

might argue that pictorial representation constitutes a major way of knowing. As most of the authors who contributed to this volume have made their mark as students of Chinese thought and history it is understandable that they have looked for animals in sources best known to them. The introduction suggests that this volume “offers a selection of essays over the *longue durée*” of Chinese history, but most articles deal with a specific corpus of sources from a delimited period of time. The result is a collection of fascinating studies on the interaction of humans and animals through Chinese history and on the textual sources that shape our knowledge of that interaction.

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AO WANG:

*Spatial Imaginaries in Mid-Tang China: Geography, Cartography, and Literature.*

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The book under review (hereinafter: *Imaginaries*) is a study of historical geography from a peculiar angle. Interestingly, its author Wang Ao, an award-winning poet, received his PhD from Yale, one of the top universities in the United States, but one without a geography department. Here Yale is in good company – of the eight Ivy League schools, only one, Dartmouth, still has a geography department. This is probably an indication of the woeful state of geography education in the USA. Any serious academic undertaking that calls attention to the importance of geography should therefore be welcome. There is, however, more to *Imaginaries* than geography. It deals with the interaction and intersection between geography and literature during the mid-Tang period. The author is inspired by W.J.T. Mitchell’s argument that attempts to erase the barrier between graphic/pictorial images and mental (and, by inference, verbal and textual) images.

*Imaginaries* begins with an introduction on three crucial sources of geographical knowledge during the period in question: the “Map of Chinese and foreign lands” by Jia Dan; a genre of literary writing known as “map-guides”; and the *Maps and Treatises of the Prefect[ure]s and Counties of the Yuanhe Reign*. These three together provided the backdrop for the interplay of geography and literature during mid-Tang times.

The chapter that follows consists of a number of case studies of the map-reading experiences of four eminent men of letters, Du Fu, Li He, Liu Zongyuan, and Zhang Hu, with a focus on Jia Dan’s “grand map”.

The third chapter shifts attention to map-guides (*tujing*) and their relations with the literati. Daoist inscriptions by Yan Zhenqing, office inscriptions by Liu Zongyuan and Liu Yuxi, orisons of appeal by Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi, and poems by Han Yu and Wang Jian are cited as examples where map-guides played a significant role in literati writing and where the literati participated in a process called “cross-field intertextualizing”.

The fourth chapter takes us further afield into the southern fringe of the empire known as Lingnan (south of the Five Mountain Ranges), encompassing present-day Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, and north Vietnam. In this “underdeveloped” area,

prominent men of letters, such as Yuan Jie, Liu Zongyuan, Han Yu, and Liu Yuxi, bore witness to a historic geographical transformation following the An Lushan Rebellion, in literary essays that went beyond the scope of geographic works.

The fifth and penultimate chapter examines the intimate relationship between two mid-Tang literary giants, Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi, with a view to shedding light on the interplay between literature and geography.

In the concluding chapter the author recaptures the points raised in the previous chapters with a special emphasis on the burst of literary activities inspired by geographical advancements in mid-Tang China.

Let us first look at the three crucial sources that underpin this research. In what ways does the first, the “grand map” of Jia Dan, represent a major advancement compared with earlier works, for example, the grand maps in Pei Ju’s *Xiyu tuji* (Illustrated gazetteer of the Western Regions) (circa the early 7th century)? Are the map-guides of mid-Tang China qualitatively better than their predecessors (for example, the *Bajun tujing* of the Eastern Han)? Is Li Jifu’s *Maps and Treatises* superior to earlier works in the same genre including the aforementioned *Tuji* by Pei Ju and the much more extensive *Kuodi zhi* (Comprehensive gazetteer) by Prince Li Tai et al. (641/642)?

*Imaginaries* takes for granted that mid-Tang started in the 790s (p. 39). However, the traditional periodization of the Tang, as first defined by the Ming scholar Gao Bing, regards 766 as the beginning of mid-Tang, which makes more sense.

The characters *junxian* in the title of Li Jifu’s masterpiece are translated as “prefects and counties”. “Prefects” is clearly a mistake for “prefectures”; a better term is “commanderies”.

One of the fundamental features of China’s time-honoured astrological tradition is the *fenye* 分野 system, whereby the zodiac and celestial equator segments of the sky are divided into the 28 Stellar Lodges (*xiu*), which are matched with corresponding provinces on earth. *Imaginaries* uses “celestial division” (p. 83) to translate *fenye*. I prefer Schafer’s “apportioned champaigns” or “allotted fields”.

Allegedly, the malaria-infested tropical far south was permeated with a kind of evil vaporous emanation known as *zhang* 瘴 (the closest English has for *zhang* is “miasm”, not “malaria” itself, p. 95).

A type of traveller account known as *youji*, translated mostly as “landscape essays” (p. 6) or occasionally as “accounts of excursions” (p. 196) and “travel records” (pp. 241–2), was popular in the mid-Tang period. The best-known work of this genre is the voluminous *youji* by Xu Xiake (Ming dynasty), which goes far beyond the scope of “landscape essays”. Thus it seems more appropriate to render *youji* into something more inclusive, such as “travel notes”.

In Tang times, first-hand biographical information was provided by the close relatives or friends of a deceased person in the form of a *xingzhuang* 行狀. This is more like a bare-bone résumé than a biography (p. 186). Twitchett calls it fittingly “account of conduct”.

In traditional poetry and prose, two stars, Shen and Shang, are mentioned together to denote separation by an extremely long distance. Shen is a star in the Shen (Triaster) stellar lodge in the west; Shang is a star in the Xin (Heart) stellar lodge in the east. One can never sight the two stars under the same sky. When translated as Orion and Antares (p. 284) without explanation, they are not comprehensible.

With the arrival of Buddhism from the Subcontinent, the concept of the Indian mystical animal makara (*mojie*) reached China. It is identified as *yu long* 魚龍 in the sources, which is rendered in *Imaginaries* as “fish and dragons” (p. 230).

These quibbles notwithstanding, *Imaginaries* is a unique work of scholarship on the cross-pollination between geography and literature in mid-Tang china.

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CHEEHYUNG HARRISON KIM:

*Heroes and Toilers: Work as Life in Postwar North Korea, 1953–1961*. xiii, 261 pp. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. ISBN 978 0 231 54609 6.

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Until recently, scholars of international relations have dominated academic commentary on North Korea, the reason for this disciplinary bias being that it was believed easier to apply esoteric theory to the workings of the DPRK state than it was to conduct empirical research either inside the country or by using DPRK materials. But the tide is turning, and a number of impactful works have recently emerged in the fields of anthropology, culture, and history.

Cheehyung Harrison Kim's *Heroes and Toilers: Work as Life in Postwar North Korea, 1953–1961* is the newest contribution to the field of historical inquiry on North Korea. Across five chapters, an introduction and a conclusion, Kim looks at the relationship between life, labour and the state in 1950s–60s North Korea. Dense in detail and rich with historical vignettes, *Heroes and Toilers* interrogates what it meant to work in the newly emergent North Korean state. Specifically, how did the state package and present a work ideology that compelled ordinary citizens to endure long hours and dangerous conditions? To what extent was the state successful in shaping everyday life as a space for production and administration? And how should we understand the tensions that subsequently arose between the state's "work as a glorified nationalist project" and the reality of everyday toil for ordinary citizens in North Korea?

Awarded a doctoral degree from Columbia University, Kim is currently a faculty member in the Center for Korean Studies at the University of Hawai'i. His first book, *Heroes and Toilers* offers both a revealing account of life in industrializing North Korea, while situating transnationally the country's dramatic economic and social changes within the global industrialism of the time. Kim's research sits thematically alongside Suzy Kim's *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution 1945–1950* (2013) and Andrei Lankov's *The Real North Korea* (2013). The political changes described in *Heroes and Toilers* can be further understood through a reading of Adrian Buzo's *The Guerilla Dynasty* (1999) exposition of North Korea's political economy, while Kim's rendering of the nascent North Korean economy as a transnational project complements Hyun Ok Park's (2015) thesis that "capital has already unified Korea in a transnational form".

In the first chapter, Kim draws on the thinking of Marx, Smith, and Calvin to explicate historically how labour was understood in the industrializing world. In positioning the relationship of the state to labour, as it was understood in post-war North Korea (1950–53), Kim presents the North Korean state not as an exception to the exploitative relationship of production to labour, but as similar to states in the capitalist world. In an echo of how work was framed in capitalist democracies of