CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE NORTHERN CELESTIAL MASTERS

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DESCRIPTION

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 (Taiping 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 鮮卑 (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 寇謙之 (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 寇讚之. In his early years, he studied mathematics, medicine, and the basics of Buddhism under the monk Shi Tanying 釋曇影, a disciple of the translator Kumârajîva (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 *Yunzhong yinsong xinke jiejing* 雲中音誦新科戒經 (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 李譜文 bestowed upon Kou the *Lutu zhenjing* 錄圖真經 (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 曇曜, 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* 觀 (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 *Daode jing*, 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 *Daode jing* 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 guan ji* 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 王懸和 *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 徐堅 *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 *Yaoxiu 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 neizhuan* 終南山祖庭先真內傳 (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 ziyun yanqing 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 shuojing tai lidai zhenxian beiji* 終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 zhuan* 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 *Daode jing* 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 *Daode jing* 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 zhujue*, 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 韋節 (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 *Zhunang jingmu* 珠囊經目 (Catalog of the Bag of Pearls; Kohn 1995, 219). It consisted of seven scrolls but is lost today. Yan Da 嚴達 (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 姜斌 and the Buddhist Tanmuzui 曇謨最 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 neizhuan*, 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 Tathâgata. 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 甄鸞 and the *Erjiao lun* 二教論 (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* 無上秘要, 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 *Xuandu jingmu* 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 *Jueduì Fu Yì fèifó fàseng shì* 決對傅奕廢佛法僧事 (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

Shiyu jiumi lun 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 lun* 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 WENCAO 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 Banqian 員半千, dated to 717 (in *Gu Louguan ziyun yanqing 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 周法 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 Taibai 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 Gaozong 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 dafu 銀青光錄大夫 (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 lun* 消魔論 (On Dissolving Evil), the *Quhuo lun* 祛惑論 (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 zhuan* 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*** 雲中音誦新科誡經 (Precepts of the New Code, Recited in the Clouds; lost, 20 j.), known as "New Code;" remains as *Laojun yinsong jiejing* 老君音誦誡經 (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" (*jiji rulü ling* 急急如律令; 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 apocyrphon, the *Tuwei boli jing* 提謂波利經 (Sûtra of Trapusa and Bhallika), written around 450 by Tanjing 曇靜, a follower of Tanyao of the sangha-households. It also shows some southern, Lingbao influence in being similar to the *Ziran wucheng jing* 自然五稱淨 (The Five Spontaneous Correspondences, CT 671) and containing the same scriptural chant as the *Zhihui benyuan dajie jing* 智慧本願大誡經 (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 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 *Tuwei 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 zhujue*** 傳授經戒儀註訣 (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 河上公 commentary (2), the *Xiang'er* 想爾 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* 保)—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 sylistic 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.

Jisheng jing 西昇經 (Scripture of Western Ascension, CT 666, 726; 36 j.), ab. 500, comm. (trl. 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 崇玄子, 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 *Xisheng jing* 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*** 老君變化無極經 (Scripture of Lord Lao's Infinite Transformations, CT 1195, 8 pp.), dat. 330s. A short but powerful document, this is written, like the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Yellow Court Scripture) of the Shangqing school, in seven-character verses, and takes up, in the wake of the *Laozi bianhua jing* 老子變化經 (Scripture of Laozi's Transformations, S. 2295, Ôfuchi 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 石勒 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 開天經 (Scripture on Opening the Cosmos, CT 1437, *Yunji 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* 高上老子內傳 (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 *Santian neijie jing* 三天內解經 (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 formlessnes, 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 zhūnang* 4.9a, 9.8b-14b; *Daode jing kaiti xujue yishu* 道德經開題序訣義疏 (P. 2353, Ôfuchi 1979, 463); *Shangqing daolei shixiang* (CT 1132) 2.8a; *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 78, 87; *Chuxue ji* 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 許甲, 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 化胡經 (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 襄楷 memorial of the year 166 C.E. After that, a first "scripture" was compiled by Wang Fu 王浮 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 sûtra (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'en 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 玄元皇帝聖紀 (Sage Record of the Emperor of Mystery Prime, lost; 10 j., 110 sects.), 7th c.; cited as *Benji* 本紀 (Original Record) or *Tangji* 唐紀 (Tang Record; see Kusuyama 1977). Passages describing Laozi's descent under various rulers are contained in Yue Penggui's 樂朋龜 *Xichuan qingyang gong beiming* 西川青羊宮碑銘 (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 謝守灝 *Hunyuan shengji* 混元聖紀 (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 賈善翔 *Youlong zhuan* 猶龍傳 (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 杜光庭 *Daode zhenjing guangsheng yi* 道德真經廣聖義 (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 *Benji* 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* 老子節解 (13b-15b), 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 guangshen yi*. They include the *Xuanzhong ji* 玄中記 (Record of the Mysterious Center; 2.18b-19a) and the *Xuanmiao yunü 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* 李氏大宗譜 (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 孟法師 catalog; and Tao Hongjing's list of scriptures. Cited in the *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明記 (T. 2103; 52.108c) is one other early work, Ruan Xiaoxu's 阮孝緒 *Qilu* 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 contemporaneous 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 compatability 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 辯惑論 (To Discriminate Errors, T. 2102; 52.48a-49c), by Shi Xuanguang 釋玄光, 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 笑道論 (Laughing at the Dao, T. 2103, 52.143c-52c; 36 sects.), by Zhen Luan, dat. 570 (trl. Kenkyûhan 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 *Daode jing*, 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 *Daode jing* 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-

ern 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 吉善行 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 佛圖登 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; Myôjin 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, maintaning 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 *Shiji* 63 as the recipient of the *Daode jing* and appears in the *Liexian zhuan* 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 neizhuan*. 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 馮長, 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 *Daode jing*, 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* 三洞羣仙錄 3.9b; *Zhenxian 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 梁諶 (247-318), Wang Jia 王嘉 (300-386; also mentioned in *Jinshu* 95), Sun Zhe 孫轍 (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 wuqi 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 五辛 (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 agression 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; 1a), as well as its flawless copying (no. 3).

Both the notion of hell and rebirth and practices of scripture veneration were introduced from Mâhâyana 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, Daoist 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 mountainside 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 iconography as much as divinities and contents of prayer thus show a close interaction 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 Buddho-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 freedom 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* 奉道科戒 (Rules and Precepts for Worshiping 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 (Ōzaki 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 (Ôzaki 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.

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