

imperialism. Readers will come away from it clearly understanding the tensions and opportunities facing the spread of Christianity in China, and with ideas about the challenges facing that religion in China today.

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*The Catholic invasion of China.* By D. E. Mungello. (Critical Issues in World and International History.) Pp. xviii + 175 incl. 10 figs and 4 maps. Lanham, Md–London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. £24. 978 1 4422 5048 2

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Before the 1980s the study of Christianity in China was rarely more than an exploration of expatriate missionary agents and their activities within Mainland China, often with an eye towards saying something about the purported success or failure of those efforts. The discovery and increasing utilisation of relevant Chinese language documents along with the growing awareness that Christianity is a world religion, rather than an intrinsically Western one, has contributed to a shift in the field. As both Chinese historical agents and Mainland Chinese scholarship gain prominence in the field, a more nuanced image of the Christian encounter with China is emerging. In his important 'Historiographical review', David Mungello traced this shift in interpretation, concluding that when viewed from a long-term perspective Christianity in China can now be seen as been less a 'failed foreign graft' and more of a 'creative indigenous force'.<sup>1</sup> Recent studies on indigenous Chinese Christianity (Carl S. Kilcourse, *Tai ping theology: the localization of Christianity in China, 1834–64*, New York 2016; Lian Xi, *Redeemed by fire: the rise of popular Christianity in modern China*, New Haven 2010; and Chris White *Sacred webs: the social lives and networks of Minnan Protestants, 1840s–1920s*, Leiden 2017, to name a few) tend to agree, giving testimony to the variety and vibrancy of this creativity.

In his latest book, Mungello presents a series of case studies as evidence in support of his more positive reading of the history of Christianity in China. Through detailed archival work, Mungello explores several of the key criticisms that have historically been levelled against the Catholic mission to China, whenever possible highlighting the agency of local Chinese Catholics in the development of what became their Church. Without denying the tragic aspects of the missionary encounter with China, Mungello helpfully complicates the narrative by reading it with an awareness of today's thriving and growing indigenous Church.

In his opening chapter, Mungello outlines the imperialist 'mentality' that guided Catholic mission efforts following the return of the Jesuits in 1842. Both foreign and Chinese critiques of mission are presented, with the acknowledgment that this mentality was a key motivation for many of the thousands of men and women who chose to leave their homes and move to China. Chapter ii is the longest and most detailed of the book, as Mungello traces the factors that led to

<sup>1</sup> David E. Mungello, 'Historiographical review: reinterpreting the history of Christianity in China', *Historical Journal* lv (2012), 533–52.

the return of the Jesuits to China and the resulting conflicts as experienced by the Jiangnan Church. The cultural arrogance of the French Jesuits in Zikawei produced a spiritual dominance that 'had the effect of damaging the indigenous foundations built by the Chinese Catholics and retarding the development of the Catholic Church in China' (p. 37). In chapter iii Mungello examines the question of indigenous authority, opening with Vincent Lebbe (1877–1940) and his efforts to support the Chinese clergy in the face of determined European resistance. The lives of the reformer and Confucian Catholic Ma Xiangbo (1840–1939) and the well-known educator and martyr Zhang Boda (1905–51) are then explored as examples of the complex negotiated authority that marked indigenous Catholic leaders constrained first by European Catholics and then by Chinese Communists.

Chapter iv continues with Chinese Communist criticisms of the Catholic mission, focusing on the charges of baby-killing historically associated with Catholic orphanages in China. While Chinese Catholic voices are less evident in this chapter, Mungello instead emphasises the important contributions of women's orders to the China mission – a *lacuna* in contemporary scholarship recently highlighted by Anthony Clark (*Heaven in conflict: Franciscans and the Boxer uprising in Shanxi*, Seattle 2014). Mungello's detailed presentation of the orphanage work of the Canossian Sisters in Shanxi reveals the compassion and expense that was required to care for abandoned and in most cases already moribund infants, factors typically ignored in later Communist critiques. Chapter v turns to more recent Communist accusations, as presented in the controversy surrounding the canonisation of the 120 China martyrs in September 2000. Looking closely at the archival evidence for the charges of sexual assault levelled against three specific foreign priests, Mungello finds that whilst wrongdoing cannot be categorically disproven, in each instance the evidence is 'inconclusive' (pp. 97, 102, 108). Particular attention is paid to the many cultural factors that influenced how the various actors perceived one another's actions and motives.

In his final chapter Mungello moves away from the detailed case studies of the previous chapters. Revisiting his seminal 2012 article, Mungello presents his case for seeing the supposed 'debacle' of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Catholic mission as an interruption in the longer-term positive trend towards the indigenisation of Christianity in China. Whilst recognising that 'viewed from a short-term historical perspective' the 1842–2000 Catholic invasion of China was 'highly negative', Mungello argues that a long-term perspective reveals that many of the events and personages of those same years made vital contributions towards the eventual emergence of a truly indigenous Chinese Catholicism – one at the same time more Chinese and more universal (p. 117). There are some overlaps here with Henrietta Harrison's reading of the increasingly globalised nature of Catholicism in Shanxi (*The missionary's curse and other tales from a Chinese Catholic village*, Berkeley, CA 2013). Precisely how these two narrative interpretations differ is a compelling question awaiting further analysis.

These revisions to the scholarly perspective on the history of Christianity in China are most welcome. *The Catholic invasion of China* provides a host of valuable case studies in support of Mungello's positive, long-term view of Christian mission in China, while also helpfully pointing readers towards the relatively unexplored

wealth of Catholic missionary activity in China beyond the early Jesuit mission. Mungello's prose is clear and his research is well documented, though adding a few extra pages to this fairly short book might have helped readers better to connect the distinct chapters with his broader argument. Those interested in the Zikawei Jesuits or the struggles of Chinese Catholic priests in mid twentieth-century Shanghai will find the book of particular value.

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*Sign or symptom? Exceptional corporeal phenomena in religion and medicine in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.* Edited by Tine Van Osselaer, Henk de Smaele and Kaat Wils. Pp. 205 incl. 23 ills and 1 table. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2017. €45 (paper). 978 94 6270 107 6  
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This little volume attempts to examine the 'cross-overs and collaborations' between science and religion. Its contributors focus on the production and circulation of knowledge of unusual bodily phenomena by medical and religious authorities over a period ranging from the early nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, and from within French, English, Portuguese, Austrian and Belgian contexts. The editors, however, overstate the case when they insist that this productive relationship has been 'hidden from view until now'. Nevertheless, its central claim is correct: medical and religious epistemologies did not necessarily stand in opposition to each other. Indeed, religious authorities often adopted new medical practices and methods to test the testimony of visionaries, and whether their extraordinary bodily manifestations supported divine intervention. The volume is a curious compendium of local events. One essay, for instance, examines the treatment of religious pathologies in an early nineteenth-century Tyrolean institute. Doctors and chaplains are shown together negotiating the therapeutic process, where a combination of medicine and religious practice defined what was healthy and unhealthy religious belief. Another essay looks at how the positivist Jean-Marie Charcot, the Catholic doctor Gustave Boissarie and the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud responded to 'exceptional corporeal phenomena' such as convulsions, visions, seizures and paralysis in terms of religious development. There are also essays exploring how certain female lay mystics were invested with political and religious meaning: one became a symbolic figure of French royalists; another was condemned as irrational and heretical by the Roman Catholic Church, which at the time was seeking to protect its reputation in an increasingly secular-minded world. Another essay discusses the lack of extraordinary mystical phenomena in modern American Catholicism, and how such Catholics came to reject mystical phenomena to avoid the stigma of superstition. Mystical manifestations were thus taken either as a 'sign' of supernatural favour or as a 'symptom' of neurological disorder by both scientist and theologian. An interesting piece follows on how Moroccan Islamic mystics were pathologised and even incarcerated by French physicians and sociologists in asylums in North Africa. While these case