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Gendered ritual and performative literacy : Yao Women, goddesses of fertility, and the Chinese imperial state

Chen, Meiwen

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Author: Chen Meiwen

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Manuscripts Utilized in This Thesis

For this thesis, I have consulted three European collections of Yao manuscripts stored in the East Asian Library of Leiden University, the Bavaria State Library in Munich and the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford, as well as collections I have made during my various fieldwork trips to Yunnan and Guangxi in China between 1999 and 2015. The classification of Yao manuscripts is still a moot point. In order to give readers a general picture of the genres of Yao manuscripts, I have adopted a broad categorical concept, proposed by certain Chinese scholars of Yao studies, such as Xu Zhuxiang, Huang Guiquan and Pan Jinxiang, that divides Yao texts into two main categories: ‘books for gods and spirits’ (*shenshu*) and ‘songbooks’ (*geshu*). In the category of ‘books for gods and spirits’, there are three sub-categories, namely: Daoist Priest Manuscripts (*daogongshu*), Ritual Master Manuscripts (*shigongshu*) and Miscellaneous Books (*zashu*). A detailed description of the Yao manuscripts in terms of their scriptural and ritual characteristics, temporal, textual and linguistic features can be found between pp. 57 and 82. Seventeen manuscripts have been chosen and utilized for different purposes in the argumentation of this dissertation. In the following table I give a brief introduction to each of these 17 manuscripts: to which collection it belongs (with call no.), its title, a brief description of its genre and ritual purpose, the pages on which it has been mentioned in this thesis, and certain ancillary information concerning the manuscript in question.

	Collection	Call no.	Title	Brief Description	Mentioned in	Notes
1	Leiden	UB 2004-15 Folder 1	Unspecified.	-A Mun ritual-master manuscript. -Chanted during rites asking for children or in an ordination ceremony to invite the Mother of Emperors (<i>dimu</i>)	Pp. 175-185 and Pp. 235-280 (Appendix 1)	Judging from its contents, the manuscript might originally have borne the title <i>Ritual of the Red-Fertility Building</i> (<i>honglou ke</i>) (more details see p. 175, Fn 67).
2		UB 2004-15 Folder 2	<i>The Middle Chapter of the Jade Emperor (Yuhuang zhongjuanjing)</i>	-A Mun Daoist-priest manuscript (Scripture for Daoist sacrificial rites and regimen practices).	Pp. 75	-Copied by Li Xuanlian in the first year of the Xianfeng reign of the Qing dynasty (1851)
3		UB 2004-15 Folder 23	<i>Scripture of Miscellaneous Kinds (Zhupinjing)</i>	-A Mun Daoist-priest manuscript (Scripture for Daoist sacrificial rites and regimen practices).	P. 75	-Copied by Deng Xuanhe (year of composition unclear)
4		UB 2004-15 Folder 25	<i>Esoteric Words of Heavenly Secrets for the Dead on the Hazardous Road (Xionglu zhaiwang tianji miyu)</i>	-A Mun Daoist-priest manuscript (Esoteric words for funerary rites).	P. 71	This copy was completed on the tenth of July, the twentieth year of Guangxu reign (the year of Jiawu) by lunar calendar (1894)
5		UB 2004-15 Folder 116	<i>A Book of Esoteric Words</i>	-A Mun Daoist-priest	P. 111	This book was completed on

			<i>for Ordination, Given by the Master of Ordination, Jiang Xuanhong, to the Disciple Deng Xian/Xuan-Cai to Be Applied Intensively to Attain the Way</i> (yiben shoujie miyu jiedushi Jiang Xuanhong geifu dizi Deng Xian/Xuan-Cai yongying shifang shangdao)	manuscript (Esoteric words for ordination ceremony).		the twentieth of September, the fifteenth year of Guangxu reign (the year of Yichou) by lunar calendar (1889)
6		UB 2004-15 Folder 216	<i>Ritual for Bowing a Hundred Times Facing Heaven for the Expiation Sins</i> (chaotian baibai ke xiaozui)	-A Mun Daoist-priest manuscript (Ritual for Daoist sacrificial rites and regimen practices).	P. 110-111	-Copied by Pan Chaozheng (year of composition unclear) -The following words are inscribed on the last page: ‘This book is preserved for the sons and grandsons’ (cunben yu erzisun)
7	Oxford Collection	S3252	<i>The Great Learning</i> (Daxue shupian)	Miscellaneous Book	P. 73 Fn 120	The book was said to have been copied in the twelfth year of the Xianfeng reign, although in fact the Xianfeng reign lasted for only eleven years

						(1851-1861).
8		S3254	<i>Yin-Yang Cosmic Certificates for Ancestor Worship (Du jiaxian yinyang erju)</i>	Miscellaneous Book	P. 73 Fn 120	The book was said to have been copied in the twelfth year of the Xianfeng reign, when in fact the Xianfeng reign lasted for only eleven years (1851-1861).
9		S3523	<i>Precious Heirloom (chuanjia guibao)</i>	Miscellaneous Book	P. 110 Fn 75	
10	Munich Collection	293 Cod. Sin. 463	<i>Rituals for Traversing the Thirty-Six Caves in Plum Mountain (meishan sanshiliudong ke)</i>	-A Mien ritual-master manuscript (Ritual for funerary rites)	P. 126 Fn 18	
11		589 Cod. Sin. 765	<i>Ritual of the Flower Hall (huatangke)</i>	-A Mun ritual-master manuscript -Chanted during rites asking for children or the ordination ceremony to invite the Mother of Emperors	P. 175 Fn 67	With similar content as Leiden collection, UB 2004-15 Folder 1
12		330 Cod. Sin. 500	<i>The Song of King Pan (Panwang ge)</i>	-A Mien ritual-master manuscript -Chanted during rites of 'Honouring a Vow to King Pan' (<i>huan</i>	p. 104-105	

				<i>panwang huan</i>)		
13		177 Cod. Sin 347	The <i>Big Book of Songs</i>	-A Mien ritual-master manuscript -Chanted during rites of 'Honouring a Vow to King Pan'	p. 114-116	
14		291 Cod. Sin. 461	<i>Received in the first generation, the lad was in Hunan and not in the prefecture (chushishou, lang zai Hunan mei zai zhou)</i>	-A Mien ritual-master manuscript -Chanted during rites of 'Honouring a Vow to King Pan'	P. 116-118	The title was taken from the first sentence on the first page, as the cover page is lost.
15	Guangxi and Yunnan Collection	/	<i>Ritual for the Mother of Emperors (dimuke)</i>	-A Mun Daoist-priest manuscript from Yunnan --Chanted during the ordination ceremony to invite the Mother of Emperors	P. 68, 142	Copied by Lu Daode in 1814.
16		/	<i>Inviting the Flower King and the God of Passes to Clear the Road and Let Us Pass through the Dark Mountain and the Water-lily Pond (qing huahuang guanshen jie xiaoguan duhua du'anshan)</i>	-A Mien ritual-master manuscript from Guangxi -Chanted during healing rituals for children	P. 76	Copied and owned by Li Decai.
17		/	<i>Book that Solves Mysteries</i>	-A Mun ritual-master	P. 102 Fn 58	Copied and owned by Pan

			<i>(Xiuzhai jiexun)</i>	manuscript from Yunnan (Ritual for miscellaneous purposes)		Yuanji.
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Notes on Terminologies and Languages

Throughout this book, I have preferred to use the term ‘manuscript’ for it expresses the most prominent material characteristic of Yao texts, because most of them have indeed been written by hand; only a very few texts composed after the mid-twentieth century have been reproduced by the more modern techniques of ink-printing and photocopying. Among the many genres of Yao manuscripts, I have chosen to concentrate on manuscripts employed in ritual performances, that I refer to as ‘ritual manuscripts’.

The term ‘Yao’ is an umbrella exonym applied by the Han Chinese. As an ethnic label in the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the people it designates actually have a diversity of languages, histories and cultures. For the sake of convenience, in this thesis the label ‘Yao’ is used when referring to the people classified or recognized as Yao in a variety of geographical localities. When it comes to addressing the two Yao groups most concerned here specifically and respectively, I prefer to use the autonyms Mien and Mun.

Unless otherwise specified, the romanization used is the *hanyu pinyin* 漢語拼音 system of Mandarin Chinese. This will be presented as [Ch], whenever the identification is absolutely necessary. To present Mien and Mun languages, I use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). They are abbreviated as [Mi] and [Mu] respectively, whenever the clarification is absolutely essential. Diacritics and tone marks are omitted in most cases for sake of simplicity, but will be shown when considered impossible to overlook.