

Born on 28.08.1950 in Duffel (Belgium). Studied Latin & Greek at the St. Romboutscollege (Mechelen) and Hagelstein College (St Katelijne Waver) and afterwards Classical Philology ("Klassieke Studies") at the Leuven University (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven: KULeuven); Master in Classical Studies in Sept. 1975 magna cum laude. Married with Bernadette Rutgeerts on 31.10.1975. Military service in 1976-1977. Started in Oct. 1977 as university assistant, preparing a doctoral dissertation on Latin linguistics ('Toponymy of the Sabine area in pre-Roman, Roman and Early Medieval Times'): defense on 11 July 1984 maxima cum laude; awarded with a price of the *Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten* of Belgium and laureate of the 'Reisbeurzenwedstrijd' (Contest for Travelling expenses of the Flemish Community (1991). From Oct. 1984 – Sept. 1992 full, later part-time (50%) teacher at the secondary school (Leuven: Paridaens Instituut: Latin & Greek). This was extended into a 70% appointment at the Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven (KHL, now UCLL), Academy of Teacher's Education; Section: Latin (grammar; text/literature; didactics).

Since mid-1686 he switched his interest into translating historical, Latin written books on (history of) science; this resulted in 1988 in the publication of a Dutch annotated translation of F. Verbiest, *Astronomia Europaea* (Leuven, 1988). This publication created a new appointment, as part-time researcher at the F. Verbiest Institute (affiliated Institute of the KULeuven), later taken over by the University (Faculty of Arts: Dept. Taal- en Regiostudies: Sinology). On 1 Sept. 2015 he started his pension. At the same time started a new period of 3 years as 'scientific collaborator' of the same Institutes, 50% (until 31/08/2018).

Golvers's interest in the Jesuit mission of China started from Jesuit astronomy, the real 'basis' for the mission in China; all the research on the text converged in a major annotated edition (Monumenta Serica, 1993, 547 pp.); in the ca. 250 pages of annotations, he tried to explain the text 'from inside', by confronting it with an abundant series of 'parallel sources' (a technique transferred from Classical Philology). The edition had considerable success (out of order); a Chinese translation will be presented in Beijing in March 2016 (Ed. The White Elephant). During the same process, older versions of the text surfaced (found by E. Nicolaidis in Athens): this resulted in the 2009 edition of the 'Constantinople ms.' (publ. jointly in Athens [Inst. of Neohellenic Studies] & Leuven [F. Verbiest Institute]). An investigation on the various phases and layers of this complicate 'key text' and the 'success' / 'reception' of this booklet of ca. 100 pages resulted in a critical census of all Verbiest's astronomica (in Latin, Chinese, Manchu etc.), in "*F. Verbiest and the Chinese Heaven*" (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000): in this, he could not only decouple the number of traced copies, which are now 220 in number, but he described the entire communication history of the copies. It is now a reference work on the antiquarian book market; the monograph was awarded by the Belgian Academy in 2004 with the Price for the best book on history of science in the years 2001-2004).

This perception of ‘astronomy’ (mathematical sciences) as a support of the mission hurt somewhat to the idea, the same was not relevant for the mission outside the Court City. Quite by fortune, he found a small ‘pocket-like’ manuscript note book, app. belonging to F. de Rougemont, in which he took note of all his expenses and incomes during the year 1675-1676: a thorough analysis of the fragmentary information scattered over this notebook (following the techniques of Ancient papyrology) revealed in fact a whole series of aspects of the daily life in an inland mission; this again showed the great importance of ‘books’ in the mission (*François de Rougemont, S.J., missionary in Ch’ang-shu (Chiang-nan)*, Leuven, 1999). As such it was a correction on the Court city focused sources, and on the other hand confirmed the place of ‘books’ and writings. This book was translated in Chinese (...); it stimulated several doctoral dissertations, especially on ‘economic’ history (as it contains a lot of product prices, and indications on the market situation during the Kangxi period, which are even not known from Chinese sources).

Meanwhile, his interest in Jesuit astronomy almost inevitably opened the question about the *educational background* and the *sources* of Jesuit science in China, and to the place of ‘Jesuit science’ within the context of the history of European science.

With regard to the educational preparation; he studied on Verbiest’s mathematical formation (Rome; Coimbra) and on a mathematical textbook, written by Antoine Thomas in Coimbra especially for the preparation of Jesuit ‘Indipetae’ / applicants of the China mission (publ. in Douai, 1685; 1729; to be publ. in EASTM 2016).

With regard to the sources, G. defended the importance of a large archival research and an extensive exploitation of contemporary parallel sources in several source-related contributions (also in this relying on the ‘*Quellen-forschung*’ of Ancient History): as a non-Sinologist in a Sinological project, he focused on the Western sources (in order of importance / relevance: Latin; Portuguese; Italian; French; German and Dutch/Flemish). He visited, during more than 25 years, archives with Jesuit papers in Belgium (Antwerp; Brussels; Leuven), France (Paris; Lyon); Germany (Berlin; Munich), Italy (Florence; Milan; Rome), Portugal (Coimbra; Evora; Lisbon). He showed the importance of an historical understanding of the composition of archives, and how to take profit from so far ‘hidden collections’. See his overview in N. Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity*, vol. I, pp. 161 – 237 (“Western primary sources”; translated in Chinese by Dong Shaoxing: Fudan Univ., Shanghai), and other contributions on particular collections: Lisbon (Ajuda: 1992; 1993; here also the addenda to the Verbiest correspondence, forthcoming); Rome (2005). A main discovery in this respect were the fragments of the former Bollandist archives, with 190 unknown, mostly autograph letters from China to the ‘procurator’ of the Antwerp Professed House, Petrus Maelcamp (2013; a full repertory in preparation).

On the other hand, it became gradually clear that it was not only the Jesuit education, and the ‘ready knowledge’ of the Jesuits which constituted the basis for their ‘presence’ as Western scholars and

exporters of ‘*xi xue*’ (‘Western Learning’): their work was impossible without a strong support from *Western libraries*, i.e. Western books: this brought him to analyze – always from the same ms. sources - to reconstruct the use of Western books in China: important was not only the question *which* books they read (apart from the 4,100 still extant, many hundreds lost and only known through archival mentions), but also the question of how ‘updated’ this selection was, which sectors they represented (and those missing), the way in which they were read and used in the instruction, and how all this was received by the Chinese public. All this was explained in a ‘trilogy’ entitled: *Libraries of Western Learning for China; The circulation of Western books between Europe and China in the Jesuit Mission (ca. 1650 – ca. 1750). Vol. 1. Logistics of Book acquisition and circulation; 2. Formation of Jesuit Libraries. 3. From Books and Readers*, Leuven: F. Verbiest Institute, 2012.2013/2015).

The enormous material accumulated in the database on “Jesuit sources in China (17th-18th cent.)” provokes’ an endless series of cross-wise analyses: (a) on ‘individual’ libraries and book collections, among them three libraries of Portuguese bishops in China [Diogo Valente; Policarpo de Sousa; Alexandre de Gouveia]: see M. Berbara & K. Enenkel, *Portuguese Humanism and the Republic of Letters*, 2012, pp. 243-263) and the book collection of Jean-François Foucquet (*Monumenta Serica*, 2010, pp. 249 – 280). A first attempt to ‘explore’ the opportunities of a book analysis for a better understanding of the intellectual basis of the Jesuit mission was made for extant Portuguese books (*Portuguese books and their readers in the Jesuit mission of China, 17th-18th centuries*, Lisboa: CCCM, 2011). Another cross-section concerned books on medical (..) matters: a major article Golvers published in EASTM 2011 (pp. 15 – 85). This same aspect was analyzed more deeply in a monograph on the European scholarly background of Johann Schreck Terrentius († 1630), a former Paracelsian physician, mathematician and polymath, who after some 10 years of alchemist experiences and whereabouts in (Central, North and Northwest) Europe, entered the Jesuit Society in 1611, bringing contemporary European alchemy and iatro-chemistry China (to be published in 2016 by R. Halleux). Other related research focused on the book collections of 17th-178th century Macau; the scholarly communication between Europe and China through correspondence (2012; 2015), through periodicals (2016); the role of Jesuit libraries in Beijing as a milieu of cultural exchange (*The Library*, 20215).

In this entire ‘circulation and exchange program’ between East and West, *some places* had a particular importance, which deserves a particular study. So far Golvers focused especially (in alphabetical order) on *Antwerp* (the ‘*Officina Plantiniana*’ & the China missionaries [1996; 1997; 2007; book list of 330 items bought for the China mission: see Terrentius, 2016]; the role of the Bollandist hagiographers [1998; 2000; 2004; 2008; 2009]; the Domus Professa archives and the China mission [2012; inventory in prep.]); *Coimbra* (Mathematical teaching [2007; 2010; 2016]; other contributions in project concern the very long detailed description of the daily life in the *Colégio das Artes* [Hartoghvelt; 1654]; publication of a very detailed inventory of the contents of the local Jesuit

archives, 1678?); *Macao* (and its libraries [1993; 2006; 2012; 2014; 2015]; *Rome* (the astronomical *Verbiestiana* in Roman archives [2005]).

Also some *periods* were crucial for the exchange: so were the ‘journeys to the West’ of the successive ‘*procuratores missionum*’: G. studied in detail the ‘tour’ of N. Trigault-J. Terrentius (1615/6-1617/8: see Terrentius 2016); Martino Martini (1994; 1995; 2011; 2016); Prospero Intorceta (forthcoming 2016); Grimaldi (2012).

Some *key texts* received particular attention: apart from the already mentioned *Astronomia Europaea* (since 1991) and F. de Rougemont’s Account Book (1996; 1997; 1999; 2007; 2009) this concerns especially A. Thomas’s *Synopsis Mathematica* (2016; in print) and the collective translation project *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (1998; 2009).

Other work in progress concerns mainly a critical edition of the correspondence of Ferdinand Verbiest (a critical revision of the 1938 edition by E. Josson & L. Willaert, completed with 62 new items; forthcoming).

As a Latinist Golvers is also interested in the precise translation of the Latin primary sources, which includes several linguistic studies on the ‘Jesuit Latin’ in China: see guidelines in *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 1995 (pp. 305-369), and an overview in the *Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin* (2015; pp. 557 - 573); another contribution on Latin and Greek authors read in China see *Greece and Rome in the Far East* (Berlin, in print).

In Guangzhou and Palermo runs a translation project of a selection of his articles in Chinese (by Zhao Dianhong) and Italian respectively (by Antonino LoNardo).

Golvers leads an Erasmus exchange program, with La Sapienza (E. Corsi) as partner; his courses taught within this program in Rome are published in: *Building Humanistic Libraries in Late Imperial China*, Roma: Nuova Cultura, 2011).

He is a permanent member of the *Seminarium Philologiae Humanisticae* and since 2015 Effective member of the *International Academy of History of Sciences*; he is a regular collaborator of the *Centro Científico e cultural de Macau (Lisbon)*.

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March 2016 (slightly revised June 2016)

Prof. Noël Golvers (n. 1950), PhD in Filologia classica (1984), Senior Researcher all'Università Cattolica di Leuven, già professore di latino alla Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven (KHLeuven), ha studiato sin dalla metà degli anni '80 i testi latini, portoghesi, italiani, ecc., sulla missione dei gesuiti in Cina, in particolar modo quelli relativi al primo periodo Qing, a cominciare dall'attività astronomica di F. Verbiest: *F. Verbiest and the Astronomia Europaea* (1993, recentemente tradotto in cinese); *F. Verbiest and the Chinese Heaven* (2004 premio della Reale Accademia del Belgio); *The Mathematical mss. of F. Verbiest from Constantinople* (2009; con E. Nicolaidis). Un'altra sua pubblicazione (2001) è: *F. de Rougemont's Account Book (1674-6)* sulla vita quotidiana nella Provincia del Jiangnan (tradotta anche in lingua cinese). È autore di innumerevoli contributi su altri aspetti - principalmente culturali - della missione dei gesuiti nello stesso periodo, con particolare riferimento alla storia della scienza e della cultura del libro, e le reti di comunicazioni tra Europa e Cina. Al momento ha in fase di completamento una collana esaustiva sulla circolazione di libri occidentali tra l'Europa e la missione dei gesuiti in Cina tra il 1650 e 1750 ca., in 3 volumi (*Libraries of Western Learning for China*. Vol. 1. *Logistics of book acquisition and circulation*, Leuven, 2012; Vol. 2. *Formation of Jesuit Libraries*; Vol. 3 *On books and readers*). Altri progetti in corso riguardano: (a) uno studio sulle basi erudite di Johann Terrentius in Europa (1615-1617); (b) una edizione rivista e copiosamente corredata della corrispondenza di Ferdinand Verbiest, che include 65 lettere recentemente scoperte; e (c) – in collaborazione con Antonino Lo Nardo della Fondazione Intorcetta – la raccolta di ben 22 articoli sul tema della circolazione di 'beni culturali', soprattutto eruditi fra Europa e Cina, che saranno organicamente fusi in un volume - per la prima volta - in lingua italiana. Citiamo alcuni titoli: "La distanza come fattore di disagio nella comunicazione scientifica tra l'Europa e i gesuiti in Cina (17°/18° secolo"; "Il Padre Johann Schreck Terrentius, cacciatore di libri e di strumenti per la missione di Cina"; "La circolazione di libri cinesi in Europa"; "Una lettera inosservata di Prospero Intorcetta a Godefridus Henschenius e la stampa della traduzione dei classici confuciani"; "Cartografi gesuiti in Cina: Francesco Brancati, SJ, e la mappa (1661?) della Prefettura di Songjiang"; "Corrispondenza erudita alla Cina con l'Europa nei sec. XVII-XVIII"