Martino Martini and the First Grammar of Mandarin Chinese Ever Written and Published**

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Abstract

Martino Martini (1614-1661) was a main contributor to historical and geographical knowledge about China in seventeenth century Europe. His works strongly influenced the intellectuals of his time. He was also author of a less popular, though no less important, work: a grammar of the Chinese language.

According to Giuliano Bertuccioli, Martini attended to the compilation of a Grammatica Sinica, in 1652, while he was detained by the Dutch in Batavia for eight months. He left a copy of it to Andreas Cleyer (1634-1697/98). The manuscript was sent to Europe in 1698 and preserved in Berlin. In 1716, T. S. Bayer (1694-1738) made a copy of it, but the original has not been found.

Once in Europe, Martini left another copy of the grammar to Jacob Gohl (1596-1667), a Dutch orientalist. From this original manuscript other copies were most likely made, and this could explain the presence of grammars very similar to that of Martini’s in the libraries of Glasgow, Berlin, and Krakow. These copies

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have at different times been modified and extended by Philippe Couplet and Christian Mentzel.

After a detailed analysis of Martini’s correspondence and a long search for reference in rare books catalogues and manuals for bibliophiles, I succeeded in finding two copies with an identical structure but entitled *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* in Cambrai and in Vigevano. The latter was Martini’s gift to Juan Caramuel (1606-1682), a Spanish polymath who had studied Chinese with him.

Further researches have led me to the discovery of a printed version of Martini’s *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* attached to the 1696 edition of M. Thévenot’s *Relations des divers voyages curieux*. Thus, Martini’s grammar has been proved to be the first grammar of Mandarin Chinese ever written and published. Through a comparative analysis of the extant copies in both manuscript and printed form, and at the same time trying to separate the contributions to the original work given by other scholars who possessed it, the present study aims at reconstructing the evolutionary course of Martini’s grammar from the older *Grammatica Sinica* to the refined and annotated copy of the *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*.

**Keywords:** Mandarin Chinese, grammar, Jesuit, Martino Martini, manuscript

1. Foreword

The Catholic missionaries in China during the 16th and 17th centuries, initially pressed by practical needs and later by propaganda exigencies, engaged themselves in the writing of works to describe the Chinese language. As a matter of fact, Chinese linguists of the past had never before compiled descriptive grammars of their language.¹ The missionaries’ interest mainly focused on the so-called *guanhua* 官话

“Mandarin,” the language used by the learned class who held the reins of power. Of the grammars they wrote, many have apparently been lost and are known to us only through references found in other works; this is because most of them circulated in manuscript form and were never printed. Thus, so far, the Dominican friar Francisco Varo (1627-1687) has been credited to be the first to have his grammar, Arte de la lengua mandarina [Grammar of the Mandarin language] (1682), published in Canton in 1703.  

The grammar of the Chinese language written by Martino Martini (1614-1661) was thought to have encountered a similar, unlucky fate. This work was probably written some time between 1651 and 1653, during two long stops in the Philippines and Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia) which Martini was forced to make while traveling back to Rome as Procurator of the China mission. The grammar circulated widely in manuscript form in Europe, becoming a useful tool for intellectuals and future missionaries for learning Chinese, presumably without ever being printed.  

At the present state of research, Martini’s grammar can certainly be considered the first descriptive grammar of Mandarin Chinese, since it is preceded only by grammars of the Minnanhua 閩南話 dialect compiled by Spanish missionaries in the Philippines.  

Martini’s original manuscript has yet to be tracked down. However, fortunately a fair number of copies have been found in different European cities and this enables us today to retrace the steps and development stages Martini’s grammar
underwent in the tangled series of changes in its ownership.\textsuperscript{6} As a matter of fact, the manuscripts that have been discovered, even though very similar in their general organization, show substantial differences and in some cases, the intervention of other authors.

My recent investigations have also been able to prove that Martini’s grammar of the Chinese Language was actually printed and attached to a few copies of the 1696 edition of Mélchisedec Thévenot’s \textit{Relations des divers voyages curieux} [Reports of various curious travels], thus proving it to be the first grammar of Mandarin Chinese ever written and printed.

Through a comparative analysis of the copies which have been tracked down, in both manuscript and printed form, and at the same time trying to separate the contributions to the original work made by other scholars who possessed it, the present study aims at reconstructing the evolutionary course of Martini’s grammar of the Chinese language from the original \textit{Grammatica Sinica} [Chinese Grammar] to the refined and annotated version, the \textit{Grammatica Linguae Sinensis} [Grammar of the Chinese Language].

2. Martino Martini, a Jesuit Missionary to China

Born in Trento, Italy, in 1614,\textsuperscript{7} Martino Martini joined the Society of Jesus in

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{6} Bertuccioli expressed this wish in \textit{Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia}, vol. 2, p. 354.}

Rome when he was eighteen years old. In the “Collegio Romano” [Roman college], one of his teachers was Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), a famous polymath that played a key role in the formation of seventeenth century literati culture. When he was only twenty-two years old and had just been ordained priest, Martini left for China. He arrived in 1643, after the mandatory stops in Lisbon, Goa and Macao. Those were transitional years in China; the Ming dynasty was on the brink of collapse, and in 1644 the Manchu dynasty of the Qing rose to power. Martini spent some time in Shanghai studying Chinese before travelling on to his final residence. During the Manchu occupation, described in his work *De Bello Tartarico Historia* [History of the Tartaric War], published in Antwerp in 1654 during his travels in Europe, he was between Hangzhou 杭州 and Nanjing 南京. At first he took the side of the Ming loyalists and became known as the Huopao shichen 火炮士臣 “Gunpowder Mandarin,” for having made his knowledge of ballistics available to the military officer Liu Zhongzao 劉中藻, helping him to forge cannons in the western way. After moving to various areas of Zhejiang 浙江 province, in 1648, Martini settled in Hangzhou, where he was appointed Superior of the Jesuit residence in 1650. The following year, the Provincial Father Diaz decided to send Martini, who was still very young, to Rome as Procurator of the China mission, so that he could negotiate again with the Holy See on the matter of the prohibition of the Chinese rites.

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8 Regarding the Portuguese Padroado on transportation to and from China, see Nicholas Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity of China* (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2001), pp. 309-313.
9 For more information about the history of the period, see Piero Corradini, *Cina, popoli e società in cinque millenni di storia* (Firenze: Giunti, 1996), pp. 256-278.
11 Archivium Romanum Societatis Jesu (hereafter referred to as ARSI), Jap. Sin. 134, f. 343, n. 16.
which had been decreed by Pope Innocent X in 1645\(^{13}\) and that the Jesuits had not respected.

He left in the direction of Europe where, after a long and arduous journey taking an unusual route, he arrived in 1653. After landing in Bergen, Norway, he traveled for about one year between the main European cities, collecting funds for the mission, recruiting new missionaries, printing his works on Chinese history and geography, and meeting the most important political and cultural figures of the time. His last stop before arriving in Rome was Vienna, where he resided shortly in September 1654 together with the Chinese neophyte, Dominicus Siquin, who had accompanied him throughout his journey.\(^{14}\) In October the same year, Martini arrived in Rome and immediately started working to fulfill his duties as Procurator.

We know that, in the following months, he addressed two letters to the Cardinals of Propaganda Fide requesting that they meet him to discuss the Rites Controversy,\(^{15}\) and also published a report on the situation of the China mission.\(^{16}\) In 1655, he forwarded a proposal to the Pope requesting permission to found a seminary in China and to concede facilitation for Chinese converts.\(^{17}\) Finally, he submitted a memorial on the rites controversy to the Congregations of Propaganda Fide and of the Inquisition. Following accusations of allowing idolatry that had been made towards the Jesuits in previous years by the Dominican Juan Baptista de Morales (1597-1664), Martini found both the Pope and the Cardinals very biased.

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\(^{14}\) The full text can be found in Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, seu Decreta, Instructiones, Rescripta pro apostolicis Missionibus, vol. 1, 1622-1866 (Roma: Ex Typographia Polyglotta, 1907), pp. 30-35.

\(^{15}\) The information regarding the presence of this young Chinese convert in Vienna in 1654 comes from Domingo Navarrete, Tratados historicos, politicos, etnicos y religiosos de la Monarchia de China (Madrid: En la Imprenta Real Por Juan Garcia Infançon, 1676), p. 25, 333.

\(^{16}\) Published with their Italian translation in Bertuccioli, ed., Opera Omnia, vol. 1, pp. 319-327.

\(^{17}\) Martino Martini, Brevis Relatio de Numero et Qualitate Christianorum apud Sinas (Rome: I. De Lazarres, 1654).

against the Jesuits in this matter. Martini stood on the side of Matteo Ricci and his evangelization method, which was based on the tolerance of the Chinese traditions of worship, seeing them as civil rites and thus compatible with the precepts of Christian religion.

In August the same year, Martini made his faith confession of the four solemn vows and the five particular promises and saw the publication of his Novus Atlas Sinensis [New Atlas of China]. In December, his mission completed, he was ready to head back to China. On December 19th, he left Rome for Genoa, and from here he embarked on a boat to Lisbon on January 11th 1656. However, hazards and adversities were a constant on sea journeys at that time and the boat on which Martini and twelve other missionaries were sailing was attacked and taken captive by a French pirate vessel near Alicante. It was thanks to the negotiations carried out by Martini himself that, though robbed of all their belongings, the missionaries were allowed to go back to Genoa on February 16th.

Martini had to wait one extra year for his departure from Lisbon to China. During that time he probably had the opportunity to go back to Rome and complete his work on Chinese history Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima [The First Ten Books of Chinese History], which was published in Munich in 1658, when he had already arrived in China. It was also during this second stay in Rome that he had the opportunity to meet the Spanish polymath Juan Caramuel (1606-1682) and give him some Chinese lessons. He left for China on April 4th, 1657, where he

21 ARSI, Hist. Soc. 23 (Diaries 1610-1655), f. 90.
22 This episode is described in great detail by Ferdinand Verbist in the “Epistola ad P. Ignatium Melgaert” (Genoa, February 1656), in Documents sur Albert Dornille, ed. H. Bosmans (Louvain: Bureaux des anectes, Imprimerie et lithographie Van Linthout, 1911), pp. 33-37.
arrived the following year. After a short period spent in Macao, Martini returned to Hangzhou, where he devoted himself to the building of a church, which would later be described as the most beautiful in the entire Empire. He passed away a few years later, in 1661, when he was only forty-seven years old.

3. Martini’s Grammar of the Chinese Language and Its Circulation

It is rather improbable that Martini started the compilation of his Chinese grammar during his first stay in China (1643-1650). In that period, in fact, he was still busy striving to learn and perfect the language, as well as traveling, escaping, hiding and worrying about the destiny of the mission. Those years were fraught with political changes and the missionaries did not know whether the dynastic change would put at risk the presence of the Christian mission in China. However, we can suppose that Martini, while dedicating himself to the study of Chinese, was collecting some notes on the structure of sentences and on pronunciation, probably from both explanations given by somebody who was helping him and from his own observations made while interacting with people, reading and translating. It is also possible to suppose that these annotations were just for his own benefit, and thus written in the language most congenial to himself, Italian or German, given the bilingualism of Trento, the city he grew up in.

When Martini was sent back to Europe as Procurator of the China Mission, he often went through periods of enforced inactivity, for example while waiting for ships to carry him back to the West or for the Dutch to release him. As a matter of fact, he had to spend a period of ten months in Manila, from March 1651 to January 1652, and then a stretch of about eight or nine months imprisoned in Batavia from May 1652 to February 1653. During those long days, he found himself with quite a lot of time to dedicate to his studies and it was probably at that time that he decided
to put together his notes organically on the Chinese grammar, translating them into Latin and giving to the topics a logical sequence which reflected the description of the eight parts of the speech of Latin grammars. A small manuscript of twenty-six pages, with concise explanations in Latin and copious examples in both Chinese characters and romanizations, was very likely left by Martini in Batavia upon departure. We know for sure that a manuscript of Martini’s grammar, which also contained some remarks by Philippe Couplet (1623-1693),24 was sent to Europe in 1689 as a gift from the Dutch doctor Andreas Cleyer (1634-1697/98) to Christian Mentzel (1622-1701), a German proto-sinologist who was engaged in the study of Chinese. This exchange is confirmed by some lines that can be read on the copy of the manuscript made by T.S. Bayer in 1716 from Mentzel’s original, which at that time was still preserved in Berlin Royal Library but today is lost.25

Menzelius exempli quod nunc est in Regia Bibliotheca, ac quo ad consignandam clavem suam olim usus est, adscripsit: Hoc Mss. Grammaticæ Sinicæ Sigillis Sinensium authorisatum et corroboratum transmissum mihi Christiano Mentzelio fuit Batavia ex insula Java majore dono a Cl. Dn. Andreas Cleyero 1689.26

Martini boarded a ship from Batavia to Europe on the 1st of February, 1652 and spent seven months at sea, with only one stop of twenty days at the Cape of Good Hope.27 During those months, Martini probably thought over his duties as Procurator which included, aside from pleading for the Jesuits in the Rites Controversy, diffusing information about China in order to advertise the mission, collecting funds

24 For his biography see Pfister, Notices, pp. 307-314; Dehergne, Repertoire, pp. 66-67.
25 The copy is now preserved in Glasgow University Library, Hunter MSS 299 (U.6.17), n. 1. The manuscript has been published accompanied by an Italian translation in Bertuccioli, Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia, vol. 2, pp. 384-451.
26 Translation: In Mentzel’s exemplar, currently preserved in Berlin’s library and which he used to compile the key, the following was written: this manuscript of a Chinese grammar, authorized by a Chinese stamp, was sent to me, Christian Mentzel, from Batavia, on the main Indonesian island, as a gift from Dr. Andreas Cleyer in 1689.
27 Martini, De Bello Tartarico Historia, p. 12.
and enrolling new missionaries. The Italian Jesuit thus realized that his grammar booklet might be very useful if circulated in Europe among intellectuals and future missionaries to China. He then decided to revise it, enlarging the explanations in Latin, eliminating some examples for which he could not provide clear grammatical justification and giving it a title: *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*.

After landing in Bergen, Norway, in August 1653, Martini delayed his arrival in Rome for more than one year until October 1654. He spent the intervening months traveling between the main European cities to promote the mission and ensure the publication of his works on Chinese history and geography. He probably also tried to have his grammar printed but, given the difficulties presented by the Chinese characters, he gave up and got some manuscript copies made instead. However, the copyists engaged in this work did not know Chinese and therefore did not copy the Chinese characters of the original text. Furthermore, since they were probably put under pressure and had to work quickly, they made several mistakes and took the liberty of abbreviating some words or truncating some parts.

Martini gifted his grammar to some scholars who were interested in learning Chinese, like the Dutch orientalist Jacob Gohl (1596-1667) and, later on, the Spanish scientist Juan Caramuel. From these copies, others were very likely made, which circulated in the main European Jesuit Colleges. Martini’s Chinese grammar must have been an enormous success and this is confirmed by the number of manuscript copies which have been found and which keep resurfacing in European private and public libraries or archives.

Martini kept refining and adding annotations to his booklet, until at least 1656. Proof of this can be seen in the copy today preserved in the Historical Diocesan Archive of Vigevano. This manuscript is enriched by three precious side annotations, which integrate its contents or justify some choices.

In 1657, when Martini left Europe again to return to China, he most likely took

with him the original copy of the grammar, which at the time of writing has yet to be found. However, Martini’s grammar in Europe took on a life on its own: several copies and translations were made. Also, given the lack of laws protecting copyright at the time, many owners of the grammar reworked it or used it to compile other handbooks on Chinese and then appended their signatures to it. Nonetheless, those authors somehow contributed to the spread of Martini’s grammar. Being the only tool to learn Mandarin Chinese at the time, this grammar became very requested and popular among European intellectuals, especially those engaged in looking for the *lingua adamiatica* [the language of Adam], the primitive language used by all human beings before the destruction of the Tower of Babel. This language supposedly had meanings which were closer to the reality of things, with few words and simple grammar structures. Many outstanding learned men of the time, like Francis Bacon (1561-1625), Athanasius Kircher, John Webb (1611-1672), Andreas Müller (1630-1694), Christian Mentzel, Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716) etc., started looking at Chinese as a possible candidate for this primitive language due to its ideographic writing system, and thus inevitably became involved in the recently-born discipline of Sinology.  

29 This quest eventually led to the *Clavis Sinica* [Key for Chinese] projects of Müller and Mentzel. The *Clavis Sinica* was intended to be a tool to facilitate the learning of the Chinese characters. Since they were seen as representing directly the natural world, mastering them would have meant possessing the key to nature.  

30 Martini’s grammar provided the foundation for these disquisitions.

4. Manuscript Copies of Martini’s Grammar

Five manuscripts of Martini’s grammar have already been studied by Giuliano

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30 For a detailed description of the project, see: Mungello, *Curious Land*, pp. 198-203, 211-229.
Bertuccioli: three are now preserved in Glasgow University Library, one in Berlin National Library, and one in the Jagiellonska Library of Krakow.\textsuperscript{31} It is important to highlight that the manuscripts in Glasgow are copies made by T.S. Bayer (1694-1738) in 1716 from originals formerly preserved in the Berlin Royal Library, which seem to have been lost during the Second World War. Therefore, all three copies are in the same handwriting, i.e. Bayer’s.

Another copy was found in Rome in the private archive of the Italian mathematician and sinologist Giovanni Vacca (1872-1953) which I was able to access in November 2010. This grammar is actually bound and has a hard cover. It appears to be identical to one of those already studied by Bertuccioli.\textsuperscript{32}

At Cambrai Municipal Library I discovered another copy. This grammar was wrongly attributed to the Jesuit missionary, Prospero Intorcetta (1625-1696),\textsuperscript{33} by Louis Pfister in the Notices [Information], his bio-bibliographical work on the Jesuits in China.\textsuperscript{34} Making the mistake of collocating the work among the manuscripts of


\textsuperscript{32} See below, Grammar A.


Lille Municipal Library instead of Cambrai’s, Pfister made an additional error in believing the grammar was Intorcetta’s simply on the basis of a handwritten annotation added by Rémusat which stated that, at the end of a printed copy of this work in his possession, there were the two characters Zhongyong 中庸, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, one of the Confucian classics which had been translated by Intorcetta:³⁵

Le petit ouvrage intitulé: *Grammatica Lingue Sinensis* a été imprimé dans le cours du 17e siècle, format petit in-folio; et l’on peut juger à l’impression, aussi bien qu’aux deux caractères 中庸 (Tchoung-young in medio constantia) gravés en bois et placé au bor de la dernière page qu’il devait-être joint à la traduction latine de l’*Immutabile Medium*, du P. Prosper Intorcetta, et inséré dans la collection de Melch. Thévenot. Je ne connais aucun exemplaire de cette collection où il se trouve, et je n’ai vu qu’on seul exemplaire de la Grammaire même, le quel est -maintenant- en ma possession.

Janv. 1832, H.A.R.

Cette signature est celle de M. Abel Rémusat qui a fait l’observation précédente.

Paris 9 Janvier 1832

Le Marquis de Fortia d’Urban,
de l’académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres³⁶

This grammar is very similar to one of the Glasgow manuscripts³⁷ and to

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³⁶ Translation: The short work entitled: *Grammar of the Chinese Language* was printed during the 17th century, in a small in-folio format; and it can be supposed from the font, as well as from the two characters 中庸 (Tchoung-young in medio constantia) engraved in wood and located at the bottom of the last page, that it must have been attached to the Latin translation of the *Immutabile Medium*, by Father Prosper Intorcetta, and inserted in the collection of Melch. Thévenot. I do not know of any copy of this collection where it can be found, and I have never seen any but one other exemplar of this same Grammar, which is presently in my possession. January 1832. H.A.R. This is the signature of M. Abel Rémusat who has made the statement above. Paris, January 9th 1832. The Marquis of de Fortia d’Urban, of the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres.

³⁷ Grammar C, see further on in this paper.
another copy preserved at the Historical Diocesan Archive of Vigevano, which has been recently proved to be attributable to Martini. When I visited the Vigevanese archive I was allowed to access a precious collection of books and manuscripts which had once belonged to the Spanish polymath Juan Caramuel y Lobkowitz, who had been bishop of that city. In the archive a small manuscript grammar, with neither date nor author’s name, is preserved. Retracing the events occurring between 1656 and 1657, my research concluded that the manuscript in Vigevano was donated by Martini to Juan Caramuel, to whom the Jesuit had taught Chinese during his sojourn in Rome.38

Here follows a brief description of the eight manuscript copies:

(1) **Glasgow - Grammar A** 39

This grammar entitled *Grammatica Sinica* has 26 pages, is divided into three chapters and subdivided into a variable number of paragraphs.40

- **Caput primum**
  - 1. Vocem sinensium numerum.
  - 3. Quomodo 5 toni pronunciantur.

- **Caput secundum**
  - 1. De nominibus et eorum declinatione.
  - 2. De pronominibus.
  - 3. De verborum coniugationibus.

- **Caput tertium**
  - 1. De praepositionibus.
  - 2. De adverbis.
  - 3. De interjectionibus.
  - 4. De coniunctionibus quibus raro utuntur.

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5. De nominibus positivis, comparativis et superlativis.
6. Appendix: De pronominibus.
7. De numeris eorumque particulis quas numericas vocabo.

The text consists of brief grammar explanations in Latin, accompanied by numerous examples offered in both Chinese characters and transcription. Bertuccioli came to the conclusion that this was the closest copy to Martini’s original, since Martini’s name is on the title-page and there is indication that the copy was sent by Andreas Cleyer to Christian Mentzel in Germany in 1689.41 In the same collection of manuscripts, at the next collocation, another of Martini’s manuscripts can be found, Characteres radicales ex autogr. Martinii [Radical characters from Martini’s autograph], containing a list of the radicals. Bertuccioli also grounded his choice on the fact that this was the only manuscript which seemed complete if compared to the other two in Glasgow, one missing half of the grammatical explanations and the other one missing the list of the Chinese sounds. Bertuccioli also concluded that this copy must be earlier than the others because it shows no arrangement of the characters according to the 214-radical system, unlike Grammars B and E described below.42

(2) Glasgow – Grammar B 43

The copy entitled Martinio Cupletiana Grammatica Sinica [Martini and Couplelt’s Chinese Grammar], has a different structure compared to the one described above. The main difference is that it is divided into four classes instead of three chapters and covers a total of 51 pages:

Classis prima:

41 Glasgow’s Grammar A has been transcribed and translated into Italian by Bertuccioli and included in Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia, vol. 2, pp. 383-466.
42 The arrangement of the characters under 214 radicals was used for the first time by Mei Yingzuo 梅陽祚 (1570-1615) in the dictionary Zihui 字彙. Martini does not seem to have known or taken into consideration this work and he arranges the radicals according to a more ancient system. See Bertuccioli, Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia, vol. 2, pp. 453-466.
43 In Glasgow University Library, Hunter MSS 299 (U.6.17), n. 3.
Numerum Chinensium absque formatione characterum exhibit.

**Classis secunda:**
De formationes radicalium cum eorum capitibus et subsequentium numeris exhibit.

**Classis III:**
Proponit voces Sinensium, quae omnes monosyllabice pronunciantur et juxta Dictionarii Hispanicii ABC disponuntur ad formationem characterum classis accommodatas.

**Classis IV:**
Grammaticalia quaedam a P. P. Societatis observata et prodita consistunt in:
1. Quinque accentibus sive tonis vocum.
2. Nominibus et eorum declinatione.
3. Pronominibus.
4. Verborum coniugationibus.
5. Praepositionibus.
6. Adverbis.
7. Interjectionibus.
8. Coniunctionibus.
10. Appendix: De pronominibus.
11. De numeris eorumque particulis numericis.

In this manuscript too, the explanations in Latin are accompanied by Chinese characters, which, however, are often incorrect. Only the fourth class, entitled *Grammaticalia quaedam a P. P. Societatis observata et prodita consistunt in* [The Grammar rules which were observed and explained by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, consist in], appears closer to the text of Grammar A, with which it shares its general organization and topics. The rest must have been added by Philippe Couplet, as made clear by the title. Of the last five paragraphs, only the titles are listed but no contents are added. This does not necessarily mean that the original copy was not complete. We could assume that it was Bayer’s choice to omit them or maybe he just did not have enough time to finish copying them. The missing parts of the text of this
grammar were probably similar to those we can read in Grammar E,\(^{44}\) which was inserted in Christian Mentzel’s *Clavis Sinica*.

**(3) Glasgow – Grammar C**\(^{45}\)

This copy has on its title page the words: “Ludovici Picques *Grammatica Sinica, ex Autogr. Auctoris...*” [Louis Picques’ Chinese Grammar, from the autograph of the author]. The manuscript, therefore, used to belong to Louis Picques (m. 1699), librarian at the Mazarine Library in Paris. It was probably given to Picques by Couplet\(^{46}\) and somehow also ended up in Berlin Library, most likely sent to Mentzel to help him studying Chinese. It was later on copied by Bayer.\(^{47}\) At the bottom of the first page there is a second title, which was not noted down by Bertuccioli in his transcription of the contents: *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*. The organization of the content is very similar to that of Grammar A, having the same number of chapters and paragraphs, and running to a total of 14 pages.

**Caput primum**
1. Vocum Sinensium numerus.
2. Earum Vocum juxta normam Latinorum explicatio.
3. De tonis seu pronunciatione diversa vocum.
4. Qualiter pronunciantur 5 toni.

**Caput secundum**
5. De nominibus et eorum declinatione.
6. De pronominibus.
7. De Verborum coniugationibus.

**Caput tertium**
10. De Interjectionibus.

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\(^{45}\) In Glasgow University Library, Hunter MSS 299 (U.6.17), n. 4.

\(^{46}\) This is what is stated by Bayer on the title page of Grammar B.

11. De Coniunctione.
12. De numeris eorumque particulis.
13. Particulae numericae.

The Latin text, though, is not accompanied by Chinese characters and omits the list of syllables and that of the radicals. Only the number of syllables is given, 318.

(4) Krakow — Grammar D

This manuscript, whose author seems to be Christian Mentzel, as stated on the first page, is entitled Grammatica Sinicae Linguae Universalis [Grammar of the Chinese Universal Language] and is divided into three chapters and a varying number of paragraphs, running to a total of 27 pages.

Liber I
Cap. I, “De natura vocum Sinensium, quas literas Latinas vel alias Europeorum admittant pro vocum formatione ac pronuntiatione.”
Cap. II, “De quinque toni generibus, quomodo sint pronunciandis, qua’q cuilibet fere voci Sinicae applicantur, pro diversitate significationis.”
Cap. III, “De ipso Sinico-Characteristico-Latino Lexico.”
Liber II
Lexicum Sinico-Characteristico-latinum.
Liber III
Cap. II, “De Nominibus Positivis, Comparativis et Superlativis.”
Cap. III, “De Numeris et Particulis numericis.”
Cap. IV, “De Verbis et eorum conjugationibus.”
Cap. VI, “De Adverbis.”
Cap. VIII, “De Coniunctionibus et Interjectionibus.”

48 In Krakow Jagiellonian Library, inv. 2031, Ms. Sin. n. 10.
Liber IV
Cap. II, “De Numeris Sinensium omnibus.”

The text of Liber III [Chapter III] is similar to that of chapters 2 and 3 of Grammar A but the explanations are longer. Liber II is separated and contains a list of Chinese syllables. Martini’s name does not appear; instead, in Liber I, paragraph 3, Couplet is mentioned.49 The work appears to be a reworking of Mentzel on the basis of the manuscripts he had access to while they were still preserved in Berlin.

(5) Berlin/Krakow – Grammar E 50

This grammar is inserted in the text of Christian Mentzel’s Clavis Sinica (1698), a work aiming at offering a tool to facilitate the learning of Chinese.51 The text, divided into five classes, shows few discrepancies with that of Grammar B but, unlike the latter, is complete.52 The work is quite extensive and covers 133 pages (266 r/v):

Classis prima:
Numerum Chinensium absque formatione Characterum simpliciter exhibet.

Classis secunda:
De formatione radicalium cum eorum capitibus et subsequentium numeris exhibit.

Classis III:
Proponit voces Sinensium, quae omnes monosyllabice pronunciantur et juxta.

50 In Krakow Jagiellonska Library, inv. 2031, Ms. Sin. n. 14 and in Berlin National Library, Preuss Kulturbesitz Ms. Dicz. A. Fol. 27. (the collocation given by Bertuccioli in Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia, vol. 2, pp. 367, “Libri Sinici 19,” is the collocation of the microfilm of the manuscript). Very likely the two copies, today located in two different cities, were both preserved in Berlin before the Second World War.
51 A detailed description of the Clavis Sinica project can be found in Mungello, Curious Land, pp.198-203, 211-229.
Dictionarii Hispanicorum ABC disponuntur ad formationem characterum classis 2
accomodatus.

Classis IV:
Grammaticalia quaedam a P. P. Societatis observata et prodita uterque. Quae a
bonis P. P. Societatis de lingua hac ad Grammaticam spectantia, sunt observata
consistunt in sequentibus:
1. De 5 Accentibus sive tonis vocum.
2. De Nominibus et eorum declinatione.
3. De Pronominibus.
4. De Verborum conjunctionibus.
4a. De Praepositionibus quaedam.
5. De Adverbis.
6. De Interjectionibus.
7. De Conjunctionibus.
8. De Nominis positivis, comparativis et superlativis.
10. De numeris eorumque particulis numericis.

Classis V:
Paradigmatibus quibusdam in Latinum Sermonem resolutis Clavem concludit.

Martini’s grammar seems to have provided the basis for the compilation of
Classis IV [Class IV], as already included in the Martinio Cupletiana Grammatica
Sinica.

(6) Rome – Grammar F\textsuperscript{53}

This manuscript is actually bound and has a hard cover. The former pages
were slightly cropped at the top and on the left side to fit the size of the cover. The
first page has a title which is identical to the second title of Grammar A. The work,
in fact, apart from slight differences, is identical to Grammar A in both structure
and content. It is divided into three \textit{caput} [chapters], which are subdivided into a
variable number of paragraphs. This grammar, in Latin with Chinese characters and

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\textsuperscript{53} Private collection. This copy does not have a collocation number which refers to its present
location.
transcriptions, covers a total of 74 pages.

Caput primum
1. Vocum Sinensium numerus.
2. Harum vocum prima juxta Latinos explicatio.
3. Quomodo 5 toni pronunciantur.

Caput secundum
1. De nominibus et eorum declinatione.
2. De pronominibus.
3. De verborum coniugationibus.

Caput tertium
1. De praepositionibus.
2. De adverbis.
3. De interjectionibus.
4. De conjunctionibus quibus raro utuntur.
5. De nominibus positivis, comparativis et superlativis.
6. Appendix: De pronominibus.
7. De numeris eorumque particulis quas numericas vocabo.

Characteres Radicales.

The pages are numbered in the upper right-hand corner. The examples and the explanations are widely spaced apart. The first paragraph, containing the list of Chinese syllables, shows a division of the page vertically in half: on the left side we find the list of characters and transcriptions, on the right side the transcriptions are repeated and a blank space is left, probably in order to be filled by the learner with the characters. Unlike Grammar A this copy is bound together with a list of 330 radicals, which are the same as those found by Bertuccioli in Glasgow and later on published in the second volume of Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia [Martino Martini, Society of Jesus, Complete works].

The Chinese characters are nicely written, however, the handwriting does not seem to be Martini’s. This copy was also “augmented” by Philippe Couplet as is made clear by the title but, at the present state of the research, it is hard to separate Couplet’s contribution to this copy of the grammar.
(7) Cambrai – Grammar G

Today preserved in the Municipal Library of Cambrai, this anonymous copy of *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* was formerly kept at another library in Cambrai, the Library of St. Sepulcher, until 1779, as written on top of the third page. Cambrai used to host a Jesuit College; therefore it is not surprising that Martini’s grammar was circulating there.

The manuscript, bound together with a *Mencii explanatio* [Explanation on the *Mengzi*], has on its first page a note signed by Abel Rémusat, stating that a printed copy of this rare work was in his possession.

This grammar, which is written in a clear elegant way with large spaces, is divided into 3 chapters and the text covers a total of 21 pages.

**Caput 1.um: De Vocibus Sinensibus**
1. Vocum Sinensium numerus.
2. Harum vocum juxtâ normas Latinarum explicatio.
3. De tonis seu pronunciacione diversâ vocum earundem.
4. Qualiter pronunciandi 5 toni.
**Caput 2.um**
1. De Nominibus et eorum declinatione.
2. De Pronominibus.
3. De Verborum Conjugationibus.
**Caput 3: De praespositionibus, adverbïs, interjectionibus et conjunctionibus.**
1. De Praepositionibus.
2. De adverbïs.
3. De Interjectionibus.
4. De Conjunctione.
5. De numeris eorumque particulis.
6. De nominibus Positivis, Comparativis, Superlativis.
7. De Pronominibus Appendix.

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It appears to be very similar in terms of content and division to Grammar C but differs in two respects: first of all, the copyist of this grammar must have been in a hurry, since many words are abbreviated; secondly, this grammar lacks four lines which are present at the end of chapter III, paragraph 2, of Grammar C, on Chinese pronunciation. Aside from these differences, the two texts are identical.

(8) Vigevano – Grammar H55

The Grammatica Linguae Sinensis, preserved in the Historical Diocesan Archive of Vigevano, appears to be the copy Martini kept with himself for the longest time, and which he had time to revise and add annotations to. He left it as a gift to Juan Caramuel just before heading back to China.

The manuscript is a small in-folio of 21 pages, held together by a thin red thread; it is divided into 3 chapters called “caput,” which are subdivided into paragraphs.

Caput I: De vocibus sinensibus
1. Vocum Sinensium numerus.
2. Harum vocab prima iuxta latinas explicatio.
3. De tonis seu diversa earundem vocab apud Sinas pronunciatione.
4. Qualiter quinque hi toni pronunciarentur.

Caput II
1. De nominibus et eorum declinatione.
2. De pronominibus.
3. De Verborum conjugationibus.

Caput III: De praepositionibus, adverbs, interjectionibus et conjunctionibus
1. De Praepositionibus.
2. De Adverbs.
3. De Interjectionibus.
4. De Coniunctione.

55 In the Historical Diocesan Archive of Vigevano, Fondo Caramuel, busta 41, fascicolo 31. This grammar can be found in both transcript and English translation in Paternicò, Martino Martini’s Grammar of the Chinese Language, pp. 147-219.
5. De numeris eorumque particulis quas numericas vocabo.
6. De nominibus positivis, comparativis et superlativis.
7. De Pronominibus appendix.

The main body is in Latin with the characters of the examples written alongside. The characters seem to have been added at a later time by a western hand familiar with Chinese writing. Both the Latin text and the characters are often corrected or underlined. The corrections, on one hand, makes us consider the possibility of Martini’s intervention to correct mistakes by the copyist; on the other hand, we can presume that Caramuel underlined certain parts while studying and that the characters were added by Martini during the lessons to Caramuel. This copy, furthermore, shows some side annotations written in the first person, a careful examination of which has revealed Martini’s own handwriting.\(^5\) The general organization of the content follows that of Grammar A, even though the list of radicals is missing, and it seems very close to those of Grammar C and G, that is, the other two copies of *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*, with which it shares an identical distribution of chapters and paragraphs. The explanations in Latin are sometimes given using a different terminology, but the general meaning is the same; they are less schematic and more detailed. There are fewer examples in Chinese in comparison to Grammar A, but the list of syllables, omitted in Grammars C and G,\(^6\) appears again, despite the lack of characters.

5. Printed Copies of Martini’s Grammar

In 1922, the French sinologist Paul Pelliot (1878-1945) hypothesized that Martini’s grammar of the Chinese language might have been printed in the 17\(^{th}\) century and inserted in a limited number of copies of Mélchisedec Thévenot’s

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\(^6\) To be precise, both the copyists of Grammars C and G had preferred to omit the list of syllables and just quoted the first four. The copyist of Grammar G had probably intended to add the entire list later, since he left an empty page before continuing to copy the rest of the text.
collection of travel reports: *Relations de divers voyages curieux*.\(^{58}\) He grounded his assumption on what he had read in the catalogue of the sale of Abel Rémusat (1788-1832)’s library.\(^{59}\) There, next to the entry *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*, it is written that, judging from the kind of paper and font used, the work seemed to have been prepared to be inserted in the *Relations*. Nobody, though, not even Rémusat himself, had ever been able to find a copy of Thévenot’s collection containing the grammar.\(^{60}\) My recent research has succeeded in finding more references on the subject and eventually led to the discovery of at least two copies of the *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* appended to the second volume of the 1696 edition of the *Relations*.\(^{61}\) This discovery, while validating Pelliot’s hypothesis, allows us to attribute the first grammar ever written or printed of Mandarin Chinese to Martino Martini, preceding the publication of Varo’s work by seven years.

On the trail of what was hypothesized by Pelliot and wished for by Bertuccioli, believing that Rémusat was indeed in possession of a printed copy as he had stated in his handwritten annotation to Grammar G, I have tried to find as many references as

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58 Pelliot, in his article “Le véritable auteur des *Elementa Linguae Tartaricae*,” *Y’oung Pao* 21 (1922): 380-381, 386, presented the hypothesis that one of the copies of the grammar found in Glasgow (see further in this paper) was inserted in the collection of M. Thévenot, *Relation de divers voyages curieux* (First edition 1663-1672, Second edition 1696). However, as Bertuccioli has already highlighted in *Martino Martini S.J., Opera Omnia*, vol. 2, p. 371, Pelliot does not specify which copy was inserted.


60 Rémusat stated this in his handwritten annotation added to the manuscript copy of the grammar found in Cambrai, which can also be found in: France Ministère de l’instruction publique, ed., *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, p. 390, n. 941.

61 One copy has been found in the Russian National Library of Moscow. Another copy is presently preserved in the Public Library of the City of Boston.
possible concerning Martini’s grammar publication. The works that have helped the
most have been old catalogues of rare books and manuscripts of European, American
and Asian libraries, as well as manuals for bibliophiles. A first important reference
came from Brunet (1840), who claimed that a volume appended to Thévenot’s
collection, a Grammatica Linguae Sinensis of 15 pages, had been discovered in
the Royal Library of Berlin.62 It appears that other authors like Zenker (1846) and
Gräse (1867), following Brunet, believed this grammar was in Berlin, inserted
in one of the editions of Thévenot’s work but without specifying which one.63
The catalogue of the Berlin National Library contains three copies of Thévenot’s
collection, one of 1663-167264 and two of 1696,65 one of which (1696) had been
lost during World War II; the others do not contain Martini’s grammar.66 During
the Second World War many books where stolen from Berlin’s library. Some were
eventually found in Krakow, in the Jagiellonska Library. However, Thévenot’s 1696
edition did not seem to have encountered this same fate.

As I discovered at a later stage of the research, the 1696 edition of the
Relations preserved in Moscow’s Lenin National Library does in fact contain,
attached to the second volume, the printed version of the Grammatica Linguae
Sinensis.67 This was the very copy originally kept in Berlin, as is made clear by a
round red stamp with the words “Ex Biblioth. Regia Berolinen.” [From the Royal

62 Jacques C. Brunet, Manuel du libraire et de l’amateur de livres, vol. 5 (Paris: Chez Silvestre,
1840), pp. 256, 813.
Theodor Gräse, Trésor de livres rares et précieux, vol. 6 (Dresde: Rudolf Kuntze, 1867), p. 132.
64 Collocation: 2" Ps 6300: R.
66 The Abteilung Historische Drucke of Berlin National Library replied to my enquiry that the
edition of 1696, coll. 2" Libri impr. rari 152/153, was lost.
67 Collocation: MK; IV-φp. 2°. However, the text is incorrectly attributed: the title is correct but
Jean de Thévenot appears as author. Jean de Thévenot was actually a nephew of Mélchisedec and
has often been confused with him. Jean de Thévenot (1633-1667) was a traveler and was author
of the work entitled Relation d’un voyage fait au Levant... Par Monsieur de Thévenot (Paris:
Thomas Jolly, 1665).
Library of Berlin], which appears on the second page.

Further reference concerning the existence of another printed copy can be found in a catalogue of the Boston Public Library, where, next to the entry for *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*, is written “in Thevenot. Voyages, v. 2”.68 As a matter of fact, the library has a copy of this grammar which is attached to the second volume of 1696 edition of the Relations and is identical to the one preserved in Moscow.69

Here follows a brief description of the grammar published in the Relations:

(1) **Printed copy – Grammar I**

This grammar of 15 pages entitled *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* is written with a slightly bigger font and a wider spacing compared to the other texts of the Relations. The general organization of its content respects that of Grammar A and it is very similar to the other copies of *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* (Grammars C, G and H).

**Caput primum: De Vocibus Sinensibus**

1. Vocum Sinensium numerus.
2. Harum vocum justa normas Latinarum explicatio.
3. De tonis seu pronuntiatione diversa vocum earundem.
4. Qualiter pronuntiandi quinque toni.

**Caput secundum: De Nominibus, Pronominibus, & Verbis**

1. De Nominibus et eorum declinatione.
2. De Pronominibus.
3. De Verborum conjugationibus.

**Caput tertium: De Praepositionibus, Adverbiis, Interjectionibus, & Conjunctionibus**

1. De Praepositionibus.


69 Another copy should be preserved in New York Public Library, as we can gather from a catalogue of the Lenox Library, which today is a part of the former. See: Lenox Library, *Contributions to a Catalogue of the Lenox Library* (New York: Lenox Library, 1877), p. 18.
2. De Adverbiis.
3. De Interjectionibus.
4. De Conjunctionibus.
5. De Numeris, eorumque particulis.
7. De pronominius Appendix.

The text is exclusively in Latin; at the bottom of page 7 there is the character he 禾, “harvest,” and at the end of page 15 there are the two characters 中庸 Zhongyong, “The Doctrine of the Mean.”

Unlike the above mentioned grammars, the text of pages 1 and 2 is accompanied by five annotations concerning the initials, finals and pronunciation of Chinese, which are attributed to Couplet by a note on the side. Following this, a list of the Chinese syllables entitled Catalogus omnium dictionum Sinensium, proït à primis Missionariis ad usum Europaeorum confectus est [List of all the Chinese syllables which were compiled by the first missionaries for the Europeans], whose structure is different if compared with those of Grammars A and H, was possibly reordered and annotated by Couplet. A last intervention by Couplet can be found on page 7, where the text of the grammar states that the number of the Chinese syllables is 318. Here, a note on the side adds: “P. Couplet 324 voces esse refert” [Father Couplet states that there are 324 syllables]. This leads us to believe that the editor, though accepting Couplet’s observations, probably did not want to alter the original content of the grammar, which from page 6 onwards is identical to that of Grammars C and G (without the abbreviations of Grammar G). Thus, we can suppose that the edition inserted in Thévenot’s Relations derives from the manuscript copies circulating in francophone Europe, and not from one of the later refined and annotated ones, like that which Martini left to Caramuel.

(2) Copies Still to Be Found

At least four manuscript copies of the grammar, and who knows how many printed ones, are still to be found.
As for the manuscript copies, we know of their existence through different kinds of first and second hand sources. First of all, the original copies of the three manuscripts today held in Glasgow, which were formerly preserved in Berlin Royal Library, are still considered lost during the Second World War. Finding those documents and conducting an analysis of the handwritings would allow us to better clarify the role of Philippe Couplet in enlarging the text of the grammar and to separate possible interpolations made by Cleyer, Mentzel or Bayer. These copies could be somewhere in Germany or Russia or in any country formerly belonging to the Soviet Union.

Through what was written by Bayer in his *Museum Sinicum* [Chinese Museum], another copy should have been gifted by Martini to Jacob Gohl but we do not have any other reference to confirm this. The problem is that Gohl’s books appear to be scattered all around Europe and more research is needed.

As for the original that Martini very likely took back to China, little hope of finding it remains. We know that a fire swept through the city of Hangzhou in 1692, destroying the main hall of the church and the dormitory of the Jesuits. Though the library was on the upper floor and was undamaged, at present it is hard to retrace the books formerly preserved there, especially because access to manuscripts is often denied in today’s Chinese libraries.

With regard to printed copies, we know that one used to be in the possession of Abel Rémusat. Not only do we have a handwritten statement by Rémusat himself to prove it, but a reference to this work can also be found in the catalogue of the sale of his library. Despite my many enquiries and visits to French libraries, especially in Paris, I have not been able to find it and the hypothesis that it has been sold to a private collector becomes more and more plausible.

Nonetheless, the search for more printed copies should continue especially in Europe because it is very unlikely that only four (one in Boston, one in Moscow, one in *New York, *Rémusat’s) \(^{70}\) were made in 1696.

\(^{70}\) *Presumably/not found yet.
6. Evolutionary Courses of Martini’s Grammar

Going back over the stages of the composition of the grammar, it is possible to assert that Martini’s work, aside from undergoing a revision process intended by its author, encountered different destinies according to the geographical areas it ended up in and its possessor.

Through the comparative analysis of the manuscript and printed copies, four development lines can be traced:

- **Line 1:** Grammar A → Grammar C – Grammar G –*Gohl’s copy* → Grammar H (with Martini’s annotations).
- **Line 2:** Grammar A + Grammar C + Mentzel’s reworking → Grammar D.
- **Line 3:** Grammar C - Grammar G- *Gohl’s copy* → Grammar I (with Couplet’s annotations).
- **Line 4:** Grammar A + Grammar B → Mentzel’s *Clavis Sinica*/Grammar E.

Evolution **Line 1** appears to be the only course intended by Martini himself for his work. He must have made some sort of notebook for learning Chinese and, during his stays in the Philippines and Batavia, probably decided to rewrite it in an ordered way. Presumably, in the beginning, Martini did not think about writing a formal descriptive Chinese grammar: as a matter of fact, the *Grammatica Sinica* he eventually left in Batavia (Grammar A, which was forwarded to Europe in 1689) was rich in examples but its explanations in Latin were very concise. The small booklet he had was probably even left untitled, and *Grammatica Sinica* actually appears to be the title given to the work by Bayer when copying it in Berlin in 1716. During the following months traveling back to Europe, Martini might have started to realize that his notebook could have had great utility if circulated with propaganda aims among scholars and future missionaries to China. He started working on it, enlarging the grammatical explanations, eliminating some examples and omitting the

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71 Trusting what Bayer wrote on the title-page of Grammar B, I have decided to consider Gohl’s copy similar to the other copies of *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*. 
characters which accompanied the list of Chinese syllables. He also gave a title to his work: *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*. After landing in Europe in 1653, he had some copies made but the copyists, not knowing how to write in Chinese, did not copy the Chinese characters and some even decided to abbreviate the words of the main body of the text (Grammar G). We know that Martini gifted Jacob Gohl with one of these copies and a few others were probably made which circulated widely in francophone Europe: aside from minor differences, they were all alike.

Despite being very busy carrying out his duties as Procurator, Martini continued his work refining and annotating the text of the grammar. Three years later, when donating a copy to his notable student, Juan Caramuel, he decided to correct some of the copyist’s oversights and to add the omitted Chinese characters. For sake of completeness, he also wrote some side annotations, which he had probably added on his original. In 1657, Martini probably brought his own copy back to China which, at the present stage of the research, is considered lost.

**Line 2** saw Christian Mentzel playing a key role in using and reworking the copies of Martini’s grammar that he was able to examine at the library of Frederick William Elector of Brandenburg (1620-1688), of whom he was the personal doctor. When Mentzel began studying Chinese, he was already sixty years old. He maintained a close friendship with the Dutch doctor in Batavia, Andreas Cleyer and with the China Jesuit missionary Philippe Couplet who helped him considerably with his study of Chinese by sending him books and manuals. Grammar D shows Mentzel as the author but, from the distribution of the content, it is not

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72 As Martini himself explains in one of the annotations to the Vigevanese grammar, it seemed superfluous adding the characters to the list of the Chinese syllables, because one syllable could match different characters. See Paternicò, “Martino Martini e Juan Caramuel,” p. 422.

73 As stated above, Picques or Couplet added few lines to Grammar C, chapter III par. 2.


75 On the first page of the grammar is written the following: “Labor primus, inventum, et MSS
hard to retrace its derivation from Martini’s work. Mentzel had access to the
original manuscripts of Grammars A, B and C, whose copies are now in Glasgow.
Grammar B, though, the *Martino Cupletiana*, does not seem to have influenced the
compilation of Grammar D. Therefore, we can assume that Mentzel was only able to
read it at a later stage.

Development **Line 3** led to the grammar’s publication. Couplet, back in Europe
in 1683 as Procurator of the China mission, at some point came into possession of
the copies of Martini’s grammar that had been circulating in francophone Europe for
nearly thirty years. Couplet slightly revised and annotated the text of the grammar
and, before heading back towards China, must have left a copy in France. In 1696,
this copy was printed and inserted in the new edition of Thévenot’s *Relations*,
even though it was at the very last moment, since the text was appended to the
second volume. Having been appended it was also detachable, and this published
Grammatica Linguae Sinensis might have been at times sold separately. This could
explain why in today’s libraries some 1696 editions of Thévenot’s work do not
contain the grammar, as well as why Rémusat owned just the grammar without
owning the rest of the *Relations*.

**Line 4.** In the 1680s, missionaries to China had had the opportunity of
studying the language with more tools than their predecessors. Couplet might have
felt well-versed enough in Chinese,\(^{76}\) that he decided to expand Martini’s work in
a new grammar which, with a certain amount of honesty, a rarity at that time, he
called *Martino Cupletiana*. An incomplete copy of this grammar is Glasgow’s
Grammar B, probably donated by Couplet to his friend Mentzel. A complete and
extended version was included by Mentzel in his *Clavis Sinica* of 1698. Mentzel’s
contribution can be seen in completing the *classis prima*, since the list of the

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*Christiani Mentzelii D. phil. et med.*” [First work created and manuscript by Christian Mentzel,
Ph.D. in medicine].

\(^{76}\) He had edited the Latin translation of three of the Confucian Four Books, see Prospero
Intorcetta, Christian Herdrich, François Rougemont, and Philippe Couplet, *Confucius Sinarum
numbers contained in the *Grammatica* stops at number 2 (*er 二*), while in the *Clavis Sinica* stops at 100,000,000 (erroneously called *wan wan* 萬萬). It might have also been Mentzel who added the characters and transcriptions to all the syllables of the Chinese listed in the classis tertia [third class/chapter], whereas in the *Grammatica* only in few cases were present.

7. Final Remarks

Martino Martini, besides being a pioneer in introducing Chinese history and geography to the Europeans, must be considered the father of linguistic studies in Mandarin Chinese. His grammar, written between 1651-1652 and constantly revised and ameliorated until at least 1657, first circulating in manuscript form and then after 1696 in printed form, became an important tool for learning Chinese for intellectuals, orientalists, curious people and future missionaries. Through the comparative analysis of the copies discovered up to now, it has been possible to separate the contributions to Martini’s work made by other scholars, such as Couplet and Mentzel. This allows us today to deduce that, if Martini had had the opportunity to have his grammar published, he would have probably chosen the copy now preserved in Vigevano for publication. The manuscript with Couplet’s annotations, which was later printed (Grammar I), represents Martini’s grammar at an intermediate stage, between the first version and the last, the *Grammatica Sinica* (Grammar A) and the *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis* (Grammar H) respectively.\textsuperscript{77} Nonetheless, having been able to find printed copies of this work is a further confirmation of how much Martini’s grammar, the first grammar of Mandarin Chinese ever written or published, was welcomed in Europe for its preciousness and utility.

\textsuperscript{77} A detailed comparative analysis between these two copies can be found in: Paternicò, *Martino Martini’s Grammar of the Chinese Language*, pp. 237-269.
### Table 1: Manuscript and printed copies of Martino Martini’s Grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Collocation</th>
<th>N. of pages</th>
<th>N. of chapters</th>
<th>Ms. or Printed</th>
<th>Chinese characters</th>
<th>Other authors</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B  Martinio Cupletiana Grammatica Sinica</strong></td>
<td>Glasgow University Library, Hunter MSS 299 (U.6.17), number 3.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Couplet</td>
<td>The grammar itself covers the fourth chapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C  Grammatica Linguae Sinensis</strong></td>
<td>Glasgow University Library, Hunter MSS 299 (U.6.17), number 4.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D  Grammatica Sinicæ Linguæ Universalis</strong></td>
<td>Krakow Jagiellonska Library, inv. 2031, Ms. Sin. n. 10.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mentzel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F  Grammatica Linguæ Sinicæ</strong></td>
<td>Rome, private collection</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Couplet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G  Grammatica Linguæ Sinensis</strong></td>
<td>Municipal Library of Cambrai, Catalogue général des manuscrits, p. 390, MS. 941.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Wrongly attributed to Intorcetta by Pfister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H  Grammatica Linguæ Sinensis</strong></td>
<td>Historical Diocesan Archive of Vigeveno, Fondo Caramuel, busta 41, fascicolo 31.</td>
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衛匡國與第一部西方撰作的
中國官話語法

陸商隱*

摘要

義大利耶穌會傳教士衛匡國（Martino Martini, 1614-1661）是最早向歐洲人介紹中國歷史與中國地理的西方人，並撰寫了第一部中國官話語法。

據已故義大利漢學家白佐良（Giuliano Bertuccioli）的談論，西元1651-1652年間，衛氏自中國前往歐洲的旅途中，曾在巴達維亞停留八個月。這段期間，他完成了《中國文法》的撰寫，並在離開之前，將《中國文法》的一部手稿抄本贈送荷蘭醫學家克萊耶 (Andreas Cleyer, 1634-1697/98)。1689年，克萊耶把抄本寄給了一位德國醫師門澤爾 (Christian Mentzel, 1622-1701)。1716年，德國漢學家巴耶 (T. S. Bayer, 1694-1738) 抄寫存藏於柏林圖書館的手稿。但此後，該原稿卻遺失了。

筆者透過衛氏郵件的詳細分析、古代善本總目及藏書家手冊的探究，又在法國和義大利另外發現了兩部抄本，這兩部文法的標題皆為《中國語文文法》。

經過進一步的研究，筆者發現衛氏的《中國語文文法》，已經收錄在出版於1696年泰夫諾（M. Thévenot’s）的文集《旅行奇集》中。綜上，得以證明衛匡國的文法應是有史以來第一部撰寫、出版的中國官話語法。本文藉由手抄本和出版版本的分析比較，試從《中國文法》初稿、經過修訂並加入注釋的《中國語文文法》，追溯衛匡國語法的流傳路徑。

關鍵詞：官話、文法、耶穌會士、衛匡國、手稿

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