This new volume in the steadily ongoing CFM-series contains the final reports and a number of related studies by an Australian research team on the Christian (both Church of the East and Catholic) and Manichaean remains, mainly from the Mongol period in Quanzhou and Jinjiang in the Fujian Province of the Republic of China. To a certain extent the book is a continuation of Lieu’s article ‘Nestorians and Manichaeans on the South China Coast’, which was first published in this journal (VC 1980, 71-88), and later republished in a somewhat revised and expanded version in Lieu’s Manichaeism in Central Asia and China (Leiden-Boston-Köln 1998, 177-195). At the centre of this pioneering article were the Manichaean shrine in Quanzhou as well as Marco Polo’s report of his encounter with a Christian sect estimated by him to consist of 700.000 families. Most scholars agree that this was a secretive group of Manichaeans.

Both Polo’s story and the still existing Manichaean temple remain important subjects in the present book, while it also contains much more. After his brief introductory essay on present-day Quanzhou (Zayton/Zaitun) and early accounts of its Western visitors (the Polo’s, the Arab travel-writer Ibn Battuta, and the Franciscan John of Montecorvino, among others), Lieu continues with a chapter on the Chinese scholar Wu Wenliang (1903-1969) and his pivotal role in the discovery and conservation of Quanzhou’s Christian and Manichaean remains. After that follows Lieu’s contribution ‘The Church of the East in Quanzhou’, a rather extensive chapter on the (still often, but mistakenly so-called ‘Nestorians’ there, being in actual fact an outline of the history of Church of the East in Sassanian Iran and Central China, its survival in later (mainly medieval) times under the Song and the Mongols, and its eventual demise. In an appendix Lieu once again (but here rather lengthily) discusses Marco Polo’s account on the ‘Christians’ of Fugiu (Fuzhou).

The next chapter, by Iain Gardner, competently and clearly deals with ‘The Franciscan Mission to China and the Catholic Diocese of Zayton’ (53-60). The following exposé, again by Lieu, is entitled ‘Manichaean Remains in Jinjiang’ and focuses on the Manichaean shrine on Huabaio hill in the Jinjiang county.1

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1 It is not always clear from the text whether or not the shrine is situated in the prefecture of Quanzhou. On p. 65 it first runs: ‘Almost all Manichaean remains from the Quanzhou region, with the noted exception of a Church of the East inscription from Jintoupu which mentions
This shrine in all probability dates back to the year 1148 and contains, carved into the granite back wall, a statue of Mani. Here local worshippers still venerate Mani as the Buddha of Light. Some recent sources, however, make mention of other Manichaean shrines in the same Fujian province and one would have read Lieu’s expert opinion also on these locations.2

A major new part of the book starts with chapter 6: ‘Catalogue of Christian and Manichaean Remains from Zayton (Quanzhou, China)’.3 The overview is compiled by Gardner, Lieu and Ken Parry. It consists of two parts (I. Christian Remains; II. Manichaean Remains) and is based upon an earlier Chinese catalogue of Wu Wenliang (Beijing 1947; revised and expanded by his son Wu Youxiong, Beijing 2005). All descriptions are accompanied by (full colour or b/w) photographs, several of them made by the Australian team. This essential part of the book (pp. 83-128) is followed by two chapters in which the inscriptions on the listed artefacts (and some others!) are translated and commented on, i.e. ch. 7 ‘Inscriptions in Latin, Chinese, Uighur and Phagspa’ by Lance Eccles and Lieu (129-149) and ch. 9 ‘Nestorian Inscriptions in Syro-Turkic from Quanzhou: (II) Texts and Translations’ by Majella Franzmann and Lieu (171-214). As indicated in its subtitle, the interposed ch. 8 ‘Inscriptions in Syro-Turkic from Quanzhou: (I) Epigraphical and Historical Background’ by Eccles and Lieu only gives background information.

Ch. 10, ‘The Indian Background: Connections and Comparisons’, is composed by Franzmann, Gardner and Parry. It describes the trading relations between South China and South India, but also deals with, for instance, Mani’s links with India and China; the problem of Thomas, the Twin and Mani; the history of early Christianity in India and, in the end, briefly with Christian artefacts in India and their possible significance for interpreting the Quanzhou