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Shomut in Israel as well as new material on the boundaries of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, or on the Saracens and the defense of the Arabian frontier. As the actual physical evidence mounts, whether in the West or in the East—and particularly with the vast finds now being excavated in China and published, partially, in such journals as *Wen Wu*, *Kao Guo*, and *Kao Guo Xuei Pao*, scholars will be able to deal on a much more precise basis with the actual impact of borders on the socio-psychological aspects of man and his society. Is it true, as Grousset maintained (*The Empire of the Steppes*, English edition, Rutgers University Press, 1970, pp. 230–231) that the Mongols “lacked all conception of the life of sedentary peoples, of urban conditions or farming culture, or anything alien to their native steppe” to such a degree that when they encountered sedentary man, the death and destruction which they unleashed came not from cruelty but from bewildered perplexity? What are the real effects of these barriers, naturally or artificially imposed, on man and society?

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JEWES IN CHINA

Joseph Dehergne, S.J., and Donald D. Leslie. *Juifs de Chine à travers la correspondance inédite des Jésuites du dix-huitième siècle*. Roma: Institutum Historicum S.I. and Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1980. Pp. XVII +250.

Michael Pollak. *Mandarins, Jews and Missionaries: The Jewish Experience in the Chinese Empire*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980. Pp. XVIII +436.

In 1605, shortly after his establishment in Peking, Matteo Ricci, S.J., the founder of the Christian mission in China, had a visit from an elderly man named Ai T'ien. This man, who was a member of a small Jewish community flourishing in the city of K'ai Feng (Kaifeng) in the province of Honan, had heard about newly arrived Westerners in Peking who believed in One God. The strange conversation between these two men seems to have been full of ambiguity, but Ricci convinced himself that Ai T'ien was a Jew, and Ai T'ien realized that Ricci was not a Jew but adhered to another faith he had never heard about. Ricci sent two convert Chinese to K'ai Feng to look into the matter and they reported back to him what they had seen. In Ricci's "Journals," published in Europe after his death by Trigault (*De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas suscepta ab Societate Jesu*, Ausburg 1615) there are a few pages about his meeting with Ai T'ien and about the synagogue visited by the Chinese converts. This is how Western readers first heard the strange news about Jews in China.

During the next 100 years there was very little contact between the K'ai Feng Jews and the Christian missionaries, but about the year 1700 the situation changed—all of a sudden the Jesuits seemed to have become deeply interested in the Chinese Jews and reports about them streamed back to Europe in the following 20 to 30 years. This change was due, as suggested by Jacques Gernet in his Preface to Dehergne and Leslie's book, to events occurring in Paris.

The Rites- and Term-controversy, splitting the Jesuits from the other China missionaries and raging even inside the rank of the Jesuit order, had been smoul-

dering in Europe for many years. Now the publication of certain Jesuit works, especially le Comte's *Nouveaux Memoires sur l'état present de la Chine* (Paris 1696, reedited several times) made it burst into flames. The Jesuits' opinions that the ancestor worship and the cult of Confucius were civic rites and that the Shang ti (Lord Above) and T'ien (Heaven) of the Confucian Classics was the true God were not stated imprudently as certainties, not just as probabilities. After a long and heated series of debates in the first months of the year 1700 the Faculty of Theology at Sorbonne declared these opinions to be false and pernicious. In 1704 they were condemned by the Pope. The book market in Paris was flooded with books and pamphlets for and against the Jesuits. In this bitter and often ignominious fight every kind of argument was used by both sides. At that time it was that the Jesuits conceived the strange idea of seeking support for their points of view from the Jews in China. If they accepted the traditional Chinese rites as civic ones, and if they used the same Chinese words for God as the Jesuits, they would, it was thought, bolster the Jesuits' cause. And in fact they did.

Once the contact between the Jews and the Jesuits had been established other motifs were curiously intermingled. Undoubtedly there was a genuine scholarly interest, but there was also the age old idea that the rabbis of the Talmud had somehow managed to tamper with the original Bible, suppressing certain "Christological prophesies." A comparison of the Bible of the European Jews, the Amsterdam Bible, with the Torah of the Chinese Jews, thought by some to date from pre-talmudic times, might show evidence of such "corrections." However, none were ever found.

Juifs de Chine, published as a separate volume of the Biblioteca Instituti Historici Societatis Jesu in Rome, is a collaborative work composed by Donald D. Leslie, the greatest living specialist in the history of Judaism in China, and Joseph Dehergne, S.J., head of the French Jesuit archives at Chantilly and the nestor in the field of historical studies of the China Jesuits. It may be regarded as a supplement to Leslie's magistral work "The Survival of the Chinese Jews" (*Monographies du T'oung Pao*, vol. X, Leiden 1972).

The book brings us copiously annotated letters, nearly all of them unpublished, from two Jesuit missionaries, Giampaolo Gozani and Jean Domenge, who visited the K'ai Feng community several times between 1703 and 1718 on the orders of their superiors. These primary sources contain a wealth of information about the books of the Bible in the K'ai Feng synagogue, the festivals, liturgies and customs in general. Domenge's invaluable drawings of the synagogue building, the Torah scrolls and Jews reading aloud from them are given here, as they are in Michael Pollak's book.

Juifs de Chine is a rich and complicated scholarly study, and at many places in these letters the awkward encounters of Jesuits and Jews come breathtakingly alive.

The texts are filled with Hebrew and Chinese words and although they are patiently explained in fine glossaries it is clear that this work is written for readers with at least some notion of one or both of these languages. For such readers one wonders why it was thought necessary to supply nearly all the texts in English as well as in French!

For his *Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries* Michael Pollak has scrutinized all the relevant literature and has received help from many scholars, including D.D. Leslie. He tells the whole story of the Jews in China from the oldest times to

the extinction of the K'ai Feng community in the 19th century and after, leaving no stone unturned. In the opinion of this reviewer several of them might well have been left where they were, such as the 12 pages about the apparently paranoid Lt.Col. (ret.) Shih Hung-mo (with photo) or the story about Liu Shao-chi being of Jewish family. However, here are all the facts and lots of fancy, mostly critically evaluated.

The author dwells at length on the circumstances of Protestant missionaries' acquisition of the Torah scrolls from the impoverished remnant of the Jewish community in K'ai Feng (1850 and 1851), more than adumbrating foul play. When he comes to discuss the removal of the Tun Huang treasures which included a few Jewish manuscripts, this problem is not touched upon. It would have been natural to compare these two events to elucidate the perennial question: What would have happened to such relics had they not been removed and deposited in Western libraries and museums?

Michael Pollak's book is a popular work, lively and fascinating. It can be recommended to cautious readers interested in the history of religions.

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