

"Estos nominativos no son concertados": Los religiosos y la lengua china: miradas cruzadas de dos misioneros en China, Matteo Ricci y Pedro de la Piñuela (siglos XVI-XVII) [

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Analítica

text (article)

Regardless of the religious order from which they emanate, histories of missions tend to present missionaries as figures endowed with the gift of tongues, that essential quality which enabled them to enter into relations with the peoples they were sent to evangelize. Beyond hagio-graphic studies, another goal of this field of research is to elucidate the processes of linguistic learning involved. By comparing and contrasting normative sources and empirical information, this article sets out to probe several questions: How did religious institutions conceive of the process of language acquisition?; How did "scholars in their cloisters", on the one hand, and actual men living and working on the ground, on the other, describe the Chinese language?; and, Is it fruitful to conceptualize the relation that emerges between describing a language and learning it as one of conflict? The analysis of letters written by Matteo Ricci and Pedro de la Piñuela, two missionaries from the 16th and 17th centuries, during the first ten years of their sojourn in China, and a comparison of their writings with contemporary theories of language will make it possible to achieve a more concrete understanding of the modalities of how they learned Chinese

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