

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE – UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA
DEL SACRO CUORE
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTIC SCIENCES
AND FOREIGN LITERATURES

THE ROAD TO CATHAY

*East-West contacts
in Marco Polo's time*

Organisation:

Prof. Elisa Giunipero
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Confucius Institute, Università Cattolica
del Sacro Cuore

International conference

www.unicatt.it

24th-25th October 2018
Università Cattolica
del Sacro Cuore
Largo A. Gemelli, 1 - Milano



Istituto Confucio
UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA del Sacro Cuore
米兰天主教圣心大学孔子学院

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Scholarly interest in contacts between Europe and East Asia during the Middle Ages has not faded over time; rather, it has intensified over the past few decades. In addition to the major contributions by European and American scholars from the 1990s, it is important to remember the numerous works dedicated to this topic by Chinese, Korean, and Japanese scholars. Cross-disciplinary dialogue has become essential in a research environment where multiple, highly varied interests and skills cross paths. These specific needs have inspired the international conference *The Road to Cathay. East-West Contacts in Marco Polo's time*.

In the mid-13th century a particular phase of the contacts between the Western and the Far Eastern worlds began, which ended with the fall of the Yuan dynasty. The unification of most of Asia and Eastern Europe under the Mongols led to the formation of a new space for religious, economic, and cultural exchanges, which stretched from the Danube to the shores of the Pacific. For over a century, emissaries, missionaries, and merchants travelled from West to East and from East to West, moving along the Silk Road or sailing along the sea route that linked the Persian Gulf with southern China.

The first Europeans to penetrate into the heart of the Mongol empire were the Franciscans Giovanni da Pian di Carpine and William of Rubrouck, and the Dominicans Ascelin and André de Longjumeau. A few decades later, numerous travellers reached as far as Khanbaliq (modern Beijing), the new capital of the Great Khan: Marco Polo, Giovanni da Montecorvino, Odoric of Pordenone, Giovanni dei Marignolli, etc. Material wealth and ideas circulated along with the movement of people. A flow of information reached Europe, gradually reshaping the traditional, consolidated image of East Asia that the Middle Ages inherited from classical sources. With the end of the Mongol dominance in China, the exchanges between Europe and East Asia came to a sharp halt. Nevertheless, the data gathered by travellers up to then continued to circulate, even during the period of Renaissance humanism, often melding with the scant information from Antiquity.

The scientific purpose of the international conference *The Road to Cathay. East-West Contacts in Marco Polo's Time* is to investigate the diverse aspects and dimensions of religious, economic, and cultural exchanges in the 13th and 14th centuries, focusing on the modes of perception and representation of otherness during the period of the *Pax Mongolica*.

Program

24th October 2018, h. 9:30

Aula G.127 PIO XI

Welcome

Giovanni GOBBER, Dean of Linguistic Sciences and Foreign Literatures Faculty, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Marisa VERNA, Director of Linguistic Sciences and Foreign Literatures department, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Agostino GIOVAGNOLI, Scientific Committee Istituto Confucio Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Introduction

Elisa GIUNIPERO, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Travellers and texts between Europe and China in Marco Polo's time

Alvise ANDREOSE, Università eCampus - Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

From Sogdian Merchants to Marco Polo

RONG Xinjiang, Peking University

Marco Polo, one of many

Federico MASINI, Università degli Studi di Roma «La Sapienza»

Marco Polo's Crouching Dragons and Hidden Tigers

Hans Ulrich VOGEL, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Tübingen

Borders. Notes on the relationship between history and geography in the description of the provinces of Central Asia and China in the Devisement dou monde

Eugenio BURGIO, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

24th October 2018, h. 15:00

Chair: Tiziana LIPPIELLO, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

On the road to Cathay: mineralogical entries from the Devisement dou Monde

Samuela SIMION, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Maritime Links between China and the Persian Gulf in Marco Polo's Time

DANG Baohai, Peking University

The correspondence between the Papacy and the Mongols: old and new perspectives

Chiara CONCINA, Università degli Studi di Verona

The Great Qaan's court rituals described by Marco Polo and Odorico da Pordenone

MA Xiaolin, Nankai University

"Shu'ab-i Panjgana" ("The five genealogies"), a Persian historical document of cross-cultural communication

WANG Yidan, Peking University

25th October, h. 9:00

Aula G.016 Maria Immacolata

Chair: Alvise ANDREOSE, Università eCampus - Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

The legacy of Marco Polo: the Jesuits and the Cathay

Davor ANTONUCCI, Università degli Studi di Roma «La Sapienza»

From Mediterranean to China: Mastic in Yuan and Ming Sources

QIU Zhirong, Peking University

The studies of Huang Shijian 黄时鉴 on Marco Polo

Chiara PICCININI, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

A Study of the Ranking of Religions in Yuan Decrees for Temples

CHEN Xi, Peking University