

English summaries

Rites, Space and Finance

The Reshaping of Sovereignty in 11th-Century China

C. LAMOUROUX

After the peace of Chanyuan (1005), the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) had to deal with the problem of rebuilding the unity of the Chinese Empire in spite of his military weakness and the very strong economic autonomy of the various regions. Given that historical context, the "Heavenly Text" affair (1008), involving both ritual practices and financial reforms, can be interpreted as a major political shift. Through the study of the program and the activities of the so-called "Five devils" clique who forged the affair, it is possible to shed light on the making of a new territory. Thanks to the three imperial sacrifices made in prestigious places, the emperor Song Zhenzong and Kaifeng, his capital city, became the center of a holy world where the transfer of goods and money was regulated by the Imperial Treasure. The reshaping of the financial structures made possible the commitment of the State in the development of an empire-wide economy, which is one of the main features of the Song dynasty.

The Carolingian Monarchy and Ancient Irish Models

M.-E. MOORE

Carolingian political culture was grounded in the successor kingdoms north of the ancient Mediterranean world. Carolingian bishops were profoundly affected by Visigothic, Irish, and English authors. The conceptualization of the Carolingian Empire as a sacred structure has been attributed to the influence of St. Augustine, while the religious aura of the Frankish kings has been traced to sacral Germanic kingship. The Carolingian Empire is also described as an attempt to revive the Roman Empire. These explanations are problematized by the importance of ancient Irish models of kingship in the sociological thought of Carolingian bishops, and by the absence of references to Augustine or to the Idea of Rome. These bishops found in Irish writings a description of kingship which was compatible with the new social model which they were developing, in which Christian king and Christian bishop jointly ruled the People of God.

Currency and Royal Majesty in 14th Century France

S. PIRON

Modern currency is by definition national currency. In the case of France, the process of constructing a monetary territorial unit begins at the end of the 12th century and undergoes a period of strong affirmation under the reign of Philippe IV. By the middle of the 14th century, the notion of royal majesty subsequently facilitates the

*enunciation of the king's full sovereignty over monetary matters, by justifying the practice of mutations. It is precisely against this vision that the *Traité des monnaies* by Nicolas Oresme (1355) is written. In 1360, with the return of monetary stability, the notion of majesty, linked to the necessity of a strong currency, aims at consolidating the domination of royal currencies in the country. It is only in the 15th century, once the institution has reached maturity, that more economic preoccupations appear.*

***The Variation of Contexts in the Field of Social Sciences.
Epistemological Remarks***

B. LAHIRE

In the field of social sciences, the notion of "context" is both one of the vaguest notion and one of the more useful. Vague, because the way contexts are framed and their theoretical status are often implicit and very variable from one research to an other. Useful and central, because social sciences are based on a contextual reasoning empirically founded. Interpretation in the field of social sciences assumes to pass on from the abstract evocation or invocation of the "social or historical context" to the description of limited and relatively singular contexts. In front of the various scientific uses of this notion, searchers are tempted to separate the "good" definitions of context from the "bad" ones, the "relevant" scales of context from the "irrelevant" ones. However, if we are conscious of the constructed scientific nature of all "social or historical contexts", we may discover the specific knowledge effects adapted to each construction's mode of contexts. Each scale of context squares with specific social complexity order and the different authors of sociological or historical studies do not talk about the same social and historical reality. From one research to another, the searcher may try to vary experimentally the aperture of his lens, to combine different methodological languages, and may attempt each time to delimit the field of pertinence of his interpretations depending on the choice of the point of view, the observation's methods and the scale of context.

***Monachism and the Circulation of Faith
in Moscovite Russia (14th-16th Century)***

P. GONNEAU

The period between 1360 and 1600 witnesses the constitution of a national Russian State and a national Russian Church, the growth of a national "Russian Idea", firmly based upon the orthodox faith. The main vehicle of this faith, first embodying the local self-awareness of the various "Russian lands", then serving as a bridge over these local identities, is the rural cenobitic monasticism which St. Sergius of Radonezh († 1392) brings back to life in North-Eastern Russia during the second half of the xivth century. From then on, monastic economic presence is as strong in Russia as in Western Europe during the "golden age" of Cluny and Cîteaux (x-xiith c.) and the monk becomes the central figure of Russian holiness. Furthermore, during the xvth century, some big monasteries, such as the Trinity, the main foundation of Sergius, get to command a nationwide devotion. In times of peace, this piety drives crowds of pilgrims, including the grand-prince of Moscow, soon to become tsar; in times of national peril, it gives an anchor to the Russian identity, it develops a first form of Russian patriotism.

***Jewish Literature in the Yiddish Language (xvith-xviiith centuries) :
Religious Crisis, vernacular Culture and propagation of the Faith.***

J. BAUMGARTEN

The circulation within Jewish society of the tradition of Modern Times has essentially been studied using printed texts which circulated among the intelligentsia. The question of the propagation of the Jewish faith among the "ignorant" remains less known. Yiddish literature, distributed from the xvith century onward within the Central and Eastern European communities remains a privileged vantage point from which to understand how the essence of Judaism was transmitted to the semi-literate. The Yiddish book will be used as a palliative to Hebrew culture and as a tool for the propagation of the basic tenets of the holy tradition. Ancient Yiddish literature allows us to pinpoint numerous traces of practices of oral transmission and to understand the dynamic relationship between orality and scripture particular to Jewish culture.