

bolism and a symbolism of the sun.

It was at the time of the spring Hanshi festival that this symbolism functioned. The Hanshi was a day when fires were not used and food was eaten cold; since fire, like the cock a yang symbol and symbol of the sun, was temporarily extinguished and then relit, it was a fire-renewal custom, the object of which was the encouragement of the rebirth of all things in spring. To have a rooster, which was a yang symbol, fight another rooster at this time was, from a Taoist viewpoint, the same in substance as a fire-renewal custom. Thus cockfighting takes its place as an indispensable spring ritual, and Taoism, which assessed it positively in this form, can be thought to have guaranteed its continued existence.

In conclusion, let me say that the book contains English translations (with the Chinese texts) for a good deal of the extravagant amount of source materials, and it builds upon the fruits of research on Chinese history by Chinese, European, American, and Japanese scholars. In addition, it has appropriate, detailed notes, which themselves constitute an outstanding outline of Chinese culture with cockfighting at the core.

I recommend this book not only to scholars dealing with cultural anthropology but also to anyone who has a broader interest in Chinese culture.

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DESPEUX, CATHERINE. *La moelle du phénix rouge. Santé et longue vie dans la Chine du XVI siècle* [The marrow of the red phoenix. Health and long life in sixteenth-century China]. Paris: Guy Trédaniel Editeur, 1988. 300 pages. Selected bibliography; lists of Chinese characters for names, book titles, and technical terms; glossary of alchemistic terms. No price. ISBN 2-85707-281-3. (In French)

This recent book of one of the most prolific writers on traditional Chinese religious and health practices, which will delight students of Taoism and traditional Chinese medicine, is a translation of the *Chifeng sui* 赤鳳髓 (The Marrow of the Red Phoenix) of the late Ming dynasty. A compilation of a variety of texts on breathing techniques, gymnastics, and inner alchemy, the *Chifeng sui* is included in the *Yimen guangdu* 夷門廣牘 (Wide Tablets of the Gate of Silence) by the literatus Zhou Lǔjīng 周履靖. Like many writers on health practices, he was a well-educated member of the aristocracy who suffered severely from various illnesses during his youth and childhood.

The *Chifeng sui* is dated to 1578. It comprises six texts on different breathing techniques, three on gymnastics, and one on inner alchemy, combining successfully the most important health and longevity practices then current. Most of the textual materials are dated to the Song and Yuan dynasties. Techniques discussed include breathing according to the six sounds (*liuzi jue* 六字訣), nourishing primordial breath (*funai yuanqi* 服內元氣), embryo respiration (*taixi* 胎息), the five animals pattern (*wuqin xi* 五禽戲), the elegant exercise in eight sections (*baduan jin* 八段錦), and the sleep exercises of inner alchemy (*shuigong* 睡功). All these techniques are still being practiced as part of Qigong 氣功 in China today.

Despeux's book follows the basic outline of the *Chifeng sui*. It begins with a historical introduction on the author and the sources, identifying wherever possible

relevant original materials in the Taoist Canon (14–30). It then introduces the types of practices concerned, clearly and comprehensively outlining the ideas involved (1) in breathing techniques, i.e., exercises of the breath (*qi* 氣), swallowing the saliva, and circulating the inner breath; (2) in gymnastics, i.e., stretching and guiding the body muscles (*daoyin* 導引), massages, and physical therapy; and (3) in inner alchemy (*neidan* 內丹; 30–55).

All these practices relate to the specific Chinese view of the body, which is believed to consist of *qi*, breath or energy, a universal power that forms not only the material universe and the human body but also takes on more subtle forms like breath and can easily be transformed into even subtler forces like essence and spirit. Traditional Chinese thought does not acknowledge a radical break between the solid, gaseous, and spiritual levels of life; rather, all is viewed as one continuum of existence. The same practices that heal ailments of the body therefore may heighten life-expectancy and physical energy and even lead to spiritual states of religious attainment. The distinction between breathing, gymnastic, and inner alchemical exercises, which both the *Chifeng sui* and Despeux's book rely on, thus reflects more a theoretical division than a practical difference. All levels of practice are involved in most of the exercises.

Emphasizing this continuity and integrity of the Chinese health system, Despeux then translates the *Chifeng sui* in the larger part of the book (57–269, followed by glossaries of alchemical terms and Chinese characters, a rather short bibliography, but no index), clearly arranged in short sections. Illustrations, including original text, have been inserted in the translation wherever possible. The depictions of the various sleep exercises are particularly delightful, showing mostly bearded, pot-bellied, elderly men in a variety of reclining postures—some on high beds with porcelain pillows, some on a heap of leaves with a piece of wood to rest their heads (223–69).

The section on “Gymnastics of the Immortals” (127–221), also illustrated throughout, is characterized by a heavy reliance on traditional Taoist mythology. All forty-six exercises are named after an exploit of some immortal or saint, which in many cases has nothing much to do with the physical movements prescribed and even less with the medical effect indicated. An example is “Zhuangzi's Butterfly Dream” (145), originally a metaphorical expression for the advanced mental state of the sage who no longer distinguishes dream and reality. Here it is a sleep exercise: lying on one's side, the right thigh is tucked under the left leg, the right hand supports the ear, and the left hand massages the lower abdomen. The adept visualizes the *qi* circulate through the body. The exercise serves to cure involuntary emission of semen during dreams.

Besides revealing a certain disrespect for venerable traditions, the choice of representative immortals often seems entirely arbitrary. In several cases the exemplary adept named in the title is a woman, but the accompanying illustration obviously shows a man (174, 189). There are, however, also instances where the ancient story is well integrated with the exercise and its purpose. “Ziying Catching Fish” (213) is a case in point. The immortal Ziying was well known for his habit of standing in the river, bowing down, and catching fish. To perform the exercise associated with his name, one is to stand bowed with bent knees and grasp the opposite ankles with one's hands. For the duration of twelve breaths one is then to circulate one's breath through the body. This will help the blood circulation.

Catherine Despeux has accomplished an excellent task in not only making this fascinating material accessible to Western readers but also explaining the relevance of

the various techniques in their medical and mythological contexts. She has clarified the coherence of the therapeutic system and shown an entirely new aspect of the integration of medicine and religion. Her solid knowledge of Chinese traditional medicine and her practical experience in Taiji quan, Qigong, and Chinese gymnastics have helped to make the translations of these texts—sometimes quite difficult—philologically sound and clear in meaning. The translation and discussion of the *Chifeng sui* is a worthy follow-up to her considerable earlier work and an important contribution to our knowledge of Chinese techniques of health and long life.

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MA XUEYI 馬學義 and MA CHENGJUN 馬成俊. *Salazu fengsuzhi* 撒拉族風俗誌 [Records of Salar customs], Beijing 北京: Zhongyang minzu xueyuan chubanshe 中央民族學院出版社 [Central Institute of Nationalities Press], 1989. ix+98 pages. 4 plates. Softcover 1.80 rmb; ISBN 7-81001-179-O/K-26.

HAN FUDE 韓福德, general editor. *Salazu minjian gushi* 撒拉族民間故事 [Salar folktales]. Xunhua 循化: Xunhua Salazu zizhi xian yinshua chang 循化撒拉族自治縣印刷廠 [Xunhua Salar Autonomous County Press], 1989. xii+428 pages. 2 maps, 6 plates. Softcover 4.50 rmb.

HAN FUDE, general editor. *Minjian geyao* 民間歌謠 [Folk songs]. Xunhua: Xunhua Salazu zizhi xian yinshua chang [Xunhua Salar Autonomous County Press], 1990. xiv+462 pages. 1 map, 1 plate. Softcover 4.50 rmb.

HAN FUDE, general editor. *Minjian yanyu* 民間諺語 [Folk proverbs]. Xining 西寧: Qinghai minzu xueyuan yinshua chang 青海民族學院印刷廠 [Qinghai Nationalities Institute Press], 1990. iv+197 pages. Softcover 2.50 rmb.

MA and MA give an overview of the Salar: social structure; material life; production, transportation, and trade; etiquette; folklore; folk arts; sports, games, and medical care; festivals and taboos; and religion and concepts regarding the soul.

Any attempt to cover this number of topics in 98 pages is bound to be superficial. Additionally, Salar are treated as culturally homogeneous, which is not the case; e.g., in nearby Hualong 化隆 County many Salar have been greatly influenced by Hui 回.

There is an intriguing treatment of the controversy surrounding Salar origins, with some claiming that Gelman, the Salar progenitor, had 6 sons and the eldest and second eldest sons each had two wives, and this explains why Salar today are divided into eight clans. Others argue that Gelman's six sons formed only six clans and the other two are traceable to immigrants from Hezhou 河州 and Gansu 甘肅.

Salazu minjian gushi has more than 100 stories in six categories: tales, fairy tales, animal stories, life stories, humorous stories, and children's stories. The most valuable are those describing the migration of Salar from Central Asia to Xunhua. Thankfully, the language of these stories indicates they have not been over-polished, and for each story there is a note on the teller, collection area, recorder, and (for some) the date of recording.