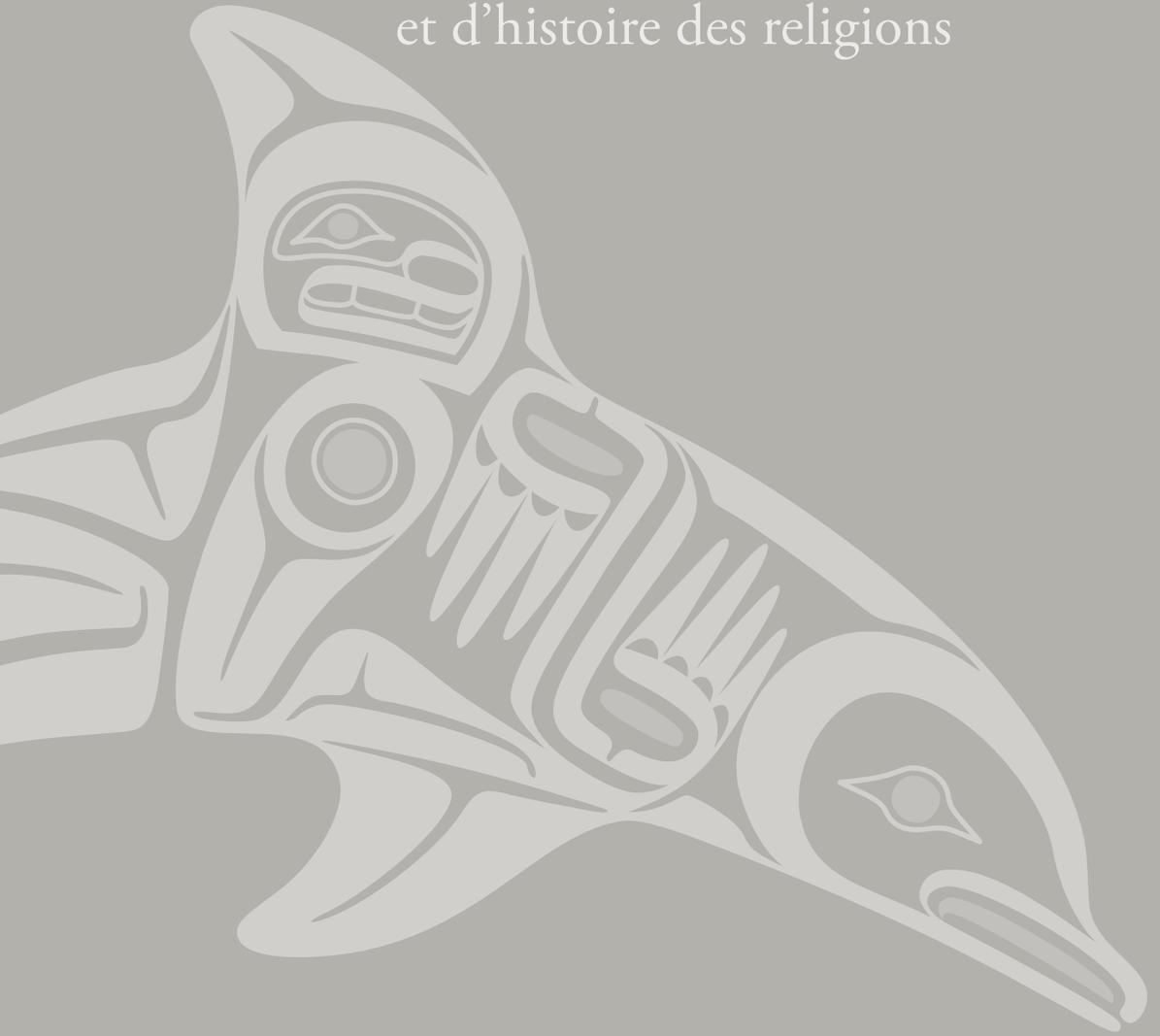


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La distinction, due à l'historiographie, entre une « représentation ibérique » et une « représentation jésuite » de la Chine, dont l'auteur connaît les limites (p. 48, n. 33) mérite discussion. Si l'on saisit bien que ces représentations se recoupent, et que les descriptions jésuites dominent la scène éditoriale jusqu'au XVIII^e siècle (p. 103), la fin du chapitre premier nous informe, au contraire, que la vision « ibérique » prédominera jusqu'aux Lumières (pp. 95-96). Malgré l'importance accordée à cette distinction d'images dans un premier temps, elle finit par engendrer une confusion au sein d'une argumentation, par ailleurs, limpide.

De manière générale, en plus de proposer une image bien plus complexe et subtile de jésuites encore trop souvent présentés sous des allures caricaturales, une des grandes richesses de cette étude est la réfutation de plusieurs idées reçues : parmi bien d'autres, celle selon laquelle Ricci et Ruggieri s'accommodent de l'habit des moines bouddhistes du fait de leur méconnaissance de l'élite po-

litique qui n'a pas grande considération pour les bonzes. Mais l'un des apports les plus novateurs est l'analyse de la correspondance jésuite. Elle permet d'éclairer l'éviction de Ruggieri de la Chine, ou de prouver que Ricci est bel et bien l'auteur d'une lettre qui sera manipulée par d'autres *a posteriori* afin de légitimer le projet de conquête militaire de la Chine (pp. 350-353). Au-delà des résultats mêmes de ces analyses, ces démonstrations reposent sur d'infimes détails et montrent la pertinence de la perspective adoptée par Bernhardt. Si les historien-ne-s ont encore tout intérêt à enquêter sur l'histoire des missions jésuites en Chine, notamment en examinant son versant économique, il est incontournable d'aborder les sources littéraires et épistolaires en tenant compte des apports philologiques d'un ouvrage comme celui-ci.

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PHILIPPE BORNET éd., *Translocal Lives and Religion. Connections between Asia and Europe in the Late Modern World*, Sheffield, Equinox, 2021, 318 p., ISBN 978-1-781-79582-8.

After the end of the twentieth century, inspired by methodologies stressing the global framework of interactions, scholars envisaged the modern world as a space irreversibly open wherein both scattered individuals and communities move along networks of visible and invisible, short- and long-term routes. Starting with the standpoint that both people and their religions move and make contact with each other, this book explores the lives of those « in-between » characters who witnessed the points of contact between different contexts within a global network of « situational interactions » in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The main objective of the volume, however, goes further, as the title suggests. It aims to provide a « translocal » approach to the study of

religion in the late modern world between Europe and Asia and – one could add – the United States. Indeed, even if the United States does not appear in the title of the book, it played a significant role in the fluid landscape explored by the contributors to the volume, especially after the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago. It is easy to imagine to what extent the transatlantic connections of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries impacted the lives of individuals. But surprisingly, this book shows how their entangled biographies may provide material for the analysis not only of their own epoch, but also of our present times.

In this sense, the book transforms the methodological premises for the discussion of « connected religions » into the theoretical

scaffolding necessary to rewrite the history of relationships between Europe and Asia. The authors of this book give a nod to a glocal approach to the history of religions by bringing into conversation the most critical scholarship of the last decades, from Bruce Lincoln to Jonathan Z. Smith, Tomoko Masuzawa, among others, and the « transnational turn » advocated by historians such as Sidney Mintz, Romain Bertrand, Serge Gruzinski, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and many others. Such an attempt, while welcome, is not new among the historians of religions in the early modern world. Nonetheless, the scholars whose contributions Philippe Bornet has edited provide an original application of the « transnational » turn to the « translocal » approach, highlighting the significant debt the scholars of our day owe to historians such as Braudel and Bloch.

In a rich and thought-provoking « Introduction » (pp. 3-32), Philippe Bornet encourages readers to understand the intellectual losses and gains brought by new approaches, such as « connected history », « entangled history », and « global history », especially in the case of the uncritical application of different methodologies to the historical study of religions, or when trying to define religion from a strictly historical perspective. Regarding the first point, Bornet stresses the limits of comparison and language. Sympathetic to Bruce Lincoln's theses and Jonathan Z. Smith's writings, Bornet accompanies the reader along the slippery borders of the discipline to suggest a series of methodological guidelines that combine a critical comparison with a self-reflexive history of religions. To this, he adds the need for systematic multiple contextualizations, which would enable researchers to go beyond isolated archives, positioned historiographies, emic discourses and so on.

Concerning the second point, the question is methodologically more complicated than the one raised in the first point. Bornet is aware that the term religion is « compromised », but he suggests that we, as scholars, need cate-

gories to compare and go beyond comparison. Therefore, his choice of « religion » as a point of connection works in a double sense: 1) if « religion », as a notion, connects people, ideas, and languages, this book explores how shared, misunderstood, translated, invented notions of religion have allowed people from different cultures and beliefs to interact and communicate; 2) if « religion » is the object of connections, this book invites readers to rethink how nineteenth- and twentieth-century interactions between Asia, Europe, and North America contributed to forging the very modern notion of religion. This is – at least, I might add – the object of our discipline, that is, what we constantly put under criticism through historical enquiry. The resulting approach is thus never reverential, but always destabilizing. I would add a further consideration that depends on the latter. As far as a specific idea of religion has produced connections and interactions between two or more communicating entities, one could surmise that its reification inspired new attempts to universalize religion, in a process that is not any more one-sided (from Christianity to the rest of the world) but multiple-sided (from the Asian networks to the West and back).

From this theoretical vantage point, the essays which follow Bornet's « Introduction » could be well described by the term « intersection ». The contributors explore documents, archives, and places by moving across different languages, contexts, and points of view. « Intersectional » personalities include the figures portrayed by Gautam Chakrabarti (pp. 35-55) and Gwilym Beckerlegge (pp. 57-88): respectively, the Luso-Indian poet Antony Firingi (born as Hensman Anthony), and the Irish follower of Vivekananda, Baghini Nivedita (born as Margaret Noble). Both characters are connected to the worship of Kālī, but in Chakrabarti's analysis, the practice of a European man in the performance context of the « Divine Patroness of Calcutta » (52) is portrayed as an example of transcultural subalternity which takes advantage from « the landed mercantile

gentry of the Bengali nouveaux riches ». In Beckerlegge's enquiry about Baghini Nivedita, her feminine connection to Kālī and her political activism in defence of Hinduism and India's independence have provided nationalists with the basis for a genderized instrumentalization of Nivedita's engagement combined with the Bhārat Mātā (Mother India) worship. The analyses of these cases of intersection allow us to understand the different voices as consonant.

From Asia to Europe, the essays by Dwayne Ryan Menezes (pp. 89-122), Steven Sutcliffe (pp. 123-148), and Parinitha Shetty (pp. 193-217), respectively, analyse the role of intersection between religions in the biography of the Parsi Shapurji Edalji, who converted to Christianity, and that of the Scottish vegetarian, conscientious objector, and naturalist Dugald Semple, who embraced a healthy lifestyle inspired by Buddhist teachings, and, finally, in the life of the Brahmin's daughter Pandita Ramabai, who converted to Christianity and travelled throughout Europe and the United States, advocating education and freedom for women. The first two case studies provide a glimpse into late-eighteenth-century England as the counter-place of a translocal empire. Menezes focuses on the difficulties, such as harassment, intimidation, and unjust incrimination, that a «black» Christian from India – probably, the first South Asian Anglican vicar in England – had to face in a «white» community, while Sutcliffe explores the cultural connections between Semple's engagement with Gandhian and Buddhist ideas and the *Lebensreform* claimed in Europe and Russia. Finally, Shetty's enquiry provides an original analysis of Pandita Ramabai's interest in the Bible and her fight against orthodoxies (in the caste system as well as in the Christian structures of power) through an insight into her book *A Testimony of our Inexhaustible Treasure*.

The intersection between Christianity and Indian asceticism, through a bridge between Switzerland and India, is explored in Philippe Bornet's essay (pp. 219-251) on Sundar Singh,

the Punjabi Sikh who converted to Christianity but left the Brotherhood to start preaching by himself as an apostle and a *sādhu*, disappearing without a trace in Tibet. The study of South Asian traditions allows the reader to discover new discussions of religious intersections in the contributions by Minyu Zhang (pp. 149-168), Brian Bocking (pp. 171-192) and Fabienne Jagou (pp. 253-271). From a Chinese perspective, Zhang examines the historical and cultural factors that stimulated the birth of Indology in China, starting with the need to «re-examine and re-evaluate China's own history and culture» and adding the aim to improve «the understanding of Buddhism and China's historical contact with Buddhist India» (165). Jagou explores the biography of Chen Jianmin, master of the school called *Adi Buddha Mandala*, and the story of his legacy from China to Taiwan via Tibet and India to the United States. From the Japanese side, Bocking explores the life of Charles Pfoundes, who, in 1889, launches the London Buddhist Propagation Society – probably «the first Buddhist mission to be established in the West» – and builds a bridge with the Nishi Hongamji Pure Land Buddhist headquarters in Kyoto led by the English teacher Matsuyama Matsutaro.

All contributions provide examples that meet the historiographical and methodological challenges raised by Bornet in the opening chapter. The scholars involved are experts from different disciplines: comparative history of religions, comparative literature, religious studies, South Asian literatures and religions, missionary studies, and political studies. To further enrich the methodological value of the volume, this book includes a «Foreword» by the world historian Sujit Sivasundaram and an «Afterword» by the Indologist and historian of religions Maya Burger.

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