those who wished to know the names and positions of the constellations. The closing lines of the *Xuan xiang shi* say that the poem was meant for those who wanted to *tui bu* 推步 , a reference to the esoteric arts of "pacing" the sun, moon, planets, and stars to calculate their positions and determine one's fortune on that basis. Similarly, the title of Wang Ximing's poem seems intended to link it to the Taoist poetry and practices that related to the arts of *bu xu* 步虛 by which Taoist adepts treaded the array of stars in order to gain mastery over them.[13]

As I mentioned at the outset of this short review, Lillian Tseng's work is ambitious in its reach. Parts of it promise to do for Han dynasty studies what Edward Schafer's 1977 work *Pacing the Void* accomplished in its exploration of Tang dynasty literary images of the stars, planets, and other celestial bodies that interest Tseng.[14] Yet nowhere in her book does Tseng cite Schafer nor for that matter even list his book in her bibliography. That is a pity. There is much in Schafer's work that would have improved and enriched Tseng's efforts and helped her achieve her ambitions.

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Mortality in Traditional Chinese Thought. Edited by Amy Olberding and Philip J. Ivanhoe. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2011. Pp. ix + 313. $85.00.

A study of the ideas of mortality and death as conceived in the traditional world of the West would start from the differing doctrines of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and the teachings of the philosophers of Greece. For traditional China there are few, if any, direct pronouncements that can be placed alongside the teachings of St. Paul

13 In his detailed study of the *Bu tian ge,* Zhou Xiaolu 周曉陸 , *Bu tian ge yanjiu* 步天歌研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian 中國書店), p. 203, briefly refers to the influence of Taoism and Taoist poetry on early astronomy, astrology, and calendrics, as well as on poetical works such as the *Bu tian ge.* While it is clear that Tseng relied heavily on Zhou's scholarship, she overlooks the importance of Taoism in her comments on the *Xuan xiang shi* and *Bu tian ge* and more generally in her reconstruction of the Han and early medieval history of Chinese astronomy.

14 Edward H. Schafer, *Pacing the Void: T'ang Approaches to the Stars* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977). For a review of Schafer's work that captures its significance for our understanding of Chinese astronomy and culture in general, see John S. Major's piece in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40, no. 1 (June 1980), pp. 278–85.

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or the *Apology* or *Phaedo* of Plato; and while attention of scholars and teachers is or was sometimes concentrated on particular figures such as Kongzi or Laozi it cannot necessarily be assumed that their ideas were always of sufficient strength to affect all subsequent thinking, as might perhaps be claimed for St. John or Socrates. Fortunately we are now past the stage of a classification of Chinese thought in simple terms as Confucian and Daoist.

However, despite the lack of an ordered essay on the subject, mortality and death, which are defined in this book in a note before the index, can hardly avoid mention in most of the early Chinese texts that we possess and which perhaps represent a wider variety of points of view than are expressed in writing for corresponding periods of Europe. We are also better informed for China in another way. Early writings describe the rituals and regulations for handling death and mourning at length, possibly in greater detail than we have for the West; and such information is supported and extended by the rich evidence forthcoming from excavation.

Unsurprisingly the approaches to the subject differ widely, springing as they may from both religious beliefs and secular practice. For Europe, it would be impossible to avoid taking full account of concepts such as ethical judgement, heroism, and self-sacrifice; for Asia ideas of hierarchy enter in almost from the start. While no reader would expect the volume under review to handle the subject comprehensively, as the editors are quite right to point out, it includes contributions written from a variety of points of view, such as those of the historian, art-historian, textual scholar, literary critic, student of religions, philosopher, and psychologist. Any reader will name aspects of the subject that elude attention here, such as the treatment of death in Chinese poetry (first mentioned on p. 274), or the concepts behind the infliction of death, either by suicide or judicial decision that are seen in varying degrees of importance in each culture. Death by judicial decision is mentioned once (p. 208).

The subject can be studied only within the broad context of some of the major beliefs and opinions that prevailed in Chinese thought. Those of especial concern here would include that of a unitary view of the universe with its three interlocking estates of Heaven, Earth, and Man; of the existence of a variety of occult forces capable of controlling human destinies; of transformation (*hua* 化) from one type of living creature into another; of abandonment, or destruction, of an existing state of affairs (*bian* 變); of unending cyclical change; of the duties due to ensuring the continuity of a family; of the acceptance of hierarchies that govern human existence. Contradictory as some of these principles or modes of thought may be, they do not seem to have been mutually exclusive and could hold a place in the mind concurrently. The same capacity for maintaining different and perhaps opposing points of view may be seen with particular reference to the various concepts of the treatment of death and the hope of an after-life.

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Such concepts included the possibility of prolonging life as lived on earth such that death would not take place, that result being achieved by ingesting the alchemist's medicaments *bu si zhi yao* 不死之藥 , or ritually calling back the soul to earth, as in the "Zhao hun" 招魂 poem or by a practitioner's intervention. Diametrically opposed to this hope went the image of the *xian* 仙 immortals living in a realm utterly distinct from the world of the living.[1] There may be added the concept of an after-life spent in company with the more permanent elements of the universe, such as sun and moon, or in the paradise over which the Queen Mother of the West presided, to either of which part of the human soul could be guided. To some, death was followed by a continued existence of part of the soul inside the tomb, for which provision was due. Such an existence would be faced by precisely the same problems as those encountered on earth and the dead must be provided with the means of facing them. In some cases diligent mourners took steps to preserve the body in its intact state, and contrived to do so successfully for two thousand years;[2] in at least one instance we hear of the resurrection of a dead person.[3] Texts mention a continued existence in the "Yellow Springs" (*huangquan* 黃泉) but the idea is not explained and remains hazy. Reacting against these and other beliefs that brought with them an abundance of irrational fears, there were some figures such as Wang Chong 王充 (27–*c*. 100) who sought to allay human misapprehensions by preaching a refusal to succumb to such imaginary and unproven possibilities.

In treating aspects of these ideas and their problems, Mu-chou Poo traces how hierarchies take their place in burial practice during Zhou times and how the subsequent development of tombs replicate conditions of the land of the living. The idea of a future life moves from that of the restrictions imposed by a tomb to that of a world in which the dead are free to roam at will, subject to the controls imposed by officials.

In his highly detailed examination of the well known painting from Mawangdui 馬王堆 , Eugene Y. Wang draws on the contemporary medical manuscripts to explain some of the motifs of the artist, seen both on the painting itself and in the décor of the coffins. He interprets the iconography as depicting the process of revitalisation and the perpetual interaction of Yin and Yang. Sexual activities are seen as lurking

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1 See the pictorial representation at Yingchengzi 營城子 , reproduced in Loewe, *Ways to Paradise: The Chinese Quest for Immortality* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979), pl. XXVIII.

2 In addition to the well-known instance at Mawangdui, this practice was seen in tomb no. 168, Fenghuangshan 鳳凰山 , Jiangling 江陵 , dated 167 B.C.E. (*Wenwu* 文物 , 1975, no. 9, pp. 1–7, 22).

3 See the document found at Fangmatan 放馬灘 , Gansu 甘肅 (*Wenwu,* 1989, no. 2, p. 10; 1990, no. 4, pp. 43–47). See also Donald Harper, "Resurrection in Warring States Popular Religion," *Taoist Resources* 5, no. 2 (1994), pp. 13–28.

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or being suggested throughout, and here it must perhaps be asked whether such implications were always intended or would have been immediately apparent to an observer of the painting. Kunlun may perhaps be seen as the destiny of the deceased woman's soul. But the suggestion that that realm is depicted in the form a pyramidical mountain painted on one of the coffins (see fig. 17) may perhaps be in question; the identification runs counter to that seen elsewhere, of a mountain whose slopes are slanted outwards, with a view to making them unassailable to a climber.[4]

Quite correctly Jue Guo points out, as has been recognised elsewhere, that those who were being buried or were preparing a burial experienced no difficulty in harbouring several views of an after-life and making appropriate preparation for each one. She notes views of the tomb in two ways, as an intermediate station between one form of existence and another, and as a permanent abode, as evidenced in the type of funerary equipment. In this connection attention may be drawn to the motif of the half open door that is depicted in some tombs and has yet to be explained satisfactorily.[5] Perhaps there is not enough attention to the sharp reminder of some funerary furnishings, of the need to defend the dead from "all perils and dangers of this night." Such is the message of the instruments and texts for divination or medical treatment, or symbolic treasures such as jades and mirrors that found their place in so many tombs. In general little note is taken here of the many types of written document that were buried or of the reasons for that practice; instead the author concentrates on one particular type of document to which full attention is not always paid elsewhere. These are described as the "informing the underground" (*gaodi* 告地) texts which record ritual communications among different realms of being and thereby supply another picture of Han concepts of the after-life.

Roger Ames considers the subject from a philosophical point of view, calling on figures such as William James and Nietzsche and wisely citing the warning voiced by I. A. Richards of the dangers if imposing Western categories on non-Western modes

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4 See Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, ed., *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋 (preface 1894; reprint, Taibei: Huazheng shuju 華正書局, 1991), *juan* 3A, "Da zongshi" 大宗師, p. 247, "Xi Wang Mu de zhi zuo hu Shaoguang" 西王母得之坐乎少廣. Hayashi Minao 林巳奈夫, "Kandai kishin no sekai" 漢代鬼神の世界, *Tōhō gakuhō* 東方学報 (Kyoto), 46 (March 1974), pp. 231, 298, n. 19 cites from the [*Hainei*] *Shizhou ji*〔海內〕十洲記 to describe such a mountain. A representation of a pair of similar type of objects, surmounted by the Queen and her partner the king, from sculptures of Yi'nan 沂南 is reproduced in Loewe, *Ways to Paradise,* p. 123, fig. 21.

5 For an example, see *Mixian Dahuting Han mu* 密縣打虎亭漢墓, ed. Henan sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 河南省文物研究所 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社, 1993), pl. II; reproduced in Nylan and Loewe, eds., *China's Early Empires: A Re-appraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 95, fig. 2.9.

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of thought. He asks what is the role of warfare in correlative thinking and refers to writings on strategy or military ventures. Unfortunately the chapter is written in an involved style and with diction that may make comprehension difficult (e.g., pp. 117, 122, 124, 125, and 129); in particular Chinese readers would be hard put to it to find a Chinese equivalent for "dyads" in their dictionaries. While the chapter is concerned with warfare it does not demonstrate how the impact of warfare affected Chinese ideas of death and mortality in a way that was more pronounced than in the West.

As a literary critic, Ivanhoe sees Kongzi as adhering to ethical values to determine a justification for mourning, and writes on what is the classic case in which Kongzi's views are expressed, at the death of his disciple Yan Hui 顏回 . Kongzi grieves at the way in which this young man had been torn away from his pursuit of the *dao,* such a death meriting a lament at the loss incurred by mankind. As opposed to the attitudes of a Zhuangzi, who sees death within the context of natural processes, Kongzi's *dao* is essentially concerned with aspirations and objectives of this world. His understanding of human life includes a realistic understanding of death.

Amy Olberding correctly distinguishes between grief as an emotion and mourning as a ritual, both of which deserve consideration in the context of social circumstances and relationships of kin. In particular, she discusses the differences inherent in reactions to the death of a parent and a child. The death of a parent is in fact to be expected as part of the normal pattern of life; the extent and type of grief that a child expresses derives from the plain fact that he or she is unable to settle the debt owed to the parents. Grief for a child was far less poignant at a time when infant mortality was far from infrequent, than at times when medical care had reduced this to a minimum.

Not every reader would accept Fingarette's discernment of a "magical" element in Kongzi's account of ritual, as Olberding cites, with agreement (pp. 166–67). Like Ames, she is fully aware of the dangers of seeking to explain attitudes to death by reference to social conditions that are not applicable (p. 154). But she may perhaps run close to doing so in applying Western ideas of "entitlement" or "duty" to Kongzi and his age (p. 163).

Mark Csikzentmihalyi considers various concepts of the length and control of one's lifespan. They range from the ability to negotiate with Siming 司命 , seen as an official whose functions are comparable with those of officials of this world, to the function of Heaven which is arbitrary and Tianming 天命 which is providential. Mourning takes different forms, from intense and perhaps excessive grief to a more calculated sense of loss of a person who is capable and authorized to transmit the messages of a sage, and here once again we have the case of Kongzi's grief for Yan Hui. These ideas are examined in the light of pre-imperial literature and the much later commentaries of, e.g., He Yan 何晏 (190–249) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200).

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Rendering of Siming as "Manager of Allotments" is unfortunate for English readers, who know allotments as small plots of land that they can rent for domestic gardening, and which are under the general management of a low-grade, faceless local official.

In the first half of his chapter, Mark Berkson brings out basic features of two approaches to life and death; in the one they are parts of the natural process of the cosmos; in the other consideration is limited to terms of man-made values. In his second half he faces the distinction between a way of life imparted by nature and the use of human skills either to improve or to subvert it. The sage is able to reconcile these two approaches by living apart from human concepts and their limitations, but applying them so as to achieve a more smooth type of existence.

Archaeology has brought out all too clearly the excessive fineries of a funeral that Zhuangzi scorned (p. 208) and it may be noted that it was not only those of Zhuangzi's persuasion who distrusted their value, albeit for different reasons. Han Wendi 漢文帝 (r. 180–157 B.C.E.) left strict instructions for restricting the style of his burial and the mourning ritual, so as to relieve human distress caused by the expense and disruption of life. Others in Han times shared his view.[6] Yet others argued in practical terms that tombs stuffed with treasures were nothing less than an invitation to robbers.

Michael Puett's chapter depends on an assumption that early China was a "haunted world," tempered by the attempts of some to secure escape by self-divinisation. In what is perhaps the most rigid and divisive of all the hierarchies known in early China, the sage and the true man (*zhenren* 真人) above him exist on a level far removed from the concerns of those who are not sages, with their limitations. Such is to be learnt from the *Huainanzi* 淮南子. But while the sage and true man exist on a higher level, they are not entirely detached from the aspirations of those who are not blessed in that way. At death those who are not sages become ghosts (*gui* 鬼) and haunt the world that they have just left; sages are autonomous, separated from that realm, who yet create a system of rituals and sacrifices as a means of benefiting the human race. Not all readers would agree that the passages of the *Huainanzi, Mozi* 墨子 and *Liji* 禮記 that are quoted necessarily allow such an interpretation or that it lay behind the minds of the authors of those works.

A deep contrast with the foregoing chapters appears when Tao Jiang considers the ideas of William James and Linji 臨濟, a major figure in Chan Buddhism of the ninth century. James's ideas of immortality are seen in a context of a search for the spiritual and ethical well-being for mankind. He questions whether the concept of

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[6] E.g., see the critical comparison of old and new style burials in the *Yantie lun* 鹽鐵論, chapter 29 "San buzu" 散不足.

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an immortality that is available for all requires elimination of personal identity. But he sees the value of such a belief, as opposed to an exclusive concern with a truth that is supported by evidence and reason; for it contributes to the achievement of an ethical life. Linji was hoping to attain clarity and enlightenment. Rejecting the idea of another world, in which salvation is to be found, he saw the means of re-awakening by a return to the conditions of the ordinary world. Such a means involved not only a renunciation of a worldly way of life with its desires but also a rejection of excessive attachment to those Buddhist ideals, practices, and disciplines that are equally delusive. While William James was looking to metaphysical speculation, Linji was concerned with practicalities.

The final chapter, by Guoxiang Peng, concerns the attention paid to death by Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529) and others, as opposed to the comparative disregard for the subject in the Confucian tradition of earlier times. He sees reasons for this change not only in the influence of Buddhist theory but also in the effect of the oppression and cruelties imposed by a ruthless government. The change of attitude is seen in the way in which death had become a subject for open discussion; in the attention paid to the general love of life and fear of death as a means of promoting a Confucian style of living; and in the place to be taken by spiritual advancement in Confucian thought. Kongzi's question of "While not yet understanding life, how could you understand death?" (未知生，焉知死？) lies behind much of what was written on the subject in the middle years of the Ming dynasty, and led some to conclude that "the key to being liberated from life and death lies in gaining enlightenment about the meaning and significance of one's present life rather than in an exploration of the afterlife world" (p. 286).

It will be seen that there is much that is stimulating in all these chapters, whose widely differing approaches underline the importance of the subject in Chinese thinking. The authors are to be congratulated on citing original source material where this is appropriate and, with some exceptions, in writing in a manner that is easily comprehensible, free of jargon, and sparing of technical terms. Perhaps unavoidably the book does not entirely avoid some general or loose expressions or implications that may be questionable, and at times there is a failure to allow for differences in interpreting parts of a Chinese text. The standard of referencing is at times faulty.

Thus Ames writes of the "Abrahamic traditions" as if these were one and the same, in a manner that can hardly be sustained (p. 118). Puett's statement that "the *Huainanzi* was, of course, an imperial text" cannot survive question, and it is followed shortly by the further statement "the *Huainanzi* was, to say the least, out of favor in imperial circles" (p. 243). Imperial circles in the time of Liu An 劉安 were in no way as unitary as is implied. In a lesser way, Wang (p. 70) refers to "Classical texts" which turn out to be the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 and the *Huainanzi,* which are not

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included in the category of *jing* 經 .

Jue Guo's rendering of the *gaodi* text (pp. 98–99) calls for comment. The formula that is used for dating the text is seen regularly in administrative documents of Western Han times. It appears in our histories, perhaps uniquely, in Chapter 60 of the *Shiji* 史記 , which reproduces a file of the central government of 117 B.C.E. (see pp. 2105, 2111). Dating by means of numbering the days in the month seems not to have been adopted before Eastern Han. Strip no. 35A should be shown as denoting the address to which the document is being sent, i.e., Andu 安都 "the citadel of peace" as written in large characters, under the seal of the Assistant of (the county of) Jiangling 江陵 . Translation requires full attention to the administrative forms of the Han empire, where the counties (*xian* 縣) were composed of constituent districts (*xiang* 鄉), each district including the *li* 里 . Yan 燕 , as the subject of this official report, must be identified in terms of her liability for service and tax, as is the regular procedure in documents found at Juyan 居延 . This is noted here by her description as *danü* 大女 "adult" which defines a category and should be rendered as "adult" rather than "elder woman" (the *danü* were aged fourteen years and over; those of seven to fourteen were *shinü* 使女 ; those of six and below were *weishi* 未使). The report is thus made by Qi 起 , of Zhongxiang 中鄉 , i.e., one of the districts of the county of Jiangling, and concerns the woman Yan, adult, of Xin'an 新安 *li,* of Zhongxiang district.

In rendering the dialogue between the *po* 魄 and the *hun* 魂 as related in the *Huainanzi* (p. 229), Puett ignores the comment of Wan Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832) who questions whether the omission of the four characters *po yue wuyou* 魄曰無有 in the received text has in fact left it meaningless. In his citation from the *Liji* (p. 240; starting "Zai Wo said") there is nothing to show that translation of the four characters *xun hao qi chuang* 焄蒿悽愴 , subject as they are to at least three different interpretations, has been omitted. In the same passage "instituting the pivot of action" is difficult to understand, varying as it does from the rendering of Couvreur who follows the sub-commentary. In a translation from the *Huainanzi,* Puett gives no reason to render *bin* 殯 as "tablet for the deceased" rather than "encoffined corpse." On p. 180, Csikzentmihalyi takes Qi 齊 to refer to "[the territory of the old state of] Qi," whereas there is no reason why it should not refer to Qi *guo,* one of the administrative units of the Han empire.

Editorial work should have eliminated a number of imperfections. References to Liu Wendian's 劉文典 fine edition of the *Huainanzi* (p. 78, n. 25) and to Wen Yiduo 聞一多 (p. 79, n. 28) give their dates as 1989 and 1982; and while these are indeed the dates of reprints they fail to do justice to the authors, whose works were in fact published in 1926 and 1945. This is no minor point; unwary readers will assume that the two scholars were writing after the discovery of the painting from Mawangdui,

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and with full knowledge thereof, instead of some decades earlier. Note 48 (p. 80) should refer specifically to the second and enlarged print of Yuan Ke's 袁珂 edition of the *Shanhai jing;* the reference to the *Han shu* 漢書 simply by page number and without indication of the chapter (p. 82, n. 74) is insufficient. Similarly Wang's references to the *Huainanzi* simply by the page of the edition that he chooses to use, without the title of the chapter, are simply useless to readers who work with different editions, such as Liu Wendian's original print (p. 83, nn. 87, 88, 103). Ames fails to give a reference to Pang Pu's 龐樸 views to which he pays some attention (p. 129). It is insufficient simply to refer to *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報 by the month of issue, without pagination (Csikzentmihalyi, p. 188, n. 3).

The publishers have treated both the authors and their readers shabbily with the poor quality of the illustrations, where it is not always possible to discern the points at issue (e.g., pp. 46–47, fig. 4, 5). Figure 21 (p. 99) is reduced to a size that is far from comfortable; readers would have been served better by reproduction of the line drawings of the inscriptions, presented with admirable clarity in *Wenwu,* 1993, no. 8, pp. 16–17.

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Ming Erotic Novellas: Genre, Consumption, and Religiosity in Cultural Practice. By Richard G. Wang. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 319. $52.00.

Richard Wang's book is about a group of Ming novellas that are vital in understanding the history of Chinese fiction between the Tang and the Qing. They are middle-length stories, longer than Tang *chuanqi* 傳奇, but shorter than the full-length *xiaoshuo* 小說, that tell of romantic and erotic liaisons between young literati and talented female counterparts. Taken as a group, they span the range of relatively chaste stories about monogamous love to polygamous extravaganzas that become the models for later vernacular romances in the late Ming and early and middle Qing. They are important for having established what I call the classic polygamous love story, in which a young man meets a series of women with whom he has sexual liaisons, including unmarried women, nuns, prostitutes, and other men's wives and concubines, a group of whom he finally marries in a grand polygamous finale. Nothing of the sort ever existed before, except in the historical and fictional reports of libertine emperors or other such figures. Wang launches the most thorough study to date by placing the works not only in their literary historical framework but examining their production, consumption,

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