

**Patronage in Translation:
The Making of *Sancta Maria Magdalena* via Patronage
in the Late Ming China**

Eileen Hung-Hsiu LIN 林虹秀

Department of Translation and Interpreting / GIMTI
Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages

Sancta Maria Magdalena (*Madalena* hereafter) was first introduced to China in the first Chinese edition of the story of Mary Magdalene in *Tianzhushengjiao Shengrenxingshi* (*SRXS*) (1629) by the Jesuit missionary Alfonso Vagnone (1566–1640). While best known as a sinner made a patron saint to midwives in the Continental Europe, *Madalena* was a patron saint to filial Chinese Catholics. This is illustrated in *zhubaodan* (主保單) which was invented around 1670. *Zhubaodan* is a sheet listed with patron saints' qualities and things to pray for. From the debut of *Madalena* in *SRXS* in 1629 to *zhubaodan* around 1670, it takes both readership and patronage to develop *Madalena*'s popularity in China.

The patronage from Candida Xu (1607–1680), grand-daughter of Paul Xu (徐光啓, 1562–1633) to Phillip Couplet (1623–1693) sustained missionaries' translation works and encouraged the popularity of *Madalena*. Candida Xu is known as a devoted Chinese Catholic whose was so resourceful that Couplet published her biography in Europe in 1688. In her biography, Couplet recounted the different images of *Madalena*.

I contend that Candida Xu not only helped the missionaries' translation works but also had an impact on the shaping of the images of *Madalena*. My study explores the effects of how Xu helped the missionaries in the turbulent years of the late Ming China (1629–1693), and it also maps out the development of *Madalena*'s Chinese images that were shaped by a woman patron in China.