony.

**12** Enfantin (1843) 11: “Les Romains, en s’emparant de l’Afrique, l’ont-ils colonisée ou simplement gouvernée et administrée ? (...) Les Romains ont-ils transporté sur le sol africain des familles romaines, pour la culture, ou bien ont-ils formé des familles avec des femmes

In those early years of colonization, the debate was about the idea of empire. The parallel with Rome led Enfantin to answer that Rome colonized not with peasant soldiers or families, but with slaves. However, Bugeaud's ideas were to live on, and the public discussion continued until the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, in 1910, Jules Harmand (1845–1921), explorer and diplomat, still contested the relevance of the motto *ense et aratro*.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, many historical works tried to demonstrate that the Roman 'colonies', so often quoted as examples, were not military colonies.<sup>14</sup>

### 3 The Present as Roman Legacy

The failure of colonization by the peasant-soldier did not undermine the idea that the model for the conquest of Africa should be that of the Romans, 'our masters in colonization'.<sup>15</sup> All the soldiers involved in the conquest developed the feeling of a filiation, both a legacy and the continuation of the same history. Arriving on the ancient site of Lambèse, Colonel Carbuccia expressed himself thus:

France can say that it replaces the Romans who left the city (Lámbese) and that it finds their traces still fresh; it is, it can be said, a glorious heritage worthy of its name.<sup>16</sup>

The feeling of the ancient Roman presence in Algeria continuously accompanied the actors of the conquest. The ruins of the Roman aqueducts underline a kind of imperial permanence, both historical legitimization of the French presence and concrete testimony to the theory of 'benevolence' and 'progress' that is attached

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indigènes, pour constituer des établissements agricoles ; ou bien, enfin, se sont-ils bornés à quelques cultures locales et pour ainsi dire modèles, faites par des colons militaires (célibataires), autour des points occupés, intéressants pour la défense du pays ? – L'examen de ces questions aidera à déterminer la valeur que doit avoir, au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ce mot de colonisation".

13 Harmand (1910) 145: "L'expérience, même entreprise dans les meilleures conditions en pays non tropical, en Algérie, et sous la direction d'un homme de guerre célèbre, le maréchal Bugeaud, qui avait pris pour devise : *Ense et aratro*, a complètement échoué, et, à plus forte raison, dans nos possessions de la zone torride, à Madagascar, en Indochine. Il est à souhaiter que l'on ne renouvelle point ces essais, si ce n'est à titre de distraction salutaire à fournir aux troupes inoccupées ou pour varier un peu l'ordinaire des postes et des camps".

14 Capitaine Condamy. *Étude sur les différents Systèmes de Colonisation militaire*, Paris 1908 (Lavauzelle), cité par Harmand (1910) 145.

15 Bussièrès (1853) 472.

16 Colonel Carbuccia, "Archéologie de la Subdivision de Batna", in Dondin-Payre (1991) 147: "La France peut dire qu'elle remplace les Romains partis de la ville (Lámbese) et qu'elle trouve leurs traces encore fraîches, c'est, on peut le dire, un glorieux héritage digne de son nom".



to imperialism. The French soldier is a civilizing builder, as the Roman legionary was before him. Moreover, to the irritation of the Minister of War, who would have preferred to see the military make war or maintain order, French officers took the initiative to participate in archaeological excavations throughout the newly conquered territory and transmitted the results of their work to the Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles Lettres. Most of the archaeological work was done on Roman remains, and very little on those of the Arab-Muslim civilization.<sup>17</sup> The taste for the *res Romana* crossed all units and concerned all ranks.<sup>18</sup> It is striking to observe that the academician Dureau de la Malle wrote his book of ancient history (*L'Algérie*, 1852) for the military:

This book has been reduced to a very small format, so that the soldier, the non-commissioned officer, the superior or inferior officer who would feel a taste for geography, ancient administration, in a word, for the archaeology of Africa, could put it in his bag and go through it during his leisure time in bivouac or in garrison.<sup>19</sup>

This disposition for Roman archaeology reinforces the idea that the French are natural heirs of the Romans. Numerous writings by officers serving in Algeria attest to the Roman presence, sounding like a reunion of family members who have been separated for too long. In an article entitled *Les Romains dans le Sud de l'Algérie* ('The Romans in Southern Algeria'), it is enlightening to see the French military being struck by the Roman presence wherever they arrive, even in the most remote areas.

Our eagles have to climb, on all the points of Algeria, the least accessible peaks, and to sink in the most arid deserts; they only very rarely meet a summit, a solitude which does not carry trace of the passage of the Roman eagles.<sup>20</sup>

This deep feeling of an 'already there' creates the irrefragable conviction of an inheritance that one cannot refuse and of which one must prove worthy. In

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**17** Taithe (2013) 513.

**18** Cf. Dondin-Payre (1991) 142.

**19** Dureau de La Malle (1852) 1: "Ce livre a été resserré en un très-petit format, pour que le soldat, le sous-officier, l'officier supérieur ou inférieur qui se sentirait du goût pour la géographie, l'administration ancienne, en un mot, pour l'archéologie de l'Afrique, pût le mettre dans son sac, et le parcourir pendant ses loisirs de bivouac ou de garnison".

**20** Bergrugger (1857) 276: "Nos aigles ont beau gravir, sur tous les points de l'Algérie, les pics les moins accessibles, et s'enfoncer dans les plus arides déserts, elles ne peuvent que bien rarement rencontrer un sommet, une solitude qui ne porte trace du passage des aigles romaines".

1891, the illustrious Gaston Boissier (1823–1908) made an argument in a text where everything seems to be said:

From the moment we are attached to this glorious past, we are no longer strangers, intruders, people who arrived yesterday, whom a happy adventure has thrown onto unknown soil. We have predecessors, ancestors; we come to continue and finish a great work of civilization interrupted over centuries. We are taking possession of an ancient domain, and these old monuments, in front of which the Arab does not pass without a feeling of respect and fear, are precisely our property titles. Let us accept the inheritance, Gentlemen – we will find our profit there.<sup>21</sup>

Boissier developed the idea, widespread everywhere, that the centuries of history which separated the Roman period from the arrival of the French were nothing more than a parenthesis, an interruption, a hole in civilization. As he suggests, the native himself is the witness to this conjunction between the Roman past and the French present.

This Roman past attributed to the natives is found in the fact that they call the French *roumi* ('Romans'). And what about their clothes? A literary glory such as Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) described the 'stoic barbarians (...) draped in their Roman togas, with their gestures and their poses of statue'.<sup>22</sup> This image of Kabyle clothing inspired by the Roman toga is found elsewhere.<sup>23</sup> Recourse to Sallust, or even to Tacitus' *Germania*, is quite frequent. These two authors were analyzed to reveal the fundamental characters of the Kabyles.<sup>24</sup> The latter, worthy descendants of the Berbers of the Roman time, were imputed as vocation with acclimatizing themselves to the requirements of colonial France.<sup>25</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the feeling of the French 'Romanness' at work in the colonization conferred to the conquest so deep a legitimacy that the Arabs themselves are supposed to have been convinced by that truth. This is what Gaston Boissier maintained without hesitation:

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21 Boissier (1891) lii : "Du moment que nous nous rattachons à ce passé glorieux, nous ne sommes plus tout à fait des étrangers, des intrus, des gens arrivés d'hier, qu'une heureuse aventure a jetés sur un sol inconnu. Nous avons des prédécesseurs, des ancêtres ; nous venons continuer et finir une grande oeuvre de civilisation interrompue pendant des siècles. Nous reprenons possession d'un ancien domaine, et ces vieux monuments, devant lesquelles l'Arabe ne passe pas sans un sentiment de respect et de frayeur, sont précisément nos titres de propriété. Acceptons l'héritage, Messieurs, nous y trouverons notre profit".

22 Gautier (1845) 132.

23 See Lapène (1844) 123 and Berteuil (1856) vol. 1, 39.

24 Lapène (1846b) 2, 5 and above all Lapène (1844) 177, 186–192.

25 Dureau de La Malle (1852) 30, 38.

There is between us and the former masters of this country [the Romans] a solidarity from which we cannot and must not escape. The natives call us *roumis* ['Romans']; they look upon us as the descendants and heirs of those who have governed them for so long and of whom they have a confused memory.<sup>26</sup>

In this text appears the idea already expressed a few years before by another great scholar, the Hellenist Gustave Boissière (1837–1895), professor at the Collège de France, in 1883, according to which the natives themselves recognize in French people a worthy successor of the Romans. 'The natives of Algeria submit to us because they recognize in us, the *roumis*, the legatees of Rome'.<sup>27</sup>

At school with the Romans, the French proved disciples who surpassed their masters. It is striking to note that the comparison of the two imperialisms has often been made to the advantage of France. The French conquest seemed to be more efficient because it was faster. Numerous texts remind us that it took a long time for Rome to conquer Numidia and Caesarian Mauritania. Colonel Edouard Lapène (1790–1854) begins his scholarly work written in 1846, *Tableau historique de l'Algérie, depuis l'occupation romaine jusqu'à la conquête par les Français en 1830*, with this statement: 'Rome took 240 years to reduce Numidia and Caesarian Mauritania (the territory of the former Algiers) to the state of subject and tributary provinces'.<sup>28</sup> The rest of the text takes pleasure in detailing the difficulties encountered by the Romans and the time it took to solve them. The officer gives the chronicle of the Roman conquest to highlight the speed of the French troops. This pride lasted a long time. Thus, in 1912, René Cagnat (1852–1937), professor at the Collège de France, in a long comparative exercise, concluded his reflection with this line:

Like them we have gloriously conquered the country; like them we have ensured its occupation... The only difference is that we have done more in 50 years than they had accomplished in three centuries.<sup>29</sup>

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26 Boissier (1891) lii: "Il y a entre nous et les anciens maîtres de ce pays une solidarité à laquelle nous ne pouvons pas, nous ne devons pas nous soustraire. Les indigènes nous appellent des *roumis* ['romains']; ils nous regardent comme les descendants et les héritiers de ceux qui les ont si longtemps gouvernés et dont ils gardent confusément un grand souvenir".

27 Boissière (1883) xvi.

28 Lapène (1846a) 1: "Rome met 240 ans pour réduire la Numidie et la Mauritanie Césarienne (le territoire de l'ex-régence d'Alger) à l'état de provinces sujettes et tributaires".

29 Cagnat (1912) 777: "Comme eux nous avons glorieusement conquis le pays ; comme eux nous en avons assuré l'occupation... La seule différence c'est que nous avons fait en 50 ans plus qu'ils n'avaient accompli en trois siècles".

Other observers, struck by the same observation, deduce that French strategists must remain prudent. If the Romans took more than two centuries to conquer North Africa, it is because they were patient. Adolphe Dureau de La Malle (1777–1857), a scholar who was both a geographer and a Hellenist, was the spokesperson for this reminder to persevere:

May the experience of past centuries guide and instruct us! Let this motto, *Perseverando vincit*, which sums up all the prodigious power of Rome, be inscribed on our flags, on our public buildings, in the African colony. This epigraph would be at the same time a memory, an example and a lesson.<sup>30</sup>

This aesthetic and architectural taste was joined by the economic challenge proper to empires. As usual, even in this register, the appeal to the Roman memory was systematic: ‘the fertility of this beautiful country can make it one day the granary of the French empire, as it was of the Roman Empire’.<sup>31</sup> Victor Hugo (1802–1885) defended the colonization of Algeria, fertile land, ‘which was called the granary of the Romans’.<sup>32</sup> Michel Chevalier (1806–1879), one of the greatest economists of the Second Empire, relied on a Roman example which it would be stupid not to follow and which constitutes absolute proof of the judicious nature of colonization. Underlining, like Cato in the past, the proximity of France to North Africa, he saw the colonization of its shores as a policy of restoring the colonial empire lost in the previous century and the promise of future prosperity. Above all, the notion of Roman legacy was by this point no longer debated. It was presented as a proof of natural right.

I would therefore very much like to see us re-establish the colonial empire that events have destroyed, and it seems to me that there is no place where it would be more natural and easier to bring about this resurrection of the colonial power of France than on the shores of North Africa. The distance, indeed, is not great; the climate is not extremely different from that of our southern regions, and then the proof exists, the peremptory proof, that the European races can prosper and develop on this part of the African soil, because at the time of the Romans they had spread and multiplied there, and threw a sharp glare there. In the last three or four centuries of the Roman Empire, civilization was spreading as brightly on the northern coast of Africa as in any part of Europe. Thus, the enterprise

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**30** Dureau de La Malle (1852) 1: “Que l’expérience des siècles passés nous guide et nous instruisse ! Que cette devise, *Perseverando vincit*, qui résume tout le prodige de la puissance de Rome, soit inscrite sur nos drapeaux, sur nos édifices publics, dans la colonie africaine. Cette épigraphe serait à la fois un souvenir, un exemple et une leçon”.

**31** Beaumont (1841) 44: “la fertilité de ce beau pays peut en faire un jour le grenier de l’empire français, comme il le fut de l’empire romain”.

**32** Hugo (1841) 810.

of founding a colonial empire in Algeria is perfectly judicious. It is an idea that it would be deplorable not to follow.<sup>33</sup>

This passage proffers a new argument, very far from Bugeaud's theory: civilization.

## 4 The Empire of Civilization

Even the fervent admirer of Bugeaud, under the effect of new ideas following the emergence of the Third Republic, had to temper his harshness. For them, Virgil's *parcere subjectis* should not correspond to the strict apartheid desired by Bugeaud:

Bugeaud wanted to imitate the Romans with this difference that instead of slaves, he wanted to populate the country with free and Christian men; and that, far from repelling the natives, he wanted to bring them to us by benefits.<sup>34</sup>

The one nostalgic for Bugeaud diverted his thoughts. From then on, it was a question of highlighting the 'benefits' of civilization that colonization brought with it. More than anything, the characteristic of French imperialism as civilizing, unlike the British empire, built on material interests, in the Phoenician way. One of the first to underline this difference between a Roman France and a Carthaginian Britain was Victor Hugo.

When one considers the role that England plays in world affairs (...), it is impossible not to think of that old Punic spirit that has so long fought against the ancient Latin civilization. The Punic spirit is the spirit of merchandise, the spirit of adventure, the spirit of navigation,

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**33** Chevalier (1863) 556: "Je désirerais donc beaucoup que nous pussions rétablir l'empire colonial que les événements ont détruit, et il me semble qu'il n'y a pas de contrée ou il soit plus naturel et plus facile d'opérer cette résurrection de la puissance coloniale de la France que sur les rivages du nord de l'Afrique. La distance, en effet, n'est pas grande ; le climat n'est pas extrêmement différent de celui de nos départements méridionaux, et puis la preuve existe, la preuve péremptoire, que les races européennes peuvent prospérer et se développer sur cette partie du sol africain, car du temps des Romains elles s'y étaient répandues et multipliées, et y jetaient un vif éclat. Dans les trois ou quatre derniers siècles de l'empire romain, la civilisation répandait au tant d'éclat sur le littoral du nord de l'Afrique que dans quelque partie que ce fût de l'Europe. Ainsi, l'entreprise de fonder un empire colonial en Algérie est parfaitement judicieuse. C'est une idée qu'il serait déplorable de ne pas suivre".

**34** Delfraissy (1871) 16: "Bugeaud voulait imiter les Romains avec cette différence qu'au lieu d'esclaves, il voulait peupler le pays d'hommes libres et chrétiens; et que, loin de repousser les indigènes, il voulait les amener à nous par des bienfaits".

the spirit of lucre, the spirit of egoism. In the past Rome was called *Urbs*, it watched over the Mediterranean and looked at Africa; today Rome is called Paris, it watches over the ocean and looks at England.<sup>35</sup>

France had not to focus on the material interests: ‘Maybe it is greatness, but it is a Carthaginian and English greatness which does not suit France’.<sup>36</sup> An identical sentiment was developed forty years later by Gustave Boissière, who described the Phoenicians as ‘enemies of war and peaceful speculators’, who had no other ambition than to be ‘the suppliers of the entire ancient world’.<sup>37</sup> He does not hesitate to consider them as the ‘British of ancient times’. Ultimate sarcasm was the hereditary enemy of France: these commercial empires leave nothing behind.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike Phoenicians and Brits who left behind only the faint memory of a flourishing trade, France was supposed to leave behind a legacy of civilization, as had its Roman model. Unlike trade, civilization is materialized not only by glorious vestiges, but above all by a force of transformation. This phantasmatic vision of Rome and France is found in Dureau de la Malle. Speaking directly to French politicians, he explains that the history of Roman Africa can be understood as an imperial program of France.

Under the empire, the extent of the conquests, the need to maintain and to preserve the many permanent legions, forced Augustus to extend the right of city significantly, to give himself a broader base for the recruitment of the national armies. He wanted to make of Africa a second Italy: his policy, in all the course of his reign, tended to this goal. But it was a work of time and patience. It was necessary to change the customs, the language, to uproot habits and national prejudices. (...) Two hundred and thirty-two years had been necessary to effect the fusion of the people, to cement their union, to build finally the durable edifice of Roman domination in Africa. But, in the following century, this fusion was so complete that, under the reign of Trajan, the law which inflicted exile on a citizen and which excluded him from the territory of Italy also prohibited him from staying of

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**35** Victor Hugo, *Le Rhin*, quoted by Laurent (2001) 65: “Quand on approfondit le rôle que joue l’Angleterre dans les affaires universelles (...), il est impossible de ne pas songer à ce vieil esprit punique qui a si longtemps lutté contre l’antique civilisation latine. L’esprit punique, c’est l’esprit de marchandise, l’esprit d’aventure, l’esprit de navigation, l’esprit de lucre, l’esprit d’égoïsme. Autrefois Rome s’appelait *Urbs*, surveillait la Méditerranée et regardait l’Afrique ; aujourd’hui Rome se nomme Paris, surveille l’océan et regarde l’Angleterre”.

**36** Hugo (1841) 970: “C’est là peut-être de la grandeur, mais c’est une grandeur carthaginoise et anglaise qui ne convient pas à la France”.

**37** Boissière (1883) VIII.

**38** Such had been the famous thesis of Victor Duruy (1811–1894) in his *Histoire Romaine*, 1843–1844, vol. 2, 32, 140, which Boissière claims.

Africa, where he would have found again, it is said, the morals, the habits, the language of Rome, all the enjoyments of the luxury and all the pleasures of his fatherland.<sup>39</sup>

By spinning the Roman metaphor, this text promotes an assimilating empire: it is necessary, with the patience of the strategist, to transform the colony into a second France, to grant citizenship to the natives and not to make these territories places of exile and penitentiaries. This osmosis between the Metropolis and its colonies had, for many years, its fervent defenders. It is striking to note how Roman history – as interpreted – has served as a model of excellence in a perspective radically opposed to Bugeaud's military colonialism as much as to that of the civilian colonists. This policy of assimilation, based on the Roman model, was supported by Saint-Simonianism, which considerably influenced Napoleon III, who developed this desire for assimilation in a radical manner. In his proclamation to the Arab peoples during his trip to Algeria in 1865, he compared Romanized Gaul and Frenchified Arabia:

Like you, twenty centuries ago, our ancestors resisted with courage a foreign invasion, and, however, from their defeat dates their regeneration. The defeated Gauls assimilated themselves to the victorious Romans and from the forced union between the opposing virtues of two civilizations was born, in time, this French nationality which has spread its ideas throughout the world. Who knows if a day will not come when the Arab race, regenerated and merged with the French race, will not find a powerful individuality similar to the one which, for centuries, made it mistress of the shores of the Mediterranean? Accept therefore the accomplished facts!<sup>40</sup>

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**39** Dureau de La Malle (1852) ix: "Sous l'empire, l'étendue des conquêtes, la nécessité d'entretenir, pour les conserver, de nombreuses légions permanentes, contraignirent Auguste à étendre beaucoup le droit de cité, à se donner une base plus large pour le recrutement des armées nationales. Il voulut faire de l'Afrique une seconde Italie : sa politique, dans tout le cours de son règne, tendit à ce but. Mais c'était une oeuvre de temps et de patience. Il fallait changer les moeurs, le langage, déraciner les habitudes et les préjugés nationaux. (...) Deux cent trente-deux ans avaient été nécessaires pour opérer la fusion des peuples, pour cimenter leur union, pour bâtir enfin le durable édifice de la domination romaine en Afrique. Mais, dans le siècle suivant, cette fusion était si complète que, sous le règne de Trajan, la loi qui infligeait l'exil à un citoyen et qui l'excluait du territoire de l'Italie lui interdisait aussi le séjour de l'Afrique, où il eût retrouvé, disait-elle, les moeurs, les habitudes, le langage de Rome, toutes les jouissances du luxe et tous les agréments de sa patrie".

**40** Quoted in Taithe (2013) 513: "Comme vous, il y a vingt siècles, nos ancêtres ont résisté avec courage à une invasion étrangère, et, cependant de leur défaite date leur régénération. Les Gaulois vaincus se sont assimilés aux romains vainqueurs et de l'union forcée entre les vertus contraires de deux civilisations opposées, est née, avec le temps, cette nationalité française qui a répandue ses idées dans le monde entier. Qui sait si un jour ne viendra pas où la race arabe régénérée et confondue avec la race française, ne retrouvera pas une puissante individualité

Many authors argued for the necessity of eradicating from African soil its native customs and replacing them with those of Europe, less to conquer than to civilize. The following words of Victor Hugo are in this respect very radical and have a filial connection to Rome:

Barbarity is in Africa, I know it, but let our political powers not forget it; we must not take it, we must destroy it; we did not come to seek it, but to drive it out. We did not come to this old Roman land that will be French to inoculate our army with barbarism, but to inoculate an entire people with our civilization; we did not come to Africa to bring back Africa, but to bring Europe.<sup>41</sup>

Jules Ferry (1832–1893), strategist and organizer of colonization under the Third Republic, had no other words in his famous ‘Speech on Colonization’, July 28, 1885.<sup>42</sup> It should be noted that Ferry was an ardent defender of education and not of violence, just like Victor Hugo who, a few years earlier, had advocated the capture of Africa in the name of fraternity.<sup>43</sup>

## 5 The Opposition and the Roman Model

This propagandistic enthusiasm can be explained by the fact that a debate had taken hold in France, for or against colonization. It is indicative of the importance of the Roman model that quite soon after the first years of the conquest of Algeria, opponents of colonization ridiculed the parallel made between France and the Romans. On the other hand, to challenge it, critics, rather than

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semblable à celle qui, pendant des siècles, l’a rendue maîtresse des rivages de la Méditerranée ?  
Acceptez donc les faits accomplis !”

**41** Hugo (1841) 951: “La barbarie est en Afrique, je le sais, mais que nos pouvoirs responsables ne l’oublient pas, nous ne devons pas l’y prendre, nous devons l’y détruire ; nous ne sommes pas venus l’y chercher, mais l’en chasser. Nous ne sommes pas venus dans cette vieille terre romaine qui sera française inoculer la barbarie à notre armée, mais notre civilisation à tout un peuple ; nous ne sommes pas venus en Afrique pour en rapporter l’Afrique, mais pour y apporter l’Europe”.

**42** ‘The system [of colonial expansion] can be linked to three kinds of ideas: economic ideas, ideas of civilization... political and patriotic ideas. (...) There is a second point I must address...: it is the humanitarian and civilizing side of the issue... The higher races have a right to the lower races. I say that there is a right for them because there is a duty for them. They have a duty to civilize the inferior races’.

**43** Hugo (1879) 124: ‘Come on, Peoples! Take this land. Take it. Take it to whom? To no one. Take this land from God. God gives the earth to men, God offers Africa to Europe. Take it. Where kings would bring war, bring concord. Take it, not for the cannon, but for the plough; not for the sword, but for trade; not for battle, but for industry; not for conquest, but for brotherhood’.



considering the analogies null and void, also indulged in parallels. For some, such as the left-wing deputy Amédée Desjobert (1796–1853), the Roman conquest of North Africa could not escape criticism and, rather than a model, should serve as a warning.

To those who always throw Roman history at us, we will recall that in Africa, at the very place where they propose us to follow the example of the Romans, these great conquerors, after one hundred and sixty years of military occupation, had to fight against the native Tacfarinas, the eighth or tenth leader of the Numidian insurrections.<sup>44</sup>

For others, like Edouard Urban, the French were simply unable to equal the Romans.

The Romans extended their power over the known world because their generals were complete men; they had been quaestors, that is financiers; they had been aediles, that is administrators; in a word, they had been praetors, judges, senators and consuls, that is statesmen. It is thus not astonishing that such men showed as much wisdom to found as they had shown value to conquer. Our generals are only military, and are unfit for administration. They are incomplete men, and all the high officials are also incomplete.<sup>45</sup>

Twenty-five years later, Franz de Nompère de Champagny (1804–1882), a magistrate and academician, without being resolutely anti-colonial, believed like Urban that the parallel with the Romans revealed the sad truth of the French Colonial Empire. It was made to conquer and dominate by force, not by civilization. It was time, according to the author, to correct this error:

Thus Rome became the center of the world by the civilization that its colonies spread, as it was already by the public right that its victory had been established; thus Rome succeeded

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**44** Desjobert (1846) 13: “A ceux qui nous jettent toujours à la tête l’histoire romaine, nous rappellerons qu’en Afrique, à l’endroit même où ils nous proposent de suivre l’exemple des Romains, ces grands conquérants, après cent soixante ans d’occupation militaire, avaient à lutter contre l’indigène Tacfarinas, le huitième ou dixième chef des insurrections numide”.

**45** Urban (1850) 34 : “Les Romains ont étendu leur puissance sur le monde connu, parce que leur généraux étaient des hommes complets ; ils avaient été questeurs, c’est-à-dire financiers; ils avaient été édiles, c’est-à-dire administrateurs; en un mot ils avaient été prêteurs, juges, sénateurs et consuls, c’est-à-dire des hommes d’Etat. Il n’est donc pas étonnant que de pareils hommes aient montré autant de sagesse à fonder, qu’ils avaient montré de valeur à conquérir. Nos généraux ne sont que militaires, et sont impropres à l’administration. Ce sont des hommes incomplets, et tous les hauts fonctionnaires le sont également”.

in assimilating the world: a more difficult task than that of conquest, a second and peaceful invasion that made eternal the results of the armed invasion.<sup>46</sup>

This idea that the French colonizers were too military and too violent to compare with the Romans would have a long life. The opposite criticism also spread. Thus, in 1862, the historian Amédée Thierry (1797–1873) associated the imperialism of the *res publica* with the greatest violence:

The Roman Empire! I cannot insist enough on the real meaning of these two words. To the idea of Rome and the Romans which is attached to us, in spite of us, creates an idea of military domination, of a state of conquest always subsisting, of peoples contained by means of force, but rising at intervals against a hated yoke, and always ready to claim, sword in hand, their lost nationality.<sup>47</sup>

Not un-colonial, and still clinging to the comparison with Rome, Prosper Enfantin denied the similarity between the two conquests.

After having briefly indicated the value that I impute to the word colonization, I have established at length the difference that exists between such a work, undertaken in our days, and what is called Roman colonization, and I have shown that it is not only with undertakings that go back twenty centuries, but with all the others, that our present undertaking must present differences: Ours is completely NEW; it has no example to imitate, no model to copy, even in the most recent past; one single fact is enough to prove it: we will not have slaves.<sup>48</sup>

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46 Nompère de Champagny (1876) vol. 3, 110: “Ainsi Rome devenait-elle le centre du monde par la civilisation que répandaient ses colonies comme elle l’était déjà par le droit public qu’avait établi sa victoire ; ainsi Rome parvenait-elle à s’assimiler le monde : labeur plus difficile que celui de la conquête, seconde et pacifique invasion qui rendait éternels les résultats de l’invasion armée”.

47 Thierry (1862) 181: “L’empire romain ! je ne saurais trop insister sur la signification réelle de ces deux mots. À l’idée de Rome et des Romains se rattache en nous, quoi que nous en ayons, une autre idée de domination militaire, d’état de conquête toujours subsistant, de peuples contenus au moyen de la force, mais se soulevant par intervalles contre un joug détesté, et toujours prêts à revendiquer, l’épée en main, leur nationalité, qu’ils regrettent”.

48 Enfantin (1843) 25: “Après avoir indiqué sommairement la valeur que je donne au mot colonisation, j’ai longuement établi la différence qui existe entre une pareille oeuvre, entreprise de nos jours, et ce qu’on appelle la colonisation romaine, et j’ai montré que ce n’était pas seulement avec des entreprises qui remontent à vingt siècles, mais avec toutes les autres, que notre entreprise actuelle doit présenter des différences : la nôtre est complètement NEUVE; elle n’a point, dans le passé même le plus rapproché, d’exemple à imiter, de modèle à copier; un seul fait suffit pour le prouver : nous n’aurons pas d’esclaves”. However, in the rest of the book, Enfantin often recommends doing like the Romans on a strategic level.

For the opponents as well as for the supporters of the colonial empire, these were the key words inspired by the Roman model: civilization and assimilation.

This assimilative enthusiasm led to a progressive, but certain, equality between the conqueror and his subjects. Opposing ‘Roman wisdom and moderation’ to ‘French violence and impetuosity’, Nompère de Champigny maintained that if the analogy between the two empires is to have any meaning, it must then pass through a true imitation of the Romans, ‘our predecessors’.<sup>49</sup> Otherwise, the French Colonial Empire would not have the duration of the Roman Empire. He asked his readers to meditate on the thought of Seneca:

What more faithful allies does the Roman people possess than those who were once its most stubborn foes? Where would the empire be today had not a sound foresight united the victors and the vanquished into one?<sup>50</sup>

## 6 The *Imperium* of the Third Republic

Over the years, analogies between the two empires evolved profoundly. It was no longer a question of accumulating quotations or anecdotes, of proceeding with mottos or reveries. The task was to study the Roman Empire to find the answer to the present questions. It was this idea that supported Boissière. It is necessary, he wrote,

to ask the history of Roman Africa for the lessons and the experience of the people who, in these matters, were the masters of the masters (...) It is necessary to ask these Romans whom we willingly propose as models, what are we supposed to do in the face of these serious questions of colonial policy, of these difficult problems of bringing races together, of progressive assimilation, of reconciliation with the vanquished; we must confront ourselves with the Romans in their organizing of their African conquest under conditions which were not identical perhaps, but certainly analogous. It would be very interesting to enlighten and animate the past with the lights and impressions of the present, especially to reassure the present and to encourage the future with the memories of the past. For what is the past for wise people, but the risks and adventures run by the first comers for the benefit of their successors?<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Nompère de Champigny (1876) vol. 3, 110.

<sup>50</sup> Sen. *De ira* 2.34: *Quos populus Romanus fideiiores habet socios quam quos habuit pertinacissimos hostes? Quod hodie esset imperium, nisi salubris providentia victos permiscuisset victoribus?*

<sup>51</sup> Boissière (1883) XVIII: “demander à l’histoire de l’Afrique romaine les leçons et l’expérience du peuple qui sur ces matières a été le maître des maîtres (...) Il faut demander à ces Romains que nous nous proposons volontiers pour modèles, (...) en face de ces graves questions de politique coloniale, de ces difficiles problèmes de rapprochement des races, d’assimilation pro-

This confusion between past and present was felt and staged everywhere. During the inauguration of the statue of Jules Ferry in Tunisia in 1899, the speech given is revealing:

I have the honor to present you the monument raised, at the expense of the government, to the memory of Jules Ferry, the first statue raised in Tunis since the Roman Empire, for fourteen centuries. In spite of the difference in time and costume, the consular figures whose effigy dominates these old forums, now gone, will recognize their direct descendant in this man with a willing brow. Like the Roman consul, he is a founder in this African land.<sup>52</sup>

Up to this point comparison with the Roman Empire in terms of surface area was only made with respect to the British Empire. But in 1899, under the effect of the international treaties resulting from the Congress of Berlin (1878), France contemplated for the first time the immensity of its empire as comparable, in this respect, to the Roman Empire.

The House having ratified the Franco-English conventions concerning Africa, our African colonial empire is definitively constituted. (...) From the Mediterranean to the Congo, and from the shores of the Atlantic to the ridge of the Nile basin, it is an expanse of territory larger than the Roman Empire of the Caesars.<sup>53</sup>

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the French Colonial Empire of the Third Republic was at its peak. Some specialists were still doubtful about the ‘success’ of the empire. The policy of assimilation desired by Saint-Simonian colonialism and Napoleon III had come to an end. Stéphane Gsell (1864–1932), a very influential scholar who had taught the history of North Africa at the Collège de France since

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gressive, de réconciliation des vaincus ; et cela, de nous les représenter organisant leur conquête africaine dans des conditions qui étaient non pas identiques peut-être, mais assurément analogues. Il serait bien intéressant d’éclairer ainsi et d’animer le passé des lumières et des impressions du présent, surtout de rassurer le présent et d’encourager l’avenir par les souvenirs du passé. Car le passé, qu’est-ce pour les peuples sages, que les risques et les aventures courus par les premiers venus au profit de leurs successeurs ?”.

52 Anon. (1899a) 2: “J’ai l’honneur de vous présenter le monument élevé, aux frais du gouvernement, à la mémoire de Jules Ferry, la première statue élevée à Tunis depuis l’empire romain, depuis quatorze siècles. Malgré la différence des temps et la différence du costume, les personnages consulaires dont l’effigie domine ces vieux forums, aujourd’hui disparus, reconnaîtront leur descendant direct dans cet homme au front volontaire. Comme le consul romain, c’est un fondateur sur cette terre d’Afrique”.

53 Anon. (1899b) 1: “La Chambre ayant ratifié les conventions franco-anglaises concernant l’Afrique, notre empire colonial africain se trouve définitivement constitué. (...) Depuis la Méditerranée jusqu’au Congo, et des rivages de l’Atlantique jusqu’à la ligne de faite du bassin du Nil, c’est une étendue de territoire plus vaste que l’empire romain des Césars”.

1912, rejected the possibility of assimilation. Echoing Napoleon III, he had a clear sense of French destiny: from the unification of Gaul by the Romans, France was born. But this capacity of France to assimilate foreign elements in order to perfect its unity is what was missing in North Africa, which, Gsell said,

has suffered, and always in an incomplete way, the dominations and civilizations that have been imposed on it; it has hardly transformed what it has received. One could claim, without too much exaggeration, that its history is only the history of those who successively conquered it.<sup>54</sup>

Like many before him, he wrote the history of the Roman conquest in order to make the colonial situation present to the public eye. Thus, the following description of the Roman pacification played on the expression ‘Army of Africa’, applied to the Romans, whereas this was the name officially given to the French forces engaged in Africa.

The Army of Africa... had a hard and thankless task to fulfill. It was not a question of fighting great battles, of winning brilliant victories. It was necessary to stop the incursions of the plunderers, to guard the passages, to expect all surprises, to force the enemy into abrupt mountains, to pursue him into vast solitudes, to answer the razzias with razzias. It was a police task, irritating and painful, rather than a work of war.<sup>55</sup>

This text also marked a return to the theory of force laid down by Bugeaud. It was a way of describing the conquest and its consequences as Bugeaud had predicted. In the wake of this literature, which considered the native as the representative of an ‘aggressive, plundering barbarism, a perpetual threat to peace’, the idea developed that the colonist was the only legitimate master of these territories. In 1921, Louis Bertrand (1866–1941), novelist, essayist and academician, was not afraid to call North Africa ‘Latin Africa’. For him, French Algeria was nothing more than Roman Africa returned to its historical vocation. Thus, the

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54 At his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, Gsell (1912): “incapable par ses propres efforts de sortir de la barbarie ; elle y est retombée lorsqu’elle a été livrée à elle-même ; elle a subi, et toujours d’une manière incomplète, les dominations et les civilisations qui lui ont été imposées ; elle n’a guère transformé ce qu’elle a reçu. On a pu prétendre, sans trop d’exagération, que son histoire n’est que l’histoire de ceux qui l’ont successivement conquise”.

55 Gsell (1912) as cited in Christol (2015) 18: “L’armée d’Afrique... eut une tâche rude et ingrate à remplir. Il ne s’agissait pas de livrer de grandes batailles, de remporter des victoires éclatantes. Il fallait arrêter les incursions des pillards, garder les passages, s’attendre à toutes les surprises, forcer l’ennemi dans des montagnes abruptes, le poursuivre dans de vastes solitudes, répondre aux razzias par des razzias. C’était une besogne de police, irritante et pénible, plutôt qu’une œuvre de guerre”.

colonists were ‘the true masters of the soil who represented the highest and most ancient Africa’ and were the direct heirs of their Roman ‘ancestors’.<sup>56</sup> These racialist theses, supported by the ideology of the extreme right, provided new fodder for colonial ideology.<sup>57</sup> The enthusiasm for colonization and its human value found echoes even among the republicans. One of the greatest thinkers of the social leftwing, Charles Péguy (1873–1914), gave a splendid ovation to the young French officers who had left their comfort to conquer the world. In ‘Victor Marie, Comte Hugo’ (1910), he addresses a young colonial officer with an impressive style:

Young man, pure-hearted man, you who in a secular house reintroduced the ancient glory, the first glory, the glory of war; Latin, Roman, French, you who, from all these bloods, make French blood and French heroism; Roman heir to the Numidian wars, French heir to the Jugurthinian wars; artillery heir to the ancient artillery, the Roman ballista (...), colonial heir to the Roman colonies, and again: Latin, Roman, heir of the Roman peace (...), peacemaker who makes peace with swords, the only one that holds, the only one that lasts, the only one that is finally worthy, the only one that is loyal (...), you who maintain peace by force, you who impose peace through war, *bello pacem imposuisti*, and who know that no peace is solid, is worthy only when imposed, when guarded by war (...), Latin, Roman, French, heir to the Roman road, *castrametator*, you who know what it is to fight a road and sit on a camp (...), you who, if necessary, maintain culture by force, and if necessary, by force of arms.<sup>58</sup>

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56 See Lorcin (2005) 266 ff.

57 We find the trace of it in a certain way in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which shows that in 1920 the victors justified their continued control by arguing that people in these territories were not yet ready for freedom: ‘To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization’.

58 Péguy (1910) 255: “Homme jeune, homme au cœur pur, vous qui dans une maison laïque avez réintroduit la gloire antique, la première gloire, la gloire de la guerre ; Latin, Romain, Français, vous qui de tous ces sangs nous faites un sang français et un héroïsme à la française ; Romain héritier des guerres numidiennes, Français héritier des guerres jugurthiniennes ; artilleur héritier des antiques artilleries, des balistes romaines (...), colonial héritier des colonies romaines”, and also: “Latin, Romain, héritier de la paix romaine (...), pacificateur qui faites la paix à coups de sabre, la seule qui tienne, la seule qui dure, la seule enfin qui soit digne, la seule au fond qui soit loyale (...), vous qui maintenez la paix par la force, vous qui imposez la paix par la guerre, *bello pacem qui imposuisti*, et qui savez que nulle paix n’est solide, n’est digne qu’imposée, que gardée par la guerre (...), Latin, Romain, Français, héritier de la voie romaine, castramétateur, vous qui savez ce que c’est que de frayer une route et d’asseoir un camp (...), vous qui au besoin maintiendriez la culture par la force, et au besoin, comme il faut, par la force des armes ...”.

Recall that Péguy was the mastermind of several generations of French intellectuals, right and left (still today). He clearly expresses the equivalence between war and civilization, force and culture, violence and generosity, Rome and colonization. Julien Benda (1867–1956), another influential intellectual, remembered his youth in *Jeunesse d'un clerc* (1936): 'We considered Hannibal, Jugurtha and Mithridates as "savages", who could only be defeated by civilization, by the Romans, by us'.<sup>59</sup> School books follow the same slope. It was at one time not uncommon to read that Scipio was a 'great colonel'.

What is important to note is that the French Colonial Empire was most often observed or administered by men trained in the humanities. The Roman reference was all the more natural. For many of these post-romantic thinkers and heralds of a utopian empire, not only did France bring civilization into the 'sunny darkness' (as said Victor Hugo), but the colonial officer was the type of man capable of regenerating metropolitan France, asleep and lazy. This idea was established by Ernst Psichari (1883–1914), a kind of French Lawrence of Arabia, brilliant author and colonial officer in Mauritania. In his autobiographical *Voyage d'un Centurion* ('Journey of a Centurion'), he explained having left an ancient world and discovering the desert in an unexpected light.<sup>60</sup> Dressed with an Arab dress (as Lawrence will do later), he gives this revealing formula: 'In my Arabian sails, [I am] a young Roman, dressed in the pretext toga'.<sup>61</sup>

The conquest of Algeria was experienced as one of the great moments in the history of France and of the world, and it washed away the supreme humiliation of the loss of French America. The conquest of Algeria opened the doors of the French Sudan. Such was the enthusiastic theory of Onésime Reclus (1837–1916), a geographer best known as the inventor of the word *francophonie*. However, the notion of 'empire' was not very present in the legal literature. The term 'colonies' was more widely used, often in an imprecise manner, as if jurists were reluctant to give a definition of these distant entities.<sup>62</sup> Only the great public law specialist Maurice Hauriou (1856–1929) made an effort to synthesize things. He observed that 'colonial possession' persisted in a hybrid state, at the same time 'a local administration of the French state and an embryo of an independent state'.

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<sup>59</sup> Benda (1936) 256.

<sup>60</sup> Psichari (1916) 13: "Ce désert est plein de France, on l'y trouve à chaque pas. Mais ce n'est plus la France que l'on voit en France, ce n'est plus la France des sophistes et des faux savants. C'est la France vertueuse, pure, simple, la France casquée de raison" ('This desert is full of France, it is there at every step. But France is no longer seen in France, it is no longer France of sophists and false scientists. It is France virtuous, pure, simple, France capped with reason').

<sup>61</sup> Psichari (1916) 50.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Beaud (2015) 8.

But situated outside the Metropole, ‘which is the proper territory of the State’, it was subject to the domination of the central State, while the latter had organized itself to resist all domination. In order to explain things more clearly, he drew a comparison with the Roman Empire:

The metropolis is therefore the territory where both the governmental empire and what the Romans called the right of citizenship, the highest of all rights, are united; the colonial possession is a territory subject to the governmental empire, but where there is no right of citizenship, or where there is only an inferior right of citizenship. Finally, the distinction between the metropolis and the colonial possessions must be drawn from the right of citizenship.<sup>63</sup>

Such theoretical and legal effort remains rare. National pride was at its height, and the debates that had animated public life since 1830 were fading away in favor of a vision of colonization which was not exactly legal but which was resolutely civilizing. In 1912, Paul Henri d’Estournelles de Constant (1852–1924), a diplomat and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1909, drew a portrait of the new military leader: he is more a man of peace than a peacemaker, and the instrument of a symbiosis between the colonizer and the colonized. He relies on the famous formula of Tacitus, *ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*.<sup>64</sup>

Nothing is easier than to provoke, by too much rigor, an insurrection followed by victories and endless complications. Nothing is more meritorious and more ungrateful than to prevent this insurrection. I know, by experience, that no army in the world will be able to provide leaders capable as much as ours of carrying out this patriotic mission, which requires the virtues of an apostle as much as the qualities of a soldier. As it has contributed, almost without bloodshed, to pacifying Tunisia, our army will contribute to pacifying Morocco, and will not revive the old adage, *ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*; it will be loved more than feared by the populations which we need as much as they need us.<sup>65</sup>

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63 Hauriou (1910) 603: “La métropole est donc le territoire où se trouvent réunis à la fois l’empire gouvernemental et ce que les Romains appelaient le droit de cité, le plus haut de tous les droits ; la possession coloniale est un territoire soumis à l’empire gouvernemental, mais où il n’y a point de droit de cité, ou bien, où il n’y a qu’un droit de cité inférieur. Finalement la distinction de la métropole et des possessions coloniales doit être tirée du droit de cité”.

64 Tac. *Agr.*, 30.6: ‘To ravage, to slaughter, to usurp under false titles, they call empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace’.

65 Estournelles de Constant (1912) 4: “Rien n’est plus facile que de provoquer, par trop de rigueur, une insurrection suivie de victoires et de complications sans fin. Rien n’est plus méritoire et plus ingrat que de prévenir cette insurrection. Je sais, par expérience, qu’aucune armée au monde ne pourra fournir, des chefs capables autant que les nôtres de s’acquitter de cette mission patriotique et qui exige des vertus d’apôtre autant que des qualités de soldat. Comme elle a contribué, presque sans effusion de sang, à pacifier la Tunisie, notre armée contribuera à paci-



A few years later, in 1924, Claude Farrère (1876–1957), one of the most famous novelists of his time, believed that French colonization embodied the opposite of English or Russian methods. Against all evidence, he denied or he ignored the human cost of colonization, its massacres and humiliations. Softness was the mark of the French empire.

The English peace, which, like the Russian peace, is based only on massacres... Have you read Tacitus? *Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.* (...) But our French peace, the one we have given to all our colonies, is founded – let us be proud of it! – on justice, on equity, on the free collaboration of the colonist and the native. We do not start by killing everything: on the contrary, we help them to live.<sup>66</sup>

This new type of soldier, who only uses brutality as an extreme resort, was more than an ideal. It was embodied by Marshal Lyautey (1854–1934), the conquering and civilizing proconsul of Morocco. He was the one who, having brutally crushed insubordination, protected the Muslim, promoted him by calling him into local administration and enhanced his civilization by restoring his monuments. He is said to have brought peace to peoples who had never known it. He was the symbol of this *pax Gallica*, which recognizes among the colonized the part of humanity ready to be civilized. Lyautey was no longer the soldier-peasant dear to Bugeaud, but he was the soldier-administrator. From Bugeaud to Lyautey, ideas about colonization evolved much after 1830. But in spite of nuances, these are still marked by Latin and Roman memories. In 1934 Louis Madelin (1871–1956) was even more explicit: Marshal Lyautey was portrayed as the perfect Roman.

There is always something in the great builder that makes him similar to his Roman ancestor. I do not believe that Lyautey – any more than Bonaparte – constantly repeated to himself: “What did the Romans do?”, but instinctively, these men acted as the Romans had acted. To defeat, to break resistance, to submit peoples only to create something, in this case a great thing: a civilization. Roads, cities, ports; schools, hospital; here is the concern of the builder; but civilization is not imposed, it is insinuated. To conquer, an operation which risks being odious if it is without a future; to attract the conquered peoples by the physical and moral, material and spiritual betterment that one brings them, a creative op-

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fier le Maroc, et n’y fera pas revivre le vieil adage, *ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant* ; elle se fera aimer plus que craindre des populations dont nous avons besoin autant qu’elles ont besoin de nous”.

**66** Farrère (1924) 43 : “La paix anglaise, qui, comme la paix russe, n’est fondée que sur des massacres... Vous avez lu Tacite ? *Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.* (...) Mais notre paix française, celle que nous avons donnée à toutes nos colonies, est fondée, elle, – soyons-en fiers ! – sur la justice, sur l’équité, sur la libre collaboration du colon et de l’indigène. Nous ne commençons pas par tout tuer, nous : nous aidons, au contraire, à vivre”.

eration, rich in great results. A Lyautey, energetic to the point of rudeness in certain cases, would never shrink from military execution; but he would do so with the will to conciliate those whom he had reduced to mercy. The Roman said: *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*. Thus by diplomacy to bring to the alliance of Rome the people who bowed before its force, then to win them to its friendship and to bring them to total assimilation only by a long diplomacy; after the conquests to show forever to the people the benefits of a superior civilization, and, of these ‘barbarians’ of yesterday, to make ‘Roman citizens’ proud to proclaim themselves such. Such was the constant method of this Roman people that one calls warlike, whereas it was especially political and a builder. Such was also the method of Lyautey.<sup>67</sup>

However, so much pride does not come without some questions. It is worthy to recall that the hand of the proconsul Lyautey remained firm:

So, behind the ideal strewn with the flowers of praise appeared the hand of the chief, a hand stretched out to all the men of good will, but which, if necessary, would know how to strike. *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*.<sup>68</sup>

Albert Sarraut (1872–1962), former governor of Indochina, was a strong supporter of colonization. In 1931 he developed the idea, already expressed by Paul Valéry, according to which Europe had made the mistake of exporting its techniques too much, thus creating new centers of material power. What if the colonized, once they had mastered French techniques, turned against the colo-

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67 Madelin (1934): “Il y a toujours chez le grand constructeur, quelque chose qui l’apparente toujours à l’aïeul romain. Je ne crois pas que Lyautey – pas plus que Bonaparte – se soit constamment répété : ‘Que faisaient les Romains ?’ mais, d’instinct, ces hommes agissaient comme avaient agi les Romains. Ne vaincre, ne briser les résistances, ne soumettre les peuples que pour y créer quelque chose, en l’espèce une grande chose : une civilisation. Les routes, les villes, les ports ; les écoles, les hôpitaux, voilà le souci du constructeur, mais on n’impose pas la civilisation, on l’insinue. Vaincre, opération qui risque d’être odieuse si elle est sans lendemain ; s’attirer les peuples vaincus par le mieux-être physique et moral, matériel et spirituel qu’on leur apporte, opération créatrice, riche en grands résultats. Un Lyautey, énergique jusqu’à la rudesse en certains cas, ne reculera jamais devant l’exécution militaire ; mais c’est avec la volonté de se concilier ceux qu’on aura réduits à merci. Le Romain disait : *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*. Ainsi par la diplomatie amener à l’alliance de Rome les peuples qui s’inclinaient devant sa force, puis les gagner à son amitié et ne les amener à l’assimilation totale que par une longue diplomatie ; les conquêtes ainsi consommées s’attacher à jamais les peuples par les bienfaits d’une civilisation supérieure, et, de ces ‘barbares’ d’hier, faire des ‘citoyens romains’ fiers de se proclamer tels. Telle fut la méthode constante de ce peuple romain qu’on dit guerrier, alors qu’il fut surtout politique et constructeur. Telle fut aussi la méthode de Lyautey”.

68 Rousset (1927): “Aussi, derrière l’idéal parsemé des fleurs de la louange, apparaissait la main du chef, une main, tendue à tous les hommes de bonne volonté, mais qui, au besoin, saurait frapper *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*”.

nizer? The excess of civilization would be a threat. Albert Puyou de Pouvoirville (1861–1939), poet and orientalist, three years later, described the mechanism of the backlash.

Why this reversal? It is, alas, logical. We have made a dangerous bargain with our intellectual predominance: received at first as gods, in the Far East, in Africa, in Oceania, we are no longer gods – nor demi-gods: we are men like the others. Without speaking of other causes, we have communicated to our protégés, to our subjects, to our vanquished, the secrets of our superiority. (...) A revenge is being prepared which, disturbing from the beginning, promises, in the shortest time, an ethnic and historical overthrow more serious than the invasions of the Barbarians in the face of the Roman Empire ever were.<sup>69</sup>

Here is a deeply worried feeling: that of an empire which, like its Roman model, announces decadence and remembers great invasions. During the previous decades, colonization had been conceived as a remedy to all decadence. Who does not conquer, who does not civilize, enters into decadence. This certainty, rooted in the Roman past, was a motivation to colonize and extend the empire.<sup>70</sup> But it was also a source of meditation for colonial officers and administrators who discovered and admired the ruins and memories of fallen empires in conquered territories, in Africa or Asia.<sup>71</sup> What do empires leave behind? Mute witnesses of a greatness that has disappeared forever. Meditation on the decline of the Roman Empire also inspires specialists of Asia when faced with the vestiges of Angkor Wat or those of Sahelian Africa.<sup>72</sup> Evocative ruins recall the nothingness which follows greatness.<sup>73</sup>

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**69** Pouvoirville (1935) 807: “Pourquoi ce revirement? Il est hélas! logique (...) Nous avons fait dangereusement marché de notre prédominance intellectuelle : reçus d’abord comme des dieux, en Extrême-Orient, en Afrique, en Océanie, nous n’y sommes plus ni dieux – ni demi-dieux : nous sommes des hommes comme les autres. Sans parler d’autres causes, nous avons communiqué à nos protégés, à nos sujets, à nos vaincus, les secrets de notre supériorité. (...) Une revanche se prépare qui, inquiétante dès le commencement, promet, dans le plus court délai, un renversement ethnique et historique plus grave que ne le furent jamais, en face de l’Empire romain, les Invasions des Barbares”.

**70** Chevalier (1863) 556.

**71** On the impression of doubt and anxiety left by the ruins in the colonial spirit, cf. the classic Stoler (2013).

**72** See Taihe (2013) 514.

**73** See Berteuil (1856) vol. 2, 439.

## 7 Conclusion

At the end of this survey, it is easy to see through the few examples we have given how much the French colonial adventure, inaugurated in 1830 with the conquest of Algeria, was built on the memory of Rome. At the same time heritage and title of glory, indispensable witness, the Roman Empire and in particular Roman Africa served as a vast metaphor used according to the ideas to be defended. Faced with the extreme diversity of local situations, the Roman idea erased all differences. Especially mobilized for Algeria, then Morocco and Tunisia, the memory of Rome was based on an imaginary Roman past, reconstructed for the occasion, one which never ceases to hesitate between the primacy of force and the process of transformation by European civilization. This permanent ambiguity between the sword or the book, Bugeaud or Hugo, is found in a formula of Cicero, often quoted: *propugnacula imperii*. It applied both to the military ramparts of the conquest and, by metaphor, to the outposts of civilization.<sup>74</sup> During his stay in Cilicia, Cicero was even made the paragon ‘of the colonial governor’.<sup>75</sup> The presence of Caesar is also attested in the conquest of sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, in 1898, during the cruel conquest of the French Sudan, Captain Voulet-Chanoine had not forgotten, in his great trans-Sahelian expedition, to take with him a copy of the *Commentaries on the Gallic War*.<sup>76</sup> This multitude of examples is less a matter of permanent coquetry than of a conviction rooted in the minds of people. Arthur Girault (1865–1931), an eminent jurist, a moderate and reasonable spirit, may have the last word:

We Frenchmen are Latins. The influence of Rome has kneaded our minds for centuries. We cannot escape this obsession.<sup>77</sup>

It is a long way from this dreamed colonization to reality. What remains of this immense French Empire? Contrary to its Roman predecessor, it is not a reservoir of *exempla*. It leaves behind a mixed memory. This is not the place to enter into the debate, which is still alive, about the consequences of colonialism on the contemporary history of France. But already, at the time of its constitution,

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<sup>74</sup> Dureau de La Malle (1852) xv. He writes *Nam tam oppida Italiae quam propugnacula imperii* (rewriting Cic. *de lege agraria* 2.73), and *Narbo Martius, colonia nostrorum civium, specula populi romani ac propugnaculum ...* (*Pro Fonteio* 13). The same texts are used by Boissière (1883) v.

<sup>75</sup> Anon. (1925) 4.

<sup>76</sup> Taithe (2013) 512.

<sup>77</sup> Girault (1885) 107. “Nous, Français, nous sommes des Latins. L’influence de Rome a pétri nos esprits pendant des siècles. Nous ne pouvons pas nous soustraire à cette obsession”.

some people were worried about seeing its vast spaces come into French possession, without really knowing what to do with them. The French colonizers, so quick to imitate Rome, did not understand that, contrary to their prestigious model, they subjected vast deserts to the *pax Gallica*. To Voltaire, who did not understand the interest represented for France in the vast icy expanses of Canada, answers Victor Hugo, in *Les Châtiments* in 1852:

We reached Africa with its frightening shore,  
The sands, the deserts that a brazen sky burns,  
The rocks without a source and without a root.<sup>78</sup>

The French Empire has a particularity that should not be forgotten: it was a sandy empire. It left behind independent states with no wealth. Most of these are among the poorest in the world today. The great competitor of French colonial expansionism, the British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury (1930–1903), noticed this better than others. To those who were worried about the growth of the French colonial domain, he replied, with malice and wisdom: ‘We have given the Gallic cockerel an enormous amount of sand. Let him scratch it as he pleases’.<sup>79</sup>

This is the warning that the French did not want to hear. To paraphrase Tacitus, *ubi solitudinem inveniunt, pacem appellant*.

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78 “On atteint l’Afrique au rivage effrayant, / Les sables, les déserts qu’un ciel d’airain calcine, / Les rocs sans une source et sans une racine”.

79 Porch (2005) 127.

Jaewon Ahn

# Does *Pax* Mean Truly Peace? Focusing on *The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* of Ahn Junggeun (안중근)

This paper begins by introducing a book I published in June 2019 with the help of my colleagues.

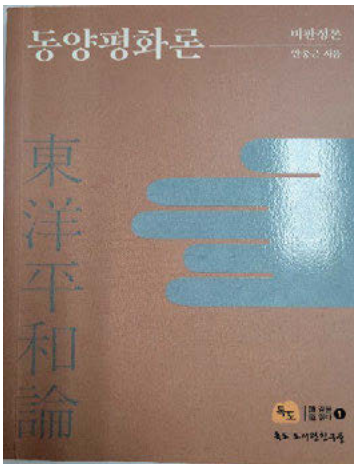


Figure 1: Cover of *The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* 동양평화론 (© Ahn).

It is the first critical edition of a work that uses the methodology of Western classical philology. The title of the work is *The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* 동양평화론 (hereafter abbreviated as *The Declaration*)<sup>1</sup>. The author of the translated work is Ahn Junggeun 안중근 (1879–1910, hereafter abbreviated as Ahn). Ahn was a Korean independence activist, nationalist, pan-Asianist, and a founder of Asia's peace movement.<sup>2</sup> Ahn shot Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909, hereafter Itō) on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1909. Itō was the Prime Minister of Japan who succeeded in reforming the Japanese constitution and modernizing Japanese politics. Along with this, he also tried to annex Korea to Japan, benchmarking Bismarck's

<sup>1</sup> Ahn (1910a).

<sup>2</sup> The study of Ahn Junggeun has largely focused on two issues. One concerns how to eulogize the Ahn's contribution to the independence movement of Korea. The second concerns how to evaluate Ahn's murder of Itō. This paper concentrates on analyzing Ahn's idea of peace in terms of international politics and the philosophy of the time.

(1815–1898) strategy of German unification. Ahn Junggeun regarded this as a crime. Ahn remarked:

First of all, I declare that I find it hard to accept the decision of the District Court with regard to my murder case. I have never been personally acquainted with Itō Hirobumi. Nevertheless, when I shot and killed him, I was not acting as an individual but was serving the cause of my nation. My murder case, therefore, should not be treated as a case of an individual murderer. That is why I find the verdict improper and unconvincing.<sup>3</sup>

Ahn shot Itō three times with a pistol on the railway platform of Harbin 哈爾濱 station. After that, he shouted for Korean independence in Russian, “Корея! Ура!” (‘Korea! Hooray!’), waving *Taegeugki* 태극기, the national flag of Korea. He was arrested on the spot by Russian guards and turned over to Japanese colonial authorities. To the clerk who investigated him, Ahn contended for his shooting of Itō as follows:

Neither the Korea-Japan Treaty of 1905 nor the Korea-Japan Treaty of 1907 was enacted with the consent of the Korean people, including the Korean Emperor, but rather by the high hand of Japanese military power. That is why we raised an army in the cause of justice to oppose the absurdity of the two treaties and I killed Itō. If I accept the Court’s decision, that would imply my agreement with the two Treaties. Therefore, I will not submit to the verdict. Japan is aware that I served as lieutenant-general of the Korean Righteous Army. The Japanese army and police know that I, Ahn Eungchil, fought for Korea’s independence in Hamgyungbukdo and the border of Russia. Since I made an attempt in the capacity of an official general of the army, I must be treated as a captive of war. Therefore, the International Public Law or the Public Law of all nations should be applied to my case. It is unfair that I should be judged and sentenced at Lushun District Court. This violates the Korea-Japan Treaties. Even if I accept the Court decision, many nations will scorn Japan as a barbarian nation. This is another reason why I cannot submit to the verdict.<sup>4</sup>

Ahn gave 15 crimes committed by Itō for which he shot him:

1. assassinating the Korean Empress Myeongseong;
2. dethroning Emperor Gojong;
3. forcing 14 unequal treaties on Korea;
4. massacring innocent Koreans;
5. usurping the authority of the Korean government by force;
6. plundering Korean railroads, mines, forests, and rivers;
7. forcing the use of Japanese banknotes;

<sup>3</sup> This is cited from Ahn (1910b). English translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. The digital text is available at [www.dokdodl.org](http://www.dokdodl.org).

<sup>4</sup> This is cited from Lee (2018) 98–99.

8. disbanding the Korean armed forces;
9. obstructing the education of Koreans;
10. banning Koreans from studying abroad;
11. confiscating and burning Korean textbooks;
12. spreading a rumor around the world that Koreans wanted Japanese protection;
13. deceiving the Japanese Emperor by saying that the relationship between Korea and Japan was peaceful when in truth it was full of hostility and conflicts;
14. breaking the peace of Asia;
15. assassinating Emperor Komei;<sup>5</sup>

The questor, named Mizobuchi 溝淵孝雄, replied to this demonstration as follows:

I have listened to what you said. You deserve to be applauded as a righteous hero of Asia. You are already a righteous hero. Thus, you will never be executed. Don't worry about it.<sup>6</sup>

Ahn replied to this:

It doesn't matter whether I live or die. It is important to instruct the Japanese Emperor as soon as possible to fix Itô's wrong policy in order to rectify the urgent crisis of Asia. This is what I wish and hope sincerely.<sup>7</sup>

As shown above, Ahn sincerely wished that Korea and Japan, along with China, could become friends, because these three countries shared many and intertwined interests. As mentioned, Ahn was the first pan-Asianist in the world. He suggested building the Asian Peace Union against the 'White Peril', namely European imperialism. To make his idea concrete, he wrote *The Declaration*. Sasagawa Norikatsu 笹川紀勝(1940-), a Professor of Law at Meiji University, viewed Ahn's suggestion of the Asian Union as equivalent to the European Union and a concept preceding the idea of United Nations by 40 years. However, it was left unfinished due to his death. Here is a photo taken just 5 minutes before his execution.

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<sup>5</sup> Ahn (1910b) 2.114.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>7</sup> Ahn (1910b) 2.15.





**Figure 2:** Ahn Junggeun 5 minutes before his execution (© Yohnap).

The original manuscript of *The Declaration* has not been discovered yet. It might be somewhere in Japan or China. Fortunately, there is a copy of the manuscript<sup>8</sup> kept in the Library of National Assembly of Japan.

*The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* was initially drafted in 5 chapters: ‘Introduction’ 序, ‘The lessons from the past’ 前鑑, ‘The current state of affairs’ 現狀, ‘The groundwork and context’ 伏線, and ‘Questions and answers’ 問答. Among these, the ‘Introduction’ and ‘The lesson from the past’ were completed. The ‘Introduction’ tells us why he set out to write *The Declaration*:

The most straightforward strategy to protect Asia from the blow of Western supremacies is to unite with each other. Even a child knows it clearly. Nonetheless, Japan does not follow this natural way. It is extraordinary. Japan exploits neighboring nations and burns bridges and breaks friendships. It can be compared to the fighting between a shellfish and a snipe bird. As is in the fable, a fisherman can catch both of them while they were biting each

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<sup>8</sup> Ahn (1910a) 123.

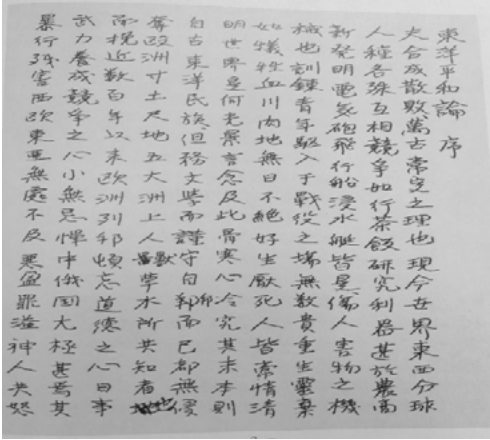


Figure 3: Picture of a page of *The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* (© Library of National Assembly of Japan).

other. The hope of both Korean and Chinese people has fallen to the ground. If Japan does not rectify its policy and stop coercing Korea and China, (...) two nations will indeed become minions of white peoples voluntarily. If thus, (...) it is unthinkable and unjust. After completing the righteous war for the peace of Asia and having juridical disputes with Japan at Lushun harbor, I put forward *The Declaration for the Peace of Asia* so that everyone could see and think about it universally.<sup>9</sup>

The second chapter of ‘The lesson from the past’ deals with the causes, development and result of the war in 1894 between Japan and China and then explains why Japan could defeat Russia at war in 1904. According to Ahn, Japan could win the war with Russia with the help of heaven and earth. Here is Ahn’s remark on the matter:

For hundreds of years, many nations in Europe have forgotten morality and thus are not opposed to using raw force and further bury themselves competitively in wars. Russia does stand out among other countries. The violence and brutality of it does merge East and West together. Because of this viciousness, God and human altogether have exploded with anger. Heaven thus gave an opportunity to Japan. Even though Japan is a small island nation, it defeated Russia with a strong fist at Manchuria. Who on earth would have expected it? This is evidence that earth and people unanimously help him who follows the will of heaven.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ahn (1910a) 93–95.

<sup>10</sup> Ahn (1910a) 87.

Unfortunately, as mentioned above, Ahn left the three chapters of his work unwritten due to being executed earlier than expected. Fortunately, however, we have two documents to supplement them. One is ‘The transcript of Ahn Junggeun’s interview’.<sup>11</sup> It was recorded on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1910 by the clerk Takeuchi Shizue 竹内精衛 of the Kanto Command High Court. The other consists of two speeches of Itō Hirobumi given just months before his death. The chapter of ‘The current state of Affairs’ 現狀 may be supplemented by comparing Itō’s view on peace in Asia with Ahn’s. Here is Itō’s speech at Yamagata 山形市 on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1909:

For many years I have stayed in Korea and thus I don’t know exactly what is going on politically and economically in Japan. Therefore I have no material to say something useful for you. However, for a moment, even if not sufficient, based on my experience, I will give some reasons why the peace of the Far East is essential. First of all, there is no one who refuses peace. Ruling and prevailing is the same as not forgetting rebellions, and thus the nation should be equipped with military power for sustaining the peace in ordinary times. It is common sense that is corroborated worldwide. It is unnecessary to say not to forget it. Everybody knows it well. As for the importance of peace, it is indispensable for the development and extension of strength of a nation. This is impossible, without peace. (...) Who disturbs the peace of the Far East? Japan never desires it because the Far East’s disturbance gives disadvantages to Japan. How about Korea, then? Today, Korea is very close to Japan and has become its family. It is unnecessary to point out that Korea has no power to disturb the peace of the Far East. It is important that Korea is a friendly nation toward Japan; thus, it is not a threatening sword to Japan. It is China that will disturb it. Everyone worries about it. Everybody agrees about it. If one asks whether China does not want peace, the answer may be that there is no reason for China not to want peace. The problem is whether China can enjoy the fruit of peace, even though they want it. In China, it is zealously debated up to the present how to reform, how to establish the constitutional monarchy, and how to restore human rights. But the nation is vast and wide. The population is too huge to make an agreement. If they fight each other, it will be an affair of the world. Japan should do its best to keep the peace of the Far East because the disturbance of the peace itself is a significant disadvantage to the Japanese Empire. We can look away from it as if it were none of its business. That is a hasty judgement. We may accept suspicions that we disregard the advantage for all nations under the pretext of ambition. We should do our best not to get such suspicions. The reason I talked about this issue is that I deeply worry about the peace of the Far East. You, everybody here, read newspapers and thus know well about China now. I am seriously worried about the situation and the reformation of China. To be sure, it is not the place to say that a war will take place soon. You know all about it. What is, then, the most important thing for Japan today? The first is the issue of the financial economy. The second is the diplomatic state

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11 This is now published in Lee (2018) 97–109.

of affairs. But the issue of the armament cannot be classed as either financial-economic or diplomatic.<sup>12</sup>

The crisis of Chinese politics is, per Itō, a principal threatening to the peace of Asia. If one looks into the speech of Itō more deeply, however, it is apparently a pretext for the annexation of Korea to Japan because he tried to settle the Japanese army in Korea and Manchuria in the name of peace. Ahn's criticism is precisely on this point:

People praise Itō as a hero of the twentieth century or a great figure. To me, however, he is no more than a wicked and treacherous man. Regarding the Sino-Japanese war and Russo-Japanese war, and the Korea-Japan relationship, it is clear that Itō's strategy failed, for not a single day passes without bullets fired. There is an old maxim that those who follow heaven's mandate will win, but those who go against it will lose.<sup>13</sup>

According to Ahn, Itō's strategy disguised in the name of peace drove Asia into war. Ahn predicted the future of Asia as follows:

Japan's current status in Asia is comparable to the head of the body. Thus, political issues among nations should be treated with utmost care. Now, not only Korea and Russia, but also China and America are waiting for a chance to retaliate against and punish Japan. If nothing changes now, Japan will suffer from a great disaster and assume responsibility for disturbing the peace in Asia. Japan will not be free from being criticized for breaking peace in Asia.<sup>14</sup>

If one observes the wars caused by Japan from 1894 to 1945, it becomes clear that Ahn's prediction did come true, because there were five major wars during this time: the Sino-Japanese War in Korea (1894), the Russo-Japanese War in Korea (1904–1905), the Japano-Chinese war in Manchuria (1927–1931), the Japano-Chinese war in mainland China (1937–1946), and the Second World War between Japan and the U.S.A, among others (1941–1945). The cause of the Korean Civil War (1950–1953) was indirectly and directly related to Japanese imperialism. Thus, history itself proves that Ahn's admonishment was right.

The chapter of 'The groundwork and context' 伏線 may offer reasons for constructing the Peace Union of Asia. Ahn's Interview is significant on this point.

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<sup>12</sup> Ahn (1910a) 16–18. The original speech is contained in <伊藤公全集 第2巻: 極東平和の必要> (*The Complete collection of Ito Hirobumi*, book 2), 編輯 小松緑(1929), 株式會社昭和出版社. pp. 523–25.

<sup>13</sup> Lee (2018) 47.

<sup>14</sup> Lee (2018) 48.

If allowed, I would talk about my strategy. It may sound ridiculous. However, I have thought it out over the years. If it would be accepted, Japan should prosper and enjoy great peace and happiness and receive great respect from other nations. For gaining hegemony, Japan should take emergency measures. Japan's policies in the twentieth century, however, have been proved rather unsatisfactory. Japan has been following those nations' footsteps that attempted to topple small, weak countries and annex them. Japan will never gain hegemonic power by using this way. Japan should do something different than the superpowers of Europe have never tried. Japan is now one of the superpowers in the world. But the myopic strategy of Japan will be its weakest point. Japan attempts to become a superpower only by a competitive, fast growth based on military power.<sup>15</sup>

Remarkably, Ahn suggests to try something new that European Imperialism never attempted. Here is his suggestion:

I think it is easy to do. War or anything else is not required. It is simple to do. Just think differently. Just change your mind. The starting point is to change Itō's policies on Asia. These policies have only weakened the credibility of Japan in the world. Such policies like the annexation treaty between Korea and Japan will evoke massive resistance from the Korean people rather than civilize them. Japan will gain nothing in the end. Japan, Korea, and China are like brothers and thus should be friendly to each other. Currently, even like brothers of one family, they fight each other on bad terms. Doing this, they ask help from other families [like U.S.]. It just opens our family fighting to the outside world. To be sure, it may be disgraceful for Japan to announce to the world the change in their policies.<sup>16</sup>

The chapter of 'Questions and answers' 問答 is to be supplemented in two ways. The first question may be, what does peace mean for Ahn? His answer may be that 'war or anything else is not needed'. Regarding this, Ahn believed that co-existence and co-prosperity between and among nations was a categorical imperative. Itō's view on peace was that 'ruling and prevailing means not to forget rebellions and thus the nation should be equipped with the military power for sustaining the peace in ordinary times'. According to Itō, military power is crucial for securing peace. This view is conventional and acceptable. For instance, the Latin word *pax* also means ruling and governing by power and force. It refers to hegemony based on the idea that the strong dominate the weak. This is corroborated by Virgil's remark on the *pax Romana*.

(Verg. *Aen.* 6.851–53) *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;*  
*hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,*  
*parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos.*

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15 Ahn (1920a) 21–22.

16 Ahn (1920a) 23–24.

(‘But thou, O Roman, learn with sovereign sway  
To rule the nations. Thy great art shall be to keep the world in lasting peace,  
To spare humbled foe, and crash to earth the proud’.)<sup>17</sup>

Itō’s view on peace is not different from the *pax* of Vergil. His remark that ‘the ruling and prevailing means not to forget rebellions’ is the same as *debellare superbos* in Vergil. Tacitus deserves to be called here as a witness.

(Agr. 30.4.) Raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terrae, mare scrutantur: si locuples hostis est, avari, si pauper, ambitiosi, quos non Oriens, non Occidens satiaverit: soli omnium opes atque inopiam pari adfectu concupiscunt. Auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.

(‘Robbers of the world, having by their universal plunder exhausted the land, they rifle the deep. If the enemy be rich, they are rapacious; if he be poor, they lust for dominion; neither the east nor the west has been able to satisfy them. Alone among men they covet with equal eagerness poverty and riches. To robbery, slaughter, plunder, they give the lying name of empire; they make a solitude and call it peace’.)<sup>18</sup>

As shown above, the *pax Romana* does not mean mutual co-existence and co-prosperity among nations. The idea of true peace as defined by mutual benefits and shared prosperity was articulated by the *Elements of the International Law* written by Henry Wheaton (1836). This was translated into Chinese by William A. P. Martin (1864). Regarding this law, however, Ahn said in the following:

We should not resort to catchphrases such as the so-called ‘International Public Law for all Nations’ and ‘the strict neutrality’ as the proper way because these are no more than the cunning and crafty tricks of current diplomatics. These just encourage the warring nations to hide military strategies against their opponents. They try to catch at weak points, to use cunning tricks.<sup>19</sup>

This citation makes clear that Ahn was a realist. He knew very well about how powerless the International Law was toward the dominant superpowers of imperialism. But he was an idealist. This is confirmed by the answer to how then to make the Asian Peace Union. Here is his answer.

Concerning this, I do suggest that Japan should open Lushun and develop it into a common naval port for Korea, Japan and China. Japan should gather together all the talented leaders from the three nations to Lushun and make a peace union and announce it to the world. It will make clear that Japan no longer has imperialist ambitions. I believe that this is the best

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<sup>17</sup> Trans. Theodore C. Williams (1910).

<sup>18</sup> Trans. William J. Brodrigg (1942).

<sup>19</sup> Ahn (1920a) 108.

plan for Japan to return Lushun to China and develop it as a base camp for the peace of Asia. For gaining hegemony, Japan must take emergency measures. Returning Lushun to China will bring peace to Japan, but it will also bring benefit to Japan eventually. This decision will be eulogized by the whole world. Japan will achieve a great credibility from the world, if peace can be settled permanently in Korea, Japan and China. In terms of Japan's financial crisis, I propose to gather members of the Peace Union of Asia at Lushun and collect one Japanese Yen from each nation's member for the membership fee. Undoubtedly, hundreds of millions of peoples from Korea, Japan, and China will join the Union. I also propose to establish a bank and to use a common currency for the three nations. This will lead to the enhancement of credibility, and then naturally will follow the soft and fluent flowing of money. Each region will have a branch of the Peace Union and a bank branch as well. This will help greatly to stabilize the financial crisis of Japan. To secure the Lushun port, I suggest mooring five or six battleships at there. Even after returning it to China, Lushun will belong to Japan permanently. The peace in Asia will be secured by the methods mentioned above. But there is one thing more to add. The three nations should cooperate in the expansion of armaments. They can dispatch to Lushun military deputies to take charge in armaments in order to prepare for possible wars with other superpowers. They can also create a youth corps composed of healthy, athletic young people. They will learn the languages of the three nations. This will greatly help their language competence and bring benefit by encouraging the friendship that makes stronger the idea of brothership. If Japan shows such a great attitude to the world, other nations will greatly admire and respect Japan. Even though those nations should have the ambition to conquer Japan, if any, they would think it difficult to do. This will lead to a high increase in Japanese exports and secure Japan's financial stability. Korea and China also will benefit from it. Japan will play a leading role for both nations. Korea and China will look up to Japan as a mentor. Japan will gain supremacy in the economy and industry without even competing for it. This will prevent debates such as those results from the problem of the railway in Manchuria.<sup>20</sup>

Ahn contends that the Asian Peace Union will secure Korea, Japan, China, and other nations in Asia and give advantages to them all. It needs to be pointed out that the idea of the Asian Peace Union itself precedes Robert Schuman's suggestion (1886–1963) for creating the European Union by almost half a century.

We are carrying out a grand experiment, the fulfillment of the same recurrent dream that has revisited the peoples of Europe for ten centuries: creating between them an organization putting an end to war and guaranteeing eternal peace. The Middle Ages' Roman church finally failed in its attempts that were inspired by humane and human preoccupations. Another idea, that of a world empire constituted under a German emperors' auspices, was less disinterested; it already relied on the unacceptable pretensions of a *Führertum* (domination by the dictatorship) whose 'charms' we have all experienced. Audacious minds, such as Dante, Erasmus, Abbé de St. Pierre, Rousseau, Kant, and Proudhon, had created in the abstract the framework for both ingenious and generous systems. One of these systems' title

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<sup>20</sup> Ahn (1920a) 23–24.

became the synonym of all that is impractical: *Utopia*, itself a work of genius, written by Thomas More, the Chancellor of Henry VIII, King of England. The European spirit signifies being conscious of a cultural family and having a willingness to serve that community in the spirit of total mutuality, without any hidden motives of hegemony or the selfish exploitation of others. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw feudal ideas being opposed and, with the rise of a national spirit, nationalities asserting themselves. Our century, which has witnessed the catastrophes resulting in the unending clash of nationalities and nationalisms, must attempt to reconcile nations in a supranational association. This would safeguard the diversities and aspirations of each nation while coordinating them in the same manner as the regions are coordinated within the nation's unity.<sup>21</sup>

The announcing of the supranational European Community of Europe of Robert Schuman is coming true. Comparatively, Ahn's declaration was and is still also very concrete, substantial, and feasible for creating a Peace Union of Asia. The ideas of a common currency, common army, and common language were at that time an entirely new concept that 'other superpowers never tried' or even imagined, as Ahn said.

Another question may involve where Asia is or what Asia is. On this issue, Itō said that 'As for the peace of the Far East, where is it? As is well known, China, Japan and Korea are nations of it. To it Vietnam and Tongkin can be attached'. Corresponding to this, Ahn said that 'If this succeeds, other nations in Asia like India, Thailand, and Vietnam will join together in the Asian Peace Union. Japan will have a firm grip on all Asia without any additional efforts'. Two things are to be pointed out. One is that 'Asia' is a new geographical term to the peoples of Korea, Japan, and China. Especially Chinese people believed and still believe, as far as I know, that China is the center of the World. The name 中國 refers precisely to the center of the world and human civilization. 'Asia' or 'East' was never used by the Chinese themselves in their history. This view is called Sino-centrism. Surprisingly, Ahn criticized it very strongly. Here is his remark:

Why was China defeated by Japan even though it had abundant resources and its territory is dozens of times larger than that of Japan? Because China, for many generations, has adhered to Sino-centrism [中華主義] with extreme arrogance and called other nations barbarian, and domestically also the government officials with authority and the eminent families wielded power, ignoring the law and disdaining the social order and system. They showed hostility to their retainers and ordinary people. This results in enmity between the upper and the lower classes.

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**21** This is cited from Robert Schuman's speech in Strasburg (16 May 1949), announcing the coming supranational European Community.



It was forbidden in Korea to criticize China publicly at that time. All in all, it is important to see that the word ‘Sino-centrism’ has lost its power among Koreans. Historically and culturally the Korean people respect China and Chinese people but politically this is not so. Another point here is that Ahn included India in Asia. This shows that Ahn’s concept of Asia was not limited to the Far East. He referred to Asia as whole in the modern geopolitical sense. In this regard, it is noticeable that Ahn’s idea of peace encompassed Asia and the world.

Human beings are the children of heaven. We are all brothers. Everyone likes freedom and loves life and hates death. Today, people praise so-called civilization, but I alone have lamented that it is not a civilization. It is open for all to see: if there are no discriminations between East and West, between high and low, between old and young, and between man and woman, and if people keep their inborn natures from heaven and cultivate virtues without competition and quarreling and live life happily in their land and enjoy felicity with others peacefully, this is called true civilization and true peace.

In this way, *The Declaration* of Ahn acquires a universal scope by arguing that it is meaningless to discriminate and differentiate others from heaven’s perspective.

To conclude, the deep meaning and real value of Ahn’s declaration for the Peace Union of Asia will be disclosed more clearly in terms of these two aspects. One is a comparison of Ahn’s declaration with Immanuel Kant’s (1724–1804) treatise on *Perpetual Peace*. The comparison in the chart below will be useful for a better understanding.

**Table 1:** Comparison between Ahn’s statements and Kant *On Perpetual Peace* (© Ahn)

Ahn	Kant <sup>22</sup>
(Ahn’s Interview) War or anything else is not required.	(1.1) No treaty of peace shall be held valid in which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war.
( <i>Autobiography</i> 2.114) 3. Forcing 14 unequal treaties on Korea.	(1.2) No independent states, large or small, shall come under the dominion of another State by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or donation.
(Ahn’s Interview)	(1.3)

<sup>22</sup> English translation from Kant (1903).

**Table 1:** Comparison between Ahn's statements and Kant *On Perpetual Peace* (© Ahn) (Continued)

Ahn	Kant <sup>23</sup>
The three nations should cooperate in the expansion of armaments. They can dispatch to Lushun military deputies who take charge in armaments in order to prepare for possible wars with other superpowers.	Standing armies shall in time be totally abolished.
(Ahn's Interview) I also propose to establish a bank and to use a common currency for the three nations. This will lead to the enhancement of credibility, and then naturally will follow the soft and fluent flowing of money. Each region will have a branch of the Peace Union and a bank branch as well. This will help greatly to stabilize the financial crisis of Japan.	(1.4) National debts shall not be contracted with a view to the external friction of states.
(Autobiography 2.114) 5. Usurping the authority of the Korean government by force.	(1.5) No state shall by force interfere with the constitution or government of another state.
(Ahn's Interview) They will learn the languages of the three nations. This will greatly help their language competence, and it will bring benefit by encouraging the friendship that makes more vital the idea of brothership.	(1.6) No state shall, during the war, permit such acts of hostility which would make mutual confidence in the subsequent peace impossible: such are the employment of assassins (percussores), poisoners (venefici), breach of capitulation, and incitement to treason (perduellio) in the opposing state.

From the above comparison appear seven common ideas between Ahn and Kant.<sup>23</sup> Firstly, Ahn tried to find the solution to Korea's independence from the perspective of the geopolitics of Eurasia. At the same time, Kant observed the issue of Prussian prosperity on the European horizon. It is clear that they both dealt with a nation's problem in the international context from the perspective of universal principle and toward a justification for world peace. Secondly, Ahn and Kant criticized strongly and sharply the cruelty of the imperialism prevailing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were against colonialism by superpower nations. Thirdly, Ahn and Kant regarded education as a fundamental means for establish-

<sup>23</sup> For more on this, see Makino (2009); cf. Kwon (2013).

ing world peace. Regarding this, Ahn founded Samheung 三興 School and Doneui 敦義 School at Jinampo 鎭南浦.<sup>24</sup> Fourthly, Ahn and Kant were against using pugnacious violence and belligerent force. Fifthly, both of them attached great importance to the role and function of religion as a way to keep peace permanently. Sixthly, Ahn and Kant had insights into the future. Kant's Perpetual Peace was not a mere declarative proposal but a concrete order for future generations.<sup>25</sup> A testimony to it was that of Robert Schuman. Likewise, the Peace Union of Asia was not only for the Independence of Korea but also for the co-existence and co-prosperity of Asia in the future. Finally, Ahn and Kant considered peace an essential part of human nature. The core of Ahn's idea of peace was made clear in his remark that 'everybody likes to live and hates to die' (好生厭死). Mutual respect was for Kant, a human obligation.<sup>26</sup> From this it can be concluded that *The Declaration* of Ahn is sufficient to qualify for a *magna charta* for the Peace Union of Asia, even though it is still latent under the legacy of the Cold War and the new military antagonism between China and the USA encircling the Korean peninsula.

Also, one should delve into the deep structure of Ahn's concept of peace. It is remarkable that Ahn released some Japanese soldiers without condition. To his comrades who opposed this strongly, he argued thus:

Other officers disagreed with it and asked why did I release them? I replied to them: "There is no act to kill captive prisoners in the *Elements of the International Law*. According to this, they are to be confined alive and set free with ransom later". Furthermore, what was said by them was just and right; if so, how is it possible not to release them?<sup>27</sup>

The humanity and clemency which Ahn showed to the captive were faithfully consistent with the humanitarian treatment principle. As is well known, this principle has been established recently, i.e. after the Geneva Conventions in 1949. Thus, Ahn's attitude was amazing, because it is not easy to forgive and respect an enemy. It is common sense that one loves friends and hates enemies. It is almost human nature, particularly in wartime. A significant symbol for this is

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<sup>24</sup> For more on this, see Ahn (1910b) 204.

<sup>25</sup> For more on this, see Bourke (1942). This essay was written in the middle of the war. It shows clearly that Kant's doctrine was considered to be ideal and drew little attention even among philosophers.

<sup>26</sup> The question of whether Ahn was impacted by Kant's *Perpetual Peace* requires urgent and close study.

<sup>27</sup> Ahn (1910b) 248.

the Greek hero Heracles, described in *Mainomenos Heracles* by Euripides like this:

It is for you, my son, to be a friend to friends  
and to hate your enemies. But don't act too hastily.<sup>28</sup>

The idea of loving friends and hating enemies is common-sense among ordinary people. The opposition of Ahn's comrades was thus not unusual. But he persuaded them even with this.

[52] "This is to remove the strong with the weak and to fight against the evil with love. Please don't say more." I tried again to persuade them in a hearty manner. They differed in opinion and thus did not listen to my words. Even some officers left the camp with their troops.<sup>29</sup>

To be sure, it was difficult for Ahn's comrades to accept the idea of 'fighting against the evil with love'. But Ahn did not bend his claim. It is interestingly to note that the hidden core of Ahn's concept of peace is evidently emerging. Indeed, this is difficult to put into practice during the battle in wartime. But Ahn forgave enemies and even set them free after the fight. This shows that Ahn jumped over and broke down the conventional idea of justice as 'to love friends and hate enemies'. Certainly, he was strongly influenced by the lesson of Jesus, who taught to 'love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you'.<sup>30</sup> This does not exclude the fact that Ahn learned this esprit of humanity from Confucius' teaching because the concept of 仁 ('love'), is a core principle of the Confucian school. As mentioned above, he did not shoot Itō as a natural person. He shot him as ringleader of enemies at war. For Ahn, there were two Itō and two Japan. For Ahn, Japan was at once a friend and an enemy. This was made clear in the attitude shown to Japanese captives by Ahn. For him, Japan was a friend in terms of future co-existence and co-prosperity. There was no reason not to forgive Japan and not to accept Japan as a friend. This is a fundamental prerequisite for the founding of the Peace Union of Asia. Remarkably, he did not forget to suggest a methodological principle for building this Union. He suggested that it 'remove the strong with the weak'. Concerning this, it is acknowledged that the justice of Thrasymachus (ca. 459–ca. 400) is a dominant form of

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<sup>28</sup> Eur. *HF* 585–86.

<sup>29</sup> Ahn (1910b) 2.52.

<sup>30</sup> This is cited from Matt. 5.44 (KJV).

power that defines relationships among nations. He argued that ‘justice is the advantage of the stronger’.<sup>31</sup> Regarding this, Ahn illustrates precisely the opposite claim to Thrasymachean justice. Someone may regard Ahn’s claim as idealistic, because the power of the stronger usually dominates in international relations. Nevertheless, Ahn’s claim is convincing and forceful. If one is aware that the world is now globalized thanks to information technology and the global economy, his ideal is now an unavoidable condition for a sustainable *modus vivendi* among people. In a word, the world has become a global city. In this condition, not only theoretically but also practically, the call for removing the strong with the weak gains more support than the claim that justice is the interest of the stronger. From this it is certain that Ahn’s declaration will gain more followers, as long as every earthbound person becomes part of a global family and the world becomes a unified community. In the globalized town, war means civil war. Ahn’s declaration ‘to remove the strong with the weak’ is a persuasive way of avoiding this, because war in the globalized city means the destruction of the world.

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31 Pl. *Resp.* 1338c.

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