

not Canton (p. 7); Chen Rui never received an order in 1582 to expel the Portuguese from Macao (p. 38); Philip II did not dismiss Alonso Sanchez's planned invasion of China as a 'crackpot scheme', but referred it to a committee, as the edition by Colin (not the English translation used by Laven) clearly states (p. 65); in Nanjing, Ricci was let down not by 'a certain Zhu', but by Xu Dayin (p. 110); Laria was Ricci's grandmother, not aunt (p. 118); Ricci did not obtain permission to enter Beijing 'because certain literati there hoped that he would be able to correct the Chinese calendar'—that applied only to a later generation of Jesuits (p. 130); there is no evidence that the Chinese were entranced by the Jesuits' height—we do not know their stature (p. 140); Wang Zhongming did not go to Beijing to become Minister of Rites—he was Minister of Rites in the southern capital of Nanjing (p. 165); when the missionaries condemned homosexuality in Ming China, they reflected the harsher mores of the Counter-Reformation, while things were quite different in early sixteenth-century Italy, when homosexuality became the byword for popery in the polemic of German Protestants (p. 181); Ricci never 'produced a full Latin translation of the Confucian Canon, the *Four Books*'—only three were ever published by the Jesuits (p. 200).

In evaluating Ricci, Laven seems to agree with the judgement of the French Sinologist Jacques Gernet, who accused the Jesuits of deliberate misrepresentation of Christianity. One of his central arguments is that Ricci's *Tianzhu shiyi* (in genre a *doctrina*, not a catechism, as Laven asserts) does not mention the crucifixion. Only a catechism would contain a full list of the articles of faith and sacraments of the Catholic Church, and there were plenty of examples in the Chinese publications of the Jesuits in the generation after Ricci.

A final word on the jacket of this intelligent and often engaging, albeit flawed, book is in order. Designed by the publisher (and imposed on the author?), it shows Ricci and a mandarin in dialogue, with a seated Chinese scribe amidst a faux Orientalist background worthy of Zeffirelli's stage for Turandot. Holding his brush the wrong way (in the manner of a quill), the scribe writes out random Chinese characters in nonsensical sentences. This serious work of scholarship deserves better.

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*Wallenstein: The Enigma of the Thirty Years War*, by Geoff Mortimer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; pp. 277. £65; pb. £20.99).

In this new biography of Albrecht Wenzel Eusebius von Wallenstein, Geoff Mortimer offers an apologetic, if not openly laudatory, image of the (in)famous Imperial generalissimo. In his opinion, Wallenstein is the victim of competing legends concerning his headstrong and irrational character. Mortimer offers a thorough contextualisation to cut through the successive layers of myth and probe the core of his apparently enigmatic character. Ultimately, Wallenstein emerges very much as a person of his times.

Mortimer's largest assertion concerns the formative influence of Johann Christian Friedrich Schiller's dramatic 'Wallenstein' trilogy, which has done more to cloud issues than any other literary work. Here, Mortimer might have

gone even further: as a converted Catholic, Wallenstein offered *Sturm und Drang* romantics yet another target in their hunt to create a master narrative focused on Luther and Protestantism as the precursors of German nationalism. In the fight against foreign tyranny, Austrian Habsburgs and Italian papism recur as regular bogeymen. An image of Wallenstein as a greedy, land-grabbing, power-mongering intriguer surely favours a Borussian interpretation of history. Mortimer debunks this myth by exposing Wallenstein as little more than an archetypically ambitious, if rather more astute, aristocratic social climber of his age.

It is well known, for example, that Wallenstein employed a prominent astrologist—Johannes Kepler, no less—to cast his horoscope. As Mortimer notes, this consultation provided the dramatist Schiller and subsequent biographers (e.g. Watson, Mann and Diwald) with an illustration of the general's irrationality and credulity. Still, Prague had long been a centre of aristocratic occultism, and the court of Rudolf I attracted individuals such as John Dee, Tycho Brahe and Edward Kelly. Mortimer further demonstrates, from correspondence and other sources, that Wallenstein's devotion to astrology remained highly characteristic and most selective.

Detractors also cite Wallenstein's involvement in currency debasement as indicative of base greed. However, as a partner in a private consortium operating with Imperial sanction, his participation in the ubiquitous farming-out of public finances was hardly unique. Certainly, such activities contributed to the disastrous Kipper-and-Wipper inflation, but once again Mortimer contextualises Wallenstein's policy within the struggle to finance the Thirty Years War. His activities on behalf of the Emperor were conducted with diligence, albeit profitably, but he can hardly be held accountable for single-handedly causing the inflation. Instead, Wallenstein merely employed practices already in place elsewhere to pay for military campaigns. As in the case of our current banking crisis, the causes of the great inflation were complex and largely systemic, so that holding Wallenstein alone responsible would be the equivalent of heaping blame for our current economic malaise on one particular investment firm.

Mortimer is equally adroit at dispelling accusations against Wallenstein as a land-grabber and a conniving military strategist who dealt harshly with his troops. If his marriage arrangements evidence calculation, his relationship to his second wife also exhibited genuine signs of affection. If he enlarged his estates, then his dynastic aspirations were typical of the age. As for his generalship, his hesitations and strategic assessments exhibited consummate understanding of military exigencies. Mortimer documents his popularity among his troops and, in the end, we are left in no doubt that Wallenstein was loyal and no more self-aggrandising than other contemporaries. What distinguished him was a spirit of industry at a time when many nobles lacked that quality and, indeed, he proved progressive in his organisational abilities, financial acumen and keen eye for dynastic advancement.

Overall, Mortimer presents us with a flowing narrative which is generally pleasant to read. It weaves social and cultural history together with more traditional military and political threads; for those who enjoy precise tactical reconstitutions—replete with maps of troop movements—this book delivers. Subtle analytical comparisons are introduced without damage to the narrative integrity or obtuse theoretical jargon. The result is a biography which is both

a useful contribution to scholarly debate on this 'riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma', and inviting prose with appeal to a wider audience.

As is often the case in biography, Mortimer associates himself closely with his subject. At times, he seems to plead the case of the deceased, not present to defend his reputation. Some might condemn this approach, or at least find it unconvincing. However, without Mortimer's genuine passion, the book would surely be less readable. Much to his credit, Mortimer takes an unequivocal stance and provides us with a sober myth-busting portrait of the generalissimo—one which nevertheless remains anything but endearing. Wallenstein might not have been 'a really nice chap', but this book is a compelling read.

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*Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England*, by Achsah Guibbory (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2010; pp. 328. £60).

In 1646, in the midst of the upheavals of the English Revolution, the fiery Presbyterian minister Stephen Marshall told the House of Commons that 'our times are times of Deliverances, the greatest deliverances that I thinke the Lord hath wrought, since he brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*'. Marshall was doing what many preachers of fast sermons addressed to Parliament did during these years of national trial, reform, and experimentation: applying the biblical history of Israel to the difficulties, challenges, and opportunities facing England during a period of acute turmoil, and thereby forging a strong connection between present-day England and ancient Israel. In this book, Achsah Guibbory takes a fresh look at widespread appeals to the Hebrew Bible and biblical history in seventeenth-century culture and literature. And she poses a larger question: what do the manifold uses of the Hebrew Bible and its historical narratives tell us about the complexities of Christian identity in seventeenth-century England?

Guibbory's study offers a rich, original, and well-researched account of the Hebrew Bible and the history of the biblical Jews as they were interpreted in seventeenth-century England. Her book is especially welcome because it complicates reductive and polarising dichotomies in relation to seventeenth-century culture and literature: for example, between 'philo'- and 'anti'-Judaic narratives; or between Christianity and Jews. The Jews are thus much more than simply the 'Other' in early modern England. Guibbory illuminates complex views of Jews and biblical Jewish history in the wake of the Reformation. In a period when 'the nature of English Protestant identity' continued to be 'unstable and sharply contested' (p. 7), Guibbory persuasively argues that English interpretations and uses of biblical Jewish history were ambivalent and complex—and by no means altogether negative. This book shows especially well the ways in which Reformation writers and theologians (starting with Calvin) encouraged a strong identification with the history of Israel. That identification with Israel had a very wide political and religious appeal: it was used by godly and radical Puritans who wanted to reproach England for backsliding; yet it was also exploited by the monarchy (for instance, by James I) and the Church to construct the nation.