

Wixted, John Timothy, Review of Michael S. Duke, *Lu You* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1977), in *Journal of Asian Studies* 40.4 (Aug. 1981), pp. 758-760. [陸游]

Lu You. By MICHAEL S. DUKE. Boston: Twayne, 1977. 160 pp. Notes, Select Bibliography, Index. \$12.50.

Lu You is a useful introduction to the poetry of this prolific twelfth century writer. Michael S. Duke has divided his book into seven chapters: the first outlines the biography and character of Lu You; the second briefly sketches the development of his poetry; and the remaining five chapters deal with recurrent themes in the poet's corpus: patriotism, Daoism and alchemy, wine, the commonplace, and dreams.

The personality and poetry of Lu You are said to "exhibit a constant tension and oscillation between two contradictory and irreconcilable tendencies—a passion for

personal freedom and an equally strong commitment to public service," i.e., a tension between Daoism and Confucian orthodoxy (p. 19). This expands on the antithesis found in Lu You's poetry, for example, by Burton Watson (Lu You, "an ardent activist, patriot, and reformer," identifying himself with Du Fu, is contrasted with "the contented, philosophical farmer," drawing on Tao Qian; "the central problem in the interpretation of Lu Yu's life and works is that of how these two disparate themes and facets of personality are related within a single man" [*The Old Man Who Does As He Pleases* (New York, 1973), p. xiv]). Duke's characterization is so broadly formulated as to be impossibly vague; it is doubtless intended, however, to bring into view the Daoist and alchemical interests of the poet.

It is in this regard that Duke has performed a real service. Although there exists a monograph in English on the subject (*Lu Yu, The Poet-Alchemist*, by Ho Peng Yoke, Goh Thean Chye, and Beda Lim [Canberra, 1972]), this is the first Western-language treatment that attempts to integrate the poet's Daoist and alchemical concerns into his life and work as a whole. (Yoshikawa Kōjirō in *An Introduction to Sung Poetry* [Cambridge, Mass., 1967] omits mention of them.) Similarly, following the lead of Zhao Yi (1727–1814), Duke discusses the role of dreams in Lu You's poetry, showing how they are interrelated with themes like patriotism.

In Chapter 2 of the book, "From Realism to Transcendence: The Origin and Development of Lu You's Poetic Style," Duke first recounts Lu You's own perception of his poetic development and then briefly outlines several influences on his style, e.g., Jiangxi poetry, Du Fu, and Mei Yaochen. The word "realism" in the chapter title is nowhere explained and certainly is inappropriate, for Lu's early Jiangxi-style poetry can scarcely be called "realistic." In fact, Qian Zhongshu has argued, with some exaggeration, that "in spite of his avowed dislike of pretty-pretty late T'ang poets, he never succeeded in shaking off their influence and frequently borrowed from them" (*Philobiblon* 3 [Dec. 1946]: 42). In this chapter, however, many of the influences at work on the poet are suggestively presented in a short space.

A word should be said about the treatment of poems in the book. After the translated text is presented, Duke normally uses one or more paragraphs to explicate names or expressions appearing in the poem; he then proceeds with the argument of the book. I mention this, so that the reader can anticipate jumping over certain paragraphs to follow the thread of the discussion, or can choose to linger over such passages and refer back to the text they serve to explicate. Furthermore, one should note that the poems are discussed thematically or in terms of the author's life and thought, and not in terms of current critical analysis.

It is the author's style of translation to minimize the specification of pronominal subjects and to generalize or impersonalize the action. An example of the latter tendency, which at times takes some getting used to, is the following:

Liberated mind forgets world's affairs,
Leisured steps leave marshy arbor.
Rustic spot knows only withdrawal,
Heart's expectations never again heroic. (p. 58)

Both tendencies are illustrated—with most satisfactory results—in the following ("Reading Tao's Poetry"):

My poems envy Tao Yuan-ming's,
Regret not recreating his subtlety.
Resigning, returning, also too late;

In drinking wine, perhaps nearly equal.
Light rain, hoeing melon patch;
Moonlight, sitting on fishing rock.
A thousand years and no such man;
With whom shall I go home! (p. 58)

Duke has a penchant for classifying by number. The poet's landscape poems are divided thematically into three basic types, and his pastoral poems are divided into four general types (p. 117). Of Lu You he says, "He wrote approximately 134 dream poems, on four major and six minor themes" (p. 132); poems are then totaled category by category. It all seems too mechanical.

Similarly, Duke draws on Carl Jung in an attempt to explain the development of Lu You's personality in terms of that scholar's archetypes (see pp. 19, 34, 60, 132, 140; unfortunately, Jung is omitted from the index). Here again, it is not that one takes issue with the categories per se, but that they are introduced rather too abruptly (esp. on p. 19) and applied with little or no qualification. Of course, Duke is working under the constraint of space. And it must be granted, he does manage to present a great deal about Lu You's nearly 10,000 poems in a short 125 pages of text.

A final word is in order concerning the selected bibliography. There are works that should not have been omitted; one will find most of them fully cited in my finding list to annotated texts and other translations of those poems by Lu You included by Burton Watson in his work on the poems, published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 96,2 [April-June 1976]: 341-43).

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