

social support and strove to preserve or create bases for social support to continue in times ahead, presumed to be uncertain in personal aging, health, and family and in a rapidly transforming social world. At the same time, she transcends and deepens her analysis through placing these practices and their meanings within the framework of new directions in the construction of wider socialities and their conceptualizations.

Each of the three ethnographic domains is addressed separately, although they are linked through the interlocking presence of a few interlocutors present across the domains. The first domain, effectively evoked in the title by “soup,” addresses these issues through the connections of family, kin, and neighbors in two slightly connected small clusters. The members of both were official urban residents with access to urban benefits, but living in modest and insecure circumstances, especially in regard to support as aging. The author reports a widespread sense of improved living conditions in immediate consumption terms, but a sense of insecurity in provision for major matters such as support when elderly whether through public or through family channels. Filial piety has long been and continues to be a primary element in Chinese moral discourse and its observation in practice goes to each person’s sense of moral being during successive life stages and roles, and to embodied issues of health and wellbeing when aging. Beyond linking her findings appropriately in the literature, Fleischer astutely brings out the practical enactments – compressed in the language of taking someone a bowl of soup – through which the work of building sociality through care, and especially through the gift of food, is realized.

The “love” of the title is not romantic love but rather the neighborly love referenced by members of a long-standing (since the late 19th century) Protestant church and congregation. It is within the officially permitted ambit, rather than part of the newer and unofficial house church movement, and has an openly operating church building in an older district of the city. It falls well within the volume’s framework of sociality and support as being a nexus of a small community, and as being one that has structured practices of caring for its own members. It also has organized practices of reaching beyond to persons in need, including local elderly and disabled persons and those further away affected by disaster. Compared with the opening section on kin-based sociality, this section allows a more extended treatment of discourses of belief and community, although none was framed or enacted in a manner that was unacceptable in current official terms. It rather occupied a space of community and service that was more open to alternative forms and expressions than had been the case in an earlier period – to benevolence in the form of neighborly love, and to community that was not exclusively official in nature.

The third section, encapsulated in “a helping hand,” goes a step further into new terrain, in examining the work of those, primarily young people, who have joined

China’s recent and rapidly growing volunteer sector. This, too, can be viewed in terms of continuity with earlier ideals of service and the continuing model of Lei Feng’s selfless sacrifice of his life, but is a departure from a period in which service for the public good was exclusively official. This section of the research engaged with two organizations. One was a large quasi-official volunteer placement service run under the Communist Youth League that gave numerous volunteer service opportunities in local communities. The other was a small and targeted organization based and operating in China but registered in Hong Kong. This organization specifically serves remaining communities of people whose older members once suffered from Hansen’s Disease (leprosy) and whose healthy younger generations remain stigmatized. This chapter returns strongly to generational themes of the earlier sections and finds volunteerism more appealing to students and to other young people seeking channels of meaning, self-fulfillment, and autonomy, as well as additional channels for forming social ties and acquiring practical experience.

This triad of investigations of China’s continuing, altering, and emerging social supports exceeds its title in demonstrating an investigation of the transformations of socialities in China more broadly. The ethnography throughout is solidly empirical and also delicately sensitive to multiple nuances of meaning, the myriad of considerations that enter into each act of support, whether in reciprocity or in generalized gift, and the weight of consequences in precarious circumstances. Fleischer’s work is noteworthy in its emphasis and methodological care in viewing all of soup, love, and a helping hand as creations of a fluid structure of networks of relations needing always to be actively managed through a repertoire of obligations, needs, and practices. In this Fleischer connects with current anthropological thinking on relatedness, enriching it with the practical kinship analysis of Fei Xiaotong and of her Guangzhou interlocutors.

The volume is well-written, concise, and readable, valuable for readers in the field and accessible for both informed general readers and university students.

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Friedrich, Markus, and Alexander Schunka (eds.): *Reporting Christian Missions in the Eighteenth Century. Communication, Culture of Knowledge, and Regular Publication in a Cross-Confessional Perspective*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017. 196 pp. ISBN 9783-447-10825-6. (Jabloniana – Quellen und Forschungen zur europäischen Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit, 8) Price: € 52,00

The volume consists of nine articles preceded by an introduction written by both editors. A short section with contributors’ biographies and two indices (of persons and geographical names) complete the volume. While the title may indicate an approach to the topic with the focus on the contents of missionary reports, the

subtitle takes the reader on the right track. The authors are more interested in technologies and procedures employed to shape and broadcast information than in the content of the periodicals. This, however, does not mean that they entirely overlook the latter. Due respect is paid to the cross-confessional perspective signalled in the subtitle. Four articles deal with the Catholic publications, another four with various Protestant publishing endeavours, and the final article attempts to combine both traces focusing on how Protestant and Catholic missionary activities were perceived through the Protestant publications in the German-speaking area. The authors of other articles are not oblivious of the inter-confessional borrowings, overlaps, and impulses. However, the editors underlined that the contributors were not asked to analyse (possible) interdependences of the missionary journals.

The editors note that most of the earlier research was done on the Protestant publications with the ensuing impression that the Catholic side of the publication scene was retarded and/or insignificant. Thus, providing a better-balanced perception of the role of confessional publications in the 18th century is the editors' concern. Though it may seem that the three articles on the Jesuit periodicals form the "core" of the volume, to which the other texts were added in order to broaden and enrich the perspective, the editors underlined that reporting on mission sprang from internal motives of various groups and the Jesuit influence/stimulus was possible but not essential.

The editors give several reasons for choosing 1700–1760 as their time frame: the particular situation of the Jesuits (demise of the Society in mid-18th century), missionary awakening of various Protestant groups, growing literacy and new reading practices (collective and individual), new technical possibilities, and development of journalistic activities (regularity of publishing).

The volume starts with an article about reporting mission from Latin America. It falls out of the timespan of the volume as Iris Gareis writes mainly on the 16th-century material, adding a glimpse on its later secondary use. The author stresses the peculiarity of the South American situation with its close ties between the Spanish colonial administration and the Catholic Church. The article is a reminder that reporting missions did begin earlier than in the 18th century.

The following three articles on the Jesuit publication activities acquaint the reader with influential journals – two published in French and one in German. Markus Friedrich underlines that the "Nouveaux mémoires de la Compagnie de Jésus dans le Levant" (9 vols, 1715–1755) has not been analysed earlier as a unified whole (only in thematic parts). Friedrich's focus, however, is placed on the purpose of composing and publishing the journal and on its production mode. He points out that not all missionary activities were put into a spotlight, e. g., reporting the activities of Christian missionaries in Muslim lands. He marks the complaints expressed by

some of the Jesuit contributors concerning the way their contributions were edited. One can add that this seems to be a recurring feature not only in the Jesuit-edited journals. Though many published reports were not quite accurate on all the details, they were nevertheless not fictitious. They basically described the events that had really taken place or matters that the authors had observed themselves. However, some of the descriptions were shaped by the editors in Europe, either to suit the (real or imagined) tastes of the readers and/or to serve the general purpose (the message) conveyed by the editors (be it on the Catholic or Protestant side). The contributors to the volume point out that the authors of the reports belonged to the "matter-of-fact" culture and many were well educated. Their reports were taken as credible not only by the church readership but also by many people belonging to the academia, who on other grounds often opposed or contested Jesuits' actions and views. That point was also stressed by Adrien Paschoud in his article: "The antagonism existing between the *Philosophes* and the Jesuits was less ideological than political, because the two sides competed most of all in the field of shaping and informing 'public opinion'" (67). Paschoud focused on the highly influential "Lettres édifiantes et curieuses" published by the Jesuits between 1702–1776. He points out that the journal served not only the goal of reporting on missions but also of refuting views and actions of the Jesuits' opponents.

The third article on the Jesuit publication activities deals with the *Neue Welt-Bott*, a journal published for the German-speaking Christians (Catholics) by Joseph Stöcklein SJ. Galaxis Borja González and Ulrike Straszer devote quite a lot of attention to Stöcklein himself as the person behind the success of the journal and to his efforts of fostering "a German community-building" and colonial ambitions within the German-speaking milieu (e. g., the journal starts with reports on the missionary activities in the Mariana Islands). Due attention is also given to the journal production process (in Graz and Augsburg) and its proliferation.

Two following articles on the publishing activities in the Anglican milieu (by Alexander Pyrges on SPCK and Jeremy Gregory on SPG) fall within the parameters of the volume under review, i. e., they focus on the rationale for publishing missionary reports and the production process. Both are informative and contain extensive footnotes (as all the other articles in the volume) but somehow form a more tedious reading in comparison to the previous three articles. Perhaps so, because they describe another milieu with its particular politico-religious specificity, where the reports were really reports, i. e., they were not clad in the form of stories.

Heike Liebau writes about the German Pietists' journals *Hallesche Berichte*, 1710–1760 and *Neue Hallesche Berichte*, 1760–1848. She places both periodicals in the context of Tranquebar Mission in South India and according to the volume principles focuses on their production and distribution. Liebau underlines that diaries, which had a special significance for the Pietists

(life stories with stress on piety), fill in the largest part of the missionary journal. It is remarkable that the published texts include not only writings of the European missionaries but also their Indian co-workers, including women. Liebau remarks that the journals contain more on Tamil women-teachers and -catechists than on the European women present in the Indian mission. She indicates that the content richness of both journals has not been fully tapped and draws attention to the digitalized copies of the *Hallesche Berichte* (Digital Library of the Francke Foundations – <<http://192.124.243.55/digbib/hb.htm>>).

Gisela Mettele writes on the structure and logistics of the circulation of knowledge among the Moravian Brethren considering the new spread of their congregations. She underlines that the community members were the primary addressees of the journal (*Gemeinnachrichten*). That specificity led to debates on what part of the contents should have been made available to the outsiders. Scrutinizing the authorship, Mettele observes: “To a certain extent, this collective authorship also included women. Most obviously through their published memoirs, they participated in the construction of religious worldviews and in what was essentially a narrative creation of theology. But some reports from the settlements, diaspora, and even from missionary stations were written by women as well. Moravian missionaries and preachers mostly travelled as couples and in some cases it can be proven that diary keeping was a task that lay in the hands of the wives” (155f.).

In the last article of the volume, Alexander Schunka focuses on the German (Protestant) periodicals. He indicates that reporting on missions provided interesting reading material, propagated missionary work, and kept the journals alive. However, it seems ironic, that given the three preceding articles on the Jesuit periodicals in the current volume and the efforts expressed in the “Introduction” to show that the Catholic publications from the period did matter, the remark made at the beginning of Schunka’s article seems to indicate how strong the old perception is rooted: “Since periodical publishing in the early eighteenth century seems to have been primarily a Protestant activity, this allows us to see eighteenth-century missionary work, even Catholic missions, through the eyes of contemporary Protestants (although, unfortunately, not vice versa)” (169). One could state here that in such a case the next volume with exploration of the contents of the journals and possible mutual influences would be not only a natural follow-up but almost a necessity in line with the editors’ introductory remark: “The vast potential for writing trans-confessional histories of Christian missions is, as of now, still largely untapped” (14).

The clear advantages of the volume include application of a broad and comparative perspective on the early 18th-century journals with a masterly composed overview presented in the “Introduction”; the focus on production and distribution methods; and the fact that women’s involvement has been clearly indicated. In the

light of the plain admittance that the volume is the result of a long-lasting preparatory process (17), it is good that the editors showed persistence and crowned their efforts with the publication of this commendable volume.

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Gill, Lyndon K.: *Erotic Islands. Art and Activism in the Queer Caribbean*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. 280 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-6870-0. Price: \$ 26.95

In her 1978 speech, now famously known as “Uses of the Erotic. The Erotic as Power,” Audre Lorde outlined the erotic as a form of consciousness and self-knowing, as an informed praxis based on one’s desires and sense of fulfillment and as a tool to assess one’s life and find one’s power. Gill reconceptualizes Lorde’s “erotic” as a hermeneutic, “a perspectival trinity,” focusing on “various formal and informal power hierarchies (the political), sexual as well as nonsexual intimacy (the sensual), and sacred metaphysics (the spiritual) simultaneously” (10). Gill proposes the erotic be used, theoretically and methodologically, as a lens for “surveying the elaborate topography of connections we share as political, sensual, and spiritual beings” (11). Using the Carnival mas of Peter Minshall, the compositions of Calypso Rose, female calypsonian Linda McCartha Monica Sandy-Lewis, and the HIV advocacy work of Friends for Life, Gill demonstrates how the erotic can be used to interpret lesbian/gay artistry and grassroots activism in Trinidad and Tobago.

Gill introduces each discussion by historicizing the issue, for example, chapter One, “Inheriting the Mask. A History of Parody in Trinidad’s Carnival” captures the “rebellious organizing” of enslaved persons hidden in plain sight through their masquerades, that mocked Europeans and the racialized power hierarchies within colonial society. Gill situates the legendary mas man, Peter Minshall, within this mas tradition defined through colonial race relations, describing Minshall’s “racial cross-identification and play from an early age” (41), such as the African Witch Doctor masquerade he created as a teenager, and for which his mother blackened his skin with animal charcoal. The nuances of race and racial identity in the Caribbean fostered Minshall’s racial identity as “a rare hybrid,” “a richly textured, multi-layered creature.” Minshall declares himself “a Caribbean,” a product of all of the region’s history. This assertion forecloses a critical look at race and racial identity in Minshall’s work. Desire and sensuality are central to Minshall’s 2006 mas “The Sacred Heart,” including Minshall’s own same-sex desire and identity, about which the artist has been “unabashedly nonchalant” (63). Gill asserts, “*The Sacred Heart* is a political project that attempts to pump new lifeblood into the nation by battling corporeal and cultural affliction with dignified island affection. However, the centrality of affect, corporality, and sexuality to this project makes the band also a highly sensual intervention” (61f.). The mas