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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 These works are rarely displayed and languish unpublished because they are not recognized as being Daoist.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 scupture, 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* 鉛) and mercury (*hong* 汞) 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 乙 of Zeng 曾 at Suixian 隨縣 (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 漢 dynasty.

Among the most important early examples of Daoist texts that have been excavated from Warring States tombs are three groups of *Laozi* 老子 manuscript fragments, found in 1993 among a sizeable group of early texts in a late fourth century B.C. tomb at Guodian 郭店, Jingmen 荊門 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 *Daode jing* 道德經, is just beginning (see Jingmen Museum 1998).

Among the bamboo-slip books discoved 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 保寧寺 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 (*yuren* 羽人) sailing through the void, are well-known from the early Han burials at Mawangdui 馬王堆 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,

Figure. 1. Box with Celestial Diagram (Tiger and Dragon, the Great Dipper, and the Twenty-eight Lunar Mansions), Eastern Zhou dynasty, Warring States Period (5th-3rd c. B.C.E.). Painted lacquer, height 40.5 9 cm. Hubei Provincial Museum, Wuhan.

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* 符), 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 (*wuyue* 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 *Zhouyi* 周易 (*Yijing* 易經, 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 *Daode jing* 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 索紞 (ab. 250-325), a scholar born in an elite Dunhuang family. The scroll consists of chapters 51-81 of the *Daode jing* (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)

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 北魏 dynasty (5th c.), and are found primarily in the vicinity of Xi'an 西安 and Yaoxian 耀縣 (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 artistocracy in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. The activities of the Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 at the Northern Wei court at Datong 大同 (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* 道民). 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 靈寶 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 靈寶天尊 (Heavenly Worthy of Numinous Treasure). Lingbao tianzun is unknown, however, before the Tang dynasty; he does not appear, for example, in the *Wushang biyao* 無上秘要 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 牛角塞, Renshou 仁壽 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 Sâkyamuni 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 玉皇; Fig. 4; see *Zhongguo meishu quanji* 1988, pl. 73). This work appears 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 for his inclusion in the *Wushang biyao* (Lagerwey 1981, 126). From the later Six Dynasties period, Daoist sculptures are also known from the Northern Qi 齊 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 王羲之 and Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之. The character *zhi* 之 in both men's names suggests that they belonged to the Celestial Master school of Daoism. Gu Kaizhi's *Hua Yuntai shan ji* 畫雲台山記 (Record of Painting the Cloud Terrace Mountain) is the earliest known reference to a painting of Zhang Daoling 張道陵, 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 梁 dynasty painter Zhang Sengyou 張僧繇 (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 上清 (Highest Clarity) revelations, in which a series of divine beings (*zhenren* 真人) descended on the medium Yang Xi 楊羲 and conveyed on him sacred texts from the Heaven of Highest Clarity. Around the same time, moreover, the Daoist master and alchemist Ge Hong 葛洪 lived, who compiled the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 (Biographies of Immortals)

re. 4. Stele with deified Laozi and the Jade Emperor, Northern Wei dynasty, dated 527
Sandstone, height 27.8 cm.. Chinese History Museum, Beijing.

the *Baopuzi* 抱樸子 (Master Who Embraces Simplicity, CT 1185). A
tury later, it was the alchemist Tao Hongjing's 陶弘景 (456-536) con
sseurship of calligraphy that allowed the texts of Yang Xi's transmissior
e separated from a host of apocryphal manuscripts, to form the core o
new Shangqing canon, one of the earliest Daoist canons. Significantly
was well known both as a calligrapher and as a painter, but none of his
works survives (Yu 1980, 961).

ot surprisingly, the early theoretical texts on painting and calligraphy
n the Six Dynasties and Tang periods were closely related to Daois

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 *qi* 氣 (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 liuli* 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 *qi* through the human body. (I am indebted to Richard Pegg for pointing out this connection.) "Vitality resonance and movement of vitality" (*qiyun 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:

> 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)

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 neijing jing* 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 陸修靜 (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 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 姚伯多 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 保定 reign period of the Great Zhou dynasty [C.E. 564]. The Daoist disciple Huxian 虎賢 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 xuanyuan huangdi 太上玄元皇帝 (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 金仙 (Gold Immortal) and Yuzhen 玉真 (Jade Perfected), as Daoist priestesses. Their brother, Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (Minghuang; r. 713-755), was also ordained, by the famous Daoist priest Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-734). The princesses underwent a series of ordination rituals at the Guizhen

guan 歸真觀[(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* 成道). Perhaps the best-known figure painter of this period was the divinely inspired Wu Daozi 吳道子 (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 朱景玄 *Tangchao minghua lu* 唐朝名畫錄 (Record of Famous Painters of the Tang; 9th c.) and Zhang Yanyuan's 張顏遠 *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記 (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 figural 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 *Daode jing* and many texts of religious Daoism are preserved among these manuscripts. These include the *Duren jing* 度人經 (Scripture of Salvation, CT 1) and magnificent examples of talismanic writing (see Ôfuchi 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 崑崙 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 Amitâbha from the Pure Land (*Jingtu* 淨土), 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* 太極圖 (Diagram of the Great Ultimate) occurred in the tenth century, and was introduced by the Daoist Chen Tuan 陳摶 (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, 271n2). 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 Xiwang 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 monumantal landscapes of Fan Kuan 范寬, an early Northern Song master, has been described as resonating with *li* 理, "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 xianzhang 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

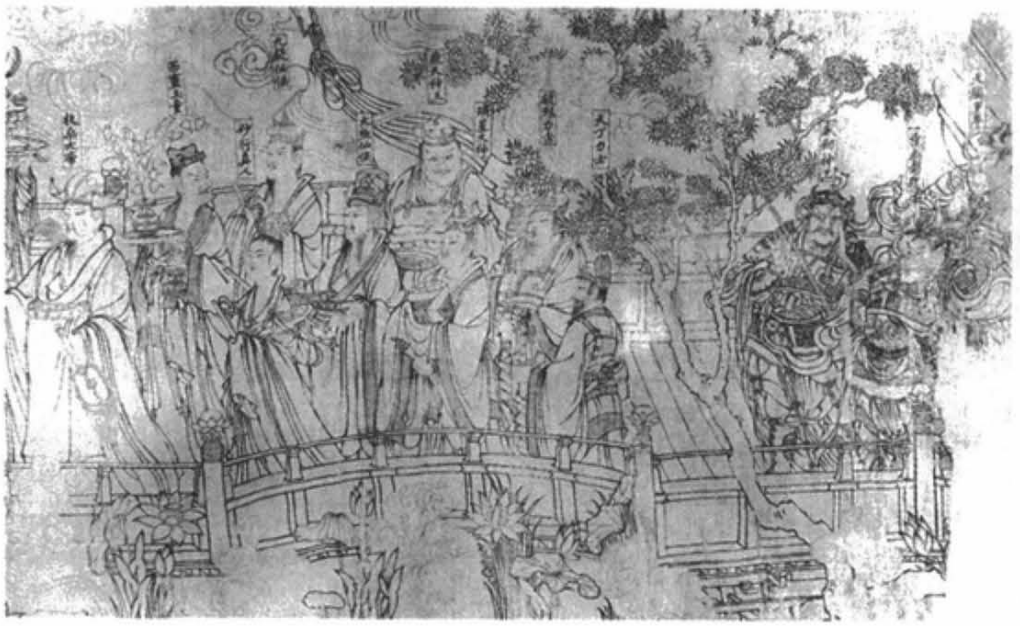

Figure. 5. Wu Zongyuan, *Procession of Daoist Deities* (detail), Northern Song dynasty (early 11th c.). Handscroll, ink on silk, size 58 x 777.5 cm. C.C. Wang Family Collection, New York.

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 mobao* 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 祐聖 with Cang Jie 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* 元師. 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 *ruiying* 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, pls. 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

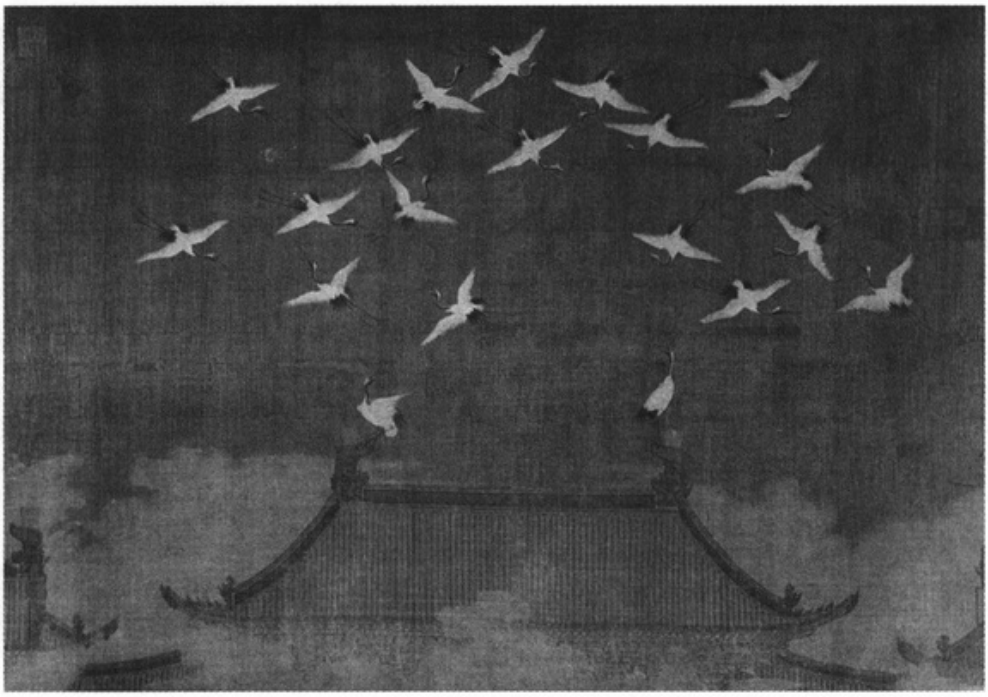

Figure. 6. Emperor Huizong (r. 1101-1125), *Auspicious Cranes*, Northern Song dynasty (early 12th c.). Handscroll, ink and colors on silk, size 51 x 138.2 cm.. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang.

the *Laozi bianhua jing* 老子變化經 (Scripture of Laozi's Transformations; see Cleveland Museum 1980, no.18).

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 梁楷 (Little 1988, no. 2). The Liang Kai scroll is even more remarkable in that the painter is best remembered today for his Chan 禪 Buddhist paintings, created after he left court service. The scroll is painted in ink on paper in the *baimiao* 白描 (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 靈巖寺 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

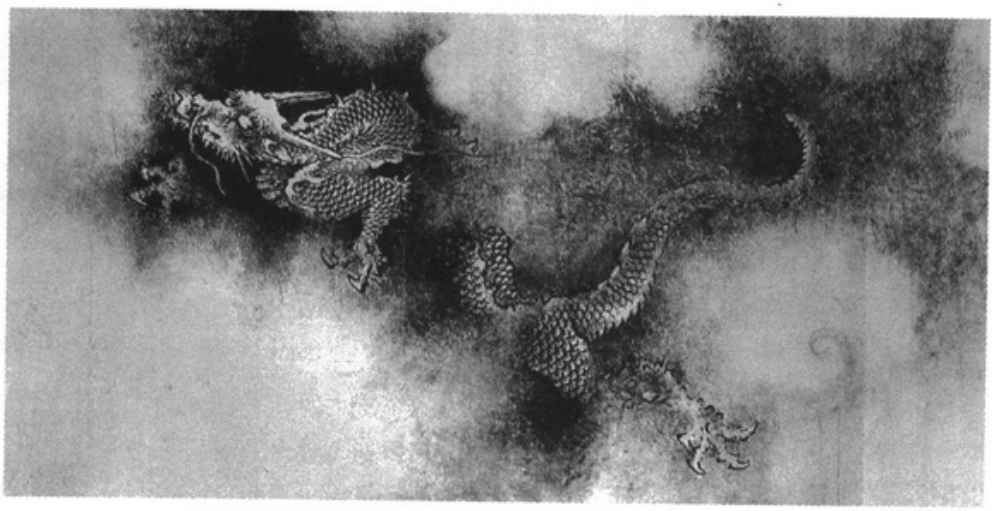

Figure 7. Chen Rong, *Nine Dragons* (details), Southern Song dynasty, dated 1244. Handscroll, ink and light color on paper, size 46.3 x 1,096.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Francis Gardner Curtis Fund (17.1697).

his *Shangshan sihao tu* 商山四皓圖 (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 芮城, 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

Figure 8. Murals depicting the Daoist pantheon in the Sanqing dian, Yongle gong, Ruicheng, Shanxi Province, Yuan dynasty (early 14th c.).

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;

2000); 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" (*chaoyuan* 朝元), i.e., the Three Pure Ones, who were originally depicted in scuptural 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 馬君祥 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 勾陳 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 酆都 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 dijun shenhua miaotong ji* 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 苗善時 (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 鐘離權, his successful practice of self-cultivation and inner alchemy and his miraculous powers.

The third main hall is the Chongyang dian 重陽殿 (Hall of Redoubled Yang), named for Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (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 龍山 (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 天龍山. 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 Sirén (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 李鐵拐 (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 顏輝 (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, pl. 31). The painting is very likely a visual metaphor for inner alchemy. Yet another scroll, once attributed toYan 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* 問道圖, 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 黃公望 (1269-1354), a Quanzhen priest who made a living as a diviner and *fengshui* 風水 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).

(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 正一 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 堯 and Shun 舜 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 alchohol 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 "Guangchengzi and the Yellow Emperor" and an unidentified "Female Immortal" (Wenwu 1992, 9: 7-0078, 2: 1-0445), "The Sage of the Northern Sea" (Palace Museum 1996, pl.31), and "The Hermit Xu You 許由 and the Oxherd Chao Fu 巢父" (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 *Daode jing* 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 周顛仙 (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 bodhisattvas. 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 萬曆 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.

Figure 10. Shang Xi (fl. 15th c.), *Laozi Meeting Yin Xi at the Han'gu Pass*. Hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, size 83.5 x 111.2 cm. MOA Museum, Atami, Japan.

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 沈周 and Wen Zhengming 文徵明, the two leading masters of the **Wu School** 吳派 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 太極 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 daozang* 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 ware 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 Kaifeng 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 紫霄宮 (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 白雲觀 (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 shangdi ruiying tulu* 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 (*sisheng* 四聖), comprise the celestial guardians Zhenwu, Yisheng, Tianyou, and Tianpeng, seen in a *Shuilu zhai* painting from the fifteenth century, now in the Shanxi Provincial Museum in Taiyuan (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 靈雲寺 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 began 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 Kharakhoto by K. Kozlov (1863-1935) in 1909, now in the 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 斗母 (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 茅 brothers, Guandi 關帝, 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* 笏 (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"(*zhenxing* 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 Guiseppe 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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