

Finally, in a brief postscript Swen reminds the reader of the importance of coincidences and urges us to take into account Kangxi's interests and Yongzheng's "embrace of Buddhism"; those two individual tastes, in combination with the Manchu master-slave relationship, made for a mercurial path of Jesuit success during the early modern period.

Frederik Vermote  
California State University, Monterey Bay  
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***Jewish Christians in Puritan England.* By Aidan Cottrell-Boyce.**  
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paper.

What might possess a loosely affiliated group of devout Christians to sever their ties to the English church and eschew a range of traditional Protestant practices in order to undergo adult circumcision, adopt kosher dietary laws, and implement Saturday Sabbatarianism? Puritans who embraced Jewish teachings and ceremonies were hardly numerous in seventeenth-century England, but they generated significant controversy in their own time and left enough of a record of their existence to merit attention in ours. Aidan Cottrell-Boyce's exploration of Puritan-era English Judaizers argues that these men (and a handful of women) chose to act as they did because they wanted to draw sharp distinctions between themselves and their contemporaries. In their zeal to lead holier lives, they fixed on the adoption of Jewish practices as tools for separating themselves from "the ungodly." Because Jewishness was *the* marker of difference and alienation in early modern England, Cottrell-Boyce contends, Puritans who wished to gain stature as extreme practitioners of their predestinarian faith gravitated toward Jewish examples of devoutness. They actively sought to become targets of contempt and hatred, and mimicking the practices of Jews (or, as was often the case, aligning themselves in accordance with the Judaism that animated their imaginations) was their most efficient method for achieving that goal.

Cottrell-Boyce is not the first historian of Puritanism to document the history of England's Jewish Christians, but his book is the most sustained, comprehensive, and argument-driven treatment of the subject to date, and, as such, it makes a genuine contribution. As he reviews the history of somewhat well-known figures such as Hamlet Jackson, John Traske, and Thomas Totney, as well as several lesser-known Puritan Judaizers, Cottrell-Boyce pays requisite attention to existing historiography. His book recognizes the work of Puritan historians ranging from Christopher Hill to Keith Sprunger to Theodore Bozeman, as well as the contributions of Anglo-Jewish historians Cecil Roth, Richard Popkin, Todd Endelman, and David Katz. *Jewish Christians in Puritan England* attends properly to familiar subjects like Puritan biblicism, Hebraicism, and, of course, the sectarian strife that existed among the various Protestant denominations who came to be known for their extreme fervor. Likewise, Cottrell-Boyce is versant with the circumstances that led to and shaped the Jews' return to England during the Cromwell era, including the influence of Menasseh Ben-Israel. While several generations of scholars have explored the phenomenon of Jewish

Christianity in the course of their wider studies of the era's religious tumult, Cottrell-Boyce is the first to center his full attention on the subject and to offer a coherent argument as to what it meant and why it mattered.

To begin, he notes that the tendencies of otherwise thoroughgoing Christians to align themselves with Judaic practices cannot be explained, encompassed, or described as out-and-out philo-Semitism. Some Puritan Judaizers did, indeed, admire actual Jews, but their motivations for embracing Jewish practice had little or nothing to do with any desire on their part to promote Judaism itself, let alone the Jewish people, as worthy of widespread sympathy, much less worldly empowerment. As often as not, Puritan Judaizers' sense of who and what Jews were was the product not of philo-Semitic thinking on their part but, in fact, their susceptibility to and willing embrace of *anti-Semitic* stereotypes. Not surprisingly, even Judaic-leaning Puritans accepted certain notions at face value, including the idea that Jews were a "stiff necked people," bore an eternal curse, and were destined for a bleak future.

Instead of settling for the rather obvious consensus view that historians have been touting since at least the early decades of the twentieth century, which is that Puritans, and maybe even Protestants in general, bore a profoundly "ambivalent" relationship to Jews and Judaism, Cottrell-Boyce argues in favor of a more salient framework for considering the phenomenon of Jewish Christianity. "Allosemitism," which is the term that he favors, was uniquely fitted to the context of the Puritan era's religious disputation. It was a definitionally oppositional viewpoint. As Cottrell-Boyce puts it in the concluding section of his study, "The Godly—to a certain degree—needed to be hated by the world" (242). Since Jews were Christendom's most hated outsiders, it stood to reason that to be most expedient way to attract the world's ire, or at least the ire of the "ungodly," would have involved taking on the qualities of Jews.

The most noticeable absence in Cottrell-Boyce's study, as well in the actual lives of England's seventeenth-century Christian Judaizers, is Jewishness itself. While certain among his cast of characters made occasional contact with Jewish correspondents and even interacted with Jews (mostly in Amsterdam, as London's identifiably Jewish population numbered less than 100 in the early to middle decades of the seventeenth century), Judaism was more of an *idea* to Puritans than it ever was any kind of actuality. With a handful of exceptions, Puritan Judaizers were indifferent to the existence of flesh-and-blood Jews and evinced little interest in joining them in worship or becoming part of their communities. Had they done so, however, they would most certainly have ceased to exercise any impact on the people they were most eager to impress and offend—their fellow Puritans.

*Jewish Christians in Puritan England* is as comprehensive a study of its subject matter as readers can ever hope for. It does not engage the increasingly transatlantic context within which seventeenth-century Puritans *and* Jews remade their worlds. Developments in the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities of northwestern Europe and the Americas also escape the attention of the author. Those points being made, its clear-eyed and insightful treatment of the Puritan context makes up for those omissions. Two thousand years of history tell us that people's fantasies about Jews are greater shapers of world history than actualities ever will be.

Michael Hoberman  
Fitchburg State University  
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