

**An Early Anthology of Chinese Literature in Italian Translation:
Michele Suppo (1902–1972) and His *Sommario storico di letteratura
cinese in Context***

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During the first half of the 20th century, direct translations of Chinese literature in Italy were still very limited in number and scope, as only a handful of sinologists fully mastered the Chinese language and dedicated their efforts to literary translation. In this context, the *Sommario storico di letteratura cinese (Historical Summary of Chinese Literature)*, published in 1943 in Macao by the Salesian missionary Michele Suppo (1902–1972), was an absolute novelty for many reasons: firstly, it was the first diachronic anthology in Italian translation covering the history of Chinese literature from antiquity to the beginning of the 20th century; secondly, it offered the first bilingual presentation of Chinese literature for Italian readers; thirdly, it used translation for teaching purposes. After describing the structure of Suppo's *Sommario*, this paper provides an overview of the translated texts it contains and examines the contextual factors that may have influenced the translator's choices. It finally selects a few representative textual examples to showcase the translator's methodology and his intended aims as a missionary living and working for decades in China.