

New Book

Han-Mongol Encounters and Missionary Endeavors: A History of Scheut in Ordos (Hetao) 1874-1911

By Patrick Taveirne

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(This book will soon be available at Catholic Centre, Hong Kong.)

This book traces the history of the Belgian Scheut mission within the ecological, geopolitical, socio-economic and ethno cultural context of the Mongol-Han borderlands during the height of European Colonialism and the collapse of the Qing dynasty. The main subjects of this study are over 100 Roman Catholic missionaries from the Low Countries (Holland and Belgium) who worked in the Southwest Mongolia apostolic vicariate. The vicariate constitutes the geographical boundaries of the study. The timeframe extends from the origins of the mission in 1874 until the end of the Qing dynasty in 1912.

The study describes the origins of the Southwest Mongolia vicariate beyond the Great Wall and along the Yellow River Bend during the transition period from Lazarist missionary activities in the 1840s up to the endeavors of the Scheutists in the early 1870s. The author outlines the historical development of the Ordos Mongols and Christian missions within their respective Qing imperial and European national contexts. The text deals not only with the European background, the double ecclesiastical and religious organization of the mission, but also with the relations between domestic and overseas mission fields, and the missionary motives within the late Qing socio-economic context, and the life of localized Catholic communities. These are described within the ethno cultural context of the Han-Mongol mixed-living area of the Ordos, and as seen mainly through the eyes of the missionaries. The study addresses the desertification of the Ordos steppes, as well as the aftermath and impact of the popular Boxer Movement in Inner Mongolia on the development of the Scheut mission and the local church.