Daoism in Japan: Chinese Traditions and Their Influence on Japanese Religious Culture ed. by Jeffrey L. Richey (review)

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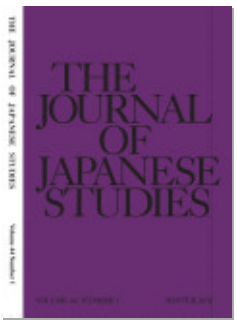

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reminded of the opinion of Franz Boas (1858–1942), cited and partly appreciated by Lévi-Strauss, who suggested that the study of human cultures should equally consider historical factors and psychological processes.[6]

However, the significance of Faure's work lies in that it clarifies the importance of looking into the structural-psychological nature of cults, an aspect all too often overlooked by historians yet strongly needing its own spotlight of enquiry. There is no doubt that his viewpoints will have a profound and enduring impact on the study of Japanese Buddhism. Last but not least, the different chapters are superbly illustrated with high-quality images, some of which are extremely rare and difficult to acquire. This in itself is a remarkable achievement.

Bernard Faure is currently preparing two more volumes in which he will undoubtedly share further valuable insights into the intricate web of the various gods of medieval Japan.

Daoism in Japan: Chinese Traditions and Their Influence on Japanese Religious Culture. Edited by Jeffrey L. Richey. Routledge, London, 2015. xiii, 268 pages. $148.00, cloth; $54.95, E-book.

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Though there is no dispute that Daoism is present in Japanese culture, the degree and importance of its influence has been the subject of ongoing scholarly debate. One problem has been dislodging its specificity from the broader mass of Chinese culture that has entered Japan over 15 centuries. This very span of time admits a complicating plurality: Daoism in China was multilayered and changed over time, while its products, which first arrived in Japan as part and parcel of the *ritsuryō* state, went on to appear piecemeal chiefly through textual sources over the centuries. Thus, the first question we have to ask is what among the "amorphous fragments of Daoism" (in the phrase of Herman Ooms in this volume) widely scattered throughout the Japanese religio-political landscape should be more properly regarded as part of the general Chinese cultural heritage, and what belongs indubitably to Daoism? A case in point is subjects related to cosmology, yin and yang, the five phases, divination, astronomy/astrology, the *Yijīng*, and

6. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 6–7.

the like. These entered Daoism as part of Chinese traditional culture. When we find them in Japan, are they to be considered "Daoist"?

This question seems to have exercised many of the contributors to this volume. Jonathan Smith, for example, writes, "Although it is clear that *yīnyáng* astromancy and the cosmology on which it is premised are related to Daoism, it is less obvious how to define 'Daoism' itself" (p. 12), and he resorts to contrivances like "Daoist" (using quotation marks) and "Daoist-flavored" when he uses the term. Michael Como speaks of "deities from the Daoist or at least the Chinese pantheon" (p. 27) and of "a milieu that was closely influenced by Chinese astrology and Daoist practices" (p. 32). Similarly, Matthias Hayek describes "mantic knowledge, derived in part from Daoist traditions transmitted from China," but in the course of his chapter the word "Confucianism" appears more often than "Daoism" (p. 209). Miura Kunio points out that certain elements of Daoism, such as immortality beliefs, a number of Daoist scriptures, and the Kōshin cult, were transmitted to Japan (p. 83) but the broader structure of calendar-making, astronomy/astrology, and divination that entered Japan in the seventh century belonged to a broader Chinese technical and cultural context. Herman Ooms employs the adjectives "Daoisant" and "so-called 'Daoist,'" and he cautions against using the term retrospectively about practices that "did not arrive as part of a fully fledged religious or sectarian system" (p. 37).

The editor of this volume, Jeffrey Richey, admits the difficulty of discussing "whether and how phenomena might be understood as 'Daoist' in any sense" but judges the time ripe to present "a sample of current scholarship" and bring to scholarly attention directions for future research (p. 2). He uses two metaphors to describe the influence of Daoism on Japanese religious culture: a river, once in full flow, creating new landforms, which was later buried from view, and only recently has become partially visible again; and a ghost, whose recent transformation makes it seem startlingly contemporary (pp. 1, 4). Unlike Endō Shūsaku, for whom Japan was a swamp that sucked in and rotted everything planted in it, an environment in which religion (notably Christianity) could not survive, Richey sees Japan as a "conjuring culture" which "has performed that most Daoist of feats: as a result of its alchemical interaction with Chinese and other cultures, it has refined and transformed itself in order to attain full integration with ever deeper historical, social, and spiritual realities." This has given Daoism "a kind of immortality beyond China's borders" (p. 6).

These metaphors, though, however deftly woven, do not compensate for the fact that we do not emerge with any clear idea of what Daoism is, other than "a highly diverse but loosely unified body of traditions whose practitioners find themselves 'agreed that they should *refine and transform themselves to attain full integration with life's deepest realities*'" (p. 2; italics in the original). This "definition" is not strong enough to hold together

the diverse range of scholarship that appears on the following pages, as is apparent from the efforts of the various authors to tackle the key issue: what is part of the wider Chinese culture, what is related to Daoism, and what is Daoism itself? While Richey seems tacitly to agree that "the quest for a definition of Daoism is over now" (p. 3), perhaps an observation by Hayashi Makoto and Matthias Hayek is more pertinent: "Daoism has been widely studied for more than a century, and it would be wise to learn from specialists who continue to struggle with the very definition of their object of study."[1]

The volume is divided into three sections, roughly chronological, entitled "Arrivals," "Assimilations," and "Apparitions." The first section contains four chapters: "Pleiades Retrieved: A Chinese Asterism's Journey to Japan" (Jonathan Smith), "Daoist Deities in Ancient Japan: Household Deities, Jade Women and Popular Religious Practice" (Michael Como), "Framing Daoist Fragments, 670–750" (Herman Ooms), and "Daoist Resonance in a 'Perfected Immortal': A Case Study of Awata no Ason Mahito" (N. Harry Rothschild and Kristen Knapp). Smith discusses the astromantic traditions of China and Japan through a philological and phonological study concerning how the Pleiades, called *mǎo* in Chinese, came to be known as *sumaru/subaru* in Japan. He concludes convincingly that the Japanese term must be Chinese in origin, alongside similar stellar terminology. Como seeks to consider the role of Daoism in early Japanese religion through what he terms "Daoist stowaways," deities with whom the populace interacted, away from the court, such as certain astral deities, household gods, demons, and epidemic deities. He focuses his attention on Jade Women (*gyokunyo*), female astral deities associated with the polestar and found in a variety of cultic contexts in early and medieval Japan, who "captured the imagination of the local populace in the outer reaches of the realm" before becoming associated with imperial metaphor as the consort of the sovereign (p. 34).

Ooms discusses how under Tenmu's and Jitō's rule, "Daoist values, terms and practices were prominently appropriated to formulate and stage political legitimations" (p. 54). His assertion that Daoist fragments became most organized in Shugendō by the middle of the Heian period is, however, questionable. It is doubtful that Shugendō existed institutionally until at least the thirteenth century, and any Daoist influence more likely came piecemeal through the practices of popular ascetic practitioners and esoteric Buddhism. Finally in this section, Rothschild and Knapp analyze the term *mahito* in the context of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange to ascertain the extent it had political or religious meaning in the early eighth century, taking the courtier and diplomat Awata no Ason Mahito as a test

1. Hayashi Makoto and Matthias Hayek, "Editors' Introduction: Onmyōdō in Japanese History," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2013), p. 6.

case. They conclude that "predominantly Daoist principles" like *mahito* and *tennō* became "encoded in the institutional and linguistic structure of early Japan" (p. 71), admitting it would be problematic to regard either as exclusively Daoist.

The second section also has four chapters: "*Onmyōdō* Divination Techniques and Daoism" (Miura Kunio), "The *Laōzī* and the Emergence of Shintō at Ise" (Mark Teeuwen), "Demarcation from Daoism in Shinran's *Kyōgyōshinshō*" (Michael Conway), and "*Kōshin:* Expelling Daoist Demons through Buddhist Means" (Livia Kohn). This section begins with the highly contentious question of the relationship of Daoism to Onmyōdō (the Way of Yin and Yang). Miura questions the contention of scholars like Fukunaga Mitsuji that Onmyōdō was the Japanese equivalent of Daoism and makes a study of its origins in the Bureau of Yin and Yang (Onmyōryō) and its divination practices, where he finds hardly any Daoist influence at all. He concludes that Daoism only came to be involved with Onmyōdō after officials of the bureau (*onmyōji*) began performing thaumaturgic rituals related to specific Daoist deities for the Heian aristocracy toward the end of the ninth century. Teeuwen discusses the incorporation of *Laōzī* cosmology by Watarai Yukitada in designing a new identity for, and redefining the *kami* of, the Outer Shrine of Ise in a time of political and economic uncertainty. He rejects the view that Yukitada did so to move away from a Buddhist worldview and construct a Shintō theory able to challenge it, pointing out that he probably regarded the *Laōzī* as "an extension rather than a contradiction of Buddhism" (pp. 112–13) and that "the Ise priests' adoption of Daoist cosmological terminology was part and parcel of the Buddhist esotericization of their shrines" (p. 114). He rejects the notion that Shintō moved toward establishing its identity by borrowing Daoist vocabulary: "we must question the label 'Daoist' in this context, not only because Zen and Song dynasty Confucianism need to be brought into the equation, but also because none of the actors involved . . . thought in terms of such categories as Daoism and Buddhism" (p. 120).

Conway studies perceived Daoist influences on Buddhist practices in Shinran's day through his denunciation in the *Kyōgyōshinshō* of astrology, divination, potions for the prolongation of life, and the worship of various deities as belonging to non-Buddhist paths, which, though he does not use the word, suggests he had Daoist practices in mind. Finally, Kohn takes us on a thought-provoking journey into what is undoubtedly one of the clearest examples of the Daoist presence in Japan, the Kōshin cult, linking medical, cosmological, and soteriological concerns both in China and in Japan. She describes the incorporation of the parasitic "deathbringers" into the Daoist school of Highest Clarity, which developed rituals, recipes, and talismans to combat them. In Japan, however, Daoist practices were replaced with Buddhist by the twelfth century and centered on the deity Shōmen Kongō.

Kohn describes the practices of Kōshin vigils, based on the fieldwork of Kubō Noritada, and notes changes in the cult due to urbanization, lessening medical urgency, and lack of knowledge of it among the younger generation.

The third section has three chapters: "The *Zhuāngzǐ*, Haikai, and the Poetry of Bashō" (Peipei Qiu), "The Eight Trigrams and Their Changes: Divination in Early Modern Japan" (Matthias Hayek), and "Crossing the Borders: The Magical Practices of Izanagi-ryū" (Carolyn Pang). Just as Yukitada employed the *Laōzī* to aid legitimization, *haikai* poets in the Edo period used the *Zhuāngzǐ* to break from classical tradition, legitimize their unrestrained writing style, and establish *haikai* as a popular art. Bashō, the greatest of them all, "creatively applied Daoist ideas and principles in his *haikai* poetics" (p. 202). Hayek presents an exhaustive analysis of divination techniques based on the eight trigrams (*hakke uranai*), in part derived from Daoist traditions, using a variety of printed books from the early seventeenth century. This divination technique did not refer to the *Yijīng* trigrams so much as to tables written or printed in folding books (*orihon*). By the middle of the century, bound books appeared that detailed the procedures to be followed and explained the tables. A century or so later, a third type appeared, which combined the tables with the procedural text. *Hakke* divination disappeared toward the end of the Edo period, supplanted by other techniques. Pang finds value in the way "Daoist elements were infused into Japanese religiosity" (p. 248) and looks to a folk religion closely related to Onmyōdō, the Izanagi-ryū, practiced in Shikoku, to study "how Han dynasty cosmology and Daoist techniques were incorporated to validate the efficacy of [its] magic rituals" (p. 248). It consists of a large number of lineages, each with its own extensive range of ritual texts, broadly classified as liturgical texts (*saimon*), incantations (*jimon*), and litanies (*hōmon*). She emphasizes the importance of performativity and the need to see the liturgy as "a material object and ritual device that can be manipulated and continuously reordered" (p. 251).

An error and some inconsistencies must be pointed out. The spouse of Shōmu was not the Empress Shōtoku but Kōmyō (p. 55), and the *gogyō* are referred to both as the "five agents" and as the "five phases" in chapter 10. There is an infelicity with hyphenation (Chan-g'ān, p. 51) and an error with romanization (*jigutsu*, p. 88), but the greatest problem is the inconsistency in the use of italics, too numerous to detail. The index too is inadequate. On the positive side, the bibliographies attached to each chapter are superb and will be of great benefit for future research.

This volume builds on the superlative work of Livia Kohn—stretching from studies of Daoism meditation and longevity techniques, and translations of Zhuangzi and Daoist scriptures, to invaluable edited volumes such as *Daoism Handbook*—and joins two recent publications to give a more

rounded view of the influence of Chinese thought and practices in Japanese religion and society.[2]

Japanese Confucianism: A Cultural History. By Kiri Paramore. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2016. xx, 231 pages. $99.99, cloth; $29.99, paper; $24.00, E-book.

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At first glance, Kiri Paramore's *Japanese Confucianism: A Cultural History* struck me as a throwback, a cross between Arthur Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being* and John Whitney Hall's *Government and Local Power in Japan*. Like Lovejoy's work, Paramore's book follows a single topic, Japanese Confucianism, from its origins to the present, tracking its different manifestations over time. This book also is reminiscent of Hall's *Government and Local Power in Japan*, which traces a single theme, institutional life in Bizen Province from antiquity to 1700, and relies almost exclusively on Japanese scholarship. Writing at a time when comparative history was becoming fashionable, Hall used Max Weber's theory of rationalization to frame his material. Like Hall, Paramore relies heavily on Japanese scholarship, but his inspiration, he tells us, was studies of "world Christianities" (p. 7) that helped him see that "Confucianism is therefore best analyzed over the longue durée utilizing the plurality that its history possesses" (p. 6). Writing after the linguistic turn, he is also less interested in a single Confucian idea or a unitary Confucianism than in "multiple Confucianisms" (p. 2).

Paramore's book opens with a discussion of what he terms "Confucianism as cultural capital." He starts at the beginning of Confucianism's history in Japan when it was introduced by Wani, a "Confucian professor" (p. 16) from Paekche, in 402 CE. Confucianism was imported, he tells us, together with the institutions from China and the states on the Korean peninsula, and was adopted in the seventh and eighth centuries. Based on the Han dynastic state (206 BCE–220 CE), this model had both Confucian and Legalist aspects, which Paramore characterizes as "conciliatory" and "coercive," re-

2. See Livia Kohn, ed., *Daoism Handbook* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Hayashi and Hayek, "Editors' Introduction"; and Bernard Faure and Iyanaga Nobumi, eds., *The Way of Yin and Yang: Divinatory Techniques and Religious Practices* (Paris: Ecole française d'Extrême Orient, 2014).