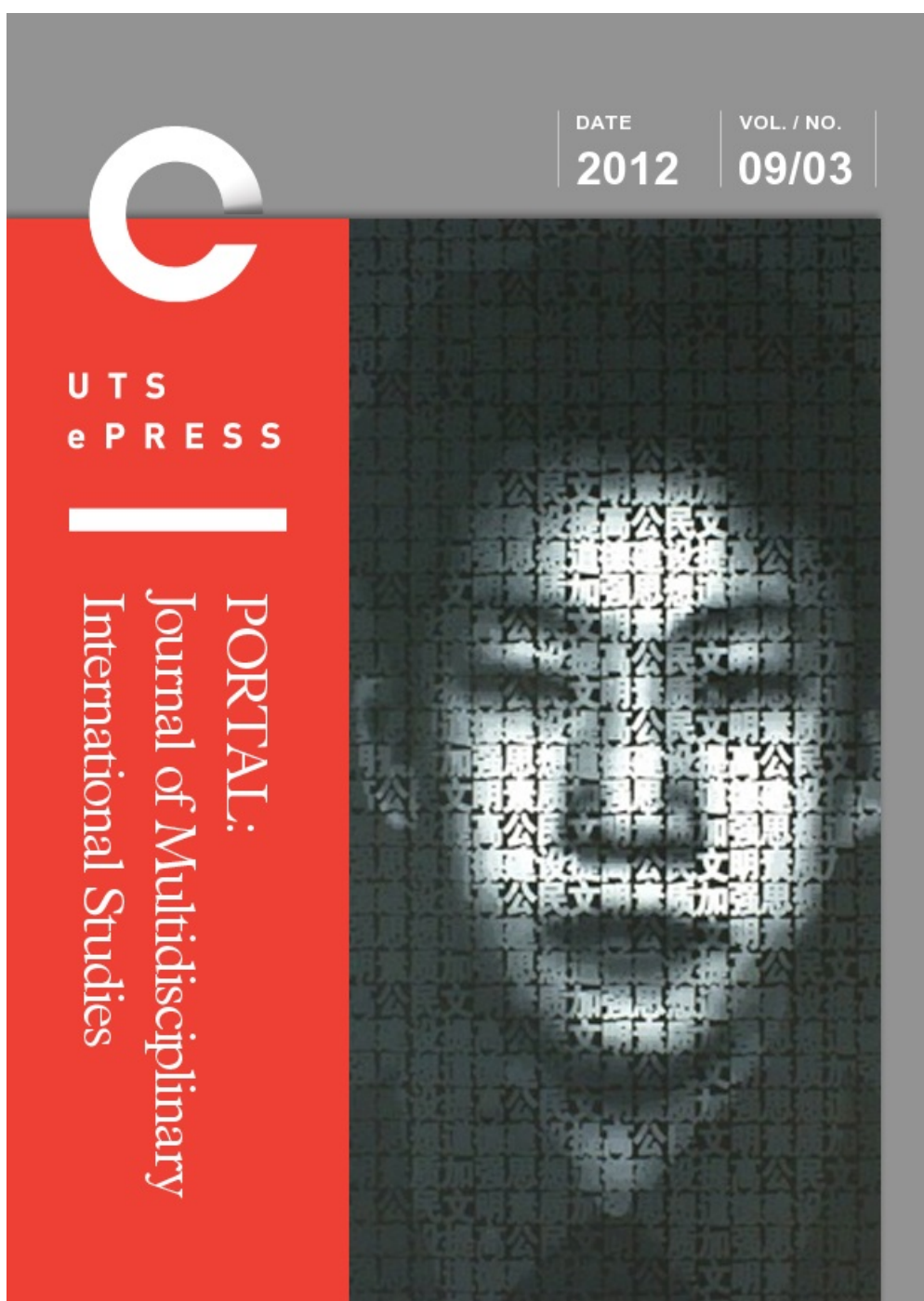


# Mortal Ancestors, Immortal Images: Zhang Dai's Biographical Portraits



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## Abstract

Towards the end of his long life, the prolific late-Ming historian and essayist Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-?1684) completed a book that he had been working on for many years. Entitled Portraits of the Eminent and Worthy Immortals of Zhejiang During the Ming Dynasty (You Ming yuyue san bu xiu tuzan 有明於越三不朽名賢圖贊) the book included the short biographies (with poetic panegyrics) and portraits of 109 men and women of Zhang Dai's hometown of Shaoxing, one of the epicentres of China's élite cultural life. The book was organised according to the "Three Immortalities of Life": moral force, meritorious service, and wise words. Zhang also included a number of his own friends and family members in this collection.

This paper discusses aspects the relationship between text and image in this late-imperial Chinese work, both in the context of Zhang Dai's practice as a biographer who had a strong visual sense and in regard to his particular historical plight as someone who had survived the collapse of one dynasty and who had lived on under its successor regime.

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*Portal Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* is a fully peer reviewed journal dedicated to the publishing of scholarly articles from practitioners of—and dissenters from—international, regional, area, migration and ethnic studies, and it is also dedicated to providing a space for the work of cultural producers interested in the internationalization of cultures.

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Civilising the Citizens: Political Slogans and the Right to the City. Image, Precariousness and the Logic of Cultural Production in Hong Kong. Author(s): Carolyn Cartier Volume: 9 Issue: 3 Year: 2013. Word-Images: Politics and Visual Cultures in China. Author(s): Maurizio Marinelli Volume: 9 Issue: 3 Year: 2013. Envisioning the Shôjo Aesthetic in Illustrations of Miyazawa Kenji's Literature. 📖 Zhang Dai. Quite the same Wikipedia. Just better. Zhang Dai. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. This is a Chinese name; the family name is Zhang. Zhang Dai (張岱; pinyin: Zhāng Dài, courtesy name: Zhongzhi (宗子), pseudonym: Tao'an (陶庵)) (1597–1679) was a Ming Dynasty Chinese writer. Profiles of Righteous and Honorable People Through the Ages – Collection of 400 compact biographical studies of worthy people from the second millennium BC to the 1360s. Sequel to the Book of the Stone Casket – Describing the fall of the Ming dynasty and apportioning blame. Tracing Westlake in a Dream 西湖夢尋 – Memories of his beloved West Lake in the city of Hangzhou. Zhang Guolao was said to have been a real-life occult alchemist who dabbled in necromancy. During his life, Zhang Guolao was something of an eccentric and was known to drink water from the petals of poisonous flowers, snatched birds out of the sky with his bare hands, and enjoyed traveling at least a thousand miles a day on the back of his trusty white mule.