

secondary literature. It will long retain its place as an innovative contribution to our understanding of early modern Japanese society.

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Roaming into the Beyond: Representations of Xian Immortality in Early Medieval Chinese Verse. By ZORNICA KIRKOVA. Sinica Leidensia, vol. 129. Leiden: BRILL, 2016. Pp. x + 420. €150, \$125.

This long-awaited monograph on early medieval Daoist poetry brings visibility to a relatively new field in which numerous aspects have so far remained almost virgin territory. These aspects include genres, prosody, themes, thoughts, rituals, and art history, which always yield freshness when studied from interdisciplinary perspectives. Focusing on the important topic of *xian*, “immortality” or “immortal,” as the author translates, the monograph succeeds in identifying works that fit into this “genre” and in exploring new research avenues. Undaunted by the challenging task to be proficient in both literature and religious studies, the author shows her mettle through a broad consultation of sources and a thorough panorama of the two disciplines, despite the limited use of religious texts mainly from the Shangqing tradition that she considers most pertinent to her reading of the poems selected for analysis.

This first book on early medieval Chinese verse on “*xian* immortality” outlines a comprehensive picture of the genre’s development through the careful design of its chapters. Since the rendering of the term *xian* as “immortal” or “immortality” throughout the book is problematic, as the author herself admits and addresses (pp. 11–12, 148), one should be cautious when encountering these translations and use one’s own judgment of what the Chinese term actually connotes in various contexts. The book, comprised of six substantial chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion, aims to present a complete history of poetry on “roaming into immortality” (*youxian shi*, p. 12). The main chapters are entitled: “Religious and Literary Background,” “The Dramatis Personae,” “A Phenomenology of Immortals,” “The World of the Immortals,” “The Way to Immortality,” and “Immortality in the Context of the Human World.” An appendix lists “Extant Classical and Early Medieval Verse Treating the Theme of Immortality,” followed by a bibliography and an index.

While the structure of the book may at first sight appear to be reasonable, the thematic division indicated by the chapter titles does not achieve the clarity they announce. The first two chapters do indeed do justice to their titles, but upon reaching chapters three to six, the reader frequently finds repeated and overlapping materials and ideas; as the chapter titles suggest, it is inevitable that the same or similar issues will be touched upon when the same materials are covered according to organizing principles that do not differ much from one another. There certainly is room for structural improvement. A more efficient presentation of ideas and arguments would enhance the persuasiveness and readability of the author’s findings. For example, comments on the works of Guo Pu, Sun Chuo, Xiao Yan, Shen Yue, and Yu Xin are scattered in a number of places such that the arguments are then inevitably presented in a fragmentary manner, despite the frequent cross-references. In addition, the ambitious attempt to outline the whole eight hundred years of *youxian* poetic history results in a survey of works from vastly different periods, which inevitably overshadows what historical issues are at stake and deserve focused investigation.

The two goals in the book of writing a poetic history of the *youxian* tradition and compiling an “anthology” of *youxian* poetry have been duly achieved: the reader is introduced to a new perspective on the early medieval Chinese poetic tradition and the “anthology” is quite handy, especially together with the appendix. These goals, on the other hand, diminish the depth of most discussions of the selected works and instead lead to superficiality. Perhaps due to the many examples, the reader sees very little discussion of the literary achievements in the selected poems. For example, chapter two is a comprehensive survey on *xian*, and chapter three mostly presents the juxtaposition of poetic works under different categories, with rather scant discussion. This treatment is found throughout (e.g., pp.

169–71, 275–79, 271–73). As the aesthetic value is the main factor for the poems' "immortal" status and literary appeal, it perhaps should have been given precedence.

Despite these shortcomings, one finds original and innovative aspects, which form the main value of the monograph. One truly valuable contribution is that the author introduces and analyzes poems that have not attracted much attention to date and offers new readings in light of Daoist thought and the *youxian* tradition. The poetic works translated into English, with annotations from new perspectives, if not for the first time, include Huan Tan's "Liexian fu" (pp. 80–85), works by Tao Hongjing and other contemporary court poets (pp. 137–48), Xie Lingyun's "Luofushan fu" (p. 183), Zhan Fangsheng's preface to his "Lushan shenxian shi" and the related work by Jiang Yan (pp. 193–97), as well as several other works scarcely known or overlooked in the study of classical Chinese poetry. Fresh approaches and insights are also found in the author's discussion of Jin to Liang court poetry, where the author employs the idea of *youxian* as a main theme in analyzing poems by well-studied writers such as Lu Ji, Xie Tiao, and Xiao Yan as well as certain *yuefu* poems (pp. 280–310). However, treating Tao Qian's "Xing, ying, shen" as a *youxian* poem, despite the line on "roaming on Kunlun and Mount Hua" (p. 294), may need more support to bolster the claim. Other innovative aspects include the discussion of seeking "immortality" together with reclusion (pp. 122–30) and the study of landscape poetry, for the first time, in relation to alchemy (pp. 176–79). The author also argues that new paradise realms start to appear in court poetry. This is an important statement but one is not informed how this development happened, what kinds of interactions between the literary and religious sides occurred, whence poetry acquired these new images, and how they differ from each other. The reader finds little more than a few examples and Shangqing terminology with a rough "conclusion" (pp. 180–87).

The book does suffer from mistakes, misunderstandings, and untenable arguments. This is especially the case when the author has no traditional commentary to rely on. One example is the erroneous identification of the well-known discourse on the net and the fish in *Zhuangzi* as an allusion in her explanation of the term "wishing fish" 羨魚 (pp. 221–22), which is in fact a reference to a passage in the "Shuolin xun" chapter of the *Huainanzi*: "better go home to make a net than [vainly] crave fish by the river" 臨河而羨魚，不如歸家結網。 Another misunderstanding is found in the translation of the line, "this is the essential for the True One" 真人是要 (p. 98). The last character in the rhyming position ought to be a level-toned word; it is a loaned graph for *yao* 邀, "invite" (the same use is found on p. 127). The line should thus be translated as, "the True One is whom I would like to invite." In her discussion of Guo Pu's "Youxian" poem no. 8, the author points out that the opening quatrain, whose lines depict a morning scene with a focus on the sun, "suggests practices of absorbing solar light" (p. 222). One finds the rendering far-fetched because the poem does not contain a single word about the Shangqing meditative practice. The comparison with the *Zhen'gao* poem (p. 223) therefore does not help in proving the point. The cryptographic reading of a poem by Yu Xin sounds arbitrary and unnecessary. Extracting the first character of each line of a couplet, the author claims that Yu Xin *purposefully* embedded the term Qingtong 青童, the name of a Shangqing deity, in the poem (p. 339). However, Qingyi 青衣 and Tongzi 童子 are themselves a pair of deities-in-attendance, and it would suffice to read the poem without conjuring up Qingtong, who does not fit the context.

The author is well read in relevant Western and Chinese scholarship, but her neglect of the abundant Japanese scholarship constitutes a major flaw. The only Japanese study consulted is an article by the literary scholar Morino Shigeo 森野繁夫 (p. 391); scholarship in religious studies is lacking completely. The author could have benefited by consulting Takeji Satao's 竹治貞夫 studies of the *Chuci* and its "decedents"; Satake Yasuko's 佐竹保子 discussion of Sun Chuo's "Fu on My Roaming to Mount Tiantai" as an experience of "actualization"; Kominami Ichirō's 小南一郎 discussion of the Queen Mother of the West; discussions of Daoist history, poetry, and meditation by accomplished scholars such as Yoshikawa Tadao 吉川忠夫, Kamitsuka Yoshiko 神塚淑子, and Kobayashi Masami 小林正美; and Yoshioka Yoshitoyo's 吉岡義豊 work on the relationship between Daoism and Buddhism, to name just a few.

Footnotes for some primary sources and conventional renderings of ideas and concepts are sometimes missing. Exact references to primary sources are missing from the discussion of various *xian* in the *Baopuzi* (p. 18); Qian Xiu's, Cao Pi's, and Guo Yuanzu's works (pp. 54–55); *Yuefu shiji* (or any

other *yuefu* sources) (p. 68); “the ‘rose-gem stamens’ (*qiongrui* 瓊蕊) on which the immortals love to feast” (p. 131); the Azure Bird (p. 139 n. 206); a grotto-heaven (p. 172 n. 42); Jiang Yan’s writing brush (p. 315); “Three Disasters” and the concept of *kalpa* (p. 339 n. 212); etc. In some cases, the author makes a claim but gives no reference or example for support. One such instance is: “Shangqing was in fact a synthesis of the local southern ecstatic traditions, the late Zhou and Han traditions of immortality seekers, and the religion of the Celestial Masters, imbued with some concepts borrowed from Buddhism” (p. 19). Another example is the absence of recent scholarship on the *hun* and *po* souls from the discussion of paired terms (p. 15). Readers might also be grateful for references to pioneer works in the field when it comes to the discussions and translations of certain concepts, ideas, and views, such as *qi* 氣, translated as “pneuma,” “vital breath,” or “vital energy” (p. 14); *zhi* 芝 and *jing* 景, translated respectively as “magic mushroom” and “effulgences”; *ziran* 自然 as “what-is-so-by-itself” or “naturally-so” (p. 85 n. 20); *cun* 存 as to “visualize” or “actualize” (p. 100 n. 82). Furthermore, exact page numbers are missing in several footnotes (e.g., pp. 16 nn. 6–7, 17 n. 12, 20 n. 27, 21 n. 19, 22 n. 22, 25 n. 31, 29 n. 38, 96 n. 71).

A profusion of typographical errors detracts from the volume as well, e.g., *wu e* 五厄 is misspelled as *wu wei* (p. 29 n. 38), *sui* 綏 as *wei* (p. 348). Two important names are misspelled throughout, i.e., Lee Fong-mao (as Li Feng-mao) and Ying-shih Yü (as Yu Yingshi). Typographical errors also concern Chinese characters, as in the following cases (correct graphs follow in parentheses): 唐公訪 (房) 碑 (p. 17 n. 9); 真告 (誥) (p. 20); 建 (簡) 文 (p. 37); 駢 (軒) 轅 (p. 53); 后 (後) 漢記 (紀) (p. 75 n. 102); 貞白先生陶軍 (君) (p. 75 n. 103); 赤誦 (松) 子 (p. 83); 殷優 (憂) (p. 89); 發 (髮) 短 (p. 92); 周禮 (禮) (p. 132 n. 185); 相 (想) 爾 (p. 169); 鳥狩 (獸) (p. 229); 何宴 (晏) (p. 247); 韓終 (眾) (p. 270); 曹湔 (唐) (p. 350). In addition, there are numerous cases in which simplified Chinese is confounded with the traditional forms.

Despite these shortcomings, the monograph achieves its goal of drawing a comprehensive picture of poetry on “*xian* immortality” by shedding new light on poetic works of early medieval China. The book marks a new height in the field of religious literature and, by dint of its cross-disciplinary insights and methodology, will certainly become a stepping-stone for future discussion and developments.

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Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israel and Comparative Contexts. By T. M. LEMOS. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017. Pp. xiv + 225. \$80.

Anyone who encounters a Neo-Assyrian royal inscription, in text or translation, or is made aware of the cruel narratives recounted in the Torah and prophetic sections of the Hebrew Bible, is horrified and awed by the vividly described brutality that is said to have been performed. Two questions that naturally arise from these confrontations are, “How could such inhumane treatment be perpetrated?” and “Why?” With *Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israelite and Comparative Contexts*, T. M. Lemos lays out an answer to the why of these collective conundrums.

In this volume, using what she refers to as a synthetic approach, focusing not on the intricacies of the systems that encourage and indeed require such described violence (the how), but rather on *implicit* “demarcated lines of personhood,” she contends that “physical violence was pivotal in [Israelite] society to the construction of ... a personhood centered on domination and subordination and one in which dominant men could abrogate the personhood of others” (p. 3). Thus, for Lemos, inhumane treatment is tied to an accepted and expected pervasive and, as one might say today, toxic, construct of masculinity. Concentrating on a certain set of subordinated persons (foreigners, women, slaves, and children) and using a sundry selection of texts (biblical and cuneiform), the book contains an extensive and detailed reflection on the harsher methods of subjugation reported, while considering whether those subjugated were ever deemed persons in their own right. Lemos ultimately contends that the evidenced brutality