

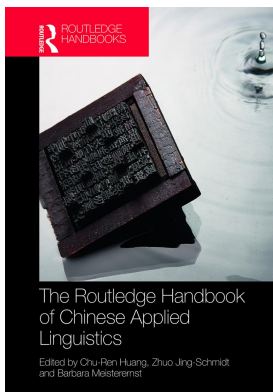
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3

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CHRISTIANITY

Federico Masini

The Chinese language and the West before Christianity reached China

The encounter between Christianity and the Chinese language largely coincided with the history of the Western world in China. The Christian faith arrived in China during the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368). Before this period, there was very little information about China in the ancient Western world, and even less information about the Roman Empire in China. In the scant information about China in early Latin sources, there is no specific reference to the Chinese language; however, the Chinese term for 絲 *sī* ‘silk’ entered Latin as *sericum* and in Greek as *sērikón* (σηρικός). Eventually, the term was borrowed by other European languages to indicate not only silk but also the *Seres* (i.e. the population that produced such precious fabric, the Chinese). In Chinese texts, the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries AD was first indicated as 大秦 *dà qìn*, but no reference to Western languages can be found earlier than the 13th century in Chinese sources. In works compiled during the Song Dynasty by Zhao Rukuo 趙汝适 (1170–1231), 諸蕃志 *Zhūfān Zhì* (*Records of Foreign People*), it was recorded that in Sicily (斯加里野 *Sījiālǐyě*), the language was similar to that of 蘆眉 *Lúméi*, which can be interpreted as Rome (Fracasso 1982).

The first real encounter between the Chinese language and Christianity took place during the Yuan Dynasty, when scores of missionaries and merchants, mostly Italians, reached China. The Pope in Rome, who was in search of allies to fight against Islam, was the first to suggest a journey to China. In the few documents written in Latin by early visitors from the West, such as the most well-known Western account of those journeys, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, there was some information about the Chinese language:

For you must know that throughout all Manzi [i.e. China] they employ one speech and one kind of writing only, but yet there are local differences of dialect, as you might say of Genoese, Milanese, Florentines, and Neapolitans, who though they speak different dialects can understand one another.

(Polo and Yule 1875: ii–218)

This can be explained by the fact that during the Yuan Dynasty the official language of the court was not Chinese but Mongolian. As for Chinese sources, no direct or specific reference

to all those who travelled to China has been identified so far, but various indirect evidence has been found (Vogel 2013).

Early Christianity in China

The early presence of a Christian community is attested by the well-known Nestorian Stele, or 大秦景教流行中國碑 *Dàqín Jǐngjiào Liúxíng Zhōngguó Bēi* (Memorial of the Propagation in China of the Luminous Religion from Daqin), discovered during the late-Ming Dynasty in the city of Xi'an 西安. The stele was erected in 781AD to celebrate the presence of a Nestorian community in the area. Although many scholars have questioned its authenticity, the stele is now considered the earliest source of Chinese knowledge of Western faith. It includes the first Chinese rendering of some words of Western origin, mostly proper names created by phonetic loans, such as 娑殫 *Suōdān* 'Satan', or words related to Christian doctrines, such as 我三一 *wǒ sān yī* 'our trinity' (Havret 1902: 28, 15).

However, the first real interaction between the Chinese language and foreign languages from the West took place in the last decades of the 16th century, when Western vessels reached the South China Sea following the commercial expansion of the Spanish and Portuguese empires. To support such a vast commercial expansion, which took place following the discovery of America in 1492, a great missionary campaign was launched to spread the Christian faith among the indigenous populations of all the continents. The missionaries reached the Far East, including Japan and the Philippines, in the second half of the 16th century and established one of their bases in Macao, which was administered by the Portuguese Empire beginning in 1557. The first extant descriptions of the Chinese language ever written in any Western language can be found in the writings of the first Portuguese and Spanish missionaries, who had the opportunity to acquire some knowledge of the local language.

First descriptions of Chinese

Juan González de Mendoza (c. 1540–1617) was the author of the first detailed history of China, *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran Reyno de la China*, published in the West in 1585. It was considered the first Western book to contain printed Chinese characters and an account of the language. However, a letter written by Father Baltasar Gago from Hirado, near Nagasaki, in September 1555, contained some reproduced Chinese characters. This was noted in a book published in 1570 that reported the missionary activity in Nagasaki. The letter contained characters such as *luña* 月 *yuè* 'moon' and *Homen* 人 *rén* 'man'. The letter also stated the difficulty of the Chinese language and the problem of the great homophony of Chinese words (Cartas 1570; Alves Dias 2014).

The Spanish in the Philippines

Following the first expedition to the Philippines made by a Spanish vessel – namely the one headed by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 – some Catholic orders, mostly Dominicans and Franciscans, began intense missionary activity in the archipelago. The local population included a vast community of Chinese settlers commonly referred to as “Sangleys” or “Sangleyes”. As will be discussed in detail later, while the Jesuit missionaries in Mainland China were attracted to the study of the written and oral language used by the Chinese literati, the missionaries in the Philippines devoted great attention to the dialectal variety of Chinese spoken by the Sangleys. Following a pioneering study by Van der Loon (1966), some texts were soon

discovered and studied in detail. The *Dictionarium Sino Hispanicum* (i.e. a Romanized 闽南話 *mínnánhuà* wordlist with Chinese characters and Castilian translations) was edited by the Spanish Jesuit missionary Pedro Chirino in 1604 (Masini 2000; Masini 马西尼 2004). The text included about 2,000 Chinese characters, including monosyllabic and polysyllabic words and simple everyday expressions. This was the only extant lexicographic material created by a Jesuit in the Philippines, and it was the oldest extant text on the Chinese language spoken by the Sangleyes (Masini 2000). Klöter (2011c) published an in-depth analysis of the manuscript *Arte de la lengua chio chiu*, written by an anonymous Spanish missionary around 1621. This text contained not only the oldest grammar of a Chinese language ever written in a Western language but also was among the oldest attested presentations of the phonology and grammar of 闽南話 Minnanhua, a dialect spoken in the district of Zhangzhou 漳州.

Aside from these two texts, the titles and the authors of roughly 10 other lexicographic works on the Chinese Minnan dialect prepared in the Philippines were mentioned in various sources (Klöter 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). In these, Martín de Rada (1533–1578) was mentioned as the editor of the *Arte y vocabulario de la lengua china* in 1580. This work, if found, would be the oldest description of the Chinese language in a European language. The problem is that many of these lexicographic materials were either lost or never existed (i.e. zealous missionaries, eager to attract the attention of their superiors and supporters, failed to record the materials).

As clearly indicated in the preface of *Arte de la lengua chio chiu*, the language described was the local language spoken by ordinary people, while the Chinese literati in that province and everywhere else in the empire used a different common language: Mandarin. For this reason, the study of Chinese local languages that began in the Philippines ended quite soon, as the Jesuits who reached Mainland China devoted themselves only to the study of Mandarin. As shall be discussed shortly, two centuries later, the Protestant missionaries dedicated great attention to the study of Chinese dialects.

The Jesuits and the Dominicans in China: the discovery of 官话 Guānhuà

Aside from the limited information about China reported in Marco Polo's travel journal, the discovery of China in the West, and vice versa, began at the end of the 16th century, when Jesuit and eventually Dominican missionaries engaged in the mission of spreading the Christian faith in China. The importance of studying the Chinese language was clearly understood by the Italian Jesuit Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), who reached the Portuguese settlement of Macao in 1578. Once there, he realized that the main impediment to the missionary endeavour in China was the lack of knowledge of the Chinese language. Therefore, he immediately asked his superiors to dispatch someone with the sole mission of studying Chinese. The person chosen was Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607), who reached Macao in 1579, followed by Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) shortly thereafter. As indicated in Ricci's journal, since he had a fairly clear picture of the linguistic situation in China, he was able to specify which language the missionaries had to learn:

Besides the various dialects of the different provinces, the provincial vernacular so to speak, there is also a spoken language which is common to the whole Empire, known as the Quonhoa, an official language for civil and forensic use. . . . The Quonhua dialect is now in vogue among the cultured classes, and is used between strangers and the inhabitants of the province they may visit. . . . A provincial dialect would

not be used in polite society, although the more cultured classes might use it in their home province as a sign of neighbourliness, or perhaps outside of the province for a sense of patriotism. This national, official tongue is so commonly used that even the women and children understand it.

(Ricci 1615: 28–29)

Ruggeri was the first to study written Chinese and spoken Mandarin. He was also able to produce the first tools for understanding the language: his greatest achievement was the creation of the first complete system for transcribing Mandarin Chinese sounds with Latin letters, thus initiating the long history of Chinese Romanization that ended with the final codification of the 汉语拼音 *Hànyǔ Pīnyīn* in 1958. He employed such Romanization in his *Atlante della China* (*Atlas of China*, ca. 1606) and in the Chinese-Portuguese dictionary eventually referred to as 葡華詞典 *Pú-Huá Cídiǎn* (Yang 1989; Levi 1998; Witek 2001; Ricci and Ruggieri 2001; Raini 2010). This manuscript dictionary was most likely edited by Ruggieri and Ricci while in Macao, and it was brought to Rome in 1588. The Romanization created by Ruggieri made use of a set of initial consonants mostly according to the Italian reading, with some influence of Portuguese. The two main shortcomings of such early Romanization was the lack of any indications for aspiration and tones. This system was called Ricci Early Romanization (RES) (although it should have been ascribed to Ruggieri) to distinguish it from Ricci Late System (RLS), which Ricci 利瑪竇 (1605) employed in 西字奇蹟 *Xīzì Qíjī* (*Strange Examples of Western Writing*), first printed in Beijing in 1605. This was a short collection of biblical stories, where the pronunciation of each character was indicated in Latin letters alongside the Chinese texts. This was considered the first example of a text written in Latin letters printed in China. Romanization was elaborated by Ricci, with the help of his confrere Lazzaro Cattaneo (1560–1640). It was mainly based on Portuguese pronunciation and presented two great novelties. First, aspiration was indicated through a Greek rough breathing written over the syllable or through an “h” inserted after the initial. In this way, it was possible to distinguish opposite graphemes such as ç/ç’, c/c’, etc. The new system also created five marks for the different tones: ˉ, ˆ, ˆ’, ˆ’ and ˘. Ricci stated that he used this second Romanization system for the compilation of a more complete Chinese-Latin dictionary; however, the manuscript has yet to be found (Masini 1996; Raini 2010). Some clues of this second Ricci dictionary have been identified in the short Chinese dictionary (with no characters) appended to the French edition of Atanasius Kircher’s *China Illustrata* published in 1670; thus, it was the first Chinese dictionary printed in Europe, although without Chinese characters (Masini 2003).

A slightly modified version of RLS was eventually employed in 西儒耳目資 *Xīrú Ěr mù Zī* (*Aid for the Ears and Eyes of Western Literati*) written by Nicolas Trigault (1577–1628), with the assistance of a few Chinese scholars, and published in Hangzhou 杭州 in 1626 (Luo 羅常培 1930; Tan 譚慧穎 2006; Xue 薛志霞 2009). The book was divided into three tomes. The first tome (萬國音韻 *Wànguó Yīnyùn*) presented a detailed description of Western phonetics by introducing a table of five vowels (自鳴 *zì míng*) and 24 consonants (同鳴 *tóng míng*), explaining how they are combined to convey the many different sounds of each language. The second tome (列音韻譜 *Lièyīn Yùnpǔ*) introduced the Romanization of Chinese characters listed according to the pronunciation of their rhyme (韻 *yùn*) from “a” to “iuen”. The third tome (列邊正譜 *Lièbiān Zhēngpǔ*) listed the characters according to the traditional radicals, with an indication of the pronunciation beside each entry. The 29 letters of the European alphabet (indicated for the first time in Chinese as 字母 *zì mǔ*), plus one mark for aspiration and five marks for the tones, proved sufficient for a consistent analysis of the phonology of the Chinese language, thus creating the first Chinese dictionary with Latin Romanization. The *Xīzì*

Qiji, the *Xīrú Ērmù Zī* and a Chinese grammar book published by Francisco Varo (1627–1687) in Canton in 1703 (which will be discussed later) were the only texts on Latin Romanization published in China until the end of the nineteenth century. These were studied by the linguist Luo Changpei 罗常培 in 1930 and were considered the first sources to be published in the collection 拼音文字史料丛书 *Pīnyīn Wénzì Shǐliào Cóngshū*, printed in Beijing in 1957, when 拼音 *Pīnyīn* was about to be conceived. Although no other books concerning the Romanization of Chinese were published in China for a long time thereafter, the Jesuit and Dominican missionaries continued to produce linguistic materials on Chinese language for more than a century (Theunissen 1943).

Early Chinese dictionaries and grammar books by Westerners

With the progress of missionary activity, during the 17th century, a large number of Chinese dictionaries and a few grammar books were compiled. The Spanish Dominican Francisco Diaz (1606–1646) wrote *Vocabulario de Letra China con la Explicacion Castellana* (*Vocabulary of Chinese Letters with Castilian Explanations*) in 1642 (Masini 2003; Ishizaki 石崎博 2005; Raini 2010). The dictionary, one of the first of its kind, included over 7,000 entries in Chinese characters, listed according to their Romanization, from the syllables ‘Ça’ to ‘Xun’. Each entry included the meaning of the word in Castilian, plus some (mostly disyllabic) compounds and sample sentences exclusively in transcription. The Romanization was of Portuguese derivation (e.g. the nasal ending – m for /ŋ/), although with some inconsistencies due to the influence of the Spanish system; for example, the nasal ending – m, typical of Portuguese systems, coexisted with the Spanish – ng for the nasal /ŋ/ (Raini 2010). This kind of dictionary was an absolute novelty in the history of Chinese lexicography and it was considered the prototype of monolingual and bilingual modern Chinese dictionaries.

This work was followed by the most important manuscript of Francisco Varo: *Vocabulario de la Lengua Mandarinana* (*Vocabulary of the Mandarin Language*), recently republished and studied in great detail by Coblin (2006). This Chinese dictionary was phonetically arranged, with no Chinese characters. The Romanization was of Spanish derivation and it was highly coherent. Varo was also the author of the Chinese grammar book *Arte de la lengua Mandarinana*, compiled in 1682 and published in Canton in 1703 by Pedro de la Piñuela, which was studied and edited by Breitenbach (2000) and Coblin (Coblin 2000; Coblin and Levi 2000). This grammar book was preceded by *Grammatica Sinica*, or *Grammatica Linguae Sinensis*, compiled by the Jesuit Martino Martini (1614–1661) between 1651 and 1653 and revised in 1656. Martini’s *Grammatica Sinica* is considered the earliest extant Mandarin grammatical text; it was also published in the 1696 edition of Melchisédec Thévenot’s collection of travel reports, *Relations de divers voyages curieux* (Bertuccioli 1998, 2003; Paternicò 2013). This text was widely circulated in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries, contributing enormously to the diffusion of Chinese language knowledge in European intellectual circles.

These grammar books were the first attempt to present Mandarin Chinese grammatical features according to the European grammatical tradition. For example, Martini’s grammar book divided the subject according to the following Classical Latin categories: nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs, interjections, conjunctions, numbers and their particles. This classification was the prototype of the modern classification of the Chinese parts of speech. In some cases, this was even the first case of the classification of specific grammatical peculiarities of Chinese, like classifiers, which were first identified by Chinese scholars in 1924 as 量词 *liàngcí* following Masini’s grammar system (2008). These grammatical peculiarities were listed and analyzed in great detail in most Chinese grammar books and dictionaries edited

by Westerners from the 17th century onward (Masini 2008). One great achievement of European lexicography at such an early stage was the *Dictionarium Sinico-Latinum* (漢字西譯 or *Hànzi Xīyì*), of which over 20 manuscripts have been identified in several countries, demonstrating its importance. The dictionary was compiled in Nanjing 南京 in 1694 by the Italian Franciscan Basilio Brollo (1648–1704). Like previous dictionaries, it included thousands of Chinese characters arranged according to the radicals, with Latin translations, compounds and sample sentences. The appendices included several lists, such as classifiers, with their related nouns, antonyms, lexical units beginning with the character 打 *dǎ*, etc. Brollo was also the author of a second dictionary completed in 1699, arranged according to phonetics, that included over 9,000 characters (Masini 2005; Raini 2010; Bussotti 2015).

When Emperor Napoleon I ordered the publication of a Chinese dictionary, the former French Consul in Guangzhou 广州, Chrétien-Louis-Joseph de Guignes (1759–1845), published a luxury edition of Brollo's first dictionary under his own name, with the title *Dictionnaire chinois-français et latin*, in Paris in 1813. De Guignes translated into French only the first meaning of each entry, leaving in Latin the compounds and sample sentences (Landry-Deron 2015). This event was the result of a great argument among European proto-Sinologists over the primacy of the publication of a Chinese dictionary in Europe. De Guignes's publication occurred only two years before Robert Morrison (1782–1834), the founder of the Protestant mission in China, published his *Dictionary of the Chinese Language* (Macao: East India Company's Press), the first Chinese-English dictionary ever (Dong 2011). Thus, it is possible to see how a line of continuity existed between the linguistic production of the early Jesuit, Dominican, and Franciscan missionaries, who had compiled many Chinese dictionaries and grammar books and the new generation of American and English missionaries who arrived in China at the beginning of the 19th century, following the military and commercial expansion of the British Empire (Masini 馬西尼 2001).

Russian Orthodox Chinese linguistics

After the death of Matteo Ricci (1610), the so-called Chinese Rites Controversy began. The Jesuits proposed an accommodation policy that would allow Chinese converts to take part in Confucian seasonal rites, while other Christian orders, such as the Dominicans and Franciscans, were strongly against any form of adaptation to local culture. The dispute lasted for over a century until, 1721, when the Jesuits were forced to leave China. During the early decades of the 18th century, the Orthodox Church opened a permanent mission in Beijing, thus establishing a direct channel of communication between Europe and China. Undoubtedly, the Jesuits also contributed to the birth of Russian Sinology, for example, providing information on the Chinese language to Gottlieb Siegfried Bayer (1694–1738), the German professor who worked at Saint Petersburg's Academy of Sciences and published *Museum Sinicum* in 1730, one of the first books on the Chinese language published in Europe (Lundbæk 1986).

The Treaty of Kyakhta (1727) between the Russian and Qing empires raised the issue of the lack of interpreters. Therefore, a few priests were regularly dispatched to the mission in Beijing to learn the language. Some of them compiled original language primers, lexical and grammatical materials on Chinese and Manchu (Kozha 2016). One of the first students was Illarion Rossokhin (1715–1751), who prepared the first Russian-Chinese vocabulary book in 1744 along with a language primer. Anton Vladykin (1761–1811) compiled the *Manchu Grammar* in 1798 and the *Manchu-Chinese-Russian Lexicon* in 1808 (Popova 2016). The most outstanding Russian scholar of the period was Hyacinth Nikita Bichurin (1777–1853),

who published the *Kitajskaja grammatika*, the first Chinese grammar book in Russian, in 1835. The book included a comprehensive comparative table of the various Romanization systems (French, Portuguese, English and Cyrillic). Bichurin, in the preface to the volume, adopted a comparative method and analyzed eight Chinese grammar books previously published by Europeans, such as Varo's *Arte de la lengua Mandarina* in China; Bayer's *Museum Sinicum* in Russia; Fourmont, Abel-Rémusat and Prémare's (1847[2007]) grammar books in France; Alfonso Gonçalves's *Arte China* in Macao; and Joshua Marshman's *Elements of Chinese Grammar* in Serampore. This was considered one of the most outstanding works in Chinese linguistics compiled by early Russian scholars. As for dictionaries, Archimandrite Palladius (1817–1878), who was stationed in the Beijing mission for more than 30 years, compiled the *Chinese-Russian Dictionary*, which was published posthumously in 1888. Palladius's Cyrillic Romanization of Chinese is still regarded as the standard today (Liu 柳若梅 2010, 2016; Popova 2016).

Mandarin Chinese-English dictionaries by Protestant missionaries

The attitude of Protestant missionaries in their missionary activity was very different from the one adopted earlier by Christian missionaries. For missionary strategy reasons, the first missionaries tried to spread the Christian faith among upper-class Chinese literati so that it would then spread among the common people. Therefore, they devoted their efforts to learning what was considered the literary written language, 文言 *wényán* and the colloquial lingua franca, which they first called Mandarin, or *Guānhuà*. The Protestant missionaries, on the contrary, who were mostly Britons and Americans, had a more practical attitude, and they immediately decided to work on two fronts: learning the official written language and, at the same time, studying the dialects spoken by local people in the regions where they dwelled, first Guangdong 广东, then Fujian 福建 and eventually the area of Shanghai 上海, following the developments of the commercial activities of the Westerners in China after the first Opium War (1839–1842).

Two years after the plagiarized publication of Brollo's dictionary in Paris by de Guignes, Morrison published the first *Chinese-English Dictionary* in three parts: (I) Chinese-English arranged according to radicals; (II) English-Chinese arranged according to Romanization; and (III) English-Chinese. This was an absolute novelty that laid the groundwork for the development of modern Chinese bilingual dictionaries in terms of lexical entries and content arrangement (Yong and Peng 2008). Morrison acknowledged a line of continuity with previous dictionaries, since he had widely used the manuscript dictionaries of the "Romish Church" (Morrison 1815b: ix–x), probably referring to Brollo's dictionary. Morrison greatly enriched the content of each entry by inserting a large quantity of sample sentences from his practical experience, in Romanization and in Chinese characters, which were missing in previous manuscript dictionaries. The Romanization included finals in –*ng* and the indication of aspiration through an apostrophe placed after the consonant (although not consistently). This system lasted for over a century, until it was replaced by modern pinyin, which used voiced consonants for non-aspiration and voiceless consonants for aspiration. Morrison's dictionary had no consistent indication of tones, although the author referred to them in the introduction. It is interesting to note that Morrison's dictionary and many other early lexical works prepared by Protestant missionaries paid less attention to the consistency of the phonological description of the Chinese language than previous materials prepared by Catholic missionaries. On the other hand, the description of the meaning of the characters and compound words was more detailed in Morrison's and in later Protestant missionaries' dictionaries than in any

other previous manuscripts. We can speculate that the Catholic missionaries dealt with a more consistent language variety spoken by the upper class in Nanjing and eventually in Beijing, while the Protestant missionaries faced a great diversity of spoken Chinese local languages and therefore, preferred to be accurate in the description of Chinese characters. Another reason for this choice could be that, at that time, it was quite difficult to reproduce aspiration marks and tone signs in printed materials. Therefore, Protestant dictionaries may have appeared less accurate in terms of phonological descriptions.

Morrison arranged the first volume according to the 康熙字典 *Kāngxī Zidiǎn*, translating a great amount of the over 40,000 characters in that dictionary, an impressive increase of entries when compared with the less than 10,000 entries in Brollo's dictionary. He then arranged the second volume according to the Romanization of Nanjing 南京官话 *Guānhuà*, instead of that of Beijing, following the 五车韵府 *Wūchē Yùnfǔ*, a late-Ming rhyme book, since he found it impossible to arrange the *Kāngxī Zidiǎn*'s entries according to their sound. This dictionary was followed by the *Chinese-English Dictionary* by Walter Henry Medhurst (Batavia 1842–1843), arranged according to the radicals and by the *English and Chinese Dictionary in Two Volumes* in 1847 and 1848, which were mostly revised and abridged versions of Morrison's dictionary. In the line of continuity, it is interesting to note that Medhurst as well, in the introduction to his dictionary, mentioned having consulted some anonymous Latin-Chinese dictionaries, most likely those prepared by Catholic missionaries in the earlier centuries. A new breakthrough was the publication of *A Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language: Arranged According to the Wu-Fang Yuen Yin, with the Pronunciation of the Characters as Heard in Peking, Canton, Amoy and Shanghai or the Hàn-Yīng Yùnfǔ* 漢英韻府 by Samuel Wells Williams in 1874. He not only took into consideration different phonological systems, an interesting goal but very difficult to achieve (Yong and Peng 2008: 387), but also adopted disyllabic words as his main reference for lexical entries under a single character head. His tones were noted in a very uncommon way, with a semicircle written on one of the four corners of the character. He was also very consistent in the precise indication of aspiration, using an apostrophe to mark it. These three dictionaries paved the way for the birth of an autochthon modern tradition of bilingual lexicology (Yang 杨慧玲 2012; Huang et al. 2016). As a matter of fact, the first dictionary completely edited by a Chinese person was the 字典集成 *Zidiǎn Jichéng* by Kuang Qizhao (or Kwong Ki Chiu 鄺其照), first published in Hong Kong in 1868, in which he acknowledged his obligation to Morrison, Medhurst and Williams' dictionaries (Takata 高田時雄 2009).

Chinese bilingual dialect dictionaries by Protestant missionaries

Together with the development of Mandarin Chinese dictionaries, as already mentioned, the Protestants engaged in the study of various local languages, preparing linguistic tools to learn them. If the mainstream of lexical materials on Mandarin Chinese proved to be crucial for the development of a genuine tradition in modern bilingual dictionaries, the materials on various dialects eventually became the main source for modern scholars to describe the developments of those local languages, in terms of their phonology and lexical and grammatical peculiarities. According to different bibliographical works (Wylie 1867[1967]; You 游汝杰 2002; Shen 沈国威 2011), during the 19th century, the Protestant missionaries edited almost 50 Chinese bilingual dictionaries, of which eight featured different Fujian dialects, five covered Cantonese, two highlighted the Shanghai dialect and one focussed on Ningbo, not to mention the over 150 missionary texts of various dialects written in Romanization. Some of the earliest of these dictionaries included Morrison's *A Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect* (1828), Medhurst's *A Dictionary of the Hok-Keen Dialect of the Chinese Language, According to the Reading and*

Colloquial Idioms (1832) and Joseph Edkins' *A Vocabulary of Shanghai Dialect* (1869). Many other works followed. All of these materials have recently attracted the attention of Chinese scholars, who have published innovative studies on the evolution of such dialects in terms of their phonology and lexicon (Ni 倪海曙 1992; Heylen 2001; You 游汝杰 2002).

Chinese grammar books and language primers

Following the earliest Chinese grammar books prepared by Catholic missionaries, during the 19th century, over 30 grammar books were published, the first being *Elements of Chinese Grammar* 中国言法 *Zhōngguó Yánfǎ*, published by Joshua Marshman in Serampore in 1814, followed by Morrison's *A Grammar of the Chinese Language* 通用漢言之法 *Tōngyòng Hànyán Zhī Fǎ*, also published in Serampore, in 1815 (Morrison 1815a; Uchida 内田慶市 2010a, 2010b). It is worth noting that, as for the dictionaries, the Protestants followed the path of previous grammar books, in particular Varo's *Arte de la lengua Mandarina*, which opened the way for the publication of Chinese grammar books in different countries, such as those by Abel-Rémusat (1822), M. A. Bazin (1856) and S. Julien (1869) in France and H. N. Bichurin (1835) in Russia. All of these texts, and the many published in China, greatly contributed to the learning of the Chinese language by foreigners. They were also considered precious materials from which to understand the linguistic situation of China during that period. Finally, they paved the way for the compilation of autochthonous descriptions of Chinese grammar, of which Ma Jianzhong's 马建忠 马氏文通 *Mǎshī Wéntōng* (1898) is considered the first example.

It is difficult to single out the very first language primers of the Chinese language prepared by missionaries; however, some very early materials in manuscript form have been analyzed recently (Breitenbach 2000: xl–xlii; Raini 2010: 102–112). Lazarist Afonso Gonçalves prepared, in Macao, some innovative materials to teach Chinese as a foreign language (Levi 2007); some teachers from the Collegio de' Cinesi in Naples published materials for learning Chinese (Castorina 佳美琳 2016); and the Protestants prepared several texts for beginners in Cantonese and in Mandarin, such as Williams' *Easy Lessons in Chinese* (Cantonese) published in Macao in 1842, Thomas Devan's *The Beginner's First Book in the Chinese Language (Canton Vernacular)* published in Hong Kong in 1847 and many others. However, the most important work was T. Wade's *Yü-yen Tzu-erh Chi* 语言自尔集 (*A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese*) published in London in 1867, which was regarded as a milestone in the history of manuals for the study of Chinese by foreigners.

As already mentioned, the early phonological descriptions of Mandarin Chinese attracted the attention of Chinese scholars, beginning with Luo Changpei (1930, 1934), who began to reconstruct the phonological features of late-Ming/early-Qing Mandarin Chinese. This reconstruction during the 1990s eventually gave rise to a debate among linguists about the origin of modern Mandarin pronunciation based on Beijing sounds. In particular, these studies proved that the sound system of the late-Ming/early-Qing dynasties, which were found in Catholic missionary sources, was based on Mandarin Chinese, while during the 19th century, the standard pronunciation eventually shifted from Nanjing to Beijing Mandarin Chinese. The *Yü-yen Tzu-erh Chi* by Wade was used as a later source to detect when, how and why this shift from Nanjing to Beijing took place during the 19th century (Coblin 1997).

New words for new ideas

The presence of Western Christians in China also raised the problem of how to render Chinese ideas that were alien to the local culture. As discussed before, as early as the Xi'an Stele,

some concepts of the Christian religion were translated into Chinese through phonetic loans and loan translations. While studying Chinese, the first Jesuit missionaries faced the problem of how to render in Chinese ideas and names of realities previously unknown to the Chinese. Thus, they began to create neologisms through phonetic loans, loan translations and semantic loans. The first problem was how to render the name of God: Ruggieri and Ricci first adopted 上帝 *Shàngdì* or 天 *Tiān* as semantic loans but eventually preferred the new creation 天主 *Tiānzhǔ*, which is still in use. Later, the first two terms were prohibited on the grounds that they pre-existed in Chinese and therefore were considered not suitable for the Christian God. The divergence on the usage of such terms was ultimately the bulk of the so-called Chinese Rites Controversy between the Jesuits and Dominicans, which ultimately led to the end of the Jesuits' experience in China at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Eventually, in the 19th century, the term 上帝 *Shàngdì* was, on the contrary, preferred by the Protestants. The translation of religious terms, and specifically the Chinese rendering of the Bible's New and Old Testaments, led to a long-lasting *querelle* about every single specifically religious word (Zetzsche 1999).

The Jesuits also created scores of neologisms that are still in use in Chinese, such as the loan translations 熱帶 *rèdài* 'torrid zone', 冷帶 *lěngdài* 'frigid zone', 溫帶 *wēndài* 'temperate zone' and 地球 *dìqiú* 'terrestrial globe' and semantic loans such as 赤道 *chìdào* 'equator'. The contribution of the Protestant missionaries to Chinese lexicons was even bigger, having developed the enormous activity of publishing Chinese books on many different subjects and, therefore, the need to create new words. Many of these terms are still in use, such as the loan translations 鐵道 *tiědào* 'railway' and 民主 *mínzhǔ* 'democracy' and semantic loans 新聞 *xīnwén* 'news' and 權 *quán* 'right'. Many of these terms eventually reached Japan and Korea, which contributed to the development of lexicons in their languages, for example, the loan translation 新聞紙 *xīnwénzhǐ*, lost in Chinese but still in use in Japanese (Masini 1996; Shen 沈国威 2010).

Conclusion

The presence of Christianity in China, from a very early stage until the end of the 19th century, not only had a great impact on the development of modern tools to study the language by foreigners but also paved the way for a mature Romanization system of Chinese (in Latin letters and in Cyrillic) for the development of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries and for the consistent and scientific description of grammatical features of standard Mandarin, as well as of a great variety of Chinese dialects.

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Appendix A

List of quoted lexicons (arranged by date)

<i>Author</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Target language</i>	<i>Secondary language</i>	<i>Presence</i>
Michele Ruggieri, Matteo Ricci	1588	<i>Pú-Huá cídiǎn</i> 葡华词典	Guānhuà 官话	Portuguese, Italian	Extant MS
Pedro Chirino	1604	<i>A Dictionarium Sino Hispanicum</i>	Mǐnnánhuà 閩南話	Castilian	Extant MS
Matteo Ricci	?	<i>Ricci Late System</i>	Guānhuà 官话	?	Not found
Nicolas Trigault	1626	<i>Xīrú ěrmù zī</i> 西儒耳目資	Guānhuà 官话		Published
Francisco Diaz	1642	<i>Vocabulario de Letra China con la Explicacion Castellana</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Castilian	Extant MS
?	1670	<i>Dictionnaire chinois & français</i>	Guānhuà 官话	French	Published
Francisco Varo	1679?	<i>Vocabulario de la Lengua Mandarin</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Spanish	Extant MS
Basilio Brollo	1694	<i>Dictionarium Sinico-Latinum</i> or <i>Hànzì Xīyì</i> 漢字西譯	Guānhuà 官话	Latin	Extant MS
Illarion Rossokhin	1744	<i>Small Russian-Chinese Vocabulary</i>	Russian	Guānhuà 官话	Extant MS
Anton Vladykin	1798–1808	<i>Manchu-Chinese-Russian Lexicon</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Russian	Extant MS
Chrétien-Louis-Joseph de Guignes, Basilio Brollo	1813	<i>Dictionnaire chinois-français et latin</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Latin, French	Published
Robert Morrison	1815	<i>Dictionary of the Chinese Language</i>	Guānhuà 官话	English	Published
Robert Morrison	1828	<i>A Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect</i>	Guǎngzhōu 廣州	English	Published
Walter Henry Medhurst	1832	<i>A Dictionary of the Hok-Keen Dialect of the Chinese Language, According to the Reading and Colloquial Idioms</i>	Mǐnnánhuà 閩南話	English	Published
Walter Henry Medhurst	1847	<i>Chinese-English Dictionary</i>	Guānhuà 官话	English	Published
Walter Henry Medhurst	1848	<i>English and Chinese Dictionary in Two Volumes</i>	Guānhuà 官话	English	Published
Kuàng Qízhào 鄺其照	1868	<i>Zìdiǎn jíchéng</i> 字典集成	Guānhuà 官话,		Published
Joseph Edkins	1869	<i>A Vocabulary of Shanghai Dialect</i>	Shànghǎi 上海	English	Published

<i>Author</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Target language</i>	<i>Secondary language</i>	<i>Presence</i>
Samuel Wells Williams	1874	<i>A Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language: Arranged According to the Wu-Fang Yuen Yin, with the Pronunciation of the Characters as Heard in Peking, Canton, Amoy, and Shanghai or the Hân-Yīng yùnfǔ 漢英韻府</i>	Guānhuà 官话, Guǎngzhōu 廣州, Xiàmén 廈門, Shànghǎi 上海	English	Published
Palladius	1888	<i>Hàn-È hébì yunbiān 漢俄合璧韻編</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Russian	Published

Appendix B

List of quoted grammar books (arranged by date)

<i>Author</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Target language</i>	<i>Secondary language</i>	<i>Presence</i>
Martín de Rada	1580	<i>Arte y vocabulario de la lengua china</i>	?	?	Not found
?	1621	<i>Arte de la lengua chio chiu</i>	Mǐnnánhuà 閩南話	Spanish	Extant MS
Martino Martini	1651–1653	<i>Grammatica Sinica or Grammatica Linguae Sinensis</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Latin	Extant MS
Francisco Varo	1682	<i>Arte de la lengua Mandarinica</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Spanish	Extant MS
Gottlieb Siegfried Bayer	1730	<i>Museum Sinicum</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Latin	Published
Étienne Fourmont	1742	<i>Lingua Sinarum Mandarinicae Hieroglyphicae Grammatica Duplex</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Latin	Published
Joshua Marshman	1814	<i>Elements of Chinese Grammar</i>	Guānhuà 官话	English	Published
Robert Morrison	1815	<i>A Grammar of the Chinese language</i>	Guānhuà 官话	English	Published
Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat	1822	<i>Les Éléments de la grammaire chinoise</i>	Guānhuà 官话	French	Published
Alfonso Gonçalves	1829	<i>Arte China</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Portuguese	Published
Joseph Henri Marie de Prémare	1831	<i>Notitia Linguae Sinicae</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Latin	Published
Hyacinth Nikita Bichurin	1835	<i>Kitajskaja grammatika</i>	Guānhuà 官话	Russian	Published
Antoine-Pierre-Louis Bazin	1856	<i>Grammaire mandarine, ou Principes généraux de la langue chinoise parlée</i>	Guānhuà 官话	French	Published
Stanislas Julien	1869	<i>Syntax Nouvelle de la Langue Chinoise</i>	Guānhuà 官话	French	Published