

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Shelfmark: 33.H.15

Fund membership: Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Fondo Corsini

Object type: Set of 105 prints in two thin volumes

Title: Liber Organicus Astronomiae Europaeae apud Sinas Restitutae sub Imperatore Sino-Tartarico Cam Hy appellato Auctore P. Ferdinando Verbiest Flandro-Belga Brugensi E Societate Iesu Academiae Astronomicae In Regia Pekinensi Praefecto Anno Salutis M. DC. LXVIII

Description: This work, by the Flemish Jesuit missionary priest, mathematician and astronomer Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688), contains in total 105 prints of astronomical and mathematical instruments that he designed and had built for the Chinese Imperial observatory. The prints are divided over two thin volumes, which are covered with blue silk (wrappers of same size as the sheets, thick c.1 cm) and kept in an original case (406 x 231 mm, spine is 39 mm wide). The pages are not numbered, the prints bear an inscription in Chinese. They are described here from back to front, in the Chinese way of reading, as the title-page is also inserted as what is, in our reading system, the very last page. As the entire work is executed on Chinese paper, it is extremely fragile.

**CREATION:**

Artist: The plates were produced by a Chinese artist, most probably working from the models prepared by the author Verbiest himself. Ferdinand Verbiest is the inventor and original designer.

Place: The place of publication is not known, but it is likely that the work was printed in China

Dating: 1668

**MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE:**

Material: Chinese paper

Technique: Woodcut

Measurements: Sheets, 401 x 227 mm; average dimensions of plate marks, 315 x 320 mm.

Watermarks: No

**SUBJECT:** Astronomical instruments; Mathematical instruments

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

Ex libris: /

Collector mark: L.2807; L.4637

Bookbinder: /

Inscriptions: /

Old shelfmarks: /

**STATE OF CONSERVATION:** Various sheets present tears or folds. The state of the prints themselves is generally good. Loosening of the binding. The case is broken.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Noël Golvers and Efthymios Nicolaidis, *Ferdinand Verbiest and Jesuit Science in 17th century China. An annotated edition and translation of the Constantinople manuscript (1676)*, Leuven Chinese Studies, 19, Leuven, 2009.

**RELATIONS:** Author of the work, and inventor and draftsman of the illustrations: Verbiest, Ferdinand, 1623-1688

**ACQUISITION AND RIGHT:**

Credit line: /

Acquisition: This volume is part of the Fondo Corsini or Corsiniana Library, one of the three main departments of the Biblioteca dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana. The fund contains the books acquired by Lorenzo Corsini (1652-1740), later pope Clemens XII, before and during his pontificate (1730-1740), among which is the book collection of cardinal Filippo Antonio Gualtieri (1660-1728) acquired in 1730; some minor book collections incorporated by cardinal Neri Maria Corsini (1685-1770), who opened the Corsiniana library to the public on 1 May 1754; and the very rich collection of manuscripts and books of Nicola Rossi (1711-1785), abbot and secretary to the Corsini household, that was incorporated in the Corsiniana library by cardinal Corsini's heirs in 1786. When in 1883 the Corsini palace at the Via della Lungara was sold by the family to the Italian state and became the new seat of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Prince Tommaso Corsini bequeathed the Corsiniana Library to the Accademia. The fund holds around 40.000 bibliographic units (manuscripts, incunabula, books from the 16th century and later): it is an outstanding collection that reflects the trend in book collecting in the 18th and 19th centuries and of which the encyclopaedic goal was to document all the fields of knowledge.

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