preeminent wall-building dynasty, "tended to favor more coercive, offensively oriented strategies" (p. 243). The implications of this analysis are carried right to the present. His conclusion cites studies showing the PRC resorting to violence in 72 percent of its foreign policy crises (versus 18 percent for the U.S. and 27 percent for the Soviet Union).

How does he reach such novel conclusions? The fundamental technique involves a sophisticated process of dissecting and decoding the arguments in his texts. The analysis is too complex to unravel in a short review, but there is a troubling tendency to judge any counsel of restraint to be purely "contingent"—the result of an unfavorable military balance increasing the danger of defeat. But Johnston never confronts the possibility that Chinese *political* preferences kept military forces weak, thus creating the "contingency" on which strategic restraint was based.

Equally troubling are the definitions behind his conclusion that "Ming decision makers preferred . . . more offensive uses of force. . . ." First, he includes within "offensive" "both external extermination campaigns and active defense measures." Then a footnote explains that "Active defense refers to the offensive use of force against Mongols raiding within Ming territory" (p. 216). So advocating an attack on Mongol forces raiding within Ming territory gets coded as a strategic preference for the offensive use of force!

The beauty of this book is the clarity and precision of the argument—the very clarity which permits a reviewer to make the sort of criticisms advanced here. The methodological rigor is admirable. Few Sinologists are likely to be persuaded by this book, but they should read it and take its arguments seriously. Our scholarship needs to confront the violent face of the Chinese state, and we need the intellectual challenge of such social science research on ancient and imperial China.

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Demon Hordes and Burning Boats: The Cult of Marshal Wen in Late Imperial Chekiang. By PAUL R. KATZ. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995. xviii, 261 pp. $59.50 (cloth); $19.95 (paper).

The epidemics of deadly diseases which used to be inflicted from time to time on many areas of the world must have been terrifying. In the southern Chinese province of Chekiang, great festivals were held annually to a deity known as Marshal Wen, among other names, who was thought able to protect against the demon hordes which brought epidemics. A grand procession lasting over a week included martial figures with swords and halberds, beggars hired to dress as demons, large numbers of tearful people portraying penitent sinners, and finally a palanquin carrying the statue of the Marshal, who at one point would hold a session for people with grievances to file complaints with the underworld bureaucracy. All through the last night young men with torches raced screaming through the city to scare away evil forces. If nonetheless plague came, a long exorcistic expulsion ritual would be held to capture the spirits responsible in a great paper and bamboo boat and send it ablaze drifting out to sea.

The cult of Marshal Wen appears to have originated in the Southern Song period, a time of commercial and urban development and of new religious movements. The earliest temples were in the region of Wenchow in southeastern coastal Chekiang, whence the cult spread quickly, apparently along trade routes, to cities and towns in

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Chekiang's northern plain and even to other provinces. It seems to have been primarily urban (like epidemics?). It never became nationwide, probably because it lacked support from the imperial state, which was little involved with this cult. In tracing its growth in Chekiang from a local to a regional cult, Paul Katz discusses the region's epidemiological conditions, economic growth, attested miracles, the hagiographical literature, and the support of merchants, scholar-officials, and Taoist clergy. He stresses the participation of all types of people from different social backgrounds in the cult and its festival. The record is evidently full of lacunae, and it is not a criticism to note that his historical account is filled with many "probably"s and "possibly"s. Still, he is able to sketch a plausible outline of the development of a popular religious cult, hardly known before now, over several centuries, and describe in some detail its festival and its rituals.

At various points in the story, he is at pains to try to clarify the murky relationship between Taoism and local cults. He discusses, often to take issue with, the views of Kristofer Schipper, Valerie Hansen, Ken Dean, and like scholars. Katz argues that, at least in the case of the Marshal Wen cult, though Taoists played an important role they never dominated it. Taoist priests helped spread the cult, but were probably less important in this regard than merchants. Taoist priests participated in the great festivals at Wenchow and Hangchow, but were far from organizing or controlling them. Most convincing on this point is a fascinating chapter comparing three separate hagiographic traditions of Marshal Wen. A Song text in the Taoist canon describes him as a martial deity protecting Taoist orthodox ritual against heterodox deities. A temple stele by a Yuan dynasty scholar official stresses Wen's scholarly aspects and service to emperor and state. And a chapter in the Ming dynasty folk novel, *Journey to the North,* recounts how a good-hearted bean curd seller snatched and swallowed poison about to be put into a village well by a divine commissioner, acting on orders of the Jade Emperor to punish villagers for evil deeds; the Jade Emperor was moved by this selfless act and enfeoffed him Marshal of Epidemics. Clearly the Taoist hagiography, though the earliest, had but limited influence.

This monograph, based on a broad range of sources from the Taoist canon through local histories to folklore, and boasting an impressive command of Chinese, English, and Japanese scholarship, makes an important contribution to our growing understanding of the history of Chinese popular religion.

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Zhongguo nüxing de xing yu ai (Women's sexuality and love in China). By LI YINHE. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. 299 pp.

Based on excerpts of personal interviews, Li Yinhe's book draws an interesting picture of women's sexuality in mainland China. In the 1990s, sexuality is no longer a taboo on the mainland, as Li's own previous book, *Zhongguo ren de xing'ai yu hunyin* (Sexual love and marriage of the Chinese) published by Henan renmin chubanshe in 1991, has already attested. What is refreshing in her most recent book is that Li allows her interviewees to express themselves in (often forcefully) subjective voices. In fact, most women did not feel reluctant to make surprisingly frank statements about various issues concerning sexuality. Their relatively independent voices to a degree contribute to deconstructing certain stereotypical images of Chinese women.

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