



## Liezi

Marie-Julie Maitre

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The largest library in China is the National Library in Beijing, rivalled only by the Shanghai Library. There are now over 1500 university libraries in China, the most important of which is that of Peking University.

### Further reading

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D.M. Campbell

### Liezi

The *Liezi* is a collection of texts which takes its name from an ancient Daoist, Lie Yukou, who is believed to have lived during the \*Spring and Autumn (*chunqiu*) period (722–476 BC). He was thought to be an allegorical character created by \*Zhuangzi but nowadays many scholars consider that Liezi was a real person who was born about 400 BC. According to the \*Zhuangzi, he is said to have lived for forty years hidden in the state of Zheng before being forced to move to the state of Wei because of a famine. Lie Yukou is described as a model of wise detachment, humility and simplicity, but also as having the power to ride the wind and rise into the air like the immortals, or a mystical communion with nature.

The book *Liezi* is a collection of stories, sayings and brief philosophical essays grouped into eight chapters. Chapter seven is named after Yang Zhu, a philosopher of the \*Warring States Period (*zhanguo*). It may have been written by another hand and is not considered as Daoist, because of the difference in the theme, thought and mood, and also because of its usage

of words (for instance, it rarely employs the term Dao). It develops hedonist ideas and topics such as the value of detachment from social interests such as career, and even from emotions, by accepting death without pathos; the appearance of illusory perceptions, and spontaneity, which helps acceptance of the wonders of nature and the imagination, as opposed to the narrow knowledge of \*Confucianism. The *Liezi* mainly focuses on the Dao, the fundamental principle which is the origin of things and of their changes, to which human life should conform.

The *Liezi* is considered one of the classics of \*Daoism which include the \**Dao de jing* and the \**Zhuangzi*. \*Tang Xuanzong recognised this book as a Daoist classical text by giving it the title *Chongxu zhenjing* (*True Classic of Simplicity and Vacuity*). Emperor \*Song Zhenzong also honoured this book as the *Chongxu zhide zhenjing* (*True Classic of Simplicity and Vacuity and Perfect Virtue*).

The dating of the *Liezi* is controversial because about a quarter of this book is found in other sources written between the \*Han dynasty and the \*Eastern Jin dynasty. For this reason, the *Liezi* is recognised as heterogeneous. Chinese scholars argued for a late dating, after the \*Han dynasty, but Westerners believed it dates from before this dynasty. Some scholars argue that the *Liezi* should not be dated much earlier than its preface and commentary by Zhang Zhan, who wrote during the \*Eastern Jin dynasty, and that most of the book comes from this period.

Marie-Julie Frainais-Maitre

### Further reading

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Marie-Julie Maitre

### Lin Biao (1907–71)

Lin Biao was one of the most successful communist generals of the Chinese revolution. As a politician, he became \*Mao Zedong's designated successor, only to fall out of favour and perish during a failed coup.

Lin joined the \*CCP in 1925 and attended the \*Huangpu Military Academy in the following year. Lin commanded a platoon during the \*Northern Expedition and, after the GMD-CCP split, joined Mao Zedong and \*Zhu De in \*Jinggangshan. During the \*Long March, Lin commanded one of the vanguard units and, during World War II, he commanded a division until wounded by friendly fire in 1937. Lin went to Moscow for treatment, but ill health would continue to plague him through the years. During the \*Civil War 1945–49, Lin's army drove GMD forces out of northeast China and later captured Beijing and Tianjin. His performance during the revolution earned him wide regard as the CCP's best general, but in 1950, Lin declined command of Chinese forces during the \*Korean War 1950–53. After Peng Dehuai's opposition to the \*Great Leap Forward, he became Defence Minister and earned Mao's patronage.

Although Lin was presented as Mao's successor during the \*Cultural Revolution, Mao eventually grew to fear his growing power. Lin and his family apparently staged a preemptive coup, but this failed, and in their haste to flee to the Soviet Union, their plane crashed in Mongolia, killing all on board.

Christopher Lew

### Lin Daiyu

The tragic heroine of \**Honglouloumeng* (*Dream of the Red Chamber*), Lin Daiyu is the true love of the novel's protagonist \*Baoyu. Orphaned and taken in by her maternal great aunt (Baoyu's grandmother), Daiyu feels unloved and insecure. From birth she is physically weak, and this condition is tied to her emotional state, resulting in a gradual deterioration. Despite the best efforts of the other girls of the household and Baoyu's affections, she remains consumed by self-pity and loneliness. Fearing an uncertain future and unloved death, she likens herself to falling blossom in the famous scene *Daiyu zang hua* (*Daiyu buries flowers*). As part of the celestial frame to the novel's earthly plot, in a previous life as a flower Daiyu received kindness from Baoyu in the form of watering, and in this life must repay this debt of gratitude in tears.

In the popular ending to the novel attributed to Gao E, Daiyu's death is brought about by intense grief after Baoyu is tricked into marrying \*Baochai in her place. Daiyu is commonly understood as a contrasting figure to her perceived romantic rival Baochai whose character is the antithesis of Daiyu's. While Baochai is strong, perfectly-mannered, pleases everyone and encourages Baoyu to conform to familial and social expectations by becoming an official, Daiyu is weak, ill-tempered and uncompromising, but sympathises with Baoyu's anti-mainstream thinking and thus shares a deeper relationship with him.

J. Marshall Craig

### Lin Zexu (1785–1850)

Lin Zexu was a Chinese scholar and official during the \*Qing dynasty. He was born in Fuzhou, Fujian Province. His father was a school teacher and provided him with a good education. In 1811 Lin received the *jinshi* degree, the highest