

The names

Wade-Giles has two marks that do most of the work, and almost nobody is told what they are for. Once you know, the names stop being noise. Valice Press's writing.

Werner spells Chinese names in Wade-Giles, the romanisation used by nearly all English-language scholarship before the 1980s. Two marks in it do most of the work, and both are usually skipped by readers who have not been told what they are for.

The apostrophe marks aspiration. In Wade-Giles, *p* and *p'* are two different consonants, as are *t/t'*, *k/k'*, *ch/ch'* and *ts/ts'*. The unmarked one is unaspirated — closer to an English *b*, *d*, *g*, *j*, *dz*. The marked one has the puff of air an English speaker uses at the start of *pin* or *tin*. So *P'an Ku* begins like *pan*, while *Pai* begins closer to *buy*. Dropping the apostrophe does not simplify the name; it produces a different one.

The breve marks a vowel that has no English equivalent. The *ũ* in *Tzũ* and *Ssũ* is not the *u* of *put*. It is a neutral buzzing vowel that follows the consonant almost as a hum, and *Tzũ* is close to a buzzed *dz* with barely any vowel at all.

The circumflex in *ê*, as in *Fêng* and *Chên*, marks a vowel roughly like the *u* in *hum*. The *ü* is the front rounded vowel of French *tu* or German *über*.

A reader who takes ten seconds on this will find that several hundred names stop being obstacles. A reader who does not may still enjoy the book — Werner's stories survive being mispronounced, as everyone's do.

A word on why this is not merely pedantry. Wade-Giles distinctions carry meaning that pinyin spells differently but does not lose: *Tao* and *Dao* are the same word, *Ch'ing* and *Qing* are the same dynasty. Where readers go wrong is in assuming Wade-Giles is simply old-fashioned English spelling that can be read as though it were English. It is a transcription system with rules, and the two marks above are the rules that do the most work. Everything else in it can be read approximately as written.

For anyone comparing this edition with modern scholarship: *P'an Ku* is Pangu, *Yü Huang* is Yu Huang or the Jade Emperor, *Shên I* is Shen Yi, *Lao Tzũ* is Laozi, *Hsi Yu Chi* is Xiyouji, and *Sun Hou-tzũ* is Sun Wukong. The spellings in this book are Werner's and have not been altered.

The names in this volume, as Werner spells them

Chang Kuo · Chang Tao-ling · Chiang Tzũ-ya
Chung-li Ch'üan · Han Hsiang Tzũ · Ho Hsien Ku
Hsi Wang Mu · Huang Ti · Hêng Ô
Ju Lai · Lan Ts'ai-ho · Lao Tzũ
Lei Kung · Li T'ieh-kuai · Lü Tung-pin
No-cha · Nü Kua Shih · P'an Ku
Pa Hsien · Shang Ti · Shên I
Shên Nung · Sun Hou-tzũ · Ts'ao Kuo-chiu
Yü Huang