PAPERBOUNDS

ETHICS IN MEDICINE: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Concerns. Edited by Stanley Joel Reiser, Arthur J. Dyck, and William J. Curran. M.I.T., 1977. 679 pp. $19.95 (cloth, $40)

This comprehensive text developed for use in medical courses at Harvard is also a unique sourcebook for lawyers, legislators dealing with health plans, and lay citizens. It opens with selections from the *Corpus Hippocratium* (probably written by Pythagorean philosophers in the 5th to 4th centuries B.C.) and proceeds through well-edited articles on medical conduct and ethics; regulation, compulsion, and consumer protection in clinical medicine and public health; truth-telling in the physician-patient relationship; medical experimentation on human subjects; procreative decisions; suffering and dying; rights and priorities in the provision of medical care. The emphasis throughout is on human needs rather than on narrow professional concerns.

BIRDS, BEASTS, BLOSSOMS, AND BUGS: The Nature of Japan. By Harold P. Stern. Abrams reprint, 1977. 196 pp. $12.50

"Can a bug be beautiful?" A Western answer to this Zen question might be: Of course, if it's depicted by a Japanese artist. This large, elegant volume, printed and bound in Japan, was compiled by the late director of Washington's Freer Gallery. He briefly traces Japanese "nature" art from the emergence of Buddhist influence in the Heian Period (8th century A.D.), through the Kamakura, Muromachi, Momoyama, and Edo periods to the present. Among the 140 illustrations of paintings, drawings, calligraphy, ceramics, and lacquerware are a full-page color detail of wasps, a brushwork close-up of a tiger's eyebrow, an impudent cat of the late Edo Period—all pure delights. Concise notes with each item provide as much background as most readers will require. (For additional information, Noritake Tsuda's classic *Handbook of Japanese Art*, first published in 1941 by Charles Tuttle, is available as a paperbound reprint.)

RED TAPE: Its Origins, Uses, and Abuses. By Herbert Kaufman. Brookings, 1977. 100 pp. $2.95

"Writing about red tape turned out to mean writing about the whole governmental process," says Brookings president Bruce L. MacLaury, introducing this brief, bright study of a subject more satirized than examined. Kaufman finds that red tape represents procedural constraints of our own making. Can its onerous qualities and effects be minimized? Not easily, is his answer, and probably only through exercising more care in the writing of *new* regulations. Administrative regulations filled 15,000 pages in the *Federal Register* in 1946. The annual postwar page total dropped briefly (10,528 in 1956), rose in 1966 to nearly 17,000, passed 57,000 in 1976, and is expected to reach 100,000 in the 1980s. That's 100,000 pages, representing millions of yards of what was, in its beginnings under the British Empire, actual cloth tape, dyed scarlet, used to tie up official files.

UHURU'S FIRE: African Literature East to South. By Adrian Roscoe. Cambridge, 1977. 281 pp. $6.95 (cloth, $18.50)

The reader new to African prose, poetry, and drama may be surprised by the wide variety of themes and voices; the combination of strength and confusion felt

in the work of African writers who are part of a literary independence movement paralleling political change comes as less of a surprise. Introducing the work of contemporary authors in East, Central, and Southern Africa, Adrian Roscoe describes vernacular writing ("the outgrowth of an oral literature which has begun to die before the world knows much about it"). He discusses the change in the literature syllabus—from British to African—at the University of Nairobi in 1961, since followed in Malawi and Uganda. "As the voices of Wordsworth and Tennyson grow dim," he reports, "the voices of Okigbo and Soyinka grow loud." So do those of Kenya's Grace Ogot, with her strong tales based on Luo tribal stories, South Africa's Ezekiel Mphahlele, Uganda's Taban Lo Liyong, and dozens of other artists, established or emerging, whose work Roscoe perceptively analyzes.

THE FACE OF BATTLE. By John Keegan. Vintage, 1977. 360 pp. $2.95

John Keegan lectures at Sandhurst, England's West Point. He has never seen a battle. Neither had Stephen Crane, whose *The Red Badge of Courage* is probably America's best war novel. Keegan's book, newly available in paper covers, is not as compelling as Crane's classic, but it does distill, from historical records, what war is like to the men who bear the battle: English bowmen and pikemen at Agincourt (1415); gunners, cavalry, and massed infantry in the confusion of Waterloo (1815); participants in the unbelievable slaughter of the Somme (1916)—where the 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, in one afternoon lost 705 dead, wounded, or missing. (Newfoundland!) Looking at "the inhuman face of wars" in these three battles fought within a hundred-mile radius, Keegan writes that "impersonality, coercion, deliberate cruelty, all deployed on a rising scale, make the fitness of man to sustain the stress of battle increasingly doubtful." One wonders.

HOUSES AND TRAVELLERS. By W. S. Merwin. Atheneum, 1977. 214 pp. $6.95 (cloth, $10)

Better known as a poet and translator of poets than as a writer of prose, W. S. Merwin in the last few years has won new followers with his short short stories, fables, and parables, in the *New Yorker.* Thirty of the odd, haunting narratives collected here appeared first in that magazine, others in a variety of literary journals. Merwin writes (ostensibly) about people, many of them old and lost, about paths, cabins, grain elevators, lakes, nesting pigeons, about "The Devil's Pig," and even (in 69 words) about language we have lost but cannot forget—words we "shine the lantern of our sleep on . . . and there they are, trembling for the day of witness. They will be buried with us, and rise with the rest."

THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY: What it is, with all the kinds, causes, symptomes, prognostickes and severall cures of it. By Robert Burton. Vintage, 1977. 1,440 pp. $7.95

Robert Burton's years on earth (1577–1640) were greatly afflicted by the "black choler." *(I'll change my state with any wretch / Thou canst from gaol or dunghill fetch / . . . Now desperate I hate my life. / Lend me a halter or a knife.)* But he made a good thing out of melancholy. His learned, witty compendium on the subject, first published in London in 1621, went through five editions before his death at age 63 of natural causes. Not until now has it appeared in paper (at a cheering price).

China's Jesuit Century

Bettmann Archive

Jesuit Matteo Ricci (left) and convert Hsu Kuang-chi in the early 1600s. One hundred years later, the work they began was in ruins.

In the long history of China's contacts with the West, only once has there been a major cultural accommodation: during the 17th century, when Jesuit scholars served as key advisers on diplomacy, science, and engineering to the imperial court at Peking. Mutual tolerance and respect brought cultural and material benefits to both East and West before Vatican insistence on theological orthodoxy led to a rift and to China's return to isolation. Father Joseph S. Sebes, who served in the Jesuits' China Mission in pre-Mao days (1940–47), visited China last year. His essay is drawn from original research undertaken during his tenure as a Wilson Center Fellow.

by Joseph S. Sebes, S.J.

On a crisp September morning in 1583, Matteo Ricci stood at the prow of a junk loaded with sheep and pigs and poultry. Portuguese Macao, its houses built low for protection against typhoons, slipped by astern as the vessel nosed its way up the Pearl River, and the young priest wondered whether he would be a fourth time rebuffed in his attempt to enter China, the Celestial Kingdom. By training he was a Jesuit and thus a man of learning; but he was also a man of God, and it is, in a sense, as a parable that his story has come down to us.

During the middle years of the 16th century, Portuguese Jesuits extended their missionary efforts to India and Ceylon, Malacca and the Moluccas, but the "brazen gates" of China refused to yield. Francis Xavier arrived in Japan in 1549 and established a Christian community that soon numbered 150,000, but his dream of bringing the gospel to the Chinese remained only a dream. He died on his way to China in 1552, the year in which Matteo Ricci was born in the Italian village of Macerata.

Stepping ashore at Chao-Ch'ing, Ricci could not know that through his own exertions China would finally emerge into its "Jesuit century." Rejecting the condescension of his fellow Europeans and recognizing in China a civilization more ancient, and in some respects more advanced, than his own, Ricci would accommodate the rites, customs, and philosophies of the Chinese within the structure of his own religious beliefs. By doing so, he would win the confidence, and sometimes the souls, of his Chinese hosts. But the welcome extended to this Western scholar in the East found no counterpart among theologians in Europe; short years after the Jesuits' most signal successes—including the Emperor's Edict of Toleration—his tactful, balanced approach succumbed to Papal condemnation. In the end, the West was to show itself incapable of accepting China as a cultural equal.

Mongol and Ming

Scholars who commonly describe China as historically a closed society often forget that under the Mongols (1280–1368) and before, the proud Middle Kingdom was relatively cosmopolitan. Some 2,000 foreign-trading firms had offices in the T'ang

capital of Ch'ang-an (near Sian), then the largest city in the world with a population of one million, and Chinese technicians supervised paper manufacture in cities as far away as Baghdad. European visitors—such as John of Montecorvino (1290) and of course Marco Polo (1271–95)—were frequent, and Chinese maritime expeditions crossed the Indian Ocean and "discovered" Africa well before Portugal's Prince Henry sent his ships exploring down the continent's west coast. There were even elements of religious diversity: The Jesuits were surprised to find a Jewish community in Kai-feng dating from the 12th century. Earlier, a group of Nestorian Christians had flourished in Ch'ang-an, where they acquired a reputation, according to one contemporary account, as "experts in eye diseases and diarrhea."

China's "Sinification"

Only when the new Ming dynasty finally wrested power from the Mongol overlords (1368) was there a period of consolidation; the result was the first self-imposed isolation in Chinese history. In many ways, the Ming reaction was similar to Chinese cultural withdrawal today. Indeed, the dynasty's first emperor, Hung-wu, fancied himself a political philosopher and required each family in the kingdom to own the *Ming ta kao*, a digest of his thoughts and sayings, which for a time was the most widely read book on earth.

The years of Ming "Sinification" coincided with the European explorations of the East. The first Portuguese trade mission to China in 1514 met open hostility, as did Tomé Pires three years later when he presented himself as Lisbon's ambassador to Peking (he was detained in the country until his death in 1520).

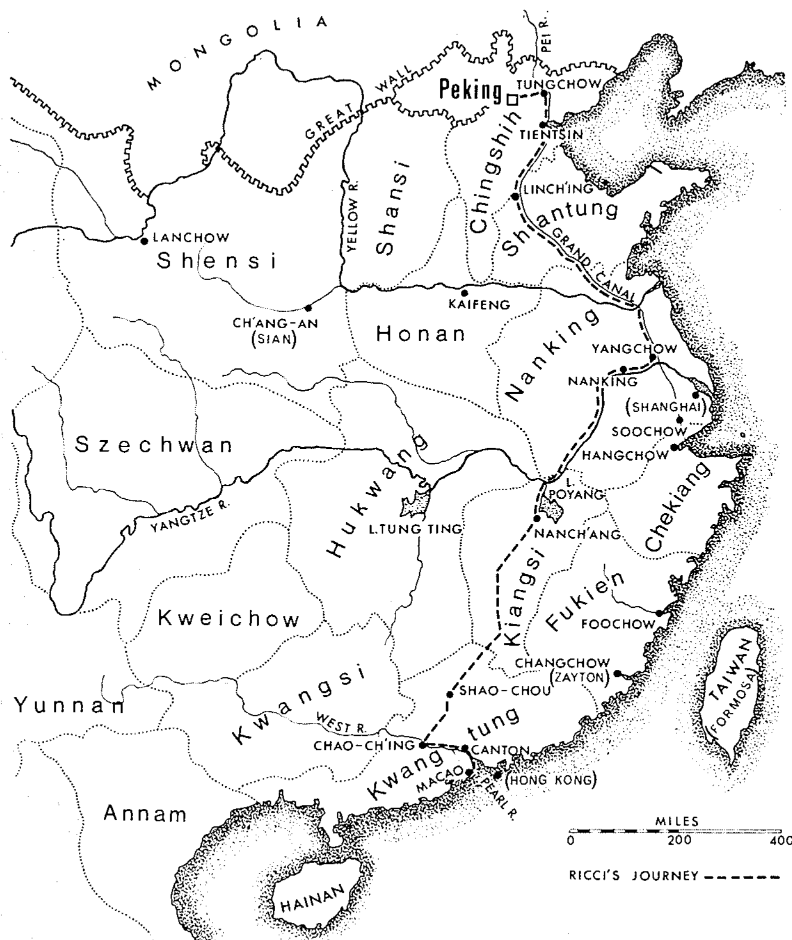
The Chinese generally regarded the Portuguese, often rightly, as little better than the Japanese pirates who periodically ravaged the kingdom's coastline. As a result, the Portuguese found their reception in China markedly different from the hospitality accorded them elsewhere in the East.

In Japan, for example, Portuguese traders and missionaries first arrived during the *Sengoku* (country at war) period. They found an open society eager to obtain Western firearms (which the Japanese turned against the Koreans in 1592) and tolerant of Western religion. Francis Xavier's limited evangelization of the country was hampered more by apathy than antipathy, and while he made some effort to win converts from among the new *daimyo* aristocracy, he concentrated on the lower classes. There

Joseph S. Sebes, S.J.,62, is professor of Far Eastern history at Georgetown University and a former Wilson Center Fellow. Born in Hungary, he entered the Society of Jesus in 1934 and was assigned to the China Mission. He studied in Peking, Taming, and Shanghai until 1947. After two years at the Gregorian University in Rome, he came to the United States and received his Ph.D. in history and Far Eastern languages from Harvard. Father Sebes is the author of The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk *(1962). Since 1958, he has taught at Georgetown University, where he was dean of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. The documents used in the research for this article are from the collection of Francis A. Rouleau, S.J.*

seemed no need to seek protection in high places.

Nor was there much need for the Jesuits to accommodate culturally to the Japanese. The banners of the Shimabara rebels sported a Portuguese legend: *Louvado sea o Santissimo Sacramento*; and Western words were readily adopted: *Deusu* for Deus, *Kirishtan* for Christian—much as the Japanese, centuries later, adopted *beisuboro* (for baseball) and *aisukurimu* (for ice cream). Only after the *Sakoku* (closed country) edict of 1639 did the Japanese, under the Tokugawa, retreat into an isola-



Reproduced, with permission, from Nigel Cameron, Barbarians and Mandarins: Thirteen Centuries of Western Travelers in China, *New York and Tokyo: Walker/Weatherhill, 1970.*

Ricci set out for Peking in 1583. He reached it 18 years later, after establishing missions in cities along his way.

tion from which they would not emerge until the arrival of America's Admiral Matthew Perry in 1853 and the subsequent Meiji restoration of 1868.

Architects of Accommodation

China, in the 16th century, represented the opposite extreme: a closed society in a fantastical kingdom known to most Europeans only as a land of strange beasts and gunpowder, of paper money and printing. Aware of Western misconceptions and recent commercial and missionary setbacks, Alessandro Valignano used his appointment in 1573 as Superior of Jesuit missions in the Far East to devise a new approach. A man of rare gifts and vision, a doctor of civil law and aide to Pope Paul IV, he realized that cultural differences within the East could be quite as pronounced as those that divided, say, Flemings and Poles in the West. Moving between Japan and Macao, Portugal's peninsular bastion on the Chinese mainland, Valignano set about formulating the China policy Ricci would take with him to China.

Valignano believed that the Chinese would respond better to a show of respect than to self-righteousness. Intensely proud of their ancient culture and holding intellectual accomplishment in high esteem, the Chinese, he felt, would be impressed by Jesuit scholars who accommodated themselves to the Chinese way of life. Accordingly, he insisted that his missionaries "Sinicize" themselves by obtaining sound knowledge of the Chinese language and the Confucian classics—something no European missionaries had done before.

In the years preceding his departure for China, Ricci underwent intensive training in Chinese language, manners, and customs—so successfully that grammatical errors in his diary reveal a man more at home with Chinese than with his native tongue. When he arrived in Chao-ch'ing, he adopted a Chinese name (Li Ma-tou) and donned the robes of a Buddhist *bonze* to indicate that he was a man of God. (He later switched to Mandarin dress, when he realized that it conveyed higher status.)

Valignano's cultural-accommodation approach was marred by none of the paternalism common among his Western contemporaries. In essence, his message to his aides was: Become Chinese. Equally simple was his strategy: Work from the top down. As scholars, the Jesuits had a natural affinity with the literati and educated officials, whose influence would afford the missionaries a measure of protection.

The task facing Matteo Ricci, Valignano's first emissary, was a difficult one. The country itself was enormous and uncharted (the first reliable atlas of China would be produced by the Jesuits in 1717)—a land of perhaps 150 million inhabitants, dispersed over 3.5 million square miles and torn by conflicting strains of Confucianism. From the first, Ricci adapted himself to the Chinese way, performing the kowtow to officials (three kneelings and nine prostrations) and carefully stressing scholarship over religion to avoid conflicts with Chinese sensibilities.*

Ricci had studied under Italy's cel-

*Ricci made it clear to the Chinese that in the sphere of ethical action and social and political life, Confucianism was a sound doctrine, which in all essentials agreed with Christianity. However, there were many superstitious elements in Confucianism as a result of Sung neo-Confucianist teachings. In its simplest terms, Ricci sought to restore the earlier, "pure" Confucianism, while condemning the adulterated later version, which, unfortunately, had been official doctrine for 600 years.

ebrated Christopher Clavius, called the Euclid of the 16th century, and was himself an accomplished mathematician, astronomer, and cartographer. To complement his skills, he had brought with him an assortment of scientific and astronomical devices as well as prisms, clocks, and other evidences of Western technology. Impressed by his devotion, tact, and ability and fascinated by his instruments (as the Chinese would be fascinated by my Polaroid camera 400 years later), the bureaucrats and literati of the southern provinces took kindly to Ricci and provided him with land for a house and church.

Tongue and Brush

Though still far from Peking, the administrative center in the north, Ricci had nevertheless secured a foothold, and as he established missions in the southern cities, he called for reinforcements to man them. Between the late Ming and early Ch'ing dynasties—that is, from around 1590 to 1680—more than 600 Jesuits would undertake the hazardous and often fatal passage from Europe to China. Only 100 actually made it. "All the rest," wrote one survivor, "had either been destroyed by shipwreck, illness, or murder, or captured by pirates or other robbers." Meanwhile, Ricci made his way through the provinces toward Peking. It would take him 18 years.

With his preaching and scholarly writing—with "tongue and brush" as the Chinese put it—Ricci at every stop made the acquaintance of the local elites and spoke to them of science and philosophy, hoping these would lead to higher things. One Jesuit later noted that Ricci used the secular aspects of his training as a kind of oil "wherewith to grease the wheels of affairs that they might roll more softly."

And softly they rolled indeed. Hsu Kuang-chi, later to become Grand Secretary to the Emperor, was baptized in 1597. His power and learning proved invaluable to the Jesuit cause. Through Hsu's efforts, other influential Chinese—such as Li Chih-tsao and Yang T'ing-yun, both of whom became presidents of the Supreme Court—embraced Christianity.

The key to Ricci's success lay in his learning and consummate tact. He refused to condemn ancestor worship, adopted a Chinese term, *T'ien-chu* (Lord of Heaven), for God, and adapted the liturgy to China. Aware that the Chinese, like the Europeans, mingled superstition with orthodoxy, he showed the same tolerance in this regard that Rome showed to Europeans. Moreover, in-

天
主

T'ien-chu [*Lord of Heaven*], *the Chinese Rites' term for God.*

stead of contesting Confucian doctrine, Ricci used it as a complement to Christianity, stressing the common elements in both.

Ricci's insight into Chinese attitudes was apparently boundless. The first book translated from Latin into Chinese by the Jesuits was not the Bible or the *Lives of the Saints* but a compilation of selections from Cicero's *On Friendship*—friendship being one of the five basic Confucian relationships. And when Ricci was asked to draw a map of the world, he ensured his fame throughout China by informing the Chinese for the first time of the existence of many other civilized nations. Moreover, by placing China at the map's center, he reinforced (pandered to, some said) the Chinese conception of the Middle Kingdom as literally and figuratively the center of civilization.

The Forbidden City

Peking, as Ricci found it in 1601, was a city of 700,000 and the nerve center of empire, connected to the rest of China by the Chichou and Huit'ung canals and by a web of roads created by the Mongols. If the Jesuits wanted friends in high places, it was here among the mandarins and the concubines that they were to be sought. The techniques that had won Ricci friendship and respect in the provinces, along with several thousand converts, served him well in the Forbidden City.

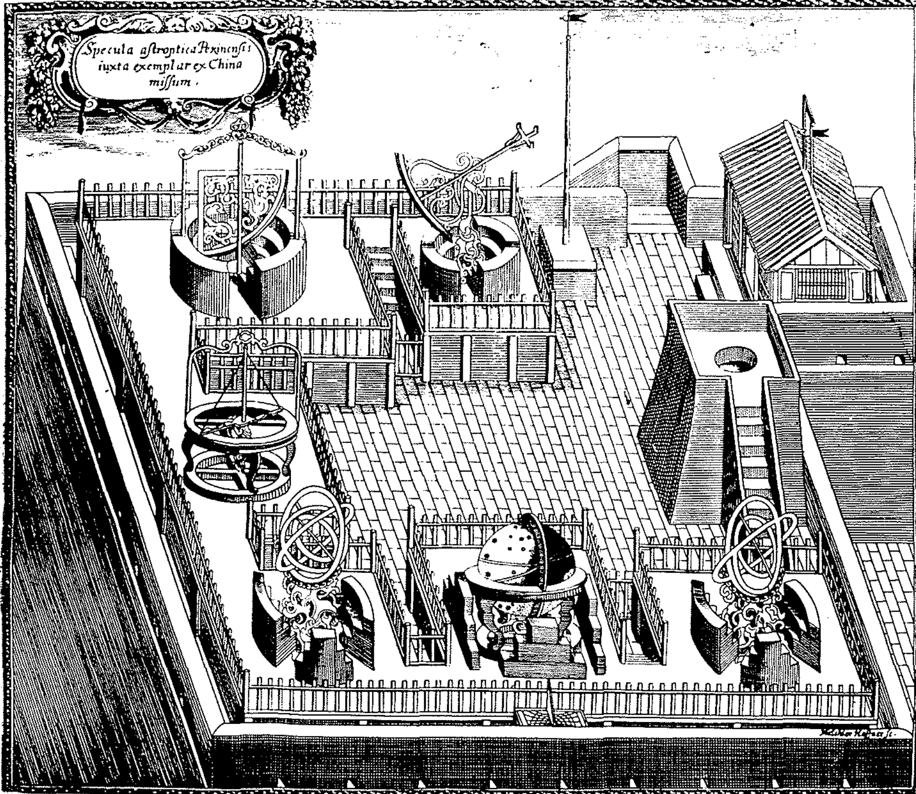
The Wan-li Emperor was fascinated by Ricci's gifts and scientific instruments, which included a pearl-studded cross, a world atlas, several ringing clocks, and a clavichord. The Emperor's eunuchs, naturally enough, were unable to repair the clocks or play the clavichord, so Ricci was asked to remain in the imperial capital—as he had hoped. The tacit understanding from the beginning seems to have been that the Jesuits would serve as technical advisers to the Emperor; the Chinese, in turn, would tolerate the presence of Jesuit missionaries as long as the foreigners' services were deemed useful.

Converts during this time included 14 mandarins of the first class, a cross section of intellectuals of academic standing (10 Doctors, 11 Licentiates, and 300 Bachelors), 140 members of the imperial family, and 40 of the Emperor's eunuch advisers. When news of this astounding progress was reported in Europe, many Westerners entertained hopes of the conversion of the Emperor and spoke of a "Chinese Constantine." The Jesuits in China, however, did not take such talk seriously, for as one of them noted wryly, "In order to convert the Emperor to Catholicism, you must first find a loophole in the Catholic morality of sex that would allow him to keep his 200 concubines."

Meanwhile, Ricci continued to supervise missionary work in the provinces. More Jesuits entered China, sustaining missions in Soochow, Nanchang, and Nanking. By the time of Ricci's death in 1610, there were 13 European missionaries in China, several native Jesuit brothers, and some 50,000 Christians. Within 30 years, 31 missionaries were serving a congregation of nearly 150,000, with mission houses, colleges, schools, and churches scattered throughout China.

Master of Mysteries

For the remainder of the 17th century, Ricci's successors—Nicholas Longobardo, astronomer Adam Schall, and the all-purpose Fer-



From Cameron, Barbarians and Mandarins.

Verbiest's observatory atop Peking's eastern wall (1687). The rest of the wall has since been razed, but this section remains.

dinand Verbiest—carried on his work, upholding the orthodoxy of the Chinese Rites—as Ricci's method of cultural accommodation came to be called—while continuing to serve China's Son of Heaven as technical advisers. In 1613, after a mistake by the imperial Board of Astronomy in forecasting an eclipse, the Jesuits under Schall were given the task of revising the Chinese calendar to bring it into conformity with the earth's orbit and rotation. As a result of the success of this project, the Jesuits were rewarded with key positions in the Calendrical and Astronomical Bureaus. Both Schall and Verbiest became official court astronomers. Schall was honored, in addition, with the presidency of the Board of Mathematics and the impressive title of Master of Universal Mysteries. These positions were of some importance, given the significance the Chinese attached to dates. Despite the turmoil of the ensuing centuries, the directorship of the Board of Astronomy would remain in the hands of a European priest until 1838. It was from this office that the

Jesuits exerted their considerable leverage on Chinese affairs. Interestingly, the section of the Peking wall that housed Schall's observatory is the only part of the wall that has not been torn down by the Communist government.

Other Jesuit activities included mapmaking, translating, and metalcasting. The works of Galileo and Euclid were rendered into Chinese, and Joannes Terrentius' *Explanation of Wonder Instruments*, a treatise on mechanical engineering, achieved a certain vogue. Later, the Jesuits were to survey the whole of China, producing, in 10 years, the *Complete Atlas of the Empire*, the first map of China to incorporate latitude and longitude. For the Ming dynasty, the Jesuits designed iron cannon to help stem the Manchu tide, overcoming religious scruples by taking the advice of convert Li Chih-tsao:

> If they propose to make warriors of you, make use of the title as the tailor does the needle, which is of no use to him but to pass his thread through; when the stuff is sewn and the garment finished, he leaves it, having no longer occasion for it.

The simile was an appealing one, and we find the Jesuits taking up their needles again, now in the service of the Manchus, who succeeded the Ming emperors in 1644. The Jesuits also served as doctors and ambassadors and wrote on every conceivable subject from algebra to zoology. Verbiest invented a boat and a car powered by steam and published 20 volumes on astronomy. The remarkable convert Hsu Kuang-chi wrote a *Thesaurus on Agriculture* in 60 volumes, most likely with the help of an enormously popular Western invention—eyeglasses.

Under the great Manchu ruler K'ang-hsi, the Jesuit century reached its pinnacle. A masterly, extraordinarily intelligent ruler from adolescence, with a shrewd insight into human behavior, K'ang-hsi would occupy the Dragon Throne for 60 years. He had been tutored by Verbiest, as his father had been tutored by Schall, and he trusted the Jesuits implicitly.

A Grateful Emperor

When the Yellow River overflowed its banks, it was to the Jesuits he turned when it came time to disburse the funds for flood relief, for K'ang-hsi was only too aware of corruption among his own officials. When he fell ill from malaria, he turned to the priests for quinine, the newly discovered drug known in China as Jesuit's bark. It was K'ang-hsi who commissioned the fathers to map his empire, and it was he who appointed Jesuit Ignaz Kogler to the Board of Rites, the first European to hold that key position.

For these and other services, K'ang-hsi was grateful. The work of the Jesuit missionaries culminated in 1692 with his famous Edict of Toleration, which at once removed Christianity from the list of "obnoxious religions" and accorded it "indigenous" status (as had been done with Buddhism many centuries before). The Jesuits profess "no disorderly or disturbing tenets," K'ang-hsi declared, "neither do they allure the people with treacherous doctrines nor provoke disturbances with strange theories." The Edict was followed in 1700 by the Emperor's "Declaration" approving the Jesuit interpretation of the Confucian classics, thereby ratifying the Jesuit position with regard to the Chinese Rites. If the Pope had shown as much tolerance as K'ang-hsi—indeed, if he had simply refrained from "provok-

From Cameron, Barbarians and Mandarins.

The young Emperor K'ang-hsi.

ing disturbances with strange theories"—the Jesuit century might have run longer.

Published in Paris

The role of the Jesuits in China was clearly a pivotal one—that of translating the cultures of East and West, one to the other. This mediating position is perhaps best symbolized by the Treaty of Nerchinsk, which the Jesuits helped to arrange with Russia in 1689. With its official text in Latin, the treaty represents the first accord between China and a European power. Other accomplishments included the introduction of higher mathematics into the Middle Kingdom (Chinese mathematics had declined after the introduction of the abacus in the 13th century) and the technique of perspective drawing. The paintings of Jesuit Giuseppe Castiglione were so highly regarded that they came to be thought of as *Chinese* art treasures, and as such Chiang Kai-shek took them to Taiwan when he fled from the mainland in 1949.

The contribution of the Jesuits in China to European culture was no less spectacular. The missionaries determined, for example, that the Cathay of medieval times was the same as Renaissance China, ending several centuries of fruitless exploration for a land that did not exist. A Latin version of the works of Confucius was published in Paris, and in 1684 Jesuit Philippe Couplet presented to the Pope more than 400 newly translated Chinese works—along with a young Chinese scholar, Michael Shen Fu-tsung. "A little blinking fellow," as King James II of England remembered him, Shen later studied at Oxford and catalogued the Chinese manuscripts in the Bodleian Library.

As European interest in Chinese culture grew, so did the market for *chinoiserie.* Lacquered furniture and glazed procelain became common in the drawing rooms of Western Europe. Oriental stone bridges and pagodas graced the gardens at Kew. More important, Chinese ethics and political philosophy exerted tremendous impact on such Western philosophers as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Leibnitz. To the Europeans, the Jesuits were the first Sinologists; to the Chinese, they were the first Occidentalists.

And yet, beneath these outward signs of amity and accord, an undercurrent of disquiet was running both in China and Europe. On the Chinese side, the conservative elite remained

suspicious of the Jesuits and envious of their influence at court. Yang Kuang-hsien, who for a time replaced the Jesuit Adam Schall on the Board of Astronomy, was typical. In a treatise called *Pu-te-I* [I could not do otherwise], he stated that he "would rather have no good calendar than have foreigners in China," adding "it is exactly because of their excellent instruments and excellent weapons that they are a potential enemy."

Fearful of the literati, with whom the Jesuits were associated, and of such dissident sects as the White Lotus or Red Eyebrows, some conservative Chinese regarded Christianity as similarly subversive. Before K'ang-hsi's Edict of Toleration, persecutions of Catholic converts periodically swept through the provinces, and while they were usually brought to heel by the Emperor's swift intervention—the Jesuits had foreseen such eventualities—they sometimes reached into Peking itself.

At one point, the onetime imperial favorite, Adam Schall, together with some of his Chinese colleagues, was arrested and sentenced to undergo the *ling ch'ih*, a lingering death by slicing. The persecution abated only when, in 1665, on the day of Schall's scheduled execution, a violent earthquake shook Peking. It was interpreted as a sign of cosmic displeasure, and Schall was released. Not until the Tangshan earthquake of 1976 would tremors of such magnitude again shake the region (they were given a similar interpretation by many Chinese).

The Rites Controversy

Less understandable is the European reaction to what the Jesuits were accomplishing in China. Always slow to slough off imperialist designs, many in Europe accused the Jesuits of "selling out" Western superiority, while they attacked the priests for accepting high Chinese office—even when it was clear, as one scholar has noted, that the Jesuits enjoyed the honors but not the emoluments of such positions. With the arrival in China in 1632 of the Franciscan and Dominican mendicant friars, and with the transfer of Chinese missionary work to the authority of the Vicars Apostolic (the Pope's emissaries in China), the most violent phase of the European reaction against Ricci's work commenced.

To understand the ensuing "Chinese Rites" controversy, a brief explanation of the politics of theology is necessary.

Christian Rivalries

During the late 15th century, the competing claims of Portugal and Spain to the fruits of their global explorations threatened to spark a major European conflict. Pope Alexander VI successfully defused the issue in 1493 with his bull *Inter caetera*, which divided the newly discovered lands between the two nations, giving Spain most of the Americas (except Brazil), and Portugal most of the Far East (except the Philippines). The result, for a time, was a virtual Portuguese monopoly on trade and missionary activity in the East.

By the early 17th century, however, it had become clear to the Papacy that the herculean task of converting Cathay and the Indies to Christianity was beyond the resources of tiny Portugal. In 1622, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Propaganda Fide*) was established to coordinate the work of European missionaries abroad. Thus, in China, there appeared the

first challenge to Jesuit hegemony as missionaries from the Church's other orders arrived to spread the faith. The cracks would widen when the Vicars Apostolic of the *Propaganda Fide* took titular control over all missionary operations in China.

To the newly arrived mendicant friars, as well as to some Jansenist-influenced *Propagandist* Vicars, Ricci's accommodating approach to Chinese culture—the so-called Chinese Rites—appeared idolatrous and intolerable. The friars, unaware of Chinese feelings about bare feet, were horrified by paintings depicting Christ and the Apostles wearing shoes. They attacked traditional Chinese observances in honor of Confucius, ancestors, and the recently dead, and charged the Jesuits with failure to preach "Christ the crucified." (The Jesuits, mindful of Chinese aversion to violence, had stressed "Christ the glorified.")

The critics didn't stop there. They condemned Jesuit adoption of Chinese dress and manners, refused to accept the Chinese name for God, and contended that Confucius was in hell. (Friar Domingo Navarrete proved this with a syllogism: All infidels are in hell. Confucius was an infidel. Therefore Confucius is in hell.) Finally, when the Jesuits refused to abandon their Chinese Rites, they were accused of disobedience, and after K'ang-hsi's Declaration approving the Rites, of having "appealed to Caesar" for rulings on matters better left to God.

The attitude of the newcomers threatened to undermine the work of a century, and the Jesuits fought back hard. They had studied China for many lifetimes, they argued, and looked upon the Chinese Rites as tokens of respect, not homage to false gods. Cultural accomodation, they added, had made it possible for intellectuals and high-ranking officials to embrace the faith, for among the upper classes Confucian observances were as much a matter of good citizenship as of religion. Abandoning the Rites, they concluded, would force such higher-ups—the backbone of the Chinese Church—from the faith. It should be noted that the Jesuits themselves drew the line on some of the Rites (certain burial practices, for example, were forbidden), but they never tried to force their positions on others. The Jesuit attitude was best expressed by a contemporary who wrote: "There is danger [to orthodoxy] in admitting the Rites, but a greater danger in suppressing them."

An Uneasy Peace

The infighting among the competing missionaries quickly grew more virulent, and when the friars in 1645 submitted the dispute to Rome, the *Propaganda Fide* issued a decree condemning the Rites. The Jesuits immediately appealed, and in 1651, after apprising the *Propaganda* of no less than 42 distortions in the friars' petition, won a decree permitting the Rites. No attempt was made to reconcile the contradictory pronouncements, and for a time an uneasy peace reigned. Unknown to the Jesuits, however, the friars and the Vicars Apostolic continued to press their case in Rome, to which end the Vicar of Fukien had engaged the crafty papal lobbyist Charmot.

The Jesuits were lulled by a false sense of security. When they finally defended themselves in several lengthy written arguments to the Vatican, among them, the famous *Peking Xylograph*, it was too late. For the Pope had decided in 1701 to send a legate to China to settle the matter.

From Cameron, Barbarians and Mandarins.

"The Westerners are small indeed," wrote an older, embittered K'ang-hsi.

His choice for the mission was a French bishop, Charles Thomas Maillard de Tournon.

The End of the Affair

De Tournon arrived in China in 1704, scarcely a decade after the Edict of Toleration and only four years after K'ang-hsi's Declaration in favor of the Chinese Rites. In a few weeks, however, he was well on his way to undoing a century's work. A young man of 34 (the Pope had not considered the Chinese respect for age) who lacked diplomatic experience, a man of nervous temperament and Jansenist tendencies who made up in strong opinions what he lacked in tact, de Tournon was an unhappy choice for such a mission. He was received politely by the Jesuits, but his arrival spelled disaster.

The Jesuits had prepared materials for de Tournon to help him make an equitable decision on the Rites controversy. What they did not know was that he had come not as an arbiter but as a promulgator of a papal decree. Unfortunately, the decree had not yet been published, and de Tournon did not know its contents. Nevertheless, in Nanking in 1707, after the Emperor had enjoined him from discussing the subject, de Tournon issued his own decree—a condemnation of the Chinese Rites. The Pope was forced to uphold his legate.

Angered at the insult, K'ang-hsi expelled the Frenchman from China. "Reading this proclamation," he declared, "I have concluded that the Westerners are small indeed. . . . It seems their religion is no different from other small, bigoted sects of Buddhism or Taoism." In the wake of the legate's departure, the whole structure of accommodation between China and the West collapsed.

The Jesuit century had ended. Although the Jesuits would remain for many years in China as technicians, painters, architects, and musicians, they had lost both their capacity to act as protectors of provincial missions and their influence as a link between East and West. When the Edict of Toleration was effectively revoked in 1707, the missionaries in China again experienced severe persecution—now without imperial protection. And as the Jesuits suffered at the hands of the Chinese, they suffered too at the hands of the popes, who in 1715 and 1742 reiterated the ban on the Chinese Rites and in 1773 suppressed the Society of Jesus altogether. The sentiments of the last survivors may be gathered from the words of the French Jesuit Amiot, who, after surveying the ruin of his order and the destruction of the China mission, left this epitaph:

Go away traveler,
congratulate the dead,
condole the living, pray for all,
marvel, and be silent.

POSTSCRIPT

There have been five major periods of contact between China and the West in recorded history. Through Scythian and Persian intermediaries, Greeks and Romans carried on commerce with the Chinese, though the relationship never rose above bargaining over prices for Chinese silk. Later, in the 7th century A.D., dissident Christian groups settled in the Middle Kingdom, but this movement too came to an end as the Crescent of Islam divided East and West. During the Middle Ages, the nations of Europe sought to engage the Mongols in an alliance against the Moslem infidel. Embassies moved back and forth (Mongol missions appeared in Rome in 1248 and later in England), but fear of Mongol expansion eventually overcame the desire for joint action. Then in the 16th and 17th centuries, Catholic priests, led by the Jesuits, followed Portuguese traders to the East, and for more than a century maintained close links with the imperial court at Peking. Finally, beginning with the Opium Wars in 1839, European powers gained a foothold in China that lasted until a new period of official isolation began in 1949 with the victory of Mao Tse-tung.

Of these five contacts, only one—the "Jesuit century"—represented a serious Western attempt to engage the Chinese as equals. In the 16th century, the doors of self-imposed cultural isolation were opened a little by Ricci's method of cultural accommodation, but it took a century and a decade more to throw them wide open. That this congenial exchange lasted, at its height, only a few short years enhances, rather than diminishes, its importance. The experience shows that, while mutual accommodation is possible, it is also very difficult.

The century of "unequal treaties" that ended in 1949 left China exploited, humiliated, unstudied—and groaning under an inferiority complex (how else can one explain, as Simon Leys has noted, the solemn mobilization of 800 million people to denounce a "puny charlatan" like filmmaker Antonio Antonioni?). Today, almost three decades later, foreign tourist groups and official visitors are permitted to "bring tribute" or take guided tours, but the immense and varied universe of China remains as mysterious and isolated as it was during the Ming dynasty.

Is there a possibility of reaching a new accommodation today? If so, how long will it take? I cannot answer these questions, but if there is any lesson to be learned from the Jesuit accomplishment of four centuries ago, it is that nothing will be achieved until Westerners accept the Chinese as cultural equals.