

resources, he shows much more ambivalence, at times even disdain, for the larger projects of land reform, revolutionary narratives, and folk-inspired modern theater. Given that these are in fact a main focus of the book, it is unfortunate that DeMare often appears to have little esteem for their value as serious political and artistic endeavors, at least in my reading. Beyond this minor issue, *Mao's Cultural Army* is an important and highly original work that makes a major contribution to twentieth-century Chinese studies. I recommend it enthusiastically to all those interested in modern Chinese history; Chinese theater; and the intersections of cultural work, art, and political activism.

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Gender, Power, and Talent: The Journey of Daoist Priestesses in Tang China. By JINHUA JIA. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. xxxvi, 324 pp. ISBN: 9780231184441 (cloth, also available as e-book).
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Gender, Power, and Talent is a richly detailed and sophisticated sinological study of Daoist priestesses in the Tang dynasty (618–907). Jinhua Jia not only breaks new ground in the study of women in Daoism, but also advances an emerging gender-critical approach combined with religious and literary studies. In this way, Jia's work represents a new model for the academic study of Daoism, one in which Chinese studies, Daoist studies, and gender studies infuse and cross-pollinate each other.

Generally speaking, Jia's pioneering work is noteworthy for a number of reasons. First, it explores the relatively under-researched history of female participation in the Daoist tradition as well as the experience of Daoist women. In the process, the book addresses the ways in which women embraced clerical and monastic identity as their career and vocation, including as a path to personal fulfillment, gender empowerment, and social participation. Jia points out that "[t]he emergence of Daoist priestesses in the Tang as a distinct religio-social group was unprecedented in the history of Chinese women" (p. xvii). Second, this is the first publication to focus solely on Tang Daoist priestesses in concert with a gender-critical framework. Along these lines, Jia draws attention to these women's Daoist religious identity as a source of empowerment and as an emancipatory remodeling of more conventional Chinese gender constructions and roles. This aspect of the book challenges received, albeit specialist, views of certain Daoist priestesses as "licentious courtesans" (pp. xxi, xxvi), partially due to their supposedly audacious aspiration for self-determination and independence. Finally, *Gender, Power, and Talent* engages a wealth of new material for the study of Chinese religiosity in general and Daoist views, practices, and experiences in particular. Jia groups these into three types of sources, namely, epitaphic and monastic inscriptions; Dunhuang manuscripts, records from official histories, essays and poems by literati, anecdotal narratives, and local and monastic gazetteers; and the Daoist priestesses' own poetry, essays, books, and even artistic works.

The specific contributions of this profound study are too numerous to document in such a short review. Here a few abridged notes must suffice. I especially appreciate Jia's discussion of Daoist priestesses as a gendered religio-social group (chapter 1), one in which the women in question had a relatively elevated social status and sense of

empowerment. Along these lines, Jia's attentiveness to their leadership roles, clerical functions, and ritual and social responsibilities provides a fuller picture of lived (female) Daoist religiosity.

The book also importantly gives ample consideration to actual Daoist practice. This includes Liu Moran's 柳默然 (773–840) model for inner cultivation, specifically her emphasis on the practice of sitting-in-forgetfulness (*zuowang* 坐忘) (chapter 4), and Hu Yin's 胡愔 (fl. 848) focus on health and longevity techniques and medical theory, specifically her engagement with the seminal third-century CE *Huangting Jing* 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court; DZ 331, DZ 332) (chapter 5). Here Jia emphasizes the significance of the fact that Hu composed the influential *Huangting Neijing Wuzang Liufu Buxie Tu* 黃庭內景五臟六腑補瀉圖 (Diagram on the Tonification and Purgation of the Five Yin-Organs and Six Yang-Organs According to the Scripture on the Inner View of the Yellow Court; DZ 432), which is one of the earliest visual depictions of the “Daoist body” in general and the “Daoist inner landscape” in particular. There is sufficient evidence that Hu herself composed the diagram (p. 109). These parts of the book thus provide a glimpse into female Daoist practice, a topic that is only just beginning to receive the scholarly attention that it deserves. Moreover, the final two chapters, which focus on the writings of various Daoist priestess-poets, open a window into their own lives, values, and aspirations. Here we find a fuller glimpse of the “inner lives” of Daoist women.

Finally, the appendix is a helpful corrective for, or at least a critical reappraisal of, the relative value of Du Guangting's 杜光庭 (850–933) *Yongcheng Jixian Lu* 壩城集仙錄 (Records of Assembled Immortals of the Walled City; DZ 783). According to Jia, it is not that this important text should be dismissed as irrelevant “fiction”; rather, the hagiography should be read as offering prescriptive and idealized models (p. 208).

Throughout her account, Jia identifies fifty-three priestesses and provides important new details and micro-histories of some significant, but lesser-known figures (pp. 52–60; cf. 200–201). In *Gender, Power, and Talent*, these Daoist women begin to be returned to their rightful place in Daoist history, one expressing religious commitment, rooted in full social participation, and deserving respect and recognition.

I have very little to say by way of substantial criticism. Instead, I will offer two minor points and one area requiring more research and reflection. To begin, I find Jia's translation (via Livia Kohn) of *zuowang* as “sitting in oblivion” problematic and obfuscating. Wang simply means “to forget,” and “sitting-in-forgetfulness” is a more accurate description of the actual practice. As a technical designation for Daoist apophatic meditation, this is a contentless, non-conceptual, and non-dualistic contemplative practice. It involves forgetting everything, until even forgetting is forgotten. This is not mere semantics, as it has repercussions for reconstructing and understanding the actual method. Similarly, Jia translates Hu Yin's sobriquet Jiansu 見素 as “Knowing the Plain” (p. 100). In fact, the name should be Romanized as Xiansu (Appearing Plain), which is an allusion to chapter 19 of the *Daode Jing* 道德經 (Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power): “Appear plain and embrace simplicity; / Lessen selfishness and decrease desire.” More significantly, in chapter 4, Jia argues—with good reason and viable, circumstantial evidence—that the seminal, possibly eighth-century *Zuowang Lun* 坐忘論 (Discourse on Sitting-in-Forgetfulness; DZ 1036) and associated inscription were not written by Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647–735), the Twelfth Patriarch of Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism. She even goes so far as to suggest that the associated inscription may have been written by Liu Moran herself (pp. 88, 98). Given the radicalness of this claim, much more research and reflection are required.

Developing, but ultimately going beyond the period- and tradition-specific work of Timothy Barrett, Charles Benn, Russell Kirkland, and Franciscus Verellen, and

advancing the gender-critical work of scholars in Chinese studies such as Judith Berling, Suzanne Cahill, Catherine Despeux, Charlotte Furth, Beata Grant, Livia Kohn, and Chün-fang Yü, Jia's *Gender, Power, and Talent* is a model study of Daoist priestesses in the Tang dynasty. It offers new and important insights into the place of women in Daoism, their own lives and aspirations, and their contributions to the development of the Daoist tradition. It would, however, be a mistake to view it as solely a book about and for women. Jia helps to expand our understanding of the fullness and diversity of the Daoist tradition, including the major contributions made by some its key female adherents and representatives. These are individuals who deserve a history of their own, a "story of her" that Jia has meticulously and thankfully begun to write.

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Concerns over health and gender have consistently been interwoven into modern nation-building projects in East Asia from as early as the late nineteenth century. In *Gender, Health, and History in Modern East Asia*, editors Angela Ki Che Leung and Izumi Nakayama bring these strands into dialogue to show the various ways that state concerns over health in China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan have been articulated through efforts to control reproduction, optimize sexual hygiene, assign gendered identities, and promote men's economic productivity. Across nine chapters and an introduction by Francesca Bray, this volume sheds new light on the ways that intraregional exchanges and experiences have led to shared ideas about gender, sexuality, and biological and reproductive health, thereby emphasizing the need to combine science studies with a broader regional focus on East Asia as a whole.

The volume is divided into three sections. The first, "Bodies Beyond Boundaries," explores discourses of normative sexual development in early twentieth-century China and Japan, as well as the advent and use of new reproductive technologies in Taiwan and South Korea. Izumi Nakayama begins this section with a discussion of precocious puberty in Meiji Japan. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, intellectuals feared that Japanese youths were experiencing puberty too early, leading to stunted growth. Due to their height and developmental differences from the "normative West" (p. 37), children were viewed as emblematic of the biological deficiencies that plagued East Asia. Jen-der Lee's following chapter explores the content of and intended audiences for physiology textbooks in early Republican China. Many of these textbooks were modeled on those used in the American school system, which tended to focus on biologically determined gender roles and the sexual hygiene of young boys. The following two chapters turn their attention to assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs) in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Chia-ling Wu's nuanced research into ARTs in Taiwan demonstrates the evolving and conflicting ways that activists, physicians, markets, and families determine who should be considered "appropriate" users of technologies