

Preliminary Notes

The comparison of different civilisations has now become an essential research topic within so-called “global history”. In the *Roma Sinica* series, the editors have promoted various publications in which the conjunction “and” was intended to represent a bridge between different worlds, certainly distant in language and traditions, history and cultural contexts, but very close to, and eager to communicate with, one another. The proceedings of the conference “Global Latin II. Latin as a vector of Cultural Exchange beyond Europe” fit perfectly into this framework, giving rise to a varied fresco dedicated to both linguistic themes and cultural perspectives, which are inevitably intertwined and stand in continuity with the “Global Latin I” conference, which back in 2020 began to explore the forms and ways in which Latin had constituted a cultural bridge not only with the East, but also with South America. “New Perspectives in Global Latin” deals with the Far East – and not only that – on a broad spectrum, and provides an important contribution to understanding in what ways the Latin language was the privileged communicative medium mediating between Western and Eastern cultures. These proceedings are also closely connected to the ELA (Eurasian Latin Archive), SERICA (Sino-European Religious Intersections in Central Asia. Interactive Texts and Intelligent Networks) and CLASSICA SERICA projects, which bring together groups of scholars from different backgrounds and research fields who share an interest in the Latin language, thereby providing a sign of the growing need for multidisciplinary approaches to research.

According to the idea of Latin as Global language, these proceedings, after a general introduction by Francesco Stella, are divided by geographical criteria, taking as a starting point Rome and Italy for the sole reason of their being the birth place of the Latin language. This literary and linguistic journey then moves eastwards through the route initially followed by Christian missionaries, thus first touching on African shores, followed by India, China, Korea and, finally, Japan. As for chronology, all papers in this volume primarily deal with texts from the Middle Ages onwards, while also focusing on the reception of classical elements.

In light of this, the book opens with **Adriano Prosperi**’s paper on the role of Latin as sacred language from the Council of Trent in the XVIth century until the Second Vatican Council in the XXth century. **Leonardo Cohen** and **Paul Rodrigue** lead us to Ethiopia, focusing in particular on the figure of Afonso Mendes, the first

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catholic patriarch of Ethiopia. His correspondence, mainly written in Latin, is very revealing of the religious policy of the Jesuit missionaries towards local religious practices. Despite finally arriving in Japan with an analysis of Francisco Pacheco's martyrdom in Bartolomeu Pereira's *Paciecidos libri XII*, **Yasmin Haskell** first takes us to India by investigating Francesco Benci's *Quinque martyres libri VI*. Her focus is on the reception of Virgilian epics and, especially, on the representation of Greco-Roman and Asian gods in the two aforementioned neo-Latin poems. There follow several papers dealing with China. The first one, by **Fritz-Heiner Mutschler**, addresses the problem of to what extent Latin can be regarded as a "world language", taking as a case study its role in late medieval and early modern China, while **Philipp Roelli** looks at the distribution of grammatical categories in the scientific and philosophical Latin used by some key European authors in China. In a dyptich of papers, the focus is on a poem which tells of Michele Ruggieri's visit to China and of his efforts to introduce Catholicism there. In the first one, **Massimiliano Carloni** and **Xie Mingguang** comment on and provide the Latin text and an Italian translation of this piece. In the second, **Charles Burnett** proposes a different outline of the text and highlights some echoes coming from Western classical mythology, as well as from Vergil. Furthermore, he provides English translations for a good number of lines. Particular attention to style is what characterises **Maria Cristina Pimentel's** investigation of the Latin letter that Father Manuel Dias Júnior sent to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus from Macau in December 1616, which provides an account of the funeral of the Chinese Emperor's mother. The last paper dealing with China is by **Anna Di Toro** and **Luisa M. Paternicò**. Taking as starting and ending points Martini's (1651–1656) and Prémare's (1728) works respectively, they analyse various grammars of the Chinese language written in Latin and explain in what ways Chinese lexical and grammatical categories are rendered into Latin. Next to China lies Korea, regarding which **Jaewon Ahn** provides a brief report on an ongoing research project aimed at publishing a series of *Hagiographica Coreana*, that is, testimonies and evidence of the martyrs executed in Korea between 1839 and 1846. The topic changes while the regional focus remains on Korea in **Kukjin Kim's** paper on the medical knowledge that, thanks to Latin, reached Korea from the West during the XVIIIth century. Farthest eastward from Rome lies Japan, which, like Korea, is here represented by two papers. In the first, **Aldo Tollini** looks at the teaching of Latin in Japanese seminars between the XVIth–XVIIth centuries, whereas **Akihiko Watanabe** investigates the intersections between Japan, Catholicism and Greco-Roman Antiquity as they emerge from the *Iaponiae Argovictoria* (1628) and *Novus Mercurius* (1701).

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