

As Haefeli acknowledges, there is nevertheless “certainly more work to be done” (297). In particular, his claim (5) that he is bringing together “disparate and widely scattered” work on anti-Catholicism and anti-popery needs to be qualified by the recognition that, with only two exceptions, the contributors are all based at institutions in the United States. This assemblage of work primarily by American scholars should therefore be read alongside another collection of essays edited by Claire Gheeraert-Graffeuille and Géraldine Vaughan, *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland 1600–2000: Practices, Representations and Ideas* (2020), which includes studies by British and French researchers. As Haefeli and his collaborators so effectively demonstrate, anti-Catholicism has been a transatlantic movement, and further advances in understanding it are likely to be facilitated by transatlantic collaboration among historians.

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HENRIETTA HARRISON. *The Perils of Interpreting: The Extraordinary Lives of Two Translators between Qing China and the British Empire*. Princeton University Press, 2021, Pp. 312. \$32.00 (cloth).  
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It is well documented in the discipline of translation studies that translation and interpretation are perilous occupations that translators and interpreters across time and place must navigate, especially when working on rendering one language into another in the midst of an international conflict. The dangers arose from the fact that word choices and modes of rendering could make drastic differences to actual events and the fact that, as go-betweens, interpreters risked being scapegoated for difficulties inherent in such fraught encounters. Henrietta Harrison's *The Perils of Interpreting: The Extraordinary Lives of Two Translators between Qing China and the British Empire* documents how two translators one Chinese, Li Zibiao, and the other British, George Thomas Staunton, risked their lives in dealing with the government of Qing China. Their paths became intertwined during the Macartney Embassy, a British diplomatic mission to China in 1793. Although informed by Harrison's formidable scholarship, the narrative style aims at the nonspecialist. The work provides an extensive exploration of late-eighteenth and early nineteenth-century encounters between China and Britain (in effect, between China and the West). These early encounters set a pattern of interactions that entailed enormous consequences for the events in the following one and half centuries.

Staunton's life and work are well known to researchers of Chinese history, not just for his childhood fame, but also for his works of translation. The son of an Irish colonial administrator who found his career in the British empire working in the British West Indies and British India, Staunton was groomed by his father to be a diplomat. He was expected to be useful to the empire and to exceed his father's achievements. Educated at home by a small group of knowledgeable private tutors, he learned Latin, Greek, and other classical subjects. His training also involved visits to northern Britain, where the industrial revolution was transforming both nation and empire. He viewed newly dug transportation canals and visited a factory that made pins. The father and son dined with illustrious figures of the industrial revolution, including Matthew Boulton and James Watt. This aristocratic and idiosyncratic education prepared him for his first moment in the sun. At age twelve, he accompanied the Macartney Embassy of 1793 to the Qing court. Officially he acted as page, while his father acted as the mission's secretary. Staunton learned Chinese onboard the ship heading to China, and thus he was able to speak a few words of Chinese to the Qianlong emperor after receiving a yellow silk purse from

his hand. Through his father's connections to the British establishment, Staunton subsequently entered the lucrative Canton trade as a banker and translator and interpreter working for the East India Company. With the fortune he made in the Canton trade, he then returned to England and established the Leigh estate and became a member of parliament. However, Staunton never felt at ease with the British ruling class even though he was groomed for the role both by education and experience.


Li Zibiao also experienced a similar career-defining encounter with an alien culture at a young age. Born into a Chinese Catholic family in the northern frontier town Liangzhou, between China proper and Inner Mongolia, Li, at the age of eleven, had the extraordinary chance of being sent to Naples, Italy, to be trained as a priest. At the time, the Qing government prohibited both Christianity and travel to the West, and Li's perilous adventures contrasted sharply with Staunton's relative life of comfort and reflected the different natures of the two empires. In Naples, Li learned Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He excelled at his missionary training and was a model student much liked by his peers. Li's path crossed Staunton's when he became an interpreter for the Macartney Embassy. He was not directly responsible for teaching Chinese to Staunton, but they became friends on the long sea journey. When they reached China, Li played a major role in the interpretation for the embassy in their dealing with Qianlong's courtiers and with the emperor himself. Li did a brilliant job. Yet it was not his linguistic talent, his good manners, and endearing personality that determined his life thereafter, but his Christian faith. Li turned down offers to go to England, where, with his talent and connections to the embassy, a glorious career would have awaited. Instead, he wholeheartedly accepted the church's arrangement of a priesthood in the remote mountains of central China, shepherding, in secret, God's flock of Chinese converts, continuing a life of perilous interaction between his Western faith and Chinese community. The saint-like Li was again well loved and respected by this community that protected him from the persecution of the Qing state that flared up every now and then, till a natural death claimed him.

Harrison's valuable contribution to the field arrives through her thorough archival research, which surpasses that of any previous works on these two important and extraordinary figures of Sino-Western interactions. In examining Staunton's life, Harrison used not just the well-known collections of records left by the East India Company and the Qing government, but also Staunton's personal papers, including his bank accounts, and contemporary letters and diaries. The archival collections in Rome and Naples provided Harrison with extensive details on Li's life. In her examination of Li, Harrison excavates a figure who heretofore had been known only vaguely in China and the West as an interpreter and a Christian.

Through her extensive archival work and a dual-biographical approach, Harrison provides a reimagining of the Sino-British historical encounter. While China was often depicted in historical accounts as a country ignorant of the West, Harrison argues that Western knowledge had in fact made its way into certain Chinese circles, but remained patchy to decision-makers, such as the emperor and his ministers. The manipulation of information was a hallmark of the Qing's political system, and both Li and Staunton as interpreters, knowingly or unknowingly, entered into this dangerous world of political maneuvering and knowledge control, playing their part of knowledge transmitting in both directions.

Harrison's treatment of Qing China is nuanced and contextualized. The Canton Hong merchant's purchase of official titles for elevating their social standing, for instance, is likened to the fact that Staunton used his China fortune to buy a seat representing a rotten borough in parliament. The usual historical treatment would have colored Hong merchants' use of wealth to gain power with a myopic moral opprobrium to illustrate differences between East and West. Harrison's sympathetic reading of the cross-cultural context and her knowledge of classical Chinese mark her apart from Western scholarship that is still overshadowed by the two colonial/imperial systems of knowledge of a bygone era. By comparing and contrasting the lives of the two interpreters, *The Perils of Interpreting* provides an informed understanding on the

history of Sino-Western interactions and the world of the British and Chinese empires and would be a good read for historians and general readers alike.

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KATHERINE HARVEY. *The Fires of Lust: Sex in the Middle Ages*. London: Reaktion Books, 2021. Pp. 320. \$27.50 (cloth).  
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In her provocatively titled book, *The Fires of Lust: Sex in the Middle Ages*, Katherine Harvey sets out to challenge stereotypes and explode myths about sex and sexuality in the Middle Ages. She does this admirably, conveying the richness, complexity, and diversity of medieval ideas and medieval people's sexual behaviors. She focuses on western Europe from 1150 to 1500, a period considered quintessentially medieval, a time when many beliefs, values, and ideas coalesced, especially those of the church. While Christian morality pervaded most of medieval Europe, the beliefs and experiences of others—Jews, Muslims, and heretics—add richness to the discussion. Harvey utilizes a wide body of legal, theological, and medical sources contextualized by a prodigious array of case studies that bring medieval people to life and demonstrate how theory worked (or did not) in practice.

Harvey begins by establishing the regulations and values that governed courtship and marriage. These might involve mutual attraction between a man and woman but were just as likely to require parental consent and adherence to a variety of ecclesiastical and secular requirements. Examples of courtship gone wrong, the consequences of premarital sex, and discussions of love magic bring immediacy to proscriptive texts.

In chapter 2, "Sex in Marriage," Harvey focuses on the centrality of consummation and conjugal sex. Harvey disentangles the thorny debates about whether an indissoluble marriage was formed by a couple's consent or sexual consummation of the union. This opens the way for attention to impediments such as impotence and frigidity, which might lead to the annulment of a marriage. The doctrine of the conjugal debt, which admonished both husband and wife to grant sexual access to their spouse whenever it was requested, reinforced the centrality of marital sex. While theoretically reciprocal, this doctrine weighed more heavily on wives given the gendered power relationships in marriage. Consequently, wives were vulnerable to coercion and sexual violence and unwanted or dangerous pregnancies. Thus, while sex in marriage was the only licit form of sexual activity, it was not without its challenges.

The normal and expected outcome of marriage was procreation, the topic of chapter 3. Harvey organizes her discussion under four major themes: conception, infertility, contraception, and abortion. Ecclesiastical and medical authorities considered the sexual pleasure of both partners to be essential for conception. Treatments to enhance sexual pleasure, to address infertility, contraception, and abortion all tended to rely on folk remedies and potions. While contraception and abortion were unlawful and considered immoral, some writers recognized it might also be the only recourse of those too poor to support additional children. Hence, punishments were generally lenient, except when physical assaults, such as hitting a woman's stomach, deliberately aimed to induce a miscarriage. While all these situations were inherently private to a couple's relationship, Harvey provides evidence to demonstrate how these issues were treated in daily life. Other topics such as prostitution (chapter 9) and sexual violence (chapter 10) receive similar deft and empathetic analysis.