

than offering a theoretical discussion of the beliefs in ghosts and spirits, the author describes her adventures in pursuing her study and her often ambiguous feelings towards these objects and the entities they represent. By understanding the author's feelings, we can appreciate to some extent the fear these items and their spirits arouse in people's minds. This account greatly helps the outsider understand what these things may mean for those who make them or have them made.

In summary, this small volume is a well-rounded and convenient introduction to contemporary Nuosu society and life within it. Since the volume is a guide to an exhibit, it was the authors' intention not to burden readers with the ordinary trimmings of a scholarly publication. Although understandable, such a decision is regrettable. A basic bibliography would have been of more help than the advice to contact the authors for more information without giving any hint of where they can be contacted. It is also understandable that the authors chose to use vernacular terms rather than translations that might be misleading, but the reader who is confronted with these terms for the first time will often be puzzled about how to pronounce them. But most regrettable is that no map accompanies the text where so many place names are mentioned. I doubt that most readers could easily locate Nuosu country without the help of even a simple map. The items mentioned may not be essential, but, considering the care that was devoted to the text and illustrations in this volume, their absence is regrettable.

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REITER, FLORIAN. *The Aspiration and Standards of Taoist Priests in the Early Tang Period*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998. 241 pages. ISBN 3-447-04086-6.

This book, which provides a concrete and detailed description of the practical life and standards of Daoist priests/monks in the Tang dynasty, is divided into three parts. The first part gives a general overview of the situation of Daoists at the time, dealing with (1) Daoist miracles and imperial support of the religion; (2) Daoist geography, mountains, and domains; (3) the life of the exemplary Daoist master Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 (seventh century); (4) forms of Daoist practice as described in the seventh-century encyclopedia *Sandon zhunang* 三洞珠囊 (A Bag of Pearls from the Three Caverns); and (5) monastic organization as outlined in the *Fengdao kejie* 奉道科戒 (Rules and Precepts for Worshipping the Dao).

The second part focuses primarily on the *Fengdao kejie* and begins with a short discussion of Jin Ming 金明, alias Qizhen 七真, an ecstatic sixth-century visionary who is named in the preface as the author of *Fengdao kejie*. The book next moves on, for well over a hundred pages (55–179), to present a translation of the eighteen sections of the *Fengdao kejie*. A most fascinating document, the text deals with different aspects of monastic life in medieval China: how to build monasteries; how to fashion statues; how to make paper and copy scriptures; how to set up cells, ritual implements, vestments, and other necessities; and how to recite the scriptures and perform the daily religious rituals. The text gives a vivid picture of the actual life of monastics in the early Tang period and is a rare and valuable document indeed.

Part three of Reiter's book discusses three further works associated with Jin Ming. They are a description of three divine figures, including Jin Ming (*Daozang* no. 164); a collection of Daoist rules combined with exorcistic formulas (DZ 674); and a register of the names of celestial generals that afford protection against demons (DZ 1388). The conclusion (204–17) returns to the theme of the overall situation of Daoism in the seventh century and summarizes the description of the religion given in the bibliographic section of the *Suishu* (History

of the Sui Dynasty). The book concludes with an elementary index, a list of sources cited, a short bibliography, and a character glossary of selected names and terms.

Reiter's book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the concrete, actual life situation of Daoists in the middle ages and presents materials previously unavailable in English. It is unfortunate that it has a number of problems: the author's English is quaint and often grammatically odd; the accuracy of certain translations and historical statements are questionable; and, finally, there is a general lack of conception and argumentation.

In regard to the last point, the book consists to a very large extent of summaries: the *Sandong zhunang* in Part 1; the *Fengdao kejie* translated in Part 2; the three texts associated with Jin Ming in Part 3; and the *Suishu* in the conclusion. These materials, however valuable in themselves, are so disparate that they do not lend themselves easily to the presentation of a comprehensive picture. The three works of Jin Ming, for example, although vivid and fascinating, are of a very different nature, and they show an utterly different dimension of practice and lifestyle than the *Fengdao kejie*; also, the *Suishu* is an official historical source, again written from a completely different perspective of medieval Daoism. There is no comprehensive argument made as to why these texts and not others should be used to present a comprehensive picture, nor are their contents placed in a proper analytical perspective. In addition, Reiter tends to make unwarranted and unexplained comparisons with materials from the Yuan dynasty, a period he is more familiar with than the middle ages, leaving the reader wondering about the author's intentions.

In terms of historical accuracy, Reiter places the *Fengdao kejie* correctly in the early seventh century and concludes, also correctly, that its alleged author—whose name he misreads as a compound, Jinming—was mainly a spiritual legitimator of the text rather than its de facto compiler (for more details see KOHN 1997). Then, however, he proceeds to treat the text and the three works of Part 3 as if they had actually been written by Jin Ming and places him in the 620s, despite consistent historical data that link him with the mid-sixth century.

Also, when presenting the *Fengdao kejie*, at no point does he make reference to the four Dunhuang manuscripts of the text that have survived. First, S. 3863 contains part of what is today section 4 on the building of monasteries, while P 2337 has the entire second half, sections 11–18; both are close to the *Daozang* text but also contain valuable variants that allow a more accurate reading. Then there are two texts that at some time were part of the *Fengdao kejie* but have not survived in the *Daozang* edition: S. 809, which details procedures of scriptural transmission; and P 3682, which has an entire section entitled “Compassionate Attitudes” as well as a partial section specifying ways of interacting with ordinary people. In addition to these valuable materials, the *Fengdao kejie* is also cited at length and with passages not found in the *Daozang* in two eighth-century sources, the *Zhaijie lu* (Record of Purifications and Precepts) and the *Miaomen youqi* (Entrance to the Gate of all Wonders). Not only does Reiter not use these valuable materials, which would have greatly enriched his presentation, but he never raises the issue of the historical position and development of the *Fengdao kejie*'s versions and editions.

In terms of the translation, it is on occasion difficult to know when the translation ends and the summary begins. The last four sections of the text, for example, which focus on the daily and ordination rituals conducted in the monastery, are almost entirely summarized, but time and again small sections are translated (164–79). No reference is made to the fact that many of the chants presented here are still actively used in Taiwan today, as documented by John LAGERWEY (1987). Also, the translation of the ordination ranks and the various texts necessary to attain them, is highly technical and even tedious (133–58); it fails to acknowledge the clear and well-presented list of the very same materials by Charles BENN (1991).

Aside from a pervasive lack of interpretative and explanatory footnotes, the translation

suffers from several major and numerous minor errors. To give a few examples, *jingren* 淨人, the technical term for lay monastic servants, is rendered as “people purifying themselves” (83); *du* 度, the word for ordination, is translated as “conversion” (97); *jingfa* 經法, rituals involving scriptures, is translated as “the methods of the scriptures” (161); and *fa* 法 is translated in a varied and haphazard manner. Contextually, the most serious misreadings were in the list of people not fit for ordination. Here, to give only a couple examples, “dismissed ministers and rejected sons” are erroneously made into those who “desert ministers and act contrary to their sons,” while “descendants of executed criminals” appear as those who “execute sons and grandsons” (99).

Overall, Reiter’s work is commendable in its effort to present highly interesting and fascinating medieval materials to a scholarly audience. Lack of in-depth historical research, proper argumentation, and accuracy in the translation, however, make it a highly problematic proposal. A more limited study with more substance would have provided greater profit.

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LI YU. *A Tower for the Summer Heat*. Translations from the Asian Classics. Translation with a new preface by Patrick Hanan. Columbia University Press: New York, 1998. xi + 258 pages. Cloth US\$39.50 (international price US\$45.00); ISBN 0-231-11384-6. Paper US\$15.50 (international price US\$18.00); ISBN 0-231-11385-4.

In a brief preface to this text, professor of Chinese literature and translator Patrick Hanan points to the innovative qualities one comes to expect in the writings of Li Yu (1611–1680). Western readers may be familiar with Li Yu, author of the erotic classic, “The Carnal Prayer Mat,” written during the same years (1657–1658) as *A Tower for the Summer Heat*, and thus prepared for a humorous, enjoyably straight-forward treatment of matters related to sex, courtship, and marriage. “More than any other writer in premodern China, he stressed the absolute need in literature to ‘make it new,’” comments Hanan (vii).

Indeed, the distinctive “newness” of the six stories that comprise *A Tower for the Summer Heat* is evident. In my view, the newness shows itself in the author’s particularly vigorous (almost aggressive) co-mingling of classical Chinese writing devices with an abundance of lively observations about society and human nature.

A Tower for the Summer Heat fits readily into the repertoire of classical Chinese literary pornography, providing the term is taken as a catchall for storytelling that centers unblushingly on the joys of sex, while simultaneously appealing to wider, ultimately more important aesthetic interests. When read as a sweep of fiction that concentrates on romance in all its disguises and variations, the half dozen narratives take on the quality of a single, moderately