relish, moreover. McShea's masterful treatment of the *Jesuit Relations* and the fascinating story of its origins and end with the Cramoisy publishing house, for instance, will not disappoint. Toward the end of the book (particularly in the last chapter), McShea nearly gets lost in the forest of her own research, offering profile after profile of a handful of Jesuits who labored in the mission field toward the end of the eighteenth century with imperial interests in mind. A single illustrative example would have sufficed—and more effectively, too—but McShea should be forgiven this excess, which I imagine is only a symptom of her obvious enthusiasm for the subject.

Mary Dunn

Saint Louis University

mdunn12@slu.edu

DOI:10.1163/22141332-00604007-06

John T. P. Lai

Literary Representations of Christianity in Late Qing and Republican China. Leiden: Brill, 2019. Pp. 199 + xii. Hb, \$166.00.

The number of scholarly studies on Christianity in China has increased dramatically in recent years, bringing new perspectives, sources, and interpretations into play that have greatly enhanced our understanding of this topic. *Literary Representations of Christianity in Late Qing and Republican China* by John T. P. Lai draws on and contributes to this literature, and in particular what he calls the “literary turn” in the study of Chinese Christianity (7), by focusing on Christian and Christian-influenced Chinese-language novels, drama, and poetry from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The book's greatest asset is its ability to draw on multiple fields to show the migration, translation, and reinterpretation of stories and images between China and the West. Lai's deep knowledge of several fields, including biblical exegesis and interpretation, translation studies, Chinese folk religion, and more, are reflected in his analyses. This is also a very comprehensive work, charting not only the efforts of Western missionaries to translate Christian concepts and Bible stories into a Chinese cultural context, but also the effects of Christian texts on non-Christian Chinese thinkers and writers (especially poets), the ways that Christian concepts were received in Chinese popular culture (often negatively), and how missionaries' own thinking about Christianity was influenced by their interaction with Chinese culture. In other words, the interaction between Christianity and Chinese culture was not the

straightforward transplantation of Western, Christian ideas to China, nor even simply a process of negotiation and accommodation by missionaries seeking to make Christianity more palatable by dressing it up in Chinese cultural forms, but instead an interreligious, intertextual exchange between Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Chinese folk religion (8). The works resulting from such exchanges “were to reshape and modernize the literary and social landscape of late Qing and Republican China” (16).

This interpretation is demonstrated in extensive detail throughout the book. Some chapters and sections of chapters cover well-trod ground; such as those dealing with the polyglot missionary Karl Gützlaff (1803–51), the Chinese-language Christian works of the Sinologist James Legge (1815–97) and his colleagues, the theology of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, and the anti-Christian tracts of the late Qing *literati*. That being said, a quick overview of these topics is helpful when combined with Lai’s own insights. Other sections add greater levels of detail and finer analysis of texts and transcultural actors who are well-known to scholars of this period, such as the Baptist missionary Timothy Richard 1845–1919, who produced a highly selective translation of the Chinese classic *Journey to the West* (*Xiyou ji* 西游记) into English (retitled *A Mission to Heaven*) that aimed to reinterpret it as a Christian text, or at least a Christian-Buddhist synthesis.

The most unique contribution of this book is the discussion of Republican era (1912–49) Christian and Catholic popular literature and dramas, including those produced by the Jesuits. Catholic missionaries in the period examined by Lai, differed from their Jesuit predecessors such as Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607), who had focused on winning over Chinese elites through their mastery of Classical Chinese and neo-Confucian philosophy. But in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Catholic missionaries focused largely on converting common people. They were aided in this task by the large number of works published by the Jesuits’ printing house at Tushanwan (often transliterated as T’ou-sè-wé 土山湾), part of the Catholic stronghold of Xujiahui (or Zikawei 徐家汇) in Shanghai, including the dramas and didactic works examined by Lai. A second, less productive but still important printing house was attached to the Jesuit mission of Southeast Zhili, which included the vibrant Catholic community at Xianxian (献县).

Having unearthed these rare texts, Lai is able to approach the proselytization of Christianity at a very local level. For example, he notes how in the Republican era “biblical dramas assumed different forms of local and indigenized Chinese performative genres” (75) that often varied from region to region. Chinese Catholic playwrights also produced dramas that operated at different registers, such as two works on the story of Joseph, one by the prolific playwright Fei Jinbiao (费金标) titled *Joseph the Ancient Saint* [古圣若瑟剧本 *Gusheng*

Ruose juben, 1918], modeled after the refined and somewhat esoteric structure of traditional Chinese opera, and a spoken drama of the Joseph story, *Vernacular Romance of Joseph the Ancient Saint* [古圣若瑟白话演义 *Gusheng Ruose baihua yanyi*, 1925], by Wu Guodong (吴国栋), made more accessible and entertaining for a wider audience (76–82).

In the next chapter, Lai traces Chinese Catholic retellings of the story of the Maccabees, namely *The Story of the Maccabees* [玛加白阿传 *Majiabai'a zhuan*, 1918] by Fei Jinbiao and *The Old Testament Stories with Commentaries* [古史参箴 *Gushi canzheng*] by the Chinese Jesuit Shen Zekuan (沈则宽), to demonstrate both the power of martyrdom dramas (*zhiming ju* 致命剧) in the wake of the Boxer Uprising, which decimated Catholic communities in northern China, as well as the clever ways in which these playwrights used biblical stories to appeal to the audience's cultural predispositions, even when they appeared incompatible. On the face of it, the story of the martyred seven brothers and their mother in Maccabees would appear to contradict the notion of filial piety (*xiao* 孝), since the brothers' decision to sacrifice themselves would destroy their bodies and their lives, bestowed upon them by their mother. Yet, Lai shows how Fei and Shen translated the story in such a way and added commentary to it so as to contend that, though a tortuous decision, martyrdom is indeed the filial choice in this case, and that the mother encourages her sons to accept martyrdom "as a way to repay her great loving kindness" (99).

This is a valuable contribution to the field, both summarizing and enhancing the ongoing "literary turn" in the study of Christianity in modern China. The various chapters serve as compact case studies in translation and cross-cultural interaction and are useful for both research and teaching purposes.

Steven Pieragastini

Loyola Marymount University

spieragastini@gmail.com

DOI:10.1163/22141332-00604007-07

Nadine Amsler

Jesuits and Matriarchs: Domestic Worship in Early Modern China. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018. Pp. xii + 258. Pb, \$30.00.

Historians have long noted the relative lack of research devoted to Catholic women in the history of Christianity in China, especially during the early modern period, in comparison to their Protestant counterparts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This neglect has only recently begun to