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This book is part of the Handbook of Oriental Studies (Section 4, China), issued by Brill Academic Publishers. It was first conceived in 1996, when the publisher approached me with the suggestion of compiling a volume on Daoism. Rather than a dictionary or alphabetical encyclopedia, I then decided with the advice and suggestions of many colleagues to develop a work that consisted of integrated articles. This proved fortuitous, since almost simultaneously with this volume two other major reference works on the religion will appear, the A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty edited by K. M. Schipper and F. Verellen (University of Chicago Press) and the Encyclopedia of Taoism edited by F. Pregadio (London: Curzon Press). The first focuses on texts and is based fully on the Daoist canon, while the second consists of over 800 separate entries on specific terms, figures, texts, places, ideas and practices of the religion. The three reference works, including this volume, present comprehensive information on the Daoist religion and will contribute to a better understanding of it and to the progress of Daoist studies.

The specific task of the Daoism Handbook in this triad is to present information in context, allowing readers to gain insight into the structure and organization of the religion from an integrated perspective. The twenty-eight papers each treat one specific topic as exhaustively and analytically as is possible at the present stage of research. About half are focused on a given historical period or school, the other half present materials on a specific topic, such as alchemy, immortality, women and art.

To make the information more easily accessible, each contribution follows a set pattern of four parts—history, texts, worldview and practices—with specific figures, texts, practices and other major themes highlighted for quick reference. The scheme was developed to enable the reader to find particular clusters of information as painlessly as possible. For example, while there is no specific contribution on cosmology or the pantheon, the “worldview” section in each paper, especially in those discussing specific schools, contains the relevant information. Similarly, materials on texts from different areas and on various topics can be found quickly. Despite these advantages, the scheme does have two drawbacks. First, it
a certain degree of repetition—certain texts, for example, may be mentioned in the "history" part, are then discussed in detail under "texts," and may appear yet again in a later section. Second, while the system works well for historical periods and schools and also for most topics, on occasion it has had to be modified to accommodate specific needs, especially in the contributions on art and music.

Regarding Chinese characters, after consultation with the contributors and the publisher, it was decided to put them directly into the text rather than into an extended glossary. However, in the bibliographies only the authors' names are given with their characters, since the titles of books, articles and journals are usually self-explanatory.

The book has been three years in the making and represents the labor of many people to whom I owe a great debt. First, I wish to thank the contributors for their cooperation and unending patience with the editing process. They were thoughtful and reliable and ever ready to change or rewrite, expand or shorten their contributions, always remaining receptive and supportive of each others' work and editorial and readers' suggestions. I am grateful for their continued good work and support of the project.

Deep thanks also go to my wonderful support team of helpers whose dedicated work greatly facilitated the editing process. James Miller (Boston University) set up an email list for the contributors which allowed easy communication with everybody. He also copy-edited the first set of manuscripts and translated the contribution on Daoism in Korea from the Chinese. Fabrizio Pregadio (Technische Universität Berlin) generously offered to share his website for the regular posting of completed papers, enabling the contributors to read each other's work. This greatly helped to avoid conflicting terminology and overlaps in the treatment of specific subjects. David Akin (Ann Arbor, Mich.) served as copy-editor for numerous papers and made many helpful suggestions that improved their style and accessibility. Louis Komjathy (Boston University) helped with the copy-editing process and was invaluable in spotting inconsistencies and character errors, in addition to doing much computer work. Patricia Radder (Brill Academic Publishers), finally, has been ever prompt and ready in answering my many queries; she has made innumerable helpful suggestions regarding both editing and computing and has helped greatly in the copy-editing process. I thank them all. The book would still be unfinished without their generous, selfless help and dedicated support.
Last, but certainly not least, the scholarly community has been very supportive of the project and I have greatly benefited from the suggestions and advice of numerous colleagues. I particularly wish to acknowledge Poul Andersen, Stephen Bokenkamp, Suzanne Cahill, Robert Campany, Edward Davis, Stephen Jackowicz, Paul Kjellberg, Terry Kleeman, Paul Kroll, Michael LaFargue, Lai Chi-tim, Liu Xun, Jeffrey Meyer, Harold D. Roth, Richard Rutt, Nathan Sivin, Stephen F. Teiser, Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, Ts’ao Pen-yeh, Elena Valussi, Wu Hung and Erik Zürcher. I am very grateful to them all for their advice on overall organization, individual papers and specific problems.

ABBREVIATIONS


Among the world's religions, Daoism is undoubtedly the most incompletely known and most poorly understood. As the twenty-first century opens, not only are the basic facts of Daoism known to very few, but the very concept of "Daoism" remains unclear to most educated people and educators. The reasons for this are fairly complex, and have surprisingly little to do with Daoism itself. One problem is that scholars were slow to take it seriously. Another is that the interpretive category "Daoism" has different contents in different minds, even those of very learned people, including educators at all levels. Also, there has been inordinate debate, among specialists and the educated public alike, about the data that ought, or ought not, to be included in that category. As Fabrizio Pregadio has noted (personal communication), scholars of Buddhism study a tradition at least as multifaceted as Daoism, but have seldom felt a need to address the "issue" of "what Buddhism is": the underlying unity of Buddhism is generally taken for granted in modern Buddhist studies as it is also in traditional Buddhist sources. Yet, those who write and teach about Daoism have almost always felt pressed to insist that we should see fundamental discrepancies—even inherent contradictions—between several supposedly different "Daoisms." Recent scholars have suggested other conceptualizations (e.g., Kirkland 1993). But by the end of the twentieth century, the majority of specialists in the study of Daoism, at least in Japan and in the West, seemed to begin to reach agreement that such artificial bifurcations as "philosophical Daoism" and "religious Daoism" (daojia 道家 and daojiao 道教) do not do real justice to the facts and serve little heuristic purpose.

Such interpretive problems do not generally result from real divergences among the beliefs or practices of Chinese Daoists, premodern or modern. Rather, they result from the cultural and intellectual history of the interpretive category "Daoism" in late traditional and modern times. That category has a complex history, a history em-
bedded in the social, intellectual, and political conflicts within Chinese and Western cultures alike. Only recently have scholars begun to try to unravel the cultural history of the concept of "Daoism." The problem has been difficult to resolve, because it requires today's interpreters to reflect critically upon why they believe what they believe about Daoism. Doing so requires a difficult and sometimes painful re-examination of many fundamental assumptions about Chinese social and cultural history, and about the proper interpretive context in which to explain such matters.

Japanese interpreters may, overall, be the most balanced in their assessment of Daoism, for their society has usually respected most elements of Chinese culture, and has escaped many of the effects of the persecutions that wracked Daoism in late imperial and modern China. There remains one problem: the Japanese recognize in their own culture a set of phenomena that they label *dōkyō*, a term derived from the Chinese term *daojiao*, and generally assumed to constitute "Daoism" in Japan. This problem has never been fully analyzed, but a simple equation of Japan's *dōkyō* with China's *daojiao* would be erroneous, for the contents of the two categories do not really coincide (see Kirkland 1986).

Chinese interpreters, for their part, have often had difficulty explaining Daoism without succumbing to a variety of biases engendered by the social and political marginalization of Daoism in late imperial and modern China. Centuries of Confucians, and decades of Communists, asserted that most of Daoism is, and always has been, "superstition"—a hodgepodge of specious products of scoundrels and fools. Even non-Marxist interpreters have often succumbed to that bias. Wing-tsit Chan (1963), for instance, sought respect for Neo-Confucian perspectives, and his depiction of Daoism was respectful in tone but narrow in coverage and tendentious in interpretation. Similarly, Fung Yu-lan (1952) labored to convince Westerners that traditional Chinese thought deserved respectful attention. His presentation of Daoism was consciously or subconsciously designed to make modern minds see it as bizarre, and as far less worthy of intellectual consideration than Confucianism. Neither Chan nor Fung presented any analysis of "Daoist thought" after the fourth century C.E.. In their works (and in deBary's influential *Sources of Chinese Tradition* [1960]), Ge Hong was quite falsely presented as the prototypical exemplar of "religious Daoism." The fallacy of such a representation has been clearly demonstrated by Nathan Sivin (1978), whose analysis all should still ponder today.

Also, like many modern intellectuals, both Fung and Chan were
uncomfortable with the very concept of "religion." Here is a fundamental point where Chinese and Western interpreters still struggle with the ideological conflicts at work in their own cultural traditions. For instance, both the Confucians of modern China and the secularized academics of the West have generally been embarrassed to acknowledge—and thereby implicitly legitimize—the religious activities of Daoists or Confucians. The fact that many Neo-Confucians of Ming and Qing times practiced meditation—and some even professed to have undergone "enlightenment" experiences—were suppressed by most modern expositors of China's heritage, as were the presence of Confucian temples, priests and liturgies. Such elements of "religion" are at odds with the modern Confucians' conception of their own tradition. Because such attitudes were deeply engrained in virtually all educated minds—the Cheng-Zhu 程朱 perspective of Neo-Confucianism having been a cornerstone of the Chinese educational system from the time of the Mongols to final years of the Qing—most educated Chinese have looked askance at all such phenomena, especially in regard to Daoism. Even the new elite consciousness of the Republican era, which consciously divorced itself from Confucianism, remained inimical to religion, and Communist rule greatly aggravated such biases.

The overlapping sensibilities among the educated elite of nineteenth- and twentieth-century China and the scholars who gave birth to Western sinology led to a productive relationship, and to a deeply distorted picture of Daoism. The first such scholars lived in an age when Western protestants were actively missionizing in China. Some Chinese sought to "package" their culture to win approval of missionaries and converts, and in doing so disparaged the "superstitious" religious activities of contemporary Daoists. Meanwhile, scholars like James Legge began resisting the pressures of their missionary sponsors, and worked toward a more accurate understanding of Chinese culture by seeking guidance from educated native informants. Of course, virtually none of those informants was trained in Daoism, and most, educated in the Cheng-Zhu Confucian curriculum, were contemptuous of all of Daoism except the sainted classics, Laozi (Daode jing) and Zhuangzi (see Lagerwey 1987, ix-xiii; Robinet 1997, x-xii, "Translator's Foreword;" Girardot 1999).

The picture of Daoism that emerged from Victorian sinology was also tainted by the egregious charge that "Daoists today"—reifying the Zhengyi Tianshi 正一天師 (Orthodox Unity Celestial Masters) of Mount Longhu as "popes" of "the Daoist Church"—were guilty of the lowest form of "papacy" (Penny 1998). So while Western sinolo-
gists, like twentieth-century Confucians, continued to write respectfully of Laozi and Zhuangzi, they generally continued to caricature the Daoism of modern times in the way that Protestants had long caricatured Catholicism in polemical attacks, i.e., as dangerous nonsense that has corrupted the tradition’s original purity, and must be condemned in favor of a return to its original truth, as embodied in ancient texts that can be correctly understood by the individual, with no need for ecclesiastical intermediaries. In this way, Western sinology gave birth to an ultra-Protestant construct of Daoism that appealed greatly to many Westerners, from poets and professors to romantics and reformers (Bradbury 1992; Kirkland 1992, 1997a).

In fact, so popular did that Orientalist construct become that many Westerners, particularly in North America, became persuaded that Daoism was actually not a tradition rooted in Chinese history and society, but rather a set of idealized attitudes (like naturalness) that the “enlightened person” already embraces. Western textbooks, and non-specialist educators, not only validated the idea that “you, too, can become a Daoist” (merely by feeling such attitudes), but also legitimized the insidious delusion that one who does so “has the Dao” and is therefore entitled to ridicule all elements of Daoism that seem to conflict with it—most specifically, anything that is clearly embedded in Chinese society or culture. Such “spiritual imperialism” has further hampered efforts to understand Daoism accurately (cf. Kirkland 2000a).

The efflorescence of Daoist studies among Western scholars in recent decades has given rise to a different set of interpretive perspectives, which consciously repudiate such Orientalist constructs. These new perspectives insist that we (1) recognize the Chinese-ness of Daoism; (2) privilege the factual data of Daoism itself, in social, historical, and textual terms; and (3) acknowledge the importance of the living forms of Daoism that survive among Chinese communities today.

These new perspectives, too, have discernible roots in modern history. They were stimulated primarily by a momentous event in the 1920s, of which many educated people, and many educators, remain wholly unaware. That event was the publication of the Daozang 道藏 (Daoist canon)—the vast library of premodern Daoist texts that were unknown to the Victorian scholars who had established the “mainstream” view of who Daoists were and what they believed. During Legge’s day, the Daozang—and much of the cognate literature produced by centuries of Daoists of every stripe—had remained cloistered in monastic libraries, which were hardly ever visited by scholars, Chinese or foreign.
Consequently, twentieth-century scholarship developed two divergent frameworks: (1) that of “mainstream” scholars, trained to understand Daoism in terms of the deeply distorted Victorian/Confucian construct; and (2) that of scholars who accepted the importance of the *Daozang*, such as Chen Guofu and Henri Maspero as well as various Japanese scholars who had been less directly affected by the Orientalist perspectives that dominated Western sinology. These two scholarly frameworks endure today, with the result that knowledgeable scholars sometimes talk past each other, or criticize each other’s scholarship for the failure to follow mainstream sinology—as Creel castigated Maspero (1970)—or for the failure to repudiate it.

As more Western scholars were able to train in Japan, and as China itself slowly began “opening” from the political and ideological strictures of the Maoist era, more and more scholars have begun to recognize serious flaws in the mainstream construct of Daoism. Moreover, critical analysts like Michel Strickmann (1980) began to win converts to a new perspective, which privileged the Zhengyi order and its presumptive origins in the Tianshi organization of late antiquity. Such scholars supported their perspective by rigorous analysis of texts from the *Daozang*, and by fieldwork among living Daoists, mostly in Taiwan. As scholars like Michael Saso (1972) and Kristofer Schipper (1994), who underwent Zhengyi ordination, began publishing what they learned from such experiences, the educated public came to believe that Daoism had all but died completely in the mainland, and that Taiwan’s Zhengyi tradition was all that remained today. This situation resulted from the fact that through most of the late twentieth century, Daoists in mainland China suffered from various degrees of political, economic and ideological oppression and had no opportunity to present their tradition to the outside world. Foreign scholars, meanwhile, were seldom allowed to enter mainland China, and could generally only guess as to whether Daoism was still being practiced there at all. In the 1980s and 1990s, China gradually began to open to foreign visitors, and students of Chinese culture began to learn firsthand about the Daoism that lives there today.

The interpretive ramifications of these facts have only just begun to be felt. The Chinese public, like most in the outside world, generally knows little about the Daoist tradition, though some are curious about whether it might have something to contribute to their lives. And many Westerners imperialistically assume that the primary reason for studying the religions of other cultures is to identify elements that can be appropriated into their own lives, or to find new religious
identities that can be assumed. A proper understanding and representation of Daoism requires that one recognize all such motivations to ensure that they do not interfere with one's interpretive efforts, e.g., by causing one to discount elements of Daoism that do not suit one's own taste, further one's own goals or re-inforce the biases of one's own age or culture.

As the new century opens, the educated public needs to be made aware of these various new perspectives and learn about the many aspects of Daoist history, thought, and practice that have heretofore been ignored or misinterpreted (see Kirkland 1998a). First, the simplistic dichotomy of "philosophical" and "religious" Daoism must be abandoned and replaced with an accurate and properly nuanced understanding of the diverse but interrelated forms of Daoism that evolved over the long history of China (Kirkland 1997b). It should also be noted that many of today's specialists privilege the subtraditions that evolved during the Han to Tang dynasties, and give scant consideration to the quite different subtraditions that emerged throughout the second millennium.

Another important point is that the modern forms of Daoism deserve much greater attention, for a variety of reasons: (1) they have survived, more or less intact, into the twentieth century, which is not true of such well-studied Six Dynasties subtraditions as Shangqing; (2) they often feature prominent roles for women practitioners and even women leaders (see Kirkland 1999); (3) they maintain ancient Daoist practices of self-cultivation, thereby revealing vital continuities between classical Daoism and the Daoism practiced from the Tang period onward; (4) they compare favorably with other Chinese and non-Chinese traditions in terms of both religious thought and models of personal practice, which is not true of most pre-Tang subtraditions.

Then again, today's specialists often ignore a helpful distinction that modern Daoists continue to make between "Northern Daoism" (i.e., Quanzhen 全真 [Complete Perfection]) and "Southern Daoism" (i.e., Zhengyi). Northern Daoism displays more of the characteristics listed above than Southern Daoism, and as members of the educated public become more aware of it, they may develop the same intense interest and respect that they currently show toward other major traditions, like Buddhism.

Perhaps the most important emphasis that today's educators and interpreters should give to their presentations of Daoism would be to emphasize those historical and living realities of Daoism that belie the misconceptions that have dominated so far. For instance, the misconception that religious Daoism was the province of the illiterate masses
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can be corrected by directing attention to the hundreds of Daoist texts preserved in the *Daozang* and elsewhere, some of which have begun to be translated into Western languages. Similarly, giving due attention to the models of personal practice articulated by Chinese intellectuals easily disproves the misconception that Daoism degenerated into superstition after *LaOzi* and *Zhuangzi*. Above all, the many versions of inner alchemical theory and practice—a fundamental element of Daoism for the last thousand years—demonstrate the absurdity of the lingering “anti-Catholic” charge that later Daoism was ritualistic nonsense that ignored the spiritual needs and aspirations of individual practitioners. Moreover, increasing sophistication in ritual theory helps us understand and explain the depth and richness of all forms of Daoist liturgy.

Further attention is also due to the rich diversity of Daoist conceptions of the religious life. Virtually no one outside the immediate field today knows, for instance, that Tang Daoists wrote extensively about the “Dao-nature” (*daoxing*—the true reality of all things, including ourselves (see Kirkland 1997-98). Nor do most realize that much of Quanzhen thought actually parallels, and interacted historically with, the thought of Chan Buddhism and with many elements of Neo-Confucian thought and practice (see Berling 1979; 1980; 1993). To explain that Daoist practice was often taught and practiced in terms of “cultivating the heart/mind,” or in terms of “integrating our inherent nature with our destined lives,” will correct and greatly expand the very narrow and misleading depictions of Daoist thought or Daoist practice that characterized most modern presentations.

It is also important to draw attention to the historical facts that demonstrate that Daoism was not, as has often been taught, a tradition practiced by people who stood outside the normal social order and attacked it, philosophically or politically. At no point in Chinese history were the majority of Daoists actually hermits, misfits, members of rebel movements or critics of conventional values. The newly discovered Guodian manuscripts contain passages of *LaOzi* which seem to show that that text did *not* originally critique Confucian values (see Kirkland 2000b; see also Kirkland 2000c on teaching the *Daode jing*). During most periods, Daoists came from all segments of society, supported—and often helped legitimize—the imperial government, and were often well-known and respected by other members of China’s social and cultural elite. For these reasons, some scholars today have begun identifying elements of premodern and modern Daoism that could be called “literati Daoism” (Kirkland
Finally, the public needs to know much more about the living realities of Daoism in China today. Today's Daoists still maintain many elements of premodern Daoism, including personal self-cultivation, a monastic life for men and women alike and a rich panoply of traditional practices. It should be noted that the liturgical traditions of Daoism—which had already been socially and politically marginalized in late-imperial China—survive not only in the Southern Daoism of Taiwan and the southeast coast, but also in temples throughout mainland China, even at those identified as Quanzhen. But it should also be noted that decades of Communist rule and secularistic trends seem to have left Daoist practice marginalized in new ways. Among the general public, practices that had become loosely associated with Daoism—like Taiji quan and Qigong—remain popular, but often without the practitioners knowing their full historical background or religious implications—though in some circles, medieval texts continue to inform Qigong practice. And in temples and monasteries, Daoist clerics continue to keep a relatively low profile, and sometimes teach outsiders a quite modernized understanding of Daoist meditative and ritual traditions (Kohn 1997). As China's economy and society evolves away from the Communist restrictions, observers should remain alert to the possible redomestication of Daoist elements among the expanding Chinese middle class, especially reformulations of the more intellectualized traditions of literati Daoism.

**Daoism: A Historical Narrative (T. H. Barrett)**

When, a generation ago, the first international conference on Daoist studies was organized, historians, and particularly historians of science, were prominent among the participants. The reason was simple: an urgent need existed at that time for some narrative account of Daoism that made it more than an “element” in Chinese culture. For Daoism, like Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism, was presumably a tradition that changed and developed over the course of time. Then, in 1968, there was very little that could be said on this topic. It was baffling enough to try to make sense of what Daoism was in early China, let alone to trace its development through imperial history.

True, by 1968 one self-declared “History of Daoism” had already existed in Chinese for over thirty years, and a substantial volume with the same title was to appear in Japanese in 1977. But what is con-
spicuous in these works, and even in Isabelle Robinet's history of Daoism up to the fourteenth century (1991; 1997), is the way in which a clear narrative of development is constantly subordinated to the need to describe different types of Daoism, and sometimes concurrently different types, at that. This Handbook, too, despite the unprecedented wealth of scholarship that it incorporates, follows the same pattern, mixing chronological and topical surveys in its separate essays. Given, however, that a broader synthesis of current knowledge is available here than in any recent Chinese "History of Daoism"—since these were not afforded the opportunity to consult much non-Chinese research—can we now point to a tacit complete narrative of Daoism contained here for the first time in English, or are there still problems?

To ask the question is to answer it, in the sense that as our interpretative perspectives grow more sophisticated, our problems as historians do not disappear so much as change in character as the historiography of the study of Daoism itself unfolds. But now is certainly a good time to reconsider the unprecedented chronological scope of this volume and to point up the current difficulties that appear to stand in the way of converting this sequence of essays into a coherent narrative.

The term "coherent narrative" of course presupposes a degree of coherence in the phenomena described. Yet it must be admitted that one of the prime lessons of the last thirty years has been that while it is possible to point to principles of coherence that broadly define Daoism, these principles cannot be stretched to cover everything that was called "Daoist" in 1968. And that is precisely why we have to reconsider the history of Daoism, because although it is possible to discuss such problems in the abstract, their significance is best exemplified by a historical narrative. In doing so we are certainly not obliged to adhere to any "single thread": Isabelle Robinet's description of Daoism as essentially a cumulative tradition, gathering in quite heterogeneous elements over the course of time, is just one important perception that points us away from a "single thread" narrative towards a more flexible approach.

But even cumulation has to start somewhere, and here I would suggest that the tendency of many scholars—and notably the late Anna Seidel (1938-1991)—to start in the second century C.E. has much to recommend it (see Welch and Seidel 1979; Seidel 1990). This does not preclude a discussion of earlier phenomena: indeed, it demands it. What goes before, however, may be regarded from this standpoint as a heritage to be shaped rather than as an established
tradition itself shaping the future. It was very much to Anna Seidel’s credit that she was the first to articulate clearly the bureaucratic and imperial elements in Daoism, and to locate their origin in the traumatic collapse of imperial authority in the second century C.E. (Seidel 1983) As her later work explored how the advance of a bureaucratic and imperial conception of the spirit world concomitant with, or even ahead of, the spread of bureaucracy in early China paved the way for religion to move into the gap created by political failure, so it became possible to see how the work of Rolf A. Stein (1979) and Michel Strickmann (1980) emphasizing the tensions between China’s “higher religion” and the chthonic, even subversive world of the local cult could fit into a single frame. Through historical study, the earlier scholarly confusion between Daoism and “folk religion”—understandable enough in view of subsequent developments—was thus in principle eliminated.

At the same time, once the bureaucratic structure of priesthood, pantheon and communication between the two was seen as something that potentially could give coherence to a religious tradition, it became possible to see the earlier elements labelled “Daoist” by most scholars as in fact part of a contestable heritage. The very word “Daoist” itself, first used by doxographers of the second century B.C.E. to bring together texts as diverse as the Daode jing and the Zhuangzi, was for a while the site of protracted struggles, involving not only proponents of various views of the Chinese heritage but also Chinese Buddhists as well. Clearly the new, imperial form of religion could not do without a sage and teacher—now Laozi rather than Confucius—and could not do without some heritage of classical texts, even if new texts were revealed. Ancient practices, too, concerning meditation and techniques for achieving immortality also needed to be integrated into the structured tradition.

But this did not mean that alternative views of Laozi, or the text under his name, or the cult of immortality were not still available in the third and fourth centuries C.E. It is possible therefore to construe much of the related literature of this period not as a two-sided conflict between “religious” and “philosophical” conceptions of Daoism, as earlier scholarship unsuccessfully tried to read the evidence, but as ideologically tinged competition between various groups reacting to the near-extinction of imperial government at the hands of a religious alternative (the Yellow Turbans) in the late second century C.E. Neither a simple progression, nor a simple dichotomy, is enough to explain the Way of the Celestial Master, Wang Bi and Ge Hong, but once the issues at stake are understood, their different ideological po-
sitions do become intelligible. And, once again, we have Anna Seidel to thank for demonstrating that the link between Daoism and politics (see Seidel 1981), dismissed by the Confucian tradition as due to a sporadic autocratic weakness for the promises of wizards, was actually a structural element at the heart of the religion.

But religion it was, and if Daoism makes no sense without considering the overall political environment, it is equally necessary to consider the overall religious environment, not simply "folk religion," but also the "higher religion" of Buddhism as well. Even so, we should not automatically assume that Buddhism and Daoism contested the religious high ground from the start. For while it is undeniable that the Buddha's message in South Asia, as entrusted to his followers, the sangha, was in some ways "higher" than religion itself, since it was dedicated to the transcendence of this world, religion and all, we would do well not to assume that this was how it was generally perceived in China at first. Rather, as late as the second half of the fourth century C.E., when the Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) and Lingbao 玲寶 (Numinous Treasure) textual revelations started to appear, there is no reason to suppose that supporters of these revelations saw Buddhism as anything other than a recent addition to the cultural heritage perfectly susceptible to being cumulated into a fresh synthesis.

This "free market" in religion, however, seems to have succumbed to increasing state intervention from early in the fifth century C.E. In the north of China, the Toba Wei regime was confronted with the task of rebuilding society after almost a century of instability, and particularly of reintegrating scattered remnants of groups adhering to the Celestial Master tradition who may well have lived in independent communities isolated from any religious or secular supervision. In the south, the new Song regime of Liu Yu 劉裕 came to power in the wake of the rebellion of Sun En 孫恩, an adventurer who again had taken advantage of the lack of an enforced orthodoxy in the Celestial Master tradition to build an organization of his own. In both north and south the issue for the state was one of quality control: left unsupervised, religious groups had proved capable of mutating in dangerous ways; supervision, on the other hand, implied some degree of recognition of religious traditions, and of their orthodox boundaries.

It is at this point that we find the emergence of codified ritual, of organized canonical literature, and above all, of a religion called "Daoism" that embraced a number of distinct sub-traditions composing a unified whole. The model here was clearly Buddhism, which accommodated within the overarching definition of "Buddha's word"
an array of distinct doctrines representing different stages in the development of the religion. We should note, however, that to the extent that Buddhism, too, started to be shaped by the state (accepting, for example, the official appointment of monk-overseers to direct its affairs on behalf of the government) it ceased to be in China quite the religion it had been in South Asia.

But now that Daoism had started to become an offically delimited religion (or rather a self-delimited broad religious tradition, thanks to official encouragement), the puzzle for the historian is how to trace its development of increasing complexity—particularly, in the face of Buddhism, at the doctrinal level—at a time when China was politically divided between north and south. We know that in the sixth century, the creation of a state based on the ideological use of Buddhism by Emperor Wu of the Liang probably forced some southern Daoist leaders to try their luck at northern courts. But was this the first era of contact? It is noteworthy, for example, that earlier Liu Yu's "northern expedition" temporarily reconquered the area of Mount Song, the very religious center that was to produce the religious reformer of Daoism, Kou Qianzhi.

Simultaneously, the sharp institutional divide between Buddhism and Daoism in both societies probably increased rather than decreased interaction between the two religions as both competed for patronage. Now that in Buddhist studies the traditional picture of a Daoism so intellectually impoverished as to be obliged to borrow from Buddhism at every turn has been replaced by one in which many Buddhist texts turn out not to have been translated, but to have been composed in China to address a Daoist environment, it seems much better to talk of dialogue rather than plagiarism, but again the details remain obscure. At first sight, too, the polemics between the two religions seem to focus on quite trivial issues, until we see once more that worldviews were often connected with ideologically sensitive areas—that a discussion of cosmology, for example, could impinge on the role of the emperor, or on questions of public morality. So again, although the sequence of events may be clear already, the logic of events awaits further study.

One indirect testimony to the importance of Daoism as ideology during this period is the degree to which a reunited China under the Sui and especially the Tang took up the task of binding Daoism to the state, even if the disruption caused by the openly anti-Buddhist policies of their immediate predecessors, the Northern Zhou, appear to have resulted in a degree of caution and gradualism in pursuing this path. A number of texts evidently designed (or promoted) in or-
order to establish empire-wide norms for Daoism allow us to see to what extent a Buddhist pattern had been imposed on the religion in the state’s interest. The fiscally and politically convenient institution of monasticism, for example, is promoted at the expense of Celestial Master Daoism, with its hereditary priesthood and community base. The constant display of state-promoted norms, however, should not blind us to the probable existence of more complex realities. The cooptation of Daoist messianism, for instance, by the Tang emperors via their claim of descent from Laozi would have been neither necessary nor advantageous had it not related to what must have been a fairly widespread belief in Chinese society, untouched by state intervention.

But Daoism beyond the purview of the state, and of the aristocracy that supported it, is much harder to discern. All that we can be sure of is that as Chinese society developed, so did religious groups, and that among them the imperial status of Daoism offered a prize worth competing for. Thus the group whose name in modern times has been the Jingming (Pure Brightness) school seems to have been before the Tang no more than a local cult, but in the late seventh century a brief spell of imperial patronage from the Empress Wu for a reformer of the cult seems to have brought it into Daoist circles, a position it sought to maintain without further court contacts by modelling its practices on those of the Celestial Masters. With the decline of the dynasty from 756 onward, state patronage became less important compared with local standing, so that we find the Celestial Masters consolidating their influence once more from a new base in Jiangsu under a new (or renewed) hereditary family leadership based on claims of descent from Han times.

The Tang-Song transition, then, saw a relative decline in the importance of court Daoism and the rise of regional groups and popular practices, often in conjunction. Some of these innovations, such as Thunder Magic (lei fa), have been tentatively linked to the expansion of Chinese culture into new areas in the south where hostile non-Chinese religious influences were still strong. The same may be said of other religious trends, too, such as the emergence of new tutelary deities, “city gods,” again in accordance with population shifts into areas where spiritual protection was a priority. But the city gods at this point were no more Daoist than most of the new deities we hear of in Song times who had evidently been brought to prominence by changes in the composition of Chinese society. It would seem that though the old aristocracy that had supported Daoism and Buddhism had disappeared, a new elite that emphasized learning
more than lineage still continued the role of patrons of monastic religion.

But other patrons of religion had now emerged, while improved communications and media (the printed icon, for example) made it possible for cults with a local base to spread across wide areas, sometimes jumping dialect and other cultural boundaries in the process. Some of these cults were able to emulate the Jingming school and achieve recognition as part of Daoism. But in the Southern Song especially, when government recognition of deities not sanctioned by Buddhism or Daoism seems to have become more easily obtained, the hegemony of Daoism as a legitimating, "imperial" organization was undermined. Paul Katz has shown (1993) how in time a cult could acquire some recognition by Daoism yet still maintain an independent existence. The simple dichotomy between Daoism and folk religion earlier noted by Stein (1979) thus becomes a more complex, nuanced affair. Of particular interest is the ability of some non-Daoist groups to define themselves in relation to Daoism as what might be termed "ancillary" forms of religion, subordinate yet in the service of higher powers than those of a mere folk practitioner. The priests of Xu Jia, the legendary servant of Laozi, play just such a role, mediating between different levels of religion.

All this trend towards further complexity would doubtless be easier to chronicle were it not for the events of the thirteenth century, which were to see the debates between Buddhism and Daoism climax in the Mongol destruction of the Daoist canon, eliminating vital resources for the study of Song Daoism. For example, "popular" forms of Daoism, like Thunder Magic, may easily be traced through references in non-Daoist literature, but what of court Daoism? At some point the elaborate system built up by the mid-Tang, with its complex hierarchy of levels of ordination, seems to have collapsed, though manuscript remains from Dunhuang show that it was for a while at least more than merely notional. But what took its place at the center?

Disaster under the Mongols has had one other consequence for our studies also in that it has drawn attention to the North Chinese schools of Daoism like Quanzhen which the Mongols encountered first, and which played a large role in their religious policies, in their thirteenth century forms, whereas contemporary Jin sources on their origins are much more difficult to come by. There are signs, however, that the collapse of Song power in the north after 1127 at first engendered truly radical religious movements which by the thirteenth century had succumbed to a process of institutionalization. The Bud-
dhist Dhuta Sect appears to have been one such group, though like the southern White Cloud and other similar movements, it seems to have been less successful in shedding its sectarian image or compromising with the religious establishment in Mongol times, and so failed to manage the transition to respectability achieved by Quanzhen. Some elements affected by this transition, such as the early importance of female leadership, though lost to official hagiography, were not so successfully purged from collective memory, as we shall see.

But first Daoism had to undergo, with the founding of the Ming administrative reforms instigated by virtually the only Chinese emperor to grow up with a firsthand knowledge of religion at the popular level. Zhu Yuanzhang was clearly aware that the established religious traditions brought with them a considerable penumbra of less qualified religious practitioners, and his main aim appears to have been to make sure that all were subject to stringent controls—not only the existence, but even the travels of Daoist priests were now duly reported and recorded. The city gods were also incorporated into Daoism at this time, and in general the balance between recognition and regulation that went back to the fifth century was now shifted decisively in favor of the state.

The results of this were twofold. First, at the popular level, limiting the official clergy seems to have created a gap in the market for religious leadership, especially as the overall population increased, so that the Ming and the Qing dynasties were plagued with sporadic sectarian uprisings headed by religious adventurers unconstrained by membership of a regulated clergy. Secondly, educated persons took religious life increasingly into their own hands. Organized Daoism had never exercised a monopoly over the techniques used to seek immortality, and with the rise in the late Tang of inner alchemy requiring no special materials we can be sure that these techniques spread yet more freely. The late Ming, however, saw a rapid expansion of the publishing industry which promoted an unprecedentedly broad dissemination of many kinds of technical knowledge, including Daoist knowledge, on the open market.

The Daoist canon remained out of reach of any private citizen, but publishing, at any rate, saw the appearance of larger or smaller sets of "essential" works to suit any pocket, and of course most of the literature included was geared to a demand for religious self-help. Interestingly, those who were now ready to seek this help included women educated and independent enough to delimit their own religious needs, and to revive the names of female authors like Sun Bu’er whom Quanzhen hagiogra-
phy had, as we noted, long suppressed. To an elite now well accus-
tomed to receiving revelations from the spirit world through auto-
matic writing of the planchette type, any historical hiatus in commu-
nication with past spiritual figures presented no problems.

But there is yet a third factor which may perhaps be associated
with the intensified climate of control. When Buddhists and Daoists
had competed freely for state patronage, it was in the interests of both
to maintain their distinctiveness. Yet open religious polemics between
the two were now a thing of the past, so that we find in the supple-
ment to the Ming Daoist canon a handbook of religious knowledge,
the Soushen ji (In Search of the Supernatural, CT 1476), by
Luo Maodeng (fl. 1593-98), which describes Buddhist and other cults
just as in the extra-canonical editions of the same work, with no at-
tempt at modifying them to suit a Daoist context. The incorporation
of Buddhist language into inner alchemical literature of the Qing also
reaches new levels of complexity, and provides indirect evidence
(amply confirmed by other sources) for a lay readership well informed
about both Buddhism and Daoism yet not particularly concerned
with an exclusive approach to either.

In some ways, however, this may have proved an excellent prepa-
ration for the twentieth century, since Daoism within this context
(leaving aside, that is, its continuing role in local society) has been cut
back to what is quite irreducibly non-Buddhist, that is, its distinctively
Chinese view of the materiality of the cosmos and the individual in
terms of qi. The rise of modern Qigong in this century has thus pro-
duced a further level of “somatization,” and of the configuring of a
“Daoist body” as the locus of practice which requires the under-
standing of such a minimum of distinctive concepts (such as qi) that it
can cut loose from its cultural context and compete successfully in a
global marketplace. Thus Daoism as popularly understood through-
out the world today is far less burdened than Buddhism with a volu-
minous but necessary doctrinal literature, even if on the other hand it
lacks the organizational strength preserved by the Buddhist tradition.

The future alone will tell whether it is able to maintain its identity
internationally; history so far can only say that as a religious tradition
it has been subject to constant change. Yet, looking back, it becomes
clear that no phase in its existence can be described in isolation. It is,
of course, possible to speak of the periodization of Daoism, but only
by involving a number of other elements that have been subject to
simultaneous historic change: the Chinese state, Chinese society,
Buddhism and even folk religion—and this last is frankly a residual
category which, as has been suggested above, was itself capable of
evolving a high degree of differentiation over time. To search for patterns of development in such a situation is a dangerous task, since hypotheses are all too easily falsified by new information arriving from a number of different directions.

If the history of Daoism looked highly unsatisfactory a generation ago, then it is certainly not free from problems now. It is reasonable to suppose that an essay on this topic written thirty years hence should in turn be capable of showing up glaring errors of fact and judgment in the foregoing remarks. But the entire aim of this Handbook is to provide a baseline from which others will be able to make and measure progress. When this particular marker has been left well behind—a process which one might hope to measure in years rather than decades—then it will have served its purpose.

RESEARCH ON DAOISM (LIVIA KOHN)

Traditionally the main centers of Daoist research have been France and Japan, where the first copies of the Daoist canon became available to the scholarly community in the beginning of this century and study began to flourish, rising to great heights in the following decades. Major scholars and works of this early period (some in later reprints and translations) are Edouard Chavannes (1910; 1919), Henri Maspero (1981), Rolf A. Stein (1990) and Maxime Kaltenmark (1969), as well as Yoshioka Yoshitoyo (1955; 1959; 1970; 1976), Fukui Kōjun (1952), Ōfuchi Ninji (1964), Fukunaga Mitsuji (1956; 1987) and Miyakawa Hisayuki (1974).

Since the 1970s, and following the reprint of the Daoist canon in various reduced editions by publishing houses in Taiwan, the study of Daoism has become more widespread. Still, France and Japan are the greatest centers, but there are now also serious Daoist scholars in other European countries (Great Britain, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Italy) as well as in the United States, Canada and Australia. In addition, after the end of the Cultural Revolution and with the increased religious revival in mainland China, the field has also picked up momentum in Daoism’s original homeland (see Leung 1991; “The Study of Daoism in China Today”).

In Japan, the main research organizations in the past few decades have been the Nihon dōkyō gakkai  日本道教学会 (Japanese Daoist Society)—with its journal Tōhō shūkyō 東方宗教 (Eastern Religions)—and the recent Dōkyō bunka kenkyūkai 道教文化研究会 (Study Group of Daoist Culture), which so far has published one book containing articles by its members (1994) and participated in two joint
conference with American scholars, in Tokyo in 1995 and in Maine in 1998 (for their proceedings, see Yamada and Tanaka 1998; Kohn and Roth forthcoming). A comprehensive English description of the development of Daoist studies in Japan is given by Sakai Tadao and Noguchi Tetsuro (1979) and, more recently, by Fukui Fumimasa (1995).

In France, three major institutions promote Daoist studies. There is first the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, with representatives in Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan. It publishes two journals, Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient and Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie. The latter, in particular, has several issues dedicated to Daoism and contains an excellent description of the development of Daoist studies in the West from 1950 to 1990 (Seidel 1990b). In addition, there are the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, a section of the University of Paris, and the Collège de France. The former is a major training center of scholars, while the latter has an extensive publication series that contains many important studies in the field.

As the field grew, leading scholars of both France and Japan were responsible for organizing three international conferences on Daoism, which took place in Bellagio (Italy) in 1968, Tateshina (Japan) in 1973 and Unterägeri (Switzerland) in 1979, and also included scholars and students from various other countries. The proceedings of the first two were published (History of Religions, vol. 17.3-4 [1969]; Welch and Seidel 1979).

It is also largely—but not exclusively—due to their effort that we today have a number of important indexes and concordances to the Daoist canon and certain specific texts. On the Daoist canon, aside from the two standards indexes (Weng 1935; Schipper 1975a), there are a comprehensive description of all its texts (Ren and Zhong 1991) and an index to all texts cited in its major encyclopedias and collections (Ôfuchi and Ishii 1988). In addition, there is an index to the Daozang jiyao 道藏輯要, a seventeenth-century collection which supplements the canon (Chen 1987).

Studies on Daoism are listed in a variety of bibliographies, beginning with Michel Soymié's early work (1968; 1969) and continuing with the collections made by Knut Walf (1989) and Julian Pas (1997; see also Dragan 1989). In addition, large sections dealing with Daoism are contained in Laurence Thompson's Chinese Religion in Western Languages (1985; 1993a; see also Kardos 1998). The most current and most complete listing of works on Daoism in various languages is contained in the fall issue of the Japanese journal Tōhō shakkyō.

Daoist studies as a field has been multifaceted and incorporated
many different areas and approaches, matching the variegated nature of the Daoist religion itself. Neither clearly an ethnic nor a universal religion (see Kubo 1974), Daoism shares many ideas and practices with Chinese culture in general—including cosmology, divination and longevity techniques—yet uses them in a uniquely Daoist way and relies on them to a large extent, so that they can also be called Daoist. This multiplicity of ideas and practices, together with the division into “philosophical” and “religious Daoism” and the large number of schools and sects within the religion, makes the definition of what truly is “Daoist” a very difficult endeavor. The term “Daoist” has accordingly been described as giving rise to “perplexity” (Sivin 1969), and to the present day scholars are debating the questions of what exactly makes an idea, practice or person Daoist as opposed to Buddhist, popular or merely Chinese (see Creel 1970; Strickmann 1980; Thompson 1993b).

Two Japanese dictionaries on the religion offer the suggestion to divide Daoism into three different strands: philosophy, organized religion (kyōkai dōkyō 教会道教, lit. church Daoism) and popular practice (minshū dōkyō 民族道教, lit. folk Daoism). Although these different aspects were dominant at different times in the religion’s development, Sakade says (1994), there is an essential continuity between them that furnishes the variety and richness of Daoism as a whole. Fukui Fumimasa, too, proposes a tripartite division into philosophical, religious, and new Daoism. He makes an argument in favor of a continuity especially between the first two, giving three reasons: (1) the identity of the terminology and application of terms among Daoist thinkers and religious practitioners; (2) the fact that Lao-Zhuang thinkers of the Wei-Jin were not only theorists but also engaged in longevity techniques and the use of immortality drugs; (3) the divinization of Laozi under the Han and recitation of the Daode jīng among the Celestial Masters, which would not have been possible without active recourse to the earlier tradition (Noguchi et al. 1994, 441-43; see Kohn 1996).

Following their guidance, Russell Kirkland has recently suggested a more complex, yet further integrated view of the religion. He distinguishes two major phases, classical Daoism and later Daoism, with the dividing line in the Han dynasty, then subdivides the latter into an early and a later phase (traditional Daoism and new Daoism), with the twelfth century as a cut-off point. Traditional Daoism, moreover, is further divided into two kinds: incipient organized and organized. This separation occurs in the fifth century, when the various schools are already established separately and begin to integrate. In other
words, he has four periods:

1. classical (-Han)
2. traditional: incipient organized (-5th c.)
3. traditional: organized (-Tang)
4. new (-present)

Expanding further on this scheme and inspired by research on the development of the deified Laozi, I have suggested that two further stages be added: (1) a transitional stage between classical and incipient organized Daoism that emphasizes the cataclysmic changes of the Han dynasty, such as the rise of immortality practitioners, the installation of Daoist politics through the Huang-Lao school, the increased imperial worship of the Dao, and the first messianic movements and (2) a subdivision of new Daoism into a structuring stage during the Song and Yuan and a stage of the increasingly popularization of Daoism lasting from the Ming to today (Kohn 1998, 164).

This volume supports the more detailed periodization and authors on both the Han and Ming emphasize the degree to which these periods, despite their importance, have been neglected by scholars. Thus Mark Csikszentmihalyi notes that “the four hundred year Han Dynasty has attracted relatively less attention from historians of Daoism. This situation is to a large degree a product of the scholarly debate over the relationship between the pre- and post-Han situation, eras associated with what were once called ‘philosophical’ and ‘religious’ Daoism.” And Pierre-Henry de Bruyn says that “scholars tend to see the Ming dynasty as a time when the Daoist religion went into somewhat of a decline .... In contrast, it should be regarded as a time of prosperity and can even be considered to be one of Daoism’s most powerful” (see below).

Regardless of period and working definition, the study of Daoism so far can be described as having been approached from four major angles:

1. Philosophy—the study of the ancient texts Laozi and Zhuangzi and their commentaires as well as the analysis of later Daoist texts from the viewpoint of philosophy or comparative mysticism.
2. History and literature—the study of the different Daoist schools, their development, scriptures and practices as well as the impact Daoism had on Chinese literature, notably of the Tang dynasty.
3. Ritual—the study of the communal practice of Daoism today and its historical precedents from the middle ages through the Tang and Song in relation to ritual theory and in comparative
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4. Practices and techniques—the study of technical activities of individual Daoists, such as alchemy, longevity techniques, and divination, both in their modern and traditional forms, often in comparison with their Western or Indian counterparts and in an effort to understand the actual procedures and their concrete effects on the human body and in daily life.

Each of these angles and approaches, while useful and fascinating in its own way, brings its own presuppositions and methods, concerns and focal points. They all make valuable contributions to the understanding of Daoism, yet it would be erroneous to claim that any one of them can stand for the religion in its entirety. They are all represented in this volume, in the chapters on the early philosophers, on the various schools, on the different methods, as well as on ritual and ordination.

More recently, four new perspectives on the religion have come to the foreground, presenting areas of study and approaches that are not yet well documented and are only partially represented here. The first among these is the examination of Daoist art and music, i.e., the study of the artistic expression of the Daoist religion. Although Daoists engaged in both since the middle ages, their work has been largely left unstudied; it is only now coming to the fore, with the exhibition of Daoist art prepared by Stephen Little (Chicago, 2000) and the Chinese Ritual Music Project under the guidance of Ts’ao Pen-yeh in Hong Kong (see “The Study of Daoism in China Today”). Two contributions in this volume present an initial foray into these newly growing areas of study.

Second, there is the study of Daoism beyond China, in other East Asia countries, such as Korea, Japan and Vietnam, but also among non-Chinese ethnic groups (such as the Yao in northern Thailand) and in newly arising groups in the West (such as Orthodox Daoism of America). Concerns here are the question of how Chinese or non-Chinese followers of Daoism would have to be to be proper Daoists or, vice versa, how much influence of Chinese culture (such as the yin-yang, five-phases system) can be properly called “Daoist.” This leads into the overarching question whether Daoism is ultimately an ethnic or a universal religion, a religion that sets out to make converts independent of culture, or a specifically Chinese phenomenon that can only be transmitted as part of Chinese culture. The cases of Korea and Japan, among the better studied to date and described in this volume, suggest a rather more ethnic inclination of the religion, as
most Daoism entered the two countries as part of an overall integra-
tion of Chinese culture and hardly any formal ordination and mo-
nastic or ritual organizations came to flourish there.

The issue is made more complex by the fact that Chinese cultural
impact on other East Asian cultures is often seen with a rather dis-
pleased eye, and the study of Daoism—especially if it is understood as
a major factor that shaped the country’s culture—accordingly tends
to conflict with nationalistic visions and interpretations. This holds
ture for both Korea and Japan, and is evident in the papers here. In
the case of Korea, the proposition that there was an “indigenous”
form of Daoism before the introduction of the organized religion in
the seventh century is a way to lay claim to an established higher re-
ligion of another country on one’s own grounds and without foreign
fluence. In the case of Japan, the polite overlooking of much of Fu-
 kunaga’s iconoclastic studies—and especially his (quite supported)
contention that the ancient Tennô system was largely shaped by
Tang Daoism—serves to present a picture of Daoism as part of a be-
nevolent cultural influence that had yet little impact on the funda-
mental identity of the Japanese. Cross-cultural and political issues
must therefore not be overlooked; they complicate the picture of what
Daoism is and what roles it plays.

A third new perspective is the analysis of Daoism in relation to
popular and ethnic religion, that is, the relationship and interaction
Daoism had with various regional beliefs and practices. This, of
course, is not a new issue, and scholars have found both a rather
contrary attitude of Daoists towards popular cults (e.g., Stein 1979)
and a rather benevolent or integrative one (e.g., Schipper 1985).
What is new in recent years is the detail of analysis and the more in-
tense focus on specific locations and ethnic groups. A conference on
local and regional cults held in Paris in 1995 brought to light many
interesting glimpses of Daoist and popular/regional interaction (see
Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie 10 [1998]) and several contributions to the sec-
ond American-Japanese conference on Daoist identity focus on the
same issue (Kohn and Roth 2000). In this new perspective Daoism is
no longer seen as an isolated or even special phenomenon, but un-
derstood in its active interchange with the culture and practices of lo-
cal and ethnic cults. A more critical awareness of which cults should
or could be called Daoist on what grounds is gradually emerging.
The present Handbook does not contain a specific chapter on this is-
sue, but both popular cults and deities appear in various sections and
their relation to Daoism is examined.

The fourth new perspective is somewhat similar to the third in
that it, too, looks in more detail at details rather than at the larger picture. It focuses on specific lineages and groups and examines the structure of Daoist transmission patterns and group organization both within and without the established schools. Here the more recent traditions of Daoism come to the fore, such as the Longmen 龍門 lineage of the Quanzhen school and the various lay Daoist organizations of Hong Kong and Taiwan (daotan 道壇). Studies undertaken in this perspective fruitfully combine the two fields of history and anthropology and present a new and newly vivid image of Daoism. They are reflected in this volume especially in the contributions on Daoism in the Qjng and modern Daoist ritual.

Yet largely unexplored areas include, as Russell Kirkland also notes above, the modern practice of Daoism outside the Zhengyi tradition (the various forms of Quanzhen, the new Qigong movements); the history, organization and present state of Daoist monasteries (described as un-Daoist by Schipper [1984], yet important institutions); and the political forms of Daoism (as state religion and as shaping ideals of Great Peace). The Daoist pantheon needs to be examined in a coherent fashion, both in a succinct historical survey and in a wider comparative perspective; the same holds true for Daoist cosmology and mythology—areas that are well recognized aspects of all major religions and about which yet so little is known in the case of Daoism.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE DAODEJING AND ITS TRADITION

ALAN K. L. CHAN

DESCRIPTION

The Daodejing 道德絳, commonly translated the “Classic of the Way and Virtue,” must be ranked as one of the most important classics in world literature. It also poses a strong challenge to interpreters, past and present, in China and beyond. Known also as the Laozi 老子, on account of its reputed author, the Daodejing is the foundational classic of Daoism, taken broadly to include all forms of Daoist thought and practice. Inasmuch as Daoism forms a pillar of Chinese culture, the influence of the Daodejing is pervasive. The sheer number of commentaries devoted to the classic—some 700, according to one count, of which about 350 are extant (W. T. Chan 1963, 77)—is itself a telling indication of its enduring popularity and hermeneutical openness.

The influence of the Daodejing extends beyond China; in Japan, approximately 250 commentaries have been identified. The first translation of the Laozi seems to have been into Sanskrit dating to the seventh century (Pelliot 1912). During the 18th century, a Latin translation was brought to England (Legge 1891, xii), after which a steady stream of translations into Western languages has appeared, totaling some 250 to date (LaFargue and Pas 1998, 277). This makes the Daodejing the most translated work in world literature, next to the Bible (see also Mair 1990, xi).

The Daodejing has been a chief source of inspiration for Chinese intellectuals and in the modern period for lovers of wisdom and spirituality in the West as well. In pre-modern China, emperors, high officials and other personages of note—as even a cursory reading of the standard dynastic histories testifies—were fond of citing the Daodejing. Followers of the Daoist faith revered it as a revealed scripture. On politics, literature, art, religion, philosophy and other domains, the Laozi has left a mark that is both deep and far-reaching. In the West, while other sources of influence are at work, the contribution of the classic to such best-selling works as The Tao of Physics (Capra 1975) and The Tao of Pooh (Hoff 1982) is considerable. Regardless of what the scholarly community may think of these works, they play a role in
what some have called the movement of "new-age" spirituality that has claimed a substantial following in recent decades. Overall the work has had a long history and widespread influence and has also been surrounded by many controversies. All this renders mapping "the Daodejing and its tradition" in a short essay a hazardous undertaking.

**History**

**THE LEGEND OF LAOZI.** Few scholars today would subscribe fully to the traditional view that Laozi, the "Old Master," wrote the *Daodejing* before he left China on a westward journey. However, scholarly consensus on such basic issues as authorship and date of composition remains elusive. The official "biography" of Laozi offered by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-86 B.C.E.) in the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian), on which the traditional view is based, provides a point of departure for debate.

The current (*Sibu beiyao 四部備要*) version of the biography begins: "Laozi was a man of Chu 楚. . . . His surname was Li 李; given name, Er 耳; zi Boyang 伯陽; he was called posthumously Dan 聃" (*Shiji* 63). Unambiguous as they may seem, even these details have given rise to intense disagreement. Since the Tang dynasty, for example, scholars have pointed out that the "original" *Shiji* version gives Laozi's style-name as Dan, and that the name Boyang derives from a later source. Early sources such as the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Writings of Master Zhuang) and *Lushi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü) refer to Lao Dan consistently. It has also been suggested that the word Lao is a surname, although the majority view remains that "Lao Dan" should be rendered simply "Old Dan." These examples give an indication of one kind of debates with which students of the *Laozi* have been preoccupied. Sima Qian goes on to relate that Laozi was a historiographer or archivist at the court of Zhou, and how Confucius consulted him on the rites (possibly funeral rites). This establishes the traditional claim that Laozi was a senior contemporary of Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.). In this story, which also appears in *Zhuangzi*, ch. 14, Laozi instructed Confucius in a tone that clearly affirms his superiority, chiding the latter for his pride and ambition. Confucius was full of admiration for the Old Master, likening him to a "dragon," which further reinforces Laozi's standing.

"Laozi cultivated Dao and virtue," Sima Qian adds, and "his learning was devoted to self-effacement and not having fame. He lived in Zhou for a long time; witnessing the decline of Zhou, he departed." When he reached the northwest border separating China from the outside world, the official in charge of the border pass, Yin Xi 尹喜, pressed Laozi to commit his thoughts to writing. The result was a book in some five thousand char-
acters, divided into two parts, which discusses "the meaning of Dao and virtue." Thereafter, Laozi left; no one knew where he spent the rest of his days. There is some disagreement about the name Yin Xi, but this completes the main part of Sima Qian's account. The remainder seeks to match the legendary Laozi with known historical individuals, including a list of Laozi's purported descendants.

In an influential paper entitled "The Origins of the Legend of Lao Tan [Dan]," A.C. Graham (1986) argues that the story of Laozi reflects a conflation of different legends. The earliest stratum, which came from a Confucian source and was current by the fourth century B.C.E., revolves around the meeting of Lao Dan with Confucius. Subsequently, Laozi was made a champion of Zhuangzi's philosophy. During the first half of the third century B.C.E., Lao Dan was recognized as a great thinker in his own right, the founder of the Daoist—or more precisely, as Graham suggests, "Laoist"—school. Only during the Han dynasty, when the teachings of Laozi and Zhuangzi were seen to share certain insights centering on the concept of Dao, were they classified together under the rubric of the "Daoist school" (daojia 道家).

It could well be the case that the meeting between Confucius and Lao Dan had a basis in fact. Various dates have been suggested—for example, 501 B.C.E., following the account in the Zhuangzi (ch. 14). Nevertheless, the meager evidence at our disposal cannot confirm the historicity of the encounter or that Lao Dan was more than a fictional construct. Sima Qian's account, as William Boltz writes, reflecting a widely held view among Western scholars, "contains virtually nothing that is demonstrably factual; we are left no choice but to acknowledge the likely fictional nature of the traditional Lao tzu [Laozi] figure" (1993, 270). According to Fung Yulan (1983, 171), Sima Qian had "confused" the legendary Lao Dan with Li Er, who flourished during the Warring States period and was the "real" founder of the Daoist school. According to D. C. Lau (1963, 148), there were probably two versions of the meeting between Laozi and Confucius—a Confucian one highlighting Confucius's humility and eagerness to learn, and a Daoist one which emphasized Laozi's critique of Confucian values (see also W. T. Chan 1963).

The story of Laozi takes on a religious turn since the Han period. Anna Seidel (1969) and Livia Kohn (1998a) offer an indispensable guide to this development. Simply put, the divinity of Laozi was recognized as the Daoist tradition took root. In the eyes of the faithful, a new revelation of the Dao by the divine Laozi, traditionally dated 142 C.E., resulted in the formation of the "Way of the Celestial Master" (Tianshi dao 天師道), the first organized religious Daoist establishment.

In the mature Daoist tradition, Laozi is seen as the personification of the Dao. He is thought to have undergone a series of "transformations" (bianhua
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Some texts speak of the eighty-one transformations of “Lord Lao”; that means, throughout history he appeared in different guises to selected individuals to initiate them into the mysteries of the Dao, to secure cosmic harmony and sociopolitical order. Lao Dan here is but one manifestation of the divine Laozi. Also, to the religious Daoist imagination, it is not true that no one knew where he went after he left Zhou China. He journeyed to India to “transform the barbarians” (huahu 化胡), Daoist sources claim, to convert them to the truth of the Dao (Kohn 1991). During the Tang dynasty, the imperial Li family traced its ancestry to Laozi. In 666 B.C.E., Emperor Gaozong officially bestowed the title Taishang xuan yuan huangdi 太上玄元皇帝 (Most High August Sovereign of Profound Primordiality) on him (Barrett 1996, 32). In this context, the writing of the Daodejing was no ordinary event, but marked the arrival of a profound scripture that promised not only wisdom but to those who submit to its power, immortality and salvation.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF COMPOSITION. With both imperial and popular support, the story of Laozi contributes significantly to the Daodejing and its tradition. As scripture, moreover, the text commands a particular kind of response from its readers and shapes religious practices. The full story thus warrants careful attention, although it does not help resolve the question of the actual authorship and date of composition of the Daodejing, of which only a structural navigation map can be provided here.

The date of composition refers to the time when the Laozi reached more or less its final form; it does not rule out later interpolation or corruption that crept into the text over its long course of transmission. An interesting development in contemporary sinological scholarship is that traditional accounts are increasingly coming back into favor. This stems in some cases from recent archaeological discoveries; but more generally the trend may be seen as a reaction against the radical distrust of tradition that characterizes much of 20th-century sinological research. In the present case, there have been calls to redress the common verdict that the Laozi was a “forgery” of the late Warring States period. Liu Xiaogan, for example, has argued that we should on the whole accept Sima Qian’s account; that is to say, the Laozi was written by Lao Dan towards the end of the Spring and Autumn period, in the sixth or early fifth century B.C.E. (1997, 65). Admittedly, this represents a minority view at present. However, there are reasons why the claim of an early date—although not necessarily Lao Dan’s authorship—may enjoy a sunnier scholarly fortune in future.

A second and more popular view traces the Laozi to the early fourth century, before the time of Zhuangzi (see Baxter 1998), while a third would argue for an even later date, not earlier than the third century B.C.E. These are general markers. The situation is far more complex, for the composition
of the *Daode jing* does not necessarily follow the idea that one author (A1) wrote the book at one time (T1).

One variation is that the *Laozi* can be seen to have preserved the ideas of Lao Dan. W. T. Chan, for example, believes that the text "embodies" the teachings of Laozi, although it was not written until the fourth century (1963, 74). According to Graham, the *Laozi* was ascribed to Lao Dan around 250 B.C.E. by the text's author or "publisher," capitalizing on Lao Dan's reputation (1986; 1989). This may appear a variation of the basic "A1/T1" model, but it leaves open the possibility that the book existed before the middle of the third century. It also raises the question whether the *Daode jing* was the work of a single author. Conceivably, the publisher or final redactor could have brought together diverse sources. Chad Hansen, for example, describes the "dominant current textual theory" as one which "treats the text as an edited accumulation of fragments and bits drawn from a wide variety of sources ... there was no single author, no Laozi" (1992, 201). If the *Laozi* were a composite work—an "anthology," as D.C. Lau (1963) puts it—then the further question would be whether there was more than one editor, compiler, or redactor who put the material together.

The idea of an oral tradition that preceded the writing of the *Daode jing* has gained wide acceptance in recent years; yet it is not always clear what that entails. On the one hand, it could lend support to W. T. Chan's view cited above, that Lao Dan's disciples kept alive the teachings of the master orally before some later student(s) committed them to writing. On the other hand, it could also mean that the redactor(s) or compiler(s) had access to disparate sayings originated from and circulated in different contexts. As Ellen Chen has it, although the book may not have been written until the fourth century, the "predominant theme ... reaches back to the primordial consciousness of the Chinese" (1989, 21).

The various permutations are too numerous to mention. Mair (1990) and LaFargue (1992) give a strong account of the "oral tradition" thesis. LaFargue, in particular, is careful to point out that oral tradition need not refer to the sayings of one person; it functions rather as a reservoir of "aphorisms," which were circulated among like-minded "Laoist" scholars and formed the basis of the *Daode jing* (1992, 197; see also Kimura 1959; Hurvitz 1961). This does not prejudice whether the final product contains sayings that were put together at random, or reflects a careful distillation on the part of the redactor(s) who arranged and/or altered the material at their disposal. LaFargue appears to favor the latter view; other scholars (e.g., Lau and Mair), however, see little sign of tight editorial control.

Both external and internal clues have been employed in determining the date of the *Daode jing*. Quotations from the *Laozi* in other classical works are often cited as evidence. For example, if the *Mozi* quotes from the *Laozi*, and if the *Mozi* can be dated to the fifth century B.C.E., then the
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_Laozi_ would have been current by that time. There is in fact one such quotation preserved in the _Taiping yulan_ (322.5b), although this is not found in the present _Mozi_. Unless new archaeological evidence comes to light, the available external evidence can only confirm that the _Laozi_ was widely recognized by the middle of the third century, when it was quoted extensively in such works as the _Hanfeizi_ 蘭非子 (Writings of Master Han Fei), _Li Shi chunqiu_, and the “outer” and “miscellaneous” chapters of the _Zhuangzi_.

The language of the _Daode jing_ also proves fertile ground for debate. Much of the text is rhymed. Focusing on rhyme patterns, Liu Xiaogan concludes that the poetic structure of the _Laozi_ is much closer to that of the _Shijing_ 詩經 (Book of Songs) than that of the _Chuci_ 楚辭 (Songs of Chu; see Liu 1994; 1997). For this reason, the traditional view should be upheld. Examining the wider linguistic evidence, while disagreeing with Liu on some points, William Baxter also believes that the _Laozi_ should be dated earlier than the _Zhuangzi_ and _Chuci_, “to the mid or early fourth century” (1998, 249). Both Liu and Baxter provide a concise analysis of the different theories of the date of the _Daode jing_.

In view of the above, beginning students may find it intimidating to venture into the maze of Laozi studies, but one can expect some help from recent archaeological discoveries. The difference between 500 B.C.E. and 250 B.C.E. may seem insignificant and it may appear immaterial to interpretation whether the text is the work of one author or reflects multiple interests. This need not be disputed, if the goal is only to catch a glimpse of the Dao or be illuminated by its power as it transcends historical or cultural specificity. Traditional commentaries have operated largely on this premise; and a number of modern interpretations insist on the “timeless” nature of the _Daode jing_. The question of date and authorship is important, however, if context has any role to play in the production of meaning. Different methodological assumptions underlie these approaches, which should be distinguished and made to work together in understanding the _Daode jing_.

**The Text**

The discovery of the two _Laozi_ silk _manuscripts_ at Mawangdui 馬王堆, near Changsha, Hunan province, in 1973 has spurred a fresh wave of interest in the Daoist classic. Before this, access to the _Daode jing_ was mainly through the received text of Wang Bi 王弼 (226-249 C.E.) and Heshang gong 河上公, a legendary figure depicted as a teacher to the Han Emperor Wen (r. 179-157 B.C.E.). There are other manuscript fragments and versions preserved in commentaries, but by and large they play a secondary role in the history of the _Daode jing_. A recent archaeological find in Guodian
THE DAODE JING AND ITS TRADITION

The Daodejing and Its Tradition

The *Laozi*, the so-called "Bamboo Laozi," promises to bring further excitement to *Laozi* studies. But first a note on the title and structure of the *Daodejing*.

The *Laozi* did not acquire its canonical status until the Han dynasty. According to the *Shiji* (49.5b), the Empress Dowager Dou—wife of Emperor Wen and mother of Emperor Jing (r. 156-141)—was a dedicated student of the text. Later sources relate further that it was Emperor Jing who established the text officially as a "classic" (*jing*). Nevertheless, the title *Daodejing* appears not to have been widely recognized until later, towards the close of the Han period. Wang Bi's commentary in the third century, indeed, is still called simply the *Laozi zhu*.

The *Laozi* is also referred to as the "five-thousand character" text, on account of its approximate length. Most versions exceed five thousand characters by about five to ten percent, but it is interesting to note that numerological considerations later forged their way into the history of the *Daodejing*. According to the seventh-century Daoist master Cheng Xuanying, Ge Xuan (fl. 200 C.E.) shortened the text that accompanied the *Heshang gong* commentary to fit the magical number of five thousand. The claim cannot be verified, but a number of *Laozi* manuscripts discovered at Dunhuang contain 4,999 characters.

The current *Daodejing* is divided into two parts and 81 chapters. Part one, comprising chapters 1-37, has come to be known as the *Daojing*, while chapters 38-81 form the *Dejing*. The division into two parts was established since the early Han dynasty, if not earlier. It is understood to be a thematic division—chapter 1 begins with the word *Dao*, while chapter 38 begins with the expression "superior virtue"—although the concepts of *Dao* and *virtue* (*de*) feature in both parts. Still, one can say that the *Daojing* is sometimes more "metaphysical," while the *Dejing* focuses more on sociopolitical issues.

In this context, it is easy to appreciate the tremendous interest occasioned by the discovery of the Mawangdui *Laozi* manuscripts. Identified simply as "A" (jia 甲) and "B" (yi 乙), the two manuscripts are similarly divided into two parts, but in contrast with the current version, in reverse order; i.e., both manuscripts begin with the *Dejing*, corresponding to chapter 38 of the received text. "Part one" of the "B" manuscript ends with the editorial notation, "Virtue, 3,041 [characters]," while the last line of "Part two" reads: "Dao, 2,426." Does this mean that the classic should be renamed? One scholar, in fact, has adopted the title *Dedaojing* in a recent translation (Henricks 1989)—with important implications for interpretation.

The division into 81 chapters is associated particularly with the *Heshang gong* version, which also has chapter titles, and reflects numerological interest. It was not universally accepted until much later, perhaps the Tang period, when the text was standardized under the patronage of Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-755). Traditional sources report that some versions were divided into 64, 68 or 72 chapters; some did not have chapter division.
at all (see Henricks 1982). The precise course of textual transmission can no longer be reconstructed. I suspect that there were a number of manuscript traditions circulating from an early time. The two Mawangdui manuscripts were found in a tomb sealed in 168 B.C.E. The texts themselves can be dated earlier, the “A” manuscript being the older of the two, copied in all likelihood before 195 B.C.E. (Lau 1982; see also Boltz 1984).

Until recently, the Mawangdui manuscripts have held the pride of place as the oldest extant manuscripts of the Daodejing. In late 1993, the excavation of a tomb (identified as M1) in Guodian, Jingmen city, Hubei province, has yielded 804 inscribed bamboo strips, containing over 13,000 characters. Some of these, amounting to about 2,000 characters, match the Laozi (see Wenwu 1997.7, 35-48). The tomb is located near the old capital of the state of Chu and is dated to around 300 B.C.E. Unfortunately it suffered considerable damage as a result of two robberies in 1993, so that some bamboo strips may have been stolen. A transcribed version was recently published under the title Guodian chumu zhijian (Beijing: Wenwu, 1998), which divides the text into three groups.

Group A contains thirty-nine bamboo slips, which correspond in whole or in part to the following chapters of the present text: 19, 66, 46, 30, 15, 64, 37, 63, 2, 32, 25, 16, 64, 56, 57, 55, 44, 40 and 9. Groups B and C are smaller, with eighteen (chs. 59, 48, 20, 13, 41, 52, 45, 54) and fourteen slips (chs. 17, 18, 35, 31, 64), respectively. The arrangement of the text differs significantly from the received version, and there are numerous variant and/or archaic characters. Details concerning both the structure and content of the Guodian Laozi and how it compares with the Mawangdui manuscripts and the received text still await careful study, but preliminary results generally support the authenticity of the find. This makes the Guodian text the oldest extant Laozi fragment and speaks strongly for an early date of the classic.

The new discovery will give fresh impetus to Laozi research but it is unlikely that it will bring forth a definitive rendition of the “original” text. When the Mawangdui manuscripts were found, there were great expectations as well, but conflicts of interpretation continue to plague or, to the more sanguine, enrich the field. For example, the opening word of chapter 10 of the current Laozi has long puzzled scholars. The character zai 卒 seems out of place, and since the Tang dynasty has sometimes been emended or moved to the end of the previous chapter. The Mawangdui B manuscript gives the variant dai 戴, which has led D.C. Lau to conclude that dai, to “carry,” should be the correct wording. Henricks, however, believes that the Mawangdui evidence supports the view that the character serves as an exclamation particle ending the previous sentence.
The fact that the Mawangdui manuscripts differ from the current text points to the existence of different lines of transmission. The two Mawangdui manuscripts quite clearly belong to the same textual family (see Xu 1985 for a dissenting opinion). But it is an altogether different claim that because they are older than the other extant versions, they are therefore "truer" to the "original" Laozi.

TEXTUAL RECENSION involves an interpretive process. The Mawangdui manuscripts make use of a far larger number of grammatical particles when compared with the received text of Wang Bi and Heshang gong. They do clarify the meaning in many instances. But the question is precisely whether they do not reflect an interpretive stance. For example, the phrase *guchang wuyu yiguan qimiao* 故常無欲以觀其妙 in the current Wang Bi text (ch. 1) is clearly marked by grammatical particles in both Mawangdui versions so as to leave no mistake that *wuyu* 無欲 is to be read together, meaning "not having desires." This seems to rule out the alternative reading, found in both traditional and modern studies, that the line should break after the character *wu*, yielding a different interpretation centering on the concept of "nonbeing."

Does this mean that the "original" Laozi had *wuyu*, or that the line was read in a particular way in the Mawangdui manuscripts? There is no question that the Mawangdui evidence is extremely valuable, but prudence dictates that we do not inflate it. In the same way, the reversal of the order or placement of the *Daqijing* and *Dejing* may reflect an interpretive context, in which the Laozi is seen to have a special contribution to make towards governance. The same arrangement is reflected in the *Hanfeizi* and in the Yan Zun version.

As mentioned, the current Laozi, on which most reprints, studies and translations are based, is the version that comes down to us along with the commentaries by Wang Bi and Heshang gong. Three points need to be made in this regard. First, technically there are multiple versions of the Wang Bi and Heshang gong Laozi—there are over thirty Heshang gong versions at present—but the differences are on the whole minor. Second, the Wang Bi and Heshang gong versions are not the same, but are sufficiently similar to be classified as belonging to the same line of textual transmission. Third, the Wang Bi and Heshang gong versions that we see today have suffered change. In particular, the Laozi text that now accompanies Wang Bi's commentary bears the imprint of later editorial alteration, mainly under the influence of the Heshang gong version, and cannot be regarded as the Laozi that Wang Bi himself had seen and commented on. Boltz (1985) and Wagner (1989) have examined this question in some detail.

The "current" version refers to the *Sibu beiyao* and the *Sibu congkan* 四部備要 and *Sibu congkan* 四部備要 editions of the *Daode jing*. The former contains the Wang Bi version and commentary, together with a colophon by the Song scholar...
Chao Yuezhi 晁誦之 (1059-1129), a second note by Xiong Ke 熊克 (c. 1111-1184) and Lu Deming's 陸德明 (556-627) Laozi yinyi 老子音義 (Glosses on the Meaning and Pronunciation of the Laozi). It is a reproduction of the Qing dynasty "Wuying Palace" edition, which in turn is based on a Ming edition. The most detailed textual study of Wang Bi's Laozi commentary is Hatano 1979.

The Heshang gong version preserved in the Sibu congkan series is taken from the library of the famous bibliophile Qu Yong 魁釗 (fl. 1850). According to Qu's own catalogue, this is a Song version, probably published after the reign of the emperor Xiaozong (r. 1163-1189). Older extant versions include two incomplete Tang versions and fragments found in Dunhuang. Interestingly, the famous calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (321-379) is reported to have made a copy of the Heshang gong Laozi for a certain village Daoist in exchange for a herd of geese, to which Wang as a gourmet was apparently partial. A work that claims to be Wang's copy of the Daode jing exists, although most scholars hesitate to accept it as genuine.

Besides the Mawangdui texts and the received text of Wang Bi and Heshang gong, there is an "ancient version" (guben 古本) edited by the early Tang scholar Fu Yi 傅奕 (fl. 600). Reportedly, this version was recovered from a tomb in 574 C.E., whose occupant was a consort of the Chu general Xiang Yu 項羽 (d. 202 B.C.E.), the rival of Liu Bang 劉邦 before the founding of the Han dynasty. A later redaction of the "ancient version" was made by Fan Yingyuan 范應元 in the Song dynasty. There are some differences, but these two can be regarded as having stemmed from the same textual tradition. According to Wagner (1989), judging from Wang Bi’s commentary, the Laozi text that Wang had worked on was similar to the "ancient version."

Manuscript fragments discovered in the Dunhuang caves form another important source in Laozi studies. Among them are several Heshang gong fragments (S. 477, S. 3926, P. 2639) and the important Xiang'er Laozi 想爾老子 with commentary. Another Dunhuang manuscript that merits mention is the Suo Dan fragment, now at the University Art Museum, Princeton University, which contains the last thirty-one chapters of the Daode jing beginning with chapter 51 of the modern text. It is signed and dated at the end, bearing the name of the third-century scholar and diviner Suo Dan 賽貞, who is said to have made the copy, written in ink on paper, in 270 C.E. According to Rao Zongyi (1955), the Suo Dan version belongs to the Heshang gong line of the Laozi text. A more recent study by Boltz (1996) questions its third-century date and argues that the fragment in many instances also agrees with the Fu Yi "ancient version."

While manuscript versions inform textual criticism of the Laozi, stone inscriptions provide further ammunition. Over twenty steles, mainly of Tang and Song origins, are available to textual critics, although some are in poor
condition (Yan 1957). Students of the Laozi now have the luxury of working
with several important Chinese and Japanese studies which make use of a
large number of manuscript versions and stone inscriptions (Ma 1965; Jiang
1980; Zhu 1980; Shima 1973; see also Boltz 1993).

In general, the various different versions of the Laozi do not yield differ¬
ences so radical as to lift the interpretive veil that continues to resist and
attract critical advances. For this reason, and for their intrinsic value, the
study of the Daode jing and its tradition cannot afford to ignore the many
commentaries that seek to lay bare the meaning of the classic. A consider¬
able number has been preserved in the Daoist canon. In an effort that can
only be described as Herculean, Yan Lingfeng has published two massive
collections of the available commentaries on the Daode jing (1965a, 1965b).

COMMENTARIES. Two chapters in the Hanfeizi (chs. 21-22) are enti¬
tled Jie Lao (Explaining the Laozi) and Yu Lao (Illustrating the
Laozi). These can be regarded as the earliest commentaries to the classic.
The “bibliographical” section of the Hanshu (History of the Han) lists
four commentaries to the Laozi, which have not survived. Nevertheless,
there can be little doubt that Laozi learning flourished during the Han
period, only to grow in the succeeding dynasties (see Robinet 1977; 1998).

Traditionally, the Heshang Gong commentary is regarded a product
of the early Han dynasty. The name Heshang gong meant an old man who
dwells by the side of the river; some have identified the river in question to
be the Yellow River. An expert on the Laozi, he caught the attention of
Emperor Wen, who went personally to consult him. Heshang gong revealed
to the emperor his true identity as a divine emissary sent by the “Highest
Lord of the Dao”—i.e., the divine Laozi—specifically to teach him. The
emperor proves a humble student, as the legend concludes, worthy of re¬
ceiving the Daode jing with Heshang gong’s commentary (Chan 1991a).

Recent Chinese studies generally place the commentary towards the end
of the Han period, although some Japanese scholars would date it as late as
the sixth century C.E. I see no compelling reason not to accept it as a sec¬
ond-century work (Chan 1991b). Called in early sources the Laozi zhangu
老子章句, it belongs to the genre of zhangu literature, prevalent in Han
times, which one may paraphrase as commentary “by chapter and verse.”
Its language is simple; its imagination, down-to-earth. The Heshang gong
commentary shares with other Han works the cosmological belief that the
universe is constituted by vital qi-energy. On this basis, interpreting the
text in terms of yin-yang theory, the Laozi is seen to disclose not only the
mystery of the origin of the universe, but more importantly the secret to
personal well being and sociopolitical order.

What the Laozi calls the “One,” according to Heshang gong, refers to the
purest and most potent form of qi-energy that brings forth and continues to
nourish all beings. This is the meaning of de, the “virtue” or power with
which the “ten thousand things” have been endowed and without which life would cease. The maintenance of “virtue,” which the commentary also described as “guarding the One” (shouyi 守一), is thus crucial to self-cultivation. A careful diet, exercise and some form of meditation are implied, but generally the commentary focuses on the diminishing of selfish desires. The government of the “sage”—a term common to all schools of Chinese thought, but which is given a distinctive Daoist meaning in the commentary—rests on the same premise. Aggressive policies such as heavy taxation and severe punishment are to be avoided, but the most fundamental point remains that the ruler himself must cherish what the Laozi calls “emptiness” and “nonaction.” Disorder stems from the dominance of desire, which reflects the unruly presence of confused and agitated qi-energy. In this way, self-cultivation and government are shown to form an integral whole. I have argued elsewhere that the Heshang gong commentary reflects the influence of the “Huang-Lao” school, which flourished during the early Han dynasty (Chan 1991b, 1998a).

A second major commentary is the Laozi zhigui 老子指歸 (The Essential Meaning of the Laozi) attributed to the Han dynasty scholar Yan Zun 嚴遵 (fl. 83 B.C.E.-10 C.E.). Styled Junping 君平, Yan’s surname was originally Zhuang 莊; it was changed in later written records to the semantically similar Yan to comply with the legal restriction not to use the name Zhuang, which was the personal name of Emperor Ming (r. 57-75) of the Later Han dynasty. Yan Zun is well remembered in traditional sources as a recluse of great learning and integrity, a diviner of legendary ability and an author of exceptional talent. The famous Han poet and philosopher Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 B.C.E.-18 C.E.) studied under Yan and spoke glowingly of him. In later religious sources, Yan is remembered as an “immortal.” During the Song dynasty, he was officially endowed with the title “Perfected of Wonder and Penetration” (Miaotong zhenren 妙通真人).

The Laozi zhigui, as it now stands, is incomplete; only the commentary to the Dejing, chapters 38-81 of the current Laozi, remains. The best edition of the Laozi zhigui is that contained in the Daoist canon (CT 693), which clearly indicates that the work had originally thirteen juan, the first six of which have been lost. Judging from the available evidence, it can be accepted as a Han product (Chan 1998b). The Laozi text that accompanies Yan Zun’s commentary agrees in many instances with the wording of the Mawangdui manuscripts.

In some places, the Laozi zhigui exhibits a strong philosophical interest. In particular, the Dao is said to be the “emptiness of emptiness” and the “non-being of nonbeing” (8.1b; 11.4b). This seems to suggest that the Dao in itself transcends even the duality of having and not having any determination. In this respect, as we shall see, the Laozi zhigui may have a role to play in shaping later interpretations. Viewed as a whole, however, Yan Zun’s
commentary is clearly concerned with the more practical issues of self-cultivation and government.

Like Heshang gong, Yan Zun also subscribes to the yin-yang cosmological theory characteristic of Han thought. Unlike Heshang gong's commentary, however, the Laozi zhigui does not prescribe a positive program of nourishing one's qi-energy or actively cultivating "long life." This does not mean that it rejects the ideal of longevity. On the contrary, it recognizes that the Dao "lives forever and does not die" (8.9b), and that the man of Dao, correspondingly, "enjoys long life" (7.2a). There is little question that valuing one's spirit and vital energy is important, but the Laozi zhigui is concerned that self-cultivation must not violate the principle of nonaction. Any effort contrary to what the Laozi has termed "naturalness" (ziran 自然) is counter-productive and doomed to failure.

The concept of ziran occupies a pivotal position in Yan Zun's commentary. It describes the nature of the Dao and its manifestation in the world. It also points to an ethical ideal. The way in which natural phenomena operate reflects the workings of the Dao. The "sage" follows the Dao in that he, too, abides by naturalness. In practice this means attending to one's heart-mind so that it will not be enslaved by desire. Simplicity is singled out as a key expression of ziran. Significantly, the Laozi zhigui suggests that just as the sage "responds" to the Dao in being simple and empty of desire, the common people would in turn respond to the sage and entrust the empire to him.

The concept of "response" (ying 奠), a common Han idea which articulates the perceived reciprocal relationship between the "way of heaven" and human affairs, figures prominently in Yan Zun's commentary. The important point is that the essentially cosmological insight is applied directly to the art of rulership. The Laozi zhigui does not question the hierarchical structure of society; Daoist naturalness has little to do with social or political anarchy. What the commentary is concerned to show is that the Laozi offers a comprehensive guide to order and harmony at all levels. My view is that Yan Zun's commentary, like Heshang gong's, reflects the influence of the Huang-Lao school. Yan Zun flourished during the reign of Emperor Cheng (r. 33-7 B.C.E.), who undertook to reform the Han imperial cultic practices. At one point, the emperor admonished the officials for having neglected the doctrine of yin-yang. The Laozi zhigui seems to fit this context. The Heshang gong commentary, though equally concerned with realizing the rule of the Dao in both self-cultivation and government, perhaps stems from a slightly later period when religious ideas and practices associated with nourishing one's vital energy became more fully integrated into the Daoist vision.

An early commentary which maximizes the religious import of the Laozi is the Xiang'er zhu. Although it is mentioned in catalogues of Daoist works, there was no real knowledge of it until a copy was discovered among
the Dunhuang manuscripts (S. 6825). The manuscript copy, now housed in the British Library, was probably made around 500 C.E. The original text, disagreement notwithstanding, is generally traced to around 200 C.E. It is closely linked to the Celestial Masters and has been ascribed to Zhang Daoling 張道陵 or his grandson Zhang Lu 張魯 (see Bokenkamp 1993; 1997).

The *Xiang'er* manuscript is unfortunately incomplete; only the first part has survived, beginning with the middle of chapter 3 and ending with chapter 37. It is not clear what the title, *Xiang'er*, means. Following Rao Zongyi and Ofuchi Ninji, Stephen Bokenkamp suggests that it is best understood in the literal sense that the Dao "thinks (xiang 想) of you (er 爾)" (1997, 61). This underscores the central thesis of the commentary, that devotion to the Dao in terms of self-cultivation and compliance with its precepts would assure boundless blessing in this life and beyond.

The *Xiang'er* commentary accepts without question the divine status of Laozi, which distinguishes it from the commentaries discussed earlier. In addition, it seems to have been influenced by the *Taiping jing* 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace), one of the earliest scriptures in the Daoist religion, and one particularly concerned with the establishment of universal, political harmony. But just as the Heshang gong commentary reflects a keener religious sense when compared with Yan Zun's, there is an even more pronounced religious focus in the *Xiang'er*. The man of Dao "wishes only long life" (Rao 1991, 36); attaining the "life-span of an undefiled, godlike being" (*xianshou 仙壽*), as the commentary repeatedly emphasizes, forms the highest goal. While Yan Zun and Heshang gong direct their insight primarily to those in a position to effect political change, the *Xiang'er* invites a larger audience to participate in the quest for the Dao, to achieve union with the Dao through spiritual and moral discipline.

In terms of self-cultivation, the *Xiang'er* is keen to dispel false practices. Nourishing one's vital qi-energy remains the key to liberation, to attaining "long life" and ultimately forming a spiritual body devoid of the blemishes of mundane existence. The commentary alludes to proper meditation and sexual arts in this regard, which are crucial to purifying and preserving one's vital energy. It criticizes those who believe that "immortality" is an inborn gift and not the result of constant effort.

Spiritual discipline, however, is not sufficient; equally important is the accumulation of moral merit. Later Daoist sources refer to the "nine practices" or "nine precepts" of the *Xiang'er*. There is also a longer set known as the "twenty-seven precepts" of the *Xiang'er*. These include general positive steps such as being tranquil and yielding, as well as specific injunctions against any action that may injure one's vital energy—envy, killing, and other evil acts. Likening the human body to the walls of a pond, the essential qi-energy to the water in it, and good deeds the source of the water, the
Xiang'er commentary makes clear that deficiency in any one would lead to disastrous consequences (see Bokenkamp 1993).

Compared with the Xiang'er, Wang Bi's commentary, the Laozi zhu, could not be more different. There is no reference to "immortals"; there is no deified Laozi or any other understanding of the Dao as a divine being. The Daodejing, as Wang Bi sees it, is fundamentally not concerned with the art of "long life" but offers profound insights into the radical otherness of the Dao as the source of being, and the practical implications that follow from it. Styled Fusi 諸嗣, Wang Bi was one of the acknowledged leaders of the movement of Xuanxue 玄學 (Profound Learning), a revival of Daoist philosophy which came into prominence during the Wei period (220-265) and dominated the Chinese intellectual scene well into the sixth century. The word xuan, which also means "dark" or "mysterious" when used as an adjective, derives from the Laozi; as such, Profound Learning should also be reckoned a part of the tradition of the Daodejing.

The movement, often identified as "Neo-Daoism" in earlier Western sources, signifies a broad philosophical front united in its attempt to discern the "true" meaning of the Dao, but is not a homogeneous, sectarian school. Alarmed by what they saw as the decline of the Dao, influential intellectuals of the day initiated a radical reinterpretation of the classical heritage. They did not neglect the Confucian classics, but drew inspiration from the Yijing, Laozi and Zhuangzi, which were then referred to as the "three profound treatises" (sanzuan 三玄).

According to Wang Bi, the Dao is the "beginning" of the "ten thousand things." Unlike Heshang gong or the Xiang'er, however, he did not pursue a cosmological or religious interpretation of the process of creation. Rather, Wang seems more concerned with what may be called the logic of creation. The Dao constitutes the absolute "beginning" in that all beings have causes and conditions that derive logically from a necessary foundation. The ground of being, however, cannot be itself a being; otherwise, infinite regress would render the logic of the Laozi suspect. For this reason, the Laozi would only speak of the Dao as "nonbeing" (wu 無).

The transcendence of the Dao must not be compromised. To do justice to the Laozi, it is also important to show how the functions of the Dao translate into basic "principles" (li 理) governing the universe. The regularity of the seasons, the plenitude of nature, and other expressions of "heaven and earth" all attest to the presence of the Dao. Human beings also conform to these principles, and so are "modeled" ultimately after Dao.

Wang Bi is often praised in later sources for having given the concept of "principle" its first extended philosophical treatment. In the realm of the Dao, principles are characterized by "naturalness" and "nonaction" (wuwei 無為). Wang Bi defines ziran as "an expression of the ultimate." In this regard, attention has been drawn to Yan Zun's influence. Nonaction helps
explain the practical meaning of naturalness. In ethical terms, Wang Bi
takes nonaction to mean freedom from the dictates of desire. This defines
not only the goal of self-cultivation but also that of government. The philo-
sophical acumen and literary elegance of Wang Bi's commentary has won
much acclaim in the modern period, although it did not always enjoy the
same respect in traditional China. In English, there are three translations
available (Lin 1977; Rump 1979; Lynn 1999).

Among these four commentaries, Heshang gong's *Laozi zhangu* occupied
the position of preeminence in traditional China, at least until the Song. For
a long period, Wang Bi's work was relatively neglected, which explains the
many textual difficulties confronting its students today. The authority of the
Heshang gong commentary can be traced to its place in the Daoist religion,
where it ranks second only to the *Daode jing* itself. Besides Heshang gong's
work and the *Xiang'er*, there are two other commentaries entitled the *Laozi
jiejie* (Sectional Explanation) and the *Laozi nejie* (Inner Explanation) closely associated with religious Daoism. Both have been
ascribed to Yin Xi, the keeper of the pass who "persuaded" Laozi to write the
*Daode jing* and who, according to Daoist hagiographic records, later
studied under the divine Laozi and became an "immortal." These texts,
however, only survive in citations (see Kusuyama 1979).

From the Tang period, one begins to find serious attempts to collect and
classify the growing number of *Laozi* commentaries. An early pioneer is the
eight-century Daoist master Zhang Junxiang 張君相, who cited some
thirty commentaries in his study of the *Daode jing* (Wang 1981). Du Guang-
ting 杜光庭 (850-933) provided an even larger collection, involving some
60 commentaries (*Guangshengyi* 廣聖義, CT 725). According to Du, there
were those who saw the *Laozi* as a political text, while others focused on
spiritual self-cultivation. There were Buddhist interpreters (e.g., Kumārajīva
and Sengzhao 僧肇), and there were those who explained the Dao of
*Chongxuan* 重玄 (Twofold Mystery)—an important development in the
tradition of the *Daode jing*.

The term "Twofold Mystery" comes from chapter 1 of the *Laozi*, where
the Dao is said to be "mysterious and again mysterious." As a school of
Daoist learning, Twofold Mystery seize this to be the key to understanding
the *Daode jing*. Daoist sources relate that the school goes back to the fourth-
century master Sun Deng 孫登. Through Gu Huan 顧歡 (5th c.) and
others, the school reached its height during the Tang period, represented
by such thinkers as Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 and Li Rong 李榮 in the
seventh century.

The school reflects the growing interaction between Daoist and Buddhist
thought, in particular, the influence of Mādhyamika philosophy. Unlike
Wang Bi, it sees nonbeing as equally one-sided as being when applied to the
transcendence of the Dao. Nonbeing may highlight the profundity or mys-
tery of the Dao, but it does not yet reach the highest truth, which according to Cheng Xuanying can be called “the Dao of Middle Oneness” (Kohn 1992, 144). Like other polar opposites, the distinction between being and nonbeing must also be “forgotten” before one can achieve union with the Dao. This last point is important, because it shows that “Twofold Mystery,” like other approaches to the Daode jing, is ultimately concerned with the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. Later proponents of the school were to develop this further, linking it to the practice of “internal alchemy” (neidan 内丹).

The diversity of interpretation is truly remarkable (see Robinet 1998). The Daode jing has also been viewed in other ways. For example, a Tang commentary by Wang Zhen 王真, the Daode jing lunbing yaozi shu 論兵要義述 (CT 713), presented to Emperor Xianzong in 809, highlights the text as a treatise on military strategy (Rand 1979-80; see also Wang Ming 1984, Mukai 1994). The Daode jing has received considerable imperial attention, with no fewer than eight emperors having composed or at least commissioned a commentary on the work. These include Emperor Wu and Emperor Jianwen of the Liang, Xuanzong of the Tang, Huizong of the Song and Taizu of the Ming (see Liu C. 1969).

By the thirteenth century, students of the Daode jing were already blessed, as it were, with an embarrassment of riches, so much so that Du Daojian 杜道堅 (1237-1318) could not but observe that the coming of the Dao to the world takes on different forms each time. That is to say, different commentators were shaped by the spirit of their age in their approach to the classic, so that it would be appropriate to speak of a “Han Laozi,” “Tang Laozi,” or “Song Laozi,” each with its own different agenda (Xuanjing yuanzhi fahui 玄經原旨發揮, CT 703). While some would purposely ignore the tradition of commentaries so as not to be influenced by them in their own reading of the text, others find them an indispensable aid to understanding. This applies to both traditional commentaries and modern studies.

**Worldview**

Is the Daode jing a manual of self-cultivation and government? Is it a metaphysical treatise, or does it harbor deep mystical insights? There is no question that the Laozi is an extremely difficult text. The language is often cryptic, the sense or reference of the many symbols it employs remains unclear, and there seem to be conceptual inconsistencies. Is it more meaningful to speak of the “worldviews” of the Daode jing, instead of a unified vision? If the Laozi were an “anthology” put together at random by different compilers over a long period of time, coherence need not be an issue. Traditionally, however, this was never a serious option. Most modern studies are equally
concerned to disclose the “deeper” unity and meaning of the classic. While some seek to recover the “original” meaning of the *Laozi*, others celebrate its contemporary relevance. Consider, first of all, some of the main modern approaches to the *Daodejing* (see Hardy 1998).

According to some, the *Laozi* reflects a deep mythological consciousness at its core. The myth of “chaos,” in particular, helps shape the Daoist understanding of the cosmos and the place of human beings in it (Girardot 1983). The myth of a great mother earth goddess may also have informed the worldview of the *Daodejing* (Erkes 1935; Chen 1969), which explains its emphasis on nature and the feminine (Chen 1989). For others, the *Daodejing* gives voice to a profound mysticism. According to Mair (1990), it is indebted to Indian mysticism (see also Waley 1958). According to Schwartz (1985), the mysticism of the *Daodejing* is *sui generis*, uniquely Chinese and has nothing to do with India. It is possible to combine the mystical and mythological approaches—although the presence of ancient religious beliefs can still be detected, they have been raised to a higher mystical plane in the *Daodejing* (Ching 1997).

Yet others see the *Daodejing* mainly as a work of philosophy, which gives a metaphysical account of reality, and does not neglect the importance of ethics, but cannot ultimately be seen as a work of mysticism (W. T. Chan 1963). Even if one admits that there is a mystical dimension to the *Laozi*, it is unlike the mystical writings of other traditions. For example, there is no indication that ecstatic vision plays a role in the ascent of the Daoist sage (Welch 1965, 60). According to another view, however, there is every indication that ecstasy forms a part of the world of the *Laozi*, although it is difficult to gauge the “degree” of its mystical leanings (Kaltenmark 1969, 65). In either case, the strong practical interest of the *Daodejing* distinguishes it from any mystical doctrine that eschews worldly involvement. It is “purposive” and not “contemplative” (Creel 1977).

To numerous people, moreover, the *Laozi* offers essentially a philosophy of life. Remnants of an older religious thinking may have found their way into the text, but they have been transformed into a naturalistic philosophy. The emphasis on naturalness and spontaneity translates into a way of life characterized by simplicity, calmness and freedom from the tyranny of desire (see Liu 1997). Unlike the claim that the *Laozi* espouses a mystical or esoteric teaching directed at a restricted audience, this view tends to highlight its universal appeal and contemporary relevance.

Many also agree that the *Daodejing* is above all concerned with realizing the reign of great peace. It is an ethical and political masterpiece intended for the ruling class, with concrete strategic suggestions aimed at remedying the moral and political turmoil engulfing late Zhou China. Self-cultivation is important, but the ultimate goal extends beyond personal fulfillment (Lau 1963; LaFargue 1992). The *Laozi* criticizes the Confucian school as not only
ineffectual in restoring order, but also as a culprit in worsening the ills of society at that time. The ideal seems to be a kind of “primitive” society, where people would dwell in harmony and contentment, not fettered by ambition or desire (Needham 1956).

This list of alternative views of the text is far from exhaustive, and different combinations are also possible. Hansen, for example, focuses on the “anti-language” philosophy of the Laozi (1992), and Graham has emphasized both the mystical and political elements, arguing that the Laozi was probably targeted at the ruler of a small state (1989, 234). The Laozi could be seen as encompassing all of the above; such categories as the metaphysical, ethical, political, mystical and religious form a unified whole in Daoist thinking and are deemed separate and distinct only in Western thought. Alternatively, coming back to the question of multiple authorship and coherence, it could be argued that the Laozi comprises different “layers” of material put together by different people at different times (see Emerson 1995).

Is it fair to say that the Laozi is inherently “polysemic” (Robinet 1998), open to diverse interpretations? Interpretation involves both reader and text. Hermeneutical reception is never rigid. It varies among readers; to the same reader, the text may also disclose different meanings under different circumstances. Indeed, it is often said, the power of the Laozi is precisely that it gives new insights every time a reader engages it.

This challenges the claim that the original, “intended” meaning of the Laozi can be reconstructed. The question is whether any hermeneutic reconstruction does not depend, in addition to the object of interpretation, on the interpreter’s own worldview. I am inclined to recognize the hermeneutical openness of the Daodejing. This does not mean that context is not important to the production of meaning. It is also not the case that parameters do not exist, or that there are no checks against particular interpretations. On the contrary, there is every need to be historically informed and critically vigilant. Questions of date and authorship, textual variants, as well as the entire tradition of commentaries and modern scholarship are important. Nevertheless, any attempt to reconstruct the original context or meaning of the Laozi can hardly claim a privileged vantage untouched by individual or social influences. The task of reconstruction, in other words, must be given full attention, but it remains an open process, drawing every new generation of students into the world of the Daodejing and its tradition. There is little doubt that the debate will continue. The following presents some of the main concepts and symbols in the Laozi, in a way that highlights their ethical significance and suggests a degree of coherence.

**DAO.** The etymology of the word suggests a pathway, or heading in a certain direction along a path. There is no disagreement in translating the word dao 道 as “way.” As a verb, perhaps on account of the directionality
involved, the word also conveys the sense of “speaking.” Thus, the opening phrase of chapter 1, *Dao ke dao* 道可道, is often rendered “The Dao that can be spoken of”; in most cases, the capitalized form—“Way” or “Dao”—is used, to distinguish it from other usages of the term. The concept of *dao* figures centrally also in Confucian writings, and most scholars agree that some parts of the *Laozi* represent a strong critique of the Confucian school (chs. 18, 19). In general, while the term *dao* signifies a means to a higher end in other schools of Chinese philosophy, the *Laozi* considers it an end in itself. The word *dao* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is defined as follows: “In Taoism, an absolute entity which is the source of the universe; the way in which this absolute entity functions.” “In Confucianism and in extended uses,” however, the term means “the way to be followed, the right conduct; doctrine or method.”

The *Daodejing* (ch. 1) underscores both the ineffability and creative power of the Dao. Whereas the former suggests radical transcendence, the latter depicts the Dao as the origin of the “ten thousand things.” The *Laozi* also specifies that the Dao nourishes all beings (ch. 51). The *Oxford* definition thus reflects the emphasis on the creative and sustaining power of the Dao. In this sense, the word *dao* is often translated as “the Way,” with the definite article. Daoist creation involves a process of differentiation from unity to multiplicity (ch. 42). This has been read cosmologically, for instance, by the Heshang gong commentary, which sees the Dao as the original vital energy. Formless and indescribable, it can therefore only be called “nonbeing” or “no-thing” (ch. 40).

Read metaphysically, however, the Dao signifies a conceptually necessary ontological ground. As nonbeing, the Dao is not a something of which nothing can be said; otherwise, the problem of infinite regress cannot be overcome. As the source of being, the Dao cannot be itself a being, no matter how powerful or perfect. This seems to be Wang Bi’s point. Historically, the cosmological reading enjoys near universal acceptance. Support for the metaphysical interpretation did not gain momentum until the rise of Neo-Confucianism, which integrates the two readings in its reformulation of the learning of the Dao.

*DE.* The character *de* 德 has also made it into the *Oxford Dictionary*: “In Taoism, the essence of Tao inherent in all beings”; “in Confucianism and in extended use, moral virtue.” *De* has been translated variously as virtue, potency, integrity, or power (for an etymological study, see Nivison 1978-79; Hall and Ames 1987, 216). The Confucian usage is quite clear; virtue is a matter of moral character and presupposes self-cultivation. The *Laozi* seems to suggest a “higher” *de* against any moral achievement attained through hard effort (ch. 38). The different translations aim at bringing out the uniquely Daoist sense of the term.
Traditional commentaries beginning with the *Hanfeizi* often play on the homonymic relation between *de* and *de* 德, “to obtain.” *De* is thus what one has “obtained” from the Dao, a “latent power” by “virtue” of which any being becomes what it is (Waley 1958, 32). Heshang gong and other commentaries are quick to relate this to one’s *qi*-endowment. This is a “descriptive” definition, but there is also a “prescriptive” dimension to the concept of *de*. The empowerment enables a person to conform to the way in which the Dao operates, but “virtue” must be allowed to flourish. When realized, “virtue” signifies the full embodiment of the Dao. As such, the Dao does not only point to the “beginning,” but through *de* also suggests the “end” of all things.

The marriage of Dao and *de* effectively bridges the gap between transcendence and immanence, and brings into view the ethical interest of the *Daodejing*. It is useful to recall the late Zhou context, where disorder marched on every front. The *Laozi*, one assumes, is not indifferent to the forces of disintegration tearing the country asunder. In other words, I am suggesting that a “nihilistic” reading of the classic should be ruled out, nor does escapism do justice to the text. The metaphysical or religious import of the Dao may remain a point of contention, but few would dispute that the *Laozi* is keenly concerned with arresting the decline of the country.

**ZIRAN 自然.** The *Laozi* makes use of the concept of *ziran*, literally what is “self so,” to describe the workings of the Dao. As an abstract concept, it gives no specific information, except to say that the Dao does not “model” after anything but itself (ch. 25). This is the way Wang Bi understands it. However, since “heaven and earth” are born of the Dao and come to be in virtue of their *de*, the *Laozi* seems to be saying that the ways of heaven and earth reflect the Dao’s function. Human beings are born of heaven and earth. At the practical level, *ziran*—translated “naturalness” or “spontaneity”—thus suggests a mode of being and way of action in accordance with the ways of “nature” (see Liu 1998). The question is, what does “nature” mean?

Modern commentators tend to equate “heaven and earth” with “nature.” This is convenient, but one should bear in mind that “nature” in the “Laoist” sense need not exclude the spiritual and the social. The existence of gods and spirits was hardly questioned in ancient China. The *Laozi* makes clear that they, too, stem from the Dao (chs. 39, 60). Further, “nature” encompasses not only natural phenomena, but also sociopolitical institutions. The “king” clearly occupies a central place in the realm of the Dao (chs. 16, 25); the family should also be regarded a “natural” institution (chs. 18, 54). This means that as an ethical concept *ziran* extends beyond the personal to the political level. Commentators are generally in agreement on this point, leaving aside whether *ziran* does not also translate into a form of spiritual discipline.
**WUWEI** 無為. The concept of nonaction serves to explain *ziran* in practice. It does not mean total inaction. Later Daoists may see a close connection between *wuwei* and techniques of spiritual cultivation. The practice of "sitting in oblivion" (*zuowang* 坐忘) described in the *Zhuangzi* is often mentioned in this regard. In the *Laozi*, the concept seems to be used more generally as a contrast against any form of action characterized especially by self-serving desire (chs. 3, 37). Nonaction entails at the personal level simplicity and quietude. At the political level, the *Laozi* cites a number of "troublesome" policies that the ruler must avoid. These include war (ch. 30), stiff punishment (ch. 74) and heavy taxation (ch. 75). In this sense, it also opposes the Confucian program of benevolent intervention, which as the *Laozi* understands it, addresses the symptoms but not the root cause of the disease.

The concept of nonaction is exceedingly rich (see Liu 1991). It brings into play a cutting discernment that value distinctions are ideological, that human striving and competitive strife spring from the same source. Nonaction entails also a critique of language and conventional knowledge, which to the Daoist sage has become impregnated with ideological contaminants. The use of paradoxes—the man of Dao is depicted as "witless" or "dumb," while the common people can show off their intelligence and scheme cleverly (ch. 20)—especially heightens this point. But rather than stipulating what one ought to or ought not to do, the *Laozi* seems more concerned with transforming the way in which one does anything at all. Thus, while there is some concern that technology may bring a false sense of progress, the antidote does not lie in rejecting technology altogether but rather in a calmness of mind that would ensure freedom from desire (ch. 80). From this perspective one can understand some of the provocative statements in the *Laozi* telling the ruler, for example, to keep the people in a state of "ignorance" (ch. 65).

These remarks are not acceptable to all scholars. Some would say that they miss the religious import of the *Daode jing*, while others would question whether they are too eager to defend the philosophical coherence of the classic. Perhaps the *Laozi* in chapter 65 of the current text did mean to tell the ruler literally to keep the people ignorant or stupid, which as a piece of political advice is not that extraordinary. Certain terms such as the "valley spirit" (*gushen* 谷神; ch. 6) and the "soul" (*po* 魂; ch. 10) seem to have a religious reference, and these cannot be reconciled easily with an ethical reading of the *Laozi*. The remarks offered here take nonaction as pointing to a higher mode of knowledge, action, and being; once realized, the transformative power of nonaction would ensure wellbeing at both the personal and sociopolitical levels. The concept of "virtue," in other words, seems to depict a pristine state of affairs, in which naturalness and nonaction are the norm. The ethics of *wuwei* rests on this insight.
In this interpretive framework, a number of symbols which both delight and puzzle readers of the *Daode jing* can be highlighted. Suggestive of its creativity and nurturance, the Dao is likened to a mother (chs. 1, 25). This complements the paradigm of the feminine (chs. 6, 28), whose “virtue” yields fecundity and finds expression in yieldingness and non-contention. The infant (chs. 52, 55) serves as a fitting symbol on two counts. First, it brings out the relationship between Dao and world; second, the kind of innocence and wholesome spontaneity represented by the infant exemplifies the pristine fullness of *de* in the ideal Daoist world.

Natural symbols such as water (chs. 8, 78) further reinforce the sense of yielding and deep strength that characterizes nonaction. The low-lying and fertile valley (chs. 15, 28) accentuates both the creative fecundity of the Dao and the gentle nurturance of its power. Carefully crafted and ornately decorated objects are treasured by the world, and as such can be used as a powerful symbol for it. In contrast, the utterly simple, unaffected, and seemingly valueless *pu* 棋, a plain uncarved block of wood, brings into sharp relief the integrity of Daoist virtue and the person who embodies it (chs. 28, 32). Finally, one may mention the notion of reversal (chs. 40, 65), which suggests not only the need to “return” to the Dao, but also that the Daoist way of life would inevitably appear the very opposite of “normal” existence, and that it involves a complete revaluation of values.

**Practice**

Once the *Laozi* gained canonical status, it began to impact on Chinese culture with sustained force. Later sources credit Emperor Jing of Han for having decreed that all officials at court and the people at large should recite the *Daode jing* (Ma 1965, 7). This may be open to doubt, but without question the classic has secured its place in Chinese tradition since the Han dynasty. Under imperial patronage scholar-officials paid close attention to it, and during the Wei-Jin period after the Han, no one could claim to be a member of the intellectual elite who did not know the *Daode jing*. In 731 C.E., Xuanzong decreed that all officials should keep a copy of the *Daode jing* at home and placed the classic on the list of texts to be examined for the civil service examinations.

In this context, commentaries on the classic began to appear in great numbers. This helped bring the classic to a wider audience and shape the very course of Chinese intellectual history. In terms of setting policies, the political impact of the *Daode jing* was probably slight, but philosophic and religious interest was evidently strong and readily spilt over into the cultural arena. On the aesthetic front, the *Daode jing* and its tradition provided an alternative to the dominant Confucian theories. From the martial to the
medical arts, the *Daode jing* has also been cited as a source of influence. More generally, it is worth mentioning that the concept of *ziran* continues to inform conceptions of beauty and romantic love in Chinese thinking. These broad indications serve to remind us of the tremendous reach of the *Daode jing* and its tradition. As a religious scripture, the *Daode jing* plays a particularly important role in Daoist practice (see Kohn 1998b).

As scripture, the *Daode jing* commands constant devotion. One principal feature of early Daoist worship is the recitation of the *Daode jing*, or more formally the *Taishang xuan yuan Daode jing* (Scripture of the Dao and Virtue of the Highest Primordial Mystery), as the work was called in recognition of its scriptural status since the Tang period. This helps bring the devotee closer to the divine Dao. It also facilitates petition, especially the asking for forgiveness and blessing. In the hands of the religious expert, the efficacy of the scripture extends to healing and exorcism. The *Daode jing* has been set to music from an early time. In the mature Daoist tradition, recitation of the *Daode jing* involves proper training and figures centrally in ritual performance.

The scripture is also used as a moral guide. As mentioned, associated with the *Xiang'er* commentary are the “Nine Practices” and the “Twenty-seven Precepts.” The “Nine Practices” refer directly to ethical precepts—nonaction, being yielding and not having desires—derived from the *Daode jing* (see Bokenkamp 1989). Ethical practice purifies and prepares the individual for higher spiritual pursuits. It is also closely related to the idea of accumulating merit, the benefit of which extends beyond the individual to the family, clan and country at large. As an instrument of the divine, the moral and religious application of the *Daode jing* thus proves decisive to individual well being, social harmony, a healthy environment, and harmony between the human and the sacred. Because of the sense of completeness that the number signifies, Daoist sources often recommend reciting the *Daode jing* ten thousand times.

Recitation of the scripture can be performed in conjunction with meditation as well. One form of Daoist meditation concentrates on inwardly directed “visualization” techniques, through which the presence of divine beings can be secured within one’s body. A second aspires to an “ecstatic” vision in which the devotee merges with the divine Daoist reality. In both instances, the recitation of the *Daode jing* is much more than an aid to spiritual discipline; it is a necessary and even sufficient condition for the highest form of religious experience. For those who devote their lives to serving the Dao, training in the *Daode jing*, both doctrinally and in terms of ritual performance, can be an arduous process marked by different stages. Basic training involving recitation and other techniques must be completed, before the adept could be initiated into the higher mysteries of the *Daode*
jing. An ordination rite would mark the adept’s progress, but the study and practice of the Daodejing, in the final analysis, remains a lifelong task.

References


CHAPTER TWO

THE ZHUANGZI AND ITS IMPACT

VICTOR MAIR

DESCRIPTION

As a literary text, the Zhuangzi 莊子 is sui generis and its influence upon later literature has been enormous. No other work of the pre-Qin period, with the possible exception of the Shijing 《詩經》(Book of Songs) and the Chuci 《楚辭》(Elegies of Chu), can begin to compare with it in this regard. The Zhuangzi has been translated and studied variously. Among the most influential translations are the Japanese by Fukunaga (1956a) and Akatsuka (1974). In English, the text appeared first in the nineteenth century (Giles 1889; Legge 1891) and again in the early twentieth (Fung 1931), but the most widely used translations are more contemporary (Watson 1968; Graham 1981; also, newly, Mair 1994a).

The importance of the Zhuangzi for literature can be measured in two ways: first, the unique qualities of creativity and fictionality that it presents through metaphor, allegory, fable, and parable written in a combination of vibrant prose and memorable poetry; and second, the indebtedness of writers from the Han (206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.) to the present who have drawn on it extensively for images, expressions, themes, and overall inspiration. No other Chinese text dating from before the advent of Buddhism in China displays the awesome imaginative powers and linguistic dexterity of the Zhuangzi. Indeed, the Zhuangzi in all these respects is highly unusual and utterly unprecedented. In addition, its rhetorical mode, style of argumentation, Yogic practices, mythic reverberations, and nirvana-like wish to get beyond life and death [samsara] also are unusual to the point that one suspects an international dimension to its formation which is only now being cautiously investigated by Victor H. Mair (1994b; 1998), Kristofer M. Schipper (pers. comm.), E. Bruce Brooks (1981), and others. Until their research is complete, however, we must restrict our inquiry to the text itself and its influence upon later authors.
Since I have already treated the literary aspects of the *Zhuangzi* in a series of other recent publications, in this chapter I shall concentrate on the significance of the text for philosophy and religion. Studies in this area that I will draw on include several collections of essays (Mair 1983b; 1983d; Kjellberg and Ivanhoe 1996—the latter with a good bibliography) as well as studies of individual chapters or topics (Creel 1970; Girardot 1983; Allinson 1990; Wu 1990; Herman 1996). Although I will focus on the philosophical and religious facets of the *Zhuangzi*, it should always remain clear that the *Zhuangzi* is distinguished from other books associated with pre-Qin thinkers by its literary playfulness and satiricalness.

**History**

**THE AUTHOR.** Any study of the *Zhuangzi* begins with the recognition that neither the composition of the text nor its authorship is a simple matter. Because the book bearing the name *Zhuangzi* is obviously associated with the thinker known as Zhuangzi or “Master Zhuang,” it behooves us to address his historicity and claims to authorship. For this, we have little else to depend upon than Sima Qian’s《史記》(145–86 B.C.E.) “biography” of Zhuang Zhou in ch. 63 of the *Shiji* (Records of the Historian). He says:

Master Zhuang was a man of Meng and his given name was Zhou. He once served as a minor functionary at Lacquer Garden and was a contemporary of King Hui of Liang and King Xuan of Qi [3rd c. B.C.E.]. There was nothing upon which his learning did not touch, but its essentials derived from the words of the Old Masters. Therefore, his writings, consisting of over a hundred thousand words, for the most part were allegories. He wrote “An Old Fisherman,” “Robber Footpad,” and “Ransacking Coffers” to criticize the followers of Confucius and to illustrate the arts of the Old Masters. Chapters such as “The Wildnerness of Jagged” and “Master Gengsang” were all empty talk without any substance. Yet his style and diction were skillful and he used allusions and analogies to excoriate the Confucians and the Mohists. Even the most profound scholars of the age could not defend themselves. His words billowed without restraint to please himself. Therefore, from kings and dukes on down, great men could not put him to use.

King Wei of Chu heard that Zhuang Zhou was a worthy man. He sent a messenger with bountiful gifts to induce him to come and promised to make him a minister. Zhuang Zhou laughed and said: “A thousand gold pieces is great profit and the position of minister is a respectful one, but haven’t you seen the sacrificial ox used in the suburban sacrifices? After being fed for several years, it is garbed in patterned embroidery so that it may be led into the great temple. At this point, though it might wish
to be a solitary piglet, how could that be? Go away quickly, sir, do not pollute me! I’d rather enjoy myself playing around in a fetid ditch than be held in bondage by the ruler of a kingdom. I will never take office for as long as I live, for that is what pleases my fancy.” (see also Fung and Bodde 1952, 1:221; Cheng 1997)

Examining this, we should first of all note that Sima Qian’s “biography” was written around the year 104 B.C.E., nearly two centuries after the death of Zhuang Zhou. It is curious that, of the five chapter titles he mentions, one (ch. 10) is from the “Waipian 外篇 (Outer Chapters), four (chs. 31, 29, 10, and perhaps 23 [cited twice under two different titles]) are from the “Zapian” 雜篇 (Miscellaneous Chapters), and not one is from the “Neipian” 內篇 (Inner Chapters). Furthermore, the allegory he quotes in the second paragraph is a longer and somewhat garbled version of the thirteenth section of chapter 32. Sima Qian’s choice of chapters to cite is puzzling because it is the “Inner Chapters” that modern scholars believe to contain the most authentic chapters in the book, those linked most closely to Zhuang Zhou. It is odd, though, that even in the “Inner Chapters” he is referred to as Zhuangzi and not Zhuang Zhou, using a polite designation one would not think he would choose for himself.

It is thus clear that, already by the time of Sima Qian, the Zhuangzi had evolved far beyond the work of a single individual. To be sure, a close reading of the extant edition, which derives from the 33-chapter recension of Guo Xiang 郭象 (252-312), reveals that the text could not possibly have been written by one author. Aside from the obvious internal inconsistencies in language, style, and content among the various chapters, it is highly improbable that the distanced, third-person appraisal of Zhuang Zhou and other thinkers in the final chapter could have been written by him. In fact, we may now turn to this impressionistic assessment of Master Zhuang as another primary source which may help somewhat to expand our vague picture of the man:

Obscure and formless, ever transforming and inconstant. Are we alive? Are we dead? Do we coexist with heaven and earth? Do we go along with spiritual intelligence? How nebulous! Where are we going? How blurred! Where are we aiming? The myriad beings being arrayed all around, there is none fit for us to return to— a portion of the ancient techniques of the Way lay in these practices.

Zhuang Zhou heard of such usages and delighted in them. With absurd expressions, extravagant words, and unbounded phrases, he often gave rein to his whims but was not presumptuous and did not look at things from one angle only. Believing that all under heaven were sunk in stupidity and could not be talked to seriously, he used impromptu words
for his effusive elaboration, quotations for the truth, and metaphors for breadth. Alone, he came and went with the essential spirits of heaven and earth but was not arrogant toward the myriad beings. He did not scold others for being right or wrong, but abode with the mundane and the vulgar.

Although his writings are exotic and convoluted, there is no harm in them; although his phraseology is irregular and bizarre, it merits reading. His fecundity is inexhaustible. Above he wanders with the creator of things, and below he is friends with those who are beyond life and death and without beginning or end. Regarding the root, he is expansive and open, profound and unrestrained; regarding the ancestor, he is attuned and ascendant. Nonetheless, in his response to evolution and in his emancipation from things, his principles are not exhaustive and his approach is not metamorphosing. How nebulous! How cryptic! Someone who has never been fully fathomed. (ch. 33; see also Watson 1968, 373-74).

Although there is really nothing of substance in this description to assist us in our quest for the historical Master Zhuang, it does enable us to understand how he was viewed when this chapter was written, probably around the third quarter of the second century B.C.E. at the court of the Prince of Huainan, Liu An 淮南王劉安 (179?-122 B.C.E.). The emphasis on Zhuang Zhou’s peculiar language and the difficulty of pinning him down to any hard and fast philosophical positions is evident throughout.

The historical development of the text is as difficult to pinpoint as its author. According to chs. 32 (“Lie Yukou”) and 20 (“The Mountain Tree”), Zhuang Zhou had a number of disciples, but there are no clear records of exactly who they were. Possible traces of his intellectual lineage may be discerned in several chapters dealing with quietism and Yogic practices in other philosophical texts of the same period, including the Guanzi 管子, the Hanfeizi 韓非子, the Huananzi 淮南子, and the Lushi chunqiu 屈氏春秋. From these documents it appears that Master Zhuang’s “school” was rather influential in the states of Chu and Qi during the late Warring States period and helped shape the cosmo-political thinking of Huang-Lao under the Han (see Roth 1993; 1997).

LATER DEVELOPMENTS. Later, however, during the staunchly Legalist Qin Dynasty and the overtly Confucian Han Dynasty, the text Zhuangzi was not much acclaimed. It rose somewhat more to the foreground again after the Three Kingdoms period when it received attention from writers such as He Yan 和晏 (d. 249). In the biography of Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232), He Yan’s fondness for the Daode jing and Zhuangzi is noted, while the biography of Wang Can
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Ruan Ji 阮籍 (170-263) took Zhuang Zhou as his model and Ji Kang 晉康 (223-262) admired the words of Master Lao and Master Zhuang. Clearly, as also documented in the contemporaneous movement of Xuanxue 玄學 (Profound Learning), a great intellectual and religious shift was taking place in China at this time, which saw a revival of Daoist and divination texts, such as the Yi Jing, over and above the Confucian classics, dominant until then. Best represented by the thinkers Wang Bi 王弼 (226-249) and Guo Xiang, it expressed itself in commentaries to the ancient Daoist classics. The elevation of the Zhuangzi is a gauge of the direction this religious shift was headed. Numerous early medieval poets, thinkers, and artists (notably calligraphers) took recourse to the Zhuangzi in formulating their visions and ideals (see Fukunaga 1960; Knaul 1985b; Liu SJ 1989).

Around the same time, Zhuang Zhou is first described as an object of veneration. The Western Jin writer, Ji Han 祖甘, created a Diao Zhuang Zhou tuwen 吊莊周文 (Essay on a Painting of Mourning for Zhuang Zhou), in which he remarked that “in houses they sing praises of Tian Kuang 恬亷; in homes they paint the likenesses of Laozi and Zhuangzi” (Quan Jinwen 全晉文 65.8a). In his preface he also notes that a certain noble, the imperial son-in-law Wang Hongyuan 王弘逹, had a portrait of Zhuang Zhou installed in his mansion and encouraged courtiers to come and mourn before it.

**Impact on Daoism and Buddhism.** In the fourth century, the Zhuangzi in both its terminology and vision of ecstatic freedom became a major contributor to the imagery and literary world of Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism, which takes up a number of its key terms. Examples are the “perfected person,” “Great Clarity,” the “Great One,” “freedom from affairs,” “fasting the mind,” “making all things equal,” and “sitting in oblivion” (Robinet 1983b, 63). Still, the use of the same terms does not mean an identity in worldview, and there are a number of key concepts in which the thought of the Zhuangzi differs significantly from that of Shangqing (Kohn 1992, 115). Nevertheless, the fact that Zhuangzi terms play an important role in the religion documents continued the impact of the text.

After that, it was influential in the adaptation of Buddhism into China and it is no accident that a prominent commentary to the text was written by Zhi Dun 支遁, the first aristocratic monk of medieval China (see Fukunaga 1956b). In addition, the Zhuangzi contributed significantly to the formation of Chan (Jap. Zen) Buddhism as a fusion of Buddhist ideology and ancient Daoist thought. Both share a
mutual distrust of language, an insistence that the Dao is found in everything, even excrement, and a dialogue style involving riddles or gong’an 公案 (Jap. kōan; see Fukunaga 1969; Knaul 1986).

Liu Guangyi, discussing the same issue, goes even further and, without making an outright claim of any direct influence, proposes that there is a historical bond of a deeper sort between Master Zhuang and the Buddha (1989). His view, moreover, was anticipated by Ma Xulun (1958, preface) and Takasu Yoshijirō (1944, 32-57) who separately theorized that there are enough passages in the Zhuangzi 莊子 having ideas similar to Buddhist dogma, and there are enough possible references to Buddhist followers in North China during the transitional period in which the text was compiled, to demonstrate the influence of this Indian religion on some of its authors, if not upon Zhuang Zhou himself (Rand 1983, 48-49). Even if Ma and Takasu are right, it may be more accurate to refer generally to Indian or Indo-European, rather than specifically Buddhist influence (see Mair 1990).

Under the Tang dynasty, the Zhuangzi 最终 became a bona fide “classic” when it was canonized as the Nanhua zhenjing 南華真經 (Perfect Scripture of Southern Florescence, CT 745) by an imperial edict of Emperor Xuanzong in 742, the first year of the Tianbao 天寶 (Heavenly Treasure) reign period. At the same time, Master Zhuang was awarded the title Nanhua zhenren 南華真人. This title was further expanded to Weimiao yuantong zhenjun 微妙元通真君 (Perfected Lord of Subtlety and Primal Comprehension; see Robinet 1983b) under the Song emperor Huizong (1100-1125). Then, as well as also under the Ming and Qing, a number of new religious commentaries and literary glosses to the text appeared (see Boltz 1987, 203-204, 226-228), assuring the continued fruitfulness and relevance of the text. Commentators then included major Song statesmen and poets, such as Wang Anshi 王安世 (1021-1086) and Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), and were most successfully collected in Jiao Hong's 焦竑 (1541-1620) Zhuangzi yi 莊子翼 (Aid [for Reading] the Zhuangzi, CT 1487).
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The Text

CHAPTERS. The 33 chapters of the extant recension of the *Zhuangzi* are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title (Chinese)</th>
<th>Title (English)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Xiaoqiao you</em></td>
<td>Carefree Wandering</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Quyou ban</em></td>
<td>(On the Equality of Things)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Yangsheng chu</em></td>
<td>(Essentials for Nurturing Life)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Renjian shi</em></td>
<td>(The Human World)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Dechong fu</em></td>
<td>(Symbols of Integrity Fulfilled)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Dazong shi</em></td>
<td>(The Great Ancestral Teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Ting diuang</em></td>
<td>(Responses for Emperors and Kings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Punmu</em></td>
<td>(Webbed Toes)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td><em>Mai</em></td>
<td>(Horses’ Hooves)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Qiqie</em></td>
<td>(Ransacking Coffers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Zaiyou</em></td>
<td>(Preserving and Accepting)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td><em>Tiandi</em></td>
<td>(Heaven and Earth)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Tiandao</em></td>
<td>(The Way of Heaven)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><em>Tiannyan</em></td>
<td>(Heavenly Revolutions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><em>Kyi</em></td>
<td>(Ingrained Opinions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><em>Shansheng</em></td>
<td>(Mending Nature)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><em>Qushui</em></td>
<td>(Autumn Floods)</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td><em>Zhi</em></td>
<td>(Ultimate Joy)</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td><em>Dasheng</em></td>
<td>(Understanding Life)</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td><em>Shanmu</em></td>
<td>(The Mountain Tree)</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td><em>Tianzi Fang</em></td>
<td>(Sir Square Field)</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td><em>Zhi beiyou</em></td>
<td>(Knowledge Wanders North)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td><em>Gengsang Chu</em></td>
<td>(Gengsang Chu)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td><em>Xu Wugui</em></td>
<td>(Ghostsless Xu)</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td><em>Zeiyang</em></td>
<td>(Sunny)</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td><em>Waiwu</em></td>
<td>(External Things)</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td><em>Yuyan</em></td>
<td>(Metaphors)</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td><em>Ransuang</em></td>
<td>(Abdicating Kingship)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td><em>Dao Zhu</em></td>
<td>(Robber Footpad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td><em>Shuangian</em></td>
<td>(Discoursing on Swords)</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td><em>Yifu</em></td>
<td>(An Old Fisherman)</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td><em>Lie Yukou</em></td>
<td>(Lie Yukou)</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td><em>Tianxia</em></td>
<td>(All Under Heaven)</td>
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</table>

The first seven chapters of the text, ever since the Han dynasty have been referred to as the “Inner Chapters;” since Guo Xiang, the next fifteen have been known as the “Outer Chapters,” and the last eleven as the “Miscellaneous Chapters.” The Inner Chapters are widely regarded as the most authentic, while the Outer and Miscellaneous
Chapters are considered to have varying degrees of closeness to the thought and style of Zhuang Zhou. As a matter of fact, scholars of all dynasties, from Guo Xiang (d. 312) and Han Yu (768-824) through Su Shi and Jiao Hong, to Wang Fu (1619-1692), harbored some doubts that all of the chapters in the *Zhuangzi* were from the hand of a single author. Modern scholarship has made enormous progress in separating out the various strands and layers of what is surely an accretional anthology composed of a rather diverse combination of late Warring States and Han period elements.

**Schools.** A rough consensus is that, in addition to the Inner Chapters which are attributed to Zhuang Zhou and his immediate disciples, the *Zhuangzi* contains material from the following five major "schools":

1. a group of "primitivists" who were influenced by the Old Masters (such as Laozi) and who were active around the end of the Qin Dynasty or the beginning of the Han (chs. 8-10; parts of 11, 12, and 14);
2. advocates of the "hedonist" Yang Zhu (5th century B.C.E.) who were active around 200 B.C.E. (chs. 28-31);
3. a "syncretist" group of eclectic thinkers who may have been responsible for compiling the text sometime between 180 and 130 B.C.E. (chs. 12-16, 33).
4. later followers of Zhuang Zhou who strove to imitate the style and themes of the Inner Chapters (chs. 17-22); and
5. "anthologists" who collected fragmentary materials, including some that may derive from Zhuang Zhou himself and which could therefore also be placed in the Inner Chapters (chs. 23-27, 32);

Taken together, the "stuff" of the *Zhuangzi* appears to have coalesced over a period of a little more than a century, i.e., from the late fourth to the early second century B.C.E. The Prince of Huainan, Liu An, and advisers at his court may have played a major role in the selection, arrangement, and interpretation of the material of the text that thenceforth came to be known as the *Zhuangzi* (see Graham 1990; Roth 1991).

**Composition.** The composition of the *Zhuangzi* is actually less neat and tidy than the above scheme would indicate. Even the "Inner Chapters" are problematic and the fact that the process of redaction
continued actively down to the fourth century C.E. means that the
text was subject to substantial editorial manipulation beyond the
formative period of the late Warring States and early Western Han.
The most sophisticated, systematic and thorough analysis of the vari¬
ous components of the Zhuangzi is that by Christopher Rand (1983).
He offers a complete list of all 212 sections of the extant recension,
with characterizations in each section of the matrical patterns—
mystical, individualist, primitivist, rationalist, and indeterminate—and
commonalities, such as dialectical reasoning based on relativism,
intuitive imagination based on experiential knowledge, recognition
and acceptance of an all-encompassing and eternal Dao (Way),
preservation of one's de (virtue) as the functioning of Dao in man,
and wuwei (inaction, nonaction) in accordance with the Daode.
Liu (1994) presents a more traditional, but nonetheless influential,
vision of the text's composition, asserting its origin before the Qin dy¬
nasty.

Regardless of the details of composition, over which scholars will
continue to debate, the Zhuangzi—as it has come down to us—cannot
possibly all be attributed to a single author. The writing varies greatly
in quality and contains many different points of view, some of which
are quite contradictory. Thus, we encounter in the Zhuangzi both ide¬
alism and materialism, nonaction and purposeful action (at least on
the part of underlings), reclusion and engagement, an ascetic limita¬
tion of desires and epicureanism, eclecticism and exclusivism, etc.
Strangely enough, several of the chapters (e.g., the "heaven" chs., 12-
14) even seem to be championing Confucian attitudes. This is pecu¬
liar in light of the fact that Confucius is Master Zhuang's favorite tar¬
get of satire in other parts of the book. These stark contrasts of view¬
point reflect the developments and interactions that took place within
Huang-Lao and other schools of thought during the late Warring
States and Qin-Han periods in response to the social and political
transformations occurring at the time. Not only was the composition
and formation of the Zhuangzi an extremely complicated process, the
same may be said of its subsequent textual history. Indeed, there is
much about the early editorial and redactional history of the text that
is quite vague.

COMMENTARIES. According to the "Bibliographical Treatise"
of the Hanshu (History of the Han), written by Ban Gu 班固 (32-
92) on a foundation prepared by Liu Xin 劉歆 (d. 23), the Zhuangzi
contained 52 chapters. During the third and fourth centuries C.E.,
several commentaries, all now lost, were written on the Zhuangzi and
two of these were based on a 52-chapter recension. One was by a
certain Mr. Meng 孟氏, of whom nothing is known. Another, by Sima Biao 司馬彪 (240-306) in 21 scrolls, consisted of 7 inner, 28 outer, 14 miscellaneous, and 3 interpretive chapters. Three further commentaries from around the same time were based on redactions with different numbers of chapters:

1. Cui Zhuan 崔譚, 10 scrolls with 7 inner and 20 outer for a total of 27 chapters;
2. Xiang Xiu 向秀, 20 scrolls presumably with 7 inner and approximately 20 outer chapters;
3. Li Yi 李頡, 30 scrolls with 30 or 35 chapters (see Knaul 1982).

Four significant observations may be made about these Jin period commentaries on the *Zhuangzi*: 1. the 52-chapter version of the Han period survived until at least the fourth century; 2. the number of outer chapters begins to destabilize during the third century; 3. most versions from the third and fourth centuries still do not have a section of miscellaneous chapters; 4. most versions would appear to share a relatively stable core of seven inner chapters. The latter characteristic is somewhat reassuring in the sense that it tends to sanction the Inner Chapters as those which the majority of early editors and commentators agreed on as typifying the *Zhuangzi*, whether or not they were written by Zhuang Zhou himself. Aside from the relative stability of the Inner Chapters, the most notable feature of the flurry of Jin-period editorial activity is that it clearly shows the high degree of flux that the text was in at that time.

**Guo Xiang.** By far the most important Jin period commentary and rearrangement of the *Zhuangzi* is that by Guo Xiang which consisted of 33 chapters in 33 scrolls (CT 745). Guo’s version eventually replaced the other competing redactions and is the basis of all extant editions of the *Zhuangzi*. According to information provided in the preface of Lu Deming’s 陸德明 (556-627) *Jingdian shuwen* 經典釋文 (Explanation of Terms in the Classics) and in Guo’s own annotations, the latter must have carried out a major revision of the text. If, as is likely, Guo began with the 52-chapter version bequeathed from the Han period, he would have reduced the text to a little over two thirds of its original size. His editorial activity may have included the removal of passages that made no sense to him and of those similar to works such as the *Shanhaijing* 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas) and books of dream prognostications (see Fukunaga 1964; Knaul 1982).

In his commentary, which was written under the aegis of the reigning tendency of Profound Learning, Guo Xiang dwells on the
relationship between being and nonbeing, between action and nonaction, emphasizing spontaneity or naturalness and the attainment of harmony with the cosmos by realizing one's inner nature (xing 性), the share (fen 分) one is given of the Dao, and destiny (ming 命), the principle (li 理) of the cosmos active in one's life (see Seki 1965; Hachiya 1967; Knaul 1985a; 1985c; Robinet 1983a). Guo Xiang's commentary is usually accompanied by the subcommentary of the early Tang Daoist master Cheng Xuanyaing 成玄英 (fl. 630-660). In subsequent centuries, numerous commentaries, subcommentaries, phonological and philological notes and so forth were composed for the Zhuangzi. There were also collections or selections of previous commentaries and subcommentaries, particularly during the Qing period. Some of these are massive and comprehensive. The most convenient and widely used of these compilations is Guo Qingfan's 郭慶藩 (1844-1896) Zhuangzi jishi 莊子集釋 (Collected Explanations on the Zhuangzi) of the year 1894 (see Roth 1993).

Lin Xiyi. Because of its protean nature and extremely complicated textual history, it is inevitable that the Zhuangzi will be read in many different ways. One of the most remarkable pre-modern interpretive studies, and one which is poorly known, is that of Lin Xiyi 林希逸 (c. 1200-1273), the Zhuangzi kouyi 莊子口意 (Oral Signification of the Zhuangzi, CT 735, dat. 1261). The author of similar interpretations of the Daode jing and the Luezi, Lin sought to provide clear and easy explanations of the sort that could be used in the oral portions of an examination. He also claimed to have dabbled with Buddhist books and applied what he learned there to his exegesis of the Zhuangzi and other Daoist books. This enabled him to “find something that, in fact, earlier scholars had not fully realized.” It is especially interesting that he “wished to wash away the crudities of Guo Xiang for the Old Transcendent of the Southern Florescence.”

Luo Miandao. Another intriguing interpretation of the Zhuangzi from a slightly later period is Luo Miandao’s 羅勉道 (d. 1367) Nanhua zhenjing xunben 南華真經循本 (Complying with the Original Meaning of the Perfect Scripture of the Southern Cultural Florescence, CT 742). Luo opines that previous commentators had seriously distorted the Zhuangzi by “elaborating Pure Talk, or dragging in the language of Zen, or forcefully applying the orthodox opinions of the Confucians, none of which point to the meaning of the original text.” Consequently, he strove to explicate the Zhuangzi as much as possible with pre-Qin materials.

Lu Xixing. A common assumption among Daoist scholars and practitioners is that the Zhuangzi constitutes an outgrowth of the Daode
A good example of an interpretive text which espouses this view is Lu Xixing’s 卢西星 (1520-1601) *Nanhua zhenjing jimo* 南華真經 裨墨 (The True Scripture of the Southern Florescence and Assistant Ink, dat. 1578), in 8 scrolls, today contained in the *Zangwai daoshu* 藏外道書 (Daoist Texts Outside the Canon). Although the title is taken from a figure briefly alluded to in chapter 6 as the immediate source of esoteric knowledge about the Way, Lu’s text is an explication of the whole of the *Zhuangzi*. Dividing the latter up into sections, it relates the gist of each. At the conclusion of every chapter there are verses of a song which briefly summarize its contents.

Lu Xixing believes that the *Zhuangzi* functions as a commentary on the *Daode jing* and that, if one wishes to understand the former, one must first carefully read the latter. Thus, in explicating the titles and contents of the various chapters in the *Zhuangzi*, Lu frequently asserts that they are derived from certain passages or ideas in the *Daode jing*. For example, he maintains that the main idea of the second chapter, “On the Equality of Things,” most likely comes from Laozi’s “mysterious identity” (*xuantong* 玄同). Similarly, the eighth chapter, “Webbed Toes,” takes the Way and virtue as fundamental but considers benevolence and righteousness as adventitious excrescences. This is held to be precisely comparable to the formulation in the *Daode jing* that after the Way is lost then there is virtue; after virtue is lost, there is benevolence; and after benevolence is lost, there is righteousness (ch. 18).

A noteworthy feature of this study is that, in an effort to demonstrate the essential unity of the *Zhuangzi*, it frequently uses passages from the book itself to explicate and verify its sections. Yet Lu’s approach is also eclectic in that he applies Buddhist ideas to elucidate the *Zhuangzi*. Likewise, he also occasionally alludes to debates among Confucian scholars to convey his understanding of passages in the text. Lu’s commentary was well regarded by other exegetes and was frequently cited in comprehensive commentaries such as Jiao Hong’s *Zhuangzi yi*.

**WORLDVIEW**

Aside from the numerous and difficult compositional, textual, and transmissive complications attendant upon the *Zhuangzi*, if we accept the received text as a whole, it does present us with an analyzable and interpretable body of thought that we identify with the corporate personality who is known as Master Zhuang and whose dominant com-
ponent (at least in spirit) was probably Zhuang Zhou. As such, the
_Zhuangzi_ presents certain key concepts which are widely recognized as
being characteristic of the work. Among these, the most outstanding
are spontaneity, the perfected person or true man, heart-mind, fasting
of the heart-mind, sitting and forgetting, and the Great Clod

It is interesting that the classical term _ziran_ 自然 (literally, "self-so")
has come to mean "nature" in modern Mandarin; in the _Zhuangzi_, it
signifies doing/being what comes naturally, i.e., following one's inner
nature or character (see Liu 1998). The perfected is the ideal person
who practices the truth and is perfectly in accord with the Way. One
of the most important means of becoming a perfected person is to
calm and empty the heart-mind, the human organ of sentience, by
"fasting" and thus making it as clean and pure as a mirror which re-
fects everything but absorbs nothing. Cultivation of the heart-mind is
accomplished through sitting and forgetting which is clearly a type of
meditation. All of this is directed toward the achievement of harmony
with the Great Clod, a metaphor for the universe, the sum total of
reality.

Other prominent topics in the _Zhuangzi_ include the relativity of
language, paradoxes and riddles, the nature of knowing, skepticism
concerning the efficacy of pure logic, letting things be (noninterfer-
ence), heaven and humanity, dreaming and reality, life and death,
activity and tranquillity, and supreme detachment (see Graham 1981,
6-26; Fung 1989, 5-21; Cheng 1997, 102-31). Taken together, these
interrelated themes in the _Zhuangzi_ contribute to the special appeal
that it has held for readers during the last two millennia.

MAIN CHAPTERS. Carefree wandering. To specify the main
aspects of Master Zhuang's thought, one may use several rubrics as-
soociated with important chapters of the _Zhuangzi_. The first chapter,
"Carefree Wandering," opens the door to comprehending the whole
of Master Zhuang's outlook on life. In it, he espouses that freedom
attained by forgetting reality and transcending material objects. He
uses the parable of the gigantic Peng bird and the tiny dove along
with other metaphors to show that everything is confined by material
limitations and is thus prevented from attaining complete freedom.
Only the ultimate man (zhiren 至人) can attain unbounded freedom
by being oblivious to achievement and fame, by not distinguishing
between self and other, and by entering a realm of creative uncon-
ventionality. In this chapter, we are introduced to the concept of
wandering (you 遠), the key to understanding the spirit of the entire
book (see Fukunaga 1946; Graham 1976; Crandell 1983; Mair 1983d
The great teacher. Another important chapter is the sixth, "The Great Ancestral Teacher." This chapter presents a worldview centered on the concept of the Dao. The Dao, Way or Track, is the source of all phenomena in the universe. It existed before heaven and earth but cannot be described as possessing action or form (see Mair 1994a, 55). If one wants to practice and attain it, nothing is better than to model oneself after the perfected of old who were its embodiment. The chief qualities of these perfected persons are that they were unmindful of moral strictures and unconstrained by knowledge, had few desires, were unconcerned about life and death, and merged with nature.

The equality of things. The second chapter, "On the Equality of Things," has received the lion's share of attention in recent decades, particularly from philosophers (see Graham 1969). It complements the ontological, experiential concerns of the sixth chapter by offering a theory of knowledge according to which all phenomena are coequal. By negating the distinction between "this" and "that," between "yes" and "no," it offers a notion of what might be called "absolute relativity." In place of dualism and distinctions, this chapter holds that all entities return to the Dao which has no beginning or end (see Graham 1983; Hansen 1983; Chinn 1997).

The remaining chapters of the inner chapters deal with such subjects as how to nourish life (ch. 3), how to get on in the world (ch. 4), what to do about the exigencies of politics (ch. 7), and how to cope with socially determined morality and materially conditioned reality by reverting to primal simplicity (ch. 5; for discussions, see Saso 1983; Wu 1990; Allinson 1990; Gao 1992; Billeter 1994).

Of the outer chapters, the most magnificent in terms of conception and literary execution is "Autumn Floods" (ch. 18). The ideas expressed in it are close to the thought of the first two chapters. Beginning in the form of a lengthy dialogue between the Earl of the Yellow River and the Overlord of the Northern Sea, it holds that—as viewed in the Dao—big and little, honor and dishonor, life and death, right and wrong are all relative. Not only are all things relative, they are constantly evolving and transforming. Based on this principle, one should follow nature, acquiesce in fate, and avoid all striving, especially for fame or rank. Only then can one be free.

Of the miscellaneous chapters, the most consequential is the final one which is a tour de force survey of the main schools of thought during the Warring States period. This chapter can safely be regarded as the first treatise on the history of Chinese philosophy. Its author believed that, in high antiquity, the arts of the Dao were uni-
fied, but they diverged and split when competing thinkers emphasized various aspects of the Dao. The author grants that each of them—including Zhuang Zhou!—captured a part of the arts of the Dao. It is significant that, in his discussion of Zhuang Zhou, translated earlier, he stresses two salient qualities: mastery of language and ludic propensity.

RELATION TO THE DAO DE JING. The Daode jing and the Zhuangzi have been intimately linked since the Han period, though notably not before. For example, the "Yaolue" (Outline of Essentials) of the Huainanzi mentions Lao Zhuang zhi shu or "the arts of Laozi and Zhuangzi." Similarly, in his "biography" Sima Qian is at pains to declare twice that Zhuang Zhou’s primary purpose was to amplify the teachings of the Old Master. This linkage became especially prevalent in the Six Dynasties period and has remained in use as a common expression up to the present day (e.g., Lao-Zhuang sixiang or "the thought of Laozi and Zhuangzi").

But there has, at the same time, been a faction of adherents to this school of thought who preferred to put Master Zhuang ahead of the Old Masters: Ji Kang in his Yu Shan Juyuan juejiao shu says that he “relied equally on the works of both Zhuangzi and Laozi;” Guo Xiang in his commentary to the first chapter states that "this is the talk of Zhuangzi and Laozi;” Sun Sheng of the Jin in his Laozi yuwen fanxun states that “someone inquired about Zhuangzi and Laozi;” Liu Xie in the “Mingshi” chapter of his Wenxin diaolong insists that “only after Zhuangzi and Laozi receded did landscape flourish;” and Yan Zhitui in the “Mianxue pian” chapter of his Yanshi jiaxun ranked the Zhuangzi first among the Sanxuan or “three mystery texts,” i.e., Zhuangzi, Daode jing, and Yiying.

PRACTICE

DAOIST TEXTS. Master Zhuang served as an inspiration for a wide variety of Daoist practitioners. For instance, we may examine the anonymous Zhuang Zhou qi juejie 莊周氣訣解 (Explanation of Zhuang Zhou’s Esoteric Formula on Energy, CT 823), which is
based on the final, one-sentence section of chapter 3: “Resins may be consumed when they are used for fuel, but the fire they transmit knows no end.” Just as fire relies on fuel to be transmitted, so is life extended by qi [vital energy, breath], and by drawing in qi, one may nurture life and extend longevity. Master Zhuang may have made light of those who wished to prolong the physical body, but that did not prevent them from seeking guidance in the book which bears his name.

The Chifeng sui. The Ming-period Daoist Zhou Lüjing 周履靖, also known as Meidian daoren 梅顔道人 or the “Daoist Confounded by Plum Blossoms,” composed an illustrated work of ascetic cultivation in three scrolls entitled Chifeng sui 赤鳳髓 (Marrow of the Red Phoenix, dat. 1578; trl. Despeux 1988; Takehiro 1990), edited in the Congshu jicheng chubian 落書集成初編 (Compilation of Collectanea, First Series). One of the key portions of this text are the “Forty-six Postures of the Red Phoenix Marrow,” a form of inner-alchemical sleep exercises, the ninth of which is “Zhuang Zhou’s Butterfly Dream.” The accompanying inscription reads: “The practitioner lies down on his back and pillows his head on his right arm; his left arm rests loosely. The left leg is extended straight, the right leg is bent. He holds his breath and circulates twenty-four mouthfuls of energy. This will cure nocturnal emissions.”

Daoist Techniques. Fasting the Mind (xinghai 心齋). Although Master Zhuang did not necessarily approve of them, some of the techniques for stilling the senses and circulating the energy described in the Zhuangzi, which ostensibly had a basis in actual Yogic practice, were perpetuated and practiced in succeeding centuries. Prominent among them is “Master Zhuang’s Method for Fasting the Mind,” later also known the “Method of Listening to One’s Breath,” which derives from ch. 4:

...listen not with your ears but with your mind. Listen not with your mind but with your primordial qi. The ears are limited to listening, the mind is limited to tallying. The primordial qi, however, awaits things emptily. It is only through the Dao that one can gather emptiness, and emptiness is the fasting of the mind.

Observe that this Yogic quotation is ironically, almost perversely, placed in the mouth of Confucius!

Later adepts understood this method to mean listening to one’s own breathing as follows: When one begins, one is supposed to listen only with the “roots of the ears,” not with consciousness; nor should one concentrate on the air passing through the sinuses or collecting in the thoracic cavities. Instead, one should only be aware of the inhala-
tions and exhalations themselves. As for the speed of one’s breathing, its depth, and its amount, one should allow these qualities to vary effortlessly and naturally instead of striving to control them.

In this manner, one will gradually become adept to the point that spirit and qi become unified. At that point, all distracting thought will have vanished and one will become completely oblivious of the phenomenal world. When this stage is reached, one has entered the realm of “fasting the mind,” having realized the emptying of the mind of desire and the purification of the spirit. It is obvious that this elaborate description goes beyond what was in the Zhuangzi itself, so that there either was a tradition of oral exegesis accompanying the text or subsequent Yogic practices were grafted onto the text by way of elaboration.

**Sitting in oblivion.** In later Daoism a technical term used to describe a state of deep trance or intense absorption, the notion of zuowang 坐忘 occurs first in the Zhuangzi, with the classical passage found in ch. 6: “I smash up my limbs and body, drive out perception and intellect, cast off form, do away with understanding, and make myself identical with the Great Thoroughfare” (see Watson 1968, 90). The idea here as well as in the later tradition is a mental state of complete unknowing that involves a loss of personal identity and self and is the utter immersion in the nonbeing of the universe.

Guo Xiang interprets the state as a twofold oblivion that begins with forgetting “all outer manifestations,” then moves on to the forgetfulness of the inner truth of things, the underlying ground that “causes the manifestations.” He sees it as a way of attaining his ideal state of oneness, realized by going along with all the changes of the universe. The Tang commentator Cheng Xuanying, representative of the philosophy of Twofold Mystery (Chongxuan 重玄), further linked this twofold scheme of Guo Xiang’s with Jizang’s theory of two truths and developed a Mādhyamika-like pattern of twofold forgetfulness (jianwang 無忘). This in turn was taken up by the twelfth patriarch of Shangqing, Sima Chengzhen (647-735) who developed the method of “sitting in oblivion” into a seven-stage process of attaining the Dao, writing a treatise known as Zuowang lun 坐忘論 (CT 1036; see Kohn 1987).

**Other yogic techniques** described in the Zhuangzi that almost certainly reflect actual hygienic practices of old are the “bear strides and bird stretches” of chapter 15, which can be considered the forerunner of the Han-dynasty Daoyin tu 導引圖 (Gymnastics Chart) and Hua Tuo’s famous “Five Animals Exercises” (see Despeux 1989), although again the author of this chapter is wryly critical of
such practices. Another set of practices that anticipates Daoist returns to the chaotic state of primordiality are the “Arts of Mr. Hundun,” mentioned in chapter 22 and directly related to the Hundun myth in ch. 7 (see Girardot 1983). In addition, it should be noted that there is a radical difference between the abstract, “empty” \( q\) of the Zhuangzi and that of Mencius’s concrete, physical “expansive” \( q\) described in roughly the same period.

YUAN DRAMA. A different form of the Zhuangzi’s practical impact is its adaptation in Chinese theater plays. Most prominently, Zhuang Zhou’s “Butterfly Dream,” which was probably the favorite passage of most readers of the Zhuangzi (see Wu 1990), is the subject of a Yuan drama entitled Zhuang Zhou meng die (Zhuang Zhou Dreams of the Butterfly), written by Shi Zhang (ca. 1279).

In the play, Zhuang Zhou is a celestial Daoist god with the title “Perfected Lord of Southern Florescence and Ultimate Virtue, [Residing in] the Jade Capital of Highest Clarity.” Once he smiled when seeing golden lads and jade maidens holding banners, pennants, and bejeweled umbrellas, which infuriated the Jade Emperor who banished him to earth as a member of the Zhuang family. On earth, Zhuang lives a besotted life, chasing after women and showing himself to be fond of drink. Hearing that Hangzhou is a romantic place, he goes there on an excursion, but the star Venus transforms itself into an old man who comes before Zhuang Zhou to enlighten him. The old man makes him drunk three times and causes him to have three dreams, in which he sees a large butterfly that instructs him to refine the pills of immortality. After concocting the elixir, Zhuang Zhou suddenly realizes that he is a god from a Daoist heaven who was banished to earth and that he should “complete his spiritual progress and pay court to the Prime.” Otherwise, he now understands, if he ever again has mortal thoughts, he will be banished still further down and eternally stray from the Dao of the immortals. In its strictures against wine, women, and wealth, the drama is manifestly influenced by the Quanzhen (Complete Perfection) school who emphasized strict monastic discipline.

The above are but a few examples of the disparate interpretations and amplifications that have been applied to the Zhuangzi by Daoist adepts during the past two millennia. One may object that, to varying degrees, they have distorted the true intent of Master Zhuang and his immediate followers. On the other hand, one cannot deny that their veneration of the text is genuine and that it has played a vital role in the evolving tradition of Daoist religion and thought.
To summarize, the *Zhuangzi* has had an overwhelming literary, philosophical, and religious influence upon writers, thinkers, and practitioners of various persuasions and is one of the oldest and most pervasive Daoist documents. Its significance and impact, not only in Daoism but also in Chinese culture in general, is all the more remarkable in light of the fact that the text is quite anti-Confucian. Although there are chapters, such as those with the word “Heaven” in their titles, which seem to constitute an unsuccessful attempt to subvert the *Zhuangzi* to a Confucian agenda, Confucius and his school of thought are ridiculed—with a high degree of effectiveness—on many occasions throughout the text. It is probable that the *Zhuangzi* survived, in spite of its anti-orthodoxy, because of its sheer wit and charm. Although Confucius and his followers are frequently made to appear like fools in the *Zhuangzi*, the satire is executed with such humor and good grace that even the most staid Confucians must have smiled (at least inwardly) when they read it. Above all, the *Zhuangzi* succeeded because it represented a necessary countercultural foil or relief to the solemnity and seriousness of the host of other political thinkers who have crowded the pages of the history of Chinese thought, particularly in its formative stage during the Warring States period.

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CHAPTER THREE

HAN COSMOLOGY AND MANTIC PRACTICES

MARK CSIKSZENTMIHALYI

DESCRIPTION

The Daoist religion in both its worldview and practices derives to a large extent from the cosmology and mantic practices (from the Greek *manteia*, divination) of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E. – 220 C.E.). All Daoists’ efforts to control *qi*, both in the body and the universe, their cultivation of spirit forces in the self and the stars, as well as their many ritual activities of purification, expiation, release of the dead and renewal of the world are unthinkable without a worldview that proposes a correspondence of all forces under Heaven and allows the determination of the auspicious times, places and methods. Thus mantic practices, which during the Han were employed at all levels of society and served many different functions, came to play a key role in the techniques of later Daoism and popular religion.

Han mantic practices included classical divination techniques, such as casting stalks to determine the hexagrams of the *Yijing* (Book of Changes), as well as a variety of omenological and fate interpolation methods, such as the observation of the skies and their changing patterns, dream interpretation and physiognomy. Such practices were conceptualized as partial understandings of the Dao, and often utilized correlative schemes, such as yin-yang and the five phases, thought to govern the natural world. During the Han, many of these methods were transmitted through private networks and were often valued because they were the product of revelation. Particular sages and divinities became associated with these methods and with the motif of revelation, notably Huangdi (Yellow Emperor), Shennong (Divine Agriculturalist) and Taiyi (Great Unity). In contrast to the situation in some other cultures, few Chinese mantic practices in the Han were dependent on the intuitive or psychic gifts of the practitioner, and instead derived their efficacy from the authority of the method or text itself. In this sense, Han mantic texts could be seen as the forerunners of the *tesserae* or talismans (*fu*) used in Daoist ritual practice.
This essay will begin with a historical and sociological overview of the transmission of mantic practices, move on to a discussion of the varieties of texts involved, outline the hybrid cosmology of the Han and conclude with an outline of selected practices. While the number of practices that could be treated is very large, particular attention will be paid to those for which verifiably Han manuals or examples exist, and to those that reveal both conceptual and sociological continuities with early Daoist communities.

Significant connections between Han mantic practices and those of early Daoist communities exist both at the level of *cosmological assumptions* and in terms of the resulting role of text. The Han understanding of the cosmos combines a model based on the three realms of Heaven, Earth and Humankind, related to each other through a variety of natural categories of mutual correspondence, with a competing model dependent on the existence of a world of anthropomorphic demons and spirits. One way these two models were integrated in the Han was by the attribution of texts based on systems of correspondence to revelation by divine or semi-divine figures. Texts deriving their authority from their revealed character were one example of the increasingly ubiquitous category of objects that symbolized correspondences between Heaven and human beings. Such tesserae derived authority and efficacy from their status as the nexus of the link between the sacred and profane.

The study of the relationship between Han mantic practices and early Daoism has been complicated by certain historical trends in *Daoist scholarship*. Situated between the "axial age" florescence of political and philosophical writings, such as the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 and *Daode jing* 道德經, and the elaborate institutions and liturgies of the Six Dynasties period, the four hundred year Han Dynasty has attracted relatively less attention from historians of Daoism. This situation is to a large degree a product the scholarly debate over the relationship between the pre- and post-Han situation, eras associated with what were once called "philosophical" and "religious" Daoism. One approach, exemplified by Maxime Kaltenmark’s *Lao tseu et le taoïsme* (1965), was to connect the conceptual aspects of the *Daode jing* to later Daoist practices that were identified with Laozi, the putative author of the text. Another approach, exemplified by the writings of Michel Strickmann, emphasized the novelty of social institutions associated with the Celestial Masters movement and the continuity of those institutions to the present day (see Strickmann 1979). Despite the differences between the orientations of their respective approaches, these two authors shared a picture of Daoism in which Han developments played a negligible role. The image of Daoism implicit in these approaches was to a significant extent a result of the source materials that each author used as evidence. Today, because the
literary corpus of essays from which Kaltenmark drew and the diverse genres incorporated into the Daoist canon studied by Strickmann have been augmented by a myriad of recently excavated materials from the late Warring States and early Han periods, it is possible to fill in much information that had been missing in earlier accounts of the history of Daoism.

**HISTORY**

**EARLY METHODS.** Evidence of mantic practices stretches back to the beginnings of Chinese history. The bulk of written records of the Shang dynasty (ab.1700-1000 B.C.E.) consists of the so-called oracle bones, which are records of pyromancy, the divinatory inquiries carried out at the Shang court. Incised on cattle scapula and tortoise plastrons, these inquiries had concerns that ranged from the possible outcomes of military action to the source and duration of medical maladies. The application of heat produced a crack in the bone or shell that was interpreted as a communication from the Shang ancestors. As Keightley points out, by the late Shang period, the inquiries were constructed so as to prevent undesirable communications, with the result that they came to be regarded as “magical charms to ensure that there would be no disaster” (1984, 15).

Some inscriptions have recently been linked to the second major early mantic system, the hexagrams of the *Yijing*. Working from inscriptions on bones and bronze vessels, scholars such as Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺 have suggested that the forerunners of the *Yijing* hexagrams were sets of six numbers, which were later correlated with solid and broken lines (see Li 1993, 235-55; Shaughnessy 1998, 1-13). Regardless of its origins, the method of casting milfoil stalks was seen as a way of catching the natural potential at the moment of divination: each hexagram took shape “as an inherent and inescapable element of a particular moment of time, or of a particular moment in the cycle” (Loewe 1981, 50). As such the casting of milfoil stalks was tantamount to the measurement of an objective characteristic of the external situation, and in this way similar to many of the omenological methods of the Han.

**THE HAN DYNASTY.** Besides divination through oracle bones and milfoil stalks, the late Warring States period saw the rise of a number of other mantic practices. The consolidation of the Qin and the Han empires then led to a bifurcated system of transmission of such practices. The bureaucracy of the Han had positions for numerous officials involved in the application of mantic practices, and in 124 B.C.E., Emperor Wu (r. 141-87 B.C.E.) ordered the establishment of state educa-
tional institutions, from the Imperial Academy in the capital down to local academies (xueguan 學官) in the commanderies and principalities. The primary qualification for a teacher in this system was the mastery of one of the Five Classics, and, as a result, the academic study of the Yi 輿 became institutionalized and served as an important route to public office (Shiji 史記121.3127).

In addition to the official system, texts and practices were also being transmitted privately. One type of non-official transmission took place at regional courts under the sponsorship of local princes. Liu An 劉安, the prince of Huainan 淮南 who died as a rebel in 122 B.C.E., was said to have gathered several thousand experts in recipes and techniques, from which he compiled a work treating matters of spirit transcendence (shenxian 神仙) and alchemy (huangbai 黃白) that is now lost (Hanshu 漢書 44.2145). He is also associated with a work on the interpretation and observation of the stars, which is ironic since it was the appearance of the portent of a comet with a long tail in 135 B.C.E. that precipitated the attempt at rebellion which culminated in his death (Shiji 118.3082; Hanshu 30.1765). Several texts on related topics and on immortality were apparently later gathered from Huainan by Liu De 劉德 and recopied by his son Xiang 劉向 (77-6 B.C.E.), but the Baopuzi 抱朴子 (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185) of the early fourth century says that because father and son did not understand the techniques of the Dao, their version was not efficacious in manufacturing gold (Hanshu 36.1928-9; Xiao 1998, 277). Liu An’s interests contrast with those of his contemporary Liu Xian 劉獻, Prince of Hejian 河間, who attracted experts in the Dao and techniques, but was chiefly interested in pre-Qin texts associated with ritual techniques and the disciples of Confucius. Qian Mu has argued that the difference between their preferences reflected a difference in regional cultures, differences that had only partially been erased by the centralizing effect of Han unification (1987, 72-73).

The individuals that were attracted to these regional patrons were generally known as “recipe masters” (fangshi 方士), “technique masters” (shushi 術士), or “Dao masters” (daoshi 道士). They specialized in a variety of practices and were particularly associated with the ancient state of Qi 齊 (Ngo 1976; DeWoskin 1983). They were portrayed in Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 Shiji 史記 (Historical Records) as experts in the mantic arts of antiquity who preyed on the aspirations of particularly megalomaniac rulers, such as the First Emperor of the Qin and Emperor Wu of the Han. In particular, Emperor Wu carried out the feng 封 and shan 封 sacrifices, which a fangshi explained originated with the Yellow Emperor (Shiji 12.482), and in 102 B.C.E. built a pentagonal twelve-story hall dedicated to the pursuit of longevity, based on plans (also presented by a
fangshi) that allegedly dated back to similarly ancient times (Shiji 12.480, 484). His success in emulating the Yellow Emperor was confirmed by an observer of the night sky who witnessed the appearance of a comet (Shiji 28.1399). In these cases, the fangshi self-consciously placed themselves in the role of the Yellow Emperor’s ministers relative to Emperor Wu (Csikszentmihalyi 1994, 93-94). While they were not members of government, they may have been experts in the same practices and even the same texts as members of the government (Chen 1948, 33-40). The source of their authority was their link to fictive traditions that contextualized mantic practices in the successful rule and apotheosis of the sage-kings.

One of the legendary figures associated with the mantic practices was the Yellow Emperor, especially during the reign of Emperor Wu. This association was central to a tradition called Huang-Lao 黃老, literally “Yellow Emperor and Laozi,” which flourished in the first half of the second century B.C.E. At that time, the Yellow Emperor’s association with the unofficial transmission of mantic practices appears to have made him an important figure to one faction at the courts of emperors Wen and Jing (Si 1980, 84-137). The term Huang-Lao then was coined by Sima Qian when he applied it to describe a set of beliefs held by his contemporaries and certain figures of previous generations. For him, Huang-Lao apparently was closely linked with a set of methods that derived from a particular cosmological view at a particular historical moment (Csikszentmihalyi 1994).

These methods were taught privately, in contrast to Confucian methods, which were transmitted by the state. An early example of a private institution that handed down such knowledge was that of Yue Chengong 楊臣公, who “excelled at cultivating the doctrines of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi, became famous in Qi, and was named ‘Worthy Master’ (xianshi 賢師)” (Shiji 80.2436). Almost half of the second-century figures associated with Yellow Emperor and with Laozi elsewhere in the Shiji are linked through the figure of Master Yue. While the myth of the Yellow Emperor and early texts associated with the Yellow Emperor and Laozi may have originated in the state of Qi during the late Warring States period, institutions like Master Yue’s had the effect of expanding them from an original regional base (see Shimamori 1981). The exact nature of the “doctrines” taught by Master Yue is open to debate, but the association with mantic practices based on correlative cosmology is generally accepted (Yates 1998, 10-12). There is little evidence that the Han association of the Yellow Emperor with such texts is indicative of a particular philosophical position, it might better be seen as descriptive of a particular genre (see Csikszentmihalyi 1994). As such, while this historical sketch utilizes the Yellow Emperor as the most common of a set of semi-
divine figures associated with mantic texts, Gu Jiegang's idea that the chronological primacy of the Yellow Emperor caused him to be associated with these texts indicates that similar arguments might well be made about other legendary figures associated with mantic practices in the Han (1972, 35-44).

LATER DEVELOPMENTS. The extragovernmental nature of the fangshi and the relationship between the Prince of Huainan's independent scholastic gatherings and his rebellious activities had political ramifications and are therefore similar to later Daoist movements. They highlight one of the central facts about the private transmission of methods and texts in the Han, i.e., that it was often seen as a danger to the state. As varied methods and texts figured strongly into the political history of the Qin and Han dynasties, the well-known attempts to control and even destroy certain classes of books must be seen as political efforts, similar to the attempts by Emperor Wu to valorize certain works that stressed the virtues of loyalty and filial piety. The use of omen interpretation became even more widespread when breaks in the hereditary transfer of power caused struggles for legitimacy between different contenders to the throne, resulting in the reigns of Wang Mang 王莽 in 9 C.E. and Liu Xiu 劉秀 in 25 C.E. (Bielenstein 1984). The conception of the natural world as a book in which clues to the potential for certain types of changes were hidden was coupled with the use of books as records of past anomalies and divinatory readings. In particular, the Chunqiu 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals), attributed to Confucius, was increasingly read as an encoded source for that sage's esoteric transmission of a technique of rulership. Similarly, a set of texts known collectively as the “apocrypha” (chenwei 闇緯), often connected with the fangshi, were read as the esoteric counterparts to certain classical texts that contained prophetic messages that could only be accessed by the initiated (Chen 1948, 46-57).

The private transmission of knowledge continued in the Eastern Han, as shown by the example of Yang Hou 楊厚 (fl. 109-149 C.E.), a native of southwest China. Yang Hou's techniques include charts and apocryphal texts (tuchen 圖説) that served as the basis of correspondence theory used to interpret portents. After retiring from his official position, Yang presided over the largest institution of Yellow Emperor and Laozi learning. Between 141 and 146 C.E., Yang had over 3000 students, and when he died, “his disciples set up a shrine where the Commandery's literary officials and scribes performed a yearly feasting and archery ceremonial, as well as regular sacrifice” (Hou Hanshu 後漢書 30a.1050). In addition to Yang Hou, the “Way of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi” (Huang-Lao, meant as two separate terms or perhaps as an anthropomorphized binome) was also significant for Emperor Huan (r. 147-167
C.E.), and Zhang Jue 张角. Zhang, the founder of the Yellow Turbans (Huang jiu 黄九, is identified in the *Hou Han Shu* as a follower of the “Way of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi” (Ofuchi 1991, 79-81).

**TEXTS**

There are both technical manuals of Han mantic practices and texts that preserve their descriptions or integrate them into political-philosophical discussions. Among them, the latter have been best preserved—notably the *Huainanzi* of the Western Han and the *Lunheng* and *Fengsu tongyi* of the Eastern Han—while the latter are mainly found in the bibliographic chapter of the *Han Shu*. Both types attest to the wide variety of methods practiced at the time and serve to augment information found in archaeological sources.

**POLITICAL-SPIRITUAL WORKS.** *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (Writings of the Prince of Huainan, 21 j., ed. *Zhuzi jicheng* 7), edited under the guidance of Liu An 刘安 (d. 122 B.C.E.; see Morgan 1934; Larre et al. 1993; Le Blanc 1985; Roth 1992). Classified as an eclectic (za 轶) text in the *Han Shu*, this work has also been characterized as a “mixture of Laozi and Zhuangzi” (Kanaya 1960, 541). Both descriptions are accurate in part, but while the work builds on ideas of the earlier Daoist thinkers, it often filters them through a synthetic worldview that attempts to unify them under a broader conceptual scheme. One of the most valuable aspects of the text is the preservation of “spirit transcendence” traditions from the southern regions of Huainan and Chu (Yamada 1983, 356). An example of this is the reference to breathing exercises associated with the figures Wang[zi] Qiao 王子喬 and Chisongzi 赤松子 (11.178; Larre et al. 1993, 135). The exercises allowed these figures to “rise to the clouds and have intimate communion with Heaven,” made possible because they, as many others, relied for their success on the Dao. Yet the passage is followed by a criticism of contemporaneous practitioners of such exercises; they are also disparaged in other chapters (Harper 1998, 114-17). While the *Huainanzi*, therefore, provides much information on practices in the early Han, it often presents it in the context of dismissing them as inferior to the pursuit of more abstract truths.

The relationship between the *Huainanzi* and the traditions associated with Huang-Lao has been a matter of much debate. Major has said that “many, perhaps most, specialists have adopted the view that the *Huainanzi* is a Huang-Lao work” (1993, 8). Others, too, who see Huang-Lao as a Daoist-Legalist synthesis (e.g., Tu 1979), as suggested first by Sima Qian (Shiji 63.2146), find an affinity between certain parts of the
Huainanzi and the absolutist view of law characteristic of Han Fei 韓非 and thus Huang-Lao (e.g., ch. 13; Larre et al. 1993, 161-93). Yamada, however, has characterized the work as reflecting the thought of a school of southern recipe masters, clearly distinct from those of Qi who were central figures in the traditions associated with Huang-Lao (1983, 357). To the extent that both positions assume that the traditions associated with Huang-Lao may be characterized as philosophical positions, they rely on a basically unproven hypothesis. As Michael Loewe has pointed out, how far a Huang-Lao mode of thought "may be regarded as a comprehensive system must remain open to question" (1994b, 390).

Lunheng 論衡 (Balanced Discussions, 84 pian, ed. Zhuzicheng 7), by Wang Chong 王充 (27-ab. 100 C.E.), a discussion of many popular practices at the time (trl. Forke 1962). His chapter Bushi 卜筮 (On [Divination by] Shells and Stalks) summarizes the popular view that "Heaven and Earth make careful reports, and milfoil and tortoises genuinely have spirit and numen" (pp. 235-57; Forke 1962, 1: 182-90). Wang critiques this by making several arguments, at times mutually inconsistent, to the effect that it is a mistake to anthropomorphize Heaven and Earth or think that spirits would respond to human entreaties. Instead, divination readings are the result of like affecting like, and because of this "the good encounter good fortune, and the bad meet with bad fortune." Wang’s perspective is consistent with a materialistic application of the mature correlative cosmology of the Han.

His skepticism about explanations of efficacy that depend on the spirits extends to the practices of sacrifice and exorcism. In the chapter Siyi 祀義 (The Significance of Sacrifice), he writes that such rituals are worthwhile only because they allow the practitioner to act on his feelings of kindness (pp. 274-49; Forke 1962, 1: 509-15). Elsewhere Wang describes exorcistic practices, such as the propitiation of the earth spirit (tushen 土神) by the fashioning of a demon-shaped earth "double" after the construction of a new house. In Jiechu 解除 (Exorcism), he explains that employing shamans and invocators (wuzhu 巫祝) to exorcise the earth spirit is wasteful, because no earth spirit would take note of human wants. Instead, people should work on their virtue (pp. 245-47; Forke 1962, 1: 532-37).

Fengsu tongyi 風俗通義 (General Account of Popular Customs, 10 j., annotated edition of Wang L. 1982), by Ying Shao 應劭 (ab. 140-200), an account of popular customs of the Later Han (see Nylan 1982). This work details a different set of mantic practices, but adopts a perspective towards them which is in many ways similar to that of Wang Chong. Among the popular beliefs described here are inauspicious signs of nature in the form of freaks called bianguai 變怪, "transformations into oddities." One example, a dog that learns to walk like a human, wears a
hat and helps with the cooking, illustrates Ying’s critical attitude. The uneducated say that the dog is a canine freak and that it should die. His educated owner, however, sees nothing wrong and even says: “The dog may be likened to a gentleman; it sees people walk and imitates them. What harm could come from this?” (Wang L. 1982, 418). This example follows Ying’s general rhetorical strategy, as explained by Michael Nylan: “Every entry suggests a plausible explanation for the historical outgrowth of such customs, implicitly discounting divine origin or supramundane efficacy” (1982, 162).

As a classicist, Ying Shao, like Wang Chong and the writers of some chapters of the Huainanzi, had a scholarly interest in tracing practices to their recorded precedents. By linking contemporary methods with classical patterns, such thinkers implicitly recognized that they derived from custom and were subject to distortion over time. This attitude may be contrasted with the message implicit in the titles of many Han mantic texts, which attributed their methods to deities or sage-kings of the past. These titles make the opposite claim, i.e., that the practices are outside of time because they are the product of divine revelation. Yet while the concept of revelation resonates strongly with later Daoist movements, one factor that early Daoists have in common with the authors of these political-philosophical treatises is their disdain for many of the explanations of popular religion.

Technical manuals. An overview of Han mantic texts is provided in the bibliographic chapter of Ban Gu’s Ban Shu (History of the Han, j. 30). Ban’s chapter was based on the result of an imperial survey carried out at the end of the previous century and internalized into Liu Xin’s Liu Xin (d.23 C.E.) Qijie 七略 (Seven Categories). In the bibliography, the categories of “Numerical Algorithms and Techniques” (shushu 数術) and “Recipes and Arts” (fangji 方技) are particularly rich in texts that appear to be based on mantic practices. Since comprehensiveness was a goal of the compilers of the bibliography, it provides a good framework for an overview of the mantic texts in circulation during the first century B.C.E.

NUMERICAL ALGORITHMS AND TECHNIQUES. The first two divisions of this category chiefly concern astronomical observation and its application to navigation, calendrics, and the determination of the potential of specific points in temporal cycles. The first, “Heavenly Patterns” (tianwen 天文) consists of twenty-two texts on stars and the yi of stars, clouds and rain. Six of the texts are specifically for sea travel. Many appear to include records of past divinations, perhaps notated as to their effectiveness, and Ban Gu says their purpose was to “lay out the images that correspond to good and bad fortune, so that the sage-king may align his government with them” (Hanshu 30.1765). The importance
of these methods to government is attested by the presence of the governmental office of Watcher of Qi (houqi 侯氣; see Bodde 1959), comprising twelve experts who worked under the Grand Astrologer 太史, alongside the Watchers of the Stars and the Watchers of the Wind.

Texts of this group were not only concerned with the stars but also with omenological readings of astronomical and meteorological phenomena. One of these texts was the Haizhong riyue huihong zazhan 海中日月彗虹雜占 (Miscellaneous Divinations of the Sun, Moon, Comets and Rainbows at Sea, 18 j.). Now lost, the contents of the text probably resembled the images of the sun, moon, halos, stars, comets, clouds, mirages and rainbows and their accompanying divinations found at Mawangdui on a chart now entitled Tianwen qixiang zazhan 天文氣象雜占 (Miscellaneous Divinations According to Heavenly Patterns and Qi Images). The chart provides a number of military divinations related to the appearances of natural phenomena influenced by qi (Li 1993, 34; Yamada 1985, 45-86). This division contains several texts associated with Great Unity and the Yellow Emperor, treating the observation of stars, clouds, rain and qi.

The second division, "Calendrics and Pitchpipes" (lipu 历谱) consists of eighteen texts on calendars and methods of calculating them, astronomical records and chronologies of past eras as well as mathematical texts. Ban Gu says: "In order to understand the cycles of the beginning and ending of cold and warm periods, the sage-king must correct his calendar and pitchpipes, and thereby establish the regulations of the calendrical conventions of the Xia, Shang and Zhou, as well as their clothing and colors" (Hanshu 30.1767).

Texts in this group were concerned with astronomical record keeping, the calendar and the prediction of conjunctions, solstices and equinoxes. An example is the Zigou wuxing sheji 自古五星宿記 (Record of the Mansions of the Five Stars from Ancient Times, 30 j.). Now lost, the text may have resembled the astronomical record of the five stars found at Mawangdui. One part of this record, now known as the Wuxing zhan 五星占 (Divinations of the Five Stars), relates the position of Venus, Mars and the other three of the “five stars” (Jupiter, Saturn and Mercury) to military divinations. The second part is a precise table of the positions of Saturn, Jupiter and Venus in the night sky from 246 to 177 B.C.E. (Li 1993, 34). One of the texts in this division is also associated with the Yellow Emperor.

The “Five Phases” (wuxing 五行) division has thirty-one texts, based on a variety of techniques that employ yin-yang, five phases and calendrical correlations. They include various methods for determining auspicious days, interpreting portents, “punishments and rewards” and using the cosmic diviner's board (shi 式). The techniques listed here employed
a variety of correlational schemes used to divine good and bad fortune in specific contexts or at specific times. Among these techniques are several related to the cosmic board, including the *Zhuanwei shier shen* 轉位十二神 (Changing Positions of the Twelve Spirits, 25 j.) as well as the *Xianmen shijia* 玄門式法 (Xianmen’s Method for the Cosmic Board, 20 j.) and the *Xianmen shi* 玄門式 (Xianmen’s Cosmic Board, 20 j.). The cosmic board, with its inscribed square base and rotating circular disk, was a microcosm of heaven and earth. Its use was connected to the progress of the counter-Jupiter (Taisui 太歲) in the night sky (Major 1993, 40), but the names of twelve spirits inscribed on the rotating disk were also connected to the determination of auspicious times and directions for travel (see Harper 1978; Kalinowski 1983). The practice was criticized by Wang Chong, who stated that movement in the direction of the counter-Jupiter was popularly avoided (Xiao 1998, 269).

The texts are functionally related to the hemerological texts found at Han sites near Yunmeng and Zhangjia shan over the last two decades. Great Unity’s progress through the “nine palaces” *jiugong* 九宮 was probably connected to Wen Jie’s 文解 *Lujia* 六甲 (Six Jia Dates, 18 j.); it was also one of the twelve spirits on the cosmic board. In addition, two texts in this division are explicitly related to Great Unity, the *Taiyi yinyang* 太一陰陽 (Great Unity’s Yin and Yang, 23 j.) and the *Taiyi* 太一 (Great Unity, 29 bds.). The titles of two other texts are also related to the Yellow Emperor.

Two of the final three divisions of “Numerical Algorithms and Techniques” are devoted to methods that use “Stalks and Shells” *shigui* 葭龜) and “Methods Based on Forms” *xingfa*. The first contains fifteen texts, including the *Tiying*, treating divination by tortoise shell and milfoil stalk or derivative methods. The second contains six texts based on reading the topography of the land and the physical features of animals and swords. Ban Gu says the goal of judging physical features is to determine their “pitch and qi, value or worthlessness, and good or bad fortune” (Hanshu 30.1775). An example of the latter division is *Xiang liu-chu* 相六畜 (Physiognomizing the Six Domestic Animals, 38 j.), a text which, judging from comparable early examples, was devoted to judging the potential utility of animals based on their eyes and other physical features. None of these ancient methods were associated with Yellow Emperor, Great Unity or Divine Agriculturalist.

The remaining texts in the first category are listed under “Miscellaneous Divinations” *zazhan* 随占) and consist of eighteen texts that use methods from reading dreams and physical sensations, rainmaking and interpreting agricultural signs, to requests made to the spirit world for wealth and fortune. Ban Gu says of this division: “By laying out the im-
ages of the hundred affairs, one may watch for proofs of good and bad” (Hanshu 30.1773).

Texts in this group are concerned with interpreting signs to determine the future potential of a person or thing. The signs may be in dreams, as indicated by the title of the now-lost Huangdi changlui zhanmeng (Yellow Emperor’s Old Willow Divinations by Dreams, 11 j.); or in physical sensations as described in the Ti erming zazhan (Miscellaneous Divinations Concerning Sneezes and Ringing in the Ears, 16 j.). Alternately, the signs might be in the form of freaks of nature, as in the three texts devoted to “transformations into oddities” (see Fengsu tongyi 9). Yet this division also contains the titles of texts that appear to be concerned with interacting with demons and spirits. The Zhi buxiang he guiwu (Managing the Inauspicious and Exposing Demonic Creatures, 8 j.) appears to be concerned with the capture of malicious spirits, while three texts are plaints to the spirits: the Qing guan chuyao xiang (Requesting the Officials for the Elimination of Evil Spirits and for Good Fortune, 19 j.), the Qingshou zhiju (Requesting Longevity and the Arrival of Wealth, 19 j.), and the Qingshu zhiyu (Requesting Rain and the Cessation of Rain, 26 bds.). The one text associated with Great Unity is devoted to the practice of watching the year-star (housui 候歳).

RECIPES AND ARTS. This second major category includes medical, pharmaceutical, hygiene and immortality texts. The first two divisions in this category are “Medical Classics” (yijing 医經) and “Classic Recipes” (jingfang 經方). The six titles in the first division include the extant Huangdi neijing (Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic), an attempt to systematize general medical principles in the form of a dialogue between the Yellow Emperor and various ministers. The eleven texts in the second division are less synthetic and are devoted to specific medical situations. One text in this division, the Shennong Huangdi shijin (Dietary Proscriptions of Divine Agriculturist and Yellow Emperor) appears to be concerned with eliminating certain foods from the diet. This is also the focus of the Mawangdui manuscript Quegu shiqi (Eliminating Grains and Eating Qi), which contains a specific regimen for restricting the diet, with breathing exercises that allow one to “eat what is round” and therefore heavenly, rather than what is square, and therefore earthly (Harper 1998, 305-9).

The third division of the “Recipes and Arts” category focuses on “Bedchamber” (fangzhong 房中) texts. The eight texts in this division are concerned with altering the inner balance of yin and yang through sexual techniques. Six describe the yindao (陰道), one contains “recipes for nourishing yang” and another presents “recipes for having children.” Among these texts is the Huangdi sanwang yangyang fang (黃帝三王養陽方)
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(Yellow Emperor’s and Three Kings’ Recipes for Nourishing Yang, 12 j.). This text was probably similar to Mawangdui texts such as the *He yinyang* 合陰陽 (Joining Yin and Yang), which—according to Donald Harper—is concerned with generating qi and seminal essence (jing 精) to be stored inside the male body (1998, 136).

The final division in this category is that of “Spirit Transcendence” (shenxian 神仙). Of the ten texts in this division, eight are associated with Yellow Emperor, Divine Agriculturist or Great Unity. The *Taiyi zaizi huangye* 太一雜子黃液 (The Golden Fluid of the Great Unity and Its Various Disciples, 31 j.) appears to have been concerned with alchemy, yet its inclusion in this section perhaps suggests that the alchemy is more inner than outer. Another text is the *Huangdi zaizi zhijun* 黃帝雜子芝菌 (Wondrous Mushrooms of the Yellow Emperor and His Various Disciples, 18 j.), which perhaps resembles a taxonomy of mushrooms related to their use to attain immortality. Health and immortality appears to have been the general aim of the texts in this section.

THE DAOIST CONNECTION. Many of the practices outlined in the texts also appear in later Daoist collections. This is true of two areas in particular: the complex of medical and immortality techniques and the techniques for determining auspiciousness that involve spirits and demons. Texts involving the set of techniques in the “Recipes and Arts” category describe such central practices as breathing techniques, healing, alchemy and abstention from grain—all aspects to be found in texts in the Daoist canon (Xiao 1998, 271; Harper 1998, 305n1). The Han interest in evaluating the best time or day for a given activity is at center of the “Numerical Algorithms and Techniques” category, and some of these techniques also overlap with those found in later Daoist texts. The twelve spirits of the cosmic board are connected with the calendar in several texts in the Daoist canon including the *Huangdi jinkui yuheng jing* 黃帝金匱玉衡經 (Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Golden Bookcase and Jade Traverse, CT 284). These methods are related to plaints to heavenly officials and the methods of expelling and identifying harmful supernatural creatures (Xiao 1998, 269-70). While there are parallels in terms of content, the frequent attribution of these texts to Yellow Emperor, Divine Agriculturist and Great Unity indicates that there are also strong sociological parallels between the transmission of Han mantic practices and textual transmission in early Daoism.

WORLDVIEW

Many of the above-listed texts are predicated on the existence of homologies between the realms of Heaven and Earth and that of human-
CHAPTER THREE

kind. Han mantic practices were methods for gathering information about the human realm in accordance with the rules governing all three spheres. The need to develop typologies on which to base these homologies was a driving force behind the refinement of Han cosmological theory. Whether a thing was part of the human body, the skies/heavens or the imperial court, its correct identification enabled a practitioner to act on it in accordance with natural categories that governed the way things developed. The universality of these categories accounts for the fact that attainment and growth is the same for plants, animals and the luminous objects in the sky. Things may differ in physical form, but their development is governed by common processes, such as the reciprocal effect of yang upon yin, on which practices as varied as calendrics, cosmic boards and “consuming yin” were based.

YIN AND YANG. The universe of homologies this approach engendered was built on a set of natural categories, primarily yin and yang, the five phases, the sixty stems and branches (ganzhi 千支) and the sixty-four hexagrams (gua 卦). Of these schemata, the earliest appear to have been the stems and branches of the calendar cycle and the hexagrams used in divination according to the Yi Jing. The origins of yin-yang theory, as distinct from the terms yin and yang used independently as descriptions of natural phenomena, is usually placed in the mid-Warring States period (see Li H. 1981).

Some scholars have argued that yin-yang thought and cyclical terms used in conjunction with the calendar appear in the Shijing (Book of Poetry), implying that yin-yang theory actually began much earlier (Inoue 1996). In the Shijing, yin most often refers to shade or areas that receive less sunlight, such as the north side of mountains, while yang indicates sunshine or sunny places. In this context, however, the existence of the binary pair yin and yang may be distinguished from yin-yang thought that established the two in a network of correlations. Graham has argued that while yin and yang were established by 300 B.C.E., they had not yet been fitted into correlative schemes (1986, 9). The five phases were thought to have been the latest of these schemata, developing in the mid-third century B.C.E. as perhaps an outgrowth of theories related to historical cycles (wude 五德). A recently discovered manuscript from Guodian dating to the early third century uses the term in an ethical context, but as with yin and yang, a mention of the five phases does not necessarily imply that they are being used in a robust correlative sense (Ikeda 1993, 417-18).

THE DAO. The important and original facet of the Han approach to these sets of natural categories is that, in Han texts, the different schemata were integrated as aspects of a distinct totalistic entity, the Dao. The Dao came to represent the universe of homologies that were the ba-
sis of the multitude of mantic techniques summarized earlier. The Dao was the embodiment of the connections that allowed qi in the skies/heavens to affect like qi on earth and caused the movement of the Great Unity to determine the potential success of a particular action at a particular time. In this sense, the Dao was both immanent and transcendent, because the operations of the universe were “deeply implicated in the human order, as when Heaven ‘naturally’ produces omens to announce a new dynasty” (Schwartz 1985, 370). Under the totalistic view of the cosmos current in the Han, the great variety of mantic techniques were seen to be efficacious because they were constituents of an overarching and ineffable Dao (see Csikszentmihalyi 1997).

This is not to say that the naturalistic view new in the Han “replaced” views of the cosmos that relied on the existence of anthropomorphic deities. Instead, these deities were integrated into correlative systems in sets of two, five, and so on. Some concepts like Heaven and Great Unity were homologized to the overarching Dao and in effect placed at the top of the pantheon. Great Unity appears first in divinations of the late fourth century B.C.E. that were found at Baoshan 包山 along with a set of celestial officials including the Ruler of Fate (Siming 司命), spirits of rivers and mountains, doorways, dwellings and directions (Li L. 1993, 268-71). In 113 B.C.E., Great Unity became the object of an official cult by order of Emperor Wu and was elevated above the heavenly emperors of the five directions and the sun and moon in worship (Hanshu 25a.1230). This arrangement mirrored the relationship between the Dao, the five phases (each correlated with a color and a direction) and yin (the moon) and yang (the sun). Elsewhere, Great Unity is related to officials such as Siming in a more bureaucratic framework, one that could also be homologized to hierarchies in the natural world. Ying Shao states in his Fengsu tongyi that the worship of Siming through a carved wooden figurine was common in the area of the old state of Qi, and was often the subject of the sacrifice of a pig in the Runan commandery (Wang L.1982, 384). This idea of invoking a particular deity to assure or request good fortune was characteristic of an anthropomorphic view of the cosmos, and this view continued to be represented in China through the Han and is current even today. Yet these examples of the Great Unity and subordinate objects of sacrifice also illustrate the extent to which deities inherited from pre-Han times were rearranged according to the emerging naturalistic models of the cosmos.
CHAPTER THREE

PRACTICES

There have been several attempts to rewrite the early history of Daoism so as to assume neither its novelty nor its lineal derivation from the thought of Laozi and Zhuangzi. An important example is Anna Seidel’s “Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments” (1983), where she develops Rolf Stein’s idea that Daoism was an attempt at recreating the order of the Han dynasty by exploring the continuity between Han imperial treasure objects and the talismans used by Six Dynasties Daoist priests. Seidel stresses not only formal continuities but also the underlying assumptions about the reciprocity between heaven and human beings that these talismans depended upon. Chinese scholarship is also generally less prone to view Daoism as unconnected to previous phenomena, and this can be seen in the influential “History of Chinese Daoism” by Qing Xitai (1988). He emphasizes the role of omen interpretation and its implicit assumptions about the reciprocity between heaven and human beings that occurs in the apocrypha and other Qin/Han texts. He also looks at the development of ideas about the spirits (guishen) from the writings of Mozi through the Han development of the lore of immortals to the Celestial Masters and later traditions, as well as the influence of Han dynasty Huang-Lao thought on longevity, internal alchemy and other practices in Daoist traditions. These connections are important, and demonstrate the degree to which the early Celestial Masters, while identified by later traditions as foundational, were very much creatures of their time.

These approaches are notable for the extent to which they are able to bridge the gap between the Han and early Daoist movements by focusing on continuities at the level of practice. On a more abstract level, one of the most important practical continuities was the very notion of practice itself and its relationship to text. A category explored by Seidel is the Han imperial treasure object (bao) that guaranteed the mandate of Heaven (tianming) as well as the way in which such an object served as the model for the tesserae or talismans so important in early Daoism. This change is foreshadowed by the idea of powerful texts that gained favor in the context of the rise of mantic practices, especially in the Eastern Han.

The affiliation of mantic texts with mythical sage-ruler of antiquity, such as Great Unity, Divine Agriculturist and the Yellow Emperor, became increasingly common during the Han. As the Huainanzi points out, in the Han an association with an ancient sage-king added value to and guaranteed an audience for a text (ch. 19). This association did not mean that these rulers were supposed to have written the texts; rather, they were often the recipients of a revelation. Han texts therefore relate that
the Yellow Emperor received texts on sexual hygiene from Sunü 素女 (Pure Woman) and Rongchengzi 容成子 (Master Perfect Face). The apocrypha draw on a second type of revelation, one that is not based on the testimony of deities but rather on the patterns in the natural world (Seidel 1983, 336-42). Given the combination of naturalistic and anthropomorphic views of causation outlined above, both categories of revelation could give a text authority.

The transmission of mantic texts may be distinguished from that of the classics by their non-official status and the intrinsic worth of their physical form. An important characteristic of revealed texts is that the limitation on their production increases their value (Strickmann 1979, 15-30). As noted earlier, Huang-Lao technical texts were distinguished by their private transmission. For example, the medical texts associated with the Yellow Emperor passed from Yang Qing 阳庆 to Chunyu Yi 汤于意 in the second century B.C.E. and are described by Sima Qian as "secret recipes" (Shiji 105.2794). Some of these texts were also called "pillow books" (zhenshu 枕書), a designation that expressed the value of a text in later Daoism (Seidel 1983, 301). The false declaration by Meng Xi 孟喜 that some of his texts on omen interpretation and divination had come from the pillow of his dying master (Han shu 88.3599) is just such an attempt at raising the value of texts by claiming their position in an esoteric transmission. Origin in revelation was also part of the lore of several texts bearing the title Taiping jing 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace), associated with the early Daoist movements (see Wang M. 1960).

The value of mantic texts was not just a function of their scarcity, but also of the nature of their content. Ying Shao relates how a certain Zhi Boyi 邰伯夷 was able to stave off a snake "transformed into an oddity" by chanting the hemerological text Liujia 六甲 (Six Jia Dates), the Confucian classic Xiaojing 孝經 (Book of Filial Piety) and a divination work called Yiben 易本 (Roots of the Changes) (Wang, L. 1982, 428). Despite Ying's penchant for explaining away popular beliefs, he accepts this aspect of the story, indicating that by the Eastern Han the magical efficacy of chanting texts was accepted even by classicists. From Ying's standpoint, of course, such practices were inferior to chanting the classics for their own sake. Thus, Ying recounts that Emperor Wu hired a shaman (wu 巫) to curse Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.E.), but by chanting the classics Dong was able to avoid injury and cause the shaman to die suddenly (Wang L. 1982, 423). Then there was Qu Shengqing 青聖卿 of the Eastern Han, an expert in writing efficacious talismans, who was able to kill or control demons and spirits with them. Another writer of talismans was Hugong 壹公 (Gourd Master), the
teacher of Fei Changfang 富長房, who was killed by demons after he lost the talisman that allowed him to hold them at bay (Hou Hanshu 72.2744, 2747). Examples of excavated Han talismans carry dates of 151 and 190 C.E. (Qing 1994, 305). The efficacy of text seen so often in Daoist practices was thus also a property of Han mantic texts. Han mantic practices may therefore be seen as a precedent for some aspects of Daoism not only because of their mode of transmission, their authority as the product of revelation and their cosmological basis, but also because of their reliance on a common set of techniques.

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CHAPTER FOUR
LONGEVITY TECHNIQUES AND CHINESE MEDICINE
UTE ENGELHARDT

DESCRIPTION

Keeping the body healthy and preserving its harmonious functions by nourishing and prolonging life (yangsheng 養生; longevity techniques) has been an important concern for Daoists of all different schools and currents as well as for the practitioners of Chinese medicine. Concrete ideas about the body, its vital functions and how to preserve them, were first explored in philosophical writings of about 400 B.C.E. (Sivin 1987, 48). Around 300 B.C.E., early medical literature began to develop, and the practices of nourishing life became an important part of medical knowledge. Under the Han they were adopted by the fangshi 方士, magical practitioners, who used them together with divinatory and meditative methods in their search for the Dao. Once Daoism emerged as a recognizable religion in the late Han, the practices were integrated in almost every school or current; Daoists duly refined, discussed and expanded them in the context of their various religious practices. In Daoism, longevity techniques reached their peak, while also continuing to develop in the medical tradition. Over the course of history, the two traditions have maintained a fruitful and stimulating exchange.

Outside of Daoism and Chinese medicine, longevity techniques were also practiced by ordinary people as a way to keep their bodies healthy. This is testified from the early Han, until today when thousands meet early each morning in parks or stadiums to exercise Qigong 氣功, health practices that directly derive from longevity techniques (Miura 1989).

The early tradition of nourishing life comprises techniques to absorb or to guide the qi 氣, including breathing exercises, sexual hygiene, therapeutic gymnastics, massages, dietetics and drugs. The texts, besides describing these techniques and their goal of maintaining and replenishing the vital forces, also include advice for everyday life, such as the regulation of sleep, hygiene, food, activities, movements and so on.
This serves to harmonize daily routine and avoid harmful excesses to the body.

The practices of nourishing life opened a way to keep the body healthy and vigorous for as long as possible by maintaining its harmonious functions, enhancing its vital forces and preventing illnesses. This was an important task for physicians at all times, but also for Daoists to whom the body was a “vessel” of the Dao (Kohn 1989, 197). Keeping it functioning in complete harmony, then, was the first stage of the religious quest for immortality. For this reason, longevity techniques formed a key foundation of Daoist practice, being located between “Heil and Heilung,” salvation and physical wholeness.

**History**

**EARLY REFERENCES.** Terms for longevity, such as *shou* 賣 or *changsheng* 長生, are first found in Zhou bronze inscriptions, especially in prayers for blessings (Yu 1964, 87). The term “longevity” in the context of physical practices means that human beings attain their proper life expectancy in possession of their full vital forces and do not undergo an early death, called *yao* 營. In contrast, the expression *chengxian* 成仙, “to become an immortal,” which appeared first in the Warring States period, implies a transformation of the body and a change in the state of being, a level of otherworldly transcendence. There is thus a clear distinction between longevity and immortality, which has been discussed over the ages.

The term *yangsheng*, “nourishing life,” first appears as the heading of the third chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, one of the authentic chapters of the work and linked with the philosopher Zhuang Zhou himself (4th c. B.C.E.). Although Zhuangzi considers the physical practices inferior to more meditative techniques, he describes them in some detail:

To huff and puff, exhale and inhale, blow out the old and draw in the new, do the “bear-hang” and the “bird-stretch,” interested only in long life—such are the tastes of the practitioners of “guide-and-pull” exercises, the nurturers of the body, Grandfathers P’eng’s ripe-old-agers. (ch. 15; Graham 1986, 265)

This passage already has the names of various breathing techniques and the first mention of breathing exercises, therapeutic gymnastics and other arts of the body. It is a classical passage, whose ideas, in more detail and technical application, reappear in various medical manuscripts
found from the late Warring States and Qin periods as well as in later texts, both Daoist and medical.

HAN DYNASTY. It is evident from recently found manuscripts (see below) that almost the entire array of longevity techniques was present even before the Han dynasty, undertaken and developed, according to Donald Harper’s research, by physicians and the medically interested elite across geographical regions (1998, 55). During the Han dynasty the techniques were further developed by the fangshi, “recipe gentlemen,” a range of specialists in natural philosophy and occult knowledge that included “doctors, diviners and magicians” (DeWoskin 1983). Many fangshi lived at the courts of the Han rulers and local aristocrats and served as their advisors. Their chief attribute was the possession of fang, recipes—especially books that contained their knowledge and techniques. Many of these texts are mentioned in the bibliographic treatise of the Hanshu (ch. 30; Harper 1998, 45-54).

At the end of the Han, in the second century C.E., several popular religious movements arose that led to the formation of a collective and organized Daoist religion. Most prominent in this context are the Celestial Masters, founded by Zhang Daoling 張道陵 and still an active Daoist school today. Based on a formal covenant between the newly arisen Lord Lao and the Daoist community, the way of the Celestial Master promised its members that the gods would grant them health and long life—provided they did not commit any sins. Thus, they also practiced physical longevity techniques like eating qi, abstention from grains and breathing exercises to maintain health. At the same time, however, the practices became part of an ethical curriculum which was activated through the confession of sins and good moral behavior. The techniques were no longer individual practices but were now embedded in the strict communal observance of precepts and purification rites.

Health was equalized with purity and freedom from sin, while sickness was seen as a kind of punishment for one’s own and one’s ancestors’ bad deeds. Therefore, healing was believed possible only through the confession of sins, penance and exorcistic rituals (see Tsuchiya, forthcoming). In this context, therapeutic talismans were considered as documents that guaranteed the covenant between the deity and humanity. As late as the fifth century, Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477) reports that the Celestial Masters would not allow treatments with acupuncture or drugs but healed their members exclusively with talisman water, confession of sins and formal petitions to the supernatural authorities (Robinet 1984, 68-69).

EARLY MIDDLE AGES. A comparatively vivid picture of longevity practices emerges from the Baopu 袋朴子 (Book of the Master Who
Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185; Ware 1966), dated to about 320 and attributed to Ge Hong (葛洪 (283-343). Ge was the son of an aristocratic clan of south China, near present-day Nanjing, at a time when refugees from the north were flooding into his region. Therefore, his work shows influences both from the indigenous religion of the state of Wu and from areas to its north and west. Ge presents himself as a seeker of immortality who gives clear preference to alchemical procedures. On other techniques, he says: “Through breathing exercises and gymnastics, by taking herbs and plant medicines, you may extend your years, but you will not avoid death in the end. Only taking the divine elixir will give you long life without end and allow you to live as long as heaven and earth” (ch. 4; Kohn 1993a, 308).

Ge Hong therefore makes a clear distinction between longevity and immortality, presenting three different types of immortals: celestial, earthly and corpse-liberated. The foundation of immortality in any form, then, is a healthy life. This means that one must avoid all excesses and prevent or heal all diseases. To this end Ge Hong lists a number of different practices, such as the taking of drugs, which he clearly categorizes according to their effect. In addition, he recommends various qi techniques, such as embryo respiration, gymnastics and various methods of visualization. Taking a fundamentally pragmatic position, Ge Hong often asserts that the perfection of any one method can only be attained in conjunction with several others.

Not long after Ge Hong, and in the same region and milieu in the 360s, the medium Yang Xi 楊羲 and the Xu brothers began to receive revelations that laid the foundation of the powerful Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) school of Daoism. According to its teachings, followers could gain access to the heaven of Shangqing—higher than those heavens previously known and the residence of the zhen 真 or zhenren 真人 (perfected). Shangqing Daoism took over and integrated numerous earlier longevity techniques, both from the Celestial Masters and from the alchemical immortality seekers, some going back as far as the late Zhou and Han dynasties. Individual practices predominate, undertaken in the solitude of the mountains or the meditation chamber (jingshi 静室; see Yoshikawa 1987; Cedzich 1987, 63-67). In general, Shangqing lent more weight than previous traditions to mental images, visualizations and cosmic excursions, though it never completely dispensed with physiological practices. But the more physical practices, such as gymnastics and breathing exercises, served mainly as preparations for visualizations or rituals. Nevertheless, the Shangqing school is of great importance for the development of longevity techniques
and has shaped their connection with traditional Chinese medicine as no other Daoist school.

An impressive example of this connection is represented by the person of Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536), the first patriarch of Shangqing. A relative of both the Xu and Ge families, he originally set out on a career as an official but, in 492, withdrew to Maoshan to pursue philological, medical and alchemical studies (Strickman 1979; 1981). As a result, he compiled two major Shangqing texts: the Zhen’gao 真詣 (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016) and the Dengtjun yuyue 登真隱訣 (Secret Instructions for the Ascent to Perfection, CT 421). In the former, he says:

Whoever desires to study the Dao of long life first has to heal his diseases. ... Without this primary healing of diseases, one cannot attain any benefits for one’s person, even if one assiduously practices the intake and guidance of qi. (10.17b)

Since Tao saw health as the basic prerequisite of any advanced religious realization, it is not surprising that he also pursued in-depth studies of pharmacology and medicine and engaged in various alchemical experiments. Around 500, he compiled the Shennong bencao jing 神農本草經 (Shennong’s Materia Medica), the first known collected pharmacology extant today. It goes back to a work of Han origins, which was lost early and which Tao reconstituted from fragments and citations and to which he added his own framework and commentary.

In this work, Tao rearranged over 700 drugs in three different classes. Most drugs in the upper/superior class have the effects of replenishing qi, making the body lighter, preventing old age, prolonging life and forestalling hunger. Such superior drugs can be taken for a long period of time, because they show no toxicity. The drugs of the second/medium class with similar effects are much fewer in number, but they still show no or little toxicity. The drugs of the third/inferior class are especially suited for attacking diseases. They are highly toxic and should not be consumed over an extended period of time (Unschuld 1986a, 17-43; Akahori 1989, 76). This hierarchical presentation of drugs shows a strong imprint of the immortality cult of the Han, when many immortals were said to have used drugs to achieve a lightening of the body and the ability to fly through the air. Another typical feature of the Han, the absence of a separation between health and longevity, is obvious as well; as in the Han, so here too the necessity of nourishing life is emphasized to support and maintain the constantly changing balance of all the various parts and functions of health.

Through the reconstitution of the Shennong bencao jing and his various commentaries Tao Hongjing laid the foundation for all later
developments of pharmacological therapy and his work became the model for many later collections.

In the 390s, Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫, Ge Hong’s grand-nephew, set about composing a scripture that—together with various related works in the following decades—formed the core of the Lingbao 灵寳 (Numinous Treasure) school. It is mainly characterized by its emphasis on ritual and its strong adaptation of Buddhist elements. Lingbao doctrine, like that of other Daoist schools, maintained that aspirants could refine themselves step by step to reach perfection. As a new point it added Buddhist models and nomenclature, mainly from Mahāyāna Buddhism, to explain the adept’s progress. Generally, Lingbao found a stronger relevance in prayers and orders to the otherworldly administration and made heavier use of spells and scriptural recitations that its Shangqing counterpart. Visualization and physical longevity practices were still applied, but their value was fundamentally lower (see Bokenkamp 1983; Yamada 1989).

HIGH MIDDLE AGES: SUI AND TANG. The Tang dynasty is well known as the heyday of Chinese culture, especially in art and poetry, and its fruitful interaction with foreign influences. Both Daoism and Chinese medicine reached new heights at this time, being further institutionalized and developing a new and superior quality. In medicine, in particular, the education of physicians was newly standardized and reached a much higher level than before. A major developmental step in the latter occurred already under the Sui, when Chao Yuanfang’s Zhubing yuanhou lun 諸病源流論 (The Origins and Symptoms of Medical Disorders) was published in 610. He presents for the first time a systematic treatise on the etiology and pathology of Chinese medicine, distinguishing four major categories of diseases: inner, outer, women’s and children’s. Each of these four main parts is then subdivided into sections that outline the origin of the disorder in question, its process of development and its major clinical symptoms. After this, the text does not prescribe phytotherapeutic or acupuncture prescriptions but rather specific exercises of gymnastics, massages, breathing or visualization. This new classification of the practices of nourishing life in accordance with a systematic etiology and pathology represents a big step forward in the development of these techniques (Despeux 1989; Despeux and Obringer 1997).

The two major medical works of the Tang period were Sun Simiao’s Qianjin fang 千金方 (Recipes Worth a Thousand Gold Pieces; see Despeux 1987) of the year 652 and Wang Tao’s Waitai biyao 外臺秘要 (Secret Essentials of the Outer Terrace) of the year 752. Both were deeply influenced by the Zhubing yuanhou lun and show a deep
appreciation of longevity practices, presenting them as an integral part of Chinese medicine (see Sivin 1968; Engelhardt 1989; Unschuld 1994).

Similarly, eminent Tang Daoists like Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-735), the twelfth patriarch of Shangqing, presented integrated outlines of health practices as preliminaries for the attainment and realization of the Dao (see Kohn 1987; Kirkland 1986; Engelhardt 1987). They link traditional Chinese physical techniques with the Buddhist-inspired practice of insight meditation (guan 観), outlining a detailed sequence of progress toward transcendence and describing the subsequent transformations of body, emotions and conscious thinking (Kohn 1990). The first step toward religious realization here is the recognition of the importance of the body and its health. Next, one has to cure all diseases and attain harmony in all physical actions. Then practitioners stop eating normal food and substitute a diet of pure substances and drugs to achieve a higher degree of subtlety in alignment with the cosmos. Visualizations and deep, trance-like immersions in the Dao finally lead to the religious goal. While Daoists in their descriptions of their practices and goals rely heavily on the works and ideas of medical practitioners, their ultimate aim goes far beyond the medical approach, leading ultimately to a reorganization of the adept’s physical condition from a profane to a sacred level and to a mystical and transcendent oneness with the Dao. Still, physical practices are emphasized as essential and never overlooked.

Also during the Tang dynasty, Chinese and Daoist medical practices and recipes were transmitted to Japan, mainly as part of the sutras and teachings obtained by Buddhist (Tendai 天台) monks. In Japan, the practices were welcomed warmly and had a strong impact on the Buddhist and aristocratic establishments of the Heian period. They were summarized, with numerous citations from Chinese texts, in the Ishimpō 藥心方 (Essential Medical Methods), presented to the court by Tamba no Yasuyori 丹波康賴 in 984. This led to a vigorous Chinese medical tradition of health and healing practices throughout Japanese history (see Sakade 1989).

SONG AND BEYOND. From the Tang dynasty onwards, and especially under the Song, another branch of esoteric doctrines and practices systematically developed, the so-called neidan 內丹 or “inner alchemy.” A major characteristic of this tendency is the expression of its inner meditation practices in the language of alchemy and the symbolism of the Yi jing 易經 (Book of Changes; see Baldrian-Hussein 1984). It also integrated forms of contemplation and silent meditation—rather than the visualization of deities—which in part derived from Buddhist practices (see Robinet 1997). The texts of inner alchemy, which became
more systematic and formalized during the Song and Yuan dynasties, present practices that were in general more contemplative and religious in nature than the physical techniques of nourishing life. Still, physical practices continued to be used as preparatory methods, and inner alchemy in its own turn exerted a massive influence on their later conception and execution.

From Ming times onwards, it is occasionally difficult to distinguish the practices of longevity techniques clearly from those of inner alchemy. There is, for example, Zhou Lüqing’s 周履靖 Chi feng sui (Marrow of the Red Phoenix; see Despeux 1988), which bears a title and contains many poems related to inner alchemy, yet also describes qi and gymnastic exercises.

Generally, longevity practices were widespread in Chinese society in the later dynasties. Famous poets and scholars of the Song, such as Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101) and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1082) were pronounced exponents of the techniques and wrote extensively about them (Wang 1989, 210, 261-70). In addition, the Song provided the first extant example of a work dealing exclusively with health techniques for the elderly. This, Chen Zhi’s 陳直 Yanglao fengqin shu (Book on Nourishing Old Age and Taking Care of One’s Parents), was quite popular. Under the Yuan it was expanded in Zou Xuan’s 鄒鎰 Shouqin yanglao xinshu (New Book on Extending the Life of One’s Parents and Nourishing Old Age). The work is important in two respects. First, it deals predominantly with dietetics, drugs to be taken by the elderly and various instructions regarding daily routine, such as clothing, sleep and hygiene. Second, it is the first specialized work devoted exclusively to the needs and practices of older people and thus opens an entirely new category of longevity literature (see Sakade 1993, 101-18).

MING AND QING. Longevity writings in the Ming are characterized by their voluminosity and the appearance of many collections and compendia. Among them are works of a highly eclectic character. Some are inclusive and treat all different aspects of longevity practices, for example, Gao Lian’s 高濂 Zisheng bajian 遵生八箋 (Eight Treatises on [Following] the Principles of Life; see Dudgeon 1895; Wang 1989, 457-59). Other works focus entirely on a single method, such as the Tiaoxi fa (Method of Breath Regulation) by the Neo-Confucian Wang Ji 王畿 (1498-1582). The authors of relevant works came from diverse social and professional backgrounds, including physicians, healers, literati, scholars, Neo-Confucians and followers of a syncretism that combined the various doctrines of China (see Stein 1998, 39).
Another new development under the Ming is the increased integration of longevity techniques into medical literature. Thus, Yang Jizhou's 张紳洲 針灸大成 (Great Compendium on Acupuncture and Moxibustion), the most extensive monograph on the subject and a classic to the present day, presents gymnastic exercises for the various qi-circuits (meridians) together with their detailed description (chs. 6-7). Similarly, Li Chan's 李梴 五雜倉門 醫學入門 (Introduction to Medicine, dat. 1575) speaks about the cultivation of vital forces in its first chapter. The author places greatest emphasis on the prevention of diseases:

When a patient takes drugs or receives acupuncture and there is no visible effect on his condition, this is due to ignorance about the methods of preserving life. In antiquity, people said: "It is better to prevent diseases before they appear than to understand the drugs to be taken once one has fallen ill." (Wang 1989, 456; Stein 1998, 41)

This clear preference for health and longevity techniques typifies the medical literature of the Ming and may help explain their high popularity. In addition, Li Chan's work places great emphasis on the mind as a causal factor in the development and treatment of diseases.

Another common element in Ming-dynasty works is their extensive discussion of what modern Qigong masters call piancha 偏差, "deviation," "derailment," "unwanted side-effects," that is, the negative and unexpected results that may arise from certain therapies or exercises. A classical description of one such piancha is found in Zhang Lu's 張璐 (1617-1701) 張氏醫通 (Mr. Zhang's Pervasive Medicine, dat. 1695). Under the heading "Rumo" 入魔 (Getting Involved in [Demonic] Illusions), he outlines the symptoms, causes and therapies of a deviation described as "abnormality of the mind." It manifests itself in a person's "being sad like a wooden doll or laughing and crying like a madman, as if one was possessed by demons." As to its causes, Zhang states:

The cause lies in an excessive engagement of the mind, to the point where it falls into emptiness; the condition arises due to the flaring-up of phlegm-fire [tanhuo 痰火]. (Wang 1989, 333; Stein 1998, 43)

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. In later centuries, the various longevity techniques developed further into an unprecedented multiplicity; they were actively undertaken by Daoists of the various schools, physicians, medically concerned people and ordinary folk. Their interest has actively continued well into the twentieth century, transforming the understanding and execution of practices into even more medical and, increasingly, biological and scientific modes. An early exemplar of this tendency is Jiang Weiqiao 蒋维樵, the author of the
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Tinshizi jingzuo fa 因是子靜坐法 (Quiet Sitting with Master Yinshi, dat. 1914). This outline of gymnastics, breathing exercises and the guiding of qi became influential in Qigong circles (see Kohn 1993b).

Qigong 氣功, translated as “Qi-Exercises” and also known as Qigong liaofa 氣功療法 (Healing Methods through Qi Exercises), describes a movement of longevity and semi-meditative practices that has swept China since the 1950s. Followers undertake many different activities, including gymnastics, breathing techniques, the guiding and circulation of qi, as well as quiet meditations and visualizations (see Miura 1989; Heise 1999). These have been used successfully in health maintenance and the treatment of chronic ailments, especially those of the digestive and respiratory systems.

Among the newer Qigong masters, Liu Guizhen 劉貴珍 (1920-1983) is best known. When he was twenty, he developed a stomach ulcer which he cured with the help of Qigong. After 1949, he created his own specific method known as Neiyang gong 内養功 (Exercises of Inner Nourishing) and engaged in its clinical study. As this revealed a high rate of success, he founded the first Qigong clinics—one in Tangshan in 1954, the next in Beidaihe in 1956. Here he had phenomenal successes treating large numbers of patients, suffering mainly from chronic gastrointestinal diseases. His amazing results earned him several awards from the Ministry of Health, and in 1956 he was received by Chairman Mao. In 1957, his ground-breaking bestseller Qigong liaofa shijian 氣功療法實踐 (The Practice of Qigong Therapy) paved the way for the increasing popularity of Qigong among the masses (Wang 1989, 509; Miura 1989, 335; Heise 1999, 94-96).

However, despite the popularity of the newly named Qigong and the various efforts of placing it on a “scientific” basis, some still believed that all these practices were merely a fad based on superstitious and idealistic nonsense. The traditional connection of longevity techniques with religion was very much on people’s minds, and it was often more important than their visible successes in the healing of diseases. Pressure against Qigong increased during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), when the clinics in Tangshan and Beidaihe were demolished and many Qigong masters were persecuted (Wang 1989, 517).

After the Cultural Revolution, Qigong masters developed new practices of their own, placing a greater emphasis on body movements. Such techniques, like Guo Lin’s 郭林 “Xin qigong liaofa” 新氣功療法 (New Qigong Treatment), which was specifically used to treat cancer, and Yang Meijun’s 楊梅君 “Dayan qigong” 大雁氣功 (Wild Goose Qigong) of the early 1980s, were officially propagated and rapidly
became popular among broad segments of the population. This new wave of popularity was accompanied by an increasingly mechanistic understanding of the body and of qi. In 1977 and 1983, research institutes in Shanghai and Beijing developed special sensors to measure the qi radiated by a Qigong master. They found that qi resembled infrared rays, electromagnetic waves, static electricity, magnetism or the flow of tiny, subatomic particles. This discovery proved that the concept of qi had a materialistic basis (see Miura 1989).

In 1980, Zhao Jinxiang (b. 1934) started teaching his “Hexiang zhuang” (Crane Pattern) to a small group of people in a Beijing park, from where it spread widely. Statistics of the Chinese Qigong Association show that in 1983 there were over five million practitioners, and by 1986 their number surpassed ten million, more than half the Qigong practitioners in the country (Zhao 1986, 1). The “Crane Pattern” begins with a set of intentional body movements, which take about thirty minutes and are a mixture of breathing exercises, slow Taiji type movements and traditional gymnastics. This is followed by about fifteen minutes of intensive restfulness or meditation, and then another ten to fifteen minutes of “unintentional” body movements during which the practitioner goes into a sort of trance. The “Crane Pattern” is easy to learn and takes very little space. Practitioners can feel their qi rather quickly and soon experience healing benefits.

However, since 1984, it has provided serious grounds for concern and controversy. First the question arose whether unintentional body movements really arose spontaneously or whether they were evoked semi-consciously on the basis of the earlier part of the exercises. Then more and more people were found trapped in the involuntary, trance-like state of the unintentional movements. Some even fell into psychotic states and had to be confined or hospitalized (Landmann 1989, 87-93). The issues sparked not only medical but also considerable political controversy. This subsided late in 1986 when the practice of unintentional body movements was replaced by a new method called “Zizai Qigong” (Self-resting Qigong), which focuses more on the restful aspect of the exercises (Zhao 1987).

Later, in the mid-1980s, the practice of emitting outer qi (fa waiqi) became more prominent. A Qigong master who has cultivated his own qi to a superior level, directs it—usually through his palms—towards a patient to strengthen the latter’s qi, loosen his inner blockages and reestablish a harmonious balance of energies (see Miura 1989; Heise 1989, 165-67). The Qigong of the 1990s, by contrast, is characterized more by a renewed consideration of religious aspects of the practice. In earlier periods it was considered wrong to point out the Daoist or Buddhist precursors of certain exercises; now many techniques are
described as immortality practices or are closely linked with ancient Chinese, Buddhist or Tibetan concepts. On the other hand, this religious revival occurs mostly on a rather low, popular level and is favored by religious sects trying to gain adherents. They often use Qigong techniques to acquire psychic or paranormal faculties (teyi gongneng 誠異功能), which then gain notoriety in the media and greater popular exposure. This in turn attracts followers and brings financial benefits to sect leaders.

The most recent example of such a sect is a group that calls itself Falun gong 法輪功 (Dharma Wheel Exercises). Founded in 1992 by Li Hongzhi 李洪志 (b. 1952), it claims to have 100 million followers today, 70 million in China alone. In April 1999, about 15,000 members assembled in silent protest before the center of China’s political power, the largest public demonstration since the Tiananmen massacre of 1989. Their demands for official recognition of their group were partially met by a startled government.

The phenomenal success of Li Hongzhi and his sect indicates the religious and spiritual vacuum China faces in the light of its rapid economic and technological development. This is increasingly filled by volatile mixtures of longevity or Qigong practices and popular religious beliefs. The social and political implications of such mixtures are as yet unknown, however in August, 1999, the government prohibited the Falun gong organization, arresting many prominent leaders and confiscating their writings.

TEXTS

THE MEDICAL MANUSCRIPTS. In the past twenty years a number of important tombs have been discovered dating from the Western Han dynasty and containing valuable manuscripts. Texts found include several important medical texts, known as the “medical manuals,” which present almost the entire spectrum of longevity techniques and methods of qi cultivation. They include breathing exercises, gymnastics, dietetics, sexual techniques and advice on the execution of daily activities such as sleeping, washing and combing. In antiquity, these comprised a key part of medical expertise. As Donald Harper points out, "The Mawangdui and Zhangjia shan macrobiotic texts describe a kind of baseline macrobiotic hygiene for the elite that focuses on care of the body, not on the more philosophical and mystical programs of the "Neiye" 内業 chapter of the Guanzi 管子, Zhuangzi or Laozi, in addition, the texts'
goal of long life is not identical to the xian-cult goal of immortality and transcendence” (1998, 114).

Based on the legacy of Han medical and immorality ideas, religious Daoism developed its own longevity theories and practices, coexisting with the popular hygienic and medical traditions that both influenced it and borrowed from it. Most techniques remained longevity-centered, but became more specialized as part of the preparation of advanced spiritual practices; others came to form the foundation of exorcistic and ritual methods.

MAWANGDUI MANUSCRIPTS. In 1973, fifteen medical manuscripts, written on silk, bamboo and strips of wood, were excavated from the Mawangdui 马王堆 tomb no. 3 in Changsha (Hunan). The burial is dated to 168 B.C.E., while the redaction of the manuscripts can be placed in the third century B.C.E. (Harper 1982, 2: 15, 1998, 4). They are predominantly recipe literature, and six of the fifteen texts can be directly related to the medical tradition of nourishing life. Two, the He yinyang 鬱阳 (Conjoining Yin and Yang) and the Tianxia zhidaotan 天下至道問 (Discussion of the Perfect Way in All Under Heaven), mainly focus on techniques of sexual cultivation. Two others, the Yangshengfang 養生方 (Recipes for Nourishing Life) and the Shiwen 十問 (Ten Questions), also have sections on sexual techniques, but also include practical advice on how to nourish life with the help of breathing techniques, dietetics and drugs (Harper 1998, 22-30; Stein 1999, 50-65). One of the two last manuscripts is a treatise called Quegu shiqi 却穀食氣 (The Rejection of Grains and Absorption of Qi); it deals mainly with techniques of eliminating grains and ordinary foodstuffs from the diet and replacing them with medicinal herbs and qi through special breathing exercises. The text repeatedly contrasts “those who eat qi” with “those who eat grain” and explains this in cosmological terms:

Those who eat grain eat what is square; those who eat qi eat what is round. Round is heaven; square is earth. (Harper 1998, 130).

The last manuscript is commonly called Daoyin tu 导引圖 (Gymnastics Chart). It contains color illustrations of human figures performing therapeutic gymnastics. Some of the recognizable captions refer to the names of exercises already mentioned in the Zhuangzi, such as “bear-hanging” (xiongjing 熊經) and “bird-stretching” (niaoshen 鸟伸).

The main concern of these texts can be summarized in a quotation from Shiwen:

Yao asked Shun: “In Under-heaven what is most valuable?”
Shun replied: “Life is most valuable.”
Yao said: “How can life be cultivated?”
Shun said: "Investigate yin and yang!"

The idea that life is the highest good, here placed in the mouths of the mythical rulers Yao and Shun, is found in similar words in the philosophical text *Lūshì chūnqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü), dated to the third century B.C.E. (ch. 2). In the manuscripts from Mawangdui, however, we have for the first time exact descriptions and instructions of how life, compared to the ruling of a country, should be regulated and ordered (zhì 治). In this context, breathing techniques, circulation of qi, gymnastics and dietetics play an especially important role, but particular attention was paid to sexual practices. Their special position is explained as follows:

When a person is born there are two things that do not need to be learned: the first is to breathe and the second is to eat. Except for these two, there is nothing that is not the result of learning and habit. Thus, what assists life is eating; what injures life is lust. Therefore, the sage when conjoining male and female invariably possesses a model. (*Tianxia zhidao tan; Harper 1998, 432; Zhou and Xiao 1989, 431*).

This makes clear that eating and breathing were seen as natural processes that served to replenish and maintain the vital forces; they have to be supported with specific techniques. The position of sexuality is more ambivalent: a form of the union of yin and yang, it is one variation of the continuous exchange of the cosmic polarities, but it must never decline into the purely instinctual realm, because that would harm the vital forces. One the one hand, sexual hygiene is therefore seen as one of the most effective ways to strengthen the jīng 精, "essence," one of the fundamental powers of life; on the other, the collection and storage of jīng require the strict control and discipline of sexual desire (Stein 1998, 57). In contrast to later sexual texts, the Mawangdui manuscripts show little sense of one-sided exploitation between men and women, but present a concept of mutuality between the sexes (Wile 1992, 77).

The remaining medical manuscripts from Mawangdui deal with more technical medical questions, such as the cauterization of the eleven conduits and the diagnosis of their disorders. They include five texts, one of them in two editions, representing an early stage of the system of conduits, earlier than the theory canonized in the *Huangdi neijing* 黃帝內經 (Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor, see below). There are also three recipe manuals and one text that focuses on childbirth (Harper 1999, 22-30).

Both types of texts, although presented separately here, belong to the preventive and therapeutic knowledge of early Chinese medicine. Their connection is also documented by the fact that the *Daoyin tu* is presented
as part of a dietetic manuscript, and another on the cauterization of conduits. This textual combination might indicate a complementary understanding: together with purification through diet on the inside and attainment of health through cauterization of conduits on the outside, the state of qi-harmony is attained through gymnastic exercises (Harper 1982, 14).

ZHANGJIA SHAN MANUSCRIPTS. The Western Han tomb no. 247 near Zhangjia shan 张家山 (Jiangling, Hubei) is about 200 km north of Mawangdui, also in the old country of Chu (see Wenwu 1989). The burial is dated to 186 B.C.E; the tomb contained two medical manuscripts written on bamboo slips. The first is the Moahu 脉書 (Conduit Book), consisting of several texts with lists of ailments and descriptions of eleven conduits. The collection is closely related to the Mawangdui conduit texts and like them includes a short statement on practices of nourishing life (see Harper 1999, 31-33; Wenwu 1989; He and Lo 1996, 91).

The other manuscript bears the title Yinshu 引書 (Document on Pulling). It begins with the description of a daily and seasonal health regimen, including hygiene, dietetics, regulation of sleep and movement as well as adequate times for sexual intercourse. After that, the text details fifty-seven gymnastic exercises, including massages. Some exercises are preventative, others more curative. The third and last part of the Yinshu deals with etiology and the prevention of diseases. The most important factors that cause diseases, according to this work, are climatic excesses such as the heat of summer (aestus), moisture (humor), wind (ventus), cold (algor), rain and dew. An unstable diet, excessive emotions and a lifestyle inappropriate to the season are also named as possible causes of an imbalance of qi. The text recommends various therapies, such as breathing exercises, bodily stretches and the careful treatment of the interior qi. It says: “If you can pattern your qi properly and maintain your yin energy in fullness, then the whole person will benefit” (Wenwu 1990, 86).

It is interesting to note that the text makes a distinction between “upper class people” who fall ill because of uncontrolled emotions such as rage and excessive joy, and lower ones whose conditions tend to be caused by excessive labor, hunger and thirst. It further notes that the latter have no opportunity to learn the necessary breathing exercises and therefore contract numerous diseases and die an early death. Obviously longevity techniques were very much the domain of the aristocracy and upper classes.

Comparison of the Yinshu and the Daoyin tu shows relatively few correspondences, and both gymnastic and breathing exercises in the
Yinshu are associated with a more differentiated etiology. The Yinshu may therefore represent a later development of the techniques, showing their historical unfolding (Peng 1994; Engelhardt 1999; Stein 1998a, 65-78). The text as a whole indicates a preeminence of prevention, the maintenance of health and avoidance of diseases through dietetics and hygiene in everyday life. In this respect it is close to the ideas presented in the Huangdi neiijing and might be considered its direct forerunner.

Huangdi neiijing (Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor; see Veith 1972; Yamada 1979; Keegan 1988; Ren 1986), dat. first century B.C.E., is extant in three medieval recensions: Suwen 素問 (Basic Questions), Lingshu 禮枢 (Divine Pivot) and Taisu 太素 (Grand Basis). In addition, there is a later question-and-answer volume, called Nanjing 難經 (Classic of Difficult Issues; see Unschuld 1986b). With this corpus, the cosmological doctrine based on yin-yang and five phases, the so-called system of correspondences, reached its culmination. The work provides a view of the relationship between the cosmos, the environment, the human body and its emotions. It describes their interconnected physiological and pathological processes, diagnosis and therapy (Sivin 1993). Rather than to details of therapy it refers to acupuncture, moxibustion and drugs as well as to gymnastics, massages and dietary regulation.

The basic premise of longevity practices is to maintain the vital forces for as long as possible and avoid diseases. It permeates the entire corpus like a red thread. The work gives clear expression to the idea that the life and being of humanity are special and precious and must be preserved by all means:

Heaven covers above, earth supports below. Among the myriad beings, none is more precious than the human. The human being lives through the qi of heaven and earth, as he fully matches the regular patterns of the seasons. Whether ruler, lord or ordinary man, each and everyone strives to complete his body. (Suwen 25.1)

Compared with the earlier medical manuscripts, the Huangdi neiijing reveals a more stringent system that describes the relationships between human beings and the cosmos in greater sublety and with a higher degree of abstraction.

To follow the orderly pattern of yin and yang means life; to act against it means death. ... The sage does not treat those who are already ailing, he treats those who do not yet ail; he does not treat what is already chaotic, he treats what is not yet in chaos. (Suwen 2.3)

The first two chapters of the Suwen, especially, bear a strong imprint of the early immortality cult; they outline an ideally regulated life of the
perfected and sages of old, completely in accordance with the Dao and
easily attaining a hundred years. However, these good times are over
now, and people today do not know how to cultivate their life (ch. I).
This is why the physician must intervene, but an able doctor can
recognize a disorder in its germination state, by identifying certain
changes in the qi. Thus he can control and regulate it early on (26.2).
Both physicians and Daoists were concerned to recognize the
germination of disorders and even the subtest movement in the patterns
of qi. Daoists of later ages in particular strove to know the subtlety of the
Dao and thus gain the ability to protect their bodies from diseases and
refine them toward higher states of perfection.

The concepts of the Huangdi neijing exerted a strong influence on the
later development of Daoism, and many later scriptures integrate parts of
the medical correspondence system into their doctrines.

FROM HAN TO TANG. After the Han, medical works tended to be
relatively extensive monographs focused on specific topics. Unlike the
Huangdi neijing, which still treated the entire spectrum of traditional
medicine, these are specialized medical works on diagnostics,
acupuncture or various treatment methods. A similar development
occurred in the literature on longevity techniques. However, many works
of this period were lost and survive only in fragments and citations.

Ji Kang's essays. An exception to this rule is two essays by Ji Kang
嵇康 (223-262), a member of the famous “Seven Sages of the Bamboo
Grove.” He wrote the Yangsheng lun 養生論 (On Nourishing Life) and
later a reply to its criticism, the Danan Yangsheng lun 答難養生論 (Answer
to [Xiang Xiu's] Refutation of “On Nourishing Life”). In contrast to
many of his contemporaries, Xi Kang professes a strong belief in the
reality of immortality. However, he says, not everyone can attain it
because it requires a special gift that manifests itself in the presence of an
extraordinary qi. Yet even without this special qi, by practicing various
longevity techniques one can extend one's life to several hundred years
(Henricks 1983; Holzman 1957). Both essays are representative examples
of aristocratic and literary concerns with immortality, influenced by
Daoism and Chinese medicine, yet not immediately originating in either.

Yangsheng yaoji 養生要集 (Compendium of Essentials on Nour-
ishing Life, 10 sects., lost) is attributed to Zhang Zhan 張湛 of the
fourth century, a member of an aristocratic clan of north Chinese
origins. His grandfather was involved in the political unrest at the end of
the Western Jin and came south as an exile, then served under the
Eastern Jin in the capital of Nanjing. Zhan himself at one time occupied
the post of imperial secretary under this dynasty (see Sakade 1986; Stein
The text was probably lost in the late eighth century and is not found in any Tang bibliographies (Barrett 1980, 172). A relatively large number of fragments of citations are found in the Ishimpō, a Japanese collection of Chinese medical works dated to 984 (see Hsia, Veith and Geertsma 1986). The ten sections of the text were:


This list makes clear that the work did not focus merely on bodily cultivation but was also concerned with spiritual perfection. It did not just discuss specific longevity techniques, such as breathing, gymnastics and sexual hygiene, but also had instructions on daily habits and activities to be undertaken in a regular rhythm matching the patterns of nature.

The Yangsheng Yaoji is important in the history of longevity techniques for three reasons: it cites from a number of earlier works that have otherwise been lost; it presents a model for many later works which treat it as a standard textbook (see Despeux 1989); and it is the earliest known text to systematize and classify the various longevity practices into one integrated system. The translated fragments (esp. Stein 1999) show that the author was not a typical follower of Daoist immortality but rather was concerned with spreading the foundations of “dietetic regimens as the key to an order in all sections of life” (Stein 1999, 248). He wished to teach people a way of individual life that would extend life and prevent diseases.

Yangxing yanjing lu 饒性延命録 (Record on Nourishing Inner Nature and Extending Life, CT 838, Yunji qiqian 32, 24 pp.), is attributed to Tao Hongjing or Sun Simiao but most recently dated to the mid-Tang (Mugitani 1987). Some of its essential ideas may well go back to earlier periods. The text is divided into six sections (four of which appear in the Yunji qiqian):


According to the preface, the text was compiled on the basis of the Yangsheng Yaoji, from which the author excised what he deemed superfluous or redundant. Scholars disagree as to whether it rests solely on this precursor or also reflects later influences (Despeux 1989, 233; Stein 1999, 109).

Zhubing yuanhou lun 藥病源候論 (On the Origins and Symptoms of Medical Disorders, 50 j.), was compiled upon imperial orders by an
editorial committed under the guidance of Chao Yuanfang 巢元方, dat. 610. This is a work of unprecedented scope. For this first time, it presents a systematic treatise on the etiology and pathology of Chinese medicine. It distinguishes four major groups of diseases (inner, outer, women’s and children’s), sixty-seven lesser categories and 1,739 specific diseases (arranged according to different causes and symptoms; for a translation of ch. 10, see Rall 1962).

Each item discusses the cause of the disorder in question, its developmental process and major clinical symptoms. Following this, the text usually has a citation from a text called Yangsheng fang 養生方, which presents general rules on nourishing life, the prevention of certain diseases, hygienic measures, diets, sexual techniques and potential harm through emotions. This new classification of longevity techniques is a big step forward in their development (see Despeux 1989; Ding 1993; for translations, see Obringer 1997, Despeux and Obringer 1997).

The text introduces its instructions on longevity practices under the heading “Gymnastic Methods of the Yangsheng fang.” Many of these can be traced back to earlier texts, such as the Daoyin yangsheng jing 导引養生經 (Scripture of Gymnastics and Longevity, CT 818), which may date from the sixth century but has come down to us in a Song-dynasty edition (Despeux 1989, 230). Other early materials include the Daolin shesheng lun 道林攝生論 (Master Daolin’s Discourse on Protecting Life, CT 1427) and the Yangxing yanming lu. As Catherine Despeux has shown, it seems that on the whole the Yangsheng fang is largely identical with the Yangsheng yaoji, or at least a work based on it, whose ideas were also presented in other medieval works (1989, 236).

Qianjin fang 千金方 (Prescriptions Worth a Thousand Gold Pieces, 30 j.), is by Sun Simiao, dat. 652 (see Sivin 1968; Despeux 1987; Unschuld 1994). This, and the longer, revised version Qianjin yifang 千金要方, completed around 682, are among the most important sources on Chinese traditional therapeutics; they are still being used to train traditional physicians today. The Qianjin fang is a huge compendium of all medical knowledge of the period and the oldest that has survived in its entirety. It includes all areas of medicine, as well as ethical principles for physicians and general principles of diagnosis and therapy (see Unschuld 1975, 18-24). Other major topics include pharmacological therapy (chs. 2-25), dietetics (ch. 26; see Engelhardt and Hempen 1997 Engelhardt 2000), longevity techniques (ch. 27; partial trl. in Valussi 1996), pulse diagnosis (ch. 28), as well as acupuncture and moxibustion (chs. 29-30; trl. Despeux 1987).

Longevity techniques here form an integral part of the medical system; special emphasis is placed on preventive measures such as a good
and regular diet. In chapter 26, the author discusses the effects of different foodstuffs in some detail, contrasting them with the often harmful influences of various drugs. “The nature of drugs is hard and violent,” he says, “just like that of imperial soldiers. Since soldiers are so savage and impetuous, how could anybody dare to employ them recklessly?” (26.464; Unschuld 1986, 209). Under the heading 養性 (Nourishing Inner Nature), chapter 27 deals with the whole range of longevity techniques: general rules for a good life, gymnastics, massages, breathing techniques, dietetics, various prohibitions and sexual practices. The section on massages and gymnastics in particular shows considerable Indian influence. Catherine Despeux has shown how similar this chapter is to the older 道林攝生論, which probably dates from the fourth century. The same section also cites heavily from the 養生論 (1989, 231; Engelhardt 2000).

Fuqi jingyi lun 服氣精義論 (Discourse on the Essential Meaning of the Absorption of Qi, CT 830, Yunji qiqian 57; 9 sects), by Sima Chengzhen, dat. 730 (see Engelhardt 1987). The two editions of the text are complementary, together presenting the nine sections:


The work relies heavily on Shangqing sources together with major medical works such as the Huangdi neijing, and groups all the various longevity techniques around the central notion of absorbing the qi. The highly concrete instructions on specific exercises are supplemented by theoretical medical knowledge of the five orbs, the healing of diseases and the awareness of symptoms. In this integrated exercise system all techniques have to support each other, being arranged in different combinations to meet the needs of specific practitioners. It shows the degree of medical knowledge that was necessary in the early stages of religious attainment.

Ishimpō 醫心方 (Essential Medical Methods, 30 j.), by Tamba no Yasuyori 丹波康頼 (912-995), dat 984 (see Sakade 1989; Rosner 1989, 26; Hsia, Veith and Geertsma 1986). This is the oldest extant work on traditional Japanese medicine, of particular value since it cites passages from 204 different ancient sources, some Japanese and Korean, but most Chinese, imported from the Sui and Tang courts. Since many of these works were lost in China proper (such as the 養生論), the work is indispensable for the study of early Chinese medicine.

The Ishimpō continues the traditional Chinese system and closely follows the division of diseases presented in the Zhubing yuanhou lun and the presentation of causes, symptoms and cures found in the Qianjin fang.
The first twenty-five chapters present pharmacological therapies, acupuncture and moxibustion, focusing on the healing of various diseases; the last five chapters are dedicated to methods of long life. Thus chapter 26 presents facial treatments, magical methods and discusses abstention from grains. Chapter 27 describes many different daily regimens such as breathing techniques, mental cultivation, gymnastics, clothing and the arrangement of living quarters. Chapter 28 deals for the most part with sexual practices, again recouping a great deal of textual material otherwise lost (see Ishihara and Levi 1968; Wile 1992). The two last chapters treat diets and the way of healthful eating.

The longevity practices outlined in the Ishimpö cover the full range of traditional Chinese methods, with one exception: the taking of mineral drugs. As Sakade has pointed out, it seems that “the religious zeal associated with certain traditions of longevity in China is replaced here by a concern for the welfare of the patient, but ... not to the entire exclusion of all Daoist thought and practices” (1989, 9).

SONG AND BEYOND. After the Tang, writings on longevity practices and Daoist medical techniques proliferated and became much more specialized due to the general progress in economy, technology, and infrastructure. In medicine, several new schools and traditions developed, each with its own take on the longevity question. Later works tend to be more voluminous and highly technical, one medical specialist addressing another. Longevity techniques, on the other hand, spread widely in the population and, with new mass printing technology available, were increasingly described in popular treatises for the illumination of the masses. Typically these treatises summarize and advertise techniques already well established, so that little new is added to the catalog of efficacious practices. On the Daoist side, finally, longevity techniques and medical knowledge were integrated into the newly flourishing system of inner alchemy, which is highly complex and sophisticated and has its own extensive body of texts. For a description of these works, and the longevity techniques described in them, see the contribution “Inner Alchemy.”

WORLDVIEW

THE BODY. “In every time and place the interior of the living human body has been a work of the imagination, fashioned from social ideals as well as from physical data” (Sivin 1995, 12). Every culture has constructed its view of the body with a different combination of cognitive ingredients. While the classical European body was primarily built of visible and anatomical structures, organs, tissues and liquid humors, the
early Chinese body was thought to consist mainly of vaguely defined bones and flesh traversed by circulating vital forces. The main interest of the Chinese was not anatomical, but concerned the body’s system of functions in various schemata and projections that aligned the human body as a microcosm with the physical features of the world or universe as macrocosm. The intimate, dynamic relationship between the body and the universe, also described in early philosophical texts, is made clear in the *Huangdi neijing*:

In the year there are 365 days; human beings have 365 joints. On the earth there are high mountains; human beings have shoulders and knees. On the earth there are deep valleys; human beings have armpits and hollows in back of their knees. On the earth there are twelve cardinal watercourses; human beings have twelve cardinal circulation conduits. In the earth there are veins of water; human beings have defensive qi. On the earth there are wild grasses; human beings have their body hair. On the earth there are daylight and darkness; human beings have their times for lying down and getting up. (*Lingshu* 71.2; see Sivin 1995, 18).

Medical texts describe the body in detail, focusing particularly on its functions and its relationships to the macrocosm as the basis for diagnosis and therapy. The body, both in medicine and Daoism, was seen as a replica of the cosmos and its functions as the counterpart of the administration of the state (see Sivin 1995; Despeux 1996). In accordance with their concern for longevity and immortality, Daoists focused more strongly on the practical aspects of the body’s nurturing and refinement; they saw the body not only as an integrated network of flowing energies, but also as the residence of the gods and a “vessel of the Dao” (Kohn 1991). Their goal was to refine the body to a point where it overcame its ordinary limitations and turned into part of the Dao, encompassing the symbolic body of the entire universe.

The medical and Daoist concepts of the body can be described as complementary. Both outline bodily processes and express them in similar metaphors and in relation to the order of space and time (see Despeux 1996).

**Terms.** There are several terms that denote the body in its different aspects. First there is *shen* 亁, which always involves the personality in addition to the physical body and may refer, in some contexts, to the person in general and to the body as individual identity (see Kohn 1989, 197). The term also implies the idea of dynamic movement. The *Shiming* 解名 (Explanation of Names, dat. 2nd c.) defines *shen* as "something that can bend and stretch" (Despeux 1996, 88).

Unlike *shen*, *ti* 肢 refers to the concrete body or its structure, that is, the body as an organized pattern. It does not primarily focus on the exact number or definition of its separate parts; rather, the term indicates
that the entire body is an integrated system of inherently multiple aspects. 7i can also mean “embodiment” and may refer to an individual’s personification of something, for example, the Dao, thus indicating the final goal of religious Daoist cultivation.

Xing 形, next, means “shape” or “form” and denotes the physical, visible form of the body. A mainly material entity, this xing is often contrasted with qi, the invisible emanation of everything in constant unfolding. Thus xing refers to the visible body, its outline, but has no relevance in terms of a concrete, anatomical understanding of it. More important here is the notion of the bodily form as a sort of “vessel” or “residence” of the Dao.

The three terms, not clearly distinguished in the texts, have in common that they describe the body as an integrated system of functional correspondences. Mental, psychological and spiritual faculties, which in Western view determine the personality, in this system are merely another aspect of the integrated pattern of the body. In general the idea that “body” is a subset of “person” is characteristic of Chinese thought, where the body-mind dichotomy, so typical for Western thinking, has no place (see Despeux 1996, 88; Sivin 1995, 14; Engelhardt 1987, 8).

COMPONENTS OF THE BODY. The main components that determine the bodily form are qi 氣 (vital energy), xue 血 (blood), jing 精 (essence, structive potential), jinye 津液 (body fluids), shen 神 (spirit) and qing 情 (emotions, feelings). These vital forces or fluids circulate between the limbs, the head and a group of systems in the center of the body, the so-called zang 腦 (inner organs, orbs) that control the metabolic and other vital processes.

Qi is of central importance in the body because it is the foundation of all life and fills both the human body and the cosmos. Early associations of the word are diverse, but tend to cluster around images of mist, fog, dampness and cloud formations. The word also refers to the air we inhale and the breath we exhale, as well as to the general vitality within us. This multiplicity of meanings is unified by the underlying idea of a streaming, penetrating and expanding force that fills all. The importance of qi is already explained in the Zhuangzi:

The birth of a human being amounts to an accumulation of qi. When it has accumulated, birth takes place; when it has dissipated, death takes place. (ch. 22; Sivin 1987, 48).

This passage does not speak of the material substance of the body but refers strictly to the energies that make the vital functions possible. The physical vitality of a baby, therefore, is drawn from the qi that fills the cosmos before birth; at the moment of birth, it begins to dissipate. From
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this conception derives the idea of replenishing and maintaining the vital forces through longevity techniques and the avoidance of excesses and diseases, desires and emotions.

_Qi_ as the sum of the vital energies is partly inborn and partly absorbed from breath and food. Both, the prenatal or “before heaven” (xiantian 先天) and the postnatal or “after heaven” (houtian 後天) types must be nourished by various practices. The _Baopuzi_ says:

> Human beings live in _qi_, and _qi_ fills human beings. From heaven and earth to the myriad beings, all need _qi_ to live. Whoever can guide the _qi_ will nourish his body on the inside and protect himself against harmful influences on the outside. (5.96; see Ware 1966, 105)

Both the vital resources of the body’s internal order and the agents of disorder opposed to them are made of _qi_; they are dynamic agents of change. Orthopathic _qi_ (zhengqi 正氣) maintains and renewes the orderly changes that comprise the body’s regular physiological processes. Heteropathic _qi_ (xiegqi 邪氣) causes transgressions that violate this normal order; it is disorderly and dysfunctional.

In the medical context, these types of _qi_ are only two among many. Others specify the function and show what the _qi_ relates to or what it does. For instance, there is the division between constructive _qi_ (yingqi 营氣) and defensive _qi_ (weiqi 氣). The former is made of the pure part of inhaled air. It circulates of the conduit system and protects the inner sphere of the body. The latter is less pure and moves outside of the conduits, defending the body’s periphery (see Sivin 1987). Daoism subscribes basically to the same system, but in Daoist texts the various kinds of _qi_ are often personified. The defensive _qi_, for example, appears in the form of a troop of soldiers or generals who stand at the frontline, fighting off disease and other bad influences (Despeux 1996, 93).

**Conduits.** How, then, does _qi_ circulate and spread through the body? Basically it flows through the so-called conduits or meridians (jingmo 經脈) that pervade the entire body like a network of rivers and lakes. The _qi_ flows, in a cyclical rhythm, from the body’s center to the extremities (hands and feet) and back, passing through twelve major conduits associated with the yin and yang orbs (see Kaptchuk 1983).

These conduits have formed the main organizational framework of Chinese medicine and traditional concepts of the body since the first century B.C.E. (see Lingshu 10). They run for the most part just below the skin; those related to yin orbs are on the inside of the extremities, while those connected to yang orbs are on their outside. In addition, each conduit has a number of clearly defined places, often dips in their course, where they are accessible from the outside. These, the so-called acupuncture points or foramina (kongxue 孔穴; qixue 氣穴), are employed
to influence the flow of qi with the help of needles, moxa or massages. They are “caverns” of qi that allow both its entry and exit; they are important in the body’s relationship with the greater universe. Accordingly, some of these points are, in certain Daoist texts, defined as the residences of the gods.

**Orbs.** The main conduits of qi are associated with and named after twelve vaguely defined orbs (zangfu 脏腑; organs or visceral systems of function) located in the deep interior of the body. There are six yin and six yang orbs, among which five of the yin orbs (of the liver, heart, spleen, lungs and kidneys) are of central importance. Exactly what their physical correlates are, or precisely where they are located, was not a major concern for Chinese physicians. According to medical doctrine, the orbs are less anatomical features than offices in the body’s administration. In Daoism, they often appear as residences of the gods who, like the officials in medical discourse, are responsible for a specific body function. To give an example:

The cardiac [heart] orb is the seat of the ruler, from whom issues the clear orientation of spirit. The pulmonary [lung] orb is the seat of the trusted minister, from whom issues the orderly rhythm. The liver orb is the seat of the chief general, from whom issues all planning and strategy. The felleal [gall bladder] orb is the seat of the central rectitude, from whom issues all firm decision-making. The pericardial orb is the seat of the lesser messengers, from whom issues all desires and joys. And the lienal [spleen] and stomach orbs are the seat of intermediate storage, from whom issue the five tastes. (Suwen 8.1; see Porkert 1988)

Like officials in the state administration, the orbs had to take care of the harmonious function of all the different aspects of the body. As the text says:

These twelve officers must never fail to support each other. If the ruler is wise, the subjects live in peace; if one nourishes one’s life in this way, one can attain long life and avoid all harm. (Suwen 8.2)

**Jing.** “As the qi of a person forms his root, so the jing forms his trunk,” Heshang gong explains in his commentary to the Daode jing (ch. 59). Originally the term jing 精 meant “to sort rice,” “to select,” “to refine,” from which derived the meaning “pure part” or “essence.” As is already made clear in the Xianger 思爾 commentary to the Daode jing, this “essence” represents “another aspect of the qi, one that has separated from the Dao” (ch. 21) and, after entering the human body, forms the person’s “germ of life” or structive potential.

Thus jing is the indeterminate aspect of qi; it is qi in transition from one determinate form to another (Sivin 1987, 164). One the one hand, it appears as the male or female reproductive essence thus representing the
power at the origin of life that carries vitality from parent to offspring; on
the other, it is the essence that the body takes from food before it is
assimilated to the individual's vital processes, thus standing for the basis
of physical growth and development (Sivin 1987, 164-65). As the most
important basis of both prenatal and postnatal vitalities, jing must be
carefully collected and preserved. A deficiency will cause weakness and
disease; a complete exhaustion leads to death.

jing is particularly harmed by uncontrolled, excessive sexual activity,
but this does not mean that practitioners of longevity techniques should
embrace celibacy. Rather, they are encouraged to engage in sexual
techniques whose aim is to revert the flow of the jing from down and out
to up and in, thus using it to "nourish the brain" (huanjing bunao 還精補腦). Sexual hygiene thus is among the most efficacious ways to
strengthen the jing. At the same time, its proper execution requires a
strict control and disciplined activation of the sexual desires (see Kohn
1993a, 153; Wile 1992). Most commonly undertaken in conjunction with
a partner, these sexual practices for the preservation of jing are
internalized in inner alchemy, and different models are established for
men and women.

Shen. This part of the body's energies is often translated as "spirit."
It describes the psychological and divine aspects of human nature, which
are essential for the successful attainment of long life and immortality.
The body, especially in Daoism, is seen as the residence or vessel of the
spirit. Thus the Huainanzi says:

The bodily form [xing] is the residence of life; the qi fills this life while the
shen controls it. If either of them loses their proper position, they will all
come to harm. (ch. 1)

Shen 神 therefore can be described as an energetic constellation that
ranks above qi; it represents the divine, unfathomable aspect of the
person. In Daoist texts, it is often contrasted with gui 鬼 (demons), which
are elements associated with darkness, earth and yin, psychological
factors that pull people deeper into illusion and worldliness. The two are
also represented by a group of three yang (hun 灵) and seven yin souls (po
魄), represented as stout, upright officials and crude, half-animal
creatures (see Kohn 1997).

The tradition of longevity techniques places great emphasis on
"nourishing the spirit" (yangshen). Already the Zhuangzi says:

To be pure and unadulterated, at rest, one and unmoving, relaxed and
without intentional action [wuwei], just going along with the course of
nature—this is the way of nourishing the spirit. (Stein 1999, 131; see also
Watson 1968, 167)
It is a basic prerequisite for all successful practice to find peace and purity of spirit by limiting all conscious wishes, desires and outward striving. Excessive emotions are considered a major factor in the origin of diseases, each harming a particular orb or visceral system of qi. Thus too much anger will harm the liver orb and excessive joy taxes the heart orb. This harm is done through unwarranted activities of the qi. As the Suwen says:

Anger causes an excessive rising of the qi, while joy disperses it too much. Sadness leads to squandering of qi, and fear causes it to sink down too far. (ch. 39)

HEALTH. The practice of longevity techniques means mainly to preserve vitality and fend off potentially harmful influences. In this it is close to the basic conditions of health in medicine. Chinese physicians use terms such as “normal,” “harmonious” and “relaxed” to describe the healthy condition of the body and its functional systems. For instance, the Lingshu uses the word pingren 平人 to indicate “a person whose body functions normally” (Sivin 1987, 96). Nonetheless, this state of “normal health” seems to be rather volatile and has to be balanced and cultivated at all times. The surface of the body must be strong in order to keep the vital substances in and the pathological factors out; at the same time, it must also be open to allow vital energies to be admitted and properly directed and stored in the inner orbs and flow throughout the body in an orderly pattern. For this reason, all functions of the body have to be constantly regulated and adapted to the spatio-temporal movements of nature. Inseparable from this process, moreover, is the maintainance of a balance in the mental and emotional spheres.

The pursuit of health and self-cultivation has to begin with

using the fresh and casting out the old, so that there is a free flow in the interstices of the flesh (couli 脺理). The vitalities are renewed daily, heteropathic qi is expelled and a full span of life is attained. (Lushi chunqiu 3.5b; Sivin 1987, 49)

Thus, health and longevity are the results of daily renewal. In all cases, constant vigilance and regular maintenance are necessary. Physicians, then, focus mainly on preserving or restoring this balanced state of health, while Daoists use it as a first step toward transforming body and spirit toward the purity of the Dao.
GYMNASTICS (*dao* 31, lit. "guiding and pulling") appear first in a passage of the *Zhuangzi*, where they are explained as a method "to guide the qi to make it harmonious and to stretch [pull] the body to make it supple" (ch. 15; Engelhardt 1987, 125). They are later developed in medical and Daoist texts (see Despeux 1989), and include physical exercises and self-massages that regulate the flow of qi in the conduits while expelling pathogenic factors. In conjunction with breathing exercises, they serve to cure diseases and prolong life.

Gymnastics are also prominent in medical manuscripts, notably the *Yinshu* and the *Dao* tu. While the *Zhuangzi* still treats them as a means of "nourishing the physical form," these texts emphasize their therapeutic efficacy and are very specific in their instructions. For example, a *Yinshu* section on curing stiff shoulders says:

> If the pain is located in the upper part [of the shoulder], one should rotate it carefully 300 times. Should it be found more toward the back, then one should pull the shoulder to the front 300 times. (Wenwu 1990, 85; see also Engelhardt 1998a)

The instructions distinguish carefully according to the location of the problem and have detailed specific exercises for all sorts of different cases. Most generally, the exercises treat problems of the senses and the outer functions of the body, focusing on pain relief and the increase in overall mobility.

**BREATHING EXERCISES** (*dag* naxin 吐固呬新, lit. "expelling the old and taking in the new"). Ways of controlling and regulating the breath also appear first in the *Zhuangzi*. They serve to make people inhale refined, vital qi while exhaling its impure, gross counterpart. One specific variant is the method of exhaling on special sounds like *xu* 休, *hu* 休 or *chui* 吹 (already described in the *Yinshu*). The effect of the various breathing methods is to control excessive emotions and harmful outer influences such as "moisture" and "heat" (Engelhardt 1998a, 15). To the present day, modern Qigong has a category of breathing techniques summarized under the term *tana gong* 吐呬功.

Breathing methods and the "guiding of qi" (*xing* qi 行氣) are first mentioned in this connection in the late Warring States period, when an inscription describes an initial downward movement of qi, followed by its transformation and return upwards. This practice, later called *xiao* zhou tian 小周天 (microcosmic orbit), has counterparts in the Mawangdui medical manuscripts (Harper 1998, 126).

**ABSTENTION FROM GRAINS** (*que* 麦, lit. "eliminating grains," *bigu* 斎穀, lit. "avoiding grains"). Already the *Zhuangzi* notes that
immortals “do not eat the five grains but live on the wind and the dew” (ch. 1). A description of this dietary technique as one part of a long-life program appears in the Mawangdui manuscript Quegu shigui, which explains how to eliminate grains and ordinary foodstuffs from the diet and replace them with medicinal herbs and qi inhaled with special breathing exercises. The underlying idea is first clarified in the Huainanzi, which says: “Those who eat qi achieve spirit illumination and are long-lived; those who eat grain have quick minds and are short-lived” (ch. 4; see Harper 1998, 131). Later, in religious Daoism, abstention from grain was also related to purging the three corpse-worms (sanshi) from inside the body—a necessary first step towards undertaking a Daoist program of cultivation (Maspero 1981, 333-35; Kohn 1997; Eskildsen 1998).

TALISMAN WATER (fushui 符水). Another way of replacing ordinary food with more refined and subtle substances was the absorption of talisman water, the ashes of a talisman dissolved in water. First described in the Mawangdui text Wushier bingfang 五十二病方 (Recipes for Fifty-Two Ailments), it was believed efficacious as a remedy for the effect of the infamous Gu poison (Harper 1998, 301). Later, among the Celestial Masters, talisman water became a major means of the healing of diseases, commonly associated with the recitation of spells and other ritual activities. Over the centuries it was used to clean the eyes, mouth and ears and has played a role in the ritual purification that preceded longevity exercises. It was also applied against illness and to the present day plays an important role in Daoist ritual (Engelhardt 1987, 141-146).

SEXUAL PRACTICES (fangzhong 房中, lit. “bed chamber”). This first appears in the bibliographic chapter of the Hanshu (ch.30), denoting a category of medical literature referring to sexual techniques. The editors comment: “Those who abandon themselves [to sexual pleasure] pay no heed [to the precepts in the manuals], thus they fall ill and harm their lives” (Wile 1992, 16). Sexual cultivation already played an important role in the discovered manuscripts from the third century B.C.E. and is denoted by different terms, such as jinnei 近內 (approaching the inner [chamber];” Harper 1998, 339) and rugong 入宮 (entering the palace; Harper 1998, 110). Later the term fangzhong shu 房中術 (arts of the bed chamber) became the general appellation of all forms of sexual hygiene and techniques.

CLAPPING THE TEETH (kouchi 叩齒). The characteristic connection of health effects and religious ideas is also clear in the notion of clapping the teeth. The Yinshu requires this as a daily hygiene, claiming that it prevents tooth decay (Harper 1998, 110). In religious Daoism of the third and fourth centuries, it appears as an effective way of calling upon the gods and as a method of protection against demonic qi,
without, however, ignoring the practical, preventive effect of
strengthening the teeth (Stein 1999, 139).

CLENCHING THE FISTS (wogu 握固). This indicates an
accompanying technique, often undertaken after or in between the
various other practices of long life or in conjunction with scriptural
recitation. The term appears first in the Daode jing, which says: “[The
infant] has flexible bones and soft muscles; he clenches his hands into
fists” (ch. 55). As already emphasized in the Zhuangzi, the practitioner
uses this method to imitate the behavior of an infant and closes his hands
to prevent the expulsion of inner qi. By doing so, he can control the vital
powers he had at birth and has since lost. The closing also serves to keep
harmful influences at bay (ch. 23; see Engelhardt 1987, 291).

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CHAPTER FIVE

IMMORTALITY AND TRANSCENDENCE

Benjamin Penny

DESCRIPTION

Texts from the Eastern Zhou onward have maintained that human life can be prolonged beyond normal limits and that the body can be transcended. These notions, which may have grown out of the general human desire for longevity, have resonated in Chinese culture throughout its history. They preceded the formation of anything recognizably Daoist and have carried currency beyond Daoism: in medical theory and practice, in the performing arts, in popular narratives, in the martial arts and in Hong Kong cinema. Indeed, the language and lore of immortality have so thoroughly pervaded the common stock of Chinese ideas that they are no longer thought of as belonging specifically to Daoism, or even to religion in general.

However, these ideas were refined, discussed and written about most explicitly and most often in the context of Daoism. Becoming an immortal or transcendent has always been the goal of the Daoist adept. This change of state, this transcendence, has been understood as being equivalent to attaining the Dao by becoming one with it. As history went on, ideas concerning transcendence changed and immortality has been pursued in many different ways: by means of drug therapies, dietary restrictions, sexual regimens, breathing practices, meditations, talismans and gymnastic practices. People have attained immortality on mountain tops, in villages and in the capital. Peasants, beggars, merchants, officials, and empresses have become immortals. Transcendence has been a destiny, a reward for good deeds or for perspicacity, as well as a stroke of luck—all documented in an extensive corpus of biographies of immortals.

These texts (xianzhuan 仙傳) display considerable variation, but they also share the function of distributing knowledge of immortality and demonstrating its reality in concrete examples, and they were often circulated among the literate public. Biographical material is also found in other kinds of texts—ritual, topographical, revelatory—which in some cases had a circulation restricted to a religiously qualified audience and often present a different perspective on the subject. In any case, biographies of
immortals do not provide information on methods but instead focus on commemorating immortals and demonstrating their exemplary status.

**History**

**EARLY REFERENCES.** Certain terms, such as *changsheng* (prolonged life) and *wusi* 無死 or *busi* 不死 (no death), first appear in the Eastern Zhou. They refer to an extended longevity on earth. In the Warring States period phrases like *chengxian* 成仙 (become an immortal) are found, which imply a change in one's state of being (Yü 1964, 87-93). The distinction between longevity and immortality is fundamental and has remained so in relevant discussions over the dynasties. Sometimes they are presented as different options, sometimes longevity is the first stage before the final goal of immortality; then again longevity is described as attainable while immortality is marked unreasonable and hocus-pocus.

**Zhuangzi** 庄子. The first literary description of an immortal appears in the first chapter of the *Zhuangzi*:

> In the mountains of far-off Ku-yi there lives a daemonic [shen 神; spirit] man, whose skin and flesh are like ice and snow, who is gentle as a virgin. He does not eat the five grains but sucks in the wind and drinks the dew; he rides the vapour of the clouds, yokes flying dragons to his chariot, and roams beyond the four seas. When the daemonic in him concentrates it keeps creatures free from plagues and makes the grain ripen every year. (Graham 1986, 46; on the translation “daemonic,” see Graham 1986, 35n.72)

Another description comes from the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*:

> The utmost man is daemonic. When the wide woodlands blaze they cannot sear him, when the Yellow River and the Han freeze they cannot chill him, when swift thunderbolts smash the mountains and whirlwinds shake the seas they cannot startle him. A man that yokes the clouds to his chariot, rides the sun and moon and roams beyond the four seas; death and life alter nothing in himself, still less the principles of benefit and harm. (Graham 1986, 58)

These passages exemplify the classic image of the immortal: a being with a purified body, who uses a special diet without grains and has the ability to fly, to roam afar and to heal. While later literature names such beings *xianren* 仙人 or *shenxian* 神仙 (immortals), the *Zhuangzi* uses *shenren* 神人 (spirit man) or *zhiren* 至人 (utmost man). It appears that the *Zhuangzi* was written when the idea of immortals had gained currency, but before the terminology had stabilized. In addition, neither passage occurs as part of a discussion of immortality; they are anecdotes used to make points in arguments about other things. Anecdotes about immortals occur in the *Zhuangzi*, but there are no records of their lives, details of their quest or practices.
Medical texts. Recently excavated texts from Warring States tombs also discuss aspects of immortality, focusing on various medical practices and longevity techniques. They are about yangsheng 養生 (nurturing life) and point to a "medical tradition of macrobiotic hygiene that had an active following among the elite by the late Warring States. The relation of this long-life hygiene to the ideas expressed in the Zhuangzi and Laozi, as well as to the beliefs and practices of the xian cult (with its goal of transforming the body to achieve immortality) requires investigation" (Harper 1995, 381). Such materials include the medical exercise manuscript Tushu 引書 (Pulling Book), the illustrated Daoxin tu 道引圖 (Gymnastics Chart; see Despeux 1989), the Wushier bingfang 五十二病方 (Fifty-two Medical Recipes; see Harper 1982) and others (see Harper 1997). In many ways they link the search for long life in a medico-religious context with the ideas of the philosophers, suggesting a more integrated view of the early Daoist tradition.

THE IMMORTALITY CULT. The Shi ji 史記 (Records of the Historian) contains the first details of what may be called an immortality cult (Ofuchi 1991), but it focuses largely on emperors searching for the secrets of life. Two emperors stand out: the First Emperor of the Qin (r. 221-210 B.C.E.) and Emperor Wu of the Han (r. 141-87 B.C.E.). They both centered their immortality searches in the ancient states of Qi and Yan (modern Shandong coastal Hebei and Liaoning), an area not only blessed with large numbers of magical practitioners but also geographically closest to the paradise islands of Penglai 蓬萊, thought to lie off the northeast coast. These isles, a group of five, were believed to rest on the backs of giant turtles, covered by wondrous vegetation and populated by immortal people and animals (see Smith 1990). The First Emperor, like some kings of the earlier Warring States and Emperor Wu later, sponsored voyages to them. He seems also to have been attracted by the far west as a numinous goal, and later sources firmly place him with Xiwangmu 西王母 (Queen Mother of the West) who lived on Mount Kunlun 庫桑 (see Smith 1992; Sôfukawa 1981). Emperor Wu's performance of the Feng and Shan 封禪 sacrifices was also an attempt to gain immortality (see Fukunaga 1954).

Both emperors associated with a group of people skilled in all sorts of unorthodox matters, "doctors, diviners and magicians" (DeWoskin 1983), called fangshi 方士 (though they never used the term to describe themselves). Some of them, like Li Shaojun 李少君 and Dongfang Shuo 東方朔, have biographies in the earliest collections Liexian zhuan 和 Shenzuan zhuan (see below). They are also mentioned in Ge Hong's Baopuzi 抱朴子 (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185) and some later texts, indicating that they became Daoist immortals ex post facto. The official histories regard them critically as charlatans or con-artists who deluded emperors with their wild tales and unsubstantiated
promises. However, they do include details of their practices, confirming that their activities were one of the important streams that fed into later Daoism (DeWoskin 1983; Kominami 1992).

Criticism of Emperor Wu’s immortality-related activities is found in Wang Chong’s 王充 (27-97) Lunheng 论衡 (Discussions Weighed in the Balance). For Wang, the fangshi were simply long-lived people who passed themselves off as immortals: the kind of immortality described in hagiographic collections was impossible (Forke 1962; Ofuchi 1991). All living things must die, says Wang—just as ice must melt, so the qi that accumulates to become man must disperse. A similar viewpoint is adopted by the Late Han Confucian moralist Xun Yue 荀悦 (148-209) in his Shenqian 申鑑 (Extended Reflections). Like Wang, he denies the possibility of immortality in the sense that the body can be transformed and transcended, while accepting that long life is possible (Chen 1980).

Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232), the son of Cao Cao 曹操, similarly produced an essay denying the existence of immortals. He insists that each person has a given span of life, some longer, some shorter, just as some people are strong and others weak. Whether one lives out one’s entire span or only a portion depends on how one lives. He denies anyone’s claim to immortality, suggesting that such persons were in fact charlatans and purveyors of falsity. A later essay of his, preserved in the Baopuzi (and possibly spurious), reveals a more tolerant attitude toward the subject, in that he accepts that there are certain things in the world that is not possible to understand (Holzman 1998). Another early thinker, Ji Kang 稽康 (223-262), has a slightly more positive position. In his popular Yangsheng lun 養生論 (On Nourishing Life; see Holzman 1957) he maintains that immortality exists but is not generally attainable. Rather, it is fated at birth through the allocation of prenatal qi. Once equipped with qi, one still has to exert effort and undertake practices. Those not so fated can still extend their lives significantly by following the same immortality methods (Henricks 1976).

EARLY MEDIEVAL DOCUMENTS. Tomb texts. A few sources survive from the Later Han to elucidate religious ideas and practices at the popular level; most important among these are texts found in tombs. These tomb documents do not speak of the kind of immortality usually characterized as Daoist (see Seidel 1987a; Nickerson 1996), but are contracts that ensure the proper rights of the deceased to his grave and his safe passage to the underworld. The cultivation of life envisioned in them is a kind of “post-mortem immortality” (Seidel 1987b, 227), achieved through ritual and the preservation of the body (see Pokora 1985). This is unlike classical immortality or even shijie 戶解 (corpse-liberation or deliverance from the corpse), which was "one more technique to bypass death" (Seidel 1987, 232) requiring the adept to die an apparent death and
leave a stick or sword behind instead of his body. Still, the contracts reveal that ideas of permanence beyond the grave circulated among wider segments of the populace even in these early times.

In addition to tomb contracts, graves also contained bronze mirrors with inscriptions describing immortals and decorative representations of flying, feathered figures. Inscriptions and images are of nameless beings and the mirrors, like depictions of Xi wang mu and her companion Dongwang gong 東王公 (Lord King of the East), appear to be mainly markers of cosmic directions placed in the grave to give its inhabitant the proper orientation (Loewe 1979; Kominami 1997). Images of nameless immortals also appear in relief on brick and stone work and on painted surfaces in the Eastern Han and later dynasties (see Spiro 1990).

New insights into the history of immortality are being gained by the use of epigraphic sources. Three recent studies related to the cults of figures in the history of immortality indicate the potential of this kind of research, namely Holzman’s study of the “Wang Ziqiao Stele” 王子喬碑 of 165 C.E. (1991) and Schipper’s studies of the “Tang Gongfang Stele 唐公防碑” (1991) and the “Fei Zhi Stele 赤致碑” of 169 C.E. (1997).

The Taipingjing 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace), parts of which may date from the second century, contains many standard features of later immortality theory (Kaltenmark 1979), such as instructions on special diets, breathing techniques, moral behavior and drug therapy. It clearly distinguishes between longevity and immortality and establishes a series of nine graduated categories, with immortals ranking only fourth. Highest are divine ones or spirit beings who are without shape yet endowed with qi. Next come great divine ones, followed by perfected, immortals, personages of the Great Dao, sages, immortals the capable, people in general and slaves (see Kaltenmark 1979, 31).

A comparatively coherent and remarkably detailed picture of fourth-century immortality theory emerges from the Baopuzi on specific practices and the Shenxian zhuan on biographies, both attributed to Ge Hong (283-343). Ge was writing in the south at a time when refugees from the north were flooding into his region, and his work shows influences both from the indigenous religion of the state of Wu and from areas to its north and west. Immortals here are solidly human, reflecting the view that immortality can be attained through practice. The Baopuzi contains long lists of drugs and recipes and details rituals that are to be undertaken, stressing methodology over the belief. Its approach is thus instrumentalist rather than spiritual (Murakami 1962; Hu 1989; Ofuchi 1991). However, it also presents a hierarchy of states of transcendence, explicitly recognizing immortals of three classes: heavenly, earth-bound and corpse-liberated. The realm of the heavenly immortals is named Taiqing 太清 (Great Clarity or Purity). Earth-bound immortals like Master Whitestone 白石公 (Baishi...
gong) enjoy extended longevity on earth, have magical powers and can ascend at will. Corpse-liberated ones have lesser powers and must undergo a fake death to ascend.

The *Baopuzi* also categorizes medicines into various grades according to their efficacy, and devotes a chapter to cataloging the contents of the Daoist library of Ge’s master Zheng Yin 鄭隱 (ch. 19) in which many titles name immortals or refer to immortal theory and practice. The *Baopuzi* thus evinces a tendency to systematize that is not apparent in the *Shenxian zhuan*, possibly because the latter was compiled from several different sources. Its biographies mention a variety of methods, powers and prerequisites, indicating that there was no single model of immortality in Ge Hong’s time, but rather a variety of different ideas and practices (see Lai 1998).

**Shangqing.** Shortly after Ge Hong, and from the same region and milieu, Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–?), Xu Mi 許謐 (303-373), and Xu Hui 許謐 (341-c.370) began to receive revelations that ushered in the new Daoist dispensation known as Shangqing. The name Shangqing, “Highest Clarity” or “Supreme Purity,” derived from the name of the heaven of the beings responsible for the revelations. The beings, known as *zhen* or *zhenren* 真人 (perfected) revealed themselves to be of a higher state and from a higher realm than had previously been known. Tao Hongjing 陶弘景, the editor of the Shangqing manuscripts, described the various heavens in his *Dengzhen yinque* 盧真隱缺 (Secret Instructions on the Ascent to the Perfected, CT 421). The following relies on Strickmann’s summary (1979, 180):

1. Jade Clarity (*yuqing* 玉清) dwelling-place of eternal spirits who have never manifested themselves on earth.
2. Supreme Clarity (*shangqing* 上清) and
3. the Grand Ultimate (*taiji* 太極), both in the north, containing the palaces of the perfected (*zhen*).
4. Great Clarity (*laiqing* 太清), in the east, and
5. the Nine Mansions (*jiugong* 九宮) in the west over Mount Kunlun, both staffed by immortals (*xian*).
6. The Cavern Heavens (*tian* 洞天) beneath the earth, under the rule of the celestial-perfected, but peopled by terrestrial immortals and postulants for perfection (see also Miura 1983).
7. Fengdu 鄲都, or Luofeng shan 羅酆山, also known as the Six Heavens 六天, Taiyin 太陰, or the Citadel of Night 夜城. An island in the far north, administrative headquarters of the unhallowed dead. It contains the dreaded Three Offices (*sanguan* 三官), the inquisition of the shades. Fengdu’s authority extends over the numerous other abodes of the dead beneath mountains and rivers in the Central Kingdom itself, all of which are also included on this seventh level.

The perfected in the Shangqing heaven are superior to immortals of the Taiqing heaven, which was the limit of Ge Hong’s knowledge. Nonetheless,
the perfected were also once human, and the Shangqing corpus contained six biographies of them. Only two survive: the *Peijun zhuàn* 裴君傳 (*Yunjqi qiqian* 105) and the *Wei furun zhuàn* 威夫人傳 (*Taiqing guang ji*). Both "are simply scriptures in which biographical information figures somewhat more prominently than technical matters" (Bokenkamp 1986, 144). The presence of these exalted beings and multiple heavens does not mean that the Shangqing idea of immortality struck out upon a completely new path. Its adepts were just as interested in the manufacture of elixirs as Ge Hong had been but were more ambitious in the goals they set for themselves. Indeed, many subjects of earlier biographies in Shangqing appear as highly spiritualized beings who are revealed by the perfected as office-holders in the heavenly hierarchy.

**Lingbao.** In the 390s, Ge Chaofu 蔑巢甫, Ge Hong’s grand-nephew, set about composing the scriptures that formed the core texts of the Lingbao school. These scriptures attempted "to fashion a compelling fusion of the most sublime religious knowledge of his day—the Taiqing tradition of meditative alchemy, the Shangqing tradition of personal apotheosis ... and the strains of Mahāyāna Buddhism currently popular in Jiangnan” (Bokenkamp 1990, 121). On the subject of immortality, the influence of Mahāyāna Buddhism is most strongly felt in the Daoist adaptation of the complex of ideas surrounding the doctrine of stages in the development towards Buddhahood. Lingbao doctrine, as other Daoist schools, maintained that aspirants could refine themselves step by step to reach perfection. As a new point it added Buddhist models to explain the immortal’s progress, naming the stages and attributes in adaptation of Buddhist nomenclature and linking each level with a cyclic progression of rebirth.

**LATER DEVELOPMENTS.** The *Tang* did not see important changes in the theory of immortality, but the social position of Daoism, its relation to the state and its importance in Chinese culture and literature, was raised (see Kirkland 1986; Barrett 1996). As a result, immortals in the Tang are no longer marginal figures but occupy center stage. The best source of the period is the *Xuxian zhuàn* (see below), which differs significantly from the two earlier collections.

The *Liexian zhuàn* contains many biographies of sage kings and heroes of the golden age and their associates. Its immortals held court offices either as resident wonder-workers or in more conventional positions. This text also addresses a number of herb sellers and fishermen, but they are relatively few. In the *Shenxian zhuàn*, by contrast, immortals and emperors usually meet by accident on the side of a road, and aristocrats hardly appear at all. Officialdom is only mentioned when the immortal either rejects the offer of a position or resigns from one on the grounds that it will inhibit his quest.
The immortal in the *Shenxian zhuan* is typically located on the fringes of society. He may sell drugs in the market by day and disappear into the mountains alone at night, he may set himself up in a cave and reject all company, or he may act the madman, going about naked and hairy, doing jobs everyone else rejects. Such immortals are, however, rarely anything but selfless in serving the community and their rejection of involvement is typically founded as much on the failings of society and government as on the desire to be alone to seek immortality.

The *Xuxian zhuan* is different from both collections in that it includes figures who are, or associate with, relatively well-known people in Tang history, such as Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (see Sivin 1968; Engelhardt 1989), one of the fathers of Chinese medicine. Zhang Zhihe 張志和, for example, a friend of the famous calligrapher Yan Zhenqing 颜真卿, receives a biography, as does Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎, court Daoist extraordinaire. These are people at the heart of society, not outside it. Another new feature appears in that these characters are often associated with an organized religious structure. Immortals like these often travel to sacred mountains on a religious tour, stay at large temples, are linked with established figures of the tradition and address audiences that can be reached through a religious network. In other words, they operate within a society, in this case an organized Daoist society, but a Daoist society that is integrated with society at large.

"For Daoism, the Tang was a period of consolidation and integration... The Tang Daoists in this respect were simply continuing the work begun during the fifth century, but they went about it much more methodically and systematically" (Robinet 1997, 190). During this period we see the first urge to systemize hagiography, most notably expressed in the works of Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933). His *Yongchengji xianjixi* (Record of the Assembled Immortals of the Heavenly Walled City, CT 783) stands as a monument to the desire to catalogue and classify immortals (Verellen 1989). Other texts by Du have been lost—for instance, his *Xianzhuan shiyi* 仙傳拾遺 (Supplementary Biographies of Immortals) originally in 40 j., and the *Wangshi shenxian zhuan* 王氏神仙傳 (Biographies of Immortals of the Wang Family) in 5 j.—but it is likely that their contents are actually found, unacknowledged, in later sources. In addition to formally religious works, the institutionalized power of Daoism in the Tang also shows itself in literary works, which are replete with Daoist tropes and metaphors (see Schafer 1977; 1983; 1985; Cahill 1993).

With the *Song dynasty* also came imperial sponsorship of Daoism, and with imperial sponsorship came text production. For hagiography, this meant the compilation of more and larger systematizing works both of citations like the *Sandong qunxian lu* and of complete biographies like *Lishi*
zhenxian tidaotongjian (see below). These two works attempt comprehensive coverage of the immortals of the past. In the latter case, individual biographies—some of them a whole chapter in length—appear to include all traditions up to the point of compilation. To take one example, the biography of Zhang Daoling 张道陵 in Lishi tongjian is rather verbose with an inclination to provide lavish detail. It is often written in parallel four-word phrases in contrast to the earlier records. It contains most, if not all, of the anecdotes and episodes from Zhang's life as recorded in earlier biographies and has an anonymous interlinear commentary (mostly concerned with identifying places mentioned in the main text) that appears to be based on Du Guangting's works. In general, the Lishi tongjian appears to be a biographical collection that is keen to organize previous traditions and to rewrite them into what may be called acceptable Song style.

Imperial sponsorship of secular works of the period also showed the influence of Daoism: the Taiping guang ji and Taiping yulan both give prominence to Daoist matters, and the Taiping guang ji in particular is an important source for biographies of immortals (esp. chs. 1-55; 56-70 [nuxian 女仙]). With the advent of new Daoist schools in the Song came a need to commemorate their founders and lineages. Thus the Quanzhen (Complete Perfection) school produced several collections of biographies of their patriarchs, their founder and his followers that are preserved in the Daoist canon (Boltz 1987, 64-68). Associated with this material are also extra-canonical works in novel form, used to popularize the foundational figures of Quanzhen (Boltz 1987, 279-80; Endres 1985; Wong 1990). There are also hagiographic texts associated with the Qingwei (Pure Tenuity) and Jingming (Clear Brightness) traditions (Boltz 1987, 68-78). These new religious developments all claimed antecedents in both historical time and on a cosmic scale, and their hagiographical collections functioned to document a lineage of authority or practice. In a similar way, although this was not a new development, the Celestial Masters’ lineage produced records of their forebears—the earliest surviving of these being the Han Tianshi shijia 漢天師世家 (Genealogy of the Celestial Masters since the Han, CT 1463)—through the lineage’s contemporary representatives.

As noted earlier, the history of immortality ideas and the lives of immortals is dependent on texts, so that our discussion is limited by a dearth of surviving documents. Extant texts do not provide a complete picture of how ideas of established religious circles interacted with those from more popular or ephemeral sources. As we get closer to the present, more texts survive and so it becomes possible to examine the lives and careers of immortals in more nuanced ways. Three important cases of individual figures will conclude this part of the chapter.

Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 stands at the head of the best known group of immortals: the Eight Immortals 八仙, each of whom has particular
iconographic attributes (see Eberhard 1986). Lü is depicted as a scholar with a fly-whisk and a demon-slaying sword. Zhongli Quan 鍾離權 (a.k.a. Han Zhongli) often shows a bare stomach and carries a fan that resurrects the dead. He discovered the elixir in the Han and during the Tang brought Lü Dongbin to immortality. Li Tieguai 李鐵拐 (Ironstaff Li) has a crippled leg, an iron crutch and a gourd from which a bat flies. He adopted the body of a beggar after his disciples, taking him for dead, burnt his original body while his spirit was off wandering. Cao Guoqiu 曹國舅 is dressed as an official and carries the insignia of office. He Xiangu 何仙姑—a young woman—carries a ladle or a lotus flower and was seduced by Lü Dongbin. Han Xiangzi 謝湘子, supposedly the nephew of the Tang Confucian Han Yu 謝愈, carries a flute. Zhang Guolao 張果老 is old, rides a donkey (sometimes backwards) which, it is said, he folds up like paper when he has reached his destination. He also carries a tubular drum. Following instructions in a dream, he met Li Tieguai and received a pill that conferred immortality to him. Finally, Lan Caihe 藍采和 (who may be depicted as male or female) carries a basket of fruit or flowers and sometimes a flute (see Yetts 1916; 1922; Yang 1958; Lai 1972).

The Eight Immortals do not appear as a group until the Yuan (although the number eight is consistent for numerological reasons) and it is in dramatic rather than religious texts that this tradition appears (Yang 1958). In these plays Lü appears as the hero, characteristically transforming treespirits and scholars into immortals. During the Yuan and early Ming the membership of the eight is not stable. The escapades of the group remained a popular topic in drama and prose (see Dongyou ji 東遊記 [Journey to the East]) and has pervaded both folklore and visual representations, including postcards, comic books and movies.

Patriarch Lü (Lüzu 呂祖), as Lü Dongbin is also known, is traditionally dated to the second half of the Tang, though the earliest records of him are from the early Song. Lü’s accession to immortality is told in the famous story of the “Yellow Millet Dream” in which he is made aware of the worthlessness and mutability of earthly success. The innkeeper, who prepares the millet while Lü dreams an entire life, turns out to be Han Zhongli. In addition, early versions of Lü’s legend show him as a specialist in inner alchemy, a calligrapher and poet, a purveyor of drugs both medicinal and transcendental, the possessor of healing ink, a patron of mediums and exorcists, a soothsayer, a merchant and artisan and a Buddhist (Baldrian-Hussein 1986; see also Katz 1996).

Chen Tuan’s 陳抟 status as a pivotal figure in Song Daoism was established by the inclusion of his biography in the orthodox history of the dynasty (trl. Kohn 1990a). That record accepts Chen’s transcendent status and notes his marvellous feats, including his extraordinary diet, “sleep” meditations, and precognitive abilities as well as his meetings with Lü
Dongbin and Mayi daoze 麻衣道者 (the Hempclad Daoist). However, its main focus is on Chen's interactions with the imperial government. His particular status is clearly related to his statements concerning the accession of the Song. The tradition surrounding Chen can be traced through various Song sources, going back to his status as founding saint and his skills as a physiognomist (see Kohn 1990b). Chen also appears in Yuan drama, which doubtless played an important role in the popularization of his reputation (see also Katz 1996), and among the Chan-Buddhist monks of Mount Huangbo 黄婆 (Fujian) from where his legend and cult were transmitted into Japan (Russell 1990).

The third figure is Zhang Sanfeng 张三丰, originally a Daoist master on Mount Wudang 武当山 who came to the attention of the early Ming emperors Taizu and Chengzu and was granted an honorific title by Yingzong in 1459 (see Seidel 1970). Material relating to these aspects of his life is available in non-religious sources. In Ming local gazetteers and biji 筆記, Zhang was transformed into a Song or even Tang figure and variously granted meetings with Lü Dongbin and Chen Tuan. He performed the range of standard immortals' tricks and acquired the nickname “Dirty Zhang” on account of his disdain for cleanliness. He also appeared in many wondrous places, leaving tokens and transmitting knowledge. Subsequently, he was hailed as the founder of Taiji quan 太極拳, a master of sexual self-cultivation and a god of wealth. His fame also spread through collections of revelations to the compiler of his widely circulated collected works. Later revelations were delivered both in direct meetings and in spirit writing. At some point after the Ming, he was adopted into the Quanzhen pantheon and is honored today in the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 in Beijing.

Texts

Information concerning the lives of immortals can be found in numerous sources in and outside the Daoist canon. Some of the collections are comprehensive, while others are heterogeneous; some are based on a sect or lineage; others are anthologies of citations or compendia (see Chen 1985, 233-51; Boltz 1987; Yan 1976; Li 1986, 187-224).

Liexian xuan 列仙傳 (Immortals’ Biographies, CT 294, in 2 j.), attr. to Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 B.C.E.), 70 biog., appended hymns (trl. Kaltenmark 1953; see Campany 1996; Smith 1998). The biographies are short and rarely exceed two hundred characters; the authorship of the surviving hymns is disputed. Investigation of citations shows that portions of text from the biographies have been lost. A preface, found in some versions, is also not regarded as reliable.
Few of the biographies contain proper life-stories; most present the bare bones of a narrative while conforming to the generic demands of a Chinese biography: stating name, courtesy name, native place (or "No one knows where he came from"), and the period in which he or she lived. The biographies are arranged in a broadly chronological order, beginning with Chisongzi 了松子 (Master Redpine) who lived "in the time of Shennong神農." Some have long and flourishing Daoist careers, such as Huangdi 黄帝 (Yellow Emperor), Pengzu 彭祖, Wang Ziqia王子喬, Laozi 老子, and Yin Xi 尹喜. Others are known from historical records and played a part in court life under the Qin and Western Han—including figures such as Anqi Sheng 安期生 and Dongfang Shuo. Others again are entirely unknown.

Shenxian zhuan 神仙傳 (Biographies of Immortals, Daozang jiyou, 10 j.), by Ge Hong (283-343), 90-odd biog. (tr. Gütsch 1988; Fukui 1984; see Fukui 1951; Kominami 1974, 1978; Sawada 1988; Penny 1999). The ascription to Ge Hong is by no means certain, but he does claim credit for the text’s compilation in his autobiographical essay, as well as in a possibly spurious preface to the Shenxian zhuan. There also exist references to his authorship in Pei Songzhi’s 裴松之 commentary to the Sanguo zhi 三國志 (completed before 429) and in biographies of Tao Hongjing (456-536).

The Shenxian zhuan is much longer than the Liexian zhuan with modern versions including over ninety, often extensive, biographies. Modern editions follow early bibliographical information in dividing the collection into ten chapters. What becomes clear on examination of the surviving editions is that they are all reconstructions undertaken after the destruction of the Song canon. To add to the difficulties in ascertaining the reliability of the extant versions, the Tang Buddhist scholar Liang Su 梁肅 (753-793) claims that the Shenxian zhuan which he knew contained 190 biographies. The biographies in the Shenxian zhuan have very complex and detailed narratives, often including several different episodes in the life of the immortal, as well as more standard introductory material concerning their upbringing and early life. The biographies sometimes relate signs of impending transcendence and often detail the stages in the immortal’s progress to his or her final goal. Usually, the method of gaining immortality is recounted and there are several “deathbed” scenes. There is even, in one case, a vision of heaven vouchsafed with a description of the deified Laozi.

The Shenxian zhuan has many of the first biographies of important Daoist figures, including Zhang Daoling, Ge Xuan 葛玄, and Lord Mao 茅君, as well as Laozi and Pengzu, Wei Boyang 威伯陽, Hugong 汴公, and Liu An 劉安. In all cases the focus of the biography is on the major figure as an individual with little or no emphasis on their place in a lineage or tradition. The Shenxian zhuan provides superb source material for the view of immortality during the fourth century, showing what the lives of immortals
were like, what powers they had, with whom they interacted, how they related to the government and local spirits, what medicines they concocted, and which spiritual exercises they practiced.

**Xuxian zhuan** (Immortals' Biographies, Continued, CT 295), by Shen Fen 沈汾, dat. 5 Dyn., 3 j. The first chapter has sixteen biographies of those who “ascended in flight” (feiheng 飛昇), the second, twelve about those who “transformed in secret” (yinhua 隱化, i.e., by corpse-liberation), and the third eight more of people in the same category. This clear organization is a feature not seen in earlier collections, although the fragmentary nature of the *Shenxian zhuan* denies the opportunity of seeing how it was originally arranged.

The figures in the *Xuxian zhuan* are largely from the Tang and often also important in civil or literary history, so that the *Xuxian zhuan* is the first collection in which it is possible to find extant sources for some of the biographies. The editors of the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Books in the Four Storehouses) noticed that sources for the biographies of Zhang Zhihe, Xie Ziran 謝自然, and Xu Xuanping 許宣平 can be found in the collected works of Yan Zhenqing, Han Yu, and Li Bo 李白 respectively. In addition, Kirkland (1986) has shown that the biography of Sima Chengzhen is based, at least in part, on Liu Su’s 劉蠹 Da Tang xinyu 大唐新語 (New Tales of the Great Tang).

**Xianyuan bianzhu** (A String of Pearls from a Garden of Immortals, CT 596), by Wang Songnian 王松年, dat. 5 Dyn., 3 j., 123 biog., see Boltz 1987, 59. Setting the pattern for later collections, this contains extracts from a number of pre-existing collections, often associated with the Shangqing school and compiled on Mount Tiantai 天台山. Under a single heading it groups extracts of two biographies together, for instance “Lord Jie 介君—a bamboo staff; Zuo Ci 左慈—wooden shoes.” In an unfortunately large number of cases citations are unattributed, although many are. Exactly why the sources for some citations are given and some are not is unclear, but it is possible that Wang may not have worked from original texts.

**Sandong qunxian lu** 三洞群仙錄 (Record of the Host of Immortals of the Three Caverns, CT 1248, 20 j.), by Chen Baoguang 陳葆光, dat. 1154 (see Boltz 1987, 59). An important source for lost records, this text claims to have been compiled as proof that immortality was something anybody could attain by working hard and not a matter of fated destiny only available to a few. The argument between these two views echoes through the history of immortality. The text should be used with care as its attributions show disturbing inconsistencies, and some citations from the same biography are credited to different source texts. Occasionally attributions are simply impossible—the source for the biography of Ge Hong is twice given as the *Shenxian zhuan*, and among figures said to be
recorded in the *Shenxian zhuan* two lived under the Five Dynasties and one during the Tang. To add to the confusion, the *Sandong qunxian lu* also cites biographies from texts such as the *Taiping guangji*, which are themselves collections of citations.

*Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 历世真仙體道通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror through the Ages of Perfected Immortals and Those Who Embody the Tao, CT 296, 53 j.), by Zhao Daoyi 趙道一 (fl. 1294-1307), 900-odd biog. (see Boltz 1987, 56). Additional collections: *Lishi tongjian xubian* 續編 (Appendix, CT 297, 5 j.) on later immortals; *Lishi tongjian houji* 後集 (Supplement, CT 298, 6 j.) on women. The text proper arranges biographical notices in approximately chronological order with a few deviations, notably in the inclusion of a chapter on later Celestial Masters after the biography of Zhang Daoling. Frustratingly, only a few sources are mentioned. In some cases, however, one can see that Zhao copied chapters of extant collections across into his compendium, also occasionally disrupting the chronological ordering. On the other hand, Zhao did not copy early collections indiscriminately, replacing certain notable biographies from early collections with later much longer versions. Some of the biographies in the text are comparatively long, such as those of Huangdi and Zhang Daoling; some even take up entire chapters. The tendency in these long biographies is to include all the material from previous traditions in one record.

The two supplementary collections appear to derive from Quanzhen circles. Boltz has observed that the *Xubian* begins with biographies of Quanzhen patriarchs while the *Houji*, a collection devoted to women, culminates with the record of Sun Bu'er 孫不二, the Quanzhen matriarch.

*Guang lie xian zhuan* 廣列仙傳 (Extensive Immortals' Biographies, ed. *Zanguwai dao shu* 藏外道書, 7 j.), by Zhang Wenjie 張文介, dat. 1583, 304 biog. The text is based on 55 source works, including collections of immortals' biographies, orthodox historical works, mountain treatises, philosophical texts, and works of belles lettres. It begins with a record of Laozi and ends with Wang Tanyang 王亙陽, whose biography is credited to the great Ming poet and literatus Wang Shizhen 王世貞. It is comparatively long and is the only biography where a specific source is given. The text is distinctive for the inclusion of figures who did not usually find their way into collections of immortals' biographies, such as Lü Shang 呂尚, Ji Kang, Wu Daozi 吳道子 and Bo Juyi 白居易.
PREREQUISITES. One of the recurring issues in discussions of immortality is whether it is a goal universally attainable or merely the fate of a certain select few. The idea that one's fate determines one's length of life as well as many other aspects of that life is common throughout Chinese history. In biographies of immortals, however, fate is not usually mentioned, except in those cases when fate played a major role in the subject's immortality. The most common evidence cited for being fated to become an immortal is physiognomic, the possession of "immortal's bones." The linking of physiognomy with fate also has a venerable history, and the connection is usually explained using the correlations of five phase theory (see Kohn 1988).

With this in mind it is no surprise that other personal features can be understood in these terms; data on the time and date of birth and the meaning and numerology of names are also used to denote someone as destined for immortality. However, in some instances, an immortal simply knew when they encountered someone who was also fated for immortality—their evidence is not vouchsafed to the reader of the biography. In other cases, the fact that the subject of a biography was able to meet an immortal was proof enough of their being fated to transcend.

Being fated, however, only indicates a possibility—a willingness and ability to learn also needs to be proven. This proof takes the form of testing the aspirant's determination and trust in what is usually a series of trials in which failure is sometimes the outcome. For instance Fei Changfang 費長房, the acolyte of Hugong, showed no fear when left alone with tigers and did not move when a huge rock that was suspended above his head on a flimsy cord was about to be gnawed through by snakes. Unfortunately, he recoiled from the third—eating excrement infested with inch-long worms (see DeWoskin 1983; Giles 1948).

Personal virtue was another key feature, growing into a major issue in the Song schools but already apparent in early texts, such as the Taiping jing. Moral behavior is a necessary requirement, but not usually a sufficient one. However, the biographies more often note cases where the aspirant's morality was not acceptable: the locus classicus for this is Emperor Wu who did not succeed in achieving everything he might have by reason of his behaviour as emperor, his arrogance and love of luxury and the spilling of blood in his empire.

METHODS OF ATTAINMENT. In most cases, where someone was fated to become an immortal someone who had already attained that state informed him of it; these meetings are one of the ever-present features of narratives of immortality. Such encounters with immortals can assume various forms: sometimes they are a quiet rendezvous in an isolated and
numinous place, typically a mountain; sometimes the immortal makes his or her appearance in the public arena, often accompanied by an invisible retinue, revealed to those present by the music they play; sometimes the immortal hides his true identity until the aspirant has proven himself worthy. These encounters serve as models for the personal transmission of teachings from master to disciple, and many include the transmission of a text, a recipe, or restricted knowledge (see Smith 1994). The presence of the spirit world in the lives of immortals is also evident in the appearance of the “travelling kitchen-feast” (xìngchú 行厨; see Stein 1972).

The preferred way of attaining immortality is ascension to heaven in broad daylight: the lucky subject simply rises into the air and disappears amongst the clouds, often accompanied by spirits of various kinds (see Kohn 1990c; Sunayama 1987). The ability to ascend is often linked to the actual physical lightening of the body through drug therapies. Biographical records commonly report the ascension as the conclusion of their narrative. One exception is that of Liu An, whose elixir subsequently gets lapped up by the local chickens and dogs, who also ascended into the sky, so that “the cackling of chickens and the barking of dogs could be heard from the clouds.”

The next best option of becoming immortal was corpse-liberation which entailed resurrection after passing through what appears to be a kind of false death (see Robinet 1979; Seidel 1987a). Corpse-liberation is sometimes described as “leaving through transformation” (huàqu 化去), an instructive term indicating that the process involved a change of category of being. Those to be transformed into immortals in this manner typically predict their own passing, then appear to die but vanish, leaving only their grave clothes behind. Often great heat and extreme weight loss are reported to be generated by such people, while the transformation is expressed in images of a cicada shedding its carapace or a snake shedding its skin.

A common variation is to place a substitute item in the grave: a talisman, a bamboo stick or a sword. The conclusion to the narrative of corpse-liberated immortals is often a report of one or more sightings of the resurrected person—apparently alive and well in some other place. Such sightings serve to authenticate their passage through death. It should be stressed that in corpse-liberation, “it is not one or several 'souls' that go on to be purified and then return to revive the corpse—it is unmistakably the physical body that undergoes restoration” (Seidel 1987a). Seidel also notes that typically corpse-liberation only occurs after the adept has practised some exercises of a meditative, alchemical or moral kind prior to death.

In many biographies no specific method of transcendence is mentioned; rather, the biographer simply makes a statement that so-and-so “departed as an immortal” (xianqu 仙去). The context or general description often makes clear what process is involved. Nonetheless, even in biographies that
include detailed descriptions of the attainment of immortality, there are no specific instructions. They provide models to emulate but an active seeker will have to go elsewhere to find out the methods.

POWERS. The attainment of immortality brings with it extraordinary powers, and the list of spectacular feats is very long. One can divide them into several broad categories (see also Güntsch 1988; Kohn 1993, 290-99).

First are those feats that are usually described as transformations (bianhua 变化), which include magical changes of the immortal’s own body as well as those of other objects (see Robinet 1979). The latter category is simply changing one thing into another, such as turning goats into white rocks. Making food and wine is one of the most common forms of transformation, either feeding many people from a single serving or making food and wine from inedible objects. Transformations of the immortal himself range from adopting an animal’s body for a specific purpose, to disappearance through merging with objects in the surroundings, to multiplication of the body and being in different places simultaneously.

Second, immortals gain extraordinary bodies. The signs of aging have been expunged from them; they have black hair, all their teeth (including some regrown) and youthful complexions. In addition, immortals often appear to have extraordinary abilities. They can walk great distances in a day, run at great speeds, possess great strength and are impervious to extreme temperatures (see Robinet 1986). Like the perfected in the Zhuangzi, they can “enter water without getting wet and fire without getting burnt”—an almost proverbial statement in the texts. Some can enter walls or dive into the earth; others know how to fly or levitate. Some may have auras above their heads; others yet again show signs of wondrous, even freakish, physiognomy (see Kohn 1996).

Third, immortals have the ability to control objects, animals, and people. This control is explained in terms of qi, the life-force that pervades all existence. Harnessing it, immortals can control the evil or dangerous activities of animals, ghosts and mountain sprites. Through it they can inhibit bleeding, aid in the restoration of broken bones, prevent being cut by swords and cure snake bites. In addition, they can create extraordinary and indelible writing, shrink the earth, relieve drought and cover great distances in mysterious ways.

Fourth, immortals are able to heal diseases. Here again the records are heterogeneous and there is more description than instruction, so that the outline of a cure, or its ability, may be presented without elaboration. Still, certain methods are common: acupuncture, moxibustion, herbs, talismans and talisman water. In addition, some can cure from a distance; others have medicines delivered by spirits. Some even perform the ultimate form of healing—bringing the dead back to life. Others again are exorcists, ridding
suffering people from disease and cleansing temples or districts of evil spirits (see Stein 1979).

Fifth and finally, immortals can predict the future—be it that they know the time of their own transformation or are able to see the future of others. They may even foresee the rise and fall of dynasties, emperors and great players on the political stage.

Diet. Diet forms an important part of immortality training, and certain diets have been indicative of special attainments. Not to eat grain is a primary dietary prohibition, explained by the nourishment that grains give to the three worms or deathbringers (sanshi 三尸) who eat away at people's life. It also is related to the immortals' rejection of a settled agricultural life and its interrelations and various social duties in favor of an eremetic, mountain-dwelling, more floating existence (see Levi 1983). An extreme version of abstention from grains is not eating at all, which also appears as a mark of the attainment of immortality.

Special diets include ingestion of crabs and clams, white stones, dried meat and jujubes, as well as that of more chemical concoctions, such as the famous elixirs of the alchemists. In addition, immortals eat unusual vegetable and mineral substances, such as Atractylis root, cypress fruit, needles or resin, deerhorn powder, water cassia, stone marrow, lead, solomon's seal root, asparagus root, quicksilver, sesame seeds, mica, fungi or excrescences and cinnabar. The Baopuzi has long lists of things that can be ingested and also tells the keen reader what each substance can be expected to do for them (see Akahori 1989).

Immortals and the State. Immortals have played pivotal roles in the founding and legitimation of dynasties, typically by predicting the rise of a future founder. The classic example is Zhang Liang 張良, credited in later texts as the ancestor of Zhang Daoling, who received a text of military strategy from the immortal Huangshi gong 黃石公 (Master of the Yellow Stone) and assisted the first emperor of the Han to come to power. Zhang Liang was enfeoffed for his service to the dynasty (see Bauer 1956). Another famous example is Wang Yuanzhi 王遙知 (d. 635), the tenth Shangqing patriarch, said to have met Li Yuan, the founder of the Tang, and predicted his rise to emperor (Chen 1985; Yoshikawa 1990). Similarly, Chen Tuan and Zhang Sanfeng predicted and played a role in the legitimization of the Song and Ming (see Kohn 1990b; Seidel 1970).

These examples of imperial legitimation through foreknowledge can be seen as a subset of prediction of the careers of politicians and statesmen in general, and they are not always predictions of achievement; for every successful career predicted, there is one where an unexpected downfall is foretold. These predictions are often couched in obscure language, to the extent that the meaning of the immortal's utterance is not clear until after the events have taken place. Within the biographies' narratives these ex post
facto validations of what appeared to be mad ravings serve as a retrospective authentication of the reality of the immortals’ transcendence.

Just as fundamental to the relationship of the immortal to the state is their consistent rejection of summonses to attend court. This is, of course, a trope common to the biographies of exemplary scholars as well as to immortals (see Vervoom 1990) but the regularity of its appearance in the biographies should be noted.

SYMBOLS. In the visual arts, certain objects and animals have become understood as symbols of immortals and immortality (see Little 1988). Some have gained these meanings by virtue of their important place in immortality culture. Preeminent among these is the gourd (sometimes termed bottle-gourd to distinguish it from the melon) which serves to carry herbs or other powerful substances. Also the dwelling place of some immortals, such as the Gourd Master, the gourd metaphorically indicates the alchemical furnace and the cosmos in microcosm. It is related symbolically to grotto heavens and other spaces where the inside is bigger than the outside (see Miura 1983; Stein 1990).

Another symbol is cinnabar, the oxide of mercury that plays a major role in alchemy and has taken on a symbolic life in the prevalence of the color red as a token of good fortune. Then there is the pine or cypress tree whose nuts, resin, and needles were among the most commonly recommended drugs for the prolongation of life. The pine stands for longevity in part because it is longevous and evergreen, conquering the seasonal death that winter brings; in addition it is traditionally planted on graves, thus in immortality symbolizing the overcoming of human death. Finally, pines are favourites in miniature cultivation and play an important role in the world of microcosms. They have this feature in common with strangely shaped rocks, which symbolically show the immortals’ island of Penglai.

Among foodstuffs, peaches are most prominent, such as those conferred by Xiwangmu, and the “numinous fungus” on which aspirants nibble is a key symbol of longevity. Among animals, besides the dragons who come to pick up the successful trainee, cranes have been central at least since Wang Ziqiao, who ascended on one, and Magu, who had nails “like talons.” Cranes are long-lived birds and serve as riding animals for immortals. Like pines, they appear to have connotations with the grave as well as with immortality (Schafer 1983; Spring 1993). Birds in general have an affinity with immortals, who may be depicted with feathers (see Kaltenmark 1953). Besides indicating their physical lightness and ability to fly, this may be related to the belief that ancestral spirits return to their temples on the seventh day of the seventh month in the shape of birds (see Kominami 1978).
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The early Daoist movements mark the beginning of Daoism as an organized religion. They developed in the turmoil at the end of the Han empire, promising the populace physical well being, the fair distribution of wealth and active solidarity. They thus became attractive to the many landless who roamed the country in search of food and employment. There were numerous mass movements at the time, some more Daoist than others, culminating especially in the late second century C.E. and again in the years 399-411. Among the most important movements are two, the first being the so-called Yellow Turbans (Huangjin 黄巾), also called the Taiping 太平 or Great Peace Movement. This movement began in Shandong and the eastern provinces and, under the guidance of Zhang Jue 張角, rose in rebellion in 184. The population followed them in numbers large enough to dangerously weaken the government and hasten the dynasty's end. Still, the rebellion was bloodily suppressed and both text and movement vanished, to be reconstituted only vaguely several centuries later. The movement was associated with a talismanic text called Taiping qingling shu 太平清領書(Book of Great Peace Written in Blue), greater or lesser parts of which may be contained in the transmitted Taiping jing 太平經(Scripture of Great Peace).

The second major movement was that of the Celestial Masters (Tianshi 天師), also known as the Covenant of Orthodox Unity (Zhengyi mengwei 正一盟威). It emerged in the west, in Shu (Sichuan), founded (according to legend) by Zhang Ling 張陵 or Daoling 道陵 and organized by Zhang Lu 張魯. Limiting their rebellious activity and submitting to political authority, they survived.(see Seidel 1984), so that the 64th Celestial Master is still a major religious figure in Taiwan today. The early Celestial Masters, after being forced to resettle in various parts of the country, provided the religious environment from which the various other Daoist schools of medieval China sprang, beginning with Highest Clarity (Shangqing 上清).

By the end of the fourth century, the agenda of Daoist movements had narrowed. They demanded revenge against the malpractices of political
power-holders, but they were mainly searching for an escape from their misery and trusted their charismatic leader Sun En 孙恩 to lead them to the isles of the blessed (Miyakawa 1979, 83). At the same time, as Daoism with its various newly developing schools widened its appeal to larger segments of the population, the early creeds and principles were seen as compromised by the rebellious environment they came from, and they were often pointed to as negative examples that believers should not follow.

Most of the movements, aside from promising general welfare to all members, also had an apocalyptic or eschatological vision that described the end of the world as imminent. They can thus be understood in terms of millenarianism and messianism (Seidel 1969b; 1984; Schipper 1979). Millenarianism was first described as a Western religious phenomenon with roots in Zoroastrianism that came to flourish in the two centuries B.C.E. especially in the Judaic environment. It led to the arising of the Jesus movement that later became Christianity (see Hanson 1983; Cohn 1995). Millenarianism’s major characteristics include a single high deity who creates and controls the world, immediate personal revelation to a selected human representative by this deity, a dualism between good and evil, a linear conception of time which will soon reach its end, and the vision of a cataclysmic end-time battle that only the sworn members of the cult, the high god’s chosen people, will survive (Cohn 1995). According to what we know about early Daoist beliefs, at least as far as they are represented in fifth-century documents (see Zürcher 1982), they shared many of these characteristics with their Western counterparts and thus signified a major new dimension of Chinese religion and religious organization (see Kohn 1998a).

**History**

**POPULAR MOVEMENTS.** The Daoist movements of the late Han dynasty belong to the tradition of popular movements, which erupted because economic and social conditions had destroyed the fabric that held society together. They were for the most part regional events, but in times of general crisis they could gain momentum and become a political factor acting throughout the country. It was customary for leaders of such movements to adopt political titles such as “king” or “emperor,” and to have a program for socio-political reform. Religious elements, as propagated and performed by shamanic practitioners (wu 巫), played a role by attributing authority to a movement’s leaders and institutions, and it can be argued that few mass movements took place without such support.

One of the first movements known from the literature is that of the Red Eyebrows (Chimei 赤眉). It was initiated in 18 C.E. by Fan
Chong 樊崇 from Langye 琅琊 (Shandong), and reveals its social background and original aims in its nomenclature, which was taken over from local government and colloquial language, and overlaps with titles used by later movements. The dynastic histories inform us that the Red Eyebrows turned to religious support when their movement had outgrown its initial locally defined framework. They invited shamans to make use of a popular local deity, King Jing of Chengyang 城陽景王. Han authorities had originally set up this deity as the central figure of a local cult in order to integrate the region of Chengyang into the Han empire (Stein 1979, 80). When addressed by the Red Eyebrows' shaman, the deity promptly complained about being linked to rebellious bandits and demanded an institutional upgrading (*Hou Hanshu* 後漢書, abbr. HHS, 11.480). The rebels thereupon enthroned Liu Penzi 劉盆子, a member of the Han ruling house of Liu, as emperor and granted mimicry court titles to themselves.

Thus, while the Red Eyebrows were not a religious movement *per se*, they did make use of the supernatural for their purposes, as did all factions during the period of civil war between the end of the Western and the outset of the Eastern Han. The antagonists closely observed each others’ propaganda, as is clear in the struggle between Wang Mang 王莽 and his opponent, the later Emperor Guangwu. But even the Red Eyebrows impressed Wang Mang as being "miraculous" (*guai* 怪; *Hanshu* 99C.4179; Dubs 1955, 436). Another example of such interactions among different groups is the invitation issued by Gongsun Shu 公孫述, ruler of Shu until 36 C.E., to a rival group in southern Henan. He was quite disappointed when they turned out to be simply bandits, especially since he had set his own ambitions much higher. In a fashion characteristic for his time, he proposed that heaven had issued texts which revealed that after twelve generations—following the model of the twelve generations in Confucius’s *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals)—the Han house of Liu had come to an end and would be followed by the Gongsuns. Speculation about the sequence of the five phases—the Han had ruled under the auspices of the red phase of fire—led him to take up the title of "White Emperor" (HHS 13.533-34).

The use of colors was highly significant. Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.E.) and other thinkers had correlated the succession of historical eras and dynasties with the sequence of the five phases, each of which was represented by a certain color. Some rebels would still use the Han-color red, trying to amend their rule, but many strove to overcome the Han and accordingly linked themselves with various other colors. Thus, while Zhang Bolu 张伯路 had still used red, yellow became increasingly popular, so that in 145 a certain Ma Mian 马勉 in Jiujiang 九江, south of the Huai river, proclaimed that he was the "Yellow Emperor" (HHS 6.277). The propagandistic effect of this was ambivalent, however, because yellow
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had two associations: its progressive, innovative quality vis-à-vis the reigning red; and the Daoist image of the mythical Yellow Emperor. Another Jiujiang rebel, possibly linked with Ma Mian, had similarly been known as the “yellow tiger” (HHS 38.1279).

While yellow was in vogue, other colors continued to play a role, probably for the sake of distinction and identity as much as for their symbolic meaning. One of Ma Mian’s associates, Xu Feng 徐鳳, was wearing scarlet (jiang 紅); another, Hua Meng 華孟, chose for himself the title “Black Emperor” and created seals, a reign period and other imperial paraphernalia matching the water phase (HHS 38.1279). In 148 C.E. rebel leaders in eastern Henan called themselves either “Son of the Yellow Emperor” (huangdi 孫) or “perfected” (zhenren 真人).

We may expect to find some sort of Daoists at work when the histories refer to shamanic activities, yet it seems reasonable to limit the appellation “Daoist” to those movements which not only engaged the services of certain religious or perhaps Daoist experts, but were actually led by them. It can be argued that the shaman or “sorcerer” (yaowu 妖巫) Wei Si 維汜 and his disciples in the first century instigated the first Daoist mass movement of which we know (Fang 1993, 4). His home was on the Yellow River, not far from modern Zhengzhou. He called himself a “spirit being” (shen 神) and before being put to death by the authorities had assembled a few hundred disciples. They later spread the message that he had not died but rather had become a god (HHS 24.838).

Among these disciples, moreover, was Li Guang 李廣, who, in 41 C.E., with a group of followers attacked Wancheng in modern Anhui, north of the Yangzi, and established himself as the “Great Master of the Southern Peak” (Nanyue taishi 南嶽太師). This, according to Fang Shiming (1993), was the place in Anhui where Wei Si had resided and served as teacher or “master” in the sense of a “celestial master,” an emissary of a central deity. After Li Guang’s defeat and death, the Wei Si disciples Dan Chen 丹臣 and Fu Zhen 傅鎮 continued the movement, calling themselves “generals” (jiang 將, HHS 18.694). Only with their execution did the Wei Si saga come to an end.

Other groups similarly made use of symbols later associated with the Celestial Masters and the Yellow Turbans. Zhang Bolu 張伯路, for instance, and his followers called themselves “emissaries” (shizhe 使者). Epigraphic evidence allows us to identify this title with tiandi shizhe 天帝使者, “emissary sent by Lord Heaven,” which became the main credential of the Celestial Master of the late second century (Fang 1993, 8; Qian 1990). The histories state that Zhang Bolu’s men saw their mission as one of eliminating all higher officials and burning all official buildings. In 109, they raided the coastal regions but were forced to withdraw out to sea. They returned again a year later. From 155 on, there were continuous
uprisings. The rebels produced seals and talismans, performed sacrifices to a well deity (jiṣing 賈井) and called their leaders Taishang huang(di) 太上皇(帝) or “Highest sovereign (emperor).” On this evidence, Anna Seidel concluded that such movements were forerunners of the Yellow Turbans in that they “assumed the dignity of the emperor and instituted an administration” while also issuing talismans and using religious means to establish their authority (1969b, 220).

YELLOW TURBANS. The short account of the Yellow Turban Rebellion in the annals of the Hou Han shu reads much like other accounts of first- and second-century uprisings: “Zhang Jue came from Julu 魯 [in Hebei], called himself Yellow Heaven and divided his army into thirty-six groups, each equivalent to a platoon of about ten thousand men who all wore yellow headbands and arose on the same day” (8.348). At first glance the Yellow Turbans appear to have much in common with the earlier movements, including their military organization and shamanic techniques, and having a leader who was an adherent of Huang-Lao 黃老 and was able to heal diseases (HHS 71.2299). However, there are also points of qualitative difference which make the Yellow Turbans more than just another regional uprising. They were not subdued until the political elite had united their forces against them, which indicates not only the rapid disintegration of the social and political system at the time but also the movement’s size, vigor and coherence. The organizational skills of the rebels must have been outstanding. Their program of mass stimulation and control was refined, containing a remarkable mixture of social and religious elements. To sanctify social reforms with religious arguments was in itself not new; it had been customary among the educated at least since the first century B.C.E. However, if we can trust the sources, it was a novelty in the context of a mass movement.

Another important difference is that, according to the histories, Zhang Jue possessed a scripture on Great Peace which had been compiled by a critical, reform-oriented scholar from Langye, where the Yellow Turbans had much support, and had been publicized at the imperial court by a faction of like-minded officials (HHS 30B.1084). This link between a religious practitioner turned rebel and a group of scholar-officials, unlikely as it may have been, was taken seriously: the Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government; 58.1864) calls Zhang Jue’s message “The Dao of Great Peace,” and there are indeed parallels between his agenda and the thoughts outlined in the transmitted text of the Taiping jing.

In addition, the movement also had adherents among the officials in the capital, so that high functionaries were accused of “studying the teachings of the Yellow Turbans” (Zizhi tongjian 58.1868). There is no mention of written material produced by the rebels, and we do not know what the
“high functionaries” could have studied except for the scripture on Great Peace that Zhangjue possessed and perhaps distributed. Officials tolerated Zhang for political reasons. While people joined his movement by the ten thousands, to the point of repeatedly causing traffic congestions, the authorities did not get involved because Zhangjue was only “educating” people (Zizhi tongjian 58.1864). Reports describing the situation as serious and suggesting early measures of repression went unheeded due to factional controversies at court. After the eunuchs instigated a proscription (danggu 尊銳) in 169, career officials were largely expelled from power and could only hope that an uproar would weaken the eunuchs’ position. This hope was fulfilled when the proscription was lifted at the end of 184.

After about ten years of missionary activity the movement covered much of eastern China, including parts of modern Hebei, Shandong, Anhui, Jiangsu, Hubei, Jiangxi and Zhejiang. For calendrical reasons, an uprising had been planned for the jiazi 甲子 year of 184, when a new sixty-year cycle began. When this plan was leaked, the rebels were forced to strike earlier than expected and not in unison, but they nevertheless gained initial victories to an extent that frightened the authorities; “in ten days’ time the whole world knew about them” (HHS 71.2300). While their main forces were defeated in less than six months, uprisings under the name of Yellow Turbans continued for years in various locations. Zhangjue died before the rebels’ military defeat, but his two younger brothers with whom he had shared the leadership of the movement were executed by Huangfu Song, who had led the victorious government troops (HHS 71.2302).

CELESTIAL MASTERS. The movement of the Yellow Turbans was ideologically as well as organizationally indebted to a long tradition of popular uprisings, but also had much in common with the Celestial Masters who developed simultaneously in Sichuan. Geographically isolated and with the strong support of the local population, including also a large number of non-Han people (Stein 1963, 22), the Celestial Masters and their followers managed for several decades to run an independent theocratic state. After their practices had spread throughout the country, they came to be hailed as the founders of religious Daoism.

To gain an understanding of their history, we can for the moment ignore the hagiographical accounts and rely on the story told by the historical sources. We learn that Zhang Ling, respectfully referred to as Zhang Daoling 張道陵, moved from Bei in north-western Jiangsu to Sichuan to set up a religious group in the Heming mountains 咸亭山 west of Chengdu, where he also produced texts to propagate his doctrine. It has been speculated that among these texts could have been the Xiang'er 想爾 commentary to the Laozi (Bokenkamp 1997, 59). Zhang Ling asked his followers for contributions or taxes in the form of millet or “rice,” leading to the appellation “Way of Five Pecks of Rice” (Wudoumi dao 五斗米道)
for the movement, the name “masters of the five pecks” for its officers (Sanguo zhi 三國志 8.265; Zhi tongian 58.1872) and the rather denigrating “rice rebels” (mizei 米賊) for the members at large (HHS 75.2435). Other forms of taxes included fabrics and practical utensils, in particular the writing materials which played a big role in the services rendered by libationers (jijiu 祭酒) and other religious practitioners (Eichhorn 1955, 318). The alternative interpretation of Wudoumi dao as “the Way of the Great Dipper of the Mi family” is difficult to sustain because it presupposes more information about the life of the Sichuan aborigines during the Han period than we have (Wang J. 1987, 158-59). A stele in Sichuan, dated 173 C.E., has a list of libationers as proof of the thriving of Zhang Ling’s movement (Stein 1963, 43).

Zhang Ling’s missionary success lay in treating the ill. He was perhaps followed by his son, Zhang Heng 張衡, and certainly followed by his grandson Zhang Lu 張魯, which gives the Celestial Masters a trinity comparable to that of Zhang Jue and his two brothers. Zhang Lu also incorporated a group led by Zhang Xiu 張修 (no relation), who had assembled followers through his healing techniques, and in the jiazi year of 184, almost simultaneously with the Yellow Turbans, staged a local uprising. In 190, Zhang Xiu and Zhang Lu were together coopted by Liu Yan 劉焉, governor of Yi 益 province (Sichuan), to safeguard Hanzhong 漢中. Both received the official rank of “major” (sima 司馬; Sanguo zhi 8.283; de Crespigny 1990, 358-60), and we may assume that this amounted to an acknowledgment of their role as local leaders.

It seems that Zhang Lu’s mother also played a role in establishing contact with the governor (HHS 75.2432). Thanks to her beauty and knowledge of magical techniques (guidao 鬼道), she had free access to the governor’s home. At this stage the movement had become large enough to invite fights over its leadership, and by eliminating Zhang Xiu, Zhang Lu set himself up as Celestial Master (Sanguo zhi 8.263). His relations to the provincial government remained cordial until after Zhang Yan’s death in 194. The latter’s son and successor demanded a higher degree of submission and killed Zhang Lu’s mother and relatives who had remained in the provincial capital. Only then did Zhang Lu take further steps towards independence. He changed the name of Hanzhong to Hanning 漢寧, and the central government gave him the title “Gentleman of the Household in Charge of Protecting the People,” thus making him governor of Hanning, an honor he acknowledged by sending presents (Sanguo zhi 8.263-64).

In the free-for-all of the declining Han, Zhang moreover was in conflict with his neighbors and was thus drawn into various alliances and military activities. The survival of his reign must to some extent be ascribed to the self-restraint advised by the Laozi. When numerous refugees from troubled areas turned to his terrain for peace and security, and an auspicious jade
seal was found in the ground, he was urged to accept the title "king" and enlarge his territory, but he refrained from following this advice (Sanguo zhi 8.264). Zhang was not an independent ruler in a formal sense; he did not set up officials of high rank and did not produce his own seals—at least, the histories do not mention that he did. Nevertheless, the population seems to have followed his libationers' instructions and rules willingly, giving him considerable power (Sanguo zhi 8.263).

In 215, he handed his rule over to Cao Cao in a carefully orchestrated ceremony that stretched out over months and served his purposes well. The move was criticized both by Zhang Lu's followers, who felt that he had surrendered, and by Cao Cao's party, who attacked the honorable terms of the take-over (Sanguo zhi 8.264). Zhang Lu survived the occasion for only a few years. He probably settled as marquis of Langzhong, situated about 100 miles south of Hanzhong, with ten thousand households as his fief. His five sons were accepted into Cao Cao's entourage on remarkably good terms. His followers, however, were made to resettle in different parts of China, carrying with them a new form of religious belief and organization (see Mather 1979).

The above is only one of several possible histories which the historical sources allow us to construct. If we were to take hagiographic material into consideration, there would be even more. On all accounts, however, Zhang Lu is the central figure of the period. The saga of Zhang Daoling and Zhang Heng could well be his invention, and so might be the confusion in regard to Zhang Xiu's historical role (Eichhorn 1955, 317; de Crespigny 1990, 356-58). The tradition of the Way of the Celestial Master resulted from Zhang Lu's political skills; later Daoists were able to identify with a small community of believers surviving troubled times in an orderly fashion. On the other hand, they did not find Zhang Jue and his violent movement exemplary, "Daoist" as it might have been. It can be argued that later "Daoism" became identified with the movement of the Celestial Masters and not with Great Peace due to political rather than doctrinal factors.

LATER DAOIST MOVEMENTS, despite their considerable political relevance, had less impact on the development of the religion. When Sun En started an uprising in 399 which lasted for over ten years, the Celestial Master style of Daoism to which he adhered served as a tool for mass control, more advanced and attractive than other Daoist and non-Daoist sets of magical practices. His movement contributed little to their development. To describe its history briefly, the Sun family had moved south from the old Daoist stronghold of Langye, and Sun En's uncle Sun Tai had studied with Du Jiong, Zigong. The latter was a shaman and Daoist of southern descent whose fame was such that even the calligrapher Wang Xizhi relied on his services when ill (Chen G. 1963, 2: 461). His particular expertise was the control of powerful local
deities which, until the arrival of Daoism, had been under shamanic management (Miyakawa 1979, 100).

Beyond this powerful magician, Sun Tai also had friends in high places, including Sima Yuanxian 司馬源先, a relative of the Jin Emperor and son of Sima Daozi 司馬道子, the head of government. Sun Tai was local strongman in the Sanwu region, southeast of the Jin capital in modern Nanjing, and he became actively involved in military upheavals. Accused of spreading prophecies of the approaching end of the dynasty, he was executed in 398 together with his five sons, leaving it to his nephew Sun En to reorganize the movement. Sun then found wide support in the region of Guaiji 會稽 (near Hangzhou) for his outright opposition to Sima rule, whose socio-economic policies had antagonized many large landholders. Another source of support for Sun was the general hatred among the local, southern population for all government representatives who often were northerners (Miyakawa 1979, 100). Conforming to this hatred, Sun En seems to have made it his policy to maltreat or exterminate all officials he could catch. Among them were well-known adherents of Daoism like Wang Ningzhi 王凝之, son of Wang Xizhi and governor of Guaiji 王羲之, who had in vain attempted to develop magical devices against the rebels (Jinshu 96.2516).

For several years Sun En's men raided the region but never settled down in a Celestial Master type of community. When forced to retreat, they would return to their base of Yuzhou 鄱洲—probably an island south of Lianyun in northern Jiangsu (Miyakawa 1983, 218)—then reappear in their large multi-storied boats for the next onslaught. In 401, Liu Yu 劉裕, the future founder of the Liu-Song dynasty, attacked this stronghold with an overwhelming force. At the same time, other events were also working against Sun En, in particular a severe famine in the regions concerned and a change of power at the Jin court, where the politicians of the Sima family were ousted. They had been responsible for Sun Tai's execution and were the main object of Sun En's wrath. In 402 Sun En died, either by execution or by suicide through drowning (Eichhorn 1954a, 351). The rebellious movement was continued and, as Miyakawa suggests, placed on a more solid organizational footing by Lu Xun 劉循, Sun En's brother-in-law who went to Guangdong to rebuild the army. Miyakawa argues that his social background was more respectable than that of Sun En and that he was a better soldier and less ruthless in his treatment of officials (1983, 200). He launched an attack on Yangzhou 揚州 in 410 C.E. which was defeated and lead to his execution in 411—the year that marks the end of the rebellion.

Sun En's insurrection of the early fifth century contributed to the general power struggle which occurred between the Jin and the Song dynasties—at least that is how the histories describe it when they set up Liu Yu as a major opponent of Sun En and Lu Xun (Jinshu 100.2633, 2635-36).
However, the rebels were minor figures, whose lowly family background and limited connections would normally have disqualified them as imperial contenders from the start. These deficiencies were supplemented by their knowledge of the magic arts, which proved to be a significant political force, providing the rebels with social as well as military and propagandistic advantages.

**Texts**

There are two major documents and one minor text that contain early materials on these two Daoist movements. The first is the *Taiping jing* (Scripture on Great Peace, CT 1101, ed. Wang M. 1979; modern Chinese trl. Luo 1996), transmitted in fifty-seven chapters. These seem more or less complete judging from a table of contents of the original text in 170 chapters, preserved in Dunhuang (S. 4226) and matching the transmitted text. The abridged version, known as *Taiping jing chao*, survives in nine out of its ten parts. It was written by Lüqiu Fangyuan 関丘方遠 (d. 937) to make the ancient text more readable and allows us to arrive at a picture of the whole of the original *Taiping jing*. The text found entry into the Song-dynasty Daoist canon, possibly with all its ten parts (following the ten stems), 170 chapters and 366 subdivisions. The editors of the Ming canon mention the *Taiping jing* as being damaged and reduced in comparison to previous versions (Wang M. 1979, 750).

The transmitted text consists of at least three layers, called A, B and C (see Xiong 1962; Takahashi 1988; Penny 1990; Petersen 1990a). Forty-four chapters consist largely of layer-A texts, depicting conferences between a “celestial master” and his disciples, a group of “perfected.” Layer-B texts are characterized by frequent use of the particle 为 (wei) and include dialogues between a Heavenly Lord (天君, tianjun), a Great Spirit (大神, dashen) and a student (学生, sheng); parts of chapters 110-12 and 114 belong to this layer (Hendrischke 1991). The rest of the text (layer C) is too diverse to identify properly. It contains no dialogues but has large sections of charts and talismans with little supplementary written text.

Regarding the date of the *Taiping jing*, the Dunhuang manuscript from the late sixth century can serve as terminus ante quem which renders earlier speculation about a Tang origin obsolete (Mansvelt-Beck 1980, 168-69). The transmitted version, moreover, is identical with the text “found” by Tao Hongjing’s disciples Huan Kai 恒開 and Zhou Zhixiang 周智響 in the sixth century. Yoshioka argues that the Shangqing tradition shares with the *Taiping jing* a missionary approach, represented by Lord Goldtower (金闕帝君, jinque dijun), who in the Dunhuang *Taiping jing* is linked to the origin of the text (1970, 88). This would explain why Shangqing adherents edited
and supplemented, if not created, the text. Their edition proved to be popular and was distributed widely enough to have reached Dunhuang in the course of a few decades.

The transmitted text cannot be traced further back than the sixth century, but it is clearly not from this period; nor is it a Shangqing text. Its language, style and contents all point to a much earlier and quite different origin (Kaltenmark 1979, 48-49). However, there is no early citation or parallel text and no definite bibliographical evidence, unless we accept as such either the *Taiping jing* in 50 *juan* or the *Jiayi jing* (Scripture Arranged in Cylindrical Characters) in 170, which are listed in the bibliographical chapter of the *Baopuzi* (Wang M. 1979, 747). Another possible reference could be a *Shenshu* (Divine Book) in 170 *juan* mentioned in the Buddhist *Mouzi lihuo lun* (Mouzi’s Correction of Errors, T. 2102, 52.1a-7a; see Wang M. 1979, 747).

Both the title and the number of chapters of the transmitted text bring it into the neighborhood of the *Taiping qingling shu* 太平清領書, which Xiang Kai 襄楷 presented to Emperor Huan in 166 C.E. (HHS 30B). He intended to draw imperial attention to the “divine book” Gong Chong 宫崇 had received from his teacher Gan Ji 千吉 or Yu Ji 千吉 and had in vain attempted to present at court (HHS 30B.1080; Petersen 1989; De Crespigny 1976). Nothing solid is known of the supposed author of the book, but there are two further figures known as either Gan Ji or Yu Ji, with whose legends he may have been connected in later ages. One of them lived early in the third century and was a shamanic practitioner in the service of Sun Ce’s 孫策 army; the other lived in the mid-third century and had a healing relationship with the Daoist Bo He 博和 (see Petersen 1989; 1990a). Xiang Kai, like other Confucian scholars propagating the text, came from Langye in Shandong, as also did the promoters of an earlier Great Peace text, known as the *Tianguan li baoyuan taiping jing* 天官歷包元太平經 (Scripture on the Keeping of the Original Mandate and Great Peace According to the Calendar Revealed by the Officers of Heaven). The latter was presented first to Emperor Cheng (r. 32-7 B.C.E.) and then again to Emperor Ai (r. 7 B.C.E.-1 C.E.). On both occasions the text was found unacceptable, but we know it was kept in the imperial library because Wang Mang quoted it and implemented a reform of the clepsydra as the text had suggested (Petersen 1992).

There is no need to doubt Fan Ye’s remark that Zhang Jue, the leader of the Yellow Turbans, had seen and made use of the second-century Great Peace text (HHS 30B.1084). What we know about the contents of this “Book in Blue” agrees with the transmitted text of the *Taiping jing*. But whether the two are at least in part identical is another and hitherto unresolved matter. The hagiographical tradition, as well as scholars, such as Maxime Kaltenmark, Ofuchi Ninji, Takahashi Tadahiko, Hachiya
Kunio and others who have analysed the *Taiping jing*'s contents, usually treat it as if it were a text of the second century. The fact that references to social and political circumstances relate to a Han environment, and that there are few if any traces of Buddhist practices and terminology, can be seen as supporting their position. Yoshioka Yoshitoyo and other religious historians place it firmly within the Shangqing tradition (Mansvelt-Beck 1980, 173), and evidence for an early date can indeed be considered inadequate.

Linguistic research on the text is as yet meager (Yu 1997), but it is quite obvious that the different textual layers show specific characteristics. The language used in the large layer-A section seems to be unparalleled, either during the Han or later. Auxiliaries and verbal complements are used frequently, two- and even three-character lexical compounds abound, only a limited range of characters is put to use and the sentence structure is clumsy and simplistic. The argument between the "celestial master" and his disciples is carried on in a repetitive and often careless manner. Comparison with the well-written and tidy *Taiping jing chao* shows clearly how far layer-A materials differ from standard classical Chinese prose. It can be argued that layer-B materials are written in less colloquial and slightly more standard language.

Attempts to date the text are usually undertaken on the basis of contents. Takahashi, for instance, considers B-layer texts as the earliest (1984, 328). The belief in salvation through self-accusation expressed in this layer was indeed an element of the early Daoist movements, but the concern with society at large in the layer-A texts can also be placed in the context of Han political thought. Petersen attempts to reconstruct a full 50-juan *Taiping jing* as mentioned in the *Baopuzi* from layer-B and C texts and argues that layer-A texts go back to the fifth century at the earliest (1990a, 198). This interpretation is unacceptable to scholars who take the text's message seriously, and there seems to be no evidence for such a late date.

Further linguistic analysis can be expected to arrive at more solid conclusions. As things stand, we must consider the *Taiping jing* to be a text edited in the sixth century from earlier, most likely second-century material of different sources. While layer-B materials could come from one source, layer-A texts contain enough internal contradictions to make it possible—although not necessary—that it goes back to several sources. We cannot even speculate as to whether a certain Gan Ji wrote parts of the text, but there is no need to completely separate the transmitted text from the Langye tradition of Great Peace texts.

The *Xiang'er* (Thinking of You; see Bokenkamp 1997, 61; trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 78-148; index Mugitani 1985a) is a commentary to the *Laozi*, written in standard *xingu* style. It has been marginalized by the Daoist tradition to the extent that it has only been preserved in a Dunhuang manuscript (S. 6825) written around 600 C.E. The manuscript contains
only the first of two parts, annotating sections 3 to 37 of the *Daode jing*. It has been edited and discussed in Rao 1991.

In dating the text, a first criterion is the edition of the *Laozi*, on which the commentary is based. The *Xiang' er* annotates a pre-Heshang gong version, a fact made clear because its text is not divided into sections (Chen S. 1957, 46) and has more in common with the Mawangdui manuscripts than with the transmitted text (Boltz 1982, 109). It is also close to the “Five Thousand Character” edition, which has a preface by Ge Xuan 葛玄 (fl. 200 C.E.; see Ofuchi 1991, 250).

In regard to terms and contents, twenty-seven precepts have been extracted from the *Xiang' er* and edited as a separate text (in CT 786; see Rao 1964). These have eclipsed in popularity the *Xiang' er* from which they were derived (Bokenkamp 1997, 59). The precepts are cited in the *Dadaojia lingjie* 大道家令戒 (Commands and Admonitions for the Families of the Great Dao, in CT 789; trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 165-85), a text allegedly released in the year 255. They also contain the expression *xiang' er*, possibly in reference to the text (Bokenkamp 1997, 59-60).

Citations in other early materials similarly suggest a Han-dynasty date and so do, it can be argued, the work’s similarities to the *Taiping jing* (Rao 1964; 1991). Bibliographical evidence of the Six Dynasties points to Zhang Lu as the text’s author, a notion also corroborated by Lu Deming 陸德明 (ca. 550-630) in his *Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文 (Explanations to the Classics), although he replaces the character 余 in the title with 余, which caused William Boltz (1982) to doubt whether Lu actually ever saw the text. Other Tang-dynasty authors credited Zhang Daoling instead of Zhang Lu (Bokenkamp 1997, 75).

While Rao, Boltz, Bokenkamp and others accept an early date and even the authorship of Zhang Lu, Kobayashi has held against it the use of certain terms—including some shared with the *Taiping jing*—and the criticism directed against other Daoist groups in regard to sexual and sacrificial practices. He concludes that the text is a product of the southern tradition of the fifth century (1987; 1990, 317). Mugitani, too, wishes to place the text in the fifth century, but in a northern environment, basing his argument on the role of the underworld known as *taiyin* 太陰 (great yin) in the text’s longevity beliefs and its conception of *qi* 氣 (1985b).

The commentary provides a community-oriented interpretation of the *Laozi*, integrating the generally accepted moral code into a religion-based system of rewards and punishments. The title “thinking of you” suggests the frequently uttered promise that the Dao, if you keep it in mind, will keep you in mind, which will be reflected in the length of your life. It remains distant from the concepts of the *Laozi*, not so much in socio-political matters but by discussing behavioral issues like sexual hygiene and other longevity practices.
The *Laozi bianhua jing* 老子變化經 (Scripture of Laozi's Transformations, S. 2295; trl. Seidel 1969a, 60-73) is preserved in fragmentary form in a Dunhuang manuscript, which was written in 612. Internal evidence suggests that the text was put together after 185 C.E., thirty years after the last noted descent of Laozi, and before the end of the Han dynasty, of whose overthrow it speaks. The date of composition is supported also by the *Laozi ming* 老子銘 (Inscription for Laozi), which was written on a stele at Bozhou shortly after 165 (Seidel 1969a, 45-50, 121-28). Both texts match the worldview of the Daoist mass movements and show the deep veneration felt for the divinized Laozi in different segments of the population (Seidel 1969a, 73-78). In form, the texts contain stylized prose that describes the cosmic origins and powers of Laozi. The *Bianhua jing* also specifies his descents under various ancient dynasties as well as in Sichuan in the second century. It encourages believers to practice as the deity tells them, so they can be saved.

**Worldview**

An account of the worldview of groups of early medieval rebellious peasants must necessarily be speculative if not fictitious. Instead of attempting such an account, the worldview expressed in the *Taipingjing* and *Xiang'er* will be outlined, with reference to the Daoist movements when feasible. While it is impossible to prove that the rebels shared the views expressed in these texts, it is also difficult to argue that they were not to some extent influenced by them.

Authors and audience of these texts saw the world through several interpretative frameworks, one superimposed on the other. In the first place, they were under the impact of the worldview developed and promoted in scholarly circles, at court and among the leading bureaucrats, from the beginnings of the Han. However, styles and contents of the texts suggest that their authors came from a less glamorous social and educational background and remained even closer to the ideas and rituals of popular religion than their highly educated contemporaries, who also were attracted to some of those rituals (Harper 1982, 88). Finally, the values they held were “Daoist” in the sense of the ancient Daoist philosophers and the newly emerging religious beliefs.

The outlook of the texts encompassed all three layers, perhaps to varying degrees. The *Taipingjing* authors were more radically “Daoist” in their values and political aims, but the *Xiang'er* may have had a more lasting effect on the development of the religion. Due to the unequal lengths of the texts, much of the following will be based on the *Taipingjing*. I will attempt to give a full account of the authors’ views, not just of the points where they
differed from more widely accepted opinions. Their worldview was comprehensive and as such cohered in an internal logic, with the concept of life or destiny (ming 靈) at its center. Life permeated the whole of society through the flow of qi-vapors, goods and information which had to fluctuate and mix in order to protect the continuity and strength of life. To achieve this, early Daoism produced a new set of values and an accompanying set of rules for personal behavior and political management. In this respect the concept of life held the same function within the Daoist system of thought as did ritual propriety (li 禮) in Confucian doctrine.

THE WORLD was divided into three layers of a dominating heaven, a supportive earth and the realm of human beings, who were the creation of heaven and earth and also the basis for their existence. Heaven was simultaneously seen as a person who expressed and enforced his will, and as a principle that prevailed in the world. It was not unlike an order of nature, except that it was moral as well as physical. As principle, heaven authorized all expressions of “celestial will,” and was at once the supreme ruler and this ruler’s authorization (Hendrischke 1985, 85). Heaven’s rules, therefore, were binding and if they were not followed, disasters would occur that heaven could not prevent. It could provide warnings. Heaven was also the physical sky and by its movements could inform human beings about the propriety of their actions. All planetary irregularities, solar and lunar eclipses in particular, were caused by human action, because in nature as such there was no such disorder (Wang M. 1979, 92.366; Hendrischke 1985). But astronomy and astrology demanded learning and expertise, and the Taipingjing authors also relied on more direct messages. In particular, there was a widespread fascination with mysteriously discovered objects and texts of supposedly heavenly origin (see Seidel 1983).

The whole world was thought to be physically coherent, and human beings were in the central position of being responsible for the welfare of all. It was in line with this belief that Zhang Jue and his two brothers chose the titles “General for the Lords of Heaven, Earth and Humanity” when they became leaders of the Taiping movement. From similar considerations the Celestial Masters adhered to the traditional seasonal rules (yueling 月令; see Major 1993), that guided agricultural production and all other routines of daily life. All human action had cosmic repercussions. Yin-oriented actions among men, such as the consumption of wine (yin) in the marketplace (also yin), would give distress to the yang element and cause social disturbances (Wang M. 1979, chao 214).

However, yin-yang and five-phases theories were still in a formative stage, and the Taipingjing modified them to serve specific social aims. The need was proclaimed to always pair one unit of yang-quality with two units of yin-quality, because yang represented the odd number and yin the even. Yin, therefore, needed full support to allow it to grow to the right size. In
practical terms, this meant the prohibition of female infanticide and the mating of each man with two women (Wang M. 1979, 34-35.37). Similarly, the clearing of hills by fire was prohibited because it would assemble too much yang (Wang M. 1979, 118.668). These measures, irrespective of their socio-political merits, were authorized by the claim to properly integrate human activities into the forces of the cosmos. The performance of large rituals, through which the imperial court attempted to symbolically safeguard cosmic harmony and cooperation, were not within the power of the rebel leaders. Instead, they proposed direct measures that could be implemented by individuals and small communities.

MORAL NORMS. How did a Han dynasty person know how to act, in private as well as in public life? The moral norms were those propagated by Confucius and his followers, and were to be learned from classical scriptures. In other words, all action was guided by moral considerations that were to be learned through education. Speculation about heaven and the five phases, together with other prognostic techniques, were not meant to compete with or oppose this basic orientation, but rather to support it. Laozi and Zhuangzi had criticized moral values and argued that evil came from the attempt to be good. However, the Xiang'er sided with the Huainanzi and the intellectual mainstream when it attributed a new meaning to Laozi’s programmatic statement that heaven and earth were not benevolent (ch. 5): here heaven and earth “are benevolent to all those who are good and not benevolent to those who are bad.” Similarly, in stressing the virtue of quietude as control over emotions and desires, the text also promoted conventional moral thinking (see also Bokenkamp 1997, 53). To interpret the demand for wuwei as a warning against deceit and fabrications (Bokenkamp 1997, 51) again turns Laozi’s sayings back to conventional morality. This is echoed in Zhang Lu’s attempt to make business transactions honest (Sanguo zhi 8.263; Huayang guozhi 華陽國志 2.72). Still, both major texts also had an alternative value system, oriented towards the cyclical course of nature and the natural organism of living creatures rather than the socio-cultural traditions that had informed Confucian as well as early quietist thought.

While not taking issue with the well-known parameters of moral conduct, the Taiping jing proposed significant modifications. Filial piety, for instance, was not understood as strict obedience and punctual service, but as providing one’s father and mother with recipes for longevity (Wang M. 1979, 47.134). The main virtue to be propagated and adhered to was “life,” or the preservation and prolongation of life and its qualities, namely flexibility, softness, mobility as well as pervasiveness and penetrability. In a formal sense the concept of life as virtue and behavioral norm is comparable to the ritual propriety of the Confucians, which refers to a state of things, a set of actions and also to the attitude behind these actions. The
term “pervading the extremes” (dongji 洞極) points to the value of life and “Scripture of Complete Pervasion” (Dongji jing 洞極緩) served as the title for a book whose history has much in common with the Taiping jing (Kaltenmark 1979, 25).

Hegi 和氣, the harmonization of energies in ritual sexual intercourse, was a related concept of great practical relevance (Maspero 1981, 533-36; Kobayashi 1992). Arguments in its favor can be found in the Xiang’er (Bokenkamp 1997, 46) as well as in the Taiping jing (Hendrischke 1992, 67), presenting it as a way to create general pervasiveness and prevent blockage (Wang M. 1979, 86.317; Hendrischke 1992, 77). The individual, therefore, carried the responsibility for causing a standstill of natural cycles and processes, thus interrupting the link between heaven and humanity and precipitating the end of humankind. In this respect, the most important human duty was to produce offspring and be sexually active—the Taiping jing makes no distinction between the two but contains violent attacks against chastity as a crime against heaven and earth (Wang M. 1979, 117.658). The Xiang’er’s attacks against coitus interruptus can also be seen in this light because the practice would block the proper flow of qi. Intercourse must, the text says, take place “at the right time” and, as in cultivating a field, go into the right soil. If not, the qi of heaven and earth will suffer an interruption (Wang M.1979, 733; Eichhorn 1954b, 473-74).

POLITICS AND SOCIETY. In the political realm, the Taiping jing authors demanded that life be promoted by guaranteeing wide-ranging communication. Information must flow freely in all directions, particularly news of inauspicious omens and complaints from the people, but also all types of suggestions, ideas and teachings; to receive instruction and not to pass it on was considered evil (Hendrischke 1992, 74-75). Communication happened mainly as a distribution of texts; from below, suggestions would reach the leaders, who would scrutinize them and issue a selection as new guidelines. Even contact with deities and spirits was upheld through the written word.

The need for open fluctuation was general and encompassing. If society was to represent life, it had to remain in a state of constant flux that included everyone and everything. This meant that commodities must not be hoarded but always circulated, that everyone consuming goods should also participate in their production. All were expected to contribute to social order and coherence from their particular point in the social hierarchy. This “contribution” could also contain individual anger and protest, so that the suffering of incarcerated prisoners or of mothers whose newborn girls were not permitted to live had an impact on society as a whole because heaven took note of it and turned their distress back on society (Wang M. 1979, 35.36). It was, therefore, only reasonable to expect political leaders to take note of these things and show concern. Similarly, popular discontent
was a serious issue, and the government had to safeguard the people’s peace of mind as much as their need to eat, dress and have children.

**SELF CULTIVATION.** Social peace was seen as the condition for individual longevity, as Wang Mang had claimed when he said that the quality of his reign caused life-prolonging mushrooms to sprout (HHS 99A.4050). Celestial rewards and punishments, be they for communal or individual actions, consisted mainly in prolonging or shortening life. The criterion for distinguishing right from wrong action was the promotion as opposed to the obstruction of life. While the agenda of the *Taiping jing* was mainly communal, individuals were also expected to directly prolong their own life. The text contains extensive information on dietary practices, medical substances and treatment, magical talismans and the movement of *qi* and winds—all techniques shamanic practitioners would have employed (Kaltenmark 1979, 42-43). Behavioral rectitude also played a role, because it was closely watched by a person’s body gods who controlled illness and good health (Miyakawa 1983, 489; Seidel 1969a, 71; Wang M.1979, chao 719).

*Meditation* was seen as another way of achieving physical health, with the *Xiang’er* propagating spiritual concentration as a means to quietude and lack of desires, not unlike the ways described in the “Xinshu” 心術 (Arts of the Heart) and other chapters of the *Guanzi* (Bokenkamp 1997, 41; see also Roth 1999). The *Taiping jing*, on the other hand, in line with the *Laozi bianhuajing* (Seidel 1969a, 71), introduced more technical practices that involved the visualizing of colors and body gods (*shouyi* 招一; Kaltenmark 1979, 41-42). In addition, both texts claimed that meditation served to alleviate any faults committed and thus was an essential step towards producing a confession that would recover health.

The sequence of good and bad times formed the overall framework for moral and political decision-making. In accordance with dominant Han thinking, it was seen in terms of a golden age of Great Peace, followed by a period of decadence, flowing along in extended cycles. While early Daoists agreed with this in principle, they had also a more linear conception of time, seeing the general deterioration reach a point of no return and the end of humankind (Petersen 1990b). This gave more urgency to their programs than more traditionally oriented reformers could muster. The *Taiping jing* conceptualized this view of history by introducing the term “inherited evil” (chengfu 行負). This meant that for many generations, through communal and individual malpractices, evil had been collectively accumulated and would soon lead to natural disasters and epidemics that would stifle all life (Hendrischke 1992). The imminent danger of extinction demanded new ways of information and missionary mobilization; it could also have been behind the proposed need for mass organization, antigovernment propaganda, armed uprisings and resistance, secession and
even the replacement of the emperor as they became manifest in the Later Han movements. Numerical speculation provided additional arguments for the urgency of reforms, and the rebels’ use of the jiazi year makes sense in this context, although in the Taipingjing the date given for the introduction of reforms is the less prominent xuanjia (Wang M. 1979, 102.495).

The concept of inherited evil was central; it was the result of actions which caused blockages of various kinds and lead to loss of life:

Since the beginning of heaven and earth, unfavorable evil influences have never been eliminated: when they were eliminated they arose again. Why is this? Now, longevity is the most valuable celestial treasure, which is a special gift to the virtuous; it cannot be obtained by pretense. If you want to know something about this treasure: when the myriad beings of heaven and earth, in all six directions and the eight distances, have not a single reason for hidden resentment and are very happy, only then will you gain longevity. (Wang M. 1979, 11.22)

Inherited evil made the fate of the individual depend on that of humankind and further connected individual actions to the fate of future generations. This was of greater relevance than individual afterlife, which the Taipingjing only mentions in criticisms of fancy and expensive burial rites. This followed the general trend among intellectuals but also put forward new arguments based on the Daoist value of life. To serve the dead to the material detriment of the living was evil and to spoil the spirits of the dead with luxurious offerings would draw them back into the world of the living where they did not belong (Wang M. 1979, 36.49).

**Practices**

Daoist movements grew out of a tradition of mass movements and shared with them elements of military organization, religious activity and rituals for political authorization. In some ways they were more mass movements than Daoist; their causes, formation, development and rituals were largely within the parameters of previous movements, which used the supernatural for legitimation and contained a touch of millenarianism. It is impossible to say how original the Daoist practices were that the texts describe for the outgoing second century C.E., because there is no equivalent information about other movements. As it stands, one may argue that the Daoists produced alternative institutions and organizations that seriously contended for political and ideological dominance. However, we cannot conclude that the Red Eyebrows, who had an extended and successful movement, had nothing of that sort simply because the sources choose not to speak about it (Bielenstein 1954, 144).

**GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.** One characteristic practice of the early movements was their missionary activity. Zhang Jue sent eight
disciples out into the world to convert people to the true doctrine and gradually take over the world (HHS 71.2299; Eichhorn 1955, 298). In doing so he was imitating both Wang Mang (HHS 99.4066; Dubs 1955, 184) and the sage-ruler Shun (Shi ji 1.35). Similarly, the Taiping jing has six disciples of the Celestial Master go everywhere and convert political power holders (Wang M.1979, 86.320), spreading the good word in the manner of the bad, which tends to travel very fast as ten messengers each inform ten others (Wang M.1979, 37.58). In addition, heaven had issued texts for the benefit of the Celestial Master to hand to his disciples, who in turn should present them to an enlightened political ruler for implementation (Wang M. 1979, 96.422), or find and authorize yet others to do the task for them (Wang M. 1979, 67.255). This transmission was accompanied by oral instruction, as the heavenly texts were brief and cryptic, instruction given by the Celestial Master to his followers, whom he addressed as “perfected” and invited to raise questions and comments. These, in the Taiping jing, were followed by short dialogues leading up to a long speech interrupted only by voices of approval, which contained threats as well as promises to oblige the audience to do as they were told. Nothing prevents us from imagining that Zhang Jue or Zhang Ling had similar talks with their disciples to prepare them for missionary work, which they undertook in obedience to heavenly command and initiative.

CONFESSION OF SINS. Shamanic and exorcistic skills also played an important role in the movements. Practitioners learned the Yellow Emperor’s teachings on the human body and memorized Laozi’s lines on the cycle of nature and the value of life, and were thus equipped for spiritual medical practice. Zhang Jue is said to have called himself “great physician” (HHS 24.290) and to have carried the staff with nine knots, a shamanist tool, which he raised when issuing a magic talisman (Dianluo, Sanguo zhizhu 8.264). All harm came from the spirits, and accordingly the talismans, written in complex, artistic and highly symbolic characters, were addressed to otherworld officials begging for protection and support. Some talismans also depicted constellations (Wang Y. 1996, 270). They would be burnt to provide patients with “talisman water” (fushui 符水), which they would receive respectfully and swallow as if it were medicine (Strickmann 1985, 191-92). If healed in a short time, the patient was promoted into the ranks of the “believers.” Illnesses and other troubles were often assumed to be caused by ghosts of deceased family members. Therefore, grave-securing writs (zhenmu wen 鎮墓文) were issued: “Let the odium of the soil be driven off, with the desire that evil be kept from propagating. Once these orders have been transmitted, the civil servants of the earth shall be bound and are not to trouble the Zhang household again. Quickly, quickly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances!” (Nickerson 1997, 244).
PERSONAL PRACTICES. While spirits and demons were responsible for sending diseases, they would normally not act on their own account. The underlying causes were trespasses committed by the patient, for which he was punished by illness. Therefore, the sick were expected to confess their wrong doings in order to be healed. The histories report in great detail on this form of diagnosis (see HHS 71.2299, 75.2435; Sanguo zhi 8.263; Dianlue, Sanguo zhizhu 264). While confession was also a Buddhist practice this does not necessarily mean that the Daoists borrowed it from them (Stein 1963, 35), although their practitioners did possess a range of insignia from different backgrounds to impress their audience, and certain Buddhist rituals were popular. Yu Ji, or Gan Ji, for example, was a famous healer who handled talismans in the form of a spate as tokens of his shamanic inheritance, and burned incense (which shows that he had met with Buddhists). Daoist hagiography promoted him to the ranks of the immortals after Sun Ce had him executed (Sanguo zhi 46.1110; Miyakawa 1964, 98; Petersen 1989).

The integration of confessions into medical treatments is mentioned for both Daoist movements, but if we are to trust the historians, confession was given more prominence among the Celestial Masters. The latter expected the sick to withdraw to so-called “chambers of quietude” or “oratories” (jingshi 靜室; see Dianlue, Sanguo zhizhu 8.264; HHS 75.2436; Yoshikawa 1987), where they were to meditate on their mistakes while a “libationer in charge of controlling evil” (jianling jijiu 妖令祭酒; Sanguo zhi 264) presided over the communal recital of the “Text in Five Thousand Words” in a ceremony called “controlling the evil.” Once the patient had made a confession, the “demon official” (guili 鬼吏) would write down all offenses, together with the patient’s name, and send both in form of a petition (zhang 章) to the Three Bureaus of heaven (by exposure on a mountain), earth (by interment) and water (by submerging) (Dianlue, Sanguo zhizhu 8.264; see Tsuchiya 1994).

Even if this practice of confession was an adaptation of Buddhist practices, it became specifically Daoist through this bureaucratic procedure (Zürcher 1980, 135-36). It was not only reserved for the sick, but was a form of “self examination” (zixin 自隠) that had to be undertaken by everyone. For retribution, people were sent to repair roads, working on a hundred feet to make up for a small offense (guo 过), which was not yet a sin (zai 罪). Only after three violations of the divine law (fan/a 反法) would someone be subjugated to formal punishment (Sanguo zhi 8.263; HHS 75.2436). With this, early Daoists laid the foundation for a long tradition of wide-ranging religious precepts for enforcing moral norms through announcing punishments and rewards to be meted out by a spiritual bureaucracy. This can be seen in the Taiping jing and in the Xiang'er lists of precepts (Bokenkamp 1993; 1997, 49-52). These precepts differed from the more
narrowly defined secular penal code, with its focus on social order rather than moral improvement, and offered the religious community some protection against it.

**SOCIAL ORGANISATION.** To treat and heal diseases was the economic and social basis of the movements, not only because those who were healed were expected to pay the practitioner’s services but also because healing created a cohesive, inclusive society. When outlaws endangered security, for example, a locality was expected to organize communal gatherings which involved everyone, even the local villains. All were assembled, seated according to their social position, given wine and addressed by a person in charge to help the authorities to track down the bandits (Kaltenmark 1979, 32; Wang M.1979, 35.39-42). Similarly, to improve the society, all regions were covered by a network of suggestion boxes, which were regularly emptied and their contents evaluated and selectively made public to arrive at political guidelines (Hendrischke 1992, 79). The official Han system of guest houses for the poor, distributed along the roads at regular distances, was kept intact and expanded (Stein 1963, 64). Travellers were provided with food and its distribution was controlled by religious precepts: those who took more than they needed would fall ill (HHS 75.2435; Sanguo zhi 8.263).

Social justice was also an issue—the rich who hoarded valuables were called “rats in the granary” in an allusion to the Shijing 齊絳 (Book of Songs); those able-bodied but not working were not to eat; punishments were evil because they caused resentment and excluded individuals from the flux of society and the cycle of reproduction (Wang M.1979, 67.243-247; 47.144; 39.68). The Daoists also adhered to generally accepted calendar rules, avoiding killing in spring and summer and prohibiting the slaughter of animals and the consumption of alcohol (Dianlue, Sanguo zhizhu 8.264; Wang M. 1979, chao 214; see Seidel 1969a, 71).

**Administration.** It is difficult to know how the movements were administered, but we gain some idea from institutional terminology which they used, especially since it was customary to advertise political intentions through newly designed administrative terms (this had been practised by Qin Shihuang, Wang Mang and others).

First, the territory reigned over by the Celestial Masters consisted of twenty-four commanderies or parishes (zhǐ 祇; HHS 8.349) to be governed and “healed” (zhì 治). Each had an altar platform (tan 坛) for religious services at its center (Stein 1963, 15). The number twenty-four was of speculative value, twice the twelve of the branches and months, and also representing the twenty-four two-week periods of the agricultural year. Among the Yellow Turbans, the figure was thirty-six, which had a long tradition in that Qin Shihuang had redesigned China as an empire consisting of thirty-six commanderies (jun 郡), and the Hanshu counts thirty-
six countries to China's west (Shiji 6.239; Hanshu 96A.3871). Beyond its speculative and historical role, this number was also linked to other Taiping institutions, in that thirty-six "generals" (jiangjun 將軍) would protect Zhang Jue and his eight emissaries in each of the four directions (Eichhorn 1955, 298).

There was no clear-cut distinction between the names for administrative personnel and the units or places to be administered. While fang 方, as a non-technical term, means "region," the "ten thousand fang" of the Shijing 書經 (Book of History) were the overseers of regions (Eichhorn 1955, 298; Legge 1960, 184-85). In the Yellow Turban environment such ambiguity may well have been intentional (see Sanguo zhi 46.1094). Under Zhang Jue, a "great fang" was a general in charge of at least ten thousand people, a small fang controlled six or seven thousand, and each fang installed his own chiefs (qushi 秩師; HHS 71.2299). This points to a structural decentralization that is in line not only with the Laozi and Huainanzi, but also with the administrative policies suggested in the Taiping jing. It also represents a highly practicable approach for the movements to employ.

The administrative terms used by the Taiping and the Celestial Masters followed patterns that had been established in earlier movements. The Red Eyebrows, for example, had installed thirty "camps" (ying 营), each with ten thousand men and led by a "leader" (jurun 巨人) who was assisted by an "attendant" (congshi 從事). In addition, they had senior officers known as the "thrice venerable" (sanlao 三老), "libationers" (jijiu 祭酒) and "clerks" (zushi 孜史) HHS 11.479; Hanshu 99C.4171; see Dubs 1955, 416). The Hanshu pointed out that these titles, except for jurun, referred to local officials and represented a gross understatement in that the numbers commanded were much larger than the titles suggested. While jurun was not an official title, it was a customary appellation of leading personalities, as in the jü of the Mohists and the jushi of the Yellow Turbans. The rebels also addressed each other with this appellation (HHS 11.478).

The hierarchy. In both movements the leader was known as the "master" (shi 師). Thus Zhang Jue was called the "great sage and good master" (daxian liangshi 大賢良師; HHS 71.2299). This designated his role as a dynastic teacher, similar to the "Celestial Master" of the Taiping jing, and to Laozi as the teacher of dynasties in the Bianhua jing (Seidel 1969b, 221; 1969a, 53). Zhang Lu chose the title "Lord Master" (shijun 師君) for himself.

Next, the leader of a commandery was called a "commandery head and great libationer" (zhitou da jijiu 治頭大祭酒; Sanguo zhi 8.263) or also a "village head" (litou 里頭; HHS 75.2435). The title of libationer was granted to all followers of the Celestial Masters who were proven believers, while new entrants were referred to as "demon soldiers" (guigu 鬼卒), as if they owed corvee service to the demons (Stein 1963, 42). The title "libationer"
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in the Han had been reserved for a respected local leader of high moral impact who also functioned as master of ceremonies at communal gatherings (Stein 1963, 53-55). He (there is no hint of women libationers in the second-century movements) was in charge of the “houses of righteousness” (yishe 義舍). These served as centers of communal life and, depending on their location, might also have doubled as chambers of quietude (Stein 1963, 65-66). Libationers fulfilled all administrative duties, replacing the local chiefs and clerks of the secular state (Sanguo zhi 8.263). Among the Celestial Masters even minor officials were literate and their religious functions involved writing.

Spiritual and administrative leadership was united in one person, an innovation that can be described as a form of theocracy. Before the Daoists, armies had always been accompanied by shamanic practitioners for the sake of spiritual protection, but they were never identical with army leaders or officers, not even in a rebellious army like that of the Red Eyebrows. Gan Ji followed the army as a shaman but was treated by officers as their superior. Sun Ce was outraged by this and had him executed in order to reestablish the traditional division of labor and rank (Jiang biao zhuan; Sanguo zhi 46.1110). When Marxist scholars have interpreted such controversies as instances of class conflict they have a point, in that the background and social network of a religious practitioner might have differed from that of a regular official (Harrison 1970, 168). When historians see Zhang Lu’s political success as closely linked to the libationers’ activities, they give due credit to the movement’s administrative innovativeness (Sanguo zhi 8.263).

The titles used under Sun En tell a different story. When he refers to his followers as “the long-lived,” he stresses the movement’s focus on individual salvation, independent of social surroundings (Jinshu 100.2632). Sun En announced political ambitions by calling himself the “general who subjugates the east,” to which Lu Xun added “general pacifying the south” (Jinshu 100.2632, 2634). Sun Tai, moreover, was seen as a deity and given property and children in exchange for the obtaining of good fortune. This is different from the early movements, where leaders had been divinely appointed messengers but were not themselves gods (but see Mugitani 1977, 46).

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. The Pantheon. While Zhang Jue certainly believed in Heaven, the historians’ phrase “he called himself the Great Peace of Yellow Heaven” is a polemical inaccuracy (Sanguo zhi 46.1094; HHS 8.348). However, the rebel leader proclaimed the need to achieve Great Peace through promoting Heaven’s original intentions which, he asserted, had so often been misunderstood. In their petitions to the celestial powers, the Yellow Turbans used specifically “petitions in the Yue style directed to the Yellow Divine” (huangshenyuezhang 黃神越章; Liu 1996, 125). Their garb was yellow, and it was expected that the new Yellow
Heaven would replace the bluish heaven of old (Liu 1996, 130; Fang 1993, 10). The fact that the two colors can be seen as opposites (Mozi 2/3/1) adds additional relevance to their use by Zhang Jue. In short, he felt the need to set up a new “Yellow Heaven” (HH5 71. 2299), just as he transformed the well-established deity Taiyi (the Great One) into Zhonghuang taiyi 中黃太一, the Great One of the Central Yellow (Sanguo zhi 1.10; Seidel 1969a, 58). The deity was thereby linked to the Yellow Emperor and to Huanglao jun, the Yellow Venerable Lord and an incorporation of Laozi.

The Laozi bianhua jing states that this deity created the world and continued to appear in manifestations to advise its rulers—among them the Yellow Emperor. On nine different occasions, the last in 155 C.E., he had transformed himself into a human being in order to save humankind from ruin, and had promised his believers that he would open prisons, heal the ill and overthrow the Han dynasty (Seidel 1969a, 73). Laozi also played a prominent role in the saga of Zhang Lu’s grandfather, Zhang Ling or Daoling (Kleeman 1998, 66-68). In 142, the deified Laozi installed him as the first Celestial Master by appearing to him in person and concluding the “Covenant of Orthodox Unity.” This event is first mentioned in the Dadiao jia lingjv, possibly as early as 255 (Bokenkamp 1997, 171). The event later came to be celebrated as the foundation of Daoism as an organized religion. The veneration of Laozi centered on the “Text in Five Thousand Words” (Seidel 1969b, 222), the recitation of which was believed to bring magical powers, heal diseases, grant longevity and allow visions of the deity. In conjunction with the Xiang’er commentary, the scripture also provided a set of basic behavioral rules (Kohn 1998b).

Ritual practices. Some practices, allegedly performed by Zhang Lu’s non-Chinese followers, anticipate later Daoist rituals. These included things such as rolling in mud and soot, smearing one’s face with yellow soil, and self-flagellation (Eichhorn 1955, 319). There were also orgies of fertility or life energy that involved the consumption of alcohol and sexual intercourse, and in which men were encouraged to strengthen their yang energy through interrupted sex with a number of women (Maspero 1981, 535-38). This became a characteristic of Sun En’s movement.

The Hou Hanshu claims that the Yellow Turbans killed human beings as sacrifices to Heaven, at least when Zhang Jue installed himself and his brothers as “generals.” This practice is difficult to link to the rest of the Yellow Turban program and has perhaps for this reason not been accepted into the Zizhi tongjian account. The remark could refer to executions that were called “sacrifices” (ji 祭), or perhaps to offerings of human figurines made from lead or other materials (qianren 金人). Such figurines were sent to the world of the dead to take the place of a deceased family member who might be atoning for wrongs done while alive. This custom may have been part of early Daoist rituals (Zhang 1996, 265).
From the beginnings of the Celestial Master movement, regular assemblies featuring ritual activities, communal meals and matters of practical concern were held (Stein 1979, 70-71). The “three assemblies” (sanhui 三會) took place on the seventh day of the first month (shortly after New Year), on the seventh day of the seventh month (at the beginning of autumn) and on the fifth day of the tenth month (after the harvest). The first served to inform the deities of changes in the congregations, the second to propagate precepts and regulations and the third was the time of the payment of taxes (Ofuchi 1991, 407). These three assemblies may have corresponded to the three otherworldly bureaus (sanguan 三官) of heaven, earth and water (Ofuchi 1991, 408-9). Later, the three major assemblies were held to honor the Three Primes (sanyuan 三元); they superseded the sanhui and occurred on the fifteenth of the first, seventh and tenth months (Stein 1979, 70-71).

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CHAPTER SEVEN

ELIXIRS AND ALCHEMY

FABRIZIO PREGADIO

DESCRIPTION

Chinese alchemy (金丹 jīndān, “Golden Elixir,” or 煉金術 liàn jīn shù, “art of refining gold”) developed in two main branches along its two thousand years of documented history. The first branch, 外丹 wàidān or “external alchemy,” focuses on the compounding of elixirs through the refining of natural substances. The second, 内丹 nèidān or “inner alchemy,” aims to regenerate the primary constituents of the cosmos and the human person. Although the two designations are conventional (Robinet 1991), they are generally accepted in Chinese, Japanese and Western language studies.

Research on the history, doctrines and practices of wàidān is limited by the number of available sources, along with the unknown or uncertain date and complex language of many documents. Despite these limitations and ambiguities, the received texts do provide evidence of a basic feature: their transmission and their relationship to the doctrinal and textual corpus show that the history of wàidān has been characterized by a progressive shift of concern from the world of gods and demons to abstract cosmological speculation. This transition culminated around the sixth-seventh centuries, and not only affected the history of wàidān but also paved the way for the rise of nèidān.

HISTORY

EARLIEST REFERENCES. Virtually nothing is known about the origins of alchemy in China or about the people who first sought elixirs. Early scriptures ascribe their teachings and methods to revelations granted by immortals and divine beings, and do not provide reliable historical details. The belief in a medicine of immortality (仙藥 xiānyào), typically found on remote mountains and islands (Needham et al.1976, 1-12), must have paralleled the early development of wàidān, but reciprocal influences can hardly be assessed beyond their partially shared background.

Despite speculations on Zou Yan’s (ca. 350-270 B.C.E.) role in the origin of alchemy, no extant source documents his relation to wàidān, and
no text on the elixirs was ever ascribed to him. The writings of the cosmological school of thought (Hanshu 30), of which Zou Yan is traditionally considered the founder, dealt with numerology and astrology, and extant fragments of works attributed to him are mainly concerned with the theory of dynastic succession (Needham 1956, 236-38; Sivin 1995, 10-12). Equally questionable is the relevance of an edict by Emperor Jingdi (r. 156-141) issued in 144 B.C.E. which forbids the counterfeiting of gold (Hanshu 5; Dubs 1938-55, 1:323). While some scholars have seen in this document the earliest allusion to alchemical processes in any civilization, the edict did not ban the making of elixirs but rather the private coining of money. According to Ying Shao's 应劭 (ab. 140-206) commentary, it abrogated a decree of the previous emperor who had allowed people to cast coins without authorization.

The earliest mention of alchemy in China occurs in connection with the fangshi 方士 ("masters of the methods"), specialists in cosmological and esoteric arts employed by rulers from the fourth century B.C.E. (Ngo 1976; DeWoskin 1981). Although few fangshi were skilled in elixir compounding, later tradition credits some of them with the transmission of alchemical texts and practices. The first is Li Shaojun 李少君 who, around 133 B.C.E., suggested that Han Wudi’s attempts to attain immortality would have benefited from the transmutation of cinnabar into an elixir. Eating and drinking from vessels made of alchemical gold would prolong the emperor’s life and enable him to meet transcendent beings (Shiji 28; t.l. Watson 1961, 2:39).

Elixir ingestion is first mentioned in the Yantie lun 盐铁論 (Discourse on Salt and Iron; Sivin 1968, 25-26), dating from ca. 60 B.C.E. Around the same time, details on alchemical texts emerge for the first time in connection with Liu Xiang’s 劉向 (first c. B.C.E.) failed attempt at making alchemical gold (Hanshu 36; Needham et al.1976, 13-14, 35). Liu apparently was inspired by a work now lost, the Hongbao yuanbi shu 鴻寶苑秘術 (Arts from the Garden of Secrets of the Great Treasure), that contained techniques for conjuring spirits and for making gold along with "important methods by Zou Yan for prolonging life." Bibliographic sources confirm that this and other writings compiled under the patronage of Prince Liu An 劉安 of Huainan (180-122) included sections devoted to alchemy (Le Blanc 1985, 43-45; Roth 1992, 23-25; t.l. of fragments in Needham et al.1976, 25-26). No explicit reference to alchemy appears in the Huainanzi 淮南子 (Writings of the Master of Huainan), but this work contains a passage on the natural evolution of minerals, a prominent notion in later waidan theory (see infra).

THE TAIQING TRADITION. Valuable documentation on the next historical stage of waidan is available in Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283-343) Baopuzi neipian 抱朴子内篇 (Inner Chapters of the Master Who Embraces Simplic-
ity, CT 1185, 20 j.; trl. Ware 1966; also Feifel 1941-46), first completed around 317 and revised around 330. Born into a family of the southern aristocracy near present-day Nanjing, Ge Hong became a disciple of Zheng Yin 郑隐 at the age of fourteen and studied under him for five years. He later served the imperial administration in various capacities. While Ge Hong acknowledges that he had not compounded any elixir by the time he wrote his 《Baopuzi》 (Ware 1966, 70), hagiographic accounts state that he retired to Mount Luofu late in life to devote himself to alchemical practices (see Ware 1966, 6-21; Davis 1934; Ōfuchi 1958; Chen 1980.)

In his work, Ge provides an overview of the religious, medical, exorcistic and esoteric practices prevalent in the southeastern region of Jiangnan, partly based on passages copied or summarized from scriptures that he had received from Zheng Yin (Robinet 1997, 78-113). Two chapters of the 《Baopuzi》 are especially devoted to alchemy. One (j. 4) focuses on the Taiqing jing 太清经 (Scripture of Great Clarity), the Jiudan jing 九丹经 (Scripture of the Nine Elixirs) and the Junye jing 金液经 (Scripture of the Golden Liquor), whose methods are mostly based on minerals. The other (j. 16) contains recipes centered on metals. Ge Hong says that the ritual context of the two sets of practices was similar, but the scriptures were transmitted by different lineages (Ware 1966, 261). In addition, the 《Baopuzi》 quotes, summarizes or alludes to many other waidan methods, mostly from unknown sources (Needham et al. 1976, 81-113).

References in later texts show that the three scriptures mentioned above formed the nucleus of the main alchemical corpus in early China. Their extant versions in the Daoist canon acquaint us with doctrines, rites and techniques of the early waidan tradition, named Taiqing 太清 (Great Clarity) after the Heaven that bestows their revelation (Pregadio 1991). Bearing no traces of re-editing by any single author or subtradition, these texts display a marked consistency in their main features: the same divinities confer their revelation; similar ceremonies regulate their transmission and the performance of their practices; communication with divine beings and expulsion of dangerous spirits are among the main purposes of the methods that they describe; and the major features of the techniques they expound are common to all of them.

Ge Hong's testimony also provides information on the history and nature of waidan in the early Six Dynasties. The three main texts, he says, were first brought to Jiangnan by Zuo Ci 左慈, a fangshi who had received them in revelation in Shandong at the end of the second century (Ware 1966, 69-70; Ngo 1976, 138-39). The 《Baopuzi》 closely reflects the interaction of the imported alchemical disciplines with the practices of the native southern tradition, which involved the ingestion of preparations based on plant products for exorcistic and therapeutic purposes (Yamada 1989). The elixirs shared
with them the power of healing illnesses and keeping away harmful spirits. At the same time, Ge Hong often emphasizes that alchemy grants access to higher spiritual realms and is therefore superior to healing, exorcism and other practices such as gymnastics, breathing or sexual techniques.

SHANGQING DAOISM AND ALCHEMY. Despite Ge Hong's claim, the alchemical practices described in the early waidan corpus and in the Baopuzi represent only an intermediate stage—both historically and doctrinally—between the local traditions of Jiangnan and the later developments in the religious history of the same area. For the history of Chinese alchemy, the first and most important of these developments were the Shangqing (Highest Clarity) revelations of 364-70. These led to a hierarchical rearrangement of the southern religious customs and their historical or legendary representatives which assigned waidan a place higher than that of ritual and exorcistic practices—in a way similar to Ge Hong's—but lower relative to the techniques privileged by Shangqing, especially meditation (Robinet 1984, 1: 35-48). Some earlier waidan figures (including Zuo Ci) found a place in the Shangqing rosters of semi-divine beings, and some Shangqing adepts did practice elixir compounding. The most distinguished among these was Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) who experimented with waidan in the first decade of the sixth century (Strickmann 1979, 143-51). Descriptions of alchemical practices found in Shangqing sources, however, include traits obviously related to meditation: in this tradition, the symbolic features of waidan became one of several available supports for visualization practices. Their emphasis on the inner aspects of the alchemical work anticipates traits that later characterize neidan (Strickmann 1979, 169-78; Robinet 1984, 1: 176-80).

Of equal importance for the history of alchemy is the continuity between the Taiqing scriptures and the Shangqing waidan sources. Language, techniques and rites are largely the same. This suggests that earlier texts were modified upon their incorporation into the Shangqing corpus, leaving the original core untouched. With the possible exception of the high number of elixir ingredients, in fact, no waidan technique can be identified as typical of Shangqing. Particularly notable is that the firing processes used in its texts are the same as those described in the Nine Elixirs (cf. Sivin 1980, 268-70 for a different view).

The inclusion of alchemical scriptures and methods in the Shangqing textual and doctrinal corpus marked the first encounter between waidan and an established Daoist movement. Relations between Daoism and alchemy were formally reaffirmed at the beginning of the sixth century, when the texts of the Taiqing tradition were included in one of the Four Supplements of the Daoist canon.
THE *ZHOUYI CANTONG QI* AND THE RISE OF *WAIDAN* COSMOLOGY. By the time the Taiqing tradition gained formal recognition, other lineages in Jiangnan had given rise to new patterns of *waidan* practice that were to play an important role in the history of alchemy, and eventually lead to the demise of *waidan* itself. While the Taiqing and Shangqing alchemical texts emphasized the performance of rites, a large number of later sources borrowed the language and emblems of the *Yijing* 易經 (Book of Changes) and of correlative cosmology to describe stages of cosmogony and corresponding cosmological configurations. Related practices were based on the compounding of an elixir made of lead and mercury, which replaced the broader range of ingredients typical of Taiqing and Shangqing alchemy.

The scripture that had the greatest influence on this shift was the *Zhouti cantong qi* 周易參同契 (Token for the Agreement of the Three According to the “Book of Changes;” trl. Zhou 1988, with a strong neidan bias; also Wu and Davis 1932). Traditionally attributed to the legendary immortal Wei Boyang 魏伯陽, the text in its original Han version probably was an apocryphon of the *Yijing*, containing cosmological speculations. During the Six Dynasties, the text circulated in Jiangnan (Pregadio forthcoming). Although some scholars have suggested that the received text was fabricated in the Tang (e.g., Fukui 1974, 29-30, and Chen G. 1983, 352-55), during the Six Dynasties the *Cantong qi* circulated in Jiangnan (Pregadio forthcoming). A poem by Jiang Yan 江淹 (444-505; trl. Waley 1930, 8), in particular, shows that it was used in connection with elixir compounding by 500 C.E. The text we have today was completed by about 700 C.E. (For more details on the early history of *Cantong qi* see the chapter “Inner Alchemy”).

The lineages that transmitted the alchemical *Cantong qi* during the Six Dynasties are unknown, but early materials for the study of the cosmological aspect of *waidan* are found in the fragmentary corpus of texts attributed to the legendary Hugangzi 狐剛子. After the writings quoted in chapter 16 of the *Baopuzi*, these are the first alchemical works to favor metals—especially lead and mercury—over minerals (Zhao 1985; Chen 1983, 303-9). Hagiographic accounts that describe Hugangzi as the disciple of Wei Boyang, and as the teacher of Ge Hong, imply that his lineage originated in Jiangnan; citations of his works in the seventh-century commentary to the “Nine Elixirs” show that the body of writings ascribed to him developed during the late Six Dynasties. The continuity between the earlier and the later alchemical traditions of southern China is also demonstrated by the early Tang *waidan* commentary to the *Zhouti Cantong qi zhu* (CT 1004), which includes quotations of methods attributed to Hugangzi along with references to the scripture of the “Nine Elixirs” (Pregadio forthcoming).
TANG ALCHEMY. Under the influence of the *Cantong qi*, alchemy was transformed from an instrument for communicating with supernatural beings to a support for intellectual speculation on the principles of being and the cosmos. This new model of alchemical theory and practice is not only visible in a substantial portion of Tang and Song *waidan* works, but also was a requisite for the development of *neidan*, which shares portions of its system with *waidan* and borrows some of its vocabulary. While *waidan* and early *neidan* co-existed for about five centuries, *waidan* continued to predominate during the Tang, a time often called “the golden age of Chinese alchemy.” The main trends of this period attest to the decline of the Taiqing tradition, paralleled by the growing importance acquired by doctrines and practices related to the *Cantong qi*.

No major original Taiqing works were produced after the Six Dynasties. The “Scripture of Great Clarity,” consisting of three chapters in Ge Hong’s time, was expanded to twelve chapters in the tenth century (*Nihonkoku genzai sho mokuroku* 日本國見在書目錄, sect. 37) and contained no less than sixty-two chapters in the Yuan canon (CT 1430, 2.2b). Materials added, however, consisted not only of alchemical methods but also of texts on *yangsheng* or Nourishing Life (Chen 1983, 491-96). The two main Taiqing sources dating from the Tang, then, consist of selections of *waidan* methods from these larger compilations. The better known is the *Taiqing danjing yaojue* 太清丹經要訣 (Essential Instructions from the Scriptures on the Elixirs of Great Clarity; *Yunji qiqian* 云笈七签; trl. Sivin 1968, 145-214), attributed to the physician and pharmacologist Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (581-682; see Sivin 1968, 81-144). His work is textually cognate with the other main Taiqing compilation of this period, the *Taiqing shibiji* 太清石壁記 (Records from the Stone Wall of the Great Clarity, CT 881).

The decline of the Taiqing tradition resulted in a tendency to focus the alchemical process on two major practices: the refining of mercury from cinnabar and the conjunction of lead and mercury. The importance gained by the former is documented in the works of Chen Shaowei 陳少微, an alchemist active in the eighth century who claimed descent from Xu Xun 許遜. Chen provides an elaborate account of the formation, varieties and symbolism of cinnabar (Sivin 1980, 237-40), and outlines a complex method for its refinement. With no explicit mention of the *Cantong qi* and no obvious reference to its system, his description of the process uses cosmological language and emblems, notably, in the portions on the stages of firing (Sivin 1980, 270-74).

The increased importance of the cinnabar-mercury methods in Tang *waidan* was countered by advocates of the other main practice, based on the conjunction of lead and mercury. Some Tang sources show that the rise to prominence of the *Cantong qi* was paralleled by arguments concerning the relative merits of the two processes (Ren 1990, 415; Chen 1983, 277). These
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sources reflect the importance progressively acquired by lead and mercury through their explicit rejection of cinnabar and mercury, with the usual rationale that *yin* (mercury) or *yang* (cinnabar) alone cannot produce the elixir. Historically, the lead-mercury theory was the successful model. Virtually all major doctrinal developments of Tang *waidan* are directly related to the supremacy gained by the tradition of the *Cantong qi*, whose representatives took alchemical theory to maturity.

**Literati and emperors.** The Tang period is also known for the interest in alchemy shown by literati and certain emperors. The former is visible in poems by Li Bo 李白 (701-762; Waley 1950, 55-56) and Bo Juyi 白居易 (772-746; Ho, Goh, and Parker 1974; Yoshikawa 1997), both attracted to the *Cantong qi*. Other poets—Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689-740), Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772-843) and Liu Zongyuan 劉宗元 (773-819)—also refer to elixir compounding in their works. The trend continued in Song and later times when the focus of interest shifted to *neidan* (Ho 1985, 195-203).

Imperial patronage of alchemical practices, an early example of which was seen with Li Shaojun, continued throughout and intensified in the Tang (Li 1994). During the Six Dynasties, several emperors had issued orders to compound alchemical medicines for their own benefit (Needham et al. 1976, 117-19, 131-32). Under the Tang, the imperial fascination with alchemy resulted in the death of at least two sovereigns due to elixir poisoning. According to the materials collected by Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1814) in his *Nian'er shi zhai* 廿二史倉記 (Notes on the Twenty-two Dynastic Histories; 1799), Xianzong (r. 805-20), Wuzong (r. 840-46) and Xuanzong (r. 846-59) died after ingesting elixirs. Doubts, however, have been raised as to the exact circumstances of Xianzong’s death (Barrett 1996, 78-79). Muzong (820-24), too, may have died of elixir ingestion, and Jingzong (824-27) certainly was involved in elixir compounding. Some alchemical sources also provide details on the emperors’ relation to *waidan*: one of the compounds described in the *Tongxuan bishu* 通玄秘術 (Secret Arts for Penetrating the Mystery, CT 942, 14b-15a), for example, is said to have been presented to Yizong (r. 859-73).

Instances of elixir poisoning are also documented in other milieux. It has been suggested that Chinese alchemists either ignored the toxicity of some ingredients, tried to neutralize it with antidotes, or interpreted symptoms of poisoning as collateral effects (Ho and Needham 1970; Ho 1985, 184-87). In some instances, as indicated by Michel Strickmann (1979, 136-38), deadly preparations may also have been consciously ingested by alchemists as a means to accelerate their ascension to the ranks of celestial bureaucracy.

**The shift to neidan.** Although elixir poisoning is sometimes designated as a reason for the decline of *waidan* after the Tang, the shift to *neidan* was
the result of a much longer and more complex process. As shown by some
texts that emphasize their close relation, *waidan* and early *neidan* developed
together throughout the Tang (Needham and Lu 1983, 218-29). Not only
did *waidan* inspire the rise and growth of *neidan*, but influences also occurred
in the opposite direction, with *neidan* contributing to the priority accorded
to lead-mercury processes in *waidan* and influencing its language accord¬
ingly. The association between *waidan* and *neidan* is visible in a number of
Tang and later texts, difficult to classify under either label because their
doctrinal aspects apply to both.

On the other hand, most *waidan* sources since the Song consist of an¬
thologies from earlier works (Needham et al. 1976, 196-208) or deal with
metallurgical methods (*huangbai shu* 黃白術). Imperial interest in alchemy
continued, with Zhenzong (r. 997-1022) establishing a laboratory in the
Imperial Academy, and Wangjie 王摠 offering the emperor “artificial gold
and silver amounting to many tens of thousands of cash” (Needham et
al. 1976, 184-85, 186-90). Texts were written and elixirs also were com¬
pounded later (Ho 1985, 210-17), but after the Tang virtually the whole
soteriological import of alchemy was transferred to *neidan*.

**Texts**

The *Waidan Corpus*. *Waidan* literature consists of works devoted to
doctrinal foundations, descriptions of single methods, anthologies, com¬
mentaries on earlier texts, and writings on *materia medica*. About one hun¬
dred *waidan* works are contained in the Daoist canon, including some in the
*Yunji qiqian* (CT 1032; Lagerwey 1982, xlv). Certain sources have come
down to us also outside of the canon (Zhang 1981, 25-30), but many have
been lost (Chen 1963, 398-419).

Two studies by Ho Peng Yoke (1979) and Chen G. (1983, 285-381) il¬
lustrate useful techniques for dating alchemical texts (see also Sivin 1968,
59-80). This is a significant issue since no more than ten sources bear reli¬
able dates, and at present only two dozen or so of the others can be dated
with adequate accuracy. Until more work is done along the lines set by
these studies, the best way to deal with the *waidan* corpus as a whole is to
classify texts according to broad historical stages and subcategories based
on content, genre and relation to known lineages and trends. Historical
studies of alchemical terminology can also help in dating sources and estab¬
lishing groups of cognate texts, but so far only one pioneering attempt has
been made in this direction (Chen 1983, 1-283).

The following survey is loosely arranged according to the above criteria.
More detailed systematic overviews of the *waidan* literature include Need¬
ham et al. 1976, 50-220; Zhang 1981; Zhao 1989; Meng 1993a, 41-117; and
the relevant entries in Ren and Zhong 1991. For an annotated bibliography of research in Western languages see Pregadio 1996.

TAIQING TEXTS AND THEIR RECEIVED VERSIONS. The early waidan corpus is based on the three main works summarized by Ge Hong in Baopuzi 4. The first is the Taiqing jing. The original text is lost, but Ge Hong’s summary matches quotations in the Taiqing jing tianshi koujue 太清經天師口訣 (Oral Instructions of the Celestial Master on the Scripture of the Great Clarity, CT 883, 15 pp.), which dates from the Six Dynasties (Pregadio 1991, 571-74). Although the “Oral Instructions” does not make a reconstruction of the whole process possible, the text includes significant materials such as those on the ritual of transmission and on the preparation of the crucible.

The second scripture is the Jiudan jing or Nine Elixirs, extant in two versions: in the Huangdi jiuding shenjuan jingjue (Instructions on the Scripture of the Divine Elixirs of the Nine Tripods of the Yellow Emperor, CT 885), which also has an anonymous commentary in nineteen chapters dating from the latter half of the seventh century; and in the Jiuzhou liuzhu shenxian jiudan jing 九轉流珠神仙九丹經 (Scripture of the Liquid Pearl in Nine Cycles and of the Nine Elixirs of the Divine Immortals, CT 952, 2 j.), written no later than the early Tang (Meng 1993a, 103-6). The Nine Elixirs is one of the few texts that describe a complete alchemical process, from the preliminary rites to the ingestion of the elixir (Pregadio 1991, 582-606). It includes an introduction on the revelation of the methods, the properties of the alchemical medicines and various ritual rules, and the methods for making two preliminary compounds and the Nine Elixirs.

Ge Hong’s citations from the third text, the Jinye jing or Scripture of the Golden Liquor (Ware 1966, 89-91), are extremely synthetic and are not arranged in the correct sequence. The method becomes clearer in the received version, with a commentary, found in the first chapter of the Baopuzi shenxian jinzhua jing 抱朴子神仙金汋經 (Scripture of the Golden Liquid of the Divine Immortals, by the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 917, 3 j.; Meng 1993a, 67-69; Pregadio 1991, 574-78). The other two chapters include the whole j. 4 of the Baopuzi. Quotations in the Xiaodao lun (Laughing at the Dao; Kohn 1995, 127-29) from both text and commentary show that the present version took shape before 570 C.E.

The Sanshi liu shuifa 三十六水法 (Methods of the Thirty-six Aqueous Solutions, CT 930, 12 pp.) is concerned with preparations used as intermediate stages in the compounding of elixirs, and is often cited in the texts mentioned above. The received text (trl. Ts’ao, Ho, and Needham 1959, exc. last sect. on ritual) contains fifty-nine methods for the solution of forty-two minerals (Needham et al.1980, 167-210; Meng 1993a, 91-96). Quotations in the commentary to the Nine Elixirs show that the methods for the
last seven substances were added to those for the first thirty-six (one of which is missing in the current text) before the end of the seventh century. Another early method of the Golden Liquor is found in the *Taiqing jinye shendan jing* (Scripture of the Divine Elixir of the Golden Liquor of the Great Clarity, CT 880, 3 j.; see Chen 1983, 289-92; Meng 1993a, 57-59). While the process described in the *Jinye jing* was bestowed by Yuanjun on Laozi, the present version was revealed by the Great One (Taiyi). The first part of the text (1.1a-14b) shares passages with the *Nine Elixirs* and may include portions from as early as the Han. It is centered on a section in verses (1.13a-14b) said to have formed by the spontaneous condensation of *qi* (pneuma, energy), and later translated into a language comprehensible to humanity by the immortal Yin Changsheng 賢長生. The third and final chapter dates from the early sixth century and contains an imaginary description of Western countries that produce minerals and other drugs (see Maspero 1950).

**SHANGQING WAI DAN TEXTS.** The Shangqing textual corpus contains two important *waidan* works. The first is the *Taiji zhenren jiu zhuan huandan jing yaojue* (Essential Instructions on the Scripture of the Elixir Reverted in Nine Cycles, by the Perfected of the Great Ultimate, CT 889, 7 pp.). It contains the recipe of the Elixir of the Nine Cycles, two methods for compounding minor drugs and an account of five *chi* 芝 (“fungus;” supernatural plants that only adepts can recognize as such) planted on Maoshan by the Shangqing saint Mao Ying 茅盈. The three parts were appended to Mao Ying’s revealed biography from earlier sources (Robinet 1984, 2: 389-98), then separated from it to form the present text. The main method (Strickmann 1979, 146-50, 170) is cast as a revelation by Xicheng Wangjun 西城王君 (i.e., Wang Yuan 王遠), but this is the only explicit mark of its connection with the Shangqing tradition. Alum, nodular malachite, quartz, cinnabar, realgar, orpiment and mercury are heated in six stages of nine days each. Firing is then interrupted for ten days, and started again for thirty-six days. The extremely detailed instructions on the luting mud make up about one third of this text.

The second work is the *Taiwei lingshu ziwen langgan huandan shenzhen shangjing* (Supreme, Divine and Veritable Scripture on the Elixir Flower of Langgan, from the Sacred Writ in Purple Characters of the Heaven of Great Tenuity, CT 255, 8 pp.). It was once part of the *Lingshu ziwen* 畫書紫文, one of the main Shangqing scriptures (Robinet 1984, 2: 101-10; trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 331-39). The *Langgan shangjing* is divided into four sections, the first of which describes an elixir obtained from fifteen ingredients. While techniques and language of this portion are close to those of the *Taiqing* scriptures, the other three sections describe a meditation practice in typical Shangqing
imagery. The elixir obtained at the end of the first stage undergoes further refining and is finally planted under the earth. The tree generated from this seed is equivalent to the langgan 琅玕 tree that grows on Mount Kunlun, and eating its fruits confers immortality (Schafer 1978; Strickmann 1979, 134-36, 176).

TANG COMPILATIONS. Two Tang anthologies, textually related to each other (Sivin 1968, 76-79) and valuable for the study of the relations between alchemy and pharmacology, have survived as witnesses of the Taiqing tradition. The first is the Taiqing danjing yaojue 太清丹經要訣 (Essential Instructions from the Scriptures on the Elixirs of the Great Clarity; Yinji qiqian 71), a compilation of methods attributed to Sun Simiao (trl. Sivin 1968, 145-214; see also Needham et al. 1976, 132-38). The text contains more than thirty recipes, chosen by Sun from among those that give clear directions and that he himself had tested. The second work is the Taiqing shibi ji 太清石壁記 (Records from the Stone Wall of the Great Clarity, CT 881, 3 j.), edited in 758 or 759 on the basis of an earlier version ascribed to Su Yuanming 蘇元命 (or Su Yuanlang 朗), who is also traditionally associated with the rise of neidan (Baldrian-Hussein 1989-90, 165-67). The Shibi ji consists of a collection of over sixty recipes (Meng 1993a, 46-48), many of which describe the medical properties of the elixirs. The third chapter is mainly concerned with the rules and effects of elixir ingestion (Needham and Lu 1974, 282-94 passim).

The nineteen-chapter Commentary to the Nine Elixirs (Huangdi jijing shenda jingji, CT 885, 20 j.; Pregadio 1991, 560-70; Meng 1993a, 59-61) is also partially rooted in the Taiqing tradition. This summa of pre-Tang alchemy elaborates on the major themes of the Nine Elixirs through a large number of quotations from other works. The mentions of personal and place names, the use of measures of weight and volume, and the avoidance of tabooed characters show that the commentary dates from the latter half of the seventh century (Pregadio 1991, 608-13). The introductory chapters concern the general principles and the ritual features of the alchemical practice. Sections on elixir compounding describe methods for preparing the crucible, obtaining aqueous solutions of various minerals and making other preliminary preparations. Several chapters focus on single substances and their use in elixirs. Substantial portions of the introductory chapters consist of passages quoted from the Baopuzi, while the main identifiable sources of the methods are the lost works attributed to Hugangzi and almost all descriptions of the ingredients come from Tao Hongjing's Bencao jing jizhu 本草經集注 (Collected Commentaries on the Canonical Pharmacopoeia; ca. 500 C.E.).

Works by Chen Shaowei. Two works by Chen Shaowei, originally a single treatise written about 712, are the best examples of the importance
acquired by cinnabar-mercury methods during the Tang (Needham et al. 1976, 141-43; Meng 1993a, 71-74). The first, entitled *Dadong lian zhenbao jing xiuju lingsha miaojue* 大洞鍊真寶經修伏靈砂妙訣 (Wondrous Instructions on Fixing Cinnabar, Supplementary to the Scripture of the Great Cavern on Refining the Real Treasure, CT 890, 4 + 21 pp.), describes a method for refining cinnabar in seven stages. The product of each cycle can be ingested or used as the main ingredient of the next cycle. The second text, *Dadong lian zhenbao jing juhuuan jindan miaojue* 九還金丹妙訣 (Wondrous Instructions on the Golden Elixir Ninefold Reverted, Supplementary to the Scripture of the Great Cavern on Refining the Real Treasure, CT 891, 17 pp.), describes how the product of the seventh stage is refined into a Reverted Elixir (*huandan* hu) through an elaborate firing method. The descriptions of the varieties of cinnabar and the firing system are among the most interesting features of Chen Shaowei's works (Sivin 1980, 237-40 and 270-74).

Waidan commentaries to the *Zhouyi cantong qi*. Most waidan sources since the eighth century belong to the cosmological tradition. Among them are the only two surviving waidan commentaries to the *Cantong qi* (Pregadio forthcoming). The *Zhouyi cantong qi zhu* (CT 1004, 2 j.) interprets passages of the *Cantong qi* as being concerned with a lead-mercury compound called Elixir of Correct Yang (*zhengyang dan* 正陽丹). Mentions of place names as well as citations of earlier sources and avoidance of tabooed characters, suggest that this anonymous commentary dates from ca. 700 C.E. (Chen 1983, 377-78). The received version lacks its second half, but internal evidence suggests that the commentary originally treated the entire scripture. It also bears traces of connections with the earlier waidan tradition: references to the *Nine Elixirs* and to writings of Hugangzi suggest that its roots lie in the waidan lineages of Jiangnan during the Six Dynasties.

The second Tang commentary is the *Zhouyi cantong qi* (CT 999, 3 j.), ascribed to Yin Changsheng. Although highly cosmological in content, occasional mentions of actual practices show that it originated in a waidan environment and probably in the seventh century (Chen 1983, 377). The text's dating is supported by textual correspondences between the recension of the *Cantong qi* included here and the one found in the other Tang commentary mentioned above. Moreover, as shown by Meng (1993b: 5-30), citations of the *Cantong qi* in Tang texts match the readings of both recensions.

TANG DOCTRINAL TEXTS. Several waidan works of the Tang, also loosely related to the *Cantong qi*, are concerned with the doctrinal foundations of alchemy. There is first the *Zhang zhenren jinshi lingsha lun* 張真人金石靈砂論 (Treatise of the Perfected Zhang on Metals, Stones and Cinnabar, CT 887, 10 pp.), whose author, Zhang Jiugai 張九垓, is also said to have written a commentary to the *Zhuangzi*. Dating from between 742 and 770, the text divides into twelve sections that describe several sub-
stances or compounds with their cosmological associations, functions in alchemical methods and actions on the human body (Needham et al. 1976, 143-45; Meng 1993a, 76-78; Kaltenmark 1974-75). It is one of the earliest datable sources to criticize the use of cinnabar as the main elixir ingredient and advocate processes based on lead and mercury.

Alchemical doctrine is also the subject of two mid-Tang texts that discuss the “theory of categories”. The first, entitled *Wei Boyang qifan dansha jue* 魏伯陽七返丹砂訣 (Wei Boyang’s Instructions on the Cinnabar Obtained in Seven Cycles, CT 888, 7 pp.), dates from before 806 and includes a commentary compiled sometime before the middle of the twelfth century (Ho 1979, 26-27). Its opening portion is also found in the *Cantong qi wu xianglei biyao* 参同契五相類秘要 (Secret Essentials of the Five Categories, from the *Token for the Agreement of the Three*, CT 905, 6 pp.), which has a commentary by Lu Tianji 盧天驥 (dat. 1111-17; see Ho 1979, 19-27; trl. Ho and Needham 1959; also Needham et al. 1980, 317-20; Meng 1993a, 63-65). The two texts are remarkable in that they describe relations between several substances but do not emphasize the role of lead and mercury.

The latter substances, however, feature prominently in a group of four cognate texts, including the *Tongyou jue* 通幽訣 (Instructions for Penetrating into Obscurity, CT 913, 28 pp.), probably by Chen Shao 陳邵; the *Huandan zhouhou jue* 邯丹酌後訣 (Practical Instructions on the Reverted Elixir, CT 915, 3 j.); the *Hongqian ru heiqian jue* 紅鍊入黑鍊訣 (Instructions for Compounding Red Lead [= Real Mercury] and Black Lead [= Real Lead], CT 941, 6 pp.); and the *Yuqing neishu* 玉清內書 (Inner Writings of the Jade Clarity, CT 947, 22 pp.). The four texts share several passages and cite the same sources. While portions of them may be from as late as the Song period (Sivin 1980, 232), the *Yuqing neishu* provides a definite indication of its date in the sentence “at present, in the Great Tang...” (3b), and the *Huandan zhouhou jue* includes a postscript dated 875 (3.10a-11b). The four texts deal with theories concerning cinnabar, mercury, lead, the cycles of heating, the principle of alchemical “projection” and other topics. With their abstract language and their frequent allusions to natural substances as emblems of cosmological principles, they are among the best examples of texts showing facets of alchemical theory that apply to both *waidan* and early *neidan*.

**TANG TEXTS ON MATERIA MEDICA**. Only a few Tang alchemical works on *materia medica* are extant. The *waidan* text closest in format and style to the standard pharmacopoeias is the *Jinshi bu wujiu shu jue* 金石簿五九數訣 (Instructions on an Inventory of Forty-Five Metals and Minerals, CT 907, 10 pp.), concerned with substances used as elixir ingredients (Needham et al. 1976, 138-40; Meng 1993a, 53-54; Pregadio 1997). While entirely neglecting their medical properties, its entries describe places of
origin, shapes and properties of the samples, many of which come from foreign countries or from the periphery of the Tang empire. The work dates from after 686.

The *Shiyao erya* (Synonymic Dictionary of the Mineral Materia Medica, CT 901, 2 j.) is a lexicon of terms used in *waidan* (Needham et al. 1976, 151-57). Compiled by Mei Biao 梅彪 in 806 C.E., it contains over six hundred synonyms of mineral, vegetal, animal, human substances and laboratory instruments. The second chapter includes names and synonyms of elixirs, names of alchemical methods and a list of about one hundred texts that is sometimes useful for dating purposes. Chen Guofu’s notes on this work (1983, 383-442) and Wong Shiu Hon’s repertoire of *waidan* and pharmacological terms (1989) provide a wealth of supplementary materials on alchemical nomenclature and bibliography.

The *Danfang jingyuan* 丹方鏡源 (Mirror-Origin of the Alchemical Methods, CT 925, 3 j.), finally, was compiled by Dugu Tao 獨孤滔 in the middle of the tenth century. It is a later version of a text entitled *Danfang jingyuan* 丹房鏡源 (Mirror-Origin of the Chamber of the Elixirs), written in the middle of the eighth century and partially preserved in the *Qianhong jiageng zhibao jicheng* 錫汞甲庚至寶集成 (A Complete Collection on the Perfect Treasure Made of Lead and Mercury, jia [= Real Mercury] and geng [= Real Lead], CT 919, 5 j.). The *Danfang jingyuan* includes short notes on the properties of about 240 substances classified into 25 sections according to their nature, appearance or color (Fung and Collier 1937; Needham et al. 1976, 180-81; Meng 1993a, 65-67). Both versions are available in a critical edition compiled by Ho Peng Yoke (1980), based on a Japanese manuscript that derives from a portion of the Daoist canon re-engraved after 1445 (see Barrett 1994).

**SONG AND LATER TEXTS.** Not unexpectedly, the boundary between *waidan* and *neidan* becomes very subtle in one of the main Song texts on alchemical theory, the *Danfang aolun* 丹房奧論 (A Profound Treatise on the Chamber of the Elixirs, CT 920, 16 pp.). After a preface dated 1020 and signed by its author, Cheng Liaoyi 程了一, the 16 sections of the work describe various facets of the alchemical doctrines. *Waidan* undoubtedly is behind this treatise (Meng 1993a, 100-3), but some of its notions and terms seem to anticipate the *Wuzhen pian* 威真篇 (Essay on Awakening to the Truth), a major *neidan* text written about fifty years later.

The *Danfang xuzhi* 丹房須知 (Essential Knowledge for the Chamber of the Elixirs, CT 900, 14 pp.) bears a preface dated 1163. Its author, Wu Wu 吳務, also wrote a *neidan* text, the *Zhigu ji* 指歸記 (Pointing Back to Where One Belongs: A Collection, CT 921, 3 + 9 pp.). Divided into twenty sections which describe, in logical sequence, the steps necessary to compound an elixir based on lead and mercury, this is one of the few *waidan* cosmological works that provides details on alchemical ritual (Meng 1993a, 69-71;
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Sivin 1980, 289-90). However, the *Danfang xuzhi* consists almost entirely of quotations from other sources—including a *neidan* work, the *Ruyao jing* 入藥經 or "Mirror for Compounding the Medicine"—and even the process it describes may have been constructed based on descriptions found in earlier works. (Modern reprints of the *Daozang* lack one page of this text; see Boltz 1993, 92.)

Apparently the latest *waidan* text in the Daoist Canon is the *Chunyang Lü zhemen yaoshi zhi* 純陽呂真人藥石製 (The Preparation of Medicinal Stones, by the Perfected Lü of the Pure Yang, CT 903, 11 pp.). According to Ho Peng Yoke and Chen Tiefan (1971), rhymes and plant names suggest a date of compilation around 1400 (see also Ho 1979, 28-51). The text, which we can read in a fine, poetical translation (Ho, Lim, and Morsingh 1973), gives descriptions of 67 plants, one of which is missing in the received version (Needham et al.1976, 147-48; Meng 1993a, 106-11).

**WORLDVIEW**

**MAIN FEATURES.** The definition of alchemy varies according to the emphasis given to its religious, spiritual, intellectual, technical or proto-scientific features. Most scholars, however, agree that the purpose of the alchemical practice is to accomplish a transmutation that affects not only the elixir ingredients but also the person who achieves it. As part of this larger process, the practice provides ritual and symbolic support to understanding the origin and nature of the cosmos and gaining access to the forces that govern its functioning, represented either as supernatural beings or as abstract notions. Thus the elixir represents both the authentic state of the cosmos and the knowledge acquired by the adept.

This definition also applies to Chinese alchemy, but within this common frame *waidan* writings differ in the emphasis that they give either to religious and ritual features or to the principles of cosmological thought. Early writings of the Taiqing tradition stress the performance of rites and ceremonies before, during and after compounding, and describe the elixirs as tools for summoning benevolent gods or expelling noxious spirits. From the Tang period onward, the majority of *waidan* texts related to the *Cantong qi* stress the cosmological import of elixir compounding and feature a large set of abstract notions.

**TIME, MATTER AND THE ELIXIR.** The two main methods of Chinese alchemy—the refining of mercury from cinnabar, and the conjunction of lead and mercury—share an important characteristic. In the first method, mercury (yin) is extracted from cinnabar (yang) and is added again to sulphur (yang). This process, that typically takes place in nine or some-
times seven cycles of refining, yields a substance entirely devoid of *yin* components. In the second method, the refining of mercury from cinnabar is only one part of the process. Here the elixir is obtained in two main stages: “real” mercury (*yin*) and lead (*yang*) are first extracted from cinnabar and native lead, respectively, then joined to produce the elixir. In both instances, the final product of the alchemical work is said to represent Pure Yang (*chunyang 纯陽*), the stage before the division of the One into the two (Robinet 1995, 194, 216).

The association of the elixir with Pure Yang plays a basic role in relating the alchemical process to the Chinese view of cosmogony. In agreement with views shared by both Daoism and the Chinese cosmology, alchemy conceives of the cosmos as the outcome of a spontaneous process that takes place in stages. In one of its classical formulations, cosmogony involves the progression from Nonbeing to Oneness, followed by the emergence of the two complementary principles *yin* and *yang* which, in turn, join and generate the differentiation of the myriad beings. This process has three closely connected implications that are central to the worldview of alchemy and inspire its main practices:

1) the unfolding of the process causes entities to be progressively removed from the original principle;
2) the generation of the cosmos brings about the emergence of time—the notion of time is implicit in the idea of generative stages and becomes explicit once the cosmos is generated and time is a measurable entity;
3) inversion, return or reversion (*fan* 從, *huan* 返) to the original state can be effected by a reversal in the cosmogonic process, i.e., by re-enacting its stages in inverse order.

All main *wuaidan* practices revolve around these notions. Through cyclical refining, the ingredients revert to their original condition and yield their pure essences (*jing* 精). The elixir is matter devoid of temporal qualities and is thus equivalent to Pure Yang, the state before the emergence of time. With the process known as “projection” (*dian* 點), often performed at the end of an alchemical procedure, a small quantity of elixir confers its own properties to any substance added to it. This final act sums up the symbolism of the alchemical work: the cosmos is restored to its original, timeless state, and the adept gains access to the corresponding state of timelessness or immortality.

**ELIXIR COMPOUNDING IN THE TAIQING TRADITION.** The two main *wuaidan* traditions develop these basic notions in different ways and associate them with different practices. The Taiqing tradition is based on a rather simple cosmological model not explicitly described in received sources. It emphasizes the ritual function of the crucible, highlighted throughout the Taiqing and relevant Shangqing texts which state that
failure in the compounding of elixirs is due to mistakes made when preparing the reaction vessel.

The crucible, made of two superimposed halves, must be hermetically sealed to avoid dispersion of qi and re-create within it the conditions of the cosmos during the first stages of its generation. Several Taiqing works describe the preparation of a luting mud spread on the outer and inner surfaces of the crucible and at the point where its two halves meet. The compound is known as Mud of the Six-and-One (liuyi nì 六一泥) or, to underline its importance in the alchemical process, Divine Mud (shenni 神泥). The commentary to the Nine Elixirs says that “six and one is seven: the sages keep this secret, and therefore call it Six-and-One” (Huangdi jujing shendan jingjue, 7.5a), but significantly adds that the mud has this name even if the number of its ingredients is different from seven.

The figures one and six are related to Heaven and Earth, respectively, but the function and name of the mud become clearer in light of the descriptions of cosmogony as a process that takes place in seven stages. A well-known passage of the Zhuangzi outlines the process in reverse, starting from the phase immediately preceding manifestation and receding to its most remote inception (Graham 1981, 55). This passage forms the basis of the elaborate description of each phase that opens 2 of the Huainanzi. Another passage of the Zhuangzi represents the same process by different imagery: the seven stages are portrayed as seven openings pierced in the body of Emperor Hundun (Chaos) by the Emperor of the North and the Emperor of the South (emblems of duality), causing his death that corresponds to the state of differentiation (see Graham 1981, 98; Girardot 1983, 150-52; Le Blanc 1989).

Symbolically, the seven ingredients of the Mud of the Six-and-One close the seven openings that caused the death of Emperor Hundun, and allow the alchemist to create conditions in the crucible that are similar to those of the primordial state of chaos. Through the action of fire, the essences of the ingredients rise to the upper half of the vessel and are collected by the alchemist who adds them to other substances to make pills.

Descriptions of the effects of elixir ingestion give, as much as do ritual sequences associated with the alchemical process, a clear impression of the religious features of the Taiqing tradition. Ingestion of the Nine Elixirs, for example, results in the attainment of the state of perfected or immortal, ascension to heaven and longevity. Divinities such as the Jade Maiden (Yunü 玉女), the Ministers of the Mountains (Shanqing 山卿), the Officers of the Moorlands (Zewei 澳尉), the Count of the Wind (Fengbo 風伯) and the Master of Rain (Yushi 雨師) come to offer protection and become one’s attendants. Vermilion birds and phoenixes hover above the alchemist, while harmful demons and entities—the Hundred Ghosts (bāiguǐ 百鬼), the Three
Corpses (sanshi 三尸), the Nine Worms (jiuchong 九蟲), mountain demons (chimei 魑魅) and water sprites (wangliang 僭蜃)—do not dare to approach the adept, who acquires control over them. Diseases like convulsions and leprosy are healed, and adepts become able to beget children even in old age. Magical powers are acquired: one can cross water or pass through fire; coins smeared with an elixir return to their owner within a day of spending. Some elixirs can also be worn at the belt, rubbed on the eyes, or smeared on the doors of a house to gain the constant protection of the gods (CT 885, ch. 1; see also Ware 1966, 76-78.)

Similar statements also appear in the waidan texts of the Shangqing corpus. The Flower of Langgan grants communication with immortals and divine beings (CT 255; trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 336). The Elixir of the Nine Cycles signifies the first step of attainment: the Golden Elixir is transmitted by emissaries of the Great Ultimate (Taiji) after the adept has ascended into the Great Void (CT 889, 3b).

ELIXIR COMPOUNDING IN THE COSMOLOGICAL TRADITION. The system of correspondences and the use of cosmological patterns acquire primary importance in sources related to the Canton qi. With a marked innovation in the language and the conceptual system of alchemy, the main underlying notion in these sources is that of xiang 影 (image), through which the ingredients, the laboratory instruments, the heating cycle and the elixir itself symbolize elements of the cosmological framework. This feature becomes so important that two Tang texts related to the Canton qi go as far as to state that “compounding the Great Elixir is not a matter of ingredients, but always of the Five Agents” (CT 935, 3a), and that “you do not use ingredients, you use the Five Agents” (CT 915, 2.4b).

The description of the alchemical process in these sources is based on three sets of emblems: (1) the lines, trigrams and hexagrams of the Yijing; (2) the Five Agents together with the associated categories of entities and phenomena; and (3) alchemical symbols proper. These and other emblems allow waidan cosmologists to establish parallels between the alchemical process and facets of the cosmos, and to correlate the stages of elixir compounding to those of cosmogony. Exploiting the customary system of correspondences among different patterns, parallel elements drawn from different series of emblems can be used interchangeably, which accounts in part for the intricate and obscure language of the texts.

Waidan cosmologists emphasize an important feature of the cosmogonic process: the change of polarity that occurs at its final stage, after the original yin and yang principles join each other and produce differentiation. When the process is complete, the original yin and yang are enclosed within entities of the opposite sign. At the last stage of cosmogony, therefore, yin entities enclose zhenyang 真陽 (real/true/perfect Yang), and yang entities enclose zhenyin 真陰 (real/true/perfect Yin). The resulting state is designated as
“yin within yang” and “yang within yin.” This process—and its reversal—are featured in the texts, which represent it by all three sets of emblems mentioned above:

1. In terms of Yijing emblems, the One is represented by the single unbroken line — or by the trigram qian =. Its yin and yang aspects are represented by the single broken line — or the trigram kan =, and by the single unbroken line or the trigram qian =, respectively. Authentic yin contained within yang, and authentic yang contained within yin, are represented by the trigrams kan = and li =. When the alchemical process is described through these emblems, it consists in drawing the inner lines out of kan = and li = and in joining them to recreate the single unbroken line that represents the One, or Pure Yang.

2. In terms of the Five Agents, the alchemist inverts the standard “generative” sequence (Wood-Fire-Earth-Metal-Water), and produces Metal — from Water =, and Wood — from Fire =. The reversal of the normal sequence neutralizes the yin-yang shift that takes place at the end of the cosmogonic process. The original yin and yang principles extracted from Fire and Water are called Real Water and Real Fire, respectively, to distinguish them from their common counterparts.

3. In proper alchemical terminology, the original yin and yang are represented by Real Mercury and Real Lead, respectively. Real Mercury is refined from native cinnabar (yang containing Real Yin), and Real Lead (occasionally called “silver,” yin 銀) is refined from native lead (yin containing Real Yang).

Some relations and associations among the different sets of symbols used in waidan are shown below:

```
- - - - -
One
Pure Yang, Gold, Lead

- -
Real Yin
Real Water
Real Mercury

= =
kan
li

- -
Real Yang
Real Fire
Real Lead

= =
kan
qian

Wood
native cinnabar

Fire

Earth

Water

Metal
native lead
```
The essential feature of these multiple, but substantially identical, representations is that each stage of the cosmogonic process is associated with a cosmological configuration (in the table above, Oneness, Yin-Yang and the Five Agents). Accordingly, each stage of elixir compounding represents the cosmological configuration which matches each stage of the cosmogonic process. Since the alchemical process re-enters the cosmogonic stages in reverse, at each stage the corresponding cosmological configuration is discarded, and the alchemist takes a further step towards Oneness.

Exploiting the possible relations among these sets of emblems, other associations are possible and are used in the texts. Real Lead and Real Mercury, in particular, are also denoted as Metal and Wood, Metal and Water or Metal and Fire (Meng 1986, 84-86). The table above also shows that the Golden Elixir is often styled "Lead," based on the association between Pure Yang and Real Yang; vice versa, refined lead is often called Golden Flower (jinhua 金華).

OTHER DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE COSMOLOGICAL TRADITION. "Waidan" cosmological texts introduce other elements into alchemical doctrines, most importantly a particular view of time. Developing a notion first expressed in the Huainanzi (Major 1993, 212-16; Sivin 1980, 224) but virtually ignored in pre-Tang alchemical sources, these texts often state that elixir compounding reproduces the process through which nature spontaneously transmutes minerals and metals into gold. While the natural process requires thousands of years, alchemy accelerates it by compressing time, relying on the correspondences among cycles of different length (Sivin 1977; Sivin 1980, 245-48, 264-79). In particular, various texts belonging to the tradition of the Cantong qi state that the Natural Reverted Elixir is achieved in 4320 years, a figure corresponding to the number of watches or double hours (shí 許) contained in one year (360 days x 12 watches). The same cosmological cycle, therefore, can be reproduced by one year of work in the laboratory.

The base unit used to match cycles of different length is the heating cycle of the elixir, known as huohou 火候 or "fire times." While the Taiqing texts describe simple cycles based on the distance of fire from the crucible, those related to the Cantong qi use a remarkably more complex system, where the phases are represented by the twelve "primary hexagrams" of the Iyijing:

Each hexagram corresponds to a stage of heating, which is first increased and then progressively decreased. In two passages of the Cantong qi, the pattern of the twelve primary hexagrams is used to represent and trace the constant presence of the One (the unbroken yang line) through the rise and
fall of time cycles, represented by the twelve hexagrams. The heating of the elixir, therefore, is based on the very rhythms which manifest the presence of the One in cosmic change. As those rhythms bring minerals to perfection in the earth's womb, so they transmute the ingredients into an elixir in the alchemical laboratory (Pregadio 1995, 160-64).

Another new element besides time concerns space. The alchemical instruments are built and arranged in the laboratory according to standard spatial configurations. The three stages of the alchemical altar, for example, represent heaven, humanity, and earth, and the reaction vessel itself is a microcosm, with its size and shape determined on the basis of correspondences to the macrocosmic order. The obvious purpose of these arrangements and shapes is to place the alchemist at the center of the cosmos (Sivin 1980, 279-92).

A third, but ultimately less important new element is the so-called "theory of categories" (lei 結), according to which yin and yang couples of substances are said to interact only if they share special affinities (Needham et al. 1980, 305-23). Examples of yin-yang dyads include cinnabar and mercury, realgar and orpiment, sulphur and mercury, cinnabar and vinegar, and even cinnabar and bronze coins, but not lead and mercury. The prominence acquired by the lead-mercury symbolism in the tradition related to the Cantong qi may explain why the theory of categories stands as a rather isolated element in the elaborate construction built by waidan cosmologists.

Waidan and Daoism. The relation of waidan to Daoism has raised perplexities since early times, as documented in the Baopuzi where Ge Hong discusses elixir compounding in the light of the Laozi (Ware 1966: 267-68). The existence of two main subtraditions in waidan require that each be examined separately, but in general waidan authors describe their undertaking as grounded on elements of the Daoist religion. Thus alchemical writings are revealed by Daoist divine beings (including Laozi and Yuanjun) or immortals; during elixir compounding, Daoist gods are invoked as recorded both in early texts, such as the Nine Elixirs, or in later documents, such as the Danfang xuzhi, according to which the alchemical altar is protected by an invocation to Xuanyuan huangdi Taishang laojun 玄元皇帝大上老君 (trl. Sivin 1980, 289-90). In an intriguing passage of a late Tang text, moreover, the alchemist is requested to wear the robes of a daoshi and utter an invocation to Dadao tianzun 大道天尊 before he ingests the elixir (CT 942, 18b-19a).

The cosmological content of waidan provides additional evidence in light of the central role played by cosmology in connecting the different traditions and practices of Daoism to each other (Robinet 1997, 260). Repeated references to the Daode jing in the Cantong qi and other cosmological texts
show that relations between *waidan* and Daoism also occurred where *waidan* had intellectual speculation and the search for *gnosis* as its prime motive. The *waidan* perspective on the cosmogonic process as taking place in stages, on the related cosmological configurations (which imply a sequence of states on non-being and being), and on the symbolic inversion of this process is the same view that inspires Daoist disciplines as different as individual meditation and communal ritual. The notion of time expressed in the cosmological *waidan* texts, moreover, has much in common with those underlying Daoist ritual (Schipper and Wong 1986).

Nonetheless, the peculiarities of *waidan* also expose its limitations as a Daoist discipline. Although no Daoist text rejects *waidan* for not being part of Daoism, some traditions, texts and authors (e.g., those of Shangqing) assign external alchemy a low place in their classifications of Daoist practices. Similarly the *Daojiao yishu* (Pivotal Meaning of Daoist Teachings, CT 1129; Robinet 1993, 49) places *waidan* lowest among four degrees of Daoist practice, well below concentration and the attainment of wisdom, and even below precepts. The *neidan* author Li Daochun 李道純 (ca. 1290) also ranks *waidan* at a low level in the elaborate arrangement of Daoist disciplines found in his *Zhonghe ji* 中和集 (Central Harmony: A Collection, CT 249, 2.12b-17a). Common to these traditions and texts is the view that the highest form of Daoist practice is an exclusively spiritual process with no need of external supports such as *waidan*. They implicitly criticize the excessive preoccupation of *waidan* with the material aspects of the cosmos, or even for the cosmos itself as a manifest entity. To them, elixir compounding does not go beyond the purification of matter and the elixir only symbolically represents the cosmogonic stage of the One (Pure Yang), so that its compounding does not grant access to the higher states of Non-being.

### Practice

**RITUAL FEATURES IN EARLY WAI DAN.** Rites and ceremonies have been part of *waidan* since its earliest recorded beginnings. According to Li Shaojun, the alchemical process begins with an offering to the furnace to request assistance from the divinities. Virtually all pre-Tang texts describe ceremonies performed at various stages of the practice. The following description of *waidan* ritual in eight stages is based on directions given in the *Nine Elixirs*, supplemented by other texts of the Taiqing tradition, Shangqing materials and the *Baopuzi*. 
1. Retirement and purifications. Retirement and the undergoing of purifications (zhai 邪) are preliminary to elixir compounding. The adept withdraws to a mountain or a secluded place with one or more attendants. During the time of zhai he and his helpers observe various interdictions—such as those against approaching filth, mourning and houses inhabited by women of marriagable age—and perform ablutions (muyu 沐浴). Purifications may last between one week and one hundred days. They are performed before receiving the methods, buying the ingredients and compounding the elixirs. Pure liquor is poured in a watercourse on the first day of purification to pacify the qi of the earth.

2. Ceremony of transmission (chuanfa 傳法). After the purification practices are completed the adept receives texts and oral instructions. Master and disciple seal a pact (or “covenant,” meng 契) and announce their intention of compounding the elixir to the gods. According to the Nine Elixirs, the disciple throws golden figurines of a man and a fish into an eastward-flowing watercourse. Gold, silver, hemp fabric, silk or a jade ring shaped as a dragon are mentioned in other texts among the pledges offered by the disciple to the master. The two smear their mouths with blood or cinnabar to seal their alliance. Then a seat is arranged for the Mysterious Woman (Xuannü 玄女). The master asks permission to hand down the alchemical methods, and waits for a sign of consent: a clear sky and the absence of wind.

3. Protection of space. Talismans (fu 符) yield protection from demons and wild animals. They are worn by the alchemist on his own body, affixed at the four directions, placed along the path that leads to one's dwelling, thrown in the furnace or made into ashes and drunk with water before compounding the elixirs.

4. Construction of the laboratory. See below.

5. Choice of time. Favorable days for buying the ingredients and starting the preparation of the elixirs are determined through traditional methods of computation. Examples of auspicious days include those at the beginning of a sexagesimal cycle, and those defined by two cyclical characters whose associated Agents are in a relationship of “sovereign and assistant” (wang-xiang 王相). The Nine Elixirs and other texts also list days on which the alchemical work should not be started.

6. Kindling the fire (qihuo 起火). Before the actual commencement of the operations, an invocation is addressed to the divinities. In the Nine Elixirs, the disciple offers food and drink to Dadao jun, Laojun and Taihe jun. He asks them to watch over the practice and favor the compounding of the elixir, and states that after ingesting the elixir he expects to have audience at the Purple Palace (Zigong 紫宮), live an unending life, and become a perfected.
(7) *Compounding the elixir.* The ceremony for kindling the fire marks the end of the preliminary rites and the beginning of the actual compounding. The alchemist is helped by his assistants, whose tasks include pounding the ingredients and watching over the fire. Three sources mention a preparation called Pellet for Driving Away Demons (*quegui wan* 却鬼丸), used together with the Talisman for Driving Away Demons (*quegui fu* 却鬼符) to protect the compounding. Almost all ingredients of the Pellet are vegetable substances, the apotropaic properties of which are described in the pharmacopoeias (*Taiqing danjing yaqjue*; Sivin 1968, 208-9); the corresponding talisman is reproduced in the commentary to the *Nine Elixirs* (CT 885, 5.9a-10a).

(8) *Consecrating and ingesting the elixir.* Ge Hong's *Baopugi* refers to a ceremony not mentioned in other sources, performed after the final transmutation of the Elixir of Great Clarity into gold. In this rite, the adept offers different quantities of the elixir to the Dipper, the Great One, the Lord of Great Clarity and several other gods including those of the doors, the house and the village. A portion of the elixir must be abandoned in the city market for the benefit of those who cannot devote themselves to its compounding. The elixir is ingested at dawn, facing the rising sun, after another invocation to the gods (see Ware 1966, 80-81).

**LABORATORY AND LABORATORY INSTRUMENTS.** Texts of all periods provide details on the Chamber of Elixirs (*danshi* 丹室, *danwu* 丹屋, *danfang* 丹房) and its instruments. The laboratory should not be raised over an old well or a tomb and must be at some distance from the ground; it is about ten meters long and five meters wide, and has doors facing all directions except north (CT 889, 1b). According to another text, the Chamber is built near a stream on a mountain or in a secluded place; it has only two doors, facing east and south; the roof is covered with leaves and the walls with mud, and only the alchemist and his attendant may enter (CT 255; trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 335). In a method found in the commentary to the *Nine Elixirs*, the furnace is placed at the center of the laboratory, with the ingredients and the scriptures arranged over a layered platform at the western side, and talismans affixed at the four sides (CT 885, 7.3b).

Descriptions of laboratory instruments vary not only according to the methods but also among texts of different dates and subtraditions. In general, a platform or "altar" (*tan* 坛) consisting of three tiers is placed in the center or along a wall of the Chamber. It is made of earth and has eight openings on each tier. A mirror and a sword are hung nearby. The furnace (*lu* 爐) or stove (*zao* 灶) is arranged on the highest tier of the platform. The simplest type of stove has a cylindrical shape with a large opening on the top for the fire and several smaller ones on the sides to let air through. Chaff, charcoal and horse manure serve as fuel. The crucible (*fu* 炉) is placed over the stove or sometimes inside it.
According to some texts, the reaction vessel is a ding 萬, a term which usually denotes an iron tripod but also refers to several instruments of different shape and function, and may even be a synonym for the simple clay crucible. The tripod can be open or closed with a lid, and can have legs or not. It is placed inside the furnace so that it does not touch its base (hence its name, xuantai 想胎 or “suspended womb”). Sometimes the tripod contains a crucible, and in this case can be made of two parts, a higher one containing water (to keep the reaction vessel cool) and a lower one holding fuel, or vice versa. In addition to these basic tools, the alchemical apparatus also includes instruments for sublimation, distillation, steaming and condensation, as well as various smaller utensils such as pestles and spoons (see Needham et al. 1980, 1-167; Ho 1985, 204-9; Chen 1983, 26-84; Zhao 1989, 123-66).

The crucible is usually made of clay and has two parts, joined to each other by their mouths (hence the name shuangfu 雙釜 or “double crucible”). According to CT 883 (3a-b), the same type of crucible is used to compound the Elixir of Great Clarity, the Nine Elixirs, the Golden Liquor, the Reverted Elixir and the Elixir Flower of Langgan—i.e., all the main elixirs of the Taiqing tradition. Red clay is pounded, sieved, steamed for one day and added to vinegar, forming a mud. One then boils thirty pounds of oak bark for one day, eliminates the sediments, and fries the remaining portion to obtain a reddish-black lacquer. This is then spread on the inner part of the crucible, so that it does not break when placed on the fire. Both the Shibi ji and the Danjing yaojue describe yet another type of crucible whose lower half is made of iron while the upper part is made of clay (Ho 1985, 206; Sivin 1968, 166-68).

The earliest method for the luting compound is found in the Nine Elixirs (1.3b-4a), where the Mud of the Six-and-One is prepared with alum, Turkestani salt, lake salt, arsenolite, oyster shells, red clay and talc. The seven ingredients are pounded, heated for nine days and nights, pounded again, sieved and placed in an acetic bath. The crucible is spread with this mud; then another mud is prepared by placing a lead-mercury compound in another acetic bath with the addition of white lead. The crucible is luted with this mud as well, and is finally left to dry in the sun for ten days. A similar method is described in the Taiqing danjing yaojue, which gives details on each ingredient (trl. Sivin 1968, 160-68).

SUBSTANCES AND METHODS. The actual compounding of the elixir is the main stage in the ritual sequence of the alchemical process. Waidan texts display a large variety in their choice of ingredients and methods, as well as their nomenclature which often involves the use of synonyms and secret terms. What follows is only a sampling from methods more frequently described or mentioned in the texts. More detailed surveys are
found in Zhao 1989, 123-66, 167-213; and Meng 1993a, 132-200. Many specific methods are analyzed in the works of Needham, Ho, Sivin, Meng, Zhao and others. Useful works on *waidan* terminology include Needham 1974, 154-87; Needham et al.1980, 4-7; Chen 1980, 13-284; and Wong 1989.

Aqueous solutions (*shuifa* 水法) are often prepared as intermediate stages during elixir compounding. The main source on these methods is the *Sanshi Liu shuifa* (CT 930). To make a solution of cinnabar, for example, one pound of cinnabar is placed in a cylinder of fresh bamboo together with four ounces of chalcanthite (copper sulphate) and four ounces of saltpeter. The openings of the bamboo tube are sealed with lacquer, and the tube is left in an acetic bath. The solution is ready in thirty days.

The acetic bath (*huachi* 华池, lit., Flowery Bath) exists in several varieties (Wang 1964). According to the commentary to the *Nine Elixirs* (CT 885, 17.6a-b), during compounding one uses a bath containing boiled wheat, yeast, the unidentified “white-azure stone” (*qingbai shi* 青白石), powdered lead, powdered cinnabar and steamed red glutinous millet. The bath should be compounded in an auspicious position inside the laboratory, away from women and domestic animals.

The preparation of the Golden Liquor (*jinye* 金液) is described according to different recipes (Meng 1993a, 156-65). The earliest is summarized, in an almost incomprehensible way, in the *Baopuzi* (Ware 1966, 89-91). According to the clearer version in the *Jinzhuo jing* (CT 917, j. 1), the main ingredients are powdered gold and mercury. They are placed with aqueous solutions of saltpeter and realgar in a bamboo cylinder that is tightly sealed and immersed in an acetic bath. In one hundred days gold and mercury liquefy and form a Golden Water (*jinshui* 金水) and a Mercurial Water (*hongshui* 紅水). No firing is required. The Golden Liquor can be transmuted into gold and used to cast swords, or—in a way reminiscent of Li Shaojun’s early method—to make dishes and cups that confer immortality to those who eat and drink from them.

The most typical processes in Chinese alchemy are those known as *huan-dan* 轮丹 or *Reverted Elixirs* (sometimes translated as “cyclically transformed elixirs”). This term refers to several different methods, two of which are most important: the refining of mercury from cinnabar, and the conjunction of lead and mercury. The earliest description of the refining of cinnabar is found in the *Nine Elixirs* (CT 885, trl. Ware 1966, 78-79), and its most elaborate method is given in the works by Chen Shaowei. The history of the lead-mercury compound reflects the development of the entire Chinese alchemical tradition. In the chapter devoted to methods based on metals, Ge Hong’s *Baopuzi* contains a brief description of a lead-mercury amalgam which is only an intermediate stage during the preparation of another compound (Ware 1966, 274). In the Taiqing tradition, the lead-
mercury amalgam is not used as an elixir but as a supplementary substance in the compounding of other elixirs, either to lute the crucible together with the Mud of the Six-and-One, or as the highest and lowest layers in the crucible together with the ingredients of each elixir (CT 885, 1.3b and passim). The compound is used for the same purpose in the writings ascribed to Hugangzi (CT 885, 11.7a-b and 12.3a-b; Zhao 1985, 205).

The rise of the lead-mercury compound to the full status of elixir is related to the Cantong qi, which alludes to it in several passages. One of them (Zhou 1988, 122-23) contains a poetical description of the amalgam of refined lead (the Golden Flower, jinhua) and refined mercury (the Liquid Pearl, liuzhu) in vivid waidan terms. Another (Pregadio 1995, 166-67) focuses on the refining of lead—preliminary to its conjunction with refined mercury—and mentions the colors it takes at each stage: black, white, yellow and red (interestingly, the same color sequence is also typical of Western alchemy: nigredo, albedo, citrinitas and rubedo). The status of this method was further enhanced when neidan came to replace waidan. Thus, the southern lineages which, during the Six Dynasties, produced the alchemical version of the Cantong qi, ultimately led to the decline of waidan, but laid the foundations for the continuation of the arts of the elixirs in new forms.

References


CHAPTER EIGHT

SHANGQING—HIGHEST CLARITY

ISABELLE ROBINET

DESCRIPTION

The term Shangqing 高清, Highest Clarity or Supreme Purity, refers to two distinct phenomena. First, it indicates a collection of texts, those originally revealed and those created later or "apocryphal," which were adopted by the Chinese aristocracy in the fifth and sixth centuries and came to occupy the highest rank among the Three Caverns (sandong 三洞), the organizational scheme used to arrange the scriptural corpus of medieval Daoism (see Robinet 1984). Second, the term designates the religious school which grew gradually from the texts and of which Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 was the true founder—a religious school with its own complete organization, including patriarchs, monasteries, holy centers, liturgies, a priestly hierarchy, as well as numerous later texts and rituals (see Robinet 1997).

Shangqing Daoism began with a series of revelations to the medium Yang Xi in the second half of the fourth century. It consisted of a synthesis of the Way of the Celestial Master and the traditions of the immortality seekers, some of which went back as far as the late Zhou (Zhuangzi, Chun) and Han dynasties (fangshi). The cosmic insights of these two traditions further merged with the ecstatic traditions of south China and with various types of physiological practices: visions of spirits and of colored energies, absorption of astral florescences, ecstatic excursions around the earth and the heavens. Shangqing traces itself back to the immortals and immortality seekers who formed the ancient traditions of China, some of whose lineages can be documented historically. Shangqing appeared in the south of China at a time when the country was divided into north and south, the north having been invaded by "barbarians" of Xiongnu 匈奴 origin. Fleeing from the invaders, the Jin imperial court and a portion of the northern upper classes moved to the south, where they confronted a local aristocracy of long standing (see

* Translated by Livia Kohn
Strickmann 1978b). For Daoism, this meant a southward move of the religion of the Celestial Masters, which had been dominant in the north. Once in the south, it combined with the cosmological and spiritual techniques of Han-dynasty fangshi who had exerted a certain influence on Confucianism, but had been supplanted in the north by more rationalist tendencies. Having lost the north, their ideas and practices survived in the south, where they fruitfully reemerged in combination with the newly arriving Celestial Masters teachings.

The resulting Shangqing revelations thus marked something of a victory of the ancient southern traditions over those from the north. They won rapid success among the local aristocracy not only because they were southern but also because they exhibited a high literary quality. Aside from the remarkable poetic power of Shangqing language, which secured both texts and school a high standing within literary Chinese culture, the movement is also characterized by a great interiorization of religious practices. Shangqing formed an important link in the evolution from operative or laboratory alchemy to inner alchemy. It caused the transformation of physical sexual practices into platonic love relationships with the gods, diminished the bureaucratic, formal, and theurgical spirit of the Celestial Masters in its ritual and transmuted the ideal of quasi-physical immortality into one of spiritual salvation. At the same time it proved seductive to the poetic and mystical imagination, a feat which successfully distinguished it from the communal religiosity of the Celestial Masters as well as from contemporary speculative Buddhism.

Shangqing Daoism is sometimes referred to as Maoshan 茅山 Daoism in Western discussions because Mount Mao, southeast of Nanjing, served as one of its key centers (see Schafer 1980). However, this reference is not entirely correct since because the mountain has served as a center for a variety of Daoist groups and movements over the centuries and can in no way be identified with Shangqing—which should be called by its proper name.

**History**

Nothing is known about Yang Xi 楊羲 (330-386) except that he was a retainer of the aristocratic Xu 許 family originally from the north but which had emigrated to the south around the year 185 C.E. It seems that the family was related to Ge Hong 葛洪, the most celebrated representative of southern Daoism, and was also affiliated with the Celestial Masters. Between 363 and 370, then, a series of divine personages, the so-called perfected (shen 神), appeared to Yang Xi and dictated to him the texts which were to form the foundation of Shangqing Daoism. They
were directed particularly at the Xus, notably at Xu Mi 許猛 (303-373) and his son Xu Hui 許翻 (341-ca. 370). The texts were very successful among the southern aristocrats and influenced the Lingbao school that developed a few decades later (see Strickmann 1978b; 1981; Tang 1955).

The grandson of Xu Mi, Xu Huangmin 許黃民 (361-429), moved to Zhejiang where he distributed the texts and upon his death bequeathed them to two further families, named Ma 马 and De 傳. This bequest marks the first dispersion of the original Shangqing scriptures, to be followed by several others. A particularly notable set of forgeries appeared in the early fifth century that were connected with Wang Lingqi 王靈期 and Xu Rongdi 許榮弟, the son of Xu Huangmin.

Several eminent medieval Daoists put their best efforts into reassembling the original texts, including Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477), the seventh patriarch of the school who collected them in his monastery, the Chongxu guan 崇虛觀 (Monastery of Venerating Emptiness) in the southern capital, and Gu Huan 順歎 (420/8-483/91) who organized a community dedicated to their study. In addition, several emperors of the period were interested in the texts and bestowed their favor upon the patriarchs of the emerging school. In 481, for example, the emperor sent an envoy to Lushan 廈山 in search of the texts and indeed recovered some of them. The eighth patriarch, Sun Youyue 孫遊蝓 (398-488), a disciple of Lu Xiujing, taught at a monastery in the imperial capital. His disciple, the ninth patriarch, Tao Hongjing (456-536), a relative of both the Xu and Ge families, was a great friend of Emperor Wu of the Liang who was otherwise more inclined toward Buddhism. Tao's friendships with Buddhists stimulated the syncretistic tendencies between Daoism and Buddhism more characteristic of later ages. He was also an herbalist of some renown (editing and annotating the *Shennong bencao* 神農本草 [Material Medical]), and engaged in a variety of alchemical experiments. He first set out upon an official career but in 492, seduced by the Shangqing manuscripts, retired to Maoshan where he greatly prospered under imperial protection. Directing a community of Daoists who lived very much like the monks in a Buddhist monastery, he continued the collection and compilation of the Shangqing texts begun by his predecessors. A learned bibliographer of some standing, he also established criteria for distinguishing forgeries from genuine manuscripts mainly on the basis of the calligraphic styles of Yang Xi and Xu Mi, and set about codifying the scriptures and classifying the practices they described. As a result, he published the *Zhen gao* 真詣 (Declarations of the Perfected), which contains not only commentaries on some texts but also a report on the original revelation and on Tao's own quest for the texts. Under him, Maoshan became a major center of Daoist activity, a place of religious
retreat and goal of devout pilgrimage (see Mugitani 1976; Strickmann 1979).

The anti-Daoist proscriptions of the years 504 and 517 (see Strickmann 1978a) spared Tao's monastery because he was working under emperor Wu's direct protection but caused a number of other Daoists to emigrate to the north, where they further disseminated Shangqing teachings without, however, drawing the movement's center away from the south. Between the sixth and tenth centuries the school became the central and highest Daoist tradition. The encyclopedia *Wushang biyao*, compiled under the Northern Zhou around the year 570, already consisted largely of Shangqing materials, as did the *Sandong shuang* of the early seventh century. The 10th patriarch, Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 (d. 635; see Yoshikawa 1990), won the favor of the first Tang emperor, serving as his legitimizing saint and initiating him into certain Shangqing texts. As a result he was granted the foundation of a new temple on Maoshan, a monastery later known as the Taiping guan 太平館 (Monastery of Great Peace). He was succeeded by Pan Shizheng 潘師正 (d. 694), whose conversations about the Shangqing texts with Emperor Gaozong still survive in fragments. He is also known for founding a group of Shangqing temples on Mount Song near Luoyang.

The 12th patriarch, Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-735), one of the greatest masters of the period (see Engelhardt 1987; Kirkland 1986), was a descendant of the royal house of Jin. After serving Pan Shizheng 潘師正, the 11th patriarch, he returned south and established himself on Mount Tiantai 天台山 (Zhejiang), where the emperor granted him the foundation of the Tongbo guan 桐柏觀 (Cypress Monastery). He was summoned to court several times by successive rulers, all of whom constructed temples in his honor, and initiated both the emperor Xuanzong and the poet Li Bo 李白 into several Daoist texts. An important administrative success of his came in 721 when the emperor granted Shangqing deities supervision over all the empire's local and mountain gods, and thereby intensified the hold of Daoism over the religions of the country. Sima died in 735 on Mount Wangwu north of the capital. His successor, Li Hanguang 李含光 (683-769) returned to Maoshan where he dedicated his life to making a new edition of the Shangqing scriptures. They were presented to the emperor in 748, and formed the basis of the first Tang Daoist canon to be copied and distributed throughout the empire.

Until the eleventh century, the Shangqing texts served as inspiration for poets, such as Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778; see Schafer 1981), and prose writers alike, while later patriarchs, such as Zhu Ziyang 朱自英 (s. 1029) and Liu Hunkang 劉混康 (1035-1108), continued to benefit from imperial approval and variously initiated emperors and their families into the
secrets of the scriptures. The Daoist section of the *Taiping yulan* (dat. 983) consists for the most part of Shangqing materials. A similarly significant impact, in liturgy, meditation, and various practical instructions, is also found in the *Yulang daifa* 玉堂大法 (Major Methods of the Jade Hall; dat. 1120), a major compendium of Daoist ritual. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, however, the Shangqing school was subsumed under the Celestial Masters who gained increasing dominance, but who still placed the Shangqing registers at the top of their ritual hierarchy.

The spirit of Shangqing nonetheless gradually moved toward greater institutionalization, ritualization, and a moralistic tendency entirely absent from the original corpus. Further codified and organized, the texts came to adopt values that defined the place of adepts within the hierarchy along the lines of the registers of the Celestial Masters. There were several works that systematized the pantheon and undertook a thematic classification of the texts. New texts were added to the ancient corpus that integrated elements from Lingbao, the Celestial Masters, and Buddhism. Living masters became increasingly more important than texts and practices. Protocols of transmission in the form of registers and certificates of ordination were essential, while the techniques of visualization and ecstatic practice underwent increasing simplification.

On Maoshan other revelations emerged which were of a different character. They greatly emphasized exorcism yet claimed Shangqing lineage. Finally, the 45th patriarch, Liu Dabin 劉大彬 (fl. 1317-1328), wrote a preface to the *Maoshan zhi* 穆山志 (Chronicle of Mount Mao, CT 304) in which he summed up the history of the school that is documented in the 33 j. of the "Chronicle," a monumental testimony to the sacred history of school and mountain, probably written by Zhang Yu 張雨 (1279-1350).

**Texts**

Although the revealed texts of Shangqing are distributed throughout the Daoist canon and have mostly been altered or redacted, it is possible to reconstitute the original corpus using lists found in texts (Robinet 1984, 2:15-22). Moreover the contents of the texts can be authenticated by referring to notes in Tao's *Chen’gao*, as well as analyzing their vocabulary, pantheon, and inter-textual cross-references.

The texts contain many Daoist talismans, hymns, and poems. There are no long lists of divinities, as in comparable works of the Celestial Masters or of Lingbao, nor do they present theoretical expositions—at
least not in the early works. Rarely do Buddhist terms occur and if they do, they are not used in their proper Buddhist sense.

**Dadong zhenjing** 大洞真経 (Perfect Scripture of Great Profundity, 39 stanzas), dat. 360s (see Robinet 1983; 1984, 2:41; 1993, 97-119; Mugitani 1992). This is the fundamental Shangqing text. It focuses on great profundity, defined as the “supreme, unlimited darkness where one attains the void and guards tranquility.” The term appears as a synonym for Shangqing itself and designates the essential teaching of the entire school.

The text exists in several versions of varying titles that date for the most part from the Song and Yuan. There are, for example, the **Wenchang dadong xianjing** 文昌大洞仙経, placed under the patronage of the popular god Wenchang (CT 5) in 5 j.; its commented version (CT 103), in 10 j.; a **Dadong zhenjing** with different commentary (CT 6) in 6 j.; a “jade scripture” or **Dadong yujing** 大洞玉経 (CT 7) in 2 j.; as well as a version in the **Daozang jiyo** which contains fragments of yet three other editions. Despite the various redactions the text underwent, these versions have mostly been authenticated, and the version closest to the original is CT 6, although it contains added parts both in j. 1 and at the end of 6.

The central 39 stanzas are dedicated to celestial divinities, who are further correlated with visualizations of certain body gods that may have been added later. In addition, the scripture itself forms the core of a group of practices, such as the method of the whirlwind (**huifeng** 回風) which already was linked with the book in Tao Hongjing’s time, and cannot be separated from its “revealed commentary,” found in the **Yunji qiqian** (8.1a-14a) under the title **Shi sanshijiu zhang jing** 释三十九章經 (incomplete). Actually two kinds of texts correspond to this title: one is contained at the end of CT 6 and again found in the **Jinhua yujing** 金華玉經 (Jade Scripture of the Golden Flower, CT 254, 6b-9a); the other is in the beginning of each paragraph of CT 6 and again regrouped in the **Yunji qiqian** (30.10b-22a). At the same time, an “oral formula” was attached to the different sections of the text and is partly contained in CT 6; it otherwise appears throughout the Shangqing corpus. The recitation of the **Dadong zhenjing** was moreover accompanied by a preparatory ritual, not unlike the method known as **Xuanmu bajian** 玄母八間 (Eight Tablets of the Mysterious Mother) and certain techniques described in the **Ciyi jing** (Scripture of the Female One, CT 1313).

**Lingshu ziwen** 紫書紫文 (Purple Texts Inscribed by the Spirits), one of the original Shangqing scriptures, found today in four different texts in the Daoist canon: CT 639, 255, 442 and 179 (trl. Bokenkamp 1997, 301-66; see Robinet 1984, 2:101-10; Schafer 1978). The first gives the composition story of the text as going back to Qingtong 青童, the
Azure Lad, a mediator between the divine and human realms. It then describes three methods of psycho-physiological refinement involving visualization, incantations and the absorption of talismans as well as control over the *hun* and *po* souls. The second text contains the recipe of the Langgan Elixir, an astro-alchemical concoction that involves the absorption of stellar essences. The third is devoted to a description of the end of the world and discusses the savior figure Li Hong who will come to rescue the chosen people. The fourth and last text lists ethical and ritual prohibitions.

_Santian zhengfa jing_ 三統正法經 (Scripture of the Correct Method of the Three Heavens; see Ozaki 1974; Robinet 1984, 2:A7). The majority of this text is lost. It seems to have been an apocryphon of the Six Dynasties, and some fragments remain in the Daoist canon, in the 11 pages of CT 1203 as well as in the _Jiuwei badoao jing_ 九微八道經 (Scripture of the Eight Ways of the Nine Tenuities, CT 1395). The most authentic and important citations of the original text are found in the _Yunj qiqian_ (2.4a-8a), describing a theory of the cyclical ending of the world. The original text probably described ways of escaping the cataclysmic disasters at the end of a cycle, using incantations and talismans.

_Huangqi yangjing sandao shunxing jing_ 黃氣陽精三道順行經 (Scripture to Accompany the Yellow Energy, the Yang Essence, and the Three Ways, CT 33, 29 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:A8). The “yellow energy” is the florescence of the moon, while “yang essence” refers to that of the sun. The “three ways” are the courses of the three key stars, the sun, the moon, and the Dipper. The adept follows the course of the sun and the moon and rides on the stars in order to acquire the nourishment necessary for immortality. He lies down on the Dipper, while the seven gods of the constellation transform into pure light.

_Taidanyinsku_ 太丹隱書 (Secret Book of the Great Cinnabar, CT 1330, 46 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:A18). The present version of this text has been reedited and is in some disorder but it does contain important original Shangqing materials. It deals with the regeneration of the adept and all the gods with the help of Taiyi, the Great One, and focuses on Dijun, the Lord Emperor, as the highest god. The book also contains methods of having one’s name inscribed in the registers of life through the intercession of the five “register spirits.”

_Ci yi yujian wulao baojing_ 雞一玉檢五老寶經 (Precious Scripture of the Five Old Lords, Enveloped in Jade of the Female One, CT 1313, 58 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:B1; Lagerwey 1981, 241-43). This seventh-century Shangqing edition contains authentic early material that consists largely of methods (*fa*) that complement other scriptures and focuses on the “formula” of the _Dadong zhenjing_. Certain parts are apocryphal, but still in harmony with the original revelations. The core text concerns the
Three Ladies of Simplicity (Sansu 三素), the female counterparts of the male deities of the Grotto Chamber (dongfang 洞房) in the center of the head and their sons, to whom one portion of the text is also dedicated (24a-27a). This latter portion, which is also cited under the title Dongfang nei jing 洞房內經, also appears in the Dongfang jing zhu 洞房經註 (Annotated Scripture of the Grotto Chamber, CT 133, pp. plus 7 pp., later comm.). It may go back to the third century, when it was received by the masters Su Lin 蘇林 and Juanzi 潘子, and later adopted into Shangqing. The Ci jing presents a harmonization of practices found in the older Dongfang jing and those of the Taidan yinshu.

Basu jing 八素經 (Scripture of the Eight White [Chariots]; Robinet 1984, 2:A3). The basu are eight chariots of white clouds closely connected with the bajing 八景 or eight chariots of light on which the divinities move about. They are also female gods. The “Basu Scripture” actually consists of several texts that all have to do with the absorption of astral florescences: the Basu zhen jing 八素真經 (CT 426, 28 pp.) and the Basu zhen jing fu ri yue huang hua jue 八素真經服日月華缺 (Basu Scripture Formula on the Absorption of the Sovereign Florescence of the Sun and Moon, CT 1323, 26 pp.). The first of these two versions describes an exercise of evoking the planets and their spirits during the wutong 五通 days when the spirits mount to heaven to attend to the registers of good and bad deeds. It complements the practice undertaken on the huiyuan 返元 days as described in the Jiuzhen zhong jing. In addition, the text also has procedures to exorcise demons, formulas for pacifying the hun souls, and ways to eliminate the Three Corpses (sanshi 三尸). The second version of the Basu jing teaches how to absorb the essences of the sun and the moon. It also describes the ritual of the Eight Gates of the Mysterious Mother, which addresses the divinities riding in the chariots of clouds and light, and gives instructions on the visualization of the gods riding during the eight nodal points, the major divisions of the year.

Jiuzhen zhong jing 九真中經 (Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected, CT 1376, 2 j.; CT 1377, 22 pp.) and Dongfang shang jing 洞房上經 (Highest Scripture of the Grotto Chamber; CT 405, 19 pp; see Robinet 1979; 1984, 2: A5; Yamada 1989). These two texts cite and complement each other, containing summaries of important Shangqing methods even though neither has retained its original form. Three techniques stand out.

1. The method of the Nine Perfected, i.e., the nine souls of the Lord Emperor who give life to the body. The practitioner meditates on the Lord Emperor, on Taiyi, and on the five register spirits, who fuse nine times, joining each time into one great spirit who then goes to the Niwan 泥丸 palace in the head. The same type of exercise is found in the Jiuzhen shanghua tai jing zhong jing 九丹上化胎精中記經 (Scripture of the Central
Record of the Ninefold Cinnabar of the Upper Transformation of the Embryo Essence, CT 1382, 27 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2: A20), here dedicated to loosening the embryonic knots in the body which are the cause of human mortality.

2. The method of the Dijun jiuyin jing 帝君九陰經 (Scripture of the Nine Yin of the Lord Emperor). The secret spouses of Great Yin who live in the Dipper and in the Mingtang 明堂 (Hall of Light) in the head control deliverance of the body through disappearance and invoke powers of vanishing and transformation. Adepts should visualize the relevant divinities, such as the Lord Emperor, the Great One, the five register spirits, and the gods of the Dipper in the various palaces of the head and heart. They then transform into a radiant infant who illuminates everything.

3. The method of the Yuyi jieli 日月結縵, the esoteric names of the sun and the moon. This appears in numerous texts and was also adopted in later rituals. It consists of visualizing the emperors of the stars who descend to take the adept into the heavens.

In addition, various methods of the five and twenty-four spirits, of the five planets, and of huiyuan, are found spread out in CT 1376 and 1377. They are best collected in CT 405, the Dongfang shangjing, a text quite distinct from the Dongfang jing related to the Ciyijing. The methods involve various exercises using the five spirits of the hands, the feet, and the lungs (or of the head), as well as the twenty-four luminous body gods and the divinities of the planets. On the special huiyuan ("return to the origin") days adepts can erase their names from the register of sins and make the gods of the Dipper descend into their bodies.

Bu tiangang fei diji shangjing 步天綱飛地紀上經 (Highest Scripture for Pacing the Heavenly Net and Flying over the Mainstays of Earth, CT 1316, 29 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:A4). This details the pacing of the Dipper (bu beidou 步北斗), a practice that probably antedates Shangqing (see Andersen 1990). The text is truncated in parts and may not all be authentic, but the parts that describe the pacing of the Dipper seem to be authentic Shangqing revelations.

Guishan xuanlu 巖山玄錄 (Mysterious Register of Turtle Mountain, CT 1393, 3 j.; Robinet 1984, 2:A27). Turtle Mountain is described as a cosmic mountain that touches the boundaries of the earth. It is located east of Kunlun, the home of the Queen Mother of the West (Xiwang mu 西王母), an ancient deity who is also the patroness of this text. The second scroll was added after the revelations between the first and third of the original. One part of the text (1.4a-8b) is written in talismanic characters spontaneously created by the purple energy of heaven which also gave birth to the Queen Mother, the spirit of the west. The text gives a list of the 74 divinities of the Dadong zhenjing as they appear in
different forms, sometimes as animals, sometimes as light, depending on the seasons. It teaches the way to meditate on these gods and return them to their original shapes.

Waiguo fangpin qingtong neiwen 外國方品青童內文 (Esoteric Text of the Green Lad on the Distribution of Foreign Lands, CT 1373, 2 j.; Robinet 1984, 2:A9). This text is slightly later than the revelation to Yang Xi. Its two scrolls seem to be two distinct scriptures, with one section of the second being apparently written after the emergence of the Lingbao texts. It names the 36 heavens and 36 earths in groups of four and can be grouped with ecstatic excursion texts and manuals on exorcism by chanting heavenly sounds. Its cosmology is a compromise between the mainstream Chinese vision of the isles of the immortals, the stages of the sun, and the potentially beneficial countries of the barbarians—all of which it describes—and Buddhist features such as the names of the four Buddhist continents and Sanskrit names for far-off places. The division of the heavens and earth, however, is by six and nine, following the cosmology of Shangqing and not that of Buddhism.

Suling dayou ntiaojing 素靈大有妙經 (Wondrous Scripture of [the Heavens] Dayou and Suling, CT 1314, 68 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:B2). This present, probably incomplete, version of this complex of materials is full of later interpolations and thus differs in form from that of the seventh century. It consists of textual strata from the Han to the late fifth century and demonstrates an early stage of the hierarchical division of Daoist texts that later grew into the full scheme of the Three Caverns. Some of its methods were linked with Su Lin and Juanzi and predate Shangqing, but were later adopted into the tradition.

The text can be divided into three major sections. The first is dedicated to the Three-in-One which are formed A) by the Three Abysses (sanyuan 三洞), the three cosmic levels of heaven, earth, and water which govern the Suling heaven and the three cinnabar fields; B) by the nine palaces (jiugong 九宮) in the head where the gods of the Male and the Female One reside; or C) by the Three Ones identical with the Three Primes (sanyuan 三元) who reside in the cinnabar fields. The latter are the object of a meditation called wudou sanyi 五斗三一 (Five Dipper Stars and Three Ones) which carries the adept to the Dipper. The topology of the head, moreover, as described here is probably anterior to Shangqing and is a bit different from that found in other texts of the school.

The second major section of the text (41a-44a) presents a developed and ritualized procedure linked with the hagiography of Peijun 裴君. The third part (44a-end) is a later code called Jiuzhen mingke 九真明科 (Luminous Code of the Nine Perfected), which systematizes the rules of textual transmission. It appears again, yet further developed, in the later Siji mingke 四極明科 (Luminous Code of the Four Poles, CT 184, j. 3).
Zhen'gao (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016, 20 j.), by Tao Hongjing, dat. 499, with a postface by Gao Sisun, dat.1223 (see Ishii 1966-68; Robinet 1984, 2:C1; Kamitsuka 1986; Akamatsu 1992; Yoshi-kawa 1998 [collection of essays]). This comprehensive presentation of the revelations given to Yang Xi by the various perfected recovers numerous texts, partly because it cites them, partly because it is cited in them. The texts consist of scattered notes taken by Yang Xi or the Xus in describing Yang's visions, the gods and their intentions outside of the actual revelations. Some explain the texts that are being revealed, others trace the ancient history of the methods applied or describe the people who transmitted them, others again respond to direct questions put by Yang or the Xus. Tao Hongjing in addition comments now and then on the authenticity of the text, whether or not he deemed it an original Shangqing fragment, or where the particular passage came from—a great help in identifying texts whose titles were changed over the years.

The Zhen'gao divides into seven sections (originally ten), which give a general coherence to the presentation. The first five sections concern the revealed texts, beginning with a retelling of Yang Xi's visions and a transcript of the incantations of the perfected (j. 1-4). It then moves on to instructions of methods by lesser divinities (j. 5-6) and to information gathered from beyond the grave among the Xus' family and friends (j. 7-10). The fourth section (j. 11-14) describes Maoshan and retells its history, while the fifth (j. 15-16) is dedicated to the underworld. The sixth section (j. 17-18) contains personal writings by Yang and the Xus, fragments of correspondence and reports of dreams. The last section (j. 19-20) is by Tao himself, describing his methods of research and presentation as well as giving a history of the texts and a genealogy of the Xu family. Despite this overall order, there are frequent interpolations and repetitions among the sections, with the result that the chronology and the logical order of presentation are often both confused. Alterations have slid into the work of Tao Hongjing, and certain texts dictated by the perfected are scattered and truncated.

Dengzhen yinjue 登真隸缺 (Secret Formula on Ascending to Perfection, CT 421, 3 j.), by Tao Hongjing, dat. 514 (see Ófuchi 1964, 308; Strickmann 1981; Robinet 1984, 2:C2). The majority of this text is lost today, and what remains is a collection of Shangqing texts made by Tao Hongjing for his disciples and thus, unlike the Zhen'gao, available for copying and reproduction. It contains an excerpt from the biography of Su Lin, discussing the practice of "guarding the One" (shouyi 寳一; j. 1), fragments of the revelation to Yang Xi on lesser practices and apotropic methods also found in the Zhen'gao (j. 2), as well as rituals taught by Wei Huacun 魏華存 and attached to her biography (j. 3). A number of citations not found in the surviving text appear in later anthologies, fitting
closely with the work and supplementing it, especially in regard to the use of various drugs commonly described in the context of the hagiographies of Shangqing saints.

HAGIOGRAPHIES. Shangqing hagiographies describe immortals prior to Yang Xi who appeared to him to dictate their lives or present their biographies. These immortals have many similar points in common and often belong to the same lineage. Outlining the progress of spiritual initiation, they aim chiefly to integrate the immortals and their methods into accordance with the Shangqing corpus (see Mugitani 1982), while yet showing that their earlier ways were somewhat inferior and that the immortals occupied a slightly lower rank. Hence they often describe differences in immortals' hierarchies. Descriptions of methods, moreover, that were part of the biographies are often set apart but can be found in other Shangqing texts.

Sujun zhuan 蘇君傳 (Biography of Lord Sun, Yunji qiqian 104.1a-4b; Robinet 1984, 2:C6), attributed to Zhou Jitong, a Shangqing immortal. It contains forms of guarding the One, also found attached to the Suling jing (CT 1314) described above. They include the method of the Nine Palaces and that of the Five Stars and Three Ones, of which a more complete version appears in Yunji qiqian 49.11a-17b. They probably also included drug recipes associated with Su Lin.

Su Lin, zi Zixuan 子玄, came from Qushui in Jiangsu. After having studied different methods with various masters, whose biographies appear in the ancient Liexian zhuan 列仙傳, he became the disciple of Juanzi who taught him how to expel the three deathbringers and transmitted the Wudou sanyi jing 五斗三一經 and the method of the Grotto Chamber to him. After having successfully practiced these techniques, he ascended to heaven in broad daylight.

Qingsu zhenren wangjun neizhuan 清虛真人王君内傳 (Biography of Lord Wang, Perfected of Pure Emptiness, Yunji qiqian 106.1a-8a; Robinet 1984, 2:C7), describes Wang Bao 王寶, zi Zideng 子登, the master of Wei Huacun. The extant text is at least in part apocryphal; it contains two formulas: one on the absorption of the “cloudy germs” of the four directions, which appears in various Daozang texts; the other, which forms a pair with the first, is called the “green essence” and appears in Yunji qiqian 74.1a-7b.

Qingling zhenren peijun zhuan 清靈真人裴君傳 (Biography of Lord Pei, Perfected of Pure Numen, Yunji qiqian 105, 26 pp.; Robinet 1984, 2:C8), attributed to Dengyunzi 登雲子 but probably recreated on the basis of an earlier original, which was altered and subjected to interpolations. The Taiyi jinde juxi jinzheng ji 太一金鑒玉鏡金真紀 (Record of the Jade Seal and Golden Perfection of the Golden Tower of the Great One, CT 394, 7 pp.) provides another, probably later, version.
Lord Pei, zi Xuanren 亜仁, came from Xiayang in Shanxi and was born in a Buddhist family under reign of Emperor Xiao (180-57 B.C.E.) or again under that of Emperor Ming (57-75 C.E.), the latter being more likely. In a Buddhist temple he met Zhi Ziyuan 支子元, a disciple of a Liexian zhuan immortal known as Chijiangzi Yu 赤將子與, who transmitted to him five recipes, included in the biography, that are named after his master. After receiving his instructions, Lord Pei took an elixir, the recipe of which too is found in the text. Thereafter he took a tour around the polar mountains where he met various divinities who gave him food of the immortals and sacred books, so that he could attain a successful journey to the highest heavens of Shangqing.

The recipes he received from Zhi Ziyuan include a) a method for making the spirits of the planets descend upon the adept's body; b) a general exposition of the principles involved in sexual practices; c) a method to expel the three corpses; d) another to make the immortals come down; and e) a way to erase one's sins and get oneself and one's ancestors registered in the ledgers of life. The biography also waxes extensively on the method of the sun and the moon (yuyi julin), otherwise found in the Jiuzhen zhongjing, a text which Lord Pei also received and followed.

Ziyang zhenren neizhuan 紫陽真人內傳 (Esoteric Biography of the Perfected of Purple Yang, CT 303, 19 pp., Yunji qiqian 106.8a-15a), dat. 399 (trl. Porkert 1979; see Robinet 1984, 2:C9). Probably written by Hua Qiao 華僑, who had received a visit from both this immortal and Lord Pei, this survives in two versions, neither of which retains the original but present either an expansion or contraction. It contains Shangqing hymns, a list of texts received by Ziyang—close to those listed in Wei Huacun's biography—reminiscences of the biography of Su Lin, and a preface describing the life of Hua Qiao. Methods tend to be similar to those of “guarding the One.”

The Perfected of Purple Yang is Zhou Yishan 周義山, zi Jitong, who was born in 80 B.C.E., became a disciple of Su Lin, and was among the immortals who appeared to Yang Xi. In his youth he studied the Daode jing, Lunyu, and Yiying, enjoyed absorbing solar essences and practiced alms-giving. He received a visit by Su Lin who gave him alchemical and dietetic recipes that would destroy the three deathbringers. After this, he spent long years searching for the method of the Three Ones, wandering over mountains and through valleys, going to all the sacred mountains of China and visiting their grottos and immortals to receive various teachings. He finally discovered within himself the method he searched for and practiced it with dedication.

Taiyuan zhenren maojun neizhuan 太元真人茅君內傳 (Esoteric Biography of Lord Mao, the Perfected of Great Prime, Yunji qiqian
Mao Ying3F9.» £> Shushen fp, was the descendant of an immortal and the grandson of a general of the First Qin Emperor. The oldest of three brothers, he retired to Mount Heng to study the Daodejing and the Yi Jing. There he received a visit of the immortal lady Taixuan nü 太玄女 who advised him to follow the school of Wang Yuan 王遠, an immortal of the Shenxian zhuan. As a result, Mao searched for him everywhere, visiting, among others, Xiwang mu who gave him two writings of Shangqing, the Yupei jindang 玉佩金壇 (Jade Pendant and Golden Bell, CT 56, 1.23b)—names of the soul deities of the nine heavens who reside in the sun and the moon—and the related method Mingtang xuanzhen 明堂玄真 (Mysterious Perfection of the Hall of Light). Having mastered these, Lord Mao also taught his brothers. After his ascension in 1 B.C.E., the latter continued to receive divine instructions and sacred texts from celestial jade maidens. Later the Mao brothers established themselves on Mount Gouqu, south of Nanjing, which was renamed Maoshan after them. From there they flew up into heaven and, like their older brother, became celestial supervisors of the spirits of the countries of Wu and Yue. The Shangqing text contains two episodes borrowed from Lord Mao's Shenxian zhuan biography that relate miracles he performed.

In addition, the latter also contained a) a description of Maoshan, of which only a few other traces remain in Zhen’gao 4 and Maoshan zhi 6; b) several drug recipes also found in the Jiuzhuan huandan jing yaojue 九轉還丹經要诀 (Essential Formula of the Scripture on Ninefold Reverted Cinnabar, CT 889; see Strickmann 1979, 146-61); c) the method of the mysterious perfection of the Hall of Light, also found in CT 56 (23b-26b) and in CT 424 (10 pp., tr. Schafer 1978).

Nanyue wei furen zhuan 南嶽魏夫人傳 (Biography of Lady Wei of the Southern Peak, Taiping guangji 58; Robinet 1984, 2:C11). The original, no longer extant, was a revealed text, and the Taiping guangji contains only a small remnant. Lady Wei Huacun, 陳賢安, the main teacher of Yang Xi, came originally from Rencheng in Shandong. In her youth she preferred a retired life, dedicating herself to the study of the Confucian and Daoist classics, taking immortality drugs, and practicing breathing techniques. She married an official on her parents’ advice and gave birth to two sons, yet rose in rank in her own right to become a libationer of the Celestial Masters. She was initiated into the religion through two visits of immortals, including her master Wang Bao, the first when she was 48, the second at the age of 83. From them she re-
ceived a number of lesser Shangqing methods, including the practice of the *Huangtmgjing* (Yellow Court Scripture), meditations on the planets, ways of pacing the Dipper, as well as certain drug recipes, which have not survived except one (in *Sandong zhunang* 8.28a-29b). She also received the Shangqing scriptures in revelation but was unable to follow their instructions until after she attained deliverance from the corpse with the help of a sword, which made her into an earth immortal. In this state, she practiced the *Dadong zhenjing* and became a celestial immortal.

The hymns linked with her biography are conserved in *Wushang biyao* 20 and *Yunji qiqian* 96. Ritual rules associated with it are found in *Dengzhen yinjue* 3, including one rite concerning the proper entry into the meditation chamber which Lady Wei received from Zhang Daoling himself and a set of rules about the correct writing of petitions to the gods, recovering procedures applied among the Celestial Masters (see Cedzich 1987). Wei Huacun, therefore, can be described as the link between the two schools. She was actively worshiped later, and her shrine on the Southern Peak became a pilgrimage center (see Schafer 1977a).

**Worldview**

**SACRED SCRIPTURES.** The scriptural corpus of Shangqing assembled and organized into a coherent whole the ancient oral traditions that were transmitted from master to disciple without a formal or institutional framework. The central place that Shangqing accords to the revealed scriptures (even its “oral formulas” are originally written) breaks with the oral form of the ancient traditions, and the greater coherence created through the collection of scriptures into one organized whole makes it possible to speak of Shangqing as a “school,” whereas previously there were only “lineages” largely independent of one another. On the other hand, Shangqing cannot be described as a “church,” which had been the formal organization of the early Celestial Masters.

The scriptures are innately sacred and precosmic. Issued from the void, they took shape and were written by divinities eons before they were revealed to humanity. Their growth followed a process of condensation which is the equivalent of the gradual influx of the gods onto the earth. The scriptures assure a connection between humanity and the gods who are made from the same primordial energy and similarly remain in more or less subtle original states (Robinet 1993, 19-54). They are “treasures” (*bao* 寶), auspicious signs (*rui* 瑞) or tokens (*xin* 信) of divine protection, not unlike the wondrous signs heaven used to send to earth in order to show that a certain ruler had won the Mandate. Most frequently the scriptures are developed from a talisman that represents
the “true form” of immortals’ paradises or the names of gods, and thereby gives access to them. Or they are amplifications of the magically empowered names of gods. Thus the “methods” of visualization and physiological practices are built on the basis of the core created by these forms and names. They are the central guide of the religion and thus replace priests as intermediaries to the gods: the master is relegated to the secondary role of being a mere witness and guarantor of the sacred transmission.

This transmission ritual over which he presides seems to go back to the environment of the fangshi and reveals the particular nature of the Shangqing scriptures. It takes the form of a legal contract witnessed by gods and contains threats against anyone who transmits the sacred documents carelessly or without due authority. Whoever violates this essential rule will never become immortal, for he has broken the key contract of the religion, a contract that takes place not on a social but a sacred, ontological level.

HUMANITY. Shangqing maintains the earlier Daoist concept of humanity that differs from classical Chinese thought in the sense that the human body is not simply inhabited by the two souls hun 魂 (celestial) and po 魄 (earthly) but also houses a multitude of body gods. This is typical of a Daoist vision of humanity found in texts as early as the Han apocrypha.

Human beings possess a triple nature: they are autonomous and responsible individuals, integral members of their lineage, and active participants in the cosmos. Shangqing continues the ancient notion of a universe founded on the direct correspondence between humanity and the cosmos, based on the patterns of yin/yang and the five phases, and also maintains the importance of energy (qi 氣) and essence (jing 精). It also inherits physiological ideas found in Ge Hong and the Huangting jing, including the three cinnabar fields (dantian 丹田), residence of life-preserving gods, and the Three Deathbringers, demon parasites who inhabit the body. Shangqing also introduces the notion of the “embryonic knots,” congenital causes of death, ontological and physiological germs of mortality that are found in precise points of the human body from well before birth. They are divided into three groups of four each: in the upper body, they are located in the Niwan palace in the head, the mouth, the cheeks, and the eyes; in the middle, they are in the viscera, the stomach, the large and small intestines; and in the lower portion, they are in the bladder, the genitals, the anus, and the feet. Beyond these, the Dadong zhenjing and the Guishan xuanlu enumerate a great number of bodily points where the energy of death may accumulate.

Other innovations include the nine palaces in the head, which later became a general feature of the Daoist bodily landscape. The nine inner
palaces are an imitation of those passed by the god Taiyi in the sky. This concept—already hinted at in earlier texts, although Ge Hong, for example, only mentions three palaces instead of nine—becomes fundamental in Daoist thought despite later variants in their names and, less commonly, in their number. The palaces are internally connected and are arranged on two levels; unlike the cinnabar fields, they are not the residences of their own special deities but house the Three Ones (sanyi 上一)—at least if and when one meditates on them: the masculine one (xiangyi 雄一), the female one (ciyi 雌一), and the supreme one (shangyi 上一 [see Andersen 1980]).

SALVATION AND IMMORTALITY. “My destiny is my own and does not lie with heaven!” This *leitmotiv* of longevity texts indicates that salvation is the concern of the individual and depends on his own deeds. According to Shangqing salvation theory, however, the sins and merits of one’s ancestors are reflected in the adept’s status, just as the actions of the adept have an effect on the immortality of his forebears. The salvation of the individual cannot be conceived apart from his ancestors, to whom he is linked ontologically. Thus the highest sin, transmitting a sacred text without due authority, has consequences both for the adept and for his ancestors: they are condemned to the tortures of the underworld, whereas he loses all possibility of ever gaining immortality.

Shangqing immortality involves the cosmicization of the individual: human beings are both the place and the product of the interaction of heaven and earth. They cannot achieve true self-realization unless they become fully conscious of their cosmic and divine nature. Salvation in Shangqing is thus universal in the sense that the adept becomes one with heaven, not in the Buddhist sense of striving to save all living beings. Shangqing salvation is not an outward embrace of all things, but a movement inwards that melts into the whole of the universe.

Immortality also means the unification of the numerous spirits and entities that make up the complex individual. Doing so he creates a subtle, “glorious body,” made luminous by the power of the gods who animate its innermost being. An analysis of this vision of immortality reveals the human being to be a complex figure. He is both autonomous and responsible, yet also ontologically linked with his lineage and the universe. This in turn indicates a mystical dimension of the teaching, which is most evident in the vows that adepts take: to become one with the cosmos and the gods in order to merge with ultimate truth, primordial energy or emptiness, and to renounce the world to do so. This mystical aspect is not at all incompatible with the ancient—naive and popular—concept of the immortal as a possessor of fantastic magical powers. On the contrary, the old idea is part of the new vision, of an adept who has “immortal’s bones” and whose name, at least according
to certain texts, is already inscribed in the heavenly registers of life. All he has to do on earth is to realize his potential. Immortality is already promised to him, becoming both more immediate and personal than envisioned in earlier texts such as Ge Hong’s, where it was a far-off goal and distant vision.

Though consistent with previous notions of immortality, Shangqing adds a completely new element that fundamentally transforms the ideal. Previously the key was to acquire an immortal body. There was no question of life after death as one simply did not die (even though certain miraculous cases of revivification were reported). The Shangqing scriptures, to the contrary, outline procedures that assure a life beyond the grave, a birth after death or regeneration to immortality. Thus it becomes possible even for inhabitants of the underworld to attain immortality by a gradual ascent through the spiritual hierarchy that eventually reaches the highest heavens. The adept may also be reborn in the heavens or on some other high cosmic level. This idea of rebirth is a new contribution of Shangqing to the ideal of immortality, and is taken up seriously in the later texts of inner alchemy. It does not, however, contain anything of the Buddhist sense of reincarnation, which had a certain impact on the Lingbao. In fact it is quite the opposite, since rebirth here is a way to salvation, not a way of being bound to earth. Furthermore, while the notion of the “return to the embryo” is found in Shangqing texts, the key idea of inner alchemy, that of the “immortal embryo,” arises only with inner alchemy in later centuries.

PANTHEON. The most significant feature of the Shangqing pantheon is that it does not share the same bureaucratic nature as other Daoist movements. It is not always described coherently in the texts, but with slight simplification a fairly homogeneous structure emerges. Certain gods are ancient divinities, such as the Queen Mother of the West and the Ruler of Fates (Siming 司命), but there are none of the ancient nature gods among Shangqing deities, a tendency that is congruous with the struggle of the Zhen’gao against various forms of animism.

Beyond a central group of 74 celestial deities, those most prominent are the gods whose primary role is to serve as mediators between heaven and humanity and who are the origin of certain revealed texts. Key among them are the Celestial King of Primordial Beginning (Yuanshi tianwang 元始天王), the Highest Lord of the Dao (Taishang daojun 太上大道君), and the Lord Emperor (Dijun 帝君). The Latter-Day Sage (Housheng 后生), so called in contrast to the precosmic sages of primordiality, takes the name Li Hong 李弘, the traditional appellation of Laozi as messiah and is also known as Lord Goldtower (Jinque dijun 金闕帝君; see Strickmann 1981). Together with the Queen Mother of the West and the Green Lad (Qingtong 青童) he also serves as an important interme-
diary. Texts describing their “biographies” also recount their initiatic travels around the heavens.

There are further cosmic deities, including the gods of the stars and the five sections of space, who play a fundamental role in visualizations. Beyond all those, finally, are the numerous gods in the body, who are also its subtle principles. Some of them have names very much like those found in Han-dynasty apocrypha and earlier Daoist texts, such as the *Wu fu xu* 五符序 or the *Lao zi zhong jing* 老子中經. They include the gods of the three cinnabar fields, the Three Ones—bodily forms of the Three Primes who created the world—as well as a series of twenty-four gods divided in three groups of eight known as the *jing* or bodily luminants who correspond to the twenty-four seasonal energies. The Three Primes are also divided into three, making a total of nine primordial deities who are present at the genesis of the cosmos and of the subtle human body. They are called the Nine Perfected and reside in the essential organs of the body, or again in the Nine Palaces, three each in the three main areas. Eight luminants are associated with each of the Nine Perfected to form a group of 72 deities who are governed by the Primordial Father (*Yuan fu* 元父) and the Mysterious Mother (*Xuan mu* 玄母). These altogether 74 deities guard the adept’s body and contribute to its spiritualization; they are in close touch with the 74 celestial gods of the *Dadong zhen jing*. The Father and Mother, in addition, represent the original yin and yang and are associated with the upper and lower cinnabar fields. They are the true creators of the spiritual aspect of the human being and preside over his divine rebirth.

Next, the five “register spirits” play a key role in the visualization exercises used to have one’s name inscribed in the registers of life. They are five body gods who govern the formation of the human embryo: Taiyi, the chief among them all, resides in the head; Wuying 無英, governor of the essence is found in the liver; Baiyuan 白元, ruler of the *hun* and *po* souls, is in the lungs; Siming, the Ruler of Fates, has his palace in the genitals; and Daokang 道康, the spirit of the beginning of life and of sexual energy, can be found in the lower cinnabar field during the day and to the right of Taiyi at night. Wuying and Baiyuan, joined by Huanglao 黃老, represent the manifestation of the male One; they are the sons of the three Ladies of Simplicity, forms of the female One, who is their superior. The three gods reside in the Grotto Chamber in the center of the head, which is also called the Flowery Palace 華宮.

**COSMOLOGY.** Shangqing cosmology in its overall structure follows traditional Chinese patterns. It consists of a horizontal division into five (the five phases) and a vertical one into three (the three forces: heaven, earth, humanity). Together this structure is expressed as the “Three and Five” (*san wu* 三五). The numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, and 9, which play key roles
in ancient Chinese cosmology, similarly appear in the Shangqing system, either as divinities or as heavens. The One is Taiyi, god of the Great Unity; the Two is yin and yang or heaven and earth, as well as the original Father and Mother; the Three and Five are the sanwu described above; the Nine are the nine great primordial heavens created from pure cosmic energy and divine forces that rule the rebirth of the adept under the guidance of the original Father and Mother. There are a total of 36 heavens, three issuing from each of the original nine, as well as eight heavens arranged horizontally. The southern paradise is a place of purification and rebirth; the Three Clarity heavens—Jade, Highest, and Great Clarity (Yuqing 玉清, Shangqing 上清, and Taiqing 太清)—are subsequent stages in the adept’s progress. Beyond the heavens, there are further paradises too numerous to name. Among them are the stations of the sun and the moon as well as the stars themselves, including the sun, moon, planets, and Ursa Major—described as the Dipper and consisting of seven stars plus two invisible ones. In addition, there are the far-off corners of the earth. They all are named after traditional myths or given appellations based on the Shangqing tradition but sometimes may also be called by Buddhist or Sanskrit names.

Shangqing adopts the “Chart of the True Shape of the Five Peaks” (Wuyue zhenxing tu, 五岳真形圖, CT 1223) mentioned by Ge Hong. In the practice, each adept aligns himself with one of the peaks. Other sacred mountains of China are important as the locations of the grotto-heavens (dongtian 洞天; see Miura 1983), residences of the immortals and storage places of the scriptures before their revelation to humanity. The most important mountain is Kunlun, the traditional axis mundi, which in Shangqing is also called Xigui shan 西廬山 (Western Turtle Mountain) or Longshan 龍山 (Dragon Mountain). Other sacred peaks play similar roles, e.g., Renniao shan 人鳥山 (Birdmen Mountain).

The underworld does not play an important part in the system. It is associated with the Dipper because it is its counterpart, both lying beyond the “gate of demons” and being able to open the “door of life.” It is located in the ancient mountain-city of Fengdu shan 鳳都山 or Luofeng shan 離酆山 (a real place in Sichuan), which serves as the center of an underworld administration organized in Six Palaces and judgment courts of the dead. There are three major courts, those of fire, water, and women. The palaces, numbered six because six is the number of yin, correspond to the realm of the nefarious Six Heavens as opposed to the grand Nine Heavens of creation (nine being the number of yang). They are in fact lesser or underworld heavens, which house all those not yet able to ascend to the heavenly realms but who have, by merit of their moral qualities or practices of lesser techniques, managed to become ser-
vants fulfilling minor regulatory functions in a celestial hierarchy that will allow them to gradually ascend the ladder toward the higher heavens. Fengdu is governed by the great emperor of the demon administrators, the Lord Emperor of the North and of the Dipper (see Mollier 1997). It also falls under the authority of King Wu, founder of the Zhou dynasty and lord of the Pole Star. Many of the underworld functionaries in this world are ancient rulers or celebrated masters of antiquity. These rather humble “underworld governors” (dixia zhu 地下主) are immortals of an inferior rank.

The Shangqing pantheon also has its own demons, called mo 魔 in accordance with Buddhist terminology and not gui 鬼 as among the Celestial Masters and in traditional China. They are great kings, with powers of both destruction and salvation (see Kamitsuka 1996).

WORLD CYCLES. Many texts evoke the end of the world which will come with the running-down of cosmic cycles, either of yang as “yang-nine” (yangjiu 陽九), marked by fire, or of yin as “hundred six” (baijiu 百六), marked by a flood. The same idea is already found in the Hanshu, the world being destroyed when yin and yang have reached their point of exhaustion. Lesser and greater such cycles are distinguished: 3,600 celestial yang or 3,300 terrestrial yin revolutions as opposed to 9,900 yang or 9,300 yin (see Kobayashi 1990, 430-54). The practice of certain texts allows selected adepts to escape from the disasters and escape to Mount Kunlun, where the cataclysms never reach. At the end, moreover, there are judges: the Mother of Water, the divine horse, and a great bird, as well as Li Hong 李弘, the Latter-Day Sage who will arrange the distribution of the faithful. The Shangqing concept of world cycles has eschatological moments but it does not present a form of messianism that implies a teleology as well as the establishment of a completely new law. Rather it maintains a cyclical vision, according to which the world is destroyed and recreated in the same pattern over and over again.

Practices

Unlike in the Way of the Celestial Master where religious practices were communal, those in Shangqing, following the southern tradition, consist of meditations undertaken individually in the meditation chamber or “chamber of quietude” (jingshi 靜室; see Yoshikawa 1987). Certain practices the school took over from previous models—transmitted by the sages of the hagiographies described earlier, they were integrated on a lower level. Others, ranked higher because they alone could afford salvation, were unique to Shangqing, although they too on occasion developed from earlier techniques. Most commonly they are linked to a
kind of cosmic journey which recalls the movements of Taiyi around the
eight poles of the universe and have the adept orient his practice to the
eight rising winds. Shangqing also lends more weight than previous tra¬
ditions to mental images, though it never completely dispensed with
physiological practices. All its traits—the cosmic journey, the importance
of the imagination, interiorization and cosmification, as well as the in¬
creasingly symbolic value attributed to alchemical recipes—anticipate
the inner alchemy of later centuries.

VISUALIZATION AND THE UNIFICATION OF THE GODS.
Most Shangqing practice consists of the visualization and the invocation
of the gods and the paradises, whose names and forms are revealed in
the texts. The recitation of the Dadong zhenjing is in itself an invocation of
the celestial divinities and the luminous gods of the body, both essential
and subtle vital forces. The adept invokes them so that they close the
gates of the body through which the energy of death can enter. In the
practice, the heavenly and bodily spirits are joined together into one
unity which is described either as the One Emperor of Great Profundity
or the Great One, the ancient god Taiyi, ruler of all the body gods, with
whom the adept identifies himself. The same complex unity is also real¬
ized as a kind of tri-unity represented by the Three Primes who govern
the 24 energies or body luminants from the three cinnabar fields, or
again the groups of gods of the male One and the female One, who serve
as assistants to Taiyi.

Two types of body gods are central in visualization practice: those that
dwell in each average human being, e.g., the Three Primes; and those
who reside only in the body of adepts who visualize them to the effect
that the body is vitalized and made spiritual.

GUARDING THE ONE. "Guarding the One" (shouyi 保守) is an
expression that goes back to the Daodejing and the Zhuangzi. It describes a
meditation that existed before Shangqing. Although considered some¬
what inferior, it was adopted and developed by the tradition. It appears
in various forms in most Daoist traditions (see Kohn 1989), and in
Shangqing is present as part of the technique of the Five Dippers and
Three Ones (wu dou san yi 五斗三星), which teaches adepts to ascend to
the Dipper in the company of the Three Ones (see Cadonna 1984;
Robinet 1993, 120-38). The practice begins with the three cinnabar
fields where one visualizes the gods, then sees them together with their
ministers go from the cinnabar fields to the Dipper or descend from the
invisible star Fu of the Dipper into the body.

The meditation on the Nine Palaces is a Shangqing development of
earlier methods involving the cinnabar fields and visualizations of the
palaces in the head. Adepts merge with the resident body gods and fly off
into the Dipper. The methods associated with the Grotto Chamber (see
Yamada 1989), residence of the sons of the three Ladies of Simplicity, and with the Mysterious Cinnabar (Xuandan 玄丹), residence of Taiyi, may also be described as Shangqing variants of “guarding the One.”

EMBRYONIC KNOTS, DEATH, AND REBIRTH. There are two types of exercises designed to unravel the knots of death that all humans receive during their embryonic stage. The first involves reliving the adept’s life as an embryo in a divine and cosmic mode. He receives the energies of the nine primordial heavens, one each month, while constantly invoking the Primordial Father and Mysterious Mother who, as the embodiments of pure yang and yin, heaven and earth, become his new parents. Completion of the exercise requires the celestial king to descend into one’s body so that the new parents can refine it into an immortal body of jade. The method fully imitates the “nine transformations” of operative alchemy, but at a physiological level.

The other major exercise consists of visualizing the twenty-four luminants of the body, governed by the deities of the female One who reside in the three cinnabar fields. These luminant spirits destroy the embryonic knots. Beyond that, the adept can also assure himself of immortality by getting his name inscribed in the celestial registers of life with the help of the five register spirits. Then again, he might undergo a purification by fire in order to be reborn in the Palace of Red Fire or in the Court of Liquid Fire, located in the extreme south of the cosmos, from where he can be reborn as an immortal (see Robinet 1993, 139-52).

ABSORPTION OF COSMIC FLORESCENCES. The Shangqing texts have considerably developed the theme of cosmic absorptions, found already in ancient texts, such as the Chuci, and also mentioned by Ge Hong. This absorption is a form of immortal nourishment which replaces the five grains used by ordinary humans. The florescences often are the energies of the poles, described as “cloud sprouts” (referring to an earlier exercise); they are the yin principles of heaven, best taken at dawn when “the two energies [yin and yang] are not yet separated.” This recovers the genesis of the world, charged with the powers of the far-off borders. Youthful and growing strong, they crystallize in the practitioner’s saliva, which he or she swallows while chanting an invocation to the “sprouts” (see Robinet 1989).

The florescences of the stars are also the nourishment of pure light that the adept absorbs after he has visualized them. He then “absorbs the light” (fuguang 服光) instead of the earlier practice of “absorbing energy” (fuqi 服氣). The adept, and the whole world through him, thereby becomes illuminated.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE CORPSE. The ancient idea of shujie 戶解 (deliverance from the corpse, corpse-liberation) is also significantly developed in Shangqing. Rather than being simply the simulation of
death, is has now become a form of post-mortem transformation in the event that the adept have died without having sufficiently spiritualized his body. The deliverance may take one of several forms of initiatory death, some of which are described as inferior because they only enable the adept to achieve the state of an earthly immortal or underworld governor. Deliverance from the corpse is directly related to the transformation and sublimation of the body that is eventually attained alchemically. The successful adept may transform himself at will, appearing or disappearing, and when his spirit is delivered, he has the power to escape and go beyond his body. The sublimation continues to include all those organs that were animated by meditation while the adept was alive, and culminates in the “purification of the highest yin.” It acts as a crucible in which the body is purified first by being dissolved and then by being reborn. The process is the counterpart of the purification by fire in the Southern Palace. Generally speaking even this process is an incomplete purification. The body is still unable to ascend “to heaven in broad daylight” and waits in its coffin for the process of purification to reach all parts of the revitalized adept, finally enabling him to fly off into the heavens. In this redefinition of corpse deliverance Shangqing adapted pre-existing ways, but it also contributed new methods, the most superior of which was considered to be deliverance by the sword. This involves forging a divine sword following precise ritual rules similar to those used in the concoction of an alchemical elixir. Both Tao Hongjing and Sima Chengzhen were masters of this art (see Robinet 1979b; Schafer 1979; Fukunaga 1970).

METAMORPHOSES. The notion of metamorphosis plays an important role in Shangqing texts. It may refer to those adepts who specially learn their practice or to those gods who change their appearance at will. The powers of metamorphosis had always been a key characteristic of the immortals, but these powers came to be even more central in Shangqing where they were synonymous with deliverance and salvation. They are, of course, closely linked to the general Chinese idea of bianhua 變化, i.e., of a world that is constantly becoming, growing, and changing, and that of an ultimate truth that takes all forms and is limitless manifold (see Sivin 1991).

Certain Shangqing texts describe procedures for transforming oneself into clouds, light, or fire as a way of attaining salvation. The Shenzhou qizhuang qibian wutian jing 神州七轉七變舞天經 (Scripture of Spirit Country on the Seven Revolutions and Transformations During the Dance on Heaven, CT 1331), for example, places them on the same level as the metamorphoses, the arts of “leaving being and entering nonbeing” or “of delivering oneself of one’s body and escaping all.”
The gods themselves, such as the invisible stars of the Dipper, are closely linked with the idea of metamorphosis. Many texts describe their different forms so that adepts can recognize them properly. Thus, CT 1393 (1.9a), for example, insists that they are the primordial principle, originally formless, eternal, and supra-cosmic. The adept who has himself become skilled at transformation should be able to see them in their "true form."

ECSTATIC EXCURSIONS AND TRIPS TO THE STARS. The ecstatic excursions typically found in Shangqing are an heirloom of the past. The texts teach adepts to travel to the far ends of the world, to the major sacred peaks, or to the isles of the immortals. In all these places adepts may encounter the gods of the five regions of the world who provide them with immortal nourishment. Or again, the adept may cause the gods to descend into his meditation chamber and his body, where they can nourish him with cosmic ethers, supported by texts and talismans that unveil the true form (see Robinet 1976). The idea of places having wondrous powers and of talismans representing their essence has a long history in Chinese religion and was taken over by Shangqing. The latter then transformed it to include the vision of the true places as located simultaneously in the world, in the heavens before creation and in the body of the adept.

Adepts may also climb up to the stars—the planets, sun, and moon, which form a triad parallel to and identical with the Three Ones in the body. Among the planets, they encounter the various resident gods who correspond to the rulers of the five directions on earth. Similarly they join the sun and the moon, celestial manifestations of yin and yang, matching their alternating movements in an anticipation of the rhythmic patterns of inner alchemy. They visit the various stations that are paradises, tasting of the fruits and juices of immortality, just as the astral florescences illuminate their bodies (see Robinet 1989; 1993, 187-99).

The Dipper similarly forms a triad with the sun and the moon. In relation to the sun and the moon, forming part of a horizontal cosmology, the Dipper represents the center of the world projected into the sky. A complex unity in itself, it is the residence of Taiyi, the Great One, but also consists of nine stars. It has an ancient role as exorcistic power and allows adepts to protect themselves against all sorts of malevolent forces by cloaking themselves in the Dipper. Also, one of its stars, the Heavenly Pass (Tianguan 天關), is responsible for letting adepts into the higher realms.

Following the Steps of Yu (yubu 禹步) they may pace across its stars lined up on a band of silk while invoking its gods, or they may ascend to the constellation whose stars are also paradises. The "Pace of the Dipper" is again an older practice adapted by Shangqing and developed
extensively. Previously called "pacing the net" (bugang 步網), "flying through the heavens" (feitian 飛天), or "pacing the void" (buxu 步虛; see Andersen 1990; Schaefer 1977b; Robinet 1976; 1993, 200-26), the practice has given rise to a famous medieval hymn that has also been included in Daoist cosmology. It can be performed according to the "three paths:" first, by moving "in order," i.e., to the left and outward of the constellation and then from first star to last; second, by "going in reverse," i.e., from last to first star; and third, by pacing around the Dipper in the yin direction of the constellation. This third method, however, is considered inferior because it does not allow adepts to reach higher than the rank of an earth immortal or underworld governor.

There is also the method of "pacing the network," called kongchang 空常 after the names of the gods of the Dipper's invisible stars. It is to be undertaken before one marches on the Dipper itself. To practice this, one moves over a network of 25 "black" stars, invisible to the normal eye, that surround the Dipper. They are inhabited by the spouses of the Dipper gods and project a "light that does not shine" onto the constellation.

DRUGS AND RITUAL RULES. Shangqing texts, especially the hagiographies, contain a number of drug-based recipes which for the most part come from earlier traditions. Some of them, however, are also new to the movement and are linked with the absorption of astral florescences (see Strickmann 1979). Thus, certain traditional ingredients, such as orpiment or realgar, are renamed "soul of the sun" (rihan 日魂) or "flower of the moon" (yuehua 月華). This form of alchemy again marks a milestone in the development of inner alchemy. The great Shangqing patriarchs, such as Tao Hongjing and Sima Chengzhen, were highly adept at it.

Ritual rules that either precede or accompany the transmission of the sacred scriptures and help adepts put their instructions into practice, tend to focus only on ritual purity and, with few exceptions, are neither new nor unique to Shangqing. They discuss bodily purity, food and calendar taboos, and prohibit any contact whatsoever with death. Their pattern continues the earlier tradition and is secondary to the key Shangqing practices of visualization and ecstatic excursions.

REFERENCES


The Lingbao 瑞寳 or Numinous Treasure school is one of the major schools of early medieval Daoism. It centers around a group of forty texts known as the “ancient Lingbao corpus,” which were defined as such in the so-called “Lingbao Catalog” by the Daoist ritualist and bibliographer Lu Xiujing 隆修静 (406-477). The texts in this corpus can be divided into three kinds: two ancient Lingbao texts that contain the five talismans and the belief in the five emperors of the five directions; scriptures revealed by the Buddhist-inspired deity Yuanshi tianzun 元始天尊 (Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning); and texts associated with the immortal Ge Xuan 葛玄, originally a magical practitioner of the Later Han.

The two texts of the first group contain materials that go back to the Later Han and continue in their practices and outlook the worldview of the magical practitioners 方士, the ancient ancestral rituals and the so-called apocrypha 非經 or non-canonical interpretations of the classics of that era. Both texts were compiled in the fourth century, the first (Wuju xu 五符序, CT 388) in several stages between the years 300 and 440, the second (Wupian zhenwen 五篇真文, CT 22) by the Daoist Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫, a southern aristocrat who was a direct descendant of the would-be alchemist Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343) and an active member of the nascent Shangqing community.

The second group of twenty-nine texts center around the Heavenly Worthy, and were written in the first half of the fifth century. They exhibit such a degree of Mahāyāna Buddhist influence (see Zürcher 1980) that they were probably compiled only after translations produced under the leadership of Kumārajīva (344-413) had reached wider segments of the population. Their key doctrine is universal salvation and the liberation of one’s ancestors from the hardships of transmigration. In literary
format, doctrines, terminology, as well as general setting the texts are so close to Buddhist sūtras that they have been accused of being plagiarized more than once, even in medieval China (Kohn 1995, 130).

The third group consists of nine texts which are all closely associated with the immortal lord Ge Xuan, a great-uncle of Ge Hong and senior ancestor of Ge Chaofu, whose low ranking in the Shangqing pantheon had first inspired his descendant to create his own vision of cosmic unfolding (Bokenkamp 1983, 442). Ge Xuan was originally a fangshi (d. 244), about whom a number of miraculous legends developed. The texts linked with his name tend to be highly talismanic in nature; in doctrine, they emphasize the veneration of the first Celestial Master Zhang Daoling and Laozi’s Daode jing but also acknowledge the texts of other Daoist schools. Hagiographic material about the immortal lord and questions asked by him round off the collection. It was probably compiled around the same time as the Heavenly Worthy scriptures but by a slightly different lineage within the Lingbao school, assumed to have been closely associated with the Ge family (Kobayashi 1982a; 1990, 175-83). Nonetheless this group still contains many Mahāyāna Buddhist ideas and practices.

The school defined by these rather disparate scriptures seems at first to have been disorganized and multilayered; it only achieved a sense of order with the systematization under Lai Xiujing around the middle of the fifth century. In the wake of his work, the Lingbao school became very important in medieval Daoism, and a large number of secondary Lingbao scriptures were compiled together with commentaries on, and expansions of, some of the ancient texts. Although the school was subsumed under the leadership of Shangqing in the integrated system of the Three Caverns that has predominated since the sixth century, its rites and liturgy have remained essential to all forms of Daoist ritual and can still be observed in practices today (for its modern forms, see Schipper 1975; Pang 1977; Boltz 1996).

**History**

**EARLY HISTORY.** The term “Lingbao” or “Numinous Treasure” derives from the southern term lingbao 禪保 which means “guardian of the numinous” and originally referred to the spirit mediator who summoned and controlled the numinous souls of the dead. The term occurs prominently in shamanic chants of south China, especially in the “Nine Songs” of the Chuci 楚辭 (Elegies of Chu; see Hawkes 1959), as well as in the biography of Ma Rong 马融 in the Hou Hanshu (see Kaltenmark 1960; Kaizuka 1977, 270; Ikeda 1981, 623-44). A lingbao or guardian of the
numinous was a specially gifted communicator with the spirit world who played a role highly similar to that of the shaman (巫). His earliest appearance is in the “Odes of Chu” of the Shi Jing 詩經 (Book of Songs; see Legge 1960), the collection of odes and folksongs from the Yellow River plain that dates from about 700 B.C.E. Here he is called a shenbao 神保 or “guardian of the spirit” and played a role in ancestor worship.

In ancient China, when the soul of an ancestor was to be summoned, the grandchild—a boy in the case of the grandfather, a girl in that of the grandmother—would wear the skull of the deceased to provide the soul with a place into which to descend. In this role the child was commonly known as the “representative of the corpse” (尸; see Ikeda 1981), but because he or she served as a location for the spirit or numinous essence of the ancestor, he was also called the “guardian of the spirit” (see Davis 1994, 317-18). In the following centuries, this particular form of ancestor worship was discontinued, and a wooden tablet, i.e., a spirit residence carved from wood in the shape of an elongated plaque, was used (Kaji 1990, 18). At the same time, people with the power to summon the spirits and numinous forces came to be known as guardians of the spirit or numinous. The expression “numinous treasure” consequently came to indicate those versed in the interaction with the otherworld. Especially in the southern country of Chu along the banks of the Yangzi, as described in the Baopu 袍補 and the Hou Hanshu 后漢書, shamans were actively engaged in the practice of calling down the spirits into themselves, thus serving as their guardians.

**Fangshi and apocrypha.** The “spirit guardians” of old also found heirs in the magical practitioners of the Han dynasty. As described in Ma Rong’s biography in the Hou Hanshu, both served as healers and exorcists, with the magical practitioners specializing in the expulsion of diseases and the prevention of disasters. Numerous biographies (see Ngo 1976; DeWoskin 1983) speak of their supernatural methods, indicating ways of controlling demons and spirits and invoking the souls of the dead. This art of he 削 (investigating) as it was then called, moreover, was undertaken with the help of talismans. Thus, for example, Qu Shengqing 魯聖卿 is described as being skilled at writing out talismans in red ink and thereby commanding demons and spirits.

Many magical practitioners were also said to have used charts and rhymes along with a knowledge of astrology to make prophecies about the future. For example, Fan Ying 樊英 made use of charts of the major rivers, the Hetu 河圖 and Luoshu 洛書 (see Saso 1978), as well as the “Seven Apocrypha” or noncanonical interpretations of the classics (ed. in Yasui and Nakamura 1972), while Dong Fu 董振 applied himself to the charts. These charts and apocrypha, moreover, can be described as a form of religious scripture. Associated either with the two rivers or with...
the classics, they were manuals of fortune-telling and provided insights into the workings of the world (see Dull 1966; Seidel 1983). Beyond that, they were also closely associated with the belief in talismans as tokens of universal power. According to the apocryphal *Longyu hetu* 龍魚河圖 or “Dragon River Chart,” the Dark Maiden 玄女 bestowed a military talisman upon the Yellow Emperor, with whose help he conquered the empire (Yasui and Nakamura 1972, 6:89). The talisman was an instrument of cosmic force and thus a key tool of the magical practitioners.

The apocryphal *Xiaojing yuanshen qi* 孝經授神契 (Spirit Tally of the Book of Filial Piety) describes the “shining writ of the Luo turtle as composed of red and green characters,” referring to a divine talisman that was carried into the world upon the back of a turtle in the Luo River. This is directly related to a talismanic pledge described in the later *Wu fu xu* (3.3a), which was also written in red and green and corresponded to strips of colored silk actually used in transmission ceremonies of the five talismans—at least in the fifth century. In either case, with the help of the talisman the human practitioner entered into a contract with heaven above through and was endowed with heavenly powers. This demonstrates the continuity of the tradition from the Han well into the organized religion of the Lingbao.

**THE GE FAMILY.** The next major step in the development of Lingbao was Ge Hong (283-343) and his main text, the *Baopuzi* (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185; see Ware 1966). Ge Hong was the grand-nephew of the magical practitioner Ge Xuan and a member of the aristocratic Ge family of the kingdom of Wu in southeast China. This clan was particularly known for its active quest for immortality, which involved techniques of alchemy and sacred charts such as the *Wuyue zhenxing tu* 五嶽真形圖 (True Shape of the Five Peaks, CT 1281) and the *Sanhuang wen* 三皇文 (Texts of the Three Sovereigns; see Chen 1973; Fukui 1987; Robinet 1997). In his *Baopuzi*, Ge Hong thus laid out many of the traditional ideas and practices current in his time.

The text also describes a number of talismanic techniques which involved the use of protective written spells against harm from demons, tigers and wolves when entering the mountains to gather medicinal herbs for longevity and immortality. In addition, the *Baopuzi* is the first source that mentions the five Lingbao talismans as well as a work or works called *Lingbao jing* 章寶經 (Scripture(s) of the Numinous Treasure; Ware 1966, 209). This comprises three sections, known as *Zhengji* 正機 (Proper Pivot), *Pingheng* 平衡 (The Equalizer), and *Feigui shou* 飛龜授 (Flying Turtle Transmission; see Chen 1975, 62), terms whose referent is not clear but may have had to do with Dipper worship. The texts, from what can be gleaned, described various ways of entering the mountains safely:
protective purifications before entering, ways of selecting the most auspicious days, methods to keep safe while in the wilderness, and prayers for finding the most potent immortality medicines. For all these, they offered suitable talismans with appropriate ritual instructions. That is to say, in the early fourth century C.E., the Lingbao jing was a manual by and for the magical practitioners that specified ways of entering the mountains and finding immortality medicines. There were mainly five Lingbao talismans at this time: those associated with the belief in the five sacred emperors who ruled the five directions of the universe. They are also the ones described in the Lingbao wuifu xu (Explanation of the Five Lingbao Talismans, CT 388).

Ge Chaofu. As noted in Tao Hongjing's (456-536) Zhen’gao (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016), Ge Chaofu was a second-generation descendant of Ge Hong, whose library and religious methods he inherited, as well as an active member of the southern aristocracy of Jurong, the center of the Shangqing revelations. In the 390s, Ge applied himself to Ge Hong’s library, Shangqing scriptures, Han-dynasty cosmology and Buddhism, and on this basis reedited and expanded the five talismans of the Baopu and the Wuifu xu. Doing so, he attributed new and increased powers to them and created a text known as the Lingbao chishu wupian zhenwen (Perfect Text of Numinous Treasure in Five Tablets, Written in Red), hereafter abbreviated Wupian zhenwen (see below).

The text is found in the Daoist canon (CT 22) and forms the first of the ancient Lingbao corpus, thus is also referred to as LB 1 (Ôfuchi 1974; Bokenkamp 1983, 479; Kobayashi 1990, 184). Tao says that Ge “fabricated” the Lingbao scripture(s) because he felt unhappy about the low rank accorded to his distant ancestor Ge Xuan in the Shangqing pantheon (Chen 1975, 67; Bokenkamp 1983, 442). Around the year 401, he transmitted this work to the Daoists Xu Lingqi and Ren Yanqing, who made it so popular that it inspired envy and the desire for more, similar scriptures (Bokenkamp 1983, 441).

As documented in the recent research of Kobayashi Masayoshi (1982a; 1990, 138), the work transmitted by Ge Chaofu was not the entire Lingbao corpus or even a large part of it but only the Wupian zhenwen, which was a spiritually more powerful expansion of the five talismans. The increased powers of the text included the ability to control the registers and ledgers of the immortals, to undertake travels around the heavens, to administer the northern realm of Fengdu 鳳都, the world of the dead, and to overcome all harm wreaked by water. Notably the latter, the power to avoid all forms of drowning or flood disasters, makes it clear that the text came from a southern environment where, near the Yangzi River, disasters of floods and drowning were very frequent.
MATURITY. In the wake of the first Lingbao text, two sets of scriptures were created, one associated with the Heavenly Worthy, the other with Ge Xuan, developing Lingbao practice and doctrine to previously unattained levels by comprehensively integrating Mahâyâna Buddhist worldview and terminology (universal salvation, karma and rebirth, the ten directions, etc.; see Zürcher 1980) and also honoring the central texts of other schools. The predominant aim of these texts, which make up the bulk of the ancient Lingbao corpus, was to effect the salvation of the dead and to pray for the immortality of all beings, thus realizing the ideal of compassion for all creatures.

All these texts show the considerable influence of Mahâyâna Buddhism, and rely especially on sûtras translated in Chang’an in the first two decades of the fifth century under the leadership of Kumarajiva. These sûtras, which include the Lotus sûtra, the Avatamsaka sûtra, and other influential texts, were also responsible for the creation of various Chinese Buddhist apocrypha, the most important of which is the Fanwuxiang jing (Brahma sûtra, T. 1484, 24.997a-1010a; see Yoshioka 1961; DeGroot 1969). The special characteristic of this text is its list of ten major precepts which became dominant in East Asian Buddhism after being adopted by the Tiantai school and transmitted into Japan by Saichô in 806 (see Groner 1990). It was thought possible to attain nirvâna by following these straightforward precepts, which were based on a striving to benefit others (lîa 利他) and strongly reflected a philosophy of compassion and the liberation of all beings.

Chinese Mahâyâna as it was established in the early fifth century further influenced the Lingbao scriptures created at this time. Originally Daoists were chiefly concerned with self-cultivation for the sake of becoming immortal and ascending to heaven. Thus the ancient Lingbao talismans present methods and devices for protection during an individual’s quest. Early Daoists had no calling or even concept of aiding others in their search for liberation nor did they strive for the universal salvation of all beings. On the other hand, the Lingbao scriptures, i.e., all except the two most ancient texts, contain many prayers for the attainment of immortality by others, for the peace and stability of the imperial rule, and for the salvation of the dead. All these were now taken to contribute to the realization of perfection by practicing Daoists. The performance of Lingbao rites similarly was dedicated to the benefit of others while yet serving as an integral part of the personal quest for immortality.

Lu Xiujing 陸修靜. Lu Xiujing (406-477) was a major Daoist compiler, ritualist, and organizer in fifth-century south China. Not well documented in contemporary sources, his biography is contained in fragments of the Daoxue zhuang (Biographies of Daoist Adepts; see Bumbacher 1995), found in the Sandong zhumang and other encyclopedias.
It appears that he served in a debate with Buddhists in the capital under Emperor Ming and resided in later the Chongxu guan (Center for Venerating Emptiness), where he collected the Shangqing scriptures of Yang Xi and the Xus and compiled his catalogs (Yoshioka 1955, 18). As is evident in his Daomen kelue (Abbreviated Rules for Daoist Followers, CT 1127; Nickerson 1996), he was originally a follower of the Celestial Masters but served also as the main organizer of Lingbao ritual, becoming thus the first representative of the Three Caverns in medieval Daoism (see Bell 1987). Lu Xiujing wrote over thirty works (Yoshioka 1955, 20), only a third of which remain today.

In 437, Lu classified the Lingbao corpus in a proper catalog (Yoshioka 1955, 16) which is lost today. He divided the scriptures into two groups, those associated with the Heavenly Worthy, which also included the Wupian chenwu, and those linked with Ge Xuan, which also contained the Wuju xu. The entire set was then integrated into a comprehensive catalog of Daoist scriptures, which Lu compiled in 471 and which has survived partially in Dunhuang. Following the Mahayana division of scriptures into the three vehicles (triryéna of greater, middle, and lesser (i.e., śrāvakā or listener, pratyekabuddha or personally enlightened one, and bodhisattva or savior of all), he created the system of the Three Caverns (sandong; see Ofuchi 1979a) and placed the Lingbao texts at the top, leading the Shangqing and Sanhuang (Three Sovereigns) schools, to represent the ideal of the compassionate savior who rescues all.

At the same time, Lu also reorganized and modernized Lingbao ritual, providing a standardized format for all Daoist rites as they were practiced in precept ordinations (jie), purification ceremonies or meager feasts (zhai), and offerings (jiao). Continuing Lu's model, the high-Tang master Zhang Wanfu (张萬福, ab. 700) and the late-Tang ritualist Du Guangting (杜光庭, 855-930) further expanded and reformed the ritual structure, shaping Daoist rites as they have been performed ever since (see Yamada 1992; 1995).

Lu was not the first to attempt to bring order and system to the Lingbao texts. Most of them were created in the approximately fifty years between the lives of Ge Chaofu and Lu Xiujing, but this period of creativity did not follow any plan or organized purpose—which were only supplied by Lu's catalog of 437. As he says in the preface which survives in the Yunji qiqian (4.5a), there was an earlier listing of the texts by a certain Zong Jingxian (宗竟鮮) who apparently was a Daoist senior to Lu Xiujing and may even have been a compiler of some Lingbao texts. His listing, however, did not prove successful because, following the texts' original disorder, it too was rather chaotic. We can therefore say that it was only through the efforts of Lu Xiujing that the Lingbao scriptures were established powerfully enough as talismanic scriptures in their own
right and thus were able, as a group, to provide the foundation for the Lingbao school.

LATER DEVELOPMENTS. In the wake of Lu’s work, the Lingbao scriptures developed in two major areas. One is the continued active belief in and worship of the *Duren jing* (Scripture of Salvation; DZ 1, 87-93); the other is worldview that emerged in the compilation of the *Yinyuan jing* (Scripture of Karmic Retribution, DZ 336). Both texts are prominent among Dunhuang manuscripts and had an active following in the Tang. There were also many other texts with the word “Lingbao” in their title that appeared from the sixth century onward. They tend to show much influence from the Shangqing and Celestial Masters schools and by no means restrict their worldview to the ideas expressed in the texts of the ancient Lingbao corpus. The notions and visions of the Lingbao school are thus best understood from the early texts, which forms the focus of this presentation.

**TEXTS**

**THE CATALOG.** Lu Xiujing compiled two catalogs, the *Lingbao jingmu* (Catalog of Lingbao Scriptures) in 437 and the *Sandong jingshu mulu* (Catalog of the Scriptures and Writings of the Three Caverns) in 471. Both contained a complete list of the Lingbao texts, as he himself states in his *Lingbao shoudu yibiao* (Memorial on Transmission and Ordination of Lingbao, CT 528). However, both catalogs were lost early on and for a long time scholars had to rely on later documents for information, including the early Tang manual *Fengdao kejie* (Rules and Precepts for Worshiping the Tao, CT 1125, 4.8a-9b; see Benn 1991, 93-95); its partial Dunhuang version, the *Fengdao kejie yifan* (Observances and Models; P. 2337; see Yoshioka 1955, 301-40); and Liu Yongguang’s *Huangtu zhaiyi* (Observances of Yellow Register Rites, CT 508, 1.5a-7a; see Bokenkamp 1983, 485-86) of the year 1223.

Then a manuscript version was discovered, contained in the *Lingbao jing yishu* (Supplementary Explanation of the Lingbao Scriptures), which in turn is part of the second scroll of Song Wenming’s *Tongmen lun* (On Entering the Gate [of Perfection]). The manuscript is extant in two versions, P. 2861.2 and P. 2256 (Öfuchi 1979, 725-26), the former of which is slightly more complete but still lacks the first four texts of the list which, however, can be supplied from later sources. Öfuchi in his study of the catalog (1974; 1997) names these texts the “ancient Lingbao corpus” to distinguish them from the old Lingbao scriptures mentioned in the *Baopuzi* and from the first text cre-
ated by Ge Chaofu. Later Kobayashi ascertained that the catalog contained in the manuscript was not the one written in 437, but formed part of the Three Caverns list of 471 (Kobayashi 1990, 144-52).

The catalog is divided into two groups of scriptures, linked with the Heavenly Worthy and the immortal Ge Xuan. Among the former, it lists both scriptures that are available on earth and those that are “not yet revealed,” giving varying numbers of scrolls, although most texts are said to consist of one scroll only. In addition, later editing and loss of scriptures has resulted in a great deal of variation (see Maeda 1994), both in titles and scroll count, between the way the texts are listed in the catalog and how they are presently contained in the Daoist canon or found at Dunhuang. A complete list of texts, with titles abbreviated on the basis of their most common version, is found in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>LP</th>
<th>CT</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LB 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Wupian zhengwen chishu 玉篇真文赤書 (Perfect Text in Five Tablets, Written in Red)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>Yigue 玉缺 (Jade Instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Yundu daqie jing 大劫經2 (Scripture of Great Kalpa Revolutions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>Yundu xiaoqie jing 小劫經2 (Scripture of Lesser Kalpa Revolutions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>... tianchi yundu 天地過度 (... Revolutions of Heaven and Earth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>P. 2399</td>
<td>Kongdong lingzhang 空洞贅章 (Numinous Stanzas of Emptiness and Profundity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1439</td>
<td>Shengxuan buxu zhang 昇玄步虛章 (Stanzas on Ascending to the Mystery and Pacing the Void)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>Jiuhuan shengshen zhanjing 九天生神章經 (Stanzas of the Vital Spirit of the Nine Heavens)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>Ziran wucheng wen 自然五稱文 (Text of the Five Spontaneous Correspondences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>LP</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>LB 10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>Zhutian neiyin yu'zi 諸天內音玉字 (Inner Sounds and Jade Characters of All Heavens)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 11</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>Baweizi zhaolong jing 八威召龍經 (Scripture of the Eight Animals and Ruling Dragons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>Zizhen shangpin daoie 稽根上品大戒 (Highest Precepts for the Roots of Sin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>Zhuhui shangpin daoie 智慧上品大戒 (Highest Precepts of Wisdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Shangyuan jinlu jianwen 上元金錐簡文 (Bamboo Text on the Golden Register of Upper Prime)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>Mingzhen ke 明真科 (Rules of the Luminous Perfected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>Zhuhui dingzhi jing 智慧定志經 (Scripture on Firming Up Determination and Wisdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>P. 3022</td>
<td>Duren benxing jing 度人本行經 (The Original Endeavor of Universal Salvation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>Quanjit falu jing 冥詣法輪經 (Scripture of Exhortations on the Wheel of the Law)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wulian duren jing 無量度人經 (Scripture of Limitless Universal Salvation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Duming miaojing 勳命妙經 (Wondrous Scripture on the Salvation of Life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>Miedu wuhuan jing 滅度五煩經 (Scripture of Salvation by Fivefold Purification)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>Sanyuan pinjie 三元品戒 (Precepts of the Three Primes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 23</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>Suming jinyuan 宿命因緣 (Karmic Retribution and Rebirth Destiny)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 24</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Zhongsheng nan 映聖難 (Hardships of the Sagely Host)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 25</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Daoyin ... xing 導引...星 (Gymnastic Exercises and... the Stars)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1407</td>
<td>Ershisi shengtu 二十四生圖 (Chart of the Twenty-four Energies of Life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 27</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1118</td>
<td>Feixing sanjie 飛行三界 (Flying through the Three Worlds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 28</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Yaopin 材品 (Assorted Medicines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 29</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1406</td>
<td>Zhipin 芝品 (Assorted Mushrooms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB 30</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Biartu kongdong 變化空洞 (Transformations of Emptiness and Profundity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>Lingbao wuifu xu 鑫寶五符序 (Explanation of the Five Lingbao Talismans)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## THE LINGBAO SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LBX 2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>Taiji yinjue 太極隠訣 (Secret Instructions of Great Ultimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>Zhenwen yaojie 真文要解 (Essential Explanations of the Perfect Texts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>P.2356</td>
<td>Ziran jing 自然經 (Scripture of Spontaneity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Fuzhai weiyi jing 敦齋威儀經 (Dignified Observances in Laying Out Meager Feasts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>Xiaomo daji shangpin 消魔大戒上品 (Highest Precepts to Dissolve Evil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>Xiangong qingwen 仙公請問 (Questions of the Immortal Lord)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBX 8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>Zhongsheng nan 正聖難 (Hardships of the Sagely Host)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Shenxian benqi neizhuan 神仙本起內傳 (Inner Biographies of Deeds of Spirit Immortals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBX 10</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Xiangong qiju jing 仙公起居録 (Activities and Rest of the Immortal Lord)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ABBREVIATIONS

- **LB**: numbers of the Heavenly Worthy texts
- **LBX**: numbers of the Ge Xuan texts
- **LP**: numbers in Bokenkamp 1983, 479-85
  - texts marked as “not yet revealed” do not have LP numbers
- **CT**: numbers of matching texts in the Daoist canon
- **P. or S.**: numbers of Dunhuang manuscripts

### NOTES

- LB 8 also has commented editions in CT 396-98
- LB 13 also appears in P. 2461
- LB 18 also appears partially in CT 348, 455, and 647
- LB 19 also has commented editions in CT 87-93
- LBX 7 also appears in S.1351
- LBX 8 also appears in P. 2454

The scriptures of the Heavenly Worthy group, as described in P. 2861.2, can be divided into **ten sections**, each presenting a particular aspect of Lingbao teaching:

1. Nos. 1-4 “clarify the doctrines of the gods’ emergence and the root of the transformations.” They contain the “Perfect Text” and its ex-
planation together with materials on cosmic cycles and unfolding. The titles of LB 3 and 4, moreover, although the texts were marked "not yet revealed," were nonetheless used in Lingbao rituals as part of incantations and prayers as described in the Lingbao zhai zuyuan yi (Incantations and Prayers for Lingbao Rites, CT 524), a text that contains ritual chants used in both major lineages.

2. No. 5 “clarifies the cosmic cycles of good and bad fortune.” Similarly “not yet revealed,” this text may, however, be matched with CT 322, which describes how knowledge of the kalpic disasters at the end of a cosmic cycle can facilitate the attainment of long life.

The text refers to the immortal lord Ge Xuan and records his formulas of recitation, while making no reference at all to the doctrines of the Wupian zhenwen. It thus was probably part of the Ge Xuan lineage of scriptures, or maybe was created later.

Nos. 6-8 “clarify the broad compassion and wisdom of the gods.” The texts contain poems or “stanzas” of cosmic power that are at the root of creation and contain the power of the universe and describe their nature, origins, and ways of talismanic application in the world. LB 8, for example, describes how the three gods of Heavenly, Numinous, and Spirit Treasure with the help of such stanzas combined the three basic energies into nine and thus created the world.

Because of this, human beings too pass through nine months of pregnancy to be born (4ab). What is more, the power that made the energies coagulate was concentrated in a divine talisman wielded by the gods; the scripture itself, written in four-character verses, is a direct expression of the divine sounds.

3. Nos. 9-11 “clarify the numinous and wondrous virtue of the gods.” LB 9, the Ziran wucheng wen, in its extant version consists of two scrolls, the first of which has talismans corresponding to the five directions with a description of their efficacy and application. The second scroll is somewhat different, explaining the various rituals associated with the five directions as well as the use of sacred talismans linked with specific days, such as the beginnings and high points of the seasons (eight nodes). It appears that the first scroll of the present text is older and was intended in the catalog listing.

4. LB 10, the Zhutian neiyin yuzi, is listed as having two scrolls, but the present edition consists of four. Among the latter, the first scroll contains explanations of the secret sounds of great Brahma that also make up the main body of the Duren jing, and is very similar to the commentary on the latter text by Li Shaowei 李少微 of the Tang. The expression “inner sounds” in the title accordingly refers to the mystical Brahma language that lies at the root of creation.
LB 11, the Bawei zhaolong jing records the “sagely virtue and divine powers of the Heavenly Worthy,” but is recorded as still present only in heaven—the Daozang text developing later.

5. Nos. 12-15 “clarify the order and ranks of the precepts.” All these have to do with rules, regulations and precepts. LB 12 and 13 contain a standard set of ten precepts and twelve vows and focusing on the religious rules to be followed by practitioners. Neither deals with ritual patterns and observances but both concentrate on the moral conditions underlying them. In addition, there is the Xiaomo dajie shangpin (LBX 6), which is highly similar in content but belongs to the Ge Xuan lineage.

6. Nos. 16-18 “clarify the distinctions of good and bad in human behavior.” Containing sets of precepts received from the Heavenly Worthy, they prohibit bad and encourage good forms of conduct. Most important among them are the ten precepts which, in analogy to Buddhism, prohibit killing, lasciviousness, stealing, lying, and intoxication, and encourage family harmony, delight in good deeds, helping others, abstention from anger, and the vow not to attain the Dao before others (CT 167, lb).

7. Nos. 19-21 “clarify the doctrine of wide universal salvation.” All revealed by the Heavenly Worthy, these three texts describe the best way to attain political stability and good fortune for the people, thus opening the path of universal salvation.

8. Nos. 22-24 “clarify the factual reality of karmic cause and effect.” This details precepts associated with the Three Primes, here defined as the administrations of heaven, earth and water. They record the sins of humanity, put a stop to evil deeds and clarify the wondrous powers of merit. The altogether 300 precepts closely integrate the Celestial Masters’ set of 180 (see Hendrischke and Penny 1996).

9. Nos. 25-27 “clarify the various methods of religious practice.” Texts of physical cultivation, embryo breathing, and visualization, these present various techniques which also involve the body gods of Shangqing. Eight in each of the three major sections, these 24 gods are shining powers of inner light whose activation renders the adept more heavenly.

10. Nos. 28-30 “clarify the different means of attaining health and long life.” Although “not yet revealed,” these texts clearly were to describe dietetic and pharmacological practices. Only one of them has been vaguely identified in the canon.

The scriptures of the Heavenly Worthy are described in the catalog as “old,” while the Ge Xuan texts are designated “new.” Although their date of compilation is approximately the same, it seems that the Ge
Xuan texts were revealed in succession to the Heavenly Worthy ones, hence their description as “new.”

INDIVIDUAL SCRIPTURES. *Wufu xu.* The “Explanations of the Five Lingbao Talismans” (CT 388) has been studied variously by Maxime Kaltenmark (1981; 1983), Stephen Bokenkamp (1986), Ishii Masako (1981; 1984), Kobayashi Masayoshi (1988; 1990, 45) and the present author (Yamada 1984; 1989). Its three scrolls contain the most ancient Lingbao materials found to date, continuing the tradition of the five talismans already mentioned in the *Baopuzi.* The rites it describes, moreover, can be assumed to have been practiced by Lingbao followers even in the fourth century. Also apparent in the “Perfect Text,” they can be described as the oldest root of all Lingbao ritual, whose unfolding has been most perceptively described by Kristofer Schipper (1991).

The center of the text is the five Lingbao talismans. The first scroll contains their myth, telling how they served the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors and were hidden by Di Ku in the Kunlun mountains 呈崑崙山. After that they were recovered, used, and hidden again by the flood hero Yu 尧, to be acquired a millennium later with improper means by King Helü 頓淵 of Wu, who duly lost his kingdom. Finally, they were made accessible to Ge Xuan who transmitted them to the Ge-family tradition and thence to the Lingbao canon. The talismans themselves, with illustrations and explanations, are contained in the third scroll. Kaltenmark (1981) and Kobayashi (1990) see the talismans as the oldest part of the text. All scholars agree that members of the Ge family played a central role in compiling the scripture (see also Ōfuchi 1997).

Then there are descriptions of the techniques and lineages of certain Han-dynasty immortals or magical practitioners, including Lezichang 樂子長 and Huaziqi 华子期 who ingested sesame and the five sprouts and worked on expelling the three worms or corpses (sanshi 三尸) from the body. They are described in the first scroll. Yamada considers their methods and lineage crucial for the development and compilation of the *Wufu xu* (1984, 1989a). The entire second scroll, moreover, is dedicated to dietary methods, including many detailed recipes for the concoction of immortality drugs. This is an extension of the *fengshi* methods described in the first scroll. It also corresponds closely with Ge Hong’s *Baopuzi*; thus, some scholars date it to the fourth century. Kobayashi thinks it forms part of the latest level of the text; that is, it dates from around the year 410.

In addition, there are specific meditation instructions on the ingestion of solar and lunar essences and the visualization of the gods of the body contained in the first scroll. Although similar to the *Taijing jing* and, thus, possibly fairly early, these represent a different tradition that is more focused on religious visions and ritual. Rather than to the magical practi-
tioners, this part goes back to the early Daoist movements (Yamada 1989a).

The third scroll, finally, has a number of additional talismans and spells with specific explanations. They serve to protect the active adept from serpents, dragons, tigers, panthers, and other dangerous creatures of the wild. In this, they are close to the magical charms described in the *Baopuzi* and might again be rather early. The more formal ritual, however, also found in the third scroll, belongs to a later phase of editing.

**Wupian zhenwen.** The "Perfect Text in Five Tablets" (CT 22) has not been translated to date. It is the first and most fundamental scripture of the Heavenly Worthy group. On its basis, the other texts of this group were created, all following the same basic pattern in that they represent scriptures that were originally contained as "perfect writing" in the heavens in a transliterated form accessible to human understanding. The "Perfect Text" divides according to the texts and talismans of the five directions, into east, south, center, west and north, and records the secret seal script of the heavens above. The key text itself is contained on p. 7b-28b, and an explanation is found in CT 352, 1.8a-16a.

The *Wupian zhenwen* contains a new religious doctrine in that it presents the five directions in their abstract form as the five talismans and claims to record the efficacious methods of the Five Ancient Lords who created the world with the help of heavenly texts. Unlike the old Lingbao talismans mentioned in the *Baopuzi*, the text integrates the Buddhist notion of a sacred form of writing that lies at the root of creation and pervades the universe. It also uses the Buddhist notion of kalpas and kalpa cycles, combined with Daoist vision of eschatological endings of the world (CT 352, 1.9a; T. 23), thus formulating the key doctrine of Lingbao. As this is honored in all Heavenly Worthy scriptures, it is apparent that these scriptures were compiled only after the *Wupian zhenwen*.

**Zhihui shangpin dajie.** The "Highest Precepts of Wisdom" (CT 177; P. 2461), in its sixteen pages, specifies a total of six sets of precepts and admonitions to be followed by adepts and supporters of the school. It begins with the Heavenly Worthy, in Mahāyāna fashion, residing in a splendid heavenly hall and being addressed by the Lord of the Dao with a plea for guidance. In response, he presents the various precepts, ordering him to "cause all living beings to see the Dao and be free from the eight difficult conditions, make all dead souls rejoice and feast in the heavenly halls and be reborn soon on the human plane to continue their lives among the sage kings" (1a).

The first set is one of ten precepts (1b-2a), based on Buddhist bodhisattva precepts and representing a mixture of the ten good deeds and the precepts of the *Fanwang jing*. The same list also appears in various other texts: LB 2 (1.2b-3b; see Bokenkamp 1989); *Wushang biyao* (46.9a-10a;
35.6b-7b); Chujia chuandu yi (CT 1236, 8b-9a); and Yunji qiqian (39.18a-19a). Next, the Heavenly Worthy gives a set of twelve resolutions (3ab), six precepts of wisdom to control the passions and six precepts for the salvation of living beings, which are also found in LB 2 and the Wushang biyao, where they occur in a ritual context (48.5a-6a; 50.3b-4a; see Yoshioka 1961; Kusuyama 1982).

The next two lists consist of six rules each, one to “block the six passions” (6ab), admonishing disciples to keep a tight control over their five senses and the mind, the other for “the salvation of all living beings” (7ab). The latter encourages practitioners to think thoughts of goodwill when seeing someone poor, hungry, cold or hurt as well as towards all birds and beasts, even the lowly worms. The final two lists are the “Admonitions to Do The Ten Good Deeds” (8a-9a) and the “Precepts of Retribution for Merit and Wisdom” (13b-14a). They are directed respectively to the active disciples of the school and to its supporting community, making the former venerate the Dao, obey the teachers, study the scriptures, and generally work hard for their and the world’s salvation, while the latter are strongly admonished to “give freely” to the religious community, supplying living space, utensils, and other necessities to all, including also the poor among themselves. The first of these two lists is also found in LB 25 (9b-10a), in P. 2461, and in the Shangpin jiejing (CT 454, 3a-4a), as well as in Wushang biyao (46.13a-14a), Yaoxiu keyi (5.2ab) and Yunji qiqian (38.11b-12b).

The goal of the practice in all cases is the attainment of universal salvation, approached when individual followers “uphold the precepts and always remain attuned to the mind of heaven, continuously behaving with great compassion and thus being liberated from this world” (2b). The bodhisattva ideal, moreover, is clearly expressed in the twelfth resolution, which has the vow that the disciple “will be with an enlightened teacher life after life, receive the teachings and spread them so that innumerable living beings may be saved” (4a).

Durenjing. The “Scripture of Salvation” (CT 1) has received a number of commentaries (CT 87-93), among which those contained in CT 87 are most important. They include the works of Yan Dong of the Southern Qi (ab. 485), Xue Youqi, Li Shaowei, and Cheng Xuanying of the Tang, and their collection by Chen Jingyuan (1025-1094) of the Song. The text, in both its original and expanded and commented forms, has been studied variously (Gauchet 1941; Strickmann 1978; Sunayama 1984; 1990, 272-303; Bokenkamp 1997, 373-438). It is a text of the Heavenly Worthy group that describes the creation and ordering of the world with the help of heavenly writings and sacred sounds. Explaining the way to worship the “Perfect Texts” that create the universe and thereby attain long life with the help of the
Ruler of Fates (Siming 司命) and other celestial administrators, it lists a total of 32 secret “Brahma” spells that give key powers to both gods and practitioners. Activating these spells and learning to understand them correctly brings adepts into the cosmic sphere.

Under the Sui and Tang, the recitation and worship of the Durenjing flourished greatly, as can be seen from its extensive commentary by Xue Youqi (fl. 700). The latter however reinterprets the text to the effect that it is less about the attainment of cosmic powers than about benefits in this world and the salvation of ancestors. This reinterpretation is placed in the text itself in the “explanations” by the Lord of the Dao, which were, however, not part of the early scripture. They show a trend in the development of the scripture away from the heavenly and towards the worldly and practical. The “explanations” also praise the benefits gained from reciting the text, the manifold forms of good fortune it will bring and the formal methods of how such recitation is to be practiced. In essence they propose that one can attain immortality and save one's ancestors by mere recitation, showing how the Durenjing from a scripture outlining the origins of the cosmos had grown into a sacred mantra-like work with serious supernatural effects. These effects, then, made the text the basis for a widespread popular worship and general representative document of the Lingbao scriptures. It became the first scripture of the Daoist canon under the Song, since it was greatly revered by the Emperor Huizong (see Strickmann 1978).

Yinyuanjing. The “Scripture of Karmic Retribution” (CT 336) has been only scarcely studied (Nakajima 1984; Kohn 1998). It was compiled in the late sixth century and contains several items of Daoist doctrine that proved to be central in later ages: the belief in the Ten Heavenly Worthies Who Rescue From Suffering (Jiuku tianzun 救苦天尊; see Yüsa 1989) and the concept of multiple hells, where sinners are punished after death.

The former involved the fashioning of statues of these deities, associated with the ten directions and imitating a corresponding set of buddhas, together with their formal worship and prayers to them. The latter meant that Daoism, through the later Lingbao texts, fully integrated the Buddhist doctrine of karma and retribution. The Yinyuanjing is central in the formulation of both beliefs, which continue earlier Daoist trends to worship statues of deities and to strive for saving the dead from suffering. Both these are closely connected with Buddhist cosmology, hells and the doctrine of karma; they came to flourish greatly in the Tang and Song and have a strong impact on popular Chinese religion.
TALISMANS AND COSMIC CHARTS. The most ancient and fundamental aspect of Lingbao doctrine, central to both the *Wufu xu* and the *Wupian zhenwen*, is the cosmology of the five phases joined by the belief in the five emperors of the five directions. The earliest form of this belief is found in the apocrypha. As Kaltenmark has shown, the *Hetu yincan fu* 河圖陰存符, *Tiluo jeigui* 伊雒飛龜, and *Pingheng an* 平衡案, mentioned in the *Wufu xu* as the three parts of the ancient Lingbao scripture, were all based—at least in name—on apocryphal interpretations of the ancient cosmic charts. The thinking of cosmic patterns and correspondences they represent, together with the symbolism of dynastic omens and officially used talismans (tallys for the recognition of royal orders and messengers) lay at the root of the Lingbao doctrine as it took shape toward the end of the fourth century (Kaltenmark 1981, 1-10; Seidel 1983).

This can be shown in a number of concrete instances. For example, the three titles of the oldest Lingbao scripture mentioned in the *Baopuzi* had as yet nothing to do with the river charts but were probably more linked with worship of the Dipper and only received reinterpretation in the *Wufu xu*. Then again, the Han apocryphon *Hetujiangxiang* 河圖繚象 (Red Images of the River Chart) has a story according to which the sage ruler Yu, in his effort of taming the floods, received “perfect texts” from the gods. The same tale appears in the geographical work *Yueque shu* 越絕書 (History of Yue), probably of the sixth century, where the “perfect texts” of Yu are clearly identified as the five Lingbao talismans.

Still, the same story, expanded into a longer and more complex narrative, appears as the origin myth of the five talismans in the *Wufu xu* (1.7ab) and served as inspiration for Tao Yuanming’s (365-427) famous “Peach Flower Font” (see Bokenkamp 1986). In the process, too, the various talismanic texts mentioned in the apocrypha and the *Baopuzi* were linked with the cosmic charts *Hetu* and *Luoshu* and were, together with the Lingbao scripture, raised to the status of full world-protecting talismans. From marginal materials, they evolved into central documents of Lingbao orthodoxy.

POLITICAL RELEVANCE. Before the teaching arose that Daoist texts were actively transmitted from originally heavenly writings, they were generally venerated because of their talismanic nature and because they served as good omens for state and country. The *Taipingjing* 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace), reconstituted in the sixth century, and Kou Qianzhi’s *Lutu zhenjing* 錄圖真經 (Perfect Scripture of Registers and Charts), for example, still contain such talismanic elements.

Among the ancient Lingbao corpus, the texts with the strongest talismanic character are those belonging to the Ge Xuan group, which
also exhibit a great veneration for the first Celestial Master Zhang Daoling and for Laozi's *Daode jing*. As Anna Seidel has shown, Lingbao Daoists of the fifth century saw in the Liu-Song rulers the successors of the ruling family of the Han (also named Liu), whose reign they wished to support with signs of Lord Lao's heavenly grace and appropriate good omens (1980, 31-47). This interest in the revival of the Han ruling house, however, also involved the revitalization of the Celestial Masters of old, thus the Lingbao also venerated their founder and sacred texts.

As a result of this political dimension, the most important effect of the Lingbao scriptures and especially their power as described in the Ge Xuan texts lay in the protection of the sacrality of the imperial house and the salvation of all people. The first scroll of the *Wuji xu* has "five initial methods of Great Clarity" that bring about the desired state of political stability or Great Peace, showing again how the ancient Daoist (and original Lingbao) concern for personal attainment of immortality was transformed into a much wider creed under the influence of both Buddhism and political considerations.

**INTEGRATIVE TENDENCIES.** The political goal of dynastic legitimation moreover entailed a religious unification. About half of the Ge Xuan texts not only honor the *Daode jing* but also accept the *Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經 (Perfect Scripture of Great Profundity) of the Shangqing school and the *Sanhuang wen* 三皇文 of the Three Sovereigns as valuable talismans. A single integrated structure of talismanic documents not only meant that Lingbao texts were elevated to the Great Vehicle of Daoism, but because they contained the most powerful talismans, they could also claim the status of the highest vehicle.

As noted earlier, the main protagonist to give the Lingbao scriptures a new form and system, and imbue them with a whole new worldview, was Lu Xiujing. As a result, his catalog is more than just a list or classification of the texts available and known in his time. It is rather the first establishment of an integrated structure of Lingbao and, by extension, of all Daoist scriptures and doctrine, even pointing out the direction the teaching was to take in the future by listing a number of texts as "not yet revealed." Bearing in mind that Lu himself was originally a follower of the Celestial Masters, it becomes clear just to what extent he, and Lingbao scriptures and doctrine through him, were tied up with the revival of the Liu ruling house.

In the preface to his catalog (*Yanji qiqiu* 4.4a-6a) Lu says, that he thought the talismanic texts called "Lingbao" were the most venerable scriptures for all Daoist schools. Seen from a different angle, this means that Lu established the Lingbao scriptures as a corpus that could be venerated by all Daoists, thereby giving birth to their nature as religious talismans.
PRIMORDIAL BEGINNING. The key deity who revealed the Heavenly Worthy texts is described first in the Wupian zhenwen as the Primordial Beginning (yuanshi 元始) of the universe. This term appears originally in the Huainanzi (ch. 1) and continues the veneration of primordiality in Daoist philosophy. The first to add a heavenly title to "Primordial Beginning" were the fangshi who named the ruler and creator of the world the Heavenly King of Primordial Beginning (Yuanshi tianwang), a title duly adopted in the Shangqing scriptures. The latter stylized him as the creator of the cosmos who produced sacred scriptures and talismans and had them carved in sacred script in the caverns of heaven, from where he would make them accessible to humanity. Lingbao Daoists, in turn, followed the lead of Shangqing but changed "Heavenly King" to "Heavenly Worthy," taking over a commonly used title of the Buddha, who later, in contrast to the Daoist deity, became generally known as the World-Honored One (shizun 世尊; see Fukunaga 1987, 140-41; Wang 1989, 67-68).

The Heavenly Worthy, who has a hagiography in the Yünjì qiqian (101.1a-2a), is the one high god who arose from the cosmic void and is the source of all sacred scriptures associated with him in the Lingbao catalog. All scriptures, that is, except one: the Wupian zhenwen which arose immediately from the cosmic void and thus represents, in abstract and symbolic form, the power of the five emperors ruling the five directions. Uncreated and primordial, the text is considered directly responsible for the division of the world into the five directions and the five phases; it is the central agent that rules and controls the universe in all its aspects and thus takes on the role of high god and creator, a role ascribed to the Heavenly Worthy in all other texts of this group.

In addition, the cosmic void is also expressed by the term kōngdōng 空洞, which plays a key role in subsequent Lingbao texts. This term, "emptiness and profundity," connotes the state of primordial oneness when heaven and earth had not yet separated and the sun and the moon did not yet shine. It was a state of cosmic chaos without brightness, without even emptiness. In this primordial state, then, suddenly an empty space, a cosmic void, unfolded. From this in turn the world was formed in its division of heaven and earth (1.1a). This cosmic void is known as the initial emptiness of the world, indicating a Daoist "big bang" theory of creation.

HEAVENLY WRITINGS. Heavenly writings are originally celestial texts and signs that have descended to earth, either by direct transmission of their form or by translation into worldly language. Their appearance is always a sign of great good fortune for all beings, whether they are manifested on the backs of spirit animals or strange stones (e.g., the river charts), appear on the walls of sacred grottoes, (e.g., the texts of
the Three Sovereigns), or are transmitted through a medium in trance, (e.g., the Shangqing revelations). The recipient in all cases has to be a person of great sageliness and virtue who will make it his task to see them deployed for the benefit of all (Wufu xu 1.4a). The transmission can happen only upon the mediation of a divine agent or a god, who either dictates the contents or writes the sacred characters down directly.

The key Lingbao texts claim to be immediate manifestations of heavenly writings. The Ge Xuan texts, as described in the Lingbao jingmu xu (Yunji qijian 4.4b), accordingly were received by Ge Xuan himself on Mount Tiantai; the Heavenly Worthy texts, on the other hand, were first bestowed upon the Yellow Emperor, from whom they went to a number of sage rulers, including Yao, Shun and Yu (Wufu xu 1.3a-4a). As they were already emperors, these recipients were men of exceptional merit and virtue, just as Ge Xuan was a highly qualified Daoist sage. It was only because of their personal merit that they could attain these texts which bestowed upon them not only power in this world but also long life and immortality. This vision of the texts as being directly from heaven and bestowed upon masters of great virtue is uniquely Lingbao. It is different from the Shangqing revelations, where heavenly information was translated into a human language through the mediation of Wei Huacun, a dead spirit who had ascended.

THE LORD OF THE DAO. This deity, Taishang daojun 太上道君, is also known as the Highest Lord (Taishang) and often named simply “the Dao.” He functions as the mouthpiece of the creator in the void, is the revealer of sacred scriptures upon instruction by the Heavenly Worthy and serves as the latter’s disciple and messenger. The relationship between the two deities is patterned on Mahāyāna Buddhism, with the Heavenly Worthy residing in celestial splendor above the known universe and the Lord of the Dao begging for instruction to help suffering humanity.

His exploits are described variously, most comprehensively in his hagiography in the Yunji qijian (101.2a-3a). Among the Lingbao texts he features for example in the Zuigen shangpin dajie (LB 12), which begins with him confronting the Heavenly Worthy in a wondrous celestial hall and outlining his previous progress. He describes how he “for a hundred million kalpas has transformed along with the world” and received instruction “in the divine scriptures of the Three Treasures, given the great precepts, and told the sacred sounds of the law” (1.1a). Now he has again come before the deity to learn what he has not heard before, so that he can further aid humanity, helping “even souls already suffering for long kalpas to find salvation through me and be reborn in the halls of happiness” (1.1b). In response, the Heavenly Worthy decides to present the key precepts and tells his own story of continued salvific efforts over
many eons, which still could not prevent a gradual decline of the world. At some point, then, an assistant and interlocutor became necessary, which is the role of the Lord of the Dao. The same information is also found in the Duren bengxing jing (LB 17).

KALPA CYCLES. The Heavenly Worthy, after creating the world with the help of celestial writings, descended to earth many times, in each cosmic cycle providing the perfect support humanity needed. Still, despite his efforts a certain decline set in, which is described in terms of succeeding kalpa cycles, one slightly more corrupt than the next. The classic kalpas are:

1. *Longhan* 龍漢 (Dragon Han): People were pure and free from evil and led a simple life. The Heavenly Worthy descended to help them live in perfect accordance with the rule of the Dao. There was no sin. At the end of this kalpa the world collapsed.

2. *Chiming* 赤明 (Red Radiance): There was a trace of impurity and evil among living beings, and karma and retribution first began. The Heavenly Worthy saved as many as he could and established the first colonies of celestial beings above. Again, the kalpa ended with the complete destruction of everything.

3. *Ktnhuang* 開皇 (Opening Sovereign): People were still living simply, but there were the beginnings of culture and civilization, as exemplified in the knotting of cords for reckoning. Since the minds of people were simple and still largely unconscious, their life-spans were as long as 36,000 years. Again, the Heavenly Worthy supported the age.

4. *Shanghuang* 上皇 (Highest Sovereign): Culture developed fully and the world declined seriously. There was strife and jealousy, hatred and war, bringing the dark age of humanity, which still continues. Ever since, the Heavenly Worthy has handed down precepts and rules to ensure the survival and salvation of at least a few (LB 12.2a-3a).

These four kalpas represent a combination of traditional Chinese cultural cycles following the five phases and the Indian notion of declining ages or *yugas*. Here the perfect age, *Krtta Yuga*, is followed by a time of slight decline in the *Tretā Yuga*, which moves on to a time of shortened life-spans and advanced culture in the *Dvāpara Yuga*, and finally ends in a dark age of evil and corruption, the *Kali Yuga*. After the world has passed through an entire cycle of four phases (*mahiyyuga*), it is completely destroyed and begins anew.
Daoist eschatology, in addition, distinguished greater and lesser kalpa cycles, at the end of which sacred scriptures vanish, depending on their original status in heaven. Thus, the *Duming miaojing* (LB 20) distinguishes three types of sacred writings. The first, on practical techniques, such as gymnastics and nourishing life, "change with the kalpas and are scattered among ordinary folk, being tied to the Six Heavens of the World of Desire" (14b). They perish even in a lesser kalpa. Next, the texts associated with Shangqing and the *Taiping jing* revolve around the eighteen heavens of the World of Form and survive a lesser kalpa revolution. However, they too end when a great kalpa turns, and only the third and highest kind, the "tiger script of divine perfection, the writings in gold and jade characters, and the perfect texts of Lingbao, which originated in Primordial Beginning and rest above the twenty-eight heavens," (15a) will be rescued by returning to the Mountain of Jade Capital 玉京 (Yujing) in the highest heaven of Grand Veil 大羅天 (Daluo tian). Here no disaster ever reaches, it is a permanent realm of Primordial Beginning.

The groups of heavens mentioned here are again a combination of Buddhist and Daoist thought. The standard number given in medieval Daoism is 36, a number first mentioned in the *Weishu* 魏書 "Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism." It says, "above there are 36 heavens, in which there are 36 palaces, each occupied by one ruler," indicating that the 36 heavens are celestial palaces that house the gods. The *Duren jing* similarly has nine heavenly palaces each in the four directions, making a total of 36. In other medieval texts, however, a Daluo tian or Heaven of Grand Veil (a name inspired by the Sanskrit *dhāranī*) appears as the highest heaven, which in turn contains the Three Clarities (*sānqīng*). These were, however, separate from the early 36 heavens, which consisted of the original nine heavens of the early medieval texts plus their multiplication by three or 27 heavens. In other words, at some point in medieval Daoism, there were 36 heavens plus the Three Clarities and Daluo.

In the *Duming miaojing* and other later standard texts, such as the *Yunjì qijian*, on the other hand, a system inspired by Buddhism has taken over: a total of 36 heavens, with Daluo and the Three Clarities at the top, followed by four so-called Brahma heavens for true believers. The bottom 28, then, were divided into the worlds of formlessness (4), form (18), and desire (6), imitating the Buddhist model of the Three Worlds. Here we have 33 heavens in the *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 (T. 1509) and 36 heavens in the *Jushie lun* 俱舍論 (T. 1558).
PRAC TICES

TALISMANS AND IMMORTALITY TECHNIQUES. The *Wufu xu* in particular is a treasure house of immortality techniques. In its first scroll, it describes methods of ingesting the essence of the sun and the moon (1. 18b-19a), which involved exposing oneself to the planets on certain days of the month, closing one’s eyes, and visualizing their innermost essence coagulate and enter one’s body. The essence of the sun was then matched with the heart and envisioned as red; the essence of the moon was matched with the kidneys and seen as black. The second volume of the text, next, contains numerous recipes for immortality drugs, including ways of preparing pine resin, sesame, pepper, ginger, calamus, and many others more (2.1a-2a). In the third volume, finally we have talismans and spells to protect practitioners as they enter the mountains together with prescriptions for the right days and directions to use. Thus, one should, for example, proceed “on a jiazi day and first write the talismans of the four directions on pieces of five-colored silk, then suspend them from boulders on the mountain one wished to enter while offering a prayer for long life” (3.8b). Taken together, the various methods and techniques reveal a rich culture of immortality practice at the root of Lingbao teachings.

MORAL RULES. As noted above, the Lingbao school had a number of different sets of moral rules, from the ten precepts inspired by Buddhism through the ten abstentions, the twelve vows, and so on, to the 300 rules of the Three Primes. Its moral thinking was based both on Buddhist models and on the indigenous precepts created by Kou Qianzhi in his “New Code.” In particular the ten abstentions, at least except the last, are immediately Buddhist: do not kill, steal, be lascivious, use fancy speech, use evil words, become intoxicated, be jealous, destroy sacred scriptures or lie, as well as always be in harmony with nature. Similarly the twelve vows follow Mahāyāna inspiration, and encourage practitioners to work for universal salvation, observe the divine law as set out in the scriptures and do good in every situation.

In contrast to this, the Celestial Masters had a set of 180 precepts which strongly emphasized Confucian virtues, such as filial piety, loyalty and good faith, and were in general more oriented toward harmonious community living rather than universal salvation. At the same time, the historical development of the Lingbao communities on the basis of Celestial Masters organization is obvious in the strong integration of the latter’s precepts in Lingbao teachings.

RITUAL. The center of all Lingbao practice is ritual. This ritual practice, in turn, as described in Lu Xiujing’s *Wugan wen* 五感文 (Text of Fivefold Response, CT 1278), centers on the nine zhai or purification
cere monies. A zhai can be defined as a complex rite consisting of three separate parts: bodily purification through baths, fasting, abstention from sexual relations and avoidance of defilements; mental purification through confession of sins and meditations; and a prayer ritual for certain distinct purposes, part of which usually involved the sharing of food, whether among the gods and the people, the masters and the community or the donors and the recluses.

The nine main kinds of zhai in Lingbao are: (1) the Golden Register Ceremony (jinlu zhai 金録齋) to ensure harmony and peace in country and state; (2) the Yellow Register Ceremony (huanglu zhai 黃録齋) to extirpate the karmic roots of sin of the ancestors up to nine generations; (3) the Ceremony of the Luminous Perfected (mingzhen zhai 明真齋) to save the souls of the Daoists' own ancestors; (4) the Ceremony of the Three Primes (sanyuan zhai 三元齋) to offer repentance of the Daoist's personal sins; (5) the Ceremony of the Eight Nodes (bajie zhai 八節齋) to offer repentance for the sins of all beings in the present age; (6) the Ceremony of Spontaneity (ziran zhai 自然齋) to dissolve disasters and misfortunes; (7) the Ceremony of the Three Sovereigns (sanhuang zhai 三皇齋) to expel all defilements through formal purification and bathing; (8) the Ceremony of the Great One (taiyi zhai 太一齋) to honor the unity of the universe; and (9) the Ceremony of Instruction (zhijiao zhai 指教齋), a rite of purification and mental clarity.

The Golden Register Ceremony was dedicated to the establishment of harmony between yin and yang and peace in state and country. An open-air altar was erected in preparation, a multi-tiered platform about 10 meters high, the top of which was about one square meter in size. Doors were inserted on the sides, at the top and bottom, as well as above and below—making a total of ten symbolizing the ten directions. On top nine lamps, each one nine feet tall, would be set up, illuminating the altar and through it the universe.

The sacred writings of the five directions (the “Perfect Texts” or five talismans) were next placed on benches in the five directions around and in the center of the altar. Then five dragons were cast of pure gold to be buried in the appropriate directions to communicate the officiants' prayers to the gods. The ceremony lasted nine days in the spring, three days in summer, seven days in the fall and five days in winter—matching the numbers of the five phases. If undertaken monthly, it would be held on the first, sixth and twentieth day. In order to dissolve all the sins of the world, the sacred texts were burnt in the end and the golden dragons cast into running water (see Chavannes 1919: Yamada 1991).

The ceremonies typically involve a sense of personal guilt, of having committed transgressions which have to be expiated and from which one has to be cleansed, and the ritual undergoing of hardships or punishments which will serve this effect. They are a continuation of the
repentance rites performed by the Celestial Masters of the Later Han, which involved the personal confession of one's misdeeds and a petition for exoneration sent to the Three Bureaus of heaven, earth and water (see Tsuchiya 1994). They also show a Buddhist influence in that the transmission of the prayer and the expiation of sins took place on the basis of the merit created through the ceremony, a characteristic specially formulated by Lu Xiujing.

In ancient China, a *zhou* was originally a rite of purification and fasting undertaken in connection with a sacrifice to the gods (see Malek 1985). This rite was transformed by Lu Xiujing into a formal ceremony that also involved prayers and repentance, making use of the Buddhist notion of merit, which alone could effect the proper expiation of sins. This is explained in some detail in Lu's *Zhou yuan yi* (Observances of Incantations and Prayer, CT 524) while his reasons for providing ritual instructions in the first place are detailed in his *Lingbao shoudu yibiao*. According to this text, he found that the Lingbao scriptures of his day hardly ever spoke of ritual rules and observances, and thus decided to supplement them himself. This fact is indeed borne out by the Lingbao texts themselves, which give some indications of the use of the talismans (*Wufu xu*) or the "perfect texts" (*Wupian zhenwen*), but are nowhere near the detailed and complex rites that Lu describes. Unlike the bulk of the ancient Lingbao corpus, the *Wupian zhenwen* did not provide new ritual forms for the use of its sacred materials, relying entirely on the earlier *Wufu xu*. Lu Xiujing thus has to be credited with giving a ritual format to the extensive Lingbao scriptures and making their worship accessible to a wider public.

He himself was aware of this situation and called the old rites the "mysterious rules of the ancient documents." With this he probably referred to the talismanic rites of offering and incantation (*jiaozhou* 邈咒) performed by the followers of the five talismans in the fourth century. In contrast to these, the new rites composed by Lu involved the interaction of the participants' body gods, themselves heavenly officers, with the celestial deities of the otherworld. These officers would then return into the adept's body and be able to summon the celestial deities down into it. As their directives descended upon the altar of the ceremony, so the prayers of the officiant reached the celestial administration.

These rites combine several key elements of other Daoist schools, such as the Shangqing belief in body gods and the Celestial Masters' practice of sending petitions to the Three Bureaus, while also integrating the Buddhist notions of repentance and the creation of merit. Again, as in Ge Xuan talismanic doctrine so in the ritual practice of all Lingbao, there was a serious integration of the different traditions, placing the Lingbao school in the highest position of the great vehicle of Daoism.
Once established, the rites continued to be actively practiced throughout Daoist history and are still dominant in the religion today. That, of course, does not mean that the rites as Lu organized them can still be observed in any given Daoist temple or have remained unchanged since the fifth century. But we do know of their continuity because they were codified in the sixth-century *Wushang biyao* and again revised by Du Guangting in the tenth century (see CT 507). The latter, in particular, joined the ancient rites of purification (*zhai*) and offering (*jiao*) into one integrated structure, which first leaned more towards the *jiao* than the *zhai* and eventually became the foundation of the *jiao* ritual of renewal that is still practiced today (see Saso 1972; Lagerwey 1987).

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CHAPTER TEN

THE SOUTHERN CELESTIAL MASTERS

PETER NICKERSON

DESCRIPTION

The term southern Celestial Masters refers to the groups and individuals who were connected with the Way of the Celestial Master (Tianshi dao 天師道) as it was practiced in the Jiangnan region of southeastern China during the early medieval period (especially the fourth to sixth centuries). As opposed to the "theocracy" of the contemporaneous Celestial Masters in the north (see Mather 1979), the southern Celestial Masters never had a genuinely centralized ecclesiastical organization, and their history and composition are accordingly more complex and more difficult to determine with exactitude.

The "southern Celestial Masters" might in fact be considered under several, sometimes overlapping, rubrics:

1. groups and individuals who had historical connections, and explicitly affiliated themselves, with the Way of the Celestial Master that began in second century Shu and Hanzhong 漢中 (modern Sichuan and southern Shaanxi);

2. Daoists who, though their primary affiliations might have been with other, often ostensibly superior, scriptural traditions, such as Shangqing, continued to engage in practices of the Celestial Masters;

3. incorporators of Celestial Master traditions within a larger Daoist synthesis, especially Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 and his successors during and after the fifth century; and

4. popular practitioners and their clients who availed themselves of Celestial Master ritual techniques, such as sending up petitions (shangzhang 上章) to Celestial Officials (tianguan 天官) for the remedi- dying of illness or other maladies, but who may have had little or no conscious identification with the Way of the Celestial Master per se.
History

The best known and best documented portion of southern Celestial Master history concerns the importation of the movement to the south by the northern émigré elite after the fall of Luoyang to non-Chinese invaders in 311 and the establishment of the remnants of the Luoyang court and the Jin ruling house as the Eastern Jin dynasty in Jiankang (modern Nanjing) in 317. As is explained elsewhere in this volume, the Way of the Celestial Master had become well established among certain of the northern great families, such as the Wangs of Langye, whose most illustrious scion was the calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (309-c. 365). When these northerners fled south they brought the Way of the Celestial Master—as well as the Libationers (祭酒) who served their ritual needs—with them (Miya-kawa 1964; Strickmann 1977, 1981). This was the sole manner, some have insisted (see, e.g., Kobayashi 1990, 1992), through which the Way of the Celestial Master entered Jiangnan. Supporters of this view also point to the Baopuzi 抱朴子 (CT 1185), written by the southerner Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343) and substantially completed before the arrival of the northerners, which appears to make no mention of the Celestial Masters.

However, other evidence points to multiple modes of the diffusion of the Way of the Celestial Master to the south after the ostensibly third Celestial Master Zhang Lu’s 張魯 surrender to Cao Cao in 215, which led to the relocation of thousands of Daoist families to cities in north China such as Chang’an, Luoyang and Ye and the removal of the central organization of the Celestial Masters from Hanzhong to what would become the Cao family’s Wei capital at Luoyang. At the same time, a number of those not so relocated are likely to have continued to practice their religion independently from the centralized Dao-ocracy (cf. Bokenkamp 1997, 1-2, 149-50). As part of the larger diaspora, it is not difficult to imagine the Celestial Masters making their way downriver from their bases in Sichuan, and elsewhere around the system of rivers that fed the Yangzi, directly to Jiangnan, thus avoiding the stopover in Luoyang and the ensuing, century-long delay there that would be ended only by the force of foreign invasion. Though indisputable archaeological evidence comes only much later, in the fifth and sixth centuries (see Nickerson 1996a, 175-96), much has been written about the propagation of Daoism by water routes, not only by sea (Chen 1992), but also via networks of lakes and rivers (Miya-kawa 1971; 1979); we shall return to this hypothesis presently. As Eichhorn has claimed: “There existed a prominent stronghold of the Wu-tou-mi-tao [i.e., the Celestial Masters] in Kiangsu and Chekiang, especially in the area of Kueichi during the Later Han dynasty, and it remained so during the ensuing periods” (1954, 329 n. 12). Emerging archaeological finds from the Guang-
dong region further support this notion of early diffusion by means of multiple routes (see, e.g., Lin 1985).

Such a hypothesis also allows one to make more sense of the later history of the Way of the Celestial Master in the south. There is first the continued practice of Celestial Master Daoism by some of the former northern elite—as seen in various anecdotes in the *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 (New Accounts of Tales of the World)—e.g., that about Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344-388; 1.23, no. 39; see also *Jinshu* 2106; Mather 1976, 19). Also well documented is the adoption of the Way of the Celestial Master by some members of the old southern aristocracy, resulting ultimately in the creative synthesis that would produce Yang Xi's Shangqing revelations in the 360s.

However, other very significant texts, such as the *Zhao Sheng koujue* and the *Nüqing guilii*, both from around 400, as well as contemporaneous scriptures on the margins of the Celestial Master movement, like the *Dongyuan shenzhou jing* (see below), attest to a much broader diffusion of the Way of the Celestial Master than can effectively be accounted for by the single-route theory. All of these scriptures show the existence, by the end of the fourth century, of relatively large-scale, popular, messianic movements that were based around the Way of the Celestial Master and whose social origins were far from the northern, émigré elites. Nor is it likely that they had much to do with the southern aristocrats who subsequently turned to the Way of the Celestial Master—as a kind of spiritual social-climbing—and then created the Shangqing revelations in an act of religious one-upmanship (Strickmann 1977).

The combination of geographic (north to south) and "downward" social diffusion (elite to popular) necessary to allow for the appearance of such popular movements seems unimaginably rapid. As a result, one can assume that the Way of the Celestial Master was already established in the south well before the fall of the Western Jin. This is not contradicted by the relatively late appearance of scriptures. After all, few genuinely early Celestial Master writings have survived, and these are ritual documents and tables, not scriptures. Also, the mid- to late fourth century was for all Daoist movements only the beginning of the medieval scriptural efflorescence, and it would have been precisely the involvement just discussed of relatively high-status, literate individuals in these movements that would have made scriptural production possible.

The rebellion of Sun En 孙恩, a bloody, religiously-motivated insurrection that began in 399, stands perhaps as a further piece of evidence for the independence of some elements of the Way of the Celestial Master in the south from the religion of the emigrants from the north. The course of the rebellion (see Eichhorn 1954)—ultimately suppressed by the general Liu Yu 劉裕 (356-422), founder of the Liu-Song dynasty (420-478)—is less interesting for our purposes than its origins in and relations with the Way
of the Celestial Master. Sun promised his followers “life everlasting” (chang-sheng 長生) and appears to have engaged in a number of practices typical of the communitarian Celestial Masters. Most significantly, his knowledge of Daoism came through his uncle, Sun Tai 孫泰, who in turn was the disciple of one Du Jiong 杜炅, a Celestial Master priest and a renowned thaumaturge who was active in the late fourth century in the Qiantang area (modern Hangzhou).

Du’s Daoism seems to have come through a family tradition that went back to his clan’s origins in Sichuan, prior to their emigration to the southeast (Strickmann 1977, 18), while later hagiographies claim that his master was Chen Wenzi 陳文子 of Yuhang in modern Zhejiang (see, e.g., Yunji qiqian 111.7a). In any event, since we know that Du Jiong was active around 360, and presumably his master was significantly older, again we are confronted with an example of a southern Way of the Celestial Master that at the very least was roughly contemporaneous with, rather than significantly subsequent to, the great northern emigration. For that matter, Li Dong 李東, the Celestial Master Libationer who served the Xu 許 family, the patrons of the Shangqing medium Yang Xi 楊羲, was himself a native of Qu’a曲阿 in Jiangsu. He transmitted a Daoist talisman to Xu Mai 許邁 in 322 and was also capable of writing petitions in the classic Celestial Master style—a remarkably quick study if all of his learning came in the wake of the fall of the north.

It was the northern emigration and the establishment of the Eastern Jin 陳 that made it socially respectable for the southern aristocracy to take up the Way of the Celestial Master and make it their own. The relatively low social status of the Celestial Masters in the south prior to 317 is enough to account for Ge Hong’s apparent ignorance, or his misportrayal of them as the “Way of the Li House” (Lijia dao 李家道; Wang 1985, 9:173f.). Although knowledge of Zhang Daoling as an immortal/ alchemist may not indicate knowledge of Zhang as Celestial Master, it still may be significant that Ge possibly included him in his Shenxian zhu 仙傳 (Biographies of Spirit Immortals; very early citations include Zhang’s hagiography). Moreover, Zhang is given a place in the lineage connected with the Lingbao wuxu 真寶五符序 (Explanation of the Five Numinous Treasure Talismans, CT 388), some of which, if not all, goes back to Ge’s own Taiqing 太清 (Great Clarity) tradition. So, in fact, Ge may have been less ignorant of the Celestial Masters than is normally imagined (Robert Campany, personal communication; see also Wang 1998).

Thus, by the establishment of the Liu-Song, the Way of the Celestial Master was entangled in an extremely complex, and not very comfortable, socio-historical web. Elite Celestial Master devotees had been subjects of Sun En’s attacks (see, e.g., Jinshu 2102-3), and of course Liu Yu himself had had direct and personal experience of the fact that Daoists could be dan-
gerous rebels. (Later on, should anyone forget, the Buddhists were always willing to remind people of this fact; see, e.g., the *Bianhuo lun* 辯惑論, T. 2102, 52.48a-49c). The Celestial Masters needed to retrench, if they were to survive the establishment in the south of relatively stable, and militarily powerful, imperial regimes like the Liu-Song. Thus even apocalyptic, messianic movements like that represented by the *Dongyuan shenzhou jing* worked (possibly new) material into their scriptures to show, not that the apocalypse was imminent, but that it had already occurred and that the world had been saved by the house of Liu, or at least that the Liu-Song emperors were performing a positive role and preparing the world for the even better one that was to come. On a higher social level, a whole genre of apologetic literature appeared, among whose many aims was to show not only that Daoists were good, upstanding citizens of the Liu-Song state who would assist, rather than detract from, the new order, but also that the house of Liu itself had received favorable portents proving its links to the original Liu rulers of the Han dynasty, demonstrating that the “new” Liu line similarly enjoyed “the trust of the Most High [Laozi]” (*Santian neijie jing* 1.9a).

It is against this background that the *Daomen kelue* 道門科略 (Abridged Codes for the Daoist Community; see below) of *Lu Xiujing* 陸修靜 should be read. While the messianic tone is muted and placed largely in the past, the emphasis is on the basically orderly and socially beneficial nature of the Way of the Celestial Master—provided Zhang Daoling’s original institutions of registers, parishes and the like are properly restored. One might speculate that this text was written less for Daoists themselves, and more for the Liu-Song rulers.

With *Lu Xiujing*, we can also end our history of the Southern Celestial Masters. As is well known, *Lu* is renowned not so much for the above text as for his cataloging of the Lingbao scriptures and his association with the Three Caverns (*san dong* 三洞) scheme for the organization of the larger body of Daoist scriptural revelation—which, interestingly, left out the Celestial Master texts themselves. From this time onward, in particular as far as the organized, usually state-supported, Daoist organization was concerned, the texts and ritual documents of the Way of the Celestial Master were merely early, if essential, steps in a graded series of texts, registers and offices to which the Daoist priest-adept could aspire (Schipper 1985). At the same time, in their own, largely anonymous and mostly historiographically invisible way, less august Celestial Master and related Daoist practitioners continued the ancient tradition of a priesthood among the people.

**Texts**

A number of Daoist texts have been identified as emanating from Southern Dynasties Jiangnan, but the most solid attributions concern the scriptures
associated with the Shangqing and Lingbao revelations.Attributing Celestial Master texts to the same place and period is much more difficult, though it has been done with some frequency (see Kobayashi 1990), if not always on the strongest grounds. Here I will mostly limit myself to a relatively smaller number of texts whose dates and provenances are somewhat less open to doubt, focusing on materials dating from after Three Kingdoms Wu and before the Tang that are strongly affiliated with Celestial Master Daoism and were composed south of the Yangzi. Many of these are extensively discussed in other sections of this chapter, and their descriptions and summaries here will not replicate points covered elsewhere. These texts may be placed under several convenient, if merely heuristic, rubrics.

APOLOGETIC AND DIDACTIC TEXTS. Santian nei jie jing

三 天 内 解 纶 (Scripture of the Inner Explanations of the Three Heavens, CT 1205, 2 j.), mid-5th c., attr. to one "Disciple of the Three Heavens, Mr. Xu 徐氏" (see Bokenkamp 1997, 186-229, with trl. of j. 1) Despite the fact that the text presents itself as a "scripture" (jing 经) whose transmission should be restricted to worthy Daoists only (1.2a), Bokenkamp contends with reason that one of its intended audiences was the Liu-Song throne. Much content of this important text—important especially because of its unabashedly pro-Liu-Song stance and thus its relatively certain date—is discussed below: the cosmology of the Three Heavens and the role of mankind, and especially people’s religious behavior, in determining cosmic stability. Other important themes introduced in the first scroll concern Laozi as an avatar reborn throughout history in order to aid humans, especially their rulers, and at one point also to be born in the West to introduce Buddhism (1.3a-4b); Laozi’s ultimate failure, through both his own assistance and that of his agents such as Dongfang Shuo 東 方 禪, to get the Han emperors to follow his Way; and hence his turning over of the custodianship of the Dao and its institutions to the people and their representatives, the Celestial Masters (1.4b-5b, 8a-9a). Also notable is the text’s criticism of Buddhism (among other “deviant ways”). It presents Buddhism as in a sense complementary to Daoism—as right is to left—but also clearly inferior: as death is to life (1.9b-10a; cf. Zürcher 1980).

The second scroll is concerned more with moral injunctions and philosophical pronouncements, e.g., that the Way is equivalent to wu 無 (“non-being”; 2.1b), as well as more practical dictates concerning fasting and purification ceremonies (zhai 禪; 2.2b-3a). The last sections are given over to a discussion of the differences between the “Greater” and “Lesser Vehicles.” Initially the contrast seems to be between a “purer” Daoist practice concerned only with inner, meditative self-cultivation and eventual immortality, versus a more materialistic version that desires all sorts of personal benefits from Daoist ritual. Then the text’s anti-Buddhist tendencies resurface, and the Lesser Vehicle is identified with the Buddhists, who meditate
only by counting their breaths, while the Greater Vehicle, Daoism, pursues the far loftier practice of the visualization of deities, their forms, clothing and accouterments (2.3a-5a).

Lu xiansheng daomen kelue 隱先生道門科略 (Abridged Codes of Master Lu for the Daoist Community, CT 1127, 9 pp.), by Lu Xiujing (trl. Nickerson 1996b; see also Nickerson 1996a, 3-30, 613-18). The text begins—in a dark and almost apocalyptic tone—with a description of the dismal situation that had inspired Laozi to reveal the Daoist religion: people are worshipping the spirits of dead generals, falsely believing them to be deities; in turn they are only being exploited, deprived of their material goods and afflicted with illness (1ab). The implication is that Lu’s own times are none too different. The tract moves on to an extensive discussion of contemporaneous Daoist ideology and practice, for which see below.

The text also includes a commentary, which the extant Daozang version distinguishes from—but also sometimes merges with—the main text through use of different character sizes. It is anonymous, but in content and style it seems close to the main text; Lu himself may even have written it (Maeda 1985, 420). It is further likely that Lu’s “Codes” were “abridged” for reading by the Liu-Song throne and that the redactor, if it was not Lu himself, may have been a disciple one or two generations later who also appended the commentary.

Laojun shuo yibai bashi jie 老君說一百八十戒 (The 180 Precepts Spoken by Lord Lao, in CT 786, 2a-20b; other versions in Yunji qiqian 39.1a-14b; CT 463, 5.14a-19b; and Dunhuang mss. P. 4562 and 4731), dat. around 350, including a preface partly from the same time and partly from about 550 (see Penny 1996; Maeda 1985; trl. Hendrischke and Penny 1996). As is suggested by its terminology, this set of rules for Libationers may originally have had no direct connections with the Celestial Masters (Schipper 1994; Penny 1996, 15); yet it was soon adopted by various Daoist lineages. There is a Lingbao version (CT 456, 21b-31a), and there is a statement in the Daomen kelue that makes clear that it also became important among the Celestial Masters: “Therefore the Scripture [which scripture is not clear] says, ‘If the priest does not receive the 180 Precepts of Lord Lao, he is without virtue’” (7b).

Following the preface, which narrates the history of the transmission of the text, the precepts—as they are all phrased in the negative (bu de 不得), perhaps “proscriptions” is as good a term—cover a variety of topics. Some suggest a kind of Daoist proto-environmentalism: forbidden are setting fire to fields or forests (14), cutting down trees or picking flowers without reason (18-19), polluting water (36), destructively excavating the earth or river-banks (no. 47), draining rivers or marshes (53) and the like. Other proscriptions concern the proper life of Daoists in society: not keeping too many servants or slave trading (1, 27, 104), not being excessively concerned with
wealth (e.g. 22, 25), not meddling in marriages or people’s other affairs (e.g., 2, 28), not becoming excessively involved in political life (either directly or through marriage connections; 20), as well as a number of more general moral injunctions. As Benjamin Penny (1996) has demonstrated, these rules were in part inspired by Buddhist standards of religious professionalism—reflected especially by the Prātimokṣa sūtra of the Mahāsāṃghika school, which was translated into Chinese in 251. The Buddhist influence may be seen both in broad rules against stealing, killing, lying, eating meat or drinking alcohol and so forth, as well as far more specific ones, such as not urinating in a standing position (no. 66). However, the complete celibacy and avoidance of financial dealings that are features of Buddhist monastic life are not enjoined. Contrariwise, other prohibitions—like those against divination, geomancy (e.g., 16, 77-8, 114) and popular, sacrificial cults (113, 118)—reflect concerns that were especially important to the southern Celestial Masters. Indeed, the rules are specifically addressed to Libationers (e.g., 153)—a title essential to Celestial Master organisation—and Orthodox Unity (zhengyi 正一) is itself mentioned (144). Thus the text may be closer to the Way of the Celestial Master than others have surmised.

The production of rules and codes for both layfolk and male and female Daoist priests continued throughout the period, as reflected in the Xuandu tàiwen 玄都律文 (Statutes of the Mysterious Capital, CT 188, 22 pp.; see Kobayashi 1990, 206-7; Ren and Zhong 1991, 137; Noguchi et al. 1994, 132; Robinet 1984, 2:280). This text, or at least some version of it, is cited in a number of seventh-century works and must be earlier than that. Kobayashi has placed the date as early as 500. However, there are discrepancies between the work as extant and as cited: CT 1139 says it has 9 j., but only 22 pp. are to be found in the Daozang; Southern Dynasties administrative terminology is not present where one would expect to find it (i.e., there is no jun 郡 (“commandery”) mentioned where a parishioner is to identify his residence when having a petition sent on his behalf, 18b); a Daoist institution is mentioned that existed only in the Northern Dynasties or later in the Tang, the guan 觀 or “abbey” (17b). Nonetheless, the rules for kitchen-feasts, sending petitions, conducting assemblies, making donations and so forth—as well as those against sacrificing to popular gods—that occupy the latter sections of the text (11a-22a) are consistent with earlier, southern texts. Similarly, the various regulations and codes that comprise the first half of the work—“Statutes of Good and Evil, [Beginning with] Emptiness and Nonbeing” (1a-3a), “Statutes on Precepts and Chanting” (3a-5a), “Statutes of the Hundred Medicinal [Virtues]” (5a-8a), and “Statutes of the Hundred [Moral] Illnesses”—testify to a proliferation of precepts for both lay and religious that might be predicted in light of earlier developments, such as the specification of reductions in lifespan for breaking any given one of that ever-increasing number of injunctions. Again one might consider as a factor
inspiration from the Vinaya (cf. Penny 1996). The Xuandu liüwen already reflects the development of a high degree of Daoist religious professionalism: one virtue mentioned in the first section is “to expel one’s wife and leave one’s children, journeying alone with the Way” (1a). All this leads one to suspect, first, that these statutes are to some degree representative of the larger—and relatively late—southern Daoist synthesis discussed above, and, further, that the extant text may well date from the Tang and not be connected in a direct way with the southern Celestial Masters. Zhang Daoling’s establishment of the Way of Orthodox Unity is mentioned only near the very end of the text (19a), seeming largely an afterthought found necessary merely to preface a set of rules on sending petitions.

POPULAR, APOCALYPTIC AND/OR SECTARIAN TEXTS.

Zhengyi tianshi gao Zhao Sheng koujue 正一天師告趙昇口訣 (Oral Instructions Declared by the Celestial Master of Orthodox Unity to Zhao Sheng, CT 1273, 5 pp.), date about 400. The scripture is presented as the final instructions from Zhang Daoling to his chief disciple, Zhao Sheng, just prior to the former’s ascension. It refers to the Jin dynasty as the Metal Horse (jinma 金馬), based on the ruling family’s name, Sima, as well as the fact that the dynasty ruled by virtue of the element metal of the five phases. As it further points to a jiazi 甲子 year within that dynasty as an important date within a rather complex apocalyptic calendar, at least a significant stratum of the text may have been composed prior to 364. The preponderance of terms characteristic of later Southern Celestial Master texts makes 304, the other jiazi year that occurred during the Jin, an unlikely choice. In fact, the next jiazi year after 364, 424, is perhaps an even better match, as the author(s) of the text might well not have predicted the founding of the Liu-Song in 420. This later dating renders affinity in terminology with Liu-Song texts (Nine Heavens, Six Heavens, Three Ways, Three Heavens) more explicable. In addition, the text uses several other dates from the sexagesimal cycle, for example the often seen jiaoshen 甲申 (324 or 384) year for a catastrophic flood, or the years renchen-guisi 壬辰癸巳 (332-33, 392-93) as alternatives or additions to the jiazi year. All this suggests a composite text that includes readjustments to its apocalyptic calendar, perhaps as predicted events failed to materialize (a common phenomenon in apocalyptic writings in many traditions).

In any event, the principal import of the text is clear. When the socio-cosmic order had been endangered in the second century, the Most High had revealed to the Celestial Master the Way of Orthodox Unity and the Covenant with the Powers (zhengyi menguei zhi dao 正一盟威之道), and in particular registers of office (zhihu 職錄) and the Red Register of Huang-Lao (Huang-Lao chilu 黃老赤録; this latter is connected with sexual rites, huangchi 黃赤, which are further advocated at 2b10). Now the times are critical again, and a savior named Lord Li—connected to, if not identical
with, Li Hong 李弘 (see Seidel 1969-70)—is due to descend to govern the earth's people. At the same time, the demons of the Three Offices and Six Heavens of the underworld, together with plagues and fierce beasts, will be released to harass humankind (lab).

Altogether, 240,000 will be chosen as "seed people" (zhongmin 種民 or "elect") who will survive these catastrophes and see the new age. While some have already been chosen, immortals and jade maidens are still circling the earth in order to fill out their number. The jiazi year of the Jin is set as a deadline, after which no further elect will be admitted. In the jiashen year, terrible floods will occur (1b-2a), and all corrupt Daoists will be wiped out. These include all those who "carry on copious correspondence with the Hundred Demons of the Three Offices" and care only for accumulating Daoist posts and their registers, as well as amassing material goods in exchange for their ritual services. All these people will be branded corrupt thieves and consigned to the Three [evil] Paths (san tu 三塗) in the afterlife (2ab). This caricature of what more or less resembles ordinary Celestial Master practice, together with the creation of an alternative Daoist lineage—one that passes directly from the first Celestial Master to his disciple Zhao Sheng, rather than to Zhang Daoling's descendants—suggests that the text belongs to a kind of sectarian or dissenting movement within the Celestial Masters.

Now, to identify the truly elect, a new talisman is to be issued: the Taixuanjiuguang wanchengju 太玄九光萬箋符 (Talisman of the Nine Radiances and Myriad Correspondences of the Great Mystery). When the time of Great Peace is imminent, the Sage Lord Li will order the world's demon generals and troops, together with the hundred kinds of noxious creatures, to protect the elect so that they may survive the demise of the Jin and live into the new, millennial age (3a). Zhang himself, however, has decided to bypass the entire, messy process and has compounded an elixir that will allow him to ascend directly to the heavens in broad daylight (cf. the Shenxian zhuan's portrayal of Zhang as an alchemist, above). Hence he has deputed Zhao Sheng to carry on his work (3b).

The scripture then proceeds to detail several types of afterlife fates. Those who do not directly ascend to heaven, but who possess the "Talisman," can after death enter Households of the Soil (tuhu 土庐), where their bodies will undergo ten smeltings and nine cycles of purification (cf. Bokenkamp 1989; 1990). Their names will be entered in the Purple Books of the Great Mystery (taixuan zibu 太玄紫簿) and their hun 魂 and po 魄 souls will ascend to join the Sagely Lord. When the Great Peace arrives, they will achieve bodily resurrection as well: "White bones will arise again, blood and qi will flow again." But those without the newly revealed "Talisman" have a far worse fate awaiting them: their flesh will rot, while their souls (hunpo) will be
given over to the Three Offices to endure unspeakably painful punishments (4a).

The rest of the text is devoted to a detailed discussion of the new “Talisman.” It has the power not only to protect the living in emergencies, but even, if conferred posthumously, to restore the dead to life when the Great Peace arrives. For one to receive it is a rare and blessed event—hence its inestimable value (4b-5b).

**Nüqing guilü 女靑鬼律 (Demon Statutes of Nüqing, CT 790, 6 j.), c. late 4th. cent.** The text begins with a version of the world-historical account typical of many Southern Dynasties texts. When heaven and earth began, the primordial qi circulated evenly, and the myriad deities dispersed them; there were no evil demons; men were filial and woman chaste. Only after the inception of the mythical era of Tianhuang 天皇 (Celestial Sovereign) did things begin to take a turn for the worse: people lost their faith in the Way; all sorts of evil demons, pestilences, and dangerous beasts emerged; and people perished in countless numbers. Taishang dadao 太上大道 (the Most High Great Way), being unable to tolerate such a horrible situation, revealed the *Nüqing guilü*, which in its original version appears to have included eight, rather than the current six scrolls (1.1a).

The text then turns to its principal concern of demonography. The *Nüqing guilü* was given to the first Celestial Master—who should then transmit it to qualified faithful—so that people might know the names of all the world’s spirits, be able to control them and thus prevent them from doing harm. This follows ancient demonographic practice (see Harper 1985). The first scroll principally consists of a long list of demons and their names: those responsible for processing the newly deceased and reporting on and recording the behavior of the living (all based at Mt. Tai 山), astral demons, baleful deities of the five directions, and (especially emphasized) the demons respectively associated with each of the sixty binomes of the sexagesimal cycle. Armed with this special knowledge, as well as associated talismans and techniques, the faithful may recite the name of the appropriate demon on any given day and receive protection. Alternatively, echoing the *Zhao Sheng koujue*, the People of Heaven 天人 (i.e., elect Daoists) even if they die will live again.

The second scroll continues with the preceding demographic focus, though it is initially portrayed as orders from the Most High of the Upper Three Heavens of Grand Clarity, the Dark, and the Primordial to rulers of the Three Offices of Heaven, Earth and Water. It briefly recapitulates the history that opened the first scroll and, since it mentions the Three Heavens 三, this implies a Southern Dynasties date for at least some portions of the text. In order that the gods of the “three and five” may govern the demons, the malevolent spirits of mountains and seas must be listed in exhaustive detail. Particular emphasis is given to nature sprites (jing 精), such
as those of hills, trees, rocks, tigers, snakes and foxes. Knowledge of their true names will cause them to return to their original forms so that they can no longer cause harm. Recitation of the demons’ names can also be used as part of more complex ritual procedures in order to cure illness.

The third scroll takes a different tack: the statutes are directed towards humans, not demons, and include a list of twenty-two moral injunctions. Headed “Daolii jinjt’” (Prohibitions and Taboos in the Daoist Statutes), this section lists a number of proscriptions governing the behavior of Daoist parishioners, from expected prohibitions of general misdeeds—e.g., duplicitous speech, disrespect for the aged and insufficient filiality—to injunctions against participation in medium cults and a number of types of sexual behavior. The latter include copulating in the open air, which offends the sun, moon and stars (presumably depending on the time of day) and especially the misuse of the Celestial Masters’ ritual of “uniting qi” (heqi 合氣). (Nonetheless, that rite—often referred to in terms of the sexual rhythms of the “three, five, seven and nine”—is in general enthusiastically encouraged throughout the text as a practice suitable for the elect.) Those who fail to heed these rules will be cut down, but if one follows the dictates of the Most High, one is sure to survive the “three disasters and nine calamities” and see the days of Great Peace, at which point one might either ascend to become a celestial immortal or remain on earth as a terrestrial immortal.

Scroll 4 continues the demonography, providing the names, customary habitats and activities of various malefic spirits, including demons of roads and travel, of houses and tombs, seizures and menstrual blood. It also details simple ritual means of controlling or dispelling them. The most significant part of this section is perhaps the first line, which states that “the Celestial Master kowtows and dares to accept the Way of the Former Kings, governing the people and controlling demons” (4.1 a). This authority, not only over spirits but also over humans, recalls the early Celestial Master Dao-oocracy in western China, and confirms that, while the extant version is later, certain parts of the text go back to the very beginnings of the movement. The above statement contrasts strongly, for instance, with Lu Xiujing’s comment that Daoist priests govern (only) the yin world just as government officials govern the yang sphere (Daomen kelue 2a).

The fifth scroll is mostly comprised of an apocalyptic narrative very similar to that of the Zhao Sheng koujue, except that it is mostly in seven-character verse. Its pronouncements are issued in the words of the deified Way: the world is confused and benighted, human society in disarray. The rulers of the Three Offices have picked out 18,000 elect, though that number has yet to be filled. This rather small figure may evince the original existence of a very small, sectarian community that used this scripture. The elect will be recognized by the Dao’s talismans or “contract-tallies” (quanqi
which they will carry on their persons. The economic situation is already dismal, with starving old men wandering the roads, but the really serious disasters and wars are yet to come, in the gengzi 干子 year (most likely 400). Only the elect will survive to see the new age of Great Peace and join Li Hong. The specific reference not only to Zhao Sheng but also also to Wang Chang 王長 as elect and original disciples of Zhang Daoling (5.4b; cf. Yunji qianian 8.1a) again suggests that Zhao, and perhaps Wang also, represent a separate filiation that allowed more popularly and apocalyptically oriented (and hence often anti-establishment) Celestial Master groups to distinguish themselves from the Zhang Lu line that had surrendered to the authorities and settled in Luoyang. The section ends with a set of fourteen moral injunctions, mostly proscribing popular god-cults, which, as is typical, are portrayed as forms of demon-worship.

The last scroll combines the apocalyptic and demonographic strains, this time placing the narrative in the mouth of the Celestial Master. In addition to the usual descriptions of various types of demons and apotropaic techniques, this section adds an interesting variation: the Celestial Master has also sent out five rulers of demons, each leading a myriad underlings, who are to protect the good and destroy evil. In exchange for their services to the Way, they will have their names inscribed on the registers of life (shenglu 生錄) and themselves join the elect. Knowing their names and the diseases they are capable of curing, others among the elect may call out their names and be healed.

The meaning of the term nüqing itself for early Daoists has yet to be fully ascertained. nüqing is listed in the materia medica as a malodorous medicinal and demonifuge plant (Stewart 1987, 299). It might actually be read as nüqing 女精, “female essence” (Strickmann 1987; cf. Peiwen yuanfu 1198.2). In the Nüqing guilti, the term seems to refer to the revealer of a book of statutes, perhaps the “Demon Statutes” themselves (5.4a), while elsewhere (2.5b) it appears to be associated with the star Tianyi 天一 (Celestial One), which has been identified as the “spirit of the Celestial Emperor.” A Lingbao scripture names Nüqing as the one who has established the otherworldly offices that keep the records on good and evil behavior (CT 456, 2b, passim). In later Daoist cosmology, it is the name of a hell.

Taishang dongyuan shenhou jing 太上洞淵神咒経 (The Most High's Spirit-Spells of the Abyss, CT 335, 20 j.), j. 1-10 early 5th cent., j. 11-20 principally late Tang, edited by Du Guangting 杜光庭 (see Mollier 1990). Strictly speaking, this important scripture does not belong in this section: the members of the movement connected with the scripture were ordered to keep clear of the Celestial Masters (10.8ab). Still, it contains a number of features that in many respects are similar to, and may have derived from, Celestial Master practice. Such features include the process of graded initiation demarcated by the reception of registers (lu 簡); the
transmission of esoteric scriptures; the presentation of pledge-offerings; the holding of collective ritual meals; initiation rituals involving the provision of five pecks of rice; three annual assemblies; an emphasis on healing, healing ritual and penitence; and a hierarchized organization overseen by "ritual masters of the Three Caverns."

In particular, its apocalyptic vision differs little from the two scriptures examined above. A great cosmic cycle is coming to an end, and calamities of all types—bandits, invasions, social and political corruption, natural disasters—will increase, and will climax in the all-important jiashen甲申 year. Again, people only make things worse by adhering to the debased rites of blood-sacrifices demanded by the deities of the popular cults (and their mediums). Only the elect will survive: those who have joined the religious community centered around the scripture and who follow its dictates. On the other hand, the not infrequent references to the Liu-Song rulers, their legitimate descent from the house of Han, and their role in restoring order and even re-establishing rule over central China from Chang'an (e.g., 1.3b-4a, 1.9b, 20.12b-13a) again associate the text with more conservative elements within the Celestial Masters, such as the author of the Santian neiqie jing, who also was eager to curry favor with the Liu-Song rulers. These references place early strata of the text in the first part of the fifth century.

RITUAL TEXTS. Despite the importance of community, healing and other rites to the Way of the Celestial Master, few ritual texts of purely Southern Dynasties provenance survive, and the best general study of Celestial Master ritual practice of the period is based largely on Tang compilations that preserve some early material (Chen 1963, 2:308-69; an exception is Cedzich 1987, which is more deeply rooted in earlier sources). While some of the texts discussed below also contain portions of later date, Southern Dynasties writings and practices predominate, and thus these works may still be taken as representative.

Chisongzi zhangli 赤松子章曆 (Master Red-Pine’s Almanac of Petitions, CT 615, 6 j.), ed. c. late Tang, but containing much early material (see Nickerson 1997; Maruyama 1986; Cedzich 1987; Kalinowski 1989-90; Seidel 1987, 233). Some sections of the text clearly draw on the Dengzhen yinjue, while later ritual innovations, such as the provision of bathhouses for souls needing salvation (5.14a), make clear that at least some of the text is quite late indeed (Nickerson 1996a, 287-89). The first scroll explains the text’s title, describing the compilation as information granted to the immortal Master Red-Pine by the Celestial Elder (Tianlao 天老), a subordinate and adviser of Huangdi. It also contains a brief historical account of the Most High’s revelation of the Way of Orthodox Unity: in particular, 120 talismans and registers; the Qian erbai guan zhangyi 千二百官儀 (Protocols of the 1,200 Officials, see below); and the texts of 300 major petitions.
The bulk of the first two scrolls, however, concerns the rules and regulations governing the process of sending up petitions to celestial officials. These instructions cover all facets of the rite. Rules are given for the appropriate pledge-offerings (xin 信) to be made, sometimes depending on the status of the supplicant (1.18); the appropriate times for sending petitions—times at which heaven’s gates are open—or particularly auspicious or inauspicious days for sending them (1.19a-20a., 22a-26b; 2.8a-10a); the precise way to write talismans and petitions (2.1a-3a); the directions to be faced while petitioning; the officials and offices to be addressed in accordance with the month and day (2.5b-7b); the names of the celestial officials to be called upon in accordance with specific illnesses or other situations; how to seal petitions (2.22b); pollution taboos (2.23ab); procedures of visualization for delivering petitions to the celestial courts (2.23b-24b); the storage and disposal of used petition texts (2.26b-27a); and so forth.

The last four scrolls contain the actual texts of petitions. They represent models of the documents used by medieval Daoists during petitioning rituals: names and other particulars are left as “so-and-so” or “such-and-such” (mou 萬), to be filled in appropriately on each ritual occasion. The petitions cover a variety of topics, from ending drought to taking up office, but the primary issue is death and demonic infestation. The text is replete with remedies for problems of this nature, including petitions for “propitiating [ancestors in] the five tombs” (4.7a-9b), “dispersing [demonic afflictions from] the five tombs” (4.9b-11a), “propitiating deceased ancestors” (4.11a-12a), “eliminating the registers of death at Mount Tai” (5.5ab), “[eliminating] sepulchral plaints” (two versions, 5.19a-23b, 5.23b-34b), and “on behalf of the departed confessing repentance, redeeming sins and gaining release from punishment” (6.11a-12b). As even this small sampling suggests, the ritual of petitioning was from early times mainly a rite for the settling of the dead and the expulsion of the baneful influences of death and tombs.

Zhengyi fauien taishang wailuyi 正一法文太上外籖儀 (Protocols for Outer Registers of the Most High from the Ritual Texts of Orthodox Unity, CT 1243, 30 pp.), around 500. Much of this text is consistent with Lu Xiujing’s prescriptions for the conferral of “outer” registers on Daoist laypeople (e.g., 11a, 18b, 5b-9b). The text also sets out a similar system for advancement based on the accumulation of virtues and merits. In some ways, it seems to anticipate later developments within Daoism, such as the ordination of celibate women (1ab), while at other points it still reflects the practices of the early Celestial Masters, as with its reference to the sexual rite of the “three, five, seven and nine” and the connection of that ritual to salvation and membership among the elect (21a). The frequency with which the text’s petitions dictate that the supplicant identify herself or himself as a resident of such-and-such commandery shows that at least the bulk of the text is pre-Tang.
Most of the work is concerned with mundane matters: it sets out numerous petitions and prescriptions for the conferral and care of registers (11b), as well as other matters concerned with those registers and the deities connected with them. A particular worry is the loss of one's registers and the extensive procedures necessary both to avoid punishment for this lapse and to receive replacements (e.g., 29ab). Certainly the most interesting portion of the text is the opening section, which concerns the ordination of the "five kinds of women"—virgins, unmarried hermits, married women, widows and women who have returned to their natal families—as well as of foreigners (1a-5a). While distanced and not particularly sympathetic in tone, the text does evince a certain sensitivity to the plight of many women in early medieval China: for instance, those who might not wish to marry, but who could be forced into matrimony by senior family members or by powerful (and non-Daoist) families seeking brides (2b).

**RELEVANT SHANGQING TEXTS.** Wei Furen zhuan 翟夫人傳 (Biography of Lady Wei, in 3.5b-27a of Dengzhen yinju, CT 421), ed. Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) about 500, based on a text of Yang Xi of about 360 (see Cedzich 1987; Robinet 1984, 2:C.11). This text is presented as a revelation from Zhang Daoling to Lady Wei Huacun 魏華存 (251-334) during her time as a Libationer of the Way of the Celestial Master. It thus claims to have been transmitted prior to her "corpse liberation" and service as Yang Xi's immortal instructor.

In content, it is mostly a version of the Qian erbai guan zhumgyi, the early Celestial Masters' liturgical guide that told the Libationer which celestial officials to invoke for assistance in curing various illnesses or remediying other situations. Tao Hongjing's commentary further reproduces extensive quotations from a manuscript copy Tao had of the Zhangyi. Tao's version is believed to date back to the early days of the Celestial Masters (Cedzich 1987, 35-41; Seidel 1988, 199). The Zhangyi also served as the basis for an independent work, the Zhangyi fauen jing zhangquan pin 正一法文經章官品 (Section on Petitions and [Celestial] Officials from the Ritual Scriptures of Orthodox Unity), whose redaction is much later and of lesser quality.

The Wei Furen zhuan thus contains the most detailed extant account of the early Celestial Master's petitioning ritual. It is significant not only in its own right, but also because it evinces the way in which those involved with other scriptural movements, such as Shangqing, embraced Celestial Master rituals as central components of their religious practice.

**Zhen'gao 宣詔 (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016, 20 j.), ed. and annotated by Tao Hongjing. Scrolls 7-8 contain some of the most personal and concrete information on the actual use of the Celestial Masters' petitioning rite during the Southern Dynasties. They record several ongoing exchanges between Yang Xi and the Perfected about the Xus' bouts with illness, nightmares and the spirits of the dead and provide much informa-
tion about Yang's efforts during the 360s of priestly mediation in the manner of the Celestial Masters (e.g., 7.6ab; see also Nickerson 1997).

**Worldview**

Given the enormous diversity of Celestial Master movements and texts during the Southern Dynasties, it would be misleading to attempt to render a single, coherent outlook on the world as the Celestial Master worldview. As the above account of individual scriptures and the movements connected with them has been fairly extensive, this section will be correspondingly brief.

**Cosmology and Cosmogony.** The most complete southern Celestial Master account of the emergence of the present universe is set out in the *Santian nejie jing*, which was influenced by both the Shangqing and the Lingbao revelations, as well as the early third century Celestial Masters of Luoyang (Bokenkamp 1997, 159-60, 188-94). The text’s cosmogony follows that of the *Huainanzi* and other early writings. The world as it exists is the result of the separating out of light and heavy, yang and yin elements from a primordial chaos, leaving heaven above, earth below and human-kind in between. However, the *Santian nejie jing* elaborates greatly on this basic scheme and, characteristically, accords a central role to the cosmic, deified Laozi. Out of the original void, even before the emergence of the primordial qi, there were produced the Elder of the Way and its Power—a “hypostasis of the cosmic Laozi”—the Limitless Great Way of the Supreme Three Heavens of Grand Clarity, the Dark and the Primordial, as well as the entire pantheon of the Celestial Masters, from Laozi all the way down to the Twelve Hundred Lord Officials.

Then a second, parallel set of events occurs, with the Three Qì (dark, primordial, and inaugural 玄元始) emerging from empty darkness and transforming to produce the Jade Woman of Mystery and Wonder 玄妙玉女, who again gives birth to Laozi himself. Laozi then transforms his own body, once more generating the universe, such that the three Qì are transformed into heaven (dark), earth (inaugural) and water (primordial): the cosmological triad that goes back to the beginning of the Celestial Masters movement. The stars take their place in the heavens, and Laozi installs on the earth nine kingdoms with human beings to inhabit them (1.2a-3a). All in all this is a highly complex cosmogenesis, described with great cogency as a “movement from one to three-in-one to three ones back to three-in-one and to the One who will disperse the three” (Bokenkamp 1997, 192).

Despite these elaborations, humankind is left in much the same situation as it had been in Han cosmology—as the middle level of a triad, with heaven above and earth below. More than before, though, the people
collectively, rather merely the ruler alone, are responsible for the maintenance of the cosmic order through preserving moral behavior. If the human realm is in disorder, this will cause disturbances in the heavens and on the earth, leading to eclipses, earthquakes, odd planetary movements and all manner of disasters. Special opprobrium is reserved for popular, sacrificial cults to the local deities of minor temples overseen by spirit mediums or 'shamans' (wu 巫): “Since people do not know where the calamities are coming from, they slaughter and boil the six sacrificial animals, praying to nothingness [the Daoist portrayal of popular gods]. Wailing, drumming and dancing—what they seek is wine and meat [shared in sacrificial meals].” 

The more socially conservative of the Celestial Master texts tend to portray such situations as the inspiration for the initial revelation of the Daoist religion. Lu Xiujing describes this pivotal event:

The Most High [Laozi] was appalled that things were like this and therefore [in the year 142] gave to the Celestial Master the Way of Orthodox Unity and the Covenant with the Powers, with its prohibitions, vows, statutes and codes, in order to regulate and instruct the myriad people... He set up twenty-four parishes and thirty-six chapels, with female and male priests numbering 2,400. He sent down ten thousand sets of the petitions to the 1,200 [celestial] officials, together with talismans of punishment for attacking temples [of the popular god-cults]. (Daomen kelue 1ab)

The antidote for the ills induced by the excesses of popular religion was bureaucratization. In place of sacrificial cults, Celestial Master Daoism offered a religion of organizational statutes, moral codes and precepts, and a priestly hierarchy whose principal function was to send up petitions to celestial officials. These petitions were documents modeled after officials' communications to the monarch, and they were dispatched by priests in precisely choreographed rituals involving the transfer of the document to the Celestial Offices.

Moreover, individual misbehavior would also be punished by the celestial and subterrestrial administrations. In particular, one's own or one's ancestors' misbehavior could result in illness, impoverishment, or all other sorts of misfortune. Even the aggrieved dead could file suit in the courts of the underworld (zhongsong 神壇 or "sepulchral plaints"), either directly against the living, or against already deceased ancestors—in which case the living again could suffer, owing to the Chinese judicial principle of collective responsibility of kin. This notion of a bureaucratized, underworld magistracy was broadly shared, described in Daoist texts of all lineages as well as in Buddhist literature of the time.

ESCHATOLOGY. Southern Celestial Master texts emanating from more popular social levels often depict the world-historical situation in far darker hues than relatively sanguine texts such as the Santian nei jing or the
Daomen kehie. The former are less interested in the initial revelation to Zhang Daoling and the reform of the Daoist community along similar lines; instead they focus on the dangerous present and an even more threatening future. Disaster is imminent (perhaps 364 or 424 for the Zhao Sheng koujue, 400 for the Niujing guili), and the foremost concern of the Daoist must be survival. The natural disasters and plagues of the present are mere foreshadowings of what is to come, and only the faithful—who have been armed with the necessary talismans, registers, and other protective items—will survive into the next age. In some formulations, Lord Li (or Li Hong), representing the forces of the good Three Heavens, will descend to take charge and protect the faithful, who may be recognized by their talismans. Those deemed unworthy will be dispatched via the plagues and other disasters unleashed by the Six Heavens and their rulers in the underworld administration. The apocalypse will be accompanied by darkness, failed crops, political corruption and chaos, foreign invasions and multitudes of demons.

It is striking how such apocalyptic notions, under different historical and social circumstances, can be redirected to support—rather than undermine—the ruling authorities. While the Zhao Sheng kuo jie looked for the demise of the Jin dynasty, even the popularly-oriented Dongyuan shenjietoujing, at least in certain strata of the text, sought to portray Liu Yu and his Song dynasty as the inaugurators of the new Great Peace. As already mentioned, other texts, such as the Santian neijie jing, carry this line of thinking even further, regarding the resurgence of the house of Liu itself as a sign of the resurgence of the Way. Of course, all of this would culminate with the establishment of the Tang, who regarded themselves as lineal kin of Laozi himself. By the end of the Six Dynasties, the Way of the Celestial Master had been established, not only as the foundation of the larger organized Daoist movement, but also as a supporter of the imperial order.

Practices

Much is often made of Lu Xiujing’s rules for the Celestial Master organization in the south, and we will begin by sketching out the blueprint put forth in his Daomen kehie. However, Lu’s tract is prescriptive, not descriptive, and his dictates relate directly to his complaints that numerous Daoist practitioners are not doing as they are supposed to and frequently engage in practices to which Lu is fervently opposed. In fact, Lu is perhaps a better guide to Southern Dynasties Daoism precisely because of his willingness to criticize—in great and exasperated detail—what he regards as deviations from the original Celestial Master institutions.
affiliated with specified administrative units or parishes (zhī 治), and parishioners were to be registered and in effect taxed—though such imposts were considered “pledge offerings” (guāixin 賛信) or “destiny-pledges” (mingxin 命信). In addition to individual registers, a “household register” (zhāilù 宅錄) was also required. The head of each household presented this document at each of the annual Three Assemblies (sanhui 三會), when his Master would update it, adding the names of new family members (including newly married-in brides), deleting the deceased and married-out daughters and passing on the corrected records to the otherworldly administration, whose representatives would also assemble at the various parishes on those days and update their own files accordingly (2ab).

Changes in household composition, other than those due to death, which of course had its own rites, were to be celebrated by holding a ritual meal known as the kitchen-feast (chū 蒐; see Stein 1971). It was of superior quality for the first-month birthdays of boys and the taking of new brides, and of medium quality for the first-month rites of girls. Superior kitchen-feasts were likewise to be held to celebrate the safety and wellbeing of one’s family during the Assembly of the tenth month, except when a death had occurred. At the same time, members had to donate their families’ annual destiny-pledges, a continuation of the ancient Five Pecks of Rice (3a-4a).

According to Lu, each Daoist household was to possess a jīngshè 靜舍 (also jīngshì 靜室/靖室, or qīngshè 清舍), a “cottage of quiescence” or oratory. This was a small, detached wooden hut where Daoists could perform daily offices or dispatch petitions. Lu demanded that the oratory be kept immaculately clean and contain only the items necessary for ritual communication with the otherworldly bureaucracy. These were restricted to “an incense burner, an incense lamp, a petition table and a scholar’s knife” (4b; see Yoshikawa 1987). Lu also gives extensive instructions concerning Daoist officiants’ ritual vestments (5ab).

In even greater detail he discusses the stages through which the Daoist may pass as she or he ascends the ladder of individual investiture, from novice (lūlì 箧吏) potentially all the way to the pinnacle: appointment as priest of one of the parishes of the Three Qi: Yangping, Lutang (“Deer Hall”), or Heming (“Crane-call”) 陽平鹿堂鶴鳴. Lu also spells out the succession of registers Daoist laypeople received, a practice that blurred the distinction between ordinary people and clerics. Layfolk could be given a simple register that gave them command over a single spirit-general, then ten, and, by steps, finally 150. Beyond this, dedicated, talented and morally fit practitioners could obtain a series of priestly offices connected with specific parishes. By Lu’s time, these parishes had lost much of their specific geographic associations with Sichuan, Hanzhong and nearby locations; parish affiliation was becoming purely astral and horoscopic, depending on date and time of birth, rather than actual residence. Still, documents from
Dunhuang show that the system of ordination described by Lu was maintained, at least in some places, in essentially the same form well into the Tang (Schipper 1985).

SEXUAL RITES. An important practice of the early Celestial Masters not mentioned by Lu—who may have been trying to present a gentrified Daoism that would be less shocking to outsiders and especially to his imperial or otherwise upper-class audience—was the sexual rite of “uniting qi” (heqi 合氣). We know from other sources that heqi persisted into the medieval period. The Shangqing huangshu guodu yi 上清黃書過度儀 (Rites of Salvation of the Yellow Writings of Highest Clarity, CT 1294) gives elaborate instructions for its performance (see Schipper 1993, 148-52). Practiced even among the earliest groups (see Stein 1963; Kobayashi 1991; Bokenkamp 1997, 43-46), ritual intercourse differed greatly from the sexual vampirism—absorbing one’s partner’s sexual essences while retaining one’s own—that is often popularly portrayed as the “Dao of sex” (see Wile 1992). In the early Way of the Celestial Master, the highest level of ordination was conferred upon married couples, rather than individuals, and it culminated in the heqi rite, overseen by a Daoist master. The couple united not only their bodies but also their registers. The ritual included preliminary fasting and meditation, as well as the invocation of the invisible forces of the cosmos, in particular the deities of the sexagenary cycle, by means of breathing and visualization. Only then did they remove their clothes, unbind their hair and engage in an elaborately choreographed set of movements—both individual and in partnership, sitting, standing and lying down—all according to a highly complex and varied numerological patterning of space, time and motion, and always accompanied by specific meditations.

Seen from this angle, Lu’s work is important not only for what it prescribes but also for what it leaves out. That the sexual rite persisted through the Northern and Southern Dynasties period is apparent not only from attacks on it that came (predictably) from Buddhists (see Kohn 1995, 147-50), but also from Daoists themselves who—like the followers of Shangqing—belonged to higher social strata and were trying to distance themselves from practices they regarded as vulgar (see, e.g., Zhen’gao 2.1ab; Strickmann 1981, 181-91). Lu’s omission of the rite is thus part of a larger Southern Dynasties phenomenon, much influenced by Buddhism. It points to a common notion of what was appropriate behavior for elite religious professionals that cut across religious traditions and often included not only celibacy but also vegetarianism (Strickmann 1978). That the ritual was liable to misuse is clear from strictures set out in the Nüqing guanli, like that against deflowering a virgin girl on the pretext of transmitting the Way to her (3.2ab).

RESTRICTIONS ON POPULAR PRACTICE. Lu’s Daomen kehu enjoins or seeks to restrict not only certain traditional Celestial Master prac-
tics, but also a number of popular practices. Along with monetary payments to Daoist masters, blood sacrifices to popular divinities were prohibited. Ordinary people were to sacrifice to their ancestors only five times annually, on the Five La days (wu-la 五節), in the first, fifth, seventh, tenth and twelfth months, and to the Earth God and the Stove God only on the appropriate days in the second and eighth months. To exceed such sacrificial restrictions was to be guilty of giving "licentious cult" (yin-sheng 淫祠, yin-shi 淫祀). Entirely forbidden were the use of medicines, acupuncture, or moxibustion for the healing of illness, the penitential petitioning of celestial officials being sufficient (1b-2a). Lu similarly prohibited divination—in particular geomancy and hemerology (8ab).

**POPULAR CELESTIAL MASTER PRACTICE.** One suspects that the purists of Lu's sort were in the minority. Basing one's view on Lu's criticisms of his contemporaries, rather than his prescriptions for them, the picture changes rather radically. Daoist parishioners were lax in attending the Three Assemblies; lacking sufficient zeal to travel the distances necessary to attend Assemblies at their proper parishes, they went to other Masters closer by (2b). Failure to attend led to their registers becoming out of date, so that the celestial authorities would no longer know whom to protect and assist (3b-4a). Many followers also failed to construct jingshe (oratories) and, if they did have them, they did not maintain them properly, using them instead to store miscellaneous household items or allowing domestic animals to wander in and out. Others—likely influenced by Buddhism—abandoned the austere aesthetic of the ancient oratory and filled theirs with altars, icons, banners and other ornaments (4b-5a). Many among both parishioners and priests, Lu would have us believe, were attracted to Daoism and its rites for entirely the wrong reasons: the copious wine and meat that accompanied the kitchen-feasts and other rituals.

Certainly the priests were no better than the layfolk, according to Lu. They wore vestments inappropriate to their ranks or in improper combination. They received registers and the parish offices without proper personal qualifications or from unauthorized members, some priests even creating them on their own initiative. Lu takes a decidedly dismal view of the majority of priests of his day:

They let free their covetous natures, drowning themselves in wine and lusting after food. [Commentary:] When they propagate the Rituals of the Way, they do not look for merit and virtue. When they perform healing rituals, they lack any compassionate or humane intent. They hope only for gain, and their thoughts are all on wine and meat. Never do they instruct the people in the Codes and Prohibitions. They only collect substantial offerings and seek for good food—dishes flavored with the five pungent roots, and the meat of the six kinds of domestic animals. The things that in the Way are most tabooed, they eat! Then, having violated the prohibitions themselves, they go on to butcher chickens, pigs, geese and ducks. They drink wine until they are awash
Putting Lu's emotions and negative characterizations aside, one sees in these descriptions the emergence of a new type of Daoism—or perhaps simply the perpetuation of something that had existed for some time. It was a kind of Daoism that would in future—as it remains today—be the norm for, rather than a corruption of, Daoist practice. Priests no longer were the politico-religious leaders of well-defined religious communities of registered parishioners. Instead, they were largely free-lancers who “travel[ed] among the villages” (8b3), independent practitioners providing ritual services to communities, households and individuals whenever asked. They competed with other such practitioners—spirit-mediums, Buddhist monks and nuns, diviners, geomancers and the like—on the basis of perceived ritual efficacy.

PETITIONS. Submitting petitions to celestial officials was indeed the distinguishing feature of Celestial Master ritual. It played a key role in Daoist healing ritual and thus in Daoist service to society. According to the Weijing zhujuan, edited by Tao Hongjing based on a text “revealed” to Yang Xi (see Cedzich 1987; Seidel 1988), petitions had to be dispatched from the priest’s oratory. The process began with the rite of “Entering the Oratory” (rujing 入靜), or the “Audience in the Oratory” (chaqing 朝靜), a series of prayers to each of the four quarters and their resident deities; these were chanted aloud to accompanying visualizations. After each prayer the priest kowtowed and slapped his own face several times, a standard gesture of penitence. Tao adds that, if the situation was serious enough, one might tear off one’s turban and weep (3.9b).

The priest then wrote the petition, whose contents were to be limited to three subjects: the supplicant’s malady and its assumed cause; repentance of his or her sins; and, finally, the request for aid from the relevant celestial officials. Next he selected the appropriate celestial functionaries—perhaps by consulting the Celestial Masters’ liturgical guide, the Qian erbai guan zhangyi—and checked the written text over once again. The actual sending followed, a multifaceted procedure that involved several distinct means of ensuring the arrival of the petition at the Celestial Offices. First, the priest read the text aloud in a soft voice. Second, he used visualization to materialize several messenger spirits from his own body—for example the gongcao shizhe 功曹使者, or “Envoy of the Merit Bureau”—and called on them to deliver the petition to the proper celestial address.

Lastly, following an additional rite called the Sealing of the Petition (feng zhang 封章), the priest himself through visualization undertook the journey to the Celestial Offices. After paying respects to Zhang Daoling, the priest was conducted into the presence of the Taiyi 太一, Great One and lord of the northern pole, and the Most High himself. When the written assent of
the Most High had been appended to the petition, the messenger spirits were sent off to deliver the petition to the appropriate subordinate office. His business concluded, the priest again paid his respects to the Most High and Zhang Daoling and then visualized his return to the oratory, now accompanied by the spirits of his own body that he had materialized earlier (Chisongzi zhangli 2.23b-24b). Following this rite, there were ceremonies to conclude the audience, such as the Covering of the Incense Burner after which the priest could leave the oratory.

Two additional aspects of the petitioning process deserve mention: the pledge-offerings and the ceremony of thanksgiving, or Statement of Merit (yangong 養功). While the early Celestial Masters prohibited both sacrifices to the gods and payments to masters, “pure” (i.e., vegetarian) offerings were permitted, and the ritual codes give long lists of the offerings to be made along with each type of petition. In addition to grain, these might include oil, silk and other objects useful to priests, such as brushes, ink and paper, as well as more valuable items like gold rings and coins (Strickmann 1977, 15-30). The pledges were tallied, and presumably displayed, when the initial petition was dispatched. But they were actually offered only subsequently, if and when the petition had proven efficacious. The pledge-offerings ostensibly were given to requite the clerks, soldiers and other subordinate members of the invisible hierarchy that had provided assistance (see, e.g., Zhen'gao 7.6b-7a). Daoist masters could take for their own use only three tenths of the offerings. They were to distribute the rest to recluse or the poor, themselves and their ancestors being subject to serious otherworldly sanctions if they took more (Yaoxiu keyi 嚴修科儀, CT 463, 11.9b-10a; Dengzhen yinjue 3.21a). If the petition had been successful, a “Statement of Merit” ceremony would be held. It served to ask the celestial authorities to promote all assisting divine officials in accordance with the severity of the situation remedied.

That the petitioning rite could have been perceived as powerfully efficacious is a strong indication of the centrality of bureaucratic forms in Chinese ritual, society and culture. Two additional points should be made. First, one must again make the distinction between prescriptive and descriptive texts. It is reasonable to suppose that many Daoist priests may have used different—and probably more simple and direct—methods of petitioning. Second, it is highly significant that the best early description we have of the petitioning rite comes from an early Shangqing text. Before the end of the fourth century, Celestial Master Daoism was in many contexts already the common property of a variety of southern Daoist movements and practitioners, not a distinct, sectarian movement.
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The Way of the Celestial Master (Tianshi dao 天師道) in the north of China in the early middle ages, also known as the northern Celestial Masters, was a continuation of the early Way of the Celestial Master as it had been originally practiced in Sichuan and of the Way of Great Peace (Tai-ping dao 太平道) as it originated in Shandong. After Zhang Lu submitted to the warlord Cao Cao in 215 C.E., many of his followers were moved to the central plains where their ideas spread in the local population and mixed with the similar doctrines of Great Peace. The religion thereby not only became part of a larger political unit, but also made its way into the local aristocracy, thus changing in nature from a peasant-based state within the state to the rudiments of an organized religion (Mather 1979, 105; Kobayashi 1992, 17).

This organization was enhanced by the political situation in China at the time. The north, in particular, after a highly turbulent fourth century during which numerous different Central Asian groups fought for supremacy, was unified under the rule of a Xianbi 鲜卑 (Hunnish) people, the Toba, who called their dynasty the Wei and had their capital at Luoyang (McGovern 1939, 347). The indigenous Chinese government and large portions of the aristocracy in the meantime had fled south and established themselves in Jiankang 建康 (modern Nanjing). Both parts of the country remained highly volatile, and a number of different dynasties succeeded each other. Religion accordingly played different roles. In the north, it was strictly under the control of the state which was interested primarily in organizational models that could support and stabilize its rule. Making use of Chinese statecraft, the foreign rulers had leaders of both Buddhism and Daoism present their ideas at court and variously handed over political power to them, establishing their creeds as state religions. At the same time, however, the common people, unless under the strict supervision of a state-controlled clergy, were also inspired by so-called free monks, millenarian preachers who were trying to set up their own movements, thus adding an unpredictable element to the religious crucible (Eberhard 1949; 1965).
This situation caused the northern Celestial Masters, in the fifth and sixth centuries, to bring forth the first form of Daoist state religion, to establish the first Daoist monasteries and to become heavily involved in debates with Buddhists for political supremacy. In so doing, their doctrine changed to include Confucian virtues and social rituals as well as Buddhist ideas of precepts, monks’ behavior, and veneration of deities. The northern Celestial Masters, therefore, can be said to represent a first stage of Daoism as a mature organized religion.

**History**

KOU QIANZHI (365-448), the founder of the so-called Daoist theocracy, came from a Celestial Masters family in the Chang’an area and was the younger brother of the provincial governor Kou Zanzhi 齊湛之. In his early years, he studied mathematics, medicine, and the basics of Buddhism under the monk Shi Tanying 釋曼影, a disciple of the translator Kumārajiva (350-409). Not only guided by the Toba’s search for the ideal form of government, but also by the dream of a reborn Daoist community rampant in the south, he withdrew to find solitary inspiration on Mount Song in Henan. There, as described in the *Weishu* 魏書 (History of the Wei Dynasty; chap. 114, trl. Ware 1933), he was blessed twice with a divine manifestation by the Highest Lord Lao (Taishang laojun 太上老君), the deified Laozi. First, in 415, the deity revealed to him the *Tunzi sūnjujiejing* (Precepts of the New Code, Recited in the Clouds), a text containing a set of precepts for the new community that is simply called the “New Code.” Then, in 423, the god’s messenger Li Puwen 李蒲文 bestowed upon Kou the *Lutu zhuangjian* (Perfect Scripture of Registers and Charts, lost) together with a divine appointment as new Celestial Master (Mather 1979, 107; Ware 1933, 228; Tang and Tang 1961, 66; Tsukamoto 1961, 321).

In 424, Kou took these works to court, where he was welcomed by Emperor Taiwu and found the support of the prime minister CUI HAO 崔浩 (381-450), a Confucian fond of mathematics, astrology, and magic who, like Kou, envisioned a renewed and purified society (Mather 1979, 112). Together they convinced the ruler to put the “New Code” into practice and thus established the Daoist theocracy of the Northern Wei. Kou himself became the official leader with the title of Celestial Master while his disciples were invited to the capital to perform regular rites. In 431, Daoist institutions and priests were also established in the provinces, thus extending the reach of Daoist and thus state control farther into the countryside. Cui Hao in the meantime masterminded various military successes and worked on the compilation of a national history, rising ever higher in rank.
and honor. The pinnacle of the theocracy was reached in 440, when the emperor underwent Daoist investiture rites and changed the reign title to “Perfect Lord of Great Peace” (Taiping zhenjun 太平真君; Mather 1979, 118).

Thereafter Cui began to exploit his power by railing against the Buddhist clergy and, in 446, organized a major persecution of all sorts of popular practitioners, especially Buddhists, believed to be in cohorts with various rebellious forces (Eberhard 1949, 229; Hurvitz 1956, 65). After Kou’s death in 448, Cui became even more megalomaniac and turned to actively insulting the Toba rulers. Unwilling to accept such insubordination, they had him executed in 450, the Daoist theocracy thus coming to a swift and unceremonious end (Mather 1979, 121). In its wake, the Toba turned to the Buddhists for their political support and established the so-called sangha-households under the leadership of Tanyao 錫曇, a system by which the Buddhist clergy collected grain taxes from parts of the populace and received criminals or slaves to do forced labor in the monasteries (Ch’en 1964, 153; Hurvitz 1956, 73; Sargent 1957; Lai 1986, 1987).

The Daoist community suffered greatly from the end of the theocracy and had to evacuate their noble quarters in the capital, the Chongxusi 崇虛寺 (Monastery of Venerating Emptiness), a place still designated by the Buddhist word si 寺. Many of them made their way to the other key Daoist institution of the time, the Daoist center at Louguan, the first to be known as guan 寰 (Schipper 1984, 208).

LOUGUAN 樓觀, the “Lookout Tower,” located in the foothills of the Zhongnan mountains, is found today about sixty kilometers southwest of Xi’an. According to the legend, it was originally the old home of Yin Xi 尹喜, the Guardian of the Pass (guanling 關令) and first recipient of the Daodejing, which was given to him as a reward for official service by King Kang of the Zhou (r. 1078-1052 B.C.E.). Having espied the telltale energies of the sage, Yin Xi left this place—which served as his astronomical observatory, hence the name—and had himself stationed at the Hangu Pass 函谷關, traditionally located in Taolin 桃林, east of Mount Hua (Porter 1993, 39-41). There he became Laozi’s disciple and then invited the sage to his home where the Daodejing was finally transmitted (Qing 1988, 430; Ren 1990, 219; Zhang 1991; Kohn 1997, 1998a).

It is not clear when Louguan was first settled or used as a Daoist institution, since the earliest solid historical evidence of its existence is an early Tang inscription, the Zongsheng guanji 宗聖觀記 (Record of the Monastery of the Ancestral Sage; Chen et al. 1988, 46-48), dated to 625. At this time, the institution was rewarded for its early support of the Tang conquest (by its abbot Qi Hui 崎暉) and renamed in Laozi’s honor to “Monastery of the Ancestral Sage.” Shortly after this, moreover, there was a Louguan benji 樓觀本紀 (Original Record of Louguan, lost), which seems to have been a
comprehensive history of the institution. It is cited variously in the Tang, such as in Wang Xuanhe’s 王 懿 and Shangqing daolei shixiang 上清道類事相 (Daoist Affairs of Highest Clarity, CT 1132) of the late seventh century; in Xu Jian’s 徐 慶’s Chuxue ji 初學記 (Record of Initial Learning; 23.552) of about 700; in the Miaomen youqi 妙門由起 (Entrance to the Gate of all Wonders, CT 1123) of the early eighth century; and in the Yaoshu keyi 要修科儀 (Essential Rules and Observances, CT 463; 12.14b) of the mid-eighth century.

In addition, there are several later, mostly Yuan dynasty, sources: the Zhongnan shan zuting xianzhen nei zhou 紅南山祖庭先真內傳 (Essential Biographies of the Immortal Perfected of the Ancestral Halls in the Zhongnan Mountains, CT 955), by Li Daoqian 李道謙 (1219-1296), a Quanzhen chronicler; the Gu Louguan ziyuan yanying ji 古樓觀紫雲慶集 (The Abundant Blessings of the Purple Clouds at the Old Lookout-Tower, CT 957), a collection of stele inscriptions by Zhu Xiangxian 朱象先 (fl. 1279-1308); and the Zhongnan shan shuo jing tai lidai zhenxian bei ji 紅南山說經台歷代真仙碑記 (Inscription on Successive Generations of Perfected Immortals of the Transmission Terrace in the Zhongnan Mountains, CT 956), also by Zhu Xiangxian, based on the older Louguan xianshi zhou 樓觀先師傳 (Biographies of Previous Louguan Masters; see Boltz 1987, 124-25; Qing 1988, 437).

According to these sources, the beginnings of Louguan reach back to the Zhou and to Yin Xi’s reception of the Daodejing and it had a noble and erudite lineage of masters (see Zhang 1991). A certain historical credibility is reached only in the fifth century C.E., when a local landowner by the name of Yin Tong 尹通 (398-499?), an alleged relative of Yin Xi, comes on the scene. According to the “Original Record,” he received the Dao in 424, then embarked on a course in dietetics, nourishing on “yellow essence” or deer-bamboo and asparagus (Needham 1976, 112), to become an accomplished Daoist and assemble a number of disciples. Yin Tong, it seems, profited from the theocracy at court by not only becoming a Daoist, but also by establishing the claim that his own home, Louguan, was the place where the Daodejing had been first transmitted and thus made it into one of the most holy places of the religion (Qing 1988, 434).

After the end of the theocracy, many Daoists flocked to this new center, so that by the late 470s, Louguan had grown considerably and had about forty Daoists in residence. At this time, the Daoist Wang Daoyi 王道一 moved there and apparently brought some serious financial backing along, since with his arrival a new phase commenced. Not only were the buildings repaired and greatly expanded, but a major collection of Daoist scriptures and ritual manuals was undertaken, including both northern and southern materials of the Shangqing and Lingbao schools (Qing 1988, 435; Ren 1990, 222; Zhang 1991, 78; Kohn 1997). Louguan became a center of
Daoist knowledge and an important location for the integration of the religion. Certain texts, moreover, can be placed here, including the precepts text *Taishang laojun jiejing*, the ordination text *Chuanshou jingjie yi zhuo jue*, and the mystical *Xisheng jing* (see below).

Still rather nebulous in the fifth century, Louguan became more historically visible in the sixth, when its masters played an active role in both religion and state. Wei Jie 許節 (496-569), for example, resident of Mount Hua and first commentator of the *Xisheng jing* (Kohn 1991, 168), not only participated in various minor debates, but also served as the Daoist master who initiated Emperor Wu in 567 (Lagerwey 1981, 19). Wang Yan 王延 (519-604), between 572-578, was the leading scholar in the imperially sponsored compilation of a Daoist catalog, known as the *Zhumang jingmu* 統彌珠目 (Catalog of the Bag of Pearls; Kohn 1995, 219). It consisted of seven scrolls but is lost today. Yan Da 嚴逹 (514-609), moreover, was a senior Daoist at Emperor Wu’s Tongdao guan 通道觀 (Monastery of Reaching to the Dao) and staunch supporter of Emperor Wu’s policies and Daoist visions (Lagerwey 1981, 13). Many Louguan masters, also participated in the current debates.

THE DEBATES among Buddhists and Daoists under the northern dynasties were forums at which the court examined which tradition might be better suited to furnish socio-political stability in the realm. Two major sets of debates have been recorded, one in 520 under the Northern Wei, the other in 570 under the Northern Zhou.

In 520, the Daoist Jiang Bin 江斌 and the Buddhist Tanmuzui 塔摩最 argued the seniority of their teachings, focusing on the problem of dating. If Laozi went west to convert the barbarians and become the Buddha, he must have left China earlier than the recorded birth of the Buddha in India. To begin with, the Daoists claimed that Laozi was born in 605 B.C.E. and converted the barbarians in 519 B.C.E., making out that Buddhism was a second-hand form of Daoism, created to control the barbarians. Its presence in China could do nothing but harm. The Buddhists countered this allegation by dating the birth of the Buddha back to 1029 B.C.E. This particular date was reached with the help of the *Mu tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳 (Biography of King Mu of Zhou) which recorded certain celestial phenomena observed in the west indicative of the birth of a great sage. The Buddha consequently entered nirvana in 949 (Lai 1986, 67). This dating was again bettered by the Daoists in the *Kaitian jing* 開天經 (Scripture on Opening the Cosmos). Showing that this scripture was a forgery and not a revealed text, the Buddhists emerged victorious in this phase of the debate and gained influence at court (Kohn 1995, 24, 178; see also Kusuyama 1976).

Several new Daoist texts were the result of this defeat, including the still-extant *Kaitian jing*, the *Wenshi neizhuang*, and the second version of the *Huahu jing* (see below).
The debate of 570 occurred on a number of separate occasions and was sparked off by a memorial by Wei Yuansong 衛元嵩, a renegade Buddhist monk, who in 567 rose to propose a new Buddhist orthodoxy with the people as the flock, the sangha as administrators, and the emperor as Tathāgata. Because this meant the dissolution of an independent Buddhist organization and the return of all clerics to the laity, Buddhist leaders argued heatedly against it. The emperor, however, honored Wei Yuansong with a formal title (Kohn 1995, 29). The Daoists similarly presented their creed as a unifying orthodoxy in a memorial by Zhang Bin 張賓, which continued the ideas used in the theocracy and made some impression on the emperor. Not willing to decide without his senior subjects' approval, he convened a huge assembly in 569 to debate the pros and cons of the propositions, but no definite decision was reached. Several more assemblies ended similarly undecided, so that the emperor had reports compiled evaluating the teachings. Among these are the Xiaodao lun (see below) by Zhen Luan 郑鶴 and the Erjiao lun (On the Two Teachings, T. 2103, 52.136b-43c; see Hachiya 1982) by Shi Daoan 釋道安, both of the year 570. While the former ridicules Daoism and categorically denies its value, the latter leaves it out completely in favor of a combination of Confucian and Buddhist teachings (Kohn 1995, 179).

Still hanging on to his Daoist dreams, the emperor then set up the Tongdao guan, and sponsored the compilation of the Wushang biyao 無上方要, the first Daoist encyclopedia and an integrated vision of the world according to the Dao (Lagerwey 1981, 8). Louguan masters played a key role in its creation as much as in the compilation of the sixth-century catalog of Daoist scriptures, the Xuandujingmu 玄都經目.

The Zhou emperor's vision remained unfulfilled and unification was achieved from the south and under Buddhist auspices. In the Sui dynasty, the issues raised in the debates remained a key concern, and there was another set of them under the Tang.

THE TANG DEBATES divide into two sets, a debate surrounding the Daoist Fu Yi 傅奕 in 621-623, and one around Li Zhongqing 李仲卿 in 626. Fu Yi, an astrologer, mathematician, and learned Daoist of the Tongdao guan (Kohn 1995, 34), proposed that all Buddhist institutions be abolished, monks and nuns returned to the laity, and inveterate religious exiled back to India (Kohn 1995, 180-82; Wright 1951). His suggestions were countered in several Buddhist treatises, including Shi Falin's 釋法琳 Poxie lun 破邪論 (To Destroy Heresy, T. 2109), Shi Minggai's 釋明概 Juedui Fu Yi feijof jaseing shi 決對傅奕破佛教僧事 (Strong Rebuttal of Fu Yi's Ideas to Abolish Buddhism and the Monks of the Dharma, T. 2103), and Li Shizheng's 李師政 Neide lun 德論 (On Inner Virtue, T. 2103); each argued the superiority of Buddhism and necessity of its practice for the wellbeing of the state (Kohn 1995, 182-84). Li Zhongqing, a good friend of Fu Yi, in his
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Shiyujiumi km 十異九迷論 (The Ten Differences and Nine Errors, cited in T. 2110, 52.526c-37a), similarly placed Buddhism in an inferior position and listed its faults. It was countered in the Bianzheng km 辨正論 (In Defense of What is Right, T. 2110) by Shi Falin, the longest and most involved of all debate texts (Kohn 1995, 185).

Tang rulers in general were inclined favorably toward Daoism and in 637 Taizong issued an edict that secured the formal precedence of Daoists over Buddhists (Li 1981, 102). Buddhists memorialized their protests but were either flogged or exiled, and the edict remained in place until 674, when Empress Wu came to power (Kohn 1995, 186). Louguan in particular benefited from the dynasty's goodwill, and its abbot Yin Wencao became a highly honored figure.

YIN WENCÃO 尹文操 (622-688) was a son of the Yin family of Tianshui 天水 in modern Gansu. His life is described in the Da Tang Yin zunshi bei 大唐尹尊師碑 (Inscription for the Worthy Master Yin of the Great Tang Dynasty) by Yuan Bangqian 原半千, dated to 717 (in Gu Louguan ziyun yaoqeng jing 1.4b-9b; Chen et al. 1988, 102-4), and in the Zhongnan beiji (16b-17a). According to these, after being bright and inspired from an early age, he met the Daoist master Zhou Fa 趙法 who instructed him in the basics (1.6a). In 636, he joined the community at Louguan and trained more seriously. In 649, while in solitary withdrawal on the mountain, he received a spirit message from his former teacher and went to Mount Tai-bai 太白山, where he had his first major encounter with the Dao—"seeing what he had never seen before, hearing what he had never heard before" (1.6b)—including also a vision of Lord Lao, who descended to him as a huge nine-colored statue through a thick layer of clouds and accompanied by the reverberation of heavenly drums.

In 656, Yin left his seclusion and moved to the capital. Emperor Gao-zong valued his counsel and rewarded him with ranks and honors. In 668, after Yin had correctly predicted the appearance of a comet, the ruler had the defunct residence of the Prince of Jin restored and given over to Yin as the Haotian guan 昊天觀 (Monastery of Imperial Heaven; 1.7a). In 677, he made Yin abbot of Louguan, and in 679 ordered him to celebrate Daoist rites in Luoyang, during which Lord Lao descended in front of the assembled court. The emperor was so taken with this sign that he asked Yin to write a formal account of the deity's exploits, resulting in the hagiography Xuanyuan huangdi shengji (1.7b). In addition, the emperor bestowed on Yin the formal title Yinqing guanglu dafa 銀青光禄大夫 (Great Officer of Silver-Green Radiance) and offered him the position of chamberlain of ceremonies, which he declined (1.8a). Yin Wencao died in 688. Besides his Laozi hagiography, he also wrote a supplementary scroll to the "Biographies of Early Louguan Masters," the Xiaomo km 消魔論 (On Dissolving Evil), the Quhuo km 抚惑論 (On Dispersing Doubts), and a catalog of Daoist scrip-
tures, the *Yuwei zangjing* 玉緯藏經 (Collected Scriptures of the Jade Net; 1.8b). He is also reported to have compiled the *Louguan xianshi zhuans* in 3 scrolls.

Yin Wencao can be considered the last of the northern Celestial Masters, with his close connection to Louguan, his penchant to raise the fortunes of the Yin family, his political involvement and his earnest veneration of Laozi as the central deity. After him, Louguan remained a key Daoist institution but was more actively integrated in the Daoist synthesis and no longer stood out as a specific center.

**TEXTS**

Not many texts have been identified to date as stemming specifically from the northern Celestial Masters. Those we know of can be divided topically into a number of different groups.

**PRECEPTS.** *Yunzhong yinsong xinke jiejing* 坤中音誦新科誦經 (Precepts of the New Code, Recited in the Clouds; lost, 20 j.), known as “New Code;” remains as *Laojun yinsong jiejing* 老君音誦誦經 (Scripture of Recited Precepts of Lord Lao, CT 785, 22 pp.), dat. 415 (see Yang 1956 by Kou Qianzhi). The title is obscure and may mean “to be recited after [the melody] ‘In the Clouds’” (Ware 1933, 229) or “recited in the cloudy heavens” (Yang 1956, 18). The text consists of thirty-six precepts, reprinted with brief commentary by Yang Liansheng (Yang 1956, 38-54) who, however, erroneously gives a total count of thirty-eight. Still scholars use his count (Mather 1979, 113, 117; Yamada 1995, 72). Each precept in the text is introduced with “Lord Lao said” and concludes with the admonition: “Honor and follow this rule with awareness and care, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances,” a variation of the Celestial Masters formula: “Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances” (se studied in Seidel 1987; Maeda 1989; Miyake 1993; Miyazawa 1994).

In terms of content, the first six rules serve as an introduction, describing the text’s revelation in similar terms as the *Weishu*. Thereafter they seem in no particular order, vacillating between general guidelines, specific behavioral rules, and detailed ritual instructions. General guidelines include an outline of the various offices and duties of Daoist followers and a survey of banquet meetings and communal rites (e.g., nos. 7-9). Specific behavioral rules describe the role of Daoists in relation to the civil administration, patterns of public conduct and measures to be taken in case of sickness (e.g., no. 21). Detailed ritual instructions, finally, deal with the performance of communal banquets, the proper format of prayers and petitions to the Dao,
ancestral offerings, funerary services and immortality practices (no. 12). The text has not been translated into English and deserves further study.

**Taishang laojun jiejing** 太上老君戒經 (Precepts of the Highest Lord Lao, CT 784, 29 pp.), ab. 500, comm., not complete (trl. Kohn 1994). A Louguan document, this work is inspired by the “New Code” and closely modeled on a popular Buddhist apocryphon, the *Tiwei boli jing* 提謂波利経 (Sūtra of Trapusa and Bhallika), written around 450 by Tanjing 潘淨, a follower of Tanyao of the sangha-households. It also shows some southern, Lingbao influence in being similar to the *Zran wucheng jing* 自然五稱經 (The Five Spontaneous Correspondences, CT 671) and containing the same scriptural chant as the *Zhihui benyuan dajie jing* 智慧本願大誓經 (Great Precepts of the Original Vow of Wisdom, CT 344; see also Lagerwey 1987, 137).

In content, the text is set at the transmission of the *Daode jing* to Yin Xi 老子, who, after an initial three stanzas of scriptural chant, asks Laozi five questions on the precepts. In response, they are first defined as the five key rules of Buddhism: to abstain from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and intoxication. They must be obeyed scrupulously, because even a minor infraction, such as picking up a coin from the street, means a violation of their spirit. Second, they are five because they match the cosmology of the five phases and are thus related to the planets, the sacred mountains, and the organs in the body. Third, any failure in obedience can be remedied by regretting one’s error and retaking the precepts. Not observing them still will do harm, as their quality is injured and causes bodily punishments and karmic consequences. People who lie and cheat in this life, thus, will not only suffer from an ailment in their spleen (the organ of earth and the center) but also not be believed by others in their next life.

The last two questions evoke a description of Daoist ordination rites, similarly found in the *Tiwei boli jing*, and a description of the five senses and six passions in their negative impact on good moral behavior, followed by another outline of the karmic sufferings and blissful states. The text is practical and popular, addressing lay followers and postulants in spelling out the benefits of following the Dao.

**PRACTICE. Chuanshou jingjie yi zhuju** 傳授經戒儀詮訣 (Annotated Explanation of the Transmission Formalities of Scriptures and Precepts, CT 1238, 17 pp., 13 sections), 6th c. A technical manual on ordination based on the *Daode jing* to the rank of Gaoxuan fashi 高玄法師 (Preceptor of Highest Mystery), this probably dates from the late sixth century, as it shows signs of the growing integration of Daoism: *Sandong* 三洞 (Three Caverns) is referred to variously, the texts involved are described as the canon of Taixuan 太玄 (Great Mystery), and Laozi, rather than a universal creator god and savior, is described as a highly gifted historical person, a “sage who accumulated learning through many transmigrations and thus
climbed to the rank of the sages and perfected” (1b). Still, the text centers on him and the Daode jing, and the transmission to Yin Xi is described as involving a total of 24 texts, divided into the three vehicles of higher, medium and lower (2a), thus indicating a Louguan provenance.

After an introduction, the work divides into 13 sections that describe Daode jing ordination. It first presents a list of the key scriptures to be transmitted, a total of ten scrolls including the Daode jing (2 scrolls), the Heshang gong commentary (2), the Xiang'er commentary (2), a Laozi visualization manual (1), a set of precepts (1), instructions for audience rites (1), and instructions for purifications (1; p. 4b-5a). Next, it gives a survey of things necessary for ordination, including a quorum of 38 participants, or a minimum of 6—one master and 5 guarantors or witnesses (bao)—a set of gifts to be made to the institution as pledges of sincerity and various rites to be performed. The bulk of the sections, then, specify these, listing the roles of participants and gifts, as well as outlining the physical and stylistic format of the memorials to the gods. The overall pattern of ordination matches that known from other sources and schools (see Benn 1991), showing how the Louguan group integrated their particular preference for the Daode jing in the overall structure of the religion.

Jishengjing (Scripture of Western Ascension, CT 666, 726; 36 j.), ab. 500, comm. (ltr. Kohn 1991; see Fujiwara 1983, 1985; Maeda 1989, 1990a, 1990b; Sunayama 1990, 330-46). The first to point out its Louguan connection was Alan Chan (1993). This work is mentioned in connection with the conversion of the barbarians and as such is cited in Buddhist polemics. The five commentaries contained in CT 726 are by: Wei Jie (497-559), a Louguan master of the early sixth century; the early Tang Daoist Xu Miao 徐邈 from Jurong, the home of Shangqing Daoism; Chongxuanzi 柏玄子, unknown; Li Rong 李榮 of the seventh century, philosopher of the Chongxuan 重玄 school and defender of Daoism in the debates; and Liu Renhui 劉仁會 of the mid-Tang. CT 666 contains a commentary by the Song emperor Huizong 徽宗.

In content, the text, in Louguan fashion, is set at the transmission of the Daode jing and contains Laozi's oral explanations of Daoist philosophical intricacies. It consists of 39 sections, which can be divided into 5 cycles of progressive teaching: Dao Knowledge; Dao Practice; Cosmization; The Sage; and The Return. They describe how practitioners are to overcome deliberate, classificatory thinking and become one with the Dao in no-mind, no-body, and no-intention. After first outlining Yin Xi’s practice, the text begins by expostulating on the fundamental problem of speaking about the ineffable. Next it speaks of the immanence of the Dao in the world and outlines a way of accessing it. Third, a more concrete explanation of theory and practice of the Dao is given, with reference to the practice of meditation. The fourth cycle deals with the life of the sage, a true person of the
Dao who is yet active in the world as teacher, helper, ruler. The final goal, however, goes beyond even that and is found in the complete return to the Dao, the joining of one's human mind-and-body with the inner flow of the cosmos. The text ends with a recovery of the beginning, describing Laozi's ascension and his key advice to Yin Xi: “When all impurities are gone, the myriad affairs are done.” The Xishengjing is a scripture of theoretical teachings that focuses on the mystical ascent to the Dao, using a language often polysemic and obscure.

HAGIOGRAPHY *Laojun bianhua wuji jing* (Scripture of Lord Lao's Infinite Transformations, CT 1195, 8 pp.), dat. 330s. A short but powerful document, this is written, like the *Huangtingjing* (Yellow Court Scripture) of the Shangqing school, in seven-character verses, and takes up, in the wake of the *Laozi bianhua jing* (Scripture of Laozi's Transformations, S. 2295, Ofuchi 1979, 686-88; trl. Seidel 1969, 60-73) of the second century, the notion of Laozi's transformations and his continued willingness to save the world. Kobayashi places the text in the fifth century and in a southern Celestial Masters environment (1990, 209, 452). The text itself, however, begins with an autobiographic note, describing its author as living in a time of great turmoil, probably in the 330s, after Shi Le bloodily established his capital at Ye (Kohn 1995, 10), and locating him on Mount Hua near the Jin capital of Chang'an, where he received the scripture from a “perfected on the mountain” (1a).

After that, it outlines the exploits of the deity Laozi and describes his attempt to civilize the barbarians (Schipper 1994, 70), appealing to the people of the Dao to practice physiological and ritual methods in expectation of the “True Lord of Great Peace,” whom Laozi will send to bring harmony to the world (3b). The various methods, including energy circulation and sexual techniques (5ab) as well as alchemical concoctions (8ab; Baldrian-Hussein 1990, 175), will not pacify the world but allow people to ascend to the heavens of the immortals. They will overcome the present disastrous state, when “barbarian horses are neighing in Chang'an” (6a) and Central Asians have settled firmly in Ye (6b). Laozi as before comes to rescue his creation.

*Kaitian jing* (Scripture on Opening the Cosmos, CT 1437, *Yinji qiqian* 2; 6 pp.), 6th c., (trl. Kohn 1993, 35-43; Schafer 1997). One of the texts to replace the destroyed *Kaitian jing* of the 520 debate, this is the creation part of the extended Laozi hagiography, which in is lost in its integrated form, the *Gaoshang Laozi neizhuan* (Essential Biography of His Eminence Laozi). It follows earlier accounts of the cosmic Laozi, such as the early *Laozi bianhua jing*, the *Bianhua wuji jing*, and the southern *Sanqian neijie jing* (Inner Explanation of the Three Heavens, CT 1205) of the early fifth century. A citation of highly similar
passages in *Xiaodao lun* 17 as from the *Sanhuang wen* 三皇文 (Texts of the Three Sovereigns; Kohn 1995, 100) suggests an influence of the latter school.

In content, it contains an account of Laozi's creation of the universe and political support of ancient rulers down to the early Zhou dynasty, dividing the cosmic unfolding into "high antiquity," including several stages of formlessness, such as Vast Prime, Coagulated Prime, Grand Antecedence, Grand Initiation, and Grand Immaculate; "middle antiquity," the time of the Three Sovereigns when harmony prevails in heaven and on earth; and "lower antiquity," when the world is governed by a series of mythical sage rulers. In each stage or reign, Laozi descends from heaven, and a key scripture issues from his mouth that will give guidance to the proper development, thus making the personified Dao responsible for all events in culture and on earth. The text concludes, rather inconsequentially, with a cryptic description of the cosmos in terms of magical numbers and diagrams.

*Wenshi neizhuan* 文始內傳 (Essential Biography of [Yin Xi], the Master at the Beginning of the Scripture, lost), 6th c., see Fukui 1962; Yamada 1982; Kohn 1998a. The first extensive hagiography of Yin Xi, this text served to replace the part of the Laozi hagiography, destroyed in 520, that dealt with the transmission of the *Daode jing* and the conversion of the barbarians. The text survives in citations in *Xiaodao lun* passim (Kohn 1995, 215); *Sandong zhuan* 4.9a, 9.8b-14b; *Daode jing kaitu xujue yishu* 道德經開題序説義疏 (P. 2353, Ofuchi 1979, 463); *Shangqing daolei shixiang* (CT 1132) 2.8a; *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 78, 87; *Chuxue* 1, 5, 6, 27; and *Tai-ping yulan* 2, 6, 137, 677, 983, 999.

As reconstituted from these fragments, the text begins with Yin Xi's supernatural conception and birth, his unusual physiognomy and outstanding inborn talents (such as his gift for astrology), then tells of the transmission of the *Daode jing* in four stages. First, Yin Xi stations himself on the pass and has to undergo several tests before Laozi agrees to teach him; next, Yin Xi proves his sincerity by helping to pay off and calm down Laozi's retainer Xu Jia 武甲, who complains of ill treatment; third, Laozi transmits the *Daode jing* together with oral explanations and precepts, and agrees to meet Yin Xi again after three years in a black sheep shop in Chengdu, Sichuan (Kusuyama 1978); fourth, at the agreed meeting Laozi examines Yin Xi and confirms his attainment of the Dao, and the two undertake an ecstatic excursion to the heavens. This is followed by their journey to the west to convert the barbarians, which in turn includes several episodes, such as an exchange of banquets with the barbarian king and his subjects, their undergoing ordeals by fire and water, their punishment of the barbarians for disbelief and their efforts at civilizing them with Buddhist precepts. The
story ends as Laozi departs to convert more countries and Yin Xi remains as the barbarian’s teacher, then known as the Buddha.

**Huahu jing** (Scripture on the Conversion of the Barbarians, lost). The sixth-century *Huahu jing*, compiled by the northern Celestial Masters in the context of the debates and cited in the *Sandong zhunang* (9.14b-20b) and the *Xiaodao lun* (Kohn 1995, 196), is the second major version of this text. Its very earliest traces go back to a brief mention in Xiang Kai’s memorial of the year 166 C.E. After that, a first scripture was compiled by Wang Fu around the year 300, of which Zürcher has identified several passages (1959, 298, 305; Kohn 1995, 13-14).

After that, a third version was created in the Tang dynasty. It remains in Dunhuang manuscripts and includes parts of chapters 1, 2, 8 and 10 (S. 1857. T. 2139; trl. Kohn 1993, 71-80; S. 6963; P. 3404; P. 2004) on Laozi hagiography, demonological and theoretical issues, as well as scholastic discussions on good government. In addition, there is a Lingbao version of the text (S. 2081), which connects cosmology with the conversion in the style of a Buddhist sūtra (trl. Seidel 1984). A fourth and final version of the *Huahu jing* arose during the debates under the Yuan dynasty. Consisting of 81 illustrated glosses, it survives in several editions and is translated in Reiter 1990 (see also Ch’ên 1945).

In content, the *Huahu jing* centers on Laozi and Yin Xi’s journey to the west and their interaction with the barbarians. It follows the plot of the Laozi hagiography and contains the same incidents as the last section of the *Wenshi neizhuan*.

**Xuanyuan huangdi shengji** (Sage Record of the Emperor of Mystery Prime, lost; 10 j., 110 sects.), 7th c.; cited as *Benji* (Original Record) or *Tangji* (Tang Record; see Kusuyama 1977). Passages describing Laozi’s descent under various rulers are contained in Yue Penggui’s *Xichuan qingyang gong beiming* (Inscription at the Black Sheep Temple of Sichuan, CT 964, 4b-10a) of the year 884, as well as in later hagiographies, such as Xie Shouhao’s *Hunyuan shengji* (Sage Record of Chaos Prime, CT 770, 1.2b-14b) of the year 1191 (Kusuyama 1979, 428-29). This text, in 9 scrolls, is the longest and most detailed of all texts on Laozi; it follows Jia Shanxiang’s *Youlong zhuang* (Like unto a Dragon, CT 774) in 6 scrolls, of the year 1086, which in turn inherits its structure and many of its sources from chap. 2 of Du Guangting’s *Daode zhenjing guangsheng yi* (Wide Sage Meaning of the Perfect Scripture of the Dao and Its Virtue, CT 725), dat. 901. All these hagiographies divide Laozi’s life into six stages: creation, appearances to mythical rulers, birth, transmission of the *Daode jing* and conversion of the barbarians, revelations to medieval Daoists, and miracles under the Tang. They closely continue the hagiographies of the northern Celestial Masters (see Kohn 1998b).
The *Hunyuan shengji* (1.20b, 32b) also has passages from the *Bazi* that deal with theoretical and philosophical issues. In addition, parts dealing with the transmission to Yin Xi have survived in the canon as *Hunyuan zhenlu* 混元真錄 (Perfect Account of Chaos Prime, CT 954; see Kusuyama 1977; 1979, 403). This text retains twelve parts of the ancient work: an introduction on Yin Xi’s supernatural stature and Laozi’s celestial nature (1a-3a), followed by a description of Laozi leaving the Zhou (3a-4a) and his arrival on the pass (4a-7a). Next Laozi transmits various materials: talismans and alchemical recipes (7a-9a), methods of nourishing on energy (9a-11a), the *Daode jing* (11a-13b), the commentary *Laozi jiejie* 老子解 (13b-15a), and the *Xisheng jing* (15b-19b). Then Laozi expresses his intention to convert the barbarians (19b-20b), agrees to meet Yin Xi in the black sheep shop (20b-23a), and teaches him to visualize the Three Ones (23a-25a) and how to enter the *jingshi* 靜室 (chamber of tranquility or oratory; 25a-27b). Set again at the meeting of Laozi and Yin Xi, the text follows the classical Louguan model and uses a question-and-answer mode. The methods and scriptures transmitted, moreover, match those central in Louguan or *Daode jing* ordination.

Probably also part of Yin Wencao’s hagiography was a link between Laozi’s genealogy and the Yin family of Tianshui. Materials on this are cited in Du Guangting’s *Daode zhenjing guangshaiyi*. They include the *Xuanzhong ji* 玄中記 (Record of the Mysterious Center; 2.18b-19a) and the *Xuanmiao yunju yuanjun neizhuan* 玄妙玉女元君內傳 (Essential Record of the Goddess Jade Maiden of Mystery and Wonder; 2.20b-21a), which make Laozi’s mother a daughter of the Yins, as well as the *Lishi dazong pu* 李氏大宗谱 (Record of the Great Lineage of the Li Family; 2.20a), which has Laozi marry the Yin girl—either case creating an affine relationship between Laozi and the Yins, and thus between Yin Wencao and the Tang imperial family.

**COLLECTIONS.** *Wushang biyao* 無上秘要 (Esoteric Essential of the Most High, CT 1138, 100 j., 292 sects.), dat. 574 (Lagerwey 1981). This early encyclopedia of Daoism was compiled upon imperial orders by Daoists of the Tongdao guan in an attempt to secure a Daoist-based orthodoxy after the debates of 570. The edition in the canon is fragmentary and can be supplemented by Dunhuang manuscripts, especially P. 2861 (Ôfuchi 1979, 370), which contains a detailed list of contents (Lagerwey 1981, 49-71). The work in addition cites numerous Daoist scriptures, helping to give not only a date for them but also to place them within the structure of Daoist doctrine (Lagerwey 1981, 222-70).

In content, the *Wushang biyao* can be said to cover the complexities of the Daoist teaching in seven parts: (1) Heavens, stars, and immortals (sects. 1-26); (2) earth and government (27-44); (3) divine beings, their abodes and attire (45-110); (4) sacred scriptures and talismans (111-46); (5) rules, pre-
cepts, and purifications (147-82); (6) immortality practices and elixirs (183-249); (7) immortals' ranks and powers (250-92). In structure, the work thus proceeds from the heavens through the organization of earth, scriptures, and human transformation back to the celestial realm. Significantly, it leaves out some of the key notions of Louguan teaching, such as the divinity of Laozi and the conversion of the barbarians.

**Xuandu jingmu** 玄都經目 (Scripture Catalog of Mystery Metropolis, lost), also known as **Xuandu guan jingmu** 玄都觀經目 (Scripture Catalog of the Monastery of Mystery Metropolis), dat. 570, cited in Xiaodao lun 36. The catalog allegedly described 6,363 scrolls of Daoist scriptures, biographies, talismans, sacred charts, and discussions, expanding from 4,323 scrolls listed by Lu Xiujing a century earlier. Other early catalogs, all lost without a trace, include Wang Jian's 王堅 *Qizhi* 七志 (Seven Treatises) of the year 473; Meng Fashi's 孟法师 catalog; and Tao Hongjing's list of scriptures. Cited in the *Guang hongmingji* 广弘明記 (T. 2103; 52.108c) is one other early work, Ruan Xiaoxu's 阮孝绪 *Qiulu* 七錄 (Seven Records) of the year 523. It supposedly listed texts in four divisions: scriptures and precepts (838 scrolls), garb and food (167), sexual practices (38), and charts and talismans (103), making at total of 1,138 scrolls—compared to 5,400 scrolls of contemporary Buddhist materials (see Yoshioka 1955, 31-35; Fukui 1952, 164; Chen 1975, 106-12; Kohn 1995, 150-53).

**POLEMICS.** The bulk of anti-Daoist polemics is not highly relevant to the understanding of Daoism. The texts' arguments are either very philosophical, supremely obscure or focus on issues of comparability of the different teachings with Confucian statecraft. For a summary of the contents of the major works involved, see Kohn 1995, 159-86. Two texts, however, contain information on Daoist doctrine and practice.

**Bianhuo lun** 辨惑論 (To Discriminate Errors, T. 2102; 52.48a-49c), by Shi Xuanguang 释玄光, 5th c. The text criticizes actual Daoist practice in two parts, focusing on what it calls the five “rebellious” acts and the six “extreme” characteristics of Daoists. Practices described include the fraudulent creation of esoteric scriptures, the pursuit of immoral practices, such as sexual rituals and drunken assemblies for the dead, as well as the cheating of emperors in search of the elixir. Daoists are moreover accused of plotting rebellion and faking miracles, of worshiping demons and deluding the populace, of believing that they have absolute power over life and death with the help of talismans, and of unsavory forms of penance, such as the Rite of Mud and Soot, during which they roll in the dirt like donkeys, hang themselves head-down, and excite themselves into a fever. Physical immortality, moreover, is decried as complete nonsense, while Daoist rites of exorcism are described as dangerous and potentially lethal. Overall the text makes hard reading, and details are sketchy and polemically distorted.
Nonetheless, it gives a concrete picture of certain aspects of the religion at the time.

**Xiaodao lun** (Laughing at the Dao, T. 2103, 52.143c-52c; 36 sects.), by Zhen Luan, dat. 570 (trl. Kenkyuhan 1988; Kohn 1995). The most mythological and practical of the anti-Daoist polemics, this work, some parts of which are also cited in the **Bianzheng lun**, uses about forty texts mostly of Lingbao provenance that are thus clearly dated to before 570. Some of them are lost otherwise and only survive here. In its 36 sections, written to match and thus ridicule the 36 sections of Daoist scriptures, it discusses different aspects of worldview and practice, including creation, the Daoist pantheon, the size of the sun and the moon, the events at the end of a kalpa, the formalities Daoists employ when interacting with commoners, as well as the divinity of Laozi and a number of different theories regarding the conversion of the barbarians. The text is useful for Daoist references and for texts otherwise lost.

**Worldview**

Aside from their heavy involvement with politics and the government, the northern Celestial Masters can be characterized doctrinally by their strong emphasis on the divinity of Laozi as well as, since Louguan, by their recognition of Yin Xi as their first and senior patriarch and of a lineage involving several other members of the Yin family.

Laozi in particular is venerated not only as the creator of the universe and supporter of mythical and present rulers, but also as the main source of the sacred scriptures, beginning with the *Daodejing*, and of various practical teachings and instructions. He is seen, in continuation of the worldview of the early Celestial Masters, as the personification of the Dao, who existed prior to heaven and earth and, as a seed of order in the midst of chaos, proceeded to create and form the world. Once having given shape to the universe, he then continued to descend at regular intervals to bring forth suitable scriptures and teach rulers, being thus single-handedly responsible for all and any forms culture took on earth.

His transmission of the *Daodejing* to Yin Xi, dated to the early Zhou dynasty, then, signifies the beginning of Louguan as a sacred place and the active presence of its masters in the world. The masters then continue, in an unbroken line that begins with the creation, the beneficial activities of the Dao on earth. This vision recognizes possible depravity elsewhere but does not allow for a negative evaluation of either human culture, the state or Louguan activities. In this point, Louguan teaching differs from the vision of Kou Qianzhi who claimed to have received a new revelation from Laozi to replace the corrupted earlier Daoist teachings. Among the north-
Northern Celestial Masters, Laozi moreover continues to appear, typically announced by a heavenly envoy and surrounded by a celestial entourage. This vision of the deity, already reported by Kou Qianzhi, plays a key role again in the founding of the Tang dynasty, when the commoner Ji Shanxing had several visions in which the god gave him encouraging messages for the future Tang ruler (Bokenkamp 1994, 84), as well as in Yin Wencao's promotion (see above).

Not only appearing in various visions, Laozi also becomes the central revealing deity of Louguan in his encounter with Yin Xi, expanded from the simple transmission of one text into a semi-ordination procedure, during which different materials and many oral instructions are passed on. As the location of the pass is shifted to Louguan, so the formalities increase, with tests being administered and new teachings being transmitted. In addition, the role of Yin Xi is expanded with the help of the "black sheep story," which is a creation of the sixth century (see Kusuyama 1979, 423). By having Laozi meet Yin Xi again after three years in Chengdu, Louguan Daoists not only made the latter's attainment of perfection tangible and integrated the flourishing center of Sichuan into their activities, but also set the stage for Laozi's formal recognition of Yin Xi as his equal and for a series of ecstatic excursions that took the two to the far reaches of heaven and earth before commencing the conversion of the barbarians. The three-year hiatus, the renewed testing in Chengdu, and the ecstatic excursions mythically imitate the advanced ordination procedure that leads to being a preceptor of Shangqing (see Kohn 1998a; 1998b). Both Laozi and Yin Xi thereby become masters of all Daoism, not just of the Daode jing and its Louguan-centered methods.

In addition, Laozi is closely linked with the Buddha. While there are no northern sources, such as the southern Santian neijie jing, that stylize Laozi's birth along the lines of the Buddha's, the Xiaodao lun cites various materials that have Laozi become the Buddha or at least name Yin Xi as such. Northern Daoism thus presents a strong pitch for universalism, claiming not only that Laozi as the Dao is the key to all creation but also that he is the root of all teachings, including especially Buddhism. This claim also legitimates the conversion of the barbarians, whose indigenous practices—and even Indian-transmitted Buddhism—lack the power and magnificence of the Dao. More than that, these teachings are not at all suited for rulers over China who may be of barbarian origin but still have access to the Dao and thus to the right teaching that will control the world. The conversion, not only a polemical and denigrating story but also a tale of the power of the Dao (especially when read with the expanded Laozi myth), thus represents a careful tightrope walk of Chinese religious leaders confronting foreign emperors with ambitions for unification. The complex story of Laozi, as it emerges in the sixth century, thus is both a religious and a political tale,
presenting a vision of how the Dao creates the world, how practitioners can realize it, and how it exerts its beneficience in the state.

BUDDHISM, in a very similar manner, served largely to support the northern state, with monks like Fotudeng 佛圖澄 of the fourth century (see Wright 1948) setting an example of linking magical powers with Buddhist ideas and practices. Its head monk, a state appointed official, was a close adviser to the ruler, while its monasteries often served as quasi-administrative centers. In addition, it established the claim that the northern ruler was himself the future Buddha and universal savior Maitreya, thus closely relating the religion with the state.

Daoists partly followed its example, partly influenced it—the Daoist theocracy growing out of the established Buddhist pattern of state-supporting religion, the identification of the ruler with Maitreya, on the other hand, emerging only after Kou Qianzhi designated the emperor as the Ruler of Great Peace, changing the Maitreya myth and thereby Buddhist eschatology forever (see Nattier 1988; Myojin 1994). Rivals on the political plane, where the sangha-households replaced the theocracy, and frequently locked in oral combat at court, the two religions nonetheless interacted fruitfully, Daoists adapting Buddhist precepts, statues, and monastic institutions to suit their own purposes and values. Unlike the Lingbao school in the south, however, which massively copied Buddhist scriptures and rituals, northerners seem to have limited their interaction to the formal and organizational plane, maintaining a doctrinal identity of their own.

This identity was closely linked with the history of Louguan patriarchs, which can be divided into four phases: (1) a legendary period from the early Zhou to the Han; (2) a time of immortality seekers and alchemists of the Jin; (3) the first organization of Louguan as a major Daoist center in the fifth century; and (4) the heyday of Louguan activities in the sixth and seventh centuries (Zhang 1991, 82-83).

In the first phase, the key figures are three immortals named Yin, beginning with Yin Xi, the Guardian of the Pass, who is first mentioned in Laozi's biography in Shi ji 63 as the recipient of the Daode jing and appears in the Li xian zhuang as his companion on his western conversion. Gradually stylized to be an immortal in his own right and full partner of Laozi, Yin Xi only rose to fame with the emergence of Louguan and had his first full hagiography in the Wenshi nei zhuang. According to Louguan belief, he was awarded the "Lookout Tower" by King Kang of the early Zhou for meritorious service and received the Daode jing there. Most Louguan texts either focus on him or feature him as interlocutor of the deity.

The second patriarch of the line is a relative of Yin Xi's by the name of Yin Gui 尹軌, placed by Louguan belief in the early Zhou dynasty. Other sources, however, have him in the late third century C. E., linked with the alchemical environment of Ge Hong and other magical practitioners. He
is described in the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 (Biographies of Spirit Immortals) as a practitioner of astrology, dietetics, and alchemy (ch. 9), while the *Han Wudi waizhuan* 漢武帝外傳 (Biographies of People Surrounding Emperor Wu of the Han, CT 293) lauds him for his expertise in the “numinous art of flying” (13b).

Then follow Du Chong 杜沖, Peng Zong 彭宗, Song Lun 宋倫, Feng Chang 風長, Yao Dan 姚但, and Zhou Liang 周亮, after whom the third Yin appears, who has a typical Louguan hagiography and, like most of the early masters, is unknown outside of his connection with the Louguan lineage. Yin Cheng 尹澄 allegedly lived for 340 years, from 431 to 90 B.C.E., before ascending bodily into heaven. Having found his powers with the help of the *Daodejing*, he was begged by various emperors to reveal his arts but did not obey their summons. He adored life in the forest, where—according to a tale reminiscent of Androclus in ancient Rome—he incurred the gratitude of the local deer by helping them in need and was duly rescued during a violent thunderstorm (*Sandong qunxian lu* 三洞靈仙錄 3.9b; *Zhengxian tongjian* 真仙通鑒 9.9a), then lived out his long life peacefully.

The second phase includes a group of semi-legendary masters of the Jin dynasty, such as Liang Chen 梁謙 (247-318), Wang Jia 汪嘉 (300-386; also mentioned in *Jinshu* 95), Sun Zhe 孫錐 (302-376), and Ma Jian 馬儉 (341-439), all of whom form part of an alchemical lineage of masters specializing in various types of cinnabars (Needham 1976, 112). The line then moves on to Yin Tong and the fifth-century practitioners, to conclude with the better known sixth-century masters and Yin Wencao.

**Practices**

Under the umbrella of this overall doctrinal and political situation, northern Daoists engaged in the typical practices of the religion, including different forms of physical longevity techniques as well as meditations and visualizations. No specific scriptures have survived about any of these, but glimpses are found in the *Bianhua wuji jing* as well as in hagiographies. Kou Qianzhi, for example, is said to have received a number of lesser visions after his first revelation in 415, during which various deities instructed him in the “methods of nourishing on energy and practicing gymnastics.” As he dutifully applied himself to these, his “energy became abundant, his body light, and his complexion radiant” (*Weishu* 114), thus enabling him to become perfect in body as much as in spirit and attain the status of a true celestial master. Similarly, Wei Jie, Louguan thinker of the sixth century, is said to have followed a dietetic regimen of various immortality drugs and to have engaged in visualizations and ecstatic excursions (Kohn 1991, 168), thus completing his education as a well-rounded Daoist. More specifically north-
ern, there are three types of practices that can be described on the basis of texts and art works: the communal observance of precepts and purification rites as organized first by Kou Qianzhi; the popular creation of statues and inscriptions to pray for peace and good fortune; and the establishment of monastic centers, such as Louguan itself, and thus of formal rules and patterns of ordination.

COMMUNAL RITES of Daoist followers (daomin 道民) as set up during the theocracy served to create a land of perfect peace, where harmony prevailed and everybody, as in the Confucian ideal, was restrained by rules of ritual behavior (Mather 1979, 113). There were daily, regular, and special rites to be observed, the latter two usually involving formal banquets and communal meetings. Feasts were divided according to major, medium, and lesser, lasting 7, 5, or 3 days respectively. To prepare for a feast, members had to purify themselves by abstaining from meat and the five strong-smelling vegetables (garlic, ginger, onions, leeks and scallions), as well as from sexual relations and contact with impure substances (Rule 11; 8a). A typical banquet, then, consisted of three courses—a vegetarian meal, wine and rice—but those who could not afford all three could resort to only having wine, up to a maximum of five pints (no. 12; 8ab). The ritual activity during feasts (no. 20), daily services (no. 19) and ancestral worship (no. 23), moreover, all involved a series of bows and prostrations as well as the burning of incense and offering of a prayer or petition, which had to follow a specific formula (no. 19). There were to be no blood sacrifices, lascivious practices or sexual orgies—the things that ruined the early Celestial Masters and made Kou’s renewal necessary (no. 4; 2a).

Special rites were also prescribed for funerals (no. 27) and sicknesses (no. 29), the latter involving not only ritual prostrations and the sending of petitions but also the public confession of sins (Mather 1979, 117). In their ordinary lives, moreover, all members had to honor their elders and the civil officials (no. 15; 9a), even more so if the latter were also priests of the religion (no. 17). The priests in their turn, as officers among the celestials, had to behave with particular propriety and be a model to the community (no. 13; 8b). In an adaptation of Buddhist rules, they were moreover bound by special behavioral rules, such as moving about “with a straight body and straight face, ... without turning to look either left or right.” They should always be impeccably polite, never showing anger or aggression or commenting on the hospitality they receive (no. 21; 12a; Mather 1979, 113).

All abuse and disobedience were punished not only on earth (no. 30) but also by a sojourn in hell and rebirth as an animal (no. 31). On the other hand, since all people participated in the energy of the Dao, they had the potential for immortality (no. 25) and could, with good behavior, well attain the higher levels of the heavens (no. 32). A highly powerful means of promotion was the faithful following and recitation of Kou’s text itself, prefera-
bly eight times in succession (no. 2; la), as well as its flawless copying (no.
3).

Both the notion of hell and rebirth and practices of scripture veneration
were introduced from Māhāyana Buddhism which left its impact also on
the popular level of medieval Daoism, as can be seen from its statues.

POPULAR ART WORKS were produced widely in north China, Dao-
ist objects closely following Buddhist models. Typically the image of the god
would be carved on the front side of a stone stele, with inscriptions on the
back and/or on the sides, then the object would be placed on a mountain¬
side to allow its easy communication with the otherworld. About fifty such
objects have so far been excavated in north China (Kamitsuka 1993, 230-
36; 1998). Images are mostly of Laozi, but also of Yuanshi tianzun
元始天尊 or of a group of deities often including a buddha or bodhisattva.
Inscriptions typically contain prayers for the dead, wishing that they may
avoid the three bad forms of rebirth (animal, ghost, hell) and instead come
to life in the heavens; for the happiness and prosperity of currently living
family members; for the imperial family and political peace; and for the
liberation of all living beings. In addition, there are occasional prayers for
a prosperous human rebirth for the ancestors or for the coming of the true
lord, the messiah (Kamitsuka 1993, 258; 1998). Production and iconogra¬
phy as much as divinities and contents of prayer thus show a close interac¬
tion of Daoism and Buddhism on the grass-roots level, indicating once
again, as Erik Zürcher has suggested, that the doctrinal differences among
medieval Chinese religions may only be the “tops of two pyramids,” with
a much more integrated and “less differentiated lay religion” at the bottom
(1980, 146).

MONASTIC ORGANIZATION, although higher up on the pyramid,
still shows a distinct Buddh-Daoist flavor. By definition, a monastery is “a
communal organization,” that “instead of centering on families cooperating
in a given space (as in the normal community), revolves around a religious
ideology” (Hillery 1992, 51). In Christianity, the ideology is based on free¬
dom and agape love; in Buddhism, it is the attainment of enlightenment
and liberation; in Daoism, it is the creation of a celestial space, a prototype
of the ideal realm of the perfected on earth. As the Fengdao kejie (Rules and Precepts for Worshipping the Dao, CT 1125) of the early Tang
has-it, “imitating the jasper terraces above and looking like golden towers
below, [the monastery is] a place to elevate the heart, a record of [celestial]
sojourn [on earth]” (1.19b).

The beginnings of Daoist monasticism are obscure, and the most ancient
forms of organized Daoism did not have it, the Celestial Masters insisting
on the importance of marriage (joining yin and yang) and transmitting their
teaching from father to son (Ozaki 1984, 95; Strickmann 1978, 469-70). In
the fourth century, the followers of Shangqing (in the south) tended toward
being unmarried in order to be able to give their fullest to the Dao, realizing that “with the Perfected, a far purer union could be achieved than that vulgar coupling of the flesh offered either by secular marriage or by the rites of the Celestial Master” (Strickmann 1978, 471). As a result, in their centers (guan 館; e.g., on Maoshan, Lushan, Tiantai shan) both married and celibate practitioners lived side by side, following a regimen similar to that of Buddhist monastics but based on more traditional Chinese conceptions (e.g., abstention from meat to avoid offending the celestials; Strickmann 1978, 473). The appellation chujia 出家, “renunciant,” “one who has left the family,” was particularly used for those who had “resolved to take vows” and leave ordinary family life behind, such as girls determined to remain unmarried (Strickmann 1978, 470).

This alone, however, does not constitute monasticism. A tendency toward a more formal resignation from family life can first be observed in the fifth century C. E. and is probably due to the increasing number of Buddhist monks and the growing independence of their institutions. Kou Qianzhi thus became one of the first Daoists to live like a Buddhist monk and in a quasi-monastic institution, the Chongxusi. Similarly, in the south, both Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477) and Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536), lived either in mountain centers or in the capital but did not have a family to distract them from their main endeavors (Ozaki 1984, 99). Still, their followers were not so dedicated but remained in their villages or, as in the case of Tao’s disciple Zhou Ziliang 周子良, brought their family with them to the mountain (see Doub 1971).

A clear distinction between lay and monastic followers and formal ordination procedures only evolved toward the late fifth century—in the south, when followers of Lingbao created sets of Daoist precepts under Buddhist influence, and in the north with the growth and flourishing of Louguan. Patterned on a Buddhist model, its precepts, ordination, and salvific endeavors all show a certain Buddhist influence. The precepts, as noted above, were cosmicized adaptations of the five basic rules of Buddhism; its ordination consisted of the transmission of a set of sacred scriptures after the giving of pledges and the swearing of vows; and its salvation centered on the dissolution of the individual mind and body in the cosmic consciousness of the Dao.

References


Ritual played an enormous role in the Daoist religion. The number of liturgies in the Daoist canon, both as independent works and as passages in scriptures, codes and hagiographies is enormous. There were rituals for virtually all aspects of the priests' and parishioners' lives from use of the privy, conjugal relations and household exorcisms to sermons, meditation and alchemical processes. Furthermore, new liturgies emerged throughout history to accommodate social, political and religious changes. Needless to say, full coverage of this topic is well beyond the scope of a short survey. Consequently, this study has confined itself to ordinations and the great zhai of Daoism as practiced between 400 and 1000.

Daoist ordination (chuan shou 傳授, shou du 授度) was the liturgical confirmation for the transmission or bestowal of a canon by preceptors to students. The notion of transmission was at least as old as Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) who considered himself to be a transmitter, not an originator and gathered students around him to pass on the wisdom of the sages who lived in the golden age of the past. He was the founder of the teacher-pupil relationship that dominated pedagogy in ancient China.

In the Daoist religion the procedures for transmitting scriptures were far more elaborate than their earlier, secular counterparts. They derived, in part, from the fangshi 方士 (magicians) who flourished in the second and third centuries. One of the earliest descriptions of the magician's textual bestowals appears in the works of Ge Hong 葛洪 (383-343) who received esoteric, alchemical works from his master Zheng Yin 鄭隱 around the year 300. After earning his master's trust by performing menial tasks—sweeping and sprinkling—and impressing Zheng with his intelligence and talents, Hong received a transmission of three texts from Zheng at an altar after forging a covenant (meng 盟). Zheng Yin himself had received these works from Hong's uncle Ge Xuan 葛玄 (third century) who, in turn, had
acquired them from an eminent magician to whom a god had revealed them on a mountain (Baopu zi, CT 1185, 4.2a-b, 19.1b-3b; Ware 1966, 69-70, 310-312).

When Daoists set about the task of constructing ordination liturgies in the fifth and sixth centuries, they adopted the basic principles of Zheng Yin’s bestowals. However, by that time, notions of scripture and their transmissions had changed and become more complicated. Daoists of that time believed that scriptures originated before the beginning of the cosmos as coagulations of qi (ethers, gases, energies, clouds, breaths, etc.) that the Dao engendered. The highest gods then had those vaporous scripts engraved on jade tablets in gold lettering and stored them in celestial archives. Periodically the deities removed the holy writs and bestowed them on their divine courtiers. When a mortal who had demonstrated his worthiness to receive the scriptures appeared on earth, the celestial sovereigns, one of the perfected or an immortal descended to earth and revealed the texts to the saint. The recipient became the founder of a new Daoist order in the mundane world. Thus the sanctity of the scriptures derived from their nature as concrete manifestations of cosmogonic energy, their circulation among the divine powers in celestial realms, and their bestowal on men or women by the grace of the gods (Zhenwen tianshu jing, CT 22, 1.1a-7a; Robinet 1993, 19-28).

Zhai ritual rituals in medieval Daoism were formal court audiences with the gods. The term zhai has been rendered “fast,” “retreat,” “purification,” “ceremony” and so on. None of these is satisfactory for the term’s usage in medieval Daoist ritual. To emphasize the unique character of Daoist zhai, I propose to use a completely new rendition and in this paper will refer to them as levees. This adopts a term from French court ritual that, like zhai, referred to a formal audience held under special circumstances, for specific purposes and accompanied by various formal and purificatory measures.

As the offices of medieval Daoist clergy, the levees evolved from earlier state rites. If classical Chinese philosophy was largely political in character, so was the Daoist religion in medieval times. The sources for the concepts and practices that were the basis of the priesthood and its rituals were the imperial ideology and religion that reached their maturity in the Han dynasty. The clergy were the heirs to the traditions of the bureaucracy. As mandarins they were both masters and servitors. In those older Han practices the term zhai meant fasts. Fasts were preliminary procedures that the emperor or his officials undertook to prepare themselves for performing sacrifices. They entailed withdrawing into seclusion, bathing, and meditating as well as abstaining from eating meat or drinking rice wine and engaging in sexual intercourse. As acts of purification they elevated officiants to a state of grace so that they could confront the gods at altars.
After the advent of Daoism the term retained this sense. Its codes and rules required fasts for visiting preceptors to make inquiries, copying scriptures, drawing talismans and concocting elixirs among other things. However, in the fifth century, the word acquired a new meaning when Daoists compiled liturgies for their major rituals. It came to stand for the actual rites of worship, not the preliminary procedures of seclusion, meditation and abstention. The form, content, language and ideology in the rites of worship developed in large measure from imperial audiences, the levees, at which officials appeared before the emperor to report and request on important occasions (Yijing baqjue, CT 425, 15b; Keyi jielü chao, CT 463, j. 8; Malek 1985; Yamada 1994).

**History and Hierarchy**

**EARLY DEVELOPMENTS.** Penitents smeared yellow mud on their brows. Then they undid their hair and tied it to the poles and railings of an altar erected on bare earth. Placing their hands behind their backs, they bound them together. Taking a jade disk in their mouths they laid face down on the ground, spread their legs three feet apart and struck their heads on the earth to repent and seek forgiveness for sins. The penitents performed the rite for six hours facing west during the day and six hours facing north during the night. This frenzied ritual took place three times yearly during the festivals of the Three Primes (sanyuan 三元) held in the first, seventh and tenth moons (Lingbao wen, CT 1278, 7b; Maspero 1981, 381-86).

The objective of this penitential, the Mud and Soot Levee (tutan zhai 塗炭齋), was to acquire the remission of sins, not only for the penitents, but also for hundreds of thousands of their ancestors, parents, uncles, and brothers—living and dead. Its merit derived from "suffering restraint" (kujie 苦節), that is mortifying the flesh and fettering the body. The penitents expressed their contrition by placing themselves in the most abject state—binding their hands like condemned criminals, undoing their hair like madmen, soiling their faces like beggars and beating their brows on the ground like lackeys. In the writ of annunciation (qi 宣) from a liturgy (yi 儀) for this rite in the Wushang biyao 無上秘要 encyclopedia of the late sixth century, the officiant declared that he and his congregation were malodorous, filthy insects, the most insignificant and base of all creatures. Priests and penitents depicted themselves as groveling supplicants so that their misery and servility would evoke sympathy from the gods who would then grant them, their kinsmen and ancestors pardons for their transgressions (Wushang biyao, 50.1a; Kohn 1993, 108).
Daoan 道安, a Buddhist monk of the sixth century, credited Zhang Lu 張路, the third of the founding Celestial Masters who ruled a Daoist state in Sichuan during the late second and early third centuries, with creating the Mud and Soot Levee. Healing the sick was the duty of Zhang’s priests, the Libationers (jiujiu 祭酒). They accomplished their task by writing three copies of a confession in which the ill declared their desire to repent. The first was dispatched to the Sovereign of Heaven by depositing it on a mountain top, the second to the Sovereign of Earth by burying it underground and the third to the Sovereign of the Waters by sinking it in a river. These three deities were the Three Primes on whose festivals the Mud and Soot Levee was performed. Zhang’s penitential practices unquestionably laid the foundation for this rite as well as several other levees in medieval Daoism, but it is highly unlikely that the rite described above originated with the early Celestial Masters. To the contrary, Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477) wrote the earliest description of the ritual more than two centuries after the fall of Zhang Lu’s state. Furthermore, the only surviving liturgy for executing the levee in the Wushang bijiao bears the indelible imprint of Lingbao Daoism that emerged around 400. All of the documents in that text—its announcements, incantations (zhū 祝), precepts (jīe 戒) and vows (yuàn 諸) are citations from Lingbao scriptures (Erjiao lun, T. 2103, 12b; Wushang bijiao 50; Kobayashi 1992).

All the evidence indicates that Daoist levees as known throughout the medieval period originated in the late fourth and fifth centuries, not earlier, with the “revealed” Lingbao scriptures. Lu Xiujing, who compiled liturgies for six of the rituals—including one for the Mud and Soot Levee—that are now lost, appears to have been the first major codifier of them. Lu also performed the Mud and Soot Levee with his followers repeatedly for several months during the winter and spring of 453-454. The frost, snow and gales at the time intensified the misery of the ritual mortification of flesh endured by the participants (Lingbao wugan wen, CT 1278, 1b; Chen 1962, 1: 43, Bell 1987).

The task that fell to Daoists of the fifth and sixth centuries was to organize the legacy of revealed scriptures that had emerged during the formative period of the religion between 142 to 400. Acting in accordance with the strictly stratified character of their society and the imperial bureaucracy, they chose to construct a hierarchy of ascending prestige for the sets of holy writs. In general, they assigned the oldest texts, Celestial Master works and the Daode jing, to the lowest ranks, and the newest, the Linbao and Shangqing canons, to the highest. Since ordination was the ritual transmission of scriptures by preceptors to students, the degrees of investiture and the grades of priests (distinguished by particular styles of liturgical vestments) conformed to the status of their scriptures in the hierarchy. The most elaborate delineation of investiture ranks appears in the Fengdao ke-
ORDINATIONS AND ZHAI RITUALS

*jie* (Rules and Precepts for Daoist Worship, CT 1125), completed in 620 or earlier. Naturally, the codifiers also relegated levees to the same tier in the hierarchy as the scriptures and ordinations to which they were affiliated. Lu Xiujing composed the oldest, surviving hierarchy of liturgies, and therefore scriptures and orders, in the *Lingbao wugan wen* (Five Lingbao Writs of Arousal, CT 1278). Most of the liturgies for levees originated or were systematized about that time (*Fengdao kejie*, CT 1125, 4.5a-5.2b; *Lingbao wugan wen*, 4b-7a; Benn 1991, 72-98).

**ORDINATION HIERARCHY.** The lowest tier in the hierarchy was occupied by the *Zhengyi jing* (The Canon of Orthodox-Unity). On June 11 of 142 Lord Lao, Laozi deified, descended to Mount Heming in modern Sichuan and bestowed the Dao on Zhang Daoling. What Zhang purportedly received during that revelation is not at all clear since various sources supply different titles. The *Zhengyi jing* (now lost), the text transmitted at Celestial Master ordinations in the sixth century, claimed that Zhang received five texts in 1,502 fascicles. This is obviously an exaggeration that was probably intended to magnify the order’s importance in an age when it had lost prestige to other Daoist orders. Judging from comments made in medieval texts, the early Celestial Master corpus included talismans (*fu* 符), registers or rosters (*lu* 録), rules (*ke* 科), petitions (*jinhua* 禁符), injunctions, precepts (*jie* 戒), codes (*li* 律) and contracts (*qi* 契; *Laojun yinsong jijing*, CT 785; *Daomen kelue*, CT 1127, 1a; *Daqiao yishu*, CT 1129, 2.9a-11b; *Keji jielu chao*, 1.1a; *Chisongzi zhangli*, CT 615, 1.1a; see Yang 1956; Chen 1962, 2: 351).

During the medieval period the Celestial Master order was responsible for inducting juveniles into the faith. Its priests conferred a command (*gengling* 更令) on children six years of age that parents accepted on their behalf. This writ contained the titles of nine types of divine functionaries and warriors. Thereafter children received a series of four registers entitled respectively one, ten, seventy-five and 150 Generals as they grew to maturity. The initiates received the registers either at fixed ages or by acquiring merit. These writs possessed apotropaic powers. Recipients attached them to their belts to control and impede demons as well as to beseech external gods or marshal energies (*qi*) and deities from within their bodies. Initiation also entailed the conferral of the Three and Eight Precepts that youths received either before or concurrently with registers. The initiation and ordination rituals for all other Daoists orders also included bestowals of registers and administrations of precepts (*Zhengyi wailu yi*, CT 1243; *Zhengyi mengwei lu*, CT 1208, 1.1a-12a; *Daomen kelue*, 5b; *Sandong Zhumang*, 6.3b; *Chuanshou jingjie falu lueshuo*, CT 1241, 1.3b-4a; *Keji jielu chao*, 10.5b-7b; Chen 1962, 2: 352-59; Seidel 1983, 323-33; Schipper 1985, 131-35; Benn 1991, 73-78).
There were four steps to Celestial Master ordinations during which ordinands received an additional thirty-one registers, a set of 180 precepts, the Zhengyi jing in twenty-seven fascicles and two collections of 1200 and 360 petitions. Petitions, the oldest Orthodox Unity writs that may date as early as the late Han dynasty, were the most important liturgical instruments employed by Celestial Master Libationers. These documents were the means by which the clergy implored the gods to carry out tasks—making rain, eradicating rats and locust, curing epilepsy and toothaches, releasing prisoners from jails and the like. Priests wrote them out while burning incense in their parishes and submitted them to the gods to promote the welfare of their congregations (Dengzhen yinzhe, CT 421, 3.11b-14a; Cedzich 1987; Fengdao kejie 4.5b-6b; Keyi jieii chao, 10.8a-14b; Chisongzi zhongli, j. 3; see Benn 1991, 79-81; Penny 1996; Hendrischke 1996).

By the middle of the fifth century, Celestial Master rituals embraced two levees, the Mud and Soot Levee and the Levee for Direction and Instruction (zhijiao zhai 指教齋). Unlike the Mud and Soot Levee, participation in which was apparently open to all parishioners, the Levee for Direction and Instruction was reserved for Libationers and their students called register pupils (lusheng 鑫生). Although a liturgy for this rite called for head banging and brow beating as acts of repentance, indoctrination appears to have been the main purpose of the ritual—the regulations called for meditating on scriptures and reciting precepts (Zhengyi zhijiao zhaiyi, CT 799).

Dongyuanjing 洞渊经 (The Canon of the Cavern-Deep). At the end of the Western Jin, around 316, the Most-Exalted Lord of the Dao, accompanied by a host of retainers descended in a blaze of light to the courtyard of Wang Zuan’s 王巢 meditation chamber. There the deity bestowed the Dongyum shenzun jing (Scripture of Divine Incantations from the Cavern-Deep) on Wang whose humane concern for the victims of the anarchy, famines and epidemics that raged in north China at the time made him worthy to receive it. The tradition of the revelation to Wang was a myth. The first fascicle of the text was composed between 420 and 479 and fascicles two to ten in the late fifth or sixth century. This no doubt accounts for the fact that Lu Xiujing does not mention a levee for this order in his hierarchy of rituals (Dongyum shenzun jing, CT 335, preface; see Mollier 1991).

A rite for transmitting the scripture with a tally (quan 卷), register, illustration (tu 図) and petition appeared by the end of the sixth century, but no liturgy for performing the order’s investiture has survived in the Daoist canon (Fengdao kejie 4.6b; Benn 1991, 81-82).

The Dongyuan shenzhou jing is an apocalyptic text that envisions a world besieged by homicidal specters and demons, most of whom dispatch their victims by propagating diseases. It supplies vivid descriptions of ghosts that come in all shapes and sizes. There are wraiths with two, three or twelve...
heads, three-legs, vertical eyes, red noses and three faces with one eye. These fiends execute their murderous missions in a variety of ways. Drowning specters, three feet two inches tall, slay men in rivers. White-headed spooks, who have black faces and white hair, stand thirty feet tall and spread ninety types of diseases. The demons often wield red staves, striking their victims who then sicken and die. They do not attack all people, only evil men who are unbelievers, the godless, slanderers of Daoist priests and malingers of scriptures (Dongyuan shenzhou jing, CT 335, 1.5b, 2.5b, 6.3b, 6.4ab, 7.1b, 7.3b, 8.2b, 9.5b, 9.10.5b).

This scripture is an exorcistic text whose function is to bind, expel or slay the murderous demons. In its first fascicle, it contends that mere recitation of it will destroy the specters. In later parts it advocates performing a great levee to accomplish the same end. Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933) composed the oldest surviving liturgies for its levees. One of them contains an address to the gods requesting that they gather in and eradicate thirteen varieties of ghosts. These fiends not only cause diseases, but lunar eclipses, nightmares, and jealousy among other things. Du also recorded four miracles that occurred when priests in the ninth century used the Shenzhou jing during famines, epidemics and rebellions in his Daqiao lingyan ji 道教靈驗記 (Records of Supernatural Confirmations for the Daoist Religion, CT 590; see Dongyuan shenzhou jing, CT 335, 1.4b, 10.5b; Dongyuan shenzhou zhaiyi, CT 526, 6a-7b; Daqiao lingyan ji, CT 590, 8.7b-8b, 12.9b-10a, 15.1a-2a, 15.4a-5b).

Taisuanzhong jing 大玄經 (The Canon of Greatest-Mystery). When Laozi became disillusioned with the decadence of the Zhou court, he abandoned his post as archivist and journeyed westward. On arriving at the Hangu Checkpoint 函谷關, he encountered Yin Xi 尹喜, its guard. Yin pleaded with him to put his ideas in writing so the sage composed the Daode jing in five thousand words. This text was the only work incorporated into the hierarchy of Daoist scriptures and ordinations that predated the advent of the Daoist religion. The oldest record of its transmission dates from the second century B.C.E. In the second century, the Daode jing that previously had been a secular classic, assumed a new role as a religious scripture. This transformation in its status resulted from the deification of Laozi and the adoption of the text by the Celestial Masters who required their congregations to recite it as an act of piety. From that time on, new and more elaborate myths about Laozi emerged, and new scriptures purportedly revealed by him appeared (SDZN, 8: 28b; see Seidel 1969).

By the sixth century, the canon transmitted at investitures for this order embraced fourteen texts in twenty fascicles. It included not only the Daode jing, but also five new scriptures, annotations and exegesis on the Daode jing, hagiographies of Laozi and Yin Xi, the Register of the Purple Palace (zizong lu 紫宮錄) and a set of precepts. At some point in the late fifth or sixth century, moreover, the character of the canon changed. An unknown
editor eliminated some of the titles and combined the remaining texts into a single work entitled the Taixuan jing. His purpose was apparently to provide a single, coherent text for transmission to ordinands at investitures. The eighth fascicle of the scripture was a liturgy for ordinations that has survived in the Daozang, while the tenth contains a liturgy for executing a levee that is not extant (Fengdao kejie 4.6b-7a; Chuanshou jingjie fulu lueshuo 1.5a; Chuanshou jingjie yi, CT 1238, 5b-13a; Chuanshou daodejing zixu luyi, CT 808; see Benn 1991, 82-87).

The function served by the Levee of the Five Thousand Words (wuqianwen zhai 五千文齋), as it was sometimes called, is unclear. Although several texts mention it, none of them offer any description of it, and no liturgy for performing it has survived in the Daoist canon.

**Dongshen jing** (The Canon of the Cavern-Divine). The core texts for this canon were the Sanhuang wen (Writs of the Three Sovereigns), and there were two legends of its revelation. According to the first, Wang Fangping 王方平 instructed Bo He 皰和 (fl. 300), his student, to stare at the north wall of a grotto on Mount Emei in modern Sichuan, promising that the graphs of the writs would appear there. After gazing at the rocks for three years Bo was able to discern writings that the ancients had engraved on them. He erected an altar, left a pledge (xin 信) of silk, copied the texts and departed. According to the second, on March 7 of 292 (or 301), the writs spontaneously carved themselves on the walls of Lord Liu's grotto at Mount Song near Luoyang while Bao Jing 鮑靓 was fasting and meditating there. In keeping with stipulations in the writs, Bao deposited a pledge of pongee 400 feet in length and then copied them after forging a covenant (Baopuzi 19.8b, 20.9b; see Ware 1966, 314, 328; Dongshen badi jing, CT 640, 12b; Daqiao yishu, CT 1129, 2.6b-7a; Yunji qiquan 4.10b-11a; Chen 1962, 1: 71-76; Benn-1991, 87-92).

Although the legend of Bo He and his writs played a role in later traditions about the Sanhuang wen, it was Bao Jing's version of the texts that formed the basis of the Cavern-Divine Canon. In 666 the throne proscribed the Sanhuang wen on the grounds that they were seditious and had them burned. However, copies of them have survived in the Daozang. With time the writs acquired additional occult and liturgical materials that were combined with them to form a single scripture. Lu Xiujing had a version of the Cavern-Divine Scripture in twelve fascicles. When it passed down to the eminent Shangqing patriarch Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536), the text had grown to thirteen fascicles (Sandong zhunang 6.13b-14a; Daomen dingshi, CT 1224, 4.1a-7b; Chen 1962, 1: 77).

By the fifth century ordination at this level of the priesthood entailed the transmission of a single scripture, the Dongshen jing in fourteen fascicles. The first three fascicles of the text contained the Sanhuang wen and materials relating to them. The following eight fascicles encompassed talismans and
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other occult writs concerning eight mythical sovereigns (badi 八帝) who used the writs to rule in the epochs after the Three Sovereigns. The final three fascicles were liturgies for a levee, an audience (chaoli 朝禮) and the transmission of the scripture. The registers, talismans, precepts, tallies, contracts, seals and other items that ordinands received at investitures were probably excerpts from the scripture (Fengdao kejie 4.7b-8a; Dongshen badi jing 16b-17a; 1284; Dongshen sanhuang yi, CT 803; Dongshen shoudu yi, CT 1283; Chuanzhao jingjie fahu lueshuo 1.7a; see Benn 1991, 87-92; Andersen 1991).

Of all Daoist levees, the Levee of the Three Sovereigns (sanhuang zhou) had the closest affinities with the older mythology and religion of China. The deities to which it was addressed, the Sovereigns of Heaven, Earth and Humanity, constituted an ancient trinity, not that established by the Celestial Masters who substituted the Sovereign of the Waters for the ruler of humanity. More importantly, the form of worship for the rite was a sacrifice, specifically an offering (jiao 祭) of alcohol, fruit and meat. This was the standard practice in state and popular religions, but not in the levees of other Daoist orders. Officiants at the Levee of the Three Sovereigns penned the Writs of the Three Sovereigns in red ink on banners and displayed them at three tables on the north, east-north-east and west-south-west sides of an altar. They also placed lamps, a platter with nine jujubes (Chinese dates) and a beaker holding three pints of rice wine on each of the tables. In addition, they installed another thirty-six lamps, platters of fruit, beakers of wine and vessels containing meat around the altar. The rules prescribed one or three days for performing the rite. In the latter case, the obligatory offering consisted of 405 jujubes, 135 pints of rice wine and forty-five pieces of jerky. In the former case, the quantities were one-third of that amount.

The central rituals of this levee, that took place in the middle of the night, were three libations to the sovereigns. As the priest poured out the rice wine, he uttered prayers requesting that the Sovereign of Heaven obliterate the figure for the number of years of life originally granted him in their records and inscribe his name in the celestial ledgers of the immortals; that the Sovereign of Earth release his body from the offices of the subterranean world and erase his name from the ledgers of the dead; and that the Sovereign of Humanity prolong his age past the normal life span granted men. In short, the function of the rite was to elicit the intercession of the gods to secure longevity and immortality for the priest (Lingbao wugan wen 6b-7a; Wushang biyao 49).

When Lu Xiujing catalogued Daoist scriptures in the fifth century, he applied the label “Cavern” to the three most prestigious canons, creating a boundary between them and texts of lower esteem. The Cavern-Divine
was the first and lowest of the Caverns and transmission of its scripture marked a priest's ascension to the higher echelons of the clergy.

_Dongxuanjing_ (The Canon of the Cavern-Mystery). The Celestial Venerable of Primordial Commencement (Yuanshi tianzun 元始天尊) decided it was time to reveal the Lingbao scriptures to a mortal and ordered the Most-Exalted Lord of the Dao (Taishang dao-jun 太上道君) to dispatch his subordinates to transmit it. Three of the perfected descended with a cortege of 1,000 carriages, an escort of 10,000 cavaliers, a retinue of immortal lads and jade maids in the millions, a pride of lions, and flocks of phoenixes, simurghs and white cranes. This host landed on Mt. Tiantai in modern Zhejiang Province where the perfected bestowed the scriptures on Ge Xuan sometime between 238 and 251. Ge had made himself worthy of receiving the holy writs by suffering through innumerable reincarnations and having compassionately vowed to strive for the salvation of all mankind.

This tradition is obviously a fabrication since it is based on Buddhist notions of samsara and bodhisattva compassion that Daoists did not adopt until the late fourth century. Actually the Lingbao canon first emerged around 400 when Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫, a descendant of Ge Xuan, transmitted the oldest of the texts to his disciples (Quanjiefalun miaojing, CT 346, 1b-2a; Yuyi qiqian 3.9a-11b; see Chen 1962, 1: 66-71; Bokenkamp 1983, 1986; Kohn 1993, 44-48).

Ordination at this level of the priesthood entailed the transmission of twenty-five scriptures in thirty fascicles. Officiants also bestowed an additional fifteen texts in sixteen fascicles including liturgies for bestowing scriptures—the Annunciation of the Covenants—and performing Lingbao levees on ordinands. The Lingbao investiture was a tripartite ritual. The first phase, the Initial Covenant (chumeng 初盟), was a rite for Rending the Tally (fenquan 分卷) that established the ordinand's official status with the gods. The second, the Middle Covenant (zhongmeng 中盟), was a performance of the Nocturnal Annunciation (suqi 夜起), a declaration to the gods that was also an essential element of Lingbao levees. The third, the Grand Covenant (dameng 大盟), was a conferral of 180 precepts (Lingbao chishu yujue miaojing, CT 352, j. 1; Lingbao zhongjian wen, CT 410; Lingbao shoudu yi, CT 528; Fengdao kejie 4.8a-9b; Chuanzhong fang su shuihuo 1.8a; Wushang biyao 39; see Benn 1991; Kohn 1993, 100-6).

Liturgically speaking, the Lingbao order was the most important in medieval Daoism. It was not only responsible for performing the largest number of levees, six, but its scriptures were the sources of many ritual procedures that appeared in the levees of other orders.

The _Levee of Spontaneity_ (ziran zhai 自然齋) was a rite for internal self-cultivation and external salvation of all things. Salvation here meant beseeching the gods for the elimination of disasters and praying to them for
peace and prosperity. A single priest or group of them performed the rite for six or twelve hours from one to a thousand days. The central ritual was a series of venerations in which the officiant requested expiation of sins from the Deities of the Ten Directions, gods that Buddhism introduced to China (Lingbao wugan wen 6b; Ziran zhaiyi, CT 523).

The Levee of the Eight Nodes (bajie zhai 八節齋) took place on the first days of the four seasons, the equinoxes and the solstices. Those were critical times in the cyclical rise and fall of cosmic powers: yin, yang and the four elements. On those occasions priests performed this rite in their levee halls (zhaitang 塞堂) for twelve hours. Like the Levee of Spontaneity, the ritual consisted of obeisances to the Deities of the Ten Directions, but its primary function was to expiate sins that the officiant and seven generations of his ancestors had committed in past and present lives (Lingbao wugan wen 6b; Bajie zhaiyi, CT 1296).

The Levee of the Three Primes (sanyuan zhai 三元齋) was a rite of redemption during which priests sought pardon from the gods for their own violations of precepts and lapses in their study of scriptures. Three times yearly at midnight on the full moon of the first, seventh and tenth lunar months—the festivals of the Three Primes—they executed the levee for six hours in their levee halls. The priests addressed their repentances to twenty-one deities: the Gods of the Ten Directions; the sun, moon, stars and constellations; the Five Marchmounts; and the Three Treasures (Sanyuan xiezui shangfa, CT 417; Lingbao wugan wen 6ab; Wushang beiyao 52).

The Levee of the Covenant with the Perfected (mingzhen zhai 明真齋) took place on open ground in the courtyard of a home for twelve hours in the course of one day and one night. There priests installed a lamp-tree nine feet tall with nine cups of oil. When lit, the light of the nine fires shone on the Nine Heavens above and the nine dark sectors of hell below. The objective of the rite was to extricate the souls of innumerable ancestors who had languished in perdition for millions of kalpas. Although the ancestors mentioned in its writs included those of the officiant, hermit priests dwelling in mountains and officials, the clergy actually performed it for the dead of the family that sponsored it. Through a series of venerations to the Gods of the Ten Directions involving kowtowing and brow beating, the officiant begged for the release of the souls from hell, their liberation from the consequences of their karma, entry into the light, rebirth, acquisition of immortality, and ascension to the chamber of bliss in the heavens above (Mingzhen ke, CT 1411, 15b-24b; Lingbao wugan wen 6a; Wushang beiyao 51; Mingzhen dazhai yangong yi, CT 521; see Chavannes 1919, 172-214).

The Yellow Roster Levee (huanglu zhai 黃籤齋) was, like the preceding, a rite of salvation for ancestors, but differed from it because it sought the release of souls from perdition and their ascension to heaven for nine generations only and required the establishment of an altar. The altar,
erected in a central courtyard, was a square, two-tiered affair with fourteen gates and nine lamp-trees each having nine cups of oil. The deities addressed in the course of the levee were the same twenty-one as those venerated in the Levee of the Three Primes, but the nature of the ritual was different. At each of the stations for the Deities of the Ten Directions the officiant made offerings, gages, of silk and gold dragons. Those pledges served as assurances for covenants sworn with the gods. The rules set fixed quantities for them based on the social status of the levee’s sponsors. Commoners had to submit 136 feet of cloth, nobles 1,360 feet and the emperor 136 rolls. The weight of each gold dragon was one ounce for the emperor, but less for nobles and commoners. When the officiant uttered his prayers at each of the ten stations, he presented a single dragon and varying lengths of silk. The pledges possessed apotropaic powers that repelled evil specters intent on attacking the altar in the course of the rite. For the remaining eleven gods the priest merely offered incense. At the conclusion of the rite, the officiant distributed the silk in order to acquire merit for the dead. The gold dragons were tossed in rivers and buried on mountains to secure the salvation and immortality of the sponsor and/or the officiant (Lingbao wugan wen 6a; Wushang biyao 54; Huanglu zhaiyi, CT 507; Huanglu dazhai licheng yi, CT 508, j. 16; see Maspero 1981, 292-97).

The Gold Roster Levee (jink zhai 金錐齋) was the most powerful Daoist rite in medieval times. It was capable of tempering yin and yang to prevent natural calamities and to protect or save the emperor. The natural calamities included erroneous astral movements, epidemics, floods, holocausts and anything unpropitious. Protecting the emperor encompassed the suppression of rebellions, pacification of the people and perpetuation of dynastic rule. The altar for this rite was exactly the same as that for the Yellow Roster Levee except that the number of lamp-trees was far greater, from ninety to 1,200. The number of those accouterments depended partly on the season during which the rite was performed, but also on the tolerance of its sponsor who was the ruler of the empire. Its liturgy called for obeisances to the Deities of the Ten Directions, but only the first five of those, the Gods of the Five Directions (i.e., elements)— wood/east, fire/south, soil/center, metal/west, and water/north—counted. These were the deities of the Lingbao’s True Writs (zhen-wen 真文). Officiants penned the writs on silk dyed the appropriate colors of the five directions (azure, red, yellow, white, and black), displayed them prominently on five tables at the altar and burned the cloth at the conclusion of the ceremony. Incineration imbued the cosmos with the powers of the elements (Zhenwen tianshu jing 1.7b-30a; Lingbao zhaiji yangjue, CT 532, 1a-7a; Lingbao wugan wen 5b-6a; Wushang biyao 53; Jinlu zhai qian yi, CT 483; see Robinet 1997, 166-77).

Lingbao scriptures were so instrumental in the formation of Daoist rituals during the fifth century that Lu Xiujing subsumed all lower rituals,
excluding the Celestial Masters’ Mud and Soot Levee, under the rubric “the nine procedures for Lingbao levees” (Lingbao ungan wen 5b).

**Dongzhen jing** (The Canon of the Cavern-Perfected). On February 22 of 364, the Perfected Wei Huacun 魏華存 appeared to Yang Xi 杨羲 in the vicinity of Nanjing where she began revealing the Shangqing scriptures to him. For the next seven years she and other immortals transmitted more than ten scriptures and hagiographies as well as more than forty fascicles of oral instructions to Yang during nocturnal visions. Of all Daoist revelations that occurred between 142 and 400 this was the only one that was well-documented and may actually have been the product of true ecstatic experience (Zhen’gao, CT 1016, j. 1-4, 19.2b-4a, 20.9b-10a, 20.11a-12a; see Strickmann 1977, 3, 41-42; Strickmann 1981, 82-88; Robinet 1984, 1: 107-9).

As with other Daoist canons, the **Dongzhen** grew between the time of its revelation and the end of the sixth century. By 600, the corpus that ordinands received during investitures encompassed thirty-four scriptures in forty-one fascicles, seven hagiographies in seven fascicles, two collections of oral instructions (jue 訴) and other materials in thirty-six fascicles, and five liturgies in seven fascicles. Two of the latter included rituals for performing ordinations and three for executing levees. The liturgies for the levees and a truncated version of the investiture rite have survived in the *Wushang biao*. The transmission of the scriptures at Shangqing investitures took place the morning after the Nocturnal Revelation (*sulu* 朧), a rite similar to the Lingbao’s Nocturnal Annunciation (*Fengdao kejie* 4.9b-5.2b; *Wushang biao* 40; see Benn 1991, 95-97).

In the fifth century the Shangqing order had no levees of its own. Its ordination was a rite of passage within the priesthood that marked ascension to a higher state of spirituality. In *Lu Xiujing*’s delineation of Daoist rituals he states that all lower Daoist orders took action or levees as their foundation while the Shangqing took nonaction as its guiding principle. He lists two methods for accomplishing the latter, but they differ only in the texts that priests recited during them. According to his notions, nonaction specifically meant that, after practicing embryonic breathing (*taiyi* 胎息), an adept gazed into his mind to find marvelous insight. The ultimate objective in “nonactive” meditation was to abandon form and forget the body so that the adept could join in nothingness with the mystery, the Dao. This nonaction required rejection of social relationships—friendships and marriage—as well as the adherence to certain dietary regimes. In rituals, it served as a means of erasing visualizations. In the course of rites, officiants used visualizations to send forth the gods of their bodies and evoke cosmic energies from their internal organs to perform external duties. Afterward it was necessary for the priest to “anesthetize the gods” (*mianshen* 眠神) and “quiet the energies” (*jingqi* 靜氣), that is to deactivate them. This meant that the
adept cleared his mind of all the images that he had created (*Lingbao wugan wen* 5a-b).

Circumstances changed after Lu Xiujing’s time, and by the middle of the fifth century the Shangqing order had acquired a set of its own levees. The **Supreme-Perfected’s Levee of the Lower Prime** (*taizhen xiqiyuan zhai* 太真下元齋), addressed to the Sovereign of Humanity, lasted three days. It consisted of fifteen obeisances made at different points of the compass. At each station the officiant recited a plea requesting the gods to liberate seven generations of his ancestors, cause their souls to live again, release them from punishment by fire, blood and knife in hell as well as from rebirth as animals, hungry ghosts or men, and enable them to ascend as immortals to the Southern Palace in the heavens.

The **Supreme-Perfected’s Levee of the Middle Prime** (*taizhen zhongyuan zhai* 太真中元齋), addressed to the Sovereign of Earth, lasted six days. During it the priest performed double obeisances and recited five pleas facing the five directions. In them he asked the gods to forgive him for sins that he had committed in former lives and violations of rules and precepts that he was guilty of in his present life.

The **Supreme-Perfected’s Levee of the Upper Prime** (*taizhen shangyuan zhai* 太真上元齋), addressed to the Sovereign of Heaven, lasted nine days. The officiant performed audience rites and recited pleas at six points of the compass. In his prayers he asked the gods to have an elixir concocted and gold fabricated. By so doing, he could become an immortal, fly aloft into the mysterious void of great space and ascend to the Palace of the Gold Gate Towers (*Jinque gong* 金闕宮) in Heaven. The number of participants at these rites was small, three to nine, and the levee took place indoors. They were not rituals performed for the welfare of the community, public or the state. Instead the priest executed them for his own benefit. (*Wushang biyao* 55-57).

**Texts**

**ORDINATION. Chuanshou jingjie fafu lueshuo** 傳授經戒法錄略說 (*A Synopsis of Transmissions and Bestowals for Scriptures, Precepts, and Liturgical Registers*, CT 1241, 2 j.), by Zhang Wanfu 張萬福 (fl. 700-742), dat. January 1 of 713. Next to the *Fengdao kejie* described below, this is the most valuable survey of Daoist ordinations for the medieval period. Part one defines the ranks in the hierarchy of investitures according to sixteen sets of precepts administered to initiates and ordinands and describes the materials transmitted at the ordinations for Zhengyi, Taixuan, Dongshen
and Lingbao orders. In part two, Zhang comments on various occult writs, talismans and illustrations passed on during those rites. In part three, he supplies a glossary of terms relevant to investitures: pledges, oaths, cloth and the like. Zhang's accounts of the Lingbao and Shangqing ordinations for the Tang Princesses Gold-Immortal and Jade-Perfected are the only descriptions of actual investitures known to me (2.18a-21a). For details, see Benn 1991, 149-51; on Daoist investiture orders as reflected in Dunhuang manuscripts and the translation of the titles to sets of precepts in Zhang’s text see Schipper 1985, 129-31.

**Yujing baojue** 玉經寶決 (The Treasured Instructions of the Jade Scripture, CT 425, 20 folios [pages]), Lingbao canon, dat. fifth century. The procedures for transmitting the *Daodejing*, *Sanhuang wen*, the Lingbao canon and Shangqing scriptures here are older than the investiture rites of the fifth and sixth centuries (2a-3b). It speaks of occasions calling for levees, clacking the teeth to notify the gods, proofreading copies of scriptures and penalties for transcription errors (15b, 8a, 10b).

**Zhengyi mengwei hu** 正一盟威符 (The Orthodox-Unity Registers of Covenantal Awe, CT 1208, 6 j.), author and date unknown. This text contains the major twenty-four Celestial Master Registers including the three that were bestowed on initiates (1.1a-12a).

**Zhengyi wailu yi** 正一外籤儀 (An Orthodox-Unity Liturgy for the Conferral of the Outer Rosters, CT 1243), author unknown, fifth or sixth century. The rules and writs for the transmission of the Celestial Master’s Seventy-Five Generals Register to women and foreigners are supplied here.

**Chuanshou jingjieyi** 傳授經戒儀 (A Liturgy for Transmitting and Bestowing Scriptures and Precepts, CT 1238, 17 folios), author unknown, dat. about 618-649. This text was the eighth fascicle of the *Taixuanjing* (4b; *Sandong zhunang*, 5.5b, 6.1ab, 6.3b) that is now lost. It has a set of instructions for the bestowal of the *Daodejing* including notes on items transmitted, officiants at investitures and pledges (5b-17a). The table of contents for the *Taixuanjing* can be found there (4b-5a).

**Lingbao shijiejing** 禮寶十戒經 (The Lingbao Scripture of the Ten Precepts; CT 459, also P. 2347, P. 2350, S. 6454, P. 3770; 2 folios), author unknown, sixth century. These texts contain both the precepts and the covenantal writs for the initiation of Disciples of Pure Faith (*qingxin dizhi* 清信弟子), recipients of the *Taixuanjing*.

**Chuanshou Daodejingzixu huyi** 傳授道德經紫虛籤儀 (A Liturgy for Transmitting and Bestowing the *Daodejing* and the Register of Purple Vacuity, CT 808, 18 folios), by Du Guangting, ca. 900. Du’s later version of the Taixuan ordination ritual has two lists of texts and other matter transmitted to ordinands (15b, 16a). Although the titles are basically the same as those given in CT 1125 and 1241, there are a few significant variations.
Dongshen badi jing 洞神八帝經 (The Cavern-Deep Scripture of the Eight Sovereigns, CT 640, 32 folios). This and CT 1202 are the only remnants of the Dongshen jing extant in the early sixth century. It contains rules for the transmission of the scripture (16b-17a).

Dongshen sanhuang yi 洞神三皇儀 (A Liturgy for the Three Sovereigns of the Cavern-Divine, CT 803, 7 folios), author unknown, dat. about 618-649. A list of the contents to the Dongshen jing can be found here (5ab) and a description of Rending the Tally as performed at Dongshen ordinations (7a).

Dongshen Sanhuang chuanshou yi 洞神三皇傳授儀 (A Cavern-Divine Liturgy for Transmitting and Bestowing the Writs of the Three Sovereigns, CT 1284, 16 folios) and Dongshen shoudu yi 洞神授度儀 (A Liturgy for Performing the Rite of Bestowal and Ordination for the Cavern-Divine Scripture, CT 1283, 15 folios) are ordination liturgies for the bestowal of the Dongshen jing that were probably compiled before 900.

Lingbao shoudu yi 童寶授度儀 (A Liturgy for Lingbao Transmissions and Ordinations, CT 528, 52 folios), by Lu Xiujing, ca. 454. This is the oldest, longest and best of the ordination liturgies in the Daozang. It is also one of the earliest liturgies for executing a Lingbao levee (Benn 1991, 39-71, 121-36; Yamada 1995, 78-81). For other manuals on initiation and investiture, of post-Tang or unknown provenances, see CT 1126, 1231, 1236, 1237, 1239, 1244 and 1295. Accounts of modern investitures can be found in Schipper 1993, 67-71.

Zhenwen Honshu jing 真文天書經 (The Scripture of the True Writs in Celestial Script, CT 22, 3 j.), Lingbao canon, fifth century. The True Writs that officiants bestowed on ordinands during Lingbao investitures as well as a description of the origins of scriptures at the beginning of the cosmos and their transmission among the gods can be found on 1.1a-30a.

Lingbao zhongjian wen 童寶眾簡文 (The Writs for All Lingbao Slips, CT 410, 13 folios), by Lu Xiujing, fifth century. This is one of the earliest liturgies for the transmission of the True Writs. Lu mentions the Three Covenants into which Lingbao investitures were divided here (1a).

Daoshi shou jingjie fahu zeri li 道士受經戒法蘸揮日曆 (A Schedule for Selecting the Days on which Daoist Priests Should Receive the Scriptures, Precepts and Liturgical Registers, CT 1240, 8 folios), by Zhang Wanfu, after 713. Zhang supplies the proper days for initiations and ordinations, beginning with the conferral of Celestial Master registers and concluding with the transmission of Shangqing scriptures (see Benn 1991, 146-48; Ren and Zhong 1991, 981-82).

Sanshi minghui wen 三師名譜文 (A Writ on the Taboo Names for the Three Preceptors, CT 445, 5 folios), by Zhang Wanfu, 710-713. Here Zhang supplies blank forms to be filled in by preceptors with the particulars of the names; titles and locations of home abbeys; parishes of
registration; and ages of the priests who were ordained and the officiants who presided over their investitures. Priests enunciated these formulas at the Rites of Homage to Preceptors that they performed before their rituals (see Benn 1991, 146–48; Ren and Zhong 1991, 330).

**LEVEES.** *Lingbao wugan wen* 禪寶五感文 (Five Lingbao Writs of Arousal, CT 1278, 7 folios), by Lu Xiujing, dat. 454. Lu’s hierarchy of levees, the earliest, with brief descriptions of the rites is appended to this text (4b–7b; see Bell 1988).

*Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱缺 (Secret Oral Instructions for Ascending to Perfection, CT 421, 3 j.), by Tao Hongjing, ca. 499. The earliest, datable Celestial Master liturgy for submitting petitions to the gods is preserved here (3.11b–14a; see Cedzich 1987; Seidel 1988).

*Chisongzi zhangli* 赤松子章曆 (Master Redpine’s Calendar for Petitions, CT 615, 6 j.), author unknown, dat. Tang. Another liturgy for submitting Celestial Master petitions to the gods appears in this text as well as descriptions of the functions of those documents (see Nickerson 1997, 261–74).

*Zhengyi zhijiao zhaiyi* 正一指教齋儀 (A Liturgy for Performing the Orthodox-Unity’s Levee of Direction and Instruction, CT 799, 6 folios), author and date unknown. This and CT 798 are the sole surviving liturgies for executing this Celestial Master ritual. It contains the twelve rules of the ritual (4a–5a).

*Dongyuan shenzhou zhai xingdaoyi* 洞洞神咒齋行道儀 (A Cavern-Deep Liturgy for Performing the Levee of Divine Incantations, CT 526, 8 folios), by Du Guangting, ca. 900. For other Dongyuan liturgies, also composed by Du, see CT 525 and CT 527.

*Lingbao chishu yinjue miaojing* 禪寶赤書螭缺妙經 (The Lingbao’s Marvelous Scripture of Jade Instructions in Red Script, CT 352, 3 j.), Lingbao canon, fifth century. The elements that were drawn together to construct the Nocturnal Annunciation for Lingbao ordinations and levees can be found in the first fascicle of this scripture.

*Lingbao zhaijie yaojue* 禪寶齋戒要訣 (Essential Instructions for Lingbao Levees and Precepts, CT 532, 24 folios), Lingbao canon, fifth century. There are primitive versions of liturgies for performing a Lingbao levee (1a–7a) and transmitting the *Daode jing* (13ab) in this scripture.

*Ziran zhaiyi* 自然齋儀 (A Liturgy for the Levee of Spontaneity, CT 523, 6 folios), author and date unknown. This is the only liturgy for this Lingbao levee in the *Daozang*. It contains a statement on its function (2b).

*Bajie zhaiyi* 八節齋儀 (A Liturgy for the Lingbao Levee of the Eight Nodes, CT 1296, 9 folios), author and date unknown. This is the sole liturgy for performing this Lingbao levee in the *Daozang*. It specifies six hours of rituals and six hours of scriptural recitation in the course of a day and a night (5b).
Sanyuan xiezui shangfa 三元谢罪上法 (The Three Primes' Superior Method for the Expiation of Sins, CT 417, 16 folios), Lingbao canon, fifth century. This, CT 533, 534 and 535 are liturgies for performing the Lingbao's Levee of the Three Primes.

Mingzhen ke 明真科 (Rules for the Levee of the Covenant with the Perfected, CT 1411, 29 folios), Lingbao canon, fifth century. This contains the oldest version of the liturgy for this levee (15b-24a) and a statement on its functions (24b).

Mingzhen da zhai yangong yi 玄寶明真大齋言功儀 (A Liturgy for the Enunciation of Merit at the Grand Levee of the Covenant with the Perfected, CT 521, 17 folios), by Du Guangting, ca. 900. CT 519 and 520 were also composed by Du and contain other Lingbao liturgies of this sort. Edouard Chavannes' annotated translation of this text is the only complete translation of a medieval Daoist liturgy in a Western language known to me (1919, 172-214).

Huangbt dazhai licheng yi 黃金大齋立成儀 (The Liturgy for Establishing and Completing the Great Levee of the Yellow Roster, CT 508, 57 j.), by Liu Yongguang 留用光 (1134-1206) et al., completed in 1223. Lu Xiujing's liturgy for performing the Nocturnal Annunciation at Yellow Roster Levees, as edited by Zhang Wanfu, is preserved in fascicle sixteen of this work. This is the longest liturgy for the Yellow Roster Levee in the Daozang, but it is untrustworthy for the pre-Song period because the compilers consciously edited it to conform to the needs of their time.

Huangbt zhaiyi 黃金齋儀 (Liturgies for the Yellow Roster Levee, CT 507, 58 j.), by Du Guangting, 901 or later. After presenting a basic three-day liturgy for executing this levee at morning, noon and night (j. 1-9), Du supplies variant forms of this ritual for performance on the birth of an heir to the throne (j. 10-12); to dispel calamities for the state (j. 19-21); at the behest of officials (j. 13-15) and commoners (j. 42-44); to save souls in hell (j. 35-36); and to cure the ill (j. 29-31) among other things. For other Yellow Roster liturgies, most of unknown provenance, see CT 509 to 513.

Jinbt zhai qitian yi 金鉞齋醮儀 (A Liturgy for the Annunciation at the Altar of the Gold Roster Levee, CT 483, 11 folios), by Du Guangting, ca. 900. For other Gold Roster liturgies, most of unknown provenance, see CT 484 to 498.

Daojiao lingyan ji 道教靈驗記 (Records of Supernatural Confirmations for the Daoist Religion, CT 590, Yuanji qiqian 117-122, 18 j.), by Du Guangting, ca. 905. Du records accounts of miracles that occurred in conjunction with the performance of levees in fascicles fourteen and fifteen and elsewhere in this text (Verellen 1989, 139-40,206-7).

COMPENDIA. Fengdao kejie 興道科戒 (Rules and Precepts for Daoist Worship CT 1125, P. 2337, 6 j.), attributed to Jinming Qizhen 金明七真 (fl. 545-554), dat. probably ca. 620. This is the most important

Wushang biyao 無上秘要 (Secret Essentials of the Most High, CT 1138), dat. 577-578 (see Lagerway 1981). This compendium contains four of the oldest liturgies for the investitures of Daoist orders—Taixuan, Dongshen, Dongxuan, and Dongzhen (j. 37, 38, 39, and 40)—as well as liturgies for performing nine levees (j. 48-57). It also includes much material on various subjects relevant to investitures and levees: talismans, hymns, pledges, vestments, recitation of scripture and precepts among other things (j. 25-34, 36, 39, 41-47). Maspero's reconstruction of the Mud and Soot Levee (1981, 384-386) should be treated with great caution since it is not based on a liturgy for that levee. On medieval Daoist ritual in general, see Matsumoto 1983, 210-24.

Keyi jieju chao 科儀戒律龗 (Excerpts from Rules, Liturgies, Precepts, and Codes, CT 463, 16 j.), by Zhu Faman 朱法滿 (d. July 9, 720). Zhu describes levees and the times for their performances (8.1a-2a), the duties of officiants—preceptors, cantors, directors, attendants of incense and lamps—who presided over them (8.7a-19a), vestments for priests of different Daoist orders (9.1a-2b) and several sets of precepts (4.1a-6.8a; see Ren and Zhong 1991, 344-45).

Daomen dingzhi 道門定制 (Hard-and-Levee Rules for Daoists, CT 1224, 10 j.), by Lü Yuansu 呂元宿 et al., dat.118. To my knowledge the only extant versions of the Sanhuang wen, written in esoteric seal script with talismans appended, appear in this work (4.1a-7b). Neither the Badi jing nor Wushang biyao 25 are fragments of them (Andersen 1994, 14), but the citations in the latter that supply rules for their use may have come from the first three fascicles of the Dongshen jing, in which the Sanhuang wen appeared.

**Practices**

**ORDINATION.** Investitures established the ordinands' place in the lineages of transmission that not only stretched back to the beginning of the universe, but also forward to generation after generation of priests. At every step of ordination, rules required ordinands to recognize their status
as successors to their preceptors and the officiants at their investitures. Among the first acts that an aspirant for the priesthood had to perform was the Visitation to the Preceptor (yishi 諸師), during which he paid homage to his master by kowtowing before submitting a request to receive the scriptures. In the rite of ordination and the levees that he performed afterward as a priest, he had to make obeisances to, and visualize and recite particulars about, the three officiants—the Preceptors of Ordination, Registration and Scriptures—at his ordination, and pray for their immortality. The purpose of this was not only to establish the ordinand’s position in the lineage of his order, but also his place in the cosmos (Wushang biyao 35.1a-b; Chuanshou jingjie yi 12a-13a; Sanshi minghuai wen; see Benn 1991, 41-42, 141-42).

The actual transmission of the scriptures entailed transcription of the texts. Before the invention of printing in the seventh or eighth centuries this was the only means by which one person could acquire a book from another. In the case of the transmission for the Daode jing the copying took place during the rite of investiture. The rules stipulated that ordinands had only the three days of that rite to make fair copies of the canon in ten fascicles. In other instances, notably Dongshen and Dongxuan investitures, the liturgies merely state that the scriptures reposed on the altars. Presumably ordinands transcribed those canons before or after the performance of the ordination rite. The transcription of scriptures was serious business. According to rules in one of the Lingbao scriptures recipients of holy writs were required to proofread their copies three times, and lost one year of their life spans for every word erroneously written. (Lingbao wugan wen 7b; Lingbao zhaijie yaojue, CT 532, 10b).

Daoist ordinations not only established a priest’s place in the lineage of clerics, saints, celestial mandarins and gods, it also afforded him the opportunity of advancement. Acquisition of one canon opened the door to higher ranks in the hierarchy of the priesthood. At each step of his rise the priest received larger, more prestigious and more powerful scriptures affording him access to increasingly greater and more awesome deities through separate rituals of investiture. This system was comparable to promotions of civil servants in the imperial bureaucracy where merit and learning were factors in promotions. There was one exception to the rule that ordinands received canons at separate rites. During the reign of Emperor Wu (561-578) of the Northern Zhou the throne issued “New Liturgies Imperially Compiled” (Yuzhi xinyi 御制新儀) that authorized the transmission of the Ten Precepts, Daode jing, Sanhuang wen, Lingbao scriptures and Shangqing canon at the same time on the same altar. This was probably an aberration that did not long survive Emperor Wu. He was a patron of Daoism who used the religion to promote his own secular ideology. It is likely that he revised the normal procedures for ordinations to supply himself with a large number of priests who would promote that
ideology and undermine Buddhism. Whatever the case, the ultimate objective for ordinands was to receive the three most esteemed canons and to assume the title Liturgical Preceptor of the Three Caverns (Sandong fashi 三洞法師; Wushang biyao 35; Lingbao shijie jing, CT 459).

The rites of Daoist investitures were overwhelmingly juridical in nature. The taking of vows or swearing of oaths at altars during ordinations is common to nearly all religions, but Daoist investitures went far beyond those simple acts. The roots of their procedures lay in legal, economic and political practices that had governed Chinese society from time immemorial.

At Daoist ordinations the Chief officiant assumed the role of guarantor. During the reading of the Yellow Silk Petition (huangzeng zhang 黃紡 章), and its invocation at Lingbao investitures, he assured the Deities of the Five Directions that his students had earned the right to receive the canon by virtue of their diligence, submission of pledges, karma, encounter with certain scriptures and establishment of covenants. Like Ge Hong before them, these ordinands had earned their preceptor's trust and respect. Therefore, he undertook the responsibility of commending them to the gods. It was also his duty to administer oaths (shì 誓) that committed ordinands never to transmit the canon indiscriminately, reveal its contents, violate its precepts, converse or disparage the scriptures or bestow the texts for a fee. Daoist scriptures were powerful, esoteric writs that could inflict great harm if they fell into the wrong hands or passed on to the ignorant who had not received oral instructions for their use from a preceptor (Wushang biyao 39.3b-4a; Lingbao shoudu yi 43a-b; see Benn 1991, 44-45, 67-68).

Preceptors did not take this duty lightly because an officiant who transmitted scriptures to those unqualified to receive them was subject to punishment. The mandarins of the underworld would cut his life short and transform him with fire or water into a specter in the world of the dead. Since the goal of all Daoist priests and adepts was to acquire physical immortality and an office in the bureaucracy of the hereafter, this was a heavy sanction indeed. Even worse the erring preceptor would bring the wrath of the gods down on the heads of his kinsmen. The bureaucrats of the shades would review the dossiers of seven generations of his ancestors and condemn his dead kinsmen to suffer on the mountain of knives and in the village of fire in hell as well as sentence them to be reincarnated as hungry ghosts, animals or men (Wushang biyao 33; Keyijielu chao 1.3a-7b).

As the wording of the Yellow Silk Petition indicates, the ordinands bound themselves to the gods by submitting covenants as Ge Hong had. The rules required formal written Covenantal Writs at various stages of initiation and all investitures. During ordination rituals the ordinands read those documents aloud to convey them to the gods of the Nine
Heavens above and announced them to the Sovereigns of the Five Directions and myriad powers on earth below. In the text of the covenant for receiving the *Daode jing*, the ordinands promised to treat the scriptures as personal treasures and venerate them with offerings forever. Should they violate the rules or their covenants with the gods, they declared that they would accept condemnation to the dark prisons of eternal night in hell without uttering any objections (*Lingbao shou yì* 37a-38a; *Wushang biyao* 37.3ab; see Benn 1991, 60).

The word of the ordinands alone was insufficient to guarantee his compliance with covenants and codes. Rules called for them to submit concrete manifestations of their commitments in the form of pledges. Those gages served as assurances for their oaths to the divine rulers of the unseen world. As previously noted, the size and value of the pledges depended on the status of the persons submitting them. During the ordination of two imperial princesses in 711, the ladies tendered 7,920 grams of gold, 240,000 copper coins, 295 meters of cloud brocade, 2,832 meters of purple silk gauze, 5,664 meters of pongee, 24,000 sheets of fine paper and seventy-six kilograms of incense among other items. Obviously, these extravagant amounts were well beyond the wherewithal of anyone but the imperial family. The pledges required of commoners were much less than those of the princesses (*Chuanshoujingjie fafu luoshuo* 2.18a-21a; Benn 1991, 33-37).

With the exception of the transmission of the *Daode jing*, all levels of ordination included a ritual for *Rending the Tally*, another legal formality. During the rite, as performed at Cavern-Divine investitures, the officiant ordered the ordinand to seize a knife by its hilt and place it over a graph at the top of the tally that was written on paper. Then the student pulled the blade, while the preceptor pushed it, to cut the document in two. The officiant retained one half of it and the ordinand the other. This was another ancient bureaucratic practice. When an emperor, official or military officer received a subordinate into his service, the superior split a tally, keeping one-half and giving the other to his retainer. Subsequently, whenever circumstances required, the two men mated the uniquely parted pieces to authenticate appointments to office, commissions for performing specific tasks or socio-political status. In Daoism, the rite firmly established the ordinand as the preceptor's subordinate (*Dongshen shou yì* 7a; *Lingbao ziran quan yì*, CT 522; see Rotours 1952; Benn 1991, 42-43).

Of all facets in Daoist investitures and levees the administration of precepts (*jie*) best reflected the influence of Buddhism. Originally in the Han dynasty *jie* or admonition was a type of rescript, specifically cautionary in nature, that the throne issued to its officials. Whatever function those documents served in the early Celestial Master movement, they assumed a role of enormous importance in Daoism after Buddhism began ordaining Chinese monks in the fourth century. Buddhists adopted the term admoni-
tion for their precepts, and their ordinations were nothing more than administrations of precepts as vows. The Lingbao canon that assimilated many Buddhist notions elevated precepts to a status that they had not enjoyed in earlier scriptures. Subsequently every Daoist order acquired a set or sets of their own that ordinands received during their investitures. Some of the sets were virtually identical to those of the Buddhists, while others were strictly Daoist in character (Wushang biyao 44-46; Keyi jielü chao 4.1a-6.8a; Chuanzhou jingjie fahu lueshuo 1.1a-2a; Sandong zhangjie wen, CT 178; see Schipper 1985; Penny 1996; Hendrischke 1996; Kohn 1993, 100-6).

Finally, Daoist ordinations were rituals of empowerment. During those rites ordinands not only received official titles, divine permission to acquire the scriptures and authorization to perform the levees associated with them, but also the right to hold and wield the magic instruments contained in the canons. First and foremost among those devices were the registers that ordinands of all Daoist orders received at investitures. In ancient times, they were rosters of a king's or noble's retainers. In Daoism, they became registers of the gods. Those rolls supplied the titles of deities whom a priest could summon and implore to do his biding. Most of the gods were celestial and terrestrial mandarins and marshals, but in some cases, notably Lingbao registers, they included gods residing in the priest's body—in his brain, heart, hair, skin, eyes, lungs, liver, nose, tongue and elsewhere. By evoking the deities named in the rosters the priest could aid the state, save the people, destroy bloodthirsty specters, prevent disease from arising, preserve life and gather in goblins (Zhengyi mengwei lu; Lingbao ershisi sheng tu jing, CT 1407, 21a-47a).

The most ubiquitous and versatile of the occult tools bestowed on ordinands at investitures were talismans. They served many of the same functions as registers, but differed from the latter in that they were not rosters of the gods and were inscribed in an arcane script that only the initiated could read or write. Some idea of their liturgical role can be gleaned from their use in activating Inciting Staffs (cezhang 策杖), at Lingbao ordinations. In the course of that rite ordinands sanctified five talismans representing the deities of the five elements or directions. They accomplished that by visualizing colored qi for the talismans that entered their mouths and flowed into their viscera where the vapors produced glorious lights that radiated to the nape of their necks. After each visualization the students handed the talisman to their preceptor who installed it in one of five hollows of segments in a bamboo staff. When all five were in place, the officiant sealed the holes into which he had inserted the writs and bestowed the batons on the ordinands. After ordination the priests employed the staffs during levees, pointing the top upward to communicate with celestial deities or the bottom downward to communicate with terrestrial gods. In this fashion the priest induced the gods to perform the functions called for in the liturgy of the levee and to annihilate demons (Zhenwen tianshu jing
LEVEES. The roots of Daoist levees lay in formal court audiences. Audiences were hearings at which the emperor received officials to conduct the day-to-day business of government. During them, the sovereign received reports from his ministers and issued decrees to them. It was the priest's responsibility to make all arrangements for his audiences with the gods. One of the priest's first tasks was to establish a defense for the altar or levee hall. At Lingbao rites, even before entering those sacred spaces, the officiant visualized a purple cloud that covered the entire area like a crown and a host of 50,000 warriors, 10,000 for each of the Five Sovereigns. That army was comparable to the guard units that stood watch at imperial audiences. Later in the rite the priest chanted the Invocation of Guardian Powers and Gods (song wei lingshen zhu 聆禽神祝), during which he visualized the gods of his five viscera, the five sacred mountains, the five stars and the five sovereigns standing guard in his body. Then he recited the invocation in five parts, evoking the radiant qi of the five directions and charging them with restraining, obstructing, slaying and otherwise deterring demons and specters that might attack the altar or levee hall (Lingbao shoudu yi 8a, 10a-11a; see Benn 1991, 126, 129).

Visualization was the instrument by which an officiant actualized deities. He first envisioned an ether of a specific color in his mind. Then he transformed the cloud into the image of the god dressed in raiments of a hue appropriate to it. The vapor was the primordial essence of the deity, but in and of itself was ineffectual until the priest gave it an anthropomorphic form. The officiant had to take great care in envisioning the proper attire for the god lest he evoke the wrong deity. Next the officiant performed a series of acts intended to inform deities that he was convoking an audience to transmit documents. To accomplish that end he first notified the gods by clacking his teeth (kouchi 叩齒), a specific number of times. The number varied according to the deities addressed—nine times for the rulers of the Nine Heavens, thirty-six times for the sovereigns of the Thirty-Six Heavens, for example. The priests sent signals of this sort to the gods throughout the rite when he recited various writs that he wished them to hear (Yujing baqjue 8a).

The objective of clacking the teeth was to catch the attention of the gods only. It conveyed no message, so priests resorted to several devices to inform deities of their intentions. Among the first was the Opening of the Censer (faJu 燃爐). After the lighting of incense the officiant recited an invocation, in which he called on the deified Laozi to summon forth thirty-six incense officers from his, the priest's, body. Those internal spirits were envoys who announced the commencement of the ritual to the perfected mandarins and true gods of the soil, hamlets and cities of the district where
the levee took place. The incense was not only the bearer of the message, but also a means of inducing the qi of the gods to descend and enter the priest’s body. In addition its fragrance was capable of destroying defilements and thereby purifying the altar to ready it for the rite (Lingbao shoudu yi 11b-12a; Benn 1991, 129).

The most elaborate form of notification at Lingbao levees was the rite of Externalizing the Bureaucrats (chuguan 出官). During that act the officiant summoned deities residing in his own body by reciting their titles and describing their majestic vestments and regalia. Then the priest arrayed his retainers as a cortège. He installed the clerk on duty at the center, officers in charge of healing to his left as guards, officials bearing banners to his front, functionaries bearing insignia to his rear, the mandarin of the yang nimbus to his left and the mandarin of the yin nimbus to his right. After he finished arranging his entourage of those and other gods, he stationed a guard of tiger-tilting cavaliers; armored infantry; strongmen; bailiffs charged with gathering in and devouring specters, demons and toxins; a clerk for submitting petitions, and others before, behind and around him. Equipped with a train befitting an emperor or noble, he set out with his cortège to visit the Celestial Master parishes, holy mountains, elysian fields, sun, moon, stars, constellations and other regions of the cosmos. There he announced his intention to perform a levee to the greatest of the divine lords and sovereigns (Lingbao shoudu yi 4a-6b; Benn 1991, 124-25).

Toward the end of the levee the officiant dismantled his entourage and dismissed his retainers with the rite of Restoring the Bureaucrats (fuguan 恢官). He called on the functionaries to return to his body and resume their customary stations therein so that they could stabilize and protect it. He also cautioned them to put themselves in order and wait for the next occasion on which he would summon them again for duty at another ritual (Lingbao shoudu yi 7a-b, 47a-49a; see Benn 1991, 125, 134).

Externalizing the Bureaucrats appears to have been a soul voyage, an ancient Chinese shamanistic ritual during which priests in a trance sent their souls out to the far-reaches of the cosmos to meet with the gods. However, in a variant form of the Daoist rite the officiant, who summoned hundreds of immortal officials and millions of warriors from his body, ordered them to split up and inform deities on their own. In either case, the levee was a gathering at which the priest’s spirit minions paid court to gods and their underlings (Lingbao shoudu yi 13b-21a; Benn 1991, 130-31).

In these acts the officiant played the role of commander-in-chief, a superior mandarin in charge of inferior officials and warriors residing in his body as well as external deities, their functionaries and their soldiers. However, the priest was also a subordinate to higher authorities. As such he had to pay homage to the gods by repeatedly bowing, kneeling, prostrating and kowtowing to them at levees. The priest’s subservience was also apparent
in the wording of certain acts and documents. In the “Entreaty to the Immortal Mandarins” (qing xianguan 請仙官), he implored millions of infantry and cavalry of the celestial immortals, terrestrial immortals, perfected, sun, moon, stars and other deities to descend to their levee halls, oversee the ritual and accomplish the ends for which the rite was being performed. Officiants did not have power over the great deities of heaven. In the levee’s writs addressed to those unseen powers, priests employed obsequious phrases such as “I beg you,” “in abject fear,” “banging my head,” “at the risk of death” and “I dare offend you,” that emphasized their servility to their masters. Furthermore, during Lingbao levees officiants sang Formulas to the Deities of the Ten Directions. Each of those chants began with the words, “I most earnestly entrust my fate to” (zhixin guaining 至心歸命). The recitations were in effect oaths of allegiance to the gods in which priests affirmed their obedience to the will of their superiors (Lingbao shoudu yi 12a-13b; Benn 1991, 129-30).

Like the emperor and his ministers, Daoist priests also served as intermediaries between humanity and the gods. In one form or another many levees had acts whose purpose was to effect the salvation of rulers, officials, priests, parishioners and most importantly their ancestors. The most prevalent of those pieties at Lingbao rituals were the Expiations (xie 資). This term is often mistranslated as “confession.” Although the phrase “to admit fault” (shouguo 聲過) appears occasionally in the liturgies, the nature of sin characterized in them was formalistic or nebulous—all transgressions that the living or dead have committed in this and former lives, or all violations of rules by officiant. Furthermore, there is no obligation imposed on sinners or their agents in the writs to acknowledge specific wrong doings in the texts. To the contrary, during Expiations priests requested that the gods eradicate sins and/or excise reports of them in their records so that the souls of the dead could be released from hell and avoid reincarnation as hungry ghosts, animals or humans. The spirits of ancestors could then enter the light, become immortal and ascend to heaven. Thus the remission of sin was yet another bureaucratic process accomplished by the intercession of the priest who addressed his plea through official channels. Likewise, immortality was not the product of nostrums, elixirs, yoga or other practices, but a divine dispensation of grace that the clergy induced the unseen powers to bestow (Wushang biyao 52.3b, 53.6ab, 54.8a-15a).

As audiences, Daoist levees were instruments for communicating with the gods. Standing on an altar or in a levee hall, the officiant addressed his messages to deities on three planes: the celestial in the heavens above where the most powerful gods presided, the terrestrial at the center where the sovereigns of the five and ten directions governed, and the subterranean under the sacred mountains where judges of the dead ruled. In the course of levees, priests orchestrated an elaborate process for transmitting
documents to his superiors on those planes. Both the messages and the procedures for conveying them were bureaucratic in origin, substance and form. Three of the documents—the announcement, the petition and the manifesto (biao 表)—were standard memorials that officials submitted to the throne during the Han Dynasty.

The announcement was another notification that officiants read to inform the gods that they were about to perform a levee at an auspicious hour of the day for a given purpose. In it they asked the highest deities to inform the Gods of the Five Directions and the sacred mountains to oversee the rite and promised not to violate the rules governing the ritual (Ling-bao shoudu yi 8b-9a; Benn 1991, 128).

The petition was the oldest form of document that Daoists used in their rites. When the codifiers of ritual constructed liturgies for levees in the fifth and sixth centuries, they incorporated those writs into their rites. There they served some of the same functions that they had in early Celestial Master rituals. For example, the officiant at Lingbao levees chanted the “Gold Perfected’s Petition” (jiazhen zhang 金真章) to vanquish demons. The petition also served other ends. Toward the end of Lingbao levees the priest dispatched the “Enunciation of Merit” (yangmg 㓣功), in which he requested that the Gods of the Three Heavens confer merits on the spirit functionaries of his, the cleric’s, body as rewards for their service in his cortège. The number of merits to be bestowed—3,000, 2,000, 1,000 and 500—depended on the magnitude of the spirit officer’s contribution to the transmission of documents and counted toward his promotion to a higher-ranking post in the bureaucratic hierarchy of immortals. This system of commendation was based on the practices of the civil service during the Han dynasty (Ling-bao shoudu yi 9a-10a, 47a-49a; Benn 1991, 128, 134).

The manifesto was the most important document submitted to the gods during the Nocturnal Annunciation at Lingbao ordinations and levees. Also called the Petition on Yellow Silk at investitures it contained the preceptor’s statement that he was going to transmit the canon to his disciples. It differed from the previous writs because it conformed precisely to the standard form for memorials that officials submitted to the throne. The manifesto began with the phrase, “I am sending word up” (shangyan 上言) and concluded with a signature that supplied the name of the officiant and the district of his registration, the date when it was submitted and the place where it was tendered. Furthermore, after reading it aloud, the priest performed a separate rite to dispatch it. He uttered an incantation that ordered the spirit functionaries from his body to seize the document and convey it to the deities. Finally he issued the “Rescript of the Strict Bond” (zhongyue chi 重約敕), in which he commanded twelve of his assistant calligraphers (internal gods) to correct all errors and supply all omissions in his manifesto before they turned it over to the gods. This punctilious regard
for accuracy was necessary because the gods acted on the wording of the documents that they received and stored the writs in their archives. Errors and omissions in an officiant's writs led to misinterpretations on their part and caused disasters for the priest and his parishioners or patrons (Lingbao shoudu yi 6b-7a; Benn 1991, 44-45).

It would be a mistake to assume that state ideology and religion were the only sources for the theory and practice of the Daoist priesthood and liturgy. Many facets of levees—hymns, dances, salutes and invocations—as well as aspects of the priest's role in performing them derived from occult traditions that flourished before the advent of the religion. Most importantly, unlike the emperor and his officials, the clergy did not derive their dominion from charisma, personal or institutional, or the law. Their power sprang from their ability to control qi, external and internal. The structure of altars for Yellow Roster and Gold Roster Levees included gates through which external qi from distant nodes of the cosmos flowed, but they did not enter the sacred space spontaneously. It was the officiant's task to implore the Gods of the Ten Directions to send them forth. Afterward he manipulated his own qi in response. The priest visualized a light emanating from the rear of his lungs that covered his entire body and imparted a golden hue to it. Then the officiant envisioned a round beam of luminescence at the nape of his neck and radiated it in all directions. In that manner he consecrated the altar, changing it into a primitive engine powered by cosmic gases/energies and endowing it with an aura that sanctified the rite (Lingbao shoudu yi 10a-11a; Benn 1991, 38,129).

The priest's power did not reside only in his personal control of qi. It derived also from the magic scripts that he received during ordination and employed subsequently in rituals. The most potent of those were the Lingbao's True Writs that were capable of altering natural forces for the welfare of mankind and the state when implanted and burned at the Gold Roster Levee. Furthermore, mere recitation of some scriptures such as the Dongyuan shengzhou jing was sufficient to prevent and alleviate calamities caused by evil spirits. In fact the chanting of scripture assumed a major role in Daoist liturgy after 400, probably under the influence of Buddhism that advocated the practice for the perpetuation of its dogma and the salvation of the dead. Buddhism was also responsible for the Daoist notion that the performance of ritual was a means of accumulating merit (gongde 德) for the dead that would lead to their liberation from perdition and rebirth.

Finally, Daoists not only believed that their rituals effected changes in the world of the living and the realm of the dead by means of prayers, penance and pieties, but also that the performance of the rites in and of itself elicited miracles. They thought of levees as means for arousing the gods who would respond with work of wonders. When Emperor Ming fell ill in 471, Lu Xiujing executed the Levee of the Three Primes to pray for
the state. On May 25 the sky grew dark with clouds, a gale blew up and a
light rain moistened the dust. As Lu sang the liturgy between 9:00 and
11:00 in the evening, a yellow cloud in the form of a jeweled canopy rose
from below to a height of one-hundred feet and completely covered the
palace courtyard. In a few moments the vapors became a multicolored
nimbus that shone on the eaves of the roof and porches. After drifting to
and fro for quite a while, it turned and moved over a scripture hall where
it gradually dissipated. The emperor was then cured. However, he did not
survive for long. He died on May 10 of the following year at the age of
thirty-three (Sandong zhunang 1.7b-8a).

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

DAOISM IN THE TANG (618–907)

LIVIA KOHN AND RUSSELL KIRKLAND

DESCRIPTION

The Tang dynasty has often been called the “Golden Age” of Chinese history. At that time, the country was once again united under a Chinese ruling house, it was respected and often copied by neighboring cultures and its society was not afflicted by rigid social controls. There was relative harmony among the country’s major value systems, and new creeds, such as Manichaeanism, Zoroastrianism, Tantrism, Islam and Judaism, were received openly in the culturally diverse capital of Chang’an. In part this openness may be accredited to the emperors themselves, as the Tang ruling house, with roots in the Turkic peoples, adopted a universalistic ethos to their government. Then again, there was economic prosperity and relative peace, which made it easier to be open intellectually.

Just as a number of new Buddhist schools that had emerged in the late Six Dynasties—Chan 禪, Huayan 华严, Tiantai 天台 and Sanlun 三论—consolidated themselves (see Weinstein 1987), so the Daoist religion developed an integration and synthesis of its teachings and organizations. There were no new revelations or foundings of new movements (see Seidel 1990, 36; 1997, 56), but practices and beliefs were variously refined and expanded, and the social role of Daoists increased in importance. On the political plane, Daoism was more dominant than in any other period of Chinese history, mainly because it helped to legitimate the ruling house, whose surname Li 李 linked it with Laozi (Li Er 李耳) as ancestor and whose ascent to power was aided by Daoist millenarian prophecies (see Bokenkamp 1994; Hendrischke 1993). More generally, the Tang can be called the most significant period in the history of Daoism, because it was then that the religion showed that it could satisfy the spiritual, cultural and political needs of the entire society.

To be a Daoist meant, in Tang times, that one could become a priest, serve at court or live in seclusion writing poetry, history or stories about the immortals. There is little evidence that any Tang Daoist regarded any of those paths as invalid or unworthy of respect. While Chinese of all periods
have honored scholars, poets and court officials, in Tang times the clerical life was equally respected, and many accomplished and talented men, and women as well, entered "the church" instead of pursuing secular goals and were honored and respected for doing so (see Duyvendak 1949).

Tang Daoism is fairly well studied today, although its full appreciation requires a different view from the Confucian-centered perspective of other ages, since Daoism had penetrated the Tang elite and pervaded their worldview, activities and writings. On the other hand, because the sources were largely written by and for literati and thus focus on the activities of the elite, the study of the common people and ordinary Daoist practice is still in its infancy. There were thousands of ordained monks and nuns at the time, yet they mostly went unnoticed and do not appear except in some Dunhuang manuscripts. Their everyday lives remain shrouded in mystery (see Barrett 1996; Kirkland 1996; 1997b).

While Daoism was officially supported throughout the dynasty, its religious development can be divided into three phases. First, the early Tang, from the founding through the seventh century, was an age of integration, when Mahāyāna Buddhist thought merged once again into Daoism. This is manifested in a number of new scriptures as well as in a tendency of thought known as Chongxuan 重玄 (Twofold Mystery). This phase also saw the production of encyclopedias and integrative summaries of the religion, most notably the works of Wang Xuanhe 王懸河, and was a time of standardization of monastic rules and the ordination hierarchy.

Second, the high Tang, the reign of Xuanzong (713-756), saw the rise of Daoism as official state cult and the emergence of leading spiritual leaders and poets, such as Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 and Wu Yun 吳筠. Their worldview can be described as mystical, and they developed an integrated outline of Daoist practice, from nourishing life to the attainment of oneness with the Dao. The third phase was the late Tang, from the rebellion of An Lushan 安慶山 in 755 to the end of the dynasty. It saw a continued imperial support for Daoism, the emergence of a several new texts associated with ideas of "purity and tranquility" (qingjing 清靜) and the beginnings of inner alchemy. The organized schools declined as imperial infrastructure failed, yet the ritualist-official Du Guangting 杜光庭 created an enormous Daoist synthesis and the foundation was laid for new developments to come.

**History**

**THE SEVENTH CENTURY.** The founding of the Tang dynasty was accompanied by millenarian prophecies that a sage-king bearing the surname Li would soon appear (Seidel 1969; 1984; Benn 1977, 24-35;
Li Yuan 李淵, the later Gaozu (r. 618-627), was identified as such, and also as a descendant of Li Er, the earthly manifestation of Lord Lao, who sent auspicious signs and predictions.

One such prediction had earlier come from Wang Yuanzhi 王逹知 (528-635; biog. Jiu Tangshu 舊唐書 192.5125-26, Xin Tangshu 新唐書 204.5803-4, Yunji qiqian 5.11a-13a, Maoshan zhi 茅山志 [CT 304] 22.1a-11a), a scion of the southern elite who studied the Dao under a disciple of Tao Hongjing 唐澄靖 (456-536) on Maoshan. He was summoned to the court of Sui Yangdi (r. 605-617), but the emperor disregarded Wang's advice against moving the capital to the south. Later Wang predicted the rise of the Tang by informing Li Yuan that he would become the next emperor, and "secretly transmitted to him [Daoist] sacred registers and the [Heavenly] mandate" (Benn 1977, 31-43; Wechsler 1985, 69-73; Kirkland 2000). In 621, Wang further recognized the next Tang emperor Taizong and lauded him as "the Son of Heaven of Great Peace" (Taiping Tianzi 太平天字). Taizong reportedly offered him a government position, which Wang declined. In 635, the emperor issued a rescript expressing gratitude for Wang's attentions, and in 680 his successor Gaozong canonized him. Within the Daoist community, Wang was later stylized as tenth Shangqing patriarch, after Tao Hongjing; whether Daoists of the seventh century actually had a formal lineage, like that of Chan Buddhists, remains unclear (see Barrett 1996, 28; Benn 1977, 31-43; Kirkland 1986a, 43-44; Wechsler 1985, 69-73; Yoshikawa 1990).

Other purported signs of Daoist legitimization at the Tang founding included the miraculous appearance of Lord Lao in 617 and 618, when he first sent the god of Mount Huo 霍山, then the commoner Ji Shanxing 吉善行 of Mount Yangjiao 羊角山, to convey a prophecy to Li Yuan that he would win the empire. The god also made a withered cypress break into new bloom, choosing his birthplace at Bozhou 毛州 (near Luyi 鹿邑 in Henan) for the occasion. In response to this, the emperor in 620 honored the god formally as “Sage Ancestor” (shengzu 聖祖) of the dynasty and so renamed the center at Louguan 樓觀, which eagerly supported him (see “The Northern Celestial Masters;” Kohn 1998c). Mount Yangjiao (Ramhorn) was later renamed Longjiao 龍角 (Dragonhorn) in honor of the events and a state abbey established there, the Qingtang guan 慶唐觀 (Abbey of Tang Blessings).

These events are recorded in inscriptions at the relevant places. The first of them is the Zongsheng guan ji 杜聖觀記 (Record of the Monastery of the Ancestral Sage), which was set up at Louguan in 625 and is today contained in the Gu Louguan ziyun yangqing ji 古樓觀紫雲行慶經 (Collection of Abundant Blessings of the Purple Clouds at the Old Lookout-Tower, CT 957, 1.1a-4b, repr. Chen et al. 1988, 46-47). The second inscription is the Qingtang guan ji shengming 慶唐觀記聖銘 (Sage Inscription and Record of the
Abbey of Tang Blessings; Chen et al. 1988, 111-13), engraved on Mount Longjiao in 729. It recounts the mysterious events surrounding the founding of the dynasty and includes a supplementary inscription, dated to 823 (Chen et al. 1988, 113-14). A Yuan-dynasty collection of these and other documents is found in the *Longjiao shan zhi* 龍角山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Longjiao, CT 968).

The two emperors who followed, **Taizong** (r. 627-650) and **Gaozong** (r. 650-684), further established Daoism as the nation's premier cultural tradition (Barrett 1996, 29-45). Edicts of 625 and 637 gave Daoists precedence over Buddhists, which led to hefty protests on the Buddhist side and a number of court debates in which Daoist thinkers were prominent. These emperors also set up imperially sponsored abbeys, most importantly at Louguan, Maoshan and Bozhou. In so doing they followed the model of the Sui rulers who had coopted the cult to the five sacred mountains and certain Buddhist sanctuaries for political purposes (see Forte 1992). In 666, Gaozong expanded this system to establish state abbeys in each of the over 300 prefectures. In addition, the seventh-century rulers placed the Daoist clerical community (alongside the Buddhists) under government auspices and created formal law codes for its regulation (see Ch'en 1973, 95-102), indicating that they found the religion politically significant. Used carefully, Daoism could be counted upon to benefit the state.

Both emperors also summoned leading Daoists and thaumaturges to court, notably Pan Shizheng and Ye Fashan. **Pan Shizheng** 潘師正 (585-682; biog. *Jiu Tangshu* 192.5126, *Xin Tangshu* 196.5605, *Zhenxian tongjian 真仙通鑑* [CT 296] 25.4b-7b, *Maoshan zhi* 11.1a-2a) was the eleventh Shangqing patriarch and leading disciple of Wang Yuanzhi. Living on Mount Gaosong 高嵩山 (Henan), he received several visits from Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu between 676 and 683. The former reportedly requested talismans and texts from him in 676, which Pan refused to provide. However, certain sources claim that he joined the emperor in an extensive discussion of the Dao, a record of which allegedly (and probably spuriously) appears in the *Daomen jingfa 道門經法* (Scriptures and Methods for Daoist Followers, CT 1128). This text contains questions and answers about the Dao, a summary of basic Daoist beliefs and practices and a glossary of Daoist terms. After his death, Pan was canonized as the Master Who Embodies the Mystery (Tixuan xiansheng 誠玄先生; see Barrett 1996, 38-39; Kroll 1986, 148; Kirkland 1986a, 44; Benn 1977, 49-50).

**Ye Fashan** 叶法善 (631-720; biog. *Jiu Tangshu* 192.5107-8, *Xin Tangshu* 204.5805, *Daojiao linyan ji 道教靈驗記* [CT 590] 14.8a-9a, *Taiping guangji* 216.170-74, *Tang Ye zhenren zhuan 唐葉真人傳* [CT 779] by Zhang Daotong 張道通 [13th c.]) was descended from a family well versed in the arcane arts. His father and grandfather received imperial honors in 713 and 717, while Ye himself—proficient in fortune-telling and the performance of
rituals—was courted by five rulers, beginning with Gaozong in the 650s. A court thaumaturge, he was lauded in 739 epitaph as an immortal who protected the country and, according to Jiang Fang’s 蒋防 Huangzi 隱希志 (Record of Returning to Subtlety, ed. T’ang-tai congshu 唐代叢書 32.6a-9a, dat. 9th c.), received a revelation that identified him as an immortal in exile. He was especially involved in communications with the otherworld, such as the famous rite of “tossing the dragons” (toulong 投龍), in which a golden image of a dragon was ritually thrown into a waterway to take messages to the gods (see Chavannes 1919; Benn 1977, 78-84; Kamitsuka 1992b; inscriptions in Chen et al. 1988, 79-80, 93, 123). Soon after his death in 720, Ye Fashan became a legendary figure and model of Tang thaumaturges (see Barrett 1996, 33; Cadonna 1984; Kirkland 1986a, 126-46; 1992b; 2000).

In addition to surrounding himself with eminent Daoists, Gaozong in 666 gave a new title to the divinized Laozi (Xuanyuan huangdi 玄元皇帝, “Sovereign Emperor of Mystery and Primordiality”) and rejected a newly found manuscript of the Sanhuang wen 三皇文 (Texts of the Three Sovereigns) as a forgery, instead elevating the Daodejing to higher sacral status. In 675, he moreover issued the first imperial order for the compilation of a Daoist canon and, in 678, made the Daodejing a compulsory text for the official examinations. In 670, Empress Wu’s only daughter, the Taiping Princess 太平公主, was nominally ordained as a Daoist priestess, and although that ordination was apparently a ruse, “no less than twelve other princesses are recorded as having followed her precedent and entered Daoist communities during the next two centuries” (Barrett 1996, 35-36; see Benn 1991, 10-11).

Doctrinally Daoism developed through new philosophical writings and Mahāyāna-style scriptures as well as synthesizing encyclopedias. Four seventh-century Daoist thinkers stand out, partly because they were selected to represent Daoism in the imperial debates. One was Liu Jinxi 劉津喜 (fl. 560-640), whose life is scarcely known. He lived for a time in an abbey in Chang’an and wrote a Daodejing commentary, of which eight citations survive, an anti-Buddhist text and possibly sections of the Benjijing 本際經 (Scripture of the Genesis Point, see below; Robinet 1977, 102-3; Sharf 1991, 36-37). Also obscure was Cai Huang 蔡晃, who participated in a debate of 638, authored a Daodejing commentary and worked on a Sanskrit translation of that classic which the Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 supposedly took to India. He was also steeped in Buddhist thought and wrote: “I have studied the principles in the Vimalakirti nirdesha and the [Mādhyamika] Three Treatises to the point at which their essential instructions flow spontaneously from me ... Although the texts of the Daoists differ from those of the Buddhists, the tenets are essentially the same” (Robinet 1977, 105; Sharf 1991, 37; Fujiwara 1980a).
Somewhat more famous are two men with comparable interests, Li Rong and Cheng Xuanying. Li Rong 李榮 (fl. 685-683, zi Renzhenzi 任真子 or “Master Who Follows Perfection,” from Sichuan), received his Daoist training on Mount Fule 富樂山 (Sichuan), then moved to the capital where he engaged actively in court debates with the Buddhists (Robinet 1977, 105-6; Kohn 1991, 196-200). He was also a poet of some renown, a respected member of the literati, and a friend of the famous poets Lu Zhao-lin 盧照鄰 and Luo Binwang 駱賓王 who both wrote poems about him (Kohn 1991, 196-99). In addition, Li Rong authored commentaries on the Daode jing and the Xishengjing 西昇經 (Scripture of Western Ascension, CT 726; see Fujiwara 1979; 1983; 1985; Kohn 1991; 2000a).

Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (fl. 632-650, zi Zishi 子實, hao Xihua 西華, from Luzhou 陸州 in Guangdong), was abbot of the capital’s Xihua Abbey, where Daoist texts were copied for dissemination throughout the empire (Barrett 1996, 26). He led the winning debate of 636 and, in 647, took part in the Sanskrit translation project. He also wrote commentaries on the Daode jing, Tijng 易經 (Book of Changes) and Durenjing 度人經 (Scripture of Universal Salvation; see Fujiwara 1980b), as well as a well-received sub-commentary on Guo Xiang's 郭象 Zhuangzi commentary (see Robinet 1977, 104; Fujiwara 1980b; 1980d; Sunayama 1980b; 1990).

Based on a list of Daode jing exegetes by Du Guangting, Li and Cheng have been described as representatives of a philosophical tendency called Chongxuan or “Twofold Mystery” (Kohn 1991, 189; Robinet 1997, 194), which some scholars have seen as a formal school or sect (Fujiwara 1961; 1980c; Sunayama 1980a; 1990), but which is really much less than that (Sharf 1991, 34-44). Dominating Daoist thought in the seventh century, Chongxuan is a way of interpreting the Dao through the four propositions of the Mādhyamika, using a heavy dose of Buddhism in the Daoist vision. In this way it is similar to the ideas described in the new scriptures of the time, such as the Benjī jīng and in the great encyclopedias, notably the Dao-jiaoyishu 道教義枢 (see below).

In a different line of development, the seventh century also saw a greater integration of Daoist and Chinese medical practices in the realm of longevity techniques. This was represented foremost by the great Daoist physician and alchemist Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (601-693; see Sivin 1968; Engelhardt 1989) who was well versed in a variety of practices and authored a number of important texts. His life and work are discussed in detail in this volume’s chapter on “Longevity Techniques.” Similarly, the areas of Daoist ritual and communal organization saw a completely new level of formalization and standardization. Several important new documents emerged, and the great ritualist Zhang Wanfu 長萬福 (fl. 700) wrote his extensive corpus. For details on this aspect of early Tang Daoism, see the chapter “Ordination and Zhai Rituals.”
Empress Wu (r. 684-705) reduced government sponsorship of Daoism partly because of the purported Daoist ancestry of the Li clan. However, in 684 she was blessed with a Lord Lao miracle, during which the god descended to appear to Wu Yuanchong 胡元崇 in the Longtai guan 龍台觀 (Dragon Terrace Abbey) in Haozhou 郝州, surrounded by immortals and riding in a cloudy chariot (Lidai chongdao ji 歷代崇道紀 6a). In response, the Empress changed the abbey’s name to Fengxian gong 奉仙宮 (Temple of Worship for the Immortals) and relaxed her negative attitude toward Daoism (see Kohn 1998c). She was also the recipient of Daoist artifacts, unearthed at the tomb of the Shangqing saint Wei Huacun 魏華存 (251-334) at Linchuan 臨川 (Jiangxi) at the initiative of one of the few known women Daoists of the period, Huang Lingwei.

Huang Lingwei 黃靈微 (ab. 640-721; biog. by Yan Zhenqing 袁真卿 (709-784) in Quan Tangwen 全唐文 340.1a-3b, 17a-22b; by Du Guangting in Tanji qiqian 115.9b-12a) came from the Linchuan area. She received Daoist ordination at age twelve and lived a quiet life for several decades. In her fifties, she began searching for the tomb of Wei Huacun which she discovered and restored in 693 with the help of the theurgist Hu Huichao, causing various miracles. She then restored another shrine close by and performed rituals there for nearly thirty years. In 721, she announced her impending ascent to the immortals and instructed her disciples to cover her coffin only with a thin layer of gauze. Soon after her “transformation” her corpse vanished (see Schafer 1977, 124-37; Kirkland 1991a; 1993a, 156-60; Cahill 1990, 33-34).

Following the reign of Empress Wu, emperors Zhongzong and Ruizong restored Daoist sponsorship (Barrett 1996, 46-52), the latter even having two of his daughters ordained as Daoist priestesses of the Cavern-Mystery level (Schafer 1985b; Benn 1991). This shows that the teachings and practices of Daoism were well-known and respected among the members of the imperial family, setting a positive example for the veneration of the religion in the society at large.

THE HIGH TANG. The reign of emperor Xuanzong (713-756) marks the heyday of Daoist influence and splendor. A dedicated student of Daoist texts, he initiated various collections and wrote a commentary to the Daode jing. Politically, he expanded all earlier pro-Daoist measures as part of a shrewd legitimatory program, having statues of both Lord Lao and himself placed side by side in state-sponsored Daoist temples throughout the empire, dedicating the Tang ancestral temples in Chang’an and Luoyang (Taiqing gong 太清宮 and Taiwei gong 太微宮) to Daoist worship (see Ding 1979; 1980), and revising the official liturgy along Daoist lines (see Benn 1977; 1987; Schafer 1987; Xiong 1996). Xuanzong instituted regulations on Daoist abbeys, required official registration for all clerics and re-
stricted their movements. Also, Daoists at state abbeys had to perform ritual services as designated by the emperor (Lagerwey 1987, 310-11; Benn 1977).

Around 733, he further established the office of “Commissioner of Daoist Ritual” (daomen weiyi shi 道門威儀使), which remained active throughout the dynasty (Barrett 1996, 56-57). In 738, he nationalized the religion by putting one temple and abbey in every district under direct imperial control and instituting a system of imperial liturgies (Benn 1977, 97-106). In 741, he established a “College of Daoist Studies” (chongxuan xue 崇玄學) in each prefecture and set up a new system of government examinations, the daoju 道舉, to promote scholars proficient in Daoist texts (Benn 1977, 255-317). Daoist institutions flourished accordingly and in 739 there were some 1,687 Daoist establishments, of which 550 were for women.

In addition, the emperor was the recipient of a series of Daoist miracles, mostly manifested in finds of numinous or wondrous objects that signified his divine inspiration and protection. First, in 723, people found a halfmoon-shaped piece of jade that showed a picture of a musician immortal; when struck it made a marvelous sound. The emperor named it “Halfmoon Lithophone” and had it hung in the garden of the imperial ancestral temple. Next, on the grounds of an ancient monastery another sounding jade appeared, and was hung up in the same garden. Then there was a metal fish from a distant province, found when the foundations for a new Daoist monastery were dug. It was three feet long and of purple and bluegreen coloring. “It looked like nothing ever done by man” and made a spectacular sound when struck. The emperor named it “Auspicious Fish Lithophone” and put it in Luoyang’s Taiwei gong to be sounded during rituals. In 741, finally, a momentous find of a celestial talisman occurred, known as the “Heavenly Treasure” (tianbao 天寶). Announced by Lord Lao himself in a vision to a court official, it consisted of a stone container with a golden box and several jade plates that were inscribed with red characters in a mysterious old seal script. In response to this sign, the emperor changed his reign title to “Heavenly Treasure.” Following this series of good omens, he also created a set of new liturgical dances, among them the famous “Dance of the Purple Culmen,” which was first performed in 742, creating a realm of Great Peace on earth (see Schafer 1987; Kohn 1998c).

The emperor also surrounded himself with illustrious Daoists whom he called to court at regular intervals. The most important among them was the twelfth Shangqing patriarch Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-735, zi Ziwéi 子微, hao Zhenyi xiansheng 真一先生 or “Master of Perfect Unity; biog. Chen et al. 1988, 109-10, 120-22; Jiu Tangshu 192.5127-29, Xin Tangshu 196.5605, Yinji qipian 5.14b-16a). A descendant of the ruling clan of the Jin dynasty, Sima received the education of a future official but turned to the Dao and, at age 21, became a disciple of Pan Shizheng on Mount Gao-song. He wandered about famous mountains, then was summoned by
Empress Wu and Emperor Ruizong. His first appearance at Xuanzong's court was in 721, when he bestowed lay ordination on the emperor (Benn 1977, 89-92; Kirkland 1997a, 120-21) and possibly illuminated him with secret oral instructions (Kirkland 1986a, 59, 69-71). In response, the emperor had the Daode jing inscribed in stone using three styles of Sima's calligraphy. Between 725 and 730, Sima presented him with a numinous sword and mirror together with a text on their meaning (see Fukunaga 1973; Schafer 1979a). Xuanzong then set up Sima in an abbey on Mount Wangwu 王屋山 near the capital, where he reedited Tao Hongjing's Dengchen yinjue 登真隐诀 (Secret Instructions on the Ascent to the Perfected, CT 421), and supplemented it with the Xuizhen bizi 修真秘旨 (Secret Directions for Cultivating Perfection; lost). In this center he also gave instruction to aspiring Daoists, presenting the Dao in a series of stages which were later edited in his Zuo-wang lun 坐忘論, first recorded in an inscription, dated 829 (see below). Sima Chengzhen was a key figure in shaping Daoist thought and practice in this period, and his fifteen works on cosmology, medicine, longevity and mystical realization of the Dao present an integrated system of Daoist attainment that focuses on the gradual transformation from an ordinary into a transcendent life (see Kroll 1978; Kirkland 1986a, 43-71, 220-97; 1997a; Kohn 1987a; 1987b; 1993a, 19-24; Engelhardt 1987).

After Sima's ascension, which he predicted and prepared for ritually, Xuanzong extended his favors to his successor as Shangqing patriarch, the reclusive Li Hanguang 李含光 (683-769; biog. inscription by Liu Shi, dat. 772; by Yan Zhenqing, dat. 777). Li was related to the ancient Daoist Wang 之丹 of Langye 潍绛 (Shandong) through his mother and came from a long line of officials. In his father and grandfather he found models of active Daoist practitioners. Ordained in 705, he received an arcane transmission from Sima Chengzhen in 729 and was duly invited to court by the emperor. However, he preferred a quiet life and spent most of his time on Maoshan, being one of the few Shangqing patriarchs of the Tang to make his home there. He actively corresponded with the emperor by letter (preserved in the Quan Tangwen), but refused to appear in the capital in person (Kirkland 1986c, 46). He made one exception to this rule when he came to grant Xuanzong a ritual transmission in 748. Li was a prolific writer and authored commentaries to various Daoist classics as well as works of his own, but none of these are extant today. He, too, predicted the time of his transformation and underwent ascension amidst numinous clouds (see Schafer 1989, 82-84; Barrett 1996, 69-70; Kirkland 1986a, 72-95, 298-323; 1986c).

In addition to maintaining a close relationship with the leading Daoist patriarchs of his time, Xuanzong also established the Jixian Academy and brought erudites of the Daoist classics to lecture and research there.
One was Chen Xilie 陈希烈 (d. 757), a jinshi 进士 who eventually rose to the office of Chief Minister (Benn 1977, 115-17). Others included a priest named Yin Yin 尹惺 (fl. 737), who was named to the post of Counselor-Censor, the scholar-recluse Wang Xiyi 王希夷 (see Kirkland 1993a, 153-55) and the poet-official He Zhizhang 贺知章 (659-744) who took Daoist ordination late in life (see Kirkland 1989; 1991b; 2000). In addition, there was the illustrious poet Wu Yun 吴肆 (d. 778, biog. by Quan Deyu 權德舆 [759-815] in Quan T’ang shu 489 and 508, Jiu Tang shu 192, Wu zunshi zhuan 吳尊師傳 [CT 1053], Nantong daqian neidan jiuzhang jing 南统大君内丹九章经 [CT 1054], pref.). Born around 700 in Huayin 華陰 (Shaanxi), Wu Yun allegedly failed the jinshi examination and opted to pursue the Dao, studying on Mount Yidi 宥棣山 (Henan) and receiving ordination in the 720s on Mount Gaosong from a disciple of Pan Shizheng. In the 730s, Wu Yun spent some time on Maoshan, then moved on to Mount Tiantai (Zhejiang), settling for a time in Shan township (near Shaoxing 绍興). There he organized a group of poets into a kind of “drink-and-sing” association, also joined by the illustrious poet Li Bo 李白 (701-762). Around 742, Wu was summoned to the capital and met Xuanzong with whom he exchanged tidbits of Daoist wisdom. He was then appointed an official in the Hanlin academy and presented his major work Xuan gang lun 玄綱論 (The Mysterious Network, CT 1052) to the emperor. Wu was known mainly for his ecstatic poetry (“Pacing the Void,” “The Capeline Cantos” [CT 1051]), but also authored several essays on the attainment of immortality. Wu lived most of his life as a poet-recluse (on Maoshan, Lushan 夢山, Tiantai shan 天台山, and Tianzhushan 天柱山), and was lauded highly after his death (see Kroll 1986, 147; Benn 1977, 116-20; Barrett 1996, 71-72; Kirkland 1986a, 96-111, 324-42; Kamitsuka 1979; Schafer 1981; 1983; Kohn 1998b; De Meyer 1999).

THE LATE TANG. Xuanzong’s reign came to an end with the An Lushan rebellion of 755, after which Tang authority was attenuated and regionalized and the political centrality of Daoism began to wane. Imperial patronage diminished, fewer Daoists were summoned to court, fewer abbeys received subsidies and fewer texts circulated among the elite. Nonetheless, Daoism still flourished. At court Daoist examinations continued, even under emperors more inclined toward Buddhism (e.g., Daizong, r. 762-779), and the Commissioner of Daoist Ritual was filled through the ninth century. One such commissioner, Shen Fu 申甫 (fl. 772-78), received permission to promote the performance of Daoist rituals, and collected Daoist writings from around the country to restore the losses caused by the An Lushan rebellion (Barrett 1996, 76). Shen’s concern to restore the material heritage of Daoism was shared by the early ninth-century emperor Xianzong (r. 806-20), who reconstructed a temple in the capital and donated to it nine cartloads of images and texts from the palace collection.
Because of the vast political and economic changes, the late Tang was also a period when certain great Daoist traditions suffered disruptions, although these were often concealed by Daoists of later ages eager to claim an unbroken lineage from Tang times. An example is the great Daoist center at Maoshan. Although it apparently remained occupied and honored throughout Tang times, there are noticeable gaps between the lives of the Maoshan patriarchs of the late Tang (Schafer 1989, 84-87). Such is more clearly the case in regard to the supposed Zhengyi lineage of Celestial Masters of the Zhang clan. In Tang times, the term Celestial Master was freely applied to any Daoist master who achieved great public regard, from Sima Chengzhen and Du Guangting to court poets such as Wu Yun (Kirkland 1984). There were few such masters of the Zhang surname, and the intervals between them strongly suggest that there was in fact no continuous “Tianshi lineage” during Tang times. Later claims to the contrary by the masters of Mount Longhu must be considered questionable (see Barrett 1994; Kirkland 1986, 479-81).

Another effect of the political changes during the late Tang was the tendency of religious centers on the periphery of the empire to become more prominent. The most important among them was the Qingyang gong (Black Sheep Temple) in Chengdu (Sichuan), where Laozi allegedly met Yin Xi before their joint travels to the western countries. A major miracle here put the temple on the imperial scene. It began in October 883 with a jiao offering held at the temple, then known as the Zhongxuan guan (Abbey of Central Mystery). Suddenly a red glow illuminated the area, culminating in a purple hue near a plum tree. Bowing, the officiating priest advanced and had the indicated spot excavated to uncover a solid square brick. It bore six characters in ancient seal script that read: “The Highest Lord brings peace to the upheaval of [the reign period] Central Harmony.” Not only was this wondrous text written in a seal script unpracticed for a millennium, but the brick itself was like an ancient lithophone, making marvelous sounds when struck and looking luminous like jade when examined closely. The find led to an exchange of several memorials and formal orders between the local Daoists and the imperial court, all of which were recorded in the Xichuan qingyang gong beiiming (Inscription at the Black Sheep Temple in Sichuan, DZ 964; Chen et al. 1988, 186-92) by the scholar-official Yue Penggui. The temple was not only recognized formally and renamed, but also expanded and showered with gifts (see Verellen 1994, 145-48; Yusa 1986; Kohn 1998c).
Yet another characteristic of Daoism in the late Tang was the greater attention of the sources to popular practices, such as miracles (Verellen 1992; Sunayama 1987), Tantric-inspired ways of securing good fortune when building a house (Yusa 1981; Masuo 1994) and newly arising popular deities, especially the Ten Worthies Who Rescue from Suffering (Jiuku tianzun 救苦天尊; see Yusa 1981). Ordinary people are saved by the deities, statues in provincial temples take flight when threatened or act in retaliation, nasty demons are slain and good forces are harnessed to the greater prosperity not only of aristocrats or recluses but also of the common people and the wider populace.

Doctrinally Daoism developed a new direction in texts associated with “purity and tranquility” and in new dimensions of scholastic integration and synthesis. The latter is particularly represented by the court Daoist and ritual master Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933; biog. see Verellen 1989), a native of the environs of Chang’an who trained on Mount Tiantai under Ying Yijie 應夷節 (810-894). First called to court under Emperor Xizong in 875, Du became a palace resident and editor of imperial memoranda, serving as counsellor and participating in controversies with the Buddhists and eventually rising to Commissioner of Daoist Ritual. After the capital was sacked by rebels in 881, he withdrew to Sichuan, where he edited and compiled Daoist texts and liturgies. Following the court, he returned to Chang’an in 885 and with it fled back to Xingyuan 興元 in Sichuan a year later. In 901, the Tang exile government was overthrown by a local king, and Du joined the new ruler as royal tutor. He continued to be promoted by the Sichuan king until he retired from official service to Mount Qingcheng 青城山, where he compiled, edited and composed Daoist texts until his death in 933.

Du wrote a large number of works, including mirabilia, saints’ biographies, liturgies, inscriptions, editions and commentaries, memoranda and official writings, poetry and miscellanea (Verellen 1989, 206). His work tended to be highly scholastic, providing a detailed and systematic record, giving lists and analyses of facts and ideas and citing ancient works and masters extensively. He was vibrantly aware of the changing times and power patterns that threatened the Daoist tradition. Against this background he compiled and systematized the practices as they were still undertaken in his time, creating a comprehensive corpus of hitherto unknown proportions (see Verellen 1989; Cahill 1986a; Schafer 1986; Bell 1987; Barrett 1996, 94-98; Kohn 1998a).
The Tang dynasty was a time of flourishing Daoist culture that also saw a proliferation of Daoist texts in many areas and of diverse kinds. A number of these are discussed in other contributions to this volume and so will not be described here (for a list, see Table 1).

**Table 1**

**Tang Daoist Texts Discussed in Other Contributions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Texts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immortality</td>
<td>Xu xianzhuan 續仙傳</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longevity Techniques</td>
<td>Zhenzhong ji 枕中記</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuqi jingyi lun 服氣精義論</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Zhiyan zong 至言總</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yangsheng jue 養生訣</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ishumption 醫心方</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>works of Sun Simiao 孫思邈</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingbao</td>
<td>Yin yuan jing 因緣經</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duren jing commentaries 度人經注</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Celestial Masters</td>
<td>Huahu jing 化胡經</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huanyuan zhenlu 混元真錄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>works of Yin Wencao 尹文操</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alchemy</td>
<td>Zhouyi cantong qi 周易參同契</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lingianzi 畫劍子</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taiji jing zhu 胎息經注</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>works of Wang Bing 王丙</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ordination and Zhai Rituals</td>
<td>Fengdao kejie 奉道科戒</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yaoxiu keyi jielu chao 要修科儀戒律錦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>works of Zhang Wanfu 張萬福</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Yongcheng jixian lu 儲城集仙録</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Alchemy</td>
<td>Ruyao jing 入蘊鏡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yinfu jing 隱符經</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zhouyi cantong qi zhu 周易參同契注</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huanting jing zhu 黃庭經注</td>
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</table>

Aside from their large number, the most outstanding characteristic of Tang Daoist materials is the increased availability of original sources, INSCRIPTIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS that actually date from the period. Heightened imperial sponsorship led to an increase not only in Daoist rituals and honors for Daoist masters, but also to larger numbers of
stelae being erected and inscriptions engraved. Thus the miraculous events surrounding the founding of the dynasty and the wondrous finds made at various Daoist centers were immortalized in stone. On many occasions the rite of “tossing the dragons” was formally described in inscriptions, and many leading masters’ epitaphs and encomia have survived in authentic form. Several important texts exist in early versions as inscribed by actual living Daoists of the period. The collection of Daoist inscriptions from the Tang includes a total of 180 items, a substantial increase over previous periods that brings the religion to life in an unprecedented form (Chen et al. 1988, 46-208).

An even greater boon than the inscriptions are the materials recovered from Dunhuang, a small desert town in the far west of China near modern Lanzhou. Dunhuang was a major Buddhist center along the silk road that consisted of hundreds of caves in a steep cliff, richly ornamented and full of sacred statues and holy books. The caves were under threat from Muslim invaders in the late middle ages and were closed and abandoned in the early eleventh century to be hidden by floating sands over the centuries. They were uncovered only in the early twentieth century by Western explorers (see Franck and Brownstone 1986; Hopkins 1980). Among invaluable art treasures and scrolls of mostly Buddhist manuscripts there were also many Daoist texts, arranged according to their main finders as “P.” for Paul Pelliot or “S.” for Sir Aurel Stein. Today they are mostly stored in the museums of Paris or London, and they have been studied especially by Japanese scholars who arranged (Yoshioka 1969), reprinted (Ôfuchi 1979) and examined them. These tasks were undertaken both in concerted research efforts (Tonkô kôza 1983; Kanaoka et al. 1983) and by individuals focusing on specific texts (Yoshioka 1961a; 1961b) and comparing them with extant Daozang editions (Maeda 1994). Western and Chinese scholars, too, make regular use of the manuscripts, but there are only a few studies focusing specifically on Dunhuang materials. They include a critical edition and reprint of the Benjjing (Wu 1960), a reprint of seventh-century philosophical works (Yan 1983), a translation and analysis of a seventh-century Huahu jing (Seidel 1984) and a study of eighth-century ordination materials (Schipper 1985).

Daoist texts found at Dunhuang and reprinted by Ôfuchi can be classified according to six groups:

1. scriptures of Lingbao provenance, including materials from the ancient corpus (as well as an early list) together with later related works, such as the Shengxun jing (Scripture of Ascension to the Mystery; also repr. Yamada 1992), the Yin yuan jing and the Benjjing;
2. Shangqing texts, classics listed in the ancient catalog and works on ecstatic excursions;
3. Daode jing and commentaries, many only found here;
4. miscellaneous texts, including the *Shenzhou jing* 神咒經 (see "Southern Celestial Masters"), versions of the *Huahu jing* 化胡經 (see "Northern Celestial Masters"), and new texts, such as the *Haikong zhizang jing* 海空智藏經 (see below);

5. encyclopedias, including sections from the *Wushang biyao* 無上秘要 (see "Northern Celestial Masters"), *Daojiao yishu* and *Daodian lun* 道典論 (see below);

6. unidentified fragments, divided into three categories: scriptural, ritual and others (Ofuchi 1979).

Together with the inscriptions, the manuscripts open a window directly into Tang Daoism, providing a rich source of original materials and enriching our understanding of the religion.

**ENCYCLOPEDIAS.** *Sandong zhunang* 三洞珠彙 (*A Bag of Pearls from the Three Caverns*, CT 1139, orig. 30 j., extant 10 j.), by Wang Xuanhe 王懸河, fl. 683 (see Ren and Zhong 1991, 892-95; Reiter 1990; Kohn 1993b). Basically a collection of passages from earlier sources, this creates a comprehensive summary of the personal and social dimensions of Daoist practice, including meditation, ritual and physiological disciplines (Bokenkamp 1986, 150). In content, it begins in the first three j. with biographical citations. The first, called "Help and Guidance," presents the lives of generally successful practitioners. J. 2, with sections on "Poverty and Renunciation" and "The Summons of the Court," describes the necessary prerequisites for Daoist practice; it also speaks of the relation Daoists had to the imperial court and gives a number of famous examples from the past. J. 3 presents successful practitioners under the heading "Food and Diet," this time focusing on people who reached the Dao by eating special herbs or minerals.

The tone of the work then changes to include more practical instructions: j. 4 deals with avoiding grain, pharmacology and basic alchemy; j. 5 concentrates on forms of meditation, while j. 6 summarizes disciplinary rules and describes the performance of rituals. The next three scrolls deal with Daoist cosmology; j. 7 consists of sixteen distinct sections, all concerned with the various numbers and categories of the administration in heaven, earth and the underworld; j. 8 describes the wondrous signs of divinity and the nature of the mythic age and the gods; j. 9 focuses on early kalpa revolutions, the transformations of Laozi and the conversion of the barbarians; and j. 10 provides yet another section on practice in its discussion of "Clapping Teeth and Swallowing Saliva."

*Shangqing daolei shixiang* 上清道類事相 (*Realities and Categories of Highest Clarity*, CT 1132, 4 j.), also by Wang Xuanhe (see Ren and Zhong 1991, 881-82; Reiter 1992; Baldrian-Hussein 1994). This work is more specialized than the *Sandong zhunang*, and draws mainly upon the corpus of Shangqing Daoism while also providing a framework for under-
standing the holistic dimensions of religious practice. It is "basically a collection of quotations on Daoist personalities, practices and scriptures linked to sacred sites within the microcosm, the macrocosm, subterranean worlds and celestial spheres" (Baldrian-Hussein 1994, 531; see also Bokenkamp 1986, 150). It helps to explain to uninitiated literati what Daoism was about. It contains six sections that all focus on the locations and architecture of aspiring Daoists, describing the layout of abbeys, their buildings, training facilities and scriptoria, as well as the types of caverns and residences best suited for Daoist progress.

_Daojiao jishu_ (The Pivotal Meaning of the Daoist Teaching, CT 1129, 10 j., j. 6 lost; index Nakajima 1984), by Meng Anpai 孟安排, 7th c. (see Yoshioka 1959, 309-350; Kamata 1966, 202; Sunayama 1980a, 43; Bokenkamp 1986, 141; Ren and Zhong 1991, 878-79; Sharf 1991, 56-60; Kohn 1992, 149-54; Robinet 1997, 191-92). This text is written to demonstrate the depth and sophistication of Daoist thought in the face of Buddhist criticism and adopts and transforms many Buddhist concepts, integrating them successfully into a Daoist worldview. For example, it speaks of "the three vehicles" (sansheng 三乘), but rather than using the term to designate distinct traditions of Daoism, it applies it as a generic device for acknowledging the mutual validity of different Daoist goals or sensibilities. Similarly it adopts the term "body of the law" (fashen 法身; dharma-kāya), which in Buddhism refers to the spiritual or true body of the Buddha, and uses it to denote the cosmic nature of the human body.

The ten_juan_ of the text divide into thirty-seven sections, five of which are lost (see Table 2). Within each section the material is first presented according to "Meaning" (yi 義) and "Explanation" (shi 釋), and then supplemented with further references and interpretations.

The text cites numerous scriptures both of the Six Dynasties and early Tang, and has a strongly philosophical focus. It draws a comprehensive picture of the Daoist teaching, beginning with the cosmology of the Dao and a vision of its attainment, moving on to Daoist scriptures and their classifications, focusing on basic precepts and practices, and eventually outlining the ultimate stages of the Daoist path. It makes use of Buddhist terms and systems of classification throughout.

_Daodian lun_ (Discussions of Daoist Classics; CT 1130, S. 3547, P. 3920, 4 j.) is an encyclopedia of the seventh century by an unknown author (see Ren and Zhong 1991, 879-80). Its text is divided into fifty-four items that summarize instructions and wisdom from the scriptures. These can be generally classified into six major groups: the titles of deities; the appellations and classes of Daoists; the paths towards immortality (including deliverance from the corpse); the retribution of sins (including filial
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section Number</th>
<th>Section Name in the Daojiao yishu</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Dao and the Virtue (daode yi, 道德義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Body of the Law (fashen yi, 法身義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Three Treasures (sanbao yi, 三寶義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Positions and Results (weiyi yi, 位業)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Three Caverns (sandong yi, 三洞義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Seven Sections (qibuyi, 七部義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Twelve Classes (shier bu yi, 十二部義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Two Halves (liangban yi, 兩半義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Intention for the Dao (daoyi yi, 道意義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Ten Good Attitudes (shishanyi, 十善義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cause and Effect (yinguo yi, 因果義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The Five Covers (wuanyi, 五陰義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Six Feelings (liuqingyi, 六情義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The Three Conditions (sanye yi, 三業義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The Ten Evil Deeds (shiwuyi, 十惡義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The Three Ones (sanyi yi, 三一義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Two Observations (erguanyi, 二觀義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The Three Vehicles (sanshengyi, 三乘義；lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Six Supernatural Powers (liulongyi, 六通義；lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The Four Necessities (sidayi, 四道義；lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The Six Ferries (liuduyi, 六渡義；lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>The Four Virtues (sidengyi, 四登義；lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The Three Worlds (sanshi yi, 三世義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The Five Destinies (wuadaiyi, 五道義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Primodial Chaos (hunyuanyi, 混元義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Principle and Teaching (lijiao yi, 理教義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Mental States and Wisdom (jingzhi yi, 境智義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Nature (ziran yi, 自然義)</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Tao-Nature (daoxing yi, 道性命)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Fields of Blessedness (futian yi, 福添義)</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The Pure Lands (jingtu yi, 淨土義)</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>The Three Periods (sanshi yi, 三時義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>The Five Deteriorations (wuzhuoyi, 五濁義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Movement and Serenity (dongyi yi, 動寂義)</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Impulse and Response (ganyingyi, 感應義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Being and Nonbeing (youyuyi, 有無義)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Illusion and Reality (jiashiyi, 假實義)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
disobedience, slander, killing); omens indicative of good and bad fortune; and methods of cultivation (including breathing, diets, energy circulation and alchemy). The many texts cited tend to be of Shangqing provenance.

**MAHĀYĀNA-STYLE SCRIPTURES.** *Benji jing* (Scripture of the Genesis Point, CT 329 and 1111, Dunhuang mss., 10 j.), by Liu Jinxi (see Wu 1960; Kaltenmark 1979; Sunayama 1983, 80-91; 1990; Ren and Zhong 1991, 246, 859-60). This text presents itself in a Mahāyāna format, claiming to document the sermons of a variety of celestial beings, including traditional Daoist sages, such as Zhengyi zhenren (Perfected of Orthodox Unity) and Tianzhen huangren (Sovereign of Heavenly Perfection) together with bodhisattva types, such as Pude miaoxing (Universal Virtue, Wondrous Practice; Ōfuchi 1979, 296, 302, 292). The title phrase *benji* originates in Buddhist literature, where it occurs in the Chinese title of the *Samyukta-gama sûtra* (T. 99, 2.240b) and refers to the state before universal creation. The expression evokes an image found in an ancient Indian origin myth, according to which being develops from nonbeing through the formation of a cosmic egg that splits into heaven and earth (j. 4).

The *Benji jing*, like other texts of the era, focuses on the notion that all sentient beings have a “Dao-nature” (*daoxing*), which is our true reality, “embodied in all conscious beings and even all animals, plants, trees and rocks” (*Daqjiaoyishu* 8.6b; Kamata 1969, 11-80). The goal of Daoist practice is the full realization of this Dao-nature through a variety of practices, including nonaction and various meditations, as well as by gaining full comprehension of the world according to this vision. Much of the argument of the *Benji jing* follows Buddhist models, making use of Mādhyamika dialectics.

The text was widely known in the Tang, as is documented by its survival in eighty-one Dunhuang manuscripts and its frequent citation in other Daoist works. In 741, Xuanzong had it copied in temples throughout the land so that it could be recited and lectured on during purification rites. He credited a subsequent abundant harvest to those activities (Benn 1977, 248-49; Sharf 1991, 39).

*Haikong zhizang jing* (Scripture of Master Haikong zhizang, CT 9, Dunhuang mss., 10 j.), by Li Yuanxing (see Sunayama 1990; Kamata 1966, 113-20; 1969, 83-96; 1986, 30-130; Lagerwey 1987, 311; Kohn 1992). According to the Buddhist polemic *Zhenzheng lun* (On Examining Truth; T. 52, 569c), this text was produced in the early Tang by the two Daoists Li Yuanxing and Fang Chang. The text itself begins by describing Master Haikong zhizang as a perfected retainer of Yuanshi tianzun (Heavenly Worthy of
Primordial Beginning) since before the separation of heaven and earth. Although he is over 2,000 years old, he looks young and strong. He is an accomplished sage who spends his time dissipating doubts and helping humanity. His name indicates his high status: “His body is like an ocean (hai), his mind is like the open sky (kung), his inner principle embraces all beyond beings, he is a storehouse of wisdom” (1.2b). His leading disciple is called Dahui 大慧 (Great Wisdom), an adaptation of Mahāvāti from the Lankāvatāra sūtra; he elicits answers from the sage.

The text then outlines the teaching of Haikong zhizang, which resembles that of other texts of the time. In addition, it includes the concept of “subtle thinking” (siwei 思微), which indicates the purity of the unmoving mind that is basic to humankind from birth, and pervades all existence, but can and should be cultivated through the practice of absorptions; it is close to the idea of Dao-nature. Next the text identifies nonaction as the basic pillar of Daoist practice and describes five stages of Daoist attainment as the so-called Dao-fruits (daoguo 道果): earth immortal, flying immortal, self-dependent, free from afflictions and perfected in nonaction. Among these, all higher stages are borrowed from Buddhism, so that, for example, stage three, “self-dependent” (zizai 自在), translates isvara, the state of complete freedom from obstruction, the mind as free from delusion. Stage four, wulou 无漏, refers to the complete absence of all drava or “outflows,” that is, all afflictions and vexations. The Buddhist dimension of the text is also documented in its quotations, which include the Avatamsaka sūtra, Sukhavatvyudhāsūtra, Prajñāparamiśāstra and Vimalakīrti nīdeśa (see Kamata 1969, 91-97).

**Shengxuán jīng** 昇玄經 (Scripture of Ascension to the Mystery, CT 1122, Dunhuang mss., 10 j.; ed. Yamada 1992) was compiled in the sixth century, and expanded under the Sui and Tang (see Sunayama 1990, 227-29; Ren and Zhong 1991, 867-68). The work is an off-shoot of the Lingbao scriptures, and like them follows Mahāyāna and Mādhyamika patterns in its exposition. The Shengxuán jīng presents the Daoist teaching in a dialogue between Lord Lao and the first Celestial Master Zhang Daoling 張道陵. It sets out three ranks of attainment: higher, medium and lower. Those reaching a higher level are spirit immortals; they ascend to heaven in broad daylight, are served by jade maidens and pure lads and transform physically into diamond bodies and radiant beings. Medium-level practitioners are finders of nirvāṇa; they attain residence in the heavenly halls and serve as celestial officers. Those on the lower level are practitioners of longevity; they follow diets and practice gymnastics to extend their years and eventually become officers of the earth who sit in judgment over the souls of the dead. To reach each level, one must follow a specific set of practices and code of behavior, obeying instructions and observing moral rules.

**PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS.** Daode jīng kāi tì suī jū yī shù 道德經
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(Bfl /f ttUSL (Supplementary Commentary and Topical Introduction to the Daodejing, P. 2353 [Ôfuchi 1979, 461-66; Yan 1983, 239-652], 6 j.), by Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (see Robinet 1977; Fujiwara 1980d; Sunayama 1980b). This explication of the Daodejing begins with a scholastic and historical discussion of the Laozi myth, analyzing the events in the deity's life from his initial personification of the Dao through his name, date and place of birth to his transformations, western exploits and supernatural powers. The commentary then proceeds to focus on the philosophical contents of the text according to five topics: Dao and virtue; the meaning of “scripture;” schools of interpretation; numbers of characters in the text; and its division into various subsections. Using an overall Madhyamika-inspired framework, the work sees the Daodejing as one among the celestial scriptures in which the great universal mystery has taken concrete shape. It further proposes five modes of interpretation: focusing on words, on ideas, on the interdependence of Dao and virtue, on their subtle significance (as being and nonbeing) and on their character as infinite. The discussion clarifies the basic principles of Twofold Mystery, tracing its thinking to earlier forerunners and describing it in terms of the twofold forgetfulness in approaching the Dao.

Xishengjingzhu 西昇經注 (Commentary to the Xishengjing, CT 726, 6 j.; see Fujiwara 1983; 1985), and Daode zhenjing zhu 道德真經注 (Commentary to the Daodejing, Dunhuang mss. [ed. Ôfuchi 1979, 476-87; Yan 1983, 729-970]), by Li Rong 李榮, 7th c. (see Kohn 1991, 200-11). Using the commentary format for his presentation, Li Rong gives a comprehensive outline of the Daoist path, from ordinary life to the attainment of the Dao. He subscribes to the philosophy of Twofold Mystery, emphasizing that one needs to undergo a process of double forgetting to realize and overcome the two levels of truth, ordinary and emptiness. One begins by forgetting constructed and illusory mental states, thus attaining a sense of overall emptiness; one then forgets this in turn to attain an oneness with the Dao.

Li Rong also incorporates social realities and virtues as well as bodily cultivation and breathing exercises into his understanding of Daoist attainment. He redefines notions of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment, the being based on mere hearing and learning, the second resulting from reflection and conscious evaluation and the third culminating in unknowing and omniscience. The person who reaches the highest stage is called a sage; he represents complete goodness, is at one with the soundless and formless and goes beyond ordinary thinking and morality. His main role is to serve as an inspiring example for all people, making the world a purer place.

Miaomenyouqi 妙門由起 (Entrance to the Gate of All Wonders, CT 1123, 33 pp.), by Shi Chong 史崇 et al. upon imperial order, dat. 713 (see
Ren and Zhong 1991, 868-70; Barrett 1996, 50-52; Benn 1991, 18). This text originally served as the introduction to the *Yuqie daojing yin yi*一切道經音義 (Sound and Meaning of All Daoist Scriptures, 140 j.; lost), which would have given scholars great insights into high-Tang Daoism. As it stands, the *Miaomen youqi* consists of six sections and cites a total of seventy-seven texts, many of which are otherwise lost. The sections begin with a discussion of the transformations of the Dao, including the meaning of the term, that is largely reflective of the *Daodejing*. It then goes on to describe the various Heavenly Worthies and other high gods, the larger cosmos (ten worlds) of the Dao, the locations of immortals (Three Clarities, four Brahma heavens, ten continents, grotto heavens), and the ways to salvation through the scriptures and the practice of the Dao. It discusses the revelations of the teaching as they took place through the various kalpas, and in Laozi's transmission of the *Daodejing* to Yin Xi, and as manifested in the Three Caverns and their various subdivisions.

*Daoti lun* 尋體論 (On the Embodiment of the Dao, CT 1035, 32 pp.), 8th. c., is by an anonymous author, possibly Zhang Guo 張果 (see Kohn 1993, 19-24). The text is divided into three sections: a discussion of the *Daodejing*, questions on the Dao, and a treatise on the Dao's embodiment. It is a highly speculative analysis of the nature of the Dao and its role in the world, first defining it as beyond all, neither being nor nonbeing, neither formless nor formed, neither right nor wrong. The text then uses Mādhyamika logic to affirm the double and yet nondual nature of the Dao, contrasting it with virtue and offering various similar pairs, including Dao and beings, principle and affairs, emptiness and being, and names and reality. In all cases the two are two yet not-two, the same yet different, born yet unborn, nameless yet named. Both are part of the same ultimate mystery, and so appear in different ways under different conditions. To realize them, one must practice twofold forgetfulness and sit in oblivion to reach the state of naturalness or so-being (*ziran* 自然) in the totality of the Dao.

*Xinmu lun* 心目論 (Of Mind and Eyes, CT 1038; 1051, 2.16b-19b, 4 pp.), by Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778; see Kohn 1998b). This short and highly poetic essay contains a fictional dialogue between the mind and the eyes on whose actions are more detrimental to or supportive in the attainment of tranquility and perfection. It begins with the mind accusing the eyes of keeping it in a state of dissatisfaction, which the latter counter by pointing out that they are the vassals of the mind and only serve to do its bidding. The mind then recognizes its power and resolves to do away with all thinking and doing, plunging the senses into darkness. This, however, does not satisfy the eyes who find this to be an act of running away rather than a true attainment. Pushing the mind into the direction of solid inner tranquility yet openness to the working of the Dao, the eyes help it—and thereby the entire person—in the attainment of true perfection. The essay shows the
need for all aspects of the personality to work together if the Dao is to be realized.

MANUALS ON OBSERVATION AND ATTAINING THE DAO. 
Neiguan jing 内觀経 (Scripture on Inner Observation, DZ 641, Yunji qiqian 17.1a-6b, 6 pp.), 8th c. (see Kohn 1989a). Neiguan refers to the Daoist way of insight meditation, a Buddhist technique of making the world and one’s place in it the object of spiritual cultivation, in which the mind is calm and empty and observes all sensory data in complete impartiality. In Daoism, this practice is described in the eighth century as guan 觀 or “observation,” a key step toward attainment of the Dao. Not only the outside world and sensory data are observed, however, but also the various energies and divinities in the body, so that the practice of observation creates a highly spiritualized being. The Neiguan jing details this practice in thirteen sections, all placed in the words of Lord Lao; it describes the growth of the human embryo as a spiritual entity and admonishes people to reduce desires and cultivate emptiness and tranquility.

Zuowang lun 坐忘論 (On Sitting in Oblivion, CT 1036, Yunji qiqian 94, Quan Tangwen 924, 18 pp.), by Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (see Kamitsuka 1979; Wu 1981; Kohn 1987a). This is a more detailed and concrete manual on the practice of observation, and first appeared in an inscription engraved in 829 on Mount Wangwu, Sima’s main residence. It is possibly based on lectures of the master, and provides a general guide for engaging in gradual progression toward union with Dao and attaining “spirit immortality.” The path is outlined in seven steps: 1. Respect and Faith; 2. Interception of Karma; 3. Taming the Mind; 4. Detachment from Affairs; 5. True Observation; 6. Intense Concentration; 7. Realizing the Dao.

It begins by emphasizing the need for a strong faith in the Dao and complete freedom from all doubts of the divine venture. Next it states that one must physically leave the world, give up all involvements and avoid the creation of new karma. Third, the first steps of meditation, in a secluded mountain setting, are undertaken, with an effort to concentrate the mind, gather one’s thoughts and find inner emptiness. Next, one detaches oneself fully from the world and ceases to worry about its affairs. Step five is called “true observation” and picks up the notion of insight meditation: adepts view their life as a manifestation of Dao energy and give up all attachments and conscious evaluations. This leads next to “intense concentration,” when the mind is completely submerged in the Dao in a state of trance and loss of ego-identity. Finally, the Dao is attained in an ecstatic going-beyond of all and ascent into heaven.

Dingguanjing 定觀経 (Scripture on Concentration and Observation, DZ 400, Yunji qiqian 17.6b-13a, 10 pp., 49 stanzas), early 8th c. (see Kohn 1987a, 125-44). This text is also found as an appendix to the Zuowang lun (DZ 1036, 15b-18a), and contains an overview of the mental transition from
an ordinary perspective, characterized by impurity, cravings, vexations, emotions, and desires, to a state of full concentration, peace, and tranquility. Once the latter is reached, the mind will be habituated to observing all things in complete dispassion, which in turn will help the attainment of oneness with the Dao and immortality.

The text also contains a description of the five phases of the mind and seven stages of the body. These appear first in the *Cunshen lianqi ming* 存神鍊氣銘 (Inscription on Visualization of Spirit and Refinement of Energy, DZ 834, *Ying qi qian* 33.12a-15a, 3 pp.), by Sun Simiao 孫思邈, 7th c. (see Kohn 1987a, 177-80). According to this text, the attainment of the Dao consists of the perfection of *qi*-energy, and of a complete reorganization of the conscious mind in five phases that lead from the ordinary mind, which is distracted and confused, to the perfected mind of complete tranquility and inner peace. Once this is reached, the seven stages of the body are entered. First, one diminishes “the diseases inherited from former lives” by bringing the mind, spirit, and *qi*-energy into tranquility. One passes through the stages of immortal, perfected, spirit being, and ultimate being, until one reaches the final goal of “the source of the Dao,” coming to reside next to the Jade Emperor in the heavens above.

*Tianyinzi* 天隱子 (Book of the Master of Heavenly Seclusion; CT 1026, 4 pp.), is attributed to Sima Chengzhen (see Kohn 1987; 1987b). This is another practical manual on observation and attainment, and outlines the path in “five progressive gateways”: 1. “fasting and abstention,” essentially meaning a balanced diet and moderation of physical activity; 2. “seclusion,” or maintaining a reclusive residence in balance “with the harmonious rhythms of yin and yang;” 3. “visualization and imagination,” or visualizing oneself as a spiritual rather than a physical being; 4. “sitting in forgetfulness,” i.e., forgetting the distinctions between “self” and “other;” 5. attainment of “spiritual transcendence” or immorality, characterized both as “entering into suchness” (a concept borrowed from Buddhism) and as “returning to nonaction,” evoking Daoist thought. The *Tianyinzi* presents a model of Daoist practice easily accessible to a “general audience” of Chinese literati, and has remained popular through the ages and is still used by Qigong practitioners today.

*Shehxian kexite hsn* 神仙可學論 (Immortality Can Be Learned, CT 1051, 2.9b-16a) and *Xingshxn kegu lun* 形身可固論 (The Body Can Be Made to Last, CT 1051, 2.20a-26b), are both by Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778; see Ren and Zhong 1991, 798). These two essays discuss the possibility of attaining immortality without any special inborn factors or acts of divine grace, by mere practice. The first focuses on the cultivation of *qi*-energy, which should begin with making the mind pure and free from desires and the attainment of moral virtues (including filiality, loyalty, sincerity and humility). It then requires training of the various energies: preserving es-
sence, nourishing the qi and harmonizing the spirit. Eventually one will attain not only exceptional longevity but also a state beyond death so that one may physically die but will not perish.

The second essay follows the same basic premise and gives a few more concrete details. It is divided into five sections. First, "Guarding the Dao" encourages practitioners to follow a lifestyle based on yin and yang and the preservation of essence, in all cases keeping their body strong and healthy. "Ingesting qi" describes the practice of the five sprouts (energies of the five directions), breathing exercises and the abstention from grains. "Nourishing the Body" focuses on the abstention from sexual activity and the need to rid oneself of all physical desires; instead, prayers and purifications should be undertaken, fortifying the body against leakages of energy and attacks from demons. "Guarding the Spirit" describes the harmonization of the forces within the body, achieved through the reversal of seminal essence from the lower abdomen into the brain. "The Golden Elixir," finally, discusses the creation of the great medicine in the body, the realization of the pure pearl of immortality within. Both texts emphasize the need to be free from desires and the attainment of a stable mind and strong inner body, anticipating notions of purity and tranquility.

PURITY AND TRANQUILITY. Closely related to eighth-century observation culture, a slightly different group of texts emerged which presented the same basic ideas in stylized patterns and verse format. They are often extremely short, and have in common that they combine the practice and worldview of observation with the ideas of the Daodejing and the structure of Buddhist mantra-texts, such as the "Heart Sutra" (T.250-57; see Fukui 1987, 286), and express their highest goal as the attainment of purity and tranquility.

The most important among these is the Qingjing xinjing (Heart Scripture of Purity and Tranquility, CT 1169, 2 pp.), 8th c. (see Ren and Zhong 1991, 925; Li 1991, 1825). In short mantra-like verses (four characters), the text emphasizes the need to eliminate ordinary perception in favor of purity and tranquility, the "perfect wisdom" of the Dao. It begins by describing the nature of the Dao as divided into yin and yang, turbid and pure, tranquil and moving, then goes on to stress the importance of the mind in the creation of desires and worldly entanglements. The practice of observation is recommended to counteract this: the observation of other beings, the self, and the mind results in the realization that none of these really exist. Completing these, practitioners attain the observation of emptiness which brings them into a state of complete purity and tranquility or oneness with the Dao. The rest of the work reverses direction and outlines the decline from pure spirit to falling into hell. Spirit develops consciousness or mind, mind recognizes a body or self, the self sees the myriad beings and develops greed and attachment toward them. Greed then leads to involve-
ment, illusory imaginings and erroneous ways, which tie people to the chain of rebirth and, as they sink deeper into the quagmire of desire, makes them fall into hell.

Qingjingjing 清静经 (Scripture of Purity and Tranquility, CT 620, 1.5 pp.), probably 9th c. (trl. Kohn 1993, 24-29; Wong 1992; see Ren and Zhong 1991, 447; Li 1991, 1816; Kamata 1986, 280; Ishida 1987; Mitamura 1994). This is a shorter, slightly later and more popular version of the Qingjing xinjing. It has a first commentary by Du Guangting and rose to great prominence in the Song, when it was read allegorically and alchemically by masters of the Southern School. Later it became a central scripture of Complete Perfection, whose followers still recite it in their daily services.

Wuchu jing 五厨经 (Scripture on the Five Pantries, CT 763, 20 lines, five-character verse), with commentary by Yin An 尹暗, dat. 8th c. (see Ren and Zhong 1991, 547-48; Li 1991, 1876; Kohn 1998c). The title emphasizes the need to replenish the energy in the five inner organs as one would food in a pantry. The work begins with the traditional notion that the “one original energy [divides and] joins to form Great Harmony.” It then emphasizes that attaining this harmony in oneself will lead to longevity within and a peaceful life without, which, in turn, helps adepts to find oneness of inner nature with “the Mystery.” The text then moves on to contrast illusory imaginings and true wisdom, and recommends the utter emptying of the mind to the point where it is “a clear mirror, on which no dust will collect.” Adepts should maintain a balance, neither getting involved with entanglements nor pushing hard to cut them off, working on cultivation but not overdoing it. The conclusion is the triumphant return to the “original energy,” the attainment of mystical union with the Dao.

Liaoxinjing 了心经 (Scripture on Perfecting the Mind, CT 642, 1 p.), 8th c., revealed by Lord Lao (see Li 1991, 1819; Kohn 1998c). This work describes the central role of the mind as the origin of both good and evil, salvation and sin. It encourages practitioners to begin their career in the Dao by observing it carefully and working for its purification.

Xuanzhu xinjing zhu 玄珠心镜注 (Annotated Mysterious Pearly Mirror of the Mind, CT 574, 575, 2 poems), revealed by Qiao Shaoxuan 检少玄, commentaries by Hengyue zhenzi 衡巖真子 and Wang Sunzhi 王損之, dat. 817 (see Kohn 1989b; 1993, 215-19). These poems on “guarding the One” and attaining the Dao (14 lines of four characters; 10
lines of six characters) present the process of salvation, ascension into heaven and attainment of the Dao in a philosophical diction inspired by Mahāyāna Buddhism. As the mind enters tranquility, spirit comes to rest and the practitioner merges with the primordial Dao. Echoes of these ideas reverberate in some works by Li Ao (772-836; see Barrett 1992), which were grounded in classical Confucian texts yet also reflect the Daoist thought of the period.

POETRY. Daoism flourished both at court and among the educated elite, and there is a great deal of overlap between Daoist and literati culture which finds special expression in poetry. Famous poets made heavy use of Daoist imagery (see Bokenkamp 1993) and Daoists expressed their ecstatic visions in verse. Prime resources for relevant materials are the Quan Tangshi 全唐詩 (Complete Tang Poetry) and the Quan Tangwen 全唐文 (Complete Tang Prose; see Kroll 1986b). The most famous poet to use Daoist notions was Li Bo 李白 (701-762), who wrote numerous songs and verses inspired by Daoist visions (see Waley 1950; Kroll 1986a), and even gave a poetic rendering of his pilgrimage ascent to the Tiantai mountains (Shi 1993). Other Daoist poets of the time were Cao Tang 曹唐 (see Schafer 1985a) and Gu Kuang 郭况 (735-814; see Russell 1989).

Daoist poetry can be divided into three major categories: works describing ecstatic excursions and the wonders of the heavenly halls; those on the beauteous visions of gods and goddesses; and stanzas singing the joys and losses of passionate encounters with divine partners. Among the first are various poetic descriptions of the Shangqing heavens (see Kroll 1985) and of trips to the stars (Schafer 1976). Most prominent among them are the works of Wu Yun, notably his cycle of poems written to the tune "Pacing the Void" (Schafer 1981) and the poem "Saunters in Sylphdom" (Schafer 1983).

The second group of Daoist poems focuses on gods and goddesses, often describing their main sanctuaries, their looks, their wondrous manifestations and the boons they granted the poet. Especially famous among these are the goddesses of the main rivers of south China, such as those of the Xiang 湘江 (see Schafer 1978a), and goddesses of famous spiritual mountain centers (Schafer 1982). The most prominent among all goddesses was Xi-wangmu 西王母 (Queen Mother of the West), whose praises were sung in numerous Tang poems by Daoists and literati alike (see Cahill 1993a; 1986a; 1986b).

The third group of poems sings the woes of passionate encounters with gods or, more commonly, goddesses. They continue an ancient literary tradition of encounters with the supernatural (see Hawkes 1967) by describing the beauty and wonder of the divine partner, the ecstatic bliss of the encounter and the desolation felt after the divinity has left this earth and
the seeker returns to his former lonely self (see Schafer 1978b; 1979b; Cahill 1985; 1993b).

WORKS BY DU GUANGTING. *Daode zhenjing guangsheng yi* 道德真經廣聖義 (Wide and Holy Meaning of the Perfect Scripture of the Dao and Its Virtue, CT 725, 50 j.), pref. 30 Oct. 901 (see Verellen 1989, 137-38; Kohn 1998c). This work is a masterpiece of scholastic systematization and integrative interpretation. It contains Du's own commentary and summary of commentaries to the *Daode jing*. The first two scrolls also outline the life and activities of the divinized Laozi, for the first time systematizing them into the categories and lists that came to serve as the basis for the great Laozi hagiographies of the Song (see Boltz 1987, 131-36; Kohn 1998c).

*Udtd chongdao ji* 历代崇道纪 (Record of Reverence for the Dao over Successive Generations, CT 593, Quan Tangwen 933, 20 pp.), dat. 885 (see Boltz 1987, 129-31; Verellen 1989, 97-100; 1994; Barrett 1996, 94-95). This is a chronicle of Daoist dynastic signs in Chinese history, written specifically to encourage and legitimate the Tang restoration under Emperor Xizong. It focuses largely on the political miracles and manifestations of Lord Lao, recording how rulers patronized and honored the Daoist religion. Eighty-five percent of the text concern Tang events, and a full twenty percent concern Xizong's reign. It is argued that Lord Lao repeatedly intervened to protect the imperium during the rebellion of Huang Chao (880-884).

*Daojiao tingyan ji* 道教靈驗記 (Record of Daoist Miracles, CT 590, Yunji qijian 117-22, 15 j.), dat. 901 (see Kirkland 1986, 203, 462-63; 1992b, 69-73; Verellen 1989, 139-40, 206-7; 1992). This is a general account of wondrous events or miracles associated with Daoist gods and institutions. Du's preface lauds "excellence" (shan 艳; see Kirkland 2000) and explains that the collection exalts this excellence by describing the activities of individuals who exemplified it. The collection was influenced by Buddhist apologetic traditions, and consists of some 200 anecdotes in which wondrous events demonstrate the validity of Daoism.

*Shenxian ganyu zhuan* 神仙感遇傳 (Accounts of Encounters with Spirit Immortals, CT 592, 5 j.), dat. 902 (see Bokenkamp 1986, 145). Here Du records tales of mostly unknown people who met transcendent or immortals, either by virtue of character or because of their achievement in Daoist practice. Many motifs found here became a mainstay of Chinese folktales, short stories, novels and films and are still current today.

Du also edited and wrote commentaries to a number of Daoist scriptures, including the *Shenzhou jing*, *Duren jing* and *Suling jing* (Verellen 1989, 217-19). One important lost work, reassembled from citations, is the *Xianzhuan shiyi* 仙傳拾遺 (Restoration of Omissions in Immortals' Lives; see Kirkland 1992b, 69). In content and outlook, this is similar to other ninth-
century works such as Jiang Fang's *Huanxi zhi* (Records of Magic), a collection of wonder-tales (see Kirkland 1992b, 60-68) and a text by the Daoist Pei Xing (825-880; see Barrett 1996, 97), who is credited with inventing the term *chuanqi*, the standard Chinese term for literary tales (Nienhauser 1986, 356).

GAZETTEERS of Daoist sacred centers with historical significance include Xu Lingfu's *Tianzai shanji* (Gazetteer of Mount Tiantai), dat. 9th century; Li Chongzhao's *Nanyue xiaolu* (Lesser Record of the Southern Marchmount, CT 453, 15 pp.), dated 902; and Du Guangting's *Tiantan Wangwu shan shengji ji* (Record of Sagely Traces on Mounts Tiandan and Wangwu). In addition, Sima Chengzhen is credited with a record of the seventy-two auspicious places of Daoism, found in his *Shangqin tiandi ganghu tujing* (Illustrated Scripture of the Palaces and Prefectures of Heaven and Earth, According to Highest Clarity, Yunji qiqian 27, 16 pp.). Du Guangting has a *Dongtian fudi yuedu mingshan ji* (Record of Grotto-Heavens, Blessed Spots, Marchmounts, Rivers and Famous Mountains, CT 599, 15 pp.), which details the interlocking subterranean network of transcendent sites and related sacred spaces (see Bokenkamp 1986, 146; Schaefer 1986, 822; also Miura 1983).

**Worldview**

Tang Daoist worldview is complex and sophisticated and cannot be fully described in a few pages. We will therefore limit ourselves to introducing some representative visions in order to highlight the key notions of the era.

In the seventh century, Daoist thinking was strongly influenced by Buddhism, and a foremost example of this influence is the concepts of TWOFOLD MYSTERY, which continues Mādhyamika logic in a Daoist environment. The expression "twofold mystery" goes back to the line "mysterious and again mysterious" in the *Daode jing* (ch. 1). During the early Tang, the line is reinterpreted to indicate the mystical goal of profundity, silence, and freedom from all obstructions; *xuan* is used as a verb, meaning "to make mysterious," the line thus becoming parallel to "decrease and again decrease" (ch. 48). Daoist attainment is thus understood as a process of mysterious/decrease and again mysterious/decrease, also described as the realization of twofold forgetfulness. First, practitioners should do away with ordinary thinking and desires, then proceed to discard this level of attainment and even become free of no-desires. Reorganizing consciousness into nonconsciousness, they move to an ultimate stage of neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness (see Kohn 1991, 190-91).
This structure is closely patterned on the Buddhist school of Madhyamika, the Middle Path (zhongdao 之道), also known as the Three Treatise School (Sanlun 三論) after its three major texts. Founded by Nagarjuna in the second century, it developed in China in the sixth and was then formulated mainly by Jizang 吉藏 (549-623) in his Erdi zhang 二谛章 (On the Two Levels of Truth) and Sanlun xuanyi 三論玄義 (Mysterious Meaning of the Three Treatises; see Robinson 1967; Kamata 1966; Chan 1963, 357).

According to Jizang, there are two levels of truth, the worldly and the absolute, which are both overcome by two further stages of both worldly and absolute and neither worldly nor absolute, reflecting the four propositions of the Madhyamika:

affirmation of being;
affirmation of non-being;
affirmation of both, being and non-being;
negation of both, being and non-being

(Robinson 1967, 57; Robinet 1977, 117).

In practical application, these stages guide adepts from the worldly assumption that everything exists to the enlightened vision that all is empty. Next they realize that emptiness too is a way of looking at the world and go beyond it, discarding even nonbeing to realize that all is simultaneously both being and nonbeing. From there they attain the highest state and realize that things ultimately neither exist nor not exist.

In the eighth century, too, the focus of Daoist worldview was the attainment and realization of the Dao, and Buddhist influence continued, but on a more practical level. Writers such as Sima Chengzhen, Sun Simiao and Wu Yun presented an integrated outline of the practices associated with OBSERVATION (guan 観), an adaptation of the Buddhist practice of insight meditation, showing the progress toward transcendence and describing subsequent transformations of body, emotions, and conscious thinking (see Kohn 1990). They tend to begin with an emphasis on the body’s health, the need to be cured from all diseases and to attain harmony of all physical actions. Practitioners are to stop eating normal food and instead substitute a diet of pure substances and drugs to achieve a higher degree of subtlety in alignment with the cosmos. Normal nourishment, so the theory goes, causes people to decay and die, whereas drugs distilled from pure plants and minerals help them to live.

Next the muscular system is made supple with the help of gymnastics, and awareness of the inner self is attained through breathing exercises (see Maspero 1981, 443; Despeux 1989). The different energies of the body are harmonized, digestion and blood circulation are stimulated and breathing is made conscious and deep. Eventually this leads to a state of glowing health and suppleness in which the body is no longer dependent on food.
and drink but can live on the absorption of qi, that is, the ingestion of the five energies of the five directions (see Engelhardt 1987, 91). Then the inner qi, the pure seed of immortality within, develops and the adepts’ physical constitution is reorganized from a profane to a sacred level.

A similar process also applies to the transformation of the emotions, commonly described as passions and desires. This begins with the stabilization and concentration of the mind, which eventually reaches a state of complete tranquility. “Whether involved in affairs or at leisure, there is no agitation at all” (Cunshen lianqi ming 2a; Kohn 1987, 121). This stability of mind is then employed toward a critical examination of the practitioner’s own psychological constitution. Adepts are led to understand that their conscious mind is originally made of spirit (shen). This spirit works through the mind and governs life perfectly, but—due to delusion—is wasted on engagements with the senses and the resulting passions and desires. To control this involvement and recover the purity of spirit, adepts—in an adaptation of Buddhist worldview—are guided to realize the impermanent nature of all and the nonidentity (no-self) of themselves. Upon reaching this understanding they are free from passions and desires.

The adepts’ next step is to develop a vision of the Dao within. They come to see themselves as a storehouse of inner nature, a habitation of the spirit, the vehicle and the host of the Dao. They learn to let “spirit radiate through human action,” like a light shining everywhere (Neiguan jing 5b; Kohn 1989a, 217), and they increasingly identify with the Dao that governs their body, loosening all remaining attachments to physical and personal selves. The result is a new and wider identity as part of the universe at large, a state in which adepts see themselves as beings of spirit and the death of their bodies as a translation into transcendence (see Zuwanglun, sect. 5; Kohn 1987, 102).

Continuing the training, eventually adepts reach the full attainment of the Dao which takes place in two phases. First, there is oblivion, a trancelike and enstatic state of complete immersion in the Dao characterized by a loss of personal consciousness and physical immobility: “The body is like rotten wood; the mind is like dead ashes. There are no more impulses, there is no more search: one has reached perfect serenity” (Zuwanglun, sect. 6; Kohn 1987, 104). Second, there is the utter pervasion of all, a state of movement, openness, joy, light and ecstasy, the attainment of heavenly splendor. “Going beyond all beings in one’s body, one whirls out of normal relations and comes to reside next to the Jade Emperor of the Great Dao in the numinous realm (Cunshen lianqi ming 3a; Kohn 1987, 123). The ecstatic joys of utter oneness are described in the lyrics of the period, notably in the various poems of Wu Yun.

The ninth century saw not only the continuation of “observation” culture, abbreviated in texts of formulaic verse such as the Qingjing jing, and in
Daoist poetry such as the *Xuanzhu xinjing zhu*, but also a new level of analytic subtlety and SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT. Most notably Du Guangting, the encyclopedic writer of the late ninth century, brought a strong analytical mind to Daoist worldview and presented integrated visions in various ritual, hagiographic, geographic and philosophical venues (see Kohn 1998a). To give one example, his treatment of the hagiography of Lord Lao in the second chapter of his *Daode zhenjing guangshengyi* (CT 725), a monumental fifty-scroll collection of commentaries on the *Daode jing*, is not only the most complete but also one of the most sophisticated.

Du analyzes the deity’s deeds in a total of thirty items, plus seventeen specifically on his birth, beginning with the god’s identity with the Dao as part of the creative process, describing his creation of the world, his establishment of the immortal hierarchy, his descents as the teacher of dynasties, and his revelation of the holy Daoist scriptures. His birth in human form is not only described in great and systematic detail, but is also analyzed in terms of overall purpose (making people see the perfect Dao) and symbolic meaning. The god strides on rays of the sun because he embodies perfect yang; he remains in the womb for eighty-one years and is bathed by nine dragons for the same reason. His name Laozi or “Old Child/Master” has highly sophisticated implications, meaning he was born old and moved on to become young, that he was born an infant yet with the white hair of an old man, that he was both the seed of the universe and its master (see Kohn 1998c).

**Practice**

Daoist practice under the Tang, too, is manifold and complex and cannot be easily described in brief. As a general survey, three aspects will be discussed: the ritual activities at the imperial court, the organized establishment of monasteries and the rise of popular practices and miracles.

With the recognition of Laozi as the dynasty’s ancestor, Daoist worship became part of imperial culture and, especially under Emperor Xuanzong, COURT RITUAL was reorganized along Daoist lines. In 741, the emperor decreed that in both capitals as well as in all prefectures a temple to Laozi, then called Xuanyuan huangdi 玄元皇帝, was to be erected, often linked with Daoist academies that trained degree candidates in Daoist subjects (Xiong 1996, 263). The finding of the “Heavenly Treasure” soon thereafter increased the intensity and dedication of the emperor’s worship. In 742, yet another major sanctuary was erected to Laozi in the Daning fang 大寧坊, the southwestern quarter of Chang’an, where the deity was honored together with groups of immortals in a divinely beautiful setting.
(Xiong 1996, 267). Its main hall was huge and contained a statue of Laozi in dragon-design imperial garb, flanked, among others, by a statue of Emperor Xuanzong himself (see also Benn 1987). The deity was then given highest priority in court ritual and received numerous sacrificial offerings to the accompaniment of gao 鼓 ritual music. This indicated that the rite was a form of imperial report to the deity, such as those practiced mainly to Heaven in earlier dynasties. It required the most formal of ritual garbs and paraphernalia (gunmian 鬲冕) and was supervised by the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (Taichang si 太常寺; see Xiong 1996, 269-70).

In 743, further significant changes occurred. First, all Daoists, who had been under the administration of a special Daoist bureau, were now entered under the supervision of the Court of the Imperial Clan (Zongzheng si 宗正寺). They thus became official relatives of the emperor and his family. Daoist temples were accordingly renamed from guan 觀 (abbey) to gong 宮 (palace), a nomenclature that still survives in various locations. Also, the formal state rituals offered at the major Laozi sanctuaries, which had been patterned on traditional state-rites, were now reorganized to include more Daoist forms. The ritual garb was changed to less formal court dress, the prayer board was replaced by paper and various Daoist forms of music and dance became part of the official ceremonies (Xiong 1996, 270; Schafer 1987). On a different front, Daoist worship was further expanded within state ritual through the adoption of the sacrifice to the gods of the Nine Palaces (Jiugong 尊宮), a group of celestial constellations that was also closely linked with the ancient Luoshu 洛書 (Chart of the Luo River), a major cosmological and astrological device (see Kalinowski 1985). In 744, the emperor followed the advice of the magician Su Jiaqing 苏嘉慶 and had an altar erected to these deities. Sacrifices were then established to be held in the first month of each season, with the emperor personally conducting the rite (Xiong 1996, 278-79). This again shows how, especially in the high Tang, Daoism inspired numerous ritual changes in official sacrifices and ceremonies.

MONASTICISM, as noted earlier in this volume (see “The Northern Celestial Masters”), developed gradually in the fifth and sixth centuries. By the Tang it was solidly in place as a key form of organized and state-sponsored Daoist practice. Daoist monasteries were classified along with Buddhist monastic organizations and were tightly regulated by the state. This can be seen from two sets of sources, one a special code on the clergy known as the Daoseng ke 道僧科 (Rules for Daoists and Buddhists) of the year 637, and the other several Tang legal codes, such as the Tang liudian 唐六典 (Six Departments of the Tang) and the Tangli shuyi 唐律疏義 (Supplementary Interpretations of Tang Laws). The former, unfortunately, is lost but can be recovered partially from its Japanese counterpart, the Sōn にょ
As Kenneth Ch'en describes in his analysis of these sources, if recluse partook of improper foods or liquor they could be condemned to hard labor; if they wore clothes of silk or aristocratic colors, they could be defrocked or sent to hard labor; and if they stole or desecrated sacred objects, they could be punished by imprisonment, hard labor, or exile. Again, monks or nuns engaged in fortune telling and faith healing on penalty of reversion to lay status. If they still continued their charlatanery, they might suffer strangulation. In general they were to be handed over to the secular authorities for all serious crimes, especially robbery and murder (Ch'en 1973, 96-102). Ordained recluse were not supposed to ride horses, possess military books, form cliques, solicit guests, stay for more than three days among lay families, participate in musical or other entertainments or behave in any way rudely or abusively to elders or those of higher rank (Ch'en 1973, 102-3).

Monasteries of the two religions came in all shapes and sizes, from the tiny mountain huts through local temples that housed a few recluse to large-scale institutions that were also landowners. These larger monasteries had important economic functions and were, by necessity, sponsored by the state or the aristocracy. We have two major sources on their layout: the Fengdao kejí (Rules and Precepts on Worshiping the Dao, CT 1125, Dunhuang mss., 6 j.; see "Ordination and Zhai Rituals") and the Shangqing daolei shixiang (see above), both of the seventh century. They describe monasteries constructed on a central north-south axis, in due accordance with standard Chinese architectural principles, and consisting of three levels of buildings. At their very heart, aligned to the central axis and directly inside the main gate was an open space for the erection of an altar platform (used at ordinations and major ceremonies), a sanctuary of the Heavenly Worthies, a patriarchs' hall, a scriptural lecture hall, a bell pavilion and a scripture tower. Surrounding these, immediately on the left and right (west and east), were buildings of practical necessity dedicated specifically to the recluse. They included dormitories, meditation facilities, kitchens, refectory, bathhouse, and scriptorium.

Beyond these, in a second level of monastic organization, there were more practical buildings which not only housed and catered to the recluse but also involved various numbers of lay supporters and outside visitors. Here we find servants' quarters, carriage houses, stables, visitors' residences, and workshops of various sorts (woodworking, statuary, paper making) as well as a number of secondary practice facilities such as pavilions for solitary meditation, oratories and visualization chambers. Here too are found an Ascension Building (shengxia yuan 昇霞院) for the dying and an Incense Building (shaoxiang yuan 燃香院) for funerals and memorial services (Fengdao
A third level beyond these was even more mundane and included an herb garden, orchard and vegetable plots, as well as agricultural estates and water mills, the so-called fixed assets (changzhuzhong) of the institution (see Gernet 1995, 67). The texts specify that all fruits and flowers to be presented in offerings, as well as all vegetables used in meals, should be grown locally within the sacred compound (1.18b-19a). They also insist that monasteries earn regular income from their various fixed assets, pieces of land and machinery that belonged fully to the institution, complete with serfs and official contracts (see Gernet 1995, 149).

Inside the monastery, rules of celibacy, poverty, obedience and general self-control applied. The formalities to be followed, be it the observation of personal poverty and self-discipline in all daily activities (including highly ritualized meals), or the polite rules in contact with the teacher, other recluse and outsiders, are all described in a number of Tang documents, including again the Fengdao kejie mentioned earlier. Another important work is the Yaoxiu keyi jielii chao 妻修科儀戒律鈔 (Notes on Essential Rules, Observances, Precepts, and Statutes, CT 463, 16 v.), a major ritual compendium of the eighth century written by Zhu Junxu 朱君绪, Faman 法滿, of the Yuqing guan 玉清觀 (Jade Clarity Abbey). This is described in this volume’s chapter on “Ordination and Zhai Rituals.”

Another work is the Xuanmen shishi weiyi 玄門十事威儀 (Ten Items of Dignified Observances of the Gate to the Mystery, CT 792, 17 pp.), of the mid-seventh century. This contains formal instructions in ten sections and 144 entries, discussing concrete activities, such as prostrations and obeisances (for contemporaneous Buddhist practices, see Reinders 1997), sitting and rising, washing the hands and rinsing the mouth, handling food and dishes and having audiences with the masters (see Kohn 2000). Another text, slightly earlier, is the Qianzhen ke 千真科 (Rules of the Thousand Perfected, CT 1410; see Ren and Zhong 1991, 1119-20), which has 109 rules that cover the interaction between recluse and outsiders, precepts against intoxication, sexual misconduct, and material greed, the mental attitudes to be cultivated in day-to-day life, formal obeisances and greetings and formalities regarding food and food offerings.

The picture that emerges from these sources is of a thoroughly organized and disciplined monastic community, which followed the rules laid down by the state and observed highly ritualized forms of behavior on a day-to-day basis. They served the Dao and sought its realization through both ritual and self-cultivation. Monasteries seem to have been largely segregated under the Tang, unlike earlier centers which were double houses for both men and women and which even allowed the presence of family members. The recluse rose through a sophisticated hierarchy of ordination, reaching different ranks of ritual competence and celestial status (see Benn 1991). These ranks may or may not have included administrative
responsibilities and specific tasks within the monastic community, roles like those of abbot, prior, cellarer, infirmarian and so on. Tang texts remain entirely silent about interior administration, and Daoist monastic hierarchies do not appear in the sources until the texts of Complete Perfection in the Yuan.

POPULAR PRACTICES. Outside the state and organized religious structures, Daoist practice also occurred on the popular level. Not much can be said about this, since sources are scarcer here than on other topics. However, two sets of facts do appear. First, there are increasing numbers of Daoist works and deities dedicated to the needs of ordinary people and to providing support and talismans for several ordinary activities. Second, miracles involving Daoist sites and deities are recorded with greater frequency, and they involve not only high-ranking officials and priests but also perfectly ordinary people. Also, they occur not only in major religious centers and the environments of the two capitals, but also in many different parts of the country, reflecting the growing importance of the periphery for the religion’s development.

Daoist support for ordinary activities is found in a new group of deities that grows significantly in popular worship under the Tang, the Ten Worthies Who Save From Suffering (Jiuku tianzun 救苦天尊). Belief in this group developed through the adaptation of the Buddhist concept of the buddhas of the ten directions, which appears in Mahāyāna scriptures from an early time, and the idea of savior bodhisattvas, such as Guanyin 觀音, Dizang 地藏, and Wenzhu 文殊 (Yusa 1989, 19). In Daoism, they appear first in the Yinyuanjing 因緣經 (Scripture of Karmic Retribution, CT 336) of the Sui dynasty, where their names are still rather Buddhist in nature, including titles such as “Great Compassion,” “Universal Rescue,” and “Wisdom Transformation” (6.4ab). Later, they are listed in their more Daoist and later standard version in the Feng dao keji (6.1ab), reflecting the development and increased Daoization of their cult in the early Tang. A third list, only found after the Tang, links the Ten Worthies with the ten kings of hell and includes their worship in memorial services for the salvation of the dead (see Teiser 1994, 226-27, after CT 215; Yosa 1989). It is dear from Du Guangting’s Daojiao kongyan ji that the belief in the ten gods played an important part in Daoist popular practice under the Tang.

In addition to providing more popular deities, Daoism of the period also furnished sets of spells and talismans and other means of practical help for the common people. One set of spells concerns particularly the building of houses and other facilities, and is found in the Anzhai bayangjing 安宅八陽經 (Scripture on Building a Safe Home [without Offending] the Eight Yang Energies, CT 634, 2 pp.) and the Buxie bayangjing 補謝八陽經 (Scripture on Compensating the Eight Yang Energies, CT 635, 2 pp.). They are matched by apocryphal Buddhist texts of similar titles (T. 1394 and 2897), which go
back at least to the early Tang; one of them appears among Dunhuang manuscripts (S. 5373) and is listed in a Japanese bibliography of the year 761 (see Masuo 1994; 1998; Kohn 1998c).

The texts begin by warning practitioners that whatever building they may erect, "an eastern corridor, a western hallway, a southern chamber, or a northern hall (T. 1394), or even a well, a carriage house, or a stable for one's livestock (CT 634, 1a), they are bound to offend the gods of earth and sky. In order to protect themselves against the gods' revenge, they must recite the scripture with its powerful spells to offer apologies to the spirits and make the demons "hide in darkness, scatter into far corners of the four directions, and never dare to do any harm" (CT 634, 1b; T. 2897; Masuo 1994, 395; Kohn 1998c). Not only will one's estate, including even granaries, cattle pens, chicken coops, stables, and gardens be freed from harm (CT 634, 1b), they will be blessed with good fortune, yin and yang will rise in harmony and the dragon deities of the earth will be well contented (2a). This state, in turn, will afford blessings for one's descendents, community, and the country at large (CT 635, 1b). A similar text is the 鎮宅靈符 (Numinous Talisman for the Protection of Residences), which deals with geomantic ways of building and securing houses and has been found at Dunhuang (S. 6094; see Yusa 1981). The works show not only a continued close interaction of Daoism and Buddhism on all levels of doctrine and practice, but also an increasing documentation of Daoist concern for popular needs and activities.

The other aspect of popular Daoist practice described in the sources are miracles worked at Daoist sites and/or through Daoist deities. Notable here is Du Guangting's 道教靈巖記 (CT 590), whose description of wonders associated with Lord Lao (j. 6-7) reports on events in various different locations, including Sichuan, Du Guangting's own place of residence, the capital Chang'an and its environments, Zhejiang and the Great Lake area (Kohn 1998c). They describe wondrous events in connection with a statue or painting, appearances of the god in emergencies, prophecies granted and rewards for meticulous worship. All of these cases involve commoners or petty officials rather than bureaucrats or clergy.

To give a few examples, the image of Lord Lao in the Lingji guan 統集觀 (Abbey of the Numinous Assembly) in Changming 崇明 (Sichuan) defended itself successfully against theft. While the images of its two attendants were snatched by a father-son team and melted down for personal gain, the Lord's image managed to abscond in time and take itself to the neighboring Anqi guan 安期觀 (Abbey of Master Anqi) about five miles away. Here the resident monks discovered it sitting in front of the main gate. They installed it properly and in due course learned of its original whereabouts (6.6b). Another case involved Jia Xiang 賈湘, a commoner living in Chang'an, who, together with his family, was rescued from certain
death at the hand of Huang Chao and his rebels because he never tired of worshipping the image of Lord Lao (7.1a; Verellen 1989, 78-79). Then again there was Gou Daorong, a poor sculptor who wished nothing more than to fashion a gold image of Lord Lao but lacked the means. Lo and behold, while praying to the god, a wind arose and drifted some wondrous pollen on the ground before him, which changed into the precious metal (7.9a).

Together with the various sources on talismans and the flourishing worship of the Ten Worthies, these cases document the active Daoist worship undertaken by ordinary people and the helpful presence of key Daoist deities while they faced their daily plights.

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Since the beginnings of organized Daoism in the Han, women have been present and active in the different schools of the religion. In the tradition of the Celestial Masters, when married to the Master himself, they were known as “female masters” (nǔshì 女士); when members of the chosen or seed people (zhōngmín 種民), they carried the title “female officer” (nìguān 女官). As such, they received registers and talismans and participated in sexual and other practices. In the school of Highest Clarity, women were most often solitary practitioners who lived in centers of either mixed gender or women only, but some were also leaders of women’s communities. They were called “female Daoists” (nǚ dàoshi 女道士) or “female hats” (nìguān 女冠), because the only difference in their ritual garb was their distinctive headdress. In more recent times, and especially since the founding of the Complete Perfection school, women have been residents of convents or have led a devout lay religious life, qualifying in either case as “ladies of the Dao” (dàogū 道姑).

The positions and roles of women in Daoist organizations have to be understood in relation to their situation in Chinese society in general. This has changed little over time, and in the most general manner can be characterized by submission to men, notably husbands, demanded of all women along with the high respect accorded to mothers of sons (see van Gulik 1961). Women have also not been very active in Chinese social institutions, and their roles in Daoist organizations were strictly limited. In both secular literature and Daoist texts, works by or about women are therefore the exception rather than the rule.

On the other hand, women came into their own in Daoism through several schools’ belief in their greater aptitude for transcendence and for

* Translated by Livia Kohn.
communication with the divine and invisible worlds. Frequently women serve as intermediaries, transmit texts and methods, and are often granted scriptures, especially when they have eschewed all contact with men. Similarly, women's special abilities to intercede with the gods and to fulfil the vows of the faithful render them more efficacious and powerful practitioners than men.

Who, then, were the women who embraced the Daoist path? According to a Six Dynasties' text, the Celestial Masters distinguished five different classes of women suited to become Daoist practitioners: young unmarried girls, women unable to marry due to an inauspicious horoscope, women forced into marriage, widows and rejected wives (see Despeux 1986, 63-67; Overmyer 1991, 99-101). All these were unenviable classes, rejected by society, to which the Celestial Masters offered a form of escape and an alternative. Such a status allowed these women to have at least some role and not be excluded completely. The same pattern also holds true for other periods and other Daoist schools, with one exception: under the Tang many women of aristocratic background became Daoist nuns after being widowed, some young girls spent time in Daoist convents to purify their lives before entering society, and some women spent a purifying interlude between marriages in a Daoist institution.

Daoist temples also offered refuge to women plagued by court intrigues and political machination. In addition to women practitioners, there were a number of major goddesses who played a key role in the religion, most prominently Xiwang mu (Queen Mother of the West), Laozi's mother and Mazu (the protectress of fishermen and merchants). Several women, moreover, are credited with the founding of an entire Daoist tradition, most notably Wei Huacun at the beginning of Highest Clarity and Zu Shu, the matriarch of Pure Subtlety. Writings concerning women, then, consist of hagiographic accounts of their lives, descriptions of specific practices for women and writings by women Daoists themselves. In terms of practice, their main activities lay in the areas of intermediation and shamanic communication, but they were also key participants in sexual rituals and longevity techniques.

**History**

**HAN AND BEFORE.** The earliest and most prominent female Daoist is the goddess Xiwang mu 西王母, queen of the immortals and symbol of highest yin. A beauty without equals, she reigns on Mount Kunlun 延壽山, a paradisical residence of the immortals covered by luxuriant orchards growing the peaches of immortality. This, at least, is the best known image of the goddess who took on a number of specifically female traits and, under
the Han, became the spouse of Dongwang gong 東王公, the Lord King of the East, also known as Mugong 林公 (Lord of Wood) and the representative of pure yang. Beyond that, Xiwang mu is known for multiple aspects that make her a demoness in addition to a goddess.

Especially before the Han dynasty she appears in various distinct aspects. For one, she was a cosmic demiurge, a primordial creator of yin and yang, presenting herself as androgynous and complete (Seidel 1982, 99-106). For another, her title appears as a geographical name, used for a country or region in the west (see Fracasso 1988). A passage in the Shanhai jing 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas) of the third century B.C.E. describes her as having a human body, a leopard's tail and tiger's teeth. She wears a characteristic square headdress in her dishevelled hair and makes strange, whistling sounds (Mathieu 1983, 1:101; see also Chan 1990). These same characteristics appear in other early descriptions of the goddess, which also mention further traits, such as the black bird who serves as her familiar, her special relation with the orchard of immortality peaches, and her visit to Emperor Wu of the Han on the seventh day of the seventh month, a date associated with popular exorcistic practices. All these go back to traditions of shamanism and the ancient popular religion (Despeux 1990, 46-47).

Most certainly it was this shamanic connection which made her appear under the Han as the goddess of epidemics who resided in the west and ruled over the demons of pestilence (Seidel 1982, 99-106).

In the Warring States period, Xiwang mu was further linked with the idea of longevity (e.g., in the Zhuangzi), a notion that grew significantly under the Han, when the quest for immortality made up for certain deficiencies in the cosmology of the time (Loewe 1979, 96-98). The quest certainly played a large role in the thinking of Emperor Wu, maybe even more than in that of his predecessor, the First Emperor of the Qin. In 110 B.C.E., on the seventh day of the seventh month, Emperor Wu received a visit from Xiwang mu, joined her in a banquet that included immortality peaches and received several revealed texts and potent talismans from her. Told first in the Han wudi neizhuan 漢武帝内傳 (Inner Biography of the Han Emperor Wu, CT 292; see Schipper 1965; Smith 1992), a text linked with the Highest Clarity school, this episode comes first in orthodox hagiography of the goddess, composed by Du Guangting 杜光庭 (855-930) in his Yongcheng jixian lu 廣成集仙錄 (Record of the Assembled Immortals in the Heavenly Walled City, CT 783; see Cahill 1986a; 1993; Kominami 1991). Placing her in the first scroll of his work, Du shows the continued centrality and importance of the goddess.

After becoming, in 3 B.C.E., the leading goddess in one of the first known popular movements (Shek 1987, 532), Xiwang mu was worshiped variously in the different regions of China, her cult being pronounced on Mount Heng 衡山, the sacred mountain of the south. In addition, she had
major sanctuaries on Mount Hua 華山 near modern Xi'an, where her tomb was said to be located, and on Mount Wuyi 武夷山 (Fujian), which is mentioned variously in connection with her. Under the Six Dynasties, her cult was integrated into the pantheon of Highest Clarity and she became one of the key goddesses of this school. While, as Du Guangting points out, she was a helper of both sexes at this time, under the Tang she emerged particularly as the protectress of women—of female Daoists, aristocratic ladies, singers, widows and nuns (see Cahill 1986b; 1988). Nevertheless, she was also a goddess highly adored by men and received many eulogies and admiring songs from Tang poets (over 500 in all). She was, most certainly, a model lady and representative of the female ideal (see Cahill 1993).

Since the Song, Xiwang mu's cult in official Daoism has been increasingly supplanted by that of other goddesses. She has nevertheless continued to be a major figure in sectarian movements and small congregational groups who often receive messages from her through spirit-writing. Descending onto the altar during séances, under the Ming and Qing she took on the title Wusheng laomu 無生老母 (Neverborn Venerable Mother; see Overmyer and Jordan 1986), thus playing a major role in popular cults and remaining a key goddess worshiped by women.

Structurally, the goddess is part of the overall Chinese tendency to classify the world in a hierarchical system based on the family structure and on the administration of the empire. As a result, Xiwang mu is both classical mother and chief of the celestial administration. In the heavenly paradises, she is surrounded not only by primordial princesses (yuànjùn 元君) who also appear as the divine spouses of Highest Clarity visionaries, but also by celestial maidens (tiānmì 妻女) and jade maidens (yuānì 玉女), including also junior goddesses of time, the Six Jia (Liu jia 六甲; see Inoue 1992). She transmits sacred texts and immortality methods, serving as a symbol of sexual communication between above and below, the visible and the invisible. She legitimates the ruler’s pursuit of immortality; she serves as the patroness of all women, ancient and modern, who wish to be delivered from evil and cured from diseases; and she is a key figure in sectarian movements, high goddess of Daoism and popular religion.

THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES. Under the Han dynasty, when the first organized Daoist movements developed, women served as wives of masters and as female officers among the chosen people. They became more prominent with the emergence of the Highest Clarity school in the fourth century, which had a woman as first matriarch. Wei Huacun 魏華存 (252-334, from Rencheng 任城, Shandong) was the daughter of Wei Shu 魏舒, minister of public instruction under Emperor Wu of the Western Jin (r. 265-290) and an adept of the Way of the Celestial Master. Married to a leading Celestial Masters officer, Wei Huacun became a libationer (jiǔjū 祭酒) herself, which means that she received a thorough religious education in the
organization, including also sexual rites of passage and the reception of formal registers which allowed her to fulfill her official duties. During the war that led to the beginning of the Eastern Jin in 317, her family survived by fleeing to Jianye (modern Nanjing), after which she spent much of her life in seclusion, receiving several visits from celestial perfected (真人) of high rank.

According to her hagiography, she attained the Dao on the southern marchmount (Mount Heng) in Hunan, which at the time was a highly active center of both Buddhist and Daoist practices (see Faure 1987; Robson 1995). She was accordingly called Nanyue furen 南嶽夫人 (Lady of the Southern Marchmount) and appears as such in a letter of Yang Xi 楊羲, dated between 384 and 399. After this time, she became the object of an important cult which, especially under the Tang (see Schaefer 1977) became prominent among women Daoists and spread to various locations in China (see Despeux 1990, 56-60; Strickmann 1979, 142; Robinet 1984, 2: 392). Under the Song, she joined the pantheon of yet another Daoist tradition, similarly founded by a woman patriarch, the school of Pure Subtlety (Qingwei dao 清微道).

THE TANG. In Highest Clarity, women were present as initiators, preceptors and possessors of sacred texts and methods. Under the auspices of this school, which became the pinnacle of integrated Daoism under the Tang, women reached their most prominent position in the religion. This was actively supported by Emperor Xuanzong (r. 713-756), whose passions for women and Daoism extended to women Daoists. According to the statistics taken by the Daoist administration of the time, there were 1,687 Daoist temples in the eighth century, 1,137 for men and 550 for women (Despeux 1986, 55). Women thus constituted an important part of the Daoist clergy as it was recognized officially.

One event in particular marks the heightened role of women Daoists in the Tang: the ordination of two princesses, the eighth and ninth daughters of Emperor Ruizong (r. 710-713) in 711, known as the princesses of Xining 西寧 and Changlong 崇隆. After being ordained in the Cavern-Mystery level of the religion, they became Jinxian gongzhu 金仙公主 (Princess of Golden Transcendence) and Yuzhen gongzhu 玉真公主 (Princess of Jade Perfection; see Benn 1991; Schaefer 1978a; 1985). Their entry into the Daoist path was celebrated with unheard of splendor which cost the state coffers a fortune. Despite the criticism of various ministers and high functionaries regarding the extreme expense (see Despeux 1986), the emperor also ordered the construction of two monasteries for his princesses, located in the Fuxing 藥興 ward of Chang'an, right next to the imperial concubines. Alleys and pathways between the two temples and the palace were open and easily accessible.
The ordination proper took fourteen days and nights, as is reported by the ritualist Zhang Wanfu 張萬福, himself a participant, in his *Chuanshou san dong jing jie fa bu lue shuo* 傳授三洞經戒法錄略說 (Synopsis of the Transmission of the Scriptures, Precepts, Methods, and Registers of the Three Caverns, CT 1241, 2.18a-21a; see Benn 1991, 148-51; Ren and Zhong 1991, 982), dated 713. It was no different from ordinations undergone by aristocratic men, except that since men were associated with yang and thus the left side, many of their ritual actions would begin on the left, while those of women, associated with yin and with the right side, started with the right. The Ming text *Shoulu cdi fa xinyi* 受籙次第法信儀 (Ordinances on Order and Rank in Ordination, CT 1244), for example, specifies that when a man and a woman receive registers of three generals at the altar, the man takes it with his left, the woman with her right (17b). Or again, that the master takes the left hand of the man but the right hand of the woman.

Zhang Wanfu does not describe the ritual garb worn by the princesses, but it must have been similar to garments known from other Tang ordinations. It was a most elaborate outfit, representing the new, divine identity of the ordinand and his or her integration into the cosmic order. It served to render the divine world visible and allow communication with it. It also guaranteed the adept access to transcendence and formed a veritable suit of armor against all sorts of demons and malicious influences. Each of the seven levels of ordination under the Tang (see Benn 1991, 73-98) had a specific ritual garb associated with it. Those of the first five levels showed minute differences between the sexes, while the garb worn by adepts of the sixth and seventh levels were identical—except that the size of headdress and length of robes corresponded to a yang number for men and a yin number for women (Despeux 1990).

The two princesses with their ordination—as well as their predecessor, Princess Taiping 太平公主, the daughter of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu who entered a Daoist convent to escape a marriage with the king of barbarian Turfan—represent a trend among imperial daughters that sent more than ten joining the Daoist path and converting their residences into convents (Schafer 1985, 1). This was unprecedented in Chinese history. Separated from society through their religious conversion, the women could yet exert a political influence, while at the same time taking refuge from the ubiquitous palace intrigues. They benefited from the economic privileges of their new status and had a great deal of personal freedom. Records show they often led a licentious life, undertook extensive travels and devoted themselves to art and literature. Passage into Daoism sometimes allowed a woman to escape an unwanted marriage (like the Princess Taiping) or to change her spouse. This was the case for one of the most celebrated women of traditional China, Yang Guifei 楊貴妃, the beloved concubine of Emperor Xuanzong. Before becoming guifei, “most honorable consort,” she
had been married to Li Chang 李瑁, one of the emperor's sons, whom she left in order to enter the imperial harem in 745 (see Schafer 1978a).

The eighth century is important not only because of the rise in aristocratic nuns, but also because it saw the integration of official Daoism with various local cults, which were flourishing as never before. Although never absent from the north and northwest of the country, they rose particularly in the maritime and central regions of the east and south where divine women of various sorts (goddesses of rivers and mountains, shamanesses, cultic founders) grew in stature and often became objects of pilgrimages undertaken equally by men and women (see Schafer 1973). Their diffusion and popularity depended on their recognition by official Daoism, the aristocracy and the imperial court. Their integration into the official pantheon is often presented in texts as conquests of Daoism—their voices on the issue not being heard.

Sources that speak of female Daoists praise their exceptional talents in various areas, such as painting, calligraphy, embroidery and poetry, as well as their gifts as prophets, healers and saviors. The hagiographies most frequently mention their powers to help beget male children and to heal various diseases, powers which gave birth to the major female cults which Daoism absorbed during the Six Dynasties and Tang.

One example for the development of a local cult under female auspices comes from the school of Pure Subtlety (Qingwei 清微) and its first “patriarch,” the Tang priestess Zu Shu 祖舒 (fl. 889-904, from Lingling 樂陵 in Guangxi; see Ren 1990, 565-66). After receiving ordination in the traditions of the Celestial Masters, Highest Clarity, Numinous Treasure and the Daode jing, she went to Guiyang 桂陽 where she met Lingguang shengmu 靈光聖母 (the Holy Mother of Numinous Radiance). The latter transmitted to her the Way of Pure Subtlety together with techniques of talismans and exorcism, typically found in thunder rites popular under the Song, and especially in the school of the Divine Empyrean (Shenxiao 神霄; see Boltz 1987). These techniques originally came from the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning residing in the Heaven of Pure Subtlety, thus the name of the school.

Later followers placed Zu Shu at the head of their patriarchal lineage, which was constructed in the thirteenth century. The first text to mention it is the Qingwei xianpu 清微仙譜 (Account of the Immortals of Pure Subtlety, CT 171) by Chen Cai 陳采 of the Yuan (see Boltz 1987, 38-39). According to him, the founder of the active school was Nan Bidao 南寂寞 (b. 1196), who appears as its ninth patriarch. He received the key methods passed down from Zu Shu, then developed them into the Pure Subtlety system during his sojourn in the capital.

Unlike Wei Huacun, whose family background and role as libationer is known, we know nothing about Zu Shu’s home. The little we do know
about her activities makes her seem more like a southern shaman than a religious visionary. Rather than an active founder, she appears in the Pure Subtlety school mainly as a preceptor who transmits methods which she herself obtained from another woman. It is notable that the school began in the south of China and that rites of healing and exorcism were central from its beginning.

THE SONG. The numbers of women Daoists declined in the early Song to about 3-5% of the registered clergy and only rose again later, with the emergence of the Complete Perfection school (Quanzhen 全真). Nevertheless, cults of women continued to flourish and there were some senior female practitioners of various techniques. Among the cults, that of Linshui furen 润水夫人, “the Lady near the Waters,” stands out. Originally named Chenjinggu 陈靖姑, she was born during the Tang, in 767. Blessed by various supernatural powers, she died young and pregnant, at the age of 24, during a rain-making ritual. Her powers began to manifest after her death and she gradually grew into the protectress of women, children and boy mediums (the so-called children of divination, jiiong 子童).

The cult first developed in her home state of Min 閩 (Fujian), then was canonized in the Song while continuing its shamanic practices, stylizing her and her sisters as magicians, controllers of demons, exorcists and healers who could undertake shamanic travels into the other world to guide lost souls and visit the heavenly and underworldly planes. As her cult grew and established her more formally as a divinity, local Daoists and literati adopted her and her fame spread more widely. Figures involved included the Song Daoist Chen Shouyuan 陳受元 and the Ming literatus Zhang Yining 張以寧 (1301-1370)—the latter even writing a memorial on her. Later the cult became particularly prominent in Taiwan, where the Lady near the Waters served as a focal point for communities of women who refused marriage but did not wish to renounce all sexuality and instead preferred lesbian expressions (see Berthier 1988).

Among senior women practitioners, a lady later honored as the first woman to undertake inner alchemy stands out. Cao Wenyi 曹文逸 (fl. 1119-1125, orig. Cao Daochong 曹道冲; see Despeux 1990, 83-93), described in her biography contained in the Luofu shanzhi 罗浮山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Luofu; in Gujin tushu jicheng 古今图书集成 292.2b), was a renowned poetess and author of the Dadao ge 大道歌 (Song of the Great Dao). Her fame having reached the ears of Emperor Huizong (r. 1101-1126), he called her to the capital and gave her the formal title Wenyi zhenren 文逸真人 or “Perfected of Literary Withdrawal.”

Song bibliographies attest to her quality as an author and mention that she wrote commentaries to various Daoist texts, including one on the Xisheng jing 西昇經 (Scripture of Western Ascension, CT 726) and one, in two scrolls, on the Dao de jing, both of which are now lost as independent
works (see Loon 1984, 104, 106). The latter remains, in fragments and citations, in a collection of twenty commentaries by Peng Helin 龟鹤林 of the Southern Song, the Daodejing jizhu 道德經集註 (Collected Commentaries to the Daodejing, CT 707; pref. 2.1b). The collection begins with an exegesis by Emperor Huizong himself and contains works by such illustrious Song scholars as Sima Guang 司馬光, Wang Anshi 王安石, Su Zhe 蘇轍, Zhu Xi 朱熹 and Ye Mengde 羅夢德. Among all these high-ranking men, Lady Cao is the sole female, described in the introduction as “Cao Daochong, mistress of tranquility and humane virtue and the perfection of the Dao.” A note adds that “her secular name was Xiyun 希雲 and she was a lady Daoist of good standing whom people called the Immortal Lady Cao 仙姑. The emperor gave her the title Qingxu wenyi dashi 清虚文逸大師 (Great Master of Literary Withdrawal into Pure Emptiness) and called her “Mistress of Tranquility.”

Later, Lady Cao was venerated by several Qing-dynasty lineages of women’s inner alchemy. This is evident in her appearances in spirit-writing séances and in various inscriptions preserved in the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Temple) in Beijing. Here one school in particular honors her as patroness: the school of Purity and Tranquility (Qingjing pai). While women were of lesser importance in Daoism through most of the Song, their importance rose again with the growth of the school of Complete Perfection in the late twelfth century. Its founders openly presented themselves to the aristocracy as practitioners who would save Chinese culture from the invasion and domination of barbarian hordes. As multiple references in the sources indicate, women in the school served variously as abbesses of major temples, wives or mothers of leading adepts, or key members of local associations (hui 會). The list of the first seven patriarchs and masters includes a woman, Sun Bu'er 孫不二 (1119-1182, from Ninghai 寧海 in Shandong; see Cleary 1989). Born into a powerful local family, she received a literary education and was married to Ma Yu 馬鈺, zi Yifu 宜甫 (1123-1183), better known as Ma Danyang 馬丹陽 and also called “Ma Who Had Half the Prefecture.” The couple had three sons and lived in peaceful obscurity until 1167 when the Quanzhen founder Wang Chongyang 王重陽 visited the area. Converted to his creed, they became active disciples and Sun herself grew to be leader of the local Ninghai association, under the direction of the Jinlian tang 金蓮堂 (Hall of the Golden Lotus). Her merits earned her the Daoist title Qingjing sanren 清靜散人 (Serene Lady of Purity and Tranquility), the term sanren being unique to women of this school under the Jin and Yuan. Receiving the third and highest level of Quanzhen ordination, she became a senior leader with the right to teach and ordain other woman followers (Despeux 1990, 111-27). Her cult grew over the following dynasties.
THE MING AND QING. In the late Yuan and early Ming, women Daoists are scarcely mentioned in the sources. Rare exceptions are some wives and mothers of Celestial Masters, who had newly risen to national importance and received imperial support. No longer do we find women leaders of temples or convents of the Quanzhen or Longmen schools. Hagiographies of women are extremely rare, maybe ten short entries in local gazettes that describe more local shamanic practitioners than Daoists.

Under the Qing the situation becomes more complex because the rulers instituted a branch of Tibetan Buddhism as state religion, and forced Buddhists and Daoists to use the same institutions. Daoism at the time increasingly split into numerous subsects and local groups, among which one occasionally finds women’s lineages that go back to a foundress. In this context also arose a number of texts specifically dealing with inner alchemy for women.

Among deities, on the other hand, several popular goddesses were increasingly adopted into the Daoist pantheon. One of them is the Hindu goddess Marici, the personification of light and offspring of Brahma who resides in the Great Brahma Heaven, serves as a ruler of destiny and is a great savior of all (see Getty 1962, 132-34). In Daoism, she appears as Doumu 斗母, Mother of the Dipper and protectress against violence and peril. She is described in the Doumu jing 斗母经 (CT 621; see Franke 1977, 214) and became increasingly popular in the religion.

Then there is Bixia yuanjun 碧霞元君 (Goddess of the Morning Clouds), whose cult began in the Song with the discovery of a statue on Mount Tai and who under the Ming was venerated as the daughter of the God of Mount Tai and merciful helper of the dead that pass under his judgment (Naquin 1992, 334-45). As documented in the Bixia yuanjun huo bo sheng jing 碧霞元君護國保生經 (Scripture on the Guarding of Life and Protection of the Country through the Goddess of the Morning Clouds, DZ 1445), she was officially integrated into the Daoist pantheon through formal empowerment by the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning, who gave her the necessary spells and talismans for helping people in a formal audience ceremony in the highest heaven.

A similar adoption into Daoism occurred in the case of the most popular of all later goddesses, Mazu 媽祖 or Tianfei 天妃 (Celestial Consort), the protectress of seafarers, fisherman and merchants (see Dudbridge 1978; Sangren 1983; Wadow 1992). Her cult began in the late eleventh century and, by the thirteenth, had expanded throughout the maritime provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui. Born into the Lin family on the island of Meizhou 漳州 (Fujian), she saved three of her brothers from shipwreck and duly became the savior of seafarers. Many aspects of her legend adopt traits of the Buddhist savior goddess Guanyin 観音 who similarly saves mariners. Her celestial realm is located in the Northern
Dipper and she protects not only sailing fishermen but also women giving birth, farmers encountering wild animals, workers with illnesses caused by silkworms and suffering people in general.

Her adoption into the Daoist pantheon through a formal enfeoffment by Lord Lao is documented in the *Tianfei juku lingyan jing* (Scripture of the Celestial Consort’s Miraculous Salvation from Suffering, DZ 649) of the year 1409 (see Boltz 1986). It begins with the astral origins of the goddess, then summarizes her worldly life, invokes her divinity, and describes heavenly nature. After this, Mazu receives her official mandate from Lord Lao, who commands her “to descend and be incarnated in the mortal realm so that she might rescue humankind from the hardships suffered” (Boltz 1986, 223).

Today Mazu has two major sanctuaries in mainland China (in Tianjin and Quanzhou), 510 temples in Taiwan, and 40 in Hong Kong. Most of the latter are run by emigrants from Fujian who brought the cult with them (Wiethoff 1966, 311-57).

**TEXTS**

**HAGIOGRAPHIES.** Typically hagiographies contain accounts of the lives of both men and women, the latter being distinctly in the minority (see “Immortality and Transcendence”). There are, however, two collections that specify on the lives of female Daoists, both from periods when women’s practice flourished.

*Yongcheng jixian lu* (Record of the Assembled Immortals in the Heavenly Walled City, CT 783, *Yunji qiqian* 114-16; 6 j.), by Du Guangting (杜光庭), dat. 913 (see Cahill 1986a; 1993). This collection presents information on women who have attained perfection and are honored particularly in the texts and rites of Highest Clarity. According to the author’s preface, the text contained originally ten *juan* and 109 biographies. Two separate versions survive today, the one in the Daoist canon having 37 biographies and that in the *Yunji qiqian* having 28, of which only two are identical. Several biographies are contained in neither version, but can be recovered from encyclopedias, such as the *Taiping guangji*. Thus we have about two thirds of the original 109 at our disposal. Much information contained in them, moreover, goes back to Tao Hongjing’s *Tun’gao* (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016) of the year 500 (see Strickmann 1981, 39).

In his preface Du Guangting emphasizes that, according to Highest Clarity teachings, the Primordial Father (Yuanfu 元父) and the Metal Mother (Jinmu 金母) are in charge of entering the names of male and female adepts in the registers of immortality above. The latter then come
together under the guidance of the Queen Mother of the West, protectress of the immortals of Yongcheng, the Heavenly Walled City on Mount Kunlun. This description does not imply any form of hierarchy or preference for one gender over the other, but rather shows a complementarity between the two. Both female and male adepts strive for the same goal and pursue the same path, perhaps with minor differences along the way (Cahill 1993, 214-15). In addition, one may detect here a remnant of earlier periods when worship of the Queen Mother was dominant among popular cults while Daoists focused more on the veneration of male celestial deities. The *Bowu zhi* (Record of Ample Things) of the third century even puts the following words into Laozi’s mouth: “All the people have great faith in the Queen Mother; only kings, saints, immortals, perfected and Daoists entrust their fate to the rulers of the Nine Heavens” (1.3b).

The version in the Daoist canon begins with the biography of the Holy Mother Goddess (Shengmu yuanjun), the mother of the divinized Laozi who not only gives birth to but also provides instruction for the newly born savior before ascending to heaven as Great Queen of Former Heaven (Xiantian taihou; see Kohn 1989). Following this, Du provides an extensive hagiography of the Queen Mother of the West (see Cahill 1993), then moves on to that of the Mysterious Maiden of the Nine Heavens (Jiutian xuannü), a disciple of the Queen Mother who also served as the teacher of the Yellow Emperor. After this celestial section, the collection principally focuses on the biographies of real, living women who seriously practiced Daoism and were divinized to a greater or lesser degree. Some lived under the Han and Six Dynasties, but for the most part Du records the lives of Tang ladies and their specific efforts (see Cahill 1990). As far as can be told from the fragments of the collection, the vast majority of women presented belonged to the school of Highest Clarity. Only three extant biographies are of ladies associated with the Celestial Masters.

*Lishi zhenshian tidao tongjian houji* (Supplement to the Comprehensive Mirror of Perfected Immortals and Those Who Have Embodied the Tao, CT 298; 6 j.), by Zhao Daoyi (fl. 1297), a Daoist of the Shengshou wannian gong (Temple of Ten Thousand Years of Saintly Life) on Mount Fuyun. Written by a Daoist of the Complete Perfection school, this contains 120 biographies, including almost all those found in the *Yongcheng jixian lu*, and follows an order not entirely chronological. Its first *juan* has accounts of the All-Highest Goddess (Wushang yuanjun, i.e., Laozi’s mother), the Goddess of the Great One (Taiyi yuanjun, 太一元君) and the Queen Mother of the West. *J.* 2-5 join divinities with real women, mostly of Highest Clarity but also of the Celestial Masters, Numinous Treasure and Pure Brightness (Jingming dao) schools. *J.* 6 has fourteen biographies of Song women, six of whom lived under Emperor Huizong. Here we also
find an account of the life of Sun Bu'er, the saintly mistress of Complete Perfection.

WORKS WRITTEN BY WOMEN. *Qiongong wudi neisi shangfa* 琼宫五帝内思上法 (Highest Methods of Visualizing the Five Emperors of the Jasper Palace) and *Lingfei huijia neisi tongling shangfa* 禧飛六甲内思通靈上法 (Highest Methods of Visualizing the Flying Spirits of the Six Jia to Communicate with the Divine), both by Yuzhen gongzhu 玉真公主, the Princess of Jade Perfection, dat. 738. Both texts describe meditation methods used in the Highest Clarity school and have been preserved in a Tang calligraphy by Zhong Shaojing 鍾紹京 (see Lidai beitie zu 1984). They precede, by a few years, the establishment of the “College of Daoist Studies” (chongxuan xue 崇玄學) in 841, in both capitals and each prefecture of the empire.

*Huangting neijing wuzang liufu buxie tu* 黃庭內景五臟六腑補泄圖 (Illustrated Description of the Tonification or Dispersion of the Five Organs and Six Viscera According to the Yellow Court Scripture, CT 432, CT 263, j. 54), by Hu Yin 胡愔 (zi Jiansuzi 見景子, from Mount Taibai 太白山), dat. 848 (see Needham 1983, 82). This contains a discussion of the central organs in the human body (liver, heart, spleen, lungs and kidneys) as understood in the visualization tradition of the “Yellow Court Scripture.” Each part presents a description of the organ in question and an outline of how to visualize absorbing its pertinent energy, as well as an analysis of relevant symptoms. In addition, the text has several sets of therapies for ailments of the organs, including the absorption of the six energies, dietary restrictions and gymnastic exercises. They match breathing and visualization techniques associated with the “Yellow Court Scripture” that were popular in the Tang. There is nothing specifically female about the practice.

*Lingyuan dadao ge* 靈源大道歌 (Song of the Great Dao of the Numinous Source), by Cao Wenyi 曹文逸, dat. 12th c. The attribution to Cao Wenyi is somewhat dubious, since the oldest version of the text, shorter than the most current version, is found in Zeng Cao’s 曾慥 Daoshu 道樞 (Pivot of the Dao, CT 1017), an encyclopedia of inner alchemical texts of the year 1145 (16.1a-3b). Here the text is attributed to He Xiangu 何仙姑, the only female member of the Eight Immortals, and not to Cao Wenyi; however, Ming editions link the text with Cao (see Despeux 1990, 84). It consists of one long poem, influenced by Chan Buddhism, on inner alchemy, which does not evoke anything particularly female. Nevertheless, under the Qing its author was associated specifically with women's inner alchemical practices, and the text has accordingly been integrated into collections on the subject. It has also recently been the subject of a commentary by Chen Yingning 陳穎寧.

WORKS ON WOMEN’S INNER ALCHEMY appeared particularly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They include about
thirty works of uneven length, both in prose and poetry, which are for the most part undated. The earliest known date is 1743, the most recent 1892. The texts are frequently attributed to gods, both male and female, and were transmitted in spirit-writing séances held by Daoists who remain largely anonymous. Certain people's names appear, but they are mostly commentators or editors of the texts. Among female deities, Xiwang mu and Sun Bu'er appear most frequently, followed by He Xiangu (see Despeux 1990, 291-302).

Authors of compilations include Shen Qiyun, a disciple of the famous Min Yide and an eleventh generation member of the Longmen branch of Mount Jing'gai near Huangtou (Jiangxi; see Esposito 1993); He Longxiang, a Quanzhen Daoist of the Qingyang gong in Chengdu; Fu Jinquan, a jingming Daoist, member of a group established in 1817 in the Ba district of Sichuan; Yi Xinying, a Daoist of Mount Qingcheng in Sichuan and, since 1953, the supervisor of the local Tianshi dong 天師洞 (Celestial Master's Grotto). Finally, there is Chen Yingning, active in Shanghai in the 1930s, who also translated Cao Wenyi's and Sun Bu'er's poetry into modern Chinese and had an active correspondence with women practitioners while heading the Daoist Studies Institute in Shanghai.

Xiwang mu nuxiu zhengtu shize 西王母女修正途十则 (Ten Rules of the Queen Mother of the West on the Proper Path of Women's Cultivation), attributed to Lü Dongbin, revealed by Sun Bu'er and transmitted by Shen Qiyun. The latter received the work in a spirit-writing séance held in 1799 in Wulin 武林 (Anhui). Its original title was Ni jindan jue 女金丹诀 (Women's Formula of the Golden Elixir); it is contained in the oldest known collection comprising works on women's alchemy, Min Yide's Daozang xubian, the two texts being connected by continuous pagination.

Niwan Li zushi nuzong shuangxiu baofa 泥丸李祖師女宗雙修寶筏 (Precious Raft of Women's Double Cultivation According to Master Li Niwan), subtitled Niugong zhinan 女功指南 (A Compass of Women's Practice), by Li Niwan, a semi-legendary Longmen figure who, in 1795, transmitted the text spiritually to Shen Qiyun. It has a commentary by Shen and was reedited in 1830 by Min Yide. It follows the Xiwang mu nuxiu zhengtu shize in the Daozang xubian, the two texts being connected by continuous pagination.
The text consists of nine rules which systematically describe the progressive transformation of the adept's body. It begins with calming and purifying the spirit, then moves on to increasing the circulation of energy with the help of breast massages and visualization exercises. Eventually the practice leads to the accumulation of wisdom, the increase in inner emptiness and the formation of a new body of light within the adept's body. The ninth rule emphasizes that women can undertake the path while still actively pursuing household tasks and repeats the virtues they have to cultivate: filial piety, obedience toward their husbands, flexibility, softness and so on.

**Niidan hebian** 女丹合编 (Collected Edition of Works on Women's Alchemy), by He Longxiang, included in the 1906 Qingyang gong edition of the *Daozang jiyao* 道藏輯要 (Epitome of the Daoist Canon). In his preface, He Longxiang notes that he spent thirty years collecting and compiling the texts of this collection, based on the practices undertaken by the Daoist women in his family, including his wife, daughter, sister-in-law, niece, aunt and others. The materials consist of about twenty texts, between one and twenty pages in length and written in both prose and poetry. Practically all of them go back to spirit-writing séances, being attributed to major gods or immortals, including Liu Dongbin (3 texts), Sun Bu'er (3 texts), He Xiangu, a daughter of Xiwang mu, the Buddha of infinite kalpas, the ancient Buddha of Mount Qinglie and others. In some cases the transcriber's name is mentioned, such as Zhenyizi of Yongzhong (Sichuan), the venerable Yuexi of Canton, Cheng Yongqing of Shanxi and Fu Jinquan (5 texts). The texts outline the various major stages of the inner alchemical path and describe the energy pathways with great precision. They also make clear distinctions between men's and women's practices and, among the latter, differentiate according to their sexual status: virginal, mature or beyond menopause.

**Niizi daojiao congshu** 女子道教叢書 (Collection of Daoist Writings for Women), by Yi Xinying, also found in a manuscript edition on Mount Qingcheng (Qing 1994, 406). This contains eleven texts, two works from the *Daozang xubian*, one work on women's liturgy, one text on women's Daoist lineages, and several descriptions of the principles of body transmutation, interception of menses and interior cultivation.

**Ni jindan fayao** 女金丹法要 (Essential Methods of Women's Golden Elixir), by Fu Jinquan. This consists of poems and prose texts attributed mainly to Sun Bu'er and revealed during her descents into the planchette. The author emphasizes both the importance of cultivating in companionship with somebody else and the necessity of performing virtuous acts. Women must purify their karma, repent their sins and cultivate goodness, sincerity, filial piety and proper wivey devotion. Some of the texts found here are also contained in the *Niidan hebian*. 
WOMEN AND SEXUALITY. Sexuality, the joining of all natural forces in the rhythm of yin and yang, is at the center of the Daoist universe. It appears either as codified marital relations and formal sexual rites or, in the case of celibate practitioners, as an imaginary union with a divine partner. Nothing could be more inauspicious than the rupture between two things, and only the proper union of yin and yang, the feminine and the masculine, can provide access to the one energy of the Dao—a union that may be bodily, spiritual or imaginary (see Robinet 1988).

Each participant has his or her particular role. The man creates and brings forth (sheng 生), the woman changes and transforms (hua 化). Within this framework, each takes on a number of different aspects, in accordance with the changing vision of femininity in the different traditions and historical ages. In some eras, women appear predominantly as servants and companions, in others they represent an ideal beauty, without which access to the interior and imaginary world of the divine is not possible.

The tradition of Highest Clarity has a rather ambiguous position toward sexuality. It does not reject it altogether but relegates it among the lesser techniques which will not grant higher forms of realization, because only sexual abstinence and chastity allows the vision of and communication with the transcendent— an understanding Highest Clarity shares with other religions of the world. Although the basic theme of sexual union is preserved, it is also transposed into the spiritual realm, into a form of interaction with the divine and invisible (see Schaefer 1978b; Cahill 1985; 1992b). As the Zhen'gao says: “When a perfected appears as a presence of light and one engages with him or her, then this is union with the light, love between two beings of light. Although they are then called husband and wife, they do not engage in marital relations” (2.2a; see Despeux 1990, 35).

The importance of sexuality in Daoism has nothing to do with the social status of women. In fact, the practices are directly related to the frequent visits Daoists paid to prostitutes. A famous patron of the “flower ladies,” as they were called, was the celebrated alchemist and poet Lü Dongbin, a semi-legendary figure who is described as having engaged happily in worldly pleasures and frequently visited the ladies not because he was a dissolute man, but to convert them (see Baldrian-Hussein 1986).

CELIBATE AND MONASTIC LIFE. Women Daoists who embraced the monastic lifestyle lived in institutions known as guan 觀, which arose in the fifth to sixth centuries and may or may not have been reserved for women. We know that the earliest advocate of a celibate life was Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 (365-448) who, probably inspired by the Buddhist model, tried to reform the Celestial Masters along these lines. Similarly, the school of Highest Clarity from an early age emphasized the need to remain chaste
in order to be able to visualize the deities (see Schipper 1984; Eskildsen 1998). Tao Hongjing, for example, was celibate; but even under his direction, institutions on Maoshan were not strictly monastic, instead housing adepts of both sexes and even their entire families (Strickmann 1978, 471). Daoism has a long history of debate and polemics regarding celibacy. Some were much in favor of it, as for example Song Wenming 宋文明 of the early sixth century who strongly recommended it for all Daoists (Maspero 1981, 411). Others preferred family life, as for example Li Bo 李播 of the Songyang guan 蘇陽館 (Abbey of the Sunny Slope) who presented a memorial to the emperor in the early seventh century recommending that he not prohibit marriages among Daoist clergy (Maspero 1981, 425). It seems nevertheless that the majority of temples under the Tang observed segregation of the sexes—evident from the different statistics given for women’s versus men’s institutions.

There is no dearth of examples of monasteries where promiscuity was the order of the day. The most prestigious among them is the Xianyi guan 蕭宜觀 (Abbey of Universal Benefit), located in the southwest corner of Chang’an. It was named after Princess Xianyi, the twenty-second daughter of Emperor Xuanzong, who became a Daoist nun and resident of the temple in 862 (see des Rotours 1981). Many women from aristocratic and official families of Chang’an, once widowed, became Daoist nuns and residents of this temple, continuing to lead a highly luxurious life, aided by any number of servants. They rubbed shoulders with women from many social classes, including the celebrated courtisane and poetess Yu Xuanji 魚玄機, who was born into a poor family around 844 and was married to a junior official as his second wife. Repudiated by her husband’s first wife, she joined the Xianji guan, where she soon took the young poet Wen Tingyun 溫庭均 as her lover and grew into a famous writer, renowned as one of the leading poetesses of the Tang (see Cahill, forthcoming). Similar to that of Yu Xuanji, typically these “conversions” to Daoism had nothing to do with a subtle, religious vocation, but rather allowed women to escape their husbands fury and enter the literary world. Frequently, too, the ladies, like Yu Xuanji, led a rather licentious life, but few ended as tragically—accused of having beaten a young slave girl to death, she was executed. Still, there are also contrary examples. Li Xuanzhen 李玄真, another resident of the temple, was so devoted to her parents that she received a biography as virtuous female in the Jiu Tangshu 舊唐書 (Old History of the Tang; 193.5151).

The regimentation and segregation of Daoist institutions seems to have become a great deal stricter under the Song. In 927, the first Song emperor issued the following edict: “There are decadent tendencies in the temples, including wearing rough fabric and cohabitation with women and children. This is prohibited for all Daoists. Those with family must live outside of the
temple compound. From now on it shall be illegal to install someone as a Daoist without proper official authority.” At this time, close relatives, such as father or brother, were still allowed to live in the temples, but a follow-up edict of 1009 or 1012 prohibited even that. The rule against the marriage of Buddhist clergy was reiterated strongly in the later twelfth century and again under the Yuan (see Eichhorn 1955). The issue does not seem to have disappeared quite yet.

With the growth of Complete Perfection, a new area of flourishing unfolded for women Daoists. The school supported the foundation of a number of guan especially for women, created all over north China wherever Quanzhen influence pertained. The initiative for their construction typically issued from women who had lost family support, be they widowed or orphaned, and whose activities tended to be strongest in the larger cities (see Despeux 1990, 131-38). Monastic life in Complete Perfection Daoism, both for men and women, was strictly regulated; its daily schedule contained set periods for recitation of liturgical texts, work for the community and individual practice, including inner alchemical exercises. Nine precepts were specifically geared towards women (see Chu zhen ji bi 25; Despeux 1990, 147-52). The precepts still apply today and tend to reveal qualities associated with women in Chinese society—placing them firmly in the house where their tasks are predominantly related to cooking and homemaking. In addition, the rules also emphasize the distinction between women Daoists and practitioners of local, popular and shamanic cults—the latter are not permitted to participate in vegetarian assemblies.

IMAGES OF WOMEN. In Daoist texts, both of religious and philosophical provenance, the conception of women and the female is ambivalent. It has been said that Daoism favors the feminine because it emphasizes the importance of yin, of softness, of nonaction. Certain scholars have affirmed this predominance of the feminine (Needham 1956; Chen 1974), others have considered the so-called feminine techniques of the Daode jing as a mere means toward political domination (Creel 1970). Roger Ames sees the feminine in Daoism as the true complement of the masculine and finds that the realization of the sage in the world, rather than being a reduction to feminine values, lies in fact in the reconciliation of opposites manifest in the incarnation of the Dao in a quasi androgynous ideal (Ames 1981, 36).

In the religion, women are predominantly understood with the help of a cosmological model that emphasizes the alternation and complementarity of yin and yang. In all cases, they are classified as yin and participate in the various ambiguities associated with this cosmic principle, which is most certainly complementary to yang, but also contains elements of being impure, dark, menacing and dangerous (see Black 1986).
Women are impure beings, and their menstrual flow is interpreted as unclean and polluting to the point where interception of the menses constitutes a form of purification. Inner alchemical texts consistently associate menstruation with impurity and never tire of emphasizing the "purity and tranquility" women should develop. Closely related to this are numerous taboos common in Chinese society, if not the world at large, regarding menstruation: during their period, women are not only impure but also dangerous and must not be approached (see Ahern 1975, 193-214).

Despite all this, the negative connotations of being female in many descriptions of Daoist practice and cosmology are counterbalanced by the strong affirmation that women can realize the Dao more readily than men because they have the inborn power of becoming mothers. The notion of the immortal embryo and its gestation through ten symbolic months is constantly reiterated in inner alchemical literature, and texts on women's practices make it clear that their maternal function constitutes a great advantage over men. While men have to develop a womb inside themselves and learn how to nurture an embryo in it, guarding and cherishing it like a valuable pearl, women already have this faculty naturally and thus have a much easier time learning the practice. "In the case of women, we discuss breathing techniques but not embryonic practices" (preface by He Longxiang). As the internal movement of energies corresponds to the gestative activities already engendered in women, their spiritual progress in inner alchemy is accordingly faster than that of the men.

There are thus a number of different and even contradictory images associated with women in Daoism. It is impossible to generate a comprehensive view from the few documents we have, which moreover reflect different positions and schools. It is also difficult to distinguish the different aspects of Daoism reflected in these views. It is evident that women had to struggle to liberate themselves from the constraints put upon them in Chinese society. One of the victories they won—and not a minor one—was certainly their right to remain celibate and not have to give birth to male children. In addition, one can say that women were essentially venerated for the symbolic value attached to their created image and for the particular benefits they provided due to their exceptional gifts of communicating with the divine and attaining the Dao.

**Practices**

**Mediumistic Activities.** The distinction between popular and literary Daoism, on the one hand, and the official religion and mediumistic cults, on the other, has not always been well marked. The border is even more vague in the case of Daoist women, whether they appear in cults, in
the pantheon or as adepts, because they played such dominant roles in local movements.

China has a long shamanic tradition, especially developed in the southern state of Chu, in which women played an important role. Called *wu* 巫, *zhū* 祖 or *líng* 瑠, they served the invisible world through chanting and dancing, inviting the spirits to descend (*jiāng* 降) into their bodies and engaging in amorous relationships with them (see Hawkes 1959; 1967; Mathieu 1987). A number of historical sources of the Han testify to the presence of shamans all over China in the early centuries C.E. (see Thiel 1968). Some were invited by the emperor to set up temples in the capital, mainly to support the state and help cure diseases (Overmyer 1991, 97). During the same period, early Daoist movements first developed with their own institutions, well demarcated against popular shamanism and yet assimilating certain of its elements. It is likely that revealed texts and spirit-writings were inspired by the practices of popular shamans.

Daoist literature consists, to a considerable degree, of texts revealed to mediums and shamans in a state of possession. The first examples go all the way back to the most ancient versions of the *Taiping jing* 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace), which clearly describes itself as a "celestial book" (*tiānshū* 天書; see Overmyer and Jordan 1986, 37). Similarly the *Zhen'gao* 仙官 has strong shamanistic overtones (see Hyland 1984). It states: "If perfected and divine spirits descend into an impure person of the world, they are no longer acting or writing with their own feet and hands. As above and below are so far distant from each other, how can their traces [writings] be truly visible [to humans]?") (1.7b).

Revealed scriptures, the "traces" of the divine, usually came out of spirit-writing séances, which have been metaphorically called "turnings of the phoenix" (*jiānshuān* 扶鸞). The term suggests goddesses as major manifesting spirits, because they use the phoenix as their mount, just as their male counterparts ride on dragons or cranes (see Xu 1985). Mediumistic literature enthralled the Chinese literary elite, well before the French surrealists. Its particular style was especially valued under the Song, with literati such as Shen Gua 沈括 and Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 showing a vivid interest in it. They have left behind detailed descriptions of spirit-writing practices, especially associated with the cult of the Purple Lady (*Zigu* 紫姑), the goddess of latrines. Originally a human female, she lived in the late eighth century and died a horrible death at the hands of the jealous first wife of her husband, who mutilated her and let her perish in low flames in the latrines. Her feast day is the fifteenth of the first lunar month; at this time many women enter a trance state and become possessed by her to be questioned about all sorts of subjects (Maspero 1981, 135-37). Venerated as the protectress of women, ever since the Song she has appeared frequently in women's spirit-writing séances, a practice that picked up even more in the Ming and Qing,
both among literati and in popular cults. Then almost every district had a special altar in her honor, and Emperor Shizong (r. 1522-1566) himself had one set up at court. The Qing codes prohibited spirit-writing, but the practice continued anyway. A close relationship developed between mediumistic séances, the Eight Immortals surrounding Lü Dongbin and women’s Daoism.

Women played a privileged role in mediumist circles. Both the traditions at the root of women’s inner alchemical texts and the various female lineages are strongly characterized by shamanic elements and those of women’s mediumistic cults. Women mediums probably served to redirect the men and women of those cults; as their techniques were assimilated into Daoism, so their roles and functions underwent a new interpretation.

SEXUAL PRACTICES. In the early movement of the Celestial Masters, all community members were initiated into and subsequently subjected to a religious life of strict moral control and ritual activity. Women in the movement both played key organizational roles and were essential in the “rites of passage” (guodu 循度) or initiation (see Schipper 1984). Sexual in nature, the latter went back to the “arts of the bedchamber” (fangzhong shu 房中術), part of ancient longevity techniques (see Wile 1992), and to the ecstatic unions of shamans with the divine. Best known is the sexual rite of “harmonizing the energies” (heqi 合氣), during which community members, independent of their marital affiliations, were joined in formal sexual intercourse (see Stein 1963). The rites took place in the oratory or “chamber of tranquility” (jingshi 靜室) in the presence of a master and an instructor. They involved ritualized body movements in alignment with specific directions, in accordance with certain numbers and in correspondence with the network of the stars in the sky. In addition, the ritual included visualization of energies inside the body as well as concentration on and retention of seminal essence and vital spirits. The arts of the oratory were not as explicitly sexual as those of the bedchamber or the ritual union at the end of the rite that led to the formation of the immortal embryo, as is specified in the Huangshu guoduyi 黃書過度儀 (Observances for the Rites of Passage According to the Yellow Book, CT 1294; see Kalinowski 1985). The ritual union of the adepts was thought not only to benefit themselves, but also to influence the order of the universe by supporting the cosmic energies in their union and renewal.

While the Celestial Masters engaged in sexual rites, authors from other ends of the Daoist spectrum placed sexual techniques among the minor arts. One example is Ge Hong 葛洪 (273-341), who affirms the importance of the exchange of yin and yang and even agrees that the erotic arts are auspicious and help people to eliminate diseases and prolong life. Nevertheless, they are only a beginning, and the practice of reverting the essence, the “yin-elixir” (yindan 陰丹), to nourish the brain stands at the beginning of a
higher, internalized form of sexual alchemy. Little by little the adept visualizes both male and female deities in his own body and sees how they unite sexually. Through this, ordinary union is transcended and moves into the invisible realm, becoming a union of human and divine through the mediation of celestial partners and divine marriages: such were the practices advocated in Highest Clarity (see Cahill 1992b).

Sexual union ideally was an even exchange of energies, but it soon becomes apparent that its religious practice deviated into a sort of sexual vampirism, in which one partner tried to obtain energies at the cost of the other, a practice described in a Song text as the "plucking [of energy] in [amorous] combat" (caizhan 援戰). Although mostly to the advantage of the male, women too could benefit from this practice.

The Queen Mother of the West is an example of a woman who obtained the Way [of attaining immortality] by nurturing her yin essence. Every time she had intercourse with a man, he would immediately fall ill, but her own face was smooth and transparent so that she had no need for rouge and face powder. She always fed on milk and played the five-stringed lute so that her heart was always harmonious and her thoughts composed and she had no other desires. Also, the Queen Mother of the West had no husband, but she liked to copulate with young boys. This secret, however, must not be divulged, lest other women should try to imitate the Queen’s methods (van Gulik 1961, 158; see also Wile, 1992, 102-3; Ishihara and Levy 1970).

But these deviations, found in non-Daoist literature, have always been described as heterodox and improper practice, even though they did in fact exist and were practiced even within certain strands of the Daoist religion.

Within Daoist religious thinking, sexual union is understood as a union of bodies—the common way of thinking about coitus—and thus a union of energies (while retaining the semen). It is, beyond that, also a union of minds and thinking (yi 意), practiced through the active visualization of the outer or inner body, the kind of union advocated in Highest Clarity and a sort of mystical marriage (see Robinet 1988). In the schools of inner alchemy, moreover, one finds again two basic attitudes toward women and sexual union. First, when the sexual act is undertaken while the semen is retained, intercourse forms the basis of the psycho-physiological transformations centered on the inner body. Women here are equal partners to men and can benefit to a similar degree. Second, when chastity is advised, the mediumistic qualities of women come to the foreground and autoerotic practices take over, such as the massaging of the man’s penis or the woman’s breasts. Women here are models of saintliness. In either case, the goal of the union is the formation of an immortal embryo, the first sprout of the adept’s spiritual rebirth.
WOMEN'S INNER ALCHEMY (Niidan 女丹) or the female way (Kundao 女道). Textual sources earlier than the Qing dynasty on women's inner alchemy mention only a few specific practices for women. An occasional description might state that the nature of women is yin while that of men is yang. Texts on breathing techniques, for example, might specify that left is yang while right is yin, so that the breath turns toward the left in men and toward the right in women. Similarly, in certain rites (as noted earlier), a man uses things with his left hand, while a woman uses her right.

Writings on women's inner alchemy describe basic techniques and divide the process into three stages: 1) refining the seminal essence and transforming it into energy; 2) refining the energy and transforming it into spirit; and 3) refining the spirit to return to emptiness. In the first stage, the adept joins the various opposite (yin and yang) forces in the interior of his or her body and through them forms an embryo of energy. During the second stage and in the course of ten symbolic months, this embryo of energy gives birth to a being of light known as the original spirit force (Yuanshen 元神). This birth takes place through the top of the head, because the alchemical process inverts the course of ordinary procedures. This luminous spirit, then, as it leaves and then re-enters the body, is further sublimated in the third stage to eventually merge back completely into cosmic emptiness.

Difference between the sexes occurs only in the first of these three stages. Instead of refining seminal essence and transforming it into energy, women refine their menstrual blood by progressively diminishing their menstrual flow and eventually stopping it altogether. This is known as "decapitating the red dragon" (duan chilong 斷赤龍) and first mentioned in a text of the year 1310. The cessation of the flow identifies the adept as pregnant—pregnant with an embryo of pure energy—on the one hand, and as prepubescent, on the other. Menstrual blood is sublimated and brings forth a "new blood," which certain texts call the "white marrow of the phoenix" (Baijingshao 白鳳髓). Both, this term and the expression "red dragon," move the power of the menstrual blood and its refined form to a new and higher level of spiritual power. When the texts wish to indicate the physical substance commonly discharged during menstruation, they use ordinary or medical terms, such as yuexue 月血, "monthly blood," or yueshui 月水, "monthly flow." As the system does not allow a rupture between matter and spirit, the new symbolic language implies that both a physiological and spiritual transformation takes place so that, in effect, the decapitation of the red dragon is physically present as the complete cessation of the menstrual flow.

In Chinese medicine, menstrual blood represents the fundamental energy of women, just as seminal fluid is the key energetic power of men. Rising steadily until puberty, it begins to decline once outflow starts, moving progressively towards weakening and old age. Energy thus decreases with
every month as the woman loses her menstrual blood, until she reaches menopause when the flow stops completely. Her loss of original energy through menstruation is the same loss that men undergo through the ejaculation of semen.

In addition, medical literature insists, menstrual blood is formed and nurtured by milky secretions of the breasts which, a few days before menstruation, sink down from the breasts to the abdomen and there transform into blood. The refinement of menstrual blood into energy is therefore a reversal of the natural process and consists of its returning to milky secretions. It begins with breast massages which stimulate the internal fire of sexual desire, which is then controlled to nurture the inner being. In addition, various psycho-physiological methods are used to heat the descended energy in the abdomen and transform the growing menstrual blood back into breast secretions. A warm energy is felt to rotate around the navel, the area gets very hot, and the “red is transformed into the white” (Xiwang mu nixiu Zhengwu, no. 6, p. 4). Once the “white marrow of the phoenix” is present in sufficient quantity—an indication that the “red dragon” has been transformed to a great degree—the adept can begin the refinement and inversion of the energy, thus proceeding to stages two and three of the process.

Structurally, the cessation of the menstrual flow in women is the same as the retention of the semen in men. In both cases, loss of an essential substance is stopped and with it, as stated frequently in the texts, the loss of original energy. At the same time, this cessation constitutes a reversal of the natural processes and allows, through interiorization, the symbolic creation of a new sprout of energy within, which then turns into an embryo of energy. The best time to undertake the exercise is two days before menstruation, when yang energy is just about to transform into yin blood. This moment is the time when the natural tendencies can be redirected, and adepts should activate the wind [of respiration] to fan the fire and pick the divine medicine: “When yang is close to being transformed into yin and to flow out through the jade channel [vagina], quickly get on the wheel of fire. When the wind of the Xun blows in the upper part, in the original Scarlet Palace [solar plexus], decapitate the periodic flow of blood so that it can never run again!” (Nü jindan 2.23a).

Once this is attained, the second and third stages of the process take over. These place women into an intense state of contemplation and nonaction in which they must guard against the stagnation of their energies, which tend to clot due to the basic nature of women as yin. At this time women should also double their efforts of doing good works, so that their spirit can increasingly join cosmic emptiness.


WOMEN IN DAOISM


CHAPTER FIFTEEN

RITUAL MOVEMENTS, DEITY CULTS
AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF DAOISM
IN SONG AND YUAN TIMES

LOWELL SKAR

DESCRIPTION

Over half of the Ming Daoist canon consists of texts deriving from local deity cults and ritual movements compiled between the mid-twelfth century and its 1445 printing (Loon 1984, 44, 61). These texts reflect religious traditions that emerged between late Tang (618-907) and early Ming (1368-1644) times, mainly in rapidly-developing urban and rural areas south of the Yangzi River. These traditions embodied a range of relationships with earlier Daoist traditions and their contemporary Daoist, Buddhist and popular religious counterparts. They indicate an expansion of the earliest “social mission of Daoism” (Bokenkamp 1997, 15) to more segments of Chinese society and an “improved access to the sacred realm” (Kleeman 1993, 63-65) only partly encompassed by Daoist spiritual priorities. The dissolution of the Tang Daoist liturgical system and the demise of communities organized by Daoist rules, ordinations and practices gave rise to a wider class of literate practitioners seeking support for their more inclusive practices and pantheons from emerging gentry communities and noncorporate groups in the south. The long ritual and contemplative apprenticeship and knowledge of local traditions of these itinerant ritual specialists helped them compete and collaborate with those of other traditions also seeking local sponsorship.

Scholars often highlight changes in these texts by stressing their similarity to those used by Daoist priests today, and their dissimilarity from Tang traditions (Lagerwey 1987; Dean 1993; Nickerson 1994; 1996; Maruyama 1995; Barrett 1996; “Daoist Ordination and Tai Rituals;” “Daoist Ritual Today”). Considerable evidence suggests that Daoism in the Song (960-1276) and Yuan (1260-1368) eras gradually shed its narrow communal and aristocratic focus and became part of a richer religious environment rooted in local communities and different groups. However, the precise extent, timing and causes of this transition are poorly understood. Furthermore,
those practicing and transmitting the traditions discussed here were part of a complex social and religious environment that scholars have only begun to explore (Davis 1985; 1994; Kleeman 1993, 1994; Hymes 1996; 1997). These ritual specialists provided an evolving medieval society with richer forms of spiritual action and more flexible forms of religious organization that existed alongside those of other spiritual traditions. They mediated the local cults and traditions of China’s emerging vernacular cultures and remade the sacred order of the cosmic Way imagined by earlier Daoist traditions. They helped immigrants, local communities and regional associations, as well as the imperial household and its institutions to establish and maintain visions of divine order within a dynamic and often unstable world. The following interim report of Song-Yuan cults and movements that Daoism claimed by early Ming times is based upon ongoing research by many scholars and awaits the fuller picture that will emerge as their findings are published.

**History**

New deity cults and revelatory traditions in Song-Yuan times enriched and reshaped the hierarchical, communal and aristocratic Daoist system that had coalesced in early Tang courts from four centuries of regional Daoist movements. The more inclusive pantheon, wider array of ritual forms for embodying the cosmic Way, and more diverse class of practitioners for gentry society made Daoist traditions full participants in the formation of the more encompassing sacred realm characteristic of post-Tang religion. The changes in the sacred realm, rites and ritualists were integral to the demographic diffusion, economic integration and cultural reassessment that transformed Chinese civilization between the ninth and fifteenth centuries (Hartwell 1982). While often positioning themselves against established Daoist and Buddhist legacies and the imperial court, these new traditions also became more tightly aligned to local communities, offering them opportunities for greater solidarity and reminders of their cosmic significance. The prominence of their texts in the Ming Daoist canon suggests their import to the establishment of Daoism in late imperial China, and their formative influence on Daoism today. The transformation of the traditions discussed here reflects three areas of change: (1) creative encounters between native cults and classical immigrant traditions in southern urban and rural areas; (2) more flexible and encompassing religious services and deity structures; and (3) literati reassessments and supplements of earlier forms of spirituality. These three areas of change helped realign the emerging southern gentry with the perennial workings of the sacred Way in the world.
BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW. From mid-Tang to mid-Song times the center of Chinese civilization shifted from the Central Plains along the Yellow River valley to rich but risky lands south of the Yangzi River, consolidating in the south between the Southern Song and early Ming. New southern immigrant reactions to unfamiliar diseases and local traditions ranged from efforts to ritually rearm themselves against cults they viewed as “vulgar” (ju 竽) or “mediumistic” (wu 無), to resigned attempts to absorb local cults or acquiesce to their intractable presence (Boltz 1993; Kleeman 1994; Katz 1995). Some local cults or peoples seeking supralocal identities, meanwhile, aligned themselves with larger organizational structures of meaning available to the state and family, or Daoist and Buddhist liturgies (Strickmann 1982; Schipper 1985b; Kleeman 1994). The web of southern cults and religious movements produced both tensions and accommodations among those immersed in classical traditions, including classical Daoist lineages (Davis 1994).

Some literati turned from the more comprehensive codifications of Daoist liturgies, or the new forms of Buddhist Tantric ritual that were part of court culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and integrated them into southern vernacular cultures over the next three centuries when the state was less able to employ them (Schipper 1985c). Scholarly Daoist priests commissioned by early Ming emperors interwove selected contemporary ritual texts with a broad selection of earlier writings on the Way in the world. The results, printed in 1445 as a state-sanctioned canon, were delivered to major Daoist temples in the newly reunified empire (Boltz 1987, 6-7).

Three interrelated processes of social and religious transformation underlay these changes: social diversification, economic integration and cultural reassessment. First, China’s growing population moved south, pushed by northern political and social turmoil and pulled by a flourishing agriculture and commercial life, where they encountered new diseases, peoples, customs and gods. Ritual movements and deity cults that emerged from these encounters from the tenth century. By the mid-thirteenth century they had remade the Tang Daoist system and its Northern Song amplifications, admitting a fuller range of rituals and gods, and becoming more tightly bound to local community life (Boltz 1993; Davis 1994).

Second, trade integrated areas on the southeast coast and along major inland water routes into networks of regional exchange and pilgrimage, centered on culturally diversified urban areas showcasing celebratory festivals for temple gods. In Daoism this trend was reflected in several ways. First, larger pantheons of multivalent deities found their way into Daoist ritual programs advocated by the state and practiced in urban areas. In addition, a Zhang family of Celestial Masters based on Longhu shan 龍虎山 (Jiangxi) became the authorizing center of many of the new cults
and movements, at first unofficially and then through official decrees (by early Yuan and Ming emperors; see Matsumoto 1982; Schipper 1981-1982a; Barrett 1994). Finally, literati reassessed all major areas of Chinese culture between the ninth and fifteenth centuries, both reinventing and creating traditions, so as to ground their lives and hopes on more stable foundations. In Daoism, these cultural reassessments involved popular, Daoist, Buddhist and classical traditions, and produced the vernacular Daoist traditions whose written forms centered on the priorities of local gentry society. Various efforts to revive classical traditions or circulate the new revelatory ones over the next four centuries culminated in the creation, by Southern Song times, of more open and flexible initiatory ranks, ritual codes, scriptural canons and ritual programs than during the early Tang (Schipper 1985c; Kleeman 1994).

FIVE DYNASTIES’ DIVERSIFICATIONS. Daoist initiation grades (jie 階) formulated in Tang courts linked registers of gods (lu 録) to scriptures (jing 經) revealed and codified during the previous four centuries (Schipper 1974; 1985a). The synthesis is most evident in the works for the Tang court by Zhang Wanfu 張萬福 (fl. 700-742). They present a comprehensive liturgy encompassing the memorial-presentation rituals of Rectifying or Orthodox Unity (Zhengyi 正一) priests and the Offerings and Rites of Numinous Treasure (Lingbao 瑣寶) priests (see “Ordination and Rituals;” Mamyama 1986). A Tang canon of Daoist writings embodied these codified structures, practices, rules of initiation and accompanying scriptures. It rose from the communal and therapeutic priorities of the Celestial Masters’ (Tianshi 天師) Zhengyi traditions, through the work toward universal salvation in the Lingbao traditions and culminating in the focus on self-perfection at the heart of Highest Purity or Clarity (Shangqing 上清) traditions (Barrett 1996).

As the religious environment opened up after the An Lushan rebellion, unaffiliated religious practitioners, often with local warlord patrons, increasingly emphasized gods, rites and initiation ranks not found in the early Tang Daoist consolidation to counter the perceived threats of popular religion and Buddhism. This produced a confusing blend of existing traditions and newly revealed material, that generally “joined hands with state power in its rivalry with Buddhism and endeavored to encompass all types of material” (Miyakawa 1983, 389). Some sought to promote new revelatory traditions, and others to conscientiously restore the genuine version of earlier revelations of the Way in the world.

Several new regional centers for Daoist priests, rituals and writings were added to the two imperial capitals and mountain temples for the three main traditions (Schafer 1954; Verellen 1989; Barrett 1994; 1996). These local forms of Daoism were always important to priests, but it was only after the central court declined that they began registering in the diverse field of
contemporary religious experience and expression with no strong institutional center (Dudbridge 1995). A key Daoist figure here was the priest and scholar-official Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933), whose writings elucidate both the older court-based forms of classical Daoism and the new incarnations of the Way that would eventually alter them. Both contemporaries and successors saw him as pivotal. Du’s writings consolidated the main Lingbao liturgies to bolster state authority, but also include rare early accounts of cults and movements that emerged in Song and Yuan times to reshape the Daoist landscape. His writings show that by his time new offering (jiao 祭) rituals had absorbed key parts of Zhengyi memorial-presentation rites, and become more comprehensive by encompassing more gods and occasions. Not only could these rites stand alone, they could conclude any ceremony for the gods.

No less important are Du’s detailed treatments of the Yellow Register Rite (huanghu zhai 黃籙齋), the high point of medieval Daoism’s ritual for the dead, which became the model for all subsequent zhai rites (Verellen 1989; Maruyama 1995). Du also discusses a rite of Universal Salvation (pudu 普度) for releasing all dead souls and raising them to Heaven, modeling it on an audience with the Way. Conservative Daoist priests in later centuries sought to reestablish the prolix rituals on the classical liturgical foundations laid by forebears like Lu Xiuqing 陸修靜 (406-477), Zhang Wanfu and Du. Scholars today look to Du for early accounts of movements that would later transform Daoist ritual practice (Verellen 1989; Barrett 1994; 1996). Du’s writings evidence both a concern with retaining classical ritual purity and the growing pressure to address local cults and ritual traditions. In exhibiting both tension and accommodation, they suggest the emergence of more diverse and flexible approaches to local gods and practices. These approaches often competed with each other as much as with local cults or Buddhist traditions, even as they employed powerful esoteric traditions and reformed the powers of local gods. They made new uses of chthonic, foreign, or primeval deities, and also of ancient ritual weapons—notably talismans, spells and hand gestures, together with elements from popular religion and Tantric Buddhism.

Du also mentions ordinations by a Zhang 張 family of Celestial Masters at Longhu shan 龍虎山 (Jiangxi), showing that this family was already well-known at what became their center of operations no later than the tenth century (Schipper 1982-1983, 33-135; Verellen 1989, 25-26; Barrett 1994, 1996, 96-97). Following their reputed ancestor, Zhang Daoling 張道陵, the first Celestial Master and his successors in Sichuan, this family maintained the therapeutic ritual of their forebears. Du also discusses a local tradition called the Way of Loyalty and Filialty (Zhongxiao zhi dao 忠孝之道) or Pure Brightness (Jingming 淨明) that grew from a cult to Xu Xun 許逊
A decade after Du’s death, just before the Song, the Hunanese Shangqing priest Sun Yizhong 孫夷中 (fl. 943) presents Daoism much as it was in the Tang, with traces of the new elements that would reshape it over the next three centuries. He refers to belief among Sichuan and Jiangsu people that the therapeutic teachings of the Zhang family of Celestial Masters were based on Longhu shan descended from Zhang Daoling (Sandong xiudao yi 三洞修道儀, CT 1237, 2a). He also notes the extra-canonical status of the exorcistic rites of Tianpeng 天蓬, the Thunder Duke (Leigong 雷公), and soul-summoning, which central to the Song transformation of Tang Daoism. Popular magicians outside of established traditions but armed with the “Rites of Thunder” (leifa 雷法) or other techniques revealed from gods helped provide a tumultuous world with a sense of divine justice (Matsumoto 1979).

Neither Du nor Sun refer to the anonymous contemporaneous Jin suo liuzhu [jing] yin 金鎖流珠引 (Guide to the [Scripture] of the Golden Lock and Flowing Pearls, CT 1015, 29 j). Among the interpolated commentaries ascribed to Li Chunfeng 李淳風 (602-670) are references to city-gods (Chenghuang shen 城隍神), Thunder Rites and cults to Xu Xun and Li Jing 李靜 (571-649). This ritual compendium holds much material from Zhengyi traditions on Pacing the Mainstays (bugang 步罡) for exorcism and therapies, as well as from early Shangqing traditions. We also find descriptions of the “rite for inspecting [demons] and summoning [spirits]” (kaozhao fa 考召法; 28.5b-6b, 7.2b-4b, 4.5a-8a; see Barrett 1990; Andersen 1991, 73-77).

This latter rite became central to the influential Rectifying Rites of the Heart of Heaven (Tianxin zhengfa 天心正法) that entered the human world through Tan Zixiao 譚紫霄, a magician and priest whom Wang Chang 王昶 (r. 935-939), fourth king of the Min 閩 kingdom at Quanzhou 泉州 (Fujian), called the Master of Rectifying Unity. Tan received a set of incomprehensible talismans written on bamboo slips from his colleague, the medium-turned-Celestial Master Chen Shouyuan 陳守元, who had found them buried in a bronze bowl. After unraveling their meanings, Tan claimed to have inherited “Zhang Daoling’s Rectifying Rites of the Heart of Heaven.” Chen had found three talismans (fu 符) able to control three ancient demon-slaying deities linked to the north—the Black Killer (Heisha 黑煞), Dark Warrior (Xuanwu 玄武) and Tianpeng. These were fierce agents of the Emperor of the North (Beidi 北帝)—who was in charge of the Department of Exorcism (Quxie yuan 驅邪院). These figures gave this influential exorcistic tradition its divine authority, but later adepts of the Heart of Heaven tradition claimed Tan as their earthly founder (Nan Tang shu 南唐書 17.388-89, by Lu You 陸游). When the Min state collapsed in
944, Tan went northwest to Lushan (Jiangxi), where he reportedly taught his ritual practice to more than a hundred students (Wudai shijì 五代事記 68.7b, Nan Tang shu 24.162-163 by Ma Ling 馬令). Heirs to this new exorcistic lineage stressed its links to the older therapeutic Celestial Masters tradition, as the latter authorized its activities. These reciprocating relations between new movements and established Daoist traditions became a model for many others in Song and Yuan times, who found mutual benefit in coordinating their efforts (Andersen 1991, 81-131; 1996).

**NORTHERN SONG TENSIONS.** Like their Tang predecessors, Song courts continued to turn to Daoism for state legitimization, cosmic theology and self-cultivation. Over time, emperors increasingly turned to Daoism to bolster their imperiled dynasty. Early Song emperors needed protection from well-armed northern tribes and gradually expanded the range of sources to which they looked for legitimation. The search for the sacredness for the state through ritual exegesis and scriptural compilation gave way to new and increasingly exalted spiritual and ritual means. One important development in Daoist ritual was the **imperial sponsorship** of a structure of universal Offerings, including those for Whole Heavens (zhoutian 周天) and Networked Heavens (luoban 罗天), a development perhaps related to the elaborate Feng and Shan 封禪 rituals performed by Zhenzong (r. 998-1022). These ceremonies were not only opened to all deities, but they could be used for almost any occasion. The state-run translation bureau for Tantric scriptures that operated between 982 and 1082 likewise enriched the stock of esoteric material available to ritual practitioners. These developments culminated in the late Northern Song in the remarkable establishment of a short-lived theocratic regime under Huizong (r. 1101-1125).

Official Daoist **conservatism** finds expression in the compilation of Daoist writings known as the Yunji qiqian 雲笈七籤 (Seven Slips from the Bookbag in the Clouds, CT 1032, 120 j., compiled in the late 1020s). While continuing the basic contours of Tang Daoism, it placed greater emphasis on therapeutic uses of Daoist rituals for the dead (Schipper 1981-1982a; 1981-1982b; Davis 1994, 328-31). From 1012 Song emperors identified their regime not just with Laozi (whom the Tang regarded as their ancestor) but with their newly discovered ultimate ancestor, the Yellow Lord (Huangdi 黃帝). Reverence for texts related to both figures—believed responsible for teaching humanity how to govern self and state—is evidenced by dozens of Song editions and commentaries ascribed to them. Imperial patronage of Daoist patriarchies like the Shangqing patriarch Zhu Ziyìng 朱自英 (976-1029) likewise reflects a continuation of earlier patterns. State support extended also to the exegetical work in the Daoist classics by Nancheng (Jiangxi) native Chen Jingyuan 陳景元 (1025-1094). He based his interpretations of classics like the Laozi, Zhuangzi and Liezi, and
scriptures like the *Dadong jing* and *Duren jing* (Boltz 1987, 203-5), on the many earlier commentaries he recovered (Boltz 1987, 203-7).

The Song state also looked to powerful deities for *spiritual protection*. Most were fierce demon-slaying protector deities, often linked to the north and particular mountains, but more immediately grounded in recently revealed exorcistic rites circulated among southern mediums and Ritual Masters (Cahill 1980; Sun 1965, 71-93; Davis 1994, 30-50). Thus the Song’s special protector, the Perfected Lord who Supports the Sage and Protects [His] Virtue (Yisheng baode zhenjun 翳聖保德真君) had roots in the Black Killer, whose cult center was on Zhongnan shan. The ancient Dark Warrior deity, charged with protecting the north but based on Wudang shan while on earth, became a state guardian with a temple in the capital, a new name—the Perfected Warrior (Zhenwu 真武)—and his first official title (Lagerwey 1992, 293-95). Likewise, the fierce Tianpeng deity, with a major center in Sichuan, often paired with his frequent demon-slaying partner, Tianyou 天猷, was charged with keeping Song state enemies at bay. This quartet—worshiped together by Song emperors as the Four Saints (Sisheng 四聖)—is often ritually linked with exalted protector deities of the north like the Northern Emperor and the Purple Tenuity (Ziwei 紫微). Most of these martial deities were integral to the earlier Heart of Heaven tradition, and they were also key agents in many later ritual dispensations. Finally, imperial honors linked a Zhang family of Celestial Masters to Mount Longhu, confirmed it as the authorizing source for new therapeutic rituals in the south. This family, located on a mountain at the crossroads of itinerant traders and Ritual Masters (fashi 法師), gradually superseded the other two major Daoist centers in the southeast—Maoshan (Jiangsu) and Gezao shan (Jiangxi), headquarters for the Shangqing and Lingbao traditions, respectively (Schipper 1982-1983). Song emperors made these centers responsible for issuing certificates of ordination to Daoist priests. While the ordinations given and basic practices taught at these three centers likely varied little, they stamped their ordinations with the authority of three different spiritual lineages, a phenomenon that became widespread in China from the late Tang (Strickmann 1979).

Each aspect considered in the last paragraphs—the Tantric rites, northern protector deities, and the Longhu Celestial Masters in the Northern Song court—reflects, in concentrated form, the larger religious transformation in south China between the ninth and fifteenth centuries. While visible in Song court records, this change is clearest within the Ming Daoist canon (Sun 1965; Jin 1976; Strickmann 1979; Boltz 1985, 1987; Davis 1994). These sources show most innovative activities taking place outside of official centers, even as a few find places in the records of the central court.

Important here is the *Heart of Heaven* tradition (Andersen 1991, 81-131; 1996). Soon after the Song consolidation, a retired official Rao Dong-
tian 魁洞天 (fl. 994) on Huagai shan 華蓋山 (Jiangxi) claimed Tan Zixiao as his teacher and asserted that the Rectifying Rites of the Heart of Heaven had originated in his local area (CT 566, pref. 2a). Besides enriching his spiritual powers with spirit-soldiers from the Lord of the Eastern Peak, Rao based his teachings in the sacred precincts of a trio of prominent local transcendents, Fu Qiulang 夏丘良 and his two disciples Wang Daoxiang 王道相 and Guo Daoyi 郭道意 (all said to have lived in the fourth century; see Hymes, forthcoming). By implicitly linking his teachings with local cults while modeling it on an initiatory ranking system similar to the state civil service, Rao positioned the Heart of Heaven ritual system for literati in both local and national society. More than a century later, the priest Deng Yougong 鄧有功 (fl. 1110-1150), claiming to be Rao’s fifth-generation descendent, edited five distinct Jiangxi and Anhui versions of Rao’s codes for the conduct of demons, spirits and initiates, together with his lists of ritual titles and his documentary templates, into a comprehensive ritual manual. The tradition of this manual, based on revelations to a predynastic order, consists of the twelve basic talismans of the tradition and exorcistic rituals to give the practitioner power over agents in the Department of Exorcism.

Deng’s life apparently spanned the reign of Huizong (r. 1101-1125), a watershed in the histories of both China and Daoism, when the historical shift in the center for Daoist practice from court to local areas was symbolically confirmed. Like earlier emperors, Huizong invited Daoist priests from the main ordination centers to court, including the 25th Shangqing Patriarch Liu Hunkang 劉混康 (1035-1108) and the 30th Celestial Master Zhang Jixian 張繼先 (1092-1126). In 1108 Huizong honored the first Celestial Master Zhang Daoling with a new title and ordered major reconstruction of Celestial Master buildings on Longhu shan, and there was a national distribution of comprehensive ritual paradigms for the Golden Register Rites (jink dì 聚錦第; Davis 1994, 67-80). These rituals were originally meant to protect emperor and state, but in their local adaptation between Southern Song and Ming times they became rituals for ensuring the covenant between local temple gods and their communities (Maruyama 1995, 91-94). In 1111 Huizong banned the Buddhicized cult of generic nature spirits (shanxiao 山魈 or shanjing 山精) called Wutong 五通, as a local Wutong cult in Wuyuan 婺源 (Jiangxi) began a meteoric rise to prominence (Cedzich 1995, 168-9).

This began a longer process of state enrichments of tutelary gods through granting of official titles in return for supporting the state; thus the 1112 honoring of the Jiangxi cult figure Xu Xun in order to defend the realm against the Jurchens (Hanson 1991; von Glahn 1993; Boltz 1987, 72-3). Huizong’s call for the compilation of a new Daoist canon in 1114 drew ritual practitioners from around the realm to Kaifeng, and part of its ra-
tionale was to establish the Song regime’s spiritual superiority over barbarian competitors. One itinerant practitioner, Yuan miaozong 元妙宗 (fl. 1086-1116), left Nanyang 南陽 (Henan) to help edit the new canon. Noticing the lack of the talismanic forms of healing tradition that he had mastered, he submitted to the emperor on March 1, 1116, the most comprehensive extant treatise in the Huagai Heart of Heaven legacy. Acknowledging both new spiritual realities and recent imperial responses to it, Yuan traced the movement’s origins back to Zhang Daoling himself.

We also see new trends. Universal rituals for the dead begin to show such Tantric Buddhist influences as the use of mudras and mantras (Mitamura 1996). While both Buddhist and Daoist priests sought to produce funerary liturgy for the general populace, Daoists specialized in rites of Salvation through Refinement (liandu 煉度), effected through dramatic outer stagings and subtle inner meditations (Boltz 1983; 1996). These merit-making rites have become the indispensable core of Daoists’ ritual repertoire. The continued development of the Yellow Register rites for the salvation of ancestors became the paradigm of all Lingbao ritual, delivered to all Daoist temples (Loon 1984, 39; Matusmoto 1983). In 1106 Huizong also began a decade-long search for Exalted Elite (gaoshi 高士) from various quarters—Method Masters (fangshi 方士) and Recluses (yinshi 隱士)—to bring to court.

One answering the call was a knowledgeable priest from the trading port Wenzhou 温州 (Zhejiang) named Lin Lingsu 林靈素 (1076-1120). He confidently entered the capital in 1116 touting a tradition that may have only been four years old. He offered the emperor something more profound, expanding the sacred instruction he obtained from the supreme Divine Empyrean (Shenxiao 神霄) heaven to include spiritual defenses against attack by human enemies of the state. This so enticed Huizong that by early 1117 he had come to see himself as an incarnation of the “Great Thearch of Long Life” (Changsheng dadi 長生大帝) or the Imperial Lord of the Supreme Empyrean (Taixiao dijun 太霄帝君), in effect establishing a new theocratic order (Strickmann 1978; Boltz 1983). Since the Song emperor-thearch was charged with ensuring the eternal salvation of the Song realm, he effectively legitimated his empire on the basis of revelations from the Divine Empyrean heaven. Perhaps due to Lin’s abrupt fall from power in 1119, this liberal consumption of new ritual programs was apparently not reflected in the Daoist canon printed in 1120. It continued earlier conservative priorities and included little from the new revelatory movements (Loon 1984).

Lin’s efforts continued through a Jiangxi native, Wang Wenqing 王文卿 (1093-1153), the court preceptor in the Divine Empyrean teachings. While Wang and other itinerant practitioners failed to prevent the Song court from falling to the Jurchens in 1126-1127, in the south they continued
to circulate this flexible ritual system, which became very popular in local communities.

Several influential local dispensations also emerged in Huizong’s reign. Near Mao shan a rice merchant’s son from Yizhen (Jiangsu), Yang Xizhen (1101-1124), was divinely chosen to receive the Aggrandizing Rites of Youthful Incipience (Tongchu dafa 童年初法). Yang feigned madness in 1120 and entered the Huayang cavern, returning the next year to instruct humanity in the ritual system he had mastered in the nether regions (Maoshan zhi 茅山志, CT 304, 16.4b-5a; Boltz 1987, 30-33). Prominent in the extant ritual codes that include therapeutic and mortuary rituals are references to the Fire-Bell Talisman (Huohuoju 火鈴符) and the Tianpeng incantation (Tianpeng zhout 天蓬咒) from Shangqing sources. They gave living adepts access to ritual materials normally reserved for the dead. Further, the Four Sages of the Heart of Heaven system were joined to the Celestial Master Patriarch Zhang and elevated to places of authority within the Immaculate Bureau of the Five Primordials (Wuyuan sufu 五元素府). This pentad played prominent roles in later cognate ritual systems.

Another widely-discussed and controversial ritual system claims to have emerged at this time. A priest named Tian Ziji (1074) received revelations that were later codified by his disciple Ning Benli (1101-1181), a native to the Northern Song capital who fled south. Based at Tiantai shan (Zhejiang), he became known in south China for his elaborate rituals for the dead, a fact confirmed by the extant legacy of the Aggrandizing Rites of the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao dafa 童寶大法) others claimed he founded.

Finally, there is evidence from this time of developments in the worship and ritual embodiment of the powers of thunder. In the last two decades of the Northern Song, the Celestial Masters began adopting the Thunder Rites. Also emerging here are elaborate schemes for articulating the powers of thunder in theory, scripture, meditation and ritual that developed more fully from Southern Song times (Matsumoto 1979). This broad class of exorcistic ritual appeared under such names as the Five Thunders (wulei 五雷) and Thunderclap (leihng 雷霆). Scriptures and deities that became integrated into these elaborate blends of local, Tantric and Daoist elements seem to date from this time. A Tantricized version of the tenth-century Tianlong hunejing 天童護命經 (Scripture of the Celestial Lad who Protects Destiny) called the Taishang taqing Huang-Lao dijing yuanlei Tianlong yinfan xianjing 太上泰清皇老帝君雷霆天童隱梵仙經 (Transcendent Celestial Lad Scripture of Secret Brahmanic [Language] for Circulating Thunder, of the Most High and Supremely Pure August Lord Lao, CT 633) is full of pseudo-Sanskrit phrases and deity names. Dating from the eleventh century, later ritual manuals called it the Leijing or “Thunder Scripture.” Later accounts say the main deity of the Thunder Ministry (Leibu 雷部), the
Heavenly Honored One of Universal Transformation (Puhua tianzun 普化天尊), was honored in his incarnation as the Great Upright and Brilliant Saint of the Nine Heavens (Jiutian zhenming dasheng 九天真明大聖) during this period. This deity later becomes integral to the union with the cosmic Way achieved by the chief officiant before the official beginning of the main Offering ceremonies to thank the gods.

While many of these religious traditions have roots in the early twelfth century, most of their textual remains are codifications and developments produced in south China from the mid-twelfth to early fifteenth centuries.

SOUTHERN SONG CONSOLIDATIONS. Itinerant practitioners of the Divine Empyrean legacy continued their work and by the late thirteenth century produced ritual codes for its cognate traditions. This helped consolidate a larger, more complex spiritual order by the end of the Song (Strickmann 1975; Loon 1979; Boltz 1985; Cezdich 1995, 183, 186). Wang Wenqing, Zheng Zhiwei 鄭知微, Lu Ye 劉葉 and Liu Yu 劉玉 (first called Liu Shi 世, fl. 1258) practiced these traditions in Zhejiang, Fujian and Jiangxi, admitting some of the gods and rites they encountered. Others made Du Guangting's ritual program for the dead the framework for their practice, supplementing it with new ritual sequences. Among the supplementary rites was that for Deliverance (kaidu 開度), which typically centered on theatrical trips to the underworld by the presiding Daoist priest or his agents.

Thunder rituals also proliferated in Southern Song times, and some masters attempted to order them (Skar 1996-1997). Ritual practitioners made greater use of corporeal forms of alchemical self-cultivation such as the Golden Elixir tradition to embody the cosmic Way to make their rituals efficacious (see "Inner Alchemy"). Initiates into these exorcistic traditions often linked themselves to the Celestial Master tradition on Longhu shan and developed ritual codes along the lines of the Heart of Heaven and Divine Empyrean traditions. The Celestial Masters, meanwhile, absorbed aspects of both the Heart of Heaven and Thunder Ritual traditions, making them fundamental prerequisites of initiations for all local Daoist priests (Daofa huiyuan, CT 1220, 249, 13b). Emperor Lizong (r. 1224-1264) made the 35th Celestial Master head of the three main classical Daoist lineages of Zhengyi, Lingbao and Shangqing by giving him control over the Talismanic Registers of the Three Mountains (CT 296 19.16b).

Lu Shizhong 路時中 (fl. 1100-1158), a Chenzhou 陳州 (Henan) native, codified the Yutang dafa after a revelation that lasted from 1107 to 1120. His manuals blend Salvation through Refinement rites with therapeutics of the Heart of Heaven tradition, energizing them with a new interpretation of a Shangqing practice for spiritual flight. He and his early Southern Song
disciples circulated this popular and influential ritual tradition in many areas south of the Yangzi (Boltz 1987, 36-37).

In the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, several Lingbao dafa codifications appeared. Many noted the import of Ning Benli's codifications. His successor, and major compiler of his teachings, Wang Qizhen 王奕真 (fl. 1154-1181), emphasized liandu rites in his practice (Boltz 1987, 43-45). Another leading codifier, Liu Yongguang 劉用光 (1134-1206), based at the Celestial Masters' headquarters on Longhu shan, learned the rituals of the Rectified Unity and Five Thunders traditions. The major editor of his teachings on Lingbao mortuary ritual, the Yellow Register, was a Wenzhou disciple, Jiang Shuyu 蒋叔舆 (1156-1217; see Boltz 1987, 41-43). Like other contemporary priests, he asserts his authority by including chunks of rituals codified by the earlier ritualists Lu Xiujing, Zhang Wanfu and Du Guangting, while adding several chapters on the liandu rites.

In contrast to those favoring flexibility and openness in ritual practice, practitioners like Lü Yuansu 吕元素 (fl. 1188-1201) of Chengdu (Sichuan) and Jin Yunzhong 金允中 (fl. 1223-1225), an heir to the Youthful Incipience tradition, tried to restore ritual to its classical purity. Jin asserts that only the rites he had inherited were the genuine form of treating disorders; he frequently complains of excesses, errors and inaccuracies in the Tiantai variety of Lingbao dafa codified by Ning Benli. He believed that the Tianxin tradition was the center of the Zhengyi tradition (CT 1222, 10.9a-9b), and that it had also unified the rites of the Five Thunder deities and other common practices (Boltz 1987, 45-46; Maruyama 1994). As a corrective, he advocates a return to the simple fundamentals of ritual promoted by Lu Xiujing and Du Guangting. Less explicit on his competitors, Lü nonetheless pulls on localist strings by claiming to restore the ritual purity in Du Guangting, who resided for a time in Sichuan (Boltz 1987, 49-51).

Ritual proliferation was hard to stop, however, and in the early thirteenth century, Celestial Lord Xin (Xin tianjun 辛天君) instructed the Guangdong master Chen Nan 陳楠 (d. 1213) in the Thunder Rites as a ritual supplement to his Golden Elixir teachings. After teaching these (and the Golden Elixir teachings) to several disciples, including the renowned Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 (1194-1227?), Chen died. Bai taught inner alchemy and rituals to famous literati from Guangdong to Jiangsu, and added to his ritual expertise with traditions he learned along the way. Surviving material shows that he considered himself an heir to the Shenxiao legacy, working on Fujian and Jiangxi most intensively (Strickmann 1975; Berling 1994; Yokote 1995; Skar 1996-1997). Between 1215 and 1225 he aligned himself with and bolstered traditions and cults on Wuyi shan, Xishan and Longhu shan. After a revelation from the Heavenly Honored One of Universal Transformation in Fuzhou in 1218, Bai declared himself a Divine Empyrean master
and initiated nine gentry disciples who set up branch retreats for these teachings and aided him in major rituals (Skar 2000). A key witness to the wealth of religious traditions in southeast China at this time, Bai aided the Celestial Master lineage during a succession crisis, compiled the fullest account of the Xu Xun cult until 1158, promoted the religious culture of northwestern Fujian and converted a Buddhist priest. Two generations of disciples continued Bai’s work, codifying his teachings in the Golden Elixir heritage and the Thunder Rituals that had become part of the Divine Empyrean system.

Late in the thirteenth century, a comprehensive ritual system emerged in Bai’s home territory, integrating four classical traditions—Shangqing, Lingbao, Daoist and Zhengyi—with a Tantricized form of Thunderclap ritual reflected in newly revealed talismans. There are many parallels between Bai’s understanding of the Lingbao, Shenxiao, Thunder Ritual and Golden Elixir traditions, and those codified by the Fujianese official Huang Shunshen (1224-ca. 1286). The latter system, learned from Huang’s onetime healer, Nan Bidao 南棟道 (b. 1196), were teachings of the exalted Pure Tenuity (Qingwei 清微) celestial realm. Before he died, Huang reworked, amplified and distributed this elaborated version of Divine Empyrean rites, replete with Tantric elements and allusions to the Shangqing legacy, from Guangxi to Wudang shan. By Ming times, authoritative priests saw this system, along with the more popular Divine Empyrean system, as the two most renowned Daoist ritual programs (Schipper 1987; Boltz 1987, 38-41, 68-70).

Figures such as Liu Yongguang and Bai Yuchan, who cultivated contacts the Zhang family of Celestial Masters on Longhu shan, suggest that during Southern Song times the Zhangs were an important source of ritual authority and legitimacy for newer ritual traditions. Leaders in this movement often asserted that the new therapeutic movements were incarnations of the Way first divulged to Zhang Daoling, only recently made available by uncovering materials he had hidden in the ground.

Also important in Southern Song times were local gods who revealed themselves as charged with overseeing cosmic order of the Dao in scriptural or ritual texts at spirit-writing sessions. One of the first in the unsettled early Southern Song was Jiangxi cult figure Xu Xun. Responding in 1131 to a 1129 plea by his cult leader He Zhengong 何真公, Xu sent the “secret rites of the Numinous Treasure and Pure and Bright [traditions]” (Lingbao jing-ming mifa 禪寶淨明秘法) and the “teachings of loyalty, filiality, humility and self-restraint.” Armed with these outer talismanic rituals and inner instructions on self-cultivation, he hoped to protect those faithful to Xu from invading evils and to strengthen their spiritual resolve (Akizuki 1978, 31-33).

Similarly, the Daoist-inspired revelations between 1168 and 1194 conferred a Daoist identity on a local Sichuanese god of Zitong, who became
known as **Wenchang 文昌**, the God of Literature. His Daoist links are clear in his overseeing Daoist ceremonies and in shrines to him placed next to Daoist establishments. In the thirteenth century this Daoicized deity became known throughout the Yangzi basin, and a new revelation in 1267 centered on growing instabilities of the Song state (Kleeman 1994, 72-73). Later versions of Xu Xun’s Song exploits also bear the imprint of Wenchang’s multiple reincarnations revealed by spirit-writing (Boltz 1987, 73-75; Kleeman 1994, 66). Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a local Zhejiang plague deity, often called **Commandant Wen**, was one of several competing deities in coastal Zhejiang, especially in Hangzhou and Wenzhou. Huang Gongjin 黄公瑾 (fl. 1247-1274), a disciple of renowned Divine Empyrean and Five Thunder master Liu Yu, recast Marshal Wen as an eradicator of illicit popular cults and gods, apparently with little lasting success (Katz 1995, 120-127; 80-88). Another deity was Ma Sheng 馬騰 (the Chinese translation of Asvajit, the Buddha’s disciple who taught Sariputra), whose cultic center was likely in Jiangxi. In Yuan Miao-zong’s Heart of Heaven synthesis he was a stellar deity of the Southern Dipper who used the fire with which he was charged to cleanse the world of demons. Iconographically linked to Tantrism, his main duty in later ritual manuals was to destroy tanshao and Wutong demons. By the mid-thirteenth century he was effectively a purified Wutong spirit emanating from the fiery Southern Dipper in the sky (Cedzich 1995, 184-190). These are but a few of the gods who became central to local cults in southeast China.

**DEVELOPMENTS IN THE YUAN.** By remaining aloof and subtly adapting itself to new circumstances after the Song fall to the Mongols, Chinese civilization escaped destruction, even as Yuan leaders sought ways to acquire cultural legitimacy. Daoism aided them; early khans, beginning with Chingghis in the 1220s, showered patronage on the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection) movement of self-cultivation that had turned to deity worship and classical Daoist ritual programs to enrich its legacy and win Mongolian patronage (see “Complete Perfection”).

After capturing Lin’an, the Mongols turned to the Celestial Masters for support, but this benefited the Mongols more than the Celestial Masters, who already had de facto spiritual authority over the new ritual traditions in south China. Qubilai Khan made the 36th Celestial Master, Zhang Zong-yan 张宗演 (1244-1291) and his successors leaders of Daoist teachings in south China (Yunshe 元史 202.8). Zhang set a precedent for the regime by delegating administration of in the Yuan capital Yanjing (Beijing) to literati surrogates, whom the Mongols called patriarchs of the Teachings of the Mysteries (Xuanjiao 玄教; see Sun 1981). These included eminent Jiangxi literati like Zhang Liusun 张留孙 (1248-1322; served 1278-1322) and his disciple Wu Quanjie 吴全節 (1269-1346; served 1322-1346), followed by
Wu's disciple, Xia Wenyong 夏文勇 (1277-1349; served 1346-1349) and the little-known Zhang Delong 張德隆 (served 1349-). After rebels destroyed the Lingbao mountain headquarters on Gezao shan in 1352, it never regained its glory. This was no doubt partly due to the greater authority laid upon Celestial Masters on nearby Longhu shan (Chen 1963, 272-74).

Outside of these developments at court, ritual traditions and deity cults continued to develop, circulating and interacting throughout local areas in the south. Soon after the Mongols unified China, incarnations formed of several ritual traditions that had been known since the twelfth century, the largest by a Wenzhou heir to Ning Benli's legacy of the Aggrandizing Rites of the Numinous Treasure, Lin Weifu 林偉夫 (1239-1303). Lin's own disciple, Lin Tianren 林天任, confirmed his master's place in a long biography written just after his death (Boltz 1987, 45-47; Lü and Lagerway 1992).

The cult to Xu Xun continued its earlier legacy, but underwent a revival at the end of the thirteenth century. Liu Yu 刘玉 (1257-1308) synthesized an ethicized version of the Xu Xun cult in northern Jiangxi, codifying the Pure and Bright Way of Loyalty and Filiality using a scriptural legacy based on decades of revelations. His efforts were captured though pious efforts of Liu's main disciple, Huang Yuanji 黃元吉 (1270-1324), whose own teachings were compiled by a loyal disciple, Xu Hui 徐慧 (1291-1352). In this phase of the Xu Xun cult, Xu was no longer chiefly known as a master-exorcist and dragon-queller. He moreover was skeptical of abstruse forms of corporeal contemplation, preferring to rectify the mind by following strict ethical standards. He also absorbed simpler forms of exorcism and Thunder Ritual centered on the Department of the Celestial Pivot (Tianshu yuan 天枢院) in the Southern Dipper, a clear counterpart to the Tianxin zhengfa. All of these traditions attracted support from influential Jiangxi literati of the early fourteenth century (Akizuki 1978; Boltz 1987, 75-78, 198-99).

Mo Qiyan 莫起炎 (1223-1291), a Huzhou 湖州 (Zhejiang) native well-known in Nanfeng 南風 (Jiangxi) continued Bai Yuchan's dual interest in contemplative and ritual teachings. His disciple Wang Weiyi 王惟一 (1264-1304), elaborated on Mo's broad interests and claimed that Mo founded the Thunderclap variety of the Thunder Rites to counteract traditions such as the Heart of Heaven, centered on the use of talismans. This despite the fact that Wang mentioned that Sa [Shoujian's 薛守堅 (fl. 1141-1178?) master, the 30th Celestial Master Zhang Jixian, first circulated them. A native of Wuchang 武昌 (Hubei), Lei Shizhong 雷時中 (1221-1295), also continued practicing both Thunder Rituals and corporeal contemplation in the Middle Yangzi region (Boltz 1987, 186-188).
After reinstituting the civil service examinations in 1315, the Mongol regime further ennobled the multivalent god Wenchang by embedding parts of his cult in official schools. This tied him to the examinations and the literati without fully replacing either his popular roots or Daoist overlays. A century later he was worshipped at state schools throughout the empire (Kleeman 1994, 73-79). Also in Yuan times, the fire-deity Ma Sheng became part of a web of divine identity that also went under the names and appearances of Wutong, Five Manifestations (wuxian 五顯), or Huaguang (Padmabrabha) (Cedzich 1995, 186-189).

The **Ming Dynasty** saw a continuation of Yuan practices, as well as fuller state support for some cults, such as that for the Perfect Warrior, that had made Daoist liturgical and scriptural forms central to their activities. Some of this support waned after the Ming capital was moved from Nanjing to Beijing in 1421. In 1368, the first Ming emperor put the 42nd Celestial Master Zhang Zhengchang 張正常 (1335-1377) in charge of all matters related to Daoism. Zhao Yizhen 趙宜真, trained in both Complete Perfection and Golden Elixir legacies, became the main codifier of the Qingwei teachings. The court, moreover, supported various popular deities, such as the Perfect Warrior, the Xu Brothers and Mazu. For more details, see "Daoism in the Ming."

**TEXTS**

Most of what we know of the Song-Yuan traditions comes from the surviving Ming Daoist canon. Compiled by those who shaped and passed on these traditions, these texts reflect their hopes of restoring the world to the order of the cosmic Way and their need to make a way in the world. They vary in scope and depth, degree of the codification and systemization, number of innovative and conservative elements, and also in the extent of their circulation. Manuscripts meant for initiates had a narrower distribution than those printed and dispersed among lay audiences. The text's language is complex, with both classical literary forms and vernacular and local strata (Lien 1995). Many texts include diagrams, depictions and charts to aid ritual practitioners. Initiates and devout laymen routinely memorized their texts, using written versions to backup their memory.

Whatever their ties to classical Daoist orders or recent ritual traditions, many of these texts are part of large ritual compendia with variable degrees of internal organization. Compilations with lesser degrees of organization tend to contain ritual traditions that are new or devoted to single deities; those with higher degrees are most representative of the classical Daoist orders or liturgical structures. Many new systems appear in massive, poorly
organized compendia with dozens of ritual systems, while compendia of classical rituals are usually large and systematic.

GENERAL OVERVIEWS AND COMPILATIONS. Like their predecessors in the early Tang, many priests involved with early Ming emperors sought to assess and arrange scriptural and ritual materials that had emerged during the previous four centuries. They organized the plethora of rites, gods and traditions through systematic essays, encyclopedias, or ritual compilations to demarcate the legitimate boundaries of Daoist thought and practice. These efforts did not keep priests from promoting specific ritual traditions or deity cults as was common in Song and Yuan times. Nor did it divert the focus of Tang and early Song priests, who often organized their material around scriptures or specific ritual programs. Examples of each will be considered here. An important instance of a scriptural-based compilation is the large anonymous *Jinsi touliuxu yin* 金鎖流珠引 (Guide to the Golden Lock and Flowing Pearls [Scripture], CT 1015, 29 j.). While claiming Li Chunfeng 李淳風 (602-670) as its compiler and commentator, this work gives a comprehensive (though often abridged) treatment of the Pacing the Mainstays practice once central to its lost eponymous scripture (Andersen 1991; Barrett 1986). Scattered references to elements prominent in the Heart of Heaven legacy and the Thunder Rites suggest the work took shape in the ninth or early tenth centuries, probably in Celestial Master circles. At about this time Du Guangting 趙光庭 wrote a major work, later amplified by unknown editors, called the *Taishang huanglu zhaiyi* 太上黃録齋儀 (Protocols for Yellow Register Rites of the Most High, CT 508, 58 j.). This work and others compiled by Du established the Yellow Register Rite as the paradigm of all Lingbao ritual.

Many early Ming writings focus less on individual scriptures or rites than on presenting comprehensive overviews of Daoist traditions as a whole, especially their development in the four previous centuries. We see this in the *Daofa huiyuan* 道法會元 (Collected Sources on Daoist Ritual, CT 1220, 268 j.), the largest work in the Daoist canon. It assembles a range of ritual manuals and related writings from various Daoist traditions that flourished in south China in Song and Yuan times. Its provenance is unknown, but an internal date of 1356 and references to a deified Zhao Yi-zhen (d. 1382) suggests an early Ming compilation in south China, perhaps by an heir to the Pure Tenuity tradition (Loon 1979; Schipper 1982; Boltz 1987, 47-49).

Many component texts deal with variant Thunder Rite traditions that often used spirit-mediums (*tongzi* 童子) as ritual standins for the afflicted. The texts often tie their exorcistic practice, centered on Ritual Masters who composed and used talismans, to the therapeutic priorities of the Celestial Masters. Qingwei materials fill the first fifth of the text (j. 1-55) while the
next fifth (j. 56-101) contains compilations linked to Fire-Master Wang (Wang Huoshi 王火師), and reflects the Thunderclap rites and Shenxiao traditions. The remaining three fifths have a range of texts, including Shenxiao traditions on hell-rituals (j. 264-68), liandu rites (j. 198-206) and ways to quell tutelary deities (j. 253-56) ascribed to the Song master-disciple chain of Lu Ye, Liu Yu (fl. 1258) and Huang Gongjin (fl. 1284). It also contains Shenxiao-based traditions (j. 104-108 and j. 147-153) of the Jade Pivot legacy, derived from Celestial Lord Xin's revelation to Chen Nan, and his transmission to Bai Yuchan, Peng Si and their Yuan followers.

Texts related to the revitalized Shangqing tradition known as Youthful Incipience fill another large section and show special appreciation of rites to the Tianpeng spirit (j. 158-187). Some texts continue Numinous Treasure (j. 244-45) and Heart of Heaven (j. 246-47) traditions, or Thunder Rites of a Song guardian spirit known as the Grand Monad and Grand Unity (Taiyi 太一 / 乙; j. 133-45; j. 188-94). Of similar provenance is a section (j. 195-96) on the Five Thunder Rites of the Eight Trigrams. One section (j. 111-13) on the Five Thunder Rites is ascribed to the 36th Celestial Master Zhang Zongyan (1244-1291), and another has a postface by Zhang Jixian. We find also the tradition (j. 122-23) on the Thunder Rites of Shaoyang, inspired by Xu Xun.

A smaller, but similarly broad work is the anonymously-compiled Fahai yizhu 法海遺珠 (Bequeathed Pearls from the Sea of Ritual, CT 1166, 46 j.). Its many ritual manuals represent a wide range of therapeutic traditions from the Yangzi valley and south, including Thunder ritual traditions of the Divine Empyrean (1, 10), Taiyi (3-6), Five Thunders (j. 21, 22, 24, 25, 37) and Thunderclap (j. 16) legacies, as well as those centered around spirit-generals Deng 鄧 (23), Liu 劉 (31), Zhao 趙 (36), Xin 辛 (38), Guan 閣 (39, 43), Yin 殷 (44), the Jupiter Spirit (Taisui 太歲, j. 30-31, 35) and the Four Saints of the Northern Emperor (j. 32-33). One chapter (j. 27) claims to be a secret family tradition of Thunder Rites. The last section, containing the Mysterious Writs of the Purple Throne (Zichen xianshu 紫宸玄書, j. 45-46), has a preface dated 1344 by Zhang Shunli 張舜烈, suggesting the manual is from late fourteenth century south China (Boltz 1987, 51).

One work that comprehensively embodies key aspects of the Song-Yuan Daoist transformation—notably the primacy of the Zhengyi tradition of the Celestial Masters in coordinating new ritual traditions and deity cults within older Daoist liturgical structures—is not in the Daoist canon. The encyclopedic Daozang miyao zhi 道藏秘要/旨 (Secret Essentials of the Daoist Canon), mostly reflects the Celestial Master's new role in Daoism of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and is still a fundamental text for Daoist priests in Taiwan (Maruyama 1992). Besides necessary theoretical and historical background to Daoist traditions, the work deals with indis-
pensible liturgical forms, contemplative and ritual activities, and initiation ranks for Daoist priests.

SPECIFIC RITUAL TRADITIONS. People in Song times generally regarded texts of the HEART OF HEAVEN tradition as part of the Zhengyi Celestial Masters legacy, although early codifiers also revered Shangqing traditions. Compilers viewed their tradition as embodying the whole Tang Daoist system, reshaped to suit a Song audience. New elements include the Subduing Demons (fumo) tradition linked to the Northern Emperor, Zhengyi techniques of Pacing the Mainstays, practices of gathering and expelling, and others influenced by Tantrism such as deity-transformation (bianshen) and mudra-rubrics (juemu). Some compilers explicitly tried to establish initiation ranks according to the Song administration. Rao Dongtian (d. 994), a minor official who retired to Huagai shan, followed a nighttime vision of lights streaming from the Big Dipper (i.e., the Heart of Heaven) to the earth and dug in his mountain to find the secret [ritual] templates of the Heart of Heaven. Later Tan Zixiao taught him to use the Mudras and Jade Models (yuge), and told him to learn more from the Emperor of the Eastern Mountain Taishan, who later gave him spirit-soldiers (yinbing).

Rao's tale is told by a fifth generation follower named Deng Yougong (fl. 1110-1150; CT 566, pref. 1a-1b). He showed his reverence for Rao in two works, one a new edition of Rao's teachings called the Shangqing gusui lingwen guilu (Demon-Code of the Numinous Writ of Bone-Marrow in the Supreme Purity Tradition, CT 461, 4 pp. + 3 j.). Here Deng calls Rao the ancestral transcendent who codified the Tianxin tradition after discovering a secret writing on Huagai shan and elaborating a code based on the statutes and laws of the Song administration (pref. 2b; cf. CT 1223 43.17a). This corresponds to chapter 6 of Yuan Miaozong's work (CT 1227; Boltz 1994, 17). Rao's tradition was well-known in northern Jiangxi in the twelfth century, since Deng based his texts on five texts of the Shangqing “Demon-Code” that he found in abbeys in Hongzhou, Nankang, Lushan and Shuzhou (CT 461, pref. 3a). He verified his text's accuracy by sending it to the gate to heaven, from where it was sent for checking to the Department of Exorcism and other celestial bureaux. A heavenly reply assured Deng the text was correct (pref. 3b), and priests could use it to support imperial rule by widely distributing and practicing these rites to keep away the evils from distant lands (pref. 4a). The text's core is a penal code for spirits involved in exorcistic rituals based on nine talismans called the Numinous Writ of Bone-Marrow, unique to the Heart of Heaven tradition. To distinguish his tradition from others that used written demon codes but which were not in tune with the will of Heaven (2a), Deng added two sections: Jade Models (rules for initiations.
based on Song administrative ranks) and Ritual Templates (ritual titles [3.6a-7b] and templates for ritual documents [3.8a-19b]).

Supplementing this work was Deng's *Shangqing tianxin zhengfa* (Rectifying Rites of the Heart of Heaven, in the Shangqing Tradition, CT 566, 3 pp. + 7 j.), which summarized the Tianxin zhengfa tradition (abbreviated as *Zhengfa*). Deng claimed the text held secret essentials and talismanic writs of the four initiatory ranks of scriptures and registers (pref. 3a), and embodied essentials of the four early Daoist traditions coordinated into ritual categories and initiation ranks in the Tang. He credits the Shangqing medium Yang Xi with introducing this talismanic tradition (pref. 2a-2b), but claims it came to the Song on the sacred grounds of a Huagai shan cult figure Fu Qiuliang and his disciples Wang Daoxiang and Guo Daoyi. It is undoubtedly related to a three-juan work of the same title listed in the *Tongshi lue* of 1161 (Loon 1984, 75) and the first two chapters of Yuan Miaozong's *Mifa* of 1116 (CT 1227, see below). A reference to talismans attributed to Zhang Jixian (1092-1127; see 3.9b-20a) and inclusion of Shenxiao material (5.8a-9a) suggest a mid-twelfth century date. The work was meant for Tianxin zhengfa initiates, who practice the canonical precious registers and secret repositories of the four degrees of the Three Caverns (2b-3a), but includes three chapters on a popular and extra-canonical talisman tradition called the talismanic writs of the Northern Emperor (j. 4-6), well known in Jiangxi and a possible source for the Tianxin tradition.

The text focuses on the three main Tianxin talismans, described as Talismans of the Three Luminaries, the Black Killer and the Celestial Mainstay (3.1a-9a; cf. CT 567 1a, 6a-13a; CT 1227 2.10a-17a). It also discusses nine subsidiary talismans, called the Numinous Writ of Bone Marrow (*Gusui lingwen* 骨髓靈文), here said to have been transmitted separately by Zhang Daoling (3.9b-21a; cf. CT 1227, j. 4-6). The main deity empowering the talismans is the Northern Emperor, also called the Ancestral Master (Zushi 祖師), the Great Emperor of the Northern Culmen (Beiji dadi 北極大帝), or the Great Emperor of Highest Purity (Shangqing dadi 上清大帝). He oversees the Department of Exorcism where *Tianxin zhengfa* initiates are assigned (cf. CT 461 pref. 1b). Besides commanding Great Generals, this deity is protected by 36 generals headed by Great Commandant Tianpeng (2.3a-b, 3.1a, 8b; cf. CT 1227). Another agent of the Northern Emperor is the Black Killer, the talismanic envoy of the Dark Warrior (Xuanwu fushi 玄武符使) and bearer of the Northern Emperor's decrees (CT 3.5a-7a; cf. CT 220 8.13a-16a, 27.6b-9b).

The largest survey of the Tianxin zhengfa is the *Taishang zhuguo jiu-min zongzhen miyao* 太上助國救民總真秘要 (Secret Essentials of the Totality of the Perfected for Assisting the State and Saving the People, in the Most High Tradition, CT 1227, 10 j.). Signed by Yuan Miaozong on
1 March, 1116, this was his response to the dearth of detailed talismanic methods for exorcism and curing in the Daoist material gathered in the capital after an imperial decree of 1115 ordered preparation of a new Daoist canon (pref. 1b). Its focus on oral instructions for secret rites for [writing] talismans is based on his gradual synthesis, over thirty years, of a complete ritual repertoire from teachings of many masters in the realm.

The first two chapters, called the Shangqing beiji tianxin zhengfa, open with the fundamentals of the tradition, followed by a discussion of basic talismans and seals. Claiming to derive from both the Central Dipper in the Northern Pole (i.e., Heart of Heaven) and the Celestial Masters, Yuan says the Tianxin zhengfa became a separate tradition through the efforts of Tan Zixiao and Rao Dongtian (1.1a). The programs for elaborate exorcistic ceremonies (1.2a-8b) incorporate less complex rites described later in the manual, and can be used to cure illnesses, save ancestors, obtain heirs or destroy illicit shrines. As agents of the Department of Exorcism, all initiates in the ritual system are heirs to their patriarch Zhang Daoling and subject to the Northern Emperor, called the Ancestral Master. The latter oversees a host of fierce generals and lieutenants and their less exalted spirit-soldiers. The second chapter contains basic rules for writing talismans, and describes the three main celestial talismans of the two main seals. These seals, the Seal of the Northern Pole's Department of Exorcism and the Seal of the Omnicelestial Ruler of the Aggrandizing Laws, gave authority to deal, respectively, with rites for the living and for the dead.

The third chapter has talismanic procedures for treating illnesses, followed by rites centered on Tianpeng. Chapters 4 to 6 contain a separate tradition of the Shangqing yinshu gusui lingwen, claiming it passed from Zhang Daoling through the Tang master Ye Fashan (616-720). Chapter 4 holds the nine old Bone-marrow Numinous Writ talismans (also in CT 566 3.9b-21a), and chapter 5 adds additional talismans separately received by Yuan (4.1a) that focus on the rites of the Five Prisons (wuyufa 五獄法 5.1a-6a) for capturing demons, and on submitting a petition through meditative ascent (zhang 5.76b-10b). Chapter 6 ends with a Demon Code based on an older version (nearly identical with CT 461, attr. to Deng Yougong). The next two chapters deal with basic Rectifying Unity practices for inspecting [demons] and summoning [spirits] (ch. 7) and for Pacing the Mainstays (ch. 8). The last two chapters contain documentary templates for ritual work and descriptions of lesser Tianxin rites.

Finally, there are two later anonymous works in this tradition. The Shangqing beiji tianxin zhengfa gives a condensed version of the Tianxin zhengfa, centering...
on its three central talismans (6a-13a). It says they were once the substance of the Tianxin tradition. The last two-thirds presents the inner practices required for successful talisman-writing, stressing its dependance upon the gathering of qi from the Three Luminaries (Sun, Moon and Big Dipper; 13a; cf. CT 1223, 6.11a-11b). The detailed descriptions at the end of the book on inhaling and circulating qi borrow from earlier traditions such as Shangqing (13b-19b), and secret divinatory traditions (20b-29b) concerning the optimal times and places to gather qi. A concluding general essay treats the details of the talismans in this system (29b-35a).

The *Tianxin zhengfa xiu zhen dao chang she jiao yi* (Protocols for Laying out the Offerings in the Area of the Way for Cultivating Perfection according to the Rectifying Rituals of the Heart of Heaven Tradition, CT 807, 12 pp.) is part of a well-established Tianxin zhengfa tradition dating from the thirteenth century or later, perhaps from Jiangxi. It distinguishes the deities in the Department of Exorcism of the Northern Culmen from those in the Department of the Celestial Pivot, which are central to the Southern Song-Yuan Xu Xun tradition.

A cognate tradition that may have been a source of the *Tianxin zhengfa* is found in Ouyang Wen’s *Beidi fumo jing* (Northern Emperor’s Scripture for Subduing Demons, CT 1412, 10 j.). This synthesis of early Shangqing and Zhengyi therapeutics and later Lingbao ritual contains a range of exorcistic procedures (and also funeral liturgy, j. 6) to avoid evil influences of troublesome spirits in Fengdu shan (酆都山). Most come from the Northern Emperor, also called the Patriarch for Subduing Demons (Fumo zushi 阪都祖師), who was sent by the Heavenly Honored One to deal with this unruly realm beneath the northern sky.

The DIVINE EMPYREAN tradition burst on the scene in the early twelfth century and became one of the most popular in succeeding centuries, due largely to its flexible ritual structures and deity hierarchies and its links to the Song court. The diverse texts in this legacy deliberately borrow from both Lingbao and Shangqing traditions, and enthusiastically absorb elements from many others. Perhaps the earliest datable text in the tradition is the *Gao shang shen xiao zong zhi shou jing* (Exemplar on the Scriptures Received by the Lineal Master of the Most Exalted Divine Empyrean Tradition, CT 1282, 7 pp.), most likely composed a few years after Huizong’s reign. An account of the divine revelation, similar to that of the *Duren jing*, leads into a discussion of the origins of Shenxiao scriptures from an Ancestral Master or Heavenly Honored One, who uttered the Central Lingbao Salvation Scripture of Shenxiao (*Lingbao duren shen xiao zheng jing* 翼寶度人神霄中經). This scripture passed to the Lineal Master Taishang dao jun 太上道君 in the Shangqing realm, who ordered its perfected residents to divide it into sixty *juan*. The divided scripture then went to the Perfect Master (Zhenshi 真師) or Perfected Sovereign...
Lord of the Jade Clarity of the Divine Empyrean (Shenxiao yuqing zhen wangiun 上真清真王君). He was to send it to earth only when the Song empire had reached a zenith of peace and prosperity, preparing the way by entering the world as Song Huizong. The above divine triad are the three masters of the Great Way of the Most Exalted Divine Empyrean 高上神霄大道 a term from the main Shangqing scripture, the *Dadong chenjing* 大洞真經. Also from the Shangqing tradition comes the use of the renchen cyclical year (#29 in the sexagesimal cycle) to mark the start of this new dispensation. In that year (i.e. 1112), the Imperial Lord of Virid Florescence (Qinghua dijun 青華帝君), that is, Lin Lingsu, would divulge the divine mandate for a theocratic age, preparing for the release of the main scripture.

The chapter headings for a 61-juan *Duren jing* listed in this text correspond to those in the first work of the Daoist canons of the Ming (printed 1445) and Yuan (printed 1244), but apparently not to that printed in 1119. This work, the *Lingbao wuxiang duren shangpin miaojing* 瑞寶無量度人上品妙經 (Marvellous Scripture of Supreme Rank on the Infinite Salvation of the Numinous Treasure Tradition, CT 1, 61 j.) opens with the basic *Duren jing* and then presents sixty ritual reworkings of it, reflecting both Lingbao and Shangqing traditions (Strickmann 1978). The Northern Song formulary notes that this revealed scripture was not only an extension of the Lingbao canon but also the culmination of the Shangqing legacy. Yet it was only a fraction of a canon of secret texts that totaled 1,200 *juan* by the time its revelations stopped in 1120. Thereafter, its dispensation was aided by Lin Lingsu and his successors, one of whom was Wang Wenqing (1093-1153). Wang, or one of his disciples, also may have had a hand in compiling a supplement of sacred diagrams to the seminal Duren jing, called the *Duren shangpin miaojing futu* 度人上品妙經符圖 (Talismans and Diagrams of the Duren jing, CT 147, 3 j.). These texts on chanting the scripture and turning it into talismans prepared the way for further developments in the Southern Song.

The Shenxiao tradition produced a comprehensive initiatory code (*Daofa huiyuan*, j. 249-250), dating from the early thirteenth century, called the *Taishang tiantan yuge* 太上天壇玉格 (Jade Code of the Most High [Lord Lao’s] Celestial Altar). This code presents a range of older traditions as parallel, but inferior, to Shenxiao priorities (Loon 1979; Cedzich 1995, 183, 186). Most of the other extant Shenxiao textual materials date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. For instance, the *Gaoshang shenxiao yuqing zhengwu zishu dafa* 高上神霄玉清真王紫書大法 (Comprehensive Rites in Purple Script from the Perfected Jade Purity King of Most Exalted Divine Empyrean, CT 1219, 12 j.), is a compendium of Shenxiao rites. Included in its title is the name of Huizong’s divine double and scattered references to his reign. But the work as a whole likely dates from after his demise,
judging from the pervasiveness of the Five Thunder and liandu rites (Ren and Zhong 1991, 960-61; Boltz 1987, 27). Another late Shenxiao compilation is the seven-chapter unit of the *Daofa huiyuan* (CT 1220, j. 198-205) entitled the *Shenxiao jinhuo tianding dafa* (Comprehensive Rites of the Golden Flame’s Celestial Stalwart in the Divine Empyrean). A preface is signed by Chen Daoyi and a colophon by Liu Yu, both latter-day Shenxiao heirs from Jiangxi, and this suggests why this late redaction treats so prominently a verse purporting to be by Lin Lingsu on the cosmic sphere controlled by the fire-wielding universal warrior (Boltz 1987, 30).

The *LINGBAO DAFA* (Aggrandizing Rites of the Numinous Treasure Tradition) is also concerned with saving the dead. Like the Shenxiao legacy, with which it shared many overlaps and connections, it was based on the Lingbao tradition *Duren jing*. The special characteristics of the tradition derive from secret readings of the scripture. These are elaborated mainly by Ning Benli based on his synthesis of Tian Ziji’s teachings on canonical Daoist liturgies of salvation and alchemical self-cultivation. After the fall of the Northern Song, Tian fled south and learned from Shi Zixian the talismans, writs, seals and mudras of the Jade Fascicles from the Five Bureaux (i.e., the Tongchu legacy). After settling in Tiantai he taught many disciples and his rites found expression in numerous legacies in Southern Song and Yuan times. The tradition makes heavy use of liandu rituals and the Shenxiao pantheon. It also borrowed from innovations of the Tianxin legacy, although writers often distinguish their Lingbao rites of salvation from the Tianxin exorcisms. At the heart of the Aggrandizing Rites are incantations, talismans and rites (CT 219, 36.1a) that derive from a secret reading of the *Duren jing* (CT, j. 3.13b-9.7b) given in a later section (CT 219, j. 5-7). Each four-character phrase of the scripture forms talismans capable of protecting people and healing diseases.

Another work suggesting tight links between the Shenxiao and Lingbao dafa traditions is the *Lingbao dalian neizhi xingshi jigao* (Essentials on Maintaining and Practicing the Esoteric Directives of the Great Transmutation of the Numinous Treasure Tradition, CT 407). This contains internal procedures demanded of a priest on a quest to save souls (Boltz 1983; Boltz 1987, 28-30). The meditation ritual also fills a separate chapter (j. 57) of the earliest synthesis of Ning’s tradition, dating from the early thirteenth century. The anonymously compiled *Duren shangpin miaojing dafa* (Aggrandizing Rites of the Supreme Ranked Scripture on Salvation, CT 219, 1 + 72 j.) was compiled in the Southern Song and amplified in early Ming times (Boltz 1994, 10). It proffers a detailed and complete description of the Lingbao dafa tradition, which it describes as the Way to save souls from hell (53.1a).
This text or a close ancestor is the likely source for two antipathical works titled *Shangqing lingbao dafa* 上清靈寶大法, one by Jin Yunzhong (CT 1222-1223) and a later one by Wang Qizhen (CT 1221). The work contains ninety sections, and includes commentaries from its divine preceptor, a certain Tianzhen huangren 天真真人, and the Mystery Master (Xuanshi 玄師). The preface, ascribed to Tianzhen huangren (also in CT 1221, pref. 3b-6b), speaks of his role in transcribing huge celestial characters for this scripture into ones legible to humans, and assigning correct sounds to them (2.1b; cf. CT 97, 3.1b-2a). He also explained the basic Lingbao talismans to the Yellow Emperor (2.1b, 72.8b, from CT 388, 3.17a-23b). The preface describes Daoist ritual practice in the alchemical language. Contrasts between the talismans in this text and those of Liu Yongguang (1134-1206) suggest that it was completed around 1200 by a disciple of Ning Benli.

Other internal evidence suggests it is earlier than the compilation of Wang Qizhen (CT 1221), who seems to have based it upon this one or a close cognate. It first discusses its cosmic underpinnings, stressing priestly ritual practice in terms of alchemy and making the Yellow Register Rite the model Lingbao rite for both the living and dead (1.1a-2.2b). The compiler then focuses on the main practices of the Lingbao dafa tradition. They allow initiates to seek to save all souls from hell by spiritually ascending to heaven for further purifications, eventually to receive precepts for the Comprehensive Rites of Salvation from Yuanshi tianzun. This initiation allows priests to perform rites of confession and petition before the Three Pure Ones and absorb the energies of the holy scriptures, which gives him command over all gods and the ability to communicate with the supernatural powers (2.2b-26).

The rest of the manual details ritual responsibilities of Daoist priests in this tradition. After learning to confess his errors and mastering the spiritual hierarchies of both heavens and earth of which he is now part, he is able to master the ritual rubrics. The first ritual section (j. 30-45) has him act as an exorcist, while the last (j. 47-71) focuses on general salvation for the dead. A concluding chapter (j. 72) contains documents for the ritual of transmission and the seals of authority. It synthesized elements from both classical Lingbao and Shangqing traditions, while new elements from the Tongchu, Shenxiao, Yutang and Jingming traditions stress expelling the pure (demonic) yin [qi] from the body and infuse it with pure (transcendent) yang [qi] (9.8a, 8b). While clearly aware of aspects of the Tianxin tradition or its cognates, the author does not mention them directly.

In the first quarter of the thirteenth century, Jiang Shuyu 蒋叔與 (1162-1223) edited the teachings of his master, Liu Yongguang (1134-1206), into the *Wushang huanglu dazai licheng yi* 無上黃錄大齋立成儀
(Protocols for Establishing the Great Unsurpassed Yellow Register Rite, CT 508, 57 j.). In this text Yellow Register is synonymous with rites done on behalf of the dead. The text has a biography of the compiler by two of his sons, Jiang Xi 蒋世 and Jiang Yan 蒋炎 (fl. 1223), and another written by Gao Wenhu 高文虎 (fl. 1160) at the famous Lushan abbey Taiping xingguo gong 太平兴国宫 (Boltz 1987, 41-43). Several sections are attributed to other sources: j. 16 on the Nocturnal Prayer to Lu Xiujing, Zhang Wanfu and Jiang Shuyu; j. 19-20 to Du Guangting; j. 25-31 on the Comprehensive Rites, and 41-43 with talismans to Jiang alone. All except j. 51-56, which are unsigned, are all said to have been transmitted by Liu and written by Jiang Shuyu.

Liu studied Zhengyi ritual and the Rites of the [Tongchu] Jade Bureau tradition, and the Five Thunder tradition (Yu fu wulei fa 玉府五雷法) with a teacher named Cai Yuanju 蔡元久 on Longhu shan. He became the head Daoist in the capital in 1203. Jiang began work on comparative ritual about this time and compiled a series of works on Lingbao ritual before he died. The resulting edition by his two pious sons is a remarkably well-organized survey of the three-day Yellow Register Rite, complete with explanatory texts and diagrams. Like many, Jiang is interested in maintaining the authentic rites of Lingbao programs, especially as presented by Lu Xiujing, and secondarily of Zhang Wanfu and Du Guangting. Yet he relies on the Zhengyi tradition of submitting petitions to heaven as the foundation for the genuine Lingbao practice he hopes to establish. Throughout the text Jiang criticizes those who have abandoned the Old Rites (gufa 古法) in favor of new talismans, contracts, mudras and rituals that have appeared since the revelation of the Comprehensive Rites of Lingbao. He gives wide latitude to those he admires, including the Tianxin, Shenxiao and Zhongxiao traditions, whose celestial realms he condones, as well as the Tongchu, and Lingbao dafa traditions. He refers to the Yutang system of Lu Shizhong without criticism.

Also derived from Ning's teachings, most likely a version of the above text, is a later (post 1250) compilation, the Shangqing lingbao dafa 上清靈寶大法 (Aggrandizing Rites of the Shangqing Numinous Treasure Tradition, CT 1221, 66 j.) edited by Wang Qizhen, but amplified in the early Ming (Boltz 1994, 27). Many abbreviated passages, criticized in an identically-titled work by Jin Yunzhong (CT 1222-1223), suggest the author was intimately familiar with Ning's teachings, most likely through the above or a related text. Wang's text, by contrast, in omitting precise geographical and human sources for his teachings, and its several citations of Jin without attribution, seems to be a response to Jin's highbrowed criticisms of the local Tiantai tradition. The text contains many parallels with Liu Yun-guang's blend of Zhengyi, Five Thunder and Lingbao ritual.
Another text in this tradition, of uncertain provenance but likely compiled around the mid-thirteenth century, was the *Lingbao yujian* 章寶玉鏡 (Jade Mirror of Numinous Jewel Tradition, CT 546-547, 1 + 43 j.). Among its unique features is its designation of Tian Ziji as the Ancestral Master, with no mention of Ning Benli, and its use of a register of transcendence from the Golden Register rather than the Yellow Register Rites, a feature Jiang Shuyu relates to its Yutang origins (CT 508 41.16a). It contains many parallel passages to other texts in this tradition, some of which seem to be older, but it clearly relies on the Tianxin and Yutang traditions.

The massive *Lingbao lingjiao jidu jishu* 章寶領教濟度金書 (Golden Writings for Universal Salvation by the Sect Leader of the Numinous Treasure Tradition, CT 465-466, 1 + 1 + 320 j.) shows that Ning's Lingbao dafa tradition underwent a revival in the early fourteenth century and was re-edited in the early Ming (Boltz 1994, 17). It likely originally included the *Taishang jidu zhengshe* 太上濟度正赦 (Most High's Memorial Pardon for Universal Salvation, CT 316, 3 j.). In claiming that Ning Benli was the transmitter of this compilation, its chief editor, the Wenzhou priest Lin Weifu 林偉夫 (1239-1303), and his disciple Lin Tianren 林天任 (fl. 1303), who did the final editing, hoped to reassert their authority over Ning's legacy. After the Song, Lin abandoned hopes for government service and studied with several Wenzhou masters, becoming an heir to the teachings of Donghua (i.e. Shenxiao rituals). He devoted his remaining years to editing rituals he had found and coordinating them with the Zhengyi system (CT 466, Record 8b), and presented his Writings on Universal Salvation to the reigning Celestial Master. The Record of Lin Weifu's life ends with a detailed table of contents for dozens of ritual programs. They are classed under nineteen rubrics divided between those for Universal Salvation (j. 42-135) and those for Prayer and Exorcism (j. 136-259). An earlier section (j. 12-41) contains ritual texts usable for both types of ritual program.

Finally, two late chapters in the *Daofa huyuan* (CT 1220, j. 244-245) called the *Yuqing lingbao wuliang duren shangdao* 玉清靈寶無量度人上道 (Supreme Way of the Immeasureable Salvation, of the Supreme Purity Numinous Treasure Tradition) list as their recipients not only Ning Benli and Lin Weifu, but also Zhang Sicheng 張嗣成 (d. 1343), the 39th Celestial Master. This suggests the great popularity of these rites into Ming times.

The *YUTANG DAFA* 玉堂大法 (Aggrandizing Rites of the Jade Hall) represents a synthesis of the Tianxin tradition's exorcistic rites and initiatory structures and the Lingbao dafa and Shenxiao legacies of funerary ritual. According to their chief codifier, the Chenzhou native Lu Shizhong 路時中 (fl. 1100-1158), they took shape between 1107 and 1119, when Lu and his disciple, the noted painter and calligrapher Zhai Ruwen 翟汝文 (1076-1141), received a series of planchette revelations from a Celestial Lord. In
1120, Zhao Sheng, a disciple of Zhang Daoling, told Lu to look for some secret writings on Maoshan. Lu discovered these while serving in nearby Jinling (Nanjing), arranged them into twenty-four parts, and presented them in 1126 while he served in Piling (Jiangsu).

In 1158 Lu recopied the entire ritual corpus. Based on the teachings of the Nine Elders residing in the Jade Hall on the primordial Jade Capital Mountain (1.2b), the Wu shang xuan yuan san tian yutang dafa (无上玄元三天玉堂大法, Aggrandizing Rites of the Jade Hall of the Three Heavens, of the Unsurpassed Mysterious Primordial, CT 220, 30 j.) are the fullest expression of Lu’s teachings (Boltz 1994, 10-11). Lu claims the Yutang dafa are a fundamental oath between Mysterious Primordial [Most High Lord Lao] and the Sagely Master (1.7b), and therefore are the essential rites of Zhang Daoling. Because they are also the inner secrets of the Tianxin zhengfa (26.1a), which are their ancestral teaching (2.6a) they are more fundamental.

The secrets that distinguish the Yutang dafa derived from the Celestial Lord's oral instructions, and aim to clarify the Tianxin zhengfa by grounding it more deeply in meditation (1.6a). In presenting the inner and meditative aspects of the more outwardly-oriented exorcistic Tianxin zhengfa teachings, the Jade Hall system adopts the Heart of Heaven's initiation ranks (2.6a, 26.1b-2a), which serve as the foundation for all practitioners in both the Yutang and Tianxin systems. It concentrates on the three fundamental talismans of the Tianxin tradition, and many of its exorcistic rites resemble Tianxin rites. Its most noteworthy differences are that large sections in Lu’s writings that deal with funeral liturgies (j. 14-18, largely deriving from the Lingbao dafa tradition, with additions) and that it emphasizes on individual meditational practice. The central practice here is the Way of Soaring on High (gaoben zhi dao 象弈之道) based on rising aloft and absorbing the energies of the sun and moon (and sometimes the Big Dipper; 4-5, 27.1a-3a, and CT 221), and linked to stanza 26 of the Huangting neijing jing 黃庭內景經 (cited at 4.1b). Liangqiuzi 梁邱子 (fl. 722) describes the method of the Huangting jing as found in CT 639 (see CT 263, 57.1a-1b), similar to the Yutang methods described here and not part of the early Shangqing material. It appears to be a unique addition of the Yutang dafa movement (cf. CT 435). Lu’s book claims that meditation methods in the Yutang dafa tradition, based on collecting fire from the sun and water from the moon, are superior to the liandu rites of Lingbao.

The Wu shang san tian yutang zhengzong gaoben neijing yushu 無上三天玉堂正宗象弈內景玉書 (Text for Soaring on High through the Inner Phosphors, of the Jade Hall Orthodox Tradition of the Unsurpassed Three Heavens, CT 221, 2 j.) is a late amplification of Lu Shizhong’s legacy. Its main texts were revealed in the 1120s (Boltz 1994, 11). The emphasis on soaring on high is described in two places in the cognate ritual treatise
(CT 220 4-5 and 27.1a-3a), and there is a reference to a more complete Gaoben yujing 高襓玉經 (Jade Scripture of Soaring on High; 26.1b). This work includes the contemplative practices for the Way of Soaring on High in the Yutang tradition, centered on the meditational ascent to and internalization of the energies of the sun, moon and Big Dipper. It provides the transcendence needed to perform public rituals in the Yutang tradition.

The first chapter deals with the Way of Soaring on High to the Sun and Moon and is related to the transients of the sun and moon, Yuyi and Jielin, as well as the 26th stanza of the Huangqing neiijing 皇帝内經. These are reworkings of flying traditions from the Shangqing tradition (cf. CT 639; CT 1376, 2.1a-8b). Chapter two deals with the Big Dipper by giving a pastiche of quotations from Shangqing texts (esp. CT 1351, 4b-8b; CT 879, 5a-7a; CT 1377, 4b-11a) and suggesting access to the Yunji qujian. Another text in Lu's tradition, the Taishang yuchen yuyi jielin ben riye tu 玉帝中真 (Diagram of Soaring to the Sun and Moon of Yuyi and Jielin, of the Most High's Jade Aurora, CT 435, 1 j.), describes the method of flying to the sun and moon that Shangqing texts ascribed to Perfected Taishang 太上老君, the transcendent Pei Xuanren 貝玄仁 (see CT 1032, j. 105; CT 639; CT 1376, j. 2). After giving deference to the Shangqing patriarchs and sources, this work quotes from the Yutang zongzi 宇堂中旨 (Ancestral Purport of the Jade Hall), none other than CT 221 and CT 639. This suggests a Southern Song date for the work.

Also from the late Northern Song is the TONGCHU DAFA 童初大法 (Aggrandizing Rites of Youthful Incipience) tradition that extended throughout Southern Song times and was heavily influenced by the Tianxin zhengfa legacy. What little survives of this tradition fills a large section of the Daofa huiyuan (CT 1220, 156-68, 169-70, 171-78, 179-87). The first collection (j. 156-68), called the Shangqing tianpeng fumo dafa 上清天蓬伏魔大法 (Great Rites for Quelling Demons by Tianpeng Spirit, according to the Shangqing Tradition) deals with rites of the Tianpeng spirit compiled by Tongchu founder Yang Xizhen (1101-1124). A related collection, the Shangqing Sisheng fumo dafa (Great Rites for Quelling Demons by the Four Saints; j.169-70) concerns a larger ensemble of demonifuges formulated in Northern Song times. The core of the revealed tradition, however, is the third collection (j.171-78), entitled Shangqing tongchu wenyun sufu yuce 上清童初五元素府玉冊 (Jade Fascicles from the Five Primordials' Immaculate Bureaux, in the Shangqing Youthful Incipience Tradition). It comes with a postface dated 1225 by a ritual purist of the Southern Song named Jin Yunzhong (fl. 1223-1225). A final collection (j. 179-87) is called Shangqing wenyun jiujing feibu xiangou mifa 上清五元九騶步章奏秘法 (Secret Rites for Submitting Petitions through the Soaring Pace to the Five Primordials' Nine Numina, in the Supreme Purity Tradition). It continues the Five Primordials Shangqing tradition but
centers on their method of presenting petitions, borrowed from the Zhengyi tradition. While placing greatest emphasis on the Zhengyi legacy of the Celestial Masters, the codes themselves are said to come from the Shenxiao master Wang Wenqing (1093-1153; see Boltz 1987, 30-33).

Although not strictly part of the Tongchu movement, the traditions represented in the *Shangqing lingbao dafa* 上清靈寶大法 (Aggrandizing Rites of the Numinous Treasure Tradition from the Supreme Purity Heaven, CT 1222-1223, 1 + 44 j.), were compiled by its major Southern Song codifier, Jin Yunzhong 金允中 (fl. 1223-1225). This work grew out of twenty years of practice but may have been edited by a disciple around the mid-thirteenth century. It displays detailed knowledge of many major traditions of the time, and excoriates them by name. Jin based this text on the unbroken transmission of written teachings given to him by Gao Jingxiu 高景修 (fl. 1120-1131). The latter moved from Bianliang to Anhui, claiming to perpetuate a version of the Lingbao dafa grounded in the *Duraijing* and the *zhou* rites of Du Guangting (17.22b-23a). He also became familiar with the Tongchu legacy through a teacher from Chuzhou 車州 (Zhejiang) named Tang Keshou 唐克壽, a master of the Rites of the Jade Bureau (*yufu zhi fa* 玉府之法).

Throughout this work, apparently based on a close version of the anonymous Lingbao dafa compendium of the early thirteenth-century (CT 219), Jin criticizes it as an inferior alternative to the ritual legacy that he promoted. It is also based on the *Lingbao jing* from the Shangqing Heaven, but Jin criticizes the vulgar origins of its rites and its ties to the popular Shenxiao tradition that many practitioners of the Tiantai Lingbao dafa rites followed. Soon after Jin completed his work, promoters of that tradition wrote another with the same title to promote their teachings, frequently borrowing from Jin (see CT 1221). Jin wanted to make sure that the genuine tradition of his teacher, based on the old books of the Central Plain, survived (12.5b). He added new material based on its fit with old rituals rather than through celestial revelation (pref. 9a). To this he contrasted the techniques for the last days (4.4b), and fabricators who stole fame (21.16a) by cutting away and altering old books and suppressing traditional methods, claiming they are incomplete... some even sold their secrets for money to their disciples (pref. 10a). He was referring especially to the Tiantai revelations (pref. 3a-b, 8b; 14.12a; 43.18a) but also the customs of Zhe (Zhexi: 10.17a, 37.47b; Zhedong: 13.24a, 20.8a, 21.9b, 22.7b). They were a danger both to the outward form and inward spirit of classical Daoist traditions. Besides adding new seals, grades and rites (preface, 4b-5b, 6b-7a; 10.6a), and using techniques of popular exorcists or mediums with the authority of the *Duraijing* (6.13a-14b, 11.14a), their obscure explanations of Daoist rites and rites for petitioning to heaven rely too much on an inner, subjective form of practice (pref. 4a, 4.4b, 11a; 7.8a, 11a, 8.3a). He mentions
individuals who have so erred: Lin Lingsu, Wang Sheng = [Wen]qing, Lu Shizhong and Jiang Shuyu, all main codifiers of his three main rivals, Shenxiao, Yutang dafa and Tiantai Lingbao dafa.

To present the correct way he admires traditions that reflect the Three Caverns of antiquity (Zhengyi, Lingbao and Shangqing), claiming that only priests with Zhengyi and Lingbao registers have the right to submit petitions to heaven. His view of the Lingbao dafa extended back unbroken to the revelations to Ge Xuan and Xu Xun (43.18a). While the Way of Lingbao is a part of the Dongxuan canon, it is also a synthesis of all that is essential in the Three Canons, and includes the mysteries of all sacred writings (42.1a). This wonderful synthesis was codified by Lu Xiujing, Zhang Wanfu and Du Guangting (19.3a), but only Du holds ultimate authority since he used two Daoist canons when compiling his Huanglu zhai (40.25a-26a; see 39.1a-2b & CT 507). Later canons, whether kept at Tongbo guan on Mount Tiantai (24.1 la), compiled by Wang Qinruo (40.25a), or in Huizong’s reign (40.26a) are incomplete and filled with extra-canonical works.

Decades before Jin Yunzhong began criticizing ritual excesses of his day in promoting his vision of ritual order, similar efforts took place in western Sichuan. Such normative impulses, and claims to present the orthodox rites for the Sichuanese Daoist community, continued through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A first compilation in 1188 by the Chongqing master Li Yuan Su (fl. 1188-1207), later collated by Hu Xianglong, was the Daomen dingzhi (Prescribed [Ritual] Paradigms for the Daoist Community, CT 1224, 1 pp. + 10 j.). The original five-juan text offered simpler and more fundamental ritual guidelines, especially the Yellow Register rites advocated by the great Sichuan liturgist Du Guangting. The first five chapters deal with the writing of petitions, close to the tradition discussed by Jiang Shuyu; announcements (suqi) and invitations for canonical deities to the Offering ceremony; a few legitimate talismans; and memorials (shu). In 1201 Liu Taihuan added more material, and other internal evidence suggests it was further augmented in Yuan times (Siku quanshu zongmu biyao 3: 3075). The latter collection filled gaps by adding to the types of zhai rites and prayers, ritual petitions, talismans and incantations and invitation documents. It ends with initiation rituals.

The work aimed to make available printed versions of standardized Daoist rituals that would be simpler than those of recent generations, and to eliminate the errors typical of privately transmitted liturgical manuscripts. Despite its concern for ritual purity, among its invited pantheon are local gods and those of the Shangqing and Tianxin legacies, and documents designed for use in the Ming dynasty (Boltz 1994, 27). A second work in this legacy is the Daomen tongjiao biyong ji (Collection of
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the Essentials on the Comprehensive Teachings for the Daoist Community, CT 1226, 3 pp. + 5 pp + 9 j.). An opening preface by Lü Yuansu, dated 1201, emphasizes the lack of appropriate ritual guidelines for contemporary priests, even though Sichuan had been home to the first Daoist communities and residence of Du Guangting. After Lü had assembled over a hundred juan of texts on the Yellow Register Rite, he had his disciple Lü Taigu edit them into a coherent, complete text so as to continue the tradition of Du’s Yellow Register Rite. He apparently completed this in 1209 and saw to its printing as a standard for Daoist ritual.

A second preface by Han Huncheng 韩混成, dated 1295, reveals that the work is a synthesis, by Chengdu Daoist master Ma Daoyi 马道遗, of the essentials of Lü’s compilation called the Tongjiao ji, and some material added from the Lianjiao ji 煉教集 (Anthology on Transmutative Instruction) by Mr. He 何氏 of Mount Yuntai 雲臺山 (Sichuan). The text follows the hierarchical order of initiation ranks and responsibilities for Daoist priests. It is mainly ritual materials from various sources, but also includes hagiographical and other material whose aim is to demonstrate that Sichuan still possesses the genuine approach to the Way, even while acknowledging the Tianxin zhengfa legacy (Boltz 1987, 49-50). A final work in this tradition is the large mid-fifteenth century ritual compendium called Daomen kefan daquan ji 道門科範大全集 (Comprehensive Collection of Ritual Standards for the Daoist Community, CT 1225, 87 j.). Possibly edited by a Zhong Lixiu 仲勳修, this work aims to establish standard ritual programs for the Ming dynasty based on Du Guangting’s precedents.

One class of exorcistic practice based on absorbing the powers of thunder is called the THUNDER RITES. Most textual material on these in the Daoist canon dates from Southern Song and Yuan times. Circulating mainly in southeast China, one of the earliest and most enduring varieties dealt with the Five Thunder (gods) and was linked to the Jiangxi Celestial Masters (see CT 1220, 56-64; 101-3; 188-97). Liu Yongguang (1134-1206) also made it part of his legacy.

A later variety was known as the Thunderclap legacy. It was first linked with popular Shenxiao traditions in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang and Jiangxi from the late Southern Song. But it also became embedded in the more exalted Qingwei legacy that was centered in Fujian and moved to Jiangxi and Hubei. It is mostly about forms of exorcistic ritual practice, but there are a few notable scriptures as well. The scriptural legacy of the Thunder Rites seems derived from the Dongyuan shenzhou jing 洞雲神咒經 (Divine Incantation Scripture of the Cavernous Abyss, CT 335, 20 j.), but reworked by heavy Tantric overlays, with a more comprehensive religious vision. This is seen in the early Sanskritized version of the incantatory Tiantong jing (CT 633) discussed above, a work later called the “Thunder Scripture.” More properly regarded as part of the
Thunder Ritual scriptural tradition is the *Leiting yujing* (Jade Scripture of the Thunderclap, CT 15), which may have existed in the twelfth century but definitely circulated in printed forms from the early 1200s.

More important is the later and more refined *Yushu jing* (Jade Pivot Scripture, CT 16, CT 99, 2 j.), with annotations ascribed to Zhang Daoing and Bai Yuchan and a preface by Zhang Sicheng [d. 1343], dated 1333 (cf. CT 195, 196). This scripture and its chief deity, the Heavenly Honored One of Universal Transformation (Puhua tianzun 超度天尊) not only became an integral part of Daoist ritual ceremonies, but were at the center of reading and meditation sects in Ming times.

A cognate text was the *Chaotian xielei zhenjing* (Authentic Scripture for Approaching Heaven and Thanking Thunder, CT 17), with a planchette writing from Xin Zhongyi 辛忠義 (Boltz 1994, 7). One group that linked all of these Thunder Books was formed around Chen Nan, Bai Yuchan and their disciples. This tradition influenced the formation of the Qingwei legacy and its variety of thunder rituals. A late compendium of some 780 Thunder Ritual spells, mainly of the Thunderclap variety, but dealing also with exorcism and the salvation of ancestors, is the *Taishang san dong zhoujing* (Incantational Scriptures in the Most High [Lord Lao's] Three Caverns' Tradition, CT 78, 12 j.; see Ren and Zhong 1991, 59). Just as the Thunder Rites seem to continue the Shenzhou jing scriptural tradition, so do they carry on that tradition's therapeutic priorities, catering especially to the problems faced by rural communities.

As discussed above, the first two-fifths of the *Daofa kuiyum* (CT 1220 j. 1-101) deal most completely with the Qingwei (j. 1-55) and Shexiao (j. 56-101) Thunder Ritual practices. Many of those in the Shexiao legacy of Thunder Rituals here revere the Fire Master (Huoshi 火士) Wang Zihua 火子華, and call upon the powers of the Celestial Lords Deng, Xin and Zhang. Among their recipients were such figures as Wang Wenqing (1093-1153), Sa Shoujian 蕭守堅 (fl. 1141-1178?) and Mo Qiyuan (1226-1294). Other prominent varieties were divulged to Hubei master Lei Shizhong 雷時中 (1221-1295) as the Chaotic Primodality (*huanyuan* 混元) Thunder Rites (CT 1220, j. 154-155). The *Fahai zhuyi* (CT 1162) also contains Thunder Ritual traditions, including the Yuan Jiangxi variety known as the Purple Throne (*chizhen* 紫宸; see *Fahai yizhu* 45-46). A student of Mo Qiyuan named Wang Weiyi (fl. 1264-1304) wrote highly theoretical treatises on both the rites of the Thunderclap (*Daofa xinzhuang* 道法心傳, CT 1253, 1 j.) and their identity with the Golden Elixir tradition of corporeal contemplation (*Mingdao pian* 明道篇, CT 273, 1 j.).

Paired around Wang's ritual text are two other compilations of Thunder Ritual texts, one compiled by Bai Yuchan's disciples (*Jingyu xuanwen* 聖語玄文...
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and four theoretical essays on the Thunder Rites assembled in 1248 as Leifa yixuan pian (CT 1254, 1 j.) by Wan Zongshi. Including also a meteorological treatise on the Thunder rites (Tiuyang qihou qinji 雨陽氣候親機, CT 1275, 1 j.), there are heavily illustrated Yuan dynasty texts in the Thunderclap tradition by Deng Nan 鄧楠 and Zhang Xixian 張希先 (Daofa zongshi yanji 道法宗旨衍義 CT 1277, 2 j.). Then again, the Xu Xun cult in northern Jiangxi developed its own form of Thunder Rites centered on the Celestial Pivot in the southern sky. Finally, the Thunderclap rites were systematically embedded into the liturgical structures in Lin Weifu's massive Lingbao dafa compendium (CT 466).

Another major synthetic textual tradition grounded in the Thunder Rites was that of the PURE TENUITY (Qingwei). It claimed to originate in Guangxi during Tang times, but its first codifications came from Fujian in the mid-thirteenth century. By century’s end its teachings had spread to many areas in south China, with major centers on Wudang shan and Jiangxi. Claiming to be the synthesis of all schools, including the Shangqing, Lingbao, Daode (i.e., Laozi) and Zhengyi traditions of Daoism, its rituals actually blend the Thunderclap rites used by the Shenxiao and Lingbao dafa legacies and the mandala heritage of Tantric Buddhism (Schipper 1987, 11-12; Boltz 1987, 38-41). Pure Tenuity wholly absorbed the Shenxiao pantheon and was quickly promoted by the Celestial Masters. Besides considering itself the summa of all traditions, it regarded the ongoing transformations of the cosmos as identical with those in our bodies (Daofa huimin, 1.8a-9a) and began with a new revelation of distinctively drawn texts used as talismans (see CT 223).

In addition to the first fifty-five chapters of the Daofa huimin already discussed, six other texts belong to this legacy. The most comprehensive treatment of the Qingwei ritual system, focusing on rites for saving dead ancestors, is the anonymous Qingwei yuanjiang dafa (Great Rites Based on the Primordial Revelations of Pure Tenuity, CT 223, 25 j.), most likely compiled in the fourteenth century. At its foundation are a new set of revelations used as talismans for their practitioners. Next, the anonymous fourteenth-century Qingwei zhasa (Rituals for the Pure Tenuity Rite, CT 224, 2 j.) shows how the Qingwei sect adapted the Lingbao rite into their ritual system. Finally, the fourteenth-century Qingwei danjue (Elixir Instructions for the Pure Tenuity Tradition CT 278, 1 j.) contains four petitions and four guidelines on the contemplative traditions for the Qingwei tradition, plus two diagrams and seven talismans. It emphasizes the complementary work done by the Golden Elixir contemplative tradition and the Qingwei ritual tradition. Both are closely related to the traditions of Bai Yuchan and his disciples. Chen Cai’s Qingwei xianpu 清微仙譜 (Roster of Transcendents in the Pure Tenuity Tradition,
A group of Qingwei texts in the Daoist canon include a manual on submitting petitions, the *Qingwei xuanshu zougao yi* (Protocols for Submitting and Declaring to the Mysterious Pivot, in the Pure Tenuity Tradition, CT 218). It is by Yang Xizhen (1251-1285), a disciple of Huang Shunshen from Wudang shan. A late Yuan anonymous work, called *Qingwei shenlie mifa* (Secret Rites of the Divine Candescence of the Pure Tenuity Tradition, CT 222, 2 j.), contains mandala-like diagrams that can conquer demons and are part of the distinctive Qingwei Thunder Rites (elaborated in the text). We also learn that the Pure Tenuity tradition is the ancestor of the myriad ritual systems, with reference to its illustrious predecessors such as Zhang Daoling and Wei Huacun (251-334). It is also claimed that the tradition from which it borrowed much of its thunder ritual, scriptural and pantheon, the Shenxiao tradition, is synonymous with it, even though it used Qingwei to name the highest central celestial realm. Just as the primordial qi condensed to form both the Shenxiao and Lingbao scriptures, so too did it become the scriptures and thunder talismans of Qingwei.

**TEXTS OF SPECIFIC CULTS.** In addition to texts deriving from revelatory and ritual movements, much new material centered around specific deity cults. Among them, one of the most substantial bodies of material in the Daoist canon cult deals with traditions related to Xu Xun (239-374?) at Xishan (Jiangxi). He was known initially as a dragon-slayer and demon-killer, and his cult had disciples from varied backgrounds. By Tang times this image began to change, when Hu Huichao (d. 703) revived the cult and called it the Filial Way (Xiaodao). By late Tang times it saw itself as part of the Lingbao legacy (Schipper 1985, 826-828). While another major revelation between 1129 and 1131 revived the cult again, most of the extant material derives from the revival orchestrated by Liu Yu. Between 1282 and 1287, after mourning the deaths of his parents (and, most assuredly, the foreign conquest of China), Liu received visions of earlier cult figures, permitting him to found a syncretic tradition known as the Way of Pure Brightness. There are over two dozen texts related to this tradition, from the seventh to the fifteenth centuries. Two versions of a late Tang scripture link it to Lingbao liturgies: the *Yuanshi dongxian cishan dao' en chengdao jing* (CT 66) and the *Taishang dongxian lingbao Baxian wanjia jiejing* (CT 1112; see Schipper 1985, 826).

In early Southern Song times more revelations made the Department of the **Celestial Pivot** the southern celestial headquarters of this cult's ritual
practice. They also may have had a hand in spreading the rites of Salvation through Refinement. There are seventeen consecutive titles, totaling twenty-six juan, in the ritual section of the Daoist canon (CT 549-65), and eight titles of anthologies in nine juan (CT 1103-10). In addition to four accounts of cult figures found in the hagiography section (CT 440, 447-49), there is a large compilation of cult material in the *Yulong ji 玉隆集 (Anthology of Jade Beneficence [Abbey], ed. *Xu Zhen shi shu 修真十書 [CT 263] j. 31-36), fashioned by Bai Yuchan around 1218. Several texts from this corpus are considered here.

First, the *Shangqing tianshu yuan huiche bidao zhengfa 上清天枢院回車畢道正法 (Rectifying Rites for Completing the Way of Transcendence] by Returning the Chariot to the Mountains], in the Shangqing Department of the Celestial Pivot Tradition, CT 549, 3 juan.) Although its title suggests a collection of Shangqing methods of immortality for aging priests, it is a collection of exorcistic methods from the late thirteenth century that can be described as a simplified version of Tianxin zhengfa rites that seem to go back to the Xu Xun cult. The Department of the Celestial Pivot here is related to the celestial South Pole and Southern Dipper, and is a counterpart to the Department of Exorcism at the North Pole, central to Tianxin zhengfa.

Next, the *Guandou zhongxiaowu wutou mifa 关斗忠孝五雷武侯秘法 (The Martial Prince [Zhuge Liang's] Secret Rites of the Loyal and Filial Five Thunders that Thread through the Dipper, CT 585, 2 pp. + 13 pp.) was compiled by the northern Jiangxi native Wu Sheng 吳昇 (fl. 1360-1369). He claims the book derives from Zhuge Liang’s interpretations of strange inscriptions found in the late thirteenth century by Zhang Huizhai 張輝齋 of Hubei as sacred seals for Loyal and Filial Thunder-Soldiers. After studying, the Tianxin zhengfa on Wudang shan, Zhang became well known, but two years after his death the inscriptions were destroyed. The hagiographer Zhao Daoyi 趙道一 recreated them on wooden slabs and transmitted them to Huang Guyang 黃谷陽 (d. 1369) who, in 1351, retired to Xishan and taught Wu Sheng. The book describes a variety of the Five Thunder Rites which seek to treat illness, expel perversity, preserve individuals and bring peace to one’s house (12b). This focuses on the symbolic associations of the west (most likely deriving from West Mountain), and discusses how a thunder seal can summon Zhuge Liang and his white-robed spiritual soldiers to come to the altar from the west. It reflects the cult for Xu Xun and its Yuan and Ming expansions.

The largest collection of Pure Brightness, based at the Yulong Abbey honoring Xu Xun, is the *Jingming zhongxiao quanshu 洗明忠孝全書 (Complete Writings of the Pure and Bright [Way] of Loyalty and Filiality, CT 1110, 6 juan.) It contains hagiographies and transcriptions of the revealed and oral teachings linked to the group, compiled by Huang Yuanji (1271-
1326), who succeeded the tradition’s founder, Liu Yu (1257-1308). While Liu is credited with the first five *juan*, the final one is ascribed to a disciple named Chen Tianhe. Huang’s preeminent disciple Xu Hui or Xu Yi (1291-1350) of Luling (Jiangxi) collated all six chapters, but since his biography is at the end of chapter one, someone else had a hand in the compilation. Seven prefaces by various well-known literati, dating from 1324 to 1327, open the text. This shows that Yuan and Ming gentlemen regarded the Jingming tradition as endorsing the moral codes identified with Confucius and his readers.

By publishing the anthology, the author intended to provide scholars of like mind with guidance on cultivating loyalty and filiality in both public and private affairs so that all might live in harmony and peace. The work proper begins with accounts of seven figures central to the Jingming formulation: (1) Xu Xun, (2) Zhang Yun (653-745), (3) Hu Huichao (?-703), (4) Guo Pu (276-324), (5) Liu Yu, (6) Huang Yuanji and (7) Xu Hui. Chapter two contains five recorded revelations to Liu Yu by Xu Xun, Hu Huichao, and Guo Pu. The next three chapters contain transcriptions of Liu Yu’s teachings, largely in response to anonymously posed questions. The heading *Yuzhen xiansheng yu* 玉真先生語錄 (Recorded Sayings of the Master of Jade Perfection) is amplified by the designations “Internal Anthology,” “External Anthology” and “Separate Anthology” for chapters three, four and five. The last chapter, including Huang Yuanji’s sayings, is entitled *Zhonghuang xiansheng wenda* 中黃先生問答 (Responses to Inquiries of the Master of Centered Yellow). The biographies document the diverse ritual practices of the Jingming patriarchs in their roles as rainmakers and exorcists on call, but the essential lesson that both Liu and Huang give their following is to forsake solitary contemplative pursuits in favor of devoted attention to the welfare of family and state.

Equally important was the ancient god of the northern celestial quadrant known for his importance to national security during the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties. The Dark or Perfect Warrior had his cult center on Wudang shan. He revealed a long scriptural spell to Zhang Mingdao 張明道 by spirit-writing, which Dong Suhuang 董素皇 recorded and prefaced in 1184 (Boltz 1987, 87-88). Within two decades Chen Zhong 陳宗 annotated and edited the work as the *Taishang shuo xuantian dasheng shenwu benzhuan shenzhou miaojing* 太上說玄天大聖真武本傳神咒妙經 (Marvelously Divine Incantatory Scripture, Spoken by the Most High on the Fundamental Account of the Perfected Warrior, Great Saint of the Mysterious Celestial Realm, CT 754, 6 j.). Six titles in the topography section of the Daoist canon (CT 958-63), contain much about his exploits, both at his cult center and in his role as national protector deity. These roles are most fully accounted for in the *Xuantian shangdi qisheng lu* 玄天上帝啟聖
Records of Revelations Conveyed to the Sage by the Supreme Sovereign of the Mysterious Celestial Realm, CT 958, 9 j.). It was compiled in the fourteenth century but largely based on Song material. Witnessing the value of the god to the Mongol regime is the Xuantian shangdi qisheng lingyi hu 玄天上帝啓聖靈異録 (Records of the Miracles Revealed to the Sage by the Supreme Sovereign of the Mysterious Celestial Realm, CT 961, 1 j.), with material by famous Yuan literati dated between 1270 and 1325. The Darning xuantian shangdi ruiying tuhu 大明玄天上帝瑞應圖録 (Illustrated Record of the Supreme Sovereign of the Mysterious Celestial Realm's Auspicious Responses, CT 959, 1 j.) reflects both the cult's importance to early Ming emperors and the role of the Celestial Masters in promoting it.

Also reflecting local and national priorities is the rich corpus of material related to the two Xu brothers: Xu Zhicheng 徐知誠 (fl. 937-946) and Xu Zhie'e 徐知誇 (fl. 937-946). This material shows how they became elevated from their original role as Putian (Fujian) protector and fertility gods in Song times to guardians of the reunified Ming state. Thus they were honored as the Perfected Lords of Vast Mercy (Hong'en zhenjun 洪恩真君). Part of their legacy is the Lingbao tianzun shuo hong'en lingji zhenjun miaojing 灑寶天尊說洪恩靈真君妙經 (Marvelous Scripture of the Lingbao Heavenly Honored One Speaking on the Perfected Lords of Vast Mercy and Numinous Relief, CT 317, 1 j.). Following a 1420 preface, the scripture relates the celestial command given the Xus to enter the world to relieve it from turmoil. There are also three later compilations: the Xuxian hanzao 徐仙翰藻 (Literary Masterworks of the Xu Transcendents, CT 1468, 14 j.), compiled in 1305 by Chen Menggen 陳夢根; the fifteenth-century Zanling ji 贊靈集 (Anthology of Promoting Numina, CT 1469, 4 j.) and the Xuxian zhencu 徐仙真錄 (Genuine Record of the Xu Transcendents, CT 1470, 5 j.). They attest to the growth of this cult in later times (Davis 1985; Boltz 1987, 53, 91-93, 195-97).

Another cult that became central to national integration along cultural rather than military grounds was that for the God of Literature, Wenchang 文昌. During the twelfth century this ancient star-spirit became the new spiritualized identity of an earlier viper cult figure known as the god of Zitong (Sichuan). A work dealing with his gradual deification is the Zitong dijun huashu 柴潼帝君化書 (Writings on the Lord of Zitong's Transformations, CT 170, 4 j.), dates from 1316. It is a revision to the culminating work of an earlier revelatory burst between 1168 and 1181 to Chengdu literati through spirit-writing sessions (Kleeman 1994, 75-76). The most extensive revelations appeared to Liu Ansheng 劉安勝 (fl. 1168-1181; see Kleeman 1994, 18-19). In 1168 the god put forth a new recension of the Dadongjing, the main Shangqing text which stressed group recitation. It was followed in 1174 by his Qinghe neizhuan 清河內傳 (Esoteric Biography of Qinghe, CT
The most remarkable revelations came in 1181. One text, known as the *Gaoshang dadong wenchang silu ziyang baolu* (Precious Register of Wenchang's Purple Radiance, the Director of Emoluments of the Most Exalted Great Grotto, CT 1214, 3 j.), lists the names and forms of gods related to the god of Zitong, often relating them to office-holding. The other revelation dealt with the god of Zitong's self-transformation into a god of the scholar-official elite (Kleeman 1995, 23), a feature that was first significant in the Yuan, but became prominent only in Ming times.

**Worldview**

NEW ORDER. The diverse post-Tang ritual movements and deity cults found in the texts of the Daoist canon present readers with a multiplicity of worldviews and various attempts to enhance, unify or coordinate them. Overall, these multiple worldviews reflect the gradual and uneven formation, in Song and Yuan times, of a more diffuse place for Daoism in gentry society, encompassed in a more diverse, flexible and overarching vision of a sacred order. This emerging order reflected the contingent place of the various Daoist traditions in south China's gentry communities and noncorporate groups. Secretly circulating manuals, such as the ritual codes of the Heart of Heaven tradition, reveal the punishments in store for a whole sub-bureaucratic spiritual order—including demons, spirit-troops and Ritual Masters—who improperly interact with nature and tutelary spirits or misuse this ritual system. Various secret Thunder Ritual texts likewise present a comprehensive vision of justice based on keeping various unruly ranks of spirits in line (Matsumoto 1981; Skar 1995). The broader cosmic and moral dimensions of the more general worldview assumed by the Daoist manuals is exemplified by the openly circulating Northern Song *Ganying pian* (Booklet on Retribution, CT 1167). This work treats the cosmic ebb and flow of good and evil across lifetimes, and blends classical moral ideas on right and wrong into the mix of Daoist and Buddhist ethics. While Daoist traditions played key roles in codifying and transmitting this work, they did not control its vision of a moral cosmos.

The aim of all social embodiments of the Way is to return the wayward parts of the world to the sacred order of the Way by establishing a cosmic model of its order in the world. The different movements and cults grew from and addressed themselves to a new social and spiritual environment. Here self-consciously organized religious communities bound by rules, regulations and a hierarchy of leaders played little role. Instead of the sacred order of communal or monastic religion that typified early forms of Daoism, the cosmology and morality of these movements and cults arose in
specific social strata and local populations, which often looked to them for signs of both order and identity. The more diverse itinerant Ritual Masters and Daoist priests were less likely to be the personal patrons of the imperial household and aristocracy, and more commonly hired ritual specialists for local communities who competed with those of other traditions for ceremonial services on behalf of individuals, households or communities. Besides generally being outsiders, the ritual specialists of the traditions discussed here often prided themselves on long periods of moral and contemplative preparation overseen by their particular deities who were subject to the order of the Way that all individuals and groups took as fundamental.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES. Beyond the common aim of returning the world to the Way, the approaches of the traditions varied in their cosmic vision and cultural depth. Some stressed that they were grounded in hierarchical and bureaucratic relations to the divine as embodied in earlier cultural visions of the Way. Others valued their ability to directly and personally relate to divinity through local gods and divine practices. Mediating these extremes were the variable approaches of itinerant Ritual Masters whose visions of divine order for a differentiated human world incorporated both specific elements of local religion and grander aspects of the sacred cosmos integral to Daoist traditions. Their emphasis depended on the particular ritual audience and the circumstances of the ritual. All the diverse approaches reflected a distinct attempt to combine cosmic and local resources for use by practitioners in a spiritually competitive environment to reassert a vision of divine order for some segment of the changing Song-Yuan society.

When seen together, this spectrum of worldviews signals a reworking of the “social mission of Daoism” (Bokenkamp 1997, 15) and a transition toward the “improved access to the sacred realm” (Kleeman 1994, 63). The disintegration of the aristocratic and court-centered Tang spiritual consensus and the failure of Song-Yuan literati to create a similarly broad, lasting and uncontested vision for the growing numbers of educated men unable to serve the state encouraged the formation of more open, diverse and flexible arrangements for the new southern gentry to directly identify themselves with local exemplars of divine order. New revelatory movements and deity cults interacted with various Daoist revivals in local areas in the Song-Yuan era to produce, by early Ming times, more open, flexible and comprehensive visions of the sacred Way for China’s gentry society. The varied traditions that produced these changes embody a spectrum of negotiated relationships between revivals of classical Daoist legacies and strong local spiritual traditions. On one side of this spectrum were the bureaucratic, impersonal and hierarchical relationships central to communications with the abstract hypostases of the cosmic Way typical of the first Daoist movements (Schipper 1985; Lagerway 1987; Dean 1993). On the other side were
relationships based on unmediated interactions with powerful local deities parallel to patterns of personal patronage that characterized the new southern vernacular cultures (Katz 1995; Hymes 1996; 1997). Important go-betweens in these negotiations were the itinerant Ritual Masters, whose livelihood depended on their ability to mediate the priorities of classical Daoism and local religion (Boltz 1993; Davis 1994, 90-139). The diverse worldviews implicit in this spectrum of relationships stemmed from the demographic change, economic development, political turmoil and cultural reassessment that transformed medieval Chinese civilization.

DAO AND QI. Whatever their differences, all the religious traditions considered in this essay assumed that a singular cosmic process called the Way or Dao underlay and made possible all modes of existence and experience. They similarly adopted the general view that all perceptible phenomena—from stones, stars and trees to people, deities and demons—were condensations of psycho-physical stuff called qi, ranked hierarchically according to their purity. Since Tang times many writers referred to the purest original state of qi as primordial yuanqi 元氣. Once embodied as a perceptible thing, the configured qi of each thing passed through a regular cycle of development and decay, whose length differed both by nature and by human interference. The ultimate and most comprehensive cycle of qi was the Way, the all-encompassing cosmic process itself. All traditions also took for granted that besides various anomalous or unusual events in nature, only humans—especially deceased humans—and nature spirits regularly deviated from the workings of the Way. Therefore much of their concern centered on finding the best way for humans to realign deviant configurations of qi with the workings of the Way.

Yet the two polar extremes differed on the best procedures for dealing with disorder and reasserting order. Daoist practitioners sought to install a sacred vision of the Way in Chinese society. They relied on spiritual resources validated by their place in a cosmic order coordinated by various hypostases of the Dao itself. The gentry leaders of local traditions, by contrast, favored sponsoring the particular gods and practices of their home areas as optimal ways to create identities for themselves outside of state priorities. Whatever their differences, those favoring both approaches gained access to the Way’s order through particular practices, objects, or figures. Among the best examples of this approach were the gods who encouraged personal and direct relationships. It also found expression in their textual revelations of the Way—special scriptures, writs and talismans—or the particular epiphanies of the Way in the human realm—especially patriarchs, transcendents and perfected. All of these objects and figures—and many more besides—arose from and had homes in local circumstances, while reflecting some larger vision of order. They encouraged individuals to fashion direct and personal relations with the inherent powers of a supernatural realm that was still in flux (Kleeman 1994; Hymes
of a supernatural realm that was still in flux (Kleeman 1994; Hymes 1996). This, in turn, helped them solidify their distinctive local identities outside of imperial priorities, and contributed to the shaping of distinctive vernacular gentry cultures (Hymes 1997).

THE RITUAL MASTER. Within this newly emerging worldview, what is the place of the Ritual Master presiding over a Daoist ceremony? This new place appears in variant forms in the texts, whether they focus on exorcizing demons of the living or on the salvation of ancestors through filling the treasury or initiating them into the ranks of the transcedents. The exorcistic Heart of Heaven tradition claims that the Daoist Ritual Master “performs the transformations on behalf of Heaven” (CT 1227, j. 1.8b). This role was likely later transformed into the role of the Ritual Master as one who saves souls by “performing the transformations in lieu of the [Heavenly Honored One of] Primordial Commencement” (CT 219, j. 66.5b). As in both earlier and later times, the Daoist priest was able to work on behalf of both the living and the dead. While not always equally stressed, many practitioners also saw their external and internal activities as complementary. This can be seen by their description in a transmission document for nine disciples in the Shenxiao system: “inwardly refining a Dose of the Elixir and outwardly accruing Meritorious Action [will enable you initiates to] embody Heaven and perform its transformations, as well as assist the State and save its people” (CT 1307, j. 1.17a). While more explicit than in many ritual texts, this passage articulates well the aims of the priest’s inner and outer actions.

PRACTICES

The MULTIPLICITY of worldviews articulated in the Song-Yuan matched the diversity of their corresponding practices. The overarching vision of the multiple worldviews—returning the wayward parts of the world to the singular process of the Authentic Way (zhen dao 真道)—likewise underlay the goals of their diverse accompanying practices. While often aligning themselves with various visions of cosmic order, salvation and justice, these visions were more open, flexible and attuned to the local circumstances of their patrons than the communal or aristocratic priorities of earlier Daoist movements. Relying on practices as established by earlier Daoists, they yet added new aspects—both piecemeal and structural—to their repertoire to appeal to their customers. Many rituals openly show the incorporation of local cults and religious practices, using the correct forms of the Way to either preserve and enhance the spiritual order or to destroy the perverted activities of those who are not of the Way.
Traditions discussed here sought to institute the Way in the world, often by organizing themselves around *fa* (methods, laws, rites or a system of varying scope, depth and focus) that centered on the use of special talismans, spells, seals and mudras, usually for therapeutic and exorcistic purposes. While today historians note that these rites combined elements from popular mediumistic religion, Tantric Buddhism and the classical Daoist legacies, contemporaries believed that these rites derived from and embodied the mandates of various deities sent forth by the Way. Many such deities had martial qualities—indicated by their fierce physical appearances and by their place in the military bureaucracy of the gods—and left behind traces of their interaction with the human world. Initiates in the ritual traditions revealed by these gods, acting as Ritual Masters or Ritual Officials, performed their rites to summon and dispatch various spirit-generals and spirit-troops to do their bidding, using commands authorized by the Way itself. Their spiritual work also frequently made use of acolytes who served as spirit-mediums to dramatically represent the local circumstances of their ritual actions (Davis 1994, 140-78). All of this reflects some accommodations with local religious traditions.

Despite these accommodating tendencies, many of the practices include basic practices or elements from the classical Daoist traditions of Orthodox Unity, Numinous Treasure and Highest Clarity. Among the most important are the various forms of writing and meditation needed to complete the ritual. Like earlier cults and movements, the traditions responsible for the manuals turned oral and foreign rites into classical or vernacular texts to guide their ritual performance (Schipper 1984; Bell 1990; Lien 1995). This process of textualization took place in a milieu of fluid and ongoing interactions between deity cults and Daoist revelatory movements. The texts gave pride of place to many forms of writing, ranging from strict bureaucratic forms to talismans. They also incorporate practices from various Buddhist and popular traditions into hierarchical arrangements, which suggest their value in conveying ritual as a bureaucratic process. Finally, these manuals emphasize recreating the embryonic cosmos via inner contemplation, using the tools of understanding and analysis provided by the Chinese sciences as a means of linking the first and last things and of producing salvation. This range of practices appear in various combination to recreate spiritual environments that were still similar to mundane legal proceedings, audiences at court, and luxurious banquets.

The RITUAL METHODS varied according to the scope of the cosmic, national, regional, local, familial, or individual order they aimed to restore. In general, those seeking to restore order in the world of the living relied on their convergence with the original and ongoing aims of Zhengyi ritual therapies, while those charged with greater salvific responsibilities depended on the all-encompassing Yellow Register ceremony that became the tem-
plate of all Lingbao liturgy from the eleventh century. This division of ritual labor finds reflection in the two main overlapping approaches to restoring order, correcting demons and saving ancestors. Rites to reform demons, whether through administrative or penal action, stressed exorcistic techniques and and talismanic practices. They were strongly allied to the Celestial Masters and often called Rectifying Rites. Rites to redeem deceased relatives often used ritual practices centered on special applications of the Duren jing and the Lingbao dafa. Aiding them were a range of corporeal manipulations such as deity-transformation or, inner refinement and cultivating perfection, which combined talismans and spells with meditation. Because of the exchanges among traditions in the southeast from the twelfth century onward, rites for saving ancestors came to be seen as basically exorcisms and that rites for the dead often conclude therapeutic rites (Davis 1994, 263-334).

Nonetheless, ritual specialists partial to the ritual of classical Daoist traditions claimed that their superiority derived from the simplicity and antiquity of the component rites they chose to practice. Especially important between the ninth and thirteenth centuries was the use of Lingbao liturgical canons and their rites for the dead to structure local cults and the use of Zhengyi therapeutic priorities for the living to authorize new revelatory movements (Schipper 1985; Andersen 1991; Kleeman 1994). These rites aimed to maintain or restore order to the interconnected realms of human beings, demons and deities.

The texts of the Heart of Heaven were so simple that they were easier to practice than those of older traditions. They were based on three talismans and two seals which embodied and summoned the powers of the sun, moon and stars, the Dark Warrior and the Black Killer, and involved intricate practices of writing and using the talismans together with their accompanying spells. Most practices served to exorcise demons and cure diseases. A key ritual method was the Investigation and Examination, which matched both the theater and juridical process of Song times (Boltz 1985; Davis 1994).

New ritual sequences were further added to this framework, such as the Rite of Deliverance, which often centered on trips to the underworld. While perhaps derived from necromantic séances of medieval spirit-mediums and the ancient practice of the ancestral impersonator, these rites came to play a different role in religious ceremonies (Davis 1994, 263-334). After first freeing the souls of the dead by destroying the earth-prisons where they were held, practitioners of these rites transported them into the ritual area, where they would become ancestors or divinities through the Rite of Salvation by Refinement (see Boltz 1983). By the end of the Song these rituals had become indistinguishable from Buddhist rites for the dead called Land and Water Rites, perhaps because of their common dependence on an
appearance made by the deceased in specific ritual arenas. This may be seen most easily in the incorporation of possession episodes in Daoist ritual programs for the dead (Davis 1994, 310-16).

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INNER ALCHEMY (NEIDAN)

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DESCRIPTION

*Neidan* 内丹 or “inner alchemy” refers to a range of esoteric doctrines and practices that adepts use to transcend the individual and cosmological states of being. Although its origins are obscure, scholars have isolated several strands that have contributed to its development. They derived from diverse sources, including classical Daoist texts, correlative cosmology, *Yijing* 易經 (Book of Changes) lore, meditational and physical disciplines of *yangsheng* 養生 (nourishing life), cosmological traditions of *waidan* 外丹 (external alchemy), medical theory, Buddhist soteriology and Confucian moral philosophy. By the twelfth century, adepts had woven these various strands into codified traditions. *Neidan* traditions enabled them to reach their goal by adopting doctrinal elements from these different sources, synthesizing and re-elaborating a range of practices, from physical to meditational, and engaging in intellectual speculation on the nature of being and nonbeing (Robinet 1989, 301; and 1997, 207).

HISTORY

While today the term *neidan* typically covers this complex of spiritual teachings and their transcendent aims, for most of the last millennium *jindan* 金丹 (Golden Elixir) was a more common designation. The term *neidan* originally had other meanings: at least through the Tang period, it indicated meditation and breathing exercises (Baldrian-Hussein 1990, 178-81), and some Tang and later texts saw *neidan* and *waidan* as different stages or aspects of inner alchemical work (Robinet 1991). These changes in meaning, and the fact that the associated doctrines and practices were highly syncretic parts of local traditions, make it difficult to assign *neidan* a definite starting place. This historical sketch will first explore some early sources, and then highlight the main stages in the development of two overlapping legacies between the late Tang and early Ming periods, the Zhong-Lü 種呂 tradition and the Nanzong 南宗 (Southern Lineage).
Current research suggests that *neidan* traditions developed through three main phases: 1. an embryonic phase, with isolated references to notions and figures central to later traditions; 2. “early *neidan*,” basically the Tang period, when *neidan* and cosmological forms of *weidan* interacted in different combinations and with varying emphases; and 3. a mature stage, from the late Tang onwards, marked by adepts’ repeated efforts to codify texts, stabilize language and elaborate standard practices and spiritual genealogies in new cultural and religious circumstances.

**EARLY AND MEDIEVAL SOURCES.** *Neidan* sources do not give historical accounts of the origin of their doctrines. Many assert that divine revelation led to their circulation in the world. Only a few of the divine beings and immortals who made these revelations are well known; most are anonymous. Among the better known is Laozi 老子, who reportedly passed on his inner alchemical teachings to Yin Xi 尹喜 (Baldrian-Hussein 1990, 171-77). Until the late Tang and Song, anonymous immortals and other divine beings are typically the sources of *neidan* traditions. From the eleventh century onward, however, adepts increasingly claim to have derived their teachings from a small group of identifiable transcendent beings.

Several early references show that by the Six Dynasties adepts described inner meditation in terms of alchemical language and symbolism. The *Laozi ming* 老子銘 (*Inscription for Laozi; dat. 165 C.E.*), for instance, states that Laozi “moves in and out of the Elixir Furnace (dank 炁), rising from and descending into the Yellow Court (huangting 黃庭)” (Seidel 1969, 47-48, 128). This correlation between the Yellow Court (one name for the center of the body) and the Elixir Furnace shows that these terms refer to loci in the person, and that alchemical terms were applied to inner practices as early as the Eastern Han. An early fifth-century Lingbao scripture states that “the Golden Elixir is in your body” (*Bawei zhaolong miaojing* 八威召龍妙經, CT 361; Robinet 1997, 228).

A fuller view of the context for these references appears in Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283-343) *Baopuzi neipian* 抱朴子內篇 (*Inner Chapters of the Master Who Embraces Spontaneous Nature, CT 1185; trl. Ware 1966*), completed around 317 and revised around 330. Ge mentions the three *dantian* 丹田 or Elixir Fields (or Cinnabar Fields) in the head, the chest and the abdomen (Ware 1966, 302; Kohn 1993, 199), each governed by the One (Yi 一), a supreme divinity abiding in everyone. He also describes transcendent beings, the Yellow Court, and other loci of the inner body that would later play central roles in *neidan* (Ware 1966, 99-100; see also 121).

Ge Hong’s text shows that the above notions were part of meditational practices in fourth-century Jiangnan 江南 (southern Jiangsu). Their textual foundation is the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (*Scripture of the Yellow Court*), a short, poetical work of the third century that
describes the human body as home to multitudinous divine beings. Among its allusions to meditation and breathing the *Huangting jing* contains alchemical symbolism, mentioning the Elixir Fields, the refining (liàn 煉) of the primary constituents of the person, and the birth and nourishment of the inner embryo (Hu 1989, 5). Some descriptions of the divinities and the palaces they inhabit in the body also bear the stamp of alchemical imagery.

About half a century after Ge Hong, the *Huangting jing* became a central scripture for Shangqing Daoism. Based on revelations received around Nanjing between 364 and 370, Shangqing teachings emphasized meditation and visualization. Although the school adopted some *waidan* texts of the earlier southern tradition of Taiqing 太清 (Great Clarity), it assigned *waidan* a low place in its hierarchical arrangement of disciplines and practices (Robinet 1984, 1: 35-48; 1995, 16). Since Shangqing saw elixir compounding as primarily image-based meditation, some scholars have seen it as the first unequivocal evidence of the interiorization of the alchemical process (Strickmann 1979, 169-78; Robinet 1984, 1: 176-80).

Within a century of the Shangqing revelations, another set of alchemical doctrines appeared in Jiangnan. Unlike the Taiqing scriptures, this distinctive elixir tradition used alchemical symbolism to guide cosmological speculation. Its alchemical theory became central to most later neidan theories.

The main scripture expounding this tradition is the *Zhouyi cantong qi* 周易參同契 (Token for the Agreement of the Three according to the Book of Changes). Traditionally ascribed to a legendary Han immortal, Wei Boyang 魏伯陽, it was originally part of the "Study of the Changes" (yi xue 易學) traditions, and may have been an apocryphon to the *Yijing*. The dearth of references to the *Cantong qi* in the Six Dynasties has prompted some scholars to suggest that the original work was lost after the Han, and re-written in Tang times (Fukui 1974, 29-30; Chen G. 1983, 352-55). However, citations of the *Cantong qi* by authors with strong links to the Jiangnan region—such as Jiang Yan 江淹 (444-505), Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536), Yan Zhitui 颜之推 (531-591) and perhaps Ge Hong himself—show that a text with this title circulated at the same time and place where the *Huangting jing* and Shangqing Daoism emerged (Pregadio forthcoming). A poem by Jiang Yan shows that some had already associated the *Cantong qi* with *waidan* before the sixth century (Waley 1930, 8), and suggests that Jiangnan alchemical lineages had turned the original Han text into an alchemical treatise.

The *Cantong qi* uses an obscure metaphoric structure and an extremely complex terminology to link alchemical processes with various cosmogonic and cosmological patterns. The two main emblematic substances in its theories are mercury and lead, symbolizing Real Yin (zhényin 真陰) and Real Yang (zhényáng 真陽), respectively. While
the discourse and symbolism of the *Cantong qi* differ from Taiqing and Shangqing alchemy, parallel expressions in the *Huangting jing* suggest that the *Cantong qi* was also influenced by Shangqing forms of alchemical meditation.

In the late Six Dynasties, several sources associate neidan-like practices with other southern traditions beyond both Jiangnan and Daoist movements (Baldrain-Hussein 1990, 164-71). A Buddhist source, for instance, claims that Deng Yuzhi 鄧郁之 retired on Mount Heng 衛山 (Hunan) at the turn of the sixth century to “cultivate the inner and outer elixirs” (*Nanyue zongsheng ji* 南嶽總勝記, T. 2097). Huisi 慧思 (517-577), who taught the founder of Tiantai 天台 Buddhism, Zhiyi 智顕 (538-597), also resided there. In a vow said to have been taken around 560, Huisi states he would “cultivate the inner elixir (neidan) with the help of the external elixir (waidan)” (*Nanyue Si dachansi lishi yuanwen* 南嶽思大禪師立誓願文, T. 1933). Although these sources likely resulted from retrospective hagiographical elaborations rather than from the recording of historical facts, Buddhist and Daoist figures did indeed interact on Mount Heng (and elsewhere). Daoist practices also influenced the development of Tiantai Buddhism, and a later resident on the mountain, the Chan master Shitou Xiqian 石頭希遷 (700-791), composed a Buddhist text called the *Cantong qi* (Robson 1995, 245-63).

Elsewhere in the late Six Dynasties, the semi-legendary neidan adept Su Yuanlang 蘇元郎 reputedly resided on Mount Luofu 羅浮山 (Guangdong). A passage in the Ming-dynasty *Luofu shan zhi* 羅浮山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Luofu) states that Su directed his disciples to find the medicine of immortality within themselves (Chen G. 1983, 314-18; Baldrain-Hussein 1990, 165-67). Su is also credited with authorship of the *Taiqing shibi ji* 太清石壁記 (Records from the Stone Wall of Great Clarity, CT 881), a waidan anthology which nonetheless contains a “Method for Making the Inner Elixir” (2.4b).

**THE TANG DYNASTY** was a turning point in Chinese alchemy, witnessing both the high point of waidan and early systematic presentations of neidan teachings (Li D. 1994). Several Tang sources refer to simultaneously preparing elixirs in laboratory crucibles and the human person, showing that adepts often saw neidan and waidan as part of a single process of cultivation (Meng 1989, 1: 36-38; Needham et al. 1983, 218-29), something also reflected in the shared language and imagery (Meng 1989, 2: 19-21). Theoretical medical writings by Wang Bing 王冰 (fl. 762) provided new cosmological models valuable to neidan, and adepts began emphasizing the cultivation of an endowed primordial breath (*yuanqi* 元氣 or *yuanqi zhi qi* 元一之氣) in each person, distinct from ordinary breath (Maspero 1981 [1937], 465-69). Tang practices of *zuowang* 坐忘 (sitting in oblivion; Kohn 1987) and *neiguan* 内觀 (inner contemplation; Kohn 1989) likewise contributed to the elaboration of neidan techniques of
meditation. The emphasis in neiquan on contemplation and silent meditation rather than the visualization of deities, in part derived from Buddhist meditation, also became part of most later inner alchemy traditions (Sakade 1988; 1991a; Robinet 1997, 202-11).

Two waidan commentaries (Zhouyi cantong qi 周易参同契, CT 999; and Zhongyi cantong qi zhu 周易参同契注, CT 1004) show that the Cantong qi reached its present form before the eighth century (Pregadio forthcoming). Thereafter, the Cantong qi became central to the development of neidan. We see this first in the Ruyu xuanwu lun 日月玄枢論 (Discourse on the Sun and the Moon, the Mysterious Axis, in Daoshu 道樞, CT 1017, 1.10b-11a; better version in Quan Tang wen 全唐文, 334.12a-21a) by Liu Zhigu 劉知古 (ab. 661-742). Written during Xuanzong’s reign (r. 712-56), this is both the earliest extant essay related to the Cantong qi and the first datable neidan source. Besides summarizing the Cantong qi, the essay emphatically criticizes its waidan interpretations. Several other Tang cosmological sources of waidan related to the Cantong qi are also crucial to developments in neidan. They contain much of the same imagery characteristic of later neidan works, such as the use of cosmological emblems to represent inner processes (Robinet 1995, 33-36).

At this stage (seventh to eighth centuries), neidan lacked the stable form it exhibits from the tenth century on. This is seen first of all in the term neidan having no constant meaning. A Tang commentary to the Taixijing 胎息經 (Scripture of Embryonic Breathing, CT 130, 1b, 3b) says that neidan is the combination of a breathing technique and guarding the spirits of the body (Baldrian-Hussein 1990, 180). The Lingjian zi 童劍子 (Scripture of the Numinous Sword Master, CT 570, 8a) identifies neidan with swallowing breath (Meng 1990, 43). Finally, a text attributed to Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778), with a spurious preface (Schafer 1981, 381) but likely compiled in the Tang, says that “assembling the (body’s) divinities” (shenji 神集) produces the inner elixir (Nantong dajun neidan juzhang jing 南統天君内丹九轉經, CT 1054, 1a; Baldrian-Hussein 1990, 180).

Another gauge of developments in neidan from Tang times is the Zhenyuan 真元 (True Origin) corpus (Robinet 1990). The nine extant texts with this term in their titles likely date from Song times, but were based on mid-Tang materials. Even though much of the vocabulary, imagery and divinities in these texts derive from Shangqing Daoism, they reflect a much broader synthesis. One text claims the Tijing and some medical and materia medica works as its foundation, while another bears the stamp of Daoist classical philosophy, neiquan contemplation and Buddhist metaphysics. The texts also expound a morality rooted in classical Confucian virtues. The range of elements woven into the Zhenyuan texts point toward the emergence of distinct and comprehensive neidan systems.
THE SONG-YUAN PERIOD. The more coherent and formalized neidan sources surviving after the tenth century show a greater convergence of texts, teachings and masters into discrete and enduring legacies. Adepts who formed these legacies often identified their learning with the oral and literary revelations from a small group of semi-divine figures, reflecting the new priorities of the examination system, civil service, urbanization and economic expansion in that time (Baldrian-Hussein 1986). Their teachings emphasize new forms of self-cultivation grounded in cosmology, traditional self-cultivation disciplines that centered on the body and older forms of Daoist meditation—often parallel with or superior to those available in the highly spiritual Chan Buddhism.

The three main neidan legacies that existed between the tenth and fourteenth centuries became known anachronistically as the Zhong-Lü (2nd c.?) and La Dongbin (b. 798?), underlay the main tenth- and eleventh-century neidan legacies. Contemporary adepts credited them with an important neidan textual corpus and miracles, and developed rituals of worship for them. Today scholars usually use “Zhong-Lü tradition” (Baldrian-Hussein 1984, 23-31; Boltz 1987, 139-43) to refer to the cluster of prose texts whose doctrines apply alchemical language and imagery to earlier regimens of corporeal practice, especially “embryo respiration” (taiyi 胎息) and “returning the seminal essence to restore the brain” (huaijing bunao 適精補腦), with few allusions to cosmological speculation (Robinet 1997, 222). Equally important, however, were the many miracles which they performed for the faithful (Baldrian-Hussein 1986). Both texts and miracles shaped their cults, their worship and their popularity in drama between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries (Hawkes 1981; Baldrian-Hussein 1986).

By the twelfth century, some adepts had begun to see the Zhong-Lü pair together with more recent disciples. Two are particularly im-
important. In the Poyang 鄱陽 region (Jiangxi), Shi Jianwu 施肩吾 (fl. 820), a late Tang adept of the Xishan 西山 (Western Hills) tradition, was credited with transmitting several texts in the Zhong-Lü legacy, and with inheriting the laboratory alchemy tradition from an important regional saint, Xu Xun 許遵 (239-292/374?). In the north, the adept Liu Haichan 劉海蟾 (fl. 1031) was first a cohort of Zhong-Lü in the heart of early Quanzhen, and was later credited with the status of patriarch and the composition of some important instructional verses.

In the late eleventh century, as the Zhong-Lü legacy flourished in both north and south China, a new tradition emerged in Sichuan, which formed the foundations for the Nanzong legacy (Baldrian-Hussein 1986; Chen B. 1985; Boltz 1987, 173-75; Ren and Chen 1989; Yu 1991). Adepts in this tradition stressed the cosmological underpinnings of neidan practices while aiming to refine their spiritual and corporeal aspects; they borrowed from both the Zhong-Lü tradition and Peng Xiao's (d. 955) reworking of the Cantong qi. They also fashioned a multi-generational line of patriarchs and made neidan central to the new Daoist ritual systems of the period.

In 1069, Zhang Boduan 張伯端, secretary of the new governor of Chengdu 成都, received "instructions on the fire-phasing of medicinal ingredients for the Golden Elixir," which he crafted into three series of verses, entitled Wuhen pian 悟真篇 (Chapters on Awakening to Perfection, Imai 1962; Fukui 1987; Azuma 1988; 1995; Miyazawa 1988a; Ren L. 1990). They deal with the basic levels of neidan practice, and were supplemented by material on higher levels and related notes on Buddhist spiritual cultivation. Zhang spent the final years of his life among officials and Buddhists; he died in 1082 and was cremated by his disciples (Hussein 1976). His writings and post-mortem appearances continued to influence people well beyond the next century.

Until the fall of the Song to the Jurchen in 1126, most of those associated with Zhang's teachings were based in the north. Thereafter, more southerners wrote of Zhang and his teachings, but only as one of many neidan traditions. Two twelfth-century adepts who claimed to perpetuate Zhang's teachings in master-disciple relations later became important links in their perpetuation. Shi Tai 石泰 (d. 1158) was a minor Shaanxi official who met Zhang and received his teachings, which he in turn transmitted to the Shaanxi Buddhist monk Xue Shi 薛式 (d. 1175/1191). Most other twelfth-century figures emphasized either direct spiritual encounters with Zhang or possession of Wuhen pian manuscripts. By mid-century, scholar-adepts concerned with the genuine meaning of Zhang's text began writing commentaries, with a split arising between interpreters stressing new cosmological theories and those focusing on Buddhist philosophy.
Early thirteenth-century Fujianese adepts began claiming ties to Zhang's teachings through Shi and Xue. Chen Nan's 張楠 (d. 1213) disciple, 白玉蟾 (1194-ca. 1227), formed a genealogy for their spiritual practice (Miyakawa 1978; Liang 1993). He and his disciples were among the first to use neidan to upgrade some of the new southern Daoist ritual systems and attract the support from literati adepts. In identifying themselves with a single genuine line of transmission stemming from Zhang Boduan, and making Zhang's teachings central to the new Daoist ritual systems they propagated, the circle of disciples around Bai effectively formed the Southern Lineage (Chen B. 1984; Berling 1994; Yokote 1996).

Bai and his major disciples promoted the teachings of his master Chen Nan on neidan and Thunder Rituals (leifa 雷法), marking the first time that Zhang's teachings become part of Taoist ritual (Strickmann 1975; He 1992). They also repeated Chen's claims that his alchemy had derived from the Buddhist priest, Xue Shi, whose reputed master Shi Tai had said he was Zhang Boduan's disciple. This five-generation line of jindan adepts—Zhang Boduan, Shi Tai, Xue Shi, Chen Nan and Bai Yuchan—became the genealogical centerpiece that literati from the early Ming onward would call the Southern Lineage (Imai 1961). Around 1217, Bai and his disciples stopped recognizing Zhang Boduan's instructress as Xihua zhenren 西華真人 and began claiming that Liu Haichan had been Zhang's teacher, effectively grafting Zhang Boduan's line of patriarchs onto the Zhong-Lü tradition. This move appealed to a broader audience of potential literati adepts, since Liu Haichan had ties to northern traditions in Shaanxi. Bai and his literati disciples also made neidan practice the heart of Daoist therapeutic and exorcistic ritual practices that had emerged and consolidated in the south during the previous three centuries.

In 1260, a second-generation disciple of Bai Yuchan named 小庭芝 蕭庭芝 (fl. 1260) framed the same patriarchy in a thirty-six-generation heritage extending beyond Lord Lao (CT 687, pref. 5a-8a; Yokote 1990). Xiao portrayed this heritage as dividing, after Liu Haichan, into a branch passing through Zhang Boduan and his successors (called the Southern Lineage a century later), and another branch passing to Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1113-70) and his seven major Quanzhen disciples (the later Northern Lineage). For Xiao, both legacies had their roots in the Zhong-Lü-Liu tradition of Shaanxi, but the former, to which he was privy, was superior. This genealogy was included in a text dated 1298 (Dao de zhenjing sanjie 道德真經三解, CT 687, pref. 2b). Its patterns of citation show a preference for the legacy Xiao inherited, similar to the preferences of other southern adepts.

In the YUAN AND EARLY MING, all three neidan codifications developed and consolidated further. Although the main centers of
Quanzhen teachings remained in the north, some Quanzhen adepts began promoting their teachings in the south, which resulted in a mix of traditions promoted by Bai on contemplation and exorcism. Among the best known figures for their neidan writings in the Yuan were Li Daochun 李道純 (fl. 1288-90), his disciple Miao Shanshi 苗善時 (fl. 1288-1324) of Jiangsu and Chen Zhixu 陳致虛 (1289-after 1335) of northern Jiangxi (Sun 1968; Chen B. 1986; Yokote 1990). All three claimed to have inherited the Golden Elixir heritage through the legacy of Bai Yuchan, but were also familiar with Quanzhen teachings and saw them all as originating from Lü Dongbin. By the end of the Yuan and the beginning of the Ming, the teachings of the three main neidan traditions circulated among various literati interested in self-cultivation and cosmological speculation, as well as among adepts wanting to practice the new Daoist ritual in their local communities. Some early Ming literati from Zhejiang enshrined the regional line of spiritual patriarchs between Zhang Boduan and Bai Yuchan as the Nanzong, implicitly demoting the Quanzhen movement by giving it the inferior label Beizong and inaugurating a new spiritual heritage within the cultural foundations of the Ming dynasty.

Texts

Most of the roughly 150 neidan writings in the Daozang are either independent works dealing with doctrines or practices, or annotations of important scriptures. Collections from late imperial times—naturally the DAOZANG XUBIAN 道藏續編 (1834), the DAOZANGJIAYAO 道藏輯要 (1906), the DAOZANG JINGHUA LU 道藏精華錄 (1922), the DAOZANG JINGHUA (1963, with later additions) and the ZANGWAI DAOASHU 藏外道書 (1992, 1995)—have much higher percentages and numbers of neidan texts, suggesting a growing popularity among literati. The present survey centers on early texts and commentaries, the main sources of the early Zhong-Lù tradition and representative works of the Nanzong heritage (see also Li Y. 1988, 163-211; Ren J. 1991; Pregadio 1996).

EARLY CLASSICS. The HUANGTING JING (Scripture of the Yellow Court; trl. Huang 1992, 221-54; Saso 1995; partial trl. Kohn 1993, 181-88; Kroll 1996) appears in two recensions: a NEIJING JING 内景經 (Scripture of Inner Effulgences), in 437 heptasyllabic lines divided into thirty-six sections, and a shorter WAIJING JING 外景經 (Scripture of Outer Effulgences) in 194 heptasyllabic lines divided into three parts. While scholars agree that the “Inner” version emerged from the Shangqing milieu, opinions differ on its relation to the “Outer” version. Some hold that the “Outer” version summarizes the “Inner” version (Wang M. 1984, 329-38), while oth-
ers argue that the “Inner” version is an expansion of the “Outer” version (Schipper 1975, 2-11; Strickmann 1981, 68). Still others assert that, whatever the dates of these texts, the two versions were texts for initiates and non-initiates, respectively (Robinet 1993, 56-59). Mugitani (1981, 31-37) cogently argues that the “Inner” version derived from the “Outer.”

The *Huangting jing* describes the human person and his inner deities (Robinet 1993, 55-96; Despeux 1994, 108-33, *passim*; Homann 1971). After describing the revelation of the scripture, the text reviews the gods of the head (sect. 7 of the “Inner” version) and the viscera (sects. 8-15), giving their names and details on their physical appearance and garments to aid adepts in visualizing them. Most of the rest alludes to breathing and meditation techniques. The conception of the person in the *Huangting jing* partly overlaps with what may be an earlier text, the *Laozi zhongying* 老子中經 (Central Scripture of Laozi, CT 1168, *Yunji qiqian* 18-19; see Schipper 1979; 1995; Maeda 1988).

The main early commentaries date from the Tang period. One is by Liangqiuzi 梁丘子 (Bai Lizhong 白履忠, fl. 729) and another is ascribed to the immortal Wuchengzi 勿成子. Liangqiuzi wrote the *Huangting neijing yujing zhu* 黃庭內景玉經注 (CT 263, j. 55-57, and CT 402, 3 j.) and the *Huangting waijing yujing zhu* 黃庭外景玉經注 (CT 263, j. 58-60). Wuchengzi’s commentary is in the *Taishang huangting waijing jing* 太上黃庭外經 (Yunji qiqian 12.28a-56b). The initial portion of his work on the “Inner” version is preserved in the *Shangqing huangting neijing jing* 上清黃庭內經 (Yunji qiqian 11-12.27b), which continues with Liangqiuzi’s commentary from section 3 onwards.

The *Cantong qi* set out the doctrinal foundation for much of *waidan* and the whole of *neidan* (Zhou and Pan 1981; Meng 1993a; Meng and Meng 1993; trl. Zhou 1988; Wu and Davis 1932). Two *waidan* commentaries (*Zhouyi cantong qi*, CT 999, 3 j.; and *Zhouyi cantong qi zhu*, CT 1004, 2 j.) are our closest witnesses of its Tang editions, but six other *neidan* exegeses are found in the *Daozang*. Altogether, at least forty commentaries are extant in more than two hundred editions, excluding reprints.

Peng Xiao 彭曉 (d. 955), zi Yongchuan 永川, hao Zhenyizi 真一子, wrote the *Zhouyi cantong qi fenzhang tong zhenyi* 周易參同契分章通真義 (Real Meaning of the *Zhouyi cantong qi*, Arranged into Paragraphs, CT 1002, 3 j.), with a preface dated 947; this is the earliest extant *neidan* commentary to the text (Meng 1993b, 41-44; Robinet 1995, 36-39; Li D. 1996). Peng substantially rearranged the Tang text of the *Cantong qi*, dividing it into ninety paragraphs and putting the portion entitled “Song of the Tripod” (*Dingqi ge* 鼎器歌) in a separate section, relocating several phrases and changing many characters. However, because Bao Huanzhi 鮑濤之 (fl. 1207-10) modi-
fied Peng’s edition in 1208, we do not know the exact extent of Peng’s editorial work. Bao’s remarks imply that the original recension was closer to the Tang text than the current version (Pregadio 1995, 171). His postface, together with the “Song” and the “Eulogium” (Zanju 賛序) and a cosmological diagram by Peng Xiao (Needham and Lu 1983, 55-59), is printed separately in the Daozang as Zhouyi cantong qi dingqi ge mingjing tu 周易參同契鼎器歌明鏡圖 (The Song of the Tripod and the Diagram of the Bright Mirror of the Zhouyi cantong qi, CT 1003, 12 pp.).

Zhu Xi’s 朱熹 (1130-1200) fame in the last two dynasties ensured that his Zhouyi cantong qi kaqyi 周易參同契考異 (A Critical Investigation of the Zhouyi cantong qi, CT 1001, 3 j.), written between late 1197 and early 1198, became the best known commentary outside the alchemical tradition (Azuma 1984; Wong 1978a). The text offers a cosmological interpretation of the Cantong qi which downplays its alchemical import. Contrary to the promises of the title and remarks in the author’s postface, the Kaqyi has only a few critical notes and ignores variants and emendations that Zhu Xi points out elsewhere. This suggests that most of the critical notes were expunged either by Huang Ruijie 黃瑞節, who edited the text in 1335 for inclusion in his Zhuzi chengshu (Complete Works of Master Zhu), or by an earlier unknown editor.

Yu Yan’s 俞琰 (1258-1314) remarkable Zhouyi cantong qi fahui 周易參同契發揮 (Elucidation of the Zhouyi cantong qi, CT 1005, 3 j.), with a preface dated 1284, includes a collection of textual notes separately printed in the Daozang as Zhouyi cantong qi shiyi 周易參同契詳疑 (Explication of Doubtful Points in the Zhouyi cantong qi, CT 1006, 25 pp.). The Fahui is firmly rooted in the main neidan textual legacy, quoting from nearly one hundred texts valued by this heritage. Yu Yan also wrote a work explaining how to apply the Tying to alchemy, entitled Yuwei biezhuju 易外別傳 (The Separate Transmission of the Changes, CT 1009, 24 pp.; Zhan 1989, 83-96).

MISCELLANEOUS EARLY WORKS. Other short works became canonical for neidan adepts before the Wuzhen pian in the late eleventh century. Among the most prominent was the Yinfu jing 陰符經 (Scripture of the Hidden Talisman; or Scripture for Joining with Obscurity; trl. Rand 1979, 133-37), which dates from the late sixth century. As an alleged revelation from the Yellow Emperor, known as the ancestor of the Song dynasty, the Yinfu jing became canonical in bibliographies from this time. Because yinfu originated as a military term, some have made military interpretations of the cryptic text, suggesting that the work itself may have originated as a military treatise (Reiter 1984). The Yinfu jing presents a view of the grand cosmic order through recondite statements, and is often quoted in neidan texts (Robinet 1997, 210-11; Miyakawa 1984a, 1984b). There are two main editions, an older one of 300 characters and a more re-
cent one of 400 characters, with several dozen commentaries extant, the two better known being those by Li Quan 李筌 (8th c.; see Rand 1979; Li G. 1992) and Zhu Xi (Sueki 1984).

The *Ruyao jing* 入藥鏡 (Mirror for Compounding the Medicine) is attributed to Cui Xifan 崔希范 (fl. 880-940; see Wang J. 1987). All but one edition consists of three-character lines, and the other is in prose with a preface dated 940. The earliest version by this title is a verse in Zeng Cao's *Daozhu* 道枢 (CT 1017, j. 37; Boltz 1987, 234). About a century after Zeng, Xiao Tingzhi (fl. 1260) added notes as the *Jiezhu Cui gong Ruyao jing* 解注崔公入藥鏡 (The Annotated *Ruyao jing* by the Honorable Cui), which asserts that the text deals with sexual practices. His commentary is found in the *Xiuwen shishu* 修真十書 (CT 263, 13.1a-9b) with a very different prose work entitled *Tianyuan ruyao jing* 天元入藥鏡 (Mirror for Compounding the Medicine of the Celestial Primordial, CT 263, 21.6b-9b). It contains a preface signed by Cui Xifan and dated 940. This latter text appears in a chapter signed by a Linwu shanren 林屋山人 (probably Yu Yan 倪琰) that discusses the reworking of Cui Xifan's text. Finally, from around the same time, the Yuan scholar Wang Jie 王介 (fl. 1310) of Nanchang 南昌 (Jiangxi) annotated the basic verse as the *Cui gong Ruyao jing zhujie* 崔公入藥鏡注解 (Annotations to the *Ruyao jing* by the Honorable Cui, CT 135, 16 pp.). All of these variant versions need to be studied in greater detail to unravel their provenance and specific aims.

Finally, the *Qinyuan chun* 春園春 (Springtime in Qin Gardens; trl. Baldrian-Hussein 1985), the only major early work in verse ascribed to Lü Dongbin, is a set of lyrics (ci 詞) which existed before the mid-eleventh century. Two commentaries on the verse from between 1260 and 1310 survive in the *Daozang*. The first, *Jiezhu Lü gong Qinyuan chun* 解注呂公呂園春 (The Annotated *Qinyuan chun* by the Honorable Lü, CT 263, 13.9b-17b), is by Xiao Tingzhi; the second, *Lü Chenyang zhenren Qinyuan chun danci zhujie* 呂純陽真人呂園春丹詞 注解 (Annotations to the Elixir Lyric Qinyuan chun by the Honorable Lü, CT 136, 11 pp.), is by Yu Yan.

**ZHONG-LÜ TEXTS.** The basic Zhong-Lü texts are in prose and focus on linking corporeal practices to cosmic patterns. The *Beiwen pian* 百問篇 (Chapter with a Hundred Questions, CT 1017, j. 5; trl. Homann 1976) has Zhongli Quan respond to queries from Lü Dongbin in simple, straightforward prose on microcosm-macrocosm correspondences. The main Zhong-Lü text, called either the *Chuandaopian* 傳道篇 (Chapters on Transmitting the Way, CT 1017, j. 39-41) or the *Zhong-Lü chuandaoji* 傳呂傳道集 (Anthology of the Transmission of the Way from Zhongli Quan to Lü Dongbin, CT 263, j. 14-16; Sakauchi 1985), contains eighteen systematic essays on the doctrines and practices central to this legacy. It closely parallels the *Michuan Zhengyang zhenren Lingbao bija*
The Concluding Numinous Treasure Rites, Secretly Transmitted by Perfected Zhongli Zhengyang, CT 1191, 1 j., abbreviated as the *Lingbao pian* 畫寶篇 (Chapter on the Numinous Treasure), CT 1017, j. 42; trl. Baldrian-Hussein 1984) and elaborates Zhong-Lu practices. The *Xishan gunxian huizhen ji* 西山羣仙會真記 (Anthology of the Transcendent Hordes and Assembled Perfected of the Western Hills, CT 246, 5 j.; *Huizhen pian* 會真篇 [Chapters on the Assembled Perfected], CT 1017, j. 38; j. 4.2b credits it to Liu Haichan), ascribed to a follower of Shi Jianwu named Li Song 李綱, contains twenty-five systematic essays (pián 篇) on a wide range of topics, including longevity and *neidan* practices.

**THE WUZHEN PIAN** 悟真篇 (Chapters on Awakening to Perfection) is a seminal *neidan* text composed by Zhang Boduan 張伯端 around 1075 from revelations he received in 1069 (Wong 1978b; Kaltenmark 1972-73; Boltz 1987, 173-74; Yan 1992-94; trl. Davis and Chao 1939; Cleary 1987; Robinet 1995). It is the most renowned collection of verses on alchemy compiled in the Northern Song, and became central to the Nanzong heritage around Bai Yuchan. The number of its annotations are second only to those of the *Canlong qi* (Qiu 1989 [1713]). The core of the work consists of stanzas divided into sets of sixteen, sixty-four and twelve verses (corresponding to various sets of cosmological aspects of the universe), which systematically deal with the fundamental stages of *neidan* practice. Most editions add thirty-two supplementary essays and songs to the main text on more spiritual aspects of self-cultivation related to Buddhism (Imai 1962; Azuma 1986). None of the six editions in the *Daozang* are identical, because the text passed through independent lines of transmission in the Yuan and Ming.

The earliest version of the *WuZhen pian* is Zeng Gao's abbreviated version in his *Daoshu* (CT 1017, j. 18; Miyazawa 1988), which is identical with parts of existing editions. A commentary by Ye Wenshu 葉文叔, based on cosmological theories, appeared in 1161 (parts in CT 263, j. 26-30) and provoked criticisms and a new interpretation by Weng Baoguang 余葆光 (fl. 1173-75) of Siming 四明 (Zhejiang). Weng's commentaries and supplementary materials highlight the parallels between the *WuZhen pian* and Chan Buddhism (*WuZhen pian zhushu* 悟真篇註疏, CT 141, 8 j.; *WuZhen zhizhi xiangshuo sansheng miyao* 悟真指詳說三乘秘要, CT 143, 33 pp.; *WuZhen pian shiyi* 悟真篇拾遺, CT 144, 11 pp.). The Zhejiang scholar Dai Qizong 戴起宗 (fl. 1333-37) later augmented and re-edited them (CT 141, CT 143). Another annotated edition with an undated preface by Weng (CT 145, 3 j.) has many textual variants in comparison to the above commentary. An overlapping, but still distinct, tradition of interpretation bears the names Xue Shi (mostly assembled from Weng Baoguang's writings), Lu Shu 魯墅 and Chen Zhixu, and was edited by the latter around 1335 (*WuZhen pian sanzhu* 悟真篇三註, CT 142,
Finally, **Xia Yuanding 夏元鼎** (fl. 1225-27), associated with several figures in the circle of Bai Yuchan, compiled a commentary to Zhang’s work (*Wuzhen pian jiangyi* 悟真篇講義, CT 146, 7 j.) with prefaces by the scholar-officials Liu Yuangang 留元剛 (fl. 1210-28) and Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178-1235).

Besides the *Wuzhen pian*, another famous neidan work bearing Zhang Boduan’s name is the *Jindan sibai zi* 金丹四百字 (Four Hundred Words on the Golden Elixir, CT 263, j. 4, and CT 1081, 11 pp.; trl. Davis and Chao 1940a; Cleary 1986). Its earliest commentary dates from 1240, but was likely transmitted by Ma Ziran 馬自然 to Bai Yuchan before 1218. The *Yuqing jinsi Qingshu miwen jinbao nei liandan jue* 玉清金箋青華祕文金寶內煉丹訣 (Instructions on the Inner Refinement of the Elixir, [based on] the Green Florescence [Perfected’s] Secret Writ and Golden Treasure, from the Golden Lockbox of Jade Purity, CT 240, 3 j.; Davis and Chao 1940b) also dubiously claims to originate with Zhang Boduan. This highly theoretical work, which contains much of the language of neoclassical Confucian philosophy, likely does not date before Ming times.

**NEIDAN COMPENDIA.** The earliest extant compendium of neidan writings is the *Da huandan zhaojian* 大還丹照鑑 (Reflective Mirror of the Great Cyclically-Transformed Elixir, CT 926, 23 pp., pref. 962; Boltz 1987, 174). Its thirty-four separate sections include many early works otherwise lost, and duplicates some texts published elsewhere in the *Dabzang*, such as Tao Zhi’s *Neidan fu* 内丹賦 (Rhymeprose on the Inner Elixir; close to the *Jindan fu* 金丹賦, CT 259).

The *Daoshu* 道樞 (Pivotal Essentials of the Way, CT 1017, 42 j.) is a compendium of self-cultivation texts assembled by the Jinjiang 晉江 (Fujian) scholar Zeng Cao 曾慥 (fl. 1131-55). While its exact date is unknown, it may have been compiled around 1150, when Zeng completed his famous *Leishuo* 頭說 encyclopedia. Its forty-two chapters include summaries, abbreviations and full texts on various aspects of self-cultivation, separated into 118 pian which draw from 108 separate titles (Miyazawa 1988a; 1988b; Boltz 1987, 231-34). It was one of various attempts by early Southern Song scholars to recoup the traditions lost or destroyed by the fall of the Northern Song to the Jurchen and to recover some of their cultural dignity. Selections range from parts of the early medical classics to those of the famous Northern Song scholar, Chao Jiong 晁迥 (951-1034), to Zhang’s *Wuzhen pian*. Zeng Cao also includes texts under the names of Tang and Five Dynasties figures such as Li Guangxuan 李光玄, Ye Fashan 叶法善 (616-720?), Liu Zhigu and Shi Jianwu, and long variant quotations from the treatise attributed to Tan Qiao 譚峭, the *Huashu* 化書 or “Book of Transformations” (j. 1, here called the *Wuhua pian* 五化篇; see Didier 1999). It also contains one-third of a
series of 100 alchemical verses (j. 13) by the Tiantai adept Zhang Wumeng 張無蒙 (fl. 985-1065) and a set of essays on the Cautong qi (j. 32-34). Besides including the Zhong-Lü tradition's Baiwen pían (j. 5), the work ends with two complete treatises from this tradition (j. 39-41, Chuandao pían and j. 42, Lingbao pían).

The Xiuzhen shishu 修真十書 (Ten Compilations on Cultivating Perfection, CT 263, 60 j.; Boltz 1987, 234-37) is an anonymous collection of writings subdivided into ten “written compilations” (shu 書). Completed around the year 1300, it is the consummate assemblage of Golden Elixir teachings in the line of Zhang Bодuan and Bai Yuchan. Its ten separate titles aim to guide its readers toward “cultivating perfection,” a common synonym for neidan practices in imperial times. While the latest date in the work (1244) is by the otherwise unknown Liao Zheng 宋正, there are two references to later figures, an heir to the Song throne named Zhao Ruqu 趙汝渠 who had a post in Jianning and a Linwu yiren 林屋逸人, likely referring to Yu Yan.

The ten compilations are:

1. *Zazu zhixuan pían* 雜著指玄篇 (Chapters by Various Authors on Pointing to the Mysteries, j. 1-8), with writings and diagrams related to Bai Yuchan and his teachings;
2. *Jindan dacheng ji* 金丹大成集 (Great Compendium on the Golden Elixir, j. 9-13), an anthology of writings on the Golden Elixir by Bai’s second-generation disciple Xiao Tingzhi;
3. *Zhong-Lü chuandao ji* 種呂傳道集 (j. 14-16), said to be transmitted by Shi Jianwu;
4. *Zazu jiejing* 雜著捷徑 (Short-cuts by Various Authors, j. 17-25), by authors such as Zeng Cao and Yu Yan;
5. *Wuzhen pían* (j. 26-30), by Zhang Boduan with annotations by Ye Wenshu, Yuan Gongfu 袁公輔 (fl. 1204), and others;
6. *Yulong ji* 玉龍集 (Anthology of the Yulong Temple, j. 31-36) centered on the Xu Xun 許遠 cult on Xishan 西山 (Jiangxi);
7. *Shangqing ji* 上清集 (Anthology of the Shangqing Temple, j. 37-44) centered on the Celestial Masters of Longhu shan 龍虎山 (Jiangxi);
8. *Wuyi ji* 武夷集 (Anthology of the Wuyi Abbey, j. 45-52) centered on the ritual activities in northern Fujian, all by Bai Yuchan and his disciples;
9. *Panshan youlu* 盤山語錄 (Recorded Sayings of [Wang] of Panshan, j. 53, a rearrangement of CT 1059), by Wang Zhijin 王志謙 (1178-1263) and his disciples;
10. *Huangtong jing* 黃庭經 (j. 54-60), with two Tang commentaries.

The text aims to show the continuity of Golden Elixir teachings from early times to the present and their relevance to Chan Buddhist con-
temptation, Neo-Confucian moral self-cultivation and Daoist ritual practice.

LATER WORKS. Two works organized similarly to the *Wujun pian* were ascribed to two successive generations of Zhang’s disciples and became integral parts of the Nanzong heritage. These are Shi Tai’s *Huanyuan pian* 返源篇 (Chapters for Returning to the Wellsprings, CT 1091, 9 pp., and CT 263, 2.1a-13b) and Xue Shi’s 薛式 *Huandan fuming pian* 還丹復命篇 (Chapters for Restoring Destiny via the Cyclically Transformed Elixir, CT 1088, 11 pp., and CT 263, 7.4b-10b). The received versions of both works bear prefaces with late Northern Song dates. Yu Yan suggested that the similarity between the terminology and phrasing in these two works and writings by Bai Yuchan made their ascribed authorship suspicious. The work ascribed to Shi Tai consists of 85 five-syllable verses in the cut-off form, all dealing with the Golden Elixir. Although the independently circulating text has no preface, the version in the *Xiuzhen shishu* has an undated preface signed by Shi Tai. The more complicated independent work ascribed to Xue Shi has sixteen five-syllable regulated verses and nine lyrics in the “Xijiang yue” 西江月 (West River Moon) tune, followed by a separate collection of thirty-four songs called *Dansuige* 丹髓歌 (Songs on the Marrow of the Elixir). The version in the *Xiuzhen shishu* contains the same songs, but unlike the previous version has an afterword by Shi Tai.

Texts signed with Chen Nan’s 陳楠 (d. 1213) name include those dealing with both neidan and Daoist ritual, and are part of sources compiled by Chen’s disciple, Bai Yuchan or his followers. The *Cuixu pian* 沛虛篇 (A Folio of [Chen] Cuixu, CT 1090, 26 pp.) has an undated preface by the Yuan scholar Wang Sicheng 王思誠 (1291-1357), who says that the work is the culmination of Zhang Boduan’s teachings on the Golden Elixir (Boltz 1987, 175). A work entitled *Cuixu pian* in the *Xiuzhen shishu* (CT 263, 17.1a-22b) is attributed to Chen Pu 陳朴 and followed by a different set of neidan instructions called “Secret Instructions on the Ninefold Cycles of the Golden Elixir.”

Several Daozang works perpetuate the teachings and traditions of the Fujianese painter, alchemist and Daoist Bai Yuchan (1194-1227), some relating to his contemplative practices, others to his ritual activities (Imai 1963; Yokote 1996). Certain significant treatises resulted from the teaching encounters of his disciples: the *Haiqiong chuandao ji* 海瓊傳道集 (Anthology of [Bai of] Haiqiong’s Transmission of the Way, CT 1309, 16 pp.), *Haiqiong wendao ji* 海瓊問道集 (Anthology of [Bai of] Haiqiong’s Queries on the Way, CT 1308, 21 pp.) and the *Haiqiong Bai zhenren yulu* 海瓊白真人語錄 (Recorded Sayings of Perfected Bai of Haiqiong, CT 1307, 4 j.). A fourth work, the *Jingyu xuanwen* 靜餘玄問 (Transquil Remnants and Abstruse Queries, CT 1252, 6 pp.), contains several identical passages as the *yulu*.
Finally, most of the first compilation of the *Xužhen shishu* contains teachings either from the hand of or reshaped by Bai Yuchan.

The Yizhen (Jiangsu) adept, exegete and Daoist priest Li Dao-chun 李道纯 (fl. 1288-90) was among the first to revere both the legacy of Zhang Boduan and the Quanzhen patriarchy. He has left us the most complete record of contemplative alchemy among literati in early Yuan times. From the eighteenth century onward, his teachings were associated with what scholars now call—in symmetry to the Southern and Northern Lineages—the Central Branch (*zhong-pai* 中派) of *neidan*. His teachings stressed the similarities between the Buddhist Prajñāpāramitā tradition, the Daoist classics, the teachings of early Chan Buddhist masters, the cosmological speculations of Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-73) and the ideas of earlier alchemists like Zhang Boduan, Bai Yuchan and Wang Chongyang. The most renowned work containing his teachings was the *Zhonghe ji* 中和集 (Anthology of Medial Harmony, CT 249, 6 j.; Boltz 1987, 181-82). His *Qing'an Yingchanzi yulu* 淸庵瑩蟾子語錄 (Recorded Sayings of [Li] Qing’an, the Master of the Shining Toad, CT 1060, 6 j.; Boltz 1987, 180-81) is a treasure trove of material related to his teachings among his disciples in Jiangsu, and bears comparison with the extensive writings of his disciple Miao Shanshi 苗善時 (fl. 1288-1324; see Boltz 1987, 182-83).

By the first third of the fourteenth century, Chen Zhixu 陳致虛 (hao Shangyangzi 上陽子; 1289-after 1335, from Luling 儀陵 in Jiangxi) sought to identify the Way of the Golden Elixir with Quanzhen. While claiming to have inherited the tradition of the Song imperial clansmen Zhao Youqin 趙友欽 on Mount Heng in 1329, Chen asserted that he did not come to a genuine understanding until discovering the teachings of the Elder of the Qingcheng Mountains 青城山 (Sichuan). Chen’s written genealogy, moreover, grafts the line of Zhao Youqin’s two immediate predecessors onto a leading line of Quanzhen patriarchs. Simultaneously he places the patriarchy stemming from Zhang Boduan in an inferior position, thereby effectively identifying the Golden Elixir heritage (which had developed and circulated in the south) with the Quanzhen heritage. While Chen sometimes refers to himself as a Complete Perfection master, the significance he intended by this term is hard to determine. He compiled the most comprehensive set of treatises devoted to all aspects of the Golden Elixir heritage to date, spanning from practice and doctrine to hagiography and genealogy (*Shangyangzi jindan dayao* 上陽子金丹大要 [Great Essentials on the Golden Elixir of Shangyangzi], CT 1067; *Shangyangzi jindan dayao tu* 圖 [Diagrams], CT 1068; *Shangyangzi jindan dayao liejuan zhuan* 列仙傳 [Hagiographies of the Transcendents], CT 1069; *Shangyangzi jindan dayao xianpai* 仙派 [Genealogical Account of the Transcendents], CT 1070), as well as a celebrated commentary to the *Cantong qi* (Zhouyi cantong qi fenzhang zhu
DEFINITION. The term neidan and its synonym jindan refer to three things: 1. a coherent body of oral and written teachings; 2. regimens of practices related to these teachings; and 3. an inner state realized through these practices. Reaching this state derives from generating and nourishing the perfected or realized one’s (zhiren 真人) “holy embryo” (shengtai 聖胎).

Cosmological and alchemical emblems represent both the nature of reality and the process of self-realization. These emblems describe cosmogonic stages with the corresponding cosmological configurations, and the inversion of the cosmogonic process with return (fan 反) to the pre-cosmological state of being. Neidan, therefore, uses cosmological language both to articulate the fundamental patterns of the cosmos and to guide adepts to a primordial order. This distinguishes neidan from other modes of contemplation and physiological practices, allowing it to become a vehicle for intellectual speculation (Robinet 1997, 107, 216-17).

Authors such as Li Daochun, Chen Zhixu and Liu Yiming emphasize two routes to realizing neidan, sometimes designating them shangde 上德 or “higher virtue” and xiade 下德 or “lower virtue,” terms found in both the Laozi (ch.38) and the Cantong qi. The way of lower virtue moves from the cosmos as we know it to its ultimate source and is based on self-conscious activity (youwei 意為). It requires discipline and uses cosmological and alchemical emblems as tools to guide the inner process of realization. The way of higher virtue, by contrast, starts with the awareness of the fundamental nature of reality and the human being. It is based on spontaneous, unself-conscious and non-intervening activity (wuwéi 無為), permitting the immediate recognition of the real nature of oneself and the cosmos. Adepts only received it by direct transmission (shouzhuan 手傳) from master to disciple.

SYNCRETISM. The lack of a central unifying authority meant that a multiplicity of local interpretations for neidan traditions could still share common doctrinal foundations. This ensured adepts in these traditions could relate themselves with ideas and practices of other traditions while retaining the emphasis of their teachers. Among the important sources of doctrines, notions and terms for neidan authors are Daoist classics like the Laozi and the Zhuangzi; the Yi-jing and other sources of classical cosmology; medical canons like the various recensions of the Huangdi neijing 黃帝內經 (Inner Scripture of
the Yellow Emperor); and, to a lesser extent, some early Confucian works like the Zhongyong (Doctrine of the Mean) and Buddhist scriptures like the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom).

The claim of the unity of three teachings (sanjiao 三教, i.e., Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism) is an obvious expression of neidan syncretism. Common from Song times on, syncretism became fundamental to Ming and Qing traditions (Robinet 1995, 50-74; Dean 1998, 21-28; see also Liu 1984). Neidan masters often knew Buddhism and classical modes of self-cultivation, just as some Buddhists and classically-trained adepts mastered the new neidan traditions. This underlies their claims that realizing Nonbeing (wu 無) was the same as realizing Emptiness (kong 空), and that a “return to the origin” (huanyuan 还元) in neidan was the same as the Chan goal of returning to the “original mind” (benxin 本心; Li M. 1988; Robinet 1995, 74; Boltz 1987, 235-36). Neidan also provided a conduit for transmitting earlier philosophical and cosmological notions to Neo-Confucianism (Robinet 1997, 216; Imai 1960).

Various earlier practices were incorporated in neidan with modifications, such as breathing techniques (e.g., laixi or embryonic breathing), absorbing the essences of the Five Agents in the viscera and forms of meditation such as zuowang and neiguan. Waidan also gave neidan a rich stock of terms—names and secret terms of substances, instruments, and operations—and, more importantly, the binary model of the alchemical process based on the conjunction of Real Lead and Real Mercury.

ORDERING DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES. Because neidan was linked to a range of traditions and practices, some authors arranged them into stages (Robinet 1997, 252-56). Li Daochun devised the most elaborate classification, ranking the various “paths” (dao 道) into three main clusters (Zhonghe ji 2.12b-17a). The first, called Nine Grades (jiupin 九品), includes sexual practices, waidan, observing precepts, reciting scriptures, minor rites, diets, massage, daoyin 喜引, breathing, circulating and ingesting qi, absorbing solar and astral essences, meditation, visualization, and other similar practices and techniques. The second, reaching into inner alchemy proper, consists of the Three Vehicles of Gradual Methods (jianfa sansheng 渐法三乘), corresponding to physiological, psychological, and spiritual neidan practices, respectively. Like other authors, Li Daochun locates a final cluster above the second, calling it the Most High One Vehicle (zuishang yisheng 最上一乘), which is distinguished by nonactivity and by the spontaneous integration of one’s original nature (xing 性) with being in the world or “destiny” (ming 命), of one’s original nature with affections (qing 情), and of concentration (ding 定) with wisdom (hui 慧).
The outline of neidan doctrines in this and the following sections is mostly based on the Nanzong and later codifications. They, in turn, based their doctrines on classical cosmogonic and cosmological theories. Writers of inner alchemical works fully accepted classical views on the generation of the cosmos, the correspondences among its different plans and entities and the arrangements of cosmological emblems. However, they also stressed that these emblems are essentially “images” (xiang), mediating absolute existence and the mundane world (Robinet 1993, 48-54; 1995, 84-90). Cosmological notions and terms help structure and guide early phases of the neidan process by framing both its teachings and its practices. Still, they are simply, in Li Daochun’s words, an attempt to “render the Formless into form, and thereby manifest the authentic, absolute Dao” (Zhonghe ji 3.13a; Robinet 1995, 75-102).

While this awareness paradoxically seems to sanction an unrestricted freedom to multiply images and words (see Needham et al.1983, 49-67; Meng 1990), the transcendent, speechless level of the Dao underlies all symbols and emblems. Notions and images illustrate the phases of the formation of the cosmos and help the adept to understand this process. Once understood, adepts may follow it in reverse. To do so, neidan continues basic notions of both classical Daoist thought and correlative cosmology, while stressing the awareness that cosmogony—which in neidan is a movement from the absolute to the conditioned—does not take place in illo tempore but is part of a regular process both fixed and perceived by the mind.

These ideas find their classical formulation in the Laozi (chap. 42), which is often quoted in neidan sources. This passage describes the cosmogonic process as moving from Nonbeing or the Dao to Oneness; the One then spontaneously divides into the two complementary principles (yin/yang), which in turn generate the “ten thousand things” (wanwu) or the manifest cosmos. This sequence also underlies neidan practice as it seeks to reverse the process in order to return to Nonbeing. After recovering the particles of original yin and yang energies which normally dissipate, the adept refines them and fuses them into the state of undifferentiated Oneness. This primeval, atemporal state has many names, among them chunyang or Pure Yang, and is represented by the elixir, gold, Real Lead or the unbroken line of the Tijing (Robinet 1995, 114-20; Pregadio 1995, 160-62). Once this “particle” (dian) of Pure Yang is recovered, the adept can proceed further to gain access to the state of Nonbeing or the Dao itself.

The cosmogonic stages through the division of the One into the two are embodied in the “prenatal” state “before Heaven” (xiantian), while the cosmos of ordinary perception is called the “postnatal” state “after Heaven” (houtian). These two major states take place before and after the process called the “opening of
"Heaven" (kaihan 開天), the actual generation or manifestation of the cosmos. While yin and yang “before Heaven” are in their prime state and join to form Oneness, in the state “after Heaven” original yang is enclosed in yin entities (“yang within yin”), while original yin is found in yang entities (“yin within yang”). This notion underlies several modes of representation of the neidan process, and provides the foundations for recovering the primary constituents of the cosmos and the human person.

**REPRESENTATIONS.** The first representation is the doctrine of the three treasures (sanbao 三寶), namely jing 精 (essence), qi 氣 (vital energy/pneuma), and shen 神 (spirit), which are the basic ingredients of the neidan process (Wang Mu 1990, 272-80; Robinet 1985; Esposito 1997, 32-36). Each of the Three Treasures has an authentic and a conditioned aspect. In the state “before Heaven,” energy is the principle of cosmic manifestation (i.e., the energy that makes the cosmogonic process happen), essence is the principle of material manifestation (as stated in Laozi 21) and spirit is the principle of subtle manifestation (including divinities, spirits and the human mind). These aspects of the Three Treasures are called “primordial” (yuan 元). In the state “after Heaven,” as far as human beings are concerned, energy is manifested as breath, essence as an indeterminate force that may appear as male semen and female menstrual blood, and spirit as the mind. Each of the three conditioned aspects replaces the correspondent authentic aspects, but is also capable of revealing them when they are refined and restored to their primordial state through neidan practice.

The interplay of conditioned and authentic aspects is also apparent in another representation, based on cosmological emblems. Neidan texts underline the different values taken on by the same emblems in the two configurations of the Yi jing trigrams traditionally attributed to Fu Xi 伏羲 and King Wen 文王, respectively. In the first configuration, which represents the unconditioned state “before Heaven,” original yin and yang are represented by the trigrams kan 坎  иностранн and qian 彖 .spy北, respectively, while li 离 火  at due East and West, respectively. In the configuration related to the state “after Heaven,” qian and kan are displaced to other positions, and their places are taken by kan (North) and li (South). In other words, kan is the conditioned aspect of kan, and li is the conditioned aspect of qian. However, the yin trigram kan or Water encloses a solid yang line, which is Real Fire (“yang within yin”), and the yang trigram li or Fire encloses a broken yin line, which is Real Water (“yin within yang”). The two inner lines symbolize the original yin and yang principles of “before Heaven” (see Needham et al. 1983, 40-41).

The same pattern can also be represented by alchemical emblems proper, which neidan draws from the cosmological tradition of waidan.
Native lead and cinnabar represent the yin and yang principles in their state "after Heaven." They contain Real Lead and Real Mercury, respectively, which correspond to the authentic yang and authentic yin of "before Heaven." Joining Real Lead and Real Mercury regenerates the state of Oneness. While the alchemical process in waidan ends here, the formation of the inner elixir is only a stage of the practice in neidan, which is completed when the adept returns to the Dao or Nonbeing.

CONTINUATION AND INVERSION. Authors of inner alchemical texts repeatedly state that cosmogony is the chief example of the process designed as "continuation" (shun 順, a sequence of stages that leads to degeneration and ultimately to death), whereas neidan is based on the opposite notion of "inversion" (ni 逆). In neidan, the alchemist's task is literally to turn upside down (diandao 倒) the normal processes of the cosmos (Robinet 1995, 131-45).

In the state "before Heaven," yin and yang have a tendency to descend and ascend, respectively. Alchemists see this in, for example, the fact that during the cosmogonic process yin forms Earth, and yang becomes Heaven (in traditional Chinese cosmology north or yin is below, and south or yang is above). In the state "after Heaven," where original yin and yang are enclosed within entities of the opposite sign, the descending movement of yin takes along original yang, and the ascending movement of yang takes along original yin: Real Fire goes down with Water (kan 火), and Real Water goes up with Fire (li 水). Original yin and yang, therefore, are bound to move in directions opposite to their authentic nature and to separate from each other.

Neidan aims to set the original yin and yang free from their corrupted counterparts and allow them to follow again their natural tendency. The inner yin line of li descends while the inner yang line of kan rises, and yin and yang can again join in the center, this time generating the inner elixir or embryo of immortality. With different imagery, the authentic principles released by the neidan process are Real Lead (yang) in native lead (yin) and Real Mercury (yin) in cinnabar (yang); or Real Fire (yang) in the kidneys (yin) and Real Water (yin) in the lungs (yang). This process is an inversion because it reverses the ascending movement of li/Fire and the descending movement of kan/Water; but simultaneously it is not, because the movement of the inner lines follows their natural inclination. "Inversion," therefore, is a release of the natural properties of original yin and yang: the neidan process, as one often reads in the texts, is "natural" or "spontaneous" (ziran 自然).

THE VIEW OF THE HUMAN BEING. Neidan writings often state that all the ingredients needed to compound the elixir are found within each person. The person is the alchemical laboratory, not only with the Three Treasures, but also with the Furnace (li 火) and the
Tripod (*ding* 丁), two abstract notions which designate any pair of complementary entities such as body and mind, heart and kidneys, or mercury and lead (the fiery Furnace is yang, the receiving Tripod is yin; Robinet 1995, 92-95; Wang Mu 1990, 296-97). Moreover, *neidan* uses a large number of notions and terms to describe the human being and the alchemical process, in part inherited from Buddhism and traditional Chinese medicine. Some of these notions, like original nature, are entirely immaterial; others, like the Elixir Fields, refer to loci in the person (*shen* 身) with no corresponding loci in the body (*tǐ* 体); in other instances, authors refer to a material organ of the body (e.g., the heart-mind) as the seat of an immaterial entity (in this instance, the spirit).

**CONCEPTION OF THE BODY.** The main pair of notions is that of *xing* 性 and *ming* 印. *Xing* is one’s original nature, and *ming* is the unique “imprint” received from Heaven at birth, including the allotment of energy to spend in one’s life. While *xing* endures and is unchangeable, *ming* has limits which an individual may modify to a degree. Human beings may or may not be able to actualize their *xing* and *ming* in their lifetimes; *neidan* texts ask them to “exhaust” them (*liao* 了, a term that also denotes thorough knowledge), that is, to merge them into a single entity and transcend them (Robinet 165-95; Despeux 1990, 223-27).

*Xing* is also often paired with *qing* 情, a term designating one’s physical and emotional states and reactions which may overcome and obscure one’s original nature. Several *neidan* authors assert that the shift from the authentic to the conditioned aspects of reality results from one’s affections and senses overwhelming one’s original nature. Here too, authors hold that nature and affections should be merged and unified.

The whole *neidan* process, with both spiritual and physical aspects, is guided by one’s *xin* (heart-mind). Not only is *xin* the seat of the spirit, but several *neidan* authors describe it as the faculty making the realization of the Dao possible (Robinet 1995, 70-74; Despeux 1990, 230-36) *xin*, in fact, is home to the *yì* 意 or “creative imagination” which guides and makes possible the joining of yin and yang and the generation and nourishment of the inner elixir (Robinet 1995, 191-95; Esposito 1997, 41-42).

Practice, as one often reads in *neidan* writings, involves opening the mysterious barrier (*xuanguan* 玄關), the discernment of which requires direct instruction from a master. Variously located by different texts, the Mysterious Barrier is sometimes situated between the eyebrows, in the Yellow Court, or in the lower Elixir Field. Other writers, however, emphasize that it is not found at any particular place in the body. In fact, some expressions used in describing it (“it is a thing but is not a thing;” “it is nowhere in one’s body, but should not be looked for outside one’s body”) suggest that the opening of the Mys-
terious Barrier is the first experience of realization during the practice (Robinet 1995, 103-7; Wang Mu 1990, 264; Esposito 1997, 43).

The main inner loci of the person are the three dantian or Elixir Fields (also commonly rendered Cinnabar Fields), where the elixir forms and is nourished by the adept. The Three Fields are the niwan (Pill of Mud) in the head, the zigong (Purple Palace) in the chest and the dantian proper in the abdomen (Wang Mu 1990, 264-66; Despeux 1979, 23-27; Maspero 1981 [1937], 326-29 and 455-59). The Elixir Fields are found at least as early as Ge Hong, who makes them homes to the three Ones. In Shangqing Daoism, each of the three Elixir Fields houses a group of eight divinities imagined as "eight effulgences" (bajing 八景).

Two channels, the dumai (Channel of Control) along the back and the renmai (Channel of Conception) in the front of the body, both well-known in traditional Chinese medicine, play an important role in the first phase of neidan practice (Despeux 1979, 27-47; Wang Mu 1990, 266-71; Esposito 1997, 40-41). In this phase, one's essence (jing) circulates through the channels, repeatedly passing through the Three Barriers (sanguan 三關) named weilii 尾閘 in the coccyx, jiaji 夹脊 between the shoulder blades, and yuzhen 玉枕 in the occiput (Despeux 1994, 80-87; Wang Mu 1990, 271-72; Esposito 1997, 51-63).

Building on earlier traditions, especially those of the Huangting jing, the neidan view of the human being has often been represented in diagrams and illustrations. The most famous are the Neijing tu (Chart of the Inner Warp), whose main version dates from 1886 and is found in Beijing's Baiyun guan (White Cloud Temple), and the more detailed Xiuzhen tu (Chart of the Cultivation of Perfection), transmitted in several versions (Despeux 1994; Sakade 1991b).

**Practices**

**OVERVIEW.** Neidan practices draw from the range of physiological and meditational techniques that appeared from the Han period onward. While many of these techniques belong to the vast domain of yangsheng, they are adapted to the purposes of neidan and reinterpreted through alchemical emblems. For instance, while the practice of huajing bunao 還精補腦 or "returning the essence to restore the brain" originally designates a sexual technique to preserve the male semen, in neidan it becomes the basis for the process of cycling one's essence. Even though many neidan traditions retain the symbolism of sexual union, sexual practices are not central to mainstream traditions (Robinet 1995, 48-50, and 1997, 227; the expression shuangxu 雙修 or "dual cultivation," sometimes taken to mean
sexual practices, usually describes the combined cultivation of xing and ming).

From the ninth century onward, neidan traditions developed different practices (Robinet 1995, 40-50; 1997, 225-27). The two main sources of these developments were the Zhong-Lü school (Baldrian-Hussein 1984, 53-193) which emphasized physical cultivation, and the Southern Lineage (Wang Mu 1990, 261-310) which stressed mental and spiritual aspects of self-cultivation. From the late fourteenth century, writers often describe the difference between the practice of neidan in the Southern Lineage and the Quanzhen or Northern Lineage traditions according to the relative priority of cultivating xing and ming. Most writers view Southern Lineage practices as focusing first on ming and then on xing, with the reverse true for Quanzhen. Yet texts of both traditions state that xing and ming should be cultivated together, and make no radical distinctions between their practices (Robinet 1995, 44-46). Other brands of practices were elaborated by later Ming and Qing schools (Despeux 1979, 48-82; and Esposito 1997, 31-63).

THREE STAGES. The most typical neidan practice consists of a preliminary stage and a longer portion divided into three parts. The latter three stages have symbolic lengths of one hundred days, ten months and nine years, respectively. Texts describing this model relate it to the cosmogonic process outlined in Laozi 42: “The Dao generates the One; the One generates the Two; the Two generate the Three; and the Three generate the Ten Thousand Things.” As shown in the table below, each stage of practice is associated with a stage of the cosmogonic process, and seeks to restore the conditions proper to that stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COSMOGONY: shun 顺</th>
<th>NEIDAN PRACTICE: ni 逆</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The Dao generates the One”</td>
<td>Dao 逆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The One generates the Two”</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Two generates the Three”</td>
<td>Two = = Breath (氣)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Three generates the 10,000”</td>
<td>Three = = Essence (精)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10,000 things (萬物)(*)

(*) This stage corresponds to the 64 hexagrams and their 384 lines.
While this three-stage process is not mentioned in the *Can tong qi*, several poems of the *Wuzhen pian* allude to it, and it appears in Weng Baoguang's commentary to the text (Wang Mu 1990, 262). Its elaboration would have to wait until Yuan times, and later it became central to the Wu-Liu 伍柳 school of Qing neidan. Some of its features and vocabulary also appear in other neidan subtraditions, which often modify them or use the same terms with different meanings. For more detailed descriptions of the process see Wang Mu 1990, 261-310 (summarized in Hu 1989, 15-21) and Robinet 1995, 147-64.

**Preliminary stage:** “Laying the Foundations” (*zhu yi* 立基) is a stage in which adepts cultivate both *xing* and *ming*, seeking to replenish the essence, breath or energy and spirit, so they can become ingredients in the following stages. The actual practices used at this stage resemble those of present-day *qigong* and do not involve making an inner elixir.

**First stage:** “Refining Essence and Transmuting it into Breath” (*lian jing hua qi* 炼精化气), also known as the “Barrier of Hundred Days” (*bai gun* 百日關) with a nod to its presumed duration, cultivates *ming* and seeks to unify one’s essence and breath/energy. Essence becomes breath through a process of cycling called the microcosmic orbit (*xiao rong tian* 小周天). The practices required to achieve this vary not only from tradition to tradition, but also from adept to adept. Most traditions imagine that the essence rises from the Gate of Life (*ming men* 命门) in the lower abdomen when stimulated by breath, passes by way of the *dumai* through the Three Barriers to the head, and then descends in the *renmai* passing through each of the three Elixir Fields. This path of circulating essence inverts its normal tendency to flow downwards. The “fire times” (*huohou* 火候) system, inherited from *waidan*, formally divides each cycle into twelve parts marked by the twelve Branches of Earth (*di zhi* 地支) and the twelve “primary hexagrams” (*bigua* 彪卦) of the *Yijing* (Wang Mu 1990, 291-96; Robinet 1995, 120-31; Baldrian-Hussein 1984, 88-105; Esposito 1997, 45-50). Breathing rhythms are regulated in multiples of nine in the first part of each cycle phase and in multiples of six in the second part, with two intermittent phases of “bathing” (*muyu* 浴浴) between each part. By repeatedly cycling essence in this manner, it becomes refined and forms the Outer Medicine (*waiyao*) in the lower Elixir Field.

**Second stage:** “Refining Breath/Energy and Transmuting it into Spirit” (*lian qi hua shen* 炼气化神), also called “Barrier of Ten Months” (*shi yue guan* 三十關, referring to the length of human gestation by Chinese reckoning), seeks to join one’s breath and spirit by cultivating the *xing*. Breath and spirit are imagined as Real Water in the lungs (yin within yang) and Real Fire in the kidneys (yang within yin). Their conjunction produces the Inner Medicine (*neiyao* 内藥), which adepts nourish between the lower and the middle Elixir Fields.
for ten symbolic months in a process known as macrocosmic orbit (da zhoutian 大周天). Texts state that this process begins spontaneously as one passes from self-conscious action into nonaction. At the end of this stage, essence, breath, and spirit are combined into one entity, and produce the Immortal Embryo (xiantai 仙胎).

**Third stage:** "Refining Spirit and Returning it to Emptiness" (tianshen huanxu 神還虛), also called the "Barrier of Nine Years" (jiunian guan 九年關, alluding to the legendary time Bodhidharma spent meditating in front of a wall), concentrates on cultivating one's xing. As the Embryo is nourished (rubu 乳哺, "breast-fed"), it grows until it is free to leave the adept's body through the upper Elixir Field in the head. As the practice ends, the adept returns to Emptiness, or the Dao.

**FEMALE INNER ALCHEMY** (nüdàn 女丹). The first reference to neidan practices for women dates from 1169, when Xue Shi described their main features (Wuzhen pian sanzhu, CT 142, "Ji" 記, 4a). While the contemporary female adept Cao Wenyi 曹文逸 wrote her Dadaoge 大道歌 (Song of the Great Way), its verses do not deal with women's alchemy (Despeux 1990, 83-93). Some contemporary poems attributed to Sun Bu'er, often deemed to be the earliest extant sources on nüdàn, are probably apocryphal (Despeux 1990, 111-26).

**Nüdàn** practices follow a similar three-stage process as that of men's neidan (Despeux 1990, 221-81; Hu 1989, 21-22), differing chiefly in the first and second stages because they acknowledge the physiological differences between women and men. While a man's energy resides in his lower Elixir Field, many texts assert that a woman's energy resides in a point between the breasts called qixue 氣穴 (Cavity of Energy, a name for the lower Elixir Field in a man's body). This energy produces secretions that become menstrual blood, which is the material aspect of essence in a woman's body. While the first stage of the practice for men reverses the downward dispersal of the essence by cycling it along the microcosmic orbit, in nüdàn this is obtained by massaging the breasts with circular strokes, so that their secretions, rather than transforming themselves into blood and becoming lost, serve to enrich the woman's natural endowment of energy. This results in the progressive diminution and final disappearance of menses, a process called Decapitation of the Red Dragon (zhan chilong 斬赤龍). Moreover, the repeated circulation of essence in a man's body brings about the formation of a foetal "pearl" (zhū 珠) in his lower Elixir Field. Since this "pearl" already exists in a woman's inner body, her aim becomes one of retarding its degradation and collecting it when it is in full brilliance, two and a half days before each menstruation. In the second stage of the practice, the Pearl is nurtured into the inner elixir. The tasks involved at this stage are also said to be easier for women, who can more easily
generate the embryo of immortality and access the third and final stage of the practice.

REFERENCES


CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

TALISMANS AND DIAGRAMS*

CATHERINE DESPEUX

DESCRIPTION

Talismans (fu 符), registers (lu 錦), diagrams (tu 圖), written documents (shu 書, chishu 赤書), perfect texts (chennwen 真文) and cloud seal writing (yunzhuan 雲篆) are fundamental elements of Daoism, closely related to the doctrines expressed in revealed scriptures and to legitimation of power invested by the gods in their representatives on earth.

Talismans, commonly used in conjunction with incantations or spells (zhou 咒) as well as with registers, are oblong pieces of wood, metal or, more recently, colored paper (usually yellow, red or blue) inscribed with figurative signs and formal symbols, written in black or red ink. Depending on the situation, they may serve as a manifestation of cosmic energies, a geomantic chart, the representation of a deity, an edict from the spirit world or an order issuing from one or the other god, which makes ghosts and demons tremble and keeps them under tight control. Registers, usually linked with talismans to form a sacred pair, are writs that contain lists of deities' names (or their images), talismans or diagrams. Formed by the spontaneous coagulation of cosmic energies and transmitted by the gods, all these sacred documents are contracts that give their holders power over divine troops and ensure the authenticity of scriptural transmission to human society (see Suishu 隋書35.1092).

Compared to talismans and registers, diagrams or sacred charts are a great deal less numerous and less frequently used. They can be divided into three major categories. The first includes those representing mythical geography or drawing the true shape of a geographic feature; examples are the charts of the five sacred mountains, of the Bird-Man Mountain, of the Lingbao paradise of Fuli 涌泉 and of the underworld of Fengdu 鬼都. The second type includes diagrams associated with the Iyijing 易經(Book of
Changes), which reveal the functioning of the universe and its cosmogonic principles; examples are the “Diagram of the Great Ultimate,” the “River Chart,” and the “Writ of the Luo.” The third, finally, consists of representations of the body, syntheses of cosmogonic elements, depictions of body gods, the underworld, alchemical processes and talismanic elements; the prime example here is the Neijing tu 内景图 or “Diagram of Interior Lights.”

They have in common that they depict, in abstract and diagrammatic form, the workings of the universe in its raw and undiluted state, showing adepts the interior structure, the true shape of things and thus endowing them with power over them.

HISTORY

ORIGINS. Talismans and diagrams are documented from the earliest Daoist movements under the Han. According to Anna Seidel,

the talismans, charts, registers, writs and tallies are not magic wands invented from scratch or derived from some preexisting folk religion or medium cult; they are, rather, elaborations upon the Han theme of imperial treasure objects, the presence of which guaranteed the imperial mandate. (1983, 292)

The most important of these treasures since the Han have been the Hetu 河图 (River Chart) and the Luoshu 洛书 (Writ of the Luo), which have been subject to numerous interpretations and speculations, but whose original design is unknown. They are, as will be documented below, the ancestors of all Daoist diagrams. For example, a Six Dynasties scripture recovered from Dunhuang, the Ruiying tu 瑞应图 (Chart of Being in Accord with Good Fortune, P. 2683), describes several mythical animals carrying sacred diagrams just like the Hetu and Luoshu.

As regards our view of the texts themselves, one of the apocryphal texts of the Han, the Longyu hetu 龙鱼河图 (River Chart of Fish and Dragon) relates the origins of talismans and registers specifically to Heaven in the legends of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黄帝). When he was fighting his battle with the Wormy Rebel (Chiyou 蛇尤), Huangdi was aided by Heaven, which sent sacred talismans through a mysterious fish. Since then, talismans and registers have been transmitted in the world (see Seidel 1983, 313).

Historically, the various terms involved (fu, tu, tu, shu) were used interchangeably in the texts. Both talismans and registers, moreover, were closely related to the idea of the contract (qi 契), while diagrams are connected with the concept of the true interior shape (zhengxing 真形). As a
result, these different sacred objects were often similar to one another—
talisms easily can resemble diagrams, and vice versa.

The most ancient talismans transmitted to date are from the Han. Archaeological excavations of Eastern Han tombs have brought to light some specimens dated before 151 C.E. (e.g., from Luoyang, Dingzhou and Gaoyou; see Wu 1981, 61-62). Even earlier, a manuscript excavated from tomb no. 3 at Mawangdui, dated to before 168 B.C.E., prescribes the ingestion of a talisman burnt to ashes and dissolved in water as a remedy for the effects of the infamous Gu poison. This indicates the therapeutic application of talismans already under the Western Han (see Harper 1982; 1998).

The same kind of therapeutic use is also attested for the Daoist movement under Zhang Daoling 張道陵, the first Celestial Master. Founded on the idea of a contract between the newly arisen Lord Lao and the Daoist community, it promised its members that the gods would grant them health and long life—provided they did not commit any sins. Therapeutic talismans were accordingly considered documents that guaranteed the contract between the deity and humanity (see Kaltenmark 1960, 584). In the same period, Zhang Jue 張角, the leader of the Great Peace movement in eastern China, also “drew up therapeutic talismans. He ordered the sick to prostrate themselves on the ground and confess their sins, then gave them talismanic water to drink, so they would be cured” (Sanguo zhi 三國志8.112; see Kobayashi 1991; Tsuchiya forthcoming).

In addition to healing, in the Later Han, talismans were also believed to have powers of exorcism and protection against harm. The fangshi Fei Changfang 贲長房, for example, received a talisman from his master that allowed him to command demons and earth spirits. The latter protected him well until he lost the talisman (Hou Hanshu 後漢書72.2734-45; see Ngo 1976, 128-34; Seidel 1983, 315; DeWoskin 1983).

LATER DEVELOPMENTS. In the Six Dynasties and Tang, all Daoist schools made use of talismans either as part of personal cultivation (complementing abstention from grains; see Eskildsen 1998, 58-59), as a means of entering the mountains safely, as protection during visualization practice or as collective charms in community rituals. Diagrams, on the other hand, were used largely in the Lingbao 禮寶 (Numinous Treasure) school, directly continuing usages of the imperial treasures of the Han.

From Song times onward, new Daoist schools proliferated that combined the teachings and practices of the three major medieval currents (Shangqing, Lingbao, and Celestial Masters) with new methods and other elements. Exorcistic, therapeutic and funerary rituals multiplied manifold, and individual practices, such as inner alchemy and ecstatic visualizations, were newly joined with rites geared to bring resolution to collective
problems, such as epidemics, droughts and communication with the dead. As a result, cartographic, symbolic, corporeal, cosmic and scriptural elements increased dramatically in the talismans. They became more diversified in type and a great deal more complex in nature, involving also more figurative forms. In addition, the sheer numbers of talismans transmitted in the literature of the period are enormous, much higher than before, especially since the great ritual compendia were produced then. Diagrams similarly became richer and more complex; they were associated primarily with the Shenxiao 神霄 (Divine Empyrean) school, with neurological speculation and with the philosophical discourse of the Yiying.

CELESTIAL MASTERS. The religious organization of the Celestial Masters followed the cosmological model of the Tiqi tu - 氣圖 (Chart of the Energy of Unity), which represented the twenty-four energies of the year. They had accordingly twenty-four parishes, plus one in the cosmic center—the great parish of Lord Lao on Mount Kunlun 崆山. The Tiqi tu was transmitted by libationers and consisted entirely of talismans, which were also handed down separately from a master to each disciple on the basis of his or her personality and fundamental destiny (as determined by the eight characters of the horoscope). Receiving the talismans made the disciples formally members of the community of Orthodox Unity. The talisman of transmission incorporated the energy of the master's body as well as the authority of the celestial realm. In the transmission ritual, the adept would identify himself with the essence of the talisman, which thereby became a protective force as well as one of control and critical awareness. The protective powers it commanded had human forms, and the adept had to learn how to see and interact with them. As he, with the help of the talisman, integrated himself into the overall cosmic chart, so he would become a full member of the social organization. His talisman, moreover, came with distinct registers that contained a list of his powers and established his rank within the institutional grades (Schipper 1994, 89-91). The registers served as the foundation of the Celestial Master's legitimation, and adepts' lives were punctuated at regular intervals by their transmission. The Zhengyi mengwei falu 正一盟威法録 (Formal Registers of the Awesome Covenant of Orthodox Unity, CT 1209) lists fourteen kinds, including registers for infants and those of ten generals, seventy-five functionaries, 150 immortal generals, and of the "three and five" used in sexual rites, as well as registers that protected the body, destiny and longevity, together with those that eliminated impurities and helped against demonic influences (see Fig: 1). Typically talismans were rectangular in shape and of a simple composition, mainly consisting of symbolic signs and stylized characters. In this they were similar to those contained in Ge
1. The great register of
ission of the Celestial

Figure 2. Talismans of
Orthodox Unity (A) as
compared to those in Ge
Hong’s Baopuzi (B). Source:
Samwu cheng Yi fabu, 3.13ab;
Baopu 17.
Figure 3. The Lingbao talisman of the north. Source: Lingbao wufu (CT 388) 3.11b.

Hong's (273-341) Baopuzi 抱朴子 (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185; see Fig. 2).

NUMINOUS TREASURE. The fundamental scripture of the Lingbao (Numinous Treasure) school is the Lingbao chuhu wupian zhenwen 灵宝赤书五篇真文 (Perfect Text of Numinous Treasure in Five Tablets, Written in Red, CT 22) of the late fourth century C.E. It presents the five perfect texts of the five cosmic emperors, each associated with one of the five inner organs. These perfect, celestial texts consist of characters believed to have been created from cosmic fire before the dissolution of primordial chaos. They were also considered numinous diagrams (lingtu 灵图).

The five talismans (wuju 五符) of the five emperors and the five sacred mountains, convoluted and intricate designs of lines and circles (see Fig. 3), are at the very core of the Lingbao tradition in the Six Dynasties. According to the Lingbao wufu (灵宝五符序) (Explanation of the Five Lingbao Talismans, CT 388), they were transmitted from the Three Sovereigns and
Five Emperors down to the flood hero Yu 舜 who hid them on Zhongshan 錘山 (Bell Mountain) of the Kunlun range, where they were rediscovered by King Helu 蒲闐 of Wu. The latter, however, was not worthy of them and lost them again (see Kaltenmark 1960; Bokcnkamp 1986). The talismans were made accessible again to the human world at the end of the Han, notably to Ge Xuan 葛玄, who transmitted them to his descendants of the Ge family. In Ge Hong’s time, in the early fourth century, the five talismans formed part of the Lingbao scriptures; one set appears as the five talismans used to enter the mountains (Baopuzi 17; see Chen 1975, 62-66). For the latter, we even have instructions on their use:

When you are going into the mountains, choose a jiayin day on which to write the talismans on plain silk, place them at night on a table, and as you face the Northern Dipper offer them sacrifices of wine and salted meat. To each of them introduce yourself briefly by name, bow twice, and then place them in the neck of your garment. This will drive from you the many ghosts and powers, the tigers, wolves, insects, and poisons from the mountains and rivers. (Ware 1966, 295)

These talismans, therefore, protected the adept while entering the mountain, while also giving him the means to collect the right herbs, surround himself with guarding charms and find support in his quest for immortality.

While the earliest Lingbao scriptures are lost except for some traces in Han-dynasty apocrypha; they apparently consisted to a large extent of cosmic diagrams. Three parts are known:

1. Hetu yincun fu 河圖陰存符 (River Chart Talisman of Invisibility), which consisted of talismans associated with the Hetu that allowed adepts to become invisible;
2. *Yiluo jiao* (Flying Tortoise of the Yi and Luo Rivers), which described the *Luoshu* as brought to humanity by a wondrous tortoise;

3. *Pingheng* (Equalizer), which dealt with the cosmic balance of great peace, as symbolized by the star *Yu-heng* of the Northern Dipper.

For Lingbao Daoists of the fifth century, these texts were none other than the *Hetu* and *Luoshu* themselves (see Kaltenmark 1960; Seidel 1982; Yamada 1989, 103).

Although diagrams are most prominent in Lingbao Daoism, other schools also made use of them. For the pre-Song period, three series should be mentioned. First, there is the group of diagrams associated with the *Wuyue zhengxing tu* (Chart of the True Shape of the Five Sacred Mountains, CT 1223; see Chen 1975, 77-78). Their first and very ancient symbolic representation is attributed to Dongfang Shuo (史前, magician under the Han emperor Wu (武帝), who made it accessible to the world. Their next appearance, similar to the first but with more inscriptions, is in a manuscript associated with Ge Hong. Here each mountain looks like a big black shape placed in a square box. The black shape represents the true form of the mountain, while the lines and small (red) points inside indicate the sources and courses of its waterways; the larger (yellow) points are grottos (see Fig. 4).

Other lines of transmission of the "True Shape" series run from Xiwang mu (西王母, the Queen Mother of the West, to the Han emperor Wu (see Schipper 1967), and again from Lord Lao to Lu Nüsheng (魯女生), Ji Zixun (疵子訓), Feng Junda (馮君大), Zuo Ci (左慈), Zheng Xuan (鄭玄) and Ge Hong (Sheyuan zhou; see Güntsch 1988). Any adept carrying them has his name inscribed in the registers of immortality, is free from all illness, pestilences and calamities, can easily enter the mountains, has access to their healing plants and powerful spirits, and will be honored by the gods and spirits. In addition, the *Wuyue zhengxing tu* diagrams are inseparable from the *Sanhuang wen* (Texts of the Three Sovereigns; see Andersen 1991), because they form the terrestrial counterpart to the Five Emperors in heaven and thus represent a key level of the tripartite cosmos—heaven, earth, humanity (Schipper 1975, 29).

The next major series of diagrams is the *Renniao shan tu* (Diagram of Bird-Man Mountain), so named because it has the appearance of a human figure and a bird. It is linked with to Bian Que (扁鶴), a legendary physician of antiquity and also a bird-man (see Shiji (史記) 105), like the Lord of Great Unity (Taiyi jun (太一君), the father of the Dao (Kaltenmark 1974, 159). A residence of the celestials, the mountain is described in the *Shizhou ji* (Record of the Ten Continents, CT 598; see Smith 1990) of the Six Dynasties as one section of the tenth paradise island; it contains particularly numinous grottoes. A matrix of the world and
origin of heaven, earth and humanity, Man-Bird Mountain is the place where primordial energy originates, the wondrous transformations at the beginning of time occur and the sacred scriptures are preserved—themselves traces of marvelous spirit forces that surged from the primordial transformation of cosmic energy. They formed eleven characters in spontaneous writing in the interior of the mountain, plus 244 on its exterior—124 to the left and 120 to the right (see Fig. 5). The words describe the mountain and its cosmic powers and have, in fact, been transmitted in the Boopuzi (6.117; Ware 1966, 120-21). According to this, the exterior line of characters describes the mountain as the Mountain of Great Origin 大元山, while the interior group lauds it as the Mountain of the Long Valley 長谷山. It is here that the peaks of the father and mother of the Dao are united (Lagerwey 1991, 134-36).

The diagram also plays a role in the Shangqing (Highest Clarity) school, where it appears in the Taijí yünjüe 太極隱訣 (Secret Instructions of [the Lord of] Great Ultimate, CT 425). According to this, Man-Bird Mountain was where Xiwang mu first submitted herself to Daoist training (9ab). Animals on the mountain are immortals who can move about flying and have better intellectual powers than humans on earth. The mountain itself and its properties, moreover, suggest that it might be considered as a flying peak with wondrous abilities and powers. Its diagram is activated either by ingesting it, an act that integrates and interiorizes the cosmic origin and paradise in the adept's body, or by carrying it on one's body. Either way, it
ensures extended longevity, gives access to the Dao and allows the realization of the perfection and mystery of the Three Caverns.

A third series of diagrams is also of Lingbao origin. A set of twenty-four charts, described in the *Lingbao ershisi shengtu* (Twenty-four Lingbao Diagrams of Life, CT 1407, *Yunji qiqian* 80), they seem to have been of some importance in the Six Dynasties but have not survived to the present day, with the possible exception of some materials contained in CT 767 (see Andersen 1994). The text we have in CT 1407 describes them and explains their origin, virtues and related talismans. It seems also that the diagrams were closely associated with the twenty-four jade talismans used in contemplation of the gods and palaces within the body. The latter were first presented by Lord Li after one thousand days of
intense purification practice. While the diagrams are not included in the surviving text, their names show that they were linked with books found in the library of Ge Hong. Here twenty-four spirit administrators are mentioned who serve in the three primordial realms (sanyuan 三元), eight in each. Lord Li ordained that adepts make a copy of the twenty-four diagrams as they appeared in heaven, written in characters of jade on tablets of gold (see Bokenkamp 1983, 458-59).

HIGHEST CLARITY. In Shangqing Daoism, talismans served as a necessary counterpart to the sacred scriptures. As Isabelle Robinet explains:

Those who possess the jing without fu will be harmed by heavenly demons; for those who possess the fu without jing, their meditation will not engender [any response] and the true spirits will not descend. (Suhng jing 素靈經 53b; Robinet 1993, 32)

Talismans here for the most part are concretizations of cosmic essences, including such elementals as the sun, moon, stars, clouds, thunder, lightning, planets and so on. In addition, they incorporate the power of the gods and thus function not only as cosmic passports but also as devices of protection.
A key talismanic series of Highest Clarity is linked with the talisman called *Liujin huoliting* (Liquid Gold Firebell; see Fig. 6), which was formed from the yang essence of the nine stars of the Northern Dipper, created before the emergence of the Nine Heavens. It shines above the head of the Lord of the Dao and proved its power when it helped drive out the six demonic heavens and install the salvific reign of the Three Heavens (see CT 1322, 7-17a; CT 1337, 8a-12a; Robinet 1984, 2:113; 1995, 32). It is closely associated with the talismans called *Huoluo qiyuan* (Seven Primes Falling; see Fig. 7), a manifestation of the yin rays of the Dipper stars which open the gate of heaven and close the door of death (see CT 392; CT 1337, 4a-6b).

The two sets of talismans are indispensable for adepts who wish to travel up to heaven and wander on the starry net above. Adepts may also apply other talismans for the same purpose, such as those listed in the *Feigang siming dalu* (Great Register of the Ruler of Fates for Flying along the Net, CT 675). This text presents a register in the form of a combination of talismans; the latter are to be placed on different parts of the adept's body while he undertakes visualizations that move him up and into the celestial spheres.

Certain talismans also operated as supports for the gods of the pantheon. The key canonical scripture here is the *Dadong zhenjing* (Perfect Scripture of Great Profundity, CT 6; see Robinet 1983), which consists of thirty-nine talismans associated with specific deities of Highest Clarity. The talismans are linked with a number of positive body gods, such as those of the Gate of Life, of the five inner organs, six viscera, blood and vital energy, but they also help to dissolve demonic influences which people carry within their bodies.

Other major talismans of Highest Clarity are the *Jinhu fu* (Talisman of the Metal Tiger; CT 1337) and the *Shenhu fu* (Talisman of the Divine Tiger; CT 1333, 1334; Robinet 1984, 2:180-81, 247-48), which grant general protection and spiritual support. Others are more specific, ensuring invulnerability from water, fire and weapons and helping to procure a lifespan of cosmic dimensions (CT 1315, 16b-20b; Robinet 1984, 2: 119-25). Aside from talismans, the school also makes use of registers, which mainly provide the secret names of the gods of the stars, the body, the dragons of space and other deities, notably those of Tortoise Mountain, the root of the Nine Heavens and origin of all energies, where the Queen Mother lives (see CT 1396). They also include the *Hetu*, whose key number nine corresponds to the nine stars of the Dipper and which was both transmitted and carried by adepts of Highest Clarity (CT 1367, 2ab).
HEAVENLY HEART. The new school of Tianxin 天心 began in the 930s in the southern kingdom of Min and is commonly associated with the find of a number of secret texts on Mount Huagai 華蓋山 (Jiangxi) in 994. It centers on the force of the “Heavenly Heart,” the stars of the Dipper and a deity most noted for his healing powers. The cult spread widely in twelfth-century south China and developed a special form of exorcism that was also focused on the demon-quelling powers of the North Culmen 北極 (see Drexler 1994, 23-46).

The talismans of this school are mainly contained in seven texts:

— *Tianxin zhengfa* 天心正法 (Proper Methods of the Heavenly Heart, CT 566), by Deng Yougong 鄧有功 (1210-79; see Boltz 1987, 35; Andersen 1991, 81-85).

— *Zhu guo jiumin bixiao* 助國救民秘要 (Secret Essentials on How to Aid the State and Save the People, CT 1227), by Yuan Miaozong 元妙宗, dat. 1116);

— *Bei ji tianxin zhengfa* 北極天心正法 (Proper Method of the North Culmen and Heavenly Heart, CT 567);

— *Yu dang dafa* 玉堂大法 (Great Methods of the Jade Hall, CT 220), by Lu Shizhong 魯時中 (fl. 1120-30; see Andersen 1991, 97-101);

— *Daomen tongjiao biyong ji* 道門通教必用集 (Collection of Works Necessary for All Daoists Penetrating the Teaching, CT 1226), especially juan 9;

— *Fahai yizhu* 法海遺珠 (Lost Pearls from the Sea of Ritual, CT 1166; see Boltz 1987, 51);
TALISMANS AND SACRED DIAGRAMS

— Daofa huiyuan 道法會元 (A Corpus of Taoist Ritual, CT 1220), of the Yuan dynasty (see Boltz 1987, 30, 47; Loon 1980), especially juan 159-69.

The Zhuguo jumin biyao stands out in particular because it has, for the first time, pseudo-Sanskrit words associated with talismans (Boltz 1987, 33-38), but the other texts also contain a large variety and many new forms of talismanic design.

The Heavenly Heart school centered its practice on three main talismans: the Sanguang ju 四光符 (Talisman of the Three Luminants); the Tiangang ju 天罡符 (Talisman of the Heavenly Net), which shields against disasters and epidemics, and consists of heavenly characters that say: “The Great Sage of the Heavenly Net orders all demons be slain!”; and the Zhenwu ju 真武符 (Talisman of the Perfect Warrior), associated with the Dark Warrior (Xuanwu 玄武), which consists of a group of characters plus a variety of symbols that present a figurative representation of the deity (see Drexler 1994, 161). The three key talismans (see Fig. 8) are typical for those used in exorcistic rituals and thunder rites, showing the way talismans developed under the Song. In the Six Dynasties, registers sometimes also included drawings of the deities’ forms. Later such drawings became parts of talismans, first using only the head, then the entire body, showing how the sacred object was related to both the god and the human body. Later still, further stylization and other new elements were added to the design, evolving into the intricate and complex forms used in the Song.

DIVINE EMPYREAN. The school of Shenxiao 神霄 was greatly favored by Emperor Huizong (r. 1101-1125) under the influence of his advisers Lin Lingsu 林靈素 (1076-1120) and Wang Wenqing 王文卿 (1093-1153; see Strickmann 1975; 1978). In 1117, they declared that the Imperial Lord of Blue Efflorescence (Qinghua dijun 青華帝君) had transmitted a number of celestial writings for the emperor, which contained a new cosmology that placed Divine Empyrean at the center of the Nine Worlds and at the top of all paradises, even above Highest Clarity.

The Duren shangpin ju zu (Talismans and Diagrams of the Highest Scripture of Universal Salvation, CT 147) by Wang Wenqing, with a preface attributed to Huizong and dated to 1120, contains several new writings, talismans and diagrams that confirm the legitimacy of Huizong’s cosmic and earthly powers. It says: “When the government effects the transformation of all things in accordance with their true nature, the secrets of heaven and earth are revealed and wondrous signs appear (2.4b-5a). Its first juan, moreover, describes the region where the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning (Yuanshi tianzun 元始天尊) first revealed the Duren jing through a series of sacred diagrams, beginning with the Lingbao shiqing
Figure 9. The Diagram of Blue Original Transformation of Numinous Treasure.
Source: *Duren shangpin futsu* (CT 147), 1.2a.

*bianhua zhi tu* 畫寶始青變化之圖 (Diagram of Blue Original Transformation of Numinous Treasure; see Fig. 9). The diagram shows creation as a combination of the sounds, energies and spirits of the void; if absorbed, it ensures longevity and enhances the energies of life. The second diagram is the *Biluo kong ge zhi tu* 碧羅空歌之圖 (Diagram of the Chant of the Biluo Space), which shows how energies and sounds form a cosmic network, matched by the vessels and meridians in the human body. Following this is the *Da fulitu zhi tu* 大浮麓土之圖 (Diagram of the Great Floating Earth; see Fig. 10), showing the region of the first and central development of the earth which corresponds to the spleen and stomach in the human body. Absorption of this diagram will cause longevity and extended youth, while carrying it ensures that one will be respected by the gods and spirits.

Beyond these elemental diagrams are six that are circular in shape, representing the new cosmology of Divine Empyrean. They are presented as part of a writ called *Hundong chiwen* 混洞赤文 (Red Writings of Chaos Cavern), which was transmitted by the gods in 1112, revealed to humanity in 1120, and is now contained in the *Duren shangpin futsu*. The diagrams consist of a series of circles, one placed inside the next and each containing
some starry patterns and/or specialized inscriptions. One shows, for example, the Nine Empyreans of the cosmos, with Divine Empyrean in the center (see Fig. 11).

The drastic increase in Daoist funerary rites under the Song also went hand in hand with a new type of diagram: that showing the underworld of Mount Fengdu in the form of a rectangular labyrinth, recalling the “True Shape of the Five Sacred Mountains” (see CT 1221, 34.14ab; CT 219, 68.24b; CT 508, 40.5b; Chenivesse 1996; 1997). Grottoes or palaces depicted as part of the mountain represent underworld regions, communication nodes, areas of transmutation and rebirth, or again palaces
of the gods that rule human destiny (see Fig. 12). In the rituals, the officiating priest is equipped with the diagram. He accomplishes his wanderings to the specific site originated within his own body and heart. The talisman ensures total protection against the demonic forces assembled in the deep wells of death, while diagrammatic map of Mount Fengdu helps to project himself into the processes of cosmic involution, thus allowing him to return to the origin of all things, to their perfect form. Ritually manipulated, the talisman serves to open the gates of purgatory and ensure the salvation of the dead. (Chenivesse 1996, 69; see also Boltz 1983)

PURE SUBTLETY. The Qingwei 清微 school, which claimed the late Tang female master Zu Shu 祖舒 as its founder, was in fact founded on Mount Qingcheng 青城山 (Sichuan) under the leadership of Nan Bidao 南畢道 (b. 1196), who became officially its ninth patriarch. Its talismanic techniques are said to go back to the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning, who resides in the heaven of Pure Subtlety; they are used primarily in thunder rites. A number of the school's scriptures, said to have arisen directly in the heavenly palaces, were written in cloud-seal script, in each case presented with a translation into earthly writing. Such is the case in the Qingwei yuanjiang dafa 清微元將大法 (Great Methods of the Prime's Descent from Pure Subtlety, CT 223), whose talismanic characters can be
easily identified as vague, cloudy-style writings that float freely about (see Fig. 13). Compared with similar patterns found in the Six Dynasties, they are more detached and abstract, leaving ordinary writing behind and accentuating their roundness and floating nature.

Beyond this text, which sees every sacred character as a talisman, the school also had integrated and complex talismans. They stand out because of their unique combination of round shapes (symbolizing movement) and squares (showing immobility), next to representations of trigrams, cosmic characters and symbolic signs (see Fig. 14; see also Schipper 1987).

NUMINOUS TREASURE OF MOUNT TIANTAI. In the twelfth century, a new branch of Lingbao Daoism developed on Mount Tiantai 天台 (Zhejiang), founded by Ning Quanzhen 宁全真 (1101-1181) and expanded by Lin Lingzhen 林靈真 (1239-1302), who transplanted it to Wenzhou (see Ren 1990, 559; Boltz 1987, 43-46). The numerous rituals of this school focused on the salvation of the living and the dead; they were linked with practical exterior methods using cosmological correlations and the force of thunder as well as with interior techniques patterned on inner alchemy, thus ensuring their highest efficacy.

The new Lingbao school produced several ritual compendia, which contain talismans of the classical model, i.e., of rectangular shape, but most
commonly have those of a new, more complex and irregular. There is also the tendency to use human-shaped patterns for talismans. They can appear as specimens topped with the form of a human head, looking like a bust (see Fig. 15); or in those that are partially or entirely human in shape, showing silhouettes of demons, formally garbed officials (see Fig. 16) or divine personages with their heads enveloped by halos, like Buddhist saints. In addition, there are also symbolic shapes in greater numbers, using animals,
circles, wheel and furnaces, found in related collections, such as the Yutang dafa 玉堂大法 and the Daofa huiyuan (see Fig. 17).

COSMIC DIAGRAMS. In 1118, Emperor Huizong decreed that all Daoists had to acquire expertise in the Confucian classics, especially the Yi Jing (see Xu zizhi tongjian 绪資治通鑑 93). As a result, the latter text gained an even greater importance in Daoist thinking, which in turn explains the presence of six Yi Jing commentaries, dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in the Ming canon (CT 157-62). Illustrated in various ways, these commentaries include a number of diagrams, not only related to the trigrams and hexagrams of the text, but also more cosmological, such as the Taiji tu 太極圖 (Diagram of the Great Ultimate), Hetu and Luoshu. The
latter in particular serve to illustrate the cosmological and calendrical theories that formed part of public discourse at the time. Among Song literati, diagrams came to be used as a new way to express norms and cosmic models, and in many ways they came to be regarded as more important than formally written documents, which yet remained indispensable to complement them. None of the many Song trends could escape the tendency toward putting abstract thoughts into diagrams (see Reiter 1990, 30). It is thus not surprising that diagrams presented by Neo-Confucian thinkers, such as Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-1073) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1120-1200), were accorded a high position in philosophical speculation, not unlike the honored status of sacrality that was accorded talismans in earlier Daoism. In fact, the Neo-Confucian texts trace themselves to the Daoist Chen Tuan 陳抟 (d. 989) and his lineage, which runs from the Daoist Zhang Fang 張房 (fl. 1000) to the Neo-Confucians Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011-1077) and Liu Mu 劉牧 (1011-1084; see CT 160; Robinet 1990, 375; Kohn 1990; Li 1990).

All representations of Taiji, the Great Ultimate, are based on the geometrical form of the circle. In the *Zhouyi tu* 周易圖 (Diagrams of the Zhou Book of Changes, CT 157) of the twelfth century, there are 114 diagrams to explain the cosmology of the *Tiyang*, going back to eminent thinkers, such as Zhou Dunyi, Zheng Dongqing 鄭東卿, Liu Mu, Shao Yong and Hong Mai 洪邁. The Great Ultimate is presented in three different forms. One shows it as a series of concentric circles that represent—from inside to out—the one energy, yin and yang, the five phases and the eight trigrams. Another is the famous version of Zhou
Dunyi, which presents it in a series of circles from above to below (see Fig. 18; see also Jiang and Chen 1995).

Another variant goes back to Zheng Shaomei 鄭少梅; it places the trigrams in a circle around a center and attaches various cosmological elements to them (see CT 158, 1.1b). Then again, there is Liu Mu's Yishu gouyin tu 吾數鈐隱圖 (Diagrams of an Inquiry into the Secret Numbers of the Yi Jing, CT 159), where the Great Ultimate is depicted as an ellipsis with ten stations on its periphery (1.1b); the Yixiang tushuo waijian 易象圖說外篇 (Outer Chapters of Explanations and Diagrams of Yi Jing Symbols, CT 162), in turn, shows it as a blank circle (1.3b). Daoist speculation made special use of Zhou Dunyi's version and related it to alchemical theories. Examples are Chen Zhixu's 陳致虚 (fl. 1330) Jindan dayao tu 金丹大要圖 (Diagrams of the Major Essentials of the Golden Elixir, CT 1068) and the Zhonghe ji 中和集 (Collection of Central Harmony, CT 249; see Robinet 1995). Here diagrams show both the unfolding of cosmic processes and, in an inverted reading, the stages of inner alchemical attainment in the body (see Lackner 1990, 144). The Taqi tu was also a representation of the human body—one of its key functions in later Daoist thought.

Aside from its Confucian uses, the diagram also appears in Lingbao writings of the Song and Ming, where it is called the Taqi miaohua shenling hundong chiwen tu 太極妙化神靈混沌赤文圖 (Divine and Numinous Diagram of the Great Ultimate of Wondrous Transformations, Written in Red in the Grotto of Chaos); without doubt, it is one of the most sacred documents of the school (see CT 89-90).

The Hetu and Luoshu, in their square form with points linked symbolically to different numbers and constellations, appear in the Zhouyi tu (CT 157, 1.3b-5a), the Dayi xiangshu goushen tu 大易象數鈐深圖 (Diagram of an Inquiry into the Divine Nature of the Emblems and Numbers of the Yi Jing, CT 158; 1.8b-11b), the Gouyin tu yilun 女隠圖意論 (CT 160, 3.12b) and the Yixiang tushuo neipian 易象圖說內篇 (Inner Chapters on Diagrams and Theories about the Emblems of the Yi Jing, CT 161; 1.7b-8b; see Fig. 19). Attributed to Chen Tuan, these two diagrams functioned as cosmic charts and were used principally in rituals that set up a sacred space. However, they could also be used as protection against demons; the Shangqing lingbao dafa 上清靈寶大法 (Great Methods of Highest Clarity and Numinous Treasure, CT 1221) suggests placing the Hetu inside a cauldron to prevent disasters (12. 10ab).

BODY CHARTS. Daoist thought did not make a fundamental separation between the natural, the sacred and the human body; the realm of talismans and diagrams was one area where the three actively coincided. The same diagram could, therefore, have an inscription that referred to the three domains, which would indicate simultaneously the immortals in
Figure 19. The *Hetu* and *Luoshu* in their square form.

Source: *Deng xiangshu guoshen tu* (CT 158), 1.8b-9a.
paradise, the sacred mountains and waterways on earth, and the five organs in the human body (see CT 1386, 15b). Diagrams that focus specifically on the body, then, appear only since the Song dynasty, following the general Chinese tendency to place stronger emphasis on the image of the body—also seen in the increase in human-shaped talismans at the time. There was, it appears, a change in the conception of the mutual interrelation between body, cosmos and state, and between interior and exterior, especially with the development of inner alchemical techniques and their integration into ritual (see Skar 1997).

The first diagrammatic representation of the human body known to date is a set of six figures attributed to Yanluozi 煙羅子 of the Five Dynasties (Chen 1975, 284) and conserved in the *Xiuzhen shishu* 修真十書 (Ten Books on the Cultivation of Perfection, CT 263; 18.1a-6a) of the year 1250. Those depicting the front and back are strictly anatomical, while those showing the body from the sides represent alchemical processes. They have inscriptions that allude to the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Yellow Court Scripture) and the gods of the inner organs as described there. These gods are also depicted in the *Huangting wuzang liufu buxie tu* 黃庭五臟六腑補泄圖 (Diagrams to the Yellow Court Scripture on supplementing the Five Organs and Six Viscera, CT 432) of the ninth century (dat. 848). They can also be linked with the later vision of the cosmic body with its interior paradieses and underworld realms (see Despeux 1994, 31-38, 110-33; Yamada 1995).

A more integrated version of the diagram appears a little later, both in a Daoist commentary to the medical text *Nanjing* 難經 (Classic of Difficult Issues, CT 1024; see Unschuld 1986), by Li Jiong 李頌 of the year 1269, and in a fifteenth century edition of the *Shilin guangji* 事林廣記 (Extensive Record of a Forest of Affairs) by Chen Yuanqing 陳元録 of the Song (see Needham 1983, 112; Despeux 1994, 40-43). Most recently, two diagrams have become prominent, the *Neijing tu* 內景圖 (Diagram of Interior Lights) and the *Xiuzhen tu* 修真圖 (Diagram of the Cultivation of Perfection; see Lagerwey 1991, 128-34). Like those of Yanluozi, these charts present lateral visions of the body.

The *Neijing tu* in its most ancient version is found on a stele dated to 1886 and attributed to Liu Chengyin 劉誠印 of the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery) in Beijing. This imitates a picture scroll, found on Mount Song in Henan. Natural elements dominate; inscriptions and notes on the diagram link it with alchemy and the *Huangting jing* (see Despeux 1994, 44-48; Sakade 1991; Rouselle 1933). The *Xiuzhen tu*, although following the same model, contains more inscriptions in textual form, more symbols of paradieses and the underworld, more signs of alchemical processes, as well as lunar phases, the names of the twenty-eight constellations and elements that refer to thunder rites (see Fig. 20). Versions of the diagram were found
Figure 20. The Diagram of the Cultivation of Perfection, Wudang shan version.
in Canton (dat. 1812), on Mount Wudang (武當山) (Hubei), on Mount Qingcheng (Sichuan) and in Daoist monasteries in Beijing and Shanghai. It shows a close relationship between inner alchemy and thunder rites, evoking in a visual manner the intricate connection between the two and using forms of symbolic representation not unlike those applied in talismans. It is, in fact, very much like a talisman that shows the human head or body, and can be said to represent the divine body of the adept as he or she undergoes the salvific alchemical transformation (Despeux 1994; 1996).

The various diagrams of the human body, although they use the natural form of the body as their base and serve primarily to illustrate alchemical processes, are yet cosmic and magical charts, very much like those described earlier. Not limited to their representative and didactic functions, they also serve a religious purpose in that they reveal the true, cosmic form of the human body and its interior deities. They thereby serve to empower adepts who receive them to realize the depicted processes for themselves and attain an interior vision of the cosmic body and its gods. Their ritual use is unknown, but they most certainly had one. Without a doubt, their use in cultivation and ritual practice was as important as that of talismans and registers.

TEXTS

HAN-SIX DYNASTIES. *Lingbao wufuxu 靈寶五符序* (Explanation of the Five Lingbao Talismans, CT 388, 3 j.), dat. fourth century. Together with the *Taipingjing*, this is one of the oldest Daoist scriptures. It underwent various revisions and expansions and has a number of problems and gaps (Kaltenmark 1960, 560-62; Chen 1975, 64-65). The first *juan* describes the mythical history of the five talismans as they were discovered by the floodhero Yu and later transmitted into the Ge family (see Bokenkamp 1986; Kohn 1993, 43-48). It also describes various longevity techniques, including the ingestion of mountain plants and herbs, the absorption of solar and lunar essences, concentration on the body gods and other kinds of visualizations (see Yamada 1989). *Juan 3* contains reproductions of the five talismans themselves. Square like great seals, they consist of symbolic signs, such as spirals, flowing lines, curves and stylized characters (for “sun,” “king,” “rain”; see Fig. 3). They are closely linked with specific rites of transmission and must be strictly avoided on inauspicious days.

*Lingbao wuyue shenfu 靈寶五嶽神符* (Divine Lingbao Talismans of the Five Sacred Mountains, CT 390, 15 pp.). This presents a collection of talismans used to bring stability to the state by protecting it from military and demonic dangers and spreading peace and prosperity among the
people. The text accompanying the talismans describes how they have come to be transmitted down from various mythical emperors, such as Yao, Shun and Yu, and how they should be used. They include talismans of the gods of the five mountains, combined with those of the six perfected of the mountains who serve to stabilize the emperor's palace; the talisman of the white tiger (8a), also mentioned in the *Baopu*zi (19.307); the talismans that stabilize the five directions (8b-11a); the talisman of Great Peace (11b); those that create sovereignty (12b-14b); and finally the talisman of the five generals used for military affairs and applied successfully by Fan Li 范蠡 in the Spring and Autumn period to destroy the state of Wu (14b).

*Wuyu guben zhenxing tu* 五嶽古本真形圖 (Old Text of the Chart of the True Shape of the Five Sacred Mountains, CT 441, CT 1281, *Yinji qiqian* 79; see Schipper 1967, 114-62; Chen 1975, 77-78; Seidel 1983, 326). The preface, attributed to Dongfang Shuo (1a-4b), describes the gods of the five Chinese sacred mountains and the four central Daoist mountains (Qingcheng shan, Lushan 盧山, Huoshan 火山 and Qianshan 顯山) with their acolytes and powers (see also CT 1281, 21b-25b). After this, the work outlines the transmission and reception ritual, attributed to Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (4b-6a; CT 1281, 18b-19b). Then follow the actual diagrams, showing the nine true forms of the mountains, each with a talisman and a short commentary that indicates how to write and carry the diagram.

This entire part is then followed by a second, similar series, mainly different in that the diagrams are more elaborate in design and have inscriptions both inside and out; their texts correspond closely to materials transmitted by Ge Hong. The story goes that the shape of the five mountains was created by flying celestials in a time before the mythical emperor Shennong 神農, just as that of the four Daoist mountains was designed by the Yellow Emperor after his ascension. Possessing the charts allows adepts to enter the mountains without harm and to avoid attacks from weapons and other dangers. They are used by suspending them from the belt, just as the "True Shape of the Five Mountains" is carried sewn into a cinnabar satchel and suspended around the neck.

*Xuanlan renniao shan jingtu* 玄覽人鳥山經圖 (Scripture and Diagram of the Man-Bird Mountain, According to the Mysterious Mirror, CT 434, *Yinji qiqian* 80, 6 pp.), revealed by Lord Lao and possibly originally part of the *Lingbao wuxu* (see Bokenkamp 1983, 456n80). The text contains a chart of the Man-Bird Mountain (see Fig. 5), together with a description of its setting, a retelling of its revelation and an outline of its powers and ritual activation. After fasting for one thousand days, the adept paints the mountain's shape in cinnabar ink on a square area of three by five paces. He then enters a first absorption, focusing on the direction associated with the current year to ensure his longevity. His second absorption procures
immortality, while the third serves to attain oneness with the Dao. The meditative process integrates the cosmic paradises into the adept’s body.

TANG. *Taishang laojun hanyuan sanbu fu* 太上老君混元三部符 (Three Divisions of Talismans of Mystery Prime, Revealed by the Highest Lord Lao, CT 673, 3 j.), edited in the Song on the basis of earlier materials (Ren and Zhong 1991, 481). The text contains 742 talismans with brief commentary on their functions and ways of usage. Classified according to twenty-six categories, the talismans serve to support different aspects of life and help to dissipate numerous problems of home and family. Those designated to pacify the residence were suspended in different places (five directions, corners, doors, central courtyard); others serving to eliminate negative influences of the earth were applied in more widespread locations. Generally, the domestic environment is of prime concern in the collection, as is evident in the numerous talismans that destroy nasty spirits in animal form (rats, snakes, foxes) and those that aid in agricultural and silkworm fertility. 151 talismans alone serve to counteract strange phenomena thought to be caused by demons in animal shape, by domestic ghosts or those afflicting the stove. Personal health, finally, is guaranteed by 106 talismans that support long life and protect the holder against epidemics, difficult pregnancies and complicated labor.

*Lingbao suilng shenfu* 靈寶素靈真符 (Perfect Lingbao Talismans of Immaculate Numen, CT 389, 3 j.), preface by Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933), dat. 906. In the mid-eighth century, the Celestial Master Daoist Zhai Qianyou 翟乾佑 received these talismans in revelation from the Heavenly Worthy together with a scripture on alchemy. In 906, Du Guangting received the text on Mount Pingdu 平都山 (Sichuan) while traveling in search of materials to reconstitute the Daoist canon from provincial collections (Verellen 1989, 124; Chen 1975, 128; Yoshioka 1955, 119). The text presents therapeutic talismans efficacious for 23 kinds of illnesses, including infections, fevers, colds, headaches, stomach troubles and more. The talismans come complete with instructions on their application and a description of their effect.

SONG. *Duren shangpin futu* 去人上經符圖 (Talismans and Diagrams of the Highest Scripture of Universal Salvation, CT 147, 3 j.) by Wang Wengqinf 王文卿 (1093-1153), with a preface attributed to Emperor Huizong and dated to 1120. The work provides various types of spontaneous writings (jade texts, red texts, numinous writing) as well as talismans and diagrams used in the rituals of the school of Divine Empyrean. It is complementary to the commentary to the *Duren jing* produced by this school (Strickmann 1975). The first juan has three square diagrams of the place where the Heavenly Worthy revealed the *Duren jing*. *Juan 2* contains circular diagrams depicting Shenxiao cosmology (see Fig. 11) together with several samples of spontaneous writing, while *juan 3* has
illustrations of the calendar associated with Shenxiao cosmology as well as images of the nine energies of the Nine Empyreans and the five talismans that correspond to the texts written in red.

_Duren shangjing dafa_ 度人上經大法 (Great Methods of the Highest Scripture of Universal Salvation, CT 219, 72 j.; Boltz 1987, 18). A Shenxiao text and major document in the Dongzhen section of the Daoist canon, this became a major ritual compendium under the Ming, containing ritual materials from many different periods and traditions. It also has a great number of talismans, including square ones that look like seals (e.g., 200 examples in ch. 5), rectangular ones that evoke classic forms of the Six Dynasties (see ch. 6), as well as those in human form or with a human head at the top (see ch. 56, 4a-5b). Black demonic shapes used for talismans in thunder rites are not frequent (only three examples); on the other hand, there are several talismans that have black balls in various areas—formed on the basis of the secret names of gods, they are most efficacious in dispelling malevolent influences (chs.11-15, 36).

The talismans have various functions: they may protect adepts from demons and disasters, save the souls of the damned, assemble good spirits, make the gods descend to the sacred altar, allow the invocation of rain or fair weather and permit Daoists to wander about in cosmic space. The text also has a number of diagrams, such as the “True Shape of the Five Mountains” (21.14a-22b) which represents the second series of the _Wayne zhexian zhi_ (15b-26b); the three diagrams contained in the _Duren shangjing ju_ (69.26a-27b); the _Hetu_ (33.6b), used in ritual space for ordering cosmic disturbances; diagrams of lamps to illuminate the underworld (50.9b-11a); and those of the thirty-two heavens (50.10a).

_Lingbao lingjiao ju_ 禮寶靈教濟度金書 (Golden Text for the Attainment of Salvation, Based on the Numinous Teaching of Numinous Treasure, CT 466, 320 j.), compiled by Ning Benli 嶺本立 (1101-1181), the codifier of Lingbao liturgies, and edited by Lin Weifu 林偉夫 (1239-1303; see Boltz 1987, 45). The first chapter contains various designs showing the organization of sacred altars and spaces, including the placement of lamps used in funeral rites, of celestial writings and of talismans suspended in strategic locations (see Lagerwey 1994). In addition, most talismans in the collection are found in _juan_ 260-81, beginning with those used to purify the corpse in funerary rituals (lianshi 瑞尸). They are mostly applied on the corpse of the deceased and the coffin, but some are also used specifically in different phases of the rite to communicate with the gods, destroy the gates of the underworld and save lost souls. _Juan_ 275-81, in addition, give instructions on how to draw and compose the talismans in a ritually correct fashion. The talismans are for the most part rectangular in shape with points alluding to the constellations, symbolic lines, wondrous
characters and sometimes spirals. Some are surrounded by a cluster of deities, others by human forms (with occasional halo; e.g., 264.33a).

_Lingbao yujian_ 玉鑒 (Jade Mirror of Numinous Treasure, CT 547, 43 j.), dat. 1108-1129. The text divides into twenty-five sections, which contain sacred writings, talismans, registers and diagrams. The first section "Resolving Doubts on Daoist Rites" explains the beginning and end of the world together with various cosmological processes. The other twenty-four sections reiterate purification rites and offerings (zhaijiao 聚醮) from the Lingbao canon of the Song, largely covering funerary rites and the salvation of lost souls. The text also contains references to the jade hall of Lu Shizhong, elements of Tianxin ritual and of the _Lingbao dafa_ 玄寶大法 (Great Methods of Lingbao; see Boltz 1987, 43). It has talismans to save the souls of unborn children, talismans based on the banners of the thirty-two heavens and those that destroy the twenty-four underworlds. Some talismans have the power to assemble the spirit-souls, other represent the bright lamps of the thirty-two heavens; some stand for the lamps that illuminate the underworld, others again serve to banish the eight forms of disaster.

_Shangqing lingbao dafa_ 上清靈寶大法 (Great Methods of Highest Clarity and Numinous Treasure, CT 1221, 66 j.), transmitted by Ning Benli and compiled by Wang Qizhen. An encyclopedic work of the Song, this relies largely on the work of Ning Benli (1101-1181) of the Tiantai branch of Lingbao. It deals with rites for the salvation of souls, petitions to the gods and otherworldly law suits; in all cases, it includes the necessary talismans and incantations with a description of their function. There are the talismans of the Five Emperors that destroy the underworld, those of the secret names of the five mountains and those of the Five Emperors that protect different aspects of the body. In addition, there are eighty-one talismans corresponding to eighty-one numinous officials, talismans that invoke the Dark Warrior and the gods of the Dipper, and talismans that save from pestilences and cosmic disasters. Various forms of the _Hetus_ (12.10a), the _Wuyue zhengxing lu_ (17.16a-21b) and the true shape of Fengdu (17.22ab) complete the ensemble.

MING. _Fahai yizhu_ 法海遺珠 (Pearls from an Ocean of Rituals, CT 1166, 46 j.). This is a collection of therapeutic rituals from various traditions, including especially thunder rites as practiced south of the Yangzi in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. The work shows Buddhist Tantric influence. Talismans here represent natural elements—wind, thunder, clouds, rain—and serve to evoke thunder, pray for rain, summon demons, avoid natural disasters, heal diseases and save the souls of the dead. There are also several talismans representing gods of the thunder tradition, including the Black Killer and the gods of the Five Thunder Offices (see
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Skar 1997). Others show different divine lords, often depicted in a black, demonic form.

**Dao**fa huiyuan 道法會元 (A Corpus of Taoist Ritual, CT 1220, 268 j.), dat. about 1400 (see Boltz 1987, 30, 47; Loon 1980; Schipper 1987, 3-10). A ritual work focusing on the Shenxiao, Qingwei and several Lingbao currents, but also containing rites of the Celestial Master and Jingming schools, this contains writings from over a hundred different authors. For the most part it describes thunder rites as practiced in south China and, more specifically, in the northern Jiangxi, northwestern Fujian and their neighboring regions. Most texts date from the thirteenth century, and the latest date mentioned is 1356. **Juan** 1-55 represent the works of Qingwei; 56-155 have those of various schools. These chapters contain numinous talismans in black, human form or in black shapes reminiscent of birds. **Juan** 156-68 have the *Shangqing tianpeng fumo dafa* 上清天蓬伏魔大法 (Great Rites of the God Tianpeng of Highest Clarity to Destroy Demons), a text related to the Tianxin tradition. Shenxiao works and rites are found in **juan** 198-206; about twelve sections bear the marks of Wang Wenqing. There are also thunder rites associated with Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 (fl. 1209-1224), including a comparison of different types of thunder rites current in his time. In addition, the collection has the ritual codes of Chen Nan 陳楠 (d. 1213), manuals of Hunyuan thunder rites that go back to Lei Shizhong 雷時中 (1221-1295) and Leiting rites associated with Mo Qiyan 莫起炎 (1226-1294; see Boltz 1987, 47-48).

**WORLDVIEW**

CELESTIAL WRITING. In China, writing is believed to be an invention of divine culture heroes who scrutinized signs in the sky. "To write" (shu 书) does not simply mean to transcribe the spoken discourse, but to express the meaning of things on an utterly different level of discourse—that of the pictographic characters (wen 文; see Chaves 1977; Lagerwey 1985; Gernet 1994; Vandermeersch 1994, 237). In Daoism, patterns of writing associated with talismans and diagrams were celestial signs revealed to the world. Texts known as "perfect writings" (chunwen 真文), especially in the Lingbao tradition, were thus revealed at the beginning of time when primordial chaos first unfolded and gave differentiated shape to the myriad things and manifold energies. At this time the luminous characters became primordial symbols of all things. Writings were then grouped according to the five directions and came to form an integrated cosmic system. Knowledge of these celestial signs and, through them, of the underlying, hidden structure of all things confers power over them and also over their deviate forms that manifest in demons and baleful influences. The Huainanzi 淮南子 says
accordingly: “In antiquity, when Cangjie 蘆簡 invented writing, heaven let grains rain and the demons were hurled into the darkness.” Xu Shen 許慎 of the first century C.E. comments:

Following the patterns established by the tracks of birds' feet, Cangjie created writing in correspondence to all things. The demons were afraid that they, too, might be noted down in the books and hurled themselves into the darkness. (8.116-17; Seidel 1983, 322)

The signs that make up talismans are sometimes embossed or engraved on paper, wood or stone, but they can also be formed in empty space, because just tracing their form activates their power. Through hand signs, the officiating priest thus transmits his vital essence and energy into the talismanic patterns, so that they become an extension of his true cosmic body (see Baptandier-Berthier 1993). The function of ritual gestures and talismanic tracings is, in turn, similar to that of the diagrams. As Sandra Chenivesse points out in regard to the mountain of the underworld:

The ritual master executes both a rite of writing and at the same time an interior rite, through which he actualizes a somatic vision of primordial energies and divine therapeutic guardians inside his body-sanctuary. He thereby also visualizes the path of souls lost in the depths of the purgatories. The cosmic energies animating his body then become a kind of condensed writing, which he projects outside to become part of a powerful talisman. (1996, 72)

THE DELIMITATION OF SPACE AND THE REPRESENTATION OF TIME. The basic form used in the diagrams is usually either square or round (see Lackner 1990), the former indicating the earth and mountains (such as the five mountains or the Man-Bird Mountain), the latter representing mythical worlds or paradises, or again the processes of the universe and the interior of the body.

The charts are first of all constituted by the inherent energy of the officiating Daoist, in the same way as the sacred area, which symbolizes both a sacred mountain and a grotto, is in reality created from the master's body through the exteriorization of his energy as breath (see Schipper 1994, 125-35). A great ritual of offerings described in the third chapter of the Lingbao wufu xu was undertaken in honor of the five perfect writings—placed on five sacrificial tables—and directed to the Five Emperors who were represented by the writings. By placing the texts in the five directions, a sacred space was created; the talismans rendered ordinary space cosmic and changed time into cosmic time. At the end of the sacrifice, the process was reversed and the talismans were raised up and burned (Lagerwey 1994, 325).

Talismans are most commonly represented in a square or rectangular format, with the exception of the Pure Subtlety school, where they are often
in a round or mixed (round and square) form. The space of the talisman is then clearly delimited either on all four sides, or at least on three, with a sort of formal frame. In some cases, it shows the form of a bell or special, stylized characters at the top, such as the character for “rain.” Again, the frame itself is often constituted by a series of circular or square shapes. More rarely are they surrounded by a complete circle—in that case, often a demon is captured within.

The application of talismans and diagrams depends on the idea of time, both cyclical and linear, which generally plays an important role in Chinese religion (see Needham 1969; Frazer et al. 1986). Most talismans have to be activated at precisely defined times of the year in order to support the flow of cosmic forces and aid their cycle of renewal. Only then, too, can they properly protect the adept during his passage through dangerous and difficult phases in the temporal cycle (see Rawson and Legeza 1973; Schipper and Wang 1986). Talismans related to temporal cycles include the five seasonal talismans either swallowed or placed near the adept’s bed to make the gods come and protect him and the eight talismans linked with the Eight Nodes or days of the beginnings and high points of the seasons (see CT 1359). Talismans associated with the sixty-day cycle are specifically linked with the six jade maidens or Jia deities (Liujia 六甲), each responsible for a group of ten days; they appear first in a revelation granted to the Han emperor Wu and come together with the “True Shape of the Five Mountains” (CT 84; Robinet 1984, 2:211). The same talismans also correspond to the six celestial palaces of the jade maidens. Each one represents a number of temporal elements and gives power over them, including the cycles of yin and yang. In addition, Song-dynasty diagrams often show complex cosmological patterns and temporal calculations.

**THE TRUE FORM OF THINGS.** Diagrams that reveal the true shape of objects or cosmic patterns are very much like reflective mirrors, similarly used to recognize, trap and neutralize demons (see Schipper 1975, 28). Both mirrors and diagrams make usually invisible things appear in the world of visible shapes and play the role of demon-dispellers; they commonly have talismans attached to them that enhance this power (Yunji qiqian 48.7b). In addition, the back of a mirror and the frame of a diagram often show cosmic emblems and mythical shapes that in themselves are protective signs, talismanic in nature. Two writings in the Daoist canon, the *Shangqing changsheng baojian tu* 上清長生寶鏡圖 (Shangqing Diagram of Precious
Mirrors for Long Life, CT 429) and the *Shangqing hanxiang jianjian tu* (Shangqing Diagram of Swords and Mirrors for Catching Shapes, CT 431), dated to the Tang dynasty, combine the idea of diagrams and mirrors by presenting charts in mirror form (see Fig. 21). They consist of representations of the stars of the Dipper, the twenty-eight constellations, the animals of the sun and the moon, as well as those of the four heraldic animals, the trigrams and various talismans (see Kaltenmark 1974).
In addition, the human body becomes a sacred space in the practice of individuals and is often conceived as a mountain or a grotto with internal labyrinths, deities and palaces. To enter it properly, adepts must know its true form and possess the right diagrams for their guidance. Daoist representations of the sacred body accordingly provide the names of key deities, secret spots, major internal processes and courseways. The body of flesh and bone in Daoist practice becomes increasingly a cosmic place, a double or shadow of the perfect inner body, the divine form of being as revealed in the diagrams (see Despeux 1996).

LEGITIMATION OF POWER. In ancient China, talismans were formed of two pieces, held each by one party of a given contract. Putting the two pieces together served to identify the authority of the two parties and the legitimacy of the contract. Imperial orders, moreover, were written in cinnabar ink on yellow paper and marked with a proper imperial seal. Daoists imitate both these ideas in constructing their talismans and registers—the former using the same style and format, and possession of the latter serving as a kind of divine investiture. A talisman is therefore, from beginning to end, a kind of official document; very often it contains terms of command or submission, such as chi 召 (summon), ling 令 (order), ming 命 (command), chen 鎮 (suppress) and sha 殺 (kill). In the main section of the talisman one finds in addition words like jiang 降 (descend), sheng 昇 (ascend) and lai 來 (come), which all indicate an active communication with the spirits. Towards the end the malicious or nefarious power to be destroyed is named, using terms such as xiong 凶 (evil), zai 災 (calamity), huo 火 (misfortune) or fei 匪 (assault). As regards registers, Daoists adopted not only the word from Han imperial practice but also the idea of investiture through a list of officers and the notion that the ruler was in control of the spirits (see Seidel 1969). As a result, Daoist practitioners become celestial officials, using talismans and registers to communicate and govern gods and demons. In their rituals, they travel to the paradises and the underworld, holding on to the talismans as their passports and letters of introduction to the supernatural world.

Han dynasty fangshi and their texts, the apocrypha (chenwei 誠緯), were concerned mainly with the changing rule of the sovereign and particularly with the manifestation of auspicious and inauspicious signs in relation to this rule. Dragons, phoenixes and magical tortoises appeared as good omens, as did celestial diagrams and charts, which then came to be considered “heavenly treasures” (tianbao 天寶; see Kaltenmark 1960; Seidel 1983). Diagrams, moreover, were commonly brought to the ruler by wondrous creatures, such as the black turtle, the yellow dragon, the white fish and the red bird—carrying good omens in their beak or mouth or on their back and transmitting them to the saints of the time (Tuhai 玉海 56.1b). During the troubled years of the Warring States, when power
struggles intensified, various ruling princes had begun to pay closer attention to signs and omens, striving for divine protection of their rule. Accordingly specialists began to produce miraculous objects for them, called 珠應 or 瑞應, i.e., “talismans or objects of good auspices which reveal the proper correspondence of Heaven.” Their appearance and treatment, then, constitutes the bulk of apocryphal and prophetic writings of the Han, the direct forerunners of Daoist talismans and explicatory commentaries.

GUIDE TO THE LABYRINTH. The diagrams of the Five Mountains, the Man-Bird Mountain and the city of the underworld all show the shape of a mountain or a deep grotto (see Stein 1988; 1990). Yet they also suggest intricate, convoluted patterns, pathways strewn with traps and pitfalls reminiscent of Western labyrinths. They show the complex path adepts have to travel on their way to sagehood, the intricate ways of searching for immortality drugs and the texts and talismans of salvation. In all cases, the principles of the Dao that must be discovered are hidden in the depth of the earth's entrails, and to search for them successfully adepts must undergo tests, manage difficult passages and discover the entrance and exit of the sacred places. The theme of the search and the intricate pathways comes up repeatedly in Daoist texts, both in regard to the heavens and the underworld, most frequently in connection with the labyrinth chart of Fengdu. The motif of the labyrinth, often linked with the geometrical shape of the spiral, is thus closely related to themes of life, death, resurrection and salvation.

PRACTICE

COMPOSITION OF TALISMANS AND DIAGRAMS. Talismanic writings commonly use patterns found in nature as well as highly archaic forms of writing. Perfect or celestial writing is also called "thunder script" and often appears as a variant of ancient seal script. The characters are drawn with strong emphasis on curved lines and evoke cloudy patterns, such as those drawn in depictions of the celestials floating down from heaven. This kind of writing is accordingly called “cloudy seal script” (yunzhuan; see CT 1, chs. 5, 9; CT 1220, chs. 73-74).

Talismans consist of stylized characters, figurative elements, geometrical patterns and symbolic signs, drawn in close combination to create a powerful, intricate mixture. Scriptural elements play a role in the kinds of characters chosen; characters, moreover, can be abbreviated (such as those for "sun" and "moon") or doubled (see Taiping jing, chs. 104-7). They can also be written with parts transposed, the left part appearing on the right, for example, or newly created by putting radicals together that do not make
sense in common words. Characters may, moreover, be repeated in entire series—most commonly done with words like “fire,” “light,” “cinnabar” and “water.” There are talismans that consist of nothing but long series of such words.

The most commonly used symbolic elements are small circles that show stars or constellations, curves representing show water, fire and the flow of qi, as well as spirals and curls indicating clouds and cosmic movements. Taken together, talismans show a great deal of variety in their composition, representing the forces of the universe and the words that grant power over them.

DRAWING TALISMANS. A number of texts, especially since the Song ritual compendia, describe the rules that apply to the proper drawing and preparation of talismans, including preparatory measures, proper times and conditions as well as accompanying visualizations. Few instructions, on the other hand, have come down to us regarding the composition of diagrams.

Drawing a talisman occurs in two phases. The first, called “separating the elements” (sanxing 散形), consists of tracing the various necessary elements one by one; the second, called “assembling the elements” (juxing 取形), is their combination in an integrated structure. In some cases, the final product allows the clear distinction of the originally separate elements that created it; in others, the various parts are meshed together inextricably so that the talisman becomes one integrated whole. A good example for the latter are certain talismans used in thunder rites where the overall pattern obscures the various internal parts.

In the actual act of drawing, the Daoist master must make sure to inhale and exhale regularly, because the efficacy of the final product depends on the power exteriorized through his breath while drawing. Before sitting down with the brush, he has to purify his spirit and enter a state of great mental concentration; with every stroke of the brush, he voices a matching incantation, moving along with its rhythm and following the divine light of his visualization. Different schools give different instructions on the latter. Pure Subtlety, for example, demands that the master, after attaining deep mental concentration, pick up the brush and focus his eyes completely on its tip, then visualize a divine light emerge from his body and condense in the space around him until it shrinks to the size of a grain of millet. Then he sees this concentrated divine light attach itself to the tip of the brush and begins to write. His writing, moreover, he sees as a golden snake which comes flying and writhes along on his paper. He must never take his eyes off the tip of the brush, because it is through his eyes that the celestial seal enters the talisman (Daoja huiyuan 4.11b-12a).

The time of the drawing is selected from auspicious dates on the calendar, matching the elements of the talisman and the function for which it is designed. Talismans are most commonly drawn on paper; sometimes
they may be drawn in air or in sand, or in blood on the bones of a medium (Legeza 1976, 21). Occasionally one finds talismans to be executed on wood, most auspiciously peach wood which has demon-dispelling qualities, on metal or on stone. There also samples left of talismans or diagrams carved on stone stelae and placed at the entrance of villages or the gates of temples; textual sources note that a stone diagram of the Dark Warrior was placed in the four corners of Zhejiang villages to prevent fire (Rawson and Legeza 1973, 119), while one of the Five Mountains was put at the Erwang miao (Temple of the Two Kings) in Guanxian (Sichuan).

APPLICATION OF TALISMANS. The way talismans are applied depends on their specific venue, which might be personal, familial or ritual, and on their function, which could be exorcistic, protective, contractual and so on. Some are to be carried on the person (around the neck, tied to the elbow, suspended from the belt), others are to be placed in the house (above doors, in the courtyard, in the corners). Some should be attached to trees or placed in specific spots during rituals. Talismans are also burned and their ashes drunk in water to remedy various illnesses; others are rolled into pills after being burned and their ashes mixed with honey. In rituals, they are simply burned (Schipper 1994, 90). Talismans are used to drive out demons and eliminate various malicious influences, stabilize potentially harmful tendencies, obtain the protection of the gods and give orders to the spirits. They can prevent illnesses and aid during epidemics and assist adepts in attaining immortality (de Groot 1892; Doré 1917). To use them properly, one must commonly chant an incantation and make a secret gesture with one's hands. The incantation is often part of the talisman, contained in its stylized writing or printed on its side.

To transmit a talisman to the otherworld, it is commonly burned in a ritual manner. Often talismans are also burned together with petitions and official orders for the otherworld, for use as divine passports and identification papers in rituals of thanksgiving and salvation of the dead. Therapeutic talismans, such as the twelve associated with the animals of the zodiac which are applied to illnesses of the corresponding year, are often used to stop vomiting, stomach ache, fevers and other ailments. They, too, are burned, and their ashes are collected and dissolved in water, which is given to the patient to ingest—again under proper ritual circumstances and to the accompaniment of incantations.

Only protective talismans are conserved and held on to. They can be sewn into pouches and carried on the body, assisting adepts to pass through dangers or enter the mountains. To prevent epidemics and disasters from entering one's home, a protective talisman should be suspended above the door and in various other strategic locations. During funerals and near corpses, talismans are applied to keep demons at bay. They are used widely and popularly and can still be found in many temples in China today,
pouches with charms being sold to procure good health, a good marriage, success in examinations, childbirth, and safety on the road.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

DIVINATION AS DAOIST PRACTICE*

Sakade Yoshinobu

DESCRIPTION

Chinese divination can be discussed under many different aspects: its means, methods, objects and places. One cannot capture them all with one set definition or single presentation. Also, while divination plays an important role in Daoist practice, it is not a specifically Daoist subject or activity, nor even Confucian or Buddhist, but rather forms part of Chinese traditional culture in general. In the late Zhou dynasty, there was even a royal Director of Divination (Taibu 太卜) who had administrative counsellors and staff at his disposal. The office was later, under the Han, placed under the surveillance of the Superintendent of Ceremonies (Taichang 太常), but continued to play an important role in determining the calendar and made decisions of both political and military import (see Loewe 1988a, 88-90). As a result of divination's official and pervasive position in Chinese culture, most materials on the subject are found not in the Daoist canon but in manifold texts of various origins. Most concepts involved in divination, similarly, cannot be linked with a specific system but instead must be approached as a fortuitous mixture of many, joined with some basic concepts of Chinese culture.

Confucius is famous for having said that he would “not speak of the extraordinary or the spirit world.” Still, this attitude was considered inappropriate even for the Confucian elite who, whether officials in the imperial administration or students and intellectuals, were among the most active practitioners and recorders of divination. They made both official and private decisions based on astrology, Yi jing or turtle-shell oracles, physiognomy, dream interpretation and other methods. They hoped to be masters of their future by discovering the proper ways to behave in the continuously unfolding cycles of the universe. The common people, too, made frequent use of divination in their efforts to fulfill their wishes and hopes and to avoid suffering and hardships. Divination was thus an integral part of the daily lives

* Translated by Livia Kohn
of all Chinese, high or low, rich or poor (see Loewe and Blacker 1981), Daoist or Buddhist. It was therefore inevitable that it would also come to be a form of Daoist practice.

Most of the divination forms found in traditional China were highly technical; they were based less on personal inspiration or intuition than on the mastery of technical instruments, intricate correspondence patterns and complex calculation systems. Still, intuition did play a role, and the true Daoist master had more immediate and often truer insights into the workings of the cosmos than his technical counterpart. A case in point is the story in the Zhuangzi that contrasts the inscrutable Hugong 壺公 (Gourd Master) with the technical physiognomist. It ends with the latter, having tried without success to analyze the master, running off in shame and confusion (ch. 7). Among the many forms of divination, only one of a purely inspirational nature has survived through the centuries and flourished—the consultation of the gods or ancestors through spirit-mediums and shamans. These religious specialists entered into trance states to communicate directly with the divine and either ascended into the heavens in ecstatic flight or allowed themselves to be possessed by a supernatural agency whose words they spoke or wrote on a tray of sand (the planchette). The latter method was frequently employed by members of all social classes, and was common in both popular religion and Daoism. In Daoism it has further gained popularity over the last several centuries, leading to important new developments, especially during the Qing dynasty (see “Daoism in the Qing”).

The following first presents the history of the more technical arts of divination in two sections: pre-Daoist and Daoist. Then it will introduce a selection of texts on divination from the Daoist canon that illustrate how Daoists applied divination in their rituals and activities. It concludes by exploring basic understandings of how fate and determination operated among Chinese in general and Daoists in particular.

**History**

**EARLY METHODS.** It is not clear when the Chinese began divining. Traditional historiography has it that the very earliest Xia dynasty (on the borders of early history) used a method known as “Connected Mountains” (Lianshan 連山), while its successor, the Shang dynasty, used a technique called “Safe Repository” (Guizang 隕藏; see Imai 1974). Nothing is known about these practices today and we cannot be sure whether they really existed or belong to the realm of myth. The earliest archaeological materials of divination, the so-called oracle bones 甲骨, date from the Shang dynasty. They are the carapaces of tortoises and scapula of cattle which were drilled and heated to allow the development of fine cracks, then interpreted as “yes”
or “no” answers to questions (see Smith 1991, 14-17). Later the Zhou dynasty used a method known as milfoil divination (shizhuan 策占; Smith 1991, 19-22). Here fifty stalks of this long-stemmed plant were divided first into two random piles, then counted off into sets of four until any number from one to four remained, determining the quality of either yin (even number) or yang (odd number). Each cast of the milfoil thus created a yin or yang pattern, which was then written down as either a broken (yin) or unbroken (yang) line and interpreted with the help of the Yi Jing 易經 (Book of Changes).

Yijing divination was a highly prominent method early on, and linked with senior sages such as the Duke of Zhou and Confucius. It has remained popular through the ages and is still applied today (see Wilhelm 1950; Suzuki 1963; Smith 1991, 93-130). Oracle-bone divination ended in the Han (see Loewe 1988b).

In addition to these methods, the Zhou, from the Spring and Autumn period onwards, also divined by observing the winds (Sakade 1991, 45-127), qi or “ethers” (houqi 候氣; see Bodde 1959), the stars (astrology; see Eberhard 1970), people’s looks (physiognomy 相; see Lessa 1968) and their dreams (see Lackner 1985; Smith 1991, 245-58; in Daoism, see Strickmann 1987). The Zuozhuan 左傳 (Mr. Zuo’s Commentary) accordingly describes the lives and deeds of many divination masters, documenting the tremendous flourishing of various methods at this time. Whether Confucius was inspired by them is unclear, but an apocryphal story in the Hanshiwaizhuan 韓氏外傳 (Separate Commentary on Mr. Han’s Poems) says that his future kingly status was foretold by the physiognomist Gubu Ziqing 姑布子卿.

In the Warring states period numerous techniques were applied, as has become increasingly clear from recent excavations, especially from the territory of the state of Qin, which later succeeded in unifying the states and creating the first empire. One such excavation, of a tomb from Shuihudi in Yunmeng 雲夢 (Hubei), provided textual materials on a number of hemerological (i.e., day selection) and calendrical (i.e., determination of auspicious times and places) methods (see Kalinowski 1986; Loewe 1988a; Kudó 1998). Among these methods, the Jianchu 建除 (Use/Avoid or Intallation/Expulsion) technique, also described in the Huainanzi 淮南子 (Writings of the Master of Huainan, ch. 3), was especially prominent. It divided the days into twelve categories—stagnation, exultation, installation, decline, destruction, equilibrium, calmness, emptiness, stability, recovery, accomplishment and growth—then associated these with the stems and branches of the sixty-day cycle to determine the inherent tendency in every day of the calendar (Kalinowski 1986, 199). In the manuscripts this appears clearly, one text instructing to “use yin 寅, avoid mao 卯 and go for chen 辰,” says:

The first: useful day, advantageous ... It is most advantageous to wear cap, belt and sword. No problem riding in a carriage.
Much like the almanacs still popular in China today (see Smith 1992), these instructions during the Han dynasty were formalized into a system of good and bad days linked with twelve deities, which is mentioned in the Shi ji 史記 (Historical Records, ch. 127). Similar ideas were associated with the stars and interpreted through astrology, as is documented in the Huainanzi 荊 (ch. 1). Further archaeological evidence of the same beliefs was excavated from Fangmatan 放馬灘 in Tianshui 天水 (Gansu; see Harper 1994).

The Shi ji also contains a rather critical record of Emperor Wu who, in his urge to determine the correct partner and way of marriage, assembled a large number of fortune-tellers at his court. Among them were masters of the five phases (wuxing jia 五行家), of geomancy (kanyu jia 坤舆家), constellation analysis (congchen jia 星辰家), calendrics (liji 历家), correspondences between heaven and humanity (tianren jia 天人家) and of the Great Unity (taiyi jia 太一家). In addition, the Shi ji describes astrology, watching the ethers and wind observation in some detail (ch. 27). The bibliography in the Hanshu 漢書 (History of the former Han) lists large numbers of texts on many different kinds of divination: 21 on astrology (in 445 j.), 8 on calendrics (606 j.), 31 on the five phases (652 j.), 15 on milfoil and tortoise (401 j.), 18 on dream interpretation (313 j.) and 6 on physiognomy (122 j.; see also “Han Cosmology and Mantic Practices”).

The Han dynasty saw a great rise in divination activity, much of which was described and criticized by various authors. Thus Wang Fu 王符 (ab. 85-163 C.E.) in his Qianju lun 潛夫論 (Discussion of Hidden Things; see Kinney 1990) has specific chapters on oracles, shamans, dream interpretation and physiognomy (to which he paid particular attention). Wang Chong 王充 (ab. 27-100) in his Lunheng 論衡 (Balanced Discussions; see Forke 1972) mentions different practices in different sections, yet reveals a strong belief in the analysis of personality according to physiognomy. He says: “Human beings receive fate from Heaven, and this is reflected in their bodies” (ch. 3). Analyzing the bodily form, people can know their inner tendencies and predict the good and bad fortune likely to befall them. At the same time, when he says that people receive their fate from Heaven, he refers to the belief that all people are born under a particular star (benming 本命). Their qi matches that of the star; the star’s position in the sky, brightness and movements determines their development and opportunities. This method was practiced not only by astrologers but also by the masters of the correspondences between heaven and humanity.

The great advance of divination under the Han also caught the attention of the historians, as is documented in the chapter on fangshi biographies in the Hou Hanshu 後漢書 (History of the Later Han, ch. 82; see Ngo 1976; DeWos-
kin 1983; Sakade 1991, 23-44). Fangshi 方士, the masters of recipes and methods (fangshu 方術), were practitioners of methods that included longevity techniques, medicine, astronomy and calculation (mathematics) together with the many arts of divination. They excelled at them not only through superb technical skills, but also because allegedly they developed certain supernatural powers. Among their divination methods were wind-direction analysis (fengjiao 風角; see Loewe 1988c, 509-16; Sakade 1991, 45-127), calendrics (duanjia 遠甲; see Liu and Zhou 1993), Dipper astrology (qizheng 七政), primal qi examination (yuangi 元氣), hemerology (rize 日搽), hexagram hemerology (liurqi fén 六日七分), encounter analysis (fengchan 逢占), qi observation (wangqi 望氣) and cloud-pattern analysis (yunqi 雲氣).

To give a sample description, the latter two involved the observation of qi and were usually executed at the beginning of the year to determine the tendencies and major events to be expected in the coming cycle. Wangqi or houqi involved the burial of bamboo pitch-pipes of varying length in the earth in certain strategic places. A thin layer of ashes was then placed on their top, which would be disturbed in accordance with the various movements of the rising earth-qi, allowing predictions of weather and other tendencies (see Bodde 1959; Sakade 1991, 128-55). Yunqi was a method of interpreting the formations and coloring of clouds in the sky as they appeared in certain places, again typically at the beginning of the year. For example, if a cloud that looked like a dog appeared over the city wall, this wall would not be taken in battle during the year. If a pig-shaped cloud appeared over a camped army, its commanding general would die (see Loewe 1988c, 502-3; Sakade 1991, 156-83). Predictions of a more personal nature would be made on the basis of wind. For example, if the wind came from the south, it was likely to carry heat and would harm the people’s veins and hearts; if it came from the west, it would carry dryness and bring harm to the lungs and the skin; if it came from north, it often carried cold, which could infect the kidneys and bones; and if it came from the east, it would have a heavy feeling to it, which impacted on the liver and the flesh (Sakade 1991, 62).

All these were also taken up, to a greater or lesser degree, by Daoists of the second century C.E. For example, Zuo Ci 左慈 was described as a renowned fangshi, an expert in the “way of the gods” (shendao 神道), a great magician and fortune-teller (Hou Hanshu; Shenxian zhuán 神仙傳, ch. 4). He was an influential Daoist, and teacher of Ge Xuan 葛玄, the great-uncle of Ge Hong 葛洪; much of the latter’s alchemical knowledge originates with him (see his Baopuzi; see Ware 1966).

One method of great import during the Han dynasty was the so-called Yijing calculations (xiangshu yi 象數易). This method was used actively in the theories of the Cantong qi 參同契 (Tally to the Book of Changes, CT 999-1008; see Pregadio 1996), allegedly written by the alchemist Wei Boyang 魏伯陽 of the second century C.E. and influential in the later practice of
inner alchemy. It goes back to the Han thinkers Meng Xi 孟喜 (fl. 50 B.C.E.), the author of the Yilin 易林 (Forest of the Changes; see Smith 1991, 28; Nylan and Sivin 1988), who combined the hexagrams of the Yijing with the twenty-four solar stations of the year, and Jing Fang 京房 (79-37 B.C.E.), who matched a series of twelve hexagrams with the twelve months of the year and the twelve double-hours of the day. The twelve hexagrams were waxing and waning (xiaoxi gua 消息卦), that is, they changed from all yang lines to all yin lines and back. They were used to visually demonstrate the alternating patterns of yin and yang. Later the method was further developed by Xun Shuang 荀爽 (128-190) of the Later Han dynasty, who proposed a more intricate theory of the rise and fall of days and hexagrams (Smith 1991, 29), and by Yu Fan 虞翻 (164-233), who set up a system that included patterned hexagram changes, moving lines, reversed yin and yang lines, diagrams consisting only of two lines and the association of various line combinations with certain days in the sixty-day cycle. All these techniques and calculations, complex and intricate, greatly influenced not only the Yijing interpretation of later ages, but were also activated in the religious Daoist practice of inner alchemy.

The Han dynasty also saw a development of a new instrument for fate calculation, the diviner's compass or cosmic board (shi 式). It consisted of a square bottom plate that represented earth and was divided according to the eight directions. A round, movable plate was attached to it that represented the sky/heaven. The latter contained not only the sixty-day cycle, but also the twenty-eight lunar mansions and the twenty-four solar stations of the year (Kalinowski 1986, 212). Several examples of this compass have been excavated from Han tombs, the oldest from that of the Lord of Ruyin 汝陰 in Shuangguozi 雙古堆 in Fuyang 阜陽 (Anhui; see Harper 1978; Kalinowski 1983). It is based on the liuren 六壬 method, which also incorporates the Great Unity and the Nine Palaces, constellations of great import that also played a key role in Daoist cosmology (see Kalinowski 1985; Sakade 1991, 184-209). The oldest surviving text on this method is the Huangdi longshou zhenjing 黄帝龍首真經 (The Yellow Emperor’s Perfect Scripture of the Dragon Head, CT 283; see also CT 284), which dates from the Six Dynasties (Kalinowski 1986, 211-16). This was used also in the analysis of the appearance of forms (both earthly and celestial), and was a key instrument in the imperial department of astrology under the Tang, when its application focused on the patterns of the sun and its influence on human destiny.

DAOIST PRACTICES. The cosmological and alchemical theories developed in the Later Han through Wei Boyang, and formulated in his Canglong qi, not only influenced the practice of operative and inner alchemy, but were also essential to Daoist Yijing calculations. Here Jing Fang’s way of matching trigrams with the stems and branches of the sixty-day system (najia shuo 納甲說) was linked further with five moon phases (new, full, waxing,
waning and ending) and came to be called the lunar trigram-day method. Here the days of the month were described with the help of trigrams and the ten stems, so that the third (new moon) was chen na geng 甲申庚, the eighth (waxing moon) was dui na ding 八丁丁, the fifteenth (full moon) was qian na jiaren 乾纳甲壬, the twenty-third (waning moon) was gen na bmg 艮纳丙 and the thirtieth (ending moon) was kun na yigui 坤纳乙癸. Variants of the same idea are also found in a system that uses either the twelve waxing and waning hexagrams or all sixty-four of them in conjunction with cyclical signs. The twelve waxing and waning hexagrams, beginning with all yang, then moving to all yin and back to all yang, were combined specifically with the twelve earthly branches (associated with Jupiter stations and the signs of the zodiac), and through them with the twelve months and the four seasons. These methods appear in rudimentary form in the Taipingjing 太平綱 (Scripture of Great Peace, ed. Wang 1960, ch. 44), but become especially important in inner alchemy, when Peng Xiao 彭晉 of the Later Shu (10th c.) and Yu Yan 俞琰 of the Northern Song integrated them into their systems. The various procedures of inner alchemical practice, according to them, had to be undertaken in specific months, which were determined by their yin or yang quality as designated in these hexagrams. Months governed by a hexagram of predominantly yin quality were thought to produce “punishment,” while those governed by yang would help establish “virtue.” The system was further expanded toward government politics; it demanded that certain administrative measures (censure, rewards) should only be taken in the corresponding months.

Ge Hong (283-343) in his Baopu zi 抱朴子 (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185) mentions a calendar method of identifying the “kingly day” (wangri 王日). For example, his “kingly-day cinnabar practice” involves the taking of an elixir on this particular day, which will ensure extended longevity, and if one applies the method of eating gold on such a day, one’s spirit will be strengthened and attain goodness (ch. 4). The picking of numinous mushrooms from the mountains and their ingestion should be undertaken only on a kingly day (ch. 11), and pledges to the Perfect One, which involved the smearing of one’s lips with the blood of a sacrificial animal, would only be efficacious then (ch. 18). Here eight possible states of development—prosperous, strong, growing, declining, dead, imprisoned, vanishing and resting—are distinguished, then linked with the five phases, the four seasons and the eight trigrams to determine the cosmic pattern of growth, decline and transformation.

This calendar method can be described as a variant of the Dunjia system, about which Ge Hong lists a number of texts in chapter 19. They include the Dunjia zhongjing 通甲中綱 (Central Scripture of Dunjia Calendars) and the Taiyi dunjia 太一道甲 (Calendars of the Great Unity; ch. 19). Later writers also link Ge Hong’s name with other texts of this kind, such as
the *Dunjia yaoyang* 道甲要用 (Essential Application of Dunjia, 4 j.), the *Dunjia miyao* 道甲秘要 (Secret Essentials of Dunjia, 1 j.) and the *Dunjia yao* 道甲要 (Key to Dunjia, 1 j.)—all listed in the bibliographic section of the *Suishu* 飛書 (History of the Sui). His name also appears in connection with the *Sanyuan dunjia tu* 三元道甲圖 (Illustrated Guide to the Dunjia Method of the Three Primes, 3 j.), which is mentioned in the bibliography of the *Tangshu* 唐書 (History of the Tang). It appears that this form of calendrics flourished especially in these periods, and the *Suishu* bibliography alone lists twenty-three texts on it.

One variation of the *dunjia* method also involved calculations based on the Nine Palaces, the Nine Stars, the eight directions, the twelve stems, yin-yang, the five phases, the four seasons, the Eight Nodes and the twenty-four solar stations of the year (see Liu and Zhou 1993). This rather complicated technique served to determine the auspicious or inauspicious nature of certain days and was originally part of military strategy. Ge Hong mentions it in the context of entering the great mountains, but it also appears in the *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (Record of the Three Kingdoms), in the biography of Guan Lu 管贠, who successfully located a run-away bull with its help (ch. 29). In the Daoist canon, several texts relate to this method, including the *Liuyin dunjia zhenjing* 六陰遁甲真經 (Perfect Scripture of the Six Yin as Applied in Dunjia Calculation, CT 857), a work of the Northern Song dynasty; the *Wulei wuhou bifa* 五雷咒候秘法 (Secret Methods of Martial Observation of the Five Thunder Gods, CT 585), a text of the Jingming (Pure Brightness) school, dated to the fourteenth century; the *Huangdi taiyi bamen rushi jue* 黃帝太一八門入式訣 (Formula of the Yellow Emperor and the Great One on Using the Compass of the Eight Directions, CT 586, 10th c.); and the *Huangdi taiyi bamen shengsi jue* 黃帝太一八門生死訣 (Formula of the Yellow Emperor and the Great One on Life and Death of the Eight Directions, CT 588, 10th c.), which also describes magical and shamanic practices, such as becoming invisible, healing the sick and exorcising evil.

According to the *Baopuzi*, proper calendrical analysis is essential especially in entering the mountains.

A similar admonition is found in a text of the Lingbao corpus, which says: “If you wish to enter the mountains, make sure to select a day of protection and righteousness. Days of focus are especially auspicious, but if you try to enter the mountains on a day of prohibition or punishment, you will certain die.” This echoes a method of calendar calculation first mentioned in the *Huainanzi* (ch. 1), which divides the sixty-day cycle into five groups of twelve each and
classifies them as days of righteousness, protection, focus, prohibition or punishment. Each is then linked with a particular level of auspiciousness, righteousness days being best and punishment days being full of hardship.

Then again, the Baopuzi mentions the application of a *jian chu* calculation method, which is similar to the *jian chu* system described in the *Shi ji* and is explained in more concrete terms in the *Huaianzhi*. A later text on this system is the *Xiejì bianfang shu* (Book on the Combined Analysis of Directions), an imperially sponsored compilation that was presented in 1741 and established the standard for divination at the time. It also appears in Tao Hongjing’s *Zhen gao* (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016), where it is used to determine the most auspicious time and direction to draw potent talismans (ch. 9).

In terms of the correct location and placement of buildings and tombs, Daoists inherited a flourishing tradition of Fengshui from the early middle ages. Even before the unification of the empire under the Qin, the proper positioning of graves, houses and royal palaces had been of utmost concern. In the Han, Wang Chong actively criticizes what he considers the superstitious mixing of Fengshui and hemerology in the building of tombs (ch. 25) and the planning of residences (ch. 24). At this time, the dominant method was to determine the correct position of the structure’s doorway in relation to the five phases; it was not yet called Fengshui but rather the art of planning residences (*tie shu*). Later, the concern shifted from the placement of the front door to the complex relationship of the building to the formations of the surrounding hills, valleys and streams. This change, I think, has to do with the migration of the Han people from the northern plains to the hilly and watery landscape of southern China at the end of the Western Jin (317 C.E.). Finding themselves in a new environment, they began to see their lives as influenced by the *qi* of the wind (*feng*) from the hills and the water (*shui*) from the streams, and felt the urge to establish themselves in as much harmony with these forces as possible.

Early evidence of this tendency is found in the biography of Guo Pu (276-324) in the *Jinshu* (History of the Jin, ch. 72) who selected a site for his mother’s grave in Jiyang (Jiangsu) which was “one hundred paces away from the water.” Later Guo Pu became the first “patriarch” of Fengshui, and his site selection served as a key illustration of how to practice it. The various aspects of gravesites were then named formally “dragon corners” (*long jiao*) or “dragon ears” (*long er*), the expression “dragon” being a metaphor for the site’s *qi*. The same image appears earlier, in the Qin dynasty, when the general Meng Tian the builder of the first great wall, committed suicide for having violated the “dragon veins” (*longmai*) of the earth (Shi ji, ch. 88). Guo Pu’s close connection to Fengshui is evident in the use of his name in one of the classics, the *Guopu zangjing* (Burial Scripture of Guo Pu), which dates from the Song dynasty.
It is also the first work to use the term **Fengshui**: "When it [the qi] strides upon the wind, it tends to disperse; when it is surrounded by water, it tends to stagnate" (ch. 1; see also *Jindai bishu* 漢道秘書, ch. 1). In addition, Guo Pu, who was not connected to any organized Daoist group during his lifetime, was later stylized as a Daoist immortal and said to have departed from this world through corpse-liberation (see *Lishi zhuan* 靈史傳, CT 298, ch. 28).

The practice of Fengshui is closely related to the Chinese system of ancestor worship and clan responsibility. The placement of one's forebears' **tomb** has a direct and inescapable influence on the good fortune one can expect in this life and for one's descendants. Even for Daoists and Buddhists who left their family to become recluses, the question of their ancestors' fate was important, since they could only attain higher stages if their dead relatives were at peace in the otherworld. As a result, medieval Daoists not only performed elaborate rituals for the salvation and transfer of the ancestors to the immortals, but also concerned themselves with the correct placement of their earthly resting places. Thus the *Zhen'gao* mentions Fengshui variously, and especially notes the case of Fan Youchong 范幼沖, who said that he wished a tomb for his family which would cause "his qi to be supported by the blue dragon, his sins to be taken away by the red bird, his life to be extended by the dark warrior and his residence to be protected by the white tiger roaring the eight directions" (ch. 10). This shows that the technical terms "dragon" and "tiger" had become part of Fengshui practice by the sixth century; it also illustrates the role of the four heraldic animals in both Daoism and mantic practices. Another example from the same text is a dream of Yang Xi 楊義, in which Xu Hui 許煥 tells him: "Your present burial place is not auspicious. The site's earth veins are intersected in too many places" (ch. 18). Here again we have evidence for Fengshui thinking in an active Daoist context. Although this connection has remained active to the present day, there are only two texts in the Daoist canon concerned with Fengshui, one from the eighth century, the other from the late Ming (see below).

The analysis of fate on the basis of the **physiognomy** of body and face (*xiangshu* 相術) also played a role in Daoist worldview and practices. First, in the middle ages, immortals were believed to show their celestial status, the fact that they were registered in the jade ledgers in heaven, in several physical marks, such as certain starry constellations represented in moles on their backs or chests, beautiful eyebrows, brilliantly gleaming eyes, and so on. These features are described in the *Housheng daqijin* litji 後聖道君列紀 (Annals of the Latter-day Sage, Lord of the Dao, CT 442) of the fourth century. They match the doctrine of "immortals' bones" (*xiangu* 仙骨), the particular skeletal signs of the immortals. Among key bones here are the sun horn (*rijiao* 日角) and the moon crescent (*yuexuan* 月懸), two bones on the forehead protruding
above the eyebrows like little horns. They are understood to be accumulations of *qi*, and characterize ancient sage-rulers such as Yao and also the Daoist deity Laozi (see Kohn 1996). Immortals are said to develop special bones within five years of dedicated practice, and especially through the visualization of the starry gods of the Three Terraces (*Santai 台*; see *Yuyi qi qian* 46). Together with the right bones, they also acquire various other physical signs, as is described in the *Jiu zhang banan yi* (Meaning of the Eight Hardships in Nine Sections):

All celestial beings have auspicious signs: long eyebrows and high ears, bony noses and square pupils, gray kidneys with silky lines, cinnabar hearts with damask-patterned lungs (*San dong junang* 8.2b)

These signs, moreover, indicate a greater purity of spirit and show the compassionate, kind and loving nature of the immortals (Kohn 1996, 203).

A greater concern with human physiognomy is evidenced in the Song dynasty. At this time, the individual rather than people’s clan affiliation and the role they played in the community came to the fore. Aristocrats and officials developed a strong concern for their own personal abilities and destinies, and increasingly made use of divination methods to determine whether or not they would pass the imperial examinations and attain a government posting. As a result, many forms of fortune-telling came to flourish, including physiognomy, Fengshui and oracle slips. Cosmic diagrams that placed the individual in the greater pattern of things entered the philosophical discourse—such as the *Xiantian tu* 先天圖 (Diagram of Before Heaven) and the *Tai ji tu* 太極圖 (Diagram of the Great Ultimate). Among leading Daoists and fortune-tellers of the early Song, Chen Tuan 陳抟, zi Tunan 圖南 or Fuyaozi 扶搖子 (d. 989), stands out. Originally from Henan, he spent the early decades of his life wandering to famous Daoist mountains and studying various arts and techniques and, in the 940s, he settled at the Yuntai guan 雲臺觀 (Cloud Terrace Monastery) on Huashan 華山. As recorded in *biji* 筆記 literature (notably Shao Bowen’s 邵伯文 *Wenjian lu* 聞見錄, ch. 7), he was received by various emperors at the time and used his physiognomic skills not only to predict the rise of the Song dynasty, but also to determine who of the many sons of Taizong would make the best heir-apparent (see Kohn 1990). Aside from authoring one text (see below), he rose to lasting fame in the field as the patriarch to whom the standard handbook of physiognomy, the *Shenxiang quanbian* 神相全編 (Complete Guide to Spirit Physiognomy; ed. Liang 1980) of the early Ming dynasty, was attributed (see Kohn 1986).

One of his teachers was Mayi dao zhe 麻衣道者 (Hempclad Daoist), to whom another major work in the field is attributed, the *Shen yi fu* 神異賦 (Rhapsody on the Marvels of Spirit), now contained in the *Mayi xiang fa* 麻衣相法 (Physiognomic Methods of the Hempclad Daoist). Nothing
is known about his life except that he encountered Chen Tuan at some point and imparted his techniques to him. The text has enjoyed lasting popularity and is still widely sold in bookstores and temples in Taiwan. Its methods have penetrated deeply into Chinese culture, as is evident from a story in the vernacular novel *Jinping mei* 金瓶梅 of the Ming dynasty (ch. 29; see Ogawa 1995).

In this work, the two protagonists Ximen Qing 西門慶 and Li Ping'er 李瓶兒 go to see the Daoist master Immortal Wu 吳神仙 to have their faces examined and their fortunes told. To Ximen Qing he says: “Your heavenly court [the center of the forehead] is elevated; this means that you will never lack emoluments as long as you live.” Later Ximen Qing acquires amazing riches and has as many as six wives. Again the Daoist tells him: “You have three lines at your mountain root [the area between the eyebrows]; this means you will be weak in your middle age.” And indeed, Ximen Qing ends up suffering from an ailment that kills him in the prime of life. To his companion, Li Ping'er, the Daoist says: “You have a black shadow in your mountain root; this means there will be many tears just when you reach age twenty-seven [3 × 9].” This too proves true—the young lady dies at the predicted age, and her family and friends shed many tears.

All of these physical characteristics and their interpretation go back to the *Shenyi fu*, which says:

> If the heavenly court is elevated, the subject can expect to acquire wealth in his young years. ... If there are three lines at the mountain root, he will fade away in middle age. ... If the mountain root has a greenish-blackish coloring, great calamities will occur at age thirty-six [4 × 9].

It seems, therefore, that Master Wu in the novel closely followed Mayi’s principles, which must have been quite commonly applied and familiar to readers of the Ming novel. Several texts that expound similar principles and methods also date from the Song dynasty and can be found in the Daoist canon (see below).

As regards the contemporary practice of divination, it is officially outlawed in the People’s Republic of China, but plays an important role both among popular and Daoist practitioners in Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas Chinese communities. Practically all temples offer the possibility of obtaining an oracle slip (and even mainland temples are beginning to do so again; see Morgan 1998), and in the vicinity of most there are shops of calendar specialists, physignomists and *Yijing* readers. Daoist funeral services for the salvation of the dead in all cases begin with the determination of an auspicious date for the burial, and the location and direction of the tomb are decided by a geomancer with the help of a cosmic board. The same holds true for secondary burials, in which the bones have been exhumed and washed and are placed in an urn for permanent keeping. Other Daoist ser-
vices similarly are only performed on proper and auspicious dates, be they simple exorcistic rites or grand sacrificial offerings. The system used here can be traced back to the late Ming dynasty, where it appears in the *Ziwei doushu* (Dipper Numbers of Purple Tenuity, CT 1485, 3 j.). Here the various combinations of the stems and branches of the sixty-day cycle are interpreted in relation to the stars in the Dipper, the constellation of Purple Tenuity in the center of the sky. The method's origins before the late Ming are unclear, but it is immensely popular today. Not only the day and time of the burial are determined by it, but also whether or not a husband and wife should best be interred jointly.

**TEXTS**

There are, as Kalinowski has shown (1990), over forty texts in the Daoist canon that have some relation with divination. He divides them into nine distinct categories:


The following will present some of the texts already mentioned by Kalinowski plus several others of a related nature under the four headings of the prognostication of fate, personality, time and place.

**FATE.** A major method of fate-calculation in traditional China was astrology, the identification and evaluation of the individual's birth star. The first Daoist text to describe the close relationship of people and stars is the *Taiping jing* (Scripture of Great Peace; ed. Wang 1960). Here people's fate is seen as determined by the star under which they are born, described and analyzed with the help of the stems and branches of the sixty-day cycle (see Penny 1990) and by the various sins they or their ancestors have committed (see Hendrischke 1991).

Another, medieval text that describes the same phenomenon is the *Chi-songzi zhongjie jing* (Essential Precepts of Master Redpine, CT 185, 12pp.), which is cited in Ge Hong's *Baopuzi* and probably goes back to the fourth century, although its extant edition dates from the Song dynasty. The text presents a dialogue between the Yellow Emperor and Master Redpine, and its first section focuses on the problem of human life as determined by the stars. The text says:

People each depend on a particular star for their lives. There are big stars and small, each governing a specific person's longevity and shortness [of life], decline and prosperity, poverty and wealth, death and life. (1a)
Whatever fate people are given by their star in the beginning of life, the Ruler of Fates (Siming 司命) also gives them a Talisman of Great Unity, which contains good starry energy and shines forth brightly. However, as people get involved with the vicissitudes of life, develop bad attitudes and commit evil deeds, the light of this talisman and thus the starry essence of the person begins to dim and eventually is extinguished. This fading of the light is parallel to the decline of the person, both physically and in terms of fate; its extinction means death (see Kohn 1998a, 840). The stars alone, therefore, are not sufficient to determine a person's fate, but they are responsible for the inherent tendencies and potentials of the human being.

A more technical astrological text is the Lingtai jing 靈臺經 (Scripture of the Numinous Terrace, CT 288, 21 pp.). Of unknown authorship, this probably originated after the Tang. It links the various fates of human beings with the twenty-eight lunar mansions and also contains instructions on the ritual propitiation of the stars (Kalinowski 1990, 104). It relates to the powerful belief in the powers of malevolent or baleful celestial influences (see Hou 1979a) and includes a certain amount of Indian astrology. An apparently related text is the Lingtai miyao jing 靈臺秘要經 (Secret Essentials of the Scripture of the Numinous Terrace, CT 289), also by an unknown author. This work, however, can be dated to the late Tang and is not, strictly speaking, a divination text. It contains a clarification of the five phases as well as a number of esoteric exorcisms and spells.

Another way to determine personal fate was the consultation of oracle slips (lingqian 緬帙). Practitioners would enter a temple to consult the deity about their fate or a specific personal problem, then throw the so-called yin-yang blocks to ascertain the willingness of the god to respond to their query, and eventually pull a wooden stick with a number from a box or container. The number would lead to a piece of paper that usually contained a classical poem and some concrete advice on love, business, school, travels, and the like. This paper is known as the "oracle slip;" it is usually part of a set of several tens of slips (see Morgan 1998).

It is not clear when oracle slips were first developed as a method of fortune-telling. We do know that they were rather popular in the late Tang and Song dynasties. The earliest record of their use is found in a text called Xingshu ji 幸蜀記 (Record of Travels to Shu), according to which Wang Yan 王衍 of the Five Dynasties once went to pray at the temple of Zhang Wuzi 張惡子 and "obtained four characters as an oracle, which said: 'Going against Heaven will bring destruction' (Shuofu 說郛 54). Later the practice was the subject of an essay by Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1036-1101), the Beiji lingqian 北極靈帙 (Oracle Slips of the North Culmen), contained in his Dongpo yangsheng ji 東坡養生集 (Dongpo's Collection on Longevity Practices, ch. 3). He says:
I visited the Tianqing Abbey and paid my respects to the God of the North Culmen. There I obtained an oracle slip which would tell me about the good and bad fortune, auspicious and inauspicious times of my future. It said:

"Through faith you attain harmony with the Dao, through wisdom you place the divine law first. These two must never be separate—thus you will reach an extended and happy life."

This not only testifies to the presence of oracle slips in the Song dynasty, but also that they were made available to the public in the halls of starry deities located within the precincts of Daoist monasteries.

The oldest continuously surviving set of oracle slips dates from the Jiading era of the Southern Song (1208-1224) and is found in a text called *Tianzhu lingqian* (Oracle Slips of India; see Zheng 1958). As the title suggests, however, this is a text inspired by Indian culture and is predominantly used in Buddhist institutions.

The Daoist canon, on the other hand, contains nine texts on oracle slips, which usually consist of between forty and one hundred readings of fortunes (Kalinowski 1990, 89-91). One example is the *Sisheng zhenjun lingqian* (Numinous Oracles of the Four Sage Lords, CT 1298, 49 pp.). This contains forty-nine slips; the oracles go back to the four leading popular/Daoist deities of the Song dynasty, Tianpeng, Tianyou, Yisheng, and Zhenwu, but the text itself is probably post-Song. Another work of the same kind is the *Xuanzhan lingying baoqian* (Wonderful and Miraculous Oracles of Perfect Mystery, CT 1299). Dated to the late Yuan or early Ming, this arranges oracle slips in accordance with the twelve double-hours of the day and assigns thirty slips to each hour. It also contains explanations of the fortunes, thus aiding readers in their proper understanding.

Then there is the *Shengmu yuanjun lingying baoqian* (Wonderful and Miraculous Oracles of the Holy Mother Goddess, CT 1300), a Ming work that contains ninety-nine oracle slips and an explanation of each. The *Hong’en lingqian* (Oracle Slips of Hong’en, CT 1301) also dates from the Ming dynasty. Hong’en, the deity involved, is the collective honorary title bestowed by the Yongle Emperor (r. 1403-1425) upon the local Fujian heroes, Xu Zhizheng and Xu Zhi’e. It has fifty-three oracles composed in seven-character verses. Another work of a very similar nature is the *Lingji lingqian* (Oracle Slips of Lingji, CT 1302). It, too, dates from the Ming and records oracles made by the Xu brothers, containing a total of sixty-four slips.

Unlike the *Fubian lingqian* (Oracle Slips of Supporting Heaven, CT 1303), whose provenance and date are unclear, the *Huguo lingqian* (Oracle Slips of Protecting the State, CT 1305) is clearly a work of the Song dynasty. Its one hundred fortunes are composed in seven-character verses in four-line stanzas. They are still in active use today, found in popular
temples to the God of War (Guandi 關帝) or the Goddess of Mercy (Guanyin 觀音), as well as in numerous Daoist abbeys and other institutions. They seem to have proved unusually reliable in their pronouncements to have been so widespread and active for so long.

PERSONALITY. Fate calculation geared specifically to the individual's personality and concerned with his/her bodily and psychological identity is usually associated with physiognomy, the "art of reading the mind's construction in the face" or the entire body. There are a number of early manuals and criticisms of this technique, but the earliest mention in Daoism is in conjunction with the looks of Laozi, who was stylized with the help of seventy-two physical signs adapted from early Daoism, Buddhism and popular religion (see Kohn 1996). Then again, there is the Houshen daojun lieji (Annals of the Latter-Day Sage, Lord of the Dao, CT 442), a late fourth-century text of the Shangqing environment (see Strickmann 1981). The text presents the physical characteristics of immortals, distinguished according to their status in heaven, and the psychological properties they exhibit in this world. For example,

People with a jade name registered in the Golden Pavilion have sunshine in their eyes. They show pure teeth and white blood. Benevolent and compassionate in character, they love immortality. Bright and versatile, they are of high excellence.

People with a jade registration in the golden books of Highest Clarity have the flowing Kui star on their backs and a slanted sternum in their chests. Generous and harmonious in character, they take care of others, their virtue reaching even to insects and worms.

People with a clear writ in the cinnabar tablets of the Great Ultimate have distinct patterns in their hand lines, such as the character for "man" or "great."

Withdrawn and cautious in character, they love perfection. Pure and empty [majestic], they are truly exceptional. (9b-10a)

The registration on the heavenly plane is therefore believed to be immediately linked with a physical appearance on earth, but it is also reflected in the psychological attitude and caring nature of the person in question. Daoists in this system made use of the traditional forms of physiognomy to give expression to their particular beliefs. They applied them also to historical figures, so that Lu Xiujing, for example, was said to have had "double wheels on his soles, feet with two ankle bones, hands with lines that read 'great' and spots on his body that formed the pattern of the Dipper” (Kohn 1996, 204).

Another Daoist-inspired text on physiognomy is Chen Tuan's Fengjian 風箋 (Mirror of Auras). The text is divided into eighteen sections, beginning with the definitions of main terms and moving through an analysis of body forms based on the five phases, the quality of spirit and energy and the various typologies associated with them. Special emphasis is placed on signs
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of longevity (or future immortality) and the role of the mind and spirit in the evolving appearance of the body (see Kohn 1988).

Also of the Northern Song dynasty is the *Lingxin jingzhi* 禮信經旨 (Pointers to Matching the Numinous, CT 1425, 8 pp), with an alternate version in CT 1481 (Kalinowski 1990, 108). It connects Daoism and physiognomy, and describes the meaning of certain facial patterns in relation to time and space. A later text of the same type is the *Ji qirshier jia xiangshu* 集七十二家相書 (Collection of Physiognomic Texts of Seventy-two Masters), compiled by the Daoist Zhang Zizhi 張紫芝 of the Chaoran guan 超然觀 (Monastery of Transcending So-being) of the Song dynasty. It was transmitted to Japan in the Kamakura period and survives in an original manuscript, today contained in the Kanazawa bunko Library. As a rare example of an authentic text of the time, this work is of high value to scholars.

**TIME.** Fate calculation based on time includes calendrics, such as the *jianchu, liuren* and *dunjia* methods, which all use a combination of different schemata (five phases, yin-yang, sixty-day cycle, etc.) to determine the most auspicious day and time for certain actions. In relation to this, two texts in the canon discuss the *liuren* method: the *Huangdi longshou zhenjing* 黃帝龍首真經 (The Yellow Emperor's Perfect Scripture of the Dragon Head, CT 283) and its related work, the *Huangdi jinkao yueheng jing* 黃帝金箋玉衡經 (The Yellow Emperor's Scripture of the Gold Casket and Jade Equalizer, CT 284).

In terms of the *dunjia* method, there is especially the *Liuyin dunjia zhenjing* 六陰通甲真經 (Perfect Scripture of the Six Yin as Applied in Dunjia Calculation, CT 857), closely linked with similar texts found in CT 585, 586, 587 and 588 (Kalinowski 1990, 192-94). A related art is "hermology," the determination of auspicious days for certain actions. This is closely linked with the almanacs which have existed since the early Han dynasty (see Loewe 1988a) and are still popular today (see Smith 1992). In Daoism, hermology was especially applied to determine the best possibly days for rituals and ordinations. In regard to the latter, a mid-Tang document has come down to us, the *Zeri li 穀日曆* (Calendar to Select [Good] Days, CT 1240, 8 pp). Written by the ritual master Zhang Wanfu 張萬福, it dates to around 720 and focuses on the best days for ordination to the various ranks of the priestly hierarchy from the Register Disciple of the Celestial Masters to the Preceptor of the Three Caverns (see Kalinowski 1990, 95-96; Benn 1991). The *jiazi* day, the first day of the cycle, is considered especially auspicious; kingly days are considered best for the beginning of a major sacrificial *jiao*.

Then there is the *Chisongzi zhangli* 赤松子章曆 (Master Redpine's Calendar for Petitions, CT 615, 6 j.), another Tang-dynasty document that includes much earlier material. The main focus of the work is the outline and description of the various forms of otherworldly communication prac-
ticed by the Celestial Masters, including memorials, petitions, and other administrative documents, for most of which it gives sample texts (see Nickerson 1996). It deals with auspicious times for these various communications in chapters 2 and 3, where it presents the best dates for regular festivals and offerings, methods to determine the good or bad qualities of certain days in conjunction with the heavens (using double-hours, lunar mansions, the sixty-day cycle and the eight directions), ways to properly position the participating deities and the structure of the sacred calendar in general. It is a work more concerned with taboos and does not deal specifically with prognostication.

PLACE. The art of determining the most auspicious location and placement of residences, tombs and sacred areas is geomancy or Fengshui, and it too features prominently in Daoist practice. Two texts in the Daoist canon deal with this method. First is the *Huangdi zhaijing* (The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Residences, CT 282, 2 j.) which also appears in a Dunhuang fragment (P. 3865; see Miyazaki 1995; Kalinowski 1991) and in the Qing encyclopedia *Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成 (Kanyu sect.). Each version is somewhat fragmentary, the Dunhuang copy lacking the latter half, the *Daozang* version missing certain sections. Taken together, the texts make reference to various related Tang works, such as those by *Lü Cai* 呂才 and by *Li Chunfeng* 李淳風, and also uses a fair amount of Song-style technical terms. This suggests a date around the year 1000. It does not deal with Fengshui proper, but rather with the theory of analyzing the auspiciousness of residences. It describes the various directions and times that people living in them should employ to attain the best fortune in their activities. In particular, it presents the use of the twenty-four positions, a combination of the stems and branches with the eight trigrams.

The other text is the *Kanyu wansiao lu* 堪舆完孝錄 (Record of Complete Filiality through Proper Place Selection, CT 1471, 8 j.), a collection of various divination methods of the later Ming period (ab. 1583) which is contained in the supplement to the Daoist canon (Kalinowski 1990, 107-8).

**WORLDVIEW**

DIVINATION is a way of determining the events or tendencies of the future with the help of signs that in various ways match the attitudes and behavior of individuals or groups. It is common not only among tribal peoples, but has played a part in all great civilizations and is still common today. Nor is it likely to vanish any time soon—human life in this world is forever unpredictable and insecure, and people will always seek knowledge about what the future may hold.
Divination has been practiced in many different ways over the ages, and its aims and means have varied widely. For example, a current rage in Japan is divination and fortune-telling by computer, something unheard of just a few years ago. Previously, people employed the twelve-star method, which was administered by the Shintō shrines. Then again, in the West fortune-telling through crystals, tea leaves, palmistry or cards has been popular, and they are still the dominant methods used.

In China, too, methods varied greatly in the different regions and historical periods. However, they all share the same underlying worldview, which can be described as the idea of qi. The Chinese have never divided their world into organic and inorganic parts, but rather have seen it as one integrated whole that shared the same underlying force of qi. Even today, modern words for “atmosphere” and “star” contain the character qi, displaying the word’s continuing importance in the culture. Healing methods, too, rely on qi, such as the famous Qigong or Taiji quan, which aid in the circulation of this universal power through the human body.

Qi can be described as a form of subtle energy, a vital flow that forms things, animates beings and causes the changes and developments of all. It has two main characteristics. The first is its responsive nature, which means that one aspect of it matches all others, that one movement within it reverberates everywhere else. The second characteristic is its cyclicity, which means that it moves in specific cycles, such as day and night, summer and winter, youth and old age. Qi is commonly described as consisting of two major aspects, yin and yang, which alternate in continuous movement and never-ending interaction. More subtle are the five phases, which, again, allow the determination of particular phases and qualities of qi.

Divination makes use of both these characteristics, seeing matching signs in apparently unrelated phenomena and predicting the movements of qi based on its cyclical patterns. It formalizes these patterns in various ways, using not only yin-yang and the five phases, but also applying the trigrams and hexagrams of the Yi Jing. For example, the twenty-four waxing and waning hexagrams, which show the growth first of yang, then of yin, are matched with the twenty-four two-week periods of the year, named after major weather and seasonal patterns such as Great Cold, Great Heat, Autumn Equinox and Rain Water. The idea is that heaven and earth follow regular cycles which are predictable and reliable and to which human beings need to adapt their attitudes and behaviors. Good fortune is perfect adaptation, while ill luck results from mismatch or contrariness. The qi in the human body is part of the larger qi patterns of heaven and earth, and people can learn about their own and their world’s future by observing the inherent tendencies.

The Yi Jing makes use of these same ideas. Here the two forces yin and yang are depicted as lines in eight trigrams and sixty-four hexagrams. The
oracle is activated through the division of fifty milfoil stalks, which render a yin or a yang line each time they are cast. The lines, then, can move, allowing for a glimpse into the inherent movement of qi. As the *Xici 繾辭* (Great Commentary) says: “The changes are without conscious deliberation, without intentional action. Serene and still, they are unmov...
mind, as in fate, it appears on two levels—one a deep fundamental, inborn level that one can do nothing to change and must work with, the other a surface level that will alternate with the seasons and the developments that one undergoes. In physiognomy, these two levels are the bones and the complexion, the two mainstays of the art. Bones, together with flesh and voice, are features one is born with; the analysis of a person’s bone structure (such as an immortal’s bones), therefore, indicates very deep-seated inherent tendencies that even massive outer events will not alter. Complexion, on the other hand, is an expression of one’s momentary state of health and mental attitude, together with one’s habits and current behavior, and is a temporary phenomenon that may change. Complexion is therefore useful to the physiogomic analyst, as much as to the medical professional, to spot current patterns, and many warnings are given on its basis. But it is not a reliable source for long-term prognostication (see Hou 1979b; Kohn 1986; 1988; 1996; Lessa 1968).

Both levels are intimately connected, and people of certain fundamental body types are highly unlikely to develop certain types of behavior and complexion. Still, people can consciously alter their inherent tendencies, and have a certain degree of free will within the confines of the bones and personality traits they are born with. They suffer justifiably, being held responsible for their bad deeds by the celestial authorities and punished accordingly. The value of physiognomy as a form of fortune telling lies in its ability to tell people the potentials and limitations they have within their particular bodies, and to pinpoint possibly harmful tendencies they might be engaged in (see Zhu 1990; Zhang 1997; Sakade 1993).

TIME AND SPACE. These two, again, are expressions of the cosmic patterns of qi. Unlike fate and body, however, they function outside the immediate person or personality and can only be controlled in very limited ways. The importance of divination here lies in determining the most auspicious moment or spot for a certain activity to be undertaken by a particular person. Three things, therefore, must be matched: the inherent characteristics of the agent, the project to be undertaken and the right time or place for it. Most forms of divination are intended to accomplish this, be they the various calendar methods, the Yijing, the analysis of gravesites or the different forms of Fengshui.

Time in this context is understood as being both cyclical and linear, matching the mainstream Chinese conception. It is cyclical in its movement through the days, seasons and life cycles of all beings; it is linear in its manifestation in history and in the development of both personality (memory) and culture (progress; see Needham 1969; Sivin 1966; Frazer et al. 1986; Chen 1992; Pregadio 1995). To find an individual’s specific position at the crossroads of the cyclical and linear manifestations of time is the key task of the diviner, who will consult the Yijing or read the cosmic board. As all human
activities issue a certain qi and have a distinct impact on the world at large, they are best undertaken in proper conjunction with the cosmic patterns—only thereby can good fortune be attained.

The same also holds true for the choice of certain spaces, be it the locating of a grave, a house or any other structure. The earth as a whole is a multilayered structure consisting of different layers of qi, and any action performed upon it will cause a change in the overall pattern. These changes can be with or against the natural pattern of the qi, and thus result in good or bad fortune for the people who create them. Mountains and valleys, often described as “dragons,” have an energy of their own which must be properly analyzed to create the best possible environment for people (see Lip 1995; Wong 1996; Tan 1994; Smith 1991, 131-72). Daoists are very conscious of this, and their buildings in all cases closely conform to the principles of Feng-shui. In addition, Daoist scriptures serve to protect people from any possible harm they may inflict on the various powers of the earth as they build homesteads or dig graves.

To sum up, although not primarily practitioners of divinatory arts, Daoists were actively involved in them; although divination was never a form of Daoist practice per se, or even a specifically Daoist thing, it has been important. The various forms of divination developed as part of mainstream and popular Chinese culture and pervade all periods and aspects of Chinese history. They have their own traditions, texts, sages and major representatives, and only in certain cases is there an overlap with the Daoist tradition. Daoists have traditionally made ample use of various divination methods and a number of Daoists have become well known as masters of these arts. Divination still plays an important role in Daoism today, and many rites and practices could not be undertaken without it. Like Chinese medicine, divination is a practice that informs and supports Daoism but is not essentially Daoist in itself.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

QUANZHEN—COMPLETE PERFECTION

TAO-CHUNG YAO

DESCRIPTION

The Quanzhen or Complete Perfection School (Quanzhen jiao 全真教) emerged at the end of the Northern Song (960-1127) and the Jurchen Jin (1115-1234) during a war-torn era in Chinese history. It was the most popular and influential religious movement in Northern China during the Mongol Yuan (1271-1368), not only occupying the center stage of Daoism but also overshadowing Buddhism. The Complete Perfection school is one of only two major Daoist divisions that still exist today, the other being the Celestial Masters, which was founded during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220).

Both external sociopolitical and internal religious factors contributed to the rise of Complete Perfection. Externally, north China in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had entered a period of political unrest and social turmoil as a result of the contention among the Song, Jin and Yuan for control of the central plateau. This sociopolitical disorder paved the way for the emergence of three new Daoist movements, of which the Complete Perfection school was the most popular and the most influential. The other two, the Great Way (Dadao 大道) and the Great One (Taiyi 太一), have long since faded into obscurity (Yao 1995; Tsui 1991, 9; see also Zheng 1987; Zhan 1989; Chen 1962; Qing 1993).

Internally, the emergence of the Complete Perfection school signifies both continuity and change in the Daoist tradition: it perpetuated the practice of inner alchemy, which started in the Tang and matured in the Northern Song, but has also been regarded as a reform movement which sought to revitalize the Daoism that, in a rather corrupted form, had won the favor of Huizong (r. 1110-1125), the last emperor of the Northern Song. Emperor Huizong favored several Daoists who advised him to build temples, ceremonial tripods and even a mountain to bring fortune and prosperity to his reign (see Sun 1965; Miyakawa, 1975; 1976). Ironi-
cally, those expensive projects drained the national treasury and ultimately contributed to the dynasty's downfall. The Daoists who enjoyed Huizong's trust received all the trappings of official positions and titles (Mou et al. 1991, 520), and so Daoism came to be widely detested as an evil force that was corrupting the emperor and destroying the empire. Some scholars regard Wang Zhe's founding of the new sect as a deliberate effort on his part to revitalize Daoism (see Kubo 1966; see also Nogami 1939). But, there are also scholars who consider Wang a Song loyalist (Chen 1974, 30-31; see also Yao 1958).

**History**

THE FOUNDER. The Complete Perfection school was founded by **Wang Zhe** (1113-1170) who was born to a rich family in Xianyang, Shaanxi. When he was eighteen, the invading Jurchen forces defeated the Song army and seized control of Shaanxi. Taking advantage of the disorder, a group of bandits plundered all his family's possessions. When the leader of the bandits was later captured, Wang was kind enough to have him released. This act of benevolence generated a deep respect among his fellow villagers.

Being the scion of well-to-do land-owners, Wang Zhe apparently received a standard classical education and was known for his proficiency in martial arts. Records moreover indicate that he tried to excel in civil as well as military services, but did not have much success. Legend has it that in the summer of 1159, at the age of 48, he encountered two supernatural beings who instructed him in secret rituals. After this encounter, Wang Zhe changed his original name Zhongfu to Zhe and also adopted the Daoist style Chongyang. In 1160 Wang had another encounter with one of the two supernatural beings, and received five written instructions (**Ganshu: xianyuan lu** [hereafter, **Ganshu**], CT 973, 1.4a; see below). Soon afterward he became delirious and dug himself a grave that he named "the Tomb of the Living Dead." He lived in it for three years before filling it in and building a hut in which he lived for the next four years. In the summer of 1167, Wang Zhe suddenly decided to burn his hut, dancing and chanting while his neighbors tried to put out the fire (**Jinlian zhengzong xianyuan xiangzhuan** [hereafter, **Xianyuan**], CT 174, 20a; see also Tsui 1991, 19-20).

Wang Zhe then headed east to Shandong where he attracted many followers, including Ma Yu and Tan Chuduan whose names were supposed to have appeared in a secret instruction given to Wang by a supernatural being. In Shandong, Wang also established five congregations (**hui**), named Congregation of the Seven Treasures, the
Golden Lotus, the Three Lights, the Jade Flower, and the Equality of the Three Teachings (Tsui 1991, 28). The expression “three teachings” used in each congregation’s name indicates that Wang Zhe embraced the notion of combining the three major doctrines of China—Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism. This fact, as well as the numerous Buddhist and Confucian elements found in Quanzhen writings placed the school at a prominent place in the long trend of “harmonizing the three teachings” (sanziao heyi 三教合—) in the history of China (Ganshui 1.6b-7b).

It is interesting to note that none of the five congregations established during his early years of proselytizing contain the term “Complete Perfection” in their titles. However, the term does appear many times in Wang Zhe’s writings, and when Wang sojourned at Ma Yu’s residence in Ninghai (Shandong), he called his hut the “Complete Perfection Hut.” Later, people began referring to Wang’s teachings as “Teachings of the Complete Perfection,” and his sect became known as the “Complete Perfection school.”

THE SEVEN DISCIPLES. Complete Perfection did not become widespread during Wang Zhe’s lifetime, but thanks to the efforts of his seven disciples, his religion attracted a large following and also gained the attention of the ruling class after his death. The seven disciples are:

1. Ma Yu 马钰, zi Danyang 丹阳 (1123-1183). Like Wang Zhe, Ma Yu was also from a rich family and had a good education in the Chinese classics. Ma Yu was the first among the seven to become Wang’s disciple and was the one who apparently learned the most from Wang (Jinlian zhengzong ji [hereafter as Zhengzong ji], CT 173, 3.1a-13b; Xiangyuan 23a-26b; Ganshui 1.14a-27b; see also Hawkes 1981, 158).

2. Tan Chuduan 谭处端, zi Changzhen 长真 (1123-1185). Tan became Wang’s disciple after Wang cured his illness one day when Wang was living in the “Complete Perfection Hut” at Ma Yu’s residence. Tan, together with Ma Yu and Qiu Chuji 邱处机, accompanied Wang to various towns and villages where they founded the five congregations (Zhengzong ji 4.1a-3a; Xiangyuan 26b-29a; Ganshui 1.27b-31b; see also De Rachewiltz and Russell 1984).

3. Qiu Chuji 邱处机, zi Changchun 长春 (1148-1227). Qiu was the best known among the seven. His meeting with the Mongol ruler Chinggis Khan in Central Asia was a much celebrated event in Chinese history (Zhengzong ji 4.7a-14a; Xiangyuan 31b-36a; Ganshui 2.5a-11b; see also Kubo 1963; Sanaka 1943). Qiu Chuji was the last among Wang Zhe’s seven disciples to die. After Qiu’s death, the followers of the Complete Perfection sect split into seven branches. The seven disciples of Wang Zhe served as their leaders. Qiu’s Longmen 龍門 branch had the largest following and still continues today (Wang 1978, 58; Chen 1988; Zhou 1982).
4. Liu Chuxuan 劉處玄, zi Changsheng 長生(1147-1203). Liu was well known for his filial piety toward his mother. Legend has it that Liu became a sincere follower of Wang Zhe after seeing a poem written by Wang on a wall (Zhengzong ji 4.3a-7a; Xiangyuan 29a-31b; Ganshui 2.1a-5a).

5. Wang Chuyi 王處一, zi Yuyang 玉陽(1142-1217). Wang Chuyi was a Daoist even before he became Wang Zhe's disciple. His mother also became Wang Zhe's disciple, and was the first known female follower (Zhang 1995, 14; see Zhengzong ji 5.1a-6a; Xiangyuan 36a-39a; Ganshui 2.11b-18a).

6. Hao Datong 郝大通, zi Taigu 太古(1140-1212). Unlike the others who actively sought their discipleship, Wang Zhe strove to convert Hao because Hao had a "supernatural quality" (Ganshui 2.19b; Zhengzong ji 5.6a-9a; Xiangyuan 39a-41a; Ganshui 2.21b-24b; see Reiter 1981).

7. Sun Bu'er 孫不二, zi Qingjing sanren 清靜散人(1119-1182). Sun, the only woman among Wang's seven distinguished disciples, was Ma Yu's wife. Wang Zhe obviously treated both sexes equally when accepting disciples, and a large number of poems in Wang Zhe's works are addressed to women (Zhengzong ji 5.9a-11a; Xiangyuan 41a-43a; see also Hawkes 1981; Cleary 1989).

EXPANSION. In 1170, Wang traveled west from Shandong with four of his disciples, Ma, Liu, Qiu and Tan, and that same year he died in Bianliang (Kaifeng). He was buried in Liujiang village where he once lived. In 1174, after observing the three-year mourning period for their teacher, the four disciples gathered in a town near Wang's resting place to discuss their aspirations. The next day they departed and went their various ways (Ganshui 1.22a).

Ma Yu returned to Liujiang where he stayed for seven years. It is said that after Ma joined the Complete Perfection school, he did not wear fine clothes, nor touch money for thirteen years. At night he slept simply in an open field (Zhengzong ji 3.6a). After Wang's death, Ma Yu became the patriarch of the Complete Perfection school. In 1181 the Jurchen Jin government issued an announcement ordering all Daoists to return to their places of birth (Zhengzong ji 3.6b). Consequently, Ma Yu turned over the sect's affairs to Qiu Chuji and left for Shandong (Ganshui 1.23b; Zhang 1995, 23).

After the meeting of 1174, Qiu Chuji went to Panqi 翮溪 (southeast of Baoji in Shaanxi) where he lived a secluded life in a cave for six years. It is said that during that time Qiu begged for one meal a day and wore only a thin coat. In 1180 he moved to the Longmen mountains (in western Shaanxi) where he continued the ascetic life (Xiangyuan 32b). When Ma Yu asked him to take over the sect's affairs, he was still in the Longmen mountains. Qiu, a native of Shandong, was also supposed to leave
Shaanxi, but he was afraid that if he also departed the sect would fall apart. Qiu was permitted to remain in Shaanxi because local officials and citizens signed a document assuming responsibility for his actions (Zhengzong ji 3.6b).

The Complete Perfection school did not seem to have any relation with the Jurchen court during the years of its first three patriarchs, i.e., Wang Zhe, Ma Yu and Tan Chuduan. However, with the increase in its popularity, it became known to the ruling house. Emperor Shizong of the Jin (r. 1161-1189) summoned Wang Chuyi to the capital in 1187 to receive instructions on “methods of preserving life.” This was the first in a series of summons of Quanzhen masters to the courts by the rulers. Altogether, Wang Chuyi was summoned to court four times by two of the Jurchen Jin emperors. Although Wang Chuyi was the first among the masters to receive attention from the ruling class, the master who gained a significant place in Chinese history because of his relationship with rulers was Qiu Chuji. In 1188, Qiu was summoned by Emperor Shizong to the capital to take charge of the jiao sacrifice for the “ten thousand spring festivals” (Pangji, CT 1159, 3.6a-7a).

In 1216, Qiu was summoned by Emperor Xuanzong of the Jin, and in 1219, by Emperor Ningzong of the Southern Song, but he declined to go both times. However, at the age of 72, Qiu accepted a summon from the Mongol ruler Chinggis Khan in the winter of 1219 to visit him in Central Asia. Chinggis Khan summoned Qiu to his court because he wanted to learn the “method for preserving and prolonging life” from the well-known Daoist sage Qiu. Qiu did accept Chinggis Khan’s summons, though not because he wanted to instruct the Khan in various secret methods, but rather because he realized that to refuse would be out of the question.

The Mongols, like other nomadic North Asian peoples, believed in pantheistic shamanism. They were not hostile to other religions and treated the masters and leaders of various religions just as they did their own shamans, Teb-Tenqqeri (Heavenly Reporter). However, they would not tolerate a religion which showed an unwillingness to serve them. As Sechin Jagchid has pointed out: “The Mongols made it clear to the leaders of every foreign religion that unless they could win support from the Mongolian rulers, they would meet a terrible destruction which might be the end of their religion” (Jagchid 1969, 109-111).

Qiu Chuji selected eighteen of his disciples to accompany him to Central Asia. They departed in early 1220 for a trip which took three years to complete. This celebrated journey was recorded in detail by Li Zhichang 李志常 in his Changchun zhenwen xiyou ji 長春真人西遊記 (see Waley 1931). In Central Asia, Qiu had several opportunities to explain his teaching to the Khan, and the Mongol ruler seemed happy to learn
about various spiritual methods for cultivating longevity. Just before Qiu's departure from Chinggis Khan's camp in Central Asia, the Khan issued an edict as a gesture of appreciation for Qiu's visit exempting Qiu's followers from taxes and labor. Qiu himself was made the head of all religions and his followers were supposed to pray for the long life of the Khan. This edict turned the Complete Perfection school into the most popular religion in north China. Thousands of people joined the sect not because they wanted to help Qiu pray for the Khan, but because the sect was able to offer protection from heavy taxes and levies. The privileges granted by the Khan not only increased the popularity of the Complete Perfection school, but also made the sect a sanctuary for a distressed multitude (Yao 1986).

Following Qiu's meeting with the Khan, the Complete Perfection school entered its golden age. Chinggis Khan's edict granting Qiu the authority to take charge of all "those who leave their families" made him virtually the leader of all native religions in North China. The Complete Perfection school outshone all other religions, and its followers outnumbered all others.

THE TROUBLED YEARS. In 1225 the Buddhist monk Fuyu 福裕 (1203-1275) went to the Mongol court and charged the Complete Perfection school with seizing Buddhist temples and spreading forgeries about Laozi's conversion of the Buddha (Bianwei lu 751a). Complete Perfection followers were charged with criminal acts, such as occupying Buddhist temples, and destroying Buddhist images and replacing them with Daoist ones. They were also accused of circulating the Laozi huahu jing 老子化胡經 (Scripture of Laozi's Conversion of the Barbarians) and compiling of the text Laojun bashiyi hua tushuo 老君八十化圖說 (Picture Book of Lord Lao's Eighty-one Transformations; see Reiter 1990a; Ch'en 1957; Kubo 1968).

One explanation for the Daoist occupation of Buddhist temples is that many of them were deserted during the war, and that since Qiu's sect was in charge of all religions, Complete Perfection had legitimate cause to restore them. The problem is that they did not restore them as Buddhist temples but as Daoist ones. Buddhists also bitterly complained that only Qiu's followers were exempt from taxes and corvee labor, and that Buddhists were unfairly excluded.

Emperor Xianzong, who had nothing against the Complete Perfection Daoists, tried to avoid taking sides and summoned the parties involved to a debate at court to settle the matter. This incident formally inaugurated a sequence of Buddhist-Daoist debates at the Mongol court and resulted in a proscription of the Complete Perfection school. This series of incidents came to be known as the Buddhist-Daoist "struggles" of the Yuan Dynasty (Yao 1980, 151-169; Jan 1982, 391-96; Liu and
Berling 1982, 488-90). The Complete Perfection school lost each and every one of the debates, and the "forged" Daoist scriptures were ordered burned. The last debate took place in 1281, after the Mongol Yuan conquered south China. The Celestial Masters, flourishing in the south, joined Complete Perfection in the debate. Still, the Daoists lost again. An edict was issued that all Daoist books except the Daode jing should be collected and burned, and that all Daoist priests should follow Buddhist rules. It appears, however, that the imperial orders were never strictly enforced because many pre-Yuan Daoist scriptures are still extant.

In spite of the setbacks during the Yuan, Complete Perfection is one of the two major Daoist schools surviving today. Advocating a celibate life and stressing self cultivation, it represents the alchemical school (danding pai 鼎派) in the Daoist tradition. The Celestial Masters sect, which practices various Daoist rituals for communities and families, is the modern representative of the liturgical school.

TEXTS

Complete Perfection Daoism left behind a large body of writings covering a wide range of subjects in various literary forms. To give a representative sample, I will discuss the writings of Wang Zhe and his seven disciples as well as a few works that are important for understanding early Quanzhen history. With the exception of two books from the Daozang jiyou, all Quanzhen writings can be found in the Daoist canon. For notes on many of these texts see also Boltz 1987.

ANTHOLOGIES. There are only thirty anthologies in the Daoist canon, and twenty-three of them are either written by Quanzhen masters or people related to the sect. This body of literature, mostly poetry, demonstrates that Quanzhen masters were well-educated literati who took pride in expressing themselves in a variety of verse forms. Because Quanzhen anthologies were mainly written for apologetic purposes, the language employed is generally simple and unpretentious, though it includes a great deal of Daoist terminology. They have thus not been considered works of literary value, and have attracted scant attention from scholars of Chinese literature. Though the Quanzhen anthologies might not contain poems worth mentioning in studies of Chinese poetry, they do contain a great number of poetic forms: regulated poems of different length, song lyrics, and more than three thousand ci lyrics to some 250 tunes (Yao, 1980; see also Wong 1988b). They deserve to be studied for a better understanding of the development of Chinese poetic forms.
Wang Zhe himself set a remarkable example by producing a huge body of poems that was later collected and edited in three anthologies (Wong 1981). First there is the *Chongyang quanzhen ji* 重陽全真集 [hereafter *Quanzhen ji*](An Anthology on Complete Perfection by Chongyang, CT 1153, in 13 j.; see Boltz 1987, 144-45; Tsui 1991, 21). With over one thousand poems it is the most voluminous. This anthology (pref. 1188) not only presents the essentials of Quanzhen beliefs, but also allows us to share some private moments of Wang's life and feelings. Each of the poems comes with a title that supplies the theme of the poem, the name of the addressee and the occasion of its composition. Judging from the titles, Wang Zhe associated with people of all walks of life, from female devotees of the Way to old Buddhist monks, from Confucian scholars to military officials. The anthology is filled with lines exhorting people to sever family ties and pursue the Way. To reach immortality, one must do away with the four evils of wine, sex, money and anger. One may be saved only if one has left the cycle of transmigration. Wang’s teachings in this respect are close to those of Chan Buddhism. He taught people the two Confucian cardinal virtues of loyalty and filial piety, revealing his efforts to bring together the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism. This is made explicit in this anthology in lines such as: “The three teachings have always shared the same ancestral wind” (1.8b). Nevertheless the anthology is unmistakably Daoist in character, given that alchemical terminology appears throughout.

Wang’s *Chongyang jiaohua ji* 重陽教化集 (Chongyang’s Anthology on Teaching Transformation, CT 1154, in 3 j.; see Boltz 1987, 145; Hawkes 1981, 159) is a collection of some 200 poems on self-cultivation that he wrote for his disciple Ma Yu. This collection provides a vivid description of Wang’s methods of proselytization. Some of the poems in this anthology can also be found in other works of Wang Zhe and Ma Yu. The six prefaces (dat. 1183) and one postscript written by scholars from Ma Yu’s hometown are particularly useful for the study of early Quanzhen history.

Like the *Chongyang jiaohua ji*, the *Chongyang fenli shihua ji* 重陽分梨十化集 (Chongyang’s Anthology of the Ten Transformations by Dividing Pears, CT 1155, in 2 j.; see Boltz 1987, 145-46; Tsui 1991, 21; Hawkes 1981, 158-59) is also a collection of poems written for Ma Yu, many of which are addressed jointly to him and his wife Sun Bu’er in order to convince the couple that separating from one’s spouse is necessary for cultivating the Way. According to the preface (dat. 1183) written by Ma Dabian of Ninghai, Shandong, while Wang Zhe was staying in the Complete Perfection hut at Ma Yu’s home, he would divide a pear into two halves and offer them to Ma Yu and his wife every ten days. Wang used the term “to divide a pear” (*fenli 分梨*) as a pun for “to separate”
and as a device to urge the couple to part. Eventually Wang succeeded: Ma Yu and his wife Sun Bu'er separated and both became Wang's disciples.

Ma Yu also produced an impressive body of poetry whose quantity even surpasses that of his teacher. More than 1300 poems are extant in three separate anthologies. The *Dongxuan jinyu ji* 洞玄金玉集 (An Anthology of the Gold and Jade on Comprehending the Mystery, CT 1149, in 10 j.; Boltz 1987, 149-51; Tsui 1991, 22), with more than 900 poems in ten fascicles, is the largest collection and consists mainly of poems on Daoist cultivation written for Ma's acquaintances. Judging from the titles of those poems, Ma associated with people of both sexes and adherents of all three doctrines. The themes are nevertheless in line with basic Quanzhen teachings and exhort abstinence from wine, sex, money and anger, and control of one's ape-like mind and horse-like will. Fame and wealth are deterrents for those seeking the Way, and being "pure and clean" is a key to immortality. The anthology is a wonderful source for studying Ma Yu's life.

The *Jianwu ji* 講悟集 (An Anthology on Gradual Realization, CT 1142, in 2 j.; Boltz 1987, 151-52) is a collection of more than 300 *ci* lyrics written by Ma Yu. Most are addressed to Ma Yu's friends as aids to understanding Daoist cultivation, but some poems are written for self-encouragement and self-discipline. Ma admonished himself not to be stingy, greedy, flattering or swindling, and urged himself to purify his mind by not thinking about his family, talking about his village, minding current affairs, and even by not composing poems or spreading teachings (2.18b). Again we see Ma's striving for a completely "pure and clean" mind and for complete detachment from the world.

The *Danyang shenguang can* 丹陽神光燦 (The Brightness of the Spiritual Light of Danyang, CT 1150, 36 pp.; pref. 1175; Boltz 1987, 152; Tsui 1991, 22) is a collection of some 100 of Ma Yu's *ci* lyrics and continues his previous theme of the "pure and clean" mind that is totally detached from the world.

Qiu Chuji's *Changchunzi panqi ji* 長春子磻溪集 (The Pan Brook Anthology of Changchunzi, CT 1159, in 6 j.; Boltz 1987, 157-58; Wong 1988a) contains more than 450 poems and lyrics of various length and styles. It has four prefaces dated 1186, 1187, 1206, and 1208, written by four men of high social status. While the poems in the anthologies of Wang Zhe and Ma Yu were mostly written to instruct people on the principles and methods of cultivation, Qiu's poems expand that narrow scope to cover a wide subject matter, including descriptions of scenery, seasons, plants and birds, etc. Some lyrics are considered to be of high literary quality (see Nakada 1955). Many are addressed to high officials,
including Emperor Shizong of the Jin, and reveal Qiu’s close ties to the aristocracy.

The next Quanzhen master who left a sizable collection behind is Wang Chuyi. His *Yunguang ji* 雲光集 (The Yunguang Anthology, CT 1152, in 4 j.; Boltz 1987, 163-65; Tsui 1991, 22), in four fascicles is a collection of some 600 poems and lyrics. This collection is called Yunguang “Cloud and Light” because Wang Chuyi once practiced cultivation in a cave of that name (2.26b). Like Wang Zhe and Ma Yu, much of Wang Chuyi’s poetry aims to spread Quanzhen teachings. The titles reveal that Wang associated with people of varied social strata and occupation, from female devotees of Daoism to male Buddhist adherents, from civil officials to generals, and from shop owners to ship owners. They also show that Wang conducted many Daoist offerings (jiao), and thus demonstrate that the Complete Perfection school served the public by carrying out rituals usually considered to be a feature of the Celestial Masters. According to one account, Beijing suffered from draught in 1209 and people there asked Wang to pray for rain. Wang told them that it would rain the following day, and it turned out to be true (2.34b). We also learn that Wang once refused to meet a foreign envoy, and that he wrote quite a few poems describing his visits to the Jin court. Thus the *Yunguang ji* not only elucidates his teachings but also sheds light on his life.

Tan Chuduan’s *Tan xiansheng shuiyun ji* 譚先生水雲集 (Mr. Tan’s Anthology on Water and Clouds, CT 1160, in 3 j.; Boltz 1987, 160-62; Tsui 1991, 22) contains more than 200 poems and lyrics. This anthology has a preface dated 1187 by Fan Yi 范挹, a local scholar, and two postscripts dated 1289. In addition to poems of various length and style, the collection also includes Tan’s *yulu* 語錄 “recorded sayings” to his followers in which he emphasizes the importance of keeping one’s mind “pure and clean” when in search of the Way. A person will not be able to escape the cycle of transmigration unless the mind is free and clear, and salvation only comes when he has completely wiped out all thoughts and revealed his true nature.

Liu Chuxuan’s *Xianyue ji* 仙樂集 (Anthology of Immortal Tunes, CT 1141, in 5 j.; Boltz 1987, 162-63; Tsui 1991, 30) is a collection of more than 500 poems and lyrics, some of which are quite short. One song instructs people to conform with their true nature and not to go against the Way. If they follow their true nature, they will have fortune and peace and will be able to cultivate the elixir of immortality. If they go against the Way, they will suffer disasters, illness and eventually death. The anthology also contains a list of ten admonishments exhorting people not to be arrogant and haughty, not to blame others for their own mistakes and not to be critical of others. They should not point out others’ shortcomings, or talk about their own good points. They should be
fair to everybody, and not just love those who might benefit them, or dis-
like those who might not benefit them. Whatever they undertake, they
should make sure that they finish it. When they try to explain the prin-
ciples of cultivation, they should make sure the explanation is in ac-
cordance with doctrine. Those who pursue self-cultivation must always be
“pure and clean” in mind and free from attachments. Although Liu’s is a
collection of poems and lyrics very much in the same vein as the an-
thologies of other Quanzhen masters, his work is not included in the
Daozang tiyao (Ren and Zhung 1991), list of anthologies.

Hao Datong’s Taigu ji 大古集 (Anthology of Taigu, CT 1161, 4 j.;
Boltz 1987, 165-66.) has four prefaces: one dated 1178 by Hao Datong
himself, one dated 1236 by his disciple Fan Yuanxi 范圂曦 (1178-1249),
and the other two written at Fan Yuanxi’s request by the well-known
Yuan literati Feng Bi 馮璧 (1162-1240) and Liu Qi 劉祁 (1203-1250; see
Yao 1995, 167-68). The book itself is divided into three parts. The first
part in one scroll consists of Hao Datong’s annotations to the Zhouti can-
tong qi 周易參同契, a classic on inner alchemy. The second part in two
scrolls consists of his explanations of thirty-three diagrams, including dia-
agrams of the twenty-eight constellations, the five phases, the eight tri-
grams and the twenty-four divisions of the solar year. The third part, I
j., contains thirty poems on the golden elixir. The contents and format
of Taigu ji are quite different from other Quanzhen anthologies, which is
probably why it too is not included in the Daozang tiyao list of anthologies.

CULTIVATION TEXTS. In addition to these anthologies, Wang
Zhe and his seven disciples also authored a number of books on Quan-
zenh cultivation. Wang Zhe’s Chongyang lijiao shiwu lun 重陽立教
十五論 [hereafter Shiwu lun] (Fifteen Discourses on Establishing the
Doctrines by Chongyang, CT 1233, trl. Yao 1980, 73-85; Kohn 1993,
86-92; Reiter 1984-1984; Ebrey 1993; see also Tsui 1991, 36-37) is a
small handbook prepared as a guide for his followers. It includes six dis-
courses on daily cultivation, five on inner cultivation and four on the
meaning of “realizing the Dao.” Wang’s other work, the Chongyang
zhiren shou danyang ershisi jue 重陽真人授丹陽二十四訣
[hereafter Ershisi jue] (Twenty-four Instructions the Perfected Chongyang
bestowed on Danyang, CT 1158; Tsui 1991, 10, 40; Hawkes 1981, 162)
is a collection of Wang’s responses to twenty-four questions posed by Ma
Yu. It was edited by one of Ma’s disciples.

Ma Yu’s Danyang zhenren yulu 丹陽真人語錄 (Recorded Sayings
of the Perfected Danyang, CT 1057; Tsui 1991, 22), edited by his disciple
Wang Yizhong 王煥中, advocates being “pure and clean” and the dual
cultivation of inner nature and life. His Danyang zhenren zhian
丹陽真人直言 (Straight Words from the Perfected Danyang, CT 1234;
Tsui 1991, 41) moreover is a voluminous collection of further teachings
on cultivation. It emphasizes the importance of self-cultivation, because no one can do this for another. It also stresses that one can become an immortal by nourishing one’s qi and making one’s spirit complete.

Liu Chuxuan’s *Wuwei qingjing changsheng zhenren zhizhen yulu* 無為清靜長生真人至真語錄 (Recorded Sayings, Straight and Perfect, of the Perfected of Nonaction, Purity, and Long Life, CT 1058) with a preface by Han Shiqian 韓士倩 in 1202, consists of over 80 discourses on various aspects of life and cultivation, including life and death, bitterness and happiness, good and evil, misfortune and fortune and transmigration and retribution.

Sun Bu’er, the only female member of Wang Zhe’s seven well-known disciples, left two works behind. They were not included in the Daoist canon, but appear in the *Daozang jingao*: the *Sun Bu’er yuanjun chuanshu dandao mishu* 孫不二元君傳述丹道秘書 (Secret Book on the Inner Elixir as Transmitted by the Primordial Immortal Sun Bu’er, in 3 j. *Daozang jingao, wei*, 111a-17a) and the *Sun Bu’er yuanjun fayu* 孫不二元君法語 (Model Sayings of the Primordial Immortal Sun Bu’er, in 1 j., *Daozang jingao, wei*, 108a-10b). Both are collections of her sayings on methods of cultivation for women.

In addition to the works by Wang Zhe and his seven disciples, there is also *yulu* by Jin Zhenren 晉真人, the “Recorded Sayings of the Perfected Jin” (CT 1056; see Tsui 1991, 40-41), which contains writings by Wang Zhe and Ma Yu that are not included in the collections of their works.

INNER ALCHEMY. Quanzhen Daoism was the chief exponent of inner alchemy after 1100 and numerous poems on the practices of inner alchemy can be found in their anthologies. There are three works by the early masters which deal specifically with this subject. Wang Zhe’s *Chongyang zhenren jingyuan yunuo jue* 重陽真人金關玉鎖訣 (Oral Instructions on the Golden Pass and Jade Lock by the Perfected Chongyang, CT 1156; trl. Kohn 1993, 175-180; Tsui 1991, 10, 30, 41-42; see also Hawkes 1981, 158-59) employs a question and answer format to explain concepts and terminology concerning cultivation. Qiu Chuji’s *Da-dan zhizhi* 大丹直指 (Straightforward Directions for the Great Elixir, CT 244), published between 1269 and 1310, discusses the theory and practice of inner alchemy in nine sections, each with diagram and explanation. Wang Daoyuan’s 王道淵 (fl. 1310) *Qingtian ge zhushi* 青天歌注釋 (Annotation to the Song of Blue Heaven, CT 137) is, as its title suggests, an annotation of Qiu Chuji’s “Song of Blue Heaven” and discusses the dual cultivation of nature and life, stressing the cultivation of nature before life.

ANNOTATIONS OF EARLIER DAOIST CLASSICS. Some twenty commentaries on early Daoist classics are attributed to Quanzhen
followers, of which two were written by Liu Chuxuan, one of the seven disciples: the *Huangting nei jing yujing zhu* 黄庭内景玉經注 (Annotation to the Jade Scripture of the Yellow Court’s Inner View, CT 401) and the *Huangdi yinfu jing zhu* 黄帝陰符經注 (Annotation to the Scripture of Yellow Emperor’s Secret, CT 122) with a preface by Fan Yi dated 1191. The commentaries in both books apply Quanzhen beliefs to interpret the texts.

**HAGIOGRAPHIES.** Daoist hagiographies serve as an important source for the early history of the Complete Perfection school. They describe both the seven perfected mentioned above and the five patriarchs or “ancestors.” The five patriarchs were:

1. Donghua dijun 東華帝君 (*Zhengzong ji* 1.1a-2b; *Xianyuan* 13a-14a; Tsui 1991, 24);
2. Zhongli Quan 鍾離權, a legendary general of the Han dynasty (...), *Zhengzong ji* 1.2b-5b; *Xianyuan* 14a-15a; Tsui 1991, 25.
3. Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 a.k.a. Lü Yan 呂岩, zi Chunyang 端陽, a legendary figure of the Tang dynasty (b. 796?; see *Zhengzong ji* 1.5b-9a; *Xianyuan* 15a-16b; Tsui 1991, 25-26; see also Baldrian-Hussein 1986);
4. Liu Cao 劉操, zi Haichan 海蟾 of the Liao dynasty (907-1125; see *Zhengzong ji* 1.9a-11b; *Xianyuan* 16b-18a; Tsui 1991, 26);
5. Wang Zhe.

It is not clear who organized the Quanzhen lineage, nor when it was formed. However, by the time that Qin Zhi'an 秦志安 (1188-1244) compiled the *Jinlian zhengzong ji* 金蓮正宗記 (Records of the True School of the Golden Lotus; CT 173, pref. Mao Shouda 毛守達, dat. 1241; see Tsui 1991, 9; Hawkes 1981, 162), the Quanzhen lineage was firmly established. Wang Zhe himself was partially responsible for the formation of the lineage because more than once he mentioned the names of Zhongli, Lü and Liu in his writings. He even claimed that Zhongli was his “ancestral master,” Lu his “paternal master,” and Liu his “avuncular master.” (*Quanzhen ji* 3.8a, 9.1a) Since some of these figures lived several hundred years apart, Wang’s claim cannot be taken literally, but must be understood as an effort to establish a line of transmission for his beliefs.

When that Liu Tiansu 劉天素 and Xie Xichan 謝西蟾 published their *Jinlian zhengzong xianyuan xiangzhu* 金蓮正宗仙源像傳 (Illustrated Biographies of the Orthodox Immortal Stream of the Golden Lotus, CT 174, pref. Zhang Sicheng 張嗣成, dat. 1327; Liu Zhixuan 劉志玄, dat. 1326; see Tsui 1991, 56-57), the Quanzhen lineage was not only well established but also widely known. The first chapter of this book contains a copy of Chinggis Khan’s summons of Qiu Chuji, and Kubilai Khan’s edict of 1269 which bestowed special honors
on the Five Ancestors and the Seven Disciples. It is worth noting that Kubilai Khan showed his favor for Complete Perfection even after it lost several debates to the Buddhists and before the last debate in 1281. The publication of this book could be an effort by Quanzhen followers to restore their school's former glory.

Li Daoqian 李道谦 (1219-1296) produced three important collections of biographies for early Quanzhen followers. His Quanzhen nianpu 七真年錄 (A Chronological Biography of the Seven Perfected, CT 175, postscript 1271; see Tsui 1991, 27) concentrates on the lives of Wang Zhe and his seven disciples, covering the period between 1112 and 1227. His Zhongnan shan zuting xianzhen neizhuan 終南山祖庭 仙真內傳 (Esoteric Biographies of the Immortals and Perfected at the Ancestral Court in the Zhongnan Mountains, CT 955) provides thirty-seven biographies of lesser known early figures of the Complete Perfection school. Perhaps the most important contribution made by Li Daoqian in preserving Quanzhen history was the compilation of Ganshui xianyuan lu 甘水仙源錄 (Records of the Immortal Stream of the Gan River, CT 973, in 10 j.; Tsui 1991, 22), published in 1289. This is a collection of biographies, stele inscriptions and eulogies concerning some fifty Quanzhen masters written by contemporaries who were not themselves Quanzhen followers. The authors include the well-known Yuan dynasty literati Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190-1257), Yao Sui 姚燧 (1238-1313) and Wang E 王鶚 (1190-1273; see Chan, 1975; Reiter 1990b).

Another important work for early Quanzhen history is the Gongguan beizhi 宮觀碑誌 (Records of Steles from Daoist Temples, CT 972) compiled by an anonymous editor during the Yuan. It is a collection of nine stone inscriptions written by scholars of Song, Jin and Yuan dynasties. The Gongguan beizhi is included in Chen Yuan’s 陳垣 道家金石略 (A Collection of Epigraphy for Daoist Schools) which contains 374 stone inscriptions concerning the Quanzhen sect. The Dàojia jinshi lue 道家金石略 is an important source book for the study of Daoism, especially the Complete Perfection sect.

RECORDS OF QIU’S MEETING WITH CHINGGIS KHAN.
Two works in the Daoist canon provide eye-witness accounts of Qiu Chuji’s meeting with Chinggis Khan. The first one is Changchun zhenren xiyou ji 長春真人西遊記 (Record of the Perfected Changchun’s Travel to the West, CT 1429, pref. Sun Xi 孫錫, dat. 1228; see Waley 1931). This text is compiled by Qiu’s disciple Li Zhichang (1193-1256) who accompanied Qiu on his westward trek. The second is Yelü Chucai’s 耶律楚材 (1190-1244; see D.E. Rachewiltz 1962b) Xuanfeng qinghui lu 玄風慶會錄 (Record of the Celebrated Meetings on the Mysterious Winds, CT 176; Iwamura 1954), which is a historical record of the meetings between Qiu Chuji and Chinggis Khan from 1219 to...
1223. Yelü Chucai was then serving as an interpreter for the Khan. He also wrote a book entitled *Xiyou lu* 西遊録 (Record of Travel to the West; trl. De Rachewiltz 1962a), a record of his travels with Chinggis Khan that includes a text defaming Qiu Chuji.

Both texts are not only precious primary sources for Quanzhen history, but also for the study of the Yuan dynasty. The *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji* is also an important document for the history of communications and transportation between China and the West, and for the geography of Central Asia (see Chen 1968; Ding 1974).

**Worldview**

Quanzhen Daoism advocated the methods of inner alchemy to achieve the ultimate goal of immortality. Unlike operative alchemy that advocated ingesting elixirs composed of metals, minerals, chemicals, etc., the inner alchemy regimen called for spiritual self-cultivation, contending that all necessary ingredients were present within the self.

**THE DUAL CULTIVATION OF INNER NATURE (**_xing_**) AND LIFE (**_ming_**).** Quanzhen is known for its dual cultivation of inner nature and life as a means of achieving immortality (see Chen 1984, 153-57). To understand the essence of its teachings, one needs to know how these two were understood by Quanzhen masters. Wang Zhe, the founding father of the sect, considered inner nature and life to be the root of cultivation (*Shiwu lun* 4b). According to him, inner nature is one's "spirit" and life is one's "vital force." Since inner nature is a key concept in Chan Buddhism and "spirit" and *qi* are two essential concepts found in early Daoist scriptures, Wang Zhe's teachings appear to have been influenced by both (Zhang 1995, 87.).

Wang Zhe compares inner nature to "root" or "host," and life to "bud" and "guest" (*Ershisi jue* 1ab). "Semen" (*jing* 精) is inner nature, and "blood" (*xue* 血) is life. The true method of self-cultivation is to understand thoroughly inner nature and life. semen and blood are the fundamentals of the body, and the "real vital force" (*shenqi* 真氣) is the root of life (*Jinguanyusuo jue* 2a). Most people fail to realize that life is the result of the interaction of "female force" (yin) and "male force" (yang). Since the root of the body is the father's semen and mother's blood, one must therefore conserve them (*Jinguanyusuo jue* 3b).

The best way to preserve one's semen or blood is to be "pure and tranquil" (*qingjing* 清靜). In explaining the meaning of the term "a person of no death" Wang said that a person who wished not to die must possess a "pure and clean" body. If true *qi* dwells in one's "cinnabar field" (*dantian* 丹田), and if semen or blood is not depleted, one will not
die. The reason why many men who are separated from their wives never attain the Way was because they fail to be truly pure and tranquil. To be truly pure and tranquil, one needs to nourish one’s qi with semen or blood. In other words, one not only needs to keep one’s body pure and tranquil, one must also keep one’s mind pure and tranquil (Jinguan yusuo jue 2b).

PURE AND TRANQUIL. The term “pure and tranquil” frequently appears in the Quanzhen writings. The Qingjing jing (Scripture of Purity and Tranquility; trl. Wong 1992; Kohn 1993) is one of its four classics, the other three being the Daode jing, the Buddhist Xinjing (Heart Sutra) and the Confucian Xiaojing (Classic of Filial Piety). When Ma Yu asked about the meaning of pure and tranquil, Wang Zhe told him that there was both an inner and an outer pure and tranquil. He called a mind free of impure thoughts “inwardly pure and tranquil,” and a body untouched by impurities “outwardly pure and tranquil” (Ershisi jue 2b).

Like Wang Zhe, Ma Yu also considered pure and tranquil to be the key to self-cultivation (Zhang 1995, 90). He said one must keep one’s mind pure and one’s vital force tranquil. When one’s mind is pure, nothing will disturb it. When one’s vital force is tranquil, evil desires will not bother him (Danyang zhenren yulu 8a). If one desires to nourish one’s vital force and keep one’s spirit intact, one must do away with all kinds of attachments, and be pure and tranquil both within and without. If a man can be pure and tranquil for a long time, his semen will concentrate, his spirit condense and his vital force stabilize. If he does not leak semen for three years, an elixir will form in the lower cinnabar field. If he does not leak for nine years, an elixir will form in the upper cinnabar field (Danyang zhenren yulu 15b-16a). Emission of semen was to him the most serious sin that would prevent one from achieving the Way: “Wine is a liquid that confuses one’s nature. Meat is a thing that stops one’s life. The best thing to do is not to consume them. While a person could be forgiven for having wine and meat, he or she could not be forgiven for having sex.” Why? Because sex, as he asserts, is worse than wolves and tigers. It will destroy one’s good behavior and harm one’s good deeds; it will deplete one’s semen and destroy one’s spirit; it will cause death (Danyang zhenren yulu 2b).

Based on Wang Zhe’s idea of inner and outer “purity and tranquility,” Ma Yu instructed his followers to engage in both outer and inner daily practices. Through daily inner cultivation a person would acquire a quiet mind. One should not worry or be suspicious, nor should one be attached to anything. He urged all to keep their thoughts pure and rid themselves of desires. If one could spot one’s own mistakes and quickly correct them, one would become an immortal (Danyang zhenren zhiyan 2b).
Wang and Ma's ideas of inner cultivation resemble the Buddhist idea of purifying one's mind and having no attachments.

Outer cultivation in Quanzhen was a discipline that sought to shape the adept's behavior toward others. One should not find fault with other people's shortcomings or brag about his own virtues. One should not be jealous of worthy and capable people, nor try to prove that one is better than others. One should not tell tales or argue with others about what one loves or hates (Danyang Shenren zhiyan 2ab). Ma Yu's teachings on outer cultivation reflect what he learned from Wang Zhe, and are closely related to Confucian moral values such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness (Ershisi jue 4a; Tsui 1991, 144).

Wang once taught Ma that a benevolent person would not abandon others, a righteous person would not be corrupted, a courteous person would not be arrogant, a wise person would not try to compete with others, and a trustworthy person would not lie (Ershisi jue 4a).

Ma Yu believed that if a person is always able to be "pure and tranquil" and realizes that all worldly attachments are unreal, his mind will naturally become pure and his desires will vanish. His nature will be fixed and life will be settled. The elixir will naturally form and the adept will attain immortality. However, a person must do this by himself because no one else can do the cultivation for him (Danyang Shenren zhiyan 1ab).

MIND AND INNER NATURE. In Quanzhen belief, the process of cultivating one's nature is called "seeing inner nature" (jianxing 见性) and the process of cultivating life is called "nourishing life" (yangming 養命). Seeing inner nature means to understand the principle or to know the underlying "structure" (體); nourishing life means to put it into practice or to know its "application" (用; Zhenxian zhishi yulu 1.21a). Both were necessary for cultivation. This section will concentrate on the concepts of mind and inner nature as presented by early Quanzhen masters.

The key to success in self-cultivation is to reveal one's true mind. When one's true mind is illuminated (mingxin 明心), one will be able to see one's inner nature. Ma Yu considered mind to be the key to the cultivation of inner nature and life. Wishing to return to the root of life, one must not let one's mind chase after anything nor be attached to anything. Wishing to see one's nature, one only needs rid one's mind of all thoughts and leave nothing on the mind. With the mind completely pure and clean and free from inner and outer feelings, this is seeing inner nature (Jin shenren yulu 6b-7a).

Quanzhen masters frequently compared the mind to a monkey and the will to a wild horse. The adept must learn how to subdue his monkey-mind and control his horse-will, and not let them run wild. According to Ma Yu, he must cut off feelings and eliminate desires in order to
subdue the mind. He should not even see his relatives, nor allow his mind to wander, but keep it calm and put a stop to thoughts at all times, even when moving firewood, carrying water or going to the bathroom. When the mind is calm and without movement, it is called the true mind (Qunxian yaozu cuanjì 3.15a). If the adept can purify his mind and rid it of desires, he will become an immortal (Danyang zhenren zhiyan 1a).

Hao Datong said that to become a Quanzhen follower one must first cultivate the mind. When the mind is not wandering outside, the spirit will naturally be calm and vital force peaceful (Zhenxian zhizhi yulu 1.22a). Qiu Chuji contended that when one’s spirit is calm and one’s vital force peaceful, one will see one’s inner nature (Zhenxian zhizhi yulu 1.5a). Tan Chuduan explained that a person is trapped in an endless cycle of transmigration because he has a mind. Using the Buddhist concepts of greed (làn 食), anger (chen 嚴) and infatuation (chì 疑), he explained how the mind brings harm to the self, and how one must rid oneself of all feelings and love to subdue the mind. To perceive one’s true nature one must return to the state before birth (Shuiyun ji 1.20b; Zhenxian zhizhi yulu 9b-10a). Only when one annihilates anger and greed from the mind, will one’s original nature emerge (Shuiyun ji 3.11b).

The late Quanzhen master Li Daochun’s (1219-1296) Xingming lun性命論 in his Zhonghe ji 中和集 (Collection of Central Harmony, CT 249, 4.1a-2a; Li 1989) is a representative work of the Quanzhen belief in the dual cultivation of nature and life. Semen and spirit are the roots of nature and life: nature will not be established without life and life cannot exist without nature. The two terms are aspects of the same principle: the two should not be separated and adepts should cultivate both. To do so they would first observe rules, remain steadfast and use wisdom to empty the mind. Then, they refine semen, vital force, and spirit to preserve the body. With the body safe and sound, the foundation of life would be forever firm. With the mind empty and pure, their nature will be complete and illumined. With inner nature complete and illumined, then there will be no coming or goings. Life is forever firm, and there is no birth or death. Thus, they become both empty and complete, and will proceed directly to nonbeing. Both nature and life will be complete, and both form and spirit will be perfected (Zhonghe ji 4.1b-2a; Tsui 1991, 30-32, 39-40).

We can therefore see that to cultivate the mind simply means to empty it of all thoughts. This concept of subduing the mind is highly similar to Chan Buddhism’s illuminating the mind; however, to Quanzhen followers this is the path to immortality, and to Chan Buddhists, the path to enlightenment. The concepts of mind and inner nature should also be distinguished from their use in Song dynasty Neo-Confucianism,
THE HARMONIZING OF THE THREE TEACHINGS. In Chinese history, the trend toward integrating the three religions of Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism started no later than the Tang Dynasty (618-907) but became very clear by the Song-Yuan era (Zhang 1995, 65). Quanzhen strove to bring the three religions together, and from the beginning Wang Zhe instructed his followers to study the classics from all traditions, believing that the teachings they expounded were all useful for self-cultivation. Wang saw the three teachings as three branches of a tree or three legs of a tripod (Yiusuo jut, 12b-13a), and his disciples made similar remarks about bringing the three together.

Nonetheless Quanzhen was fundamentally a Daoist school pursuing the Daoist goal of immortality, but its understanding of immortality was somewhat different from other Daoist movements. To Quanzhen followers, immortality was reached when one was totally free from all kinds of stress and attachments. However, in order to attain that state one had to go through a process of self-cultivation that involved perfecting oneself inwardly and outwardly—inwardly by purifying one's mind through meditation and conserving one's vital energy such as semen and blood, and outwardly by severing all worldly attachments and perfecting oneself morally. All these methods of self-cultivation were geared to revealing one's nature and to nourishing life.

PRACTICES

GENERAL GUIDELINES. Wang Zhe's handbook of fifteen discourses (Shiwu lun, CT 1233) may serve as a guide and explanation to self-cultivation. The fifteen tenets can be divided into two categories, outer cultivation and inner cultivation. To those who decide to "leave home" (chujia 出家) in search of immortality, Wang advises them to first surrender themselves to a monastic hut where their mind will find peace. They also must find the central point between movement and quiescence so that they will not move excessively and damage their vital force. On the other hand, they should not remain inactive too long or their blood will congeal and stagnate (1a). Wang warns his followers not to live in luxurious buildings because grass-thatched cottages are to him more appropriate for people in search of the Way. They should be concerned with what is being constructed within the self, and not with fancy outer things (2b-3a).

Wang cautions all who travel far in search of the Way not to amuse themselves with scenery or the splendor and bustle of large cities. They
should remember the purpose of the trip is not to enjoy the beauty of the temples or to have a good time with their friend, but to climb high mountains and seek enlightened masters. Wang warns those who try to find the Way in books not to confuse elegant writings with profound meaning. They must extract the meaning from the book, and apply it to their self-cultivation. If they read widely in order to brag about one’s knowledge to others, their self-cultivation will be undermined.

Wang also instructs all his followers to acquire a good knowledge of medicinal herbs to improve health and to cure illnesses. Being knowledgeable about herbs, practitioners can use them to save people’s lives. Such knowledge will help in reaching the Way (Shiwu lun 2ab). In addition all Quanzhen followers should have a Daoist companion so that the two can help each other in time of sickness. However, there must not be too much attachment to a companion because then the mind will not be set free. Complete indifference to others is also not beneficial. The best is to find a middle way so that people may care for each other without being overly attached (3a).

So far the text describes Wang’s “outer” or daily cultivation, which he believed would contribute to reaching immortality. In Wang’s opinion, there is no shortcut to immortality. To become an immortal, one must test one’s will for many years and try to accumulate good deeds (Shiwu lun 5a).

As for the cultivation of the inner self, Wang advocates mixing inner nature and life, subjugating the mind and refining nature. Wang describes two states of mind—a “fixed mind” and a “confused mind.” A fixed mind is always tranquil and unmovable. It does not see myriad beings nor think or ponder in the slightest. When the mind is in that state, one need not worry about subjugating it. However, if one’s mind moves as the circumstance changes, it is a confused mind and must be extirpated immediately (3b-4a). One way to subjugate the mind is through meditation, a practice that is more than sitting in meditation with one’s body straight and eyes closed. True meditation, according to Wang, requires the mind to be unmoved and unshaken throughout all activity and repose, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down. In this state, even if the body remains in the mundane world, one’s name will be listed among the ranks of the immortals, and there is no need to go far and consult others (3b).

To explain the different stages of mental cultivation, Wang Zhe uses the Buddhist concept of the “three worlds” (sanjie 三界), the worlds of sensual desire (yujie 欲界), form (sejie 色界) and formlessness (wuse jie 無色界). As the mind forgets consideration and reflection, it transcends the first world; as it forgets the various states of things, then it transcends
the second; as it becomes free from vain views (kongjian 空見), it then goes beyond even the formless.

To explain the desired goal of cultivation of the body, Wang Zhe uses the Buddhist concept of the “dharma body” (fashen 法身) which is the embodiment of truth and law. The dharma body has neither shape nor form; it is not empty, nor does it contain anything, and it is without physical dimension. When in use, it penetrates everywhere. Hide it, and it will be dark and obscure without a trace. Nourishing the dharma body successfully, one is attached neither to this world nor return to another place. Then one’s goings and stayings are truly natural.

At the end of the text, Wang Zhe makes it clear to his followers that the goal of self-cultivation is not physical immortality. It would be very stupid to hope for that. When one becomes an immortal, one leaves the mundane world. However, what leaves the world is not one’s physical body, but one’s enlightened mind. For those who have attained the Way, their minds are already in the holy land even though their bodies are still in the physical world (Shiwu lun 5a-6b).

These fifteen brief essays do not encompass all aspects of Wang’s teachings in great detail; in order to gain a more complete view of Wang Zhe’s teachings, it is necessary to consult other works.

RECURRENT TERMINOLOGY. According to Wang Zhe, the first step towards immortality is to get rid of all unnecessary worries. The second step is to guard against wine, sex, wealth and anger (jinguan yusuo jue 1a). In fact, two of the most frequently used phrases in the works of Wang Zhe and his disciples works are jiu se cai qi 酒色財氣 (wine, sex, wealth and anger) and xin yuan yima 心猿意馬 (monkey mind and wild-horse will), which together epitomize the cultivation of one’s nature and life (see Hawkes 1981, 162-63). Severing all worries is the first step towards purifying one’s mind. One’s mind and will, like horse and monkey, are not easy to control. It takes effort to calm one’s mind and to realize one’s true nature. Guarding against wine, sex, wealth and anger is essential in taking care of life.

Those who want to enter the Way must also “sever their worldly ties;” that is, they must not be trapped by their families and should leave their wives and children. Wang Zhe stressed the importance of achieving the Way through quiescence and admonished against unnecessary words for he considered the tongue as one major root of disaster (Quanzhen ji 3.17b, 13.9a; Jiaohua ji 2.6b). In order to achieve the Way, one should not hang after fame or profit for these will constrain people from reaching the Way (Quanzhen ji 10.16b, 11.13ab, 12.4b). The Buddhist concept of lunhui 輪迴 or transmigration is seen throughout, as the purpose of cultivation is to free oneself from the endless cycle of transmigration. Another common term is kalou 骸髄 (human skeleton), used as a warning to those not
interested in entering the Way that they would become mere skeletons as a result (\textit{Quanzhen ji} 10.20a; \textit{Jiaohua ji} 1.20b).

**PURE RULES.** Wang Zhe also issued a set of ten prohibitions or rules for his followers. They can be found in the \textit{Quanzhen qinggui} \全真清規 (Pure Rules of Complete Perfection, CT 1235, ed. Lu Daohe 陸道和 Tsui 1991, 59-60; Akizuki, 1958; Kanayama 1943).

1. Those who offend national laws will be punished by expulsion from the order.
2. Those who steal money or goods and give them to superiors and elders will be punished by having their clothes and bowls burned, in addition to being expelled.
3. Those who like to tell tales and to cause disturbances will be punished by being whipped with bamboo rods, in addition to being expelled.
4. Those who offend by drinking wine, [indulging in] sex, [seeking] wealth, [losing] their temper, or eating strong-smelling vegetables (i.e., leeks, garlic, onions, etc.) will be punished by expulsion.
5. Those who are villainous, treacherous, indolent, crafty, jealous or deceitful will be punished by expulsion.
6. Those who are insubordinate, arrogant and do not act jointly with others will be punished by [compulsory] fasting.
7. Those who make lofty talk and brag, and those who are impatient in their work will be punished by [being made to] burn incense.
8. Those who talk about strange things and joke, and those who leave the temple without [good] reason will be punished by [being made to add] oil [to the lamp].
9. Those who do not concentrate on their work, and those who are villainous, treacherous, indolent or lazy will be punished by [being made to serve] tea.
10. Those who commit minor offenses will be punished with compulsory worship.

The first commandment seems to have nothing to do with “entering the Way” or spiritual cultivation but was probably included to avoid any conflict with the state. Wang made it clear that he had no intention of protecting anyone who violated national interests. In doing so he notified the government that his sect was merely a religious organization made up of law-abiding citizens. Considering the fact that China was under foreign rule at the time, the first commandment may have been nothing more than a device for gaining the trust of the Jurchen rulers (see Kubo 1951, 36).

**MEDITATION AND MONASTIC LIFE.** The Complete Perfection practice of “quiet sitting” (jingzuo 靜坐) or meditation was very likely influenced by Chan Buddhism, since meditation has always been a major concern of Chan. For Quanzhen followers, meditation was a sacred routine to be carried out solemnly. A set of rules was compiled for “sitters” to obey. According to the \textit{Quanzhen qinggui}, followers gathered together on the first day of the tenth month each year to perform the \textit{zuobo} 坐功...
“sitting with the bowl” which usually lasted one-hundred days. During this period, followers meditated twenty-four hours a day. Two signs, one saying dong 動 (movement), the other saying jing 靜 (stillness), were placed in the room in turn. When the “movement” sign was up, the meditators were allowed to slowly move their bodies. When the “still” sign was up, no one was allowed to move at all. A zhubo 主碗 “master of the bowl” would patrol to see if anyone was moving. When he spotted someone twitching, he would hang a sign on the offender and hit him three times. The offender would slowly get up wearing the sign and take over the duty of patrolling. The next offender would in turn take over his job. Those who dared to leave the room or to talk during the “stillness” period were punished (Quanzhen qinggui, 5ab; also Quanzhen zuobo jiefa, CT 1229).

A typical daily schedule for Quanzhen adepts was as follows (Quanzhen qinggui, 5b-6a):

3-5 a.m.: The sound of the plank indicates the “non-movement” period is over. Everyone washes his face and rinses his mouth. Then they worship the perfected and the sages.

5-7 a.m. Morning meal.
7-9 a.m. Group meditation.
9-11 a.m. “Non-movement” meditation. Each person meditates quietly by himself.
11 a.m.-1 p.m. Noon meal.
1-3 p.m. Group meditation.
3-5 p.m. “Non-movement” meditation.
5-7 p.m. Late gathering.
7-9 p.m. Group meditation and offering of tea and soup.
9-11 p.m. “Non-movement” meditation.
11 p.m.-1 a.m. “Chanting time.” Adepts chant poems meant to enable them to resist the “sleeping devils” (i.e., to overcome the tendency to fall asleep). Each verse is sung three times and no more.
1-3 a.m. The gathering is dismissed. One can do whatever one wants.

Scholars believe that Quanzhen established a set of regulations influenced by Chan (e.g., Kohn 1993, 86, 97-98. See also Yoshioka 1979; Kamata 1960). Kubo in particular argues that rules were not regarded as important by earlier schools (1951, 35). For example the Celestial Masters were allowed to marry, eat strong-smelling vegetables, and drink wine, all of which were forbidden in Quanzhen and Chan alike. Furthermore, punishments such as burning incense and adding oil to the lamp prescribed in Quanzhen rules were also practiced by Chan Buddhists. Above all, the term qinggui “pure rules” is clearly borrowed from the Baizhang qinggui 百丈清規, a collection of Chan Buddhist rules put together in the Song and ascribed to the Tang dynasty Chan master.
Huaihai 懷海 (see Cleary 1978; Foulk 1987). Judging from the practices mentioned above, as well as from the sometimes cruel tests Quanzhen masters administered to prospective disciples (see Hawkes 1981), the Complete Perfection school was widely influenced by Chan Buddhism. Many masters were familiar with the teachings of Chan Buddhism, and as they promoted the unification of the three teachings, it is natural to find Buddhist elements in Quanzhen scriptures. However, the fundamental goal of the Complete Perfection school was distinctly Daoist: the attainment of immortality.

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Scholars tend to see the Ming dynasty as a time when the Daoist religion went into somewhat of a decline (Qing 1988, 8; Ren 1989, 579). In contrast, it should be regarded as a time of prosperity and can even be considered to be one of Daoism's most powerful periods, when the religion was followed by large segments of the population (Liu 1970, 291). The Ming was also a time of great change, because the political control over the different Daoist schools and groups exerted a deep influence on the evolution of the religion. The variety of views on the period reflects the dearth of academic studies in this area. Most histories of Daoism tend to pass it by quickly after discussing the Yuan, or even stop in the fourteenth century (Robinet 1997). The following will present a basic outline of Ming Daoism in the hope that interest in the period will be awakened and the importance of further study will become obvious.

**History**

THE DECISIVE INFLUENCE OF MING TAIZU (1368-1399). According to the *Mingshi* 明史 (History of the Ming), Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, the first emperor Taizu, was variously influenced by Daoists during his ascent to power. Important figures include the legendary Zhang Sanfeng 張三豐 (or 張; see below), Zhang Zhong, Leng Qian, the Quanzhen master Zhou Dianxian and the Daoist official Qiu Xuanqing.

Of particular importance was Zhang Zhong 張中 (fl. 1362-1370, 景華; hao Tieguanzi 鐵冠子 or “Master of the Iron Cap,” from Linchuan 涟川). He failed the official examination, but was nevertheless recommended to Zhu Yuanzhang by the general Deng Yu 鄧愈. In 1362, he impressed the future emperor with his predictions, which included unmasking an assassination plot by Shao Rong 郭榮 and Zhao Jizu 趙繼祖.
In 1363, he also foresaw Zhu's victory over Chen Youliang (1320-1363), which inspired numerous legends in Ming fiction.

**Leng Qian** 冷谦 (14th c., zì Qijing 启敬, hào Longyangzi 隆陽子, from Qiantang 錢塘 in Zhejiang), lived on Mount Wu 吳山 where he studied the *Tyting*, music and painting. In 1368, Taizu made him music director at the Ming court, and, in 1387, promoted him to Pitchpipe Assistant (xielu long t&H ffl). He wrote the *Taiguyiyin* 太古遺音 (Lost Music of the Past, lost) as well as the *Lengxian qinsheng shiliu fa* 冷仙琴聲十六法 (Sixteen Lute Techniques of Immortal Leng), contained in the *Jiaochuangjiulu* 焦窗九録 (Nine Registers of the Plaintain Window) by Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (see Goodrich 1976, 802-4; Wong 1979, 15).

**Zhou Dianxian** 周道仙 (14th c.) was a medical practitioner whose medicines allegedly healed Taizu. In addition, he is said to have predicted the new ruler's ascent to power and was lauded as a master who was not harmed by fire and could walk on water (Qing 1993, 388).

**Qiu Xuanqing** 丘玄清 (1327-1393, zì Yungu 雲谷, from Fuping 百平 near Xi'an), was said to have studied with the Qingwei 清微 (Subtle Tenuity) patriarch Huang Shunshen 黃舜申 (b. 1224). In the 1360s, he moved to Mount Wudang 武當山, where he is thought to have met Zhang Sanfeng and became head administrator of the main sanctuary, the Wulong gong 五龍宮 (Five Dragons Palace). The emperor heard of his talents and called him to the capital to promote him first to Inspector, then to Ceremony Chamberlain (taicheng qing 太常卿). While preparing for the annual sacrifice to Heaven, Taizu fasted and met with Qiu, asking him questions about weather-making rites. The emperor was so pleased with the Daoist that he offered him two palace women, a present Qiu rejected with vigor. Qiu's parents, too, received honorific titles and at his death he was honored by Zhang Zhi 張智, secretary in the Ministry of Rites. He wrote the *Yungu tu* 雲谷圖 (Chart of the Cloudy Valley).

Zhu Yuanzhang was a Buddhist monk for some years in his youth, yet Daoism played a strong role in the **imperial family**. His tenth son, Zhu Tan 朱檀 (1370-1390), turned blind because he took a Daoist drug; he was cursed by his father with the posthumous name Huang 荒 (uncultivated). Zhu's seventeenth son, Zhu Quan 朱權 (1378-1448), became known for his Daoist works (see below), and his twelfth son, Zhu Bo 朱柏, the Prince of Xiang, visited the Daoist center on Mount Wudang to make offerings to the gods (De Bruyn 1997). Zhu Yuanzhang had many Daoist connections not only on a personal level but also in politics. His main goal was to limit the influence of organized religions, and to this end he prepared an official liturgy for all Daoist rituals. In so doing, he gave clear preference to the Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Unity) school of the Celestial Masters and criticized the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection). Following Song and Yuan models, he organized the national administration of Daoism on all levels
and promoted a unitive spirit among the three teachings (*sanjiao* 三教) in hopes that they would all serve imperial power.

In terms of **administration**, soon after 1368 Taizu established the Xuanjiao yuan (Court of the Mystery Teaching), an independent body that dealt with the administration of all Daoists in the empire. This court was abolished in 1371, after which Daoists were governed by the Daolu si 道錄司 (Bureau of Daoist Registration), which was divided into two sections (left and right), each including officials of various ranks. This organization was a subdivision of the Libu 禮部 (Ministry of Rites), responsible for the supervision of all levels of Daoist activity. It controlled the Daoji si 道紀司 (Bureaus of Daoist Institutions) on the provincial level, the Daozheng si 道政司 (Bureaus of Political [Supervision] of Daoists) on the prefectural level and the Daohui si 道會司 (Bureaus of Daoist Assemblies) on the district level. In 1379, Taizu moreover established the Shenyue guan 神樂觀 (Temple of Divine Music), which was in charge of music and dance during court rituals and was completely independent of the other administrative units. This offered court Daoists the opportunity to personally meet with the emperor and get to know him intimately. (Under the Yongle emperor, the Daoists of Mount Wudang acquired the same political and economic privileges as those of the Shenyue guan; they had direct contact with the emperor and had only to go through the imperial eunuchs rather than through more formal channels.)

Various of Taizu's regulations involved age: in 1373, he decreed that no woman could become a Daoist or Buddhist nun after the age of 40; in 1387, he prohibited men from becoming monks after the age of 20; in 1394, he set the minimal age of ordination at 14. Moreover, no soldiers or artisans could ever be ordained. In 1418, his son, the Yongle Emperor, fixed the maximum number of Daoists and Buddhists in the empire: forty per province, thirty per prefecture and twenty per district. This amounted to about 36,000 officially acknowledged religious practitioners in all China. However, their actual number during the Ming was always well above this mark. In 1373, for example, there were already 96,000 Daoists (Ren 1990, 605), and during the Zhengtong era (1436-1450) in the early fifteenth century, Wang Zhen 王振, a champion of the religion, single-handedly supported the ordination of 23,300 new monks and nuns. This trend continued such that in 1507, under Emperor Wuzong, 40,000 new Daoists were ordained.

Taizu also continued the system of ordination certificates first established under the Tang, through which the state certified monks and nuns after an official examination taken after three years of study (Qing 1993, 422-26). The certificates contained the name of the monk or nun, his or her religious affiliation, the date of ordination as well as their various appellations. They were distributed only once every three years. Under Yongle, this period was lengthened to five years, and in 1458, under Yingzong, to
ten. Certificates were essential, since monks and nuns were not permitted
to leave their monasteries without them.

In a further move to control religion and especially to curb the flourish¬
ing of so-called heterodox sects (xiejiao 邪教), the Ming administration
created the Zhouzhi ce 周知冊 (All-Knowing Register), an official list that
contained the names of all Daoists who had ever passed time in any mon¬
astery. Because visitors’ names were officially registered, it was possible to
keep track of their movements and thus establish control. The Ming
huadian 明會典 (Institutions of the Ming) dates the practice to 1372; the Ming
shilu 明實錄 (Factual Records of the Ming) places it at 1392. Another re¬
striction applied to aristocrats, who were no longer allowed to build private
temples. Only sanctuaries with a horizontal tablet of the imperial admini¬
stration were legal, and in 1391 all those lacking this authorization were
ordered destroyed. The establishment of these various regulations by the
dynasty’s founder set the tone for the entire period of the Ming.

THE REIGN OF THE YONGLE EMPEROR 永樂 (CHENGZU, 1403-1425). The Yongle emperor was the second major ruler of the Ming.
The fourth son of Taizu, he was called Zhu Di 御覽 or the Prince of Yan.
Under his rule Daoism grew significantly, both through imperial protection
and in the provinces. The latter benefited particularly from the work of Liu
Yuanran 劉洞然 (1351-1432, hao Tiyuanzi 體元子, from Gan 贅 in
Jiangxi), a Daoist who became an adept in the Xiangfu gong 祥符宮 (Mon¬
astery of the Auspicious Talisman). There he learned talisman-making from
the two masters Zhang and Hu. Later he studied with Zhao Yizhen 趙宜真 who taught him alchemical arts and introduced him to the secrets
of the Jingming 淨明 (Pure Brightness) tradition, whose sixth master he
became. In addition, Liu Yuanran was trained in the Quanzhen and Qing¬
wei schools and excelled in the summoning of wind and thunder. In 1393,
he was asked by Taizu to demonstrate his abilities, given the title Eminent
Daoist and installed in Chaotian gong 超天宮 (Monastery of Transcending
into Heaven) on Xishan near Nanjing. Under Yongle, he became Daoist
patriarch of the left (zuozhengyi 左正一) and was given the title Perfected.
However, he quarreled with various court officials and eventually ended up
in exile. This took him first to Longhu shan and later to Yunnan for three
years, where he created Daoist associations, greatly developing the regional
organization of the religion. Renzong summoned him back in 1425, estab¬
lished him in the Dongyang guan 洞陽觀 (Monastery of Pervading Yang)
and gave him the new title Changchun zhenren 常春真人. This came with
a position of the second rank, equaling that of the Celestial Master. At the
end of his life, he recommended his disciple Shao Yizheng (see below) as his
replacement.

A key Daoist event under the Yongle Emperor was his order to have a
new Daoist canon compiled, which was printed in 1445. Responsible for
the compilation were Zhang Yuqing 张宇清, the 42nd Celestial Master, and the general intendant of Mount Wudang (Hubei), Ren Ziyuan 任自垣 (fl. 1400-1422, zi Yiyu 一愚, hao Chanyu 蟠宇, from Danyang 丹阳 near Nanjing). Ren received Daoist and classical training and joined the religion at the Wanning gong 萬寧宮 (Monastery of Ten-Thousandfold Quietude) on Maoshan 茅山 (see Feng 1991). In 1411, he received an office in the Daolu si and was ordered, together with Hu Ying 胡英, to find the whereabouts of Zhang Sanfeng. In 1413, upon recommendation by Zhang Yuqing, he became the head of all Wudang temples, a post he held for over fifteen years. During this time he compiled a local monograph, the Dayue taihe shanzhi 大嶽太和山志 (Monograph of the High Peak of Great Harmony, 15 j., dat. 1431), which contains the first biography of Zhang Sanfeng. He also visited the court in 1419, at which time he received a gift from the emperor and supervised the compilation of a Daoist canon that was presented at court in 1422 (Ren 1990, 787).

Another important development under the Yongle Emperor was the elevation of Mount Wudang 武當山 to a major Daoist center, which supported the emperor in various ways. Among others, Li Suxi 李素希 (1329-1421, zi Youyan 幽岩 or “Dark Boulder,” hao Mingshi 明石大師 “Great Master Concealing the Initial Light of His Talents,” from Luoyang), trained at the Wulong gong on Mount Wudang and became a Quanzhen Daoist. He was known for the poverty of his clothes and his simple lifestyle, as well as his enjoyment of the Yi Jing and the Daode Jing. After serving briefly in the Wulong gong he retired to a small temple on the mountain. In 1405 and 1406, he served the political legitimation of the Yongle Emperor by sending his disciple to court with several pieces of fruit from the Langmei tree 櫂梅樹, which was thought to have been created by the Dark Warrior from plum and elm wood. It was seen as an auspicious sign for the court, and the emperor sent back an envoy with a gift of gold for Li. In 1412, the emperor decided to construct new buildings on Mount Wudang and ordered a consultation with Li Suxi on the local architectural tradition, but he did not give Li any religious responsibility in the reorganization of the monasteries. Li died in 1421 and was buried with imperial honors.

An important move of the Yongle Emperor regarding Daoism was to give official support to Xuanwu 玄武, the Dark Warrior, as an imperial deity. The god, a constellation of the northern sky venerated since antiquity, was originally represented as a snake embracing a turtle (see Major 1986). Under the Song, there was a growing influence of the Four Saints corresponding to the four directions of space, whose cult developed after the apparition of the Tantric god Heisha 黑殺 (Black Killer) to Zhang Shouzhen 張守真 in 960. Influenced by this development, Xuanwu was gradually recognized as an important deity (see Lagerwey 1992) and became
increasingly a personalized rather than starry god. In 1012, due to a character taboo involving Zhao Xuanlang 趙玄郎, the alleged ancestor of the Song rulers, xuan was replaced by zhen 真, and the Dark Warrior became the Perfect Warrior. Under the Southern Song Daoists adopted the cult of this deity. They presented him as a prince who became a Mount Wudang monk and from there ascended to heaven. Under the Yuan his cult grew further, and the Wudang fudi zongzhen ji 武當圣地總真集 (Collection of the Assembled Perfected of Mount Wudang, the Auspicious Spot, CT 962), by Liu Daoming 劉道明 of the year 1291, names him by his Daoist title Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝 (Highest Emperor of the Dark Heaven). Only in the Xuantian shangdi gisheng lu 玄天上帝感聖錄 (Revelation Record of the Emperor of Dark Heaven, CT 958; see Boltz 1987, 88; Lagerwey 1992, 326n3) was Xuanwu first named the eighty-second transformation of Laozi. As this work was probably only compiled under Chengzu (see deBruyn 1997), it is likely that the god did not receive this title until the Ming. Xuanwu was not only heir to the Daoist tradition; he was also influenced by the traditional divinity Beidi 北帝 (Emperor of the North; see Nikaidó 1998; Mollier 1997) and by the Tantric god Mahākāla, a celestial emperor of the dark heaven who was adopted as imperial protector by the Yuan (see Zhang 1997; De Bruyn 1997). Xuanwu’s Daoist title was officially recognized by the Yuan emperor Chengzong in 1304, and from then on Mount Wudang was officially the god’s holy center (see Wong 1988; Chuang 1994).

When Zhu Yuanzhang came to power, he demanded that his sons sacrifice to Xuanwu at the northern gate of Nanjing whenever they visited. This indicates the importance attached to the cult even at the dynasty’s beginning. During his campaign to usurp the throne of Emperor Huidi (r. 1399-1403), Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆, the Yongle Emperor claimed that Xuanwu had given him special help. He later ordered Zhang Xin 張信 (d. 1442), a key figure during the usurpation, to rebuild the temples of Mount Wudang from their Yuan-dynasty ruins and gave him command over 200,000 troops as well as over his own son-in-law. He further set up a Zhenwu sanctuary at the holiest and most northern place of Beijing’s forbidden city when he moved the capital there in 1421. Both Mount Wudang and Zhenwu’s cult thus became essential elements of Ming religion and politics. The Perfect Warrior served the Ming as a dynastic protector, just as Laozi had served the Tang, Huangdi the Song and Mahākāla the Yuan. This veneration was expressed in the ruler’s ascension ritual. Soon after ascending the throne, a Ming emperor would send an emissary to Mount Wudang with a sacrificial prayer, which was later carved in stone (Lagerwey 1992). Also, the administration of Mount Wudang was given over to the imperial eunuchs, another indication of the importance of this Daoist center.
Besides the Perfect Warrior, the Yongle Emperor also venerated other Daoist divinities, including the cult of the two brothers Xu Zhicheng 徐知常 and Xu Zhi’e 徐知業. Their worship arose in Fujian in the late tenth century, and they were the subject of a text contained in the Daoist canon, the Hong’en lingji 保恩靈濟真君事實 (True Facts about the Perfect Lords of Boundless Grace and Numinous Salvation, CT 476, dat. 1417; see Lagerwey 1987, 261). Yongle venerated them because he claimed to have once been healed by their divine power. Later emperors, too, supported their cult and bestowed new titles upon them: Xuanzong in 1435, Yingzong in 1436 and Xianzong in 1485 (see CT 1470).

Another deity supported at this time was Guandi 关帝, the popular god of war (see Duara 1988). Under Taizu, a temple to him was built in Nanjing; under Yongle, one was erected in Beijing. In 1594, following a request by the Daoist Zhang Tongyuan 張通元, he was promoted to “emperor,” only to receive a still more resounding title in 1614 and be worshiped as Wusheng 武聖, the Warrior Sage. By this time, he had over fifty sanctuaries in Beijing alone and was featured in the popular novel Beiyou ji 北遊記 (Journey to the North; see Seaman 1987). In the latter, Guandi is contrasted with Xuanwu, who he is said to have accidentally killed. But he did not stay dead for long, being brought back to life upon Lord Lao’s command.

Politically the most important god during Ming times was Chenghuang 城隍, the City God, the divine representative of localities and cities (see Johnson 1985; Hamashima 1992). His main feast day was the 11th day of the 5th lunar month, two days before Guandi’s birthday. Taizu had already ordered that each official arriving at a new post had to pay a visit to the local City God (see Taylor 1977). Daoists, too, adopted him into their pantheon by making him an emissary of Lord Lao (see Kohn 1996). Two further divinities emerging in the early Ming should be mentioned briefly: the Wutong shen 五通神, a group of gods grown from nature demons under the Song and gradually fused into Daoism (see Cedzich 1994, 139); and Yangong 晏公, an obscure immortal originally of the Tang or Song who was said to have helped Taizu in his attack against Zhang Shicheng 張士誠 (Ren 1990, 603).

FROM RENZONG TO WUZONG (1424-1521). Renzong died after only one year of rule due to a Daoist drug. Xuanzong (r. 1425-1436) let the imperial eunuchs have the run of the court, initiating a development that would eventually lead to an alliance with Daoists in the control of Ming politics. Yingzong reigned twice (1436-1450 and 1457-1465). During his first term, in 1445, the Daoist canon was readied for print under the supervision of Shao Yizheng 尹以正 (d. 1462, hao Chengkangzi 承康子 or “Master Receiving Health,” Zhizhi daoren 止止道人 or “Daoist Stopping Blockages,” from Yunnan). He was the disciple of Liu Yuanran and served as Gentleman of Celestial Rightness in the Daolu si. Under Yingzong, Shao
became Daoist patriarch to the left, which made him responsible to the Ministry of Rites for examining and certifying all Daoist priests through special local registries. Under Daizong he received an official title, and in 1456 he restored three buildings of the Baiyun guan in Beijing. When Yingzong returned to power, Shao asked permission to retire, but his request was refused. Later he received another title. After his death he was buried on Mount Wuhua 五華山 upon imperial orders. Besides the Daoist canon, Shao edited the works of his master in a book entitled Changchun Liu zhenren yulu 常春劉真人語錄 (Recorded Sayings of the Perfected Liu Changchun).

Xianzong (r. 1465-1488) was known for his predilection for Daoist magicians, whom he greatly promoted. For example, Li Zisheng 李孜省 from Nanchang 南昌 in Jiangxi came to court in 1477, served the emperor in the procurement of young sex partners and rose to become Grand Councillor of the Office of Imperial Sacrifices. Being thus in charge of all official rites celebrated by the emperor, he met with strong Confucian opposition, particularly from Wan An 萬安, Liu Ji 劉吉 and Peng Hua 彭華, but remained securely in power. Other important Daoist figures of this period were Deng Chang’én 鄧常恩, Zhao Yuzhi 趙玉芝, Gu Hong 顧洪 and Wang Wenbin 王文彬. They collaborated with the eunuchs in the control of Ming rule and were easily bribed to allow official promotions. Called Chuanfeng guan 傳奉官 or “officers transmitting emoluments,” they contributed significantly to the declining effectiveness of the Ming examination system. Xianzong, like Renzong, died from taking a Daoist drug.

His son Xiaozong (r. 1487-1505) reacted against his father’s religious zeal by first trying to rid his court of all Daoist and Buddhist influences. Within a few years, however, he too became a fervent follower and participated in many Daoist rituals. During the second part of his reign, Daoists, such as Wang Yingqi 王應琦 and Du Yongqi 杜永祺, again acquired political influence and, in cooperation with eunuchs such as Li Guang 李廣 and Yang Peng 楊鵬, ran the empire. They promoted hundreds of personal friends to official positions and occupied key positions, including the Ministry of Rites under the Daoist Cui Zhiduan 崔志端.

Wuzong (r. 1505-1521), Xiaozong’s only son, ascended the throne at the age of fifteen. Soon all power was consolidated within the hands of a group of eunuchs known as the “eight tigers” (bahu 八虎), under the leadership of Liu Jin 劉瑾. Daoist political influence, however, was limited, especially since Wuzong was fond of Buddhism. In 1507, he personally supervised the ordination of 40,000 monks, and in 1510 he adopted the Buddhist title Daqing fawang 大慶法王 (Dharma King of Great Celebration).

SHIZONG, THE DAOIST EMPEROR (1521-1566). Shizong was very fond of Daoist rituals and after surviving an assassination plot in 1542 he became involved in Daoist practices to the point of neglecting state affairs.
Daoists gained influence as so-called "prime ministers promoted by blue-paper prayers" (qingci 青詞)—the Daoist prayers used in imperial jiao 祭 offerings. Most important among them were Shao Yuanjie and Tao Zhongwen.

**Shao Yuanjie** 南元節 (1459-1539, hao Xueyai 雪巖, Taihezi 太和子 or "Master of Great Harmony," from Guixi in Jiangxi), was a Daoist of the Shangqing temple on Mount Longhu 龍虎山, the headquarters of the Celestial Masters. He allegedly refused an invitation from Prince Zhu Chenhao 朱宸濠 (d. 1521), and so avoided being involved in the latter's unsuccessful rebellion in 1519. He was called to the court in 1524 and received the title "Perfected" in 1526. In 1530, the secretary for the recruiting of soldiers, Gao Jin 高金, was put to death for daring to oppose Shao's rapid rise at court and in 1532 Yang Ming 楊明, compilor at the Hanlin Academy, was jailed for the same reason. Shao was protected by forty guards. After having prayed successfully in 1536 for the posterity of the emperor, he was promoted to Minister of Rites. In 1539, his health declined and so he could not join the emperor on his journey south. After his death, he received an honorific title and was buried with aristocratic honors. He wrote the *Taihe wenji* 太和文集 (Collected Works of Great Harmony, lost; see Goodrich 1976, 1169-70).

When Shao found himself weakening, he recommended his protégé **Tao Zhongwen** 陶仲文 (1481-1560, zi Dianzhen 典真, from Huanggang in Hubei) as his replacement on the emperor's imperial tour. Tao made a good impression and his prayers were credited with the emperor's recovery in 1540. He rose to become Minister of Rites, and in 1544 was promoted to Junior Mentor, Junior Guardian and Junior Preceptor, receiving the first degree of nobility and becoming the only figure in Chinese history to ever jointly hold the three functions known as the "Three Solitaries" (sangu 三孤). After 1542, Shizong no longer actively ruled and only Tao had regular contact with him. Yet another Daoist, Xu Kecheng 徐可成 who had served in the Shenyue guan since 1531, became Minister of Rites in 1556. For many years, Tao was in close alliance with Yan Song 嚴嵩 (1480-1565), and together they managed to oust the Grand Secretary Xia Yan 夏言 (1482-1548). In addition to his court activities, Tao visited important Daoist centers and, in 1522 and 1555, he helped to select respectively 300 and 160 young virgins from whom to extract the ingredients for a high-power aphrodisiac. He retired in 1559 and died the following year, receiving a posthumous title. This title was removed again when the new emperor ascended in 1567 (see Goodrich 1976, 1266-68).

Other important Daoist figures were Duan Chaoyong 戴朝永 from Hefei 合肥 in Anhui who claimed that he could magically transform plates and dishes into gold, but was found a fraud and executed, and Gong Kepei 龔可佩 from Jiading 嘉定 near Shanghai who became responsible for all
palace officials involved with Daoist rituals and was later accused of drunkenness and beaten to death. Another well-known Daoist was Lan Daoxing 蘭道行 who pleased Shizong with his mastery of the planchette (jüluan 扶籤), and his ability to invoke spirits into a tray of sand. In a session arranged in 1552, the emperor asked why the empire had become so difficult to govern, and Daoxing answered: "Because the wise are not used and the incompetent do not retire." Shizong then asked who were "the wise" and who "the incompetent," and Daoxing replied that Xu Jie 徐階 and Yang Bo 楊博 were wise but Yan Song was incompetent. Shizong then dismissed the latter, who in turn bribed a number of officials to accuse Lan Daoxing of charlatanery. As a result, Yan Song was called back and Lan was put into jail where he eventually died.

Yet another Daoist figure was Hu Dashun 胡大順 from Huangfeng 黃鳳 in Hubei, presented to the emperor by Tao Zhongwen and put in charge of the Lingji Palace 澤清宮. When his protector died, he fell into disfavor for a time before rising once again to prominence. He wrote the Wanshou jinshu 萬壽金書 (Golden Book of Ten Thousand Years), allegedly revealed by the immortal Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓. At the end of his life, Hu Dashun was put to death for falsifying official documents.

Under Shizong, some Confucian officials, such as Lan Tianyu 蘭田玉, Gu Kexue 顧可學, Sheng Duanming 盛端明, Zhu Longxi 朱隆禧 and Wang Jin 王金, attained official promotions only by mastering Daoist techniques. Others were executed because they criticised the popularity of Daoists in imperial favor. For example, in 1532, Yang Ming tried unsuccessfully to oppose Shao Yuanjie, and in 1566 Hai Rui 海瑞 was jailed for attempting to dissuade the emperor from further research into immortality. All this reveals how deeply political life under Shizong was influenced by politically active Daoists and masters of magic.

TO THE END OF THE MING (1567-1644). After Shizong, the empire declined financially, and the official status of Daoism was reduced. One factor in this development was the division among the Zhengyi and Quanzhen schools, which began moving in opposite directions. The Zhengyi diversified into several branches (Qingwei, Jingming, Maoshan and Wudang) and gained more independence; the Quanzhen united under the umbrella of the Longmen branch. Another factor was that Ming rulers became disenchanted with Daoism after Shizong's excessive fervor.

Thus Shizong's son Muzong (r. 1566-1572) reacted strongly against the Daoist education he had received in his youth and eliminated all powerful court Daoists, even cancelling the posthumous titles that had been given to Shao Yuanjie and Tao Zhongwen. In 1568, Muzong confiscated two important symbols of the Celestial Master, stripping Zhang Yongxu 張永緒 (49th) of both the right to be called Perfected of Orthodox Unity and his seal of official recognition. Both were restored to Zhang Guoxiang
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张國祥（50th; d. 1611）under Shenzong (r. 1572-1619) in 1577. Still, Zhang was not allowed to enter the palace or visit the emperor, a rule that was relaxed gradually so that he could attend court once every three years. He later published the *Xu dao zang* (Supplement to the Daoist Canon). Other important Daoists under Shenzong were Yan Xi 閻希 (d. 1588), the founder of the Longmen 龍門 branch at the Qianyuan guan 乾元觀 (Monastery of Celestial Prime) on Maoshan, and Lu Xixing 陸西星 (d. 1606), an important Daoist writer (see below).

Zhuangtie di (r. 1628-1644), the last Ming emperor, did not take a Daoist drug but received Daoist aid in his the selection of sexual partners. He also sought Daoist reassurance in the face of a declining empire and, one year before the end of the dynasty, invited the Celestial Master to celebrate a ritual at the imperial court. He then received the assurance that Zhenwu was still supporting the Ming emperor and his family (Ren 1990, 597).

**TEXTS**

**COLLECTIONS.** *Zhengtong dao zang* 正統道藏 (Daoist Canon of the Zhengtong Era, 5305 j., 480 sects., dat. 1445). After Daoist books were burned in 1281, the Yongle Emperor ordered a new compilation of the Daoist canon. The leading editors were the Celestial Masters Zhang Yuchu and Zhang Yuqing, as well as Ren Ziyuan, Xu Shenggong, Yu Daochun, Tang Xiwen and Shao Yizheng. The collection is the major resource for the study of Daoism today. It divides materials into Three Caverns 三洞 and Four Supplements 四輔 in representation of the schools of Highest Clarity, Numinous Treasure, Three Sovereigns and Orthodox Unity. Within these grouping, materials are further subdivided according to twelve categories: Fundamental Texts, Divine Talismans, Secret Instructions, Numinous Charts, Genealogies and Registers, Precepts and Regulations, Rituals and Observances, Techniques and Methods, Various Arts, Records and Biographies, Eulogies and Encomia, and Lists and Memoranda. (For descriptions and discussions, see Liu 1973; Ofuchi 1979; Thompson 1985; Boltz 1987.)

*Xu dao zang* 續道藏 (Supplement to the Daoist Canon, 240 j., dat. 1607). In 1598, under the influence of his mother, Empress Dowager Li, Emperor Shenzong approved the reprinting of the Daoist canon. He assigned Zhang Guoxiang, the 50th Celestial Master, to produce a supplement, which was added to the canon (Boltz 1987, 9).

The collection begins with the *Taishang zhongdao miaofa lianhua jing* 太上中道妙法蓮華經 (Lotus Scripture of the Highest Central Dao, CT 1432) and ends with the *Laozi yi* 老子翼 (Wings to the Laozi; CT 1475, 6 j.) and the *Zhuangzi yi* 莊子翼 (Wings to the Zhuangzi, CT 1476, 8 j.), by
Jiao Hong 焦竑. It contains a total of fifty-six works, mostly from the Yuan and Ming. Some texts, however, date further back, such as the *Taiwei dijun ershiqi shen huiyuan jing* 太微帝君二十四神回元經 (Scripture of the 24 Gods of the Lord Emperor of Great Subtlety, CT 1455, 1 j.), the *Beidou juhuang yinhuijing* 北斗九皇隠鏞經 (Scripture of the Concealed Names of the Nine Emperors of the Northern Dipper, CT 1456, 1 j.), the *Taishang dongzhen huixuan zhang* 太上洞真徊玄章 (Stanzas on the Authentic Return to the Mystery of the Highest Perfection Cavern, CT 1458, 1 j.), and the *Taiqing jinzhang shier pian* 太清金章十二篇 (Twelve Sections of the Golden Chapter of Great Clarity, CT 1459, 1 j.). Others, such as the *Huangming enming shi lu* 皇明恩命世錄 (Record of Daoist Decrees of the Sovereign Ming, CT 1462) and the *Han Tianshi shijia* 漢天師世家 (Genealogy of the Celestial Masters since the Han, CT 1463) provide valuable information on the history of the Zhengyi school. The *Soushen ji* 搜神記 (In Search of the Supernatural, CT 1476) is also important for its clear lists of the names of the various gods.

**WORKS BY INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS.** Zhao Yizhen 趙宜真 (d. 1382, zì Yuanyangzi 原陽子 or “Master of Original Yang,” from Fu’an 富安 in Jiangxi), was the first disciple of the Quanzhen Daoist Zhang Tian-quan 張天全 of Jiangnan (see Schipper 1987), as well as of Li Xuanyi 李玄一 of Nanchang. Both were followers of Jin Pengtou 金蓬頭 (1276-1336), a southern Daoist related to Quanzhen. Zhao Yizhen in turn taught Liu Yuanran and, indirectly, Shao Yizheng, the last editor of the Daoist canon. Trained in the Qingwei, Quanzhen and Jingming traditions, he edited the rituals of the Qingwei school as published in the *Daofa huiyuan* 道法會元 (A Corpus of Daoist Ritual, CT 1220; see Loon 1979). He also wrote the *Lingbao guikong jue* 緬寶歸空訣 (Numinous Treasure Secrets of Returning to Emptiness), the *Yuanyang zi fa ju* 原陽子法語 (Dharma Sayings of Master Yuanyang) and the *Xianzhuang weike ji yanfang* 仙傳外科集驗方 (Collection of Efficacious Medicines Found in Immortals’ Biographies). Zhang Yuchu wrote Zhao Yizhen’s biography and Liu Yuanran secured a canonical title for him in 1455.

Zhu Quan 朱權 (1378-1448, also known as Daming qishi 大明奇士, Quxian 雲仙, Hanxuzi 涵虛子 and Danqiu xiansheng 丹邱先生), was the seventeenth son of Taizu. He was promoted to Prince of Daning 大寧 (modern Jehol) in 1391, then moved to Nanchang in 1402 (Goodrich 1976, 305-7). Under Yongle, he stayed out of politics, spending his time studying and writing over fifty books. He played the lute, cultivated flowers and bamboo and pursued an interest in medicine and chemistry. After his death, he was canonized as an immortal. He wrote widely and on many subjects, including agriculture, the burning of incense and geomancy, but his best-known work is the *Taihe zhengyinpu* 太和正音譜 (Orthodox Musical Score of Great Harmony), which presents northern lyrical drama and includes lyrical pieces.
Zhu’s key work on Daoism is the *Tianhuang zhidao taiqing yuce* 天皇至道太清玉冊 (Jade Records of Great Purity of the Perfect Dao of the Heavenly Emperor, CT 1483, 8 j, 19 sects., dat. 1444). This is an apology for orthodox Daoism, “an indispensable compendium on the beliefs and practices of the early empire as seen through the eyes of a member of the imperial house” (Boltz 1987, 237). The text, often simply called *Taiqing yuce*, begins with a Daoist cosmogony that includes various meteorological and astronomical terms. Here Zhu Quan justifies the orthodoxy of Daoism, saying that “China is located in the middle of heaven and earth, which is why it can obtain the true qi of heaven and earth, its people have the right attitude, the sounds of its music are adequate and its teachings are orthodox” (1.4).

After commenting on the southern and northern branches of the religion and justifying both as orthodox, in the second chapter Zhu replies to criticism voiced in Buddhist polemics, both of the middle ages and the Yuan dynasty. He provides also an inventory of sacred texts and ordination registers as well as a detailed account of the book burning under the Mongols. In chapter 3 he offers instructions on Daoist rituals and regulations governing the activities of ritual officers. Chapter 4 explains Daoist hierarchies, reminding the reader that the seat of honor should always be offered to Buddhist monks visiting Daoist temples, and vice versa (4.9a). Nevertheless, Zhu also insists that the Chinese people should not follow religious teachings from abroad.

Chapter 5 contains names of temples and institutions, as well as those of divinities and details on music and vestments. The latter included also a set of instructions on the Quanzhen meditation rite of *zuobo* 坐鉧 (see Wang 1997; Goossaert 1997, 220-59). The sixth chapter speaks of ritual instruments and contains essays on various other topics. Chapter 7 provides a Daoist calendar, while chapter 8 is devoted to numerical terms. A concluding note explains that anyone who prints the book will receive twelve additional years of life and have prosperous descendants for three generations.

**Zhang Yuchu** 張汝初 (1361-1410, zi Zixuan 子瑄, hao Jishan 積山) was the oldest son of Zhang Zhengchang 張正常 and the 43rd Celestial Master (Reiter 1988, 7-41). In 1378, he received the title Great Perfected of Orthodox Unity, and in 1383 he held a special celebration on Mount Zijin 紫金山 near Nanjing. Two years later he prayed successfully for rain in the Shenyue guan and, in 1390, he received special permission and imperial funds to rebuild the Shangqing gong 上清宮 of Longhu shan. The following year, despite a strong prohibition against counterfeit charms, he received a special seal that granted the authenticity of his work. Stripped of his title and punished unfairly during the reign of Jianwen (r. 1398-1402), he was restored by Yongle. In 1406, Zhang Yuchu was put in charge of preparing a new version of the Daoist canon and two years later was sent
to find out the whereabouts of Zhang Sanfeng. In 1410, he died after transmitting his authority to his brother Zhang Yuqing 張宇清, a painter and calligrapher, who in turn passed the baton to his nephew Zhang Mao-cheng 張懋成 (1380-1445; see Goodrich 1976, 107-8).

Zhang wrote the Duren jing tongyi 儒人經通義 (Pervasive Meaning of the Scripture of Universal Salvaton, 4 j.) and a 7-juan collection of the sayings of his ancestor, the 30th patriarch Zhang Jixian 張繼先 (1092-1126). His Longhu shanzhi 龍虎山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Longhu, 10 j.) is now lost. Zhang Yuchu tried in his works to unify the three teachings and encouraged Daoists of all schools to conform to official guidelines. His Daomen shigui 道門十規 exerted great influence on the organisation of Daoist monasteries, prohibiting monks from interfering in worldly affairs.

Daomen shigui (Ten Statutes for Taoist Followers, CT 1232, 1 j., dat. 1406). This concise treatise reflects its author’s interest in collecting books for the new canon and his concern with unifying the different Daoist institutions of his time (Boltz 1987, 241). Here Zhang claims that the various schools of Zhengyi, Jingming, Lingbao and Shangqing are merely different designations of the same unique teaching dispensed by Lord Lao. He goes on to distinguish between scriptural writings applied in personal cultivation and those offering salvation to the masses. Next, he presents various aspects of meditative practice, based to a great extent on the teachings of the Southern School of inner alchemy. Zhang then explains liturgical matters and the history of thunder rites as practiced in the Qingwei and Shenxiao schools. Next he describes how one becomes a Daoist abbot, by first leaving home to dedicate oneself to the Dao, and then undergoing special training. The last three sections of the treatise present Zhang’s vision of the state’s role in the maintenance of Daoist temples.

Xianquan ji 島泉集 (Anthology of the Alpine Spring, CT 1311, 12 j.), dat. 1404-1407. Originally ordered by a son of the royal house, Zhu Zhi 朱植 (d. 1424), Prince of Liao, “this is one of the largest and most diverse literary anthologies in the canon” (Boltz 1987, 193). It contains a broad overview of the concerns that the Celestial Master of Mount Longhu had in regard to the local cults of his surroundings.

Lu Xixing 陸西星 (1520-1601, zi Changgeng 長庚, from Xinghua 興化 in Jiangsu) represents the Eastern school of inner alchemy in the Ming. His family was poor, and his father was a diviner and student of the Yiying (Liu 1976, 991). In his early years he tried unsuccessfully to pass the provincial examination, then decided to give up all official aspirations and devote himself to the Dao. Considering the reclusive life to be the true Daoist way, he withdrew to the mountains, thus acquiring his zi Qianxuzi 潛虛子 (Master Secluded in Emptiness). He claimed to have met Lü Dongbin at Caotang 草堂 (in Beihai) in 1547 and received his teachings in direct transmission, coming thus to regard himself as Lü’s disciple. His teachings
are collected in the Binweng ziji 賓翁自記 (My Memories of the Venerable Bin) and in the Daoyuan hulu 道緣彙錄 (Collection of the Affinity to the Path).

His major work is the Fanghu waishi 方壇愛史 (An Unofficial History of Mount Fanghu, 8 j.). The text was first edited in the mid-sixteenth century (Longqing era), and a photolitographic reprint of this edition was made in 1915. A second edition, undertaken by Zheng Guanying 鄭觀應 during the Wanli period (1573-1620), is found in Daozang jinghua 道藏精華 2-8, Zangwai daoshu 藏外道書 5, and in a 1993 reprint by Guji Press in Guanglin. The work contains fourteen inner alchemical texts with Lu’s commentary, including the Zhouyi cantong qi 周易參同契 (Tally to the Book of Changes, CT 999; see Liu 1968; Pregadio 1996, 79-80), the Rayao jing 入藥鏡 (Mirror for Composing Medicines, CT 1017, j. 37), the Jindan sibazi 金丹四百字 (Four-hundred Words of the Golden Elixir, CT 1081) and others. It also includes interpretations of the Daodejing and the Tinjujing 聖符經 (Scripture of Joining with Obscurity, CT 31) as well as four texts on inner alchemical theory and practice written by Lu himself.

The first of these texts is the Xuanju bin 玄壇論 (On the Surface of the Mystery). It focuses on inner alchemical principles and criticizes the partial views and heterodox transmissions of Daoist masters. Next, the Jindan juzheng pian 金丹校正篇 (Proper Understanding of the Golden Elixir, dat. 1564; see Wile 1993, 149-53), presents the Southern School theory of the double cultivation of inner nature and destiny, following the explanations given by Chen Zhixu 陳致虚 (1326-1386). It also discusses teachings Lu allegedly received directly from Lü Dongbin.

The third text is the Qipo lun 七破論 (Seven Essays of Refutation). It argues for the elimination of all heterodox and wrong doctrines and of partial views on inner alchemical theory and practice. It anticipates the later work of Liu Yiming 劉一明. Finally, the Jindan daoshi tu 金丹大旨圖 (Illustrated Pointers to the Golden Elixir) contains diagrams of the Great Ultimate and the Non-Ultimate as well as eight illustrations of the inner alchemical process. The Fanghu waishi is thus a major work on inner alchemical doctrines and practices, especially of the Eastern School of the Ming.

Besides his Daoist endeavors, Lu Xixing also edited the Xinghua xianshi 興化縣志 (Local Gazetteer of Xinghua District) on his home area and wrote numerous religious and philosophical works. The latter include a commentary to the Zhuangzi entitled Nanhua zhenjing fano 南華真經副墨 (Additional Notes on the Perfect Scripture of Southern Florence), which was appreciated by scholars and listed both in the Mingshi and the Siku Catalog. Jiao Hong (1541-1620) cites it frequently in his Zhuangzi yi (Wings to the Zhuangzi, CT 1487). In his interpretation, Lu uses Buddhist terms and cites numerous Buddhist texts, rethinking the Daoist classics in a Bud-
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dhist light (Liu 1976, 992). This inclination toward Buddhism increased in his later years, and he wrote two commentaries on the *Lengyanjing* 楞嚴經 (Surangama sūtra). He also acquired a Buddhist *zi*, calling himself Yunkong jushi 隱空居士 (Recluse of Empty Skandhas).

A key representative of Ming syncretism, Lu was also credited with the authorship of the novel *Fengshenyanyi* 封神演義 (Creation of the Gods), a fictional account of the conquest of the Shang dynasty by the Zhou (trl. Gu 1992) that includes various episodes involving Buddhist and Daoist divinities mixed with popular cults and beliefs (see Liu 1962; 1976, 993). Finally, Lu was also known for his calligraphy, painting and poetry, and some of his poems are preserved in the *Xinghua xianzi*.

On the level of practices, Lu’s books contain nothing new, but his systematization is of such high quality that it has been described as marking the third stage of the development of inner alchemy, following Wei Boyang’s *Zhongyi qantong qi* and Zhang Boduan’s *Wuchen pian* (see Qing 1995, 22; Robinet 1995). As other books of his time, Lu’s inner alchemical writings focus on *shuangxiu* 双修, the double cultivation of spirit and life, sometimes with sexual undertones. For example, in the *Jindan*, the oldest chapter of the *Fanghu waishi* 方壠外史 (Formal History of Fanghu), we find the formula *yipan yigong* 鉛汞 or “one lead and one mercury,” which is explained as the essence of a man and a woman united in sexual intercourse. Both partners—although the text were written more with male cultivation in mind—are said to try to steal the complementary energy from the other, and Lu accordingly says that a “[practicing] Daoist is a thief” (daozhe dao 盗道). These practices were not mere vulgar methods aimed at heightened sexual pleasure but, as Lu insists, could be successful only if each partner would practice self-refinement (lianji 修炼), i.e., train himself or herself to regulate and transform the nature of sexual energies, and seek the trust of the partner (mixin 覈信), i.e., pay attention to the other. The progressive spiritual transformation of sexual energies then takes place in three steps, called “the hundred days of purification” (*bairi qingxiu* 百日清修), the “ten months of regulating the fire” (*shiyue xinghuo* 十月行火) and the “spirit transformation of the embryo” (*tuolai shenhua* 脫胎神化), moving from breath to the circulation of sexual energy to its ultimate transcendence as spirit. Intercourse in this system is only one step among others, a form of spiritual cultivation called “to get the medicine in a short time” (*pianxiang er deyao* 片禹而得藥). It cannot be separated from the three others.

ON GODS AND IMMORTALS. *Daming xuantian shangdi ruying tuulu* 大明玄天上應圖錄 (Illustrated Register of the Marvelous Signs Realised by the Highest Emperor of the Dark Heaven Under the Great Ming, CT 959, 25 pp., dat. 1413). This contains stories, with corresponding illustrations, of wonders and divine apparitions said to have occurred on Mount Wudang in 1412-1413, when the constructions ordered
by Yongle first began. A copy was presented to the emperor, and this is probably the manuscript that survived in the Baiyun guan (White Cloud Monastery) in Beijing. The work is important because it shows the rise of Mount Wudang under Yongle (see Lagerwey 1992; de Bruyn 1997).

Zhang Sanfeng quanji 张三丰全集 (Complete Collection of Zhang Sanfeng, 8 j., dat. 1844; see Wong 1988, 154–61), compiled by Li Xiyue 李西月 (1806–1856). The most commonly used edition of this text is in the Daozangjiaoyao by He Longxiang 何龍驤 and Peng Hanran 彭瀚然 (vols. 17-18, Zangwai dao shu 5; Wong 1988, 150). The compiler claims to have received the materials on Zhang Sanfeng from Wang Yun 王雲, the sixth-generation descendant of Wang Xiling 王錫齡, who lived in the early Qing and claimed to be a disciple of Zhang Sanfeng.

Most texts in this collection state clearly that they were written by Ming and Qing authors other than Zhang Sanfeng, but there are also works by unknown or uncertain authors that are attributed to Zhang Sanfeng, as well as Buddhist texts that bear no relation to him at all. The collection is therefore a highly composite work, with no obvious system of organization; its list of contents does not match the actual contents. Its eight juan contain the following materials.

Juan 1 and 2 are comprised of six works on the life and manifestations of Zhang Sanfeng, dated from 1359 to the 1700s, a history of his Daoist lineage from Laozi to his later disciples and a number of lesser biographical notes on hidden scholars, hermits and wise men, some of which were copied from the earlier Shenxian jian 神仙鑑 (Mirror of Divine Immortals), and only later attributed to Zhang Sanfeng. Juan 3 and 4 contain works attributed to Zhang Sanfeng on inner alchemical practices together with some Daoist doctrinal principles such as the Dadao lun 大道論 (On the Great Dao), the Xuanji zhijiang 玄機直講 (Direct Explanation of the Mysterious Mechanism), the Daoyan qianjin shuo 道言淺近說 (Simple Explanation of Daoist Words) and the Xuanyao pian 玄要篇 (On Mysterious Essential Points). The following juan has three collections of poems attributed to Zhang Sanfeng and other figures of Li Xiyue’s Western School. Two of these are probably by Wang Xiling or may also be the product of spirit-writing. Many poems allude to communications with Zhang Sanfeng, Lü Dongbin and other important Yuan Daoists such as Qiu Chuji and Zhang Yu (see Wong 1988b).

Juan 6 contains prose works under the title Tiankou pian 天口篇 (Celestial Formulas), which deal with the syncretism of the three teachings, general philosophical principles of human life and ethical precepts in the style of morality books. Juan 7 has scriptures and ritual texts attributed to Zhang Sanfeng which closely resemble the teachings and rites of Mount Wudang. The eighth juan, finally, contains three sections under the title Shui shi xiantan 水石賢談 (Chatting Near Water and Stones), which present the lives of men
devoted to alchemical and hygienic practices, Daoist poems from the Tang to the Qing and materials on spirit-writing. The book as a whole was popular due to the fame of Zhang Sanfeng; it is important for scholars because it provides a good survey of Ming traditions of inner alchemy and various literary materials.

**Worldview and Practices**

**DAOIST SCHOOLS.** In 1360, Zhu Yuanzhang officially recognized Zhang Zhengchang as 42nd Celestial Master of the *Zhengyi* school and in 1368 gave him the official title “Perfected.” Soon after this, he suppressed the title Celestial Master, feeling that Heaven should not have another master besides himself, the Son of Heaven. Nevertheless, in 1377, he acknowledged Zhang Yuchu as successor to Zhang Zhengchang and gave him, too, the title “Perfected.”

The Ming dynasty was dominated by the Zhengyi school and many Daoist masters from Mount Longhu married women of the imperial family (see Chuang 1986). Its orthodox format of practice was fixed in 1374 and written down in the *Da Ming xuanjiao licheng zhajiao yifen* 大明玄壇朝儀儀法 (Liturgy for Fasts and Offerings of Daoism Under the Great Ming, CT 467) by Song Zhongzhen 宋宗真, Zhao Yunzhong 趙允中, Fu Ruoxu 傅若霄, Deng Zhongxiu 唐仲修 and Zhou Xuanzhen 周玄真, with a preface by Taizu himself. Here the emperor expresses his preference for the Zhengyi, because it “focuses on salvation, placing special emphasis on filial children and compassionate parents, and on the improvement of human relations and enrichment of local customs.” He contrasts this with Quanzhen, which, he says, “devotes itself to the cultivation of the person” and “serves only the self” (Lagerwey 1987, 260).

Besides Mount Longhu, *Mount Wudang* played a key role in the Ming and certain important Daoists came from there, including Qiu Xuanqing and Li Suxi. The legendary Zhang Sanfeng, too, was associated with the mountain. The Zhongnan mountains also produced leading figures, including He Daoquan 何道全 (1319-1399), originally from Zhejiang, who trained there. He was deeply influenced by Buddhism and wrote the *Suji yinghua lu* 隨機應化錄 (Record of Appropriate Change in Accordance with the Pivot, CT, 2 j.).

All of these men can be considered Zhengyi Daoists. The only Quanzhen master of any renown during the dynasty was Sun Xuanqing 孫玄清 (1517-1569) who resided in Beijing’s Baiyun guan and successfully prayed for rain under Shizong in 1558. If Quanzhen was officially recognized under the Ming and started separate ordination certificates, as some suggest (see Chen 1992, 40), it is hard to know what these certificates really
were. In fact, Quanzhen Daoists were largely excluded from the official religion under the Ming and were not permitted to create documents that would give us a concrete idea of the school's development. In addition, this situation seems not to have changed even at the end of the Ming (Qing 1995, 78), and it was only under the Qing that the Longman school established a religious legitimacy by creating genealogies all the way back through the Ming in an attempt to prove that their school had Quanzhen origins. This in turn is highly dubious because it cannot be confirmed by Ming-dynasty documents at all. The only thing certain in this context is that under the Ming the boundaries between the schools were quite fluid and can be viewed as currents flowing in various directions (see Berling 1998, 959).

DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENTS. Daoists gained political influence under the Ming, but the development of Daoist doctrine was rather poor. What new visions there were occurred mainly in the realm of inner alchemy, which matured during this period (Qing 1995, 22), and in the syncretism with Confucianism and Buddhism.

As regards inner alchemy (neidan 内丹), early on Zhao Yizhen insisted that one must practice both inner and outer forms so that one could attain the oblivion of everything and return to the empty void—where there is nothing but the true void, which is not void. Keeping a ledger of merit and demerit (gongguoge 功過格), another widespread practice at the time (see Brokaw 1991), he proposed that one perform a daily examination of oneself, paying attention to avoid acts that would not stand up to documentation and striving for a state in which human reason was in line with the emotions, which in turn meant that heaven and humanity were in harmony. Zhao was also steeped in the Tantric tradition and he insisted on the importance of meditative practice. He recommended daily exercises of inhaling the essence of the sun and the moon and the taking of Daoist elixirs. He stressed that meditators should not allow themselves to be moved by illusions, be they of demons and spirits or immortals and bodhisatvas.

The Celestial Master Zhang Yuchu followed Zhao in his understanding of Daoist doctrine and practice and he emphasized the origin of all Daoist teachings with Lord Lao. He was also concerned with unifying the teachings and refused the dominant opinion of his time that saw Chan Buddhism as concentrating on inner nature, Daoism on destiny, Quanzhen on both of these and Zhengyi on ritual. Zhang taught that all Daoists should follow Quanzhen practice and cultivate the techniques of both major schools. He wrote that "sitting in a meditation cell and maintaining tranquility is the fundamental attitude to enter the Dao." The perfected cultivates himself and thereby saves others, sharing with them the power he gains inside—including magical powers, such as summoning wind and thunder and exorcising evil. Because all these were part of the personal cultivation of oneself, all practices could be joined into one. Zhang's position here
all practices could be joined into one. Zhang's position here documents the growing syncretist tendencies under the Ming as well as the influence of the Quanzhen tradition on the Zhengyi school.

Among later masters, Lu Xixing, author of the *Fanghu waishi*, and Wu Shouyang made important contributions to the systematization of inner alchemy. **Wu Shouyang** 伍守陽 (1563-1644; zi Duanyang 瑠陽, hao Chongkongzi 沖空子 or “Master Penetrating the Void,” from Bixieli 辟邪里 in Nanchang), was the son of Wu Xide 伍希德, who became an official in 1555, was sent to Yunnan in 1578, and soon died. Shouyang first studied the classics at age ten. He also read the works of the Quanzhen founder Wang Chongyang and obtained a number of Daoist books from his uncle, Wu Lizhai 伍立齋, who was interested in attaining immortality. Wu Shouyang was an important figure in the Longmen lineage under the Qing (see “Daoism in the Qing”) and was widely known for his works on inner alchemy, such as the *Tianxian zhengli* 天仙正理 (Proper Principles of Celestial Immortality, 9 j.). Written between 1615 and 1622, this work was transmitted to his main disciple Zhu Changchun 朱常淳 of the Jiwang dian 吉王府. Wu's *Xianfo hezong yulu* 仙佛合宗語錄 (Recorded Sayings of the Common Tradition of Daoism and Buddhism) was written after 1622; it is contained in the *Daozang jiyao* under the title *Wu zhenren dandao jupian* 伍真人丹道九篇 (Nine Chapters over the Daoist Practices of Perfected Wu). A different text, also entitled *Xianfo hezong yulu*, is in fact a record of Wu's conversations with his disciples (Qing 1995, 37-59). Between 1639 and 1640, Wu retired to Jinling 金陵 to add final corrections to his two books. Also among his notes is the *Daqyuan qianshuo pian* 道原淺說篇 (A Superficial Presentation of the Original Dao), which contains a general summary of his thought.

The other area in which Ming Daoism developed doctrinally is its syncretism with Confucianism and Buddhism. It has long been recognized that Neo-Confucians at the time increasingly turned to the religious practices of the other religions and adopted inner alchemy into their repertory (see Liu 1970). Besides Lu Xixing, a key figure in this endeavor was **Lin Zhaoen** 林兆恩 (1517-1598; zi Mao 茂, hao Longjiang 龍江, Ziguzi 心隱子 or “Master of the Valley,” Xinyinzi 心隱子 or “Master of the Hidden Heart,” from Putian 莆田 in Fujian). He came from a long line of bureaucrats and was the son of an official under Wang Yangming 王陽明 whom Lin himself met as a child (see Berling 1980). In 1534, he graduated from the lowest level of the civil service, then studied with Luo Hongxian 劉洪先, an eccentric Daoist who dabbled in various traditions (Liu 1970, 308). Lin was also influenced by Zhuo Wanchun 卓晚春, hao Shangyangzi 上陽子 (Master of Superior Yang) or Xiaoshan 小山 (Little Mountain), whom he first met in 1548. Using this broad formation as a foundation, Lin Zhaoen “set up his own syncretist religious organization which,
with Confucianism as its principal doctrine and Buddhism and Daoism as its subsidiary teachings, aimed at gradually eliminating all denominations and sectarianism” (Liu 1970, 319). He styled himself Sanjiao xiansheng (Master of the Three Teachings) in 1556 and attracted numerous disciples.

In 1584, Lin's group became the Sanyi jiao (Three-in-One Teaching), which jointly honored Confucius, Laozi and the Buddha as well as the three patriarchs Lin Zhaoen, Zhuo Wanchun and Zhang Sanfeng. Lin wrote the Linzi sanjiao zhengzong tonglun (Discourse of Master Lin for the Orthodox Sect of the Three Teachings), in which he drew upon several works ascribed to Zhang Sanfeng, such as the Xuan ge (Mysterious Song) and the Xuantan (Conversations on the Mystery). He also cited his own Yuyan lu (Report about Our Conversation), which contains a dialogue between himself and Zhuo Wanchun. Lin's group spread through southeast China and gained considerable influence both during his lifetime and for about 150 years after his death. He died in 1598, at the age of eighty-two (Qing 1993, 513-16).

POPULARISATION OF DAOISM. A more popular strand of Daoism grew rapidly during the Ming, documented partly in the various popular deities who were adopted into the Daoist pantheon, such as the City God and Mazu 城隍 or Tianfei 天妃, the goddess of merchants and fishermen (see Boltz 1986). In addition, the highly mysterious and very popular figure of Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰 arose at this time. His oldest biography is contained in Ren Ziyuan’s 仁自垣 Dayue taihe shanzhi (Gazetteer of the Sacred Mountain of Great Harmony [i.e., Mount Wudang]; see Seidel 1970; Wong 1979, 1988; Feng 1992; Yang 1993). Ren describes him as somebody whose “native place no one knew” and affirms that Zhang Sanfeng “was strong and big in stature, his body appearing like that of a tortoise [symbol of longevity], his frame resembling that of a crane [bird of immortality].” According to this, Zhang Sanfeng was “wearing a cassock no matter whether it was winter or summer,” and “when someone came to seek instruction from him, he would not utter a single word the whole day long, but when he lectured on the classical works of the three teachings, he would speak without stopping.” Ren states that in Taizu’s early years Zhang Sanfeng arrived at Mount Wudang and there organized the renewal of Daoist life, putting Qiu Xuanqing 丘玄清 (1327-1393), Lu Qiuuyun 盧秋雲 (fl. 1410), Liu Guquan 劉古泉 and Yang Shancheng 揚善澄 in charge of the main temples. He then left the mountain in 1390, “no one knowing where he went.” In 1391, Taizu sent Daoist priests to look for him but without success. The Yongle Emperor, deeply impressed by Zhang’s high achievements, also tried to find him but to no avail (Wong 1979, 10-12).
This biography, although the earliest source on Zhang Sanfeng, is sus-
pect because not a single text from Taizu’s reign mentions him and because
all four disciples mentioned were already dead when Ren published his
work. At the same time, the biography was successful due to the political
context of the time. The Yongle Emperor usurped the throne of his nephew
in 1402, but remained unconvinced that the corpse found after the burning
of the Nanjing palace was in fact that of his predecessor. After having as-
cended the throne, he could not very well go about asking people whether
his nephew was still alive, so he sent out emissaries to look for “a certain
Zhang Sanfeng.” The search for the immortal was a clever way of sending
secret police officers throughout the country without raising suspicion of the
emperor and the legitimacy of his rule. The publicity, however, surrounding
the name and fame of Zhang Sanfeng, and made him a legend more
quickly than his own actions ever could have. Scholars today suspect that
Zhang Sanfeng never in fact existed as a person or at least that he was the
subject of mythologizing from a very early point. Thus, little is certain about
him (see de Bruyn 1997). To further complicate matters, the expression
sanfeng 三峰 (Three Peaks) has a technical meaning and was already in use
before Zhangs’ biography. In Daoist descriptions of sexual practices, it
referred to the tongue, the nipples and the vagina (Hao 1997, 39). This is
why, during the Ming dynasty, specialists in the erotic arts often used the
name Zhang Sanfeng as a euphemism for their practices.

After Yongle, the cult of Zhang Sanfeng developed not only through the
creation of new stories about him, but also through claims of increasingly
early dates for his life. A number of legends that located his activities in
Sichuan or Shandong were printed early on, but most of them were only
collected by Jiao Hong (1541-1620) toward the end of the dynasty. They
claimed, among others, that Zhang had been buried but that his body was
gone when his coffin was opened—leading to the claim that he had come
back to life. Jiao Hong also notes that Zhang studied with Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠 (1216-1274) and Leng Qian (ab. 1310-1371), raising the assertion
that he was a man of the Yuan or even the Song. Later, Huang Zongxi
黃宗羲 (1610-1695) said that Zhang Sanfeng had been skilled in boxing and
had flourished in the Song dynasty, something that is already recognized as
spurious in the Mingshi.

Under the Qing, Fu Weilin’s 明書 (Book of
the Ming) made Zhang a native of Yizhou (Manchuria). Other problematic
items found in the Mingshi are a title Zhang allegedly received from Ying-
zong in 1459 and the claim that Yongle had built up Mount Wudang in his
honor, neither of which is confirmed by other sources. In the nineteenth
century, Li Xiyue published the Zhang Sanfeng quanji (see above), claiming
that Zhang had been a district magistrate in Boling 博陵 (Zhongshan) in
1248 and implying that he had arrived on Mount Wudang in the 1360s,
being already 120 years old. Later, some of Zhang's admirers even established sects under his name, which is why the *Zhuexian zongpai zongpu* (General Register of the Schools of the Immortals) of 1926 states that ten Daoist schools had him as their main patriarch (Akioka 1994).

Another aspect of the popularization of Daoism under the Ming was the integration of the various schools into the two great ones that alone were recognized by the authorities, the Zhengyi and the Quanzhen. This tendency toward centralization was furthered by emperors who worried about potential rebellions spurred by religious movements. The result was that the diverse schools became more homogeneous and that a number of school were actively suppressed (see Reiter 1988). However, this integration did not only involve Daoist schools, but also the broader field of popular ideas and practices. The joining of the different religions can be traced back to Taizu, who in his youth was greatly influenced by folk religions and ideas of magic. His vision and administration came to dominate the country through the over-centralized empire he created. The religious tradition of Daoism thereby became so popularized and secularized that it was not recognized as being a separate organized religion by Jesuits arriving in the sixteenth century. To them, and to many missionaries who followed, Daoism was merely a form of confused popular superstition.

The Ming emperors constantly worried that some opponent would use Daoist or Buddhist organizations to spread rebellion, a fear that was not entirely unfounded. For example, even under Taizu, a certain Peng Yulin 彭玉琳 had called himself Prince of Jin after founding an association of the White Lotus in the late 1300s. Under Yongle, the Buddhist nun Tang Sai'er 唐赛爾 proclaimed herself Mother of the Buddha in 1420 in opposition to the ruler. To apprehend her, Yongle had all the nuns of China brought to Beijing. Similarly, under Daizong, a certain Li Zhen 李珍 pretended to be a lay Daoist practitioner and tried to convince Wei Xuanchong 魏玄沖, Daoist of Mount Wudang, to collaborate with him in the overthrow of the dynasty, promising him that he would soon become emperor. Not surprisingly, then, the Daoist religion was both worshiped and feared by the rulers, a testimony to its great popular influence and religious power.

Less threatening than Daoism, Confucianism was adopted as the imperial doctrine of the Ming. As early as 1368, Zhu Yuanzhang asked Kong Kejian 孔克堅, the 55th descendant of Confucius, and his son Kong Xixue 孔希薛 to come to court and collaborate with him. In 1382, he issued an edict that Confucius should be worshiped throughout the country, and himself presented an offering to the sage in the imperial temple. This was a stark contrast to the 1372 prohibition of similar Daoist rituals. At the same time, the emperors also tried to benefit from the popular influence of Daoism and adopted Daoist identities. The Yongle emperor claimed to be a
reincarnation of Zhenwu; Wuzong took the title Dharma King of Great Celebration; and Shizong called himself Imperial Daoist Lord (Daojiao dijun 道教帝君).

A different line of the popularization of Ming Daoism is found in the presence of Daoists at folk religious festivals. The annual festival of Yanjiu jie 燕九節 (Ninefold Festival of Yan) in Beijing, celebrated during the first lunar month, was attended by as many as 40,000 Daoists. Similarly, the great annual jiao offering celebrated by Daoists in Beijing’s Tianqiu miao 天齊廟 (Temple of Heavenly Support) in honor of Dongyue dadi 東嶽大帝, the god of Mount Tai 泰山, on the 28th of the third month, drew massive crowds. Among them were many blind people who attended due to the belief that the water used in washing the statue would heal them if applied to their faces. Again, in the fourth month, a great festival was held in honor of Bixia yuanjun 星霞元君, Goddess of the Morning Clouds and daughter of Dongyue dadi. This took place on Mount Miaofeng 妙峰山 in the outskirts of Beijing and was the occasion for a highly popular pilgrimage (Naquin 1992; Ren 1990, 607-10). Such Daoist-cum-popular events were not limited to Beijing, but occurred throughout China to the great delight of the people. To give but one example, Suzhou organized an annual pilgrimage to Mount Wudang that drew several thousand people who traveled over 2,000 miles (mainly by boat) in about six weeks (see Gu 1989).

In charge of these popular festivals were a growing number of small popular associations, to which Daoists also belonged. It seems likely that these associations furnished the bases of an increasing number of unofficial and popular Daoist groups—compensating for the severe restrictions on Daoist growth maintained at the official level. However, this new side of the Daoist tradition developed largely in secret and we know little about it. It is sometimes poetically called the “Daoism of Lakes and Rivers” (jianghu daojiao 江湖道教). We can conclude that under the Ming dynasty, there were significant economic activities that sustained religious festivals, pilgrimages and groups, but which have been little studied to date.

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Daoism in the Qing dynasty displays three characteristics: a strong state control, an increase in lay activities and a tendency toward unification and standardization among the Daoist schools. Following their Ming predecessors, Qing rulers strove to establish tight state control over all religious organizations. To this end, they imposed legal limits on the size of the clergy, restricted the number of sanctioned monasteries and temples, and controlled the scope of all religious activities. Thus “abbots, priest and nuns were always subject to indirect state supervision and remained at the beck and call of the emperor and his agents” (Smith 1990, 293). As under the Ming, religious administration was a function of the Board of Rites (libu 禮部), one of the six boards of the central administration. Within it, Daoism was specifically governed by the Daolu si 道錄司 (Central Daoist Registry), “a central government agency responsible for certifying and disciplining Daoist religious practitioners throughout the empire” (Hucker 1985, 489). It controlled appropriate boards and officers on the provincial, departmental, prefectural and county levels (Daqing huidian 248.16a). These official committees tended to be more concerned with upholding laws and rules than with the spiritual guidance or religious activities of the people (Yang 1961).

The Qing rulers personally venerated Tibetan Buddhism, and under emperor Qianlong the Gelugpa school became the state religion. As official doctrine they adopted the Neo-Confucianism of the Cheng-Zhu school, using it both for imperially endorsed rituals and as the basis of the examination system (Liu 1993, 298). Daoists were progressively marginalized by their lack of moral authority and decreasing numbers, and priests lived in isolated monasteries and came in contact with secular society only during the performance of religious services for individuals or groups. Even in these, however, they were often replaced by trade guilds, local elites or other groups. Like Buddhists, they had local associations, but they lacked
a strong religious structure, had inadequate financial support and, incapable of controlling resources, did not participate in charitable works.

As a result, Daoists were not prominent in the society and suffered from the generally low status of the clergy which, exonerated from taxes, was considered unproductive and a burden to state coffers. This low status "deterred many intellectuals from taking the vow, depriving institutional religion of a supply of educated leadership" (Yang 1961). It also weakened the structural position of clerical religions and promoted the organization of a laity outside of religious channels. Many functions once filled by clerics were now taken over by local magistrates in cooperation with the gentry and merchants—as described especially in local gazetteers (see Taylor 1995). Large numbers of people who felt the need for a religious life became secular devotees or joined new forms of sectarian groups (Yang 1961).

This leads us to the second characteristic of Qing Daoism: the growth of lay organizations and practices. Apart from the low status of the clergy, this growth was also encouraged by imperial Confucianism, established by the Qing emperors on the model of their Ming predecessors, which was accompanied by bringing certain sections of the clergy into the civil service (Berling 1980, 47-48). It is interesting to note that one of the most celebrated laymen of the Manchu dynasty was Emperor Yongzheng who showed how one could combine the official functions associated with Confucian doctrine with a personal belief in Buddhism and Daoism. His support of the unity of the three teachings (sanjiao heyi 三教合一) encouraged increased lay practice, and promoted a lay religious life. Overall, during the Qing, then, the increase in the number of laymen was conversely proportional to the decline of religious specialists (see Bardol 1992).

At the same time, this increased lay activity encouraged new forms of popular and lay Daoism. They found expression in morality books, the revelation of precious scrolls and spirit-writing cults—all predominantly lay-centered, oriented toward popular religion and strongly inspired by Daoist beliefs and practices. There were local Daoist schools, spirit-writing groups and sectarian associations following Daoist teachings that were outside the range of imperial control and beyond the reach of the official arm of the clergy. They paved the way for the form Daoist popular practice still takes in China today.

Nonetheless, the Manchu emperors did create a state-controlled and well indoctrinated clergy, and this provided a certain uniformity and countered plurality and spontaneity among Daoist schools. This movement toward unity is the third characteristic of Qing Daoism. It was of capital importance for the formation of modern official Daoism, distinguished by a "standardization of schools." According to official sources, the Qing, as had the Ming, recognized only two schools, Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Unity) and Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection; see Daqing haidian
248.16a). The latter, particularly under its Longmen 龍門 branch, stan-
dardized the northern and southern schools of inner alchemy and inte-
grated so many aspects of Zhengyi doctrine that it became difficult to tell
them apart (see Esposito 1993). However, in order to understand the spe-
cific character of Chinese religion, it is necessary to take into account the
difference between the official version of events and what really happened.
Under what can be called a trend of “Longmen standardization,” a variety
of Daoist schools continued to exist at the local level, but in order to survive
they were sometimes obliged to claim descent from the Longmen lineage.
This also applied to certain minor schools of inner alchemy, such as the
Wu-Liu 伍柳 School, an eclectic group under the umbrella of Longmen
that mixed inner alchemy with Huayan Buddhism, and the Jingming 淨明 (Pure Brightness) school which was linked to the immortal Lü Dongbin 吕洞賓 and incorporated certain aspects of Confucian doctrine.

In the following, I first present an outline of the history and major fig-
ures of some important Daoist schools of the Qing, then discuss new forms
of doctrine and the impact of state control under the heading “Worldview,”
to turn to inner alchemy and spirit-writing under the heading “Practice.”

HISTORY. THE ZHENGYI SCHOOL. The Zhengyi school of the
Celestial Masters was the most officially recognized among Qing Daoist
schools. It continued to exert significant religious influence on the Daolu si
through its leader, the Celestial Master with headquarters on Mount
Longhu 龍虎山 in Jiangxi. To perform his government function, he was
given a staff of twenty-seven priests by the Board of Rites (see Qingshi gao
清史稿 115.3331).

In 1651, during the Shunzhi era, the 52nd Celestial Master Zhang
Yingjing 張應京 was officially ordered to manage the Daoist religion. He
was appointed specifically to prevent heretic religious influences. He was
given the formal title “Great Perfected of the Hereditary Lineage of Ortho-
dox Unity” (Zhengyi sijiao da zhenren 正一嗣教真人) and equipped
with a seal of the first rank (Qingshi gao 115.3331; Bu tianshi shijia 補天師世家,
in Koyanagi 1934, 349). In 1655, the 53rd Celestial Master Zhang
Hongren 張洪仁 (1624-1667) was invited to court and lived at the Lingyou
gong 靈右宮 (Numinous Palace to the Right) in Beijing together with the
highest officials (Bu tianshi shijia, in Koyanagi 1934, 350).

Emperor Shengzu of the Kangxi era (1662-1722) showed an even
more positive attitude toward Daoism. In 1675 he invited the 54th Celestial Master Zhang Jizong 張繼宗 (1666-1715) to court and gave him a plaque
with his Daoist name Bicheng 碧城 written in the emperor’s own hand.
Zhang was frequently asked to perform rain-making and flood-control rites,
and in 1703 received the prestigious title “Grand Master of Splendid Hap-
piness” (Guanglu dafu 光祿大夫). In 1713, he obtained imperial funds for
the reconstruction of the halls on Mount Longhu (Bu tianshi shijia, in Koya-
Emperor Shizong of the Yongzheng era (1723-1735) proposed the unity of the three teachings and, in the literary inquisition of 1772-1788, purged the country of all heterodox ideas. He was a firm believer in exorcism and the efficacy of rituals, and showed particular respect to the Celestial Masters while also offering lands to other religious groups. He gave Zhang Xilin the title “Grand Master of Splendid Happiness” and, in 1731, furnished funds for the reconstruction of the Shangqing gong (Great Clarity Palace) on Mount Longhu (Bu tianshi shijia, in Koyanagi 1934, 351). This construction project occurred under the leadership of Lou Jinyuan (1689-1776, zi Sanchen 三臣, hao Langzhai 朗齋, Shangqing waishi 上清外史 or “Inofficial Historian of Highest Clarity,” from Lou 袁 district near modern Shanghai). Born into a family of Daoist priests, he joined the religion on Mount Longhu, where he studied with Zhou Dajing 周大經 and received both thunder rites (leifa 雷法) and talismans. In 1727, Lou joined Zhang Xilin on his journey to the capital and after the latter’s death in Hangzhou complied with his last wishes that he serve the emperor with loyalty (Bu tianshi shijia, Koyanagi 1934, 351; Chongxiu longhu shanzhi 6.42a). In 1730, he successfully cured the emperor and obtained his favor, becoming abbot of the Qin’an dian in the imperial palace and chief administrator of Mount Longhu with the nominal rank 4A. As Grand Minister (Dachen 大臣), he was put in charge of the reconstruction of the mountain sanctuaries (Chongxiu longhu shanzhi 1.6b-7a, 6.42b).

Later Lou was accepted into an elect circle of disciples to whom the emperor taught Buddhist sutras (see Chen 1993). In 1733, he was formally installed in the Da guangming dian (Palace of the Great Light; Daqing huidian 248.16b), a Daoist imperial office, and received the title “Perfected of Mysterious Orthodoxy” (Miaozheng zhenren 妙正真人; Qingshi gao 115.3332). Lou retained a high position at court even after the emperor’s death and, in 1736, received the title “Grand Master of Thorough Counsel” (Tongyi dafu 通議大夫). He also became supervisor of the Daoist registry and abbot of Beijing’s Dongyue miao (Temple of the Eastern Peak; see Chen 1993).

Lou’s main work focused on the restoration of temples on Mount Longhu, about which he compiled the Chongxiu longhu shanzhi (Gazetteer on the Reconstruction of Mount Longhu, 16 j.). He also wrote a commentary to the Zhuangzi called Nanhu jingzhu 南華經注 and the Tuxuan miaozheng zhenren yulu 御選妙正真人語錄 (Imperially Selected Recorded Sayings of the Perfected of Mysterious Orthodoxy, in Chongxiu longhu shanzhi 11). In it Lou emphasizes the importance of the three teachings, into which he integrates Buddhist materials that he studied with...
Emperor Shizong. Finally, he compiled an important collection of Daoist rituals entitled *Huang lu keyi* (Yellow Register Liturgies, 12 j.).

Emperor Gaozong of the *Qianlong era* (1736-1795) supported Neo-Confucianism, encouraged the production of great encyclopedic literary works and sponsored the compilation of the *Siku quanshu* (Complete Books in the Four Repositories). He promoted neither Buddhism nor Daoism but proclaimed the Gelugpa teaching as the state religion. His lack of Daoist interest is reflected in the *Siku quanshu*, which contains only 430 scrolls of Daoist works (Liu 1993, 301).

The two practitioners of inner alchemy that had been established previously at court, Zhang Taixu 張太虚 and Wang Dingqian 王定乾, were banished (Liu 1993, 301), and the Celestial Masters were no longer allowed to come to audience. Moreover, in 1752, as “Perfected of Orthodox Unity,” they were demoted to nominal Rank 5 from Rank 3 and were forbidden to ask for titles (*Qingshi gao* 115.3332). The Celestial Masters thereafter had authority only over Mount Longhu; they no longer served as general administrators of Daoism and lost their supreme authority in Jiangnan. Furthermore, in 1742, the emperor stopped appointing Daoists to the position of Music Master (*taichang yueyuan* 太常樂員) at the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*taichang si* 太常寺, see Hucker 1985, 476) and instead gave it to Confucian officials (*Qingshi gao* 114.3285).

Under the *succeeding emperors*, however, Celestial Masters such as Zhang Qilong 張起隆 and Zhang Yu 張鈹 (*58th* and *59th*), were allowed back at court and again received prestigious titles (*Bu tianshi shijia*, in Koyanagi 1934, 352-53). Nevertheless, the influence of Daoism continued to decline until, in the Daoguang period (1821-1850), the title “Perfected of Orthodox Unity” disappeared altogether and the relationship between the court and the Celestial Masters came to an end (Liu 1993, 302).

THE QUANZHEN SCHOOL. During the Qing dynasty the Quanzhen school enjoyed a renaissance, albeit one that would sputter out with the fall of the dynasty. The first upsurge began right at the end of Ming, when many Confucians and literati joined Quanzhen to show their loyalty to the Ming and their disappointment with the Manchu conquest. Although the Qing rulers gave all formal ritual and talismanic privileges to the Zhengyi school, they liked Quanzhen because of the strong discipline and moral rules that were the basis of its official doctrine. As its followers lived in monasteries and followed an ascetic and well-regulated conduct, the school conformed to government rules and thus regained some of the official and literati prestige it had once had under the Jin and Yuan. Its Longmen branch emerged as the leading group (Chen 1988).
The Longmen branch traces itself to a place called Longmen in Shaanxi, where Qiu Chuji 邱處機 (1148-1227) retired to practice Daoism for seven more years. According to the Jin'gai xindeng (see below), although traditionally linked with Qiu, the Longmen school appeared much later, probably during the Ming (see Esposito 1993). It represents a late school of inner alchemy that cannot be traced back to northern Quanzhen alone. Rather, it combines the traditions of several local Daoist movements in south China. Although the purported historical origin and lineage of the school are full of contradictions (Esposito 1993; Mori 1994), it is nonetheless important because it was the most influential vehicle in the handing down of theories of inner alchemy. Even today, most Daoist temples in both north and south China claim to belong to this branch.

The established lineage of Longmen goes back to Wang Changyue, abbot of the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Abbey) in Beijing in 1656. Even under the Ming the Baiyun guan was often visited by emperors in celebration of Qiu Chuji's birth, while the common people came to worship at his grave (see Hu Ying's Stele of 1444, in Koyanagi 1934, 124-28). In the Qing, the Baiyun guan had a dual role as a public monastery with a platform for formal ordinations and as the headquarters of the Longmen branch (see Yoshioka 1970; 1979).

Regarding the first role, the abbot of a public monastery was also the Master of Discipline who transmitted the precepts (chuangjie liishi 傳戒律師). Under Wang Changyue's supervision, that is, under the direction of the Longmen school, the Baiyun guan became a major training center for all kinds of Daoist schools, promoting a "standardization" of religious rules in conformity with the ruling Confucian ethics. The Zhuozen zongpai zongbu 緣真宗派總簿 (Comprehensive Register of all Genuine Lineages; in Koyanagi 1934, 91) reveals that many schools accredited at the Baiyun guan differed in terms of their "lineage verse" (pashi 派詩). This was commonly used as a form of "ideogram genealogy" (zi pu 字譜), with every Daoist belonging to a particular school receiving one of the verse's characters as part of his or her religious name (Yoshioka 1979). The official appointment of the Baiyun guan as agency overseeing the spiritual formation of all ordained Daoist priests (shoujie che 受戒者), independent of their various schools, was crucial to its widespread influence under the Qing.

The second role of the Baiyun guan was as headquarters of the Longmen school. Longmen first claimed supremacy over the Daoist priesthood in the north (just as the Celestial Masters did in the south). Then, helped by its official position as ordination monastery, the school extended its influence throughout China, creating a de facto "Longmen standardization" of Daoism. Many Daoist schools continued to maintain their diversity, but they were compelled to subsume themselves to Longmen, at least officially, to assure their survival.
The first Qing abbot of the Baiyun guan was Wang Chang-yue 王常月 (?-1680, orig. Wang Ping 王平, hao Kunyang 崧陽, from Lu’an 滁安 in Shanxi). In his early years, he travelled around famous mountains and, in 1628, met Zhao Fuyang 趙復陽 on Mount Wangwu 王屋山 (Shanxi). Zhao, a sixth-generation Longmen patriarch, gave Wang the Longmen precepts as well as the ordination name of Changyue, “Constant Through the Months,” making him the seventh Longmen patriarch. For nine years, he studied the classics of the three teachings and visited many masters until he met Zhao once again, on Mount Jiugong 九宮山 (Hubei). Zhao predicted that Wang would become the main representative of Longmen at the Baiyun guan. In 1655, Wang went to live in the Lingyou gong in the capital, and one year later he indeed became abbot of the Baiyun guan. All this is reported in the Jinggu xindeng 金蓋心燈 (1.15a-17b) by Min Yide, a major source on Longmen history (see below).

As abbot, Wang reorganized Daoist religious precepts in accordance with Neo-Confucian ethics as supported by the Qing court. He divided them into three stages: (1) initial precepts of perfection (chuzhen jie 初真戒); (2) intermediate precepts (zhongjian jie 中真戒); and (3) precepts of celestial immortality (tianxian jie 天仙戒). According to him, the precepts were an indispensable means to enlightenment and an important element in the education of the Daoist clergy. They represented a compromise between the aim of becoming a monk, inherited from Quanzhen Daoism, and the necessity to live in the world, following the social rules of Confucianism. This compromise constitutes the core of Longmen doctrine, as Wang explained in his Biyu an tonjing 碧苑論經 (Platform Sutra of the Jade Garden), a work influenced by the “Platform Sutra” of the sixth Chan patriarch Huineng 慧能. It consists of discourses given by Wang during an ordination held at the Biyou guan in Nanjing, and is contained in Min Yide’s Gu shuyin lou cangshu (see below). It is also included in the modern collection Zangwai dao shu 藏外道書 (Daoist Texts Outside the Canon; abbr. ZWDS; 6: 729-85) under the title Longmen xinfa 龍門心法 (Core Teachings of Longmen). The court approved of this concept because it encouraged Confucian morality and also because it drew on Chan Buddhist doctrines that were supported by the early Qing emperors (see Bardol 1992) as well as by many officials and men of culture (see Esposito 1993).

Wang also wrote a history of Quanzhen transmission entitled Bojian 考覈 (Examination of the Bowl, maybe lost; see Esposito 1993; Mori 1994) and the Chuzhen jielii 初真戒律 (Initial Precepts and Codes of Perfection; in Daozang jiyou [DZJY] zhangji 7; ZWDS 12). The latter includes the Niujian jujie 女真九戒 (Nine Precepts for Women Perfected; see Despeux 1990). After Wang’s death, the Kangxi Emperor gave him the posthumous title “Eminent Master who Embraces the One” (Baoyi gaoshi 抱一高師), and
ordered a sacrifice hall built with his portrait and a dispatch of officers to be present at a ceremony in his honor.

With Wang Changyue, the Longmen lineage was established and Longmen teachings began to spread throughout China. He ordained thousands of disciples in Beijing, Nanjing, Hangzhou and elsewhere (*Jin'gai xindeng* 1.15a-17b; Esposito 1993). Through him, Longmen became a key Daoist school of the Qing, one that remains active to the present day.

Another key patriarch of the school was **Min Yide** 閔一德 (1758-1836, orig. Min Tiaofu 閔若甫, *hao* Buzhi 補之, Xiaogen 小艮, *daohao* Lanyunzi 懶雲子 or “Master of the Lazy Clouds”, from Wuxing 吳興, modern Huzhou 湖州 in Zhejiang). Min was the eleventh patriarch of the Longmen school on Mount Jin’gai and the founder of a group called Fangbian pai (Skillful Means) in Shanghai. He came from a distinguished family and his father Min Genfu 閔艮甫 had passed the provincial examination in Henan (*Jin’gai xindeng* 8.1a).

In his early years, Min was very weak and his father brought him to the Tongbo gong (Cypress Temple) on Mount Tiantai (Zhejiang), where Gao Dongli 高東麓 (? - 1768), the 10th Longmen patriarch, cured him with Daoist gymnastics (*Jin’gai xindeng* 8.1a, 6a). Gao’s disciple Shen Yibing 沈一炳 (1708-1786, *hao* Qingyun 輕雲; *taixu* weng 太虛翁) then became Min’s master and taught him the basic Longmen principles. Min later he recovered his health, finished his studies, and followed his father’s wishes by becoming a departmental vice magistrate (*Zhou sima* 州司馬) in Yunnan. While there, in 1790, he allegedly encountered Jizu daozhe 餓足道者 (Daoist of Chicken Foot Mountain), a semi-legendary figure who, himself a recipient of Longmen ordination, came to play an important role in Min’s spiritual development (*Jin’gai xindeng* 6.1a-2b). Jizu daozhe was later credited with having established a Longmen branch in Yunnan called Xizhu xinzong (Heart School of West India), a kind of Tantric-Daoist branch. Min claimed to have received two texts from him: the *Lüzu sanniyishi shuoshu* 吕祖三尼鬣世說述 (Patriarch Lü’s Explanation of the Three Sages’ Doctrine of Salvation) and the *Foshuo chishi twuloni jing* 佛説持世陀羅尼經 (Vasuṇḍārāṇa). Both are included in his *Gu shuyinlou cangshu* 古書隱樓藏書 (Collection from the Ancient Hidden Pavilion of Books; see below). Min also received a Dipper method which included the recitation of mantras based on their Sanskrit pronunciation.

Having become the eleventh patriarch of Longmen and an initiate of the West India branch, Min withdrew to Mount Jin’gai and devoted himself to writing the history of Longmen patriarchs and branches, paying particular attention to the local tradition. This work is the *Jin’gai xindeng* 金葦心燈 (Transmission of the Heart-Lamp from Mount Jin’gai, 10 j.), an important source for Longmen history. Min also collected Longmen texts on inner
alchemy in his *Gu shuyin lou cangshu*, which is central to our understanding of Qing inner alchemical ideas and practices.

A contemporary of Min Yide was yet another eleventh Longmen patriarch who arose on Mount Qiyun (Gansu) and was named Liu Yiming (1734-1821), hao Wuyuanzi or “Master Awakening to the Prime,” Supu sanren 素樸散人 or “The Simple Unemployed,” Beihe sanren 被褐散人 or “The Unkempt Unemployed,” from Pingyang 平陽 in Shanxi). What little we know about his life is gleaned from biographical notes in his extensive writings. Liu was apparently born into a rich family and studied the Confucian classics in his youth. However, he tells us in the preface to the *Wugen shuji* 無根樹解 (Explanation of “The Tree Without Roots” [poems by Zhang Sanfeng]), he soon developed a strong interest in inner alchemical poetry, especially that of Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰, and he dedicated himself to the study of perfection and the elucidation of inner alchemy. In his *Huixin waiji* 會心外集 (Outer Collection of the Encounters with the Mind), Liu recalls that he left his family and wife at the age of eighteen. In the prefaces to his *Wudao lu* 悟道錄 (Record of Awakening to the Path) he writes that sometime before turning twenty he suffered a terrible illness that no medicine could cure. Then, on his way to Nan’an 南安 (Gansu), he met Pengtou laoweng 蓬頭老翁 (Old Man of the Tousled Head) who gave him a powerful recipe that restored his health. This story is interesting because it follows a stereotyped paradigm: the seed of the quest for immortality is instilled in the adept during a long illness which seems incurable until, nearly desperate, he meets a superb master who gives him a miraculous drug. Liu writes that he was awakened to the Dao through his disease.

After his recovery, in 1760, Liu met Kangu laoren 蓬谷老人 (Old Man of the Recessed Cavern) in Yuzhong 榆中 (Gansu). The latter, dressed in Confucian garb, unexpectedly transmitted to him the secret formulas of inner alchemy. Nevertheless, he still felt a need to search for further enlightened masters and deepen his quest for truth, and so he “roamed with the clouds,” visiting Buddhist and Daoist masters north and south. During these years Liu acquired a deep knowledge of the three teachings and a thorough understanding of the significance of their classics. His efforts eventually led him to his longed-for encounter with a genuine master. In 1772, at the age of thirty-nine, Liu met Xianliu zhangren 仙留丈人 (Elder Remaining Immortal) who freed him from all of his doubts (Qing 1996. 157).

During the later part of his life, he withdrew to Mount Qiyun (Yunnan, Yuzhong district), where for twenty years he lived in the Chaoyuan guan 朝元觀 (Abbey of Worshiping the Prime), writing in a lodge called Zizai wo 弈自在窩 (Nest of Freedom). Here he also engaged in further self-cultivation and transmitted Daoist teachings to selected disciples. As a result, his fame
spread far and wide throughout northwest China (modern Shaanxi, Shanxi, Gansu and Ningxia). Liu wrote numerous books, most of which are edited in a collection called 道書十二種 (Twelve Daoist Books; see below).

An earlier Daoist who claimed to be a Longmen adherent but is better known for his association with the so-called Wu-Liu school was Wu Shouyang 伍守陽 (see also “Daoism in the Ming”). According to his biography by Shen Zhaoding 申兆定 (fl. 1764), Wu Shouyang (ab. 1574-1644, zi Duanyang 端陽, hao Chongxuzi 冲虚子, from Nanchang) took up the life of a recluse and attained transcendence only at age seventy after his mother’s death. He thought of himself as a disciple of the Longmen branch (Boltz 1987, 199), but this has not been undisputed. In his works, Wu claims a lineage connection to Cao Changhua 曹常化 (1562-1622, hao Huanyang 邁陽), a disciple of Li Zhenyuan 李真元 (1525-1579, hao Xu’an 虛庵), who in turn studied with Zhang Jingxu 張靜虛 (b. 1432, hao Hupi 虎皮), a Longmen master associated with Mount Wudang 武當山 (Xianfo hezong yulu, DZJY biji 1.85a-86a; see Liu 1984, 186; Mori 1994, 193-95, 211).

According to another biography, by Min Yide (Min’gai xindeng 2.1a-2b), Wu was linked to the eight Longmen generation through Zhao Fuyang 趙復陽, who persuaded him to seek instruction from Wang Changyue on Mount Wangwu (Shanxi). All of this suggests that Wu Shouyang’s original affiliation to a local Longmen branch was obscured by the official, standardized Longmen claim that linked him with Wang Changyue (Esposito 1993; Mori 1994). Also, even though Min Yide’s biography mentions Cao Changhua as Wu’s master, it places their encounter several decades earlier, at the time when he fled to Mount Lu on the northern border of Jiangxi. Liu at this time received instruction in inner alchemy from Cao Changhua and from Li Niwan 李泥丸, alleged master of the five thunder rites (wu leifa 五雷法) who was located on Mount Jin’gai (see Esposito 1993). What Wu learned from Cao he then put into his Tianxian zhengli 天仙正理 (Proper Principles of Celestial Immortality, DZJY biji 4-5), after which he also wrote the Wu zhenren dandao jujia 真人丹道九篇 (Nine Chapters on the Alchemical Path by the Perfected Wu, DZJY biji 6). This latter work contains the instructions he gave while serving as tutor to the Prince of Ji, sometimes identified as Zhu Youlian 朱由樑 (d. 1635; Boltz 1987, 200) Zhu Changchun 朱常淳 (d. 1618; Liu 1984, 208) or Zhu Cikui 朱慈煚 (Mori 1994, 191, 201).

Wu’s name was later linked with that of Liu Huayang 柳華陽 (fl. 1736), a Chan monk and author of the Huaming jing 慧命經 (Book of Wisdom and Life, trl. Wilhelm 1929; Wong 1998), dat. 1794. Some of their works were published together under the title Wu Liu xianzong 伍柳仙宗 (Immortality Teachings of Wu and Liu), creating a lineage called the Wu-Liu school. Eclectic in character, this work drew on the inner alchemical traditions of
the Song and Yuan, joining them with Chan and Huayan Buddhism and presenting them in a readily comprehensible language inspired by Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist teachings as well as medical theories.

Another Qing school of inner alchemy was the WESTERN SCHOOL, also known as the Yinxian pai 隱仙派 or “Hidden Immortal School” or again as the Youlong pai 猶龍派 or “Like Unto a Dragon School” (see Wong 1988a). It flourished in Leshan 樂山 district (Sichuan) in the nineteenth century, and its main representative was Li Xiyue 李西月 (fl. 1796-1850, orig. Yuanzhi 元植, zi Pingquan 平泉, hao Changyi shanren 長乙山人 or “Hermit of Changyi,” Zixia dong zhuren 紫霞洞主人 or “Master of Purple Clouds Cavern,” Shibenzi 食本子 or “Eater of Books,” Tuanyangzi 團陽子 or “Master of Round Yang;” see Wong 1988a, 1-62; Yokote 1994, 70). Li says that he received the name Xiyue from the immortal Lü Dongbin when they met on Mount Emei 峨眉山 (Sichuan) together with Zhang Sanfeng (Daozang jinghua, abbr. DZJH, 2-2). He regarded himself as a disciple of both masters and was particularly devoted to the collection and transmission of Zhang’s alchemical teachings, compiling also the Zhang Sanfeng quanjji 張三丰全集 (Complete Works of Zhang Sanfeng; see “Daoism under the Ming”).

Among his works are also a commentary to the Wugen shu 無根樹 (The Tree Without Roots), a collection of poems attributed to Zhang Sanfeng (Daoshu qizhong 道書七種, DZJH 8) and a collection of exegeses to the Taishang shisan jing 太上十三経 (Thirteen Highest Classics; see below). Li further explains his alchemical theories in the Daoqiao tan 談議 (Discussion of the Opening of the Path) and the Sandong bizhi 三洞秘旨 (Secret Principles of the Three Vehicles), both edited by Chen Yingning 陳耀寧 in the twentieth century (DZJH 2-2). In the latter text in particular, Li divides the alchemical firing process into three stages called the “three vehicles.” The first is employed to transport vital energy (qi 氣) and corresponds to the microcosmic orbit (xiao zhoutu 小周天); the second transports essence (jing 精) and corresponds to the circulation of the jade liquid (yuye 玉液); the third transports both essence and vital energy and corresponds to the macrocosmic orbit (da zhoutian 大周天; see Yokote 1994). The three vehicles clearly recall the Buddhist parable of the three carts, mentioned in the Lotus sutra (Yokote 1994).

Li’s alchemical theories overall reflect the tendency of the time to join the three teachings and clarify alchemical practices from a physiological viewpoint. His work is important because it sheds light on the teachings and history of the Western School associated with Zhang Sanfeng and other schools similarly linked with him.

The JINGMING SCHOOL, prominent under the Song and Yuan (see Akizuki 1978), continued under the Qing as part of the Longmen and the official Zhengyi legacies (see Chen 1990; 1991; Qing 1996, 126-29); it was
particularly associated with the well-known *Jinhua zongzhi* 金華宗旨 (Secret of the Golden Flower; trl. Wilhelm 1929; Cleary 1992). Having lost some lineage continuity, the school attempted to reconstruct itself with the help of spirit-writing, calling particularly upon the immortal Lü Dongbin (Esposito 1998a; 1998b; Mori 1998a; 1998b; forthcoming). A different perspective is found in the *Xiaoyao shan wanshou gong zhi* 道家山萬壽宮志 (Gazetteer of the Palace of Longevity on Mount Xiaoyao, j. 13; ZWDS 20, 819-21). It says that Xu Shoucheng 徐守誠 (1632-1692) was the major patriarch of the school. He belonged to Longman in the eight generation and withdrew to Xishan (Jiangxi) to devote his life to the restoration of the local Jingming temple and the renewal of Jingming doctrine (Qing 1996, 127-28).

Another important representative of the school was Fu Jinquan 傅金銨 (b. 1765; zi Dingyun 鼎雲, hao Jiyizi 濟一子 or “Master Saving the One,” Zuihua laoren 醉華老人 or “Old Man Drunk on Flowers, from Jinxi 金溪 in Jiangxi), whose work contributed greatly to the diffusion of Jingming teachings (Qing 1996, 194-208. Information about his life is scarce. He was born into a wealthy family and received a classical education, excelling in painting, music, calligraphy and other subjects (*Beixi lu*, ZWDS 11.1). He travelled in Jiangxi, Jiangsu and Hunan and, in 1817, moved to Sichuan where he transmitted his teachings (Qing 1994, 1: 399). Fu claimed to have obtained teachings from Lü Dongbin, but her also placed a high emphasis on Confucian values of filial piety and loyalty. His doctrines are reflected in his *Daoshu shiqi zhong* 道書十七種 (Seventeen Daoist Books, see below), in which he collected the dialogues of Liu Yu 劉玉, the original founder of the Jingming school, emphasized Confucian ethics and argued for the necessity of living in the world in accordance with moral and social rules. Fu is also the author of certain texts on women’s inner alchemy (see Despeux 1990; Wile 1992) and of several commentaries on alchemical classics (ZWDS 11: 745-861).

**Texts**

**CANONS. Daozang jiyao 道藏輯要 (Epitome of the Daoist Canon), dat. 19th c.** The main edition of this text is the *Chongkan dao zang jiyao* (Reedited Epitome of the Daoist Canon), which was compiled in 1906 under the supervision of abbot Yan Yonghe 閔永和, with the help of Peng Hanran 彭瀚然 and He Longxiang 賀龍驥. It was based on the version stored at the Erxian'an 二仙庵 (Hermitage of the Two Immortals) in Chengdu after a fire destroyed the original blocks in 1892. (Repr.: Taipei: Kaozheng, 1971; Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1977; Chengdu: Erxian'an, 1986 [see Chen 1987; Ding 1996].)
This canon collects Daoist texts not only from the *Daozang* but also from private collections, libraries and temples of the Ming and Qing. Its origins are somewhat obscure. According to the preface of the Erxian'an edition, Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645-1719) first compiled it during the Kangxi era (1662-1722; see Wong 1982, 3-4; Qing 1996, 453-54), but this seems historically unlikely, as Liu Ts'un-yen has shown (1973, 107-8). Another account is found in a gloss to the list of contents of the *Daozang jiyao* (*Daozang jiyao zongmu 总目*) as contained in the *Daozang jinghua lu* (*Daozang jinghua lu* 100 texts, 10 sects.) by Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1874-1952, zi Shouyizi 修一子), ed. Shanghai: Yixue, 1922; Zhejiang guji, 1989. This consists mostly of works from the *Daozang* and the *Daozang jiyao* on inner alchemy and nourishing life, but it also contains some biographical notes, doctrinal statements and ritual texts. It continues earlier encyclopedias, such as the *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel) and the *Xiuzhen shuhi* 修真十書 (Ten Books on the Cultivation of Perfection), and includes important Ming-Qing inner alchemical texts. Each of these texts is accompanied by a brief abstract and notes on its origin.

**INNER ALCHEMICAL COLLECTIONS.** *Wu Liu xianzong* 伍柳仙宗 (Immortality Teachings of Wu and Liu, 4 texts), edited by Deng Huiji 鄧徽紀, dat. 1897. This collection begins with two texts by Wu Shouyang. The first text, the *Tianxian zhengli* 天仙正理 (Proper Principles of Ce-
lestial Immortality; also in DZJY biji 4-5), has two sections entitled “Simple Explanations” (qianshuo 漫説) and “Forthright Discourses” (zhilun 直論). The first contains the alchemical teachings Wu received from Cao Changhua, with a commentary by his brother Wu Shouxu 伍守虛 (zi Zhenyang 真陽). The second section consists of nine essays dealing with vital energy Before and After Heaven, basic medicines, the alchemical cauldron, the firing process, refining the self, laying the foundations, refining the medicine, controlling the energy and embryo respiration. Each essay contains a saying by master Wu with extensive annotation by Wu Shouxu, and the second section concludes with a note on the origin of the nine essays and a more general postface.

The second text of the collection is the Xianfo hezong yulu 仙佛合宗語錄 (Recorded Sayings on the Common Tradition of Daoism and Buddhism, also DZJY biji 6; 1 2.1a-25a; 3.31b-39b), which contains questions and answers of Wu’s disciples. The main theme of this text is the pursuit of transcendence as analogous to the attainment of Buddhahood, a theme probably also central in an earlier text, the Xiamf tongyuan 仙佛同源 (Common Origins of Daoism and Buddhism, lost) by Zhao Youqin 趙友欽 (fl. 1329; see Boltz 1987, 201). Wu’s text is interesting because it provides a concrete explanation on how to distinguish reality from illusion, how to realize instantaneousness in the regulation of the firing process and how to understand key terms, such as zhengyi 真意 (true intention) and shouzhi 守中 (guarding the center).

The third and fourth texts of the Wu Liu xianzong are by Liu Huayang. The third is his Huiming jing 惠命經 (Book of Wisdom and Life), dat. 1794 (trl. Wilhelm 1929; Wong 1998), with a preface containing biographical notes on the author. The first part of the text includes and explains a series of eight illustrations on inner alchemical practice, while the remainder presents various related theories.

The fourth and final text of the collection is the Jinxian zhenghun 金仙証論 (A Testimony to Golden Immortality, dat. 1799), written at the Renshou si 仁壽寺 (Temple of Humane Life) in Beijing. It is divided into eighteen sections, the first six of which concern the practice of the microcosmic orbit and the refinement of jing and qi. Section 7 focuses on the moment of production of the small medicine, that is, the experience of instantaneousness in the firing process, which is the starting point of the second stage of refining qi and shen. Later sections discuss the foundation of real practice and the difference between the different orbits (sect. 11). The last third of the text deals with the right vision of discernment and the path leading to the third stage, culminating in a section entitled “Resolving Doubts” (jueyi 決疑) and presenting questions by Liu’s disciples. The text ends with a supplement called “On Dangers” (weixian shuo 危險説) that explains obstacles to the practice, such as the incursion of discursive
thoughts, the erroneous understanding of the principles and the fall into heterodox paths.

_Daoshu shiqi zhong_ 道書十七種 (Seventeen Daoist Books, 17 texts), by Fu Jinquan 傅金銓 of the Daoguang era (1796-1850), ed. Shudong shancheng tang, 1825 (see Needham et al. 1983, 5:5, 231, 240-43); Guangling guji, 1993; ZWDS 11. These seventeen texts can be divided into three groups: (1) exegeses by Fu Jinquan; (2) texts written by Fu Jinquan; (3) texts written by other authors.

The first group contains Fu's commentaries on texts associated with Lü Dongbin, such as the _Lüzi wupian_ 呂祖五篇 (Five Compositions of Patriarch Lü) and the _Duren tijing_ 廣人頌經 (The Gradual Path of Universal Salvation), dat. 1815.

The second group contains eight works by Fu Jinquan 傅金銓: _Xingtian zhengwu_ 性天正錬 (Striking the Center of Celestial Nature’s Target), on Jingming practice;

_Daohai jinliang_ 道海津梁 (Bridge of the Sea of the Path), on Jingming practice;

_Chishui yin_ 赤水音 (Songs on the Red Water), poetry on alchemy;

_Tiguan zhenji yijian lu_ 一貫真機易簡錄 (Simple Notes on the Mechanism That Unifies All), prose on alchemy;

_Xinxue_ 心學 (Study of the Heart), syncretistic teachings;

_Beixiji_ 杯溪集 (Collection from Bei Mountain Stream), collection of poems;

_Zhi suohua_ 自題所畫 (Painting Inscriptions), poems and art inscriptions.

The third group has works by various Daoist masters and schools. These include the _Qiaoyang jing_ 桂陽經, which also contains the _Qiaoyangzi yulu_ (Recorded Sayings of Master Qiaoyang [Liu Yu]) and other early texts related to the Jingming school; the _Sanfeng danjue_ 三丰丹诀 (Sanfeng’s Alchemical Formulas), which includes various texts attributed to Zhang Sanfeng; and the _Qiu quanshu_ 邱祖全書 (Complete Works of Patriarch Qiu [Chuji]), which has the recorded sayings of Patriarch Qiu (see Mori 1998c). According to Pan Jingguan 潘靜觀, a Longmen disciple, this text was preserved by Zhang Bixu 張伯虛, a disciple of Qiu (see his _Yuluhouzu_ 謀語後序 [Postface to the Recorded Sayings], dat. 1815.

The collection also presents the _Tianxian zhilun_ 天仙旨論 (Fortright Discourses on Celestial Immortality) by Wu Shouyang of the Wu-Liu school under the title _Nei jindan_ 内金丹 (Inner Golden Elixir), and it contains a number of texts on operative alchemy, attributed to Guangchengzi 廣成子, Ge Xuan 葛玄, Liu An 劉安 and others under the title _Wai jindan_ 外金丹 (Outer Golden Elixir). As a whole, it is useful for the study of late Jingming thought and provides a better knowledge of the Longmen school as well as of inner alchemical theory in the Ming and Qing.
**Gu shuyinlou cangshu** 古書隱樓藏書 (Collection from the Ancient Hidden Pavilion of Books, 35 texts, 14 vols.), by Min Yide 閔一得, was collected in the Chunyang gong 純陽宮 (Palace of Master Chunyang [Lü Dongbin]) on Mount Jin'gai and first edited in 1834. It was reedited variously (see Qing 1996, 116). The 1904 edition was reprinted by Guangling guji in 1993. Twenty-three texts of the collection, mostly inner alchemical texts and commentaries, also appear in the *Daozang xubian* 道藏續編 (Supplementary Collection of Daoist Canon), first edited on Mount Jin'gai in 1834 and since then reprinted variously: Shanghai: Yixue shuju, 1952; Beijing: Haiyang, 1989; Beijing: Shumu wenxian, 1993 (see Esposito 1992; 1993).

The texts contained in the *Gu shuyinlou cangshu* can be divided into three groups: (1) commentaries or texts revised by Min Yide or other masters; (2) texts written by Min himself; (3) texts written by other masters.

The first group contains Min’s notes on a number of established texts, including the *Xiuzhen biannan* 修真辯難 (Debate on the Cultivation of Perfection), by Liu Yiming; the *Yinfu jing* 陰符經 (Scripture on Joining with Obscurity), by Li Quan 李筌; the *jindan sibaizi* 金丹四百字 (Four-hundred Words on the Golden Elixir), by Zhang Boduan 張伯端, with commentary by Peng Haogu 彭好古 and revised by Min Yanglin 閔陽林 (Min Yide comments only on the preface); and Min’s full notes on the *Xiuxian bianhuo ran* 修仙辨惑論 (On Doubts Concerning the Cultivation of Immortality), by Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾, under the title *Guankui bian* 管窺編 (A Personal Lecture).

Also included are Min’s annotations and revisions of hitherto unpublished manuscripts that had been stored in different temples. These include the *Huangji hetai chengdao xianjing* 皇極闢鬱道仙經 (Immortals’ Scripture Testifying to Opening and Closing the August Ultimate) and the *Liaoyang dian wenda bian* 嶽陽殿問答編 (Questions and Answers from the Liaoyang Hall). Both are manuscripts from the Qingyang gong 靑羊宮 (Black Sheep Palace) in Chengdu that were transmitted by the semi-legendary Yin Pengtou 尹蓬頭 (*Daozang xubian* 1.7b; Esposito 1993). There is, in addition, a version of the *Taiyi jinhua zongzhi* 太一金華宗旨 (Secret of the Golden Flower), revised by Longmen masters from Mount Jin’gai (Esposito 1993; 1996; Mori 1998a; forthcoming). Min also included a cycle of texts on the doctrine of healing the world, which he claimed to have received from Jizu daozhe and his master Shen Yibing, and wrote a commentary on this subject under the title *Du yishi shuoshu guankui* 魂醫世說述管窺 (A Personal View on the Explanations of the Doctrine of Healing the World). The first part of the collection contains towards its end a cycle of texts on precepts, transmitted by Shen Yibing and compiled by Min Yide in the context of the cultivation of celestial immortality. Here also are two texts on women’s inner alchemy and related moral rules (see Despeux 1990; Wile 1992;
The second group of texts contains a number of Min’s own works, such as the *Suoyan xu* 瑣言續 (Sequel to an Ignorant Transmission), *Erlan xinhua* 二懗心話 (Heart-to-Heart Dialogue Between the Two Leisurably [Masters]) and *Tianxian xinzhu* 天仙心傳 (Heart Transmission of Celestial Immortality).

The third group contains works (1) of Confucian background, (2) materials associated with Zhang Sanfeng and (3) several Tantric or Buddhist-inspired works. Among the first, Confucian works, there are the *Jiucheng lu* 就正錄 (Record of the Realization of Rectitude) and *Yu Lin Fenqian xiansheng shu* 與林奮千先生書 (Letter to Master Lin Fenqian), both by the Confucian Lu Shichen. Second, works associated with Zhang Sanfeng include the *Sanfeng zhenren xuantan quanj* 三丰真人玄譜全集 (Complete Collection of the Mysterious Words by the Perfected Sanfeng), attributed to Zhang Sanfeng. In the third group, there is a Tantric work, the *Chishi tuoluojing* 牆世陀羅尼経 (Dharani for Supporting the World), which also appears to exist in a Tibetan version (see Esposito 1993) and Wang Changyue’s *Bi yuan tanj*. 

Daoshu shier zhong 道書十二種 (Twelve Daoist Books) by Liu Yiming 劉一明, editions: Changde (Hunan): Huguo’an, 1819; Shanghai: Yihua tang, 1880; Shanghai: Jiangdong shuju 1925; Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1933; Beijing: Zhongguo zhongyiyao, 1990; ZWDS 8. This collection’s materials can be divided into three groups: (1) Liu’s commentaries on the *Yijing*; (2) Liu’s commentaries on alchemical classics; (3) Liu’s own works.

The first group contains two texts, the first being the *Zhangyi chanzhen* 周易闡真 (True Explanation of the “Changes,” 4 j., pref. 1798, trl. Cleary 1986a). *Chanzhen* here means “authentic exegesis,” and it concerns the explanation of truth inherent in the investigation of principles, the truth of the fulfillment of inner nature and understanding of the meaning of destiny. The first chapter has thirty diagrams on the *Yijing*, transmitted from the Song and Yuan, some of which are traditionally attributed to the Song master Chen Tuan 陳抟. The remaining three chapters contain a commentary on the sixty-four hexagrams as well as their individual lines. The second text of this group is the *Kongyi chanzhen* 孔易闡真 (True Explanation of the Confucian “Changes,” two sects., no pref., trl. Cleary 1986a, 239-323). It contains an exegesis of the *Daxiang zhuan* 大象傳 (Commentary on General Images) and of the *Zagu zhuan* 雜卦傳 (Commentary on Miscellaneous Hexagrams).

The second group of texts presents Liu’s commentaries on alchemical classics. Here we find his *Cantong qi zhizhi* 參同契直指 (Direct Pointers to “The Triplex Agreement,” pref. 1799, Pregadio 1996, 83); *Wuzhen zhizhi* 悟真直指 (Direct Pointers to “Awakening to Perfection,” pref. 1794, trl. Cleary 1987; see Miyakawa 1954); *Yinfu zhuzhu* 陰符經註 (Commentary
on the Scripture on Joining with the Hidden, pref. 1779, trl. Cleary 1991, 220-38); *Huangting jingjie* 黄庭經解 (Explanations of the Yellow Court Scripture) and *Jindan si baizi jie* 金丹四百字解 (Explanations of the Four Hundred Words on the Golden Elixir, pref. 1807, trl. Cleary 1986b). Liu compares the various classics and, with the help of the teachings he received from his Daoist masters, explains the meaning of their symbolic language and sheds light on their abstruse alchemical terminology. He thus offers an exegesis that cleverly mixes his knowledge of the three teachings with that from his alchemical and spiritual experiences.

The third group of texts in the *Daoshu shier zhong* contains eight texts in Liu’s own hand. They begin with the *Xiyou yuanzhi* 西遊原旨 (The Original Meaning of the “Journey to the West,” pref. 1778, 1798, trl. Yu 1991; Cleary 1991), a work midway between an alchemical exegesis and an independent work. It is an alchemical explanation of the novel *Xiyou ji* 西遊記 (Journey to the West). Some Ming and Qing scholars, including Liu, erroneously attributed this work to Qiu Chuji and confused it with the record of his journey to Chinggis Khan, also entitled *Xiyou ji* (CT 1429). In his comments, Liu links the one-hundred chapters of the novel to secret alchemical practices and shows how they represent the true alchemical quest, a journey to perfection that takes place in the adept’s body (Despeux 1985, 65-66, 70-72).

Next is the *Xiangyan poyi* 象言破疑 (Resolving Symbolic Language, 2 sects., pref. 1811, trl. Cleary 1986a: 51-118). Liu here presents seven diagrams to illustrate the natural process of human creation, which he divides into three stages: gestation, childhood and adulthood (see Li 1988, 554-558; Liu 1991, 237-239). A third text is the *Tongguan wen* 通關文 (Treatise on Going through the Passes, 2 sects., pref. 1812). It is related to the *Xiuzhen juyao* (see below) and its first section on “Seeing Through Things of the World.” Liu here presents a list of fifty passes intended to prevent adepts from sinking into the ocean of worldly sufferings. Passes that have to be overcome include the pass of desire, the pass of affection, and the pass of honors. The list represents a series of stages of progressive awareness (see Li 1988, 559-60).

Fourth is the *Xiuzhen biannan* 修真辯難 (Debate on the Cultivation of Perfection, 2 sects., pref. 1798). This is a dialogue between master and disciples on various ways of attaining perfection. The fact that it is also contained in Min Yide’s *Gu shuyin lou cangshu*, demonstrates the importance of Liu’s ideas in Longmen teachings. Liu’s fifth work contained here is the *Shenshi bafa* 神室八法 (Eight Elements of the Spiritual Abode, pref. 1798). The “spiritual abode” is a metaphor for the nature of the mind and thus for the basis of true alchemical cultivation. Liu presents a list of eight spiritual qualities needed as the basic materials for building one’s spiritual abode:
firmness, flexibility, sincerity, trustfulness, temperance, peacefulness, emptiness and spiritual clarity (see Li 1988, 563-67).

The sixth text is the Xuexun jiuyao 修真九要 (Nine Principles in the Cultivation of Perfection, pref. 1798), which presents a list of nine principles matching nine stages of spiritual cultivation. They begin with “Seeing Through Things of the World” and continue on to “Realizing Destiny Through the Outer Medicine” and “Realizing Inner Nature Through the Inner Medicine” (see Li 1988, 559-63). This text is followed by the Wudao lu 悟道錄 (Record of Awakening to the Path, 2 sects., pref. 1810, 1811, trl. Cleary 1988), which contains Liu’s cosmological theories. The text especially points out the indissoluble bond between macrocosm and microcosm and emphasizes the fundamental balance between yin and yang (see Li 1988, 559-63). The eighth and last text here is the Huixinji 會心集 (Collection of Encounters of the Mind, 2 parts, 2 sects., pref. 1801). The first section of the inner part consists of poems in five and seven character verses, compositions of irregular verses and songs illustrating the alchemical path. The second section includes ten treatises, such as “Discussion of the Great Dao Going Back to the One,” “Gathering the Medicine” and “The Firing Process.” All are devoted to the explanation of alchemical practices. The first section of the outer part has poems, inscriptions and eulogies, while the second consists of songs and miscellaneous prose, including songs about “Women’s Alchemy” and the “Debate on the Three Teachings.”

RITUAL TEXTS. Guangcheng yizhi 廣成儀制 (Ritual Systematization of Master Guangcheng, 270 texts), by Chen Chongyuan 陳仲遠 (hao Yunfeng yuke 雲峰羽客 or “Feathered Guest of the Cloudy Peak”; see Qing 1996, 139, 465), editions: Chengdu: Erxian'an, 1911; repr. 1913; ZWDS 13-15. This work represents the most complete collection of liturgical Quanzhen texts. It includes texts used in Quanzhen temples, works on popular and regional cults (Yangzi valley, Sichuan) and materials on the rituals of other Daoist schools, such as the Lingbao and Qingwei, as they were standardized under the Quanzhen model. The book is a valuable resource concerning the development and progressive standardization of Daoist ritual under Quanzhen canonization.

Gazetteers. Chongxiu Longhu shanshi 重修龍虎山志 (Reedited Gazetteer of Mount Longhu, 16 j., pref. 1740), by Lou Jinyuan 濱近垣, editions: xylographic version in Shangqing gong on Mount Longhu; ZWDS 19: 419-636; Daqiao wenxian 2 (Taipei, Danqing tushu, 1983); Taipei: Guangwen shuju yinxing, 1989. The text describes the history of Mount Longhu and its temples, drawing upon an earlier record by Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (1269-1322; Daqiao wenxian 1) and following “what remained of a 10-ch. topography by the 43rd Celestial Master Zhang Yuzhu (1361-1410)” (Boltz 1987, 276 n.157). It begins in juan 1 with imperial decrees regarding
the mountain, the rebuilding of its temples, and the titles granted to its Celestial Masters, and includes certain biographical notes on its author.

Juan 2 describes the landscape surrounding Mount Longhu; Juan 3-4 present its temples and hermitages; Juan 5 cites relics of the past and gives information on its Buddhist temples; Juan 6 contains biographies of Celestial Masters from Zhang Daoling to Zhang Xilin (55th); Juan 7 has those of other local Zhengyi masters; Juan 8 provides an account of imperial honorific titles conferred on the Celestial Masters and the transmission of seals since the early Ming; Juan 9 deals with land donations made to the mountain; Juan 10 through 16, finally, are comprised of artistic and literary works, recorded sayings, epigraphic sources, elegies, miscellaneous and other materials. This gazetteer is an important resource for the history of the Celestial Masters and their relationship to Mount Longhu. It is of particular interest for the study of their development under the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Several other gazetteers were compiled during the Qing. One is the Maoshan quanzhii 茅山全志 (Complete Gazetteer on Mount Mao, 14 j., pref. 1669, repr. 1878), by Da Changuang 笪贇光, ed. ZWDS 19: 687-964. This text contains drawings of the mountain, reprints of epigraphic records such as stelae and temple inscriptions, relics of the past and biographies of local patriarchs and Maoshan masters from Wei Huacun 魏華存 to Liu Dabin 劉大彬 (fl. 1317-1328), 45th patriarch and author of the earlier Maoshan zhi 茅山志 (Record of Maoshan, CT 304; see Boltz 1987, 103; Schaefer 1980). The collection has important materials for the study of the Daoism associated with the mountain, including also a survey of overall historical and religious development from the Song to the late Ming.

Huayue zhi 華嶽志 (Gazetteer of Sacred Mount Hua), also known as Huashan zhi 華山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Hua, in 8 j., pref. 1821, 1831), by Li Rong 李榕, ed. ZWDS 20: 3-185. The compiler lived on the mountain for twenty years and presents a comprehensive collection of relevant drawings, relics, biographies, epigraphic sources, literary works and more. He relies heavily on earlier compilations, such as Wang Chuyi’s 王處一 Xiyue huashan zhi 西嶽華山志 (Gazetteer of Mount Hua, the Western Peak, CT 307; see Boltz 1987, 107-9) and Li Shifang’s 李時芳 Huayue quanjii 華嶽全集 (Complete Collection on Mount Hua, 13 j.), supplemented by Ma Ming-qing 马明卿 in 14 j. All of these use epigraphic sources and various other materials concerning the mountain, but the Qing-dynasty Huayue zhi constitutes the final version, combining information from all previous gazetteers.

Xiaoyao shan wanshou gong zhi 逍遥山萬壽宮志 (Gazetteer of Longevity Temple on Mount Xiaoyao, in 15 j., dat. 1878), by Jin Guixin 金桂馨 and Qi Fengyuan 漁法人, ed. ZWDS 20: 653-977. This collection of materials on the Longevity Temple on Xishan (Jiangxi) contains important sources on the Xu Xun 許遜 cult and the Jingming school (see Akizuki
Jingu dong zhi 金鼓洞志 (Gazetteer of the Golden Drum Cavern, in 8 j., dat. 1796-1820), by Zhu Wenzao 朱文藻 upon request of Zhang Fuchun 張復純, the 14th patriarch of Longmen at the Heling gong 鶴林宮 (Crane Forest Palace) of the Jingu dong. Editions: Wulin zhanggu congbian by Ding Bing 丁丙, dat. 1833 (Taipei: Jinghua, 1967); ZWDS 20: 189-299. The Helin Temple still exists as a Longmen center at the foot of Mount Zilong north of Qixia Peak in modern Hangzhou. It has been a Longmen temple since Zhou Mingyang 周明揚 (1628-1711). The text begins in juan 1 with a portrait of Lü Dongbin and four characters allegedly written in his own hand. Juan 2-3 contain a description of the local landscape and surrounding places, including travel notes and eulogies (also in j. 5). Juan 4 is devoted to, among other things, the history and development of the temple, and descriptions of its sanctuaries, halls, lay-out, and other features. Juan 7 has the names of related Longmen patriarchs, from the 5th to the 14th generations, while Juan 8 contains supplementary notes, epitaphs and biographies of ancient sages and eminent personages who lived there.

Worldview

Syncretism of the Three Teachings. Late imperial China generally was characterized by unity and integration. This is evident in the thought of many philosophers of the time who developed theories and methods of self-cultivation that mixed Confucianism with Buddhism and Daoism. The unity of the three teachings shaped Ming and Qing society and was acclaimed by religious schools, sects and lay associations in the wider populace, the intellectual elite and even the emperors. Syncretism as a means to reconcile elements of different religious traditions was and still is central to Chinese religious life. Despite its flexibility, it tended to establish further levels of orthodoxy and thus, paradoxically, paved the way for more pronounced sectarian activities (see Berling 1980). Generally Ming and Qing rulers and their representatives were suspicious of any organized religious elements that did not support the “kingly way” and they persecuted all forms of religious and intellectual heterodoxy. The organized religions, therefore, had to adopt their own values to Confucian cultural norms. These norms were completely accepted not only by them (see Smith 1983) but also by various heterodox associations—the White Lotus 白蓮, for example, incorporated the six Confucian maxims of the first Ming emperor into its popular chant (see Naquin 1985).

Still, the two dynasties were not entirely alike. The Ming government saw the three teachings as a source of official legitimacy; the Qing, as a foreign dynasty, used them to emphasize the role of Neo-Confucianism in
contrast to Buddhism and Daoism. The Qing pursued complete control over all religious organizations and attempted to concentrate them around certain well-defined and well-controlled schools that were faithful to official policy. At the end of the Ming, the Confucian elite supported the syncretic movement and contributed to the propagation of the religious and intellectual theories of the three teachings (e.g., Wang Yangming, Lin Zhaoen, Wang Fuzhi). Many Qing scholars, by contrast, were shocked by the disastrous consequences of Ming despotism and felt it necessary to return to the source of the original Confucian spirit. They traced the Ming collapse and its cataclysm of 1644 to the empty speculations regarding the inner quest of sanctity that had begun in Song times. Accordingly, they adopted a pragmatic policy and strongly rejected Buddhist and Daoist doctrines (see Cheng 1997).

Thus, like the Ming dynasty, the Qing period was open to syncretic impulses, but in a more covert way. The Ming witnessed the spread of lay syncretistic associations, supported even by the ruling elite, and also the production of many religious and morality books that focused on meeting the needs of laymen and narrowing the gap between the people and the elite. The Qing, by contrast, cut all links with these associations and their publications because they were too independent of government control; they used morality pamphlets only to propagate models of social behavior and ethics that were consistent with Confucian doctrines. The Qing court was obsessed with ensuring subject-monarch loyalty on the basis of filial piety, and to that end they employed morality books and so-called “Sacred Edicts” as instruments of indoctrination. For example, the Kangxi emperor’s “Sacred Edict” of 1670 was supposed to be read aloud by officials and village elders in public meetings in all rural localities. Even more publicized was the *Shengyu guangxun* (Extensive Explanation of the “Sacred Edict”), an amplification of Kangxi’s edict produced by his son, the Yongzheng emperor. It was published in a number of popularized versions, some of them written in local dialects (see Chang 1967; Mair 1985).

This phenomenon of widespread Confucian propaganda facilitated cultural integration and greater uniformity of norms. However, cultural integration was concomitant with cultural heterogeneity, and the late imperial period was characterized by not only uniformity and consensus, but also diversity and dissidence (Rawski 1985).

**Cultural Integration: State Ritual and the Standardization of Local Cults.** The Qing dynasty placed great emphasis on imperial ritual (*li*), in a manner compatible with Neo-Confucianism (see Zito 1997). They “copied the Ming system down to the smallest detail, often exceeding its dynastic predecessor in ceremonial exuberance” (Smith 1990, 285). The Qing emperors paid unprecedented homage to Confucius, and in the waning years of the dynasty, elevated his wor-
ship to the first level of state sacrifice, assuming that “the moral transformation of the people is the dynasty’s first task and the regulations of ritual constitute the great item of moral transformation” (Smith 1990, 288). Important and distinctive ritual compilations were produced under imperial patronage, while ritual handbooks of various sorts circulated widely throughout the empire. Some of these were written for officials and scholars; others for literate commoners, including ritual specialists (Hayes 1985, 100-3).

Even though institutional Buddhism and Daoism had their own separate structures and sets of rituals, they—like all members of Chinese society—were expected to adhere at least to the basic elements of ceremonial behavior. Parallel to imperial ritual, Buddhist and Daoist priests, as well as various other ritual specialists, played a major role in local festivals and other rites that remained virtually independent of the state. Community leaders also acted as officiating priests and often replaced them, taking part in charitable works and assisting actively in the construction of approved temples. “Eager to cooperate with state authorities in the standardization of cults,” local elites with interests in land and commerce saw their participation in such events as a way to “gentrify” themselves and their home communities (Watson 1985, 293). The process of cultural integration in late imperial China, then, also brought about greater religious uniformity. Unsanctioned local deities, although never completely eradicated, gradually disappeared, while new, officially recognized ones were installed. “The promotion of state-approved cults in south China was so successful that, by the mid-Qing, local gods had been effectively superseded by a handful of approved deities” (Watson 1985, 293). Different local cults could be joined under a single deity, thus serving the needs of various social classes while at the same time participating in the standardization of cults. Such was the case of Mazu 娘祖, to whom the Qing founder gave the title Tianshang shengmu 天上聖母 (Heavenly Saintly Mother), and who rose to the position of Tianhou 天后 (Empress of Heaven) in 1737 (see Wadow 1992). The literati elite thus played an important role “by ensuring that religious cults conformed to nationally accepted models” (Watson 1985, 322).

MORALITY BOOKS (shanshu 善書). Parallel to the acceptance of more uniform religious symbols and deities, late imperial China also saw a remarkable multiplication of religious books written for non-elite groups. Their content was believed to have been revealed by deities in charge of rewards and punishments, and they were based on Confucian ethics mixed with the popular Buddhist concept of karma and Daoist beliefs in longevity and immortality. Their forerunner was the twelfth-century Taishang ganying pian 大上感應篇 (Tract on Action and Response by the Most High, CT 1167). The text was printed first in 1164 and distributed by a Song emperor
to convey the message that good and bad fortune do not come without reason, and was reprinted many times (see Bell 1996). However, while this text and its early successors still focused on the workings of karma and other Buddhist values such as compassion and piety, texts published since the Ming placed a higher emphasis on practical moral teachings (see Yau 1999). One form of moral practice appeared in the so-called Ledgers of Merit and Demerit (gongguoge 功過格; see Brokow 1991), which measured each good or bad deed in assigned points and allowed a person to save accumulated good deeds to earn good fortune. 3,000 good deeds were believed to grant one a son, while 10,000 would allow one to pass the jinshi 进士 degree (see Berling 1985). Anyone, not just the educated elite, could become a virtuous sage if he or she could follow this practical science of moral cultivation. While for individuals these morality books were a concrete way of clarifying moral obligations and of calculating progress in moral cultivation, for the court printing them they served not only to accumulate merits but also to reinforce values that maintained societal stability under Qing rule.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY: SECTARIAN RELIGION AND PRECIOUS SCROLLS. Moral cultivation was also central to the practice of sectarian groups, but in their case the government saw it as a source of dissidence because it was propagated outside of orthodox vehicles of transmission. Early modern forms of sectarian activity appeared first in the Yuan in the form of lay Buddhist groups, which gradually integrated Daoist concepts and practices, such as healing, divination and exorcism, into their system (see Overmyer 1976; 1985). At the end of the Yuan, some of these groups became more militant, as can be seen in the case of the White Lotus, which changed from a passive devotional group into a millenarian movement (see ter Haar 1992).

Similarly, a new type of vernacular religious literature called baojuan 寶卷 (precious scrolls) appeared among sectarian groups under the Ming and Qing. Early examples contain vernacular discussions of orthodox Buddhist teachings composed by Buddhist monks; later works were authored by charismatic leaders of movements such as the Luo Menghong 羅教 (Teaching of Luo) and the Wuwei jiao 無為教 (Nonaction Religion), who used them to express their doctrines (see Overmyer 1985). The phenomenon grew in tandem with economic progress, population increase and the country’s confrontation with Western traders—all social and economic changes which, by the mid-sixteenth century, had ushered in a new phase in China history.

The new religious groups were a social alternative to the institutionalized religions of the ruling monastic institutions and their temple-cults, which were controlled by the established elite. They drew their inspiration from Buddhism, Daoism and local oral traditions and spread widely, so that by the late Ming some were supported by court eunuchs, officials and their
wives (see Sawada 1957). The court at that time helped in the printing of baojuan, but under the Qing this support was cut off and the groups were forced underground (see Naquin 1976). The Qing elite and government despised the popular practices performed by Buddhist monks, Daoist priests and village spirit mediums, although they participated in the state cult and often patronized local temples, hiring Buddhist and Daoist professionals. The movements, then, found adherents less among the ruling elite than among the wider populace. By the eighteenth century they had become part of popular religion, absorbing deities like Guanyin, Confucius and Lord Lao into their pantheons. Popular deities thus became increasingly dominant, in contrast with earlier movements in which they had played only a secondary role.

The term “White Lotus sectarianism” has been proposed to subsume all mid-Qing religious groups that shared a new mythological framework and incorporated the Maitreist goddess Wusheng laomu (Eternal Venerable Mother; see Naquin 1985). These groups usually focused either on sutra-recitation or on meditation. Groups of the sutra-recitation type adopted the ideal of Buddhist monkhood and developed an organizational structure concordant with congregational and devotional institutions; their main activity consisted of recitations of sutras, baojuan, morality books and other religious texts. Mid-Qing examples of such groups, which also had literati followers, included the Luoji and the Hongyao jiao (Religion of Expansive Yang; see Overmyer 1978; Kelley 1982; Sawada 1957). Groups of the meditation type focused on contemplative practices, healing and martial arts; their organization consisted of personal networks and lacked any fixed structure (see Naquin 1976; Overmyer 1976).

The different orientation of these groups may have been the product of continuing conflict between elite lay Buddhists, observant of traditional forms, and religious groups outside the traditional monastic framework (see ter Haar 1992). Many sutra-recitation groups, moreover, incorporated beliefs in Maitreya’s coming and the Eternal Venerable Mother, so that a schism developed between them and the elite attached to lay Buddhism. Social changes further increased the difference, since, after the mid-Ming, families belonging to non-elite religious groups sometimes had members participating in examinations or in the educational system. This frightened the defenders of Confucian morality who, though they tolerated the monasteries, felt threatened by the non-elite religious groups.

By the late Ming, “the literati’s practice of lay Buddhism became a difficult undertaking” (ter Haar 1992), a situation exacerbated by increased persecutions under the Qing. This governmental hostility, far from preventing the emergence of religious groups, contributed to their involvement in millenarian uprisings (see Naquin 1981). In another line of development,
by the mid-nineteenth century, religious groups merged with community structures, and entire villages adopted White Lotus leadership and techniques of self-defense. Ming and Qing editions of baiguan then came to be supplemented by spirit-writing scriptures as the basis of new sects.

Practice

SPIRIT-WRITING or planchette writing (fūjī 扶乩) was a form of divination analogous to consultation of the Yijing, geomancy, astrology, fengshui, physiognomy and dream interpretation. The practice began in Tang times, with a cult in honor of Magu (see Chao 1942) and was structurally organized under the Song, but its origins go back to shamanic spirit possession. It centers on receiving automatically written messages transmitted by the spirits of gods, immortals or culture heroes who “take possession of a writing implement to compose what they will” (Jordan and Overmyer 1986). Spirit-writing was embraced by many literati not only as a means of predicting their lifespan, fortune and examination topics, but also to cure illness, bring rain and procure other necessities of life. Spirit-writing specialists or mediums appeared everywhere and in all social classes. Like professional fortune-tellers, they could predict disasters and provide medical advice in the form of charms or prescriptions (see Smith 1990).

Spirit-writing required several devices, beginning with an altar (jītān 扶乩壇) which, during the Ming and Qing, could be found in every prefectoral and county capital (see Xu 1941). It was often located in religious temples, usually Daoist but sometimes also Buddhist, or also in association halls, domestic residences, aristocratic or imperial palaces. A special hall devoted to the practice (huántāng 鳳堂) typically contained a square table (xiāng’ān 香案), on which was a tray (shānpán 砂盤) covered with sand or incense ashes, known as the planchette. This in turn was surmounted by a wooden T-shaped frame (jījiā 扶乩架) made of peachwood or willow, which were believed to have demon-dispelling qualities. To its end was attached a sharp stick (jībǐ 扶乩筆), about two feet long, which had to have been cut from the southeastern side of a tree exposed to the yang influence of the rising sun on a day and at a time deemed auspicious (De Groot 1892-1910, 1321-22; Goyama 1994, 470). During the procedure, two mediums held (fū 扶) the two extremities of the instrument, hence the term fūjī or “to support the divining instrument” (Smith 1991, 226). This was the most common term used in the early Qing, but there were others: fūjī 扶乩 (supporting the sieve), jiànglùn 降鸞 (descent of the phoenix), fūlùn 扶鸞 (supporting the phoenix) and fēilùn 飛鸞 (the flying phoenix; see Goyama 1994, 473-74; Jordan and Overmyer 1986).
Before inviting the spirit to descend into the stick devotees offered food or flowers, burned incense, drew talismans, recited incantations and underwent ceremonies of purification. As the spirit entered the stick it began to move automatically, tracing characters on the sand planchette. One person was in charge of reciting the characters (chàngtúan 帖鶴) while another wrote them down (huluan 録鶴).

Spirit-writing was highly popular in late imperial China and was practiced by some very illustrious scholar-officials and literati (see Xu 1941; Jordan and Overmyer 1986; Goyama 1994). They liked it not only because it could give advice on official examinations, but also because it emphasized morality. By the early seventeenth century morality books were frequently composed by means of the planchette, most often revealed by Guandi 關帝 (see Duara 1988), Wenchang 文昌 (see Kleeman 1994) and Lü Dongbin (see Katz 1996). The values expressed in such texts were largely Confucian, but also included popular ideas inspired by Buddhism and Daoism. The presence of these non-Confucian elements did not dissuade Qing officials or the gentry from supporting their publication or writing colophons to them. Even scholars involved themselves in the practice, so that Jiang Yupu, for example, presided over a spirit-writing altar called jueyuan or juetan, which apparently was at the root of the compilation of the Dàozi gùijī, the Lùzu quanshu and other Qing religious texts (Esposito 1998a; 1998b; Mori 1998a; 1998b; Yau 1999).

Ming and Qing law officially prohibited spirit-writing, but because it was ardently pursued by those very officials who were supposed to enforce the law, spirit-writing survived and flourished throughout the empire. Still, it seems that, like many other shamanic activities, it was practiced more heavily in the south (Goyama 1994, 476). Moreover, non-elite local diviners and shamanic mediums were responsible for many of the spirit texts that circulated widely in Qing society (see Jordan and Overmyer 1986). The spirit-writing activities of non-elite practitioners are important not only regarding the development of “sectarian” spirit-writing texts, but also as an indication of Ming-Qing cultural integration. Parallel to the elite use of spirit-writing, independent religious associations formed around spirit-writing altars. Here morality books were composed in a simple classical style, resembling that used by literati spirit-writers and similarly supporting Confucian values. Only in the late nineteenth century did “sectarian scriptures” appear with mythological content inspired by the Eternal Venerable Mother. Even these retained the format of morality books (Jordan and Overmyer 1986). Such texts can still be found in Taiwan and Hong Kong today, as can spirit-writing groups, sometimes nowadays also called “spirit religions” (shenjiao 神教), “Confucian spirit religions” (ruzong shenjiao 儒宗神教) or “phoenix worship” (bailuan 拜鶴). The reference to Confucianism in names such as Rujiao 儒教 or Kongjiao 孔教 (Confucian religion) may well
reflect their association with the educated art of writing (Jordan and Overmyer 1986). Several Hong Kong groups are related more directly to Daoism and are generally called daotan (Daoist altar) or daotang (Daoist hall). They often hold spirit-writing sessions devoted to Lü Dongbin and other Daoist divinities (see Tsui 1991; Shiga 1995; 1999). Indeed, most Daoist sects in Hong Kong began as spirit-writing circles and only gradually developed into formal religious organizations, using the Daoist institutions and ritual system as their model. Contemporary Daoist movements can therefore be seen to have emerged from local religious centers rather than secret religious societies (see Shiga 1995).

INNER ALCHEMY SIMPLIFIED. We can conclude by saying that moral cultivation was a key preoccupation of Ming-Qing society, propagated in a syncretistic formulation by thinkers such as Lin Zhaoen (see Berling 1980), as well as by founders of new Daoist schools, such as Lu Xixing, Wu Shouyang and Wang Changyue (see Tang 1995). The government strove for a simplified Confucian ethos to be adapted by the entire population, and so did the religious leaders with their doctrines. As a result, Daoist masters devoted themselves to clarifying obscure inner alchemical theories, leaving out their intricate alchemical symbols, and to simplify them and facilitate everyone’s understanding of the essence of true cultivation (Esposito 1993).

Lin Zhaoen, for example, used Buddhist, Daoist and Neo-Confucian theories as the bases of his sixteenth-century popularization of meditation as a path to enlightenment (see Berling 1980). Wu Shouyang similarly formulated his alchemical theory on the basis of a mixture of Buddhist and Daoist doctrines and proposed the attainment of the Confucian humanist path as a first step (see Tang 1995). Wang Changyue of the Longmen school saw the goal of immortality as an attainable goal for anyone who followed a gradual path of precepts that included the cultivation of Confucian moral principles (Chen 1988; Esposito 1993; Tang 1985; Qing 1996).

The disclosure of inner-alchemical arcana and the transmission of religious beliefs were further facilitated by popular novels, such as the Fengshen yanyi (Creation of the Gods; trl. Gu 1993) and the Dongyouji (Journey to the East; see Liu 1962), as well as by the development of sectarian associations. The latter, in particular, integrated methods of meditation inspired by Buddhism and Daoism into their main practices. By the 1760s they were even proposing martial arts as practical applications of Daoist and medical theories of the circulation of energy (see Naquin 1981). Charismatic figures such as Zhang Sanfeng were not only regarded as celestial Daoist monks, but also became patriarchs of inner-alchemy schools (see Wong 1982; 1988; Akioka 1994) and founders of schools of martial arts (see Despeux 1981; Engelhardt 1981; Vercaemen 1989; 1991). Inner-alchemical theories, therefore, were no longer restricted to circles of initiates but rather became
part of a popular culture. They can still be found in folk practices, such as what is now called Qigong (see Engelhardt 1987; Despeux 1988; Miura 1989; Esposito 1995).

This was not the product of a simple "popularization." Rather, it resulted from a long process of social and intellectual change, from the increasingly shared values of a widely propagated written culture that emerged over the course of two dynasties.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO
DAOIST RITUAL TODAY

Kenneth Dean

DESCRIPTION

Daoist ritual can be described as an elaborate and overpowering oratorio, combining singing, chanting, recitation and dance to the accompaniment of drums, gongs, cymbals, strings and woodwinds. The rich costumes, altar hangings, ritual implements, oil lamps and incense burners set the stage for intricate symbolic actions. These actions range from solemn court audiences to highly dramatic exorcisms complete with sword dances, to moments of sheer farce. Daoist rituals can be performed by a solitary ritual specialist or by a troupe led by a Master of High Merit (gaogong 高功). The troupe can vary in size, but often includes a chief cantor and an assistant cantor, a keeper of the incense, and a leader of the dance. In the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection) tradition widespread in north China, Daoist priests perform rites in Daoist monasteries. In the southern Celestial Master (Tianshi 天師) tradition, the ritual specialists maintain altars in their residences, and are hired by community representatives or individuals to perform Daoist rites in local temples dedicated to popular gods, or in private homes.

Rituals can last for days on end, with brief rests between rites, so that time, sleep, and dream meld with cosmic rhythms. The community is represented by headsmen, usually male, selected by divination or rotation, and led by a Master of the Incense Burner (luzhu 燈主). These representatives follow the instructions of the Daoist ritual specialists, bowing and offering incense when instructed to do so. The Daoist rites take place inside the local temple, dedicated to any one of the numerous local gods. Ritual practitioners set up a portable altar, set out the Five True Talismans (wu zhenfu 五真符) to establish the sacred space and hang up scrolls representing the Three Pure Ones (Sanqing 三清), anthropomorphic emanations of the Dao, Zhang Daoling 張道陵, Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝 (Supreme Emperor of the Dark Heavens) as well as gods and spirit soldiers of the heavens, the earth, and the waters. Ritual implements include the Daoist master’s Five Thunder Seal, his buffalo or metal horn, his sword, incense burner, bowl of water, container of rice with a ruler, a mirror and a pair of scissors, his
audience tablet, and various offerings of tea, wine and rice. They are placed on the central altar. The community responds to the order of the rites by preparing offerings in the courtyard between the temple and the stage, where the Master of High Merit will "present the memorial" to Heaven to announce the success of the ritual to the gods (and to the assembled crowd).

Daoist ritual covers a vast range of repetitive, symbolic, and transformative actions including collective rites of offering, sacrifice and thanksgiving, initiation, prayers for rain, exorcisms of disease-bearing demonic forces, requiems for deceased family members and individual rites featuring meditation and visualization. Its origins can be traced back to the meditations and healing rites of the Zhengyi Tianshi movement (Orthodox Unity, Celestial Masters) in Sichuan in the Han dynasty. Major innovations in later Daoist ritual include the ritual aftereffects of the rise of a meditative/visionary tradition in the Shangqing revelations (Highest Clarity; 4th c. C.E.), and the composition of liturgies for the deceased and for communal thanksgiving in the Lingbao ritual tradition (Numinous Treasure; 5th c.). Many of these ritual traditions were merged and codified between the fifth and ninth centuries. Tang versions of many rites composed by Zhang Wanfu and Du Guangting show remarkable structural similarities with contemporary Daoist rituals practiced in many parts of China. Song ritual compendia provide even more elaborate versions of Daoist rituals, often surpassing contemporary rites in complexity. Rival schools of liturgy in the Song criticized one another vigorously, as new revelations and new Daoist movements generated new rituals and new pantheons. Northern and Southern schools of Quanzhen Complete Perfection Daoism elaborated their own monastic regulations and ritual codes; they have preserved a separate ritual tradition to this day.

New movements in south China, such as the Shenxiao Divine Empyrean, Tongchu Youthful Incipience, Tianxin Heavenly Heart, Jingming Pure Brightness, and Qingwei Clear Subtlety movements, all have left a lasting imprint on contemporary Daoist ritual. Hybrid formations of popular, shamanistic cults and Daoist ritual traditions such as the Sannai movement generated new pantheons and ritual forms, many of which were not gathered into the Daoist canon, which are still widely practiced across southern China and among communities of Yao and other minorities in south China, Southeast Asia.

French sinologists such as Edouard Chavannes and Henri Maspero (1967; 1981) made detailed studies of Daoist ritual texts. Chavannes' "Le jet des dragons" (1919) is still the only full translation of a Daoist liturgy. The contemporary study of Daoist ritual began with the discovery by Kristofer Schipper in the 1960's that Daoist rites in Taiwan preserved many
elements of traditional Daoist liturgy as found in the Daoist canon, even though the ritual specialists there were not aware of the existence of the canon (see Schipper 1975b). Schipper's research demonstrated that a multitude of lines of descent within distinct regional ritual traditions linked contemporary Daoist ritual practice to the great traditions of medieval and late imperial Daoist ritual. The comparative study of contemporary Daoist ritual traditions therefore requires an extensive gathering of liturgical manuscripts along with a precise documentation of ritual traditions across China and in overseas Chinese communities. The importance of such sources was already suggested by the Daoist manuscripts found in the Dunhuang caves, and edited by Ofuchi Ninji (1978; 1979). Ofuchi has also edited the liturgical manuscripts of Daoist Master Chen Rongsheng 陳榮盛, of Tainan 臺南, Taiwan (1983). Michael Saso edited and reproduced the liturgical manuscripts of Daoist Masters from Xinzhu 新竹, Taiwan (1975). Recently, Prof. Wang Ch’iu-kui of Tsinghua University in Taiwan has begun editing and publishing a set of reproductions of the complete liturgical manuscripts of several Daoist altars from across southern China, accompanied by thorough documentation on the ritual practice of the Daoist masters (1998-). Important research on Daoist rituals of the Yao, the Zhuang, and the Hakka Chinese has been done by Shiratori Yoshire, Jacques Lemoine, David Holm and John Lagerwey. Detailed descriptions of specific Daoist rituals in Fujian, Zhejiang, Taiwan and Hong Kong have been written by Liu Chih-wan, Li Xianzhang, Tanaka Issei, Li Fengmao, Kristofer Schipper, John Lagerwey, KennethDean and others.

In general, one can discern two major ritual traditions in contemporary Daoism, the Quanzhen school and the various offshoots of the Zhengyi Lingbao traditions. The former are predominant in northern China, although they made substantial inroads into southern China (Zhejiang, Guangdong, Hong Kong, Fujian) in the late imperial period. Yoshioka has described the workings of the Quanzhen monastery Baiyunguan 白雲觀 in Beijing prior to World War II (1979). It is now the center of a Daoist academy and the headquarters of the Daoist Association of China, which publishes a journal. Quanzhen rituals there have recently been videotaped and Quanzhen Daoist music has been outlined by Cao Benye [Ts’ao Pen-yeh] and his colleagues. Further study is necessary to bring out variations between the various branches of Quanzhen in the different parts of China.

The Zhengyi ritual tradition, by contrast, is passed down primarily from father to son within individual families or through master-disciple networks. Most such Daoist ritual troupes work out of their homes. Although ostensibly headquartered in the hereditary home of the descendants of Zhang Daoling at Mount Longhu 龍虎山 (Jiangxi), the many localized ritual traditions of Zhengyi Daoism have developed significant variations over time.
The range and diversity of Daoist ritual traditions still practiced in China and in overseas Chinese communities is just beginning to be documented. The most research to date has been done on the Daoist ritual traditions of Taiwan (Schipper 1975; 1985a; Saso 1972; Liu 1983; Òtfuchi 1983; Lagerwey 1987; Li 1993; Maruyama 1995). In Taiwan, major differences have been found between the ritual traditions of the north and the south of the island. Southern Taiwanese Daoists perform communal sacrifices and individual rites as well as requiems, while northern Daoists generally do not perform services for the dead. These Taiwanese Daoist ritual traditions have been traced back to their respective points of origin in Fujian (Dean 1988; Lagerwey 1988). As a result of the concentration of research in the area, the Daoist ritual traditions of the Fujian Minnan region have taken on a somewhat paradigmatic role in Daoist studies (see Schipper 1985a). In this model, the classical, cultures, literary rite of the "black hat" Daoists inside the temple finds its complementary opposite in the vernacular, marital, oral rites of the "red hat" fashi (ritual master) outside the temple.

Further research is ongoing into Daoist ritual traditions around China (see Wang 1998-). It may well present differences from the Minnan model of Daoist ritual, and come to reveal various complex mixtures of popular Buddhist, Daoist and shamanic ritual traditions. Nevertheless, in general terms, it is possible even at this stage to bring out the key elements of contemporary Daoist ritual, though aspects of this analysis may change with new ethnographic findings from other areas of China. Many of these key elements can be traced through the layers of accumulations of Daoist ritual (see Maruyama 1995; 2000).

Contemporary Zhengyi ritual as practiced in Quanzhou 泉州 and Zhangzhou 漳州 (Fujian), as well as in southern Taiwan, consists of three major categories: jiao 礼 (communal sacrifices), gongde 功德 (requiem services) and xiaofa 小法 (exorcistic minor rites). Most rituals begin with the creation of a sacred space by placing the Five True Talismans of the Lingbao tradition around the altar and at the central altar. Then the purification and sealing of the altar occur, followed by the invitation of the Daoist gods, the offering of incense and tea, and the enactment of an audience with the gods. The ritual culminates in the presentation of a memorial explaining its purpose and usually listing the names of the sponsors. The remainder involves the reverse process of feasting the gods, an announcement of the success of the ritual, an expression of thanks and a sending-off of the gods, leading eventually to the deconstruction of the altar.

Alongside this general structural framework is the inner visualization of the Master of High Merit. In these visualizations, accompanied by spells, finger movements and pacing out patterns associated with the Daoist stars,
the hexagrams of the *Yijing* (Book of Changes), and other mantic diagrams, the Daoist master goes on an inner journey, traveling simultaneously in separate spheres (diagrams on the ground, within the body and in the heavens). He visualizes a voyage through his own body to the cranium (containing the astral palaces of the highest emanations of the Dao), where he presents the memorial. In the process of this voyage, he may regress in time to the state of infancy, as in certain inner alchemical processes, only to age anew upon returning to the altar. Contemporary Daoist ritual preserves aspects of the three elements of early Daoist ritual, a preparatory fast and purification, the carrying out of the Dao and the announcement of merit. The final stage is represented in contemporary Daoist ritual by the *jinbiao* (presentation of the memorial), during which the Daoist master ascends a stage (usually set up across the courtyard and facing the temple) and acts out the presentation of the memorial to the Jade Emperor. Community representatives are sometimes invited onto the stage after the memorial has been delivered. These acts serve to represent the recreation of an alliance between the gods and the community. According to the Daoist master’s texts, this renewed covenant elevates the status of the entire community, bringing them ever closer to salvation.

**History**

TIANSHI ZHENGYI ritual, founded by Zhang Lu (fl. 191-215 C.E.), can be said to draw upon Han imperial court ritual as well as shamanistic and mantic traditions of the common religion of the pre-imperial period. There may also have been influence from Buddhism, which was beginning to spread in China in the period of the formation of Daoism. The early Tianshi tradition distinguished itself from the practices of popular cult worship by rejecting blood sacrifices and payment for rites, while adapting bureaucratic and ritual procedures from imperial court audiences to address a newly revealed pantheon of anthropomorphic emanations of the Dao. These newly revealed gods of the Three Heavens maintained control over the lowly popularly worshiped gods, now revealed to be “demons,” the stale energies of the lowest Six Heavens. Early texts claim that Lord Laozi himself provided Zhang Daoling (Zhang Lu’s grandfather) with registers of gods and demons that would be at his command in 142 C.E. Communication with the gods was carried out in bureaucratic form, with documents in triplicate addressed to the Sanguan (Three Offices) of the heavens, earth, and water (abode of the underworld) by burning, burying and sinking (see Kobayashi 1991). The “inferior” gods of the popular cults were enlisted as generals and administrators of the dead.
Zhengyi ritual centered on meditation and the confession of sins in a jingshi 静室, a chamber of tranquility or oratory (see Yoshikawa 1987; 1998). As evident from a reconstruction based on the fifth-century Shangqing text Dengzhen yinjue 登真隠訣 (Secret Instructions on the Ascent to Perfection, CT 421; Cedzich 1987), procedures involving this oratory included key ritual sequences such as the Fatu 发爐, lighting the incense burner (of the body). This involved the visualization of the body gods (an-shen 存神) and the absorption of cosmic forces into the body, which enabled the adept to ascend to the gods and present a memorial to them. It was followed by a further irrigation of the body of the adept by cosmic powers, and concluded with the Fulu 復爐, the return of the body gods and the covering up of the incense burner. Other rites outlined in the Dengzhen yinjue include the chuguan 出官, the exteriorization of the gods listed on the adept’s lu 悔 register and prayers for aid to the officers in charge of specific illnesses accompanied by confessions and followed (after the cure) by rites of Yan-gong 言功, the report of merit. Still more early Daoist ritual practices can be gleaned from the Taipingjing 太平經 (Scripture of Great Peace, ed. Wang 1960), the Xiang’er 想爾 commentary to the Daode jing (see Rao 1992; Bokenkamp 1997) and the Zhengyi fawen 正一文 (Ritual Compendium of Orthodox Unity). The latter was once a veritable canon of Zhengyi ritual in the middle ages, but is now scattered in the Daoist canon and Dunhuang manuscripts in short texts, fragments and citations. Scholars are currently working to restore and edit some twenty texts of this movements, which will greatly assist the study of early Daoist ritual traditions.

The significant emphasis the Celestial Masters placed on faith-healing was based on the assumption that illness was largely self-inflicted and due to the commission of sins (see Kobayashi 1992; Tsuchiya 2000), but could also be the result of resentful actions of the wronged dead, including one’s own relatives and ancestors (see Nickerson 1996a). Cure from disease accordingly required confession of both one’s own and one’s ancestors’ transgressions, which was then transmitted to the otherworld in formal memorials, accompanied by petitions for pardon. The latter required the intercession of ritual masters who worked by meditation in the oratories. Known as energy dispersing ritual masters (sanqi 散氣), they were at the pinnacle of the early Celestial Masters hierarchy, which also included ritual administrators called libationers (jijiu 祭酒), lesser managers known as demon soldiers (guizu 鬼卒) and commoners referred to as demons (gai 鬼). The ritual masters used processes of visualization to summon their body gods, and with their aid transmitted the memorials to the higher gods of the newly revealed Daoist pantheon. They also healed with talismans or consecrated water (fushui 符水), which contained the ashes of talismans. The Zhengyi theocracy appears also to have instituted graded initiations involving the investiture of the initiate with registers of the body gods at
their command. These rites may have included sexual rites of union and merging of body gods, as indicated in the later Shangqing work *Huangshu guodu yi* (Rites of Salvation of the Yellow Writings of Highest Clarity, CT 1294). They were later attacked by Buddhists and were eventually partially suppressed by Daoist reformers.

In the fourth and fifth centuries Zhengyi ritual practice diversified as it absorbed elements of the Shangqing and Lingbao traditions. The可视化 of body gods played a stronger role, there were more specific rites of purification and self-protection, the presentation of memorials and petitions was increasingly structured, and rites of transmission and ordination ranks were formalized and standardized. Also, as Daoist practitioners came to play a larger role among the common people, “popular” Celestial Master ritualists began to merge the communal kitchen feasts (chu 厨) with the celebration of jiao sacrificial offerings (see Nickerson 1996).

In the Tang dynasty, for the first time jiao sacrificial offerings were undertaken after the presentation of certain memorials; however, the main communal feasts of the Celestial Master were still the so-called kitchens. Also, as evident from the *Chisongzi zhangli* (Master Red-Pine’s Almanac of Petitions, CT 615), there were larger numbers and more specialized formats of memorials, indicating the broad range of needs addressed in Daoist rituals (see Nickerson 1997). Certain memorials concern plaints brought by a parishioner to be adjudicated in the otherworld. These required the mediation of the local tutelary spirit, to whom infractions were first reported and who conducted formal kaozhao 考召, interrogations and investigations, to verify the charges, prior to their presentation to the high gods. All rites had to take place on auspicious days and at blessed times, and several texts of the Tang present the importance of calendrical observances and taboos to Daoist ritual. In this, the Celestial Master continued a tradition that reaches back to the *rishu* 日書 (almanacs) of the pre-Qin period (see Loewe 1988). Another early tradition continued in Zhengyi ritual is the exorcism and dispersal of demons, undertaken with the use of the correct talisman and by calling out the demon’s name, causing it to revert to its true form and be captured by the ritual master. Lists of demons are equally contained among early manuscripts (see Harper 1985) and in medieval Daoist texts, notably in the *Nüqing guitu* 女青鬼律 (Demon Statutes of Nüqing, CT 790). The best general description of all these ritual forms is found in the *Wushang biaosi* 無上秘要 (Secret Essentials of the Most High, CT 1138; Lagerwey 1981) and the *Lingbao wugan wen* 靈寶五感文 (Five Correspondences of Numinous Treasure, CT 1278).

SHANGQING, LINGBAO AND OTHERS. The Shangqing movement greatly expanded the store of meditations and individual visualizations of the Daoist adept, drawing upon the southern occult traditions of the Jiangnan region represented by Ge Hong 葛洪 and others (see Strickmann
It also populated the stars and the underworld with palaces and officials, greatly expanding the Daoist pantheon, and elaborated the practices of visualizing the body gods. Many meditative, visionary practices would remain central to subsequent Daoist ritual.

The Lingbao school, by contrast, focused more on communal rites which became the principal raison d'être for later Daoist ritual. Its earliest scriptures and liturgies borrowed many elements from Buddhism, such as the universal salvation of all beings, the circumambulation of the altar, figures of the Buddhist pantheon and the emphasis on the recitation of revealed scripture (see Ofuchi 1974; Zürcher 1980; Bokenkamp 1983; 1997). Rites for the deliverance of the dead, such as those found in the Mingzhen ke 明真科 (Rules for the Luminous Perfected, CT 1411), outline a Buddhicized version of the Zhengyi presentation of memorials, with the emphasis on the illumination and salvation of the denizens of the nine realms of the underworld (jiyou 九幽). Yet the Lingbao tradition also retained certain ancient Chinese ritual elements such as the laying out or exposing of talismans on the altar to attract the cosmic powers to the sacred space. As Buddhist elements became increasingly prominent, they were grafted onto an idealized version of Han imperial ritual and an even earlier strata of “hamanic” visionary meditation. The Buddhist cult of the sacred text and the importance of recitation of scriptures can be seen in various Lingbao texts such as the Duren jing 度人經 (Scripture of Universal Salvation, CT 1; see Bokenkamp 1997) and the Lingbao wufulu 禮寶五符序 (Explanation of the Five Lingbao Talismans, CT 388). These talismans (sometimes invisible) still play a major role in the establishment of contemporary Daoist altars in Taiwan.

Other localized traditions of the Six Dynasties period were tied to millenarian beliefs and special communities. An example is found in the texts and practices around the demon-quelling scripture Shenzhou jing 神咒經 (Scripture of Divine Incantations, CT 335; see Mollier 1990; Li 1993). Some of these beliefs and practices underlay popular religious uprisings in this period, but they also suggest the survival of Daoist communities in various parts of China. However, by the fifth and sixth centuries, competition from the increasingly powerful Buddhist orders led to pressures for the unification and codification of Daoist ritual. Encyclopedias of Daoist beliefs and practices such as the writings of Lu Xiujing 隆修靜 (406-477) and the Wushang biaozhong 冥山真經 (see “The Lingbao School” and “Daoist Ordination”). In general, the division was between Yellow Register rites 黃錦齍 for the diseased, Gold Register Rites 金錦齍 for the living and Jade Register Rites 玉錦齍 for the imperial court.

The TANG DYNASTY supported the Daoist religion, claiming that Laozi was an ancestor of their imperial family. Materials from the Dun-
huang caves confirm the continuity of the Daoist initiation rites and the transmission of a hierarchy of registers, scriptures, liturgies, seals and talismans in this time (see Schipper, 1985b; Benn 1991). Other Tang dynasty Daoist sources point to the growing involvement of Daoism in the expanded requiem services that arose in part in response to Buddhist notions of purgatory. For example, the *Yinynuan jing* 因缘經 (Scripture of Karmic Retribution, CT 336; see Kohn 1998) is one of the first texts to outline the cycle of Daoist rites to be performed during the period of mourning and is addressed to the psychopomp Jiuku tianzun 救苦天尊, the Heavenly Worthy Who Saves from Distress.

Tang imperially mandated ritual compendia add a few Daoist rites to the expanding list of *zhai* ceremonies. Several texts claim that there were twenty-four *zhai*, other have as many as forty-two, fifty-six or seventy-two *jiao* liturgies. During the Tang, the *zhai* fast or purification was firmly linked to the *jiao* sacrificial offering, but eventually the latter became an independent ritual form in its own right. Zhang Zehong suggests that the *jiao* texts were linked to an early and rich genre of Zhengyi sacrifices to the stars at lamp altars (1998). The term *zhai* is still used in southeast China for requiems, while *jiao* is now the term that designates communal sacrificial rites. The oldest surviving extended liturgies for Daoist *jiao* include several works by Zhang Wanfu’s 張萬福 (fl. 711; see Benn 1991). His *Jiao sandong licheng yi* 觀三洞立成儀 (Observances to Establish Sacirifical Rites to the Three Caverns, CT 1212) outlines the key elements:

1. Establishing the altar and the seats of the gods 设壇坐位
2. Purification of the altar 潔壇解積
3. Formula of entry 入戶咒 (and meditation on the masters)
4. Lighting the burner 發爐
5. Exteriorization of the body gods 出靈官
6. Invitation of the officers of the register 請官啓 (with a reading of the memorial and three offerings of incense and broth
7. Sending off of the gods 送神
8. Commanding the minor clerks (body and also earth gods) to return to their posts 敎小吏神
9. Interiorization of the officers 內官
10. Extinction of the burner 復爐
11. Hymn to send off the gods 送神頌
12. Exit formula 出户咒

In other texts, Zhang describes ritual vestments and investitures of registers, drawing on his personal experience as a priest involved in the initiation of two Tang princesses at Ruizong’s court (see Benn 1991; “Daoist Ordination”).
Du Guangting (850-933) was a court Daoist who reassembled the pieces of the Daoist tradition after the collapse of the dynasty (see Verellen 1989). His ritual texts became the basis for many standard liturgical collections of the Song. Other late Tang sources such as those associated with the school of Pure Brightness (see Akizuki 1970; Schipper 1985c) reveal the increasing propensity for Daoism to merge with local or regional cults, generating in the process new ritual forms.

In the SONG DYNASTY, Daoist ritual reached its most elaborate extremes, yet also underwent a conservative backlash that postulated simplicity and the reestablishment of traditional models. Several major schools can be distinguished at the time, and each have important liturgical compendia. Among them, the mainstream Lingbao ritual tradition, which follows earlier rites as set out by Lu Xiujing, Zhang Wanfu and Du Guangting, is represented in the Huaglu dazhunyi (Observances for the Great Yellow Register Rites, CT 508), a work based on the teachings of Liu Yongguang (1134-1206), and edited by Jiang Shuyu (1156-1217). It places great emphasis on the ritual application of sacred diagrams and talismans, but also provides detailed descriptions of ritual items, modes of financing and sample petitions. Another representative work of this school, notably of its Tiantai branch, is the Shangqing lingbao dafa (Great Rites of Highest Clarity and Numinous Treasure, CT 1221), by Ning Benli (1101-1181). It reflects the influence of the ritual innovations of the school of Divine Empyrean, such as the greater emphasis placed on interior visualizations, and provides complex versions of liandu rites. A retreat to greater simplicity and earlier ritual forms within the Lingbao school is represented in the work of Jin Yunzhong (fl. 1223-1225), also named Shangqing lingbao dafa (CT 1223). After outlining a brief history of Lingbao liturgy, he criticizes the excesses of his time, such as the extensive use of talismans.

The Shenxiao (Divine Empyrean) ritual tradition goes back to Lin Lingsu (1076-1120), who transmitted specific new revelations to Emperor Huizong, who was revealed as the incarnation of a Shenxiao deity (see Strickmann 1978). The school is characterized by its use of talismans, diagrams, lamps, seals and pennants, as well as its inner visualizations in liandu rites (see Boltz 1986). It also developed new therapeutic rites of the Five Thunders (wu lei 五雷).

The Tongchu (Youthful Incipience) movement was begun by Yang Xizhen (1011-1124), who is reported to have discovered sacred texts in a cavern on Maoshan.

The Tianxin (Heavenly Heart) tradition, which goes back to the tenth century, represents a form of ritual that continues ancient Shangqing practice combined with exorcistic and therapeutic liturgies. The spiritual head-quarters of the powers revealed here was the Quxie yuan (Bureau
for Exorcising Deviant Forces), and a key exorcistic spirit was Tianpeng 天蓬. Tianxin rites made use mainly of three talismans, representing the Sanguang 三光 (sun, moon, stars), Zhenwu 真武 (Perfect Warrior), and Tiangang 天纲 (Dipper spirits).

The Qingwei (Clear Tenuity) ritual tradition traces itself back to a late-Tang woman named Zu Shu 祖舒 (889-904). She allegedly sought to merge earlier Daoist liturgical traditions and combined Thunder Rites with Tantric Buddhist mandalas (see Qingwei shenlie bifa 清微神烈秘法, CT 222). This reflects a general tendency already found in the Tang (see Strickmann 1996).

Under the MING DYNASTY, Qingwei rites are well represented in the key compendium Daofa huiyuan 道法會元 (A Corpus of Daoist Ritual, CT 320; see van der Loon 1979), which also contains a wide range of thunder and liandu rites of various traditions and provenance. Many of them are edited by Zhao Yichen 趙宜真 (d. 1382), a major syncretist who had been cured of a threatening disease by Qingwei rites. Aside from the tendency to integrate and synthesize traditions, this period is characterized by an increasingly apparent diversity in regional ritual forms and the integration of various local and popular cults into mainstream Daoism. One of them is the southern Zichen 紫宸 school, which is represented in the Fahai yizhu 法海遺珠 (Select Pearls from a Sea of Rituals, CT 1166), edited by Zhang Shunlie 趙舜烈 in 1344. The rites described here were designed to cure a wave of tuberculosis that was ravaging Fuzhou 漳州 county in Jiangxi province. Another set of regional ritual texts are those associated with the Xu brothers, whose temple is south of Fuzhou 漳州 in Fujian province (see Davis 1985; 2000). Dean suggests a series of stages in the process of reworking local cult legends into scriptures and liturgies in the Daoist canon (1993).

Daoist ritual of the Qing dynasty has hardly been studied at all to date. Main sources include the recently compiled Zangwai daoshu 藏外道書 (Daoist Texts Outside the Canon), which allows scholars to follow the development of certain ritual traditions, as well as specific collections, such as the set of nineteenth-century Daoist liturgies from the Zhangzhou region which survives in the British Museum.

**Texts**

From the earliest Zhengyi Tianshi communities to the Qing dynasty, a number of important ritual texts survive both in the Daoist canon and elsewhere. Many of them are discussed in contributions to this volume (see Table 1).
Table 1
Texts on Daoist Ritual Discussed in Other Contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Longevity Techniques</th>
<th>Baopuzi</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Daoist Movements</td>
<td>Xiang'er, Taiping jing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shangqing</td>
<td>Dengzhen yinjue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingbao School</td>
<td>Lingbao wufuxu; Wugan wen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Celestial Masters</td>
<td>Daomen kelue; Shenzhou jing; Xuantu liwen; Niqing guili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Celestial Masters</td>
<td>Wushang bijao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daoist Ordination</td>
<td>Yaoxiu keyi; Fengdao kejie; works by Zhang Wanfu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tang Dynasty</td>
<td>Yin yuan jing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song Dynasty</td>
<td>Shangqing lingbao dafa; Tianxin zhengfa; Yutang dafa; Qingwei shenlie bifa; Jiomin zongzhen biao; Shenxiao shoujing shi; Duren miaojing fuhu; Shenxiao zishu dafa; Huanglu dazhai yi</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As regards modern sources, one can distinguish those originating in Taiwan and those from the mainland. Taiwanese sources for the study of Daoist ritual include Saso’s collection of Xinzhu Daoist scriptures and liturgies (1975) as well as Ofuchi Ninji’s presentation of master Chen Rongsheng’s ritual corpus (1983). Daoism among the Yao (Zhuang 1991) and other minorities of south and southwest China provides another important point of reference for the understanding of Daoist ritual today, particularly since the tradition of communal initiation and the transmission of registers and investitures of gods of the body has survived in many Yao communities.

Contemporary mainland collections of Daoist liturgies and studies include Ye on Minxi Lushan Daoist ritual (1998), Hu on pacings and mudras in use in Sichuan rites (2000), and Xu on Zhejiang ritual traditions (1999). Comparative ritual programs for Daoist rituals in Zhejiang and Fujian have been recorded by John Lagerwey in a series of articles (esp. 1996; see also Dean 1986; 1988; 1989; Ye 1998; Xu 1999). Daoist ritual programs in Hong Kong and Taiwan have been recorded by Liu (1983b), Tanaka (1993b), Chan (1986; 1989) and Choi (1990). Several Daoist scriptures and liturgies from the New Territories have been collected in the Oral History Project of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (see also Ofuchi, 1983).

WORLDVIEW

Key characteristics. Early Daoist ritual texts regularly reject blood sacrifices and the acceptance of money for ritual services, and even today
offerings to the gods are primarily vegetarian and include tea and wine (see Asano, forthcoming). Despite their denunciation of blood sacrifices, Daoists seem to have engaged in them, which is partly due to the fact that even in the middle ages the reality of religion and ritual deviated from the prescriptions (see Daomen kelue, CT 1127). But there are also some texts that suggest meat offerings were part of the Daoist program; certain central Lingbao rites involved the sacrifice of a goose, and meat offerings formed part of the Sanhuang 三皇 rites. Then again, as Daoist rites became more closely integrated into the worship of popular deities in rural religion, the importance of blood sacrifices in popular religion could not be denied and plays an accordingly large role today. In some cases, I have observed the Daoist priests blessing the sacrificial animals or the butcher’s knife, while the actual killing is done by someone else. The sacrifice of victims and the celebratory consumption of meat during the closing feasts play a central role in the overall ritual ensemble today. This might be seen as one way in which Daoist ritual accepts contradictory representations of spiritual power.

Kristofer Schipper has argued that a key aspect of Daoist ritual is the sacrifice of writings and scriptures (1995). There is no doubt that many documents are composed and burned in the course of the ritual, including the Five True Writs that establish the sacred space of the Dao (daochang 道場), and that certain rituals call for the burning of entire texts. Others scholars have contested the interpretation of these actions as sacrificial acts, but they remain a key feature of Daoist ritual.

Another important characteristic of Daoist ritual is that it involves complex transformations of the body of the ritualist (bianwen 變身), resulting in radically different experiences of space and time. Note that the altar is a conflation of two spaces: the meditation or purification hall, and the outer three tiered altar of sacrifice. Both these spaces are enfolded within the altar: the altar is a mountain with an inner grotto or cavern. The altar is charged with cosmic force by symbolic actions such as the laying out of five talismans in the four directions and in the center. The altar is thus a palimpsest constructed with layer after layer of cosmological symbols that transduce coded fields of force: these include the arrangement of the Daoist divinities mentioned above, the five talismans of spiritual power, the astral realm of the sun, moon, and the constellations, the bagua, the hexagrams of the Yijing, and the magic squares of Chinese numerology, the Luoshu and the Hetao 河圖.

But the most important space of the Daoist altar is the inner landscape of the Daoist priest. His body is also a mountain with a cavern within. Actually three caverns: these are the three elixir fields of the nine-chambered Niwan 泥丸 palaces within the head, the Scarlet Palace 绛宮 of the heart, and the cinnabar elixir field 丹田 of the abdomen. Many of the coded fields of force mentioned above are brought to bear on the space
of the altar through internal visualization of processes within the body of the Daoist master, whose body is connected in a kind of Möbius strip reaching to the cosmos and folding its forces into the space of the altar.

The space of the altar is first prepared through rites of purification which involve the summoning of generals and spiritual troops in a reconfirmation of the pact between Zhang Daoling and Lord Lao. Lord Lao gave Zhang a list of the gods and powers that would be under his command and ordered him to drive away stale breaths of the lower realms in his name. Thus the purification rites are primarily exorcistic, but the demonic forces are in fact usually captured rather than driven off, and thus enlisted into the cosmic forces at play within the altar. The laying out of the five talismans to attract pure cosmic forces to the altar is the main action of the central rite; this is done only after all light has been extinguished, and a flame from the outside is brought in to light first one lamp, then two, then three lamps, and finally the ten thousand lamps (enacting lines from the Daodejing). Then the gods and spiritual and cosmic forces are invoked by various methods, such as burning further talismans, or visualizations, and these deities are brought down to the altar where they are offered wine and incense. Under the watchful eyes of these celestial powers, various scriptures are re-revealed, that is they are exposed on the altar like the talismans and recited aloud, completing an immense cosmic cycle—since the scriptures are only supposed to be transmitted once in many tens of thousands of years. This acceleration of cosmic cycles within the charged field of the altar is said to generate merit for the Daoist master and the entire sponsoring community. This merit is then announced outside on the stage where theater is performed each day in honor of the gods. The gods are sent off, the talismans are burned, and the altar is deconstructed.

The basic underlying schema of Daoist ritual unfolds a theatrical representation of cosmogenesis, the re-creation of the universe, and the completion of a cycle of revelation with a cosmically charged space. This version of time as an upwards spiral of revelation and merit making, leading to the progressive deliverance of all beings (or at least the sponsors), and the transmutation of the dusty world into the realm of the immortals, is matched by a regressive current of time that takes place within the body of the Daoist master. The inner rite is a series of infoldings of cosmic forces into the body of Daoist master, who then exfoliates these coded forces and spheres into the ritual time-space. These processes of infolding and unfolding include the infolding of the powers of the sun, moon, Dipper stars, Three Terraces asterism, the lunar palaces, the five directions and the four heraldic animals, the eight hexagrams, the net of heaven and the web of earth. The priest visualizes these forces joining with his body. He externalizes the energies within his body into the incense burner and into the purificatory water that he spits out over his sword to purify the altar. He sum-
mons the gods and attendants within his own body to merge with their counterparts in the astral palaces. He transforms his body into the cosmic body of the Most High Laozi to summon spiritual armies to purify the altar. He transforms the space around him into the Land of the Way. But his most important meditation involves the reversal of time: he visualizes himself as an infant, escorted on a long voyage through his microcosmic body to the cranium, the palace of the Jade Emperor, where he presents a memorial outlining the purposes of the ritual. Upon his descent back into his abdomen, the inner infant ages again. Thus time only goes forward by going backwards as well.

The regressive movement of time is everywhere in the Daodejing, and underlies many Daoist inner alchemical traditions. Daoist ritual as it is practiced today in Fujian and Taiwan is not nearly so elaborate as the meditations on the gods of the body of the Huangtingjing (Yellow Court Scripture), the astral travel visualizations of the Shangqing revelations, or the ninefold inner alchemical cyclic transformations leading to the birth of the immortal embryo. Nonetheless, in all these meditation systems and liturgical practices time is stretched between reverse flows and accelerated forward cycles. Time is stretched and twisted into a recursive feedback loop. These recursive, self-organizing transformations of spatiality and temporality are central contributions of Daoist ritual to a theory of ritual.

This sketch of some of the central aspects and processes of Daoist ritual would have to be extended to the relationship between the rite and the community. It was noted above that the altar was superimposed on the space of the temple. The temporal structure of the Daoist ritual also imposes an order on the principal moments of communal participation. The Daoist rite as performed in Taiwan takes place for the most part inside a locked temple, before a select audience of community representatives. The Daoist master and his troupe emerge from the temple on certain key moments—in the initial purification, in the announcement and summons to the generals, in the raising of the banner, in the presentation of the memorial on the last day, and in the concluding rite of the universal deliverance of hungry ghosts. For the presentation of the memorial and the deliverance rite they go on stage. In the presentation, the stage is turned into a representation of the Astral Court of the Jade Emperor. The Daoist priests carry umbrellas symbolizing the heavens, and hop from star to star of the Big Dipper to make their theatrical ascent of the stairway to heaven. Upon reaching the stage, the Daoist master prostrates himself in front of the Emperor, and conducts an inner meditation, returning to infancy, and delivering the memorial. The Daoist master wears a large number of talismans representing his bodily transformations and externalizations of energy.
on his cap during his ascent to the heavenly stage. These are distributed upon his return to members of the crowd.

The community, composed of lineage groups and neighborhood groups, send representatives of each household to set out offerings timed to correspond with significant moments in the Daoist ritual. Thus offerings are set out on tables to the gods for the presentation of the memorial facing the stage, while offerings to departed ancestors are set facing east for the feast altar for the deliverance of hungry ghosts on the last day of the rite. Other tables of offerings are set out for the Noon Offerings, or to greet visiting delegations and processions from neighboring, allied communities. All kinds of bloody sacrifices are prepared by the community, and presented to the gods in tangent with the Daoist rites.

The community organizes its own procession which circles the territory of the village to recharge its space with cosmic force and to replenish the camps of the Spirit Soldiers of the Five Directions that protect the village from demonic attack. The return of the procession to the temple is often a moment for the irruption of spirit possession, when mediums are possessed by the gods of the temple, and speak in their voices. Sometimes they get so excited that they charge into the temple, right into the midst of the Daoist ritual. The Daoist priests tend to ignore the mediums, but do not deny the validity of their possession. There is a taboo on contradiction, a refusal to deny any manifestation of supernatural power. This can be described as a form of positive unconscious which characterizes the ritual-event (Dean 1998). The role of Daoist rites within community festivities will vary, but it will always be one important magnetic node in a complex self-organizing process. But the extraordinary sensory overload of Daoist ritual and of the community celebrations that surround these rites also has transformative effects on the bodies of the communal participants. Daoist rituals self-consciously seek to restore contact with the undifferentiated Dao and to reanimate cosmogonic processes, generating diverse experiences and emergent communities in the process. Daoist rites appear to operate with an acceptance of multiple, even contradictory, representations of supernatural power, including the shamanic possession of mediums by local gods (fushen 附身). Some Daoist ritual traditions are more closely connected to shamanic traditions than others, where the emphasis is on the controlled modulation of the body, and the absorption of and merger with cosmic counterparts to the gods of the body. The range of contemporary Daoist ritual traditions remains largely unexplored, as do the consequences of the study of Daoist ritual for ritual studies as a whole.

Scholarly studies. Daoist ritual presents many interesting issues for the study of ritual and its relation to culture and society. The documentary richness of the sources opens the way to a historical analysis of the evolution of contemporary ritual traditions (see Murayama 1995). A great deal of
scholarly work on Daoist ritual can be found in the Daoist canon itself. It is worth emphasizing the bureaucratic and scholastic nature of Daoist ritual, which requires the preparation of very large numbers of different documents of ritual purposes, often in triplicate.

The extraordinary complexity and attendant redundancy and repetitiveness of contemporary Daoist ritual has also elicited a formal analysis of ritual acts. This mode of study has been applied to Hindi rites by Fritz Staal (1983) and to Daoist rites by Kristofer Schipper (1984-86).

Not following this approach, other scholars insist that rituals must be studied for their inherent meaning or for the meanings they have for their participants such as the ritual masters, community representatives and the sponsoring community (Hymes 1997; Katz 1995). Opinions vary considerably on the proper methodology for the study of Daoist ritual. Several scholars have pointed to the importance of a clear grasp of the specific social and historical context for an understanding of the meaning of Daoist ritual within communal celebrations (Faure 1986, Dean 1998).

**Practices**

A typical *jiao* as performed in Southern Taiwan is made up of some twenty to thirty discrete rites, and can last between one and seven days. John Lagerwey provides a detailed description of the ritual processes involved, as observed in contemporary Tainan (1987). The following is a greatly simplified account of the main rites:

**Day One:**
1. Burning oil to drive away filth
2. Starting up the drum (起鼓舞)
3. Announcement (*fabiao aigu* 發表哀歌)
4. Invocation (*qibai 啓白*)
5. Raising the flag (yangi旗)
6. Noon Offering (*wugong 午供*)
7. Division of the lamps (*fendeng 分燈*)

**Day Two:**
8. Land of the Way (*daochang 道場*)
9. Noon Offering
10. Floating water lamps (*fang shuideng 放水燈*)
11. Invocation of the masters and the saints (*qi shisheng 啓師聖*)
12. Sealing the altar (*jintan 葬壇*)
13. Evening overture (*suqi 宿啓*)
14. Renewed invocation (*chongbai 重拜*)
15. Scripture recitation (nianjing 念經)
16. Noon Offering
17. Orthodox Offering (zhengqiao 正醮)
18. Universal Deliverance (pu du 普度)

A more formal rite would also have included the following:
1. Morning audience (zaochao 早朝; Day One)
2. Noon audience (wuchao 午朝; Day Two)
3. Evening audience (wanchao 晚朝; Day Three)
4. Recitation of the Scripture of the Jade Sovereign (Yuhuang jing 玉皇經; Day Three)

A typical two-day requiem service (gongde 功德) is made up of more than twenty rites as well. Lagerwey describes one he observed in Tainan (1987; see also Maruyama, forthcoming). It consisted of:

Day 1:
1. Announcement
2. Invocation
3. Scripture recitation
4. Opening a road in the darkness (kaitong minglu 開通冥路)
5. Recitation of litanies (baichan 聖機)
6. Dispatching the Writ of Pardon (fang shma 攤赦馬)
7. Attack on hell (dacheng 打城)
8. Division of the lamps

Day 2:
9. Land of the Way
10. Recitation of Litanies
11. Noon Offering
12. Scripture recitation
13. Exorcism
14. Uniting the talismans (hefu 合符)
15. Bathing (muyu 沐浴)
16. Worshipping the Three Treasures (bai sanbao 拜三寶)
17. Untying the knots (jieie 解絹)
18. Recitation of litanies
19. Filling the treasury (tianku 添庫)
20. Crossing the bridge (guoqiao 通橋)

In this sequence of contemporary Daoist ritual, certain elements inherited from ancient ritual patterns as described above still play a key role. They
are the setting out of the Five True Talismans, the visualizations known as the lighting of the incense burner and the exteriorization of the body gods as well as the presentation of the memorial. These are commonly followed by offerings to the high gods and the sending off of the gods and the re-absorption of the gods of the body and the extinguishing of the burner. They play a part today especially in the rites of Announcement, Land of the Way, and the various audience rites. Then again, many elements of contemporary Daoist ritual can be traced back to earlier texts and periods, notably the Song and Yuan dynasties (see Lagerwey 1987; Maruyama 1995; 2000). There is, for example, a strong continuity between the Daoist altar and earlier altars of pre-imperial China.

The various key rites are performed by the Master of High Merit, while the other ritualists perform dances or sing hymns. The Master keeps a secret manuscript with the visualizations, spells, pacings, mudras and talismans needed to ensure the success of the rite, while the less esoteric liturgical manuscripts of the outer rites are placed on the Daoist altar throughout the performance. A complete listing of minor rites performed by Daoist ritual specialists would be impossible, but some of them are available in the literature today. For example, the text of a Lūshan fuchang rite, the exorcism of a personal illness, as performed in northern Taiwan has recently been published (Hsü 1998; see also Lagerwey 1988; Ofuchi 1983). For detailed descriptions of Lūshan rites in Minxi, with full textual documentation, see Ye (1999).

References


Sacred sites, created and recreated, formed and reformed, can be found—in various layers of density—all over China. Space in general lends form, shape, definition and a vocabulary to those who experience it; sacred space adds a physical dimension to numinous power, to hierophanies and revelations. It is at first a “danger zone,” then is timed by accruing ethical or ecological value for a community. Its qualities come in two types: physical, in the form of edible plants and fruit, minerals, water and fertile soil (the case with most, if not all sacred sites in China); and behavioral in the way that it provides a crucial centrality that distinguishes it from other types of profane cityscapes or even wild spaces which are open, unexplored, non-connected and disturbingly chaotic (see Eliade 1961).

Organizational standards for charted sacred space tend to be elaborate and time-honored: they operate according to a strictly coded environmental axis (no cutting down of trees, littering, or unclean objects or persons), as well as a ritualistic matrix which structures human spatial interactions with it (in the form of professional specialists conducting religious feasts and rituals). Various modes of perception enable the seeker to establish guided and guarded rapport with the powers of sacred space as means to request religious experience (Graber 1976, 4-5).

In general, the more complex the religious community connected to a specific locality, the more complex are the rules governing that community’s interactions with society at large. Daoist establishments acted as agencies to synchronize the common interests of the populace with divine will, serving as fair grounds for temple festivals or focal points for pilgrimages. However, in order for the same “congregational” or sectarian entity to function within the confines of sacred space and relate to the divine powers residing there, the organizational standards remained the same.
Followers of religious Daoism over time have accumulated a vast corpus of knowledge about the space they live in or retreat to (sometimes not entirely voluntarily). Thus we find a multitude of descriptions of scenic-sacred spaces and an equal plethora of organizational or individual approaches to living (as long as possible) within them. Longevity and immortality, the prime goals of Taoist believers, can only be achieved by associating oneself to a sacred central place, which then serves as a point of mental concentration and devout daily routine. Worldly manifestations of the Dao in the form of miraculous, inexplicable phenomena (such as lush growth despite droughts, or discovery of an ancient scroll within an uninhabited cave) are considered ling 眞, a term usually translated as "numinous." Spatial markers to designate holy grounds developed over time in the form of named constructed buildings such as shrines, pavilions, roofed pathways, temple structures and full-fledged monastic compounds. Yet in Daoist belief, the macro-structure, and the best place to work toward the realization of perfection is the mountain.

History

All major Daoist schools are in one way or another linked with a sacred mountain. Thus Zhang Daoling 張道陵, the founder of the Way of the Celestial Master, came originally from Longhu shan 龍虎山 (Dragon-Tiger Mtn.) in Jiangxi, which later became the headquarters of the school. He had his major encounter with the personified Dao on Heming shan 鶴鳴山 (Crane-Cry Mtn.), a peak in western Sichuan, and established his first community there. Similarly, the northern Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 found his revelation of the Dao on Songshan 高山 (Lofty Mtn.), the central of the five sacred peaks. His teaching then influenced the Louguan 樓觀 group, who established themselves in Zhongnan shan 終南山 (End South Mtn.), southwest of Xi'an. This was also where Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1113-1170), the founder of Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection), had his hermitage and made supernatural contact with Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 and other perfected beings. The school of Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity), moreover, was centered on Maoshan 茅山 (Mt. Mao, named after the three Mao brothers) to the southeast of Nanjing 南京 (Jiangsu). It remains a holy mountain to the present day. Other, lesser centers were established on mountains by individual patriarchs and practitioners, and a number of sacred grotto heavens were associated with them, areas for interaction with the divine and personal realization.

Outlining a history of these various sites, however important they may be, is a difficult undertaking. The records inherited through official
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historical writings, religious scriptures and geographical accounts focus to a great extent on established buildings and institutionalized monastic orders, while hagiographies tend to elaborate on the virtue of the founder or resident of a cult site rather than detailing the natural environment or layout of buildings. Still, a number of things can be said on the basis of the just-listed schools and their holy centers.

Before the arrival of Daoism proper, mountains were already sacred. This sacrality was expressed through the establishment of a formal platform, often described as an elevated platform or, to use a more familiar term, altar (tan 坛). It usually consisted of several layers of tamped earth or bricks, one slightly narrower than the next, which allowed practitioners to ascend higher toward the sky and the gods. If a sacred site can be seen as a center of numinous radiation, then this altar platform is its fuse. Only specialists—magicians, shamans, ritual sacrificers, and later Daoist priests—could approach and "arm" or "disarm" the site through this fuse. Altars were thus constructed for worship and sacrificial purposes, and there is evidence of their existence in early Shang dynasty inscriptions on oracle bones and bronze vessels.

In Daoism, the altar with its three levels symbolized cosmological forces and represented the control of a vast and important mythological heritage. It was conceived as a cave and a mountain at the same time. It had depth through roads that led both inside its entrails and into the inner self of the adept, as well as height, structure and mass through which Daoists could govern the qi (vital energy) of themselves and the world. The altar would be constructed, invested and armed—or deconstructed and moved along—wherever spatial and spiritual reformation or transformation was thought necessary. This might be due to the death of a leading priest or other important person, when the departed soul left a gap in the community.

Many types of construction are used in Daoist altars (see Schipper 1982, 129; Lagerwey 1991, 25-27), but the core elements remain constant. In all periods of Daoist history, priests have used altars for major ceremonies and investitures. The first such institution was Zhang Daoling’s, the first Celestial Master who preached to and converted people in Sichuan during the first half of the second century C.E. and established twenty-four altars in different parishes. The central altar of the Celestial Masters on Longhu shan was built by his great-grandson Sheng, who not only erected an ancestral hall to worship Zhang Daoling’s spirit, but also an altar to transmit registers (chuanlu 传授) and perform rituals to the Three Primes (sanyuan zhai 三元齋), thus ensuring the active continuity of the tradition.

Another important institution associated with sacred mountains in Daoism is the parish (zhi 治), first set up by Zhang Daoling, To organ-
ize his numerous followers, he constructed a network of twenty-four locations, in each of which he erected earthen altars (tutan 土壇) in simple thatched houses (caowu 草屋). It is not recorded whether Zhang appropriated already established indigenous cult sites that may have been dedicated to nature gods or associated with fertility cults. (A cult site of this nature was flourishing and active around Longhu shan until the Red Guards destroyed it during the Cultural Revolution). It is likely, however, that he introduced a new spiritual context to the landscape and its inhabitants, synthesizing established parameters with his immediate needs and demands. His Five Bushel of Rice Sect (wudou mi jiao 五斗米教) thrived within the sacred mountainous geography west and southwest of present-day Chengdu 成都 (Sichuan), including the revelation site of Mount Heming, one of the parishes.

These parishes were centered around the altars which, not unlike Celtic cairns, served to transmit locally generated and revered numinous power. They also marked territorial rights and staked a claim on the land. They mediated between forces and translated the varying local patterns of the individual spaces into a codified and comprehensible narrative of appropriation, justification and, eventually, administrative notification. To reside by and cater to an altar platform, more elaborate buildings were constructed. These have been described in various terms. Purification halls (jingshe 精舍, jingchu 精處) were probably used for dietary and purifying purposes. They opened toward the south and were closed toward the north to obstruct the influx of evil forces. Thatched huts (lu 萬) were places for individual retreat and reflection, associated both with the communal purification halls and chambers of confession and tranquility (jingshi 靜室; see Yoshikawa 1987; Shi 1986, 2-3). A later description of these institutions is given by Zhu Faman 朱法滿 (d. 720) in his Yaxiu keyi jielü chao 喜修科義戒律钞 (Short Summary of Essential Rules and Observances, CT 462). It says:

In order to establish a parish with a proper purification hall according to the Celestial Master, first a space is consecrated that is eighty-one steps (bu 步, 73 m) long and wide, activating the [yang] number nine times nine and allowing specially for ascending yang qi. In the exact middle of this space the Chongxu tang 崇虛堂 [Hall for Venerating the Void] is erected; it consists of seven levels and six chambers, twelve chang [34 m] wide.

It has rising halls; its highest level sits on top of two central rooms and forms the Chongxuan tai 崇玄台 [Terrace for Venerating the Mystery]. On this level a great incense burner is set, five feet high, that constantly emanates [fragrant] fumes. To its east, west and south three thatched huts are erected, each with windows cut into the sides. The central edifice can be accessed via two passageways. ....

Five chang [15 m] north of the Chongxuan tai stands the Chongxian tang 崇仙堂 [Hall for Venerating the Immortals]. It consists of seven chambers, each fourteen chang [39 m] wide and with seven pillars each. To its east is
the Yangxian fang 陽仙房 [Chamber of Yang Immortals]; to its west the Yinxian fang 隱仙房 [Chamber of Yin Immortals].

Then again, south of the Chongxuan tai, about 12 zhang [34 m] away and close to the southern border of the compound, there should be an edifice of five rooms and three levels to serve as the gate house. Inside, on the southern side of the eastern doorway, is the room for performing libations and sacrifices to Mysterious Tenuity (xuanwei 亶成); in the corresponding western chamber there is a room for sacrifices to the one who guards destinies and inspects the qi (diansi chaji 観司察氣). The remaining, lesser rooms I cannot describe. Of the twenty-four parishes, each and every one should be laid out like this. (ch. 10)

The idea of the parish and its central purification hall as a gathering place for religious activities thus evolved from a set of buildings erected around a plain earthen altar. Over the centuries, the Daoist mountain center became larger in scale and turned into a spatialized operation that was implemented and developed long after the Zhang family had founded their first organizations.

Another important Daoist institution typically associated with mountains is the monastery or abbey (also cloister or belvedere), guan 觀. The term, which originally means “to observe” or “to look out,” was already used in an architectural context for two specific buildings during the reign of the Han emperor Wu (r. 140-87 B.C.; Shi 1986, 3). In a Daoist context, it goes back to the first monastic institution at Louguan or Louguan tai 樓觀台 in the Zhongnan mountains, founded in the late fifth century. It replaces the term guan 館 (community center), used earlier for Daoist mountain communities that were not celibate and did not function according to reclusive rules, such as the early settlements on Maoshan. Louguan, southwest of Xi’an and well within the sphere of influence of the old capital, marks the site where Laozi allegedly compiled the Daode jing at the request of the border guard Yin Xi 尹喜. It was established by Yin Tong 尹通, a putative descendant of the latter (see Kohn 1997).

With the advent of the Tang dynasty and the establishment of larger, rather affluent religious communities flourishing under imperial tutelage, monasteries became bigger and more elaborate, as described in the text Fengdao kejie 惟道科戒 (Rules and Precepts for Worshiping the Dao, CT 1125; see Reiter 1998). When Emperor Xuanzong (r. 713-755) further assigned the care of all Daoist clerics to the Department of the Imperial Family, all Daoists became de iure relatives of the emperor and their institutions were accordingly renamed gong 宮 or palace. This also reflected the playful grandeur and artful design of the lavish monastic constructions at the time. The largest such Daoist “palace” ever created in Chinese history was said to have been built in the vicinity of Xi’an (in the Zhongnan mountains) and was called Chongyang gong 重陽宮 (Pal-
it was dedicated to the memory of Wang Chongyang, the founder of the Quanzhen school, and it is said that it had over 5,000 rooms and attracted more than 10,000 Daoists at any one time. When I visited the site in 1986, I found only thirty-one stele inscriptions and a few buildings remaining (see also Zheng 1994, 160-61).

A survey undertaken in the Kaiyuan period (713-741) found 1,678 Daoist institutions within the confines of the empire (including 550 for nuns). Over 1,000 years later, the two provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan alone had 773 Daoist places, and according to a survey undertaken by the Taiwanese government in 1984, Taiwan then had over 6,700 buildings devoted to the practice of Daoist religion. Even these large numbers do not fully convey the extent of Daoist worship. As there were many spiritual entities and natural forces which Daoists were trained and empowered to control, subdue and use, there were equally as many worldly manifestations of their presence. These came not only in the form of buildings—in city or country—but also in the form of natural habitats, most notably caves. There is no survey of how many caves were inhabited by Daoist practitioners at any one point in time, but for example Zibo shan 紫柏山 alone has seventy-two identified grottoes (see Boerschmann 1914). Also, before Huangshan 黄山 became a major tourist attraction, each one of its seventy-two peaks claimed to have at least three hermitages and one cave. The wide-spread Chinese eremitic tradition—which continues even today (see Porter 1993)—added to the sacrality of space. The ethical clout of the purified mountain space was also appropriated by the lay community at large and came to play a key role in popular religion.

**TEXTS**

It has been argued in a different context by Paracelsus and others that nature itself is text (Blumenberg 1986, 69-72), and that the layers of phenomenological imprints on it can be read, understood, interpreted and translated into “proper” writing. The powerful Western metaphor of the “book of nature” for centuries served as a nimble rhetorical vehicle laden with (proto) scientific instruments and driven by iconoclasts. Finally, in the “age of reason,” the ultimate mirror of the universe was submitted to the letter press: the encyclopedia. Constituting a compendium of all available knowledge, this literary genre occupied itself not only with geognostic models, or describing what the “naturalist” (and here especially botanists) might have collected, but also attempted to compile a grammar of the world’s inner working. Its approach to something as infinite as nature, history or the human mind, executed in terms
of presupposing a high degree of administrative finality, proved (at least according to Herder) to be the genre’s fallacy.

In China, the earth was also “read,” albeit in another context. Whatever locality was in question, the so-called “earth texture” (diwen 地文) was used in geomancy and in divination to determine the proper location of social spaces such as houses, temples, public squares, palaces and graves. A vast corpus of literature exists today dealing with the geomantically rightful or harmful appropriation of land. Prescriptions for consecration are found in manuals on “mountain methods” (shanfa 山法) or in “precious scrolls” (baojuan 寶卷), such as the Kanyu biji baojuan 堪舆秘笈寶卷 (Precious Scroll Containing Secret Tablets on Heaven and Earth). They describe how to deal with caverns (xuefa 穴法, longxue lun 龍穴論), valleys (shangu 山谷) and ridges (beimian 背面). These manuals may be revealed or received; they are sacred texts themselves. They do not necessarily focus on specific sacred spaces, but rather explicate the general geomantic principles underlying the process of “opening a mountain” (kaishan 開山), laying the foundation for a grave or mapping out the construction of a temple.

Besides the specialized literature, there are also encyclopedias (leishu 領書) in China, compendia born of administrative necessity that form a genre in their own right. Their underlying utilitarian conception shines through on every page. We also find local inventories or registries that focus specifically on mountains, commonly known as “mountain gazetteers” (shanzhi 山志). They contain data on holy places and sacred precincts as well as on famous figures and outstanding features associated with the mountain. The texts dealing with sacred sites are a sub-genre of the much studied local gazetteers (difang zhi 地方志) and are structured much like them. After securing and linking the site under discussion with the appropriate star constellation, a brief discussion of its toponymical history follows. The reader is informed that temple A had the name B during dynasty C, that it was destroyed by fire in the year D, and consequently rebuilt under the new name E. In some cases, fifty or more temples, monasteries and shrines are listed and surveyed in their respective “genealogies.” Natural features of either numinous or scenic value, such as peaks, grottoes, groves, gardens, stones and rock formations, form a second category of physical proprieties. Earlier gazetteers tend to stress the sacred, those compiled later (probably from the mid-Ming onward) focus more on the scenic aspects of sites.

Another common feature of these gazetteers is their emphasis on hagiographic accounts of saints and persons of illustrious virtue. Monastic or mountain gazetteers may contain versions of hagiographies not included in otherwise stereotyped collections, thus providing a different reading on people and their influence upon places. Likewise, one some-
times finds highly specialized information in the gazetteers, nuggets of precious data such as a complete catalog of a monastic library or an elaborate and annotated calendar of local festivals. For example, no less than 1,600 mostly Daoist scriptures were listed in the description of a monastic library on southern Hengshan in a local gazetteer dated to 1763. Besides hagiographies, the literary sections often contain lists and texts of stele inscriptions (beiwen 碑文), prayer and ritual texts (jiwen 祭文), poetry and a variety of prose forms, such as odes or travelogues. In short, the material contained in these sources is indispensable for the study of sacred sites “all under heaven.” They are still compiled today, which is a good sign: sacred sites are—again—in dire need of explanation and legitimization in China.

Worldview

HOLY MOUNTAINS. Quite possibly the archetype of sacred space on a macrolevel, holy mountains belong to the mythological foundations of Chinese civilization. They are anthropomorphical compositions of living matter as well as abstract entities in the cosmological framework of geopolitical territoriality, incorporated into the sagas of nation building and the annual sacrificial calendar. According to the Taiping yulan 太平御覽 (Imperial Encyclopedia of the Taiping era, chs. 38-50) of the early Song, mountains are organized along a hierarchical scale and grouped in five clusters, of which I will present the first three.

The first group consists of seven mountains which are cosmological and mythical in nature. They are:

Mt. Kunlun 嵩山 (Mt. High and Precarious). This mountain, or rather mountain range, in the far west of China is the equivalent of an axis mundi. The yellow springs—and hence all rivers fertilizing the Chinese heartland—originate here. As the Shizhou ji 十州記 (Record of the Ten Continents, CT 598) states, it is “completely surrounded by a weakwater stream” (Smith 1990, 110) and houses the palace of Xiwang mu 西王母, the illustrious Queen Mother of the West, administrator of a large garden with peaches that bestow immortality. “Of all objects and creatures, it is the rare and the strange that predominate here. The celestial ones are crowded and cannot be counted. This is the root and the hub of heaven and earth, the handle of ten thousand measures” (Smith 1990, 113).

Mt. Zhong 鍾山 (Bell Mountain). Not much is known about this mountain. It is not the Zhongshan or Jinling shan 金鈴山 near the southern capital of Nanjing on the Yangzi River. Rather, it is supposed to be located north of the Northern Sea and is lauded as the native place
of “more than forty varieties of jade fungi and wondrous herbs. ... Golden terraces and gate-towers of jade there also store up the primal qi; it is the Celestial Lord’s seat of government” (Smith 1990, 116).

Mt. Penglai 蓬莱山. This mythological mountain island in the Yellow Sea is said to be the source of herbs that prolong life. It figures prominently in stories and traditions of immortals, beginning with the First Emperor of the Qin and lasting until today. In Daoism, it is one of the key paradises of the immortals together with Mt. Kunlun. The Shizhou ji describes it as “the best continent.” (Smith 1990, 97, 109).

Mt. Fangzhang 方丈山 (Square Measure Mountain or Continent). The Shizhou ji places it in the middle of the Eastern Sea, populated with “flocks of dragons.” It also states that ”there are palaces of gold, jade and crystal where the Arbiter of Fate in the Three Heavens rules. Those among the immortal multitudes who do not wish to ascend into the heavens all go to this continent” (Smith 1990, 107).

Mt. Yingzhou 漁洲 (Oceanic Continent). This mountain is often associated with the Penglai group and is of equally obscure origin. According to the Shizhou ji, “is is four thousand square li in area, and it is located on the same level as Kuaiji, approximately seven hundred thousand li from the western shore.” A rock cut from jade with a spring producing water “as sweet as wine” is noted as the main attraction of Yingzhou, where many immortals have taken up residence. (Smith 1990, 91-92).

Mt. Yu 玉山 (Jade Mountain). The location or characteristics of this mountain are not clearly defined in the sources. There are so many mountains all over China and beyond that it is hard to pinpoint which is the one in question.

Mt. Zhongnan 终南山 (End South Mountain). A vast mountain range in southern Shanxi, this forms the divide between central and southwestern China. It has been home to various Daoist schools and the earliest monastery of Louguan.

These seven mountains in ancient times formed the matrix for spiritual voyages, and some of them are described at length in classical travel and mythological texts, such as the Mu tianzi zhuan 禹天子傳 (Account of Emperor Mu, CT 291; see Mathieu 1978), and the Shanhaijing 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas; see Mathieu 1983). It is impossible to classify them as either Buddhist or Daoist, because their status as centers of ancient myths and cults antedates such distinctions.

The second group is the five sacred peaks (or marchmounts) of traditional China (see Geil 1926; Landt 1994). They are:

Huashan 蒼山, the sacred peak of the west, is located in Shaanxi. This peak is of extraordinary structure and appearance, rising almost vertically out of the surrounding plains. It is a very old sacred site that
has the advantage of lying between the two ancient capitals Chang’an and Kaifeng (see Eberhard and Morrison 1973; Vervoorn 1990).

Taishan 崂山, the sacred peak of the east, is located in Shandong and was thought of as the residence of the dead. Its mountain lord (Taishang fujun 太上府君) served as the ruler of souls. It was central to imperial sacrifices (fengshan 封禪) and when the emperor made his ritual round throughout the country would be visited first. Tall and erect, it too rises abruptly from the fertile plains (see Chavannes 1910; Goodrich 1964; Baker 1971).

Hengshan 衡山, the sacred peak of the north, is located in Shanxi. It is serene, lush and adorned with spectacular cliffs and “suspended” monasteries.

Hengshan 衡山, the sacred peak of the south, is located in Hunan. It is heavily wooded (67%), and easily sustains large monastic compounds on its summit and slopes. It houses both Daoist and Buddhist centers (see Robson 1995).

Songshan 嵩山, the sacred peak of the center, is located in Henan. It is equally as reputable as Mt. Tai, but closer to the ancient capitals.

A sixth major sacred peak of China is Huoshan 霍山, sometimes called Supreme Peak (taiyue 太嶽). Located in Shanxi, it is sometimes confused with another Huoshan in Anhui, which is now called Tianzhu shan 天柱山. On occasion, it takes the place of the southern peak.

These mountains are among the most revered sites and sacred powers in Chinese culture and as a group they are divine rulers of the land. In mythological terms, they are often described as occupying the position of generals who control a vast staff in the form of lesser mountains distributed in their respective spheres of influence. These all report back to the “generals,” who keep the registers of life and death of all human and numinous inhabitants of their domains. All five peaks are connected by a huge subterranean network. They have vast compounds dedicated to them, and their innermost powers, or so-called true forms (zhenxing 真形), are represented in emblematic projections such as charts or talismans whose possession grants the practitioner influence and control over ghosts and spirits.

The third group of mountains contains thirteen significant peaks, also considered holy and of important influence. Some were also sites of important Daoist temples or monasteries, such as Mt. Wangwu 王屋山 (Mountain of Kingly Residence, in Henan). Located near the capital of Chang’an, this was the residence of the eleventh Shangqing patriarch and important Daoist master Sima Chengzhen. It enjoyed great prominence until the Ming dynasty. The Taiping huanyu ji 太平還虛記 (Return to Yu Record of the Taiping Era), an administrative geography of the Song dynasty, calls it the “finest” of all mountains. Besides Mt. Wangwu,
Mt. Emei (Sichuan) is prominent in this group. As the westernmost of Chinese mountains, it is today famous as a Buddhist center. But it is also close to Heming shan, where Zhang Daoling received his first revelation, and closer yet to Qingcheng shan (in Guan county), where there is still a remarkable community of devoted Daoist priests and scholars. Other famous mountains such as Laoshan in Shandong, Qianshan in Anhui, Luofu shan in Guangdong and Yandang shan in southern Zhejiang are not part of the primary Song dynasty inventory of famous mountains, but were nevertheless active regional Daoist centers.

All of these mountains (among the 471 listed and ranked in the Tai-ping yulan) stand out in one way or another. They either harbor strange and potent herbs, form a natural water divide, allow strange animals to roam or have illustrious hermits associated with them. Furthermore, they are inhabited by a multitude of powerful spirits and divinities. Their names are well known by initiates, although their forms may change through time. Daoists use meditational practices to visualize—and exorcise or control—these supernatural agents by calling upon them by their proper name.

Except for Mt. Heng, the sacred peak of the south, none of these mountains is located south of the Yangzi River. A central cluster can be defined, consisting of Zhongnan shan, Songshan, Huashan and Huoshan; the periphery of the empire would then be marked by Mts. Kunlun, Emei, Tai and Heng. The official list also has hundreds more of lesser known places, and it may well be that each community at one time or another felt the need for a protective mountain. The book Guanzi 管子 uses the expression “house mountain” (menshan 門山) to allude to the intimate relationship between a social body and the natural forces that surround it and dominate its qi. Similarly, many mountains are called “earth lung” (difei 地肺). That is, they emanate vital “breath” or benevolent “steam” which accumulates in the Daoist’s body and supplies the necessary energy to achieve longevity or immortality.

Then again, mountains have a terminology associated with them that is as vast as it is metaphorical. The death of an emperor for example was perceived and officially described as a “crumbling mountain” or “landslide” (beng 崩).

HERMITS. As mentioned earlier, mountains formed the natural habitat for recluses. The degree to which hermits pursued the principle of “getting lost,” or submerging themselves in wild spaces, is astounding. Hermits retreated—and still retreat—into caves cut high up into sheer cliffs that are only scaleable by iron chains and rough stone ladders. They stayed secluded for varying lengths of time, sometimes shutting themselves up for good (see Porter 1993). There were, to be sure, many
reasons to withdraw from society. Vervoorn, writing on the perception of ethical and economic deflation towards the end of the Han dynasty, states: "This was the mode of eremitism which derived from Confucius: that of withdrawing in adverse times in order to be able to serve the Way in another place or another time" (1990, 82). When disappointed or disapproving literati officials retreated to the mountains, they usually continued their usual activities of studying and teaching. Citing the Bailu zhou shuyuan zhi 白鷺州書院志 (Gazetteer of the Academy at White Deer prefecture), John Meskill translates a telling account of the status of such hermit scholars. He says:

Mountain recluses lectured and taught among themselves. ... Books were bestowed on their mountain places as special grace. ... Teacher Hu Wu-feng (12th c.) studied and taught more than twenty years in his mountain retreat. ... That the master of a place for teaching students in the mountains be an officer of the lord, receiving his commission from the court, has no precedent in previous areas. In the Three Dynasties the schools of the state capital and the local communities did not accommodate the scholars of the mountain grottoes (shandong 山洞). In later days the teaching in the mountains had no authorization from the sovereign. (1982, 254)

This suggests that mountains were used as a space apart, and not only to distance oneself physically from the fast-paced life of the city or at court—they also provided a fertile ground on which to venture into the seemingly heterodox aspects of traditional teachings.

For another type of hermit, the mountain acted as the outer body of the self. Daoist hermits, usually more aware of the characteristics and the possibilities of a given locality than anybody else, resolutely and "naturally" placed themselves in charge of all the forces a mountain was harboring: water and forests, wild birds and beasts, ghosts and divinities, minerals and ores. By employing metaphorical argumentation and magical devices such as charms, writs and rituals to hold sway over a specifically numinous or "enriched" natural space, mountain Daoists disappeared into the wild as fishermen blended into the sea. Indeed, on those same grounds, Vervoorn denies that Daoists should be called hermits at all so long as "they dwell on a given mountain top solely because it is believed to be a place of spiritual potency which offers optimal conditions for the attainment of their particular goal [immortality]" (1990, 14). Whatever their background and purpose, Chinese recluses encompassed a great number of diverse individuals, from noble ministers and religious seekers (both Buddhist and Daoist) to those "behaving strangely" (yiren 異人), a category common in local and mountain gazetteers. The great Daoist master Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) may stand as representative for them all. Living high on Maoshan near Nanjing, yet entertaining a close relationship with the court and especially
with Emperor Wu of the Liang, he was called by contemporaries the "chancellor of the mountains" (shanzhong caixiang 山中宰相).

**GROTTOES AND AUSPICIOUS SITES.** Grottoes, caverns, caves, underground spaces, mountain hollows and inner corridors all possess qualities manmade places do not have. They are archetypal chambers of reflection. Despite a singular solidity, their physical permeability in terms of air- and water-flow reflects the inner workings of the human body. Blood equals water; air equals breath. Spermatic liquids (see Seidel 1983) form pools; walls constitute shapes like inner organs or viscera. Their resident, left windowless and in an enclosed void, experiences the dignity of complete independence and autarky. In this self-contained space of self-projection, he conducts alchemical procedures in search of recreating the "Perfect [Replica] of Man" (zhenren 真人) who exists in the double enclosure of cave and alchemical apparatus, without the natural diffusion and deflection of external relationships. Thus the totality of exterior factors stays under control, purification is complete, the "product" can be re-engineered according to recipe (Blumenberg 1989, 418). Within and yet beyond sacred space lies mindspace: the Daoist grotto (see Benton 1995).

There are scores of them. Every community was to have access to at least one. Of one hundred local gazetteers from southeast China, ninety list caves with names that carry connotations of religious significance and activity. Networked, they form sub-terrestrial passageways that expand to the remotest regions of the world. A very old hierarchy of caves forms the substratum of Daoist holy sites: the so-called ten great and thirty-six lesser grotto-heavens (dongtian 洞天), which first appear as a subtle framework in a fifth-century Daoist text (Lagerwey 1981, 77; Miura 1983; Hahn 1988, 147; Verellen 1995, 278).

A canonical body of sacred grottoes was then created with the systematization of Sima Chengzhen 司馬承真 (647-735) and Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933). Both were Tang Daoists with close affiliations to the imperial court, whose interest in assigning spatial sacrality served to stabilize the dynastic lineage. Thus, for example, a previously unnamed cave on a mountain named Liu feng 立魚峰 (Upright-Fish-Peak) in Liuzhou 柳州 (province of Guangdong 廣東) was claimed to lead to a spot underneath a stone plate in the local yamen, going beneath a large area and even tunneling under the river Liu which separates the mountain from the city (see Minsu zazhi 民俗雜誌 47 [1929], 43-44). Especially in the beginning of the Tang dynasty, many new temples were constructed on sites listed among those sacred grotto-heavens and the seventy-two auspicious sites (fudi 福地), thus regulating and boosting the numinous nature of such spaces. Why there were two networks of greater and lesser dongtian is still debated. In chronological terms, the
number thirty-six alludes to a cosmological construction earlier than that involving the number ten. The latter was of great importance in Mahāyāna Buddhism and introduced to China only in the early fifth century (see Miura 1983, 4-5).

The distribution of the grottoes follows the pattern of Daoist expansion. Very few dongtian are recorded from the border provinces, such as Yunnan, Guangxi, Qinghai, Fujian or even Hebei (which in earlier times was not considered as central). Roughly one quarter of all listed sites, however, are concentrated in Zhejiang, a region that is highly divers geophysically and has a sometimes stunning mountainous landscape. Throughout history it has produced numerous scholar-officials and housed many religious centers. The ten greater grotto-heavens are as follows:

1. Wangwu shan 王屋山 grotto (Henan), 10,000 li.
2. Weiyu shan 威羽山 grotto (Zhejiang), 10,000 li.
3. Xicheng shan grotto 西城山 (Shanxi), 3,000 li.
4. Qingcheng shan grotto 青城山 (Sichuan), 2,000 li.
5. Xixuan shan 西玄山 [Xiyuan shan 西元山] grotto (part of Huashan 華山, Shaanxi), 1,000 li.
6. Luofu shan 龙浮山 grotto (Guangdong), 500 li.
7. Chicheng shan 赤城山 grotto (Zhejiang), 300 li.
8. Linwu shan grotto 林屋山 (Jiangsu, in Lake Tai), 400 li.

(Daofu jing 道跡經; Wushan biyao 無上必要 chapter 3, p. 13b-14a; Miura 1983)

The measurement refers to the “circumference” and is given in li 里 (ab. 550 m), but what exactly this indicates is not clear. I take it to be an abstract value in terms of spatial relevance and influence. As is made clear in the case of the Wangwu shan grotto, the infrastructure of a grotto-heaven’s immediate environment underlines its auspiciousness.

According to the Ming-dynasty Wangwu shanzhi 王屋山志 (Gazetteer of Mt. Wangwu), the altar, here called altar of heaven (tiantan 天壇), is located on the top of the central peak. It is constructed of stone and bears the “real” name “grotto heaven of purified emptiness” (qing xu xiao you dongtian 淸虛小有洞天). Sima Chengzhen attained the Dao here, and the immortal Zhang lived just to the south. The Baxian feng 八仙峰 (Eight Immortals Ridge) lies to its east, and the Jiuzhi feng 九芝峰 (Nine Fungus Ridge) to its west (1.3ab). About the grotto-heaven proper, the gazetteer cites the words of the Perfected Yan (Yan Zhenren 煤真人). He said:
Where there is no heaven, this is called emptiness. Where there is no mountain, this is called a grotto. Where there is no human being, this is called a chamber. Hollowness in the belly of a mountain is called the grotto-palace. Hollowness in a person’s head is called the grotto-chamber.

Thus the perfected can place himself in accord with Heaven, with the mountain and with humanity. What is called “incoming or outgoing” has no distinction. Equivalent to heaven and earth having mountains and grottoes, the human body has orifices, through which the divine energy can pass.”

In other words, heaven and the mountains are subject to the same principle and belong to the same matter as the body of the Daoist adept who has taken care that the qi can go about unhindered and circulates throughout the right places in his body. The metaphor of the cave, then, is used as a rhetorical device to demonstrate that the distinction between exterior and interior has been successfully overcome, that there is no more of an outside than there is of an inside.

Caves, however, are also the world of the shadows, of echoes in a void of stillness. Dragons reside here, regulating water, the life-giving source for both people and agriculture. In an exhaustive monograph, Chavannes has shown how Daoist priests and local officials worshiped and addressed the dragon-king in religious ritual, offering him prayers for rain and requests for benevolent portents. Sometimes, as in 666, the emperor himself would conduct the sacrifices, during which small golden dragons were cast inside a cave, accompanied by prayers and inscribed jade tablets. Examples of both are still around (e.g., in the Suzhou City Museum). The cult, according to Chavannes’s research, was pervasive, and included offerings held at the five sacred peaks and their caves as well as on sites outside the spectrum of specified networks.

Citing a poem about the grotto-heaven at Linwu shan in Lake Tai 太湖, a Song dynasty author describes thunder, frost and snow on its two peaks (one considered male, the other female), which are together called Dongting shan 洞庭山. He then likens the grotto to Mt. Fengdu 鄭都山 as a place of detention. Also called GUICHENG 鬼城 (City of Ghosts), Pingdu shan 平都山 (Mountain of Plains Capital) or simply Mingshan 名山 (Famous Mountain), it is the location of the Chinese netherworld. Originally identified as an island off the coast of Liaoning, it was transferred under the Tang to southwest China, to a place on the northern banks of the Yangzi in the territory of the ethnic Ba 巴 people (modern Sichuan). Fengdu was one of the seventy-two auspicious sites and until the mid-1930s was adorned with twenty-seven temples and monasteries. The mountain rises only 270 meters above sea level, and
rather than its outward height it is its grotto underneath that moves the Chinese mind. "This small mountain brings together the authentic territories of death, and the 'pure lands' of immortality which border it" (Chenivesse 1997, 46; see also Chenivesse 1998). The labyrinth-like underworld, harboring illustrous places like the Shuijing gong 水晶宫 (Crystal Palace), can be decoded by the initiated through the Fengdu shan zhenxing tu 峰都山真形圖 (Chart of the True Form of Mount Fengdu), which expounds the pattern of the Daoist model of the human body. The souls of the dead pass into the darkness of the unknown void of the mountain, spirits that can be redeemed by the accumulated virtue of their descendants over seven generations. After that, they may enter the realm of the immortals. The link between the deceased ancestors and the surviving descendants is formed by moral obligation and ritualized communication in the form of charms and prayers. On specific days in a year, Mt. Fengdu allows "visitors" and displays sculptured hells as representations of its abysmal confines.

A MODERN VIEW. Daoist grottoes are commonly described as being filled with "refined breath" jingqi 精氣). This refined flow of air in deep mountain hollows can, as modern science such as biospeleology has shown, be permeated with gases like radium and other lightly radioactive emanations such as Radon, a natural by-product of Uranium 238 (Clement 1996). Furthermore, the percentage of carbonic dioxide CO2 in a cave (any cave, that is) can be significantly higher in concentration than normal, and limestone, the base material of many karstic caves in China, acts as a superb storage repository (Sweeting 1995, 148, Gillieson 1996, 205). In some places, table salt is dissolved in the damp microclimate of the grotto and can function as an agent to suppress asthmatic coughs and throat problems. Rheumatic fevers are successfully treated in caves with deposits of uranium, minerals and mangan oxids. Stones enriched with silicic acids (like Apletit or Lapis albus) are well known to have medical properties. Hot thermal springs with a high proportion of sulphur help relieve kidney and liver problems.

In addition, caves with thermal flowing water are known to have a higher concentration of electricity. Measurements on medical patients retiring into Central European caves for treatment for example have highlighted the fact that the amount of emanation liquid taken in through the body's skin, which—as a beneficial side effect—has the capacity to dissolve body fat, almost equals the amount of liquid lost through sweating during a given period—up to 4,000 grams in a six-hour period (Lübke 1953, 231). In some cases the equilibrium was so perfect that the body could have functioned normally for weeks with hardly any food and drink. Measurements of patients in various European limestone caves have also shown that the digested emanation cir-
culated to every part of the body, penetrating cells and tissues alike, thus effecting a subtle impact of radiation throughout (Lübke 1953, Verole-Bozello 1994). It is not unlikely that Daoist hermits, focusing on inner refinement and physiological expertise, experimented with deposit or mineralic elements found in caves and within the mountains, engineering morphological and biotopic change in their immediate environment and within themselves (prolongation of metabolic cycles, or the depigmentation of the skin for example). In fact, many of these experiments and physiological exercises are documented and have been described at length in various treatises contained in the Daoist canon, testifying to salutary phenomena such as those described here.

**Practices**

**TEMPLE FESTIVALS.** Sacred sites often have also become the location of monastic establishments and duly turn into active locations during various religious occasions, such as a god's birthday or an anniversary. Pilgrims and other folk then flock to the temple grounds in vast numbers, momentarily transforming the sacred ground into a public sphere. The defense or protective character a temple may have in the form of a protective landmark for a community is—during a temple festival—put aside and overruled for a specified time. What is celebrated is its success in mediating common, popular interests and divine wisdom and purpose. Offerings and rites that renew the location's contract with the divine (or with a variety of gods) are held on a regular basis. Thus the festival calendar for an institution such as the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery) in Beijing can be quite elaborate, with the exception of a few weeks in winter when action ceases and all life is frozen.

Temple festivals (miaohui 廟會) can take on many guises. From Ming times onward, in central China at least, they have involved theater performances, mainly due to the influence of the Shaanxi merchants guild (huiguan 會館), as well as acrobatics, agricultural fairs and sales of arts and crafts, incense and spirit money. There are scribes and storytellers, toy peddlers and fortune tellers, persons knowledgeable in herbs and medicines, scholars and beggars. Such festivals are economically important to a market town or city. Profane products bought and sold create a situation in which religious objects also become commoditized. The service trade that caters to ordinary people merges with the religious services performed by the priests (resident or itinerant) for the benefit of the community and to the honor of the gods. The organizational infrastructure to stage such festivals rests with both the populace and the priests. Among the local people, incense societies (xianghui 香會) assure
proper service for incoming pilgrims (xiangke 香客). They cater food and tea and organize traffic and housing. Priests prepare the altar, fast for the number of days deemed appropriate—varying with the importance of the ritual—and set aside utensils, scriptures and other implements.

The *Yanjing suishi ji* 燕京歲時記 (Record of a Year’s Time at Yanjing), compiled around 1900, contains a short description of a temple festival held in the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Temple). It says:

> Each year, beginning with the first day of the first month, the temple is thrown open for nineteen days, when sightseers come continuously and carriages and horses rush about. On the nineteenth day it is even more busy, this day being called that of Meeting the Gods and Immortals [hui shenxian 會神仙].

It is traditionally said that on the night of the eighteenth day there will be a descent of the Immortal Perfected, who will transform himself perhaps into a pilgrim, perhaps into a beggar. Those who by some chance then encounter him, will thereby ward off illness and prolong their years. Therefore there are always from three to five Daoist priests sitting cross-legged in a group below the corridors with the hope of experiencing just one meeting.

... On the nineteenth [ninth] day of the first month the people of the Capital come to offer sacrifice, this being called the Yen Chiu festival. (Bodde 1965, 14).

During this auspicious time pilgrims and sightseers seek blessings by stroking the stone slabs, statues and tablets of carved stone monkeys at the temple, thus receiving benevolent, soothing energies (Zhang 1995, 57-58).

SACRED TIME. The festival calendar adds the element of sacred time to the sacred space of the Daoist monastery or temple. It integrates religious activities into the annual curriculum of a predominantly agricultural society by merging economic interests with spiritual quests. Festivals continue almost all year round, and the annual religious calendar constitutes a ritualized form of time control, synchronizing with—yet also abstracting from—nature’s unchanging course. Thus festivals constitute terminal points of what is inherently infinite, changing the spatial fabric as they are performed. The sacred territory they occupy may extend infinitely into space with each new event, and may include lengthy and laborious pilgrimage routes in addition to the complete transportation network involved.

Spatial cohesion expands widely when a god’s birthday is celebrated and the temple gates are flung open to the public. Space recedes again after the event, when only designated, initiated persons are allowed on the hallowed ground, just trampled on by thousands of sightseers. Both sacred space and sacred time are highly mobile factors, resulting in
shifting spatial boundaries, in the transfer or the bestowal of new qualities, in construction and deconstruction. As Lefèvre has noted, the “temple is divided up into the sanctuary and the secret dwelling-place of divinity—and of thought. It has aspects but no facade. ... Visitors may walk all the way around, but the place is not an ‘object’ that can be grasped otherwise than by means of a thought-process capable of perceiving it as a totality, and hence as endowed with meaning” (1991, 237). Temple festivals for a moment disclose the meaning of the sacred’s spatial presence to the general public by celebrating a god’s birthday, stimulating participation in a grand totality of reality which is usually beyond the modes of perception of everyday life.

PILGRIMAGES are another major activity surrounding sacred sites. Pilgrimage by an individual or by an organized group of persons may coincide, but does not need to, with the festival calendar(s) outlined above. In Daoist traditions, pilgrim centers are usually associated with mountains, or are elevated to the “rank” of a mountain, though the terrain occupied by a sacred edifice may be completely flat. Pilgrimage is interpreted by Victor Turner as a primarily social process, so that “pilgrims leave home..., enter a liminal state while travelling to the sacred place and return, transformed, to be reincorporated into their home communities” (Naquin and Yu 1992, 6). The pilgrim engages in activities that involve the respectful approach to a sacred site (chaoshan 朝山) and the presentation of incense (jinxian 進香) to the resident deity, with whom a form of contractual and spiritual rapport is being sought. In Chinese literature and early travel writings, we find many references to pilgrimages. It is hard to establish what made early (pre-Tang) pilgrimage specifically Daoist except perhaps the quest for immortality, usually associated with gaining access to mineral riches, botanical rarities and the worship of an elaborate pantheon of gods and deities in remote locations. I would argue that with the widespread pilgrimage and travel activities triggered by the “Buddhist conquest of China,” Daoist pilgrimage became more organized, following calendarical cycles and established trade routes to a larger degree than under the Han and their successors. Research of early Daoist pilgrimage, however, is still in its infancy and will have to be pursued along the lines of cultural and religious historical geography.

Research undertaken and reviewed here focuses more on the Ming and Qing dynasties. Various studies examine specific persons or texts pertaining to Taishan, Maoshan, Miaofeng shan and others, but the most exhaustive fieldwork to date has been undertaken by John Lagerwey, who reports on Wudang shan that it “was organized from plain to peak as the unfolding story of the god’s [Dark Warrior’s] own ascension from human crown prince to divine emperor” (1992, 295). The pilgrim,
following the narrative of the god's unfolding story as it is re-enacted in
the spatiality of the created, deified landscape, is engaged in a progressive
encounter with the god ruling this particular patch of land.

Among Daoist pilgrimage centers, only few stand out on a national
scale, including Mt. Tai and possibly some other marchmounts. But this
is really hard to establish, because the ordinary pilgrim usually did not
engage in quests on a national scale, but was satisfied with regional or
local cult sites that promised to fulfill his needs. The main reasons to
seek an encounter with a deity included offerings of thanks for a granted
wish, prayers for a son, or the swearing of a vow. Organized groups of
pilgrims usually had between fifteen and fifty members, but larger
groups have been noted, too. Commemorative plaques documenting the
size, reason, dates and places of origin of pilgrim groups once adorned
many pathways, temple walls and hallways. Individual pilgrimages, on
the other hand, though forming a sizeable part of the overall mix of
these movements, are difficult to quantify, since source are scarce. It is
interesting to note, however, that groups embarking on a specific religious quest who came from the same native place perceived themselves as
belonging to "religious domains" (Lagerwey 1992, 312).

Today many traditional pilgrimage centers located on mountains are
rather popular again, but many urban temples have also reopened their
gates. Although many are tourist attractions, it is only partially accurate
to describe their current popularity as the result of a general tendency of
pleasure seeking, possible now that people in China are economically
more affluent. With the communist government retreating from the
control panel of everyday life in China, pious groups and believers have
returned to demand the right to perform rituals, renew the cycle of the
world and pray for a son.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

DAOIST ART

STEPHEN LITTLE

DESCRIPTION

The study of Chinese Daoist art is in its infancy. Indeed, Daoist art is a field so enormous that this essay can only hint at its richness and depth. In contrast to Chinese Buddhist art, which has enjoyed a wealth of scholarly attention in the past four decades, and to which many ground-breaking exhibitions have been devoted, there has been little research on Daoist art. Only one book has been written on the subject (Wang 1994), a brief survey available in Chinese. There has been only one modest exhibition of Daoist art organized (see Little 1988), and there exists no iconographical study or dictionary of Daoist art, in contrast to the abundance of such resources for East Asian Buddhist art. Western surveys of Daoist art are limited to a small number of general works, such as by Legeza and Rawson (1973). More specialized studies of Daoist art include works on the Six Dynasties (Pontynen 1980; Ledderose 1984; James 1989; Kamitsuka 1993; 1998; Bokenkamp 1996; Abe 1996), the Tang (Liu 1997), the Yuan (White 1940; Katz 1993) and the Ming (Cammann 1964), but these are few in number. There have been four doctoral dissertations on Daoist art or artists, by John Hay (1978), Mary Gardner Neill (1981), Arthur Pontynen (1983) and Anning Jing (1994)—much unlike the comparative situation in Buddhist art. Altogether, there are very few specialized studies of the history of Daoist painting, calligraphy, sculpture, textiles or architecture.

At the same time, there are many superb examples of Chinese Daoist art in the storerooms of museums around the world, particularly in the United States and Europe. These works are rarely displayed and languish unpublished because they are not recognized as being Daoist. There are also many superb works of sacred art in Daoist temples in China. Very little of this material has been catalogued or published. Occasionally events in the history of Daoism are documented in surviving works of art, while the same events are only hinted at in the contemporaneous literary record.
The majority of art historians in the West who specialize in Chinese art are generally unaware of the detailed history of Daoism, particularly religious Daoism; in this they are not so different from the majority of Western sinologists. Because many of the surviving examples of Daoist art were made in the service of religious Daoism, these works exist today in a kind of artistic limbo, their true significance unrecognized. An excellent example is the largest known Ming bronze sculpture of the god Zhenwu 真武 (Perfect Warrior) outside of China, which has been in the basement of a major European museum since the early 1920s, catalogued simply as a "seated Chinese gentleman." This lack of awareness is not entirely the fault of art historians. Given the fact that there is still no comprehensive history of Daoism available in any Western language and that the field of Daoist studies is a relatively recent phenomenon in academia, it is not surprising that so many important works of Daoist art remain unstudied, and even unrecognized.

One of the difficulties inherent in studying Daoist art is that very little art that can be called Daoist survives from earlier than the Song dynasty (960-1279). Works of Daoist art that do survive can be divided into discrete categories based on their function: didactic, iconic, transformative, ritual, political. The survey that follows introduces several primary types of surviving Daoist art, based primarily on works found in temples and museums in China, and museums and private collections in Japan and the West. This essay focuses almost entirely on surviving works of Daoist art, as opposed to recorded works, with the aim of suggesting the full range of works that can be called Daoist, and indicating some of the issues raised by such works.

BEGINNINGS: MANUSCRIPTS AND BRONZES

NEOLITHIC THROUGH ZHOU. Belief in the cosmological principles of yin and yang, shared by most Chinese in traditional times regardless of their religious or philosophical orientation, appears to have already been given visual form as early as the Neolithic period. The evidence for this lies in a funerary shell sculpture, in the form of a tiger and dragon, flanking a corpse in the Neolithic (c. 3,000 B.C.E.) burial at Puyang 濮陽 (Henan), excavated in 1988 (see Sun and Kistemaker 1997, 116, Fig 6.2). While these early sculptures are not Daoist per se, they provide significant evidence for the origins of the dragon-tiger symbolism that would become completely identified as Daoist in later times (by at least the Six Dynasties period), and specifically with such concepts as yin and yang in cosmology and, for example, lead (qian 銅) and mercury (hong 水) in Daoist alchemy.

The visual expression of the cosmological principle of yin and yang survives among the painted designs on a lacquer box excavated from the War-
ring States period tomb of the Marquis Yi of Zeng at Suixian (Hubei), in 1978, depicting the Northern Dipper surrounded by twenty-eight lunar mansions (ershiba xiu 二十八宿), flanked by a tiger and dragon symbolizing yin and yang (Fig. 1; see Hong Kong Gallery 1994, 15). The existence of the designs on this lacquer box in the late Zhou suggests that the philosophical and cosmological tenets rooted in such elemental concepts as the yin-yang dichotomy were already being expressed in visual form well before the Han dynasty.

Among the most important early examples of Daoist texts that have been excavated from Warring States tombs are three groups of Laozi manuscript fragments, found in 1993 among a sizeable group of early texts in a late fourth century B.C. tomb at Guodian, Jingmen City (Hubei). Inscribed in a pre-Qin dynasty script with a brush and ink on bamboo slips, these texts are the earliest known Daoist texts extant, and are furthermore superb examples of Warring States calligraphy. The study and analysis of these Laozi texts, which overlap and yet differ in the sequence of sections (zhang 章) from the later, received Daodejing, is just beginning (see Jingmen Museum 1998).

Among the bamboo-slip books discovered in Tomb #1 at Guodian was a hitherto-unknown cosmogonic text entitled Taiyi sheng shui 太一生水 (Great Unity Generates Water). The text provides compelling evidence for the existence of religious beliefs among the elite classes of the Warring States. Li Ling, in his recent study of the god Taiyi 太一, has brought together several rare surviving images of this god, ranging in date from the fourth to second centuries B.C. E. (1996). The presence of Taiyi in late Warring States texts and images is significant because the god enjoyed great longevity in Chinese history, being also transformed into a star god (Sun and Kistemaker 1997, 96). He is depicted, for example, in early Ming dynasty shuilu zhai 水陸齋 (Water and Land Ritual) paintings from the Baoningsi Temple, now in the Shanxi Provincial Museum.

Han. During the Han dynasty concepts associated with the emerging Daoist religion begin to find increasing visual expression. These survive among works excavated from tombs throughout China. Lacquer paintings suggesting the movement of qi 氣 through the universe, with winged, immortal figures (xuan 羽人) sailing through the void, are well-known from the early Han burials at Mawangdui in Changsha 長沙 (Hunan; see Fu 1992, 1: 6-11). The god Taiyi also appears at Mawangdui in a painting on silk (Fu 1992, 1: 35).

Han dynasty depictions of the goddess Xiwang Mu 西王母 (Queen Mother of the West), who would become a key deity in the pantheon of religious Daoism, have been discovered in tombs from many parts of China,
with particularly abundant finds in Sichuan and Shandong. Among the most remarkable works associated with Xiwang mu are the so-called “money trees,” found in late Han tombs in Sichuan (see Wu H. 1987; Rawson, 1996, no. 87; Chen X. 1997). These bronze trees are set into molded ceramic bases and tall, elaborate openwork structures that depict a paradise. Some of these depict Xiwang mu and a seated Buddha together, with the goddess at the top. From Han tombs also come the earliest known talismans (fu), of the type closely associated with Daoist practice from the Six Dynasties period onward (Wang 1998, 75-81). Sculptural depictions in bronze of winged, immortal figures are known in at least three examples, and similar figures are commonly found in the decorations of Han dynasty bronze mirrors (see Rawson 1996, no. 86; Desroches 1994, no. 47; Osaka Museum 1986, no. 306). That the concept of the Daoist immortal as a transformed human being was well-established by the late Han is confirmed by the existence of the memorial stele dedicated to the Daoist Fei Zhi 肥致, excavated from a second century C.E. tomb in Luoyang 洛陽 (Schipper 1997) and related texts (see Chen 1988).

Parallel to the rise of depictions of immortals in the Han were representations of mountains as numinous pivots connecting heaven and earth (Munakata 1991). This concept, reflecting the widespread worship of the
five sacred peaks (王野 五嶽) and other holy mountains, is most prominently found in the richly decorated and inlaid incense burners known as *boshan lu* 博山爐. The most spectacular of these was excavated in 1968 during the Cultural Revolution in the tomb of an imperial prince, Liu Sheng 劉勝, in Mancheng 滿城 (Hebei; see Fig. 2; Fong 1980, no. 95). The bronze mountain is surrounded by dynamic, swirling lines of inlaid gold which suggest the pulsating movement of the *qi* within the earth.

Han tombs and funerary shrines also contain the earliest known depictions of narratives drawn from Daoist literature, of the type that are commonly seen in later Chinese painting. The famous Wu family shrine in Shandong province, for example, contains one of the earliest depictions of Confucius’ visit to Laozi, a narrative found in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 and Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian). This narrative continued to be depicted throughout the later history of Chinese art; a much later example is an early Ming handscroll on silk in the collection of the Nanjing University Library (Harada 1936, pl. 290).

A wealth of early philosophical texts, among them two versions of the *Laozi*, were excavated in 1973 from Han tomb #3 at Mawangdui in Changsha, Hunan province, a burial dated to 168 B.C.E (see Chen S. 1996). In addition to the *Laozi* texts, the manuscripts discovered included the earliest known text of the *I Ching* 史記 (Book of Changes). Like the earlier Guodian manuscripts, the philosophical texts from Mawangdui are also superb examples of calligraphy, in this case ranging from the third to second centuries B.C.E.

**THREE KINGDOMS PERIOD.** A beautiful and extremely rare example of a calligraphic manuscript of a partial *Daodejing* text survives in a Three Kingdoms Period handscroll from Dunhuang 敦煌, dated to 270 C.E. Now in the Princeton University Art Museum, this elegant text was transcribed by Suo Dan 索駿 (ab. 250-325), a scholar born in an elite Dunhuang family. The scroll consists of chapters 51-81 of the *Daodejing* (see Jao 1955; Mote and Chu 1988, no. 52; Boltz 1996; Harrist and Fong, 1999, no. 1).

The primary material evidence for Daoist art in the Three Kingdoms Period (220-265) consists of bronze mirrors with cast designs of cosmological diagrams and winged immortals (Little 1988 12). The deities depicted on such mirrors include Xiwang mu, Dongwang gong 東王公, the Zhou dynasty *qin* 琴 (zither) master Boya 白牙, and Huangdi 黃帝. Such mirrors are often inscribed with incantations; a characteristic inscription on a third century mirror depicting Xiwang mu, Dongwang gong together with winged immortals reads (Fig. 3):
Figure 2. Mountain-shaped Censor (boshan lu), Western Han dynasty (2nd c. B.C.E.), from the tomb of Prince Liu Sheng. Bronze with gold inlay, height 26 cm. Hebei Provincial Museum, Shijiazhuang.
Figure 3. Mirror with Xiwangmu, Three Kingdoms or Six Dynasties Period (3rd-4th c. C.E.). Bronze, diameter 18.5 cm. Cleveland Museum of Art, The Severance and Greta Millikin Purchase Fund (83.213).

I have made this bright mirror,
Secluded, I have refined the three shang [metals: copper, tin, lead].
I have matched and depicted the myriad limits,
I have followed proper precedents and the Dao.
I respectfully present it to the worthy and virtuous,
I have engraved and carved without end.
In all affairs, may the Yang force dominate,
May your happiness and prosperity be extended and bright.
May you have wealth, nobility, peace, and happiness,
May your sons and grandsons be numerous and prosperous ... 
May the worthy one be lofty and illustrious.
May the lord become a duke or a minister,
May the master’s destiny be long.
(Cahill 1986; also Little 1988, 41; Cahill 1994)
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THE MIDDLE AGES: STATUES AND CALLIGRAPHY

THE SIX DYNASTIES PERIOD. The beginnings of organized religious Daoism at the end of the Han dynasty gave rise to a tradition of Daoist art that extends to the present day. The Six Dynasties period witnessed the spectacular development of both Daoist and Buddhist art, with considerable influence from the latter to the former, particularly in the realm of sculpture. Very little Daoist art survives, however, from the Six Dynasties period—ironically the period of religious Daoism's most rapid growth. Consequently, very little is known about the production of Daoist art in the religion's formative phase. The largest body of Daoist works that does survive are stone sculptures.

The earliest known Daoist sculptures date to the Northern Wei dynasty (5th c.), and are found primarily in the vicinity of Xi'an and Yaoxian (Shaanxi; see Kamitsuka 1993; 1998). Daoist sculptures are almost completely unknown from the areas of south China under the Six Dynasties, despite the widespread belief in and patronage of Daoism by the southern aristocracy in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. The activities of the Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi at the Northern Wei court at Datong (Shaanxi) in the fifth century led to the first investiture of an emperor as a Daoist priest. The same period also witnessed the rapid spread of Buddhism and Daoism in both northern and southern China, and the presence of both religions side-by-side was reflected in recorded works of imperial patronage, e.g., the commissioning of temples and surviving works of art.

The most tangible works of Daoist art that survive from the Six Dynasties period are stone sculptures and bronze mirrors. For the most part, the sculptures depict the deified Laozi, and were commissioned by groups of Daoist believers (daomin). It is clear from the most common format in which the figures are presented—with a central deity flanked by smaller, attending figures—that the overall format of these works was inspired by Buddhist sculptures, in which a buddha, usually seated, is flanked on either side by bodhisattvas (see Pontynen 1980; Ishimatsu 1998). This is analogous to and symptomatic of the borrowing of other Buddhist concepts in the development of early religious Daoism, as evident, for example, in Daoist Lingbao texts of the fifth century (see Zürcher 1980; Bokenkamp 1996). As several scholars have shown, the dedicatory inscriptions on early Daoist sculptures often refer to the central deity as Taishang laojun 太上老君 (the Supreme Lord Lao; see Kohn 1998), sometimes as Yuanshi tianzun 元始天尊 (Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning), and occasionally merely as tianzun 天尊 (Heavenly Worthy; Kamitsuka 1998, 71). Yuanshi tianzun and the deified Laozi (known later as Daode tianzun 道德天尊) would later become two of the Three Pure Ones (Sanqing 三清),
the highest gods of religious Daoism, along with Lingbao tianzun (Heavenly Worthy of Numinous Treasure). Lingbao tianzun is unknown, however, before the Tang dynasty; he does not appear, for example, in the *Wushang biyao* of 574. The earliest documented depiction of the Three Pure Ones in Chinese art dates to the mid-eighth century, in a Daoist cave at Niujiaosai, Renshou county (Sichuan; see Liu 1997, fig. 9).

The syncretistic aspect of religious belief in sixth century China is evident in several surviving stelae, in which the deified Laozi appears with Sākyamuni Buddha, or the patrons of a Daoist image refer to themselves as Buddhist disciples (James 1989). One rare Northern Wei example, dated to 527, depicts the deified Laozi seated next to a similarly attired deity, identified by an inscription as the Jade Emperor (Yuhuang; Fig. 4; see *Zhangguo meishu quanji* 1988, pl. 73). This work appears to be the earliest known depiction in Chinese art of the Jade Emperor, the head of the popular pantheon. That this god was already being worshiped in the sixth century is clear from his inclusion in the *Wushang biyao* (Lagerwey 1981, 126). From the later Six Dynasties period, Daoist sculptures are also known from the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou dynasties (see Osaka Museum 1995, no. 110).

The fourth, fifth and sixth centuries were formative periods in the history of Chinese painting and calligraphy, and many of the greatest masters of this age were practicing Daoists. Among the two most famous names in the history of Chinese calligraphy and painting respectively were Wang Xizhi and Gu Kaizhi. The character *zi* in both men’s names suggests that they belonged to the Celestial Master school of Daoism. Gu Kaizhi’s *Hua Yuntai shan ji* (Record of Painting the Cloud Terrace Mountain) is the earliest known reference to a painting of Zhang Daoling, the first patriarch of the Celestial Master school (Bush and Shih 1985, 34-36; see also Spiro 1988). Indeed, Gu Kaizhi is one of the earliest Chinese painters with whose name specific images are attached, albeit later copies of the Tang and Song dynasties. A glimpse into the painting style of another master of religious subjects is provided by a scroll entitled “The Five Planets and Twenty-eight Lunar Mansions” in the Osaka Municipal Museum of Arts, traditionally attributed to the Liang dynasty painter Zhang Sengyou (fl. 600) but probably a copy of the Northern Song (960-1126; see Osaka Museum 1975, pl. 1).

The fourth century, during which these artists lived, was also the period of the great Shangqing (Highest Clarity) revelations, in which a series of divine beings (zhenren 真人) descended on the medium Yang Xi and conveyed on him sacred texts from the Heaven of Highest Clarity. Around the same time, moreover, the Daoist master and alchemist Ge Hong lived, who compiled the *Shenxian zhuang* (Biographies of Immortals)
A century later, it was the alchemist Tao Hongjing’s (456-536) connoisseurship of calligraphy that allowed the texts of Yang Xi’s transmission to be separated from a host of apocryphal manuscripts, to form the core of a new Shangqing canon, one of the earliest Daoist canons. Significantly, he was well known both as a calligrapher and as a painter, but none of his works survives (Yu 1980, 961).

Not surprisingly, the early theoretical texts on painting and calligraphy in the Six Dynasties and Tang periods were closely related to Daoist...
texts in their conceptual structure and language. In abstract terms, the highest criterion of excellence was the ability to convey the most refined and dynamic \( q\i (\text{vital energy}) \) through one's brush. In painting this meant to capture both the physical appearance of the subject (be it a person or landscape) and its inner essence.

Such conceptual works as Xie He’s 謝赫 Huafa liuluì 繪法六律 (Six Laws of Painting) are clearly linked to medical texts like the Huangdi neijing 黃帝內經 (Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor), a fundamental text of the movement of \( q\i \) through the human body. (I am indebted to Richard Pegg for pointing out this connection.) “Vitality resonance and movement of vitality” (\( q\i yun shengdong \) 氣韻生動) is Xie He’s first law. It states, in effect, that a successful painting captures, conveys and brings into sympathetic resonance the essential spirit and energy (\( shenqi \) 神氣) of what is being painted. This expectation is expressed in the Northern Song dynasty by Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037-1101), in a famous poem written on a bamboo painting by his friend Wen Tong 文同:

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When Wen Tong painted bamboo,
He saw bamboo and not himself.
Not simply unconscious of himself,
Trance-like, he left his body behind.
His body was transferred into bamboo,
Creating inexhaustible freshness.
Zhuangzi is no longer of this world,
So who can understand such concentration?
(Bush and Shih 1985, 212)
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Wang Xizhi, considered China’s greatest calligrapher, was a practicing member of the Celestial Master (Tianshi 天師) school of Daoism (see Legeza 1975; Ledderose 1984). Several Daoist texts attributed to Wang survive as copies. The most famous of these is the Huangting ruyingjing 黃庭內景經 (Inner Classic of the Yellow Court, CT 263). The original is lost, but copies in the form of ink rubbings from stone-engraved copies, are kept in the Palace Museum, Beijing, and the National Palace Museum, Taipei.

That art was created in the service of religious Daoism during the Six Dynasties period is known from the writings of Lu Xiujing 魯休静 (406-477), the compiler of the Numinous Treasure canon. As Bokenkamp has shown, Lu railed against the creation of images of deities, stating the Dao was beyond form and was fundamentally opposed to the results of such image production. He says: “As for those heterodox families who outfit their chambers with altars and images, banners, canopies, and all sorts of decorations—are they not just asserting their distinctive wealth and refinement?” (1996, 64). In addition, there was also the northern Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi 柯千志 who “carved images of the Celestial Worthy and various Tran-
scendents and had offerings made to them.” Images created in this period were typically used to offer a prayer for the grace of the gods. For example, an inscription reads:

We pray that
All the members of Daoist Yao Boduo’s family -
His three forebears and five ancestors,
His fathers and mothers of seven generations,
All his relatives, long deceased or dead lately -
If currently in the three bad rebirths,
May speedily be rescued and liberated!
May they forever be separated from
The suffering of the dark hell prisons,
And ascend to the Southern Palace,
The true home of the immortals!
Should they, again, be reborn as humans,
May they have lords and kings for their fathers.
(Kamitsuka 1998, 76)

A later example, from the Northern Zhou dynasty, reads:

The twenty-eighth day of the eighth month of the fourth year of the Baoding reign period of the Great Zhou dynasty [C.E. 564]. The Daoist disciple reverently has had made one Taishang Laojun image, for the benefit of ancestors, father, mother, and the adults and children of the household. [Followed by incised donor images with identifications]. (Pontynen 1980, 192)

TANG DYNASTY. The Tang dynasty saw the adoption of Laozi as the divine ancestor of the Tang ruling house, with a resulting proliferation of imperially-sponsored temples and works of Daoist art. In 666, he was given the title Taishang xuan yuan huangdi (Supreme Mysterious and Primordial Emperor; see Barrett 1996, 32; Kohn 1998) and came to be depicted variously. Several enormous Tang stone sculptures of the deified Laozi survive in China, most notably in Shaanxi, Shanxi, Fujian and Sichuan provinces (see, e.g., Hu 1994). Such sculptures often include depictions of the donor or donors. One example dates to 726 (Sirén 1925, 3: 412); another, unpublished one, dated to 754, is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (#07.738). While this practice began during the Northern Wei dynasty, the Tang images of donors are more individualized than their Six Dynasties Period antecedents.

Charles Benn has recently examined the series of rituals in 711 that resulted in the ordination of two Tang dynasty princesses, named Jinxian (Gold Immortal) and Yuzhen (Jade Perfected), as Daoist priestesses. Their brother, Tang Xuanzong (Minghuang; r. 713-755), was also ordained, by the famous Daoist priest Sima Chengzhen (647-734). The princesses underwent a series of ordination rituals at the Guizhen
guan (Abbey of Returning to Perfection), located in the palace in Chang'an. The locus of the rituals was an outdoor altar, formed as follows:

Earth was excavated to form an altar in three tiers which was about 3.54 meters (about 11.6 feet) high. Gold lotus-blossom poles, purple and gold title-tablets and blue-green silk cordons encircled the altar. (Benn 1991, 21)

Among the works of art made for ritual use here were cases for holding the sacred texts and pennons or flags. Made of brocade, their images included depictions of "brilliant suns in flying clouds, dark shadows embracing smoke, revolving graphs and unfurling flowers, painted landscapes, animals of strange shapes, propitious grasses and auspicious blossoms" (Benn 1991, 119).

The annals of Tang dynasty painting are replete the tales of painters who were said to have obtained the Dao (chengdao). Perhaps the best-known figure painter of this period was the divinely inspired Wu Daozi (fl. 710-760), famous for his paintings of both Daoist and Buddhist subjects. While none of his original works survive, many are recorded and described in such texts as Zhu Jingxuan’s 卓景玄 Tangchao minghua lu 唐朝名畫錄 (Record of Famous Painters of the Tang; 9th c.) and Zhang Yanyuan’s 張頊遠 Lidai minghua ji 历代名畫記 (Record of Famous Painters in History, dat. 847; see Bush and Shih 1985, 55-56, 61-62). A later echo of Wu Daozi’s dynamic figurative style and brush manner can be seen in the works of later followers, such as Wu Zongyuan 武宗元.

In addition, of Tang date are some brilliant surviving examples of Daoist calligraphy scrolls, discovered in the Dunhuang caves in Central Asia and now kept in the British Library, London, and the Bibliothèque National, Paris. Versions of the Daodejing and many texts of religious Daoism are preserved among these manuscripts. These include the Duren jing 度人経 (Scripture of Salvation, CT 1) and magnificent examples of talismanic writing (see Ofuchi 1979, 10-22, 70-77, 366-70).

EARLY MODERN CHINA: DIAGRAMS AND PAINTINGS OF GODS AND PARADISES

LIAO DYNASTY. A pair of hanging scrolls from a Liao dynasty tomb, discovered in the 1970s, may depict Daoist subjects. One scroll depicts several hares among plants; the other is a mountainous landscape with a temple. In addition, a Liao dynasty wall painting has recently been excavated from a royal Liao tomb that depicts the descent of Xiwang mu, from the Kunlun Paradise to the human realm, where the goddess meets with the Han emperor Wudi 漢武帝. As such the goddess’s descent resem-
bles the descent of Amitābha from the Pure Land (浄土), a subject often depicted in Tang dynasty mural art. The study of Daoism and Daoist art under the rule of the Khitan Liao is just beginning.

**SONG DYNASTY.** The first appearance of the Taiji tu (Diagram of the Great Ultimate) occurred in the tenth century, and was introduced by the Daoist Chen Tuan 陳抟 (c. 906-989; see Li 1990), but an earlier form of this symbol was in fact first devised by the Buddhist monk Zongmi 宗密 (780-841) in the Tang dynasty (Robinet 1997, 221, 271 n2). The diagram became important in Song Neo-Confucianism and also inspired many related and varied Daoist charts and diagrams.

Aside from this development, the Song dynasty is a period from which a relative abundance of **Daoist paintings** survives. Ruan Gao's 阮郜 "Female Immortals in Paradise" (Palace Museum, Beijing; Xu 1984b, 1: pl. 30) depicts a realm of female immortals, probably the Kunlun Paradise of Xi Wang mu. This is one of the earliest known surviving scroll paintings of the Daoist paradise theme, of which there were many earlier versions that are recorded. The landscape setting, the figures, and the overall subject relate to a long tradition of Daoist paradise paintings that followed.

Many of the great Five Dynasties and Song treatises on landscape painting, such as Jing Hao's 荊浩 Bifa ji 筆法記 (Notes on the Art of the Brush; see Munakata 1974) and Guo Xi's 郭熙 (fl. 11th c.) Linquan gaozhi ji 林泉高致集 (Lofty Message of Streams and Mountains), are thoroughly Daoist in their conceptual language. Guo Xi emphasizes the organic nature of the earthly landscape, and the need to grasp intuitively and internalize this essential aspect of reality. The monumental landscapes of Fan Kuan 范寬, an early Northern Song master, has been described as resonating with 『inner principle," which reflects a Neo-Confucian concept of cosmic order that is essentially Daoist in origin. The paintings of Fan Kuan and Guo Xi both depict the earth as alive with qi, and the surfaces of their landscapes visibly pulsate with it.

Among the most important surviving Daoist paintings from the early Northern Song dynasty is a handscroll attributed to the figure painter Wu Zongyuan (Fig. 5). In the early eleventh century Wu was popularly called the reincarnation of the Tang painter Wu Daozi. This scroll, now in the C. C. Wang Family collection (New York), is over seven meters long, painted on silk (Barnhart 1983, 52-53, fig.13). It depicts a long procession of Daoist gods, and is entitled Chaoyuan xianzang tu 朝元仙仗圖 (Procession of Immortals Paying Homage to the Primes). The attribution to Wu Zongyuan is made in a colophon by Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫, dated 1304. The scroll may be a sketch for a Daoist temple mural, of the type seen today in the
Yuan dynasty wall paintings at the Yongle gong 永樂宮 in Shanxi province. A closely related work, probably slightly later in date, is in the Xu Beihong Memorial Museum in Beijing 北京 (Xu 1984a, pl. 33). The later version is painted on paper, and lacks the identifying inscriptions of the C. C. Wang scroll.

Another related work is the album of Daoist deities known as Daozi mo-bao 道子墨寶 (Ink Treasure of [Wu] Daozi). This remarkable album, consisting of fifty leaves, was originally published in Germany (Martin 1913), and later republished in a pirated Chinese version in 1960. The album, which almost certainly dates to the twelfth or early thirteenth century, is now in a private collection in Chicago. Many of the gods depicted are labelled as they are in the C. C. Wang scroll by Wu Zongyuan. The majority of the gods are Daoist, emanations of the pure Dao as opposed to gods of popular religion who are usually deified ancestors, ghosts or heroes, although the album does end with a depiction of the story of Erlang 二郎, a popular deity of Sichuan province.

Leaf 5, for example, depicts the gods of the five sacred peaks; leaf 11 shows the celestial generals Tianpeng 天蓬, Tianyou 天猷, Yisheng 翊聖, and Yousheng 祥聖 with Cangjie 倉頡 (the mythical inventor of writing, see Chaves 1977). Then again, leaves 12-16 depict other groups of celestial
marshals (yuanshuai 元帥), while leaf 18 could represent the demon queller Zhong Kui 鍾馗 with two subjugated demons. Leaf 21 depicts the deities of the sun, moon, the five visible and two invisible planets Luohou 羅候 (Rahu) and Jidu 計都 (Ketu), while leaves 23-24 show celestial generals of the twelve months. Leaf 25 has the deities of the twelve earthly branches accompanied by their appropriate zodiac animals. Leaf 26 depicts a group of ancient gods, including Siming 司命 (Ruler of Fate) and a figure labeled Santai 三臺 (Three Terraces) who resembles Nanji laoren 南極老人 (God of Longevity). Leaves 27-40 show figures who resemble the Judges of Hell, while the final cluster of leaves depicts the ancient story of the popular god Erlang (Fong 1984, no. 19).

Among other aspects, the “Wu Daozi” album contains what may be the earliest surviving depictions in Chinese art of the Daoist celestial guardians known as yuanshuai 元帥. These figure prominently in later Daoist painting and sculpture, and in some cases their visual representation appears to have been derived from the multi-headed, multi-armed celestial guardians and wisdom kings (mingwang 明王) of Tantric Buddhism. That painting was used in the service of religious Daoism at the Northern Song court is known from both recorded works and such surviving paintings as Emperor Huizong’s 徽宗 “Cranes over Kaifeng” (see fig. 6). The latter is a short handscroll on silk, now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang. Peter Sturman has shown (1990) that this painting was created as a ruying 瑞應 (auspicious omen), a sign of the virtuous reign of the emperor, who was a devoted patron of religious Daoism and who traced his family origins to the Yellow Emperor.

One of the most brilliant examples of surviving religious Daoist painting from the Song dynasty is the rare triptych of hanging scrolls in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, depicting the “Three Officials” (Sanguan 三官; see Wu T. 1997, pis. 21-23). In each of the three scrolls the deities are shown surrounded by their entourage and placed in appropriate settings: the official deity of heaven is floating on clouds; the deity of earth is shown on an inspection tour in a terrestrial landscape; and the deity of water is crossing the ocean waves on a dragon. The high quality of these works suggests that they were created for the imperial court of either the late Northern or early Southern Song dynasty; on stylistic grounds a twelfth century date seems clear. Unfortunately the works have no documentary inscriptions or seals that might shed light on the original context in which they were created.

A work that points to the imperial patronage of Daoist imagery during the Southern Song dynasty is a handscroll on silk by Wang Liyong 王利用, now in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City. This work, while partially truncated, depicts the transformations of Laozi and is ultimately based on
Another superb Song-dynasty Daoist painting, and one that functions as a significant and rare document of the imperial patronage of Daoist art at the court, is a short handscroll by the Southern Song painter Liang Kai (Little 1988, no. 2). The Liang Kai scroll is even more remarkable in that the painter is best remembered today for his Chan Buddhist paintings, created after he left court service. The scroll is painted in ink on paper in the baimiao (plain outline) technique of uncolored line drawing. It depicts a Daoist priest’s vision of the deified Laozi, who appears in a blaze of clouds and beams of light, surrounded by his celestial court. The scroll is signed “Your servant Liang Kai,” indicating that it was painted for the imperial court.

In addition to its scene of revelation, the painting is significant for its small adjunct scenes at the beginning and end of the scroll. The first of the three scenes at the beginning depicts artisans making images for worship in a Daoist temple, specifically paintings and sculptures of Daoist gods, and a
priest transcribing a Daoist scripture. The second scene depicts priests in a Daoist temple preparing for a ritual, and the third depicts an actual ritual being carried out, possibly the rite of *fendeng* 分燈, division of lamps. The first of the three scenes at the end of the scroll depicts people giving alms to beggars, while the second shows people releasing birds from cages. The results of acquiring merit through good deeds, suggested in these scenes, is the theme of the last scene, in which a Daoist god descends from heaven to rescue souls who are being tormented in hell. The god who descends toward a boiling cauldron, out of which lotus flowers grow, may be Jiuku tianzun 救苦天尊, the Heavenly Worthy Who Saves from Suffering, a popular god in late Tang and Song times (John Lagerwey, personal communication, November 1998). This painting is an example of a type of imperially commissioned Daoist scriptural illumination that is extremely rare today, but which was undoubtedly widespread during the Song dynasty.

Another painter better known for his Chan Buddhist subjects was the monk Fachang Muqi 法常牧谿, from Sichuan. A resident of the Lingyan Temple 禪巖寺 in Hangzhou (Zhejiang), Muqi painted one of the most striking images of Laozi that has survived from this time. Now in the Okayama Prefectural Museum, Japan, this painting depicts a world-weary, haggard old man with a concave cranium and huge ears. Looking both unkempt and infinitely wise, Laozi stares into space, clutching his robe. Muqi was also the painter of several pairs of hanging scrolls depicting tigers and dragons; the most famous of these are in the Daitokuji 大德寺, Kyoto.

The most famous Song dynasty dragon painter by far was Chen Rong 陳容, active in Lin’an 臨安 (Hangzhou) in the mid-thirteenth century. Chen’s greatest surviving masterpiece is the handscroll in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, known as the “Nine Dragons,” dated 1244 (Fig. 7; see Wu T. 1997, pl. 92). This scroll depicts nine dragons among churning ocean waves and billowing clouds; as such it is a classic depiction of yin (water) and yang (dragons). That the painting was perceived in this light is clear from the attached Yuan dynasty colophons, by such writers as Wu Quanjie 吳全節 (1269-1346; for a series of Yuan portraits of this famous Daoist priest, see Wu T. 1997, no. 149) and the Celestial Master Zhang Zhu 張祝 (1287-1368), who describe the visual imagery of the painting in purely Daoist terms.

Liang Kai’s contemporary Ma Yuan 馬遠, active during the reigns of the Southern Song emperors Guangzong 光宗, Ningzong 寧宗 and Lizong 理宗 (late twelfth early thirteenth century) is also known to have painted Daoist images at the court in Lin’an 臨安 (Hangzhou). Two works from Ma’s brush offer further evidence for the patronage of Daoist images at the Southern Song court. They are his *Chenglong tu* 乘龍圖 (Immortal Flying on a Dragon), now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei (1996, pl. 2), and
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Figure 7. Chen Rong, *Nine Dragons* (details), Southern Song dynasty, dated 1244. Handscroll, ink and light color on paper, size 46.3 x 1,096.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Francis Gardner Curtis Fund (17.1697).

his *Shangshan sihao tu* (The Four Graybeards of Mount Shang), in the Cincinnati Museum of Art (Avril 1997, no. 27),

MONGOL RULE: TEMPLE BUILDINGS, MURALS AND HANGING SCROLLS

YUAN DYNASTY. Increasing numbers of Daoist art works have survived from the Yuan dynasty, the period in which adherents of the Quanzhen 全真 school spread throughout China. Daoist figure painting from the Yuan comprises images of deities, immortals and philosophers. This is also a period from which one of the greatest examples of Daoist architecture survives (very few Daoist temple buildings survive in China that predate the Yuan; for a general survey, see Kwang Fu 1992). The most remarkable of the Yuan examples are the three principal buildings of the Yongle gong (Temple of Eternal Joy), a Quanzhen temple in southern Shanxi province, now located in Ruicheng 蒲城, just north of the Yellow River. These structures are important as much for their architecture as for their large and well-preserved Daoist murals.

The three Yuan dynasty temple buildings at the Yongle gong are each decorated on their interior walls with murals that have survived in remarkably good condition. The bulk of the complex was built in 1262, while
the murals date to the early fourteenth century. These wall paintings, found in all three of the Yuan buildings, depict gods and saints of the Daoist pantheon, and provide rare visual evidence of the pantheon as it was envisaged by the Quanzhen school in the early fourteenth century. The murals are the subject of recent Western studies by Anning Jing (1994; 1996) and Paul Katz (1993), who rely on numerous Chinese studies (see Katz 1993, 59;
they have recently been completely published in color photographs (Jin 1997).

The first hall, the Sanqing dian 三清殿 (Hall of the Three Pure Ones), contains murals that depict large groups of Daoist gods, totalling 286 deities (Fig. 8). These figures are pictured in “Audience with the Primes” (chanyuan 朝元), i.e., the Three Pure Ones, who were originally depicted in sculptural form on an altar near the center of the hall (and apparently destroyed in the 1940s). The murals were completed in 1325 by the Luoyang painter Ma Junxiang 马君祥 and his pupils. The large, primary deities whose images appear on the walls of the building include the Emperor of the South Celestial Pole and Long Life, the Heavenly Lord of Supreme One and Jiuku tianzun, the Emperors of the Thirty-two Heavens, the Emperor of Purple Tenuity and the Northern Celestial Pole, the Heavenly August Emperor of Gouchen 勾陈 Star Palace, the Jade Emperor, the Lord of Wood, the goddesses Queen of Earth and Metal Mother (i.e., Xiwang mu).

Among the many subsidiary deities, shown in smaller scale than the large primary figures, are the gods of the seven stars of the Northern Dipper, the gods of the six stars of the Southern Dipper, the gods of the sun, moon, and five visible planets, the gods of the invisible planets and the twenty-eight lunar mansions, the Three Officials, Fu Xi 伏羲, the gods of the five sacred peaks, Wenchang 文昌, the Emperor of Fengdu 鬼都 and his court, the celestial generals Tianyou, Tianpeng, Yisheng and Zhenwu, the gods of the Thunder Bureau (Leibu 雷部), the gods of the Eight Trigrams as well as Cangjie—in addition to a host of attending immortals and jade maidens. It appears that the iconography of the pantheon depicted in this hall was based on the Shangqing lingbao dafa 上清靈寶大法 (Great Rites of Highest Clarity and Numinous Treasure, CT 1213) a ritual text of the Lingbao tradition, compiled in the thirteenth century by Jin Yunzhong 金允中 (fl. 1224-1225; Katz 1993, 49). There is some disagreement among scholars regarding the precise identification of some of the gods, as none of the figures were labeled. Regardless, the enormous value of the figures lies in their preservation of a rare visualization of the Daoist pantheon. Painted in brilliant mineral pigments on plaster, these works preserve a style ultimately derived from the great Tang muralist Wu Daozi and transmitted through such Song dynasty followers of Wu Zongyuan (Katz, 1993, 45-68).

The second main hall of the Yongle gong is the Chunyang dian 純陽殿 (Hall of Pure Yang), named for the Quanzhen patriarch Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓, whose Daoist name was Chunyang. The murals here depict fifty-two scenes from the life of Lü Dongbin, and were painted by the atelier of the painter Zhu Haogu 朱好古 (see Steinhardt 1987). Many scenes are accompanied by inscriptions in cartouches. According to Katz, nearly two thirds contain quotations from the Chunyang dian shenhua miaotongji 純陽帝君神化妙通記 (The Record of Divine Transformations and Miraculous
Powers of the Lord Emperor of Pure Yang, CT 305), compiled by the southern Quanzhen Daoist Miao Shanshi (f. 1288-1324). The focus of the painted scenes include Lü Dongbin's famous "yellow millet dream," following his meeting with the immortal Zhongli Quan, his successful practice of self-cultivation and inner alchemy and his miraculous powers.

The third main hall is the Chongyang dian (Hall of Redoubled Yang), named for Wang Chongyang (1112-1170), the founder of the Quanzhen school. The murals here originally depicted forty-nine scenes from the life of Wang Zhe, painted in about 1368, but, as Paul Katz has shown, only about two thirds of these scenes survive (see Katz 2000). The hall also contains a wonderful depiction of the Three Pure Ones, on the wall of the central niche.

Mention should be made here of the Yuan-dynasty cave temple site of Longshan (Dragon Mountain) in Shanxi Province. It is located southwest of Taiyuan, the provincial capital and not far from the earlier Buddhist cave temple site of Tianlong shan. The eight caves at Longshan date to the early fourteenth century. The figures carved on the sandstone walls depict such deities as the Three Pure Ones and a variety of early Quanzhen practitioners (see Wang 1994, 112-14). A climb on foot up the steep side of the mountain is necessary to reach this beautiful and geomantically powerful site, which, much like Tianlong shan, is perched on a mountain ridge overlooking an abyss. Several heads of Daoist figures were acquired from this site by the Museum of East Asian Antiquities, Stockholm, in about 1930, and are published by Osvald Siren (1931, pl. 33).

The rapid spread of the Quanzhen school in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries led to the popularization of the cult of Lü Dongbin. Many Southern Song and Yuan paintings survive that depict this immortal. These tend to either present Lü in iconic form, as a single figure, or as part of a narrative scene, in which case many figures appear. An example of the former is the beautiful, anonymous hanging scroll in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City. A variation on this theme is seen in an anonymous late Yuan painting in the MOA Museum, Atami, Japan (Ebine 1975, no. 63). In this superb painting, the Han dynasty immortal Zhongli Quan transmits his Daoist teachings (symbolized in the painting in the form of a handscroll) to his pupil, Lü Dongbin.

While the earliest appearance of the famous group known as the Eight Immortals is in a Jin dynasty (1115-1234) tomb of the thirteenth century (in the form of ceramic relief sculptures), the best-known early depiction of this group is in a mural in the Chongyang dian at the Yongle gong. Of the eight, the most frequently depicted during the Yuan were Lü Dongbin, Zhongli Quan and Li Tieguai (Iron-crutch Li). Among the most riveting of all surviving paintings of Daoist immortals are the pair of hang-
ing scrolls in the Chionji 智恩寺, Kyoto, by the early Yuan painter Yan Hui 颜辉 (depicting Li Tieguai and Liu Haichan 劉海蟾; Ebine 1975, no. 50), and the same painter's brilliant hanging scroll in the Palace Museum, Beijing, depicting Li Tieguai (see Xu 1984a, 2: pl. 13-3).

In the latter scroll, Li, who was said to have lived during the Sui dynasty, is shown seated on a rock under a cliff. He clutches his iron crutch and glowers toward the viewer with an intensely world-weary expression. This is one of the most powerful characterizations of a Daoist immortal in the entire history of Chinese painting. One can see from such works why Yan Hui was considered one of the greatest masters of Daoist painting of the Yuan dynasty. An anonymous Yuan hanging scroll in the British Museum, traditionally attributed to Yan Hui, depicts a scene in which three immortals (Lü Dongbin, Li Tieguai, and Zhongli Quan) convene in a mountain clearing around a bronze crucible decorated with the Eight Trigrams (Binyon 1927, pi. 31). The painting is very likely a visual metaphor for inner alchemy. Yet another scroll, once attributed to Yan Hui but probably early Ming in date, depicts Li Tieguai seated by a mountain stream, engaged in an audience with an adept or lay student. (The scroll, in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. [accession #11.295], is unpublished). This type of image generically fits into the category known as wendao tu 風道圖, or paintings of “seeking the Dao.” Works of this type are not unlike Chan Buddhist paintings that depict meetings of two Chan priests, or meetings between enlightened Chan masters and secular figures, often Confucian officials; see Shimizu 1980).

One of the rarest Yuan Daoist paintings extant is Chen Yuexi's 陳月溪 hanging scroll, “The Daoist Immortal Magu” in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Wu T. 1997, pl. 148; see Fig. 9). Works like this are critical for our understanding of the changing conception and visualization of this ancient female immortal. Depicting Magu 麻姑 as a barefoot hermit, dressed in a jacket of leaves, this work presents a completely different characterization of Magu than the majority of better-known images that survive from the Qing dynasty, which depict her as a demure figure dressed in silk robes.

A highly anomalous Yuan hanging scroll in the Hatakeyama Museum, Tokyo, depicts “Laozi Crossing the Pass.” Instead of Laozi, however, the painting depicts Śākyamuni on the ox. He is accompanied by two attendants, shown in Daoist garb. Whether this image is meant to convey the interchangeability of Laozi and Buddha is not clear.

Among the great literati masters of landscape painting of the Yuan, several were practicing Daoists. The most famous landscape painter of this period was Huang Gongwang 黄公望 (1269-1354), a Quanzhen priest who made a living as a diviner and fengshui 风水 master (see Skinner 1982). His finest work is a long handscroll entitled Fuchun shanju tu 福春山居圖
Figure 9. Chen Yuexi, The Daoist immortal Magu with a Crane, Yuan dynasty (14th c.). Hanging scroll; ink, colors and gold on silk, size 100.7 x 54 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection (11.6168).
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(Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains; National Palace Museum, Taipei). It has been described as a consciously geomantic rendition of the natural landscape, the visual forms and movement of which conform to a Daoist vision of the world as a living body (Hay 1978). Several of Huang Gongwang’s other surviving landscapes have clear Daoist themes; these include “Cinnabar Cliffs and Jade Trees” in the Palace Museum, Beijing, and “Mountains of the Immortals” in the Shanghai Museum (see Tianjin 1994, pl. 7; Wenwu 1995, 2: 1-0181).

Huang’s famous contemporary Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1306-1374) was a Zhengyi 周一二 Daoist from Wuxi 無錫 (Jiangsu), whose family had been active supporters of local Daoist temples since the generation of Ni’s father. While Ni Zan rarely discusses his Daoist beliefs in his literary works, two of his surviving paintings have clear Daoist content. The first is Ni’s hanging scroll, “The Mountain Hall of the Purple Mushroom” (National Palace Museum, Taipei; see Palace Museum 1991, 4: 315). The phrase “purple mushroom” in the painting’s title refers to the Four Sages of Mount Shang, who fled into the mountains during the early Han dynasty or, according to some sources, during the preceding unrest of the Qin dynasty, in order to maintain their moral integrity. The four graybeards lived solely on mushrooms, and one of the four, Luli 甪里, composed the “Song of the Purple Mushroom:”

Silent is the lofty mountain;
Long is the deep valley.
Bright are the purple mushrooms;
They can still my hunger.
The ages of the emperors Yao 尧 and Shun 尧 are gone forever;
Whither shall I go?
A carriage and four, and lofty roofs,
All bring great worries [to the inmates].
If riches and honors entail submission to others,
I would rather be poor and lowly in order to live happily.
(Avril 1997, 54).

This (and Ni Zan’s painting) are more than a mere paean to Confucian eremitism, as is suggested by the presence of the Four Graybeards of Mount Shang. They appear in an astonishing Song dynasty monochrome ink handscroll in the Freer Gallery of Art, depicting a paradise landscape populated by Daoist immortals (Lawton 1973, no. 34).

Ni Zan’s short handscroll “The Crane Grove” is owned by the Zhongguo Meishuguan (Chinese Art Gallery) in Beijing, and was recently published for the first time (Wenwu 1995, 1: 3-003). The painting depicts a grove of trees with a stepped stone ritual altar on a river bank. The painting is dedicated to a Daoist with the cognomen Xuanchu 玄初, and the presence of the crane in the grove accentuates the sacred aspect of this remote, quiet place.
The painter Wang Meng 王蒙 (c. 1308 - 1385) was a younger contemporary of both Huang Gongwang and Ni Zan. Several paintings with Daoist themes survive from his oeuvre. The large hanging scroll “Ge Zhichuan Moving His Household” (Palace Museum, Beijing) depicts the Jin-dynasty alchemist Ge Hong traveling with his family through a mountainous landscape (Tianjin 1994, pl.110). A Daoist paradise scene by Wang Meng appears in his handscroll, “Cinnabar Mountains, Ying Ocean” (Shanghai Museum; pl. 109). The scroll, while deeply resonant with a Daoist concept, is simultaneously a literati painting of the most refined quality.

In the late Yuan, the Zhengyi school priest Fang Congyi 方從義 (fl. 1340-1380) was one of the great landscape painters of his day. Fang’s “Divine Peaks and Numinous Groves” and “High, High Pavilion” (both National Palace Museum, Taipei; Palace Museum 1991, 81, 85) are among the most dynamic of all landscapes painted by Daoist priests of this period.

Several of the Zhengyi school Celestial Masters of the Yuan were skilled painters (the same is true in the Ming dynasty). The dragon scroll entitled “Beneficent Rain” in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, is by Zhang Yucai 張羽材 (r.1295-1316), the 38th Celestial Master of Longhu shan 龍虎山, Jiangxi 江西 (see Fong 1992, pl. 81a).

**LATE IMPERIAL CHINA: COURT AND LITERATI PAINTERS, WOODBLOCKS AND RITUAL ART**

MING DYNASTY. The majority of surviving Daoist painting of the Ming dynasty are by court and professional artists, generically categorized as the Zhe School 浙派 (see Barnhart 1993). There is abundant evidence from both surviving painting and calligraphy, however, to indicate that many scholar-officials and literati (wenren 文人) were deeply engaged with Daoism. As for religious painting, while increasing attention has recently been paid to Ming dynasty Buddhist painting (Weidner 1994) there has been very little study of Ming dynasty Daoist painting.

The great masters of Zhe School painting—Dai Jin 戴進, Wu Wei 吳偉, Liu Jun 劉俊, Zhang Lu 張路—all painted many Daoist images (Barnhart 1993, pls.38, 72, figs. 62, 132, 135; see also Mu 1982). The precise function of the paintings created by these masters, which depict Daoist immortals and scenes from Daoist mythology, is often unclear. Regardless, the surviving paintings form a significant and seriously understudied body of visual work. Wu Wei (1459-1508), perhaps the greatest of the early Ming court painters, was an intellectually gifted artist whose life gradually sank into an cloud of alcohol consumption. Called to court, nonetheless, by three different emperors, Wu appears to have been a practicing Daoist who
believed in the existence of the spirit world. Stories survived in the late 
Ming of Wu Wei’s encounters with Daoist immortals, and his nickname 
given to him by the Chenghua 成化 emperor was “Little Immortal” 
(Xiaoxian 小仙). Among his surviving works are depictions of “Guang-
chengzi and the Yellow Emperor” and an unidentified “Female Immortal” 
(Palace Museum 1996, pl.31), and “The Hermit Xu You 許由 and the 
Oxherd Chao Fu 鳥父” (Miyagawa 1983, pl. 85).

Shang Xi 商喜, an early Zhe School master who served the Xuande 
宣德 emperor, painted both Daoist and secular works. His “Laozi Meeting 
Yin Xi at the Hangu Pass” (MOA Museum, Atami; Cahill 1978, pls.6-7) 
depicts the moment immediately preceding the revelation of the Daodejing 
to the frontier guard, Yin Xi 尹喜, who kneels before Laozi’s oxcart (see 
Fig. 10). Both Chinese and Western scholars have shown how Shang Xi’s 
large painting of Guan Yu 關羽 (Palace Museum, Beijing; Washington 
Gallery 1991, pl. 287) functioned as a symbol of imperial majesty, while the 
god functioned throughout China as a popular deity. (see Duara 1988).

Other artists of this school were Huang Ji 黃濟 and Zhao Qi 趙麒 who 
worked in the imperial presence and specialized in Daoist immortals. Their 
type of work is very well known, but there also were the ritual scrolls created 
for sacred occasions and events in the Daoist calendar (see Gyss-Vermande 
1988). Carefully observed by almost every Ming emperor were Daoist 
rituals at the court that reinforced both spiritual and political stability. Zhu 
Yuanzhang 朱元璋, the first Ming ruler (Hongwu 洪武) sponsored Daoist 
and Buddhist rites and temples, and was generally a patron of Daoism. 
Accounts of his life relate his reliance on several Daoist adepts, including 
Zhou Dianxian 周顔仙 (Berling 1998, 962).

Many of the finest representations of Daoist gods in Ming dynasty 
painting are found among several sets of paintings of shuilu zhai 
水陸齋 (Water and Land Rituals). The Musée Guimet in Paris owns two 
partially complete sets, acquired by Paul Pelliot. They contain depictions 
of Daoist, stellar and popular gods, in addition to buddhas and bodhi-
sattvas. The earlier of the two sets was made for use in the imperial palace 
in 1454. It includes the deities Taiyi (Great Unity) and the gods of the five 
directions, Daoist immortals, gods of the zodiac, the sun, moon and planets, 
the Three Stars (longevity, good fortune and emolument 福祿壽) as well as 
various nature deities. The appearance here of the Three Stars is one of the 
earliest known depictions of these gods as a group; they have retained their 
popularity to the present day.

In the second Guimet set, which may date to the Wanli 萬厰 reign 
(1573-1620), one sees the goddesses Mazu 媽祖 and Houtu 后土, earth 
gods 土地公, city gods 城隍 and gods of the twenty-eight lunar mansions.
The Musée Guimet also owns a brilliant painting of Bixia yuanjun, the goddess of the Morning Clouds and daughter of the Lord of Mount Tai, the eastern sacred peak.

An outstanding visual document of the engagement of the Ming court with religious Daoism takes the form of an illuminated handscroll. This was presented by the Celestial Master Zhang Xuanqing 張玄慶 to Empress Zhang 章, the wife of the Hongzhi 弘治 emperor (r. 1488-1505), on the occasion of her ordination as a Daoist priestess (San Diego Museum of Art). The Celestial Master’s long inscription documents a series of rituals that lasted six months, during which numerous Daoist ritual texts and talismans were conveyed to the empress. Precedents for such imperial ordination go
back to the Northern Wei dynasty, when Emperor Tai Wudi was ordained by Kou Qianzhi.

There is much more evidence of the engagement of the Chinese literati of the Ming with Daoism than has heretofore been recognized. Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming, the two leading masters of the Wu School of painting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were well versed in Daoist lore. In his poetry, for example, Shen Zhou demonstrates a profound knowledge of Daoist alchemy and its history. The engagement of the visually sophisticated literati of the late Ming with Daoism is demonstrated in the subject matter of two well-known masterpieces of deluxe woodblock printing, the *Chengshi moyuan* 程氏墨苑 (Cheng Family Compendium of Ink Cake Designs; dated 1606) and the *Shizhu zhai jianpu* 十竹齋箋譜 (Ten Bamboo Studio Album of Letter Papers; early 17th c.). The *Chengshi moyuan* presents a panoply of Daoist and cosmological images, beginning with the Taiji diagram. Among the most striking images in this book are the images of the gods of the twenty-eight lunar mansions, accompanied by their Daoist talismans. Similarly, the *Shizhu zhai jianpu*, one of the most brilliant examples of Ming woodblock printing, includes an astonishing array of Daoist images, some straightforward and others utterly mysterious.

Another great achievement of Ming woodblock printing was the *Zhengtong daozaog* 正統道藏 (Daoist Canon of the Zhengtong [Reign]), completed in 1444-1445. A supplement, also containing many woodblock-illustrated texts, was printed in 1607. Huge in scope, this work is itself a great work of art, including many texts illustrated with charts, diagrams, talismans, images of gods and immortals, and even sacred landscapes. The finest surviving edition of the early Ming *Daozang* is now in the Bibliothèque National, Paris, having been acquired by Paul Pelliot in Beijing (Cohen and Monet 1992, no. 44).

Although Daoist priestly vestments are known from the Jin dynasty (1115-1234), having been excavated from a late twelfth century tomb near Datong (Shanxi; see Wilson 1995, figs. 6a-b), most surviving examples date to the late Ming and Qing dynasties (see Jacobsen 1991; Lagerwey 1987, app. 1).

Any discussion of Daoist art of the Ming would not be complete without including a brief survey of works created in the service of the worship of the god Zhenwu, the Perfect Warrior and god associated with the north. An enormous number of sacred art works were made during the Ming to honor this Daoist god. The majority of these date to the Yongle reign onward. The proliferation of Zhenwu images in the early fifteenth century can be traced directly to the Yongle Emperor’s personal devotion to this god, also known as Xuanwu 玄武 (Dark Warrior) or Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝.
(Supreme Emperor of the Dark Heavens; see Lagerwey 1992; deBruyn 1998). One of the largest surviving Zhenwu sculptures from the early fifteenth century is now the primary icon of worship at the Yanqing guan延慶觀 (Monastery of Extended Felicity), the main Daoist temple in Kai-feng開封 (Henan), the former capital of the Northern Song. Seated on an enormous stone dais carved in low relief with the Eight Trigrams, this bronze sculpture is dated to 1486, during the reign of Chenghua.

As the imperial Zhenwu cult deepened and took on a previously unmatched regularity, worship of the Perfect Warrior spread throughout China and became part of popular culture (see Seaman 1987). On the imperial level this is reflected in the fact that the Yongle emperor built several Zhenwu temples in the palace precincts in Nanjing and, after 1421, Beijing. He also erected the Zixiao gong紫霄宫 (Temple of the Purple Empyrean) at Wudang shan武當山 (see Osaka Museum 1994, pl. 65). The miraculous apparitions of Zhenwu at Wudang shan during the Yongle reign are given visual articulation in a brilliantly-colored handscroll owned by the Baiyun guan白云觀 (While Cloud Monastery), Beijing, entitled “Divine Manifestations of Zhenwu at Wudang shan” and attributed to the Yongle period. The same images also appear in a woodblock-illustrated text in the the early Ming Daoist canon, entitled Da Ming Xuantian shanghai tuolu大明玄天上帝瑞應圖錄 (Illustrated Record of the Auspicious Omens in the Great Ming Dynasty) of the Supreme Emperor of the Dark Heaven, CT 959).

Many small-scale bronze, stoneware, and porcelain shrines to Zhenwu survive from both the Ming and Qing dynasties (e.g., Vainker 1991, pl. 119). Wudang shan was the god’s sacred mountain on earth, a tradition that can be traced to at least the Yuan dynasty (Lagerwey 1992). As Xuanwu, the god may have been portrayed in some kind of anthropomorphic form since the Six Dynasties period (see Major 1986); its traditional image as intertwined tortoise and snake is accompanied by a human male figure in two known examples of Northern Wei tomb art. Both are carved into the lower ends of stone coffins dating to the early sixth century. It was in the Northern Song, however, that the tortoise-and-snake image of Xuanwu was transformed into the anthropomorphic form of a warrior known as Zhenwu. The god was increasingly associated with Wudang shan during the Mongol period. One of the earliest depictions of Zhenwu in Chinese painting is as one of the Four Saints 四聖, comprise the celestial guardians Zhenwu, Yisheng, Tianyou, and Tianpeng, seen in a Shuishu zhai painting from the fifteenth century, now in the Shanxi Provincial Museum in Tai-yuan (Wenwu 1988, pl. 78). Several Ming dynasty paintings of Zhenwu with his court survive; among these are examples in a private collection in London (Bruckner 1998, pl. 7) and the Reiunji 禪雲寺 in Tokyo.
It is also known from literary evidence that beyond the northeast border of China, the Tanguts of the Xixia 西夏 dynasty (ab. 982-1227) had begun worshipping Zhenwu during the early eleventh century, and later evidence for this can be seen in the Xixia period banner depicting Zhenwu with a tortoise and snake, recovered from the ancient site of Kharakhot by K. Kozlov (1863-1935) in 1909, now in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (see Piotrovsky 1993 64).

Among the many metal sculptures related to the Zhenwu cult are two miniature models of Wudang shan in bronze. One is in situ on the sacred mountain, and is dated 1616 (Renmin 1991, 32). The other, undated, is now in the British Museum, and depicts Zhenwu flying on the back of a tortoise and snake, with Five Dragon Kings below—all figures long associated with Wudang shan.

QING DYNASTY. While the Manchu rulers of the early Qing dynasty embraced Tibetan Buddhism as their primary religion, Daoism continued to play a role at the imperial court as well as throughout both urban and rural China. Numerous Daoist paintings of the Qing dynasty survive at the Baiyun guan in Beijing; these consist of images of such figures as the Jade Emperor, the Queen Mother of the West, the Three Officials, Jiuku tianzun, Zhenwu, Doumu Dou Mu (Dipper Mother), the seven stars of the Northern Dipper, the Three Stars, the gods of the twenty-eight lunar mansions, the sun, moon and five planets, the three Mao 費 brothers, Guandi 关帝, Lü Dongbin, Qiu Changchun 丘長春, Magu, Bixia yuanjun 碧霞元君, city gods, earth gods, the Ten Kings of Hell and Zhong Kui (see Cheng 1996).

A large, previously unpublished hanging scroll in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in Washington, D.C., provides visual evidence for the presence of Daoist rituals at the early Qing court. The painting by the eighteenth-century court painter Jiao Bingzhen 焦秉貞, focuses on a Daoist altar comprising three stacked tables. Standing on the mid-level of this altar is a Daoist priest, who holds aloft a hu 瑚 (ivory ritual tablet). Kneeling before him is an aristocrat, possibly a Manchu nobleman. In front of the altar a Daoist orchestra is depicted, with lithophone, sheng 笙, cymbal, horn, and other instruments.

Daoist priestly vestments of the Qing period survive in abundance, and are often extraordinary creations of silk weaving and embroidery. These are very often decorated with depictions of the Daoist and popular pantheons, the “true forms” (zhengxing 真形) of the five sacred peaks, and symbols of the sun, moon and twenty-eight lunar mansions. In many cases the designs center on a building resembling a pagoda, which may be a depiction of an ideal sacred peak, or axis mundi.

Several rare portraits of Daoist priests survive in the form of scroll paintings, in ink and colors on silk. A fine example in the Royal Ontario
Museum depicts an unknown Daoist priest. The painting can be dated to the eighteenth century by virtue of its similarity to portraits by Giuseppe Castiglione and Jiao Bingzhen.

With the enormous resurgence of religious Daoism in mainland China, greater numbers of works of sacred Daoist art will inevitably come to light in the coming years. The compilation of the largely lost history of Chinese Daoist art has yet to be written, and will depend on the discovery of such treasures in China, and the recognition of works of Daoist art in museum and private collections in Japan and the West. Before long, it is hoped, a major reassessment of the history of Daoist art will emerge, leading to greater awareness of the major role Daoism has played in the development of Chinese visual culture.

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Ritual music as a genre can be defined as the formalization of language and sound with the aim of communicating with the divine. It is studied particularly in the discipline of ethnomusicology, and in the China field has most recently been the subject of an edited volume by Bell Yung, Evelyn Rawski and Rubie Watson (1996). That volume contains a thorough survey of recent studies (2-5) and a good description of different musical styles, such as patterns of loudness and timbre of sound, intonation and rhythmical patterns, tempo and pitch (17-26). The terminology used there for both musical instruments and forms of presentation will serve as the basis for the English terms used in this contribution.

Daoist music has been mostly studied by Chinese scholars from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the mainland, but the volume by Yung et al. contains an in-depth study by Judith Boltz on the music used in the puda 覆渡 ritual for guhun 孤魂 or desolate souls. She analyzes both its present form, as used in Taiwan, and its descriptions in historical sources (Boltz 1996). In addition, a major international conference on Daoist music was held in Hong Kong in the 1980s, and its proceedings were published a few years later (Tsao and Law 1989).

Daoist ritual music has its origins in shamanism. Its development was heavily influenced by court music, and to the present day it is closely linked with folklore and folk music. It divides today into two major types: music associated with the key Daoist schools of the monastic Complete Perfection (Quanzhen) and that of the lay Celestial Masters (Tianshi) or Orthodox Unity (Zhengyi).

The music is found in every province of mainland China wherever there are Daoist temples and Daoist rituals are performed. Complete Perfection styles appear more in the north, and Celestial Masters styles more in the
south. Both enjoy great popularity, but the latter have a closer relation to folk music. In Taiwan, the major Daoist school is the Celestial Masters, with a music style heavily influenced by local models, especially those of Fujian and indigenous Taiwan. As a result, Daoist music here is now quite distinct from that on the mainland. Daoist temples of Hong Kong, by contrast, for the most part are descended from the Sanyuan gong 三元宮 (Temple of the Three Primes) in Guangdong, and the music is Guangdong Daoist in style. Nevertheless, it also shows influences from Cantonese, Buddhist and regional folk musics, and has developed its own unique style.

As Daoist music developed in China, it also spread overseas to Chinese communities in Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, the United States, Australia, France and elsewhere. All of these countries have Daoist temples that have been developed by local people. To date they have remained smaller than those in China, and both their rituals and musical performances are more limited in scale. They have not yet developed independent styles.

When classifying Daoist music we can divide it, like all ritual music, into vocal and instrumental categories. Daoists, or those who are inside participants, call vocal music “chanting” (yun 韻, yunqiang 謡腔, yunzi 韻子) and instrumental music “tunes” (qupai 曲牌, paizi 牌子). Both are played in different forms depending on their intended audience. The main division is according to yin and yang. Among forms of vocal music there is yinyun and yangyun. The former is employed in rituals for the deceased or during memorial services, while the latter is performed in rituals for the deceased or during memorial services addressed to the gods on behalf of the living (Takimoto and Liu 1997, 19).

In addition, vocal music is divided into four different styles of presentation. The first is a kind of song that is very musical with a defined melody, sounds like normal singing and is delivered with a smooth voice. It is comparable to an “aria” in Western music. Chinese terms expressing this form are yun 韻 (chant), song 頌 (extolling), zan 讚 (praise), tan 嘆 (lament) or yin 引 (aria). Songs written in this form that are commonly heard include the Chengqing yun 澄淸韻 (Chant of Purity and Clarity), the Tianshi song 天師頌 (Extolling the Celestial Master), the Zhongtang zan 中堂讚 (Praise in the Central Hall), the Xinglu zan 行路讚 (Wayfarer’s Lament) or the Xiao jukuyin 小救苦引 (Lesser Aria to Those Who Save from Suffering).

The second type of vocal music is a kind of chant in which the musical aspect is secondary to the vocal element. This music is commonly used in reports to superiors, to show respect to the gods or when receiving orders from the divine. Daoists call this baogao 宝誥 or “precious declaration;” a Western equivalent might be the recitative. Typical examples include reports addressed to the Goddess of the Dipper (Doumu 斗姆), to the Three
DAOIST RITUAL MUSIC

Bureaus (Sanguan 三官), to Mysterious Heaven (Xuantian 玄天) or to the Worthies Who Save from Suffering (Jiuku 救苦).

A third type of vocal music is a rhythmical presentation with a more subtle musical element. This is called *niangqi* 童腔 or “incantation.” It is usually used in addressing the earth god (Tudi gong 土地公) or during offerings (*gongyang* 供養) and purification ceremonies (*jiuzhai* 戒齋). The final type is a kind of recital that is spoken in a voice specially pitched low or high, resembling the speech used in Chinese opera. It appears in the vocal performances presented by one of the three key leaders of a ritual: the *dujiang* 読講 (cantor), the *biaobai* 表白 (presenter) or the *gaogong* 高功 (officiant). Most commonly the cantor leads the singing and the other two follow along with the congregation. Sometimes, however, the presenter leads, the officiant sings a solo, and the various ritual leaders generally take turns in singing the ritual.

Instrumental music also appears in several different forms. One distinction made is between the *zhengqu* 正曲 or formal musical piece, and the *shuaju* 言曲 or informal music. The first is used for praising the gods or in any other formal ritual context, especially in the key religious moments of the rite. The second is played in more secular contexts and serves to lure the broader populace into joining in the festivities. It is not heard in the rituals themselves and its main function is to appeal to outsiders. It is sometimes played before the rituals begin or during intermissions.

There are two forms of formal instrumental music. One is purely instrumental without any vocal music. Like the informal music described above, this is played either before or between rituals. It can be played when Daoists move or dance without chanting, to assist in coordinating their movements, or to alleviate the transition between one set of rites and the next and indicate the continuity of different religious activities. The latter music is called *guochang* 國場. The other major form of instrumental music accompanies vocal performances. It highlights the use of ritual percussion instruments, such as the wooden fish, small gongs, cymbals and drums, to beat the rhythm of the chants. On occasion other instruments are also used, most notably strings and winds. A list of the most common instrument names in Chinese and English is provided in Table 1.
TABLE 1. INSTRUMENTS USED IN DAOIST MUSIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cha</td>
<td>cymbals</td>
<td>Guan</td>
<td>pipes, winds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dang</td>
<td>small gong</td>
<td>Di</td>
<td>transverse flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erhu</td>
<td>two-stringed fiddle</td>
<td>Gu</td>
<td>drum, percussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ling</td>
<td>handbell</td>
<td>Myu</td>
<td>wooden fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipa</td>
<td>plucked lute</td>
<td>Sanxian</td>
<td>three-stringed lute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheng</td>
<td>mouth organ</td>
<td>Suona</td>
<td>double-reed pipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yangqin</td>
<td>zither</td>
<td>Zhong</td>
<td>bronze bell</td>
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History

Daoist music has a long history that goes back thousands of years. According to Chinese tradition, shamans sang and danced before the gods in order to bring joy, prosperity, health, and good fortune to the people. The shamans acted as liaisons between the people and the gods. Daoist music partly derives from these ancient practices, inheriting both song and dance as means of communicating with the gods.

The FORMATIVE period of the Daoist religion was the early middle Ages, from the Later Han through the Six Dynasties. During this time Daoism rose above its grassroots origins to secure a more prestigious place at the imperial court and became a fully organized religion. In the early fifth century the new Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi received a revealed scripture titled *Yinzong yinsong xinke zhi jie* (Precepts of the New Code to Be Chanted [to the Melody] ‘In the Clouds’). This is the first recorded use of ritual music in Daoist chanting. Before this time it appears that scriptures were expressed orally in a form of chanting called *zhsong* that was more like an oral recitation. Kou reformed the way in which scriptures were expressed, prescribing the use of music and even specific melodies (*yuesong*).

Daoist music reached its peak in the TANG dynasty, and as the religion became more popular and influential so did its music. The music's most noteworthy characteristic at this time was its close relation to court music, and Daoist songs and tunes were often commissioned by emperors for ritual use at court. Emperor Xuanzong (r. 713-755) was an especially great connoisseur of Daoist music. He ordered court musicians to write Daoist pieces, invited musicians of different backgrounds to his palace and even composed ritual music himself. Some of the more famous works that he sponsored include Sima Chengzhen’s *Xuanzhen daoqu* (Tune of Mysterious Perfection), Li Huiyuan’s *Daluoqian qu* (Chant
of the Heaven of Grand Veil), and He Zhizhang's 紫清道曲 (Tune of Purple Clarity) and 上聖道曲 (Tune of the Highest Sages).

The SONG dynasty saw a transformation of Daoism in which the religion became even more popular and widespread, and imperial support of Daoist music continued unabated. The oldest surviving notation of a musical transcription dates from this time. It was compiled by the emperor himself in the context of the 玉音法事 (Jade Tune) Ritual. The work is divided into three volumes and contains a total of fifty pieces of music. It used winding lines to record melodies, a notational method that was then discontinued and is no longer understood; thus the pieces themselves are unintelligible (see Figure 1).

In the YUAN dynasty, Daoism divided into the two major schools of today: the monastic Complete Perfection and the popular Celestial Masters. Daoist ritual music has divided along the same lines, and the music of each faction is described below.

In the MING dynasty, the Yongle emperor (1402-24) wrote an anthology of Daoist music, entitled 大明御制玄教樂章 (Musical Stanzas of the Mystery Teaching, Sponsored by the Great Ming). It uses the gongche pu or word-based form of notation and includes fourteen pieces (see Figure 2).
It employs about ten different Chinese words, or phonetic symbols, with each representing one tone of the notation. The music can still be read today.

During the Ming, Daoism declined, particularly in terms of imperial support. Instead of occupying a prestigious position at court the religion now found more of a place among the grassroots traditions of popular culture. From this change in Daoism’s overall status, Daoist music became linked more closely with Chinese folk music, and the two genres influenced each other.

In the QING dynasty the close relationship between Daoist and folk music continued as the Qing court supported the religion even less than the Ming. To the Manchu emperors Daoism was an unimportant creed lacking prestige. Nevertheless one important event occurred in regard to Daoist music under the Qing; in 1906, He Longxiang and Peng Hanran compiled the Chongtian daoziang jiyao (Edited Essentials of the Daoist Canon) in the Erxian an (Two Immortals’ Cloister) of Chengdu (Sichuan). It contained 56 pieces of Daoist music under the title Quanzhen zhengyin (Proper Melodies of Complete Perfection), an unprecedented collection that was written down in the ritual percussion notation called dangqingpu (see Figure 3). The pieces in this collection continue to be heard in Complete Perfection rituals today.
one exception there was little Dao continued to be the case until the activity in the country came to an end. The 1980s, has Daoism regained has undergone a renaissance.

SCHOOLS AND FUNCTION

and its music, falls into two major and Celestial Masters. has three different functions in the school. First, it embellishes the and evening (zaowan ke 早晚課) at
Chatter Twenty-Five

ries. Second, music is used to celebrate festivals or send memorials to the gods on special days. These include important birthdays such as those of the Jade Emperor on the ninth day of the first month of the lunar calendar, Qiu Changchun on the nineteenth of the first, and Lord Lao on the fifteenth of the second month, as well as the festivals of the Three Primes on the fifteenth of the first, seventh and tenth months. Finally, music is used to praise the gods on special occasions, such as when rain falls after a long drought, when an epidemic or natural disaster ends, or when someone dies and the gods are praised to ensure their successful sojourn in the otherworld.

Generally, in Complete Perfection music the voice is emphasized over other musical mediums. Instruments play a secondary role and are few in number and variety. Ritual percussion instruments, such as bronze bells, drums, wooden fish, handbells, small gongs, and cymbals, together with a group of monks or nuns chanting in unison, constitute the core of Daoist music at the daily monastic services and other rituals. Only on rare occasions do other traditional Chinese instruments make an appearance.

In rituals that praise the gods in festivals or memorials, the voice—both in chanting and singing—is again the most important medium. Sometimes the rituals also involve the performance of longer scenes represented in dance, or more extensive pieces of instrumental music. After this large percussion instruments are played, along with Chinese wind instruments such as double-reed pipes, mouth organs, or transverse flutes. In these rituals, vocal music may appear in a variety of different styles: as choirs singing in unison, soloists leading a group, different soloists taking turns singing individual lines, individual solo singing, or free recitation in the form of songs.

The most notable characteristic of Complete Perfection music is its high degree of uniformity; it applies the same melodies and styles throughout the country, even across provincial and regional boundaries. This is because all members of the school use the same musical model contained in its repertory, the *Quanzhen zhengyun* (Perfected Melodies of Complete Perfection). This is also used in the *Shifang conglin* 十方叢林 (Comprehensive Forest [of Melodies] of the Ten Directions), and so is known as the *Shifang yun* 十方雲. All music in this school is transmitted via oral instruction; there are no written scores in any of its temples or monasteries.

Despite this overall uniformity, there is a certain degree of local coloring within Complete Perfection music, and specific temples are affected by local culture and language. Music that is modified in this way is referred to as *difang yun* 地方雲 or “local melodies.” Popular styles are highly effective in
spreading Daoist ideas and attracting wider segments of the population to the religion.

The CELESTIAL MASTERS (Zhengyi) school also uses music in its key rituals, but tends to employ music for the curing of diseases, the prevention of and recovery from natural disasters, the expulsion of harmful insects from fields and the offering of prayers for good fortune. Rituals of this nature are often called dajiao 打醮 or "offerings" and are carried out before harvests in the countryside.

Offerings can be divided into two kinds: pure offerings and dark offerings (qingjiao 清醮; youjiao 幽醮). Pure offerings and their prayers intended to improve people's lives, bringing them good harvests, good fortune, healthy children and the like. Dark offerings are celebrations to remember the deceased, to ward off evil and to protect the living from harm. The ritual music of the Celestial Masters coordinates both kinds of offerings. Similar to its Complete Perfection counterpart, it makes much use of the voice—in solos, with leaders beginning the song or chant while a choir follows, and with groups chanting in unison. Unlike Complete Perfection, however, the Celestial Masters' instrumentation is rich and varied. There are two reasons for this: one, its music incorporates many more instruments, especially strings and winds; two, it is sometimes purely instrumental. Additional instruments used include double-reed pipes, transverse flutes, two-stringed fiddles, plucked lutes, three-stringed lutes and zithers (see also Lee 1992).

Celestial Masters music has two other major characteristics. First, it is performed in an open manner, with anyone able to join in and participate. It is even performed by people who are not Daoists. If such people desire the celebration that accompanies a great offering, they can hire a Daoist troupe to come and perform, and may actively participate in the music and celebration. Second, the sponsors of such Daoist musical performances are usually local people, not monks or nuns. For this reason, Celestial Masters music is highly local and heavily incorporates local instruments, players, melodies, and styles.

Because of these two traits, Celestial Master Daoists are highly aware of their local environment, and much popular and folk music is absorbed into their musical styles and ritual performances. For example, the ritual music of Shanghai and Suzhou clearly exhibits the influences of local Jiangnan silk and bamboo music (jiangnan sizhu 江南丝竹). Certain melodies used in Suzhou's central temple, the Xuanmiao guan 玄妙观 (Temple of Mystery and Wonder), derive from Sunan wind and percussion music. Typical tunes include the "Tifaig shu 一封書 (A Letter), the Qingjiang yin 清江引 (Clear
River), the *Dakai men* 大開門 (Wide Open Gate) and the *Jinzi jing* 金字經 (Book of Golden Letters). Similarly, the Celestial Masters head temple on Mount Longhu uses a form of music that is heavily influenced by the style of local folksongs, known as *Yiyang qiang* 弁陽腔 (Jiangyi Local Folklore). These are examples of how Celestial Masters temples have actively incorporated local music into their ritual performances.

Consequently, this kind of Daoist music is highly idiosyncratic, varying from place to place. It thereby differs significantly from Complete Perfection music which, as we have seen, is extremely uniform throughout the country. For example, whereas one finds a very similar style of Complete Perfection music in both Shanghai and Suzhou, Celestial Masters music in the two cities is widely divergent—even though they are geographically close and the rituals performed in them are highly similar. In Shanghai, a Daoist would sing in *Shanghai qiang*; in Suzhou he would chant in *Suzhou qiang*. All the major centers of the Celestial Masters have their own style of music and chanting, even if the same rituals are performed and the same scriptures are used.

*Huqiu* 伙居, "community" or popular Daoists, are a third type of Daoist. They are not attached to monasteries or local temples but rather live with their families and lead ordinary, lay lives, usually as farmers or craftsmen. Although they follow the religion and are trained in both rituals and music, in their daily lives they appear as peasants and wear no special garb. They don their costumes only when asked to perform a rite on behalf of a local person. They become Daoists, that is, only when the occasion demands, moving back and forth between the lay and priestly life. Sometimes they invite local folk musicians to participate in the rituals which they organize. Their music, although it applies certain elements of monastic or temple styles, tends overall to be more in line with folk practice, using popular tunes to chant the scriptures.

**Relations and Influences**

*Court Music*. From its very beginning, Daoism has had a close relationship with the imperial court. Traditionally Daoists appeared at court to gain the support of the emperor, aristocrats, and officials, which they needed in order to survive and flourish. At the same time, because Daoism was the major indigenous religion of China, the court needed its support in order to maintain a strong hold on the people. Since Daoists reached out widely to the populace, the court was able to use them to spread ideas that
were politically supportive of its policies. As a result of this symbiotic relationship, Daoist music has always maintained close links to court music.

Although this interrelationship is clear from historical sources, it is difficult to demonstrate in any concrete cases. This is because traditional court music has all but vanished today; there are no audio recordings, and score transcriptions are scarce. Comparisons therefore must be made using historical documents, such as the above-mentioned “New Code” of Kou Qianzhi, which included a set of precepts to be chanted in an arrangement that imitated Han-dynasty court music (jisi 祭祀).

It was in the Tang dynasty that Daoist music reached its heyday at court, exerting a significant influence on the development of court music styles. Court music, too, thrived at this time, which contributed significantly to the rise of Daoist music. Indeed, it becomes difficult to distinguish one from the other. The most important form of music in all major Tang court ceremonies was Yanyue 燕樂, “Music of Yan.” It was also applied during Daoist rites, and several key melodies followed its style, including the famous Buxu sheng 步虛聲 (Pacing the Void), the Qixian 祈仙 (Imploring the Immortals), the Qiaoxian 饋仙 (Soaring to Immortality), the Jiuxian 九仙 (Nine Immortals), the Sanyuan 三元 (Three Primes), the Shouyue 寿樂 (Longevity Song), the Zijiu 紫極 (Purple Culmen), the Chengtian yue 承天樂 (Song of Obeying Heaven), and many others.

Some forms of this “Music of Yan” were also called faqu 法曲, or ritual music. These bore a close resemblance to Daoist tunes and themes. For example, certain faqu titles referred to clearly Daoist themes, such as Wangying 朮應 (Yearning for Paradise), Xianxian yin 献仙音 (Offering Immortals’ Song), Xiantian hua 献天花 (Offering Heavenly Flowers), or Nishang yuyi 雨裳羽衣 (Rainbow Cloak and Feather Robe). Moreover, the same instruments were used in this kind of music as in Daoist music, and both court officials and emperors (notably Xuanzong mentioned above) were actively engaged in the composing appropriate pieces. Furthermore, Daoist musicians were trained at court. Clearly then, under the Tang the relationship between Daoist and court music was close and multifaceted.

A similar situation was found under the Ming dynasty. The Ming court frequently held Daoist rituals, which were very popular. Both the Hongwu (1368-1398) and Yongle (1402-1424) emperors greatly enjoyed Daoist rituals and music; they supported a court institute, known as the Shenyue guan 神樂觀 that trained professionals to perform both court rituals and Daoist rites. Ritual performers known as yuesheng 樂舞生 (performers of music and dance) specialized in these court services,
and wore costumes identical to those of Complete Perfection masters. They were generally regarded more as Daoists than as court musicians.

Like the Tang emperor Xuanzong, Yongle also composed Daoist music and had it collected in the anthology *Da Ming yuzhi xuanjiao yuezheng* (see above). This collection is divided into three sections: (1) music used during offerings to the gods, including rites for their greetings and farewells; (2) music praising the god of mysterious heaven; and (3) music used during rites for the souls of the dead and memorial services. The second of these forms the core of the book because the emperor focused his religious concerns on the heavenly deity and believed himself to be his earthly manifestation. From the collection's notation it is quite evident that this Daoist music—which was used strictly within the confines of the court—was very close to court music in style and organization, so close in fact that it is sometimes hard to differentiate between the two.

**FOLK MUSIC.** Although Daoism is a religion and is thus composed of religious elements, it is also deeply ingrained in secular folk customs. As described earlier, Daoism was closely linked with the court in ancient times, but it has also always had an intimate relationship with popular culture. While Daoist music aims to express the wishes of and convey messages to the gods, it is also played by mortal people in a secular local settings. Thus it has two elements that make it unique: its religious character, which sets it apart from other forms of music; and its closeness to folk culture, which bonds it with real people in real places. We can therefore better understand Daoist music if we analyze its relationships to folksongs, story recitals, local drama, and popular instrumental music.

In mainland China, folksongs are passed from one generation to the next through an oral tradition. They are not transcribed or composed by individual musicians. Folksongs are closely linked with people's daily lives. When peasants work in the fields, they sing songs about their labor; when people marry, they and their friends sing songs about marriage; when people engage in story telling, they sing songs relating to the story. For this reason, folksongs play a vital role in Chinese daily life and popular culture, providing an environment in which Daoist music has thrived for centuries. Both forms of music have been closely connected with, and have reflected the realities of, people's lives, and they have thus influenced each other significantly.

Daoist music uses popular forms of music to attract people to the religion and spread its teachings. But it is also rooted among the people since many Daoists themselves come from the countryside. When a given Daoist moves from his village to the temple, he does not always shed his local
language and customs—although ideally he should give up all non-religious activities and ideas. He often finds it difficult to shed his native accent and customs, and thus maintains an element of local color in his religious activities. Thus, when Daoists sing religious songs, however much they may wish to comply to non-local standards, they unconsciously add local color to their chantings in their words, melodies, or instrumentation.

The common people often use religious songs in their customary activities, such as the rituals of jisi. Daoist music enters into these as a natural element, and in fact the successful performance of the practice may require its participation. To give an example; certain types of folksongs such as Sidian ge 祀典歌 (Song of Sacrifice) and Fengsu ge 風俗歌 (Song of Customs) are chanted in offerings made to the local gods. Daoist music everywhere has songs of this type, displaying highly similar melodies and tunes. In transcription the two look remarkably alike. Figure 4 (a-c) gives a comparative example, showing the Daoist melody above and the folk tune below.

**Story recitals** or shuochang 説唱 are another kind of folk music common in mainland China and contain a mixture of spoken and sung phrases. They have a long history in the country, varying greatly with locality. One form of this is called daoqing 道情 or “solo ballad” (see Sawada 1970; Boltz 1996, 209). Part of an active Daoist effort to raise funds for the religion, it goes back to a Tang-style of storytelling known as sujiang 俗講 or “colloquial telling.” Sujiang was first used to spread Daoist ideas among the wider populace but soon became so popular that people were more interested in listening to stories than in doing their work. The Tang government was concerned about this development and, in an attempt to establish some control, limited its performance. Daoists reacted by changing their style of storytelling and instead of describing the scriptures they began to explain Daoist tales. This new form made use of a more poetic style and was soon linked with instrumental tunes.

Solo ballads as a composite art form developed fully only in the Song dynasty, when professional balladiers traveled throughout the country to spread the religion. In the Ming and Qing, ballads became widely popular throughout the country and came to be sung notably by Daoists but also by other people. Their content and form changed accordingly, and the music was strongly influenced by popular tunes. What emerged was the folk ballad. This in turn appears in two forms, the yuequ ti 樂曲體, a non-universal or irregular piece of music that forms part of the ballad, and the qupai ti 曲牌體, a systematic or regular form of music within the ballad. The former, widely popular and known to many people, was prevalent in the south, especially in the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Fujian; the
latter was more common in the north. Typical pieces include *Shua hai'er* (Children Playing), *Zaolong pao* (Dragon Garb), *Qingjiang yin* (Clear River), *Langtiao sha* (Waving Sands), *Shampo yang* (Mountain Goats), and so on.

The ballad is very popular to the present day in the northern provinces of Shanxi, Gansu, Hebei, Henan and Shandong, maintaining the close relationship between Daoist music, story telling and other performances, and popular art forms.

The same pattern also holds true for popular *drama* (*xigu* 戏曲), whose closeness to religious ritual has been noted before in a Buddhist context (see Johnson 1989). The dramatic aspect of Daoist ritual is immediately appar-
ent when one remembers that Daoists take on the roles of different gods, officials, and immortals in their rites. Again, local practices are tremendously diverse, so that some locations have an active tradition of Daoist drama, while others do not. To give some examples, there is **daqing xi** (ballad drama) in Shanxi, **shidao xi** (masters drama) in Hunan and Guangxi, **tongzi xi** (apprentice drama) and **xianghuo xi** (incense burning drama) in Jiangsu and **dixi** (earth drama) in Guizhou. All of these types of local drama combine Daoist ideas and ritual forms with local ways, so that they represent a form of ritual that is Daoist and yet, at the same time, part of the popular theater scene. These styles all share the same musical organization, within which we can distinguish two forms: **qupai lianzhu** (a medley that strings together hundreds of individual pieces to express the complex emotions raised in the drama); and **banshi bianhua** (a type of melody that is more uniform and yet changes rapidly in rhythm and tempo, again to match the changing feelings expressed on stage. Both of these forms are actively used in Daoist rituals, being applied at different stages and expressing different aspects of the sacred events (see also Boltz 1996).

In addition, both local drama and Daoist ritual music are characterized by a close integration of bodily movements, singing, and instrumental music. Both make use of a narrative form of music known as **yunbai** (chanted speech). In this form, the pitch varies from high to low according to the feelings expressed by the person in the drama or ritual. Percussion instruments also play an important role in both. In Daoist rituals they punctuate the chanting of the scriptures, give rhythm to the ritual steps, and orchestrate the movements. In popular drama, they are essential in emphasizing the actors' movements and accompanying their singing and musical chanting.

It is difficult to decide whether Daoist music influenced drama more or drama had a greater impact on Daoist music, but a few historical observations can be made. First, Daoists traditionally took an active part in local drama and Daoist stories about gods and immortals formed an important part of local repertories. Second, Daoists made active use of dramatic performances to attract people to the religion and spread their teachings among the wider populace. They used dramatic music because it was already a popular medium and the people could easily relate to it. Some instrumental pieces are thus the same, both in melody and title, in both Daoist music and the music of drama—as, for example, we see in **Xiao kaimen** (The Open Door), **Shanpo yang** (Mountain Goats), and **Bangzhuang tai** (At the Vanity).
Another area of overlap is **folk instrumental music**, which has a long history in China. By the Zhou dynasty instruments were already classified according to the material from which they were made and divided into eight classes: metal, stone, clay, skins (of cows, pigs, or snakes), silk, wood, bowl-formed wood _ROUTE_ and bamboo. Instruments at that time included chimes, bells, lithophones, ocarinas, zithers and flutes. Over the centuries these became popular as folk instruments, and they have remained in use to the present day. Folk music is popular in all parts of China. Some of the more important regional variants include the percussion music of Shanxi, the winds of Hebei, and the pipes and drums of Jiangsu and Jiangnan.

In all these places Daoist music and folk music interact in multiple ways. Sometimes both contain identical pieces, whereas sometimes they share a basic melody but with varying interpretations. Then again, the style may be similar while the performance varies. The structure of the instrumental music used in both tends to be highly similar. A good example here is the instrumental music of the Baiyun guan in Shanghai, which is popular in both Shanghai and southern Jiangsu. Another example is the music of the Xuanmiao guan in Suzhou which is almost identical with the local winds and percussion music (see Liu 1999). Both have a drum solo that is played in three parts—fast, moderate, and slow—and overall their percussion music share the same structure, playing technique, and performance style. In fact, older Daoists testify that they learned their musical techniques from the local musical folklore organization.

In other areas of China, too, including Taiwan and Hong Kong, a similar relationship between Daoist and folk music is found. For example, the Daoist music of Hebei is very close to Hebei folk music (chuida 吹打) and the music of the Daoist City God Temple of Xi'an resembles the local percussion style. The ritual music of Guangdong and Hong Kong temples, moreover, is very close to the regional folk music, a situation also found in Taiwan (see Lü 1994). Although the close interrelation between the two kinds of music is documented in many areas of greater China, it is difficult to determine which was more seminal. Over the past fifty years, however, the tendency has been for folk music to influence Daoist styles rather than the other way around.
DAOIST RITUAL MUSIC

REFERENCES


CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX
THE STUDY OF DAOISM IN CHINA TODAY

DING HUANG

DESCRIPTION

The modern study of Daoism in mainland China began after December, 1978, when the eleventh general assembly of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party recognized the Cultural Revolution as a mistake, and Deng Xiaoping became party leader. After that, reconstruction started on a grand scale, and new directives were issued in different areas of culture throughout 1979. In the same year the Chinese Daoist Association (in Beijing), as well as local Daoist organizations in Liaoning and Shenyang, commenced their work. Nanjing University set up a Center for Religious Studies focusing on Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism; drawing faculty mainly from philosophy departments, it had its first graduate students and research fellows within four years.

Also in 1979, the Third International Conference on Daoist Studies was held in Unterägeri, Switzerland, under the leadership of professors Chen Guofu 陳國符 of Tianjin University and Wang Ming 王明 of the Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing. Both felt that, due to travel restrictions and political limitations, Daoist studies in China had lost touch with the greater academic world and they hoped to remedy this situation by inviting Daoist scholars to their country. The Beijing Academy of Social Sciences was inspired by this to open a Center for World Religions. In September, 1980, Sichuan University similarly initiated a Daoist studies section in its Religious Studies Department, and in 1981, the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences created a similar venue. All these added greatly to the growing momentum of Daoist studies in mainland China, making 1980 a turning point in the field.

Nevertheless, the institutions continued to be run by the communist government whose ideological worldview remained oriented towards historical materialism and atheism. Methodology, argumentation and viewpoints were still influenced by Marx, Engels, Stalin and Mao Zedong, and

*Translated by Livia Kohn
all theses and dissertations had to pass through a strict ideological inspection before being accepted. Although there were also a number of areas of study that had nothing to do with ideology and did not make use of Marxist methodology, for the most part scholars, to be accepted officially and have their works published, could not avoid citing, at least pro forma, some words of the great communist thinkers.

In 1989, another major breakthrough occurred when the government of Taiwan first permitted its citizens to travel to the mainland, effectively ending the separation between the two parts of the country. Since then, cultural and commercial exchange have increased dramatically, and many temples and monasteries, for so long ruined and delapidated, were restored. This occurred in response to fervent requests of tourists and religious pilgrims and with the generous financial help of Chinese from Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas.

A number of Daoist temples and institutions, especially those that had not been destroyed completely or put to radically different uses, were selected for restoration. The government freed the land and, depending on the specific economic circumstances, helped bring the places back to life. The tendency was to focus on the most historically significant, famous and magnificent institutions. However, even many of those have yet to be fully returned to religious uses, and continue to house workshops, businesses or government agencies. Religious mountains have fared rather better. In major centers such as Mounts Mao, Hua, Longhu and Luofu, even a number of smaller sanctuaries have been recreated, while local centers such as Mount Wudang in Hubei and Mount Qingcheng in Sichuan had survived with comparatively little damage and were easily restored. Still others, such as the Wu liang guan (Monastery of Universal Salvation) and the Wulong gong (Five Dragons Temple) on Qianshan in Liaoning, were hardly touched and had already been restored earlier.

In terms of practitioners, since 1980 a few very ancient Daoists have led groups of very young ones, despite serious economic and personnel restrictions. They have worked painstakingly, exhibiting a religious zeal and devotion that is truly moving and can be an inspiration to us all. They fight never-ending battles with administrative obstacles set up by local officials and party officers, but they are supported by Daoist leaders from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao, Singapore and overseas. They have managed to weave an international network of cooperation and receive help on many levels, achieving good results and providing great inspiration to Daoist scholarship.

Taiwan and the mainland have been engaging in an active academic exchange of both scholars and studies, especially in the last decade. There have been mutual guest lectures and publications, joint conferences and exchanges of books, articles and information. The process has been greatly
aided by the help of scholars from Hong Kong and Japan, so that communication and exchange in East Asia in general have become more intense and have been bringing ever more results.

In mainland China, Daoist studies occur in four different venues:

1. religious organizations, such as the Chinese Daoist Association and its regional counterparts in Shanghai, Shaanxi, Quanzhou and elsewhere, with their lay members, Daoist priests and trainees;
2. universities and other institutions of higher learning with their professors and research students;
3. research institutes, especially the Academies of Social Sciences on the national, provincial and city levels, with their trained research faculty;
4. cultural and artistic institutions, with both active and retired members.

All of these hold meetings and conferences and engage in cooperative projects, working together and exchanging ideas. Many are students of Daoism, but others are members of societies for religious studies in general, organizations propagating atheism or cadres in party or government positions. They come from many different areas and have a range of concerns, yet they follow the government and expect there to be an orthodox or heterodox position in regard to religion. As the government position changes, so does the definition of orthodoxy. These scholars and practitioners—in chameleon-like fashion—change their views to adapt to the shifting demands of political outlook. In addition, party members are still important in religious organizations, universities and research institutes, and they naturally exert an influence on policies and academic outlook. They are subject to directives from the government’s Bureau of Religious Affairs, which in turn bows to the Department of Propaganda and the Cultural Planning Committee.

The Bureau of Religious Affairs is a particularly important body for the study of religion, especially in its Center for Religious Studies. The latter, like all government institutions, is generally dominated by party politics. However, there are also serious scholars involved, such as its current executive director Zhao Kuangwei 趙匡為, a graduate of the History Department of Beijing University (whose wife, Wang Yi’e 王宜娥, is associate editor of Zhongguo daojiao 中國道教, the organ of the Chinese Daoist Association). Under his leadership, in 1995, the Center launched a quarterly journal called Zhongguo zongjiao 中國宗教, which provides articles on government directives, recent scholarship, culture and religious activities. The editor is the Center’s associate director, He Kemin 賀克敏. Also in 1995, the Center set up its own publishing house, the Zongjiao chubanshe, which issues books on government positions as well as studies of Buddhist, Daoist and Confucian culture. Examples are a volume edited by Zhu Yueli 朱越利 on Daoist temples and institutions and their leading priests (Zhu 1996a),
and another by Tian Qing 田青 on Chinese religious music. The latter has several articles on Daoism (Tian 1997). The publishing house also has produced a number of smaller booklets and pamphlets at irregular intervals.

Another ongoing venture of the Center is the republication of the Daoist canon in a current version to be known as Zhonghua daozang 中華道藏. It has prepared this through a number of conferences and meetings, coordinating the work of many regional contributors. The idea is to present the texts of the canon in the traditional order of the Three Caverns and Four Supplements, but also including massive supplementary information on classes of texts, their contexts, date and authorship, lineage affiliation and doctrines. The collection will thus integrate all the research done on each text to the present date and relate it to relevant cultural models. This new edition of the canon is intended to supplant and expand all existing versions of the canon; it will also include later texts and materials found in Dunhuang manuscripts. It should serve to correct the many errors found in the Ming and Qing canons, setting new standards for textual editing.

The project is enormous. It is continually being revised, criticized and developed by a number of scholars. The hope is that the Zhonghua daozang will become the standard version of Daoist texts the world over, and finally eliminate the confusion created by the varying numbering systems of existing indexes. Communist China has subscribed strongly to the system of community and communal effort. While this has many shortcomings and can create numerous problems, it also has advantages; a large cooperative project like this could not be handled by one or two scholars working alone, and would be more difficult to organize and administer in other countries. New editions of texts, reference works, dictionaries, encyclopedias and other valuable collections of materials, then, have been pursued on the mainland with vigor. These projects have emphasized integrative and interactive—rather than analytical and interpretative—aspects of scholarship. The recent development of Daoist studies in China fully reflects this approach.

**Organization and Activities**

BEIJING. Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 中国社会科学院. The Center for World Religions 世界宗教中心 is a unique national institution that specializes in religious studies. First established in 1964, it originally was geared primarily toward government purposes rather than research. In 1981, the Department for Daoist Studies was established under the leadership of Zhong Zhaopeng 钟肇鹏 (b. 1925), a graduate and professor of Sichuan University, now retired (see Zhong 1991). The present director is Ma Xisha 马西沙 (b. 1943), a graduate of Beijing University and professor
at Renmin University (see Ma 1989; 1992). Some of the Academy’s prominent members include the deputy director Wang Ka (b. 1956) and the scholars Yang Huarong (b. 1928), Jin Zhengyao (b. 1956; grad. Beijing Univ.), Lu Guolong (b. 1959, grad. Xiamen Univ.) and others (see Wang 1995; Jin 1991; Lu 1990; 1993). Past directors have been Ren Jiyou (b. 1916; Daoism, Buddhism), Du Jiwen (b. 1930; Buddhism, philosophy), Kong Fan (Christianity, theory), Dai Kangsheng (Islam) and Wu Yungui (Islam).

When the Center was first established, most researchers came from the Department of Religious Affairs and various institutes of Beijing University; over the years it has considerably broadened its base. It is currently organized in four divisions: research, publications, administration and library. The research division has eight sections, focusing on the study of Buddhism, scriptural Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Daoism, principles of religion and religious art. The publications division produces two journals: *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* (Studies in World Religions) and *Shijie zongjiao ziliao* (Materials of World Religions). The administrative division manages finances and arrangements for visiting scholars. The library over the years has grown into a major resource facility. The Center has about 110 staff members, about 100 scholars in residence at any given time and a number of young research fellows. Since 1978, it has graduated forty doctoral students, only a few of whom focused on Daoist studies. About ten additional graduates took part in a joint program with Beijing University that was set up in 1982.

Additional studies on Daoism are undertaken in the Academy’s Center for Historical Studies. Here Chen Yuan 陈垣, the author of the great collection of over 1,500 Daoist inscriptions and epigraphic records, is active. Although his study is written in simplified characters and contains a few misprints and minor errors, it is a great resource (Chen et al. 1988). Also there are Zhang Guangbao 张广保, who has done important work on Quanzhen and inner alchemy (1995), and Tang Yijie 湯一介, an important Confucian scholar and student of Daoist thought.

In the Academy’s Philosophy Section is the renowned Wang Ming 王明 (1911-1992), who has done important work on Daoist texts (see Wang 1960; 1980; 1982; 1984; 1995). He was active both in the Philosophy Section and in the Center for World Religions, and trained many younger people who are now leading academics, such as Wang Ka, Chen Jing 陈静, Liu Guoliang 劉國樑 and Li Jiayan 李家彦.

**Beijing University** 北京大學. Beijing University has a long tradition of religious studies, and even counter-religious studies, as represented by Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培. The University has been home to such great scholars as Hu Shi 胡適, Liang Shuming 梁漱溟, Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, Xiong
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Shili 和 others, who were particularly strong in the study of Buddhism and other Indian religions. Several scholars moved from here to the Center for World Religions when it was established in 1964, and more joined the Center when the cooperative program was established in 1982. Religious studies here were mainly undertaken in the departments of Philosophy, History and Classical Chinese, which highlighted studies of Marxist-Leninist principles of religion, Indian Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and general theory. The Philosophy Department, in particular, trained graduate students to specialize in various religious traditions, both Eastern and Western.

In 1989, a Center for Religious Studies was established, and this grew into a proper Religion Department in 1996, directed by Ye Lang . Its goal is the study of religion in a scientific and objective manner, employing a critical approach to both its historical development and organizational and doctrinal structures and paying special attention to its interaction with various aspects of culture. The Religion Department further aims to develop mature scholars who will have the insight necessary for a successful launching of the twenty-first century, and also to train suitable teachers for middle schools and high schools. International exchange and the widening of religious education are also envisioned, and the Department hopes to contribute to the modernization and development of China as a whole. A leading scholar there is Tang Yijie, a student of Chinese thought and Daoist history (see Tang 1988a; 1988b; 1992).

Zhongguo Renmin University 中國人民大學. This institution established its Center for Religious Studies as an annex to the Philosophy Department in 1991. It is directed by Fang Litian 方立天 and its faculty are mainly scholars in philosophy, history and classical Chinese. Members include Xing Dongfeng 邢東風 (Buddhism, philosophy), Li Qiu-ling 李秋玲 (Christianity), Suo Aiqun 薛愛群 (theory, philosophy), Zhang Xiaqiao 張小喬 (philosophy) and, importantly, Xu Zhaoren 徐兆仁 (Daoism, history), whose studies present a critical, historical examination of inner alchemy (Xu 1988; 1991; 1993).

SHANGHAI 上海. Academy of Social Sciences. The Academy was established in 1981 under the leadership of Luo Zhufeng 洛竹風, and since 1994, it has been directed by the Buddhist scholar Ye Luhua 萧露華. It has centers for religious studies, religious history, and contemporary religion, and also an administrative and a library section. Leading scholars there include Wu Yakui 吴亞魁, Ge Zhuang 葛壯, Yan Kejia 晏可佳 and Huang Shiru 黄世如, but most importantly is Chen Yaoting 陳耀庭 (b. 1939), the coeditor of major collections such as Zangwai daoshu 藏外道書 (Daoist Books Outside the Canon) and Zhongguo daqiao 中國道教 (Chinese Daoism).
The Academy publishes two journals: the quarterly *Dangdai zongjiao yanjiu* 常代宗教研究 (Studies in Contemporary Religion) and the annual *Zongjiao wenti tansuo* 宗教問題探索 (Investigations of Religious Topics). Research undertaken and published here is of a high standard, and the faculty have brought forth a number of important collections and indexes. Shanghai is one of the most dynamic cities of mainland China, and the Academy’s studies tend to be concerned with the contemporary world and involve issues of business, culture, education and art. Scholars can draw on numerous local museums, archives and university libraries, and this institution has a high-powered focus of religious studies as well.

**Shanghai Normal University** 上海師範大學. This university’s Institute for Religious Culture was established in 1987 under the directorship of Zhang Zhizhe 張智哲, a scholar of both Daoism and Buddhism. It draws upon a fine faculty in several departments, including Pan Yuting 潘雨廷, a specialist for *Yìjìng* studies, Wu Ze 吳澤, a scholar of Daoism and early religion, Wang Wenyao 王文耀, who works on popular religion and archaeological materials, and Zhang Yihe 張義和, a specialist in Six Dynasties culture and religion.

In 1992 the various universities of the Shanghai area formed a consortium for the study of religion known as the Shanghai Center for Religious Culture 上海宗教文化研究中心. It coordinates the research efforts at all of Shanghai’s locations of higher learning, and is run by Zhang Zhizhe from its administrative center at Normal University. The special foci of the new Center are the local religion of the Jiangnan area and the impact of religion on modern culture and society. It has sponsored the publication of several new studies.

**Shanghai Educational Institute** 上海教育学院. A center for the study of religion was inaugurated here in 1994 under the leadership of Liu Zhongyu 劉仲宇 (b. 1946), a scholar of the *Yìjìng* and its tradition (see Liu 1990; 1992a; 1992b; 1997a; 1997b). The Institute engages in both national and international exchange and is a major resource for scholarly cooperation inside China.

**SICHUAN 四川. Academy of Social Sciences.** Established in Chengdu in 1978, this Academy developed a major religious studies division in 1993 consisting of three research centers focusing on Confucian, Buddhist and Daoist cultures. Wide in scope and supported by numerous academic institutions of the area, these centers do excellent work and coordinate all religious studies in Sichuan province. The centers also cooperate widely, working closely with the Academies in Beijing and Shanghai, and exchanging scholars and ideas with centers abroad.

The Sichuan Academy houses the great scholar of Chinese mythology Yuan Ke 權珂 (see Yuan 1982; 1985; 1986; 1988), and also the epigraphy specialist and art historian Hu Wenhe 胡文和 (b. 1950). The latter is a
prolific writer with articles in numerous learned journals. His works contain highly useful materials for the study of Daoism and his analysis sets a high standard in the field of religious art (Hu 1985; 1994). In addition, there are the philosopher Huang Haide 黃海德 (b. 1953) and the cultural historian Li Gang 李剛, who coedited the first Daoist dictionary in mainland China (Li and Huang 1991). Li has also published a number of articles on the Chongxuan 重玄 philosopher Li Rong 李榮, as well as a book on Daoist immortals (1994).

In the Philosophy Center, we also find Li Yuanguo 李遠國 (b. 1950) from Chengdu, an author of numerous books (see Li 1985a; 1985b; 1987; 1988; 1993; 1997; 1998), as well as articles in Chinese, Japanese, European and American journals. Well traveled, a member of many academic societies and often present at conferences, he is among the most international of China’s scholars today. Li's research focuses on five different topics: the Song immortal Chen Tuan 陳搏, Daoist talismans and spells, the interaction of Daoism and local culture, the pantheon and iconography, and Daoist epigraphy.

Sichuan University 四川大學. The Religion Department here was established in 1980 under the leadership of Qing Xitai 禪希泰 (b. 1928) from Sichuan, who is also the associate director of the Chinese Religious Association. His efforts have made this one of the major research institutions for Daoist studies in China; his work on Daoist history has produced the standard works on the subject (Qing 1988a; 1992; 1993; 1995). He has also written a history of Daoist thought (1980; 1985) and fundamental studies of Daoism and Chinese culture (1988b; 1990).

Many other renowned scholars work here as well, including Li Gang (see Li 1994a; 1994b; 1995), Pan Xianyi 潘顯一 (Daoist art) and Chen Bing 陳兵 (Buddhism, Quanzhen Daoism, Qigong; see Chen 1989). The department’s foci of study are on Daoist thought, the interaction of Daoism with ancient technology, principles of religious studies and the beliefs and practices of southwestern minority peoples. A formal master’s degree in religion was established in 1982, and a doctorate in 1991. There have since been about twenty graduates in both programs, studying Daoist history, thought, literature, and other major topics. Also, since 1982, the Department has published a journal, Zongjiao xue yanjiu 宗教學研究 (Religious Studies), totalling thirty-eight issues and over 400 articles. Volume 30 contains an index. Numerous foreign scholars have come to visit and conduct research here.

YUNNAN 雲南. Academy of Social Sciences. A Center for Religious Studies was opened here in 1984 under the leadership of Han Jing 韓敬, later succeeded by Yang Xuezeng 楊學政. The Center focuses particularly on local Yunnan forms of religion and Daoism, and publishes the biannual journal Yunnan zongjiao yanjiu 雲南宗教研究 (Studies in Yun-
nan Religion). The Center has a division specializing in Daoism under the
directorship of Guo Wu (b. 1966), a graduate of Beijing and Sichuan
Universities. His specialty is the study of Daoist thought, and he has pub-
lished several books and well over forty articles on the subject (e.g., Guo
1995).

Ethnology Institute. This institute opened in 1951. Since
1978 it has housed a Center for Yunnan Minorities, and since 1979 a spe-
cial division on religion. It has worked closely with the local Academy of
Social Sciences and Kunmin University, and has supported Daoist studies
since 1985. The Center’s director, Lei Hong’an 雷宏安, studies Daoism
(see Lei 1995), and its associate director Zhang Qiaogui 张橇贵 is also a
student of Daoism, particularly its relation to local, popular and ethnic
forms of religion.

The director of the Ethnology Institute is Li Guowen 李国文 (b. 1950),
a graduate in minorities studies from Yunnan University whose father-in-
law is a senior shaman of the Naxi 纳西 people. He speaks the Naxi lan-
guage and has a strong concern for their culture (see Li 1991; 1993; 1997).
Overall there has been an increased international interest in local Yunnan
culture. The Taiwan scholar Li Lincan 李霖燦 has organized the transla-
tion and publication of several local religious documents (Li L. et al. 1978)
and published a collection of twenty-one essays comprising forty years of
active scholarship on Yunnan minorities (Li L. 1985). There has been a
gradual rise in interest in the serious study of minorities, and Li Guowen
and Li Lincan have made massive contributions to this shift. Their example
is inspiring research on minorities in other regions as well.

FUJIAN 福建. Fujian Normal University. A Center for Religious
Culture was established here in 1995 under the leadership of Zhan
Shichuang 詹石窗 (b. 1954), a graduate of Sichuan University and professor
of Chinese literature at Aomen University. Tan has written variously on
1997).

Other faculty at the Center include Lin Jinshui 林金水, Xie Bizhen
谢必震, Gai Jianmin 葛建民, and Lin Guoping 林國平. There are three
research divisions, dealing with Chinese Christianity (Profs. Lin J., Xie),
Daoist culture (Profs. Tan, Gai) and local and popular Fujian religion (Prof.
Lin G.). The Daoist culture division focuses mainly on literature, the study
of the Tejing and the interrelationship of Daoism and traditional Chinese
technology.

In 1998, the Center began a master’s program in cooperation with the
graduate school of Aomen University and the Chinese Cultural Company
of Taipei, Taiwan. In August of 1999 it organized a conference on Mount
Wuyi 武夷山, with a special focus on the inner alchemical and longevity
techniques of the Southern Song dynasty. With the financial support of the
Cultural Company, and especially its director Lai Zongxian 賴宗賢, it has published the monthly journal Daqym 逹韻 (Dao Tones) since 1997. Daqym has contained stories of the Eight Immortals, examples of Daoist literature, materials on longevity practices and articles on local and popular religion.

OTHER MAINLAND SCHOLARS. There are a number of senior scholars who have done important work on Daoism but who are not affiliated with any of the major institutes. They live in various provinces and work at local universities or religious centers, and are carrying out influential work that deserves mention here. I list them in alphabetical order.

Chen Guofu 陳國符, professor of chemistry at Tianjin University, authored the renowned Daozangyuanliu kao, which first appeared in 1949 and has been reprinted many times since. A sequel was published in 1983.

Hong Pimo 洪丕謨, professor of politics at the Law School of Shanghai Huadong University, has studied ancient methods of fate calculation (1989), as well as ways of immortality (1994).

Li Yumin 李裕民 (b. 1940), graduate of Shanxi and Shanxi Normal Universities, is now a professor of history at Shanxi University. His main focus is Daoist culture, about which he has written numerous articles. These have been collected in one volume (Li Y.M. 1995).

Liu Guoliang 劉國樑 (b. 1939), from Sichuan, graduated from Tianjin Nankai University as a student of Wang Ming. He is currently professor of philosophy at Jilin University in Changchun. His work focuses on Daoist history and literature and he is the author of a comprehensive collection on Daoist studies (Liu 1991). This contains essays on Daoist history, immortals, temples, and longevity techniques, as well as studies on the interaction of Daoism and traditional Chinese culture and technology. Another major work of Liu’s is a study of Daoism and the Yijing, containing papers on the symbolism of the hexagrams, alchemy, doctrines of fate and retribution, numerology, cosmology and divination (Liu 1994).

Liu Jingcheng 劉精誠 (b. 1936), graduate of Fudan University in Shanghai is a member of the history section of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and a professor at Shanghai Huadong University. His main interest is the history of Daoism, about which he has written a highly readable introductory volume (Liu J. 1993).

Lü Xichen 吕錫琛, professor at Zhongnan Industrial University, made an important contribution to our understanding of Daoism and the imperial government (1991).

Tang Qiling 湯其領, a graduate in political science of Jiangsu Normal and Xuzhou Normal Universities, is currently a professor at the former after having served at Huadong Normal and Henan Universities. His main work is a history of Daoism written from a Marxist-Leninist standpoint that raises many issues of interpretation and historical inquiry (Tang Q. 1996).
Wang Chunwu 王纯五 (b. 1932) of Langzhong in Sichuan, now retired from museum work in Jiang’en, wrote an in-depth study of the early Celestial Masters’ parish system (1996). It addresses both textual and archaeological material and presents a meticulous analysis of the material, coming to conclusions that are significantly different from those of Chen Guofu’s in his *Daozang yuanshi kao*. Wang also has a coedited volume on Daoist music (1993).

Wang Shiwei 王士偉, professor at the Political Institute of Shaanxi Province in Xi’an, wrote a major volume on the Louguan tradition (1993) that echoes the work done by Zhang Weiling 張煥玲 in Taiwan (1990; 1991).

Yang Lizhi 楊立志, professor of political history at Hubei Yunyang Normal College, coauthored with Wang Guangde 王光德, director of the Wudang shan 武当山 Daoist Association, a major work on the history of Daoism in this area (1993). The volume employs careful historical analysis to make a significant contribution to our understanding of Daoist mountains, institutions and monasteries.

Zhang Jintao 張金濤 (b. 1964), grandson of the 63rd Celestial Master Zhang Enpu 張恩溥, was the head of the Longhu shan Daoist Association until his recent forced resignation. He published a history of the Celestial Masters on Longhu shan 龍虎山 (1997).

Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹, the 65th Celestial Master, published a history of his tradition (1994).

Zhang Yuanxian 張源先, the 64th Celestial Master, similarly wrote a collection of biographies of his forebears (1977).

Zhong Laiyin 鍾來茵 (b. 1939), a member of the literature section of the Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences, has focused on the *Zhen’gao 真誥* (1992), and on the impact of Daoism on the poetry of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1990).

TAIWAN 台灣. Taiwan has a number of important universities and research institutes (most notably Academia Sinica 中央研究院 in Taipei) that are home to important scholars in Daoism. Among the most important are Li Fengmao 李逢駒, Yang Qiqiao 楊啓樵 and Ding Huang 丁煌, all of whom have published numerous articles in major journals (see Li 1989; 1991; Zhang 1991; 1991; Yang 1985; Ding 1979; 1989).

In addition, there are a number of senior scholars and important people who subscribe to some form of Daoist philosophy. They include the philosopher Li Yueqiu 李嶽脩, the politician Gao Yuejian 高越天, the physicians Xiao Tianshi 蕭天石, Li Yujie 李玉階 and Shi Yihui 史贻輝, as well as scholars such as Huang Gongwei 黃公偉, Yan Lingfeng 嚴靈峯, Nan Huijin 南懷瑾 and Wu Yaoyu 吳耀玉. The folklorist Lou Zikuang has had a long-standing concern for Daoism, as have the anthropologists Zhang Guangzhi 張光直, Su Xuelin 蘇雪林, Wen Chongyi 文崇一 and Hu
Nai’an 胡耐安. Literary and historical scholars with a strong interest in Daoism include Sun Kekuan 孙克宽, Zhou Shaoxian 周绍贤 and Yuan Yi 袁翼.

Major venues for publication on Daoism include the following Taiwan journals: Daojiao wenhua 道教文化 (Daoist Culture) began monthly publication in 1977 and is edited by Xiao Tianshi, Huang Gongwei, Gao Yuetian, Ma Bi 马璧 and others in Taipei. It covers broad issues of Daoism, including events and studies of the mainland.

Xiandao 仙道 (The Way of Immortality) has appeared bimonthly since 1982 and edited by Xu Jinzhong 许道忠, He Maosong 何茂松, Hong Shuofeng 洪硕峰 and others in Taipei. It focuses on various aspects of longevity techniques and ways of attaining immortality, advertises workshops and deals with Daoist thought in relation to physiological and spiritual practices. It is a valuable resource on inner alchemy and Qigong.

Daojiao xue tansuo 道教学探索 (Daoist Studies Investigations) has been published annually since 1988 and is edited by Guo Ruiyun 郭瑞雲 and Ding Huang in Tainan. This journal is concerned with the history and scriptures of Daoism, and is scholarly in nature. It also publishes works by international scholars. To date there have been ten issues containing 191 articles of high quality Daoist scholarship.

Dongfang zongjiao yanjiu 東方宗教研究 (Studies in Eastern Religions) was started in 1987 and has been published irregularly. Edited by the Society for Eastern Religions in Taipei, its primary focus has been religious issues in China. This journal is understaffed and has published only five issues to date (1987, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994).

Zongjiao zhexue 宗教哲學 (Journal of Religious Philosophy) has been a quarterly journal since 1994. It is edited by Li Yujie 李玉階 (1900-1996) and his son, Li Ziyi 李子弋 in Taipei. Both Lis have been head of the Society for Religious Philosophy, a Christian organization with a focus on issues of theology. This journal’s Daoist content is limited to bits and pieces.

Beyond these journals, there are a number of smaller publications that contain occasional articles of interest to students of Daoism, but they are too numerous to list here.

HONG KONG 香港. Qingsong guan 青松观 (Green Pine Temple). Even before Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997, local Daoists, both of the Daoist Association and at local universities, cultivated intense contacts and cooperation with their mainland counterparts. Most prominent among them has been Hou Baoyuan 侯宝垣, abbot of the Qingsong guan in Kowloon 九龍, who has been untiring in his efforts to spread and elucidate Daoism. He was central in the establishment of Daoist temples in the US, Australia and Europe, and essential to the restoration of numerous Daoist institutions in China. Without his financial and organizational support many projects would have been unsuccessful. Examples include the
publication of various volumes on Daoist culture by Sichuan University, the establishment of a religious museum there, the organization of an international conference on Daoism at Beijing University and work toward producing a new Chinese Daoist canon.

In 1992, Hou and Luo Zhiguang 倪智光 established a Daoist Studies Institute at the Qingsong guan, which has since published a series of studies on Daoist culture under the editorship of Chen Guying 陈鼓应 of Beijing University (e.g., Chen 1994; 1996; 1997). So far, thirteen books have been published in the series, all of them of a high scholarly standard. Since 1996 the Institute has also taught classes in Daoist studies, divided into three areas: Chinese Thought of the Yijing, Lunyu and Mengzi; Introduction to Daoist Culture; and Studies in Daoist Scriptures. The classes are usually taught in the evenings to a broad audience from diverse segments of Hong Kong society, and are conducted by visiting Daoist scholars who stay for a semester or so. Prominent visitors have included Wang Jiayou 王家祐 of the Sichuan Museum; Li Yangzheng 李養正 of the Daoist Studies Institute in Beijing; Qing Xitai and Li Gang of Sichuan University; Ma Xisha, Wang Ka and Zhu Yueli of the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing; and Chen Yaoting of the Academy of Social Sciences in Shanghai.

In 1998, Hou invited a number of international Daoists and Daoist scholars to found the International Daoist Association, with leaders from many countries. Together they organized a major international conference held in the Huanglong gong 黄龍宮 (Yellow Dragon Temple) on Mt. Luofu. The three major topics of the meeting included: Daoist thought and religion from the Han through the Tang; Daoist influences on Confucianism in the Song and Ming; and Daoist culture in modern society. The Association and conference emerged from a meeting organized in 1996 by the Daoist Studies Institute, in cooperation with the Department of Religious Studies at Beijing University (founded in 1996) and led by Tang Yijie, Chen Guying and Hou Baoyuan. Scholars from many countries attended, giving impetus to increased activities on an international level.

The Qingsong guan also publishes the quarterly journal Hongdao 弘道 (Spreading the Dao). Six issues have appeared since 1997, describing activities of the temple’s different sections and presenting studies on Daoist culture, arts, scriptures and worldview.

Yuanxuan xueyuan 圆玄学院 (Institute of Perfect Mystery) was founded by Zhao Zhendong 趙鎮東 (b. 1922) from Guangdong, an ordained Daoist of Mount Luofu 羅浮山. He later left to become a businessman in Hong Kong, struck it rich, and then used his funds to support Daoism and general good works. In 1991, Zhao and the Institute sponsored an international conference on Daoist music, which convened seventeen scholars from different countries under the leadership of Ts’ao Pen-yeh (Cao
Benye) and Wei Cipeng. The proceedings have since been published (Cao 1991), and a matching publication appeared later in Taiwan, again focusing on the study of Daoist ritual music (see Lii 1994). In 1993, the Institute was instrumental in organizing the 34th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS) in Hong Kong, another event that brought numerous international scholars to the city.

The Institute actively supports the Research Center of Chinese Daoist Culture at the Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences in Chengdu. This center, too, is publishing a series of volumes on Daoist culture, under the editorship of Huang Haide; so far, one volume has appeared and a second is in preparation. In addition, the Center since 1990 has published the Daoist quarterly journal *Dadao* (The Great Dao), which contains scholarly articles and devotional news.

**Overseas scholars.** Another major contribution to Daoist studies from Hong Kong is made by its overseas scholars, such as Wong Shiu Hon (see below), Liu Ts'un-yan (b. 1917) and Ho Peng Yoke. The first two work at the Australian National University; the latter is at the Needham Research Institute in Cambridge, England. Wong’s focus is on late imperial Daoism, inner alchemy and the legends surrounding Zhang Sanfeng 张三丰. Liu is a professor of Chinese late imperial literature whose work has much to do with Daoism (1962; 1967; 1976; 1984; 1991); Ho studies the technological history of China with particular concern for alchemy (1979; 1980; 1985).

**Texts**

**DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS ON DAOISM.** The earliest Daoist dictionary published in Chinese appeared in Taiwan in 1962 (Dai 1962). After that, various series, both of Chinese folklore materials (Lou Zikuan’s *Minsu congshu* 民俗叢書) and Daoist texts (Xiao Tianshi’s *Daozang jinghua* 道藏精華), appeared which made Daoism accessible to both scholars and a wider audience. A second major dictionary was produced by Li Shuhuan 李叔邁 (1979), and was reprinted on the mainland in 1987. Li was originally from Fujian; he became a Daoist priest after arriving in Taiwan, where he lives in Gaoxiong and is a close aide to the current Celestial Master. He also wrote an encyclopedic discussion of Daoism in question-and-answer format (1972). Yang Fengshi’s *Yang Fengshi dictionary* of the Daoist canon followed (1985), after which dictionaries were no longer the domain of either Taiwan or the mainland but became more cooperative ventures.

The first specifically Daoist dictionary to appear on the mainland is by Li Gang 李剛, from Sichuan (1991). It contains information on Daoist
history and schools, doctrines and worldview, gods and immortals, historical personages, practices, ritual, scriptures, mountains and institutions, as well as on the current status of the religion in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and overseas. It also presents a good chronology and contains a detailed bibliography of Chinese Daoist studies, 1980-1990.

Also in 1991, Li Yuanguo 李遠國 published his major work on Daoist practices and inner alchemy, the Zhongguo Daojiao qigong yangsheng daquan 中國道教氣功養生大全 (Complete Dictionary of Chinese Daoist Qi Exercises and Longevity Techniques; 2037 pp., 6604 entries). The work is divided into five parts, dealing with technical terms, physiological and alchemical methods, verses and poetry, personages and lineages, and relevant scriptures. The scope of the work is extremely broad and it well deserves to be called a major dictionary of Daoism.

The big year for Daoist dictionaries on the mainland was 1994, when two Japanese dictionaries also appeared (Noguchi et al. 1994; Sakade 1994). The first was the Daojiao wenhua cidian 道教文化辞典 (Dictionary of Daoist Culture, 1283 pp., indexes), edited by Zhang Zhihe 張志哲 (b. 1939), a graduate of Fudan University and professor of history at Shanghai's Huadong Normal University, under the guidance of Chen Guofu 陳國鋒 (Tianjin University) and Pan Yuting 潘雨廷 (editor of Shanghai daojiao 上海道教) and with the cooperation of over twenty leading Daoist scholars. It presents Daoism in all its different dimensions and contains a useful chronology that includes Western dates and a calendar of annual holy days and festivals.

Zhonghua Daoxue tongdian 中華道學通典 (Dictionary of Chinese Daoist Studies, 2110 pp.) was edited by Wu Feng 吳楓 and Song Yifu 宋一夫, with the cooperation of over 200 scholars from all parts of the country. The book is divided into three major parts, plus indexes and a chronology. It covers Daoist scriptures from the Daodejing to recent texts, Daoist personages and organizations, including 851 figures, thirty-eight groups and many temples and institutions, and Daoist worldview and practices including cosmology, longevity techniques and rituals.

Daojiao da cidian 道教大辭典 (Encyclopedia of Daoism, 1009 pp.) was edited by Li Yangzheng 李書正 from Hubei (b. 1925), a graduate of Wuhan University, professor of Beijing Technical College and associate director of the Daoist Studies Institute. The strength of this work is its close connection with various local Daoist organizations. It collects information from Suzhou, Maoshan, Wudang shan, Sichuan and other major Daoist centers. It covers Daoist doctrines, terminology, scriptures, major figures, rules and taboos, practices, arts and many other subjects. The encyclopedia also summarizes the current state of Daoism and the most important academic trends. The scholarly level is of a high standard and has been well received; it was reprinted in Taiwan in 1996.
Zhongguo Daojiao da cidian 中國道教大辭典 (Encyclopedia of Chinese Daoism, 2207 pp., 15,000 entries) was published in 1995, edited by Hu Fuchen 胡孚澤 (b. 1945), originally a professor of chemistry at Nankai University and now a religion scholar at the Academy of Social Sciences. Hu has also written several other relevant works on Daoism (1989; 1991; 1993). The encyclopedia was created with the help of subeditors Wang Ka and Chen Yaoting, and over a hundred Daoist scholars including several from Japan. It is the largest Daoist dictionary published to date and covers all aspects of the religion. Appendices include bibliographies of recent Chinese Daoist studies (1990-1993), a chronology, and indexes of names and titles.

Zhongguo Daojiao baike quanshu 中國道教百科全書 (Complete Collection of Chinese Daoism) is a work in progress under the leadership of Qing Xitai 青希泰. This had its beginnings in a larger compendium begun in the late 1980s which covered various aspects of culture such as customs, archaeology, and architecture, and had only a very minor section on Daoism. It is expected to be yet another substantial encyclopedia on the subject of Daoism.

DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS ON RELATED SUBJECTS. On the mainland, the first dictionary having anything to do with Daoism was the Zhongjiao cidian 中國宗教大辭典 (Encyclopedia of Religion, 1343 pp.), edited by Ren Jiuyu 任繼愈 at the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing (1981). Arranged by stroke number in simplified characters, it deals with a variety of religions, including the great world religions as well as Chinese popular ideas and practices. It includes a number of integrated indexes that make it very accessible to scholars. The same year saw the publication of the Zhongguo mingsheng cidian 中國名勝辭典 (Dictionary of Chinese Scenic Spots) by the Ministry of Culture (Wenhua bu 文化部 1981). This dictionary includes descriptions of major mountains, temples, monasteries and other places of Daoist interest. Along the same lines is a later publication from Sichuan, Zhongguo zongjiao mingsheng 中國宗教名勝 (Scenic Spots of Chinese Religion), which focuses even more on religion (Ren and Yang 1989).

In 1990, a major work on the religion of minority peoples appeared, the Zhongguo ge minzu zongjiao yu shenhua da cidian 中國各民族宗教與神話大辭典 (Encyclopedia of the Religion and Mythology of China's Minorities, 900 pp.) edited by Lan Hong’en 蘭鴻恩 and Wang Song 王松. The work covers the beliefs, myths, rituals and customs of fifty-six minorities and has an alphabetical index. Although written under the influence of historical materialism, it is a most valuable resource that contains much material related to Daoism. Many scholars were involved in its compilation, most notably Lü Daji 呂大吉 (b. 1931), a graduate of Beijing University who now works at the Center for World Religions of the Academy for
Social Sciences and edits the journal Zongjiao xue tonglan 宗教學通論. He has also been involved in major conferences on minorities and is co-editor of a follow-up encyclopedia on the religion of minorities (Lùi 1993).

Daoism and the arts forms a major section of the Shijie san da zong-jiao yu yishu 世界三大宗教與藝術 (The Three World Religions and the Arts), edited by Zhang Xikun 張錫坤 of Jilin University in 1991. Two sections are relevant here: both “Daoism and Chinese Art” (pp. 922-77) and “The Aesthetics of Ge Hong” (at the end of the volume) are valuable studies that contain much information otherwise not easily found.

Daoist ritual appears in the Zhongguo liyi da cidian 中國禮儀大辭典 (Encyclopedia of Chinese Ritual, 1144 pp.), edited in 1992 by Zhou Wenbo 周文柏 and a committee of ten senior scholars. The work has a number of sections dealing with rites of passage, birth, marriage, death, social communication, the military and many other topics. Religious rites, including those of Daoism, are discussed in section 9, which, like the previous work, presents information difficult to find elsewhere.

Li Ying's work on Chinese Temple Associations, Zhongguo miaohui cidian 中國廟會辭典 (Chinese Temple Societies and Associations), appeared in 1994. It highlights the enormous regional differences in Chinese religious practice. The year 1994 also saw publication of Xu Hualong's 徐華龍 encyclopedia of Chinese ghosts and demons (Xu 1994) based on two similar works by the same author, and on Jiang et al. 1992. It describes major historical developments as well as names, customs, theater plays and practices related to otherworldly agents. Again, information on Daoism is included, and materials can be found that are not in many specifically Daoist dictionaries.

Finally, a 1996 publication was Pu Wenqi’s 潘文起 “Dictionary of Chinese Esoteric Religion,” which focuses on Tantric Buddhism and has a good deal of Daoist content. It presents Tantric gods, lineages, organizations, doctrines, rules, rituals, practices, spells, terms, and other topics for a total of 1500 entries. There are numerous color plates, a detailed chronology and an extensive bibliography.

COLLECTIONS AND EDITIONS. Laozi xiang’er zhu jiaozheng 老子想爾注校證 (Examination and Analysis of the Xiang’er Commentary to the Laozi) is by Rao Zongyi 饒宗頤 (b. 1917), another senior Hong Kong scholar. Rao's works have recently been cataloged by Zheng Weiming 鄭偉明 (b. 1958), a student of Wong Shiu Hon and a graduate of Macao University whose writings have focused on local Daoist inscriptions (Zheng 1993; 1994). The “Examination” presents the text of the Xiang’er commentary with extensive notes and analysis. Originally published in 1956, it was expanded and reedited in 1991. An index to the text was produced by Mugitani Kunio 麻谷邦夫 in Japan (1985).

Quanzhen Daojiao jingdian yinyue quanji 全真道教經典音樂全
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

(Complete Collection of Musical Pieces Contained in Quanzhen Scriptures), dat. 1990, by Cao Benye (Tsao Pen-yeh) 曹本冶 (b. 1925), ordained Quanzhen Daoist, professor of Music at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and associate director of the Chinese Daoist Association. This collection of ten volumes, gathers together Daoist music from a variety of Quanzhen temples and monasteries in mainland China. It is an important resource for the study of contemporary Daoist ritual and musical art. Its publication was greatly aided by the Taiwan scholar Wang Qiugui 王秋桂 and the Chiang Chingkuo Foundation 蔣經國基金會.

INDEXES OF TEXTS AND TERMS. Daozang suoyin 道藏索引 (Index to the Daoist Canon), by Chen Yaoting 陳耀庭 (1996) is based on three earlier indexes created in the 1970s and 1980s and is the best and most integrated index to date. It might come to replace the earlier standard indexes such as Weng 1935 and Schipper 1975.

Daozang tiyao 道藏提要 (Abstracts of the Daoist Canon, 1500 pp.) is by Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 (b. 1916), a philosophy graduate of Beijing University and scholar at the Academy of Social Sciences (see also Ren 1990), and Zhong Zhaopeng 鍾肇鵬 (1991). The work consists of short abstracts of texts in the Ming canon as reprinted in Shanghai from 1924-1926. Each gives date, author (if known) and a short synopsis of content. It has various indexes of names and titles, and contains references to studies by major Chinese and Japanese scholars. This is the best survey of Daoist texts available to date.

Daojing zongtun 道經總論 (Comprehensive Discussion of Daoist Scriptures, 488 pp.) was edited in 1991 by Zhu Yueli 諸越利 (b. 1944) from Hebei, a graduate in minorities studies and currently scholar at the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. The book includes discussions of the origins of Daoist texts, their historical unfolding, classification, textual criticism and catalogs.

The work is not limited to the canon but also includes Dunhuang manuscripts and works found in other collections. Based on meticulous research, it is a must for every serious scholar. Other works by Zhu include Daojiao dawen 道教答問 (Answers to Questions on Daoism, 1989), and a Chinese translation of the Japanese Dōkyō (Fukui et al. 1983).

In 1996, Zhu also produced the Daozang fenlei jieli 道藏分類解題 (Classifications of Texts in the Daoist Canon, 550 pp.), which contains catalogs of the Ming and Qing dynasty as well as the work of Liu Ts’un-yan and other senior scholars. The book first describes the traditional system of the Three Caverns, Four Supplements and Twelve Divisions, but does not ultimately follow the system in its arrangement of Daozang texts. Instead, it applies the modern classification system used in Chinese libraries, and yielding thirty-three categories in fifteen divisions. The work is immensely useful for the study of Daoism and Chinese ancient texts because it allows
one to access texts of related subject and nature without having to plow through large tomes of documents. It was reprinted in Taiwan and has seen several editions since its first publication.

_Daozang dayao yiming suoyin_ (Chinese Alchemical Terms: Guidebook to the _Daozang_ Pseudonyms) is by Wong Shiu Hon (1989). The work is based on nineteen key texts of alchemy and inner alchemy and presents a survey and in-depth analysis of their key terms. Wong Shiu Hon was born in Hongkong in 1941 and is currently at the Australian National University, Canberra. He is a very prolific scholar whose most important work centers around the legendary figure of Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰 (1982; 1988b), and the interaction of Daoism and Chinese culture in the late imperial and modern periods (1988a; 1993; 1994).

**BIBLIOGRAPHIES OF SECONDARY SOURCES.** There is no central bibliographic index to works on Daoism in Chinese to date, and the various bibliographies that do exist tend to be riddled with errors. As a result, the most complete and correct bibliographies are found in the computer files of individual scholars. In Japan the situation is slightly different, since scholars there have published bibliographies occasionally. The first was Yoshioka’s _Mokuroku_ (1983), closely followed by Fukui et al.’s _Dékyô_ (1983). Since 1987, moreover, the biannual journal _Tôhô shûkyô_ 東方宗教 (Eastern Religions) has published extensive bibliographies of Daoist studies in Japanese, Chinese and Western languages in every fall issue.

In China, the dictionairies edited by Li Gang (1991), Zhang Zhizhe (1994), Li Yangzheng (1993), Zhu Yucli (1994) and Hu Fuchen (1995) all contain bibliographic information. In addition, some of the key journals tend to publish bibliographic lists both of their own content and of Chinese works more generally. Leading journals in mainland China include _Dongfang zazhi_ 東方雜誌 (Eastern Journal, 1904-1948) and _Shijie zongjiao yanjiu_ 世界宗教研究 (Studies in World Religions), both issued by the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing; _Zongjiao xueyanjiu_ 宗教學研究 (Religious Studies) of Sichuan University; and _Shanghai daojiao_ 上海道教 (Daoism in Shanghai) of the Shanghai Daoist Association. The various lists they publish tend to be incomplete and to divide items uncritically by subject.

In addition to these specialized journals, publications in related fields, such as archaeology, art, history, and medicine, often contain valuable references to studies involving Daoism. Overall, mainland bibliographies tend to focus on mainland studies; they usually leave out works of Chinese scholars in other parts of the world and are usually unaware of studies by non-Chinese. The latter are hard to obtain in China, partly due to financial reasons, but also because of immense bureaucratic obstacles. Nevertheless, despite these difficult circumstances, mainland Chinese scholarship has advanced by leaps and bounds over the past decade, and continues to improve dramatically.
One key bibliography, created in Taiwan, has yet to be mentioned: the *Zhongguo dalu zongjiao wenzhang suoyin* (Index to Articles on Religion in Mainland China), produced in 1995 by Wang Leiquan 王雷泉 (b. 1952). Wang graduated from Fudan University in 1984 and is now a professor there. The book is part of a series of reference works published by the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, and one section focuses specifically on Daoism (pp. 378-421). General works on Buddhism and Chinese religion typically have sections that list works on Daoist studies.

On-line bibliographies have become more common in recent years and include computerized versions of the catalog of the National Central Library 國家圖書館 in Taipei, and of the “Index to Chinese Periodical Literature” and other bibliographies that used to be available on microfilm. The Taiwan Internet (TANT, 台灣學術網路), moreover, has many easy-to-find reference lists that can help scholars make their way through the increasingly dense forest of academic Daoist studies.

All of this work is still rather diffuse and uncoordinated, and there is no central agency or organization in Taiwan to systematize references and bibliographies. Among regional catalogs, the works by Gao Xianzhi 高賢治 and Liu Yanli 劉燕儔 (1989), and by Lin Meirong 林美容 (1991), both focus on Taiwan and its culture specifically, but have more on popular religion than on Daoism. Related reference works include biographical dictionaries of Taiwan personages, catalogs of the National Central Library, and indexes of Taiwanese literature.

ONGOING PROJECTS. The Chinese Ritual Music Project was initiated in 1994 under the leadership of Cao Benye from Hong Kong, and funded by the Hong Kong Research Fund and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation. The project involves the collection and evaluation of music scores and rituals from different regions of China and is to be published as a twenty-eight volume set. These will include some works published earlier (e.g., Min 1990; Cao and Liu 1991) as well as others on the history of Daoist music, recitative prayers, the music used at Daoist festivals, and music of specific ethnic groups.

The Chinese Ritual Music Project, was started in 1998 under the leadership of Wang Qiugui from Taiwan. It will include publication of rites and rituals of different Chinese regions in a total of fourteen volumes, beginning with Fujian, Sichuan and Zhejiang, then moving on to Guangxi, Jiangxi, Jiangsu and various specific mountains, local centers and ethnic minorities. The publication is not limited to Daoism, but Daoist rites have an important place in it.
References


Korean culture is generally taken as an expression of Confucian culture, and any discussion of the cultural milieu of East Asian Confucianism must include Korea. In addition to Confucianism, Buddhism has also been vital to Korean culture. In fact, with the exception of the last dynasty, the Chosŏn (1392-1910), Buddhism was for the most part the national system and a most important cultural feature. This was true under the Koryŏ (918-1392), the Unified Shilla (668-935), and in Three Kingdoms period (57 B.C.E.-668 C.E.).

From this perspective it would appear that Daoism, in comparison to Confucianism or Buddhism, is relatively unimportant to Korean culture. However, when Korean scholars discuss what Korean culture means, they devote equal space to Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism. Daoism nonetheless has never been as developed or as influential in Korean history as Confucianism or Buddhism and has never actually had an organized system of ordination, and yet it dominated the internal aspect of Korean culture and was latent in the Korean consciousness. Korean Daoism has had a profound and fundamental influence upon shamanism, popular customs and new religions, and has even seeped into Confucianism and Buddhism, being intimately connected with both indigenous and aspects of imported culture throughout Korean history.

Most Korean scholars believe that Korean Daoism was not imported from China at one particular time but is an intrinsically Korean tradition that shares characteristics with Chinese Daoism. The official historical records note that in ancient Korea, around the seventh century C.E., organized Daoism was transmitted from Tang China, but prior to this there existed an indigenous form of belief and worship highly similar to Chinese Daoism and often described as indigenous Korean Daoism. Evidence cited in support of this includes the so-called kŭksŏn (national immortals),

*Translated by James Miller*
recluses who engaged in free and easy wandering, just like Chinese immortals. Also, the stories of Dangun 應君 and the myths surrounding the founding of Korea are evidently influenced by tales of immortality. Seen from this angle, Korean Daoism is intimately connected with ancient indigenous culture. It has been decisive in shaping the unique character of Korean culture, and it has been particularly significant at those times in history when it has underscored Korean political and cultural identity. For example, the Donghak religion 東學 (Eastern Doctrine), which arose from a critical consciousness toward Western power, was strengthened by Daoist influence, and it was a Daoist scholar who wrote the Kyuwon sahwa 模園史話 (Historical Tales of the Kyuwon Garden), which overturned the dominant Sinocentric tradition (Han 1984, 278-82). Both are evidence that Daoism has historically strengthened Korean identity.

Although Korean Daoism has thus a very ancient and authentic Korean component, it developed in completely new dimensions with the introduction of organized Daoism that came to be transmitted from Tang China. Ultimately these two components merged to form a Korean Daoism with both similar and disparate characteristics to Chinese Daoism. Ever since the seventh century, Korean Daoism has been influenced by Chinese Daoism in its organization and doctrine, and has grown substantially richer in its structure and scholarship. The Koryo and Choson dynasties established national Daoist temples, such as the Bokwon gung 福源宮 (Palace of Original Happiness) and the Sogyok so 昭格署 (Bureau of Brilliant Investigation). Through them the doctrines and practices of Chinese Daoism became the object of disciplined practice and scholarship among Koryo and Choson intellectuals. Nevertheless, Korean Daoism was not limited to imported Chinese Daoist theories. Its adepts independently composed Daoist texts and developed their own doctrines; such as Jung Ryom’s 鄭確 (1506-1549) Yong ho bokbol 龍虎秘訣 (Secret Formula of Dragon and Tiger) and Hô Jun’s 許浚 (1546-1615) Dongui bogam 東醫寶鑣 (Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine). Moreover, Lee Kyukyong’s 李圭景 (1788-?) essay Dokyo sônsô dokyông byônjîngsôl 道教仙書道經辨證説 (Investigative Theories on Daoist Scriptures and Immortality Books) critically examines Daoist materials and attempts to analyze them objectively. This was the forerunner to Lee Nungwha’s 李能和 (1868-1945) Choson dokyosa 朝鮮道教史 (History of Korean Daoism) completed in the beginning of the twentieth century.

In the modern period, research into Korean Daoism has been relatively limited in comparison to that of Confucianism and Buddhism, but Daoist studies have increased since 1980 and have actively examined the intrinsic, fundamental values of Korean Daoism. There are now many scholarly associations, excavations, conferences and academic journals. An abundance of material still needs to be unearthed and assessed, and there is a
mountain of potential research topics on every aspect of Korean Daoism. It will yet provide a wealth of material for Daoist studies across the world.

**HISTORY**

**ORIGINS.** The academic world is divided on the issue of whether Korean Daoism originated in China or arose indigenously. Chinese scholars of cultural transmission have detected elements of foreign propagation in the Elite Youth Corps (Hwarang do 花鳥林) of Shilla (Fu 1978, 179-91). In general Chinese, Japanese and most foreign scholars of Daoism have adopted the position that Korean Daoism was transmitted from China. For example, the Japanese three-volume work Dōkyō 道教 (Daoism) has a section on Daoism in Korea in its third volume on “The Transmission of Daoism” (道教の伝播), which clearly states the Chinese origin of Korean Daoism (Fukui et al. 1983, 49-129).

All scholars base their theories on the Samguk sagi 三國史記 (Records of the Three Kingdoms), at present Korea’s most ancient written document. According to this, in the seventh year of King Yongryu 永留王 of the Koguryo 高句麗 (624), the Tang Emperor Gaozu sent Daoist priests to present him with a statue of the Heavenly Worthy and provide instruction in Daoist practices (ch. 20). Foreign scholars take this to mark the official introduction of Daoism into Korea. Korean Daoist scholars, however, read this passage differently and assume that it refers only to the establishment of an organized Daoist ordination system in Korea that began with the Tang dynasty’s missionary activity in Korea, not diminishing the practice of a preexisting, indigenous Daoist culture which it expanded and systematized. They believe that the primordial Daoist culture, i.e., the legends and ideas about immortality were already present in Korea before the arrival of Gaozu’s envoys.

To give an example of such a view, Lee Nunchwa, the founding father of modern Korean Daoist studies, compared the ancient Korean beliefs in three divinities, Hwanin 恒因, Hwanwung 恒雄 and Dangun 榮君, with Chinese myths about the sacred mountains Penglai 蓬萊, Fangzhang 方丈 and Yingzhou 氫洲, and proposed that immorality cults in Yan 燕 and Qi 齊 came, contrary to common view, from an ancient Korean range of indigenous beliefs surrounding the sacred Mount Baekdu 白頭山, the Changbai shan 長白山 of the Chinese (see Lee N. 1977, 30-40). Following in his footsteps, Cha Juhwan 車柱煥, Do Kwangsun 都煥淳 and others similarly analyzed the myth of Dangun and the customs of the Elite Youth Corps in an attempt to prove that there existed a form of indigenous Korean Daoism before organized Chinese Daoism was formally transmitted (Cha 1986, 95-105; Do 1983, 51-71). In any case, ancient northern Korea
and the Chinese regions of Yan and Qi were geographically and culturally connected, and shamanism and mountain worship flourished in both. Some scholars therefore think that an original form of Daoist culture was shared between ancient Korea and China (Jung 1994, 68-69). Ultimately, the best way of dealing with this question is to regard Korean Daoism as comprising key elements of indigenous ideas and practices similar to those of Chinese Daoism and originally part of Korean culture. These elements were then fused with, and formalized under the influence of, the systems and doctrines of Chinese Daoism later transmitted to Korea.

THE THREE KINGDOMS AND THE UNIFIED SHILLA. The Three Kingdoms denotes the kingdoms of Koguryó in the north, Paekjae in the southwest, and Shilla in the southeast. Data from the kingdom of Koguryó (37 B.C.E. – 668 C.E.), predating the formal transmission of Chinese Daoism in the seventh century, suggest the existence of a form of Daoist culture. For example, Tao Hongjing’s (456-536) Zhenlei bencao (Critical Classified Pharmacopoeia) in the section on “Gold-Based Drugs” records that Koguryó had a technique for using gold for medicine, which some scholars take to imply that they were using techniques of laboratory alchemy (Miki 1962, 7-8). Similarly, immortals riding cranes or holding bowls of medicine appear on grave murals around the sixth century, implying that immortality ideas were already prevalent. In addition, the Samguk yusa (Tales of the Three Kingdoms, ch. 3), in a later edition of the Samguk sagi (Tales of the Three Kingdoms, ch. 3), records that Celestial Masters Daoism, then called the Five Pecks of Rice sect (Wu doumi dao) was popular in Koguryó at the beginning of the seventh century, suggesting that this form of Daoism was transmitted to Korea by the northern Celestial Masters (Cha 1986, 180-83).

There are two subsequent instances of the formal transmission of Daoism. The first was in the seventh year of King Yongryu (624), when the Tang Emperor Gaozu sent two Daoist priests to present a statue of the Heavenly Worthy, provide instruction in Daoist practices and give lectures on the Daodejing. The second transmission was in the second year of King Bojang (643), who followed the enthusiastic recommendation of the powerful official Yôn Gaesomun and applied to the Tang for a renewed transmission of Daoism. In response, the Samguk sagi records that the Tang Emperor Taizong sent eight Daoist priests and a gift of the Daodejing. This implies that Daoism was imported for the political purpose to restrain the power of Koguryó Buddhism (Cha 1986, 110-112; Jung 1995, 178-81). The Tang had previously intended to promote Daoism in order to restrain the expansion of Buddhism, and this was what the Koguryó court also intended to do.

This is all the evidence we have, fragmentary indeed, and it does not afford more than a glimpse of the vague outlines of Koguryó Daoism, while
the detailed circumstances of its system and nature remain shrouded in mystery.

As concerns the kingdom of Paekjae 百濟 (18 B.C.E.-660 C.E.) there are no formal records on the transmission of Daoism, but we can infer that Daoist culture was already widespread. The Nihonshoki 日本書紀 (Chronicle of Japan) records that in the tenth year of Emperor Taiko (602), the Paekjae monk Kwanрук 觀勒 arrived in Japan and presented the emperor with astrological writings, calendars, texts dealing with calendrical calculation and methods of magic. This is understood as circumstantial evidence that Daoism was already present in Paekjae. Clearer evidence is found in archaeology. A "broad mountain" incense burner (boshan tu 博山爐), recently discovered in the ruins of a workshop in the Paekjae palace, bears the image of Penglai, the paradise of the immortals, in gold and copper plating. There are a number of bricks with landscape designs (san hyŏng munjŏn 山景文壇), carved in the shape of three sacred mountains and Daoist temples, as well as formal tomb contracts, all excavated from the tomb of King Munyŏng 武寧王 (501-523). This suggests that Daoist culture was alive and strong in the kingdom of Paekjae. As Paekjae had, moreover, close political and cultural contact with the kingdoms of the southern Chinese dynasties, we can also assume a close connection between Paekjae Daoism and that of south China. Again, the details remain elusive.

The kingdom of Shilla 新羅 (57 B.C.E.-935 C.E.) received Chinese culture somewhat later than Koguryŏ or Paekjae, and in the literature there is no record of specifically Daoist beliefs. Myths concerning immortals, however, are prolific, and it is not difficult to discover essential features of Daoism in its indigenous thought, religion and folk customs. The Elite Youth Corps, established before organized Daoism was transmitted, was the key political and religious organization of the state—also known as the Way of Elegance (pung'yu do 風流道). Its members, the elite corps or national immortals, combined a warrior spirit with the attitudes of Daoist cultivation. Among them were the so-called sasŏn 四仙 (four immortals), such as Yongrang 永郎, Namrang 南郎, Sulrang 速郎 and Ahnsang 安祥. Many myths about their love of nature and the arts resemble tales of Chinese immortals. (Cha 1989, 9-25; Yang 1994a, 13-24).

It was during the UNIFIED SHILLA (668-935) that the Daoism of organized alchemical lineages first entered Korea and became popular among the intellectual classes. We know from the Haedong chŏndo rok 海東傳道錄 (Record of the Transmission of the Dao to the Eastern Sea Country [Korea]), a work by Han Muwae 韩無畏 (1517-1610) of the Chosŏn dynasty, that Choi Sungwu 崔承祐, Kim Kagi 金可紀 and the monk Jahae 慈惠 went to study in China during the reign of the Tang Emperor Wenzong (827-841). There they made contact with the Daoist priests Shen Yuanzhi 申元之 and Zhongli Quan 鍾離權 and received training in inner alchemy,
which they brought back to Korea. There is a record of Kim Kagi’s ascen-
sion as a celestial immortal in Shen Fen’s 沈汾 Xuanzuan 續仙傳 (Sup-
plementary Immortals’ Biographies), and a stele on his activities was dis-
covered recently on Mount Zhongnan 终南山 near Xi’an. The Haedong chondo
rokk also contains an account of the late-Shilla literatus and Daoist Choi
Chiwon 崔致達 (b. 857). An official at the Tang court, he was both a prac-
titioner of Daoist magical arts and an official on the staff of the military
commander Gao Pian 高駒. It therefore seems that the new tendency in
Daoism toward the Zhong-Lu school of inner alchemy if i entered
Shilla through those who had studied in China (see Cha 1988, 11-38).

KORYÖ(高麗)(918-1392). With the advent of the Koryö dynasty, clear
examples of the flourishing of Daoism become more numerous. Although
Koryö was a Buddhist state, the royal court favored Daoism in its early
period, using legitimation stories of various divinations and secret records
about King Taejo’s 太祖 (r. 918-943) accession which closely resemble the
myths surrounding founders of Chinese dynasties and often involved his
celestial approval through a renowned Daoist. This suggests that there was
a sympathetic relationship between the founder, King Taejo, and contem-
porary Daoist adepts both before and after his accession to the throne. Thus
Daoist aspects in the originally Buddhist ceremony called Palkavan have 八觀
會 (Assembly of the Eight Views) include sacrifices to the god of Heaven
天神, the five mountains, famous hills and great rivers. In the seventh year
of his reign, he set up the Kuyo dang 九曜堂 (Hall to the Nine Luminaires)
as a venue for Daoist offerings jiao 妖 to the stars, further consolidating his
authority by elevating Daoism to an equal rank with the state religion of
Buddhism.

Continuing along these lines, the Koryö not only maintained the Kuyo
dang, but also implemented Daoist principles and practices at fifteen sites,
including the Bokwon gung, the Jöndan 被壇 (Padded Altar), the Söngsú
jön 星宿殿 (Palace of the Constellations), the Jöngsa saek 靈事色 (Bureau
of Pure Affairs), the Daechöng gwan 大清觀 (Temple of Great Clarity) and
the Sokyökkjön 昭格殿 (Sanctuary of Brilliant Investigation). Numerous jiao
offerings were performed there, including those directed to the birth star,
the Northern Dipper, the Great One, the constellations, the Three Worlds
三界, the multitude of divinities 百神 and the planets 天星—indicating of
a rich and complex religious scene.

The most important innovation regarding Koryö Daoism, moreover,
was the establishment of the Bokwön gung in the tenth year of King Yae-
jong 密宗 (1115; see Yang 1988b, 485-505), which was specially designated
to allow the performance of Daoist purification ceremonies (zhai 塵) and
offerings for the protection of the state. The project was greatly supported
by the Northern Song emperor and Daoist sponsor Huizong (r. 1101-1126),
who sent two Daoist adepts to assist. Even before this time, King Yaejong
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had developed an interest in Daoism, and in the second year of his reign (1107), installed a statue of the Heavenly Worthy in his palace. Offerings were held every month, and in the fourteenth year (1119), he decreed that lectures on the *Daode jing* be given at the Chŏngyŏn gak (House of Pure Debate).

Even after Yaejong, Daoism continued to receive strong state support, and under King Injong (1122-1146), the Palsŏng dang (Hall to the Eight Sages) was erected in Pyŏngyang, following the recommendation of the monk Myochŏng (妙清). Portraits of the eight Korean immortals were installed there. Like the nationally venerated figures of the immortal Taebaek 太伯, who had similar abilities as the bodhisattva Manjusri, and the immortal Pyŏngyang 平壤, who was like the Buddha Dipamkara, they represented a fusion of Buddhism and Daoism while also being deeply rooted in original Korean culture. Their worship was felt central to political stability, and numerous offerings were held in their honor, especially under King Euijong (1146-1170), who thereby depleted the resources of the royal treasury.

The official favor granted to Daoism in the Koryŏ period gave rise to the widespread private practice of Daoist cultivation among intellectuals, and also to a form of Lao-Zhuang philosophy. Lee Jahyŏn 李賢玄 and Lee Myŏng 李modification rapidly rose to fame for their lives as hermits practicing Daoist cultivation. Jung Jisang 鄭知常 and Han Ahnin 韓安仁 made profound achievements in Lao-Zhuang studies. Lee Inro 李任老 and Lim Chun 林椿 admired the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove in the Jin dynasty (3rd c.) and in their imitation formed the Juklim gohui 竹林高會 (Lofty Gathering of the Bamboo Grove). Their works are densely interwoven with the philosophy of Daoism and immortality ideas (see Lee JG 1989, 81-100).

CHOSŎN 朝鮮 (1392-1910). The Chosŏn dynasty adopted Confucianism as the state doctrine, and the fifteen sites for Daoist offerings and other rites that had been established under the Koryŏ were almost all abolished, even including the Bokwon gung and the Daechŏng kwan. King Taeto 太祖 (r. 1392-1398) had been interested in Daoism before his accession and even performed Daoist sacrifices to the planet Venus, but in the first year of his reign the Ministry of Rites recommended that he should abandon all the places of Daoist worship. As a result, he retained only the services of the Sokyŏk jŏn, which was preserved until the Japanese invasion of 1592 and became the only national Daoist institution of the Chosŏn. In Taeto’s third year, court officials were still debating whether or not to move to a new capital, and Taeto personally conducted divination at the Sokyŏk jŏn to decide the matter. This shows that during the early years of the Chosŏn, the Sokyŏk jŏn continued to function and still enhanced the tradition of previous dynasties.
Under King Saejo 世祖 (r. 1455-1468), the Sokyok jón was renamed Sogyok sō 昭格署 (Bureau of Brilliant Investigation). This implies that it was no longer recognized as a religious institution, but was reduced to an executive state office. Nonetheless, it continued, as in Koryo times, to be the main venue for offerings and rites that exorcised evil influences and procured good fortune. Under King Taejong 太宗 (r. 1400-1418), Kim Chôm 金珦, the head of the Sokyok jón, proposed the installation of state worship of the Great One and of offerings to the Great Lord of Heaven, also urging Taejong to sacrifice to the national gods. His proposal, however, was not adopted.

Under King Chungjong 中宗 (1506-1544), a faction of court officials led by the Confucian reformer Cho Kwangjo 趙光祖 petitioned for the abolition of the Sogyok sō, as a result of which the temple was closed. Later, however, an opposing faction gained influence and King Chungjong issued an edict to reinstate the Sogyok sō. It was finally abolished after the Japanese invasion, marking the end of the official organization of Korean Daoism (Lee JG 1988, 109-12).

The fate of the Sokyok sō is typical for the overall devastation that official Daoism suffered during the Choson. On the other hand, important developments occurred on a less official level, where Daoists formed centers to conduct studies and experiments in inner alchemy. They were known collectively as the Danhak pa 丹學派 (School of Alchemical Studies) and can be traced back to groups of intellectuals who had practiced Daoist methods in private and independent of organized or national Daoism, from the Three Kingdoms through the Koryo. Prominent figures include Kim Kagi and Choi Chiwon of the Shilla, as well as Lee Jahyŏn, Lee Myŏng and others under the Koryo.

With the improved organization of Daoists pursuing alchemical studies in the Choson, the dominant direction of Korean Daoism shifted from being national and disciplined to being private and experimental (Jung 1995, 188-89). The salient features of the new trend are presented in Cho Yŏjŏk's 趙汝爵 (fl. 1588) Ch'ŏnghak jip 靑鶴集 (Collection of Master Blue Crane) and Hong Manjong's Haedong yijŏk 海東異蹟 (Record of Eastern Sea Immortals; see below), which both trace Choson ideas and practices back to Korean myths about Hwanin, Dangun and others. In contrast, Han Muwae's Haedong chŏndo rok 海東道錄 sets forth a more historically plausible account of the transmission of Korean Daoist lineages from Choi Chiwon, the Shilla student at the Tang court, through the Koryo period, to Kim Sisub 金時稷 (1435-1493) who transmitted Daoism to Hong Yusŏn 洪裕孫 (1431-1529), Jung Hiryang 鄭希良 (b. 1469), Jung Ryŏm 鄭熔 (1506-1549) and others.

Alchemical studies under the Choson broadly incorporated practices of inner alchemy as undertaken in the Zhong-Lù tradition and Quanzhen
Nevertheless, its followers did not simply take over Chinese theories of inner alchemy, but attempted, through a pattern of scholarship and commentary, to deepen their own understanding and interpretation. Kim Sisūb, in his *Yongho ron* 龍虎論 (*Discussion on Dragon and Tiger*), developed his own critical theory of inner alchemy using the language of Neo-Confucianism (see Yang 1988a, 85-86), while Jung Ryŏm wrote the earliest Korean work on inner alchemy, the *Yŏngho bikkol* 龍虎秘訣 (*Secret Formula of Dragon and Tiger*). The latter not only became the basic textbook of the period, but also had a great influence on the formation of the distinctively Daoist medical system represented in the Chosŏn medical text *Dongui bogam* (see Lee JS 1988, 217-18; Jung 1992, 158-59; Yang 1994b, 398).

Kwon Kŭkjung 权克中 (1585-1659), the great master of late-Chosŏn inner alchemy, moreover, established a systematic neidan philosophy in his *Chamdongkae juhae* 参同契註解 (*Commentary to the Cantong qi*). It offered a complete ontology, theory of human nature, system of alchemical practice and doctrine of immortality. Sŏ Myŏngŭng 徐命膺 (1716-1787) similarly wrote the *Chamdong ko* 参同改 (*Study of the Cantong qi*), which added an original commentary and textual criticism to the Chinese scripture and established its formal study in Korea (see Kim Y. 1990, 283; 1995, 533-35).

Chosŏn intellectuals were also deeply interested in Lao-Zhuang studies. Lee Yi 李珥 (1536-1584) wrote a commentary on the *Daode jing* called *Sunjin* 酉吉 (*Naive Words*); Park Saedang 朴世堂 (1629-1703) authored the *Shinju dodokkyŏng* 新註道德經 (*New Commentary to the Daode jing*) as well as the *Namhwaekyŏng juhæ* 南華経註解 (*Interpretation of the Zhuangzi*); and Han Wonjin 韩元震 (1682-1751) composed the *Jangja byŏnhae* 莊子解 (*Analysis of the Zhuangzi*). All sought to establish a critical interpretation of Lao-Zhuang thought from a metaphysical standpoint (see Song 1995, 383; Cho 1997, 215), following the trend of their time to submit objects of scholarship to analysis and research from a Daoist perspective. Lee Kyukyŏng accordingly included a long discussion of Daoism in his *Ojuyŏn mun jangjón sanko* 五洲行文長箋散稿 (*Miscellaneous Collections of Essays from the Five Islands*) and gives a thorough analysis and interpretation of Daoist and immortality scriptures. This work stands out especially as an exposition of the essence of Daoism.

In the late Chosŏn, another form of Daoism became popular: Chinese-style morality books 善書. The first among them to be transmitted to Korea was the *Yinzi wen* 隱鶴文 (*Text of Secret Blessings*) in six hundred sections. It was sent by the Ming Emperor Chengzu (Yongle; r. 1403-1425) to the Chosŏn king Taejong 太宗. After this nothing more was published until 1796, when the comprehensive morality book *Jingxin lu* 敬信錄 (*Record of Respect and Faith*) was published in Korean under the title *Kyŏngsin*.
rook haeok (Korean Interpretation of the Jingxin lu). It was highly popular, as were the Guansong jaegun myeongsong kyong haeae (Korean Interpretation of the Sacred Scripture of Lord Guandi), the Sansheng xunying (Systematic Scripture of the Three Sages) and the Guohua cunshen (Transformation through Visualization of Spirit). Morality books typically contained practical precepts and simple prayers; being well received among ordinary people, their application in Korean society ushered in a new aspect of popular Daoism in the late Choson. Their popularity can be attributed to several factors, including the abolition of the Sogyok sô and the decline of official Daoism after the Japanese invasion of 1592, the cult of the god Guandi as transmitted from Ming China, and the encouragement given to morality practice by Kojong (r. 1863-1907) and other kings.

Popularity, moreover, was not limited to the Chinese texts that had been disseminated, but extended to independent editions and commentaries. The Kagsae shinpyun palgam (Eight New Chapters on the Enlightenment of the World; dat. 1856), for example, contributed a commentary and supplementary notes to the Ganying pian (Treatise of Impulse and Response), the Wenchang dijun yinzhi wen (Lord Wenchang’s Text of Secret Blessings), the Guandi baoxun (Precious Exposition of Guandi) and other major morality books (Lee K. 1988, 456; Choi 1997, 130-34).

While these books were at the heart of popular Daoism, on a more official level the Japanese invasion of 1592, the Manchu invasion of 1636 and disputes among aristocratic factions prompted doubts about the monarchy and the Confucian worldview. Some of the declining clans then embraced an anti-establishment mentality and, having obtained a pessimistic prognosis about the fate of the dynasty through divination and other Daoist methods of fortune-telling, advocated a new world order. One trend focused on the Jung gamrok (Prophecy of Master Jung), which adopted popular Daoist views on divination. As the power of the monarchy wavered toward the end of the Choson, this trend became even more widespread, and ultimately became an invisible force on as broad a scale as an armed rebellion (Jung 1995, 201).

With the end of the monarchy approaching, popular religion increasingly was infected by a rebellious spirit. Popular Daoism at this time disintegrated and was reconstituted in the so-called new religions. Among them were Donghak (Eastern Doctrine), established in 1860 by Choi Jaewu (1824-1864), and Jungsan kyo (Teaching of Jungsan), created in 1901 by Kang Ilsun (1871-1909), and they filled the spiritual vacuum at the end of the Choson still remaining to date. Daoism plays a key role in their doctrines and practices, for example, in their worship of the Jade Emperor, Guandi and other Daoist gods; their use of talismans and...
pursuit of immortality; and also their practice of visionary journeys to the celestial realms (see Yun 1989, 327-43; Kim Tak 1994, 294-359). Jungsan kyo even calls its leader "celestial master," and one of its central doctrines is haewon (resolving a revenge) as described in the Taipfng jing, a connection that deserves closer examination (Jung 1995, 204-5).

THE MODERN PERIOD. From the end of the Choson to the present day, Korean Daoism has maintained its vitality in three areas. First, it has been absorbed into new religious movements, such as Donghak and Jungsan kyo, as well as merged with popular Buddhism and shamanism. Donghak today is called Chondo kyo 天道教 (Teaching of Heavenly Principles), and Jungsan kyo has become Jungsan do 凰山道 (Way of Jungsan) or again Daesun jinri hui 城真理會 (Great Truth Congregation). These groups all propagate their own specific doctrines, but certain key elements remain Daoist. Not only there, but even in Korean Buddhism and shamanism the seven gods of the Northern Dipper and a number of gods are worshiped as are the Jade Emperor and Guandi.

Second, Daoism survives in the countryside in the form of folk traditions that contain traces of the worship of various gods as well as of the stove god and the city gods, showing influence of both Daoism and Chinese popular religion. Third, Daoist practices have been handed down individually or in small-scale movements, and they are increasingly organized in large-scale institutions that pervade the entire country, such as the Hankuk yonjong won 韓國研修院 (Daoist Cultivation Circle of Korea) and the Kukson do 國仙道 (Way of the National Immortals). Although rooted in the Choson, they have recently exerted considerable influence on the new wave of qigong and yangsheng activities that has swept the country.

The pervasive presence of Daoism in Korean culture has moreover given rise to an atmosphere of rigorous academic inquiry. As pointed out earlier, Lee Nunghwa (1868-1945) paved the way for modern Korean Daoist studies with his exemplary "History of Korean Daoism" (see Lee N. 1977)—in continuation of the objective academic spirit of Lee Kyukyong 李圭景. The main research venue today is the Hankuk dokyo munhwa hakhui 韓國道教文化學會 (Korean Association for the Study of Daoist Culture)—whose members participate in research in many areas, including literature, art, philosophy, history, religion, folklore, and medical science. They discover, classify and report new materials and engage actively in association conferences every spring and autumn. Their annual journal is entitled Dokyo munhwa yonku 道教文化研究 (Studies in Daoist Culture), and it is now in its thirteenth year.
DAOISM IN KOREA

TEXTS

HAGIOGRAPHY. **Haedong chondo rok** 海東傳道錄 (Record of the Transmission of the Dao in the Eastern Sea Country [Korea]; handwritten Chinese characters; Kyujanggak Library), by Han Muwae 韓無畏 (1517-1610). A record of Korean Daoist lineages, the text describes how Choi Sungwu, Kim Kagi and the monk Jahae went from Shilla to China during the reign of the Tang Emperor Wenzong (827-841) to learn about the Dao from the Daoist Shen Yuanzhi and Zhongli Quan. Among the books they received were the *Qinghua miwen* 青華秘文 (Secret Writing of Blue Flora;, the *Lingbao bifa* 禮寶法 (Final Methods of Numinous Treasure), the *Jingao* 金詔 (Golden Declaration) and the *Tianhun lianmo jue* 天遁練魔訣 (Formula to Exorcise Demons in Accordance with Heavenly Rhythms). Later, the Shilla monk Hyunjun 玄俊 also visited Tang China and studied methods of deliverance from the corpse. He wrote the *Bosa yoin sul* 步捨遊引術 (Arts of Bodily Regeneration) and the *Kaya bon bo* 伽耶步引法 (Methods of Bodily Regeneration from Mount Kaya). These various techniques were then transmitted to Choi Chiwon who duly became the founder of Korean inner alchemy.

The *Haedong chondo rok* further describes the lineage leading from Choi Chiwon to Kwon Chông 欽淸 of the Koryo, to Kim Sisùb of the Choson and to Han Muwae, the author himself. Scholars assume, according to this book, that the lineage before Kim Sisùb is rather spurious and that Korean inner alchemy derives from Chinese Quanzhen models (Kim N. 1987, 138-46). Besides the lineages outlined by the author, the work also has a postface by the literatus Lee Sik 李植 and several texts on inner alchemy (see below).

**Chonghak jip** 青鶴集 (Collection of Master Blue Crane, photolithograph edition from Ahsia munhwasa 亞細亞文化社), by Cho Yojok 趙汝籍 (fl. 1588). This records in note form the activities and conversations of people in the circle of immortality adepts that surrounded the author's teacher, We Hanjo 魏漢祚 or Master Blue Crane 青鶴上人. The introduction describes the activities of the legendary immortal Lee Sayon 李思源, also known as Master Cloud Crane 雲鶴先生 and discusses his lineage of teaching, mentioning the tradition of Korean immortality. The text presents anecdotes and life stories of immortals, as well as their techniques, writings, and so on. It begins the Daoist lineage with the mythical figure Hwanin 根因 and relates how he transmitted the Dao to his son, the celestial king Hwawung 桓雄. He, in turn, passed it on to his son, Dangun 檀君, who rode around on an ox and governed the kingdom for 1048 years before becoming an immortal. Later, Master Munbak 文朴氏 transmitted the Dao of Dangun to subsequent generations.

Also appearing in the divine lineage are the goddess Bodok 寶德 of the Mahan state 馬韓國; the immortal Chamsi 始真人 of the Garak state.
CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Uisong Yongrang, Mulgaeja 勿稽子 and Choi Chiwon of the Shilla; and Lee Myông 李宏 and Kwak Yó 郭興 of the Koryó. These various figures have no direct connection with each other and are, for the most part, spurious. Nevertheless, the book also contains a detailed record of the lineage of teachers from the times of King Yónsankun 燕山君 (r. 1494-1506) to its author. They excelled at a variety of Daoist practices, including the five thunder rites, calendar calculation, prognostication, clarivoyance, vitality accumulation and dream control. The text is a profound literary achievement and its figures all have outstanding immortal qualities.

The lineage of immortals in the Chónghak jip is different from that in the Haedong chǒndo rok, which indicates that there were probably many different branches of Daoist practice in Chosón times. Moreover, unlike the Haedong chǒndo rok's concern with Chinese Quanzhen Daoism, the Chónghak jip focuses more on the myth of Dangun and the ancient origins of Korean Daoism, revealing a nationalistic agenda (Choi 1990, 40-47).

Haedong yijók 海東異蹟 (Record of Eastern Sea Immortals; typed Chinese characters; in Hong Manjong's collected works), by the literatus Hong Manjong 洪萬宗 (1645-1725) of the mid-Chosón. It introduces a succession of famous immortals in chronological order, from antiquity to the Chosón period. Figures include: Dangun, the ancient ancestral founder of Korea; Kings Hyókgosae 赫居世 and Dongmyông 東明 of antiquity; Kim Kagi and Choi Chiwon of the Shilla; Kang Gamchan 姜邯贊 of the Koryó; and Kim Sisub, Jung Ryóm, Nam Sago 南師古 and Kwak Jaewu 郭再祐 of the Chosón. Hong Manjong traces their lives on the basis of historical and literary texts, using textual criticism and commentary to construct their biographies. Eleven of the altogether thirty-eight personages are also described in the Haedong chǒndo rok.

Hong's intent was to prove that Korea had immortals just like those described in the Chinese Liexian zhuàn (Biographies of Immortals) asserting that Korean Daoism had had indigenous origins. Some of the themes in his book, however, are so similar to the Liexian zhuàn and the Liaozhai zhiyi 聊齋志異 (Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio) that they can be said to imitate the Chinese stories (Nozaki 1992, 240-41). Nevertheless, the fact that the Haedong yijók was composed by a famous literatus and that it systematically documents the families of Korean immortals, means that it is of vital significance for Korean Daoist studies. Hwang Yunsok 黃胤錫 (1729-1791) later studied the book and supplemented further biographies to it, creating the Haedong yijók bo 海東異續補 (Supplement to the Record of Eastern Sea Immortals), which comprises a total of 102 figures (Choi 1993, 154-63).

Ogae iljip 楊溪日誌 (Record of Ogae’s Daily Routines, handwritten Chinese characters; Dongkuk University Library), by Lee Uibaek 李宜白 (b. 1711), an intellectual unappreciated in his own time and student of Han Hyuhuyu 韓休休, who spent his life wandering around the country-
side befriending people. The book is an edited collection of his observations and can be divided into three main sections. The first describes important Daoist figures of the ancient Choson and Three Kingdoms periods. It shows that Korean Daoism arose independently and that its ancient origins are not Chinese at all. Dangun is accordingly revered as the founding ancestor of Korean immortality (Choi 1990, 41-42).

The second section relates the eccentric activities of immortals and recluses of different ages in the form of a novel. It describes the lives of the immortal Han Hyuhyu, the Daoist Songwu, the goddess Bodok, and the literatus Choi Chiwon, including their practices and writings. The third section concerns Daoist arts and scriptures. It records examples of practicing and testing methods of deliverance from the corpse, magical arts, geomancy, divination, talismans and spells, and describes in detail Han Hyuhyu’s book of divination, the Hongyeon pinkyol 洪煙真訣 (Perfect Formula of the Vast Smoke). It also conveys details of Hwanwung’s text on immortality, the Hyonmyo kyol 玄妙訣 (Formula of Mystery and Wonder). As the author Lee Uibaek, moreover, was a fourth generation descendant of Lee Sayon, an important figure in the Chonghak jip, the text’s Daoist lineage and intellectual orientation are closer to the Chonghak jip than to the Haedong chondo rok.

COLLECTIONS. Doga jikji dokjo kyong 道家直指獨照經 (Mirror of Instructions and Reflection on Daoism; typed Chinese characters; National Central Library), edited by Shin Donbok (1692-1779). The book comprises two distinct sections and approaches, the Jigji mun 直指門 (Gate of Instruction), and the Dokjo mun 獨照門 (Gate of Reflection), which were later also published separately. The first is divided into three sections, dealing with physical practices, such as arts of the bedchamber, the equal cultivation of yin and yang, and extending life. The second has one section on a more meditative approach, focusing on the cultivation of purity and tranquility.

The book as a whole is composed of materials taken from the Ming collection Daoshu quanjí 道書全集 (Complete Collection of Daoist Texts) and Kwon Kukjung’s Chamdongkae juhae. It also draws on the Ming works Shouyang congshu 舊養叢書 (Encyclopedia on Nourishing Longevity), Zunsheng bajaran 遠生八箋 (Eight Memoranda on Honoring Life) and Wanping huüchun 萬病回春 (Complete Recoveries from Every Illness). It also makes use of the Choson works Namjong shsæng jön 南宮先生傳 (Biography of Master Namgoong) and Dongkuk jöndø biki 東國傳道秘記 (Secret Record of the Transmission of the Dao in Korea). The editor systematically compiled materials from these texts in accordance with a Daoist worldview (see Kim Y. 1996, 288-91).

The text discusses Daoist theories of cosmology and the human condition, but also includes ontological theories, methods of inner alchemy and
descriptions of specific steps for various levels of practice. The text presents an almost complete collection of the principles of moral enlightenment required before practicing inner alchemy, the main themes of spiritual and physical discipline, from practical plans for physical training to self-cultivation through taking herbs and regulating the interior fire. All this implies that inner alchemy in the late Choson had attained a certain level of profundity and that theoretical inquiry was more wide-ranging than ever. Shin Donbok can be seen as continuing the tradition of inner alchemy studies of Kwon Kukjung and others, in addition to which he incorporated the whole range of schools of Chinese Daoism.

Chinese inner alchemical materials used in the book include the Cantong qi as well as works from all manner of schools, but mainly focus on the Southern School as represented by Zhang Ziyang’s Wuzhen pian 悟真篇 (Awakening to Perfection) and Yuqing jinsi shibu 玉清金笥實錄 (Record of the Golden Casket of Jade Clarity), Chen Niwan’s 玄泥丸 Xuan’ao jicheng 玄奧集成 (Collection of Mystery and Profundity), Chen Zhixu’s 陳致虛 Jindan dayao (General Principles of the Golden Elixir) among others. From this it becomes clear that while early inner alchemy in Korea was influenced by northern Chinese schools, including Quanzhen, late Choson practice relied heavily on the Southern School.

Juy6k chandonggase yons6l 周易參同契演說 (Interpretations of the Cantong qi; handwritten Chinese characters, Library of Seoul National University), dated 1857, by Kang Honkyu 姜獻奎 (1797-1860). The title of this is misleading, because it is not, in fact, a commentary on the Cantong qi, but a collection of important materials on Daoist practice. Its can be divided into five sections:

1. the Shier danjin 十二丹錦 (Hidden Wisdom for Twelve Elixirs) and other Chinese Daoist texts;
2. Han Muwae’s Haedong chǒndo rok;
3. Kwak Jaewu’s Yangshim yokjö 養心要訣 (Essential Formula of Mental Cultivation), a compilation of highlights from the Bokki joppō 服氣雜法 (Various Breathing Exercises), the Bokki shipsa 服氣十事 (Ten Forms of Breathing Exercises) and the Baopusi neipian;
4. the Lingbao bifa zhijie 靈寶華法直解 (Direct Understanding of the Final Methods of Numinous Treasure);
5. an appendix to the Hwanghbn okcho 玉編 (Jade Compendium of Yellow Gold), composed of selections copied from the Huangting neijing and the Wuzhen pian.

This book, and the slightly earlier Doga jikji dokjo kyong, are typical Korean Daoist collections. They systematically consolidate selections from Korean and Chinese texts dealing with inner alchemy, cultivation, breathing exercises, gymnastics and morality, and are of great importance.
INNER ALCHEMY. **Yongho bikyōl** 龍虎秘訣 (Secret Formula of Dragon and Tiger; handwritten Chinese characters; Yonsei University Library), by Jung Ryom (1506-1549), an exposition of instructions on inner alchemy and cultivation techniques from the early Choson period. The author is also known as Bukchang 北窗 (Northern Chamber), and hence his book is sometimes referred to as **Bukchang bikyōl** 北窗秘訣 (Secret Formula of the Northern Chamber). It is closely related to the **Cantong qi** and other esoteric Daoist texts, so that early scholars encountered considerable difficulty in understanding its techniques. Nevertheless, the text has been greatly favored by Korean practitioners to the present day. It is divided into three sections, on “Breath Control” (bīqi), “Embryo Respiration” (táixī), and “Regulating the Fire throughout the Cycle” (zhōutún huòhòu), each with later commentaries. It criticizes the methods of laboratory alchemy, emphasizes embryo respiration and holds the essence of the human being to be in the relationship of body 形, energy 氣 and spirit 神.

The book details a clear program of cultivation. The first task is to concentrate the mind and control one’s breathing, and then to obtain a vision of the “mysterious female” (xuānpǐn 玄牝). Next come embryo respiration and the regulation of the alchemical fire, after which the embryo is formed (see Yang 1994b, 396-401).

**Danso kukyōl** 丹書口訣 (Formula Delivered Orally on Internal Elixir; 16 j.; handwritten Chinese characters; in the Haedong chōndorok). This is a theoretical work of unknown authorship on inner alchemy in the early Choson. The work is contained together with the **Danka byōji kukyōl** 丹家別旨口訣 (Formula Delivered Orally on Inner Alchemy) in an appendix to the Haedong chōndorok. It takes the subtle theories of inner alchemy as the principal Daoist doctrine and argues that Daoism reigns supreme among the three teachings (Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism) and is, in fact, the major element of their common source. When qi is centrally aligned, according to the text, it gives rise to the human and the cosmic realms. A balanced and harmonious qi, therefore, is vital for a program of cultivation.

Probably influenced by the **Cantong qi**, the **Danso kukyōl** describes the process of cultivation as “holding the One” (baqū 抱一) a term from the **Daode jīng**. The aim of cultivation is to transcend the limits of ordinary expectation and be manifested as a celestial or earthly immortal. “Holding the One” is necessary for this process, the “One” being the qi of perfection before creation, literally “before Heaven” (xiantian 先天) and signifying the primordial qi at the origin of humankind. The text applies inner alchemy to interpret the **Daode jīng**, so that “holding the One” comes to mean the formation of an elixir. In addition, it places great emphasis on human relations and sets great store on the practice of virtue. Along the same lines, chapter eleven
of the Danka byŏlji kakyŏl gives concrete suggestions for virtuous conduct, specifying that only after accumulating three thousand merits and eight hundred good actions can one attain the Dao.

The text also explains that the adept should place an ancient mirror and sword in his room to ward off the attacks of demons when practicing cultivation. It also suggests worshiping the seven stars of the Northern Dipper and ways to prolong life by driving away the three corpses (sanshi 삼尸). Clearly, systematic theories of inner alchemy in the Choson period did not completely eliminate elements of religion and necromancy (Kim N. 1987, 146-65).

Chamdongkae juhae 参同契註解 (Commentary to the Cantong qi, 5 j.; handwritten Chinese characters; Kyujanggak Library), dat. 1639, by Kwon Kŭujung 權克中 (1585-1659), a scholar and practicing alchemist of late Choson. Originally a Confucian, Kwon authored commentaries on Confucian, Daoist and Chan-Buddhist philosophy, and established his own systematic philosophy of inner alchemy based on the harmonization of the three teachings. His “Theory of the Matching of the Three in Inner Alchemy and Yijing” 人內同同論 was based on the principles of the Yijing used in inner alchemy. His concept, moreover, of the common origin of immortality and Buddhism combined both Chan and alchemy, while his understanding of the dual practice of Chan meditation and inner alchemy combines the Chan cultivation of one's nature with the alchemist's refinement of qi. On this basis he then developed his encompassing theory of inner alchemy, with the purpose to soften the harsh criticism of Daoism by the Confucianism and Chan-Buddhism of his time and to lay a solid foundation for a systematic Daoist worldview.

He took the Great Ultimate (Taiji 太極) and the one qi before Heaven (xiantian yiqi 先天一氣) to be the root from which the myriad beings stemmed, and which in human beings formed inner nature (xing 性) and destiny or life (ming 命). He then advocated the dual cultivation of inner nature and life and suggested concrete practices for cultivating life first and then nature. When cultivating life it is necessary (1) to harmonize the water-qi and fire-qi within the body, (2) to grasp the one qi before Heaven, and (3) to accord with the cosmic cycles. Then the one qi will flow into the human body, whose inherent natural qi will accordingly transform into its pre-Heaven counterpart. When this stage is complete, the adept proceeds to the cultivation of nature. This is like the samadhi (chandha 極定) of Chan Buddhism, in which all concepts are abandoned and no-mind at one with the Dao harmonizes with the realm of the Dao. Then one's life and nature before Heaven, in their original substance, can be eternally liberated, and one reaches a state thoroughly different from the finite, after-Heaven life and nature in the actual world. Thus those who attain immortality through cultivating life and nature possess a liberated spirit and are truly immortal.
This unique vision of inner alchemy, which includes a valid ontology and metaphysics, makes Kwon a vital figure in the history of Korean Daoism and his work a document of great importance (see Kim N. 1990b, 182-200).

MORALITY BOOKS. *Kyŏngshin rok ḍohnsŏk* 敬信錄詳解 (Korean Interpretation of the *Jingxin lu*; typewritten Korean script; ed. in Hanul thak jaryo chongso 韓國語學資料叢書 [Collection of Materials about Korean Linguistics], vol. 3), dat. 1796. This is a Korean translation, published in the Bulamsa Temple 佛巖寺 near Seoul. A second edition was made in 1880 by order of King Kojong 高宗. The original Chinese edition comprised nineteen morality books, but there are only fifteen in the Korean edition. Texts in the collection include the *Ganying pian* Wenjang dijun yinzi wén; *Wenjang dijun quanxiao wén* 文昌帝君孝誡文 (Exhortations to Filial Piety by Lord Wenjang); the *Wenjang dijun jujie baozhang* 文昌帝君救劫寶章 (Lord Wenjang's Precious Verses for Salvation through the Kalpas); *Jingzao pian* 慶灶篇 (On Worshiping the Stove God); *Xing bu feiqian gongde li* 行不費錢功德例 (Virtuous Examples of How to Live without Wasting Money); *Gongguo ge zuanyao* 功過格要 (Essentials of Reckoning with the Ledgers of Merit and Demerit); as well as a variety of other records of efficacious practices. The last section of the text explains the original purpose of publishing a Korean edition: regardless of sex, age, wealth or social status, many who read the book will practice good, reform their evil ways and live a peaceful and happy life. The value of the book lies in its exhorting people to be good in the world and practice sincerity and honesty. It gives people clear moral guidelines and explains how good and evil actions inevitably entail good and evil rewards (Choi 1997, 134-41).

*Kagesae shinpyŏn palgam* 覺世新增八鍊 (Eight New Chapters on the Enlightenment of the World, 11 j., 6 vols.; typewritten Chinese characters; National Central Library), dat. 1856, edited by Choi Songhwan 崔溶焕, an official under King Chŏljong 善宗. In imitation of the Chinese White Lotus Society (Bailian hui 白蓮會), he established a religious society called Myoryŏnja 妙蓮社 (Wondrous Lotus Circle), through which he published many morality books, often inspired by planchette writing. Thus, for example, the *Jejung gamro so* 淨眾甘露序 (Introduction to the Sweet Dew That Saves the People) was written under the inspiration of the bodhisattva Guanyin 覺音 and Lord Fuyou 浮佑帝君.

In content, the first two volumes of the collection contain the *Jueshi san-jung* 覺世三經 (Three Texts on Enlightening the World), which includes commentaries on the *Ganying pian*, the *Wenjang dijun yinzi wén*, and the *Guandi baoxun* 關帝寶訓 (Precious Words of Guandi) plus an appendix of mostly popular Daoist material. Volume III has the *Jisong kam* 持誦錦 (Recitation Instructions), which expounds the practice of chanting scriptures: recite for nine days the names of four senior deities, such as the Heavenly Worthy of Grand Transformation, perform rites to gods that
control life expectancy, such as the Northern Dipper and the stove god, and respectfully recite the *Jueshi sanjing*. This should bring peace to home and world, as well as infinite blessings.

The fourth volume contains the *Yuyun kam* 養倫鑑 (Morality and Ethics), which emphasizes Confucian ethical practice and lists sayings and proverbs categorized according to the five relationships. In Volume V, the *Shika kam* 懇字鑑 (Concern for Letters) provides advice on writing and explains how veneration of Lord Wenchang can help in studying for and passing the civil service examinations, while the *Kadn kam* 戒淫鑑 (Abstention from Sensuality) contains warnings from the scriptures of Lord Wenchang and Lord Fuyou to stay away from sensual desires, which are the root of all evil.

In Volume VI, the *Onkup kam* 恩及鑑 (Reaching out in Benificence) considers benevolence to be the life-giving qi of heaven and earth and states that a mind whose life-giving qi is harmed will inevitably result in malevolent actions. One should accordingly refrain from accumulating an unlimited amount of things and from killing living beings. The last work of the collection, the *Uiyak kam* 藥藥鑑 (Medical Treatments and Medicine), finally, lists a variety of prescriptions on the premise that good medicine can help cure people.

**Worldview**

Daoism, together with Confucianism and Buddhism, is a vital component of Korean culture, despite the fact that historically there was no ordination-based, organized Daoism in the country. Korean Daoism was therefore unlike Chinese Daoism and never accepted the Highest Lord Lao or the Jade Emperor as a leading deity and had a significantly different understanding of its origins and its highest gods. The majority of Korean Daoist texts describing lineages of Korean immortals assume that its origins do not lie with the Yellow Emperor or Laozi but with Hwanin, Dangun and other key figures of Korean mythology. In ancient Korea, shamanism and mountain worship flourished, and the views of these indigenous religions are apparent in the Koguryo ritual *Dongmang* 東盟 (worshiping Heaven). There were also the *yŏngko* 迎鼓 (receiving the drum) rite in Buyŏ 夔餘, and the *Muchŏn* 舞天 (dancing for Heaven) rite in Dongyae 東涯. In all these, the sacred mountains, situated between heaven and earth, were venerated by shamans as intermediaries and served to unite heaven and earth.

The myth of Dangun, moreover, is a verbal expression of these rituals. According to the myth, Hwanin, the Lord of Heaven, conceived of the idea “to benefit all humankind” (*hongik inkan* 弘益人間) and sent his son Hwanwung down to Mount Baekdu. The latter married Wungnyŏ 熊女 (Bear
Woman) and conceived Dangun who became the first king of ancient Korea. After a long reign, he became an immortal. The myth of Dangun symbolizes the harmony between heaven and earth, and this harmony is signified by the birth of Dangun, and in the fact that he pursued the principles of benefiting all humankind while also cultivating himself. The doctrine of the integral harmony of heaven, earth and humanity is known as samil sasang, or the “notion of conceiving three as one.” Following this thinking, later generations also believed that the three persons of Hwanin, Hwanwung and Dangun were ultimately one. These myths were very influential in Korean culture and also in Korean Daoism (see Cha 1986, 33-36, 95-105; Song 1987, 20-33; Yu 1987, 62-63).

After the early figures, who are shrouded in myths, Master Munbak—as described in the Chônghak jip, succeeded to the way of Hwanin and passed it on to Yongrang, one of the four immortals of the Elite Youth Corpse of Shilla. Their training included physical exercises, martial arts, and self-discipline in ethics, morality and spirituality. They enthusiastically participated in state events, and when the country was prosperous, they travelled through the countryside and delighted in the arts. Choi Chiwon, a later representative of Shilla immortality, integrated the ideas of Confucius, Buddha and Laozi with his worldview. The notion of harmonizing the three teachings had already appeared in China in the Six Dynasties, but in Shilla it came from the indigenous “three-in-one” thinking. It consolidated the spirit of benefiting all humankind and advanced the pursuit of self-cultivation.

This Korean tendency then influenced organized Daoism as it was transmitted from China in the seventh century C. E. and made part of an indigenous Korean culture. Although first transmitted in the late Koguryó period, Daoism was not established nationally as a form of organized religion, and only after the mid-Koryó the Bokwón gung and Sogyók só alternated in performing Daoist rituals. Evidence for this is plentiful in the liturgical prayers (lit., “pure words”) composed at that time.

According to them, Daoist belief cherished a faith in the multiple divine personae of the highest deity, so that faith in one high god coexisted with faith in a multitude of divinities. In other words, the high god was not the only god, but existed under many different names and in many different aspects, each with the same reality, so that Heaven, Dao, Shangdi, the Three Pure Ones, and the Great One were all of the same rank and status and presented simply varying manifestations of the highest deity. Koryó Daoist thought, therefore derived from the belief in a high god—as also found in Shangqing and Quanzhen Daoism—which was linked with the cult of the highest deity of indigenous Korea, again with the help of the concept of three-in-one (see Kim S. 1987, 117-21). Among lower ranking deities, there are also the Northern Dipper, the Fate Star and the Six Ding
六丁 (gods of time), with the Dipper taking a central place in popular practice, reflecting its importance also in traditional shamanism. Another example of the integration of Chinese and indigenous Korean religion is found in the offerings held on Mount Mari 摩利山. Tradition has it that Dangun sacrificed there to Heaven, instituting offerings that combined the cult of the traditional Korean gods, mountain worship and Chinese Daoist rituals for the benefit of the world by obtaining a harmonious frame of mind, long life, good fortune and the avoidance of disasters.

From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, Korean Daoism saw the world of human affairs as functioning in harmony with a cosmology based on a supreme god who coexisted with many deities, both indigenous and foreign. From the mid-Chosôn, organized Daoism as centered on the So-gyŏk sŏ went into decline, and inner alchemical studies became popular among intellectuals. Nevertheless, the basic worldview of an integrated, harmonized Daoism never changed. Jung Ryŏm, for example, advocated the merging of Confucian, Buddhist and Daoist doctrine and identified the mysterious pearl that condenses in the Niwan palace 泥丸宮 after the bright and pure qi has been established in a full cycle of proper regulation of the fire, with the relics of the Buddha.

Kwon Kŭkjung, the expert in Cantong qi studies in the late Chosôn, similarly continued Jung Ryŏm's position. Under the premise of harmonizing Confucianism and Daoism, he argued that Daoism and Buddhism came from the same origin and that the realm of immortality pursued in inner alchemy was the equivalent of the highest realm of Buddhist practice. Kwon thought that the aim of inner alchemy was the same as that in Buddhist doctrine, namely to return to the Great Ultimate and attain a state beyond life and death. He advocated that Chan meditation and inner alchemical cultivation be undertaken at the same time, seeing the two as complementary. For him the spiritual cultivation of an enlightened mind and the physical cultivation of a refined qi should always go together. Kwon thereby continued both the harmony of Confucianism and Daoism as reflected in the Cantong qi and the dual cultivation of nature and life as developed by Zhang Boduan and Chen Zhixu (Kim N. 1990b, 194-95). He persisted in the pursuit of the harmonized and integrated worldview handed down from ancient, indigenous Korean culture.

**Practice**

STATE DAOISM. Because of the dominance of shamanism and mountain worship in ancient Korea, the most popular rituals were sacrifices to Heaven and rituals to the major mountains and rivers. These can be related to the ancient rituals of immortals and indigenous Korean Daoism, but we
lack the material to investigate them in detail. Relevant information collected in the Dongmun sŏn 東文選 (Collection of Korean Traditional Good Writings) is of a later date and concerns Daoist purification ceremonies and offerings. The text specifically contains Daoist liturgical prayers used in jiao rituals from the mid-Koryó to the early Chosŏn. Beginning with the reign of King Hyŏnjong 順宗 (r. 1009-1031), Daoist offerings became the state practices and were held inside the palace complex. After King Sŏnjong 宣宗 (r. 1083-1094), their frequency increased and they were no longer restricted to the capital Kaekyŏng 開京 (modern Kaesŏng), but were held throughout the country. This pattern continued until the middle of the thirteenth century. Under the Koryó, there were a total of 191 jiao rituals, with the highest frequency occurring under kings Yaejong and Úijong (r. 1146-1170). Performed by Daoist priests in accordance with Chinese Daoist liturgy as transmitted under the Song and formalized through the establishment of the Bokwon gung, they included offerings to high Daoist gods, such as the Lord of Heaven, the Three Pure Ones and the Great One, to longevity deities, such as the Life Star and the Old Man Star, to various constellations and planets, to the seven demonic and five benign spirits, to the southern dawn for liberation from peril and others for the purpose of exorcising disaster and illness. In addition, there were offerings to the Great One praying for rain and to the eleven luminaries and twenty-eight constellations of the zodiac for state divination. Their general purpose was to secure peace for the royal family and the country and to save the people; they were thus conducted both for personal reasons and with the intention of benefiting others (Kim C. 1996, 188).

Under the Chosŏn, Daoist rituals were still conducted with the favor of the royal family; they continued the legacy of the Koryó though somewhat scaled back in scope. Faced with the strenuous opposition of Confucian officials, particularly in the beginning of the dynasty, official Daoist rituals declined, and the duties and assignments of the only Daoist temple, the Sogyŏk só, were taken over by a government bureau. The latter employed one supervisor (jajeo 提調), several officials and ten Daoist students. To become an official at the temple, candidates had to be able to recite the Jintan 祭壇 (Ordination Precepts) and the Lingbao jing 隱寶經 (Scripture of Numinous Treasure), and were examined on three texts selected from among the Yansheng jing 延生經 (Scripture on the Extension of Life), the Taiyi jing 太一經 (Scripture of the Great One), the Yushu jing 玉樞經 (Scripture of the Jade Pivot), the Zhenwu jing 真武經 (Scripture of the Perfect Warrior) and the Languang jing 龍王經 (Scripture of the Dragon King). Chosŏn Daoist rituals, like those of the Koryó, were therefore held according to Chinese liturgy. They included offerings to the Northern Dipper and the Three Primes, the planets Mars and Venus, the Ruling Star and various comets, as well as sacrifices to the gods of good fortune and pure life, and
prayers for health, for rain and for strengthening the army. They served to secure peace for the royal family and the country.

Other state rituals, such as those on Mount Mari, however, continued to have strongly indigenous elements and were not conducted according to the Daoist calendar but at the times of the ancient Korean sacrifices to Heaven, such as on certain auspicious days in late spring, showing that the ancient indigenous liturgy still persisted. Since offerings on Mount Mari included sacrifices made to Heaven, Confucian officials believed that only the Son of Heaven, i.e., the Chinese emperor, could conduct them, and accordingly voiced objections to holding them in Korea because of its state as a vassal. Nonetheless, the rituals were continuously conducted in Korea.

As far as Daoist state rituals go, they ended when the Sogyŏk sŏ was abolished. After this, Daoist rites either took place as part of personal cultivation or popular religion. For example, Jung Jisŭng 鄭之升, a mid-Chosŏn alchemist, retired to the country to sacrifice to Heaven and hold formal offerings—possibly indicating an extension of existing individual practices or again the transfer of state practices to the individual level. Within popular religion, Daoist rites persisted in the new religious movements that arose by the end of Chosŏn. Choi Jaewu, the founder of Donghak, for example, very much like Zhang Daoling and Kou Qianzhi in medieval China, obtained the Dao through a mystical experience while practicing self-cultivation in the mountains. He had a vision of the high god and received incantations and numinous talismans, then instructed his followers to recite incantations and swallow the ashes of talismans dissolved in boiling water to cure sickness—again like the Celestial Masters in China. The texts of his incantations and writings of his talismans, on the other hand, did not come from Chinese Daoism but were newly composed by himself.

Then again, Kang Ilsun, the founder of the Jungsan kyo, claimed that he was the incarnation of the Jade Emperor; he, too, instructed his disciples to recite incantations and drink talisman water, but his spells and talismans show more active Daoist influence. The latter are particularly found in his Hyŏnmu kyŏng 玄武経 (Scripture of the Dark Warrior), while his invocations were directed at the Great One, various immortals and spirit generals, at Guan Yunchang 關雲長 and the seven stars of the Dipper (Kim T. 1994, 337-46).

POPULAR DAOISM. Many popular customs of the late Chosŏn were related to Daoism, and many aspects of contemporary Korean shamanism find their roots in it. The three most commonly worshiped Daoist gods in modern popular religion are the city or village god, the seven stars of the Dipper and the stove god (Kim T. 1988, 533-35). Local gods can be found at the entrance to villages or in temples on hillsides, then known as Sonangdang. Their cult was first transmitted from China around the reign of the
Chosôn King Munjong 文宗(1450-1452) and soon integrated with the traditional Korean cult of mountain spirits. The gods of the Dipper are worshiped as granters of children and health or longevity. They are not entirely of Chinese origin, but were already worshiped in shamanism and ancient Korean religion. The stove god resides in the kitchen, worshiped by housewives who offer him fresh spring water every morning—a combination of traditional Korean beliefs and the Chinese god of fire and the hearth.

In addition, the most salient custom derived from Daoism is the gengshen 庚申 vigil, first practiced in Koryô times. The belief is that there are three parasitic worms or corpses in the body who ascend on every gengshen day to report to the celestial administration and come back with orders to punish people by making them sick and causing death. By staying awake on the gengshen night, the corpses can be prevented from ascending. As a result, on these days people would meet to drink wine, perform music and stay up through the night. This became a national custom, and under the Chosôn, it was practiced even in the royal palace until it was banned under King Yongjo 英祖 (r. 1742-1776). The remaining custom of staying up on New Year's Eve is a relic of this practice. There was also the Chosôn custom of posting the words “Built by Jiangtai gong 姜太公 on the gengshen day of such and such a month and year” on the door of new homes. This was probably derived from the popular Chinese Daoist belief that Jiangtai gong could prevent illness from entering homes (Lee N. 1977, 271-73).

Other Chosôn practices were connected with Daoist constellation cults. When the age of a man or woman corresponded with the ruling constellation, for example, he or she would make a straw figure (churyŏng 靈童) and, on the eve of the day of Upper Prime (middle of the first month), throw it onto the road to ward off evil influences. This was one of the many customs to do with worshiping the Northern Dipper popular because of the influence of the Yushujing.

Another popular Daoist custom since the Koryô was the practice of the blind making divinations or reciting scriptures, especially the Yushujing, to point out good and evil, cure illnesses and save people from danger. They used the government agency known as the Bureau of Lucidity (Myŏngtong si 明通寺) as the center of their activities, and even the king sometimes commanded rituals to be performed there to pray for rain or to cure an illness. Perhaps the fact that blind people officiated at these rituals is a uniquely Korean phenomenon; and since there were no organized Korean Daoist priests or temples, it was left to blind people to take their place (Lee N. 1977, 253; Cha 1986, 86).

**DAOIST TEMPLES AND CULTIVATION ORGANIZATIONS.**
There is no way of knowing whether the Shilla Elite Youth Corps had an established Daoist temple, but it is generally assumed that unlike in China,
folk-developed Daoist temples did not exist in Korea; there were only national Daoist temples. The official Daoist temples documented in Korean history are represented by the Bokwon gung of the Koryó and the Sogyon sô of the Chosón. The former was both a Daoist temple and part of the royal palace and, together with several Buddhist temples inside the palace complex, served the royal family and state religion. Architecturally influenced by Song Daoism, it probably resembled a Chinese temple. Located in the north of the palace compound, it comprised two halls, one devoted to the Lord of Heaven, the other to the Three Pure Ones. It was guarded by barracks and permanently staffed by Daoist priests. Presumably this meant that the temple also included accommodations for the priests, but according to the Gaoli tujing 高麗圖經 (Koryó Illustrated, j. 18) by the Song literatus Xujing 徐兢 (dat. 1123), Koryó Daoist priests worked in the temple during the day and returned to their private quarters at night. Thus the activities of the Bokwon gung were not as strictly disciplined as those in Chinese Daoist temples, and the priests did not have to be celibate to practice cultivation.

The Chosón temple, Sogyon sô, was not directly connected to the royal family, but also used by court officials. It had two halls, one for the Great One, the other for the Three Pure Ones, and its supervisor and officials held offerings according to Chinese Daoist liturgies. However, later the laws governing the temple were relaxed, and the rites became just a matter of formality, so that the Sogyon sô no longer served as a venue for Daoist cultivation.

In addition to the two major state temples, the worship of Guandi had been introduced from China in the late sixteenth century, and a temple to the deity was built in the eastern part of Seoul. There were also small-scale cultivation groups and organizations which continued from generation to generation. The various lineages of immortality mentioned in the Haedong chondo rok, the Chônghakjip and the Ogae iji jip are good examples. At the end of the Chosón, popular cultivation organizations gained even greater influence, and Daoist-inspired ordination lineages were established by the new religions, such as Donghak and Jungsan kyo.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

DAOISM IN JAPAN

MASUO SHIN'ICHIRO' *

DESCRIPTION

The arrival of Chinese culture in Japan is usually dated to the fifth century C.E. It is documented in inscribed mirrors and swords that were fashioned by immigrants from the mainland yet nevertheless showed a specifically Japanese character. These were distinctly different from the auspicious spells and magical incantations carved on objects, which were earlier imported from China and Korea. In the sixth century, a more organized adaptation of religion and artistry from the mainland commenced. Scholars of the Five Classics 五経博士 from Paekche 百濟 transmitted Confucian doctrines, while masters of the Northern Wei—again most likely after having passed through Paekche—brought Chinese medicine, divination, calendar sciences and the Buddhist religion.

There are no dear records concerning the earliest transmission of Daoism into Japan. According to a story recorded in the Nihonshoki 日本書紀 (Chronicle of Japan, dat. 720), a man named Tajima Mori 田道聞守 spent decades of his life searching for the elixir of immortality and eventually managed to get to the Eternal Land (tokoyo no kuni 永世國), from where he brought back the “fragrant fruit that grows out of season” (Ashton 1956, 1: 186), which he wished to give to his ruler. Upon returning he found that the emperor had already died, sighed deeply and followed him into death. About the country visited by Tajima the text says: “This Eternal Land is no other than the mysterious realm of gods and immortals to which ordinary mortals cannot attain” (ch. 6, Suinin 99; Ashton 1956, 1: 186). Scholars have identified it as the immortals’ isles of Penglai 蓬萊, and the “fragrant fruit” as the mandarin orange which grew in the Chinese south and was alien to Japan at the time (see Nakamura 1983; Kohn 1995).

Another story in the Nihonshoki concerns Mizunoe no Urashimako 瑞江浦島子, a man from Yosa 余社 district in the ancient land of Tamba 丹波, northwest of modern Kyoto. Going out to fish in the sea, he caught

* Translated by Livia Kohn
a giant turtle who transformed into a woman. Startled and delighted, Ura-
shima made her his wife, and together they went into the sea to visit the
isles of Penglai, where he met with numerous immortals (Masuo 1997). A
version of the same tale in the *Man'yō-shū* (Collection of a Thousand
Leaves), which adds luster and embellishments to it, makes Urashima into
an immortal officer of the Eternal Land who rejoiced in the celestial splen-
dor and lost all count of time. Eventually returning to his home in Japan,
he received a jade box from his immortal lady. As soon as he opened it, his
hair turned white and his skin wrinkled, and he died shortly thereafter (see
Shimode 1972b). Other versions appear in fragments of the *Tango no kuni
fūdoki* (Local Record of Tango Country), found in the *Shaku
nihonki* (Chronicle of Japan Explained), in the *Urashimako den* (Biography of Master Urashima), its supplement and a number of
other early and medieval texts. These document an increasing adapta-
tion and embellishment of the story which is now a popular folk tale.

While these are highly legendary accounts that may or may not have
been transmitted in a Daoist context, other early evidence of the religion
includes the adaptation of its methods by yin-yang diviners and esoteric
Buddhist monks as well as the use of its spells and talismans in Shintō and
Shugendō. A number of Daoist texts, from the *Daodejing* through talismanic
manuals to major religious documents, made it into Japan and played a role
in different historical periods. In addition, more recent practices involving
observing the Kōshin vigil and calculating merits and demerits on the basis
of morality books can be described as forms of Daoism in Japan.

**HISTORY**

**ANTIQUITY: SCHOLARS' THEORIES ON THE TRANSMISSION
OF DAOISM.** The first inkling of the presence of Daoism in Japan ap-
peared in the Edo period, in works by leading scholars of Chinese history,
literature and philosophy, such as Hirata Atsutane (1775–1843; see
Hammitsch 1936; Kohn 1995) and Ōe Bunpa (1730–1790; see Asano 1964). After them it was only in the early twentieth century that
the topic was raised again, different scholars looking at different texts and
presenting a variety of views on how Daoism came to be transmitted and
what role it played.

The first among them, heir of the Edo scholars and a major forerunner
of modern studies, was Tsucha Sōkichi who in a 1920 article
argued that the expression *tennō* 天皇 for the Japanese emperor, which was
first used in the eighth-century chronicles to replace the ruler’s title *škimi*
大王, was a sign of strong Chinese, and particularly Daoist, influence. He
found evidence for the Chinese use of the term in a number of texts, in-
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cluding the *Chunqiu wei* 春秋解 (Apocryphal Interpretation of the Spring and Autumn Annals). In its chapter “Hecheng tu” 合誠圖 (Matching Sincerity), we find the following: “The great emperor and heavenly sovereign (tenno) is the star of the North Culmen.” Similar statements about the central deity of the cosmos, including the Great One (Taiyi 太一), in relation to a northern constellation and the appellation tenno, also appear in the *Shiji* 史記 (Historical Records, chs. 27-28) and in the *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of the Jin Dynasty, ch.6) among official documents, as well as in the more Daoist/popular *Zhengzhong shu* 枕中書 (Pillowbook; dat. 5th c.) and *Shenyi jing* 神異經 (Classic of Spirit Marvels; dat. 6th c.). Tsuda argues that the appellation developed from a basic title of the cosmic ruler through a link with a northern constellation. The belief in immortality then developed into an active religious cult, and was as such introduced into Japan and associated with the ancient emperor (Tsuda 1920).

Later scholars followed Tsuda’s lead and, on the basis of inscriptions found in the central hall of the ancient Horyuji 法隆寺 Temple and on a statue of Yakushi nyorai 藥師如来, the Medicine Buddha, concluded that the usage of tenno for the Japanese emperor was already in vogue in the seventh century, under emperors Temmu (673-686) and Jito (690-697). The term carries both astrological and Daoist connotations and may have been transmitted in the *Zhengzhong shu* and *Shenyi jing*, which reached Japan in the mid-seventh century, at the time of the Tang ruler Gaozong (see Ōyama 1997; Fukunaga 1978).

A different approach to the problem of Daoist transmission into Japan is found in the work of Kuroita Katsumi 黒板嘉美 (1923), who focuses on a Nihonshoki entry under Emperor Yuryaku (456-479). This states that *dōkan* 道觀 or “Daoist abbeys” were erected on Mounts Katsuragi 葛城山 and Ikoma 生駒山 in the ancient land of Yamato 大和 (modern Nara prefecture). In addition, the Futatsuki no miya 二嚳宮 on Mount Tōnomine 多武峰 was also described as a *kan* or *dōkan*. This understanding of the institutions erected at the time was countered by Naba Toshisada 那波利重 (1952; 1954) and Shimode Sekiyo 下出積 (1972a), who claimed that the *dōkan* were not Daoist abbeys but rather astronomical observatories—a view that has since prevailed among scholars (see Fukunaga 1987; 1989). They generally follow the extensive work by Shimode (1968; 1972b; 1975; 1997), in which he filters out bits and pieces of Daoist ideas and metaphors in ancient Japanese documents.

Nevertheless, even without formal organization, certain elements of organized Daoist belief and practice did reach ancient Japan. The first scholar to present a survey of these was Tsumaki Jikiryō 壬申直良 in a series of lectures presented in 1911-12 and published in 1933. A Pure Land priest, he undertook an extensive study of Buddhist and other religious materials
from China, Korea and Japan and, comparing their various elements, focused on pieces of Daoism apparent especially in the Heian and Edo periods. In the former, he found that the major bibliography of Chinese texts, the Nihonkoku genshasho mokuroku 日本國在書目錄 (Bibliography of Books Currently Available in Japan) by Fujiwara no Suketsugi 藤原佐世 of the ninth century, listed 17,160 scrolls of texts in a total of 1,588 wrappers. Many of these bore a relation to Daoism, but only a few represented religious scriptures; the vast majority dealt with longevity techniques and self-cultivation, and thus could also be classified as medical (see also Sakade 1989).

Another venue of Daoist entry into Japan was through the transmission of esoteric (Tantric) Buddhist doctrine of the Tendai 天台 and Shingon 真言 schools. In the early Heian period altogether eight leading monks went to China to obtain Buddhist sutras, including the well-known An'en 安然, Saichō 最澄 and Kūkai 空海. The works they brought back were listed in the Hakken hiroku 八家秘録 (Secret Record of the Eight Monks); among them are many works concerning spells and talismans, protection of residences, the cult of Mount Tai and other, Daoist-inspired arts and beliefs (see Tsu-maki 1933).

Yet another line of Daoist influence is found in the widespread spell “Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances” (jījī ru hōding 急急如律令), a classical formula of the Celestial Masters. This spell has been in use in Japan, especially in Shugendō, from the earliest times to the present day (see below). Then again, there are the treatises on good and bad deeds, patterned on the Gmyingpian (On Impulse and Response, CT 1167), as well as morality books (shanshu 善書), both highly popular in the Edo period and directly influenced by Daoism (see below). Tsumaki points out all of these elements, then supplements his discussion with a list of Daoist texts available in Japan and/or translated into Japanese. This makes his study a highly valuable resource for later scholars. Indeed, most later studies follow his lead when he says: “Daoist ideas transmitted to Japan in ancient and Heian times first came under the umbrella of esoteric Buddhism and yin-yang divination, then spread into the wider populace,” expanding the picture he painted without altering its basic tenets.

HEIAN: YIN-YANG DIVINATION AND ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

In the late seventh and early eighth centuries, the legal and administrative system of China was imported into Japan. Among others, a special Bureau of Yin and Yang (Inyōryō 陰陽寮) was set up to handle affairs in the four areas of yin-yang cosmology, astronomy, calendar calculation and time keeping (with the clepsydra). Officials there observed the rising of the ethers and the movements of the stars, divining good and bad fortune and setting both annual and daily time. In the tenth century, this state-sponsored form of divination spread among the aristocracy to include personal fortunes and
was merged with rituals and spells that would dispel dangers and unlucky tendencies. The result was a religious practice known as *in'yōdō* 陰陽道 or *yin-yang divination*.

Around the same time esoteric (Tantric) Buddhism, which had been transmitted from India into Tang China in the early eighth century and moved into Japan in the ninth, became stronger. A branch of Mahāyāna Buddhism, it placed little importance on future existences or transmigration, but instead emphasized the possibility of becoming enlightened in this life. Esoteric Buddhism was not merely a practice limited to celibate monks, but offered spells, talismans and rituals to householders for a variety of concrete situations. In this way it strongly resembled Daoism, whose elements it also incorporated. This is evident from the many Tantric texts in Chinese that describe the recitation of *dhrānī* and the performance of efficacious rituals (see Misaki 1991). Through the mediation of esoteric Buddhism elements of Daoist belief and practice therefore made their way into Japan, where they in turn merged with popular *yin-yang divination*, another Daoist-inspired activity.

Kūkai, the founder of the esoteric Shingon school in Japan, in the late eighth century wrote a work called *Sankyō shiki* 三教指歸 (Pointers to the Three Teachings; see Hakeda 1972) in which he contrasts and compares Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism. He finds Buddhism highest and places it at the top, ranks Daoism second as a religious practice that also addresses the common people, and has Confucianism third, seeing it mainly as a moral and social teaching (see Fukunaga 1982; 1985). This shows that he was aware of Daoism and had a strong respect for it.

Another major text showing Daoist awareness within esoteric Buddhism is the *Gorin kuji hishaku* 五輪九字秘釋 (Secret Formula of the Five Chakras and Nine Words) of the twelfth century. This work describes secret mantras and mudras in a mystical body practice based on the five organs as understood both in Chinese medicine and Daoism. It shows that the monks of the late Heian were conversant with a number of religious techniques as well as with divination, spells, talismans and rituals that had both Buddhist and Daoist origins (see Tanaka 1984; Nakamura 1990; Misaki 1991).

The *gods worshiped* in *yin-yang divination* included both Daoist and popular Chinese deities, such as the Great One (Taiyi), the Lord of Thunder (Leigong 雷公), the Dunjia 道 (gods of divination) and the Liuren 六壬 (gods of time; see Kosaka 1986). The practice focused on the observation of eclipses, comets and other planetary phenomena, assessing in each case the potential good or bad fortune indicated. Specialists then drew up appropriate reports for the imperial court and wrote manuals for their own use. Once the practice had spread into wider ranges of society, popular *yin-yang diviners* appeared, many of whom were also esoteric monks, offering charms and rites to protect people and alleviate their anxiety. Two wide-
spread works used by such monks were the Sukkyōyō 宿曜經 (Book of Planets and Constellations), a divination text of an Indian esoteric background, and the Futenrō 符天曆 (Calendar Matching the Sky), which focused on the telling of individual fortunes (see Yamashita 1996). Their methods were slightly different from those practiced by yin-yang specialists, but like them they made use of such Daoist notions as the star of one's birth (benming 本命), the constellation of origin (yuanchen 元辰) and others.

Another commonly practiced method in yin-yang divination was the avoidance and/or purification of the directions. The belief here was that there were several malevolent deities located in the eight directions, including figures such as the Great General (Daijōkun 大將軍), the Planet Venus (Taihaku 太白), the Heavenly One (Ten’ichi 天一) and the Metal God (Konjin 金神). They all were said to consist of the celestial essence of metal that accumulated in the various directions. To protect oneself against them and prevent disasters coming from them, one had to cast spells, perform rituals and observe taboos related to the various directions (Yamashita 1996). The practice gained a strong foothold among Heian aristocrats, who became especially fond of purification rituals to prevent ills—a kind of ritual commonly associated with Shinto and shrines that may have entered the latter through yin-yang divination.

One way in which this purification was performed was by casting a doll on the last day of the lunar month. Directed by imperial orders, the yin-yang master would take a prefashioned doll, breathe energy into it, stroke it several times and cast it into the Brook of Seven in the capital. Taking its name from this, the ritual became known as the Seven Brook Purification (shichise no harai 七瀬祓). Later it also spread into the outlying areas where it was performed on the banks of rivers and became known as the Riverbank Purification (karin no harai 河臨祓). Esoteric monks further developed the ceremony by adding a six-word mantra, adopting it into Buddhism and changing it into the Riverbank Rite of the Six Words (rokujī karin no hō 六字河臨法). It then included a formal fire ritual (goma 護摩; see Strickmann 1983) offered to the Enlightened King of the Six Words (Rokuji myōō 六字明王) on a boat floating down the river. After reciting the formal prayer of purification addressed to the celestial ministers (nakatomi no harai 中臣祓), the officiating priest would throw a doll into the river, thereby joining Shinto activities with yin-yang divination and Daoist spells under an esoteric Buddhist umbrella (see Shimode 1997).

Protective measures were also taken during the construction of temples, shrines or residences to ensure the safety and success of the undertaking and cast supportive spells on the location. The rite was typically centered around Daoist deities and notions, including the Northern Dipper and the Eight Trigrams and consisted of the ritual circumambulation of the construction site. It was accompanied by the voicing of spells that would expel
all influences of baleful stars and strengthen the beneficence of all good powers. Again, this took up certain aspects of yin-yang divination and was commonly performed by esoteric monks.

Beginning in the tenth century, rituals undertaken by yin-yang diviners also increasingly took over Shinto rites for local protection and the expulsion of pestilence. This used a more Chinese venue that included the wearing of animal skins and multi-colored robes by the officiating priest, as well as the invocation of increasing numbers of star gods. Japanese worship of the latter is traceable to Chinese models in all cases, to Han sources that speak of the celestial rulers in the North Culmen and Northern Dipper. These had developed by the Tang into particular Daoist forms of astral worship. The Heian Japanese took over the latter and mixed them early on with esoteric beliefs and practices. They soon acquired particularly Japanese forms, such as that in Myoken, Miakashi, and Koshin (see below). These appear in the ninth century as part of yin-yang divination and are worshiped in the tenth as part of esoteric Buddhist rites (see Yamashita 1996).

In the late Heian (11th–12th c.), finally, two further Daoist beliefs became popular in Japan: that in the Lord of Mount Tai (Taizan fukun), and that in the celestial administration of the underworld run by a multitude of hierarchically organized deities. Following ancient Chinese beliefs, the Lord of Mount Tai was thought to reside in the sacred mountain of the east and serve as the ruler of fate, longevity and good fortune, controlling the registers of life and death. He was a key subject for prayers for the avoidance of disasters and extension of life (see Sawada 1968). Heian texts also mention other life-giving gods, including general officers such as the heavenly administrators, the departments of Earth and Water, the rulers of Fates and Emoluments and the heads of the Six Departments, and specific deities such as the Northern Emperor, the gods of the Five Realms and the stars of the Northern Dipper. A total of twelve groups of gods were offered silk and coins and prayed to for support in life and the extension of longevity (see Hirohata 1965; Masuo 2000).

Beyond this, special occasions, such as war, natural catastrophes and epidemics warranted further ceremonies of protection and avoidance of disaster. Again the Lord of Mount Tai served as one of the most efficacious deities, joined closely by the officials of the Department of Earth. These various rites and offerings, too, were conducted by esoteric monks who were also yin-yang diviners, following a complex mixture of medieval beliefs and practices that included a strong Daoist influence.

KAMAKURA: SHINTÔ AND SHUGENDÔ. Shintô, 神道 has long been recognized as the indigenous religion of Japan. It was particularly singled out in the nineteenth century with the rise of nationalism and became the key political doctrine in the early twentieth century, then known
as State Shinto (see Hardacre 1989). Today, much as in the middle ages, another form prevails, highly localized and focused on popular welfare and commonly called Shrine Shinto. It involves the worship of *kami* 神 or "gods," personified forces of nature. These holy, pure and benevolent powers are found in all sorts of natural locations. In the early period, worship of the *kami* was closely integrated with Buddhism, so that shrines were usually also temples (institutions that have been called multiplexes; see Grapard 1992a) and served as locations of a variety of popular rituals. Ideologically, the integration was justified in the belief that ordinary *kami* were local spirits that served as protectors and helpers of Buddhism, while more famous ones were thought of as localized manifestations of buddhas or bodhisattvas (*suijaku* 垂迹; for typical examples, see Kleine and Kohn 1999).

In the Kamakura, around the time of the failed Mongol invasion (1281), two new forms of Shinto, Ise Shinto and Yoshida Shinto, arose that did away with the protective helper doctrine. They saw *kami* as individualized, special powers that had their own virtues and needed their own offerings, prayers and worship. Both created new rites and doctrines and in their own way incorporated Daoist influences.

**Ise Shinto** 伊勢神道 is documented first in a twelfth-century text known as the *Shintō gobusho* 神道五部書 (Five Book on Shinto), which is part of Watarai Ieyuki’s 度会家行 Ruju jingi hongen 風聚神祇本源 (Origins of the Manifold Gods). Here, for the first time, *kami* are distinguished according to function, including those who created heaven and earth, those who represent certain places and those closer or more distant to human beings. The text includes numerous citations from proto-Daoist works, including the *Yijing* texts on yin and yang and Han-dynasty apocrypha, showing that its worldview depended to a large degree on Chinese concepts. Moreover, the first chapter of the work on the "Creation of Heaven and Earth" cites the *Daodejing* and some of its commentaries as well as the *Wuxing dayi* 五行大義 (Great Meaning of the Five Phases; see Kalinowski 1991) and the *Yijing* (see Takahashi 1977).

**Yoshida Shinto** 吉田神道 developed slightly later than Ise Shinto and under the latter’s influence, intensifying its vision of *kami* and even more strongly opposing the protective helper doctrine. It not only makes ample use of the *Daodejing* and the *Zhuangzi*, but also relies on the *Beidou benming yanshengjing* 北斗本命延生經 (Scripture of Extending Life with the Help of the Birth Star and the Northern Dipper, CT 622). This form of Shinto developed particularly in the Muromachi period by Yoshida Kanetomo 吉田兼倉 (1435-1511; see Grapard 1992b), and strongly opposed the contemporaneous doctrine of the integration of Buddhism and Confucianism, as proposed by the Five Mountains system of Zen Buddhism (see Collcutt 1981). It created a completely new form of Shinto doctrine, as documented especially in Yoshida’s *Yitsu shintō myōhō yoshū* 唯一神道名法
DAOISM IN JAPAN

The Jingido reijuin (The Kami's Talismanic Seal of Numinous Dao-Power) found here is a prominent protective charm that goes directly back to Daoist sources and has remained prominent in Shinto practice to the present day. In addition, Yoshida Kanetomo linked his system with the old yin-yang divination practice by identifying a number of specific deities, such as the gods of earth, water, stove and the souls, with the ten-partite division of deities used in the Heian and with ancestors of his own clan, such as Yoshida Urabe 𠮷田卜郎. In both doctrine and practice he thereby created a new version of Daoist-Shinto integration that took a specifically anti-Buddhist stance and helped pave the way for later Shinto developments (see Sakade and Masuo 1991).

Besides Shinto, Daoism also exerted a great deal of influence on another form of popular religious practice in Japan: Shugendo 修験道. Originally a practice of shamanic and ascetic mountain worship, this integrates esoteric Buddhism, Shinto, yin-yang divination and Daoist elements into a single organized system. It began in the seventh century with the legendary En no Ozunu 伊呂佐村, who lived on Mount Katsuragi in the ancient Yamato area. A practitioner of asceticism and the working of spells, he controlled even Buddhist deities with his powers and served to protect the state from harm (see Miyake 1993; Shimode 1997). Other early figures following the same path were centered on Mounts Yoshino 吉野山 and Kumano 熊野山 in the same region (south of modern Nara). Their deeds and religious activities, which included numerous supernatural powers as well as the collection and ingestion of immortality herbs, are recounted in the Honchô shinsenden 本朝神仙傳 (Biographies of Spirit Immortals of Our [Heian] Dynasty; see Kleine and Kohn 1999) and in the Honchô hokke genki 本朝法華验記 (Record of "Lotus" Miracles from Our Dynasty; see Tsu-maki 1933).

Between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, the practice of Shugendô spread from the three mountains in western Japan (Kumano, Ōmine 大峰山 and Yoshino) to three further peaks in the northeast (Mounts Haguro 羽黒山 [see Earhart 1970], Gassan 月山 and Yudono 湯殿山) as well as to Mount Hiko 英彦山 in Kyushū. In the process it split into three different strands and lineages. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, Shugendô was linked with Buddhism and further divided into two major groups: an esoteric lineage of Tendai, associated with the Shōgoin 聖観院 Temple (the so-called Honzan lineage 本山派), and a lineage of
Shingon, with headquarters in the Sampōin 三寶院 Temple of Daigoji 嵐鏡寺 (known as the Tōzan lineage 當山派; see Miyake 1993). Since that time it has spread widely among the populace and today has come to exert considerable influence on the new and new-new religions.

Shugendō practitioners are known as yamabushi 山伏. They undergo ascetic practices in the mountains to acquire supernatural powers and learn to divine good and bad fortune. Their practice focuses on fortune-telling, faith-healing and praying against calamities, as well as on the weaving of dhāranī-spells and the writing of protective talismans. They are called upon to perform rituals that heal, invite good fortune and repose the souls of the dead. Much of what they do goes back to Daoist sources. For example, one of their key rites is a protective ceremony performed before entering the mountains that follows a formula already found in Ge Hong’s 葛洪 Baopuzi 抱朴子 (Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185, ch. 17) of the fourth century. Common elements include the wording of the spells, the ritual procedures, the gods worshiped and the practice of abstaining from grains. The main difference is that the Baopuzi intended its rite for the solitary mountain entry of a single Daoist, while yamabushi undertake their practice in groups, believing that they will become buddhas in this life.

Then again, not unlike the fangshi of ancient China, many Shugendō practitioners make a living concocting and selling medicines, which they moreover call dan 药, the term used for the cinnabar elixirs concocted by Chinese alchemists. Famous examples include the Mankintan 萬金丹 (Cinnabar Worth Ten Thousand Pieces of Gold) from Mount Asama 朝熊山 in Ise, the Fūrōtan 不老丹 (Cinnabar Against Old Age) from Mount Hiko and the Hankontan 反魂丹 (Cinnabar for Returning the Soul) from Mount Tateyama 立山 in Echū 越中. Their talismans also integrate the Daoist-based formulas used by yin-yang diviners and their ritual movements follow the ancient Daoist Yubu 禹步 or “Pace of Yu.” Among their key spells is the Celestial Masters’ formula “Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances,” which is found on talismans, sacred banners and roof tiles even today (Maeda 1989; Miyazawa 1994). Finally, they make use of the so-called kaijū kiri 九字切, a demon-dispelling spell of nine characters that first appears in the Baopuzi (17.6a). It runs: Rin byōdōsha kai chimetsu zaizen 臨兵將者皆陳列在前 or “Come down, soldiers and fighters, and line up before me!” It is often arranged graphically in a grid of five vertical and nine horizontal characters (see Miyake 1993; Kubo 1962; see Fig. 1).

While Shugendō thus integrates many Daoist elements from a variety of backgrounds, the exact nature of the transmission is not clear. As likely as not Daoism entered Japanese mountain worship not via organized lineages of patriarchs but rather through the activities of individual practitioners,
emigrés and exiles from the mainland who brought their creeds and techniques with them. One, rather tentative, example is the case of a Japanese practitioner of the early eighth century who set himself up on Mount Togakushi in Shinshū (modern Nagano), erected a statue of Lord Lao and recited the *Daode jing*. Condemned by the court for some sort of improper conduct, he was exiled to the far-off Isles of Eight Fathoms (Hachijōjima 八丈島), to the south of modern Tokyo.

**TEXTS**

There are practically no sources that describe the transmission of Daoist texts in ancient Japan. The *Kojiki* 古事記 (Chronicle of Ancient Affairs) and the *Nihonshoki* of the early eighth century, as noted earlier, show traces of Daoist influence in their records and stories, but the actual texts cited in them are not specifically Daoist. Rather, they are literary works, poems, encyclopedias and collections such as the *Yüwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (Classified Collection of Artistic Writings) and the *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (Record of Initial Learning).

**THE DAODE JING.** Recent archaeological evidence, unearthed at the site of the Fujiwara palace, erected in 694, shows that Daoism was present
at the time. Wooden tablets contain the first line of the Daode jing, "The Dao that can be told is not the eternal Dao," but it remains unclear whether this is part of a complete copy of the text or just one line, cited from oral or other sources. It was not from any official use of the text, since the lists of texts necessary for official study under the Chinese legal system introduced in the seventh century did not contain it. Nevertheless, the text was widely known among Japanese intellectuals. For example, the Kaijō 懷風藻 (Verses on Bosom Feelings) and other poetic works contain any number of allusions and partial citations from the text, using, interestingly enough, its edition by Heshang gong 河上公. Unlike other major editions, such as that of Wang Bi 王弼 or the Xianger chu 想爾注, this version of the Daode jing places a great emphasis on longevity techniques and makes clear statements about political techniques, such as ruling the state as one would cultivate oneself (zhishen zhiguo 治身治國). It also appears that all actual copies of the Daode jing circulating in Japan were of the Heshang gong edition (see Masuo 1997), which was of central importance in the middle ages and also a key text of later Ise Shinto.

WORKS ON PERSONAL PROTECTION. According to the Nihonshoki, on the last day of the twelfth month of 651 (Emperor Hakuchi) the capital was moved from one site to another (see Takahashi 1991). To protect the good fortune of the venture, two texts were recited, the Anlakuifuyi (Scripture on Building a Safe Home) and the Dosokuyi (Scripture on Following the Rules of the Earth). While the former remained extant in various versions, the latter was lost early on, but it may be related to a text called Anbokyō 安墓經 (Scripture on the Protection of Graves), which has been rediscovered recently among a cache of texts found at the Nanatsudera 七寺 Temple in Nagoya (see Ochiai 1991; Makita and Ochiai 1994-99). Both texts are highly similar in nature, providing ritual formulas and ceremonies for the construction of all sorts of structures, from residences and utility buildings to gates, gardens and stoves.

In all cases, the spirits of the earth, such as the gods of the four directions and the Six Jia deities of time, are disturbed by the building procedures and must be properly pacified if good fortune is not to be lost. In format and content, the texts go back to medieval Daoist scriptures, composed on the basis of a mixture of Buddhism, popular religion, Confucianism and Daoism. These also have parallels among apocryphal Buddhist sūtras which, being apocryphal and thus not genuine (Indian), have been cast aside and ignored by scholars for far too long (see also Buswell 1990). This dismissive attitude is quite contrary to the evidence which suggests that the texts were extremely well-known and widely used among monks and laymen alike. They are found, for example, in a variety of versions in Dunhuang and were copied numerous times in Japan, where one finds them in the Shōsōin
正倉院（Treasure House）of the Tōdaji Temple in Nara and in a number of ancient Kyoto temples. Numerous manuscripts here can be matched, more or less closely, with texts in the Daoist canon (see Masuo 1998).

A prominent example is the *Tenchi hachiyō shinjukyō* (Scripture of Sacred Spells [to Pacify] the Eight Yang Energies of Heaven and Earth), which contains methods of salvation as explained by the Buddha to a bodhisattva called Non-Obstruction. Reciting the text three times will get rid of demons, heal diseases and liberate from foolishness. In addition, when chanted at the time of construction of a new building, it will pacify the gods of the four directions, the Six Jia, the twelve major deities and the dragons of the earth. When chanted seven times at the deathbed of one's father or mother, the text will assure that they will become buddhas and enter paradise even if they have committed a mortal sin during life. Other occasions for the text's chanting include childbirth, marriage, funerals and moving into a new home—in all cases, it will assure good fortune, protect from evil influences and increase health and longevity (Masuo 1998).

After its compilation in the seventh century, the text spread widely, so that over one hundred manuscript copies were found at Dunhuang. Later it was rewritten into a Daoist version, the *Anzhai bayang jing* (Scripture on Building a Safe Home [without Offending] the Eight Yang Energies, CT 634), dat. 1008-16 (Ren and Zhong 1991, 456), and translated from the Chinese into Uighur, Mongolian, Tibetan and Korean Hangul versions. It is still in common use in East Asia today. As it moved from one country to another, its application changed; the basic purpose of the text, to avoid any offenses to the spirits of yin and yang, was first mixed in China with the filial piety owed to one's parents, then joined ancestor worship and the practice of fengshui in Korea, only to be merged with offerings to earth kami, merit accumulation and the spells and soul-prayers of yin-yang diviners in Japan.

Another text of this kind is the *Jinhu shenming jing* (Sūtra on the Salvation and Protection of Body and Life). It was first composed in the late sixth century, it describes how, after the nirvāṇa of the Buddha, the five defilements (*wu zhuo* 五濁) will spread in the world, allowing demons, spectres and *gu* poisons to steal people's vital energy and cause them to die. All these dangers will be greatly alleviated or even avoided through the recitation of this scripture. The idea contained in the text that evil can be dissolved through the accumulation of merit and the proper chanting of sūtras reached China from India. However its understanding of the nature and form of evil originates largely in the Qin and Han, when fear of demons and the *gu* poison was widespread (see Harper 1985). By the Tang, it had also been transformed into a Daoist text of the Lingbao school.
It is found twice in the Daoist canon today, under its original title in CT 356, and as *Jiuku hushen miaojing* 救苦護身妙經 (Wondrous Scripture on the Salvation from Suffering and the Protection of the Body) in CT 351 (see Masuo 2000).

Then there is the *Yisuan jing* 益算経 (Sūtra on the Prolongation of Life), also known as the *Qiqian foshen juying* 七千佛神符経 (Talismanic Scripture of the 7,000 Divine Buddhas). It contains a large number of spells and talismans that serve to dissolve bad fortune and increase health and longevity. These are made efficacious by the Six Jia gods, the 7,000 buddhas and the seven gods of the Northern Dipper. Various changed and edited over the centuries, it appears in the Daoist canon in two versions, the *Changsheng yisuan miaojing* 長生益算妙経 (Wondrous Scripture of Prolonged and Eternal Life, CT 650) and the *Yisuan shenfu miaojing* 益算神符妙経 (Wondrous Scripture of Divine Talismans for the Prolongation of Life, CT 672; Masuo 2000).

The *Zhaokun jing* 招魂経 (Scripture of Calling Back the Soul) was composed in the late fifth century. It is based on the ancient Chinese mortuary practice of calling back the soul and describes how to recover the lost souls of Buddhist followers and extend their lifespans. It also integrates popular ideas and practices as well as Daoist gods and constellations, claiming that knowing and writing down the demons’ names will expel all evil and bad fortune. Human souls, moreover, are not one or two in number as in ancient Confucianism, but a set of three hun 魂 and seven po 魄, as described in Daoist texts. In Japan, it was used by yin-yang diviners who too practiced rites for recovering people’s souls.

The *DAOIST CANON*, as edited in the Zhengtong reign of the Ming dynasty (1445) and its supplement, the *Xu daozang* 續道藏 of the seventeenth century, were both transmitted to Japan under the Tokugawa. The Chinese edition contained a total of 5,485 scrolls of texts, many of which arrived in Japan through the Nagasaki trade route. The *Shōhaku sairai shomoku* (Catalog of Books Imported by Merchant Vessels) of 1695 is the first to catalog it. It appears next in 1770, when the collection was made part of the library of Feudal Lord of the Saeki clan, Mōri Takasue, from where it entered into the Imperial Palace. The Daoist collection present here is not the complete canon as printed in China and contains a total of 4,115 scrolls of texts (see also Barrett 1994).

A separate edition of the canon was reprinted in Shanghai in 1923-26 on the basis of woodblocks stored at the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 in Beijing, which contained the Ming canon in a nineteenth-century reedition. This edition was further amended and variously supplemented and has become the standard basis of Daoist scholarship today, also being used frequently in Japan. Still, there are three major versions of Daoists texts: the Ming canon as present in the Imperial Palace library, the Baiyun guan reprint
and the manuscripts found at Dunhuang. Further research is needed on their interconnections and differences (see Kubo 1955).

**PRACTICES**

In more recent centuries certain Daoist practices have taken root in Japan and are flourishing among the wider populace. The most important among them are the Kōshin cult and the adaptation of Chinese morality books, both of which rose to prominence under the Tokugawa.

The KŌSHIN CULT 建申信仰 is based on the belief that there are three worms or “corpses” (sanshi 三尸) in the human body which, once in every sixty-day cycle, on the kōshin (gengshen) day, ascend to heaven to report on the person’s sins and receive celestial instructions for punishments, such as sicknesses, bad fortune and early death. The three worms, an upper one residing in the head, a middle one residing in the torso and a lower one controlling abdomen and legs, can only leave when the person is asleep. To prevent them from leaving and making their detrimental report, people on the eve of the Kōshin day take ritual precautions and make an effort to stay awake. The belief is that three such vigils on the Kōshin night will severely weaken the worms; if they are prevented from leaving seven times, they will perish—together with all sickness and bad fortune, thus allowing for the extension of life and happiness (see Kohn 1993-95; Kubo 1998).

The notion of the three worms appears first in the *Baopuzi* (6.4b; see Ware 1966, 115-16), and is then found in Tao Hongjing’s 陶弘景 (456-536) 《真诰》 (Declarations of the Perfected, CT 1016) and Duan Cheng-shi’s 段成式 《酉陽雜俎》 (Miscellanea of Youyang). Among religious Daoist texts, it is specified in the *Chu sanshi juchong baosheng jing* 除三尸九蟲保生經 (Scripture on Preserving Life by Removing the Three Worms and Nine Parasites, CT 871) of the late Tang and its abbreviated version, the *Sanshi zhongjing* 三尸中絃 (Central Scripture of the Three Worms, 宮畿 qiqian 81).

The belief in the worms coupled with the vigil on the critical night is first documented in Tang China, but it is not entirely clear when it was first transmitted to Japan. Ennin 圆仁, the Great Master Jikaku 慈覺大師, describes it in an entry under the year 838 in the record of his Chinese travels, the *Nittō guhō junrei koki* 入唐求法巡禮行記 (Travel Record of the Pilgrimage to the Tang in Search of Buddhist Teachings; trl. Reischauer 1955). Similarly, brief notes under the years 834 and 836 in the *Shoku nihon koki* 續日本後紀 (Supplementary Latter Chronicle of Japan) mention a Kōshin assembly and banquet. It seems, therefore, that the practice was known and active in ninth-century Japan.
However, the Kôshin cult was not entirely the same as in China, where the vigil had been a spiritual event that included abstention from sexual activity and a taboo on eating meat as well as purifications through baths and meditations. In Japan, by contrast, participants engaged in extravagant banquets, drank wine, ate meat, made music, watched dance performances and played chess and other social games. In short, they made the vigil into a party rather than a spiritual undertaking. As this practice was transmitted from the Heian aristocracy to the samurai leaders of the Kamakura period, it was further adopted by yin-yang diviners and esoteric monks. They added the worship of certain deities, the most popular being Shômen kongô 金剛面, the Bluefaced Vajrapani (see Yoshioka 1967; Kohn 1993-95).

A Japanese Kôshin scripture, the Rôshi shukôshin guchôsei kyô 老子守庚申求長生綫 (Laozi’s Scripture of Observing Kôshin and Extending Life), appeared in the eleventh century. It was compiled in close similarity to the Tunji qigian text by a monk of the Onjôji 圓城寺 Temple who followed the lineage of Enchin 圓珍, Great Master Chishô 智証大師. Later in the same century the text was amended and expanded by the Tendai monk Jôjin 成尋, who had traveled to Song China in search of authentic Buddhist teachings. By the mid-fifteenth century a number of specifically Buddhist elements had been added to the text and, for the first time, there were also Kôshin engi 庚申緣起 (Origin Stories) that described local events related to the cult and specified its taboos, ritual observances and merits (Kohn 1993-95; Kubo 1998). Buddhist deities were increasingly involved in the cult at this time, including Manjusri, Yakushi nyurai, Sakyamuni, Amitabha, Kannon and Fudô. The cult was increasingly localized, becoming an established part of popular Japanese religion.

In the Tokugawa, esoteric monks and yamabushi adopted it and began to give Kôshin lectures throughout the country. Many local temples erected special Kôshin halls or pagodas for the practice, and even Shintô shrines became active participants, linking the cyclical sign of Kôshin with its symbolic animal, the monkey (saru), and establishing an association with the Shintô god Sarutahiko 集田彦. The cult is active to the present day: Kôshin halls at temples in Osaka and Nara hold fairs on the relevant day, while various local Kôshin associations meet for vigils.

MORALITY BOOKS (shanshu 善書) are the other major form that Daoist practice took in Japan. They were first imported in the Tokugawa period as part of a major absorption of Chinese and especially Neo-Confucian culture, and strongly reflected the Song pattern of harmonizing and integrating the three teachings (see Ōba 1967). Among the earliest texts, first apparent in 1620, is the Ganying pian jingzhuan 感應篇經傳 (Scriptural Commentary on the Treatise on Impulse and Response). This is an annotated edition of Li Changling’s 李昌玲 (fl. 1127-1150) exposition on the rewards and punishments of good and evil deeds (see Hervouet
This was further supplemented in the eighteenth century by Japanese editions and translations of the *Yinzhì wén* (Text of Secret Blessings) and the *Zìzhī lù* (Record of Self-Examination), which served to spread morality books widely among the populace. A systematic commentary (*gengchù* 訓詮) of the *Ganyìng piān* published in 1719, and a scriptural version of the text of 1733, not only merged the three teachings of China into one system, but also integrated Japanese Shinto and newly developed Japanese Confucian theories. Further texts appeared in the 1770s, including the *Wàijì kōka jìchí lù* (Japanese Record of Self-Examination of Merit and Demerit) and the *Wàjì jìngshì lù* (Japanese Record of Secret Blessings). These defined the good fortune that accrued on the basis of good deeds in both Shinto and Buddhist terms and presented a uniquely Japanese interpretation of the Daoist works. In 1791, moreover, the *Kansai teikän kakusa shinkei reibèn* 關聖帝君覺世經靈應篇 (Record of the Numinous Effects and Worldly Awareness of the Imperial Lord Guandi) appeared. This collection of records on the belief in the god of war and wealth, Guandi, in the late Ming and early Qing, also contained morality books such as the *Kakusa kyō* 覺世經 (Scripture of Worldly Awareness).

A major compiler of such texts was Ōe Bunpa 大江文坡 (1730-1790), a major Qing scholar of Daoism who left behind numerous works on starry deities, bodhisattvas, the god Zhenwu and many aspects of Daoist belief. They include his *Kimen reiken mibu shatenden* 鬼面靈驗壬生謝天傳 (Record on Ghostly Appearances, Miracles, Extending Life and Thanking Heaven), his *Hokushin myōken bosatsu reibèn* 北辰妙見菩薩靈應篇 (Numinous Effects of the Bodhisattva Myōken of the Northern Sky) and writings on the three worms, such as the *Taijì keimin kōkō hiroku* 太上惠民甲庚秘録 (Highest Secret Record of Benefiting People on the Days Jīa and Gēng) and the *Kōkō reiju sankyō hiroku* 甲庚靈符三教秘録 (Secret Record of the Numinous Talismans of the Three Teachings Effective for the Days Jīa and Gēng). He also wrote about the secret chart of the five sacred mountains, various methods of casting spells and producing talismans, ways of becoming immortal and the proper observances for the sending of petitions to the otherworld. He was widely learned in diverse fields and tended to create a thorough mix of Daoism, Buddhism and Shinto in his various works. They may not contain an accurate presentation of organized Daoist beliefs and rituals, but they certainly are relevant documents for the practice of popular religion in Tokugawa Japan, which was greatly influenced by Daoism (see Asano 1964).

In the late eighteenth century, the *Lùzhú quanshū* 呂祖全書 (Complete Book of Patriarch Lù, 33 j.), a compendium of Complete Perfection, and
the *Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書 (Complete Book of Wenchang, 50 j.) were introduced to Japan. Both contained morality texts side by side with devotional and literary materials and exerted a serious influence on Japanese religion. The *Wendi quanshu* made its way into the hands of Hasegawa Ennen 長谷川延年, an Osaka townsman, in 1823. He studied it avidly and linked it with the *Ganying pian* and other morality of books, and he organized reprints and wide distribution of them all. The nineteenth century saw further developments that were more independently Japanese, as is documented in the *Wakan inshitsu den* 和漢陰鸞傳 (Japanese and Chinese Records of Secret Blessings), which reflects the title of the traditional Chinese *Yinzi wen* but is completely different in contents and outlook. It is a completely Japanese morality book and shows the degree to which this aspect of Chinese and Daoist culture had become part of Japanese religion.

Morality books were widely used among the common people, but their influence was by no means restricted to them. The intellectual elite also made use of the books and paid serious attention to Daoism. For example, Nakae Tōju 中江藤樹 (1608-1648), a Confucian scholar of the Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 tradition, wrote a preface to the *Taiyi shenjing* 太乙神經 (Spiritual Scripture of the Great Unity) in which he noted that he worshiped this Daoist deity himself. Miura Baien 三浦梅園 (1723-1789), following the example of Tao Hongjing, called himself a “grotto immortal” (dongxian 洞仙) and wrote several Daoist-inspired works, including the *Yūjōkan* 養生訓 (On the Cultivation of Life) and the *Genkiron* 元氣論 (On Primordial Energy). Hirata Atsutane, a senior representative of national learning, undertook a detailed reading of the *Yanji qiqian* and made ample use of devotional and meditational Daoist scriptures in his discussion of Shintō and the origins of Japanese culture. Finally, Aoki Hokkai 青木北海 (1783-1865) of Toyama 富山 was seriously concerned with Daoist spells, talismans and ritual dances and, studying the *Baopuzi* and other early works, compiled a work on the Pace of Yu, the *Uho senketsu* 禹步傳訣 (Explanation of the Pace of Yu). All of these show that Daoist practice was widespread among both the popular and the elite segments of Tokugawa society. They employed organized Daoist notions and yet in all cases adapted them so as to create something specifically Japanese.

**References in Japanese**


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