signataire de la présente recension s'est efforcé récemment de décrire en détail, à propos d'un épisode limité, comment Sima Guang a mis en œuvre "cette technique de la récupération, de l'amalgame et du polissage de matériaux de plusieurs provenances" et obtenu par ce tour de force une recomposition apparemment cohérente\(^1\). Mais au nom de quels principes et options l'historien s'est-il livré à cette reconstruction hasardeuse du passé? "La raison de ses choix et de ses exclusions n'est pas donnée", ajoutais-je. "Il faudrait pour la saisir une enquête d'une autre ampleur." Ne peut-on espérer que Rafe de Crespigny, fort d'une si longue fréquentation du chef-d'œuvre, couronnera un jour les profonds et remarquables travaux qu'il lui a consacrés par une réflexion d'ensemble sur l'historiographie de Sima Guang?

École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris Jean-Pierre Diény


The volume under review is the third installment of David Knechtges’ planned complete translation of the Wenxuan in six volumes. While we all do hope that the volumes would follow in quicker succession, both the translator and his publisher have to be complimented for their dogged perseverance in continuing this project on the scale it was originally perceived. The present volume covers juan 13 to 19 of the Wenxuan and deals with the remaining fu or rhapsodies. In each case the translation is printed on the right hand page, while the left hand page is reserved for Prof. Knechtges’ detailed annotations. Notes to prose introductions of fu are found at the back of the book. Short introduc-


© Brill, Leiden, 1999 T'young Pao LXXXV
tions on the author of the work concerned, its structure, available annotated editions and translations into *bái hua* and other languages accompany each translation, while an extensive section at the back of the book provides biographical sketches one or two page long for all of the authors featured in the volume. The Bibliography covers almost twenty pages. Utmost care has been given to the execution of the book. Like its predecessors it is, because of Prof. Knechtges’ superb skills as a translator, a continuous joy to read, and, because of his superb sinological scholarship, an indispensable reference tool for everyone who is interested in China’s literary or cultural history.

The preceding two volumes were devoted to the long and very long *fu* in the *Wenxuan*. Most of the *fu* in the present volume are relatively short and run at most to a few hundred lines. The rhapsodies on Natural Phenomena deal with the wind, with autumn, snow and the moon. The section on Birds and Animals is mostly taken up by birds, as only one *fu* on an exceptional horse accompanies the works devoted respectively to a houlet, a parrot, a wren, and dancing cranes. The section on Feelings and Aspirations contains extended expositions of the unpredictability of fate and shorter songs in praise of a retired life. In the section on Sorrowful Laments we find poems in which men mourn their departed friends and neglected or widowed women bemoan their lonely fate. The section devoted to Literature only contains Lu Ji’s oft-translated *Wen fu*, but in the section devoted to “Music” we find rhapsodies not only on the panpipes, the long flute, the zither, and the mouth organ, but also on dance and on whistling. The final Section on Passions brings together three pieces by Song Yu and Cao Zhi’s “Rhapsody on the Luo River Goddess”. The majority of the authors represented in this volume, occasionally by their only known work, were active in the third and fourth centuries. Of these, Pan Yue is present with no less than five works. However, we also reencounter some of the masters of the earlier Western and Eastern Han dynasties, such as Sima Xiangru, Ban Gu and Zhang Heng.

Perhaps even more than the preceding two volumes, this one may convince Western readers of the versatility of the *fu* as a poetic genre. The genre not only adapts itself to epideictic grandeur but also to lyrical intimacy, not only to detailed description but also to philosophical musings, and equally well impersonates the male and the female voice. The genre is also very hospitable