

insistence that the Mongol Yuan and Manchu Qing were “not Chinese at all” (pp. 16, 27, 54, 172, 176). He is also misled by contemporary Uighur and Tibetan expatriates who claim that their people simply want independence from China (pp. 57, 88, 181). Sadly, the really interesting question of what it will mean to be Chinese by the middle of this century is not fully addressed—let alone answered—in this volume.

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Sojourners in a Strange Land: Jesuits and Their Scientific Missions in Late Imperial China. By FLORENCE HSIA. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. xv, 273. \$45.00 (cloth).

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Florence Hsia’s investigation of the Ming-Qing Jesuit scientific enterprise in China is inspired by an apparently simple question: because most missionaries had little to do with scientific activities, why has the historiography obsessively reenacted the lives of the few scientists in their midst as emblematic of the whole missionary enterprise? Hsia concedes in chapter 1 that the missionaries strategically chose science and technology as keys to a successful religious mission: “had Chinese auditors been more interested in the niceties of French or Italian cuisine than in Aristotelian cosmology or Tychonic instrumentation, the present book might well be a history of Jesuit chefs in the Celestial Empire” (p. 5). Nonetheless, Hsia finds this “functionalist claim” insufficient. Partly inspired by action network theories and work on “scientific personae” in early modern Europe, she argues that a basic collective impulse existed among the Jesuits to “promote scientific specialization as part of an apostolic enterprise” (p. 147). To substantiate her claim, Hsia reconstructs the Jesuit self-presentation of their scientific lives, and the unstable textual outcomes of that effort in European languages. As she shows, the Jesuits employed various literary genres, including hagiography, travelogues, and academic collections, to establish their order as a legitimate actor in the world of early modern European science.

Chapter 2 opens the book’s examination of the “mechanics of print genre” in this enterprise, focusing on the difference between manuscript materials that were intended for internal circulation and what was instead printed for public consumption. Matteo Ricci’s narrative of the mission’s beginnings, published by Nicolas Trigault, offered a coherent historical picture of the China Jesuit as both “missionary mathematician” and “mathematician as saint.” In Ricci’s account, the marriage of natural knowledge and technical practices with religious zeal “established scientific expertise as an appropriate arena for Jesuit action” (p. 27).

Chapter 3 explores the complications of this strategy under Ferdinand Verbiest, head of the Imperial Astronomical Bureau during the Kangxi reign. In his

writings, Verbiest tried to appeal both to his order's internal audience, putting missionary mathematics on a par with the Jesuit educational ministries in Europe, and to external audiences, through the dissemination of materials on Jesuit astronomical activities in China among European scientists.

Chapters 4–7 deal with the exploits of a French Jesuit contingent sent to China under the patronage of the French monarchs, and the textual offensive that this produced in Europe. An examination of how Jesuit editors in France coached the observational materials received from China reveals their attempt to imitate the scientific rigor and austere appearance of the new academic collections issued by the Académie Royale des Sciences, so as to earn admittance in the scientific pantheon of the time. Hsia remarks that the outcomes did not always please the China Jesuits, who complained about shoddy editorial supervision in Paris and felt snubbed by French lay scientists. In turn, French Jesuit editors became keenly aware that the quantity and quality of observations sent from China would not satisfy the increasingly exacting standards of professional scientists. Nevertheless, their publications still reached a vast learned public, and represented the ultimate effort of the Society of Jesus to broadcast the eulogistic image of the missionary-scientist.

At the outset, Hsia briefly introduces the scientific and religious strategies employed by Ricci and Trigault (chapter 2) and Verbiest (chapter 3) as a prologue to her extended analysis of the French mission to China (chapters 4–7). This choice might give the impression that all China Jesuits belonged in an uninterrupted line of transmission of the same ideal of the missionary scientist. Ricci, Trigault, and Verbiest, however, had traveled under the patronage of the Portuguese, and relied on networks of court and scientific patronage located in Germany, Central Europe, Russia, Italy, and Portugal, and only marginally in France. A comparative examination of those contexts would reveal variations in the mechanics of print genres, dictated both by the political and scientific organization typical of each of those communities at different historical stages, and by the personal and educational background of Jesuits from different nations.

Historians of Chinese science and of the Jesuit mission, moreover, have shown how the missionaries were shaped by their encounter with the Chinese, even when they were presenting European knowledge, an important context that is evoked by Hsia only in passing. Many China Jesuits were hardly “sojourners in a strange land.” Rather, they consciously assumed the personae of the Confucian master and the imperial official, playing those roles for several decades of their lives, a behavior that influenced the China Jesuits' self-perception and identity and, in turn, contributed to their European scientific persona.

In sum, to Asianists, Hsia's study offers a valuable contribution to assess yet again how an Asian culture helped shape European culture, or, as Donald Lach put it long ago, how Asia played a role “in the making of Europe.”

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