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Articles

From Paradise to Garden

The Construction of Penglai and Xuanpu¹

JEONGSOO SHIN

Glory in the morning turns into dust in the evening.
It is not as good as purifying your mind in the Hanging Garden
and resting under the shade of a jasper grove on Mount Penglai.
Cao Pi 曹毗 (fl. 5th c.; *Jinshu* 92.2388)

Abstract

This paper examines the two lines of development Daoist paradises took as they were recreated as gardens in ancient and medieval China. It problematizes contrasting differences between Penglai (Immortals' Isles) and Xuanpu (Hanging Garden) by analyzing a selection of mythological, historical, and literary texts. It concludes that they were founded on the two different Daoist desires, one secular and the other transcendental.

Penglai and other islands developed into a formula of three islands in one pond beginning in the Qin-Han epoch (221 B.C.E.-220 C.E.). They then came to play an integral role in imperial garden culture both in China and neighboring countries. Emperors saw the active incorporation of otherworldly island paradises as an effective way to enhance prestige or a sublimation of their desire for eternal life. In contrast, the Hanging Garden was created for crown princes mainly during the Northern and Southern Dynasties. Prince Zhaoming (501-531) transformed it from a pleasure garden into a natural park in concert with aristocratic eremitism.

¹ An earlier version of this article was presented at the Fourth International Conference on Daoist Studies: "Daoism in Action" in 2007 in Hong Kong and at Peking University on July 12, 2009. I would like to express my deep gratitude to Livia Kohn, Shih-shan Huang, and Seungyoun Choi for their valuable comments. Special thanks should go to Charles Randles for his critical reviewing my paper.

The ancient Chinese imagined two immortal lands at the start and the end of the sun's movement. In the high western mountains of Kunlun they saw Xuanpu 縣圃 (Hanging Garden); in the far eastern sea they perceived the three island mountains Penglai 蓬萊, Yingzhou 瀛洲, and Fangzhang 方丈. These provided two archetypes of Daoist paradises which came to be represented differently when adopted in imperial garden complexes. Penglai formed the prototype of pleasure gardens set in imperial and royal palaces, both in China and other East Asian countries, while Xuanpu grew into a naturalistic garden in the early medieval period and did not have a big impact on garden culture. This paper compares the developments of these two Daoist paradises in Chinese garden culture.

Daoist mythology underwent a complex development. Gu Jiegang argued that the Kunlun myth came first and stimulated the emergence of the Penglai cult (1979, 31-57). However, only a few scholars have paid attention to the cult's impact on garden culture: Lothar Ledderose was the first to draw attention to the embodiment of Penglai in imperial gardens (1983, 165-74), followed by Shuen-fu Lin who examined many real and imaginary gardens from antiquity to the early medieval period (2004, 123-66). Studying Penglai and Xuanpu gardens as they were represented in literary and historical texts, and also using archeological evidence, it appears that they differed from one another from the beginning: the Penglai myth captivated the ancient emperors who desired to eternalize secular prosperity while Xuanpu had more to do with mountain imitations and nature preserves. Daoist elements played a varying role, as did Confucian impact.

The Three Islands as Low Watery Paradise

Mount Kunlun 崑崙, the central axis of the world in Chinese mythology, is related to chaotic deluge (*hundun* 混沌) as expressed in the similarity of both characters and sounds of these two terms (Girardot 1983, 23-24; Stein 1990, 65, 226).² All waters are believed to originate from the cosmic mountain. They branch off into multiple directions across the earth, then

² Both binomes betray the influence of the ancient Man cultural complex with a linguistic link to Austroasiatic languages (Girardot 1983, 174).

reach the mythic ocean called Bohai 渤海. Their movement ends when they fall into a fathomless abyss known as Return to Emptiness (*guixu* 歸墟).

While naturally flowing downward, water takes different shapes and changes ceaselessly, nourishing all animals and plants. Having diverse forms and a limited life-cycle, it is often likened to the myriad things (*wanwu* 萬物):³ they too are destined to perish just as water falls into the abyss. Yet there is one way to escape the natural laws of death: before drifting into the abyss, one can reach eternal life by landing on the isles of the immortals that float on the ocean. Their names appear in the *Liezi* 列子 (Book of Master Lie):

The group has five mountains: Daiyu, Yuanqiao, Fanghu, Yingzhou, and Penglai. These mountains are thirty thousand miles high, and as many miles round; the tablelands on their summits extend for nine thousand miles. It is seventy thousand miles from one mountain to the next, but they are considered close neighbors. The towers and terraces upon them are all made from gold and jade, the beasts and birds are all unsullied white; trees of pearl and garnet always grow densely, flowering and bearing fruit which is always luscious, and those who eat of it never grow old and die. The men who dwell there are all of the race of immortal sages, who fly, too many to be counted, to and from from one mountain to another in a day and a night. (*Liezi jishi* 5.151-52; Graham 1960, 97; see also *Shiyi ji* 10.220-36)

The first two mountains, Daiyu 岱輿 and Yuanqiao 員嶠, deserve to be called islands on account of the meaning of their names, the square and round peaks associated with the area round Mount Tai in Shandong. The other three are mere isles; Fangzhang 方丈 is one square *zhang* (2.31 m), Yingzhou 瀛洲 is a sandbar in the Ying Ocean—later interpreted as the Oceanic Continent—and Penglai 蓬萊 is technically a bush of wild plants that include mugwort (*peng*, *Erigeron acer* L.) and goosefoot (*lai*, *Chenopodium album* L.). The five mountains are upheld by fifteen turtles in alternation but they come to different ends, as six of them are devoured by

³ Sarah Allen claims that the water, with its multiplicity of forms and extraordinary capacity for generating imagery, provides for the root metaphor of many of the primary philosophical concepts, which is one aspect of what philosophers often call conceptual schemes (1997, 4-18).

giants. At this point, the first two islands drift into the abyss, but the three isles—small, sandy, and weedy—continue to be held in place by the remaining nine turtles. This mythic incident is construed as a Daoist parable to deconstructing such opposing concepts as small and large, useless and valuable, ugly and beautiful.

Beginning with the late Warring States period (574-221 B.C.E.), the three isles were imagined to be enormous mountains, where jade trees and white quadrupeds thrived and magic herbs grew in abundance. Kings Wei (356-320 B.C.E.) and Xuan (319-301 B.C.E.) of Qi and King Zhao (311-279 B.C.E.) of Yan sent sailors to the Eastern Sea to fetch herbs from them, believing they were not distant from the human realm (*Shiji* 28.1369-70; *Hanshu* 25.1204-5).

This topophilia culminated in the time of the First Emperor (r. 247-209 B.C.E.) (*Shiji* 6.247), who aspired to control everything in the realm, participate in the ways of the heavens, and thereby transcend human life. He modeled his Xianyang Palace 咸陽宮 after the Purple Star Palace (Ziwei gong 紫微宮) in the sky in order to emulate the Heavenly Lord (He 1005, 1.22). He also built simulacra of the magic islands in the Orchid Pond (*lanchi* 蘭池) at a detached palace (*ligong* 離宮). He is further credited with the first construction of a Daoist paradise (*Shiji* 6.251),⁴ but more important data remains about similar efforts by Emperor Wu (r. 141-87) of the Han.

Emperor Wu had the same preoccupations as the First Emperor. He had his palace match the configuration of heaven and earth (Knechtges 1982, 115), and constructed high structures to express his celestial aspiration. The Terrace of Luminary Deities (Shenming tai 神明臺), for example, was a tower that rose to a height of fifty *zhang* (ca. 115 meters). A huge statue was erected showing an immortal figure catching the morning

⁴ In his *Shiji jijie* 史記集解, Pei Yin 裴駟 of the Liu-Song (420-477) also cites similar passages from the *Qin ji* 秦記 (*Record of the Qin State*): “The First Emperor established the capital in Chang’an. He routed water from the Wei River to make a lake, built Penglai and Yingzhou, and carved boulders into whales two hundred *zhang* in width.” and “The First Emperor built the Orchid Pond. He routed the Wei River to make a lake that spread two hundred *li* from east to west and twenty *li* from south to north. He piled up earth to make Penglai Mountain. He carved a boulder into a whale two hundred *zhang* long.” (quote from *Sanqin ji ji zhu* 三秦記輯注, 38)

dew (1982, 201). The emperor also visited the Sweet Spring Palace to sacrifice to the Great One (Taiyi 太一) in 110 B.C.E., making special use of the Terrace for Communicating with Heaven (Tongtian tai 通天臺).

His Daoist-style garden was located in the Jianzhang Basilica in the western suburbs of the palace complex (Fig. 1).

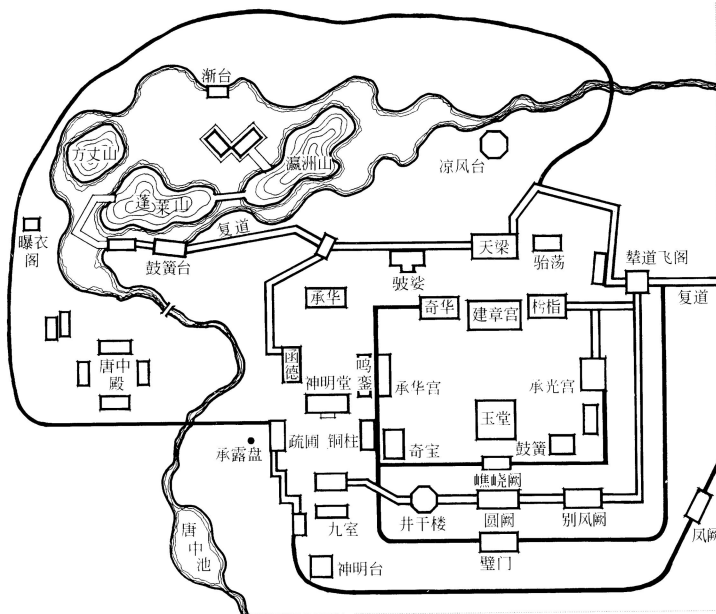


Fig. 1. The Grand Fluid Pond in Jianzhang Palace in the Han (Wang 2006, 1:58)

The garden area is outlined by Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139 C.E.) in his *Xijing fu* 西京賦 (Rhapsody on the Western Metropolis):

In front they opened a place for Middle Path Pond;⁵
As far as one could see it was a vast expanse.
Turning around, one could look down on the Grand Fluid,
That azure lake broad and boundless.

⁵ The name Middle Path (Tangzhong 唐中) is probably an inversion of Zhongtang 中唐 given in the second stanza of the *Maoshi* #142: "The middle path of the temple is covered with tiles." Tang designated the path in a temple, from the gate to the hall or raised platform (Legge 1991, 1.211).

The Tower of Soaking Waters stood in the center
Shining with a vermeil glitter, wide and spacious. (Knechtges 1982, 199)

Grand Fluid (Taiye 太液) literally means cinnabar (mercury oxide), an essential mineral for medicinal elixirs. The Grand Fluid Pond symbolized the mythic ocean Bohai, sometimes called the Northern Sea (Beihai 北海) (see *Sanfu huangtu jiaoxi* 4.261). Its grand view was described in hyperbolic tones, a typical feature of epideictic rhapsodies, by Ban Gu 班固 (32-92 C.E.) in his *Xidu fu* 西都賦 (Rhapsody on the Western Capital):

And then there are
Magic herbs blooming in winter,
Sacred trees growing in groves,
Precipitous and steep, peaked and sharp,
Rugged hills of gold and precious stones. (Knechtges 1982, 135)

Magic herbs and sacred trees were exotic plants that came from various provinces, often former independent states. Full and luxuriously planted, the emperor's garden was also dotted with unusual boulders and precious stones whose unchangeable quality symbolized perpetual life—leading to a cult that culminated under Emperor Huizong in the Song (see Hargett 1988). The bank of the lake was dotted with mushrooms and fungi—ingredients of the elixir of immortality:

A wind from the distance struck the separate isles
Raising huge breakers, lifting waves,
That drenched the stone mushrooms on the high bank,
And soaked the magic fungus on vermeil boughs.
Hairuo played among the dark holms;
A whale washed shore, writhing desperately. (Knechtges 1982, 201)

Whether in reality or fantasy, its dimension was enormous. It was wide and deep enough to nurture such fantastic sea animals as the legendary Hairuo and the whale. Surging huge breakers reminds us of tempests that would blow sailors off the magic islands in the time of the First Emperor.

The view of the Grand Fluid Pond is romanticized in the *Xijing zaji* 西京雜記 (Miscellanies of the Western Capital), a collection of articles on the Former Han (206 B.C.E.-24 C.E.) dated to the early sixth century (Nienhauser 1978). It provides some idea of the flora and fauna:

The Grand Fluid Pond area abounds in the kind of *diaohu*, *zituo*, and *lǚjie*. *Diaohu* is what people in the capital area call dandelion that has matured. *Zituo* indicates the leaves of sedges and reeds staying immature. *Lǚjie* is the name of rice when it bears a capsule. Amid all these plants, there are numerous wild goose eggs and fledglings as well as plenty purple tortoise and terrapins. The pond is surrounded with many flat sandbanks. On the banks, pelicans, chukar, herons, and swans move around and flock together. (1.23-24)

Lushly covered with wild rice dandelion,⁶ the lake provided a habitable place for unusual animals, such as southern chukar birds. Migratory birds and tortoises, moreover, served as living metaphors for hinterlands and borders. The collection of exotica was not only intended to portray the Daoist paradise, but also to represent the world in miniature. Emperors saw acquisitions and display of collected rarities as effective avenues to demonstrate imperial dominion over the entire realm—as is illustrated clearly in Sima Xiangru's 司馬相如 (179-117) *Shanglin fu* 上林賦 (Rhapsody on the Imperial Park).⁷

A comparison of mythological, historical, and literary writings reveals the interrelationship of myth and gardens. The three major immortal isles are central to imperial garden design, although there may have been more isles early on. We do not know how many islands were constructed under the First Emperor. Under Emperor Wu, designers started with four islands,⁸ but sometime soon this was standardized as a triad:

⁶ Shibusawa identifies it with *qusui* 蘼蕪 (*Zizania caduciflora*) based on the *Erya yishu* 爾雅義疏 (2005, 17).

⁷ Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531), *Wenxuan* 文選 1: 8.361-86; Knechtges, 1989, 2: 8.73-114.

⁸ The *Shiji* has: "It is named the Grand Fluid Pond. In its center there were Penglai, Fangzhang, Yingzhou, and Huliang, made to resemble the sacred mountains and the turtles and fish in the sea" (12.482). The three magic islands are followed by an ambiguous word, Huliang 壺梁. It may refer to the turtles or fish believed to bear the islands on their backs or a wooden bridge on the basis of the

Fangzhang 方丈 and Huliang 壺梁 were combined into Fang-Hu 方壺.⁹ On the other hand, it may also have happened the other way round: the formation of three islands as central to garden design may be at the origin of the myth about the devouring of the other two islands' supporting turtles. This remains a mystery, for the oldest extant edition of the *Liezi* was compiled by Zhang Zhan 張湛 (4th c.), much later than the establishment of three islands in garden design. Nonetheless, there is a clear relationship between the myth and the formation of the garden.

The Hanging Garden as Mountain Paradise

The hanging garden is called *xuanpu* 縣圃. What exactly do these characters mean?¹⁰ The original word seems to indicate an architectural struc-

second character *liang* 梁. A reasonable interpretation in my view would be the fourth island. It is worthwhile to note that Huling 壺領 island, similar to Huliang, appears after the story of the three magic islands in *Liezi jishi* 5.163: "In the middle of the country was a mountain called Huling, whose appearance was like a jar. There was a mouth on the summit, which had the shape of a round ring."

⁹ See Ban Gu's *Xidu fu*: "On it float the Yingzhou and Fang-Hu isles, / And Penglai rises from its center" (Knechtges 1982, 135). The fourth island seems to have disappeared about fifty years later. Penglai is flanked only by Yingzhou and Fangzhang in Zhang Heng's *Xijing fu*: "There were Yingzhou and Fangzhang ranged together, / Joined with Penglai wedged between them" (Knechtges 1982, 201).

¹⁰ The character *xuan* has two variants. The graphic variant, *xuan* 懸, has the "heart" classifier *xin* 心 affixed as a notational marker, to distinguish it from the almost same form *xian* 縣 meaning "administrative unit." Another variant *xuan* 玄 is lexical and phonetic; its meaning 'dark' and 'profound' fit the mysterious atmosphere of the garden, and the coda of the characters *xuan* 玄 (*-in) and *xuan* 縣 (*-ən) reveals a phonetic affinity (*-n). The two different medials *ue* and *we* in Later Han times were assimilated into the homophone in the *xian* 先 rhyme group (-en) in Middle Chinese. Old Chinese reconstruction: Schuessler 2009, 246, #23-9ab; 317 #32-5a; and Middle Chinese Baxter 1992, 248-50, 799. I appreciate Professor Zev Handel's comments on this phonological issue.

	Old Chinese	Old Chinese Reconstruct	Initial	Middle Chinese	tone	Middle Chinese	Mandarin
縣	元部	* gwên	匣	先	平聲	hwen	Xuan
玄	眞部	* gwîn	匣	先	平聲	hwen	Xuan

ture of the garden, given the gloss of "hanging (*xi* 繫) in the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Explaining Phrases and Explicating Characters) (9a.423). The word is glossed by the expression "hanging in the sky" on the highest or second highest peak of the Kunlun Mountains or on Yuheng 玉橫 (Alioth), the brightest star in the constellation Ursa Major (Jin 1999, 2: 325-26). The concept of being suspended describes an ethereal status, evoking the sense of an abyss which defines the essence of chaos (Porter 1996, 82). Another interpretation connects it to an overhanging structure, terraced on a mountain top. Similarly, the term "hanging gardens" of Babylon, built by King Nebuchadnezzar II (ca. 600 B.C.E.) in the arid Mesopotamian desert, is an inexact translation of the Greek word *kremastos*, which means "overhanging" or might possibly indicate "high garden." The character *xuan* is glossed with the meaning "high" in Jerry Norman's reconstruction of the Proto Min dialect, based on its modern version (1979, 271). It supports the notion that Kunlun mythology is associated with the religio-cultural pattern of the southern Man, superseded later by barbaric chaos through sinification or "Han-Chinese" reinterpretation of other ethnic cultures (Girardot 1983, 174).

The character *pu* is a phonetic compound (*xingsheng* 形聲). The inner element (*fu* 甫) provides a sound gloss of the character, bilabial **p*-, which developed into labiodental *f*- in Middle Chinese. The outer element, consisting of a box shape (*guo* 匚), is a semantic part referencing enclosed walls.¹¹ Old Chinese had various walled parks: hunting preserves (*you* 囿), tree and flower gardens (*yuan* 園), as well as vegetable gardens (*pu* 圃). The use of the character *pu* for the Daoist park reveals the aspirations of the northwestern Chinese who did not have established agricultural communities. What they sought after in the garden was not exotica or landscape, but fresh vegetables as compensation for their hard life in an arid region. Thus Xuanpu is really a vegetable garden hanging in the air or, more likely, overhanging a high platform in the Kunlun Mountains.

¹¹ This analysis matches the English word "garden" as an enclosed space where the soil is maintained for planting. It also connects with the word "paradise"; "para-" and "-dise" mean "around" and "make." It derived from the Greek *parádeisos* (παράδεισος) and came ultimately from the Old Iranian.

The earliest reference is found in the *Tianwen* 天問 (Heavenly Questions), a series of enigmatic questions about various issues ranging from cosmogony and mythology to early history:

The Hanging Garden in Kunlun—where is its location?
Its layered walls are ninefold—how many miles its height?
The gates of the four sides—who goes in and out?
Its northwest is opened—what vapors come in? (*Qu Yuan jijiao zhu* 2:318)

The exact location of the garden was unknown to mortals; they only were aware that it was somewhere in the high reaches of the Kunlun range. The four gates being locked, the imposing edifice discouraged people from even approaching the gate. “Ninefold” (*jiuchong* 九重) means a complicated structure given that the number nine is a complete number in Chinese numerology. It is not clear who may enter the gates and what kind of vapors come from the northwest. The series of unanswered questions only serve to make it more mysterious.

Despite the ambiguous descriptions, the garden is invariably envisaged as an unapproachable paradise. Thus the *Lisao* 離騷 (Encountering Sorrow) by Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340-278 B.C.E.) has:

In the morning I release the parking break in Cangwu,
in the evening I arrive at the Hanging Garden.
I wish to stay for a while here at the mysterious gate,
the sun is rapidly dipping into darkness.
I order Xihe to drive the carriage,
I gaze at the Yanzi mountains, but dare not approach it.
The road is uneven and far away,
I shall go up and down, searching for another shelter.
(*Qu Yuan jijiao zhu* 1:80; *Chuci bu zhu* 1.20b-21a)

The diurnal journey traces the movement of the sun. The poetic persona of Qu Yuan starts at Cangwu in the southeast and dashes to the northwest to reach Xuanpu in the evening. He wishes to rest overnight in the garden, which is metonymically referred to as the mysterious gate (*lingsuo* 靈瑣), but he seems to be denied entry for an unknown reason. At dusk, he has to leave again on an aimless journey, gazing at the sun disappearing into the Yanzi mountains.

The poem does not spell it out, but it is quite obvious why Qu Yuan is barred at the gate: ordinary people are simply not permitted. Thus the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (Book of the Prince of Huainan, ca. 150 B.C.E.) says:

If one climbs to a height doubt that of the Kunlun Mountains, [that peak] is called Cool Wind Mountain. If one climbs it, one will not die. If one climbs to a height that is doubled again, [that peak] is called Hanging Gardens. If one ascends it, one will gain supernatural power and be able to control the wind and the rain. If one climbs to a height that is doubled yet again, it reaches up to Heaven itself. If one mounts to there, one will become a spirit. It is called the abode of the Supreme Thearch. (*Huainanzi yizhu* 4.187; Major, et al. 2010, 4.157)¹²

This mundane world is connected to the sacred realm through the Kunlun range, a transitional sphere through which human beings ascend to communicate with heaven and through which the Supreme Lord descends to reside on earth. In principle anyone can climb to the Hanging Garden but in reality few practitioners manage to endure the hardships of the expedition. Therefore, Xuanpu remains a mysterious and obscure site for ordinary people. This is one reason why it failed to inspire imperial pleasure gardens.¹³

Kunlun mythology was further infused with the legend of the Queen Mother of the West at the same time as popular forms of Daoism began to emerge. By the time of Emperor An (r. 106-125), the mythology was directed to a new end: it conveyed the dead to a life of bliss in the Western Paradise (Loewe 1994, 251-2). The Kunlun Mountains accordingly were associated with various symbolic structures, such as pillars, multi-story pagodas, and towers (Stein 1990, 240-6).

¹² *Bei* 倍 is interchangeable with *pei* 培/*pei* 陪, "to go up" (*cheng* 乘).

¹³ Lin (2004, 133-4) documents that a Xuanpu garden was constructed in the emperor's park, based on a passage of Yang Xiong's 揚雄 (53 B.C.E.-18C.E.) "*Ganquan fu* 甘泉賦" (Rhapsody on the Sweet Springs Palace): "All this befits the Hanging Garden of the Lord's abode. / And images the majestic spirit of Grand Unity" (Knechtges 1989, 7, 25). I interpret it as hyperbole for the splendid imperial palace as in another reference to Xuanpu in the *Xijing fu* by Zhang Heng 張衡: "To the left, he peers at Dawn Valley, On the right, he faces the Dark Garden" (*Wenxuan* 3.125; Knechtges 1996, 299).



Fig. 2. The Queen Mother of the West and the King Father of the East seated on the pillar-formed Xuanpu in a rubbing of a brick tile in Han times (after Yu Meixia 俞美霞 2000, 96)

Xuanpu also achieved visual significance. One example is a pair of platform shapes on top of two pillars carved on a stone column of a tomb, in the collection of the Mizhi 米脂 prefecture museum in Shaanxi Province (Fig. 2).¹⁴ On each platform, a flowery canopy is set up, and a seated figure is attended by a jade rabbit, a winged man, and other auspicious animals. Yu Meixia speculates that the two figures are the Queen Mother of the West and the King Father of the East, and that the supporting pillars represent Xuanpu, which is a reasonable interpretation fitting the etymological meaning of the Hanging Garden (2000, 96). This kind of tomb artifact shows that Xuanpu had found its way into popular soteriological practice.

¹⁴ I am indebted to Professor Shih-shan Huang for the location of this image.

The Medieval Xuanpu Park

Early Medieval China was divided into the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589). Han Chinese and their nomadic neighbors both emulated the cultural norms of the Eastern Han Empire as a means to claim succession. Imperial parks in each capital, Yecheng and Nanjing, thus were imitations of the Flower Grove Park (*Hualin yuan* 華林園) in Luoyang that included Penglai and other Daoist elements.¹⁵

The northern rulers held a lustration festival at the park on the third day of the third month (Bodde 1975, 281).¹⁶ Two bronze dragons faced each other from opposite sides of the Heavenly Pool (*Tianyuan chi* 天淵池) and belched water into it. This is reported particularly under Shi Hu 石虎 (295-349), posthumously known as Emperor Wu 武帝 (334-349) of the Later Zhao (*Yezhong ji* 6a). The southern rulers hosted the double-three day at the Leyou park 樂遊苑 and the Fanglin park 芳林苑 (*Wenxuan* 20.958; 46.2049). The emperors not only enjoyed seasonal parties but also held court and decided juridical issues in the parks (*Songshu* 3.56-7; 6.118). At times they even turned the park into a market place (*Songshu* 4.66; *Nan Qishu* 7.104).

Centuries of political rivalry between north and south led to dissimilar visual representations in the gardens. King Houzhu (r. 565-577) of the Northern Qi transformed the Fragrant Grove Garden in Yecheng into the Capital Park for Immortals (*Xiandu yuan* 仙都苑). Four lines of water-courses were designed to flow around five islands and then converge into a large lake (*Lidai zhajijing ji* 12.186). Streams, islands, and a lake

¹⁵ The original name of the imperial garden was Fragrant Grove Park (*fanglin yuan* 芳林園), later renamed Flower Grove Park (*hualin yuan* 華林園) in order to avoid the taboo character *fang* 芳, the name of King Qi (r. 240-253), the third emperor of Wei Dynasty. The park was renovated in 224 by Emperor Wendi (229-226) and restored by Emperor Shizong (r. 499-515) of the Northern Wei (*Luoyang qielan ji jiaojian* 2.63).

¹⁶ The double-three festival was initially a erotic ritual for purgation (*fu* 祓) and lustration (*xi* 禊), but, in post-Han times—and quite probably already beginning in the Han as well—it became simply an occasion for seasonal merrymaking on the water. The occasion used to take place on the first Snake day (*si* 巳) of the third month in the Han dynasty. By the mid third century, at the latest, this date changed to the third day of the same month as a part of wider trend to shift many festivals from cyclical to lunar dating.

symbolized the four waterways (*sidu* 四瀆), the five sacred mountains (*wuyue* 五岳), and the great ocean (*dahai* 大海). The capital Yecheng in due course became the cosmic center of all, with all the landmarks of the world, a clear sign that the nomad rulers had superseded the Han-Chinese.

The southern capital Nanjing was quite different from Luoyang or Yecheng in terms of size, appearance, and environment. Compared to the plain northern region the palace site was cramped: streets twisted and turned, and buildings were not laid out on a grid. It consisted of an impenetrable and sophisticated cityscape (Mather 2002: 2.102, 80-81). The imperial garden also underwent significant changes and developments. Built at the park site of the Wu state (221-280), it was unlike anything in the grand northern style and displayed natural scenery to console emperors and northern aristocrats:

On entering the Flowery Grove Park, Emperor Jianwen looked around and remarked to his attendants: "The spot that suits the mind is not necessarily far away. By any shady grove or stream one may quite naturally have such thoughts as Zhuangzi had by the Rivers Hao and Pu, where unselfconsciously birds and animals, fowls and fish, come of their own accord to be intimate with men." (Mather 2002: 2.61, 60)

The emperor thus enjoyed the view of a shady (*yiran* 翳然) grove without seeking distant (*yuan* 遠) landscapes—a term that may allude to exotic scenery or northern territories. Animals and birds would approach humans intimately, quite in contrast with the strange creatures enclosed in the Han imperial hunting park. The emperor compared his garden to the Rivers Hao and Pu, where Zhuangzi allegedly declined to serve in office (*Zhuangzi jinzhu jinyi* 17/5.441). His remarks should not necessarily be taken at face value but they nevertheless show his orientation toward reclusion.

Exiled northerners assuaged their longing for the capital by creating an artificial mound in Luoyang named Jingyang Hill 景陽山.¹⁷ They gradually realized that their temporary refuge would become permanent and so they came to terms with the southern landscape. The new com-

¹⁷ Jingyang Mountain was constructed by Zhang Lun 張倫 (ca. 528) in his luxurious courtyard (*Luoyang qielan ji jiaojian* 2.75).

munion with nature was influenced by the reclusive culture prevalent among the southern aristocracy.¹⁸ Nagahiro writes that the Flower Grove Park adapted the garden culture of the southern aristocracy, given that it was reconstructed in 441 under the supervision of the aristocratic garden connoisseur Zhang Yong 張永 (d. 475) (*Songshu* 53.1511; 1969, 166). It is not clear to what extent the palace garden represented his own taste,¹⁹ but at least its landscape demonstrated Daoist elements. As He Shangzhi 何尚之 (382-460) says in his *Hualin Qingshu zhan fu* 華林清暑展賦 (Rhapsody on the Qingshu Palace in the Flower Grove Park):

Sorrowful cranes cry at dusk,
Saddened monkeys wail at dawn.
Magic mushrooms grow on the stiff banks,
Celestial flowers cover the pond (*Quan Songwen* 28.267).²⁰

One significant achievement in the Jiankang park was to keep artifact to a minimum. The site was not spacious but contained a huge natural lake north of the capital, called Black Warrior Lake (Xuanwu hu 玄武湖), named after the emergence of a black dragon (see Fig. 3).²¹

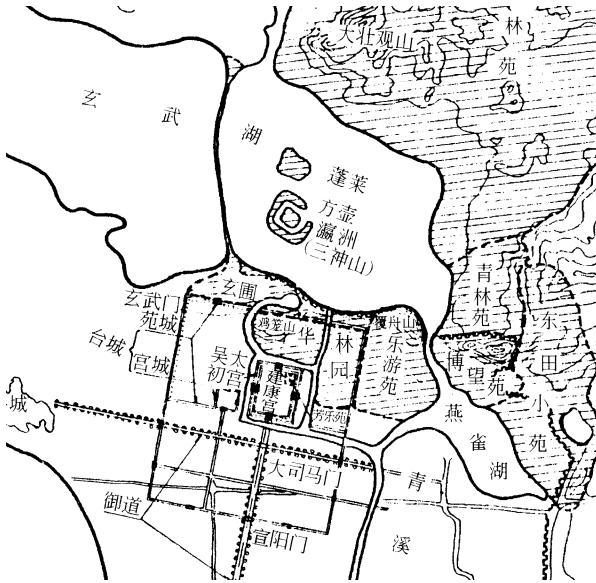
This allowed appreciation of an enormous natural waterscape without large-scale hydraulic construction. It is uncertain whether the three magic isles were ever constructed in the lake. Emperor Wen (424-453) wanted to have them but was prevented from realizing this project due to He Shangzhi's criticism in 446 that the exorbitant construction cost would wreck the economy (*Songshu* 6.1734). Li Yuan suggests that natu-

¹⁸ One occasion was the gathering at the Orchid Pavilion (Lanting) by Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (321-361) on 3/3 of 353 in Shanyin 山陰, Guiji 會稽 (modern Shaoxing 紹興). Wang and his followers expressed transcendental sentiments and detachment from worldly matters through the unity with nature.

¹⁹ The garden may have developed in any of the three ways Lin defines with regard to the southern gardens in general: 1) aesthetic interests gradually replaced utilitarian functions; 2) the size of gardens was reduced; and 3) the landscape was realistic and suggestive, rather than slavishly representational (2004, 151-2).

²⁰ See also poems of the same title by Emperor Xiaowu 孝武帝 (r. 430-464), in *Quan Songwen* 5.42-43 and Liu Yigong 劉義恭 (n.d.) in *Quan Songwen* 11.100-01.

²¹ See Xu Song 許崇 (Tang), *Jiankang shilu* 建康實錄, *Siku quanshu*, 4.11b.



A singular achievement in the Early Medieval Period was the emergence of the Hanging Garden. Its image gradually changed from an unapproachable paradise to a land of plenty. In the Hanging Garden, renamed the Peace Garden in the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas), one could find every kind of precious stones in abundance.²³ The new image of the mountain paradise fulfilled human aspirations that food, drink, and clothing would be provided without toil or labor (Birrell 1999, 267). When the paradise was represented in the

²³ “On the summit of Mount Carobriver were quantities of green male-yellow, precious stone-like gems, and yellow gold and jade. Granular cinnabar is abundant on its south face and there are quantities of speckled yellow gold and silver on its north face. In truth, this is the Great God’s Garden of Peace. The deity Brace Raise presides over it” (*Shanhai jing jiaozhu* 2.53; Birrell 1999, 22).

labor (Birrell 1999, 267). When the paradise was represented in the garden-setting, what mattered most was not its overshadowing structure or material affluence, but its conceptual location within the ninefold hierarchy. The name of the second highest locale in Mount Kunlun was used to indicate the status of the crown prince in line to the imperial throne (*Zizhi tongjian* 161.4972).

The Xuanpu Park in Jiankang was created in the Liu-Song period, and was later expanded by Crown Prince Wenhui 文惠 (458-493) of the Southern Qi (479-502).²⁴ He was inclined toward Buddhism and provided aid for the poor, yet was also infamous for his extravagance. His park in the Eastern Palace was so excessive that he had to worry about his father's censure:

The prince renovated the Xuanpu park along with terraces, city-walls, northern moats, and so on. There were earth hills, ponds, pavilions, towers, pagodas, and other halls, all of which were bizarre and beautiful; they cost a huge amount of cash. The prince collected unusual rocks, whose beauty was in parallel with the most wondrous landscape of mountains and streams. Afraid that his dissipation could be seen from the imperial palace, he planted a line of tall bamboo, to screen it from the outside. (*Nanshi* 44.1100; *Nan Qishu* 21.401)

He thus squandered much wealth to decorate his rock garden which, it seems, was created in imitation of "mountains and streams" (*shanshui* 山水), the two complementary elements in the new landscape aesthetics arising from the Eastern Jin (317-420) dynasties. Mountains and streams might have been no more than a backdrop in the extravagant garden. Nonetheless, the sumptuous yet natural vista still exhibited a marked difference from the formal and grand style of the imperial gardens.

Further landscape aesthetics appear in the Xuanpu park rebuilt by Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531), Crown Prince Zhaoming of Liang (502-557):

He was by nature fond of mountains and streams. At the Xuanpu park he dug a pond and built pavilions and lodges, where he roamed with court of-

²⁴ There was also a Xuanpu park in Luoyang in the Western Jin (265-316), but details are unknown. Lu Ji 陸機 (261-303), "Crown Prince Minhuai 愍懷 had a feast at the Xuanyou Hall in the Xuanpu and asked for a composition of poetry" (*Wenxuan* 3: 20.947).

ficials and famed gentry. Once they were boating in the rear pond, the Marquis of Panyu, Xiao Gui 蕭規, suggested: "In this atmosphere, a performance by female musicians is appropriate." The prince did not reply directly, and instead recited a couplet from "Summoning the Recluse" by Zuo Si 左思 (ca. 250-305): "Why do we need strings and reeds? Mountains and streams make their own pure sounds." The marquise felt ashamed. (*Liang-shu* 8.168)

Xiao Tong so deeply appreciated "mountains and streams" that he could spontaneously recite a couplet praising the delights of reclusion in a mountain retreat, far from the capital. Although the Western Jin writer Zuo Si probably wrote his poem at court or perhaps at a gathering held on a wealthy man's estate, his poem in Xiao Tong's time represented a conventional view of the hermit's garden. The latter's citation of the passage implies that his princely garden, though located in an imperial palace, could dispense with human artifice, even music performed by female musicians and singers (Knechtges 2009, 11). At his park Xiao Tong would have imagined his free spirit taking off to roam in the mountains.

Xiao Tong's reclusive spirit was embodied in his Xuanpu park.²⁵ He transformed the park, once acclaimed for its gaudy rockery, into a place of contemplation. He compiled the anthology *Wenxuan* 文選 (Literary Selections) and the collected works of Tao Qian 陶潛 (365-427) in the garden. Praising him for his "skillful and outstanding poetic diction," he was the first to give serious attention to the reclusive poet (Chang 2004, 176); his own pursuit of Tao's eremitism is illustrated in his preface to Tao's works (Wang 2010, 206-220).

The Crown Prince related what he undertook at the park in his *Xuanpu jiang shi* 玄圃講詩 (Poetic Lecture at Xuanpu):

We dug ponds, whose form is broad and vast,
we constructed peaks, whose shape is tall and towering.
Clouds aglow with the sun, along the eaves, cast a shadow,

²⁵ The Daoist reclusive life was prevalent in the Southern Dynasties from the fourth century as a means to avoid political turmoil, but it was often viewed as a convenient way to gain honor or recognition at court. A new tendency of "reclusion within the court" (*chaoyin* 朝隱) may be also understood as the rhetoric and recourse of pragmatic transcendence, characterized by duplicity and hypocrisy (Berkowitz 2000, 137-38, 144-48).

evening view enters the hall through a window.
 (Zhaoming taizi ji jiaozhi, 16; Knechtges 2009, 11)

The princely park imitates the form of huge lakes and the shape of high mountains. The words "broad and vast" (*haogan* 浩汗) and "tall and towering" (*yeji* 業岌) usually apply to large entities, but their usage in the poem forms part of the rhapsody tradition (Knechtges 2009, 12). The prince could visualize high mountains and deep streams through contemplating nature. In Lines 3 and 4, he also describes the park view with the surrounding scenery, which is considered a technique of appropriating scenery (*jiejing* 借景).

Influenced by his father, Emperor Wu (r. 502-549), Xiao Tong also delved into Buddhism. Together with the monk Fayun 法雲, in 518 he invited fourteen monks from twelve monasteries and eight royal family members to the park for an extended Buddhist seminar, which continued for two years (Wang 2006, 197-202). As he says:

We set out to wander the precious mountain,
 Hoping to establish the root of belief.
 Of naming and benefiting state students spoke of,
 Brushes and writing tablets of Liu Zhen 劉楨 (d. 217) and Wang Can
 王粲 (177-217) are provided.
 This pleasure surpasses the sounds of panpipes and stone drums.
 How does it merely dispel lingering anxiety? (Knechtges 2009, 11)

Xiao Tong's seminar discussed Buddhist doctrines and practice with elite students who are likened to Liu Zhen and Wang Can, two famous poets among the Seven Worthies of Jian'an (Jian'an qizi 建安七子). He imagined the princely park as a precious mountain, a metaphor for the Buddhist temple, and confirmed that his spiritual pursuit was more delightful than worldly music.

For all Xiao Tong's efforts, the Xuanpu garden did not have a substantial impact on later generation. This may well be because its ponds and artificial hills did not make a distinctive display of Kunlun mythology; rather the park was also infused with oceanic elements of Penglai, such as turtles and whales as objects symbolizing longevity and immor-

tality.²⁶ Its visual conception was not strong enough to resist alien elements and so the park was destined to perish.

The Confucian Impact

Leaders of the Tang dynasty attempted to justify their non-Han origins by patronizing Daoism. They made it into a state cult from the beginning and went so far as to adopt the family name Li to satisfy the masses' messianic expectations connected to Laozi or Li Er 李耳, who had mysteriously disappeared in the northwest and was later apotheosized as Lord Lao.

The cosmographic cityscape of the capital Chang'an was a showcase that demonstrates the ruling class's religious convictions (see Fig. 4).

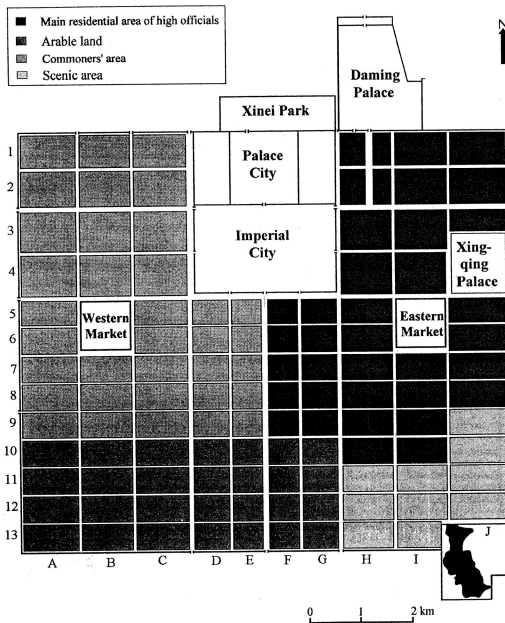


Fig. 4. Three palace complexes in Chang'an (Xiong 2000, Map 8.2)

²⁶ Xiao Ziyun 蕭子雲 (487-549), *Xuanpu yuan jiang fu* 玄圃園講賦 (Rhapsody on a Lecture at the Xuanpu Park) in *Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (*Sibu congkan* 20.9b): "A bronze turtle holds water and spouts out alone. / A stone whale wears a garland and gushes forth a stream."

The Ultimate Principle (*taiji* 太極) flanked by yin and yang symbolically appeared in the triad formation of Palace City: the Taiji Palace in the center, the Yeting Palace for court ladies in the west, and the Eastern Palace for the crown prince in the east.

South of the palace a host of residential wards unfolded along a grid, each of which implied a different region of the territory: the thirteen wards from north to south alluded to a year including an intercalary month, and the four wards in each direction implied the four seasons (*Chang'an zhi* 7.6b, 7a).²⁷ The palace was further connected to the Western Inner Park (Xinei Park) through the main northern Xuanwu Gate that served as the palace's rearguard. Xuanwu, a legendary animal representing the north was promoted to a high-ranking deity, commonly known as the Perfect Warrior (Zhenwu 真武).

The Daoist atmosphere became more prominent as the imperial domicile moved from Palace City to Penglai Palace in 663.²⁸ The second palace complex was construed as an extension to the northeast of the capital. Its direction and location were in accordance with the geographical orientation of the Bohai Sea in the mythological world map (Xiong 2000, 80).²⁹ Many facilities employed a broad range of Daoist symbols and signs in their names. They are categorized into the following five types: 1) mythology: Penglai 蓬萊, immortals (*xian* 仙); 2) alchemy: grand

²⁷ Victor Xiong suggests two paradigms for the genesis of the capital: the canonical tradition based on the architectural text *Kaogong ji* 考工記 and the topomantic theory of Fengshui 風水 (2000, 39-53).

²⁸ The Penglai Palace was renamed Daming 大明宮 in 635, then changed to Hanyuan 含元宮 after its principal basilica in 670. All three names articulate Daoist symbolism. See *Quan Tangwen* 314.2a, 6a. Li Hua in his *Hanyuan dian fu* has: "On the hexagrams Qian and Kun, the *Yijing* says: 'It embraces everything in its breath and illuminates everything in its greatness.' It also says: 'Sublimity, potentiality of success, power to further, perseverance.' . . . To summarize, the palace will be perpetual, like the constancy of a mountain, thus called Penglai; it will prosper like a rising sun, thus called Daming."

²⁹ The palace was initially planned as a summer retreat for the founder Gaozu (reg. 618-627) upon his successor Taizong's (reg. 627-650) command in 634. Construction halted when the emperor became ill and died; it was finally completed in 662 by the following emperor Gaozong (reg. 650-684) who was enthusiastic about Daoism in particular (Xiong 2000, 80).

fluid (*taiye* 太液), cinnabar (*dan* 丹); 3) cosmology: purple throne (*zichen* 紫宸), primordial (*yuan* 元); 4) supernatural beasts: phoenix (*feng* 鳳), simurgh (*luan* 鸞), dragon (*long* 龍); and 5) auspiciousness: good fortune (*fu* 福), blessings (*qing* 慶).

The second palace complex was placed on a rising plain off the main axis of Palace City. In particular, the Basilica of the Three Pure Ones (*Sanqing gong* 三清宮) was built on an enormous earthen platform that measured 73 by 47 meters. High elevation provided many benefits ranging from control over the city to strategic defense, as well as beautiful scenery. The striking view of the entire cityscape and Mount Zhongnan in the distance could evoke a sense of detachment, as if overlooking the human world from the land of immortals.

The Daoist paradise was situated in the Grand Fluid Pond area. Archaeological surveys have shown that it was constructed differently from the pond in Han times in terms of location, scale, and formation (see Fig 5).

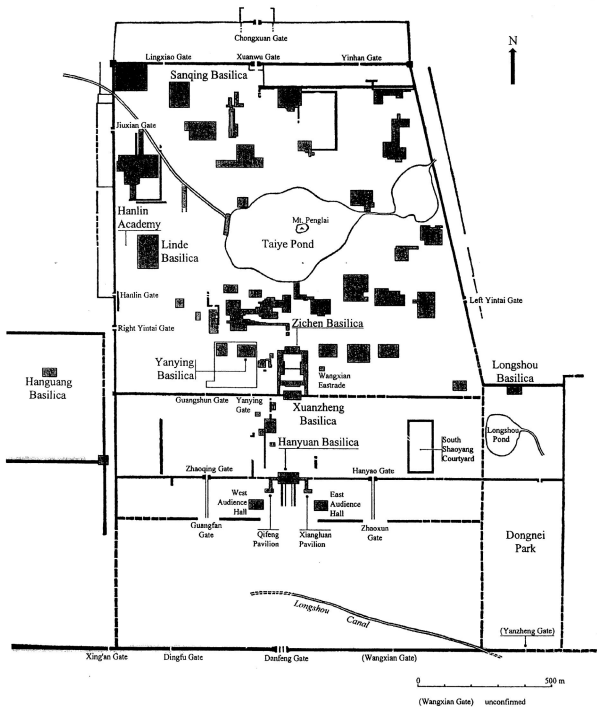


Fig. 5. Grand Fluid Pond in Tang Times (Xiong 2000, Map 4.1)

It lay at the heart of the Tang palace complex, more precisely north of the Penglai Basilica and south of the Xuanwu Basilica, and consisted of two pools linked by one canal. The eastern one (220 by 150 meters) is considered insignificant in palace life, since it is not mentioned in primary sources. The main pond that surrounded Penglai Island was the western one (500 by 320 meters), still considered moderate in size when compared with the enormous pond of the Han, located northwest of the Jizhang Palace outside the core palace complex. The Daoist paradise was moved into the center of the Tang court with a reduced size and its configuration was not modeled after the triad of three islands in Han times.

Another difference was that more ornamental plants were placed in the Tang pond, notably white lotus whose full bloom allegedly bewitched Emperor Xuanzong when accompanied by an entourage of close relatives or his favorite consort Yang Guifei (713-756) (*Kaiyuan Tianbao yishi shizhong* 2.96, 107). A bamboo grove grew in the corner, and the tangerine, an exotic plant from the south, featured prominently. As the poem *Bingjue* 病橘 (Sick Tangerine) by Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) has:

I have heard how at the Penglai Palace,
They [tangerines] were arrayed to look as if by the Xiao or Xiang.
Yet those bore no harvest at the year's end,
And food of jade lacked their lustre. (McMullen 2001, 227)

The tangerine trees were said to create an exotic southern view of the Xiao and Xiang, and so brought to mind an immortal world. Emperor Xuanzong may well have used it to show his transcendental powers over natural laws, but the trees remained barren, foiling his efforts. A mix of garden plants in the Tang palace demonstrated that the Tang pond had a different flora from the wild, lush plants in Han times: cherry, lotus, tangerine, chrysanthemum, and peony (McMullen 2001, 231-47).

The influential scholar-official Li Hua 李華 (ca. 710-769) once was allowed into the imperial gardens. He describes their Daoist atmosphere in his *Hanyuan dian fu* 含元展賦 (Rhapsody on the Hanyuan Palace):

To take a close look,
the palace holds the dragon head and spreads the phoenix wings.
To view at the distance, tall trees tumble to reach the edge of clouds.
High and towering,

a huge turtle carries the mountain of immortals, raising a blue surge.
Dazzling and Bbrilliant,
the mythic serpent cracks a cave and approaches to the north.
(McMullen 2001, 213)

Li Hua gives a brief account of the Grand Fluid Pond area. “Dragon Head” and “Phoenix Wings” seem to allude to the Dragon Head Pond (Longshou chi 龍首池) and the Vermillion Phoenix Gate (Danfeng men 丹鳳門). Tall trees created an impenetrable barrier by protecting the court scenery from the outsider viewer. The magic island was set on the back of the mythic turtle.

The court poet Shangguan Yi 上官儀 (608-664) similarly describes scenery arranged with ornamental plants in his *Zaochun guilin dian yingzhao* 早春桂林殿應詔 (Awaiting an Audience in Early Spring at the Guilin Basilica):

The imperial palanquin emerges from Pixiang [Basilica],
the clear sound of singing floats over Grand Fluid Pond.
Morning trees teem with warbling orioles,
spring slopes burgeon with fragrant plants. (Xiong 2000, 93)

Leading Tang scholars tended to influence each other and intellectual change went beyond the boundaries of traditions (Bol 1992, 18-22). In this vein it is understood that Confucian culture was blended into the Daoist Pond. On top of the island stood a pavilion named after the Taiye Pond, but it was mainly used as a Confucian lecture hall to teach the *Shijing* 詩經 (Book of Odes) and *Shujing* 書經 (Book of Documents) (*Jiu Tangshu* 16.477). It also displayed edifying illustrations of kings and ministers from the *Shujing* on its interior walls, ordered there in 828 by Emperor Wenzong (r. 826-840) (17a.529). Another Confucian influence appears in the Hanlin Academy 翰林院, located southwest of the pond. Members of the Academy included Daoists, Buddhists, alchemists, painters, and calligraphers, but its core faculty were an elite group of Confucian writers who performed secretarial and literary tasks for the court. Confucian functions thus happened in a Daoist setting.

The pond served as a social place for emperors, their relatives, and various nobles. Some emperors conducted farewell parties for subjects appointed to regional areas (*Jiu Tangshu* 163.4262). Noble men and

women enjoyed gathering there, as is illustrated in the *Yi chunri taiyichi ting houdui* 憶春日太液池亭候對 (A Memory of Archery in Spring at the Pavilion of the Grand Fluid Pond) by Li Shen 李紳 (772-846):

Warbling orioles break the dawn as propitious mist fades away,
the supernal birds of the Three Islands return splashing the water.
A rainbow bridge meanders to a colorful hall,
a seahawk-headed boat approaches Penglai Island.
(*Li Shen shizhu* 1984, 12-13)

Clouds and mists are attributes of Daoist figures and objects; they often played an important role in communicating the full impact of Daoist representations. Especially, the dawn sun and red mists are decisive motifs in paintings of the Magic Islands such as Fangzhang, whose appearance was epitomized as "rosy clouds of dawn," "a long bridge across the sea," and "a white jade immortals' terrace" (Laing 1998, 37). Those images are also aptly applied in this poem because a group of aristocrats and the colorful building are interpreted as immortals sitting on a jade terrace.³⁰

Noble men are seated in a fragrant carriage of grass,
ladies look like the Queen Mother of the West: peach-colored, charming,
and divine.
At this time attendants pin brushes on their heads,
recalling the Golden Horse Gate and laugh at Zou Yang and Mei Sheng.

A group of aristocrats sets out to the island for an archery game, which showcases another example of Confucian influence. Ladies are described as looking like the Queen Mother of the West. Noble men practice archery, one of the Six Arts (*liu yi* 六藝) required for Confucian men. At this moment they recall the Golden Horse Gate, a place for inviting scholars in Han times, and laugh at Zou Yang (ca. 206-129 B.C.E.) and Mei Sheng (d. 141 B.C.E.). Perhaps they are proud of themselves for being invited to the imperial garden, and sympathize with the two unfortunate men of

³⁰ The colorful building that was built over the pond is identified as the Linde Basilica 隣德展 by Zhang Jiaqi (2004, 148), but it seems to me that it refers to the Lingqi Basilica 綾綺殿 southeast of the pond. The building includes the character *qi* in its name, and it also functioned as informal meeting place, which fits in the context.

ancient times who served King Xiao (r. 168-144 B.C.E.) of the Liang, who had no chance of becoming an emperor.

One more Daoist waterscape was built as the Xingqing Palace 興慶宮 was designated the third imperial domicile by Emperor Xuanzong in 714. Legend has it that his rise to power was predicted by a yellow dragon emerging from the oval Xingqing lake, later renamed Dragon Pond (Xiong 2000, 102-05, Map 4.3). The emperor harnessed the supernatural legend to enhance the authorities of the imperial line. He introduced an annual ritual for Laozi at the Xuanzheng Basilica in the palace complex, starting from the first year of Tianbao (742), which means that Daoist rituals came to play a significant role at the Tang court (Barrett 1996, 60-73; Seo 2001, 190-1). The Daoist symbolism associated with Penglai mythology was also found in the pond area, with a Yingzhou gate north of the pond.

Conclusion

In antiquity Penglai and Xuanpu were envisioned as lying in opposite directions. Penglai, the island paradise, floated subtly in the mythic ocean of the east and in due course became the model of pleasure gardens for emperors who wished to continue their secular glory. Xuanpu, the hanging garden on Mount Kunlun, was part of a massive mountain that dwarfed all neighboring peaks in the arid west. It was more of an orchard and came to serve as the garden for the crown prince.

Penglai and the other islands were designed to be the epitome of everlasting imperial glory. Their surrounding grand pond created a cosmic landscape filled with wild plants and animals, similar to and also more concentrated than the imperial hunting park. As Penglai became more of myth, the landscape associated with it turned into a pleasure garden serving the ruling class as a venue for diversion: banqueting, trysting, literary excursions, boating, and archery. The Penglai garden thus derived its secular imagery from imperial court life.

Xuanpu, the Hanging Garden, on the other hand, reflected the transcendental desire of the aristocracy as detached from worldly matters. It emerged in the Six Dynasties, when literary eremitism was infused with new landscape aesthetics. Initially laid out by Prince Wenhui in a lavish manner, it soon was turned by Prince Zhaoming into a natural garden in

imitation of "mountains and streams." He made it a cultural center for literary and religious studies.

Evidence from architectural, literary, and mythological studies explains the different developments of the two paradise gardens. What comes into focus first is a practical aspect: constructional feasibility. The multilayered model of Mount Kunlun could be built with medieval technology, but its verticality was certainly cumbersome and its enigmatic visual scheme highly problematic. The equivocal meanings of "hanging" were difficult to configure into a garden form. By contrast, the image of the Penglai garden was easy to visualize and construct from the beginning: a pond was dug and earth was piled into mountains. Any palace complex needed a grand pond anyway as a means of cooling in the summer.

Literary references also had an impact on garden styles. The Hanging Garden was depicted as an unapproachable paradise, rife with difficulties and dangers as well as snowy, barren mountain trails that few mortals could survive. Such a bleak landscape did not befit an extravagant imperial garden space. In this regard the island paradise was more tantalizing and believed to exist closer to humanity. The magic herbs also appealed to the down-to-earth rulers who hoped to procure them by dispatching sailors to fetch the islands.

Lastly, the two paradises were also construed representations of the human body from the viewpoint of internal alchemy. Architectural terms for body parts were mapping along interior energy circuits (Huang 2011, 42-44). The cosmic flow from Mount Kunlun to the Guixu abyss is analogous to the body's energy movement from head to anus (Stein 1990, 210). The mountain paradise thus corresponds to the head with its upper elixir field (*shang dantian* 上丹田) and access to the immortal realm: an area of perfection that few attain. The anus, on the other hand, provides the outlet for waste matter, just as all waters fall into the abyss. It can be interpreted as the watery lower paradise, given its role and location, but more studies need to be done to explore this connection.

Last but not least, Chinese cultural influence also introduced Daoist gardens to neighboring countries, especially Korea and Japan where the three magic isles were adopted in connection with local beliefs and culture. Different treatments of Penglai in the three countries raise important questions that require the comparative analysis of a wide range of

texts from later periods, promising much exciting work to be undertaken in the future.

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Daoist Imagery of Body and Cosmos

Part 2: Body Worms and Internal Alchemy

SHIH-SHAN SUSAN HUANG

Abstract

This article presents Daoist visual representations of body and cosmos, drawing extensively on illustrations and diagrams from texts preserved in the Ming-dynasty Daoist Canon. To examine how the Daoist perception of body and cosmos unfolded over time, I discuss images of four types: body gods, imaginary journeys to stars, body souls/worms, and the body transformed in internal alchemy—the first two in JDS 3 (2010), the next two here.

The current work hopes to contribute to interdisciplinary studies of Chinese art, religion, and science. From the visual perspective, it hopes to add to the on-going examination of charts or maps (*tu* 圖) and to enrich our understanding of the representation and perception of what “body” means in Chinese visual culture. In terms of Daoist studies, my dominantly visual approach aims to complement the many textual approaches on this topic. This study also adds to the growing scholarship of Daoist art, which has so far focused more on public devotional paintings and statuary and less on private imagery associated with meditation and visualization.

Souls and Worms

From the Daoist perspective, the human body contains not only body gods but also souls and worms, many of which may cause sickness or death. This concept has ancient roots. It makes reference to the ancient dualistic notion of *hun* 魂 (spirit soul) and *po* 魄 (material soul), which designate the yang and yin souls in the body, one connecting to heaven and the other linking with earth (Kohn 1997; Y. Yü 1987, 369-78). Furthermore, it relates to the Han-dynasty notion of the physical three

worms (*sanchong* 三蟲), which are leech-like worms and "gnow through the intestines of people" (Kohn 1995a, 35; *Lun Heng* 論衡 16:3a-b).

By the Tang and Song periods, Daoists expanded the concepts of yin and yang, *hun* and *po*, and the three worms to a more complicated microcosmic system of body gods, spirits, and worms. New members include the three spirit souls (*sanhun* 三魂), the seven material souls (*qipo* 七魄) (Fig. 1a), the three deathbringers (*sanshi* 三尸) (Fig. 1b), and the nine worms (*jiuchong* 九蟲) (Fig. 1c) (Kubo 1961; Kohn 1993b, 1995a-b, 1997, 97-102; Xiao 2002, 258-371). By visualizing such bodily spirits in their concrete form, one can control or expel them, a feature that led to the creation and proliferation of the images of such body entities. While the three spirit souls reflect the wonderful manifestation of the yang forces in the body and are often illustrated as gentlemen (DZ 871, 18:697b; DZ 220, 4:7b-c; ZW 314, 9:524a),¹ the others represent the yin counterparts of evil forces; their appearance ranges from the demonic and abnormal to micro-organic parasites and earthworms.² Examined as a group, these harmful souls and worms exhibit a unique sub-category of Daoist visual culture which also converges with the little-studied visuality of Chinese demonology and disease.



a.

¹ Daoist texts from the Ming *Daozang* (DZ) are numbered according to Schipper and Verellen 2004 and follow the Sanjia ben edition in thirty-six volumes (Beijing: Wenwu, Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, and Tianjin: Guji chubanshe, 1988). Works in the 36-volumes *Zhangwai daoshu* 藏外道書 (ZW; Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1994) are numbered according to Komjathy 2002, 83-105.

² The seven material souls are the counterparts of the three spirit souls. Livia Kohn further pairs the three deathbringers as the counterpart worms of the pure body gods known as the Three Ones (Sanyi 三一) (1998, 97-102).

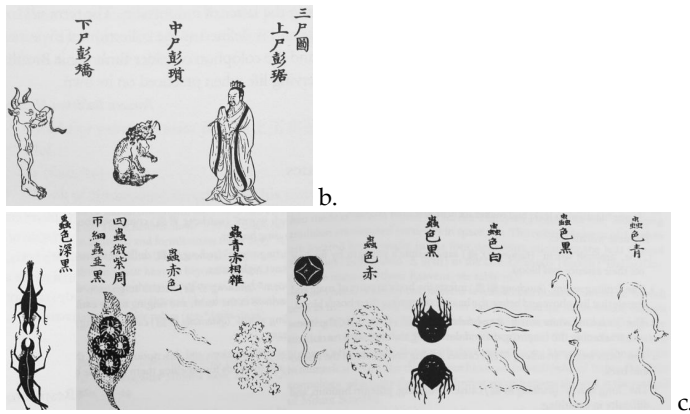


Fig. 1: Grotesque Spirits and Body Worms. a. The seven material spirits; b. The three deathbringers; c. The nine worms (Rearranged from DZ 871, 18: 698a-701c).

The earliest extant visual materials detailing this subject is the ninth-to-tenth-century Daoist illustrated handbook of “demonic entomology” (Mollier 2006, 86), *Chu sanshi jiuchong baosheng jing* 除三尸九蟲保生經 (Scripture for the Protection of Life through the Elimination of the three deathbringers and nine worms, DZ 871, hereafter called *Baosheng jing*) (Fig. 1) (Kubo 1961; Kohn 1993b, 1995a-b, 1998, 97-102; Schipper in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 364; 2006, 174-75). The text may stem from the Sichuan area; it attributes the original illustrations to a student of the Tang physician Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (581-682) (Schipper and Verellen 2004, 364).³ The following discussion will draw on visual examples from this text.

The seven material souls are basically the internal demons. Contrary to the three spirit souls, who represent the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual side of people and grant adepts beneficial goodness, they are representatives of people's instinctive needs for sleep, food, sex, and survival and tend to cause tension and sickness (Fig. 1a) (YJQQ 54: 1193-95; Kohn 1998, 97-98; Schipper 1993, 134-35). They have individual names

³ A 1225 Daoist stele from Sichuan known as the *Taishang duanchu fulian beiming* 太上斷除伏連碑銘 (Stele Inscription of the Highest Extinction of the Tuberculosis) also makes prominent references to the belief of three deathbringers and nine worms; see Zhang Xunliao and Bai Bin 2006, vol. 4, 1251-95. The term *fulian* mentioned in the Sichuan stele title refers to a disease comparable to tuberculosis; see DZ 1164, 26: 657.

and are shown in semi-demonic forms except two: Devouring Thief (Tunze 吞賊) looks like a man holding a rolled document and Expelling Filth (Chuhui 除穢) is shown as a female deity.⁴ Sparrow of Yin (Queyin 雀陰) and Flying Poison (Feidu 飛毒) are the most monstrous: they have human legs and bird or demon heads (Mollier 2003, 412, 425; 2006, 99). In fact, they look quite like the other set of body demons, the three deathbringers.

The Three Deathbringers

The three deathbringers are among the most widely-documented body parasites in early and medieval literature (DZ 1016, 20:519; DZ 1185, 28:183, 193; Ware 1966, 77, 115; DZ 426; DZ 1365; Xiao 2002, 272-84). According to the *Baosheng jing*, the upper deathbringer resembles a male Daoist scholar, the middle deathbringer is depicted as a Chinese lion, and the lower deathbringer has a deformed one-legged human body with an ox's head (Fig. 1b) (DZ 871, 18: 699b-c). Sharing the same surname Peng 彭, they are imaginary brothers serving to create illness and trouble in body and mind (18: 699b-c. Cf. YJQQ⁵ 81:1854-55).

The Upper deathbringer resides in the head. He causes headaches, tearing eyes, and runny nose; he also creates deafness, loose teeth, bad breath, wrinkles, and white hair (18: 699b). The middle deathbringer lives in the heart and attacks the five organs, prompting the commission of wrong-doings and loss of memory. Other symptoms range from anxiety and thirst to coughing up phlegm, tinnitus, and sweating while feeling cold (18: 699c). The lower deathbringer lives in the lower abdomen; he arouses desire and lust, prompting people to have intercourse with ghosts and thus ending up with exhausted waist, weak legs, and frequent urination (18: 699c).

Developed in both Daoist and Buddhist communities in the Tang period, a night-long *gengshen* vigil called "guarding on the Gengshen Day" (*shou gengshen* 守庚申) aimed at preventing the three deathbringers from leaving the body and reporting wrongdoings to the heavenly court

⁴ For the names of the seven material spirits, see DZ 871, 18:697-98. Cf. the translation of these names in Kohn 1998, 98.

⁵ This article cites the punctuated version of the *Yunji qiqian* (YJQQ); ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003.

(Xiao 2002, 302-18). This practice was transmitted to Japan in Tang times by way of Buddhism, as vividly reflected in some later Japanese drawings of the three deathbringers bearing similar iconographic traits as their Chinese prototype (Kubo 1961, 481-84; fig. 122, 526; Xiao 2002, 323-28, 355-57). Throughout the Song, elaborate drug prescriptions and talismans were created to eliminate the three deathbringers (*Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 228:9a, 261:5a; YJQQ 81-83:1857-89; *Yishuo* 醫說 3:19a, 5:45a, 8:14b; Xiao 2002, 302-08).

Monopode Oddities

The one-legged body of the lower deathbringer looks much like the souls called Sparrow of Yin and Flying Poison (Fig. 2a). They are reminiscent of the many bizarre monopode “zoomorphic oddities” recorded in the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas), a compilation of ancient mythology whose contents date from the Warring States to the Han periods (Birrell 1999).⁶ The lower deathbringer, in particular, compares closely to an ox-headed ceramic “object of an eccentric form” (*yixingqi* 異形器) (Fig. 2b) excavated from a Southern Song tomb of the Yang family in Mianyang 綿陽, Sichuan (He 1988, 71). It is an object that bears “an animal head with two horns; its mouth carries an object; its body is shaped like a leg with a hoof (*shenwei tizu xing* 身爲蹄足形)” (He 1988, 72). Likely, this eccentric figurine refers to the ox-headed lower deathbringer. The single-legged prototype also recalls the one-human-legged and four-headed “monster of disease” known as Heavenly Thief (Tianzei 天賊), shown in a manuscript from Dunhuang usually dated to the late Tang (S. 6216) (Fig. 2c) (Mollier 2003, 412, 425; Cedzich 1995, 152-57; Harper 2005, fig. 6.2, 142-43).⁷ Such comparisons further suggest that an image convention of the one-legged oddity seems to have circulated in the Sichuan and Dunhuang areas in medieval China.

⁶ A good example is the ox-like *kui* 夔, illustrated in a sixteenth-century edition as an ox-like creature with a single leg. For an illustration from the 1593 illustrated edition published by Hu Wenhuan 胡文煥; see Ma 2003, vol. 2, 149. For more studies of *kui*, see Granet 1926, vol. 1, 310-12; vol. 2, 505-15; Birrell 1993, 134-35; Von Glahn 2004, 90.

⁷ The name of the monster, Tianzei, is noted in the other Dunhuang manuscript (P. 2856r); see Mollier 2003, 412; Harper 2005, 142-143.

This way of depicting diseases in multi-headed and one-legged images of demons also calls to mind a series of thirty *Bingguiwang tu* 病鬼王圖 (Pictures of the Demonic Kings of Diseases) (Fig. 2d) illustrated in the Daoist-inspired tantric Buddhist text *Qiyao xingchen biexing fa* 七曜星辰別行法 (Method of the Seven Planets, T. 21.1309) attributed to Yixing 一行 (d. 727) (Xiao 1993, 94-98). Controlled by the Twenty-eight Lunar Mansions, many demons depicted here have basically human bodies but with different degrees of abnormality. The healing method requires that the practitioners first draw the images of the demons with their specific names inscribed, then nail the images onto the wall of their residences (Xiao 1993, 94-97). On the date when the specific star that controls the demon is in charge, adepts worship the image, offering pure wine, meat, and spirit money (T.21.1309: 453b-56c).

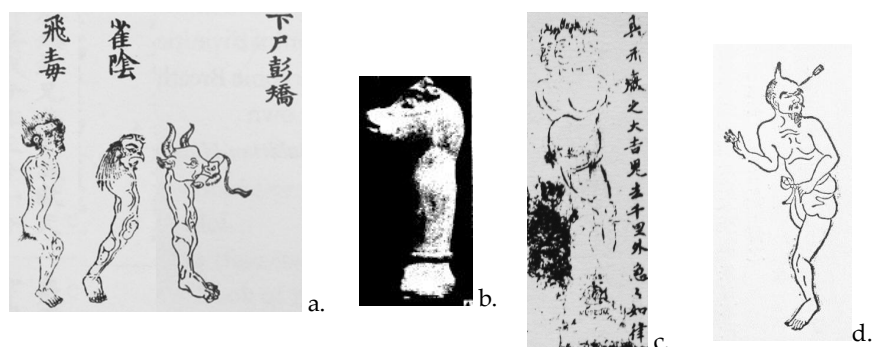


Fig. 2: a. The lower deathbringer and two material souls; rearranged from DZ 871, 18: 698a, 699c; b. The ox-headed, one-legged ceramic figurine. From the tomb of the Yang family, Mianyang, Sichuan. Southern Song Dynasty (He 1988, 71); c. Ink drawing of the Heavenly Thief from a Dunhuang manuscript. Tenth century. British Library (S. 6216); d. The one-legged disease demon controlled by the *wen* star (T.21.1309: 456c).

The demon controlled by the *wen* star (*wenxing* 文星), for example, is a one-legged man with a goat-like beard and a horn on his head (Fig. 2d) (T.21.1309: 456c). Unlike the one-legged body spirits depicted in the Daoist *Baosheng jing* (Fig. 2a), though, he has a full human-like torso similar to that of the Heavenly Thief (Fig. 2c). The back pain caused by this demon is as unbearable as if being shot by an arrow. Failing to worship this star on time, one may risk becoming totally paralyzed

(T.21.1309: 456c). All the examples examined above suggest that the material souls and deathbringers depicted in the *Baosheng jing* (Fig. 1) gradually took shape as part of both an ancient tradition of strange creatures in far-off countries and visualizations of disease demons common in medieval China.

Scroll-carrying Messengers

The three deathbringers commonly carry a rolled document (Fig. 1b), some holding it in their mouth. This may serve as a record of their host's sins as filed in the heavenly administration, since such scrolls are often shown in the representation of a bureaucrat. Beyond that, it also appears in mythological or religious images to represent supernatural communication. For example, the eighth-century Dunhuang manuscript *Ruiying tu* 瑞應圖 (Picture of Auspicious Omens, P. 2683), depicts a heavenly messenger in the form of an auspicious turtle. It carries the magical, heaven-sent chart known as the *Luoshu* 雒書 (The Luo Writ) in its mouth (Fig. 3a) (Drège 1999, 165; Shanghai guji chubanshe et al. 1994-2005, 17: 235-41; Matsumoto Eichi 1956).

The scenario is comparable to a detail of the Southern Song Ningbo painting, *The King of Hell* (Nara 1996, fig. 165, 167; 2009, fig. 82, 90),⁸ whose full composition depicts the King of Hell receiving a court case involving a rooster and a goose filing a complaint against a butcher. In the detail illustrated here (Fig. 3b), a goose and a rooster hold scrolls in their mouths while staring at the karmic mirror showing a butcher killing a goose (see also Sawada 1991, 87-88). The butcher restrained by a guard is visible behind the animals. The complaint is represented by the scrolls they hold in their mouths. Though functions and context vary, the depictions of a turtle (Fig. 3a), a rooster, and a goose (Fig. 3b) all carrying a rolled document in their mouths are similar to the pictorial conventions of the middle and lower deathbringers (Fig. 1b).

⁸ Now in the collection of Eigenji Temple 永源寺, Shiga 滋賀 Prefecture, this painting belongs to one of the ten hanging scrolls that make up a set of *Ten Kings of Hell*. For a study of this subject, see Ledderose 2000, 163-85; Ide in Shimada and Nakazawa 2000, figs. 90-99, 132.

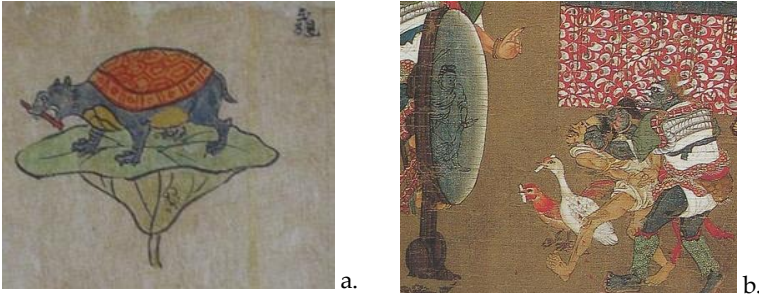


Fig. 3: a. Detail of the *Picture of the Auspicious Omens*. Tang Dynasty. Ink and color on paper. Bibliothèque national en France (P. 2683); b. Detail of *The Ten Kings of Hell*. Southern Song Dynasty. Hanging scroll. Ink and color on silk. 53.5 x 37 cm. Eigenji, Shiga.

Physical Parasites

The *Baosheng jing* further describes the so-called nine worms, parasites in the body (Fig. 1c) (DZ 872, 18:700a-01c; Verellen 2006, 174-175; Cook in Pregadio 2007, 844-846). Some reside in the inner organs (heart, lungs, and stomach) and cause internal disorders such as stomach ache, chest tightness, vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, asthma, tuberculosis, sore muscles, and back aches. Others live in the skin and cause itching, acne, and ringworm. While the nine worms represent the main group of body worms, the text also notes other “countless micro organic worms” (*weichong qianwan* 微蟲千萬), which look like “vegetable seeds” (*caizi* 菜子) and reside on the surface of the body (DZ 872, 18:700a). The documentation of these miscellaneous body worms in a tenth-century Daoist text suggests that “the existence of harmful bacteria was known to the Chinese of the time” (Schipper in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 364; Liu 1971).

The nine worms look different from the figural-animal motifs of the body spirits. Some look like insects with tentacles and eyes, others resemble serpentine earthworms. Still others recall single-cell organic forms seen under a microscope. The encyclopedic display of these body worms reflects a common interest in picturing parasites shared by Daoist and medical texts. For instance, an almost identical array of the nine worms is illustrated in an undated Daoist text, the *Jinsi xuanxuan* 金箭玄玄 (Mysterious Golden Container, ZW 323, 9:795a-b). In addition to the nine worms, this text illustrates six generations of Deathbringer Worms

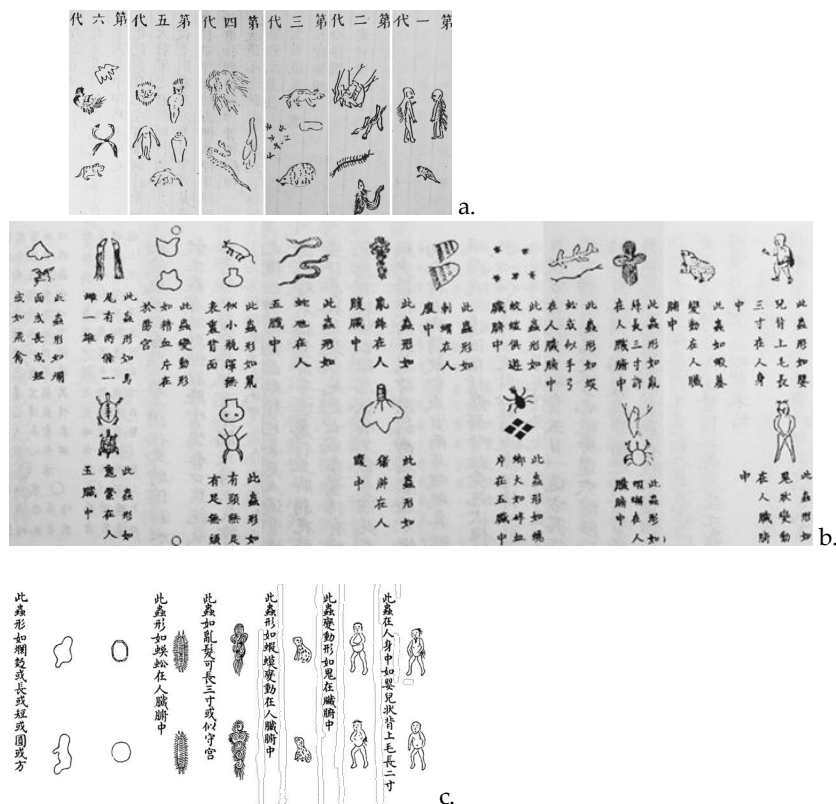


Fig. 4: a. Six generations of the Deathbringer Worms (*Jin si xuan xuan*, ZW 323, 9:791b-94b); b. Six generations of tuberculosis parasites (rearranged from the Ming compilation of medical texts in DZ 1164, 26: 646b-47c); c. Images of parasites from a fourteenth-century medical text (*Shiyi dexiao fang* 9:13b-15b).

(*shichong* 尸蟲) (Fig. 4a) (ZW 323, 9:795a-b), comparable to six generations of tuberculosis parasites illustrated in the *Jijiu xianfang* 急救仙方 (Formulas of the Immortals for Relief of Emergencies, DZ 1164) (Fig. 4b) (DZ 1164, 26: 646b-47c), a *Daozang* compilation of medical texts, some of which date to the Song (Sivin in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 774-77).

As these texts show (Fig. 4a-b), the deathbringer worms change from looking like a baby to resembling a frog, a shrimp, a centipede, a meshed tread, a pig liver, a snake, a rat, a turtle, a human body part, and so on, until they reach the sixth generation when they resemble a bat or “meshed noodles” (*lanmian* 爛麵) (ZW 323, 9:791b-94b; DZ 1164, 26: 646b-47c). These fanciful images are further comparable to pictures of

parasites in a fourteenth-century medical treatise (Fig. 4c), especially the worms resembling a baby, a frog, "meshed hair," a centipede, and "meshed noodles" (*Shiyi dexiao fang* 世醫得效方 9:13b-15b). Altogether, they reveal the little-explored visual culture of disease preserved in medieval Daoism and medicine.

Illustrating Internal Alchemy

Between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, various treatises of internal alchemy use pictures and charts to explain the complex inner visions concerning the macrocosmic/microcosmic processes and the circulation of *qi*. This visual strategy departs from Tang treatises which mainly advocate text-based inner observation (Verellan 2006, 171-76, 182; Needham et al. 1983; Baldrian-Hussein 1989-90, 1996-97; Kohn 1989b; Baldrian-Hussein, Kohn, and Despeux in Pregadio 2007, 762-771).

Many Southern School works on internal alchemy contain visual images (Baldrian-Hussein in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 780, 812-34). They sometimes pair single motifs to symbolize the inner blending of yang and yin, such as a tiger paired with a dragon (DZ 263, 4:712c; DZ 1068, 24:72c), or a tripod paired with a furnace (DZ 151, 3:104b). The motif of a tortoise swimming in water or the presence of a toad symbolizes the sublimation of pure yin (DZ 240, 4: 371b; Baldrian-Hussein in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 829; DZ 151, 3: 105b). The trademark image symbolizing the "end result" of internal alchemy, moreover, is a naked baby inside a circle (DZ 151, 3:107b).

These texts also tend to explain a method called "embryo respiration" (*taixi* 胎息) by mapping the inner organs and energy conduits in a variety of "instructive charts" (*juetu* 訣圖) (Fig. 5).⁹ The *Huandan jue tu* 還丹訣圖 (Chart of the Formula of the Reverted Embryo), contained in the Song-dynasty *Xiuzhen taiji hunyuan zhixuan tu* 修真太極混元指玄圖 (Illustrations of the Mystery of the Cultivation of Perfection, DZ 150), maps the imaginary "lesser" and "larger" energy conduits, the microcosmic and macrocosmic orbits (Fig. 5a) (DZ 150, 3:100c; Needham et al. 1985,

⁹ A series of map-like diagrams included in Song alchemical texts (*Xiuzhen taiji hunyuan tu* 修真太極混元圖, DZ 149; DZ 150) await further study. For a study of the technique of "embryonic breathing," see Katō 2002, 114-26.

fig. 1562, 77; Sakade 1991, fig. 11, 74).¹⁰ Both begin at the kidneys: one line reads internal alchemy and denotes an imagined site where the embryo forms. The interrelated locations of the five organs and the imaginary embryo call to mind another “instructive chart” in the same text, showing the bureaucratic body gods emanating from the associated organs (Fig. 5b) (DZ 150, 3:101c; Needham et al. 1983, fig. 1564, 80; Sakade 1991, fig. 12, 75; Kohn 1993a, fig. 33, 322; Despeux 2010, fig. 3, 69).

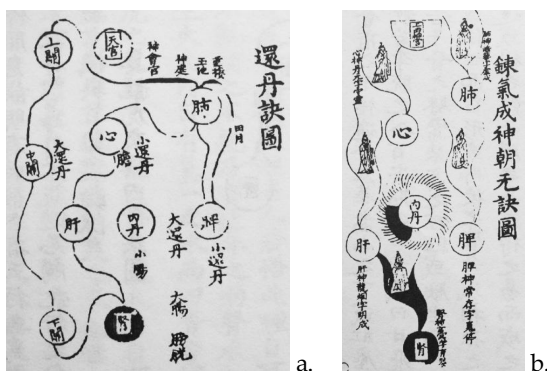


Fig. 5: Internal Alchemical Maps of the Inner Body. a. *Chart of the Formula of the Reverted Embryo* showing the lesser and larger energy conduits (DZ 150, 3:100c); b. *Chart of the Refinement of Energy and Perfection of Spirit* (DZ 150, 3:101c).

In mapping the energy conduits of the inner body, illustrators tend to replace the actual names of the body parts with architectural designations. The larger route illustrated in Fig. 5a offers a good example. Departing from the kidneys, it passes through three gates (*guan* 關) alongside the spinal column which rises to the brain, here called Heavenly Palace (*tiangong* 天宮). After mixing with the Divine Water (*shenshui* 神水) generated there (Pregadio 2006a, 208), it flows to the tongue, called the Jade Pond (*yuchi* 玉池). From there it moves down to the throat, known as the Multi-storied Tower (*chonglou* 重樓),¹¹ and eventually descends to

¹⁰ Baldrian-Hussein classifies this text as a twelve-century text of the Zhong Liquan 鍾離權-Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 *neidan* tradition in general circulation; this text may be related to another Northern Song treatise of the similar subject (DZ 149). See Baldrian-Hussein in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 802-04, 1368.

¹¹ In other diagrams the throat is referred to as the twelve-storied tower, analogous to the twelve months of the year; see figs. 6b, 7.

the central area around the spleen. While many architectural metaphors can be traced back to the *Huangting jing*, they also form part of the standard vocabulary in Song-Yuan internal alchemy (Figs. 6b, 7).¹²

Charts of the Inner Realm

Perhaps the most intriguing visual products evoked by the lore of internal alchemy are the *Neijing tu* 內境圖 (Charts of the Inner Realm), which feature the magio-realistic inner torso in sectional views, with or without the head (Figs. 6-7) (Needham et al. 1983, 107-10; Zhu 1992; Despeux 1994, 31-38; 2000, 519, 521-23).¹³ The earliest known creator of this kind of depiction is the tenth-century Daoist Yanluzi 煙蘿子, who compiled a series of six body charts highlighting the head and the trunk viewed from different angles (Fig. 6) (DZ 263, 4: 690a-b; Needham et al. 1983, 108-10 [figs. 1583-85]; Despeux 1994, 32-36; Sakade 1991, fig. 6, 58-59; Pregadio in Pregadio 2007, fig. 12, 77).

In the thirteenth century, the *Neijing cemian tu* 內境側面圖 (Side-view Chart of the Inner Realm) (Fig. 7) synthesizes Yanluzi's sectional analyses into oneness (DZ 1024, 21:595a; Despeux 1994, 40-43; Despeux in Schipper and Verellen, 773-74).¹⁴ As Catherine Despeux and others have shown, these charts not only map out the Daoist vision of a cosmic body of "an interior paradise and underworld realms," but also reveal the sophisticated anatomical knowledge in medieval Daoism (Despeux 1994, 31-38, 110-33, 149-50; 2000, 519, 521-23; Needham et al. 1983, 107-10; Sakade 1991, 57-65).

Yanluzi's two side-view charts (Fig. 6a-b) place alchemical symbols in the thorax and abdomen. The "Bone of the Heavenly Pillar" (*tianzhu gu* 天柱骨) framing both charts is the main support of the body.

¹² The jade pond and the twelve-storied tower as metaphors of the mouth and the throat respectively can be traced back to the *Huangting jing*; see DZ331, 5:909a, 910b; YJQQ 11:202, 206, 236. For a study of a Northern Song commentary of the *Huangting jing*, see Baldrian-Hussein 2004.

¹³ Sakade Yoshinobu calls these diagrams *Neijing tu* 內景圖; see Sakade 1991.

¹⁴ For the chart preserved in the Southern Song encyclopedia *Shilin guanji* 事林廣記, see Needham et al. 1983, 112; Sakade 1991, fig. 8, 61. For the Qing-dynasty painting and rubbing of a similar subject, see Li 1992, 85; Little and Eichman 2000, pl. 133, 350; Komjathy 2008, 2009.



Fig. 6: Sectional Body Charts by Yanluozi. a. Chart of the Right Side of the Inner Realm; b. Chart of the Left Side of the Inner Realm; c. Chart of the Front Side of the Inner Realm; d. Chart of the Back Side of the Inner Realm (DZ 263, 4: 690a-b).

It indicates the arch-shaped vertebral column and is composed of twenty-four vertebrae (Fig. 6b) (Despeux 1994, 32). The numerology of twenty-four not only accurately reflects anatomical structure but also corresponds to the *qi* of the twenty-four solar periods of the year (two per month), also known as the twenty-four energy nodes (*jieqi* 節氣) (Zhu 1992, 62; Despeux 1994, 32, 38; Needham et al. 1983, 108). Three animals marked as the “goatcart” (*yangche* 羊車), “deercart” (*luche* 鹿車), and “oxcart” (*niuche* 牛車) are moving up the path of the spinal column from bottom to top (Fig. 6a). The animal motif originally derives from the Buddhist scripture *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (Lotus Sutra; T. 262, 9:12c) where it serves as a metaphor for expedient means, i.e., teaching of different levels (Hurvitz 1976, 59-61).¹⁵

Relocated in the Daoist body, the animals symbolize the internal mechanism of moving energy up against the natural current (Despeux 1994, 149-50). At the end of the spinal column is a circular configuration with a tortoise emanating radiant light amid waves. This is the “Drinking Tortoise” (*yingsui* 飲龜) which symbolizes the sublimation of true yin.

¹⁵ For representations of the three carts in later inner alchemical illustrations, see the 17th-century *Yuandao yiqi* 元道一炁 in ZW 314, 9:566b; Sakade 1991, fig. 15, 79; Despeux 1994, fig. 41, 151; 2010, fig. 2, 68. For translations of the early Complete Perfection text which describes the related features of these animal-cart motifs in meditation, see Komjathy 2007.

In addition to the spinal cord, other prominent symbols of internal alchemy cluster in the central abdomen. These include the naked baby or imaginary embryo (Fig. 6a) and the intermingling dragon (yang) and tiger (yin) (Fig. 6b). Both are situated below the crescent-shaped area marked as the Yellow Court (*huangting* 黃庭) and above the Lower Cinnabar Field (*xia dantian* 下丹田) (Despeux 1994, 32-33).

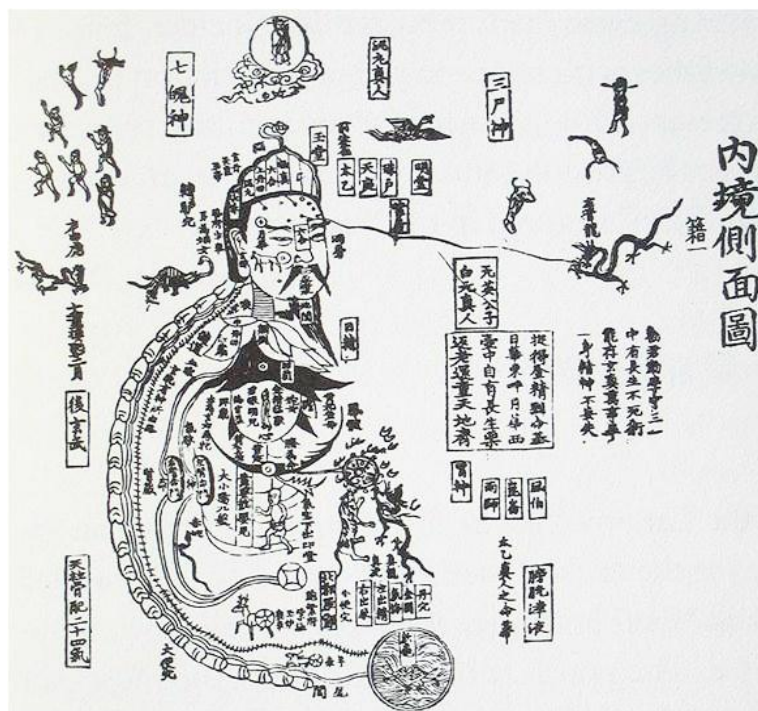


Fig. 7: Chart of the Side View of the Inner Realm (DZ 1024, 21:595a).

The thirteenth-century *Neijing tu* (Fig. 7) incorporates many stock motifs from Yanluozhi's sectional body charts (Despeux 1994, 40-43; cf. Needham et al. 1983, fig. 1586, 112). It has especially the paired dragon and tiger, the naked baby, the tortoise in water, the three animal carts, and the spinal column. Outside the head, the three deathbringers (*sanshi shen*) on the right and the seven material souls (*qipo shen*) on the left are shown eliminated from the body—a manifestation of the efficacy of internal alchemy. This also derives from Yanluozhi's prototype, especially the head chart known as *Yanluozhi chaozhen tu* 煙蘿子朝真圖 (Picture of

Paying Homage to Perfection; DZ 263, 4: 690a; Needham et al. 1983, 108-10; Despeux 1994, 31-36). Floating above the head is the Perfected of Niwan (Niwan zhenren 泥丸真人) who appears in bureaucratic attire inside a cloud circle. He is the body god guarding the head, the highest-ranking section and thus comparable to Daoist heaven. The symbolic presence of a celestial palace in the head, such as the Jade Hall (*yutang* 玉堂), stands in contrast to the Daoist hell known as the Northern Capital at Luofeng (*beidu Luofeng* 北都羅酆) located in the lower abdomen.

Altogether the *Neijing tu* adopts old motifs in a bold and open framework, with a human head in three-quarter view attached to a torso supported by the crescent-shaped spinal cord to the left, leaving the border of the body open to the right. The almost-transparent quality of its appearance evokes “a feeling of cosmic flow” and ignores “the fleshy body of humanity” (Despeux and Kohn 2003, 177), contrasting the flesh and muscles dominating body charts as produced in the European tradition (see Kuriyama 1999). This body framework, moreover, is the direct compositional forerunner of later illustrations, such as nineteenth-century rubbings and paintings called *Neijing tu* 內經圖 (Chart of Internal Passageways) (Li 1992; Needham et al. 1983, fig. 1587, 115; Schipper 1986, 186-87; Sakade 1991, figs. 1-2, 46-51; Wang 1991-92; Little and Eichman 2000, pl. 133, 350; Komjathy 2008, 2009) and *Xiuzhen tu* 修真圖 (Chart of Cultivating Perfection) (Despeux 1994).

The Medical Body

As Joseph Needham remarks, “internal alchemists were extremely interested in the most advanced anatomy of their day” (1983, 111). Yanluzi’s sectional body charts showcasing the inner organs support this observation (Fig. 6c-d). They are the earliest extant anatomical body charts produced in pre-modern China (Zhu 1992).

The Daoist knowledge of the internal body may well have had an impact on medical studies in Song times. This is quite obvious in the anatomical body charts (Fig. 8a) by Emperor Huizong’s physician Yang Jie 楊介 (12th c.) (Despeux 2005, 24-31). Yang admits that his medical charts were based on Yanluzi’s body charts plus his own on-site observations of dissected criminals (Needham et al. 1983, 111, 113). He corrected Yanluzi’s misplacement of the liver and spleen (Fig. 6c-d) (Despeux 2005, 28-29). This is reflected in a thirteenth-century copy of his

Cunzhen huanzhong tu 存真環中圖 (Charts of the True Circulatory Vessels, dat. 1113) (Fig. 8a) (Jin S. and Jin P. 1996, 273).¹⁶

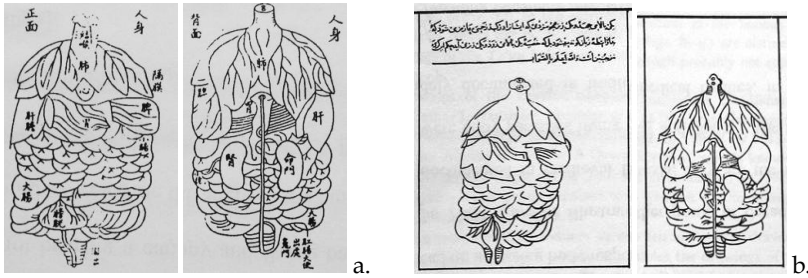


Fig. 8: a. Copy of Yang Jie's *Cunzhen huanzhong tu*. From *Xuanmen maijue neizhao tu* (Jin S. and Jin P. 1996, 273); b. Persian Body Charts. Fourteenth century. Drawings illustrated in the Persian manuscript (Aya Sofya MS 3596), Aya Sofya Library, Istanbul (Miyasita 1968, 489-490).

Beyond China, Yang Jie's body charts also seem to have made their way into the Arab world when China and Persia were both under Mongol rule. A set of fourteenth-century Persian body charts (Aya Sofya MS 3596) discovered in Istanbul in 1939 (Fig. 8b), are so similar to Yang Jie's that they resemble copies made by hand (Miyasita 1968, 489-490; Needham et al. 1983, 113).

Medical interest in the inner body in Song times clearly manifests in the manufacture of statues. The Northern Song imperial medical official Wang Weiyi 王惟一 (c. 987-1067) who served under Emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1023-1063), designed two bronze models of the human body (*tongren* 銅人) for educational purposes (Yuhai 玉海 63:27; Xu Zizhi *tong jian chang bian* 續資治通鑑長編 105:26a; Goldschmidt 2008:31-36).¹⁷ One was on display in the Buddhist temple *Xiangguo si* 相國寺 in the capital Kaifeng 開封, and thus accessible to the public (*Lingyan ji* 靈巖集 4:16-18; Goldschmidt 2008:34). Noted for the 354 acupuncture points (*shuxue* 腧穴)

¹⁶ Cf. 1315 Japanese copies of Yang Jie's body charts in Huang 2003, 18-21.

¹⁷ For Wang Weiyi's illustrated text on acupuncture originally engraved in the Northern Song capital and discovered partially in Beijing in 1972, see the rubbing in Fu and Li 2000, wentupu juan, pl. 237, 110. For archaeological discoveries of early Chinese lacquer and terra cotta figurines bearing meridians or acupuncture points, see Lo 2007, figs. 1-2, 418-19; Fu and Li 2000, wentupu juan, pl. 127, 57.

marked on the surface of the figurine (Unschuld 2000, 85),¹⁸ this model bears a set of life-size wooden inner organs neatly stuffed inside (Huang Longxiang et al. 2004, 358; Goldschmidt 2008, 34).¹⁹ A Ming-dynasty bronze model now in the Hermitage, Moscow is also said to reflect this Song model (Huang 2003, vol. 1, 219).

This fascination with the inner body also leaves its mark on Northern Song Buddhist statuary. The earliest extant and best-known examples of inner organs are textile models deposited inside a cavity in the back of a Song (dated 985) wooden statue of Shakyamuni Buddha held in the Seiryōji Temple 清涼寺, Kyoto (Fig. 9) (Maruo et al. 1966, *zuhan*, pl. 48; *kaisetsu*, 53-60; Watanabe 1956; Henderson and Hurvitz 1956, 22-25; Ishihara 1975a-b; Oku 2009, 43).



Fig. 9: Textile models of inner organs deposited in the Shakyamuni Buddha at Seiryōji, Kyoto. Before 985. Northern Song Dynasty.

Produced and donated by the Chinese nun Qingxiao 清曉 from Taizhou 台州 in Zhejiang (Maruo et al. 1966, *zuhan*, pl. 48; *kaisetsu*, 54),

¹⁸ The point names on the bronze statue were inlaid in gold (*cuojin shu* 錯金書) beside each locus. "The figure was made in two halves, front and back, which could be fitted together to make a whole body." See Zhou Mi's (1232-98) comment in *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 14:251-252; Goldschmidt 2008, 34.

¹⁹ The Song manufacture of the bronze models must have been regarded as one of the greatest inventions in science. For the Jurchen-Jin confiscation of a bronze model from the Song court collection in 1127, see *Jinkang yaolu* 靖康要錄 11:18. For the acupuncture figurine known as the "Bronze Man of the Bright Hall" (*Tongren mingtang* 銅人明堂) given by the Later Jin (*Houjin* 後晉, 936-947) to the Khitan Liao 遼 as a tributary gift, see *Liao shi* 遼史 4:19.

some organs contain incense, while others contain gems. Most show Brahmi and Sanskrit characters (Henderson and Hurvitz 1956, 22-24; Maruo et al. 1966, *kaisetsu*, 53-54; Ishihara 1975a, 18-19). Watanabe Kōzō, among other Japanese scholars, attributes the knowledge of the inner body demonstrated by the Seiryōji deposit to an understanding of the Daoist five organs as well as to Chinese anatomical study (Watanabe 1956; Ishihara 1975a-b).²⁰

Tang and Song writers documenting mock human organs in Buddhist statues usually linked their fabrication to both the medical and Daoist traditions (YYZZ 6:1a; *Huaji* 畫繼 10:6a; Watanabe 1956, 30-31). Although there is no extant Tang or Song Daoist statue with such organs,²¹ Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933) wrote about the making of Daoist statues with inner organs in Chengdu 成都. He cites the portrait statue of the Celestial Master (*tianshi zhen* 天師真) as an example (DZ 590, 10:826c; YJQQ 119:2610-11).²²

As Du outlines, the fashioning of such Daoist statues is quite similar to the acupuncture model or equivalent Buddhist figurines. The sculptor Hermit Liu (Liu chushi 劉處士) painted the surface of the statue with gold and colored pigments. He stuffed the interior of the statue with five mock organs, viscera, and stomach, all stitched together with colored brocade and made from cloth. Additionally, five fragrances (*wuxiang* 五香) and a mirror were deposited alongside the mock inner organs. In addition, as Du points out, the statue had a throat with twelve junctures--a structural detail that recalls classical Daoist body charts (Figs. 6, 7). Devotees marveled at the statue's magical efficacy (*lingyan* 靈驗) in response to their inquiries (DZ 590, 10:826c; YJQQ 119:2610-11).

²⁰ For an alternative view linking the Buddhist mock human organs to Indian medicine introduced to Song China, see Watanabe 1956.

²¹ For recent scholarship of the later (mostly the Qing and modern) Hunan Daoist statues which contain deposits of consecration certificates (*yizhi* 意旨), medicines, paper money, and more, see Arrault 2008; Fava forthcoming.

²² For more studies on Du Guangting, see DZ 590, 10: 826c-29c; Mesnil 1996-97, 152; Verellen 1989a-b, 1992.

Body Landscape

Internal alchemy is also well-known for its analogy of the interior of the human body to the landscape imagery. A good example is the *Tixiang yin yang shengjiang tu* 體象陰陽升降圖 (Illustrated Ascent and Descent of the Yin and Yang Energies in the Body) (Fig. 10),²³ found in Highest Clarity master Xiao Yingsou's commentary to the *Duren jing* 度人經 (Scripture of Salvation, DZ 1), a major work compiled and expanded under Emperor Huizong (Strickmann 1978).²⁴ Xiao submitted his commentary to the Southern Song Emperor Lizong 理宗 (r. 1225-1264) in 1226 (DZ 90, 2: 333c). A similar chart also appears in a treatise by Chen Zhixu 陳致虛 (d. 1331) (DZ 1068, 24: 71a; Needham et al. 1983, fig. 1581, 105; Despeux 1994, 41; Verellen 2006, fig. 8.10, 173).



Fig. 11: Visualization of *Paying Homage to the Jade Hall and the Primordial Qi* (DZ 220, 4: 6b-c).

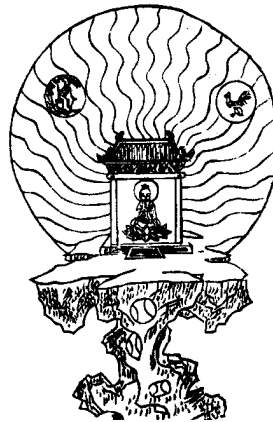


Fig. 11: Visualization of *Paying Homage to the Jade Hall and the Primordial Qi* (DZ 220, 4: 6b-c).

²³ DZ 90, 2: 334b; Boltz 1987, 206-207; Sakade 1991, fig. 13, 77; Despeux 1994, 38-40; Despeux and Kohn 2003, 185-187.

²⁴ While the title of Xiao's text suggests that it is intended as a commentary on the *Duren jing*, Xiao's commentary is charged with overwhelming notions of internal alchemy. See Zeng 2000.

This suggests that alchemists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were the primary audience of such landscape illustrations.

Literary sources of the Tang and Song describe the transformations of the sacred body of Laozi (*Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集, T 52.2103: 144b; Kohn 1995c, 54-55) and Pangu (YJQQ 56: 1216; Kohn 1993a, 169) into internal landscapes. Similarly, landscape painting, newly established in the Song, draws on the anthropomorphic metaphor. The eleventh-century landscape treatise *Linquan gaozhi* 林泉高致 (Lofty Message of Forest and Streams), written by the court painter Guo Xi 郭熙 (fl. 1060s), and further edited by his son Guo Si 郭思 (*jinshi* 1082), describes the ideal landscape as a living, organic cosmic body. Water is compared to blood in the veins, while rocks are the bones. Mountains are referred to as the face, grasses and trees are hair, and pavilions are eyebrows and eyes (*Linquan gaozhi*, 499b; Bush and H. Shih 1985, 167). Because Guo Si submitted this treatise to Emperor Huizong in 1117, Alfreda Murck suggests that the overwhelming Daoist elements in the treatise may be due to his catering to the emperor's interest in Daoism (Murck 2000, 197-202).

Xiao Yingsou's body landscape (Fig. 9) reflects the new discourse of body and landscape of that time and serves as a metaphorical depiction of the progression and regression of inner energies in the context of internal alchemy (Verellen 2006, 173).²⁵ The picture shows a grand view of myriad hills piling up frontally from the sea. Roofed edifices, including an impressive multi-storied tower on the left, denote imaginary nodes which transact the circulation of inner energies, depicted as meandering rivers encircling the hills at the center like a loop (Needham et al. 1983, 107). Many loci marked in this mountain diagram reflect the standard internal alchemical vocabulary shared by similar images (Figs. 6, 7).

At first glance, Xiao's frontal mountain differs drastically from the visual norm of Daoist sacred mountains (Fig. 11). They typically show Mt. Kunlun in its classical form, with a narrow base and wide top that resemble "a hanging bowl" (*yanpen* 偃盆). A good example is a mountain from Lu Shizhong's 路時中 illustration of a visit to the Mountain of Jade Capital located in the highest Daoist heaven known as the Heaven of Grand Network (*Daluotian* 大羅天) (Fig. 11) (DZ 220, 4: 6b-c; ; Andersen

²⁵ For a study of the progressive and regressive time cycles in Daoist ritual, see Schipper 1986.

in Schipper and Verellen 2004, 1073-74; Boltz 1987, fig. 6, 37). The image depicts another version of the “body landscape” while adepts visualize the body transforming into the Mountain of Mystery Capital (Xuandu shan 玄都山), also known as the Mountain of Jade Capital (Yujing shan 玉京山). At the same time, Lord Lao receives adepts in audience inside the Jade Hall, a celestial site similarly marked in thirteenth-century body charts (Figs. 7, 10).



Fig. 12: *Travelers among Mountains and Streams* by Fan Kuan. Ca. 1000. Ink and light color on silk. 206.3x103.3cm. Taipei National Palace Museum (000826).

Departing from the mainstream Daoist sacred mountain, Xiao's body landscape recalls the Northern Song monumental landscape paintings, best shown in the early eleventh-century *Xishan xinglü* 谿山行旅 (Travelers among Mountains and Streams) by Fan Kuan 范宽 (Fig. 12) (Lin 2007, pl. 6, 54-59; Fong 1984; 1996, 125-30; Barnhart 1997, 100, 102).

The composition here is strongly vertical and frontal, its strokes have a short and pointed "rain-drop" texture which fills the rocky surfaces. In addition, there are small trees growing atop the hills, and various architectural motifs dot the landscape.

Xiao's image can be seen as a monumental landscape in miniature. Furthermore, viewing both images re-quires the viewer to undertake a mental and visual journey through complicated landscape constructions: one enters the landscape from the closest point at the bottom of the picture plane and cross the water and the bridge, stopping at the various gates and pavilions, then gradually making one's way to the summit.²⁶ Stephen Little interprets the "inner principle" resonating in Fan Kuan's painting as a reflection of the "concept of cosmic order that is essentially Daoist in origin" (Little 2000, 722).

The text accompanying Xiao's body landscape explicitly urges the viewer to see the mountain as the self. It states: "The body is the furnace and the stove amid heaven and earth; its central palace is the alchemical tripod, while beyond it is the great void" (DZ 90, 2: 334b; Despeux and Kohn 2003, 186). Seen in this way, the mountain image also serves as a mental map that assists adepts to embark on a spiritual journey within themselves.

Just as in viewing a Song landscape hanging scroll, one begins from the foreground of this landscape, confronted first with the Sea of Suffering (*kuhai* 苦海), a term borrowed from Buddhism and here indicating the Ocean of *Qi* or the lower cinnabar field. The gate of the underworld prison known as Fengdu (*fengdu guan* 酆都關) is located immediately above the water.²⁷ The massive ocean further rises up to the Yellow Court (spleen) on the left and to the Gate of Life (*mingmen* 命門) on the right.

The middle section is dominated by the river running in a loop, with various architectural motifs placed at different junctures and a horizontal bridge connecting its two gates.²⁸ The vertical stream flowing on the left and right sides of the loop may refer to the meridians running along the

²⁶ Cf. Schipper's viewing process of the nineteenth-century *Neijing tu* in Schipper 1986, 186.

²⁷ This signpost is reminiscent of the signpost of the underworld in Fig. 7.

²⁸ The Gate of Heaven situated at the left side of the bridge refers to the solar plexus; see Despeux and Kohn 2003, 187.

front and back of the body. The Residence of the God Wuying (*wuying fu* 無英府), situated inside the lower loop, is the imaginary embryo (Despeux and Kohn 2003, 185). The vertical stream along the left loop, i.e., the multi-storied tower, refers to the throat; below it is the heart, marked as the Scarlet Palace (*jiangong* 絳宮).

Above the bridge, the Golden Gate (*jinque* 金闕) refers to the mouth. Above, various refining stations marked in the landscape are in the head. The celestial Upper Capital of Jade Mountain (*yushan shang jing* 玉山上京)—an alternative term for the celestial Mountain of Jade Capital—radiates in the upper-left corner of the loop; it denotes a site in the brain where the energies are collected, blended, and refined (DZ 90, 2: 356a). Other sites signifying the correlation of the celestial realm and the brain include Mt. Kunlun, marked at the summit of the landscape,²⁹ and the Mysterious Heaven (*xuantian* 玄天), the Daoist heaven beyond earth.

Echoing the cartography of Daoist heaven, an intriguing nine-storied ziggurat in the upper right corner is called the Noble Terrace Sheltering [the Heaven of Grand] Network (*Yuluo sutai* 鬱羅蕭台), a term referring to a celestial construction on the summit of the Mountain of Jade Capital first mentioned in the *Duren jing* (DZ 1, 1: 3b, 72b, 86b, 132c, 158c, 262b, 303c, 330b, 337c, 405b). Xiao's commentary further explains that this nine-storied terrace corresponds to the brain (DZ 90, 2: 356a-b).³⁰

What, then, is the significance of miniaturization in Daoism? While Fan Kuan shows a grand mountain in his two-meter hanging scroll, Xiao Yisou's body landscape probably was a small illustration in a book commentary, designed exclusively for the imperial gaze.

In Fan's painting, human figures are dwarfed and only appear as a tiny element among the ten thousand things that co-exist in nature (W. Fong 1996, 128; Barnhart 1989, esp. 65-66). Such figures do not appear at all in Xiao's miniature landscape, because humanity is now embodied by

²⁹ According to the *Huangting jing*, Mt. Kunlun corresponds to the head; see YJQQ 11: 236, 12: 299.

³⁰ According to Wang Qizhen's *Lingbao dafa*, this terrace corresponds to the back of the neck; see DZ 1221, 31: 250b. The term "Noble Terrace Sheltering [the Heaven of Grand] Network" also resonates with a Daoist architectural design promoted by the Northern Song court, and especially with Emperor Huizong; see *Shengchao minghua ping* 聖朝名畫評 3: 459a; *Nenggai zhaiman lu* 能改齋漫錄 12: 18a-b; DZ 92, 1: 468b-c.

the sheer presence of the landscape imagery. What seems to be envisioned in Xiao's mountain chart is not just one dominant mountain, but layers of miniature mountains piling up from bottom to top. The idea of seeing infinite mountains in one's body highlights the perception of body as microcosm. It recalls the phrases in the *Huangting jing*, stating that the myriad body gods are on a par with hundreds and thousands of piled-up mountains connecting to one another (YJQQ 11: 237, 248).

The experiments associated with imagery scale seen in Fan's monumental landscape and Xiao's miniature mountain call to mind Susan Stewart's narrative of the miniature versus the gigantic (Stewart 1993). According to her, miniaturization "not only bears the tangible qualities of material reality but also serves as a representation. . . of a reality that does not exist." Most importantly, it implies turning the world inward and focusing on "infinitely profound interiority" (Stewart 1993, 60). It is the "gemlike" quality of the miniature that evokes the fantastic and creates "an 'other' time, a type of transcendent time which negates change and the flux of lived reality" (Stewart 1993, 43, 60, 64). Viewed in this way, the fashioning of Xiao's internal alchemical picture of the human body as landscape mimicking the Northern Song monumental landscape painting is a thoughtful rather than an abrupt choice, for, in Rold Stein's words, "the more altered in size the representation is" from the original object, "the more it takes on a magical or mythic quality" (Stein 1990, 52).

Daoists were pre-occupied with the correlation of body and cosmos, depicting it through body gods, starry journeys, internal spirits and deathbringers, as well as illustrations of the processes of internal alchemy. They all reveal the multi-dimensional body and self, while the depictions of the visualization journeys to the Northern Dippers celebrate the Daoist curiosity of the constellations and space in cosmos.

When picturing the grotesque spirits and body worms, they envisioned an encyclopedic array of health-threatening "body residents," some of which are comparable to the imaginary parasites recorded in medical treatises of the Song, Yuan, and Ming periods. The visual conventions of these body spirits and worms may constitute a significant part of the under-studied visual culture of disease, which overlaps with that of demonology.

The imagery of internal alchemy reflects another facet of Daoists' fascination with the microcosmic self. A rich repertoire of visual vocabulary devoting to mapping and visualizing the inner body distinguishes the Song-Yuan internal alchemy from the earlier tradition. Thanks to this new wave of "visual internal alchemy," a unique genre bridging religion and medicine, explores a transparent body revealing not only the inner organs but also the metaphysical mechanism of inner energies. Another type of body landscape links the Daoist visual interpretation of cosmic body with the newly-established art of landscape painting current in the Song period. The images of body spirits, interior worms, and illustrations of internal alchemy, then, in general circulation during Song and Yuan, converge with the visual productions associated with nurturing life, health, and medicine made outside the Daoist circle. Hence, they form a contrast to the esoteric images of body gods and starry travel otherwise prominent in the tradition.

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Daoist Incantations for Acupuncture

STEPHEN JACKOWICZ

Abstract

This paper examines the use of Daoist incantations in conjunction with acupuncture as described in the *Zhenjiu dacheng* (Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion) from the late Ming. Utilizing primary source material, the paper traces the background of Daoist incantations in the period in relationship to the coterminous techniques of acupuncture. The combination of these techniques is explored in the literature. The author then presents the results of a case study utilizing the combined incantation-acupuncture technique comparing the efficacy of the combined methodology versus the use of needle technique alone.

Acupuncture has enjoyed a renaissance in the modern day. Licensure, professional education, and an ever-increasing acceptance and integration with Western medicine have made it a common practice. However, the techniques that were preserved and incorporated into the corpus of modern acupuncture do not reflect the entirety of the classical repertoire. In fact, techniques amenable to modern scientific thought as well as to Communist revisioning are perhaps reflective of only a small number of classical methods. Techniques that were considered “superstitious” or “spiritual” were rejected in favor of more banal and mechanical ones.

One example of this phenomenon appears in the Ming-dynasty *Zhenjiu dacheng* 針灸大成 (Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion; hereafter called *Great Compendium*), which records acupuncture techniques that utilize incantations (*zhou* 咒) and chanting (*nian* 念) intended to increase treatment efficacy. Such techniques are not part of modern acupuncture literature, nor are they taught in acupuncture schools. However, the choice to obviate them from the corpus of East Asian medicine was not one of efficacy, but of socio-political power and

the establishment of a dictum of acceptability, which rejected certain approaches as superstitious without empirical assay.

Historical Background

The *Great Compendium* is the work of Yang Jizhou 楊繼洲 of the Ming Dynasty. Composed in 1601, its twelve volumes attempt to pull together the various treatment methodologies of the time. Ute Engelhardt notes that, “the *Great Compendium* is the most extensive monograph on the subject and a classic to the present day;” it includes, “gymnastic exercises for the various *qi*-circuits” (2000, 82). The text rose to widespread notoriety and has become a long-term reference work. Birch and Felt describe the centrality of this text to the subsequent development of acupuncture (1999).

The text has been reproduced in at least thirty editions prior to 1900 and in about fifty more since then. It notes 308 points on the twelve regular channels and 51 on the two medial ones. These 667 points almost exactly match the 670 points currently accepted. Also, the point names of the text remain in use today, as do the treatments it describes. Produced in the midst of the tremendous diversity of the late 1500s, the *Great Compendium* is one of the dominant medical works of the time, joining Li Shizhen’s 李時珍 (1518-1593) well respected and widely used *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 (Classified Pharmacology).

Both texts preserve information from many previous works and represent the epitome of scholarship in their respective fields, supporting what was considered clinically useful at the time. The codification that each develops, such as the *Great Compendium*’s system for describing acupoint locations, survives to the present. It is still considered the surviving high point of the written tradition and recognized as the strongest representative of classical clinical acupuncture: its Western successor, Soulie de Morant’s *L’Acupuncture Chinoise*, is still one of the finest clinical manuals (Birch and Felt 1999, 33).

The *Great Compendium* was a well-known and central text with a large range of influence. Its information provides a platform for modern practices and commonly accepted acupuncture techniques, containing highly useful and clinically relevant data. However, despite its influence on later acupuncture, the incantation methodology it presents is unknown today. The absence of this and similar methodologies in the

modern corpus of technique is a signature of the changes that occurred within Chinese medicine in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Political and social change had profound impact on the formation of the neoclassical, yet Western medicine amenable, construct known as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). The majority of these changes were made, not for clinical reasons, but rather for reasons of worldview and de facto conformity to reformative censors' sensibilities (see Fruehauf 1999).

Incantations (*zhou* 咒) in traditional China include words of power, curses, and internal sounds that resonate with the organs (Zhang 1989, 3). Daoists use them to reinforce prayers or requests addressed to the spiritual hierarchy with a sound of power. Some incantations are recognizable words, others are mere sounds. The appropriate pronunciation or resonance is requisite for unleashing the effect or power behind them. Different traditions embrace specific incantations and emphasize specific pronunciations. Chants (*nian* 念), on the other hand, are phrases—often from sacred texts—repeated and intoned to bring about an effect using the force of a divine entity. They tend to be intelligible phrases, which implore divine intercession (Kohn 2000, 101).

Acupuncture technique usually focuses on needle manipulation: rotation, lifting and thrusting, percussion, and conjoined breathing with insertion create a range of variation (Cheng 1987, 337-57). *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, one of the most widely used modern TCM textbooks available in English, refers to the *Great Compendium* as including twelve needle techniques, all of which are purely mechanical and include things like needle insertion assisted by thumb nail, warming the needle in the mouth, pressing, scratching, twisting, shaking, and pulling (Cheng 1987, 352-53). As other textbooks, it remains completely silent about the use of incantations and chants in relation to acupuncture. What, then, does the *Grand Compendium* suggest?

Initial Incantations

The text provides a protocol for using incantations during acupuncture in six parts. First, it has a chant to the great gods of the heavenly net (*tiangang dashen* 天罡大神). This name is best understood as a culmination of the celestial forces of the sun, moon, stars of the dipper, and the three primordial qi of creation. Instead of as a major deity of intercession,

we may best view these gods as the emanation of *qi* of the highest levels of heaven, the embodiment of the highest and purest *qi* of creation that forms a backdrop to cosmic as well as physiological events. By using his incantation, the practitioner thus invokes the force of the fundamental escarpment of existence.

This represents a prime example of the macrocosmic world paralleling the microcosmic. The practitioner calls upon the force of the overarching heavenly structure of the universe to influence that of the human body. Before proceeding with needling, he collects the totality of the upright and corrective force (*zhengqi* 正氣) in the universe, attempting to leverage his ability to correct the physiological state with the motivating power of the universe behind it.

The chant continues by describing the motion of the sun and moon, while the text entreats the practitioner to intone it with emotion so that it can rise to the heavenly realms. It should elicit the descent of “mysterious upright yellow *qi*,” which has a protective effect. This first step thus sets the stage for the practitioner to become an expression of the universe, clothed in the protective aura of celestial foundations.

The second step requires that the practitioner still his spirit. The text indicates that both disease and medicine relate to the condition of the spirit. Only by stilling his own spirit can the practitioner hope to make the technique effective.

This step relates acupuncture incantations to other esoteric healing practices. The practitioner becomes a conduit for the action of celestial *qi*. He must be still so he can “listen” to the *qi* and not interfere with the actions of the healing force by consciously willing an effect. Similarly, the *Huangdi neijing lingshu* 黃帝內經靈樞 (The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic: Spiritual Pivot) advises practitioners to enclose the spirit within in order to become part of the superior forces of the universe and develop an intent mental focus on the tip of the needle (Wu and Wu 1999, 493). The *Lingshu* then moves on to discuss which points should be used and how to apply the nine kinds of needles; it does not dwell on the mental attitude or physical posture of the practitioner.

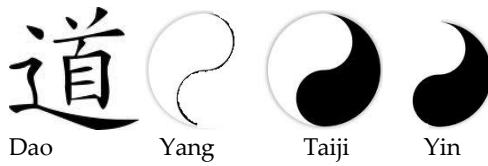
Internal Focus

The third step in the protocol is directing the proper countenance for the application of the technique. The practitioner must block out thought and hold no evil image in the eyes; he must hold his hand "like grasping a tiger, your grip like you were capturing a dragon." Here again, the emphasis is on an advanced level of uprightness, which requires the avoidance of thoughts or images of anything impure. In addition, there is an avoidance of external thought, reiterating the importance of stillness as a precursor.

The hand technique, then, includes the imagery of tiger and dragon, a common reference in both Daoist alchemical and traditional acupuncture texts. The tiger is a yang expression of the yin of earth, while the dragon is a yin expression of the yang of Heaven (Wong 1997, 7). Both in concert represent the dynamically intertwined components of yin and yang that arise in the midst of each other. The implication in the text seems to be that the practitioner's hand represents the yang aspect within the yin expression: this may be a cognate of the spiritual nature of the Great Deity's being, expressed through the physical nature of the practitioner's body. The practitioner seeks the yin aspect within the yang expression. This is a reflection of the steady state within the dynamic change required of the diseased physiology.

The fourth step is an internal prayer, recited as the needle descends toward the body. The practitioner visualizes unifying into the technique and calls upon the three great sage-rulers of Chinese legendary history: the Divine Farmer (Shennong 神農), the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黃帝), and the cosmogonic master Fuxi 伏羲. The three appear before the practitioner and give him the ability to remove the disease without recurrence. The practitioner recites an incantation glorifying the prime of (the trigram) *Qian*, which flows in to cure the ten thousand diseases. The incantation closes with a devotional to Highest Lord Lao (Taishang Laojun 太上老君), stating that the practitioner serves him.

The underlying operation within the fourth step of the technique is one of numerological magical sympathy. In the Daoist universe the force of Heaven is among the most sublime emanations of Dao. It descends as subtle cosmic *qi* and becomes more solid as it approaches physical form. The *qi* is embodied in celestial deities who have specific functions and dedicated responsibilities.



The diffuse aspect of cosmic singularity is then separated into the binary complementarity of yin and yang, which again finds unity in the Great Ultimate (Taiji 太極).

These three states of being form a primordial relationship. The cosmic *qi* of yin-yang-Taiji “. . . gathers to form the Three Clarities: the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginning or Jade Clarity, the Heavenly Worthy of Numinous Treasure or Highest Clarity, and the Celestial Worthy of the Dao and its Virtue or Great Clarity. Below the Three Clarities, the emanations of Tao are . . . deities such as the Jade Emperor” (*Daode jing* Forum 2009). The Jade Emperor’s actions and orders are made manifest in the phenomenal world. He is the pivot of manifesting reality through which the rarified and subtle aspects of the upper echelons of the spiritual realm express themselves in physical form.



The Gods of the Three Clarities



The Jade Emperor

The acupuncture technique from the *Great Compendium* thus operates through a subtle association with the numerological organization of the universe. The Great Deities of the Heavenly Net are invoked as a collec-

tive representing the first emanation of Dao. Then independently, the sun and moon are invoked along with Mount Kunlun. These three images represent the primordial aspects of yin-yang and Taiji. The practitioner must become a still and clear conduit in communion with the three sage-rulers who unite and come to represent the three primes. Finally, the practitioner himself takes on the role of the Jade Emperor; he becomes the pivot by which the spiritual world finds physical expression.

The practitioner's role is intimately expressed through the needle, which is held by a hand that has become the tiger (yang within yin) seeking the dragon (yin within yang). His practice is the culmination of the integrated consummation of cosmic *qi* that produces the ongoing dance of life. The numerological sequencing in this aspect of the technique is similar to the correlative schemata of Han-dynasty mantic practices, also linked to figures such as the Divine Farmer and the Yellow Emperor (Csikszentmihalyi 2000, 53). The practitioner's devotion to the Highest Lord Lao, moreover, reinforces the schemata: he is none other than the Heavenly Worthy of the Dao and its Virtue.

Needling

The fifth step in the technique is performed as the needle descends into insertion. The practitioner resonates the sound "he" as he inserts the needle. The sound is described in other texts as relating to the fire phase and to the heart orb (Zhang 1989, 5), which is considered the house of spirit in the body. The use of this resonant sound is an induction of spirit into the technique, whose emanation at this point also represents its dissemination from the head of the spiritual hierarchy into the world. It is the primordial breath of creation that flows from spirit.

The practitioner next summons a divine fire within his consciousness and use that strength to drive the needle in. Spirit is associated with the phase fire. As the force of spirit descends through the practitioner into the patient, his visualization and breath sound provide a medium for its conduction.



Fig. 1: The parallel structure of cosmology and incantation technique

By visualizing fire, consciousness is intimately and intensely engaged with the technique. Then again, fire is a transformative as well as a purgative force. By inducing it into the patient, the practitioner bolsters his ability to change.

Now the practitioner utilizes yet another incantation which describes the dissemination of cosmic *qi*. It is described as defending the pathways of upright *qi* in the body from the ten thousand diseases, then assisting the raising of the tiger and the descent of the dragon—the integration of yin and yang, also expressed as grasping and entering the spirit of the needle. This is a verbal confirmation of the sympathetic magical correspondence activated in the practice.

Just as the practitioner has become the conduit of the forces of spirit, so the incantation is an affirmation of this state. It continues with a description of the needle impacting five aspects: Heaven, Earth, Mountain, Ocean, and Ghosts. The needle influences each of these differently. Heaven is opened; Earth is cracked apart; Mountain is laid low; Ocean is exhausted; and the Ghosts laid to rest. These aspects are not delineated as separate parts of the technique, and they may be best understood as a template for the concurrent action of the incantation needle. Eliciting these effects simultaneously, the needle has become the conduit through which the macrocosm of the universe restructures the microcosm of the body. The statement in the incantation that the needle enters and the disease is laid to rest supports this interpretation. In the final part of the incantation, the practitioner once again affirms his service to the Highest Lord Lao.

The sixth and final part of the technique consists of an additional incantation performed independently of the physical manipulation of the needle. The practitioner holds his hands with the fingers stretched upward and breathes deeply as if to move the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers, by extension moving human flesh, blood, and vessels and reaching to the constellations of the Southern and Northern Dippers (Ursa Major), constellations that serve as the central administration of the immortals and the living, respectively. It too, ends with an affirmation of service to the Highest Lord Lao.

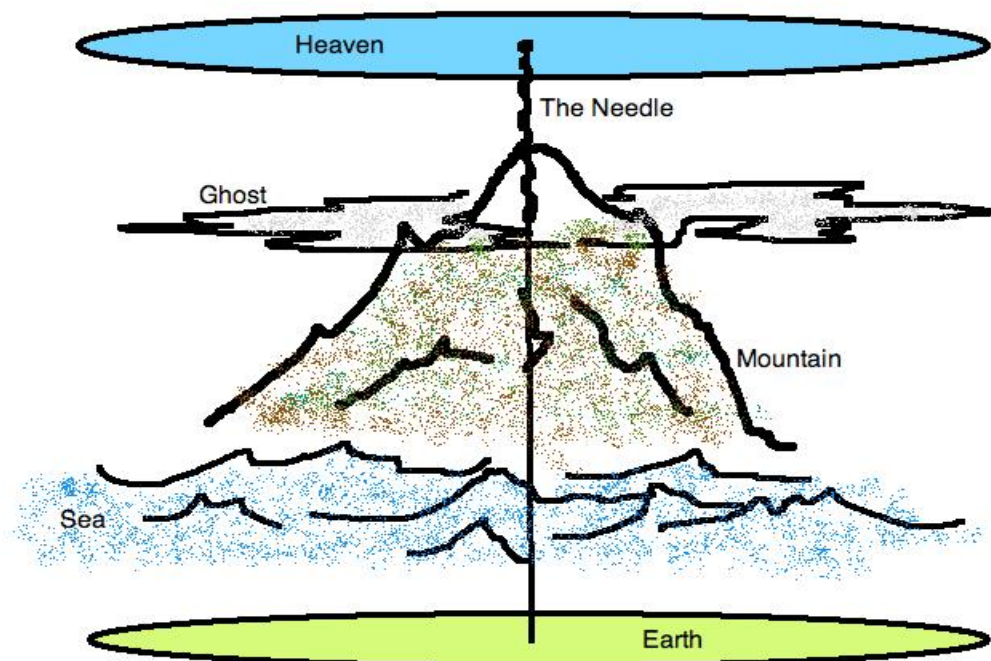


Fig. 2: The needle as a pivot of spirit, linking the various realms.

In this final aspect of the technique, the practitioner affirms his transformation into the central pole of spirit. He has become the force of *qi* that moves the rivers, the components of the human body, and even the stars themselves. He is at one with the primordial cosmic energy of the universe and by such association and transformation, can bring about curative effects with the needle. He has reaffirmed his role in the celestial hierarchy as an administrator of the Lord Lao's concerns for the healing of humanity.

Application

This incantation needle technique has not been incorporated into the body of modern acupuncture despite its presence in a classic—a widely known work that has been generally considered as a major foundation of the understanding of acupuncture. One can only assume that the religious overtones of the technique were the cause of its fading into obscu-

rity. There has been no study of its efficacy, so it is quite possible that it actually works more efficiently than the standard needle techniques of modern acupuncture. The sad fact is that we have no understanding of the potential of the incantation needle in a clinical setting.

To remedy this and explore a potential model for studying this versus modern techniques, I conducted an N=10 and an N=1 study. In the modern repertoire of acupuncture technique, two of the most common and basic methods are plain insertion (*cifa* 刺法) and even method (*pingfa* 平法) (Cheng 1987, 341-47). In the N=10 case study, ten subjects were needled using plain insertion, then even method, then the incantation needle from the *Great Compendium*. In the N=1 case study, one subject was treated and a complete review of all diagnostic parameters was performed.

The population for the N=10 study was evenly male and female with age ranging from age 19 to 60 years. All subjects were ambulatory, without impediments to normal activities. Subjects were randomly selected without a classifying diagnostic category in either Western or Eastern medicine. Sterilized 1.5-inch 30-gauge needles were used with free-hand insertion on the point Conception Vessel 4 (Guanyuan 關元). This point was selected for its major tonification effects and because it has no lateral pair. Each patient was assayed for baseline parameters and subjected to insertion. This was followed by baseline recheck, even method, and yet another baseline recheck.

Forty-eight hours was then allowed to pass before the next phase of the study. The subject's baselines were again assayed; then the incantation needle technique was applied. The forty-eight hour hiatus was included since the incantation needle technique employs a specific method of insertion. Since the same acupuncture point was used for each subject and for each needle technique, re-inserting a needle for the incantation needle after having done so in the simple insertion may have skewed results. Although forty-eight hours is an arbitrary period, the logistics of the study afforded that time frame as most feasible. Lacking any empirical data to indicate the time frame in which the effect of a singular acupuncture point being stimulated will persist, the forty-eight hour time block seemed sufficient.

Study Findings

In terms of pulse parameters used in East Asian medicine, the three techniques examined show a level of statistical parity. The range in result does not argue for or against the efficacy of any of the techniques when viewed from this set of parameters.

On the other hand, when looking at blood pressure results, the gap is more pronounced. Basic insertion produced a 6.94% increase in blood pressure levels. Even method produced a 2.97% reduction in blood pressure. Incantation needle produced a remarkable 12.25% reduction in blood pressure. Comparing the basic insertion and the even method, the latter yielded a 9.91% better result than the former. The even method is considered in modern TCM as a stronger technique than basic insertion. These blood pressure results support this conception. But these results also indicate that the incantation needle produced a change 4.12 times greater than the even method, and a 19.19% better response than basic insertion. These values are statistically relevant and indicate that repeated studies are necessary to determine its potential long-term treatment effect.

In the N=1 case study, the subject experienced an abatement of pain that had persisted for eleven years as well as changes in his diagnostic parameters. From an East Asian medical perspective, the technique may have induced physiological as well as symptomatic changes due to the influx of a rarefied form of spiritual *qi* which reorganized his system. Although some diagnostic signs may have been altered by placebo effect, the forty-eight hour period without a pain that had persisted for eleven years makes the placebo effect an unlikely explanation. If we chose not to accept the East Asian medical explanation for the treatment effect, there is no clear dynamic to account for the therapeutic result. However, a positive treatment result was obtained. Further studies may yield an answer as to the mechanism of the effect amenable to Western medicine. If not, following Occam's Razor,¹ we would be forced to accept an explanation that at first seems strange: that a spiritual force moves through the needle to produce therapeutic results.

¹ The 14th-century English logician William of Occam argued that the simplest physical explanation should do until evidence demands a more complex one. His principle is the "Law of Parsimony" (*Lex Parsimoniae*), or Occam's Razor.

Conclusion

The first intention of this was to unravel an aspect of traditional acupuncture that plays no part in modern practice. The incantation needle technique from the *Great Compendium* provides a glimpse on an aspect of traditional acupuncture that was important in a major Ming collection. How many more, similar or variant methods that are seriously different from those preserved in modern, redacted TCM are still waiting to be explored? How many more may have existed only in oral transmission lineages that are dying out or already lost? What percentage of techniques from the classical period have we truly inherited? Has the lion's share of methods remained in the shadows, in the wings of antiquity? I contend that we truly do not know what classical Chinese medicine was like, and that scholars and practitioners need to be open to a revision of our understanding and application of the classical tradition.

The second purpose of this paper was to document a clinical study that pitted modern acupuncture techniques against the incantation needle. The results indicated that the classical technique fared as well as its modern counterpart in terms of pulse parameter, better than basic insertion in abdominal release, and much more potently than modern methods in lowering blood pressure. The N=1 study further delineated a profound treatment response with the incantation needle for a concern that could be considered recalcitrant.

The conclusion is clearly that classical acupuncture techniques are not simply convention and superstition. There are real treatment results to be found in the "magic words" for the "celestial lancets" of acupuncture. We must be wary that our devotion to the modern world does not create a dogma of the rational and expected, blinding us to the world of the real and mysterious. We cannot throw the classical techniques out without astringent studies of their efficacy, which yet have to be performed. Until that time, we will not know the full potential and promise of the oldest continuously practiced form of medicine on the planet.

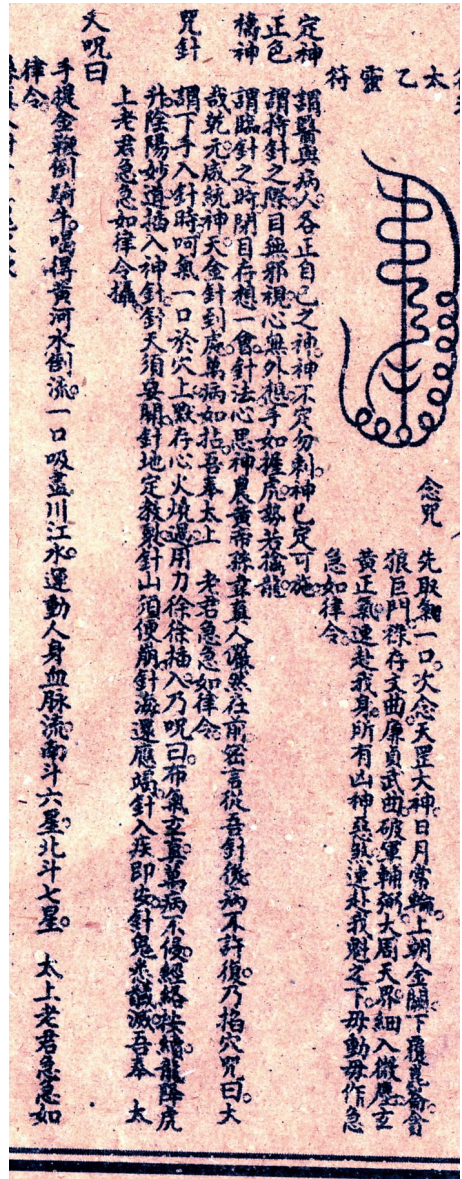


Fig. 3: The Original Text on Incantations in the Great Compendium

Translation: *Great Compendium*, Book 11

Recite and Chant

First take a mouthful of air and chant:

Oh, Great gods of the heavenly net:
Sun and moon forever moving—
Above shining on the Golden Towers,
Below covering Mount Kunlun!
[Dipper stars] Greedy Wolf and Wide Gate,
Prosperous Life and Literary Song,
Pure Modesty and Martial Song,
Ruined Army, Sustainer, and Equalizer—
So great you encompass the heavenly realms
So subtle you enter the finest dust!
All the mysterious, yellow, and upright energies [of creation]:
Keep distant from my body
All that has cruel spirit and evil noxiousness.
Keep away from me
All demonic stars descending.
Let them be immobile! Let them be inactive!
Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances!

Stabilize the Spirit

What we call "medicine" and "disease" lies squarely in the spirit of each person. If the spirit is not stable, do not insert the needle. Only when the spirit has been stabilized can you execute the technique.

Right Your Countenance

At the moment of inserting the needle, your eyes must not behold anything wayward, your mind must not entertain external thoughts. Your hands should be like you were grabbing a tiger, your grip like you were capturing a dragon.

Pray to the Gods

At the time of needle descent, close your eyes and visualize becoming one with the needle. Your mind should be fully focused on the gods Shennong, Huangdi, and Fuxi, making them appear before you. Then chant silently: "Once touched by my needle, no disease may arise any more!" Next, tap the point and recite:

Great indeed: the prime of [the trigram] Qian
Majestically pervading all spirit and heavens.
As the metal needle approaches its aim,
The ten thousand diseases pull out with ease
I serve the Highest Lord Lao!
Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances!

Chant over the Needle

As you lower your hand to drive in the needle, exhale with *he* [the sound of the heart] above the point. Silently visualize your heart's fire burning strongly. Use its strength to drive it in with great care, moving ever so slowly. Then recite:

Disseminating the *qi* of mystery, and perfection,
The myriad diseases no longer invade,
And channels and collaterals are well connected.
Dragon descending, tiger rising,
Yin and yang, wondrous Dao—
Come and enter your spirit into my needle:
By the needle: heaven must now open.
By the needle: earth's stability cracks up.
By the needle: mountains come atumbling.
By the needle: oceans reach exhaustion.
By the needle: as it enters, diseases laid to rest.
By the needle: all ghosts beheaded and destroyed.
I serve the Highest Lord Lao!
Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances!

Additional Incantation

My hand holding a golden whip, I drive the riding ox.
Thirsty, I reach the Yellow River, water flows my way.
With one mouth of breath I spread the water of a thousand rivers—
Thus I move people's bodies, the flow of blood and *qi*.
Six stars of the Southern Dipper!
Seven stars of the Northern Dipper!
I serve the Highest Lord Lao!
Swiftly, swiftly, in accordance with the statutes and ordinances!

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Daoist-inspired Healing in Daily Life

Lü Dongbin and the Multifaceted Roles of Chinese Barbers

M. CRISTINA ZACCARINI

Abstract

This paper examines the role of Chinese barbers in the 19th and 20th centuries, utilizing recent Daoist scholarship together with the contemporaneous observations of Western physicians and travelers. Its impetus emerges from Dr. John Dudgeon's depictions of Chinese health practices as rooted in Daoism as well as connected to the healing role of barbers. Other Western observers who did not share Dr. Dudgeon's positive opinions and were critical of Chinese hygiene also contribute information on the importance of the roles of Chinese barbers.

The paper further examines the barber's role in light of Paul Katz's descriptions of popular interpretations of the immortal Lü Dongbin. As the patron deity of barbers he is represented as one who touches the lives of the poor and heals the sick. Western observers describe Chinese barbers as providing both haircuts and health services to promote circulation through the stimulation of energy (*qi* 氣) flow. Thus they made affordable health care available to locals who often did not have access to Western medicine.

The ability of Chinese medicine to adapt and thrive comes from its penchant for keeping "personal responsibility for health at the center of its practice, as it critiques the scientific understanding of the body as narrowly physical and material" (Furth 2008). In the 19th century, while Chinese patients sought Western medical care with its emphasis on authority-based medicine, traditional ideas of health and healing continued to persist. These ideas were in accordance with ancient traditions rooted in Daoist concepts of the body, such as the interrelatedness of its physical components and its relationship to the spiritual and natural world. Visit-

ing Westerners accordingly noted that the personal responsibility of maintaining this mode of health was encouraged by the Qing government's wish that a "deep and lively interest" be "taken by every member of the community in his own health" (Eden 1877, 238).

Studies of Chinese attitudes toward health through local sources reveal that Chinese patients concurred with the view expressed by the Qing Dynasty. Chinese Patients were often involved in the process of self-care and diagnosis, carefully selecting from a variety of healing options (Andrews 2002; Rogaski 2004). The voices and attitudes of Chinese patients are often unavailable, however, as indigenous sources are scarce. For this reason, Western materials can be a useful supplement to the work of sinologists; however, they must be read with careful scrutiny (Andrews 2004).

Western attitudes toward Chinese healing practices prior to the discovery of the germ theory of disease offered some rich material that has been utilized by scholars; however, after the mid-to-late 19th century Western views changed. This was due to Louis Pasteur's confirmation of the existence of micro-organisms as the cause of disease, paving the way for the emergence of biomedicine. As a result, Western accounts of Chinese health practices became increasingly negative and dismissive, focusing upon hygienic concerns and China's shortcomings.

Western observations of Chinese health practices also became increasingly critical as medicine became professionalized in the United States. The American Medical Association was formed in 1847 with the purpose of advancing the science of medicine and elevating medical education standards in the United States. Western doctors striving for legitimacy considered Chinese health practices inferior and unscientific. Professional medical schools increasingly drew a line between the pre-Pasteur, informal practitioners of the earlier period, similar to healers in China, and formally trained doctors who relied upon "solid reason" and evidence.

These factors led Western observers of Chinese health practices to affirm their own modern status by criticizing Chinese healers as untrained, unlicensed, and unregulated. Western observations of Chinese longevity practices involving the cultivation of life energy (*qi* 氣) which Yoshinobu Sakade defines as "a form of subtle energy, a vital flow that forms things, animates beings and causes the changes and developments

of all" (2000, 559), were generally critical. Therefore, Chinese practices involving the movement of *qi*, such as acupuncture, acupressure, massage, movement, meditation and breathing, historically rooted in Daoism, were increasingly viewed with disapproval.

Livia Kohn has observed that "the multifaceted complex nature of Daoism has only been recognized recently" because 19th-century missionaries, "when confronted with the ancient texts associated with Laozi and Zhuangzi that expressed the philosophy of Dao . . . could not reconcile their being part of the same tradition as religious practitioners performing rituals and self-cultivation exercises." Kohn continues: "Any ritual or cultivation activities associated with organized communities or lineages were considered nonsensical or superstitious and a danger to Christian mission that had to be extirpated or at least ignored" (2001, 1-2).

Despite this proclivity to either ignore or aim to extirpate Daoist healing, some missionary writings contain details that show just how such methods persisted. When these Western sources are combined with careful reading of secondary sources, the ways become clear in which traditional Chinese healing survived and even flourished amidst the introduction of Western medicine to China in the 19th century (Yip 1995; Zaccarini 2001).¹

John Dudgeon and Daoist Healing

John Dudgeon (1837-1901), a physician of the London Missionary Society, was a "rare commentator who" appreciated Chinese ways of healing and credited them with "keeping the population healthy." Missionary physician to the British Legation at Beijing and Tianjin, Dudgeon was someone who did not view "hygiene solely as a signifier of Chinese deficiency" (Rugaski 2004, 101-103; Li 2010). He did not fit in well with his contem-

¹ Scholars have observed that, well into the twentieth century, particularly at the rural level, the lack of Western doctors and medical care resulted in the reliance of local Chinese on traditional Chinese healing modalities. There were roughly 1,500 modern doctors in China of whom 600 were either missionaries or foreigners," or "one modern doctor per 300,000 people" (Yip, 1995, 13). Zaccarini provides examples of the encounters among Western medical providers, modern Chinese doctors and traditional healing at the local level (2009).

poraries,² having no qualms about offering his readers a multitude of descriptive sources about Chinese healing, a topic that many of his contemporaries disdained. He thus devoted considerable effort and time to delineating Chinese meditative healing movements, which he defined as "Chinese Gymnastics," thereby conveying the importance of physical exercise from the Daoist perspective.

An essential component of Daoist healing is the belief in the smooth flow of *qi* throughout the body. In 1947, Liu Guizhen brought Daoist healing to the attention of the Communist party, becoming instrumental in beginning the qigong movement. In 1957, he published *Qigong liaofa shijian* (Practice of Qigong Therapy), which gives a detailed definition and outline of the practices. As David Palmer notes, he "proposed a typology of the techniques covered by" the term *qigong*, defining it as "a discipline of the body, breath, and mind. This made possible the grouping, under a single category of techniques, that which previously had not necessarily been associated" (2006, 32). According to Palmer, *Qi* is a vital force that reverberates in nature and "everywhere else;" it is seen as cyclical, which "means that it moves in specific cycles, such as day and night, summer and winter, youth and old age." *Qi* is "commonly described as consisting of two major aspects, yin and yang, which alternate in continuous movement and never-ending action" (2000, 559). While there was no formal term *qigong* before, references to *qi* and its movement are quite common, not only in classical texts and other original sources, but also in accounts of Western observers such as Dr. Dudgeon.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Dudgeon recognized the connection between Daoist religious texts and the healing practices he witnessed around him. He also placed both texts and practices in a historical context by comparing them to health practices among classical civilizations. Explaining that ancient Greek philosophers and physicians understood the connection between athletics and "a sound mind," Dudgeon suggested that the term "*athletae* might most appropriately be applied to the Chinese Taoist priests," because the Greek word *athlos* was similar in meaning to the "Kung-Fu" (*gongfu*) they practiced. Kung-fu today is un-

² Dudgeon used unorthodox methods such as morphine to treat opium addicts in an abandoned Beijing temple and behaved in ways that caused his fellow missionaries to describe him as "emotional" and "touchy" (Austin 2007, 245-247). Most scholars examine him as a Western doctor (Li 2010; Ping 2007).

derstood to be defined broadly as skill cultivated through hard work; however, Dudgeon's definition of Kung Fu goes beyond what he explains as the Greek motivation for a "sound mind" or the pursuit of challenges. According to Dudgeon, while Greek athletes devoted their entire lives to the pursuit of "contests," the Chinese "Tauist priests," that he observed engaged in gymnastics "solely with the view of improving their health and strength" (1895, 65).

Dudgeon's attitude toward preventative medicine led him to conclude that Westerners had much to learn from these "Tauist" priests. Complaining that Europeans had grown increasingly unhealthy due to their "present mode of warfare," he lamented that they had "done much to put an end to gymnastics as a part of education and a means conducive to robust health." Dudgeon here echoes the belief of many 19th-century physicians and educators who had begun to understand the value of exercise for good health. There was a growing Western interest in "physical education programs," designed not simply to "emphasize sports and games" but to "improve overall health-related fitness" (Kokkinos 2009, 11). Dudgeon lauded the Chinese as pioneers because their practices constituted the "preventative medicine" that he viewed as "coming every year more and more to the front, and gaining more attention and importance" (1895, 65).

A prolific scholar and translator of Chinese classics, Dudgeon used his knowledge to trace *gongfu* to the Shang dynasty (ab. 1700-1000 BCE) and Confucius, claiming that he already exercised to maintain health. Dudgeon defined this *gongfu* as medical gymnastics: not simply a sport or contest but a practice with enormous value for healing. His gymnastics falls within the parameters of what we today consider Daoist medical qigong: exercises of value for health maintenance and improvement (Dudgeon 1895, 65; Kohn 2008, 167, 170, 243).

Expressing a unique appreciation for cultivation exercises, he viewed Daoist alchemy as efficacious at a time when others saw it as superstition. He noted that "the conquest of the passions, the use of amulets, the observance of fasts and sacrifices, together with rituals and charms . . ." served as a means to "ward off and cure disease and for strengthening the body and prolonging life." Unlike his contemporaries, who disdained these longevity practices and specifically dismissed the use of amulets, Dudgeon confidently stated that these practices have been "declared a far-reaching and efficacious system" (1895, 76).

Chinese Barbers

Dudgeon's works also shed considerable light on the role of the Chinese barber (*tetouyan* 剃头匠) not only as a tradesman charged with cutting hair but also as healer. His observations, as well as those of other Westerners, provide evidence that barbers in traditional China may well have been Daoist inspired healers. In addition to shaving heads while leaving a queue that signaled loyalty to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), they also offered various treatments apparently designed to promote qi flow in keeping with the Daoist understanding of the body.

This multifaceted role is not unique to China. In Africa, barbers used to provide circumcision to males (Feierman 1992, 310) and even, in some cases, females (Denniston 1999, 322). In Europe, they engaged in blood-letting and practiced surgery (Ramsey 2002). In China, their conventional role was to provide men with a hairstyle that their life depended upon and that they could not achieve without outside help.

In 1645, the Manchus decreed that "all Chinese men had to adopt the hairstyle" consisting of a "high shaved forehead and a long braid down the back." While "originally developed to keep long hair out of the face in battle," this hairstyle was now required as a demonstration of loyalty to the new dynasty. The stipulation that a Manchu subject without this haircut would be considered a traitor would give impetus to a rising need for barbers (Spence 1991, 803).³

Europeans came first into contact with people wearing this hair style in Canton (Guangzhou), working with *compradores*, government commissioned Chinese merchant families who acted as brokers "superintending the foreign traders." Like all Manchu subjects, they had to show loyalty to Qing fashion. The Manchu decree and subsequent trade in Canton "gave rise to an army of barbers in Canton who serviced the floating population" (Van Dyke 2005, 60). According to Western accounts, there were approximately 7,000 to 7,300 barbers in Canton in the 1830s; in the 1850s they numbered around 20,000 (Allom 1840s; Peters

³ Philip Kuhn (1990) has also shown that the emperor in 1768 was concerned that snipping off the ends of queues might represent a conspiracy to delegitimize Manchu rule. Barbers did collect hair, and used the basin to catch hair clippings of customers.

1849, 97). They included “itinerant barbers, barbers in their own room, barbers with shops, and barbers who stand at the corners of the streets, like the Paris commissionaires” (Yvan 1858).

One Westerner describes Canton barbers as “perambulating the public streets,” carrying a “long bamboo lath, from one extremity of which is suspended a small chest of drawers, containing razors, brushes, and shampooing instruments, made of white copper” (Allom 1840s). It is most likely that itinerant barbers who traveled to clients’ lodgings and those on street corners were the lowest among the lot, as less capital was required to set up practice. Western accounts suggest that they just needed a “simple razor,” a “primitive triangle of steel, two inches long by one inch wide” a linen strap, and if they were not using a chest to seat their customers, sometimes “a bamboo seat and table.” The brass basin purchased by some barbers, required to catch hair clippings, could be more expensive (Wood 1883, 1425).⁴ In addition to barbers in shops and itinerant barbers, some also worked on boats, straddling boards, paddling their way up and down the many avenues of junks and sampans” (Van Dyke 2005, 60).

As of 1730, the official Qing policy was that only those properly “licensed were supposed to have direct contact with foreigners above the Bocca Tigris,” the entrance to the “Canton River” (Van Dyke 2005, 165). It may well be that barbers were like prostitutes and other menial workers and were, as such, not in fact, licensed (2005, 165). Their presence was thus an indication that the Qing decree was not obeyed to the letter. However, some 19th-century accounts indicate that it was actually heeded. Langdon notes that “no one was allowed to discharge the duties of tonsor until he had obtained a license” (1844, 42).

While Dudgeon does not provide much information about how exactly the barbers cut hair, he describes their health methods in some detail. For example, he explains that barbers performed such “operations as kneading, thumping, chafing, rubbing, pressing, pinching, etc.” (1895, 74). Other Westerners corroborate his observations, often sharing his enthusiasm for the benefits of what they viewed as methods helping an increased flow of circulation (see Allom 1840s).

⁴ Hair clippings or cuttings were necessary due to the insistence of some Chinese to keep “the cuttings of their beards and nails to carry with them to the grave” (Breton 1813, 100-04).

Most likely they saw what today is called *zhiya* 指壓 (lit. "finger pressure, Jap. Shiatsu), a form of meridian-based acupressure that uses pinching and pressing, as well as pushing, pulling, and kneading (Breton 1813, 100-104; Barnes 2005). Not appreciating the concept of *qi*-flow and its promotion, Dudgeon and others explain the effectiveness of this massage with concepts of lymph flow, muscle stimulation, and enhanced skin reflexes. Barbers thus not only provided services to those who wished to be "shaved," often "in the open air," but also those desiring health benefits through massages (Eden 1877, 153).

The barbers' use of acupressure rather than acupuncture may well have been the result of the Qing perception that acupuncture was "an insignificant and petty skill" (White 1999, 2). In 1822, Emperor Daoguan declared acupuncture unsafe for "a monarch," banning it from instruction at the Imperial Medical College and "from the Forbidden City" (1999, 2; see also Ma 1999), which led to a rise in the use of acupressure.

Breton notes in this context that the barber "shaves the head, cleans the ears, puts the eyebrows in order, and further performs that operation so generally practiced . . . which is known by the appellation of Macer. It consists in promoting the circulation of the blood; giving more tone and suppleness to the muscles, by extending the limbs, and gently rubbing them with the palm of the hand" (1813, 100-104). Allom explains that "shaving is a less scientific part of the barber's vocation than shampooing," as shampooing leads to that which results in "quickenning the circulation of the blood" (Allom 1840s). This is achieved when "the candidate is

seated on a large chair, the operator beats rapidly with both hands upon all parts of his body. The arms and legs are next stretched, and with sudden jerks that give the idea of dislocation. Sometimes the patient is pulled by one arm, his head being pushed in the opposite direction, the finger joints cracked, and the quick beating repeated.

Evidence further suggests that not only Chinese but many Westerners utilized the barbers' services and enjoyed the experience. One can envision the barbers interacting freely, providing the foreigners with information about work, lodging, and potential business ventures (Van Dyke 2005, 60). While seated on the chest of drawers, which served "as a seat for customers," the attentive Western customer not only had the

benefit of information but also received a shave which, while dispensed with a “clumsy” Chinese razor (restored by friction on an iron plate), produced “a clean and spruce ensemble” (Allom 1840s).

Yvan reports that he “often sent for the barber from the corner, and never had any reason to regret it” (1858). Another, unknown Westerner offers a detailed description of the barber’s massage. In an article published in 1862, he notes that after his shave and thorough auricular wax removal, the barber “suddenly twisted” his “neck to one side in such a manner that it cracked, as if the vertebrae had been delocated.” The unwilling massage recipient shouted “Hold on!” but the barber continued to jerk and twist his neck until it felt like a dish rag.” Subsequently, the barber beat the man’s back, breast, arms, and sides with his fists, pummeling the muscles until, as he put it: “they fairly glowed with the beating they had received.” The surprised Westerner walked away feeling like a “new man” with the sensation of “soreness gone and elasticity restored” (1862, 67).

In the early 19th century, Western accounts showed little awareness of germ theory and hygienic concerns, however, by the end of the century they paid much attention to them. Still, many continued to view the barbers’ massage positively. An 1893 account by William and Robert Chambers, two Scottish brothers and writers interested in phrenology, describes the barbers’ services as efficacious. The brothers note that the barber, unlike his Western counterpart, was not “limited to haircutting and clean-shaving” but also “punched” his customers’ heads, “clenching his fist and dealing . . . several sharp taps or punches with the tips of his knuckles, varied by a process of kneading or pounding.” They find it similar to the practice of a “fanatical phrenologist . . . seeking to improve the character of his subject by altering the undulations of his skull and changing the relative positions.” The barber’s customer thereby finds “his brain cleared and his mind relieved; worry, care, depression, and dullness dispersed, and a feeling of lightness, brightness, and vivacity induced...” After the “head punching,” moreover, the barber would seize his client’s hands, pull his “arms behind,” twist and turn the hands until every joint cracked, knead and pound the “muscles of the arms,” bend the fingers backwards, and finally crack the bones of the fingers. This treatment led to the client leaving completely “refreshed and invigorated” (1893, 527).

The Connection to Lü Dongbin

In the early 1900s, William Edgar Geil (1865-1925), a China explorer, writer, and cultural observer, was the first person to traverse the Great Wall of China. He notes that the prefectural city of "Liangchowfu," located near the Great Wall in Gansu province, housed 20,000 families and 110 doctors. Among them, barbers served an important function: as "tonsorial artists" they were "prosperous," "popular," and "organized in a guild of two hundred" (Geil 1909). Interviewing some of them, he found that their group had a spiritual nature, since they paid "their devotions to a god of their own, a distinguished alchemist who in 1700 attained immortality at the age of fifty" (1909, 256). This deity was the scholar and warrior Lü Dongbin, the leader of the eight immortals, who was "said to have been able to cheat death by having acquired a sword" (1909, 257).

Lü Dongbin is well known as the patron deity of healers, scholars, swordsmen, brewers, ink makers, and barbers (Shiga, 2002, 194; Katz 2000, 81; Chan 1999, 39). Important both in popular and elite culture, he was seen as a scholar and master of internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹), as well as an exorcist, diviner, and artisan. Applying Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Gramsci 1971) to Chinese elite groups, Paul Katz suggests that each social group inculcated its own version of Lü's divinity. Various texts, folk tales, poems, and murals all served to show the immortal's talents as swordsman and healer, portraying him along the lines of a bodhisattva, yet also impressing specific aspects on the deity (2000).

Some sources also describe how he would travel about in disguise and communicate with all types of individuals regardless of status or class, while conferring miraculous abilities to the recipients of his teachings of internal alchemy (see Baldrian-Hussein 1986). Many times he actively related to ordinary people, in some stories appearing disguised "as a tradesperson . . . usually a barber" (Katz 2000, 171). In other scenes, he converted local folk "like the barber Chen Qizi" or appeared as the "healer of the poor..." (Chan 1999, 39).

Lü was thus perceived as both powerful and mobile as were, by most accounts, Chinese barbers. His symbols are a "Devil Slayer sword and a bushy fly whisk which enables him to fly at will" (Chan 1999, 39). The sword, in particular, resonates with Chinese ideas that fever is re-

lated to evil spirits and that the barber can conquer these, using the sword as a weapon against them. Visual images project Lü holding a fly-whisk which, as expressed in a related poem, indicates his penchant for travel, a mobility that was often also the trademark of Chinese barbers:⁵ “Shining weapon in hand, I dance on the steps of heaven / Coming and going at will, atop a dragon I fly” (Chan 1988, 766).

Both Lü and the barbers tend to be described as “usually peripatetic,” the latter in particular often going to regular customers on a daily basis, “carrying two nests of drawers slung at the ends of the carrying-pole.” They either visited homes or met customers outside as they walked with their tools (Goodrich 1913, 98). Looking toward Lü as their protector, they may have been inspired by the magical qualities of his sword, linked to longevity and the movement of *qi* through physical manipulation. Some Western observers note that barbers carried not only razors but also lancets for bleeding: this resonates with the fact that “the sword is usually associated with Lü Dongbin” (Little 2000, 333). Just as the barbers used lancets for bloodletting and to dispel heat and “evil spirits” (Dunlap 1917; Eden 1877, 241-45; Goodrich 1813), so Lü used his sword “to dispel evil spirits.” Barbers believed that they could treat the ears and eyes, not only for prevention but also for alleviation of pain, just as Lü Dongbin was “worshiped by the sick” (Macintosh 1994; Goodrich 1913).

The 20th Century

From the 19th to the 20th century, concern for hygiene and cleanliness rendered Western accounts increasingly vociferous regarding dangers posed by barbers. Consequently, Westerners at times remarked upon the crudeness and dangers of Chinese barbers’ tools and practices. Revealing the Victorian concern for privacy that shaped nineteenth century cultural values in the West, they expressed overall curiosity about Chinese attitudes toward privacy. Notwithstanding these concerns and criti-

⁵ A Southern Song fan painting, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, depicts Lü Dongbin “flying through the air” (Little and Eichman 2000, 327). Eskildsen even discusses Lü Dongbin’s possible use of the sword for murder or attempted murder (Eskildsen 2008).

cisms, Western accounts often revealed Chinese customers comfort with, and appreciation for the Chinese barber.

Joseph Weber unflatteringly compares the barber's razor to a "potato parer and a putty knife," a primitive instrument better suited for the kitchen yet used to shave "the face, then the neck, then the scalp nearly as high up as the queue." Still, he finds his massage practices "... hard for us to understand" rather than merely negative: the barber "gives the man a massage, and this is how he does it: He pounds the man's back for quite a while with his fists" (1922, 25-26).

A record from Shanghai from the same period documents that street barbers "were virtually everywhere." Although their stand was portable, each barber usually had his regular spot, either on a corner or in the midst of "bustling traffic." An adult might, as a result, "feel a little uncomfortable about having a haircut in public . . . thus the majority of the customers were children and oldsters" while "women customers were rare..." (Lü 2004, 210, 211). Other accounts suggest, however, that privacy was not as critical a factor for the Chinese as it might be for Westerners; in general the appreciation of a barber's services either mitigated or rendered insignificant any privacy concerns. More particularly, the lack of concern for privacy had to do with social status: "lower classes" would entrust their heads simply to the street barbers" (Chambers 1893, 527-528) and for them privacy did not appear to be an issue (Yvan 1858).

When he visited Manchuria in 1913, Joseph Goodrich observed that while clients were being worked on, passersby did not take heed. "The shaving of the man in the public streets aroused no curiosity whatever; the passers-by did not stop for an instant, and even a woman would occasionally call upon the barber. . . to have her face shaved and her ears, nose, and eyes attended to" (1913, 100) in what were the "narrow" highways of the "true Chinese city" (1913, 99).

Barbers, moreover, carried around "lancets" or "knives needed to draw blood" (1913, 98). As Dr. Albert Menzo Dunlap notes, they were often "old men . . . with their wash-stands, basins, and a single towel, which does for everybody," working" on the shady side of the street in summer and on the sunny side in winter." Their customers' confidence persisted even while receiving what appeared to be painful procedures such as bloodletting—practiced in cases of fever, in the minds of the "less enlightened" indicative of the presence of an evil spirit which necessitated the barber's "letting out" with a "sharp needle, or a knife-

needle which punctures the forearm or front of the chest in numerous places" (Dunlap 1917).

In addition to bloodletting, the barber treated the fever by "picking up the skin between the first and second fingers, punching and stretching it, and allowing it to snap back into place." This might sometimes cause internal bleeding into the subcutaneous tissues. While these were painful procedures that might cause some bleeding, patients bore them faithfully, believing that they would provide healing (Dunlap 1917).

Other procedures included work on customers' "eyes, ears, and feet" (Huc 1878, 29; Peters 1849, 96), documented also well into the post-1911 period. As Albert Dunlap describes, the customer seated "himself on a hard stool" while the barber proceeded "to lather the front part of his scalp and shave it, down to the ears." Just as the Western barber asked the client whether he wished to have a shampoo, the Chinese barber inquired whether he wanted his ears shaved and cleaned (Dunlap 1917). In keeping with the Chinese medical understanding of the ear as a miniature version of the human body, containing points connecting to all major meridians, the barber pulled "the ear from different directions." Next, he inserted a long needle—which Dunlap considered extremely dangerous, particularly due to its lack of sterilization and potential puncturing of the ear drum, the creation of granulations in the external canal, and various kinds of infections. Despite this, however, these procedures were well tolerated by Chinese clients (Dunlap 1917, 438-39).

Dunlap described the barbers' "muscular treatment," of clients as "the origin of osteopathy:"

With the barber's foot raised to the stool beside the customer, first one arm and then the other is laid over his knee, pulled, rolled, flexed, and massaged. This done, the forehead may be attacked, and the skin stretched and pulled. The skill of the barber is evident finally, in his ability to massage the spinal column, giving to his thumbs a rhythm similar to that of clodhopping. As the clodhopper gets his effects by dropping his feet in different positions, so the barber gets his, by working with the fist closed, partly open, or with the full-spread palm. (Dunlap 1917)

Like previously mentioned Westerners' references to barbers' work on the spine, Dunlap's detailed account of the barbers' work on the lower torso of the patient reflects the barber's proclivity to work on more

than the upper body (Dunlap 1917). One observer noted that the Chinese barber will not only engage in "pummeling of the back," but also a "little massage on the stomach, or perhaps just a touch of chiropody" (Farquharson 2007, 110). According to the Qing Dynasty rubbing described in the poems attributed to Lu Dongbin, the cranial cavity, representing yang energy of the upper body is connected to the lower torso through a spinal cord "through which energy moves up and down" (Little and Eichman 2000, 350), and it is likely that the barbers aimed to facilitate that energy flow.

Westerners noted the gratification expressed by clients when the barber offered massage that went beyond the cranial area. One man who was enjoying the massage, which, in this case consisted of the barber "drumming with the 'hand from the lower part of the loins up as far as the shoulders,' and toward the sternum, had his eyes closed and was expressing the "sentiment of comfort and satisfaction" that was typical of most recipients of the barber's treatment (Yvan 1858).

The client would not only have his ears and lower torso worked on, as noted by Dunlap and others, but the eyes as well. The eyes were turned inside out and "wiped" "with a brush or a tuft of cotton which was not infallibly treated antiseptically after each operation" (Goodrich 1913, 99). Was this a way to cleanse the eyes or was this a form of acupuncture that had escaped the understanding of the observer? What is certain is that eye and ear problems were within the jurisdiction of the Chinese barber.

If we are to heed the observations of 19th and early 20th century Western observers, barbers supplying massages, acupressure and at times, perhaps acupuncture and bloodletting, were among the myriad of healers available as consistent and abundant options to Chinese, at least in urban areas where Westerners had access. Charles Henry Eden, an Australian writer and public servant noted in 1877 that in China, the professors of the healing art are numerous, because, no examination is necessary," a consequence of the Qing government's desire to foster a "deep and lively interest taken by every member of the community in his own health." Eden had meant to criticize the circumstances resulting from this, as at this time Western medicine was increasingly becoming professionalized, and he disapprovingly noted that, as a consequence of the Qing Dynasty's "happy-go-lucky theory," "quacks and impostors of every kind" could "practice their deceits with impunity." However, the

result of the Qing Dynasty's desire to foster this interest, which reflected the inherent Chinese understanding of personal responsibility for health, was that healers were omnipresent at the local level in Chinese society (Eden 1877, 238).⁶

What is more accessible is often deemed inferior to the observer. Perhaps due to this notion, critical Westerners, despite their gratitude and admiration for the Chinese barber's services, derisively described him as so low status that he might even open up shop near a latrine. Yet this too resonated with the multi-faceted ways that Lü Dongbin was portrayed. At times, the deity was depicted as disheveled or as a poverty-stricken thief. Indeed, the latter was one of his main disguises and one of his more popular interpretations according to local people and oral folktales (Katz 2000, 196).

While Westerners compared the barber to his earlier "congener of a very short time ago" in Western history, "a combination of barber and surgeon," or surgeon, for example, there were similarities as well as differences (Goodrich 1913, 99). The differences between the two reveal how Western attitudes toward health differed from Chinese and how the Chinese barber was more accordingly valued more highly. Barbers in Europe also provided health services but tended to inspire fear among the population and were subject to criticism from medical professionals. Unlike them, Chinese barbers were known primarily for their massages and acupressure rather than more invasive acupuncture and bloodletting; their clients seem to have had much confidence in their ability to heal.

Status and Rewards

Like their Chinese counterparts, European barber-surgeons were traditionally numerous and easily accessible; they too had a low status. Barber work and surgery, and hence the barber-surgeon, represented the practice of manual operation and were considered inferior to internal medicine. Some barber-surgeons in Europe received formal medical training, however, when surgery was separated from barber work, work "without barbering" came to be considered a "liberal art" while barber-

⁶ Eden understood the Chinese principles of life as "vital heat and radical moisture, of which the spirits (yang) and the blood (yin) are the vehicles" (1877, 239).

ing remained an inferior manual skill. In France, for example, it "remained entirely in the hands of the barber-wigmakers" (Ramsey 2002, 21).

Examined comparatively, it seems that the Chinese barber has a higher status than the Western: he was sought after and respected, his massages providing *qi*-circulation along with immense relaxation, health benefits, and enjoyment. Danger seems to have been quite limited. In Europe, in contrast, despite the separation of the fields, some barbers continued to practice medicine and surgery with dangerous results. In Germany, for example, one barber, under the "influence of wine from the morning on" was said to dispatch "a good many victims each year." The dangers of another barber were mitigated by the fact that nearby inhabitants had "no confidence" in him" (Ramsey 2002, 209).

The Chinese barber thus had the confidence of his clients. He also viewed himself as an efficacious professional and healer who could parlay his success into social and economic rewards. Wong Yeat Wo (1921 -) a Chinese barber who immigrated to Malaya, says he was trained in ancient Chinese secrets in the early 20th century, including two years of instruction in Canton. After immigrating to Malaya at the age of 21 in the early 1940s, his skills continued to be sought after. He had numerous customers and was able to upgrade from plain wooden chairs to large barber chairs. Wo continued many of the same practices utilized by earlier barbers, including preventative treatment of diseases of the eye, nose, and ear, as well as treatments for pain in these areas. He utilized ancient Chinese secrets, including special herbal formulas, such as ear drops. Without charging excessive amounts, he could support a large family, including one son who became so wealthy that he retired at the age of fifty-six (see Chip Taylor 1999).

Observers of Chinese barbers in the United States, too, note their continuation of the traditional ways. One *New York Times* writer observes their value to the migrant constituents, noting that they received "50 cents to \$1 from a customer," a significant compensation. He concedes that the Chinese barber's "tonsorial knowledge" was comparable to that of the earlier Western barber, being also "dentist, doctor, chiroprapist, occultist, and surgeon" — "far more elaborate" an "artist than his American cousin." He notes that "Chinese shaving is a slow process" and that the treatment can be compared to a "Swedish-movement cure" in its

manipulation of “head and neck, shoulders, arms, and back,” along with the rubbing and pulling of fingers and toes (*New York Times* 1894).⁷

The accounts of other Westerners in China further dispute Western observers’ assumption of the low value of barbers, as they indicate that in China, the barber’s status as an efficacious healing practitioner led to measurable economic gain. While some Westerners disparaged the barber as low class, and indicated that he was not paid well, these accounts were confused, ambiguous and contradictory. For example, one observer who called the barber “low” in status also acknowledged that the barber treated many customers and that he adhered “to a fixed tariff, with none of your tossing for double or nothing, as practiced in the other professions” (Farquharson 2007, 110-11). Early 19th century Western accounts indicated that the barber did not charge a fixed fee, but that by the turn-of-the-century the barber insisted upon a set tariff and that payment was required prior to the haircut (Peters 1849, 97).⁸

Aware of the barber’s value, barbers’ unions worked hard to enable their members to achieve increasing status and improved economic circumstances. For example, while barbers and their descendants initially were not admitted to literary examinations, unions worked hard to change this. One Westerner who pondered why coolies and barbers were excluded from examinations when all other trades were allowed, speculated that it was because Chinese barbers had too much power already, as “150 million Chinese have to submit their heads” to be manipulated by barbers (*Church Missionary Intelligencer* 1874, 169). Undaunted by the existing restrictions and initial refusals, the barbers continued to appeal to higher authorities, threatening to strike. One Western observer noted that since barbers were so important, a barbers’ strike could have brought down the entire province. As a result of the importance of the barber and the work of unions, the descendants of barbers were soon allowed to take part in the examinations that had previously excluded

⁷ Another article notes that the “keeper of the barber’s shop in the Alpine apartment house, Broadway and Thirty-third Street,” had “been doing a profitable trade” (*New York Times* 1895)

⁸ John Peters (1849) notes that “the barber’s remuneration is generally twenty or thirty cash (two or three cents), but no regular charge is made, the amount being left entirely to the generosity of his customers.”

them.⁹ According to one account, "barbers and their sons" were excluded until the early twentieth century; however "this disability was removed by the Emperor on the representations of the Governor" of Zhejiang, who was "induced by the powerful Barbers' Guild to plead their cause" (Diosy 1904, 42).

In some districts in Zhejiang, barbers' unions achieved victories that represented higher wages. In Ningbo, for example, the unions managed to achieve standardization of wages and prices of shaving. In Wenzhou, the barbers union passed a law forbidding their members from shampooing and from cleaning ears during the last six days of the year. Since these practices were time consuming, as barbers required special tools for cleaning and scraping, for example, the omission of these services would save the barbers time, adding to their profits (Pattengill 1901, 619).

Whether positive or negative, Western accounts typically expressed hygienic concerns and a racism typical of the time period. It was common for Westerners to speculate that the barbers' eye treatments, performed without sterilization of instruments, were likely the cause of rampant cases of blindness in China (Peters 1849, 97; Dunlap 1917). These views led to a flurry of legislation in the United States and other areas where immigrant barbers set up thriving shops.¹⁰

Early 20th century Westerners were undoubtedly often influenced by the racist views evinced in missionary Arthur Smith's *Chinese Characteristics*, which attributed an "absence of nerves," to the entire race of Chinese (Smith, 1894; Liu, 1995). Evincing racism, Dunlap even suggested that some readers might think that barbers' customers bore the painful treatments because the Chinese did not feel pain, but he assured

⁹ According to the report of the Commissioner of Education, volume 1, United States Office of Education, 1908, Chapter VI, Educational Activity in Foochow, "any Chinese who can show that none of his ancestors for three generations have been butchers, barbers, executioners, priests or actors, is eligible to appear for examination for the first and second degrees" (p. 194).

¹⁰ See for example, the Annual Report of the Secretary of War, Volume 10, part 1. United States War Dept., 1903. Resolutions of the board adopted November 26, 1901 indicate that, for example, "While actively engaged in the various operations of their trade all barbers shall wear a clean coat . . . and shall, before operating on any person, thoroughly scrub and wash the hands, keeping the finger nails short . . . disinfect each razor, comb, pair of scissors . . . a fresh and clean towel, or towels, shall likewise be furnished (p. 318).

them that their acquiescence was owed to their confidence in the treatment. In one instance, even a Westerner who appreciated both his own and Chinese enjoyment of barbers' massage services evinced an ugly racist attitude that was nothing short of cruel. He mockingly indicated that his companion threw a bucket of water at a Chinese man who was enjoying his barber's massage and then attributed the man's restraint at not angrily throwing the bucket back as a lack of emotion characteristic of the "race." It never occurred to the Westerner that the Chinese customer was exhibiting civilized behavior and decorum rather than giving in to his passions as had the perpetrator of the violence against the barber's customer (Yvan 1858).

Conclusion

Despite the negativity of some Western accounts, concern for hygiene, racism, and the lack of understanding of the meaning of *qi*, Westerner accounts can indeed shed light upon the historical roots of local Chinese utilization of practices designed to promote *qi* flow, such as self-cultivation exercises, consultation with Daoist priests and the multifaceted healing role of Chinese barbers.

Dudgeon's writings and that of others suggest that there might have been Westerners in China who promoted Western medicine while evincing an appreciation for Chinese healing beliefs and methods. Centered upon the belief that prevention and good circulation were necessary for good health, Dudgeon's work reflected admiration for health care beliefs and practices that sought to ward off disease, in the tradition of the Yellow Emperor, who noted that the "sages did not treat those who were already ill; they instructed those who were not yet ill" (Hume 1953).

Dudgeon's work sheds light upon, and introduces the reader to, the importance of Daoist healing beliefs in the every day life of Chinese at the local level. Further corroboration of Dudgeon's views introduced this author to other accounts by medical practitioners such as Dr. Dunlap, as well as phrenologists and Western travelers to China. While some accounts evinced racism, when read carefully, they provide information supportive of the works of sinologists by providing a window into the persistence of Daoist understandings of health.

Representation of the deity Lü Dongbin to tradesmen such as the Chinese barber suggests the ways that local Chinese interpreted the deity.

Just as Lü Dongbin was depicted as a scholar, the barbers fought for and won the right for their descendents to be allowed entrance into the examination system. As a tradesman, the barber did provide customers with haircuts, clearly a manual task; however, the barber, like Lü Dongbin, was a learned man as well, as sources suggest that barbers required training. As healers, barbers provided accessible meridian-based massage, treatment of ears and eyes, as well as bloodletting and possibly acupuncture. The barber not only cut hair, but provided preventative medicine that was believed to enable *qi*-flow. The barbers' presence and the affordability of their treatment rendered their mode of healing accessible to Chinese of all ages and, sometimes both genders. This was available to all at a small fee, thus suggesting that the wishes of the Qing government that a "deep and lively interest" should be "taken by every member of the community in his own health" (Eden 1877, 238) was in some way fulfilled by the Chinese barber operating under Daoist auspices.

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A Daoist Career in Modern China

Wang Xin'an of the Southern Peak¹

GEORGES FAVRAUD

Abstract

Alive for most of the twentieth century, Wang Xin'an 王信安 (1918-1993) lived through the deep and violent social changes from which emerged the Chinese nation-state, technology, and modern economy. In the 1930s, he had been healed of his weak health and initiated in a monastic community by a master of the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Authenticity) school. Then he became a master of Daoist liturgy, practicing both personal ritual techniques of internal alchemy and healing as well as the collective recitation of scriptures and offerings to the celestial hierarchy. Master Wang accomplished virtuous achievements and established his meritorious existence and identity.

After 1949 he moved to Hunan province and became a leading official representative of the Daoist community of the Southern Peak. As the new state endowed Daoism with a national administrative hierarchy and a globalized leisure class and tourism industry developed, the Southern Peak was reinvented as a site of natural, cultural, and intangible heritage. Master Wang dedicated his life in this changing milieu to build official Daoism in Hunan.

¹ I am deeply grateful to Li Jiazhong and all the Daoists who welcomed me in China. This paper could not have been written without them, nor without the help of my doctoral advisor Brigitte Baptandier and the members of the China Workshop in the Laboratory of Ethnology and Comparative Sociology of CNRS, Paris. I also want to thank Catherine Despeux, Ian Johnson, and James Robson for their corrections and suggestions that improved the paper. For financial support I am indebted to the French Center for Studies on Contemporary China (Hong Kong) and the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation (Taipei).

Wang Xin'an was the "transmission father" (*shifu* 師父) of Li Jiazhong 李嘉中, who kindly accepted me as a foreign disciple and anthropologist, welcoming me several times between 2005 and 2009 in his village temple in rural Hunan. He is one of my prime sources for Wang Xin'an biography, supplementing three written biographies in public sources which focus on his institutional career and appeared in *Nanyue quzhi* 南嶽區誌 (Annals of the Southern Peak District; hereafter NYZ 1996), an official public report published by the local government of the Southern Peak; the official website of the national Chinese Daoist Association (Ouyang and Zhang 2008);² and a website called *Zhongguo Lishi Renwu* 中国历史人物 (Historical Celebrities of China; hereafter ZLR 2010).

In addition, I had the opportunity to share the daily life of some of Wang Xin'an's disciples, to participate in the practice of their body techniques, and to listen to their oral testimonies. However, yet another text allowed me to connect the dry official discourse of the biographies and the profusion of personal experiences: a ten-page biography with a hagiographic dimension, by Wang's disciple Li Jiazhong and approved by Wang himself a year before his death. Li later completed the text and published it in the *Nanyue wenshi* (Li 1995). Li uses technical and ritual discourse of medicine and internal alchemy (*neidan* 内丹) as well as concepts and images from the classical Daoist mythology and hagiography to open the Daoist world (*daojie* 道界) and the life of his master. His work is a narrative in memory of his beloved master, showing him as a model Daoist, practicing and transmitting his teachings.

To produce a comprehensive narrative of Wang Xin'an's life, I have placed these various data into context with the help of Western secondary studies and other sections of the *Nanyue quzhi*, specially with regard to the institutional and technical milieu surrounding Master Wang. The localised, lively perspective of a specific life narrative thus becomes a mirror of the institutionalisation of Daoism in China today, revealing how the religion has been reorganized in the course of the twentieth century under the influence of modern China.

² I accessed this web article on April 7, 2008. In August 2010, it was not available any longer.

To make this clear, I have rejected the opposition commonly drawn between “conservative tradition” and “innovative modernity” (Boyer 1990),³ and instead considered the way traditions participated in, and were adapted to, a changing eco-techno-symbolic milieu (Berque 2000). I thus define “tradition” as a canonical body of representations made up of norms, principles, genealogies, and narratives (symbolic level), transmitted and reinterpreted through the ritual and technological interactions of persons in communities and networks (technical level), yet also structuring the daily social and economical relations of persons and local communities both among themselves and with their natural environment (ecological level).

Leaving the Family

Wang Ying 王莹 was born in northeast Hebei on the 6th day of the 6th month of 1918, the day of the Festival of Cleansing Light (*xishai jie* 洗曬節) when people spread clothes, sheets, and books in the sun. It was the 7th year of the Republic. The young Wang received his personal name Ying, literally “Jade Shining,” from his father, a poor peasant in Kuancheng district 寬城縣. According to Li (1995), Wang’s health was weak as a “sickness demon had attached to his person,” a concept matching the beliefs of the early Celestial Masters (see Strickmann 2002).

At age twelve, his father died and he was sent to a private village school (*sishu* 私塾), run probably by his family lineage, to study for three years. However, his vitality was still weak and he tended to “feel rather depressed” and was often “anxious and worried” (Li 1995). Then he en-

³ In *Tradition as Truth and Communication*, Pascal Boyer argues that “tradition is a type of interaction which results in the repetition of certain communicative events” (1990, 23), communication being conceived “as a type of interaction which modifies people’s representations in a relatively organized way” (109). In consequence, the author challenges the “common assumptions” that “traditions are conserved because people want to transmit them unchanged,” and that “they are held together by some underlying ideas” (1990, 5). According to him, unlike a modern expert, “a traditional specialist is not someone who has an adequate picture of some reality in her or his mind, but someone whose utterances can be, in some contexts, directly determined by the reality in question” (112).

countered an old man who announced to him: "Often ill in youth without efficient treatment, go and leave your family to cultivate the Dao. This will save your life." Despite objections by his family and knowing that he was violating his duties to continue the family line, he decided to join a monastery.

This occurred in 1933, two years after the Japanese invaded north-east China and created the Manchu puppet-state. Wang was sixteen. He left on the 3rd day of the 3rd month, the day of Offering of the First Tendency (*shangsi jie* 上巳节), a ritual first described in the *Zhouli* 周礼 (Rites of the Zhou) as part of an exorcistic cycle, and headed to nearby Capital Mountain (Dushan 都山), climbing to Turtle Shell Terrace (Kejia tai 壳甲台), the site of the Monastery of Great Concord (Datong guan 大同觀), the home of local heirs of the techniques of internal alchemy, martial exorcism, and healing practices of the Flower Mountain tradition (Huashan pai 华山派), one of the major branches of Quanzhen Daoism.

He humbly requested the local master, Li Zhishan 李智山, to help him heal his disease. The master told him to sit in meditation while waiting for the visit of a knowledgeable healer, scheduled three weeks later. After waiting with a "sincere heart" (*chengxin* 诚心), he heard the tinkling of the life-saving bell—which rescues souls from the underworld—in the form of an old bearded Daoist riding up on a donkey. He gave him two sessions of acupuncture and *moxa* and prescribed a further practice of meditation. This effected a complete cure.

Li's description of his master's initiation provides more details. When sitting in meditation, Wang had to practice inner observation to overcome "demonic hardships accumulated for ages" and "let his heart-mind quiet down." He had to maintain a specific physical and mental posture by concentrating on specific agencies (*yi* 意, i.e., intentions and meanings) and by visualising and incorporating Daoist deities and pure *qi* inside his body. This practice was to restructure Wang's person (*shen* 身) through a "painful process of cultivation" (*kuxiu kulian* 苦修苦練), requiring strong efforts of will (*kuzhi* 苦志).⁴

⁴ According to the Chinese medical tradition, a cultivated and conscious will, the focused beam of a mental intention, is concentrated and calmed until it dwells (*cun* 存) in the kidneys (*shen* 肾) and becomes a matrix of personal thinking and behavior. The process is described in the medical classics. See *Huangdi*

Li's biography refers to this process as "Cultivating the Mysteries" (*xiuxuan* 修真). The word *xuan* is a cornerstone concept in the Daoist tradition, designating the obscure color of heaven, the unfathomable "undifferentiated origin" (*hunyuan* 混元) that evades discursive thought. *Xuan* is also associated with the cosmic body of Laozi 老子 and with the person of the alchemist who, in the manner of a pregnant woman, gives birth to the immortal embryo of his spontaneous nature (*zi* 自). The knowledge springing from this process relies less on the clarification of concepts (*zhi* 知) than on an immediate consciousness of self and environment, based on the ability to keep watch and to conserve (*shou* 守) oneself (Baptandier-Berthier 1979; 2008). From this point of view, there is no gap between the healing process initiated for Wang when he arrived at the monastery and his practice of internal alchemy. Moreover, this inside journey into the obscure aimed to "accomplish meritorious deeds and establish a virtuous existence" (*xinggong lide* 行功立德).

Apprenticeship

According to the Quanzhen school, "virtuous achievements" (*gongde* 功德) have three aspects. The practice of internal alchemy, consisting of interactions with one's own spontaneous nature and the celestial realm; the practice of collective studies and the chanting of ritual scriptures (*nianjing* 念經); and the benevolent actions one does in daily life (*zuo haoshi* 做好事).⁵ Wang Ying's healing depended on personal cultivation as well as on joining the Daoist community with its daily life structured by the canonical precepts (*jie* 戒) and the ritual practices of the local tradition. This in due course evolved into further participation in local society and the greater Daoist world.

The material conditions in the monastery were basic, but not uncomfortable for the son of poor peasants. Its income came from dona-

neijing lingshu 黄帝内经灵枢 8: "Rooting in the Spirit" (*Benshen* 本神); Larre and Rochat de la Vallée 2002; Despeux 2007.

⁵ The link between internal alchemy and the accomplishment of benevolent actions became clear when Master Meng Zhilin told me: "If the practice of internal alchemy is the tree, doing benevolent actions is like accumulating earth around its stump." Personal communication, May 2007.

tions by local patrons, practitioners, believers, and guests often came for divination and medical services. The money was used to buy salt, oil, and fabrics, and to maintain the temple's infrastructures. For food, the Daoist fellows (*daoyou* 道友) cultivated vegetables and rice around the temple. Under the supervision of Li Zhishan, they also took care of housework, probably aided by lay disciples. Cleaning, cooking, sewing, and other activities usually done by women also formed part of Wang's daily life.

As heirs of the Quanzhen school, the Daoists of the Monastery of Great Concord also practiced abstention from food and sex as a basic requirement for ritual practice. They gathered four times a day to chant the scriptures, using copies they had transcribed by hand. Since the liturgy also required other forms of ritual writings—memorials, petitions to the celestial hierarchy, and talismans (*fu* 符)—Wang is said to have become a good calligrapher and even poet during his apprenticeship.

After a few years, he took another step forward and asked to venerate Li Zhishan as his personal master (*baishi* 拜師). This made him a 19th-generation heir of the ritual genealogy of the Flower Mountain (Huashan) tradition. The word *xin* 信, in the 19th position in its genealogical poem (*paishi* 派詩)—which forms part of each family and religious line's identity (see Herrou 2007)—thus became the first character of his Daoist name: Xin'an 信安, which means "at peace in faith" or "settled in peace." He received the liturgy through canonical texts in a ritual and communal context, learning the right gestures and postures, words and music by continuous, steady imitation, repetition, and study. He thus grew in the religious tradition for seven years.

During this time Wang practiced "respecting the masters" (*zunshi* 尊師), a necessary condition for transmission, both by his immediate and the ancestral masters (*zushi* 祖師). Li describes this with the metaphor of the feminine skill of sewing: Wang was so close to his master that he could make cloth shoes for him with only his feet a model (Li 1995). Patient and in deep concentration, almost meditating, he displayed respect and gratitude to the masters by reinventing the form of his master's feet. Needle and thread allowed him to instil a new vitality to an old, inherited form, harmoniously gathering disparate pieces of fabric in a comprehensive and efficient manner (Choron-Baix 2000). "Struck in his

mind's eye" by this work, Li Zhishan transmitted to Wang what he himself had learned step by step: ritual, internal alchemy, and healing.

The latter included orthodox medical skills, such as acupuncture, moxibustion, and herbal remedies—involving collection, prescription, and preparation of herbs. It also meant personal practices, such as the recitation of scriptures and mantras, the visualisation and internal activation of celestial agencies and pure *qi*, as well as the calligraphy of talismans, memorials, and petitions.⁶

In the Greater Daoist World

In 1940, when Wang Xin'an was twenty-two, his master Li Zhishan transformed into an immortal. Wang in due course decided to leave his old temple (*laomiao* 老廟) to join the greater Daoist world. He went to several cities in northeast China to study the administration of religious affairs and became a copyist in the religious networks, which at the time were organized according to the modern concept of "associations"—or better, "state associations." He practiced what he had learned and gained new insights by interacting with his Daoist fellows.

In 1943, considered to have reached the "correct ritual behavior and understanding of the principles" (*yili* 义理) of "the pact of purity" (*qingjie* 清戒) structuring the Daoist world (Schipper 2008, 127-60), he was sent to Heilongjiang to take part in a collective ordination. After 100 days of initiatory ritual, he received the Great Precepts of the Three Altars (*santan dajie* 三壇大戒), i.e., of the Three Officials (Sanguan) in charge of Heaven, Earth, and Water. In the life of a Daoist, this kind of superior ordination marks a new step of engagement, after living the family and revering a master. Until the 1950s, such huge rituals were also the main venue of Quanzhen gatherings; they played a key role in the building of macro-regional networks between local monastic communities (Dean 2003; Latour 2005; Skinner 1977), facilitating mutual support and exchange, and

⁶ This follows Li 1995. The more official biographies, more focused on his institutional career, mainly state that Wang entered a life of "clarity and stillness" (*qingjing* 清靜) and cultivated the Dao (*xiudao* 修道).

helping Daoists travel from place to place.⁷ Afterwards, Master Wang directed the liturgy of a local temple—a travel palace (*xinggong* 行宮)—on Mount Tai 泰山, the Eastern Peak, not far from his old home in north-east Hebei.

In 1947, he decided to leave his native region and engaged in the “traveling like the clouds” (*yunyou* 雲遊; Baptandier 1996; Demiéville 1965; Herrou 2011; Naquin & Yü 1992; Ward 2000), going to different masters and thus fulfilling another part of Quanzhen training. According to Liu Xuanwen 刘玄文, a Daoist who lived for six years in the White Cloud Temple (Baiyun guan 白雲觀), “when Daoists travel, they are like clouds, always moving and changing,” implying that the physical travel of Master Wang was also ritual, nourishing and transforming his person.

Making his way south, Master Wang was searching for teachings from knowledgeable Daoists and sacred sites, rambling along the margins of society. Li’s biography describes him melting with the wind and rain. Sustained by alms from the people, he could also ask for shelter in local Daoist temples, where he could “hang up his registration” (*guan* 掛單) for a few days or for a longer period to receive teachings if the “karmic affinity” (*yuanfen* 缘分) between him and the local master was right (see Herrou 2011). During these stays, Master Wang shared the daily life of the monastic communities, whether urban, rural, or natural, sometimes participating in their administration and receiving transmissions from local masters. Travelling further, he discovered famous monasteries, places of knowledge and power situated in the big cities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou. He also climbed peaks and forded streams, experiencing the natural, sacred milieu where the Daoists pick herbs and concoct elixirs, withdraw as hermits to nourish life and practice internal alchemy. Sometimes he also reached auspicious places (*fudi* 福地) and grotto-heavens (*dongtian* 洞天), natural and historical sacred sites where Daoists of the past achieved immortality that serve as junction points between nature and paradise.

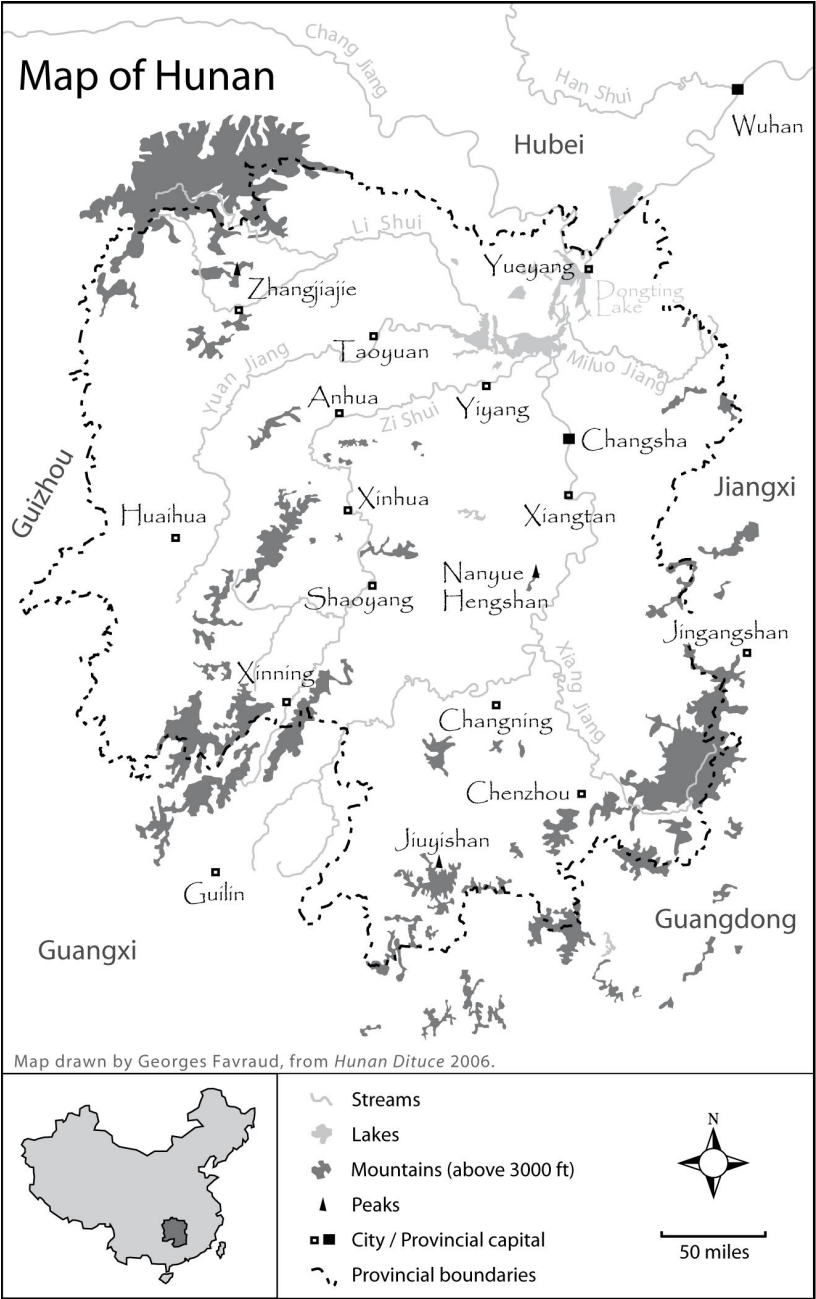
⁷ The White Cloud Temple (Baiyun guan) in Beijing housed thirty-one such high-level ordinations between 1807 and 1927, an average of one every four years, gathering Daoists from all over northeast China (Goossaert 2007, 144-57). Since the opening policy of the 1980s, only two collective ordinations, gathering Daoists from all over the country, have taken place in Beijing.

All this allowed Master Wang to perfect his techniques of meditation and healing. As Li puts it: With a sincere and open heart-mind he learned from masters of “the gate of the mysteries” (*xuanmen* 玄門), deepening his “esoteric knowledge” (*mizhi* 秘知) of the “ritual techniques of life cultivation” and “methods of nourishing the heart-mind elixir.” At the same time he also displayed “a deep concern and high ideals regarding the hardships which arise in society.” Joining the administration of monastic communities and religious networks, he carried his Daoism into the social realm. “To heal” and “to administer” are closely linked in Chinese, both expressed by the word *zhi* 治, which also indicates the parishes of the early Celestial Masters. A Daoist healer and administrator thus sees social hardships from the perspective of internal alchemy and treats them as diseases of the social body. Participating in the administration of the Daoist world thus helped Wang develop a meritorious cycle of virtuous accomplishments, making him, at the age of thirty-one, a respectable master in the Daoist world.

On the Southern Peak

Early in 1949, Master Wang arrived on Mount Heng 衡山, literally meaning “Transverse Mountain,” in the Xiang River basin of eastern Hunan (see NYZ 1996). In the Qin-Han period (221 BCE–220 CE), this river was the main route for the Han people to subdue ethnic groups in the south, i.e., today’s Guangdong and Guangxi provinces, and was accordingly a very urbanized and developed area. Later the river became an important artery of communication between the central plains and the Yangtze (Skinner 1977).

In the sixth century, Mount Heng was integrated into the imperial liturgy as the ritual axis of the south; it was then given the official title *Nanyue* 南嶽 (Southern Peak). In accordance with the correlations of the five phases, summer offerings associated with fire and the south were held here (Robson 2009). On the mountain, networks of monasteries and hermitages welcome Daoist and Buddhist practitioners into a natural milieu where they can practice among rocks, plants, and animals to explore the spontaneous movements of nature. Over the centuries, the mountain has featured in numerous literary works by travellers, poets, officials, and pilgrims (Ward 2000; Strassberg 1994).



Because of its natural and ritual position, Hengshan is a pivotal site in the macro-region of south-central China (today's provinces of Hunan, Jiangxi, and Hubei). In this greater area, the deity of the Southern Peak is worshiped widely in travel palaces as well as in local temples, ritually affiliated to the monasteries of their "capital" mountain.

Climbing the stone stairs of the Southern Peak, stopping to rest and to pay respect in temples and shrines, Wang Xin'an reached the main summit of the mountain range, a height of 1290 meters. Since the sixth century, the highest peak has been called Zhurong 祝融, the "Melter-Invoker" (Cook and Major 1999), a complex deity especially famous as "fire regulator" (*huozheng* 火政). One of the three high gods of the antique Chu kingdom, the deity is often associated with the "stove god" (*zaoshen* 灶神), a celestial administrator of domestic life (Chard 1990). Daoists say that Zhurong descended on this peak upon orders by the Jade Emperor (Yuhuang 玉皇) to transmit fire and the cooking food to the human world while the stove god is the ancestral master of alchemists (Schaffer 1975).

Exploring the valley, Master Wang discovered the Yellow Court Monastery (Huangting guan 黃庭觀), whose name refers to the *Huangting jing*, a key scripture of internal practice and the visualization of deities. The text was supposedly revealed by celestial immortals to the early libationer Lady Wei Huacun 魏華存 (252-334), who later became Mistress of the Southern Peak (Nanyue furen) and has been worshiped in the monastery since the Tang (Robson 2009).⁸

⁸ The *Huangting jing* and Lady Wei mark the evolution from the Celestial Masters to Highest Clarity. The Celestial Masters rituality was based on agnatic or uterine transmissions, sexual rites of passage called "harmonization of *qi*" (*heqi* 和氣), and cyclical community gatherings in natural sacred sites. Highest Clarity Daoists, inspired to a certain degree by Buddhism, left the family to experiment with celibacy and sexual abstinence, replacing *heqi* with ritual techniques of refinement and of marriages to divinities (Despeux 1997). From the sixth century onward, Daoist communities settled in the mountains, bringing their residence closer to the ancient sacred sites and building the first monasteries of Daoism (Schipper 2008, 179-98). Epigraphic sources testify to this (Robson 2009).

Next, he stayed in the Mystery Capital Monastery (Xuandu guan 玄都觀), situated in the middle of the mountain. Until the mid-nineteenth century, this site was called the Hermitage of Breathing Clouds (Xiyun An 吸雲庵) and served as home for a Buddhist community, then became the seat of a community of the lay-based Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Unity) school. During the Republic, Chen Mingshan 陳明山 and over sixty Daoist families owned an important agricultural estate here. However, at some point—left unclear in the Annals—they left the mountain to live among the people and provide them with ritual services. Most probably this move had to do with the Quanzhen development of a modern Daoist organization coming to dominate the area. But it may also relate to the reinvention of the ritual genealogies of both schools into administrative categories, characteristic of religious policy to the present day. In this context, Zhengyi Daoists are expected to live “at home” (*zaijia* 在家), remaining in their native villages.

Wang Xin'an's biographies insist that the Daoists of the Mystery Capital Monastery invited him to stay and that he soon got engaged in community life by becoming the estate's accountant. He was also reaching a turning point in his life, quite like the parallel verses on the sides of the temple gate, about half-way between the valley and Zhurong Peak:

Respectfully following the movement of the Dao to this half-way point, effort is still necessary.

Return to the true heart-mind is close, but to reach the summit never shy from diligence.

In August 1949, Hunan province was “peacefully liberated” (*heping jie-fang* 和平解放). After decades of political revolution, cultural destruction, civil war, and Japanese invasion, a government promising a “New China” was established by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Its leader, Mao Zedong, was born in Shaoshan 韶山, about forty miles north of Mount Heng. Due to this development Master Wang's life was about to change significantly, away from a focus on the social and symbolic organization of Daoist liturgy and community life toward the Daoist adaptation to the institutions and emblems of Chinese Communist modernity.

The Collective Ecology Manager

Beginning in late 1949, and peaking after the agrarian reform of June 30, 1950, the great “feudal” land estates were dismantled and taken over by the people. The Daoists on the mountain, too, had to shift their efforts away from ritual transmission and toward reclaiming and cultivating the land around the temple. New state regulations required religious communities to develop “self-subsistence” (*ziyang* 自养), with the overarching goal of reorganizing monastic economies.

As new activities imposed by the Communist government came to transform the daily life of Daoists, they were forced to accept a linear concept of time and the mobilization of all workers toward material progress. These trends were superimposed on their traditional administrative vision, which focused on a “natural government” with a cyclical liturgy and the implementation of quietude in the social realm (Kalinowski 1982). However, the Daoists still carried on their daily services (*xiu gongke* 修功課) and were allowed to receive “incense income” (*xianghuo shouru* 香火收入): donations from believers, pilgrims and rich patrons who wished to accomplish a meritorious action by helping the monastic community or to reward it for ritual services (NYZ 1996).

According to Li, Wang Xin'an found a compromise that allowed him to honor both the Daoist and Communist conceptions of virtuous accomplishment. He retreated to a remote mountain area above the monastery, about a kilometer behind the Purple Bamboo Forest (Zizhulin 紫竹林), where Guanyin supposedly had come to teach. There he built a small altar from wood and stone, protected by a hut which he called the Thatched Hut of Pure Emptiness (Qingxu maopeng 清虚茅棚). In this “border place” (*bianshang* 边上), he “welcomed emptiness like a valley,” practiced clarity and stillness (*qingjing* 清靜) as well as spontaneous nonaction (*wuwei* 无为), and reached out to “elevated realms” (*gao jingjie* 高境界).

This practice reflects the Daoist conception of the mountain as the purest environment for self-cultivation, where the hermit can be in full interaction with the stillness and spontaneity of nature he seeks to incorporate. However, Li describes his practice in such a way as to reconcile

Communism and Daoism in this episode of Wang's life not noticed in official sources (1995). Interestingly, Master Wang refined his "spontaneous nature" (zi 自) and "nourished his life" (*yangsheng* 養生) through inner cultivation, yet also followed the Communist principle of self-subsistence (*ziyang* 自養) by clearing a piece of land around his altar to cultivate his own food. He even provided some surplus to the old and handicapped Daoists of the monastery.

In 1952, two officials from Nanyue Township came to the monastery. They organized a meeting and proclaimed: "The Mystery Capital Monastery is famous and its natural environment is excellent. There is no capable manager here to apply the administration's guidelines . . . , so is it possible to choose a skilled administrator from among you? If you cannot find somebody, the government will requisition the temple and transform it into an inn."

The monks duly recalled Wang Xin'an from his hermitage to serve as official administrator of the community (Li 1995). A few months later, "responding positively to the call of the party and the government" (ZLR 2010), he accepted a position as vice-director of the "Buddhist-Daoist agricultural mutual-assistance team of the Southern Peak" (*Nanyue fodaonongye huzhuzu* 南嶽佛道互助組), established as part of the first national plan launched in 1953. During that period, the monastery was called the dormitory (*sushe* 宿舍) of the local production team. This new organization is said to have been successful in the application of the principle of self-subsistence, because both Daoists and Buddhists could "provide for their needs without relying on public grain, even producing a surplus they sold to the state" (NYZ 1996).

In the 1950s, Wang Xin'an, the mutual-assistance team, and the neighbouring villagers were further involved in a policy of "reforestation" (*lühua* 绿化), with the goal of developing "a high efficiency forest industry and maintaining greenery all over the district" (NYZ 1996).⁹ The technological solutions implemented unfortunately upset the balance of the eco-techno-symbolic milieu of the area, which was duly sub-

⁹ Forestry farms were set up, using seeds first (in the 1950s) locally picked, later (in the 1970s) imported from other provinces, and eventually (in the 1980s) from abroad. In 1938, 138 species of trees were inventoried on the mountain, reaching 644 species in 1994 (NYZ 1996, "Forestry" 林业: 210-228).

ject to several invasions of parasites, leading in turn to massive bombings with chemical substances (NYZ 1996, 210-28).¹⁰

Besides developing the forest industry, reforestation was to transform the mountain: for aesthetic reasons, for an increase in leisure potential, and for the prestige of the Communist elite. In the early 1950s, the government built a huge hotel with conference rooms on a back peak. At the same time, Master Wang organized a small inn in the Halfway Pavilion (Banshan ting 半山亭) to provide room and board for pilgrims—in a spot which in 1995 became the starting point of the cable car. All these rather artificial and technological ways of interacting with the mountain stood in deep contrast with the Daoist concepts of spontaneous nature and the Daoist relation with the environment as rooted in internal transformation. The modern Chinese word for “nature” or “ecological environment” (*ziran* 自然) has always been a key term in Daoism, meaning literally “self-so” and referring to both the natural cycles of the macrocosm and the microcosmic state of the sage who has attained Dao (see Schipper 2001).

Coordinating the “Frontline”

As a leader of both Daoist liturgy and the production team of the Southern Peak, Master Wang played a decisive role in the adaptation of the local economy and ecology to Communist modernity and soon came to be charged with various political responsibilities. In 1954, he was chosen to represent the Daoist community in the consultative congresses of both Nanyue Township and Hengshan County. These organizations, which still exist today, had been established at that time as the legislative *alter ego* of the United Front of the CCP—literally the “Department of the Coordination of the Frontline” (*tongyi zhanxian bu* 同一战线部).¹¹ Its mission is to delimit and organize the ideological and institutional marches of the

¹⁰ Plane bombings of BHC took place on the Southern Peak in 1960, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1988, and 1990 (NYZ 1996: 221-222).

¹¹ During the Republic, the CCP created the United Front as part of their effort to build circumstantial alliances with the Guomintang against the Warlords (1923-1927) and later against the Japanese (1937-1946).

Party: religious organizations, minority nationalities, democratic parties, and groups of the Chinese Diaspora abroad.

Soon other official work awaited. Because of its lack of international networks and its being embedded deeply in local society, Daoism was the last of the five Chinese official religions (the others being Buddhism, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam) to be institutionalised in the national Chinese Daoist Association (Zhongguo Daojiao Xiehui 中國道教協會). Founded in 1957, this organization also prolongs Republican efforts to develop a nationwide network around short-lived religious associations representing the imported concepts of "religion" (*zongjiao* 宗教; see Goossaert 2007) and "religious freedom" (*zongjiao ziyou* 宗教自由). In April of that year, its founders called Wang Xin'an to Beijing to take part in the inaugural meeting, held at its future headquarters, the White Cloud Temple in Beijing: a "gathering of the rambling pure clouds where dwell the immortals."¹² For the first time in Chinese history, Daoism was endowed with a national organization integrated in the administrative hierarchy of the state and supervised by the United Front department of the CCP and the Bureau of Religious Affairs of the Chinese State Council.

To the present day, the Chinese Daoist Association is dominated by the Quanzhen order which is centered around monasteries and consists of numerous communities and networks—thus easily identified for governmental supervision. Its administrative hierarchy and territorial divisions are superimposed on regional and larger networks among local communities. Connecting the various levels, the Chinese Daoist Association works according to three principles of autonomy: ecological self-subsistence, self-administration (*zizhi* 自治), and self-transmission (*zichuan* 自传).

This remaking of Daoist institutional structure, then, complicated the transmission of ritual techniques and liturgical power—previously the domain of master-disciple interaction. It also severely curtailed the interaction of Daoist liturgy with the wider social world. Some Daoists like Wang Xin'an were forced to use their transformational know-how in restructuring their institution in the newly emerging technical and symbolical milieu, lest it disappear. Taking on the leadership of the Daoists

¹² According to Liu Xuanwen, personal communication, 2008.

of the Southern Peak in this key period, Master Wang came to participate in a sweeping historical movement that promised the Chinese people relief from material suffering. His tasks involved integrating and mastering new constraints, often in dire opposition to the traditional Daoist way of life

Rightist Dissident and Barefoot Doctor

Just before the Great Leap Forward, in 1957, the Chinese Daoist Association launched an anti-rightist meeting where Wang Xin'an, "enthusiastic and in full ascension, received a traumatic shock . . . Having frankly expressed his personal opinions during the meeting, he was identified as a rightist" (Ouyang and Zhang 2008). He returned to the Southern Peak, relieved of his responsibilities and officially marginalized from his community. According to some disciples' testimonies, he once again felt deeply depressed.

In 1961, during the famine caused by the Great Leap Forward, with Mao retreating to Shanghai and lands being redistributed among the peasants, the state also instituted a new religious policy. The general secretary of the Party of the South-Central administrative area of China announced that "the Buddhist and Daoist practitioners of the Southern Peak should concentrate on the religious life, whose priorities are academic research, the protection of the temples' cultural patrimony, the construction of certain forest parks and embellishment of the famous mountain. They should not take part in agricultural production work anymore" (NYZ 1996, 452). This decree again transformed the Daoists' institutional setting, marking another mile stone in the continued reinvention of Daoism since the end of the 19th century (see Goossaert 2006). It also established a new level of patrimonialization, the process of institutionalizing the natural, material, and intangible heritage—a key prerequisite of the tourist development of the sacred mountain—a process that can be clearly discerned already in the early stage of the People's Republic.¹³

¹³ The 1996 descriptions of the *Nanyue quzhi* contain reinvented historical data, or at least emphasize specific aspects important to the redactors. The 1961

Although repudiated, Master Wang "did not ignore the hopes the people had placed in him, fearing neither effort nor criticism and devoting himself fully to production work and unit cooperation." Li describes it by saying that Wang had already "woven the cloth of Hengshan by transmitting the Dao with great depth of sentiments" (*ganqing dushen hengshan budao* 感情笃深横山布道). In China, weaving is traditionally a woman's activity, and the Weaver Maid (*zhinü* 织女) is the female partner of the Cowherd Boy (*niulang* 牛郎) in a myth marking the different tasks of the genders, differentiating sexual roles as matching the inherent nature of heaven and earth. By using a metaphor related to the feminine qualities of the weaver, Li emphasizes the meritorious achievements of Master Wang both in internal alchemy and administrative and healing work: both require what Catherine Despeux defines as major feminine qualities, i.e., mediation and transformation (1990).

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution began and with it the overall destruction and vandalizing of religion: deities' statues, sacred scriptures, the Daoist canon, ritual vestments, liturgical instruments. The monastery suffered greatly. According to oral testimonies, Master Wang was arrested by the Red Guards and "locked up for three days with a Buddhist nun; they were both naked and had only meat to eat." "The Daoists were left penniless, thrown out of the monastery and ordered to return to secular life (*leling haisu* 勒令还俗), often deported (*qiansong* 遣送) back to their native district" (Li 1995). Resettling the population in their "original [district] of registration" (*yuanji* 原籍), the authorities struck at a mainstay of monastic Daoism, the institution of *chujia*, "leaving the family."¹⁴ While the Mystery Capital Monastery, previously transformed into a workers' dormitory, now became the "Southern Peak Inn" (Nanyue zhaodaisuo 南岳招待所), Master Wang was forced to leave the mountain and, at age 48 headed back to his native Hebei.

Many Daoists at the time stopped all self-cultivation and got married, some never returning to the monastic life. And even if Wang Xin'an

declaration, however, is compatible with the economic and political reforms of the time.

¹⁴ A traveling Quanzhen Daoist is does not refer to his home by "old home" (*laojia* 老家) but by old temple" (*laomiao* 老廟). The temple and its ritual parent-hood replace home and family. See Herrou 2005; 2011.

is said to have been “hit hard by this stroke” (Ouyang and Zhang 2008), Li insists that he was determined to respect the precepts: he was a model practitioner, able to prove that the social pressure of the time was not inexorable. He also portrays Wang as working in the fields during the day and meditating to refine the cinnabar at night, even allowing himself to discuss sacred issues or “engage in pure talk” (*qingtan* 清谈) with his fellow villagers. The latter respected him, “knowing that he was honest and generous and that he could cure the sick and select medicinal herbs” (ZLR 2010). They asked him to exercise his healing skills, and soon came to consider him a barefoot doctor (*chijiao yisheng* 赤脚医生)—a local practitioner of traditional medicine trained in elementary Western healthcare and supplied with basic equipment.¹⁵

Although an experienced Daoist healer, Wang Xin'an was placed in this category at the bottom of the new medical hierarchy. His methods involved alchemical and ritual techniques in combination with the orthodox medical skills of acupuncture and herbs. Like many other Daoists (see Herrou 2011), he was also a practitioner of self-healing, connecting self-care through internal alchemy with care for others through healing and administration. As the methods were divided sharply into new official categories—religion, medicine, sports, qigong, and superstition—Master Wang's healing and cultivation methods fell into the cracks and his identity was lost. However, understanding his virtues and seeing the obvious results, the community wanted him to proceed. It is one of the ironies of history that Master Wang continuously practiced Daoist medicine throughout the Cultural Revolution, thereby transmitting the “intangible heritage” of Daoism at the local level, both within and yet beyond all official categories and institutions.

¹⁵ In the 1950s, the government began to organize national health, creating healthcare centers at the local level. “Traditional Chinese Medicine” (TCM) developed at the time: standardized and applied by doctors trained in Western medicine and purified of all ritual and religious content. Because they were considered “conservative” and their practices imbued with “superstitions” (*mixin* 迷信), traditional therapists had to study modern science and improve their technical level (Taylor 2005). They came to be called “barefoot doctors.”



Master Wang Xin'an at the end of the 1980s.

The Come-Back

In 1979, Deng Xiaoping declared the opening of China and gradually installed a policy of religious freedom, allowing the practice of the five officially recognized creeds under the control of state-run associations and working under the slogan "love the country, love the religion" (*aiguo aijiao* 爱国爱教). In Li Jiazhong's words, "a spring wind was blowing both within and outside of the Great Wall," making "old traces come back to light."

In 1980, Wang Xin'an, 62 years old, was amnestied as a rightist and, together with other religious personalities, "stepped forward, his head

held high." Pushed by the government of his home town, he participated in the foundation of the district's United Front. In the fifth lunar month, he went to the White Cloud Temple to participate in the third national meeting of the Chinese Daoist Association and came to serve among the thirty nine members of its administrative council. The following fall, after fourteen years in Hebei, he left again his family and village to move to Beijing. The Bureau of Religious Affairs put him in charge of administering the "restoration" (*huifu* 回复) of the Daoist heritage. He stayed for years, also working as a guest prefect of the monastery (*zhike* 知客) and teaching courses on Daoist knowledge in specialized classes (*zhuanxiu ban* 专修班).

In 1985, he was officially invited to return to the Southern Peak as head of the Mystery Capital Monastery. The previous year, Nanyue Township had become a special section within of Hengyang City 衡阳市, dedicated to the development of the cultural and natural site under the slogan: "The famous mountain as a footboard, tourism as a dragon head" (NYZ 1996:357). After all of twenty years, he again was able to climb halfway up Hengshan, only to find the monastery abandoned and destroyed, quite like a "body affected by numerous diseases" (Li 1995).

However "the morning following his arrival, one could again hear the sounds of scripture chanting in ritual" (Li 1995). The liturgy that marks the life blood of the monastery was launched again, instilling the destitute site with renewed vitality. Aged 67 and filled with deep emotion, Master Wang declared that "he wanted to dedicate all the vitality he had left to developing Hunan Daoism." His disciple, however, notes that this involvement "occupied him too much so that he would not consider the health of his own person" (Li 1995). Soon after, Master Wang participated in the foundation of the Provincial Daoist Association of Hunan and became its president. The following year, 1986, he was elected a member of the People's Congress of Hengshan City and also of the Hunan Consultative Congress. The Mystery Capital Monastery in due course became the official Daoist center of the province.

Li depicts Master Wang as criss-crossing the Southern Peak on foot, his hair in a top knot, a gourd on his belt, and straw sandals on his feet—just like the immortals (see Kaltenmark 1953; Ngo 1976). His various biographies also recount several anecdotes, insisting on his simple, healthy

way of living in the Daoist community. In the late 1980s, he had barely enough to live on, but he "never used his position to personal advantage" (Ouyang and Zhang 2008), however large the administrative responsibilities and the amounts of money he had to handle on behalf of the monastery and the Daoist Association.

Closely interacting with the high officials of the province, Master Wang also developed connections (*guanxi* 關係) which allowed him to send requests to the hierarchy and garner support from powerful networks, but even these he never used to further himself personally. In addition, the biographies emphasize his healing practice, time and again recounting how he healed both mountain Daoists and visiting pilgrims without asking for rewards. As soon as he found out that a Daoist was ill, he "immediately took time to apply needles and moxa, fire up his decoction pot (*huoguan* 火罐), or treating his patient with other methods" (Li 1995). These "other methods," mentioned marginally, give a brief hint to the ritual aspects of his "meticulous" healing practice.

Daoist Tourism

As leading administrator of Hunan Daoism, Wang Xin'an developed a four-step plan. Li describes it as his own, but it was in fact the provincial application of a nationwide plan the government implemented to channel regional social forces, reinvent Chinese identity in the midst of globalization, and develop tourism. The first step involved the restoration—or, more properly speaking, the appropriation—of several temple properties in the provincial capital of Changsha and on Hengshan to the newborn Daoist Association. Yet "resistance to the implementation of this policy was strong" and "numerous meetings, oral instructions, and written documents were necessary" (Li 1995). The temples had been converted to factories or workers' accommodations during the Cultural Revolution, and the government agencies that held them tended to be unwilling to let go of them, being great sources of income.

As regards the development of tourism, the Daoist communities stood in competition with official institutions and private entrepreneurs, hoping to dominate the ecological sphere of the mountain through technical and symbolic actions and eager to profit from it. Developers built roads and, in 1995, opened the cable car, thereby allowing the tourist-

pilgrim to ascend the heights without effort. They set up restaurants, hotels, and a “village of folk culture” (*minsu wenhua cheng* 民俗文化城) and revived the temple fair of old.¹⁶ They also enhanced boulders, caves, and other mountain sites, setting them up for tourism. Sometimes they gave the places new names to create “an abundance of tourist attractions,” able to accommodate large numbers of tourist-pilgrims who were to be “so happy they would forget to go home.”

The methods and symbols used in this development often stood in direct conflict with Daoist concepts and traditions which involve a long history of metaphorical storytelling, connecting specific mountain sites to religious events and handing down specific teachings to later generations. Daoists traditionally also transmit ritual techniques to protect pilgrims from demons, beasts, and other dangers of the mountain, guiding them “to recover” a direct way of interaction with spontaneous nature. This could not be further from the purpose of the tourism entrepreneurs, whose main goal is to keep large groups of tourist-pilgrims in a technologically secured, “coin-operated” setting, shielding them for a short while from the vicissitudes of daily life and enveloping them in an abundance of entertaining, often newly created, “attractions” (*neihan* 内涵).

This is the context in which Master Wang and the Daoist Association had to reinvent the Southern Peak as a Daoist sacred space, restructuring ancient legends and narratives to enchant and educate the visitors. Wang’s second step was more specific. He hoped to restore the three palaces and living quarters of the Mystery Capital Monastery so that it could recover its “original appearance” and become a worthy and efficient provincial headquarters of the Daoist Association (Li 1995).

Federating Hunan Daoism

The third step of Wang Xin’an’s plan involved building up Daoist Associations on the city or district level by federating the various communities around Daoist liturgical sites, especially within the province but also

¹⁶ According to official data, in 1984 the mountain had 17 restaurants and 117 hotels, and sold 667,000 entrance tickets. Ten years later, in 1994, the mountain had 184 restaurants, 302 hotels, and 1,480,000 visitors (NYZ 1996, 357).

beyond it in the greater ritual region of the Southern Peak. To do so, the Association had to obtain the property of temples located in secondary provincial cities such as Yueyang 嶽陽, Zhangjiajie 張家界, and Xiangtan 湘潭.¹⁷ As far as the United Front was concerned, the policy aimed at integrating the ritual communities of Hunan into national religious agencies, thereby establishing surveillance and control over civil society. Comparable policies had already been implemented during the Song dynasty, but the government at the time was rather more liberal and chose to establish a ranking and control system by bestowing official titles on deities emerging from regional ritual networks (Hansen 1990). In the second half of the twentieth century, the government's aim was to channel similar social forces into hierarchical state institutions, to set up standardized liturgies under the dominance of the Quanzhen school, which has been reinvented as an official administrative agency. Within this framework, married and family-centered Zhengyi Daoists came to serve as a second administrative category: they became a buffer zone, allowing local traditions to be integrated in, or eliminated from, official religious institutions.

Ever since it began to be formally institutionalized, Daoism has grown and unfolded through the transformation of local ritual communities into levels allegedly equipped with a higher level of purity. This continued effort at conversion—not unlike the work of Confucian officials (see Lévi 1987)—meant that ritual activities judged as excessive (*yin* 淫) or heterodox (*xie* 邪) “were sublimated and enclosed in a firmer and better-organized framework” (Stein 1979, 59). In the 1980s, Master Wang similarly hoped to federate Zhengyi Daoists under the Quanzhen umbrella, noting that, even though they were often engaged at the local level of society, they could be part of “a full and sound team” (*banzi jian-quan* 班子健全)—as political parlance has it—and become an important branch of the new Daoist “troop of life” (*shengli jun* 生力军) of the province (Li 1995).

¹⁷ Yueyang is near Lake Dongting, north of the Southern Peak. Here the cult surrounding the immortal Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 first appeared under the Song (960-1279). See Baldrian-Hussein 1985. Zhangjiajie with its spectacular mountain scenery is a major tourism center of the province.

Generally, the functioning of the Daoist Association and of the networks surrounding the Mystery Capital Monastery depended on the federation of grassroots-level ritual communities. This was not an easy task, because as the history of the Southern Peak demonstrates, different Daoist traditions were often in competition or conflict for control of its liturgical transmission. This meant that numerous local provincial communities of vastly different natures had to be gathered into a centralized institution. As a result, the Daoist Association was both an inescapable institution that alone allowed the religion to exist in the modern context and an institutional tool for Master Wang and other organizers to extend the networks administered around the liturgy of their core temples.

Besides the diversity of local communities and various internal breaches, difficulties also arose from the local officials' attitudes and practices towards traditions in general and Daoism in particular. In some districts, officials of the Departments of Culture or of Religious Affairs combined their efforts to develop their heritage,¹⁸ in others, as one of Wang's disciples notes, "they tried to maintain the temples under their administrative control in an inactive status or even to extort funds from them."¹⁹ Master Wang's political rank and connections were very helpful when he had to deal with lower-level government agencies in the province, but they did not always suffice.

Since the condition of a local ritual community depends on the district officials, "a temple without a *bona fide* Daoist to direct a regular liturgy and with no connection to the Daoist Association is much more profitable to unethical notables," Wang's disciple continues. In the modern institutional environment, becoming part of the Daoist Association network was thus a safeguard for a ritual community. It also ensured its official recognition and gave it the right to restore a local temple, re-establish a regular liturgy, and sometimes invite Daoist masters to live there.

In addition, the deities worshiped by local communities had long been part of cultural, social, and administrative networks and requests offered to the celestial hierarchy matched those addressed to the imperial

¹⁸ The central part of Hunan is an example of such a kind of development around the regional identity of Meishan 梅山 (Favraud, forthcoming).

¹⁹ Anonymous personal communication, 2009.

administration. The technical and symbolic milieu having changed according to new conceptions, the Daoist Association serves as the modern intermediary between state and communities, allowing them to formulate and submit requests through the administrative hierarchy. In other words, for Master Wang, federating the ritual communities of the province was a way to protect them and give them a voice, to gather their social and economic forces under the auspices of the Mystery Capital Monastery, thereby to build a provincial Daoist organization able to interact with both private entrepreneurs and state agencies.

Daoists as Managers

The fourth step of Master Wang's plan involved creating training classes for a new generation of Daoists. In the late 1980s, he first started such classes, hoping to train "professionals in religious administration" (*jiaowu shiye* 教务事业), but he also organized specific courses on the *Yi-jing* 易經 (Book of Changes) (Li 1995). These classes later formed the foundation for a two-year seminary program that allows promising Daoists to be trained as local managers and presidents of district associations. The first seminary of this kind was set up in 1989 at the White Cloud Temple in Beijing, later followed by one on Mount Qingcheng in Sichuan—both for male practitioners. Wang Xin'an's school on the Southern Peak, on the other hand, in 2005 became the national "Academy of Daoist Nuns" (Kundao xueyuan 坤道學院) (see Wang 2008), continuing a long history of renowned women Daoists.²⁰

Besides creating these training classes, Master Wang was authorized to accept personal disciples to share the daily life of their master and receive the transmission of what he had learned "step by step." There is a clear distinction between these traditional "disciples" (*tudi* 徒弟) and the "students" (*xuesheng* 學生) of the academy. While "transmission brothers" (*shixiongdi* 師兄弟), i.e., disciples of a same master, have ritual kin-

²⁰ The Southern Peak has long been associated with Daoist women. It is the site of a cult to Xiwangmu 西王母, the Queen Mother of the West; the center associated with Lady Wei Huacun, Zhengyi libationer and revealing deity of Shangqing (Highest Clarity); and the site of a sixth-century monastery directed by a woman (see Despeux 1990; Despeux and Kohn 2003; Robson 2009).

ship mutual bounds, the others are just schoolmates (*tongxue* 同学). Daoist academies are modern training institutions, never replacing the transmission of the Mystery through ritual parenthood and esoteric techniques.

Immortality

A candle burned until late in Wang Xin'an's room. His disciples were worried that he was going to collapse under the pressure of his administrative work. He, however, said: "During the day I have so many little tasks to deal with that I cannot get quiet. Now, when nobody comes to bother me is the best time to work" (Li 1995). Convinced that the administration of Daoism was not yet satisfactory, he worked in dark of night by candle light, drawing plans to improve regulations and making them more "specific and reasonable" (*juti heli* 具体合理; Li 1995).

Still worried, a lay disciple once suggested that he retire, but he answered: "I am involved in Daoism, my heart is involved in Daoism, and I want to die being involved in Daoism. . . You may think about your master's body, but your master thinks about the years I have left to improve Daoism in Hunan" (Li 1995). He saw his body as inseparable from the social body of Hunan Daoism. In the event he never retired and died in early 1993 at the age of 74.

At the conclusion of the biography, Li Jiazhong writes that the memory of "this master of his generation who served as the pillar of the restoration of Daoism on the Southern Peak will be cherished and venerated" for a long time (Li 1995). His physical body may have died, yet the master refuses to abandon his disciples. As Li has it, Wang's followers continue his quest to improve Daoist institutions, both for the sake of the country and of the Chinese people, but also as a personal Daoist practice, aiming to "polish our will and give shape to our strength (Li 1995)." As for Master Wang, has "ascended and become an immortal" (*dengxian* 登仙). As Li notes, if "the ancestral masters respond positively [to the request for promotion]," he will even become "an official in the land of the immortals." He winds it all up with a poem:

Heaven's fertilizing rain falls on Melter's Peak,
 The Purple Pavilion, the Mystery Capital, soaking ancient pines.
 As evening drum and morning bell sound anew today,
 Cinnabar haze and purple *qi* happily come together.
 Held in clarity, we never tire to transmit authentic secrets.
 Awakened in stillness, we always carry on the master's teachings.
 At night fall hardly lonely—dreams come on the pillow,
 The mountain empty and serene—white clouds [immortals] gather.

Conclusion

Holding on to the central axis of the Daoist discourse on Wang Xin'an's life, his Daoist liturgy, and the various social environments he participated in, in this paper I have contrasted personal, devotional, official, and academic sources, examining them through the lens of anthropological categories. It has become clear that for a Daoist master of the 20th century the practices of internal alchemy, healing, and administration are as closely interconnected as are the levels of canonical principles (concepts, precepts, and narratives), ritual practices (personal and collective), and community interactions.

In his early years Wang suffered from physical weakness, so that for him becoming a Daoist was a question of life and death. His Daoist modes of healing, moreover, integrated his personal history into his Daoist career, making his life's experiences inseparable from his community and tradition. Fully participating in and, despite strong pressures, never letting go of Daoism, Master Wang took on official functions and realized an institutional career in the midst of violent social change. This may well be why his disciples feel both sorry for him and deeply grateful for his efforts.

From the central position Wang Xin'an occupied on the Southern Peak, he lived a deeply virtuous life and created a new and transforming identity both for himself and for official Daoism in Hunan. Today Daoists, both monastic and lay, as well as scholars and officials regard him as having accomplished a tremendous lot and reached a high level of virtue. Even beyond the death, he is still thought able to participate in the "fertilization" of the ever-changing environment of Chinese Daoist communities today.

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Forum

on

Contemporary

Practice

Daoism, Ethics, and Faith

The Invisible “Goodness” of Life

MARY I. BOCKOVER

Hold fast to the way of antiquity
In order to keep in control the realm of today.
The ability to know the beginning of antiquity
Is called the thread running through the way. (*Daode jing* 14)¹

The world had a beginning
And this beginning could be the mother of the world.
When you know the mother
Go on to know the child.
After you have known the child
Go back to holding fast to the mother,
And to the end of your days
You will not meet with danger. (*Daode jing* 52)

Living a wholesome and healthy life is central to Daoist thought,² but it is hard to make sense of this idea, and in turn what would philosophically justify any practice aiming to bring such a good life about, without the contrasting idea that life can be less wholesome and unhealthy. This

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the *Daode jing* is translated according to D. C. Lau 1963, in which *dao* is transliterated as *Tao* (as it is in many translations).

² The earliest texts now identified as Daoist thought are the *Daode jing* from the 6th or 4th century BCE (often attributed to an author named Laozi whose historical existence is in dispute) and the *Zhuangzi* from the 3rd–4th centuries BCE. All excerpts for this article are from these sources. It is also worth noting that these ancient texts continue to increase in their translations, readership, and general influence in the field of Daoist Studies. In fact, the *Daode jing* is currently one of the most widely translated books in the world.

is a *normative* idea that there is a way or *dao* that can lead to a better life. Even though this way is distinguished from the idea of “it,”³ *dao* still has normative implications reflected in how it is conceived as having practical use. Just some categories that apply this idea that there is a way or *dao* for living well are: physical and mental health, personal and social wellbeing, and moral and spiritual integrity.

This analysis will not bring out all of the specific differences in these, but a general Daoist view of what living a good life involves. Nor will it deny that Daoist thought and practice may ultimately be justified only by a subjective *experience* of *dao* and its power (*de*). Paradoxically, *dao* is an “ultimate reality” that cannot be known “objectively” exactly because *dao* is not an object. This is one reason the *Daode jing* and the *Zhuangzi*, the great ancient Daoist texts drawn from in this article, are critical of language, “too much speech” and “naming” things in the attempt to distinguish them from what they are not; for these “opposites” are relative human constructs built out of limited perceptions and ideas that confuse what is real with what we conceive it to be. The *dao* of the ancient Daoist texts can only be “known” by means of a different kind of experience—an *actionless* experience—with different aspects only generally discussed below as applying to human experience in three ways.⁴

³ For example, in the opening chapter of the *Daode jing* it is said that, “Tao can be talked about, but not the Eternal Tao” (translation by John C. W. Wu).

⁴ Epistemically, “knowledge” in the mainstream Chinese philosophical traditions of Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, has to be thought of in a broader sense than it is in the mainstream Western philosophical tradition. While Western epistemologies or theories of knowledge tend to restrict ideas of what can be known to objective reality, such as knowing something in holding a true belief about it, or being able to logically formulate an argument, Chinese epistemologies widen the scope of knowledge to include a kind of *insight* that cannot be accounted for merely in logical, objective terms. This may be because these mainstream Chinese philosophies are also religions. Daoism offers a perfect example of how the concept of knowing has to be expanded, discussed in this article in terms of the three ways of actionlessly experiencing *dao* and its power: the religious or mystical experience of the unity of *dao* itself, the actionless activity (*wuwei*) of doing a skill so well that one no longer has to reflect on how to act, and activities that one can “do” without their needing to be learned. A point of clarification is, that all three are actionless activities (*wu wei*), although it is the

The first way to "know" *dao* is to become wise to it as being ultimate, infinite reality. This is a spiritual realization of the inherent unity of this "great ultimate" that goes beyond what is differentiated by sense perception, ideas, and the words used to identify these; it is penetration of one's awareness—a "mystical" experience—into the essential unity of things. This religious experience of the interrelatedness of things ordinarily experienced as being separate and diverse, evokes appreciation for life and awe of its mystery and creativity.

The second way to "know," or to actionlessly experience *dao* is by learning how to make use of its mysterious power, thereby achieving excellent results with minimal effort. This actionless activity (*wuwei*) improves life in concrete, practical ways, and allows one to build a personal identity—to *become* a sage, an artist, a tailor, a charioteer, a butcher, a soldier, and the like—by learning the relevant skills so well that they are second-nature and no longer require intentional or (self) conscious direction.⁵

second kind that is most typically referred to as *wu wei*, for the reason that so much of human activity has to be learned. But notice that the distinction between these three kinds of actionless experience is not categorical. The raw capacities to develop any skill must actually be cultivated into excellences that are put into action, or else the skill does not exist. One crucial implication is that the dichotomy between what is innate and what is learned, expressed in the Western philosophical tradition in so many ways, is a *false* dichotomy from a Chinese point of view, for one can learn something only in having the potential (power, or *de*) to do so. Once well learned, the action becomes actionless (*wu wei*), distinguished by the fact that one "knows" what she is doing but without having to deliberate upon, or choose, to do the action. This idea of *wu wei* goes hand in hand with Daoist skepticism about the limits and fallibility of conventional knowledge. For example, see the discussion between Wang I and Nieh Ch'üeh about "knowing" in the *Chuang Tzu* (*Zhuangzi*) (Chan 1963, 187-88).

⁵ In "The Ren Dao of Confucius" (2008), I have made the distinction between *intensional* and *intentional* activities, where the later require more active and self-directed "willfulness." In short, an intensional activity is a mental event that has conscious content and direction but does not require the kind of deliberate reflection that is characteristic of (willful) "choice" in the second-order sense. Unlike the first-order conscious activity of intensionality, the second-order activity of intention entails that one be aware of oneself as making a choice; where she identifies herself as an agent of the action.

The third and last way to experience the *dao* actionlessly is through unconscious activities that occur “naturally” in the sense that they need not be learned. For example, breathing, hair growing, being born, and dying, are activities that we “just do” that require no conscious effort, even though, in the human case, they can be influenced by conscious effort. None of these actionless experiences, however, requires the denial that *dao* is a self-evident, self-justifying principle with identifiable normative implications. *Dao* may not just be a principle in the sense of just being a concept, in other words, but it may be real and *still* be talked about. For those who recognize the “goodness” of *dao* and its power by reflecting on experiences briefly described above, then it can be spoken of, with the qualification that speech is just a practical pointer to the wisdom, skill, and understanding of just how much of what we do is a gift of life neither learned nor (self) created. Language must be framed as a tool for expressing and sharing such “metaphysical” insights.⁶ Talking about the “goodness” of *dao* and its power can be done even from a skeptical point of view, in order to show, philosophically, how Daoist practice would be justified according to its own principles.

Such an account of the normative dimension—or the goodness—of *dao* and its power begins by seeing *dao* as a first-principle, a self-evident truth that cannot be objectively proved or disproved *to others*⁷ or that

⁶ Major annual conferences regularly bring a community of people interested in Daoism together to share their various interpretations and applications of its ideas. Some of these interests are more strictly academic, but many presentations and exhibits show how Daoist ideas have beneficial consequences in a variety of practical contexts. For example, see <http://www.daoiststudies.org/dao/node/7693> to get more information about a conference in Los Angeles in June of 2010 on “Daoism Today: Science, Health, Ecology” that is linked off of a more general “Daoist Studies” site found at <http://www.daoiststudies.org/dao/> and that is an excellent electronic resource in the field.

⁷ This view that Daoism must be seen as being just a philosophy, religion, or religious practice, is coming under greater scrutiny, however, by those who claim that concrete empirical benefits of Daoist practice can be measured. Skeptics challenge that these results cannot be controlled for enough to show that the basic assumptions underlying them are true, and that the benefits of such belief and practice may only be a kind of placebo effect, in the same way people have been healed through the power of Christian faith and belief. I do not wish to re-

cannot appeal to anything further to justify its ultimate, primal value. This cannot be "proved" in the modern scientific sense of being duplicated and refuted (at least in principle).

Again, *dao* is not an object, as everything in the universe is because of *dao* (that is, *dao* is the "first cause"). Cultures can be defined and distinguished by the assumed goods that in turn cultivate shared values and practices, even when shaped *out of* the cultures assuming them in the first place. Such "goods" constitute the backbone of civilization.⁸ They are first-principles either way; articles of faith, or beliefs, taken to be true but that cannot be "proven," at least in the modern scientific sense of the term. For those who do *not* believe, they are *merely* questionable assumptions taken "on faith," to be rejected on skeptical grounds.

However, this is a challenge for any religious, ethical, or aesthetic view; and I would say for *any* view, no matter how objective it is taken to be at any given time. This is because all views entail assumptions or rest on first-principles. Religious and ethical views are so open to skeptical challenge because of their diversity, because their "truths" are not so "universally" held.⁹ By contrast, there is now a much greater, more global belief in science, a widespread scientific culture not possible until the modern era cross-culturally framed a new way to experience and evaluate the world. This is not a radical critique of science or its practical usefulness. But it does show the scientific paradigm is only one way of

solve this dispute in this paper. My aim here is to show that, even in the absence of scientific proof, there is still a subjective experiential criteria for forming a community of shared ideas and values that can be applied to action and even more specialized professional practices, all of which rests on the notion that something – in this case, the *dao* – is inherently and ultimately good. Such beliefs are first-principles collectively justified, i.e., identified as true only within a particular culture, but this does not make them false.

⁸ It is worth noting that these "goods" may not always be so good or "civilized," but do constitute the basic values and beliefs of (or relative to) a human community. The religions, philosophies, and histories of humanity identify or express these values.

⁹ "Truths" may always be relative, then, or never "universal" in the sense of being absolutely true, once we grant they rest on assumptions that cannot be conclusively proven. No matter how shared or widespread these ("true") beliefs are, their assumed first-principles are contingent and historically situated.

viewing life among many, and despite its pervasive influence, has to take its place in a long and diverse *history of ideas* that reflect, as well as have influenced what people think and value. This also does not mean that seeing the world through one lens precludes seeing it through others as well. To follow the example, seeing life as working according to scientific principles may well be compatible with also seeing life as being infused with certain spiritual, moral, or aesthetic qualities.

So far, only a general description of Daoist goodness has been offered: as a tri-part way of “being one with” the *dao*: through spiritual insight, the cultivation of practical excellence, and spontaneous natural activity. Having given a sense to how the ambiguous terms of “faith” and “belief” are to be understood in this context—as being a *human* orientation consciously affirming¹⁰ *dao* and its power (*de*) to transform life—a more focused philosophical account of the good life can now be given, in light of textual material in the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi*.

We will see that good living is tied to attaining a spiritual perspective that lets one be at ease with, and in awe of the natural course of events, and even in the inevitable events of aging, illness and death. It is a deep faith in the natural beauty and goodness of life that is only “darkly visible” to the human eye because of our tendency to attach to shortsighted, conventional interests. The good life is a way of faith and spiritual insight into an almost invisible ultimate reality that is thought to transform ordinary human experience into extraordinary tranquility:

The way is empty, yet use will not drain it. Deep, it is like the ancestor of the myriad creatures. Blunt the sharpness; Untangle the knots; Soften the glare; Let your wheels move only along old ruts. Darkly visible, it only seems as if it were there. (*Daode jing* 4)

Having transcended all life, he became as clear and bright as the morning, he was able to see the One. Having seen the One, he was then able to abolish the distinction of past and present. Having abolished past and present, he was then able to enter the realm of neither life nor

¹⁰ This “conscious orientation” may be more or less reflective. One could be said to believe in, or have faith in something without being able to explicitly identify *what* one has faith in. It is the philosophical account that identifies *dao* as being such a first principle.

death. Then, to him, the destruction of life did not mean death and the production of life did not mean life. In dealing with things, he would not lean forward or backward to accommodate them. To him everything was in the process of destruction, everything was in the process of perfection. This is called tranquility in disturbance. Tranquility in disturbance means that it is especially in the midst of disturbance that [tranquility] becomes perfect (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 195-96)

In light of the simple truth that "goodness" is almost always a relative term, requiring comparative experience, then things are better or worse only in *relation*—to what makes them better or worse in our experience. For example, something deemed "bad" may come to be appraised as minor or even as good in comparison to something experienced as much worse. This shift in perspective can, and often does result from the passage of time through which we gain hindsight about earlier events taken to be bad at the time but that come to be experienced later on as having a positive or redeeming value.

We may also be disturbed by an event that is offset by a much more disturbing event close in time but that puts the first in perspective. For example, the discomfort experienced by even a serious inconvenience may immediately shift to being insignificant and trivial in face of the death of a loved one. This kind of relativity is also inescapably temporal but not quite in the same way the first is where the change is the result of hindsight, only because the passage of time plays less of a role in the shift in perspective than the qualitative impact of the experiences themselves; the serious inconvenience may not even remain a object of awareness when a loved one becomes seriously ill or dies.

The idea of relativity taken to be basic to human experience is not unique to Daoism.¹¹ Ideas of relativity permeate this history of ideas both east and west. In Chinese thought it rests on a more primal metaphysic embracing a distinction between *yin* and *yang*, where everything (*wan*) is

¹¹ Chad Hansen, David Wong, and P.J. Ivanhoe have also discussed the question of whether or not Daoist thought is "relativistic." I offer a different evaluation of how the normative thread of goodness has to be tied to *dao* by showing how Daoism entails a concept of human nature that rests on a "holistic" and spiritual first principle, an article of faith in the "goodness" of *dao*.

seen as a result of the blending and contrasting of (e.g., negative and positive) forces:

The way begets one; one begets two; two begets three; three begets the myriad creatures. The myriad creatures carry on their backs the yin and embrace in their arms the yang and are the blending of the generative forces of the two... Thus a thing is sometimes added to by being diminished and diminished by being added to. (*Daode jing* 42)

The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth; The named was the mother of the myriad creatures... These two are the same But diverge in name as they issue forth. Being the same they are called mysteries, Mystery upon mystery—The gateway of the manifold secrets. (*Daode jing* 1)

The *yin-yang* relation is basic to the mainstream Chinese philosophies and religions of Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, and was implicit in the *Yi jing* in which the first two hexagrams are creativity (the *yang* image is heaven) and receptivity (the *yin* image is earth). *Yin-yang* is a relation, where heaven, humanity, and earth are interdependent aspects of a larger “nameless” and mysterious way that cannot be understood in terms of the sum of its parts.

In the *Daode jing*, the traditional concept of *dao* is redefined to subordinate humanity even further; where humanity is no longer taken to bridge the gap between heaven and earth but is relegated to the realm of nature and its myriad creatures. This suggests we have lost our way precisely because we think of ourselves as existing in and of our own right instead of being vessels of *dao*. To be a vessel of something greater is humbling in comparison, and to feel supported by something greater should put us at ease. So the Daoist reinterpretation of the *dao* has the ethical implication that we have lost our way and have harmed ourselves in doing so. The habit of thinking about life and trying to govern it as if we were the creators of destiny itself has harmed us. And conversely, we will benefit by returning to *dao*. *Dao* is the “creator,” the origin of destiny and of all things it sets in their course. *Dao* is the origin of life itself, and by forgetting *dao* we take the supreme mystery and miracle of life out of our experience, supplanting it with a preoccupation with human power.

Forgetting our origin (*dao*) and the power (*de*) it has to sustain or destroy us is like cutting the plant off from its root:

He did not forget his beginning nor seek his end. He accepted [his body] with pleasure, and forgetting [life and death], he returned [to the natural state]. He did not violate Tao with his mind, and he did not assist Nature with man. This is what is meant by a pure man. Such being the pure man, his mind is perfectly at ease. (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 192)

The way alone excels in bestowing and accomplishing. (*Daode jing* 41)

To continue to clarify, how Daoism can be thought of as relativistic, is *not* in the (modern and post-modern) sense where change is thought of in scientific terms. Change entails a kind of evolution for Daoism, but this change is personal, moral, and spiritual as well as material. A basic assumption of the scientific theory of evolution is that change has no "purpose," even if it aims at survival through natural selection (see Rorty 1995). Purpose involves an intended aim toward some end. For example, Christian natural law entails this idea that life is filled with purpose: that a creator designed the world and that we live a good life to the degree that, as self-aware beings, we recognize our "God given" purpose and live according to it. By contrast, evolutionary theory is scientific in both method and assumption in seeing life as having no such "divine" purpose, no such design that conceptually entails a great designer and ultimate author of the good life behind the scenes of empirical experience. Evolutionary theory marked a period in the history of ideas when religious thinking and its often-connected essentialist morality were rejected. Nor are the ancient Chinese views found in the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi* relativistic in this scientific sense where the world is seen as devoid of conscious or spiritual agency. A mark of ancient Chinese philosophy in general, and of Daoist philosophy in particular is that the world is infused with spiritual agency, but this is actionless agency (*wuwei*) that must be distinguished from the idea of purposefulness that is so prevalent in the Abrahamic traditions.

Tao has reality and evidence but no action or physical form. It may be transmitted but cannot be received. It may be obtained but cannot be

seen. It is based in itself, rooted in itself. Before heaven and earth came into being, Tao existed by itself from all time. It gave spirits and rulers their spiritual powers. (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 194)

How Daoism portrays spiritual agency is paradoxical: in terms of being an actionless activity or purposeless power that needs no purpose because “the mother” (*dao*) gives birth to it and carries it to fruition. The *dao* too, source and sustainer of this power, is not rightly thought of as having purpose either because that implies a kind of willful direction to gain something or to possess something not yet within its grasp. This evokes the wrong kind of imagery; instead of the *yin* imagery so often coupled with the *dao* in Daoism, the notion of having a purpose evokes *yang* imagery more suited to portray the human way and its conventional aims. The Great Way is without purpose in needing nothing and embracing everything. So in the same way that a plant is continuous with its roots, growing out of them and bearing the natural product of fruit, spiritual agency grows out of *dao* and needs no *reason* for being. There is simply a *way*—for everything to *ultimately* thrive by extension. For humans, this is a natural power to recognize and properly respond to the source of all there is. Spiritual potency is relative, in other words, entailed by, and modeled on a purposeless origin and path that guides the wellbeing of each creature without willing it.

Confucius said, “Fishes attain their full life in water and men attain theirs in the Tao. Those fish which attain a full life in water will be well nourished if a pool is dug for them, and those men who attain a full life in the Tao will achieve calmness of nature through inaction. Therefore it is said, ‘Fishes forget each other (are happy and at ease with themselves) in rivers and lakes and men forget each other in the workings of Tao.’” (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 199)

To recap, this discussion has shown how Daoism may, and may not be thought of as “relativistic.” It is not relativistic in the scientific sense, which accounts for the way things work empirically and without reference to spiritual agency. Nor is it morally relativistic, where moral agency is thought to have no ground beyond the cultural and conventional constructs of the “good” that is fashionable or desirable at the time (and in a particular culture). For Daoism, all action is ultimately

grounded in *dao*. As human beings we live a good life—and a moral life—only in fully realizing our connection with *dao*. In other words, moral and spiritual cultivation are outgrowths of one another.¹²

Where Daoism is relative is found in its *yin-yang* cosmology, where moral action, for example, is a blend of both active and receptive agency. The same can be said of the relation between moral and spiritual agency, for they are both aspects of the same essentially unified (but actionless) activity. We will now see how this *yin-yang* interdependency works in more detail in light of this necessary connection between moral and spiritual integrity.

Simply stated, a unique concept of "moral action" is offered by Daoism: action is good when it unites one with *dao*; thus, there is no substantive way to distinguish moral action from spiritual integrity (unity with *dao*). The confusing point is that this moral-spiritual integrity or "oneness with *dao*" is actionless; but it is *not* senseless as it depends on a connection with *dao*. The good life may not be purpose-laden but is still dependent on, and grounded in a belief that actions can be qualitatively contrasted. The view that there is an essential connection between spiritual and moral wellbeing does not change this.

Dao itself is a normative principle in relation to human action, and the fact that this is a relational—and ultimately spiritual—measure does not make it any less normative. Normative action must have context, and has to be experienced and evaluated in that context, but this does not take the thread that makes action better or worse out of the action. It is co-extensive with the great *dao*, where we become "agents" of good conduct by paradoxically giving up our agency to this greater force. We become empty vessels so that the *dao* can work through us (e.g., see *Daode jing* 11; Lau 1963). To do this, we must abandon self-interest in the interest of being guided by the way of heaven, a way of harmony and "actionless" unity with this supreme guiding force:

When carrying on your head your perplexed bodily soul Can you embrace in your arms the One and not let go? ...It gives them life and rears them. It gives them life yet claims no possession; it benefits them

¹² The cultivation of physical and psychological health can also be seen as connected and motivate many Daoist practices today.

yet exacts no gratitude; it is the steward yet exercises no authority.
Such is called the mysterious virtue. (*Daode jing* 10)

The paradox can be spelled out further as one where our natural human tendency to pursue our own conventional and often self-centered interests become centered through *dao* instead. An example can be taken from other human excellences and skills besides those that fit the category of moral excellence.¹³ For example, one becomes an artist by doing art; by letting him or herself become a vessel of artistic agency. But notice the process involved: one becomes a good artist only when one has the skill to let the art be activated; when one's agency become a subordinated activity of *dao*. Awareness has to shift away from the self to the activity itself. This kind of concentration is key to any skill. And if awareness shifts back to one's own role in the activity, on one's role as creator of the action, then the concentration that allows for a smooth and harmonious result is interrupted and the outcome is corrupted.

The power of the *dao* is impeded by a preoccupation with the human role in the greater scheme of things. That does not mean that we do not play a role but only that it is "inactive," receptive to the power of *dao*. One becomes an extension of *dao* in the same way an artistic product becomes an extension of artistic activity. The activity is actionless because it is done with no purpose, in the sense that one is not preoccupied with one's own involvement in the activity. One is not aware of the role that one's own will plays in that larger creative process. This is the mark of learning anything well: one can let go of self-consciously following rules of action and of what one has to do to produce good results. One "lets

¹³ I think that the category of "moral" excellence would most directly apply to good governance in human relations for both Daoist and Confucian thought. To be "moral" applies to one who has the ability and authority to govern others in a way that benefits them, in the same manner that *dao* benefits the myriad creatures. Even though one may have the "mandate of heaven" to do this, however, from the earliest records of Chinese history this meant one fulfilled his destiny (*ming*) as a ruler – that he *cultivated* this excellence – so it would not just be a given at birth. Hence, one "ordained by heaven" to rule would have to develop and apply the skill, in much the same way an artisan would her craft. These actions would fall under the second kind of actionless activity (*wu wei*) discussed earlier.

go" of the self by having self-will become inactive and the way of heaven become activated. In this way one becomes a vehicle for that greater way. In sum, one acts with excellence when the action becomes spontaneously excellent, not just spontaneous.

This analysis of the paradoxical "relativity" of daoist excellence can be applied to any area of human activity. It is not that the goodness is human; it is that the human has allowed the goodness of *dao* to flow through the self to produce an outcome that is healthy, wholesome, and uncorrupted. But in the human case this often involves learning how to subordinate the self to the *dao*. Metaphorically, the child is fed by the mother, but as we grow a stronger sense of self-will this process often involves developing a spiritual orientation and disciplined practices that help us learn this lesson: that any strength we have is given to us by abandoning self-will and embracing the way of heaven.

Because we naturally develop a sense of self, we have to cultivate a way of life that puts this sense in perspective. This often requires great effort, at least for a while, until the skill has been developed and perspective gained. We are not subjects-in-ourselves but rather, *subjects of dao* and its power. And we must have great faith in the way of life to gain this perspective:

Life and death are due to fate (ming, destiny) and their constant succession like day and night is due to Nature, beyond the interference of man. They are the necessary character of things. There are those who regard Heaven as their father and love it with their whole person. How much more should they love what is more outstanding than Heaven [that is, self-transformation itself]? . . .

The universe gives me my body so I may be carried, my life so I may toil, my old age so I may repose, and my death so I may rest. To regard life as good is the way to regard death as good... Therefore the sage roams freely in the realm in which nothing can escape but all endures. Those who regard dying a premature death, getting old, and the beginning and end of life as equal are followed by others. How much more is that to which all things belong and on which the whole process of transformation [Tao] depends? (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 193-194)

Daoism then, does have strong normative implications for what good living is about. We do not live life fully until realizing that life is living us—living *through* us—and that it can take a turn for the “worse” at any moment. Aging, illness and death are natural parts of life. The beauty of these ancient Chinese texts, and the *Zhuangzi* in particular, is that they evoke an appreciation even for these events that normally do not put us at ease, and are usually highly unsettling.

I think this also implies that our greatest achievement is spiritual: learning how to be at peace even when facing great personal loss, such as the loss of loved ones, and one’s own health and life. Even though we may be able to maximize our life powers by learning how to let *dao* work through us, aging, illness and death are natural events and are not bad from a Daoist viewpoint (see Chan 1963, ch. 8). They are how the world works, and we embrace this when embracing *dao*. This is the greatest challenge Daoism puts before us, I think, and perhaps more honestly than any other faith tradition, exactly because we must experience natural events as good even when they are highly repugnant to us from a more myopic and self-interested perspective:

Soon afterward Tzu-lai fell ill, was gasping for breath and was about to die. His wife and children surrounded him and wept. Tzu-li went to see him. “Go away,” he said. “Don’t disturb the transformation that is about to take place.” Then, leaning against the door, he continued, “Great is the Creator! What will he make of you now? Where will he take you? Will he make you into a rat’s liver? Will he make you into an insect’s leg?” . . .

Tsu-lai said, “Wherever a parent tells a son to go, whether east, west, south, or north, he has to obey. The yin and yang are like man’s parents. If they pressed me to die and I disobeyed, I would be obstinate. What fault is theirs? For the universe gave me the body so I may be carried, my life so I may toil, my old age so I may repose, and my death so I may rest. Therefore to regard life as good is the way to regard death as good... If I regard the universe as a great furnace and creation as a master foundryman, why should anywhere I go not be all-right? When the body is formed, we sleep. With it visibly there, we wake.” (*Zhuangzi* 6; Chan 1963, 197-198)

To end, our moral and spiritual integrity are conceptually tied and mutually supporting in Daoist thought. The problem is that human nature is highly paradoxical, if not contradictory. In particular, in the natural course of human development our vision of the good life is myopic as we come to have a sense of self. It is also natural for us to grow beyond this, to realize our full potential and to be at ease with ourselves, with others, and with the world around us. But we do this by "forgetting ourselves," by forgetting the very self developed by nature sometime after that precious and *dao*-like state of infancy (see *Daode jing* 28). This *does* require that we find a way of seeing what the narrower viewpoint keeps us from seeing, which is the invisible or "darkly visible" goodness of *dao*. Both the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi* portray this as being a rarified experience of what it is to be whole and want for nothing. It purports to be a way of life where the human spirit, moral action, and the good life are one, and ultimately, one with *dao*. Philosophically, this goodness makes the relative self-interest and motivation for forgetting *dao*, for not returning to *dao*, into something less than truly wholesome. In sum, the *dao* is *the way* that transforms what is quite naturally first taken by human beings to be bad or good, into something that pales in comparison.

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Daoism in the West

Following Buddhist and Christian Models?

BILL HULET

Daoism in the West is increasingly becoming a practiced religion, and more and more individuals are working to create a viable Western form. Since we are in the formative stages of this process, this may be a good time to initiate a dialogue about two questions that have troubled me in my “faith career:” Is the master-disciple dynamic intrinsic or incidental to Daoism? And how is Daoism going to relate to modern science?

As regards the former, the example of Buddhism in the West and my own observations suggest that there are practical and rather unpleasant consequences of the institution of “Master” that are best avoided. As regards the latter, some Daoist language and practices overlap with those of physiology and psychology but there may also be areas of conflict. A useful parallel in this respect is modern Christian scholarship which has argued that it is possible to accept the wisdom of the Bible while discarding language that is rooted in long-discarded theories about how the world operates.

Personally, I was initiated into the Fung Loy Kok Temple by Moy Lin Shin in the 1970s and adopted the Daoist name Cloudwalking Owl. I parted ways with that institution early on, but have tried my best to study and practice as a hermit. Over time, I have noticed a rapid growth in the infrastructure of Western Daoism: more and more books get translated, scholars and practitioners organize to share their understanding, and body work has become accepted as part of mainstream society. The latest phase is toward the establishment of institutional, religious Dao-

ism in the West. Much visibility comes from the Internet which allows people to connect at the click of a mouse. But many groups represent more than just web-pages and involve some seriously dedicated people. Just a few of the more visible examples that I have noticed include the Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism, the British Taoist Association, Dayuan Circle (formerly Orthodox Daoism in America), The Daoist Foundation, and so on.

To me Daoism is currently at the stage where Western Buddhism was in the 1960s. Growing numbers of people are interested in building substantial religious institutions, academics are translating more foundational texts, Chinese teachers and Chinese-trained Westerners are beginning to build temples and monasteries. What, then, can Daoists learn from the Buddhist example?

Authority and Deification

A striking issue Western Buddhists had to deal with is the power dynamic of the master-disciple relationship. Some schools of Buddhism place great emphasis on submission to the personal authority of individuals who have been given superior, and in some cases even supernatural, authority. Zen Buddhism, for example, has a theology that talks of the "mind to mind" transmission through lineage chains that stretch all the way back to Bodhidharma and Gautama Buddha. Some schools of Tibetan Buddhism also have traditions of "tulku" or enlightened masters who have been reincarnated from generation to generation to teach disciples. The authority of the teacher as master exists outside of the institution that he presides over. As such, this relationship is *inherently* authoritarian, uncontrolled, and beyond any checks and balances.

No matter how one feels about this from a scholarly or religious point of view, certain practical consequences have flowed from this teaching style. One example is the situation surrounding Chögyam Trungpa, a famous tulku with numerous disciples. The author of many popular books, he had tremendous influence in the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in the West and was the leader of a group called Dharmadhatu with headquarters in Boulder, Colorado. Besides teaching advanced Tibetan meditation techniques, he engaged in sexual relations with many of his students and died of alcoholism in 1976. His chosen successor,

Ösel Tendzin, continued the sexual activities with students even after learning that he had contracted HIV. After a period of crisis, criticism, and restructuring, the organization today has recovered and follows more traditional and ethical paths under the leadership of Trungpa's son, Sakyong Mipham.¹

Western Zen Buddhism has also suffered as a result of masters becoming corrupted by the slavish devotion of Western students. One of its most successful organizations, the San Francisco Zen Center, suffered a significant scandal when it was revealed that its leader, Michael Baker, had affairs with several students and was living an extravagant lifestyle while his followers provided unpaid work for the Center's several business enterprises (see Downing 2001). In the wake of the ensuing scandal, in 1983 the San Francisco Zen Center became the first Buddhist institution to be run by a board of directors, elected for a limited time period, rather than by a single, authoritative abbot who ruled for life. As Richard Saeger says in *Buddhism in America*, this "pioneering elective leadership" was "an important turning point in the Americanization of Zen" (1999).

To my knowledge Daoist circles have so far remained free from sexual impropriety or even much high living. Still, the same unhealthy power dynamic existed in the Taoist Tai Chi Association (TTCA) with regard to its founder, Moy Lin Shin. While I was an active member I could see the process of encroaching deification gradually envelop the man. For example, when I first met him he was "Mister Moy." After a few years he had become "Master Moy." Next a lineage chart was created that had him on the bottom and Laozi and Bodhidharma at the top.² This deification and the way it supported his bizarre behavior soon became one of the reasons why I and many others eventually left.³

¹ Wikipedia has many details on both figures: see under "Chögyam Trungpa" and "Ösel Tendzin." On the life and work of Chögyam Trungpa, see his autobiography (Trungpa 1985), the classic study by Feuerstein (1990, ch. 3), and a recent account by Gimian and Mukpo (2006). His son and successor, too, has begun to write (Mipham 2003). See also www.shambhala.org.

² See http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_T2WZKSTNbMU/RlBt5hZw12I/AAAAAAADk/RoLXZOdyJg/s1600-h/dscn02741.jpg

³ A detailed documentation of what the deification of its leader will do both to his/her psyche and behavior as well as to the lives and conceptions of the followers—including how they continue to create internal justifications for both the

Let me give you an example. One time Mr. Moy had the executive of our local Tai Chi club bring in the police to swear out a complaint for "grand theft temple treasure." An instructor from our local group had been living in some property owned by the TTCA. He had had an argument with the leader and walked out with a cheap reproduction of the famous *Neijingtu* diagram of the human body,⁴ being under the impression that it was a personal gift to him by a third party and did not even belong to TTCA. While funny now, the young man at issue happened to be a visa student from Hong Kong who might have gotten into real trouble if the police had done more than laugh off the complaint.

This problem is not due to the failings of specific individuals. It is inherent in the dynamics that arise when human relationships are defined in a specific and highly authoritarian way. My experience with Daoists in China being limited, I do not know if Moy was a typical representative, but he certainly fit into the preconceived Orientalist notions of naïve Westerners: he was enigmatic, authoritarian, and erratic. As Louis Komjathy notes:

One of the most prominent contemporary Orientalist constructs is that of the Oriental Monk. He is perceived by Westerners as an embodiment of spirituality and the hope for an alternative future, in which materialism is abandoned and spirituality retrieved. The Oriental Monk represents the ancient wisdom of the East and transmits it to a new cultural context, found in an idealized vision of "America" as a storehouse and safe haven for allegedly dying Eastern spiritual traditions. (2006, 211)

Understanding that this preconception and the unchecked authority it supports give rise to all kinds of potential abuse, it is time that we as members of the growing Western Daoist community consider what sort of institutions we want to create. We should have a vigorous discussion about whether or not we want to maintain the traditional authoritarian master-disciple dynamic in our communities. I personally would prefer

leader's and their own dependency behaviors—is found in the study of a small Tibetan-based group in the Washington, DC area. See Sherrill 2000.

⁴ See Komjathy 2008, 69 for an illustration. Moy also said that this was a very dangerous poster that could be used to "hurt people."

if we adopted something like the Benedictine model where authority flows from consensus-building and fundamentally equal structures instead of from supernaturally legitimized lineages.

The Benedictine rule is a monastic code that was developed in the middle ages to govern groups of religious people who had begun to spontaneously live together for mutual support. It works to find a way for people to get along with each other while also supporting each person's individual efforts to pursue his or her spiritual vocation. In other words, it centers the individual's spiritual career on the institution of monasticism, not an individual relationship with a charismatic individual.⁵ How this would play out in an actual community might involve something like having an elected abbot or board of directors responsible for all the practical elements of the community. In addition, there might be a spiritual director whose authority is restricted to teaching meditation or body work.

Science or Superstition?

Another issue Western Daoists should consider carefully is their relation to modern science. Because many Daoist practices such as daoyin, internal alchemy, and taiji quan contain elements of verifiable and measurable body work, they involve effects on the physical body not found in other religions. They also make claims, some of which have apparently been verified by Western medicine so that today many physicians recommend taiji quan as helpful, low-impact exercise. Others are more problematic. Indeed, another reason why I left the TTCA was because of the attitude amongst some practitioners that the practice could cure significant health problems such as cancer.

Beyond the recommendation of specific therapeutic effects of Daoist practices, the greater issue is Western Daoist terminology and how it is reinterpreted in terms of modern physics and biology. For example, what exactly are *qi*, *jing*, or *shen*? I personally do not read Chinese, but have practiced internal alchemy over many years, read everything I can on the subject, and have had many experiences described in the texts.

⁵ See Chittister 1992. For more immediate information, go to <http://en.wikipedia.org>; www.newadvent.org.

But having a sensation moving up your spine, through your hands, and so on is not the same as *understanding* it. The difference is not due to the research, but from one's attitude toward the world. In other words, I am not content to simply have the experience, I want to know what it is and what it signifies. Nor am I willing to take answers simply based upon the authority of a teacher or a tradition. As a modern person, I want that information to be part of society's common store of scientific truths.

The Christian tradition has wrestled mightily with scientific statements around things like evolution and mental illness. Fundamentalist interpreters of the Bible have made the claim that if one is going to believe anything in the Bible, one has to believe every single part. As a result, they believe that the different species were created all at once through a miracle and that some people go mad because they are possessed by demons. Liberals, on the other hand, argue that the authors of the Bible was never intended as a science textbook. Instead, the compilers were making statements about relationships that should exist among human beings based on the conventional wisdom then current. Moreover, in the pre-modern era authors conventionally used metaphors in ways that go far beyond the wildest fantasies of modern "magic realist" novels.

While Daoist scriptures are significantly different from the Bible, they raise similar questions. How much of the traditional language they use is a reflection of conventional wisdom at the time of writing? How much is essential to the Daoist project? Also, how useful is this language in the modern day and age? If practitioners used the scientific worldview would it be possible to better explain Daoist experiences?

To relate a personal experience, I once had a classic "numinous dream" where I met the Ghost King and his underworld lictors. The dream was very meaningful to me, but its value had nothing to do with the assumption that there actually is Ghost King who presides over a realm of hell. Instead, I happily saw the experience as a psychological event dealing with an archetypal dilemma common to all human beings. The experience and the value of the event are the same. But trying to explain a Daoist event using modern language allows me to be an active participant in modern society instead of someone marginalized by adhering to an ancient and obscure worldview.

This distinction has practical consequences. Internal alchemy can be quite dangerous, leading to negative as well as positive consequences. Quite a few people practicing meditation and body work end up having some form of negative experience. When I posted my own problematic experience in a blog, I received a massive response from readers and found a number of Internet sites specifically on problems that people had while meditating and doing body work in various traditions. One of the sites is maintained by Lorin Roche. He says:

For some reason or set of reasons, there is almost no information about the dangers of meditation. It is taboo to even think about it. Meditation is presented as an omni-beneficial activity. We are in the odd situation that the field that is supposed to be about truth, is presented in a deceptive manner. Discussion of the real obstacles and hazards of meditation is met with denial.

Runners get shin splints, sore knees and blisters; swimmers get shoulder injuries and ear infections; soccer players get head and neck injuries; volleyball players, tennis players, skiers, weight lifters, and golfers all have their characteristic injuries. Coaches and sports doctors study these injuries, figure out how they happened, and how to prevent them. Then they revise the training to minimize injury and publish articles, and the information eventually gets out so that everyone can benefit from it.⁶

Roche here refers to the scientific culture of sports medicine as opposed to the authority culture of meditation teachers. In the former, there are no taboos and people work collaboratively to improve theoretical understanding and establish the best practice. In the latter, people work to preserve “ancient wisdom” and reinforce the authority of master over the disciples. He has a valid point, and Western Daoists would benefit mightily if they developed an attitude toward both body work and meditation that had more in common with sports medicine.

⁶ <http://www.lorinroche.com/page8/page8.html>

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Daoism and Entirety in Quantum Physics¹

IMKE BOCK-MÖBIUS

There is only one principle of arrangement (*li*) underlying the ten thousand things: the difference lies in where they started from. (Su Zhe; Pohl 2007)

This paper discusses the underlying principle of the universe in three different areas: in the qigong way of moving, especially looking at the idea of completeness in every exercise; in mysticism and its experience of unity; and in the natural sciences, notably in quantum physics as a representative of modern physics. By examining these areas, we find impressions of Daoism in past, present, and future

Qigong Movements

Qigong is not only the art of living and a method of exercise conducive to good health but also affords the realization of certain principles concerning body and mind. Its aim is to maintain and restore the equilibrium of yin und yang, to harmonize qi, and to mobilize self-regulatory forces within the individual. “*Qi* is the ultimate cause of everything” (Ommerborn 2004); its motion and dynamics connect human beings and the universe. *Qi* is the bridge between the visible and the invisible worlds, between individuated objects and the ultimate principle.

The genesis of the universe may be described as a transition from the undifferentiated state of unity (Dao) to the emergence of the polarities of yin and yang. The transition is made visible in the dynamics of the

¹ This articles is based on Bock-Möbius 2010. It is also a preview of her *Qigong Meets Quantum Physics: Experiencing Cosmic Oneness*, forthcoming from Three Pines Press in 2012.

Taiji symbol ☯. To live in harmony with nature and avoid harm, human beings have to adapt to its rhythms, thereby in each case complementing opposites. In terms of exercise instruction this means that while practicing qigong, Dao can manifest itself in the principle of completeness. The completion of the polarities further appears in the four patterns of movement: opening and closing, rising and descending (Jiao 1993, 94). They are constantly in transition from one into the other and always contain their respective opposites. Each opening has an inherent closing and vice versa; while opening we are still aware of rooting; while closing we stay upright.

The driving force in qigong practice is the mental orientation that uses appropriate images and gives meaning to the exercises. The goal is a state of inner clarity and stillness while excluding all disturbing factors and realizing qigong as "meditation in movement" (see Bock-Möbius 1993). This allows ideal conditions for self-regulatory and self-regenerating processes to arise, and the positive effects of qigong come to the fore. Quietude is the state of naturalness or spontaneity (*ziran*), where the connection of the individual and nature, both following the same rules, reveals itself. The duality of the world is overcome and the unity with the Dao can be experienced.

The mind is at the same time concentrated and unattached: images become perceptible and a feeling of timelessness arises. During the exercises a transformation happens inside the body, in the so called *dantian* (elixir field) regions. They correspond to a process of refinement like that known from alchemy in the outside world. Therefore qigong represents one aspect of internal alchemy and Daoist realization: we work on preparing our own longevity pill from the inside in present time. It must be emphasized here that when practicing qigong we consider polarities not as opposites but rather as complements that constitute an entirety in many ways, for example there is naturalness and control in the execution of the movements.

To expand this thought of complementarity to insight in general, we turn to the natural sciences, the established rational method to attain understanding, as an objective and reproducible way. Complementing this is an intuitive method, a subjective and unique way of understanding as, for example, in mysticism.

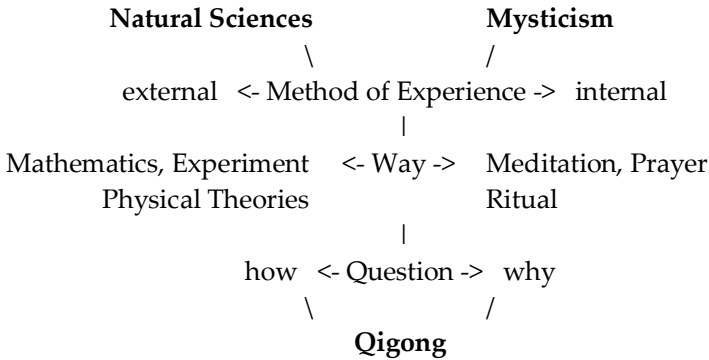


Fig. 1: Qigong connecting natural sciences and mysticism.

Combining the experiences of both ways according to the idea of complementarity we could get a more complete insight into the conditions of the universe. Both the natural sciences and mysticism are methods of experience, one analyzing the external, the other the internal world. Their ways and means include mathematics, physical theories, and experiments on the external side, as well as meditation, prayer, and ritual on the internal side. The questions they answer are about the function (how) on the external side, and about the reason (why) on the internal side. In my opinion, qigong mediates between the two of them because it has an external part: a long history, detailed methods, and clear instructions on how the exercises have to be executed; it also has an internal part: the experience that we go through during practice. The cross-over between the two appears most obviously in increasing numbers of scientific studies that show how effective qigong is when used by patients with certain complaints, such as asthma and migraine (see Reuther 1996; Friedrichs 2003).

Mysticism – Beyond the Mist

Mysticism represents the past of Daoism, its roots. The introduction to the *Zhuangzi* has that “the master wanted to attain the experience that lies beyond thinking and that science can grasp only incompletely.”

Mysticism is the experience of the absolute in the here and now. In the East the absolute is called Dao; in the West we speak of God. Mysti-

cism means coming to be one with God or attaining deep understanding through internal vision. Western mystics like Willigis Jäger (2000, 42) describe this immersion into the mystery with the metaphor of wave and ocean: human beings are like waves on the divine ocean (i.e., part of the cosmos), but the ocean experiences itself in every single wave. God or Dao is present in every one of us.

One might also say that the very nature of the human being originates in God and that separation is an illusion. At the same time, God experiences himself as human in the human being. If we compare God's appearance in the various religions with the appearance of light in the different colors of the spectrum, we realize that everyone may have his own favorite color, but that no color is better than the other.

Mysticism refers to the part of religion that can be experienced. Unlike its rational part or theology, it has been pushed into the background over the last two centuries, mainly because theology has become more and more scientific. Many theologians now have an intellectual understanding of God (Jäger 2000, 117). The mystical experience, on the other hand, allows us to perceive unity with the highest creative principle. In the transpersonal space where this happens lies hidden our healing potential. The key to this is to overcome our ego. As organizing center of everyday life it is useful, but it has to step back to open the way for the transpersonal.

According to Ken Wilber (2004, 28), one of the leading theorists of transpersonal psychology, it is our fundamental desire to search for the experience of unity and this search leads us through the whole of evolution. Modern life mostly ignores our spiritual needs so that we drift deeper and deeper into senselessness. Our original search for a deeper meaning is often stopped too early and leaves us stuck in addiction and egocentricity. By transcending the ego we experience integration into a bigger reality. In so doing we can overcome the existential crisis. Wilber's theory correlates with C.G. Jung's reports that all of his patients over thirty-five were in the process of investigating their attitude to religion (Jäger 2005, 131).

In the Christian tradition, the separation of God and the world is described in Genesis, the First Book of Moses, as the expulsion from paradise. Eating from the tree of knowledge and seeing good and evil means leaving unity by entering polarity. This can be seen as the reason

for our desire to reunite with God. Yet this search is also the starting point of a development that would never have started without the expulsion. In Daoism, in comparison, duality appears in the division of the Dao into yin and yang out of which come the five elements and the ten thousand things. But a separation of the polarities is impossible by definition.

The mystical experience of unity is not a regression to an unconscious state like original paradise but the goal of an extended development of the individual and of humankind. There are parallels in the development of the individual and the species from the realization of our separation from God/Dao to our entering into self-consciousness. Now this self-consciousness has to be overcome in the direction of the transpersonal state. According to Wilber this is the meaning of our history: development towards perfection, unfolding of latently existing potentials to experience transcendence.

Wilber (2004, 344) assumes that new abilities cannot come into being out of the blue but might have been hidden inside before being visible. He supposes that before the evolution started there was an involution ongoing; higher potentials were embedded until they disappeared. At the end of involution, all higher levels were unconscious. That is where evolution starts in the known way; nature remembers and unfolds its hidden potentials one after the other.

We can assume that this desire for the absolute is something generally human, but the fear of losing our ego is strong. Therefore people choose substitutes: they replace the desire to unify with God by the wish to play God's role; instead of looking for the unity of the universe they want to dominate outer space. They confuse the infinite with the finite: they search for God in materialism with money as a symbol of immortality. This results in numerous detours and deep suffering.

The main point is to learn that there is no separation between God/Dao and the world, and that we can experience the innermost spirit directly so that Dao is revealed: this means the end of suffering. Praying means talking to God, but before praying in words came praying without words: praying with the body (Jäger and Grimm 2004). Becoming one with the gesture leads to composure and prepares the way to the transpersonal level; it is the way to that level. Qigong can be seen as praying without words. Knowing God/Dao does not mean to have

knowledge about but to be one with God/Dao. The experience of the transpersonal leads to a development of personality which cannot be achieved by good will or under pressure from outside.

Although it is a radical experience, the mystic stays afloat in the sea of consciousness; this is the difference to the psychotic who might get drowned in it (Jäger 2000, 163). Both are looking for their way to unity, the psychotic by regression, the mystic by progression (Wilber 2004, 13-34). In order to achieve this development in a healthy way we have to practice in a mental state of clarity, awareness and presence. This state is the basis in qigong as well as in meditation. It is important to keep to the right direction in the labyrinth of life. There is, therefore, no reason to restrict ourselves to intellectual pursuits and exclude internal experiences while looking for understanding.

Future Daoism: Nonlocal Interactions

Modern thinkers tend to rely mainly on the natural sciences when looking for the organizing principles of the universe. Within this context, quantum physics offers interesting new developments with far-reaching consequences.

What is quantum physics about? In 1900, it became clear that certain physical problems could be solved under the assumption that essential quantities in nature could appear only quantized; that means that, for example, energy could only be absorbed or emitted in smallest amounts, in multiples of Planck's constant. This then led, for example, to the stability of atoms which was explained in 1916 in the atomic model of Bohr and Sommerfeld.

A fundamental experiment in quantum mechanics, the double-slit experiment, demonstrates an unexpected fact, i.e., the dualism of wave and particle on the atomic scale. Depending on how this experiment is designed the behavior as particle or as wave shows up (Feynman et al. 1999, 17-32). These contradictory aspects of elementary particles or light were reconciled by the Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum physics in 1927 using Heisenberg's uncertainty relation and Bohr's principle of complementarity. It was worked out mainly at Niels Bohr's Institute of Theoretical Physics in Copenhagen.

In contrast to classical mechanics it can be said that quantum physics leads to precise predictions also, but the predictions are of statistical character, they give only probabilities. The atomic process and the experimental equipment cannot be separated any longer. The observer disturbs the system by his measurement. Our knowledge about the physical world has general limits, which can be predicted according to the uncertainty relation. The physical properties of a system remain unknown until the incident of measurement.

For his services Niels Bohr was awarded the Elephants Medal by the Danish Academy of Sciences in 1947. It is interesting that the Taiji symbol is depicted in his coat of arms (Capra 1988, 161). Bohr's idea of complementarity applied the unity of opposites to the completion of wave and particle. Already at this point the unity of nature comes up clearly, the Dao of Physics, as Fritjof Capra named his book in the 70s, with which he aroused interest for modern physics among a wider public. But there are more surprising phenomena.

On the other hand, the quantum hypothesis had vehement opponents, e.g. Albert Einstein, who considered it incomplete. The different opinions concerning the completeness of quantum physics that Bohr and Einstein discussed in public over the years culminated in the formulation of the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen (EPR) Paradox (1935), modified by David Bohm in 1952. The calculations as well as the experiments, that were not possible before the seventies and in the eighties (see Aspect et al. 1982), showed correlations between particle states that formed a common system once, independent of how far the particles had moved apart at the moment of measurement. They showed an unexpected entirety lying behind multiplicity. What kind of influences this might exert on the rest of the universe, if we consider that at the beginning of time and space with the Big Bang everything was compressed to smallest volume, cannot yet be estimated.

The correlations between particle states cannot be explained by the concepts of locality and realism used so far, i.e., that systems own their qualities independent of each other, and that these qualities exist independent of measurement. This is no longer useful. The new concept is named entanglement, a term coined by Erwin Schrödinger (1935). It corresponds in major parts to what we call Dao. Another name for it is non-locality.

To avoid a conflict between entanglement and Einstein's theory of relativity we have to consider the correlations as being between quantum states (that means probability distributions) instead of being transmissions of information what would be limited by the velocity of light. This is reasonable because atoms and quantum objects aren't things, but observable phenomena in a world of probabilities; Heisenberg puts it like this, they exist between the idea of a thing and a thing (2007, 38, 262).

Mystics express their experiences in images and allegories, quantum physicists use operators and expectation values. They talk about mathematical quantities in abstract space. It is understood what they are about but it can be communicated only symbolically. Besides, some important points still remain unclear: The wave function describes the entirety of all possible states of a system. In the incident of measurement the wave function collapses and only one special state out of the variety of possibilities is realized.

Although the Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum physics was formulated eighty years ago, the last word has not yet been spoken about many things. In my opinion the main reason for the many uncertainties in the search for the fundamental principles of the cosmos is the low dimensionality of our everyday consciousness: we get along in three dimensions of space and in one dimension of time; the experts of the string theory already need ten space dimensions plus time to get satisfactory results concerning the unification theories (Greene 2000, 218-45). The string theory allows for example the description of the interior of Black Holes, where small distances and big masses meet. On the ultra-small scale quantum physics is needed; for the big masses it is the General Theory of Relativity. The main premise in the string theory is that instead of pointlike smallest particles we now assume swinging strings. In this way the former incompatibilities are avoided.

But if we consider our three-dimensional world to be only a projection of a higher dimensional reality, it could be that things that seem to have no connection with each other (like wave and particle) turn out to be part of the same phenomenon.

This is illustrated in Figure 2, which shows a circle and a rectangle that seem to have nothing to do with each other in the two dimensional plane.

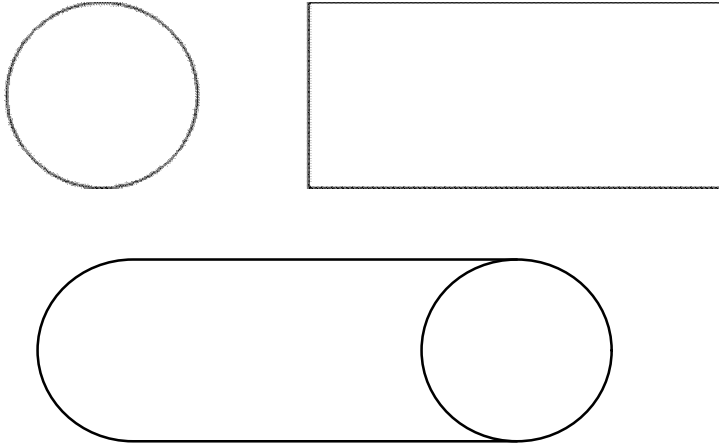


Figure 2: Circle and rectangle as two projections of one object (cylinder)

But if we assume that they are projections of a three dimensional reality, we suddenly understand that they just appear by looking at the same object from two different directions. They both represent a cylinder; the circle shows up if we look from the top, the rectangle shows up if we look from the side. If we expand this thought to the atomic scale, maybe the dualism of wave and particle is only due to the limitations of our three dimensional world. Wave and particle could both be projections of a higher dimensional phenomenon that we are not able to perceive with our everyday consciousness and our experimental equipment.

The phenomenon of entanglement, the surprising relation between quantum states that once were connected, can be considered as leading directly to the proof of the underlying entirety in nature. It leads to an area that mystics and Daoists have already known for a long time. To get an understanding of the interconnections of the universe we should establish the unity of natural sciences and mysticism (see fig. 1) and join their experiences. Non-locality is a phenomenon beyond space and time in the same way as the internal experience.

Synthesis

"All men by nature desire knowledge," Aristotle said (Schäfer 2004, 297). "And sense," I would like to add (2010), because that was the driving force for this time travel through Daoism and the nature of reality.

While examining the three areas qigong, mysticism and quantum physics we meet the same phenomenon only differently named: Dao, unity, entanglement. In practicing qigong we approach entirety by the changes of yin and yang while opening and closing. We return to the Dao by the connection of complementary phases in every exercise. In mysticism we meet entirety in the experience of the universal unity lying behind the duality of the world, i.e., in the transpersonal experience.

In the natural sciences it is entanglement or non-locality which uncovers the unexpected unity between subject and object of a measurement or rather between parts of a system that were connected before. It looks as if entanglement is showing us in the measurable what mystics have long since been conscious of as a higher reality. Heisenberg's opinion was that the individual can communicate with the "main order of things" at any time (1969, 332-33). The wave function acts as a bridge between the Dao and the things. It describes the sum of all possible quantum states.

The diligent separation of subject and object practiced in the natural sciences since Descartes now gives way to a coherent reality of internal and external experiences. Scientific and mystical insights converge. This can be perceived in qigong exercises.

What we are looking for today is the "synthesis of rational understanding and the mystical experience of unity" (Heisenberg in Ricard et al. 2008, 12). Heisenberg thinks that is our fundamental desire. Rational understanding and mystical experience are not opposites but different ways to attain comprehension. Together they allow an understanding of reality not only with our head but also "with our heart," as Heisenberg once put it (1969, 52). This leads to a holistic understanding. In other words, we do not only learn how things work, but also understand their meaning.

Historically the spheres of value ethics, sciences, and the arts were not separated. This led to the big disadvantage that religion dominated the sciences and arts (e.g. Galilei). A differentiation of the spheres of

value was therefore desirable. But nowadays there is a dissociation of the spheres, giving rise to a scientism that makes people think there is no reality besides sciences and that ignores internal dimensions or rather reduces them to external ones. This development overshoots the mark and leaves a world without sense. The empirical method, which is the basis of science can also be applied to internal experience, as Wilber describes it (1998, 210-25, 257-72). It provides a criterion to decide if a certain experience contributes to understanding.

We assume that this world is arranged in a comprehensible manner, that there are the same structures inside and outside, and we have good reasons for that (Heisenberg 1969, 160). More and more phenomena originally considered separate are now shown to be correlated: gravitation in the cosmos and on earth; electricity and magnetism; space and time. At present physicists try to unify the four fundamental interactions (gravitation, electrodynamics, weak and strong nuclear force) and the string theory seems to drive this process. One of the next steps could be to reconcile the sciences and mysticism.

Entanglement reveals aspects of the transcendent part of reality, the "unity behind the manifold" as we can read in the introduction to the *Yijing* (Wilhelm 1978, 15). A qigong exercise is the smallest part of this unity: I call it "Quantum of the Dao" (2009), since one single exercise overcomes the polarities and joins them. In doing qigong we practice the resurrection of the Dao, exercise by exercise. In the experience of entirety in mysticism we experience the Dao, and in quantum physics the Dao even becomes detectable as entanglement and shapes our modern world. Therefore entanglement here is associated with the Daoism of the future. Many new developments have their starting point in quantum physics. One application of it is the coding of information; using the phenomenon of entanglement we can ascertain whether a piece of information has been intercepted or not.

Linking to the starting point we see that Daoist principles can be found in quantum physics. But as the Copenhagen Interpretation shows this has to be carved out from time to time in a similar way to Meister Eckhart's description of the making of the wood picture: "When a master makes a picture, he does not sculpt the picture into the wood but removes the chips that hide it" (Quint 2007, 144).

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Infusing Chinese Medicine with Spirit

Daoism, Shamanism, & Chinese Medicine in the Modern World

MARY KAY RYAN

Chinese medicine as it is developing in the modern world and particularly in the so-called West is engaged in a debate over the place that spirituality will play in its practice. On the one hand are those who bemoan the exclusion of “spirituality” from our medicine (e.g. Jarrett 2000), while others work diligently to create something they call a “modern secular Chinese medicine” (Lake and Flaws 2001, ch. 2, 37). Succinctly put, the latter view states: “In contemporary professional Chinese medicine, spirit is nothing other than a certain quantity of heart *qi*. Thus the concept of spirit in Chinese medicine is not ‘spiritual’ in any conventional religious sense” (Lake and Flaws 2001, 17).

In this paper, I will make a fourfold argument:

- that spirituality has always been and should still be a deeply intrinsic part of medicine and that therefore Chinese medicine does indeed need to consider some kind of spiritual content if it is not to be subsumed wholesale into the materialist worldview of the mainstream medical system;
- that Daoism should probably contribute the largest part of that spirituality
- that to do so, it may have to consider remaking itself in some sense to appeal to a much wider world audience;
- and that shamanic practices might be able to offer a method that could make Daoism more accessible outside its native China.

Spirituality

In order to talk about Chinese medicine, Daoism, and shamanism, all large subjects in and of themselves, let us define some terms first. What for instance is “spirituality?” Under the rubric of Chinese medicine and alternative medicine in general in the twentieth century, the term has come to be defined as almost coterminous with the emotions.¹¹² This is a rather odd development, given that in most spiritual systems, especially those with a mystical bent, the emotions are seen as problematic in spiritual pursuits and can be things that have a tendency to “get in the way of” spiritual development (see Walsh 1999).

Another irony is that the model of the emotions being grafted onto Chinese medicine as “spirituality” usually comes from various versions of Western psychology, which in turn is based on individualist ideas of the person totally antithetical to ones held historically in Chinese and Asian cultures. Asian cultures have tended to embed the person in a variety of contexts, both social and natural, rather than seeing people as autonomous “free agents” who have an individual identity outside their socially defined roles.¹¹³ That is another topic entirely, but for our purposes here, it is important to comment on another discordant aspect of this marriage between Chinese medicine and psychology.

Western psychology (or at least that of the 19th and early 20th centuries) derived from a scientific and materialist worldview—that is, one that sees causality as linear and mechanical, where meaning derives from matter and not the reverse and where “what you see is what you get.” There is no “invisible world” behind or prior to the material one. This is, of course, the opposite to the most basic belief of almost all spiri-

¹¹² The Worsley School of Chinese medicine probably began this trend, but it has continued among other well respected practitioners such as Jeremy Ross.

¹¹³ It could be argued that Daoism and other spiritual traditions from Asia counterbalance this highly socialized view of the person: they provide a somewhat socially acceptable space in which to explore one’s identity. But it is equally notable that this “identity” relates to the universe, the spirit world, destiny writ large, and so on, rather than to highly personalized ego-structures or histories. Indeed, Asian philosophies are highly suspicious of individual ego-based identity and mostly see this aspect of the person as problematic.

tual systems which either see spirit as preceding matter or at least as related in some kind of highly complex interconnected and inter-creating dance of the two.

In other words, here I do not equate spirituality with the emotions. Instead I take it to imply the following:

- that there is an animating or vital principle that gives life to physical form;

- that the human being has an immaterial, intelligent and sentient aspect which not only animates him or her but whose presence provides a larger meaning and connectedness to our existence;¹¹⁴

- that aside from this kind of animating force within physical form, incorporeal and immaterial Beings can and do exist in both the everyday physical world as well as other "dimensions;"¹¹⁵

- that knowledge of and interaction with and between all of the above give meaning to life;

- and that the harmonious relationships within and between the physical and all other Worlds is important to well being for all concerned.

Often all of the above come along with mythological systems, stories and beings that act as guides, maps and access points to connection with the spiritual and physical worlds

Finally, spiritual systems include ethical, moral, value, and sometimes even social systems thought to be necessary for harmony among all Beings and Worlds and within human and physical life.

Put succinctly, spirituality consists of those experiences, beliefs, practices, ethical commitments, and understandings that deal with the nature of existence and that which creates, sustains, and gives meaning to life. Topics that are in turn included within spirituality include:

¹¹⁴ Beliefs about the nature of this animating principle vary in spiritual systems. In Daoism and other ancient spiritualities, it is not only not unique to human beings but infuses all of creation, including things often defined as "inanimate" today: rocks, mountains, rivers, and the earth itself.

¹¹⁵ The word "dimensions" is anachronistic and more familiar to modern science or science fiction than to most spirituality systems. The "other realms" or "other worlds" are seen to exist so surely that their separateness or distance from the everyday world is always a matter of speculation, an ongoing mystery to contemplate and experience rather than solve.

Origins and Terminations: Where did we and all of this come from and where is it going

Ultimate Reality: What is the nature of these bigger and “more real” realities” and how do I access them? With what senses or in what states can they be reached and how do I attain these?

The Nature of Life: Why am I and everything else here? What is the purpose that I and the world around me are suppose to serve?

Good and Not-Good (aka “evil”): As humans we perceive that there is “bad” and “good.” But is this indeed so? In either case, what is the nature of this bad or good. Can I, and how can I, make sure that what happens to me is mostly “good?” How can I know the Good and contribute to it. And conversely, how can I avoid contributing to the bad, no matter how unwittingly?

Cause and Effect: What brings things into Being, animates them, both in the past and at every minute. How does this work and how may I best work within this reality?

Paranormal Reality and Experience, i.e., the experience of non-ordinary states of Being: What is the nature of such experiences. Should I access these. If so, to what end and how is this done?

Medicine

All of these issues relate directly to medicine both philosophically by virtue of being about the nature of well-being in a general sense and concretely by offering answers to the questions we face most acutely when in a state of ill health. They encompass issues of birth, death, meaning, connections to things larger than one’s self, and the efficacy thereof, the reasons and causes of suffering, the way one judges the quality of life, the ways one can influence life, applications to deities or other means of intervention for assistance in misfortune and ill health, the ability to avoid misfortune as well as illness, deterioration and even death.

In short, they attempt to address or assist with the most basic questions about life and death, health and illness:

Why me? Why now? What can I do to avoid suffering and sickness? How can I be happy? How can I enjoy life? How can I have enough energy to do the things I need to do?

Throughout human history, all medical systems from Ayurveda through Tibetan medicine, Tibh unani (Greco-Arabic medicine), Christian and Buddhist monastic medicines to polytheistic, animistic pagan medicine have considered the intimate connection between physical and spiritual health and have included this within their medical thought and interventions. Only modern biomedicine has tried to separate human health from these larger spiritual worlds and questions.

Modern Chinese medicine as currently configured, too, has a rudimentary, nascent, or implied spirituality inasmuch as it asserts an energetic explanation of health and disease, seeing life as the product of energetic rather than purely mechanical processes. To be sure, this energetic vision can be and is understood in a variety of ways. Approaches to the topic can be as mundane as asking a patient how their "energy" is, which means the practitioner is asking whether you can get through your day and perform your usual tasks. Or it can be somewhat more nuanced as in, "your energy is in disorder due to your unhealthy lifestyle or emotions." Or it can be quite esoteric in implication as in, "the energy in your house or of those around you is making you sick."

But modern, secular Chinese medicine is much more likely to come in on the mundane end of this spectrum and the esoteric ends are fairly undeveloped in terms of diagnosis or treatment in the Chinese medicine we are learning today.¹¹⁶ In general a person who goes to a TCM practitioner is likely to get a diagnosis of a spleen-*qi* deficiency, i.e., not enough energy to digest your food and get through your day. The question then is, whether to a woman who has just had her fourth miscarriage, or a man who has suffered from debilitating migraine headaches for his entire adult life or who is being controlled by his own severe depression, the explanation of spleen-*qi* deficiency or liver-yang rising is that much more spiritually satisfying or helpful than failing progesterone levels or vascular constrictions. To what extent does it offer meaning and comfort to someone who is suffering to tell them that they have been eating too much sugar, having too much sex or are giving in to their anger too much.

¹¹⁶ Some Chinese medicine schools in the United States go so far as to consider eliminating the concept of *qi* entirely from their curriculum as an outdated and unscientific concept unnecessary to "successful practice."

To be sure, these kinds of explanations offer something since they allow for some input and a modicum of control. But without being connected to something larger like, for instance, an idea of what energy is, how it moves in the body, how it moves through the universe and how that connects us to all that is, modern Chinese medicine runs the risk of being every bit as disconnected, dry, uninspired, and spiritually bereft as Western biomedicine.

In summary, then, spirituality is much larger than emotions. It is, and has been throughout the millennia, deeply connected to all medical systems. We need to think about how to re-introduce something of the kind into modern Chinese medicine. We must prevent its wholesale excision from it.

Any major spirituality system (or religions) could be a part of medicine as each of them addresses the kinds of questions listed above. In a highly multi-cultural milieu as increasingly prevalent in many modern Western countries, it makes most sense to work within the spirituality that is most meaningful to a particular patient. Perhaps we should have classes on world religions in TCM curricula so that practitioners are better equipped to do exactly that. Indeed, elsewhere I have argued that even an avowed atheist's "spirituality" can be addressed—albeit in a secular, scientific, and/or political manner. In any case, the answer to "Why me?" "Why now?" will vary depending the larger spiritual meaning system in which the patient is embedded.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ There is a tendency to try and homogenize the world's religious systems into one with statements like, "It's all one god," or "There are different paths, but they are all going up the same mountain." Of course, at one level that is much more mystical and rarified than perhaps most people are operating at, these statements have some truth. But when dealing with real life, on the ground suffering, they are not usually very helpful. Usually it is best to elicit how the patient understands the meaning, implications, causes and outcomes of their suffering, rather than obscuring these with statements that can at least be trite and at the worst, offensive. See Prother 2010.

Daoism

For practitioners the most obvious spirituality to include as a part of Chinese medicine would seem to be Daoism, the Grandmother Spirit of Chinese medicine. Daoism has answers, practices, and philosophical stands on all the above questions. Many Daoist techniques are directly related to health and longevity. But, aside from some qigong practices and programs that have been sporadically included in Chinese medical training, a few Western practitioners, some ordained priests, and the occasional temple, Daoism as a religious and spiritual system has not been available as an option for Westerners outside of China.¹¹⁸

There are multiple reasons for this. For one, Daoism has remained a marginal religion contained and confined largely to China. It has been appreciated outside that milieu only in the most esoteric, philosophical terms. Lots of people know of the *Daode jing*. Very few have actually read it. Even fewer know or even consider what it might mean. Hardly anyone realizes that Daoism is a complete religion with its own venerable history, canons, ritual systems, spiritual techniques, monastic traditions, priesthoods, women followers, and so on. Daoism has made its way into Western culture in a typically Daoist—surreptitious—way. Everybody knows the phrase “May the Force be with you” and what a Jedi Master is. But only very few realize that Lucas patterned both the phrase and the figure directly on Daoist masters, martial artists, and sorcery. Many people have heard of yin and yang and maybe even of *qi*. But very few know the word Daoism, let alone that it is an extant religion. When I use the term, most people say: “Is that some kind of Chinese thing?”

Some of the problems lie with Daoism itself. As it has come down to us, it is almost totally embedded in Chinese culture. Also, it is by nature secretive, exclusive, inaccessible, esoteric, and thus inadvertently elitist—just plain difficult to access or even find a place to practice. Until very recently, Daoism has not developed an even a mildly proselytizing sys-

¹¹⁸ It is interesting to note that there are probably many more Buddhist practitioners of Chinese medicine than Daoist ones. Perhaps the answers to this phenomenon will become clear below.

tem. Unlike Buddhism, which has tried to share its messages in some kind of universalized form, Daoism does not seem to want new adherents, especially outside its culture of origin.¹¹⁹

I myself tried to find a Daoist sect or group in the United States that I could “join.” The only things I found were “Daoist” martial arts studios and a couple of people claiming to be ordained Daoist priests, most of them thousands of miles away and when approached, clearly more interested in minions for the founder than in new Daoists.

Shamanism

So, then, what does shamanism have to do with this? Shamanism is really not an “ism” at all, nor is it a religion. The word describes a set of techniques employed to access spiritual understanding, states, and realities. As such it can appear in any religious system, although it has tended to stay primarily within cultures that are animistic, polytheistic and religiously tolerant and pluralistic.¹²⁰

In general, shamanically based systems assert that:

- all entities, whether animate or otherwise, are imbued with a life force, vital energy, consciousness, soul, spirit or some other ethereal or immaterial substance that transcends the laws of classical physics;
- each member of this cosmos is a participant in the life energy that holds the world together;
- there is a “web of life” in which all things are interdependent and interconnected

¹¹⁹ This is clearly changing. International conferences on Daoism are now being held outside *and* inside China. More importantly they are beginning to combine a scholarly academic interest in Daoism with an experiential interest as well thanks to organizers like Livia Kohn. Although these developments are encouraging, they are still somewhat nascent, and more can be done.

¹²⁰ Shamanism is usually distinguished from other “altered states” religions in that its most basic defining characteristics are soul flight to the spirit world and an almost total focus on social and individual healing. For a discussion of the differences between shamanic practice and other spiritual practices such as Yoga, Buddhist meditation and so on, see Walsh 2007, Pt. VII.

—there is a cause and effect relationship between different dimensions, forces and entities of the Cosmos

—and human beings are endowed with abilities that allow them to See these realities, interact with and within them and effect them for the common good of all (Moss and Corbin 2008, 27-31).

Almost all of these statements could be made in almost the exact form about Daoism in its many historical guises.

In fact, despite the antipathy that Daoists have had for shamans—probably due in part to the two groups competing for the same constituency more than deeply different approaches to the spirit world and spiritual practice—Daoism and shamanistic practices have much in common. Indeed, to any shamanic practitioner, Daoism looks like a very formally organized shamanic style religion.

Common Points

What, then, do shamanism and Daoism have in common? These are but a few examples of the many.

Both have their historical roots in Chinese folk religion.

The founder of the first Daoist religious sect was taught by shamans.¹²¹

The Daoist division of heaven, earth, and humanity closely resembles the shamanic division of upper, middle and lower worlds.¹²²

The role of Daoist organizations is to help create and maintain harmony and constructive communication among the worlds and beings, exactly as do shamans

Daoists and shamans have been feared by those in power who used that power to take people down the wrong roads.

¹²¹ Zhang Daoling, the founder of the first Celestial Masters sect of Daoism, by some legends was thought to have been taught by "the Queen Mother of the West, a direct learning from the Spirit world but is also thought to have studied with Sichuan shamans where he learned to "go into trance" and received his first revelation.

¹²² A clear example is the Great Peace movement, the earliest Daoist sect. See Hendrischke 2006.

Daoists in ancient times were often in opposition to the government and were feared by those in power for both the spiritual power that they had, but also for the power over the hearts and minds of the people. Shamans have also sided with the common people and have suffered the same kind of persecution from people in power.

Daoist schools are often based on “visions and revelations” which are obtained in practices that closely resemble shamanic journeys.¹²³

Daoist scriptures come directly from the spirit world.¹²⁴

Shamanism is usually not part of a literate tradition, but shamans take their information directly from the spirit world.

Daoists and shamans both heal, leave their physical bodies, travel to the stars, visit the spirit world, and have many supra-normal abilities, which they gain by amassing energy through various exercises.

Daoist exercise and martial arts moves have their roots in shamanic dances (see Despeux 1989).

Daoism and shamanistic religions believe in a great unifying ultimate while being simultaneously polytheistic, beliefs that are not seen as mutually exclusive.

Daoism embraces both multiple deities as well as the Great Ultimate (Taiji), which is the universe itself. Shamanic practitioners experience these realities in their journeys as well.

Shamans and Daoist priests work for the good of their communities with information and techniques received from the spirit world.

Shamans and trained Daoists can use energy to effect the material world.

Daoism as well as shamanism have powerful women practitioners who on occasion rise to positions of power and influence. Both emphasize “equality for women” on the world stage.

Perhaps most importantly, Daoism is a religion that is based in both earth and heaven, thus uniting these two arenas which are the basis of

¹²³ For example, the Shangqing revelations, where the medium Yang Xi connected to Lady Wei Huacun and other denizens of the otherworld. See Miller 2008; Bokenkamp 2008.

¹²⁴ According to Isabelle Robinet, the word *jing* for “scripture” in its most ancient form implies a “channeled” document (1993, 21-25).

contention between some of the world's religions.¹²⁵ There is a world-wide movement to reintegrate earth and physicality back into religion. Shamanism embraces it strongly; Daoism could contribute a great deal to it as well.

These are some similarities. However, today there is a glaring difference between shamanism and Daoism. Whereas Daoism is virtually unknown outside of China except by a fairly small, well educated and relatively peripheral groups of people worldwide, shamanism as an approach to spirituality is a rising star internationally, actively expanding on a all fronts (see Tedlock 2005, ch. 19). Shamanic techniques are being taught and shared on every continent, between cultures as disparate as the Scottish Highlanders and West-African Yoruba. Shamanistic abilities, far from being the property of an elite, are seen as abilities intrinsic to every human being. If one wants to look into or study shamanic practice, one simply goes on the Internet and easily finds hundreds of teachers available throughout the world. Readily accessible foundations¹⁸ and multiple journals¹⁹ provide information to those interested in pursuing this spiritual practice.¹²⁶

Yet, despite this stunning success as a spiritual practice, shamanism is anarchistic and based on small groups of practitioners. It can apparently be practiced by anyone anywhere. It has no centralized structure but is based on a loose set of approaches, tendencies, and different ideas

¹²⁵ The world's monotheistic religions, in some of their incarnations, eschew "the world," calling it the "home of the enemy" and not the proper place for humankind, which is heaven. Whereas the growing Wiccan movement embraces an earth-based spirituality and is thus set in direct contradistinction to many Christian facets, Daoism and shamanism find this dichotomy as somewhat odd. Both exist. Both are part of spiritual reality. Both can be accessed, traveled to, or reached within. Both have lessons and wisdom to teach.

¹²⁶ Among foundations, the most important is probably the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, run by Michael Harner and Sandra Ingerman. They have helped to spearhead and support international resurgence. Another is the Society for Shamanic Practitioners; see www.shamansociety.org. Among journals, see *Shaman's Drum* and *Shaman: The Journal for the International Society for Shamanistic Research*.

of how to proceed. Despite this, there is an amazing continuity among practitioners as to what constitutes legitimate shamanic practice.¹²⁷

Humanity in Crisis

If pursued with caution and a deep respect for Daoism as it already exists in the world, shamanic practice may offer a framework in which those outside of China can start to access the Dao in all its richness directly.

It can make a major contribution to the world today, especially if it comes to re-infuse Chinese medicine with a vibrant spirit via shamanic practice on a worldwide stage. We as humans are at a major cross-road today, in a veritable crisis. As Winona LaDuke, the Native American, Anishanabee activist and former vice presidential candidate back has said: "Our elders told us many years ago, that we would come to a fork in the road where either we could choose the Green Road or the Dark Road. And if we did not choose the Green Road, we would not survive."

This is where we are now. The dark and light sides of the force are lined up on either side, trying to influence which road we will take. Will we continue in our heartless, bellicose, avaricious, power-mad, consumer-driven, materialistic, earth-destroying, path? Or will we move toward a sustainable, life affirming, just, peaceful, and earth-loving one?

Many spiritual systems today address this crisis, looking to see how to reconnect people to the natural world, to the earth, to all creatures, and to each other so that we may change paths and embrace survival. Native American spirituality states this over and over. Reawakened shamanism states this. Indigenous African spiritual systems say it. Throughout Latin America, India, Europe, and the United States, spiritual systems are being born or resurrected that emphasize reconnecting with our deepest selves and with the living natural world in order to create a lasting, peaceful, and sustainable life for humanity.

¹²⁷ In contrast to this, in the academic world there is an amazing discontinuity of what constitutes shamanic practice. Scholars are busy arguing who is and is not a "shaman," a debate which has had almost no effect on the popular international movement

Up until recently the most active Asian spiritual system in this conversation has been Buddhism. It brought to bear its emphasis on overcoming the striving, selfish, angst-ridden, insecure ego and replacing it with a universalized compassion and inner peace, from which we can then create the world we want..

Daoism as one of the worlds oldest religions honoring nature, energy, and the universe has profound insights to offer—not just to Chinese medicine, but humanity at large. And this is not merely the Daoism of the *Daode jing*. Rather, the biggest contribution has to come from the whole of the Daoist religious world, especially since it created one of the earliest articulated environmental and social visions—Great Peace. But to do that it will have to come out of the closet, let itself be unleashed, and find ways to connect to the larger world beyond China.

Shamanic Exploration

Daoism is the logical choice for the unfolding of spirituality in Chinese medicine and for working together with contemporary shamanism. In what ways, then, can shamanic practice contribute to a Daoism that is available and useful to Chinese medicine practitioners or patients when appropriate? I can best answer that by saying what has come to light for me and my shamanic co-practitioners. We have undertaken numerous shamanic journeys searching for more information on the spirituality of Chinese medicine. Doing so, we have quite often encountered beings and information secretly contained within lineages. When this has happened the message has clearly been "Keep Out!" Outsiders should not enter here. We have respected this and continue to do so.

At the same time we have also been introduced to many wonderful things including inspirational holographic demonstrations of the intricate workings of yin and yang, ways to experience the five phases more palpable, vibrant and three dimensional forms. The whole energetic system of points and channels of Chinese medicine has been made available to us as a living, visual, and transformational dance. We have had insights shown about how pulse diagnosis can occur in a deeper way. We have learned that connecting with a larger energetic cosmos and especially with spirits of the earth, we can access information on, and a wider context, of Chinese energetics. We have even been shown acupuncture-

like systems as they have existed in places other than China in ancient times. We have come to understand the deeper connectedness to “all that is” that the system can afford us. We have been shown spiritual disharmonies as causes of illness that go well beyond the secular Chinese medicine commonly taught.

This may all sound odd and highly esoteric and perhaps even more incomprehensible and inaccessible than Daoism. Nor does it immediately provide a clearer picture of a spirituality for Chinese medicine. This is because “to be shown” Chinese medicine by the spirit world is an experience that cannot be easily expressed in words. Indeed, it is profound precisely because it is an experiential visual, sensual, auditory, and inspirational learning experience rather than something gleaned only from books and human teachers.

A new Daoist religion with deities, beliefs, ritual, and so on would not serve our purpose. Nor should we stop academic-style training for practitioners of Chinese medicine. But there is a great deal of merit in having direct access to the spirit of Chinese medicine and Daoism through shamanic practice. For me, even after thirty years of practice, it has brought Chinese medicine alive in many amazing new ways. I firmly believe that the practice of shamanism—especially as it connects with traditional Daoist techniques and vision—can be of great service to students, practitioners, and even some recipients of Chinese medicine.

Shamanism as a world-wide system that is easily accessible provides a unique practical way of learning Daoism in the modern world. It can bring concrete techniques to bear on our understanding of what traditional practitioners underwent, how they viewed their universe, and what their ultimate goals were. The Daoist cosmos and that of Chinese medicine is accessible from anywhere—with the right techniques and proper guidance spirituality can be just around the corner.

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Daoist Principles As a Solution for Sustainable Business

RITA EGIZII

A discussion of business sustainability cannot begin without a brief history of commerce, as we know it today. Trading, which is at the root of commerce, most likely reaches back to prehistoric times, when early people began bartering from each other, goods and materials they had, for goods and services they did not have. The history of long-distance commerce dates back to circa 150,000 years ago (Watson 2005). As described already by Powers:

The history of commerce is the history of civilization. In his barbarous state man's wants are few and simple, limited to his physical existence, such as food, clothing and shelter, but as he advances in the scale of intelligence his wants increase and he requires not only the comforts and conveniences of life but even the luxuries. Civilized man is never satisfied, for no sooner is a want supplied than another arises in its place, and under that stimulus he achieves mighty conquests over the forces of nature and attains to a high degree of development in character. Commerce is one of the means by which various peoples have at different times undertaken to supply their needs. (1903, 18)

Interestingly, Laozi provides a similar observation:

The Way of Heaven is like the flexing of a bow. The high it presses down; the low it raises up. From those with a surplus it takes away. To those without enough, it adds on. Therefore the way of Heaven is to reduce the excessive and increase the insufficient. The way of Man—is to reduce the insufficient and offer more to the excessive. (*Daode jing* 77; Henricks 1989, 48)

As civilization became more complex, those economies which relied on barter began to experience what has been coined as the "coincidence of wants" problem. The dilemma is caused by "the improbability of the wants, needs or events that cause or motivate a transaction occurring at the same time and the same place" (Jevons 1875). Often described as a "double coincidence of wants," in-kind transactions have several problems, the most common being timing and need conflicts. If two parties wished to trade fruit for wheat, the transaction could only be completed when the fruit and wheat were both available at the same time and place. Concurrently, if someone wanted fruit but only had lumber to trade in exchange and the owner of the fruit did not want (or need) lumber at that time, the transaction would not make much sense.

Creating a medium of exchange, such as money, solved this problem (Kiyotaki and Wright 1989, 927-54). The use of money, in effect, made all commodities available when they were wanted, and, at a supposed equal exchange value, for what was being bartered. For the purpose of exchange then, money came to serve three key purposes: 1) unit of account which facilitates valuation and calculation; 2) store of value which allows economic transactions to be conducted over long periods of time as well as across broad geographical distances; 3) medium of exchange which eliminates the inefficiencies of barter (Ferguson 2008).

According to most modern scholars, the Lydians were the first people to introduce the use of gold and silver coin. It is thought that these first stamped coins, as documented in the *History of Herodotus* (440 BCE), were minted around 650-600 BCE. The first banknotes were used in China in the ninth century, and the first in Europe issued by Stockholms Banco in 1661.¹²⁸

As communication increased and civilization developed, no one community was capable of producing all the things which it began to consume—either through need, or, more importantly, because of now defined "wants." The beginning of "commerce" then, as the modern world knows it, began with the interchange of products with other communities or nations, either domestic or foreign.

As ancient civilizations continued to develop, a "merchant class" began to emerge. The quest for new trading partners had powerful conse-

¹²⁸ www.rg.ancients.info/lion/article.html.

quences, including driving exploration in the 15th and 16th centuries which led to the discovery of the New World and, with that, new prosperity. With prosperity came power and opulence—particularly within those empires that had natural advantage (because of supply) over others. Practices such as money lending, charging of interest, currency exchange and the establishment of commercial credit led to the birth and evolution of banks and banking¹²⁹ (Ferguson 2008). In the middle ages, the Roman Empire became widely feared as they grew wealthy (and corrupt) from the profits of trade.

Economic growth, in the modern sense, is believed to have started with Industrial Revolution—a global transformation which led to an exponential increase in the human consumption of resources. Spreading across the world, increase in health, wealth and population was perceived as the new path of progress. Driven by new technology and globalization, the highest growth occurred in the 1960s during post-war reconstruction and in the early 2000s. The associated role that credit and debit has played in this growth has been identified by historical scholars as important to the development of human civilization as the Industrial Revolution and the Technological Era (Ferguson 2008).

Business as a Cancer on Society

In most countries, a “business” is a legal organization, established to provide goods and/or services to consumers. Businesses are the economic engines of most societies—producing goods and creating the flow of money so critical to the operation of today’s global economies. The owners and operators of a business work to generate financial return in exchange for acceptance of risk. In other words, businesses are formed to earn profit that will increase the wealth of its owners. Because of this, the act of “doing business” has carried with it as much negative connotation as positive. Throughout history, businessmen (merchants) were to be watched with a wary eye and were not to be trusted. As the world “progressed” and “big” business began to control the most powerful economies around the world, the toxic outcomes of unethical business prac-

¹²⁹ Bankers (*banchieri*) literally conducted their business seated at benches behind tables in the street.

tices began to have serious economic and environmental impact around the globe and many believe that the benefit of commerce has become as detrimental as it is beneficial (Tainter 1990; Homer-Dixon 2006). Although most of the developed world believes that commerce has had significant benefit on human progress in terms of overall prosperity, wealth and economic growth, there is a growing esoteric perspective which believes business has become a "cancer" on society—a totally profit-driven, self-centered malignancy that has gotten out of control and, will eventually, be the catalyst which causes the death of our modern societies.

The analogy of business as a cancer is an interesting one. Cancer, in its simplest form, is an abnormal cell that grows out of control and harms normal tissue. It is life-threatening and can be fatal if not controlled. Corporate growth, for its own gain, is similar to a cell gone awry—like a cancer cell which is focused entirely on its own survival and reproduction. Paradoxically, by growing with no regard for other cells around it, it causes massive internal and external damage, eventually killing its host, and the very system that supports it.

As Laozi points out: "There is no calamity greater than lavish desires. There is no greater guilt than discontentment. There is no greater disaster than greed" (ch. 46; Chan 63, 162). How, then, does an "enlightened" forward-thinking business person function in today's toxic corporate environment? How can businesses respond to the diagnoses of "corporate cancer"? The answer is simple, yet complex. One can choose to take a pro-active stance—learning to understand the role that they, and the businesses in which they work and operate, have in the wholeness of the Universe.

In their personal realms, whether they are staff, middle management or top executives, an individual does have the ability to make decisions that, ultimately, can impact the sustainability of the businesses within which they work. According to Laozi, "To conquer others is to have strength; to conquer yourself is to be strong" (ch. 33; Henricks 1989, 85). They can choose to be "servant leaders" and embrace important work/life balance practices—practices which will work to strengthen personal and social resilience. Thought leaders and political science experts are predicting radically different futures which will require paradigm changes in the way society and businesses produce food, manufac-

ture products and consume energy. These changes may need to involve re-visitation of global inter-connectivity, less travel, different financial systems and even the re-design of our cities). These same experts believe the world, fuelled by business, is reaching a “stage of vulnerability that could trigger a major social transformation”—the degree of which has only been experienced only a few times in the history of humankind (Homer-Dixon 2006).

The principles of Daoism become relevant in that understanding them can lead to greater appreciation of the intricate interrelatedness of everything in life (Kohn 2001). Ancient Daoist knowledge and practices are tools for transformation. They encourage harmony and prosperity, promote improvement of environmental peace and quality of life, leading to enhancement of both personal and “corporate” health.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Although only recently in the forefront of today’s news, exploring the sustainability of welfare in an economy that uses non-renewable resources is not new. Concerns about the environmental and social impacts of industry were expressed as far back as the 1800s. Economists began developing models of non-renewable resource management as early as the 1930s (Hotelling 1931, 137-75). Many anticipated similar concerns and worked towards establishing the modern discipline of ecological economics (Schumacher 1973; Solow 1974, 29-46; Daly 1999; Faber 2008, 1-7). Beliefs around ecology—especially those concerning the nature of powers that create and animate—are fundamental concepts of Daoist philosophy. They are instrumental in addressing the business-driven dilemmas which are seen to have contributed so immensely to our current environmental crises (Girardot et al. 2001).

Over the past 30 years, the changing nature of the relationship between corporations and the communities in which they operate has brought the discussion of an even newer concept—corporate social responsibility (CSR)—into public discussion in new ways. Individual citizens now have increased consciousness about the impact and influence of companies in their midst. Corporations are given a license to operate by those who buy their products and provide them with capital to grow. The societal expectations on which that license is granted are steadily

rising. It is no longer sufficient for companies to minimize harm in the conduct of their business activities but to actively take a role in the support of social progress. Laozi says: "To produce things and to rear them; to produce but not to take possession of them; to act, but not to rely on one's own ability; to lead them, but not to master them—this is called profound and secret virtue" (ch. 10; Chan 1963, 144).

CSR can mean many things to many people. It is sometimes referred to as the "3-tiered bottom line"—broadening allocation of economic profit to include work place balance, protection of the environment, and investment in community. Key concepts include engaging in ethical business practice, incorporating sustainable leadership principles and the introduction of health and well-being standards into human resource management. For all businesses, new management trends are picking up on the fact that CSR is a business issue which can mean the difference between demise or survival. There is an increasing realization that CSR is not simply an ideology but a pragmatic response to the hard-core business reality of remaining resilient in a changing world.

For pro-active companies, involvement in CSR is about risk management—and has become a fiduciary duty to shareholders.¹³⁰ Corporations are now competing on rankings in indices such as the "Business In The Community Corporate Responsibility Index,"¹³¹ the "FTSE4Good,"¹³² and the "Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes."¹³³ The London Benchmark-

¹³⁰ In 2007, Kingfisher Group (the third largest home improvement retail group in the world, with 85,000 employees and 2008 sales of \$9.4 billion), produced a Corporate Responsibility Report targeted to its shareholders and which focused on the importance of CSR in impacting share performance.

¹³¹ The UK CR Index is the UK's leading benchmarking tool for responsible business. It provides tools for systematic approaches to managing, measuring and reporting on business impact on the environment and in society.

¹³² The "FTSE4Good" Index Series has been designed to measure the performance of companies that meet globally recognized CR standards, and to facilitate "socially responsible investment" in those companies.

¹³³ The "Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes" comprise leading companies defined as the top 10% in the world, North America and the USA. Companies are evaluated and selected according to a systematic corporate sustainability assessment that identifies leaders in each of 58 industry groups in areas such as climate.

ing Group¹³⁴ offers yet another model for companies wishing to measure and report on the impact of their community investment programs. CSR indices assess the extent to which corporate strategy is integrated into business practice throughout an organization, providing a benchmark for companies to evaluate their management practices in four key areas of CSR (see chart below), as well as performance in a range of environmental and social impact areas material to the business.

CHART 1: The Four Areas of CSR

Community	Reputation, identifying key social issues, community investment, working with community partners, transparency about community investment targets.
Environment	Measurement and reduction of climate change targets, water consumption, leadership across all Green issues, engaging suppliers in environmental messages.
Marketplace	Balancing innovation & creativity with impact of products and services, influencing supply chain practices, raising & enforcing standards, policy for codes of conduct.
Workplace	Recruitment & retention, skills gaps as a risk (e.g. language/numeracy skills), flexible working practices, social benefits, learning & development, health & well-being.

¹³⁴ Working collectively since 1994, the London Benchmarking Group (LBG) is a group of over 100 companies working together to measure Corporate Community Investment (CCI). The LBG model provides a comprehensive and consistent set of measures for CCI professionals to determine their company's contribution to the community, including cash, time and in-kind donations, as well as management costs. The model also captures the outputs and longer-term impacts of CCI projects on society and the business itself .

Conclusion

The future success and prosperity of corporations, small or large, will rely on their ability to accept the reality of living in a world governed by fundamental, unpredictable, accelerating change. As market economies continue to deteriorate and the struggle for competitive advantage intensifies, there is growing evidence that a company's CSR activities form a legitimate and compelling case for long-term sustainability. Few organizations, however, have figured out how to use CSR effectively (Bhattacharya 2008). Surveys of employment preferences for both new business school graduates as well as an experienced labour force indicate a preference for employment in organizations that provide development opportunities, have high ethical standards and are socially responsible.¹³⁵ Similar surveys focusing on employee perceptions indicate that 75% of workers think their company's reputation should extend beyond its economic circle of influence to the greater good of humankind.¹³⁶

Proactive corporations interested in optimizing recruitment and maintaining retention of labour are already incorporating the four key components of CSR (community, environment, marketplace and workplace) into the fabric of their corporate culture as well as adding elements of work-life balance, diversity and CSR principles into the company brand.

The most powerful tool for adapting to monumental change and shifting paradigms is to develop and focus on un-changing principles, at every level of society: personal, family and corporate. In order for "business," as we know it, to not only survive, but to thrive in the modern world, it needs to embrace CSR issues—issues such as ethical leadership, respectful use of resources and the environment, promoting and maintaining the health and work/life balance of employees, and taking an interest in community—locally and globally.

¹³⁵ Annual Survey Report. 2007. *Recruitment, Retention and Turnover*. Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development. www.cipd.co.uk

¹³⁶ Keynote speaker, Ron Abbott, Corporate Social Responsibility, Deloitte (Calgary) at the 38th Annual Business Day Conference, "Think Green: The Business of Environment," Feb. 8, 2008.

From that perspective, and to those familiar with Daoist wisdom, it would certainly appear that CSR issues are strongly grounded in the principles of Daoist philosophy. Daoist wisdom, as outlined in its greatest works—the ancient classics *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi* as well as the comprehensive collection of the Daoist Canon—helps to gain a deeper understanding of the way people interact and how social organizations influence the well-being of both individuals and the world at large. For example, the concept of “authentic leaders” who are honest, transparent and concerned about the welfare of others has become a popular topic in the field of organizational behaviour (Aviolo et al. 2004, 801-23; Aviolo and Gardner 2005, 315-38). As Davis point out, ancient Chinese rulers have been aware of these traits for some time. “[They] faced the same challenges confronting leaders of virtual teams today—exerting influence over great distance through use of imperfect communication media, while confronting a turbulent and potentially hostile competitive environment” (2004, 47-62). Again quoting Laozi:

In the sage’s desire to be above the people, he must in his speech be below them. In his desire to be at the front of the people, he must in his person be behind them. Thus he dwells above, yet the people do not regard him as heavy. And he dwells in front, yet the people do not see him as posing a threat. The whole world delights in his praise and never tires of him. (ch. 66; Henricks 1989, 35)

The Daoist Canon, along with its supplements, describes guidelines ranging from the personal values of the individual (ethics), to the communal norms and social values of the organization, suggestions for altruistic thinking, models of social interaction and concepts of universal ethics (Kohn 2004). The search for harmony with, as well as the sustenance and valuing of nature as part of human culture is also addressed in the *Daode Jing*. Teachings from this influential text are also increasingly being used by corporations concerned with employee health. Practices such as diet, tai chi, qigong, deep breathing, massage, acupuncture, mental focus exercises and various forms of mediation—are encouraged as proven methods of decreasing stress and balancing employee work-life equilibrium (Kohn 2005).

Sustainability can be defined as the capacity to endure. It is the ability of a system to maintain processes, functions, and productivity into the future. As the world faces the escalating challenge of economic, political and ecological breakdown, the historical contribution of business in creating the unsustainable environment we now live in, as well as its unquestionable responsibility to address solutions that will meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations, becomes increasingly important.

As the *Daode jing* states: "By not elevating the worthy, you bring it about that people will not compete; by not valuing goods that are hard to obtain, you bring it about that people will not act like thieves; by not displaying the desirable you bring it about that people will not be confused" (ch. 3; Henricks 1989, 55). Ancient Daoist texts contain knowledge that brings hope for a better world—knowledge that will provide the tools that can help workers, managers, leaders and organizations face the immense transformation required to sustain commerce in a world where systems and process which have worked in the past may not necessarily work in the future.

Organizations such as Legacy of Dao (www.legacyofdao.org)—a nonprofit organization based out of the USA and dedicated to spreading Daoist wisdom in the modern world—will become important vehicles through which the knowledge contained in ancient Daoist texts can be translated and disseminated to those willing and ready to take up the challenge.

Also of note is the role that business schools are now taking in integrating social and environmental impact management into their curricula. Canada's Knight School magazine¹³⁷ and the Aspen Institute's Beyond

¹³⁷ Launched in 2002, amidst the wake of corporate scandals around the world, *Corporate Knights* is a quarterly Canadian magazine dedicated to the promotion of responsible business practices within Canada and the advancement of social and environmental sustainability worldwide. Beyond holding companies accountable, *Corporate Knights* evaluates corporate citizenship and the performance of particular sectors. Annual rankings of the Best 50 Corporate Citizens in Canada and the Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations are announced each year at the World Economic Forum in Davos. The Knight School rankings specifically evaluate the social and environmental characteristics of university degree programs. [Wikipedia]

Grey Pinstripe¹³⁸ both publish measures of how strongly business schools incorporate practice, research and teaching of social responsibility and environmental sustainability into their course offerings.

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¹³⁸ An independent, biennial business school survey which evaluates metrics targeted specifically to MBA programs.

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What to Fear and How to Protect Yourself

Daoism and Hong Kong Horror Movies¹³⁹

A Case Study of *A Chinese Ghost Story* 倩女幽魂—from Golden Harvest 嘉禾 Limited Production Company [Hong Kong], produced by Tsui Hark 崔和, directed by Ching Siu Tung 程小東, and starring Leslie Cheung 張國榮, Joey Wang 王祖賢, and Wu Ma 午馬 (1987)

SUZANNE CAHILL

In *Men, Women, and Chain Saws*, Carol J. Clover argues that characters and plots in American horror films embody and act out cultural anxieties in such a way that these anxieties are resolved in a manner satisfying to a broad audience (1992). The present article argues that Hong Kong horror movies, such as the popular and critically well-received *A Chinese Ghost Story*, also propose and then resolve cultural fears and conflicts. Modern critics have noted that Hong Kong cinema is full of expressions of tension, and have traced the origins of this tension to conflicts over the restoration of the colony to the PRC and to negotiations between the diverse populations that make up Hong Kong (see Tao 1997, ch. 14; Lau 2001; Zou 2004).

A Chinese Ghost Story also received positive reviews and sold out theaters in Taiwan, suggesting that it speaks to the concerns of Chinese audiences beyond Hong Kong. Such concerns include fears of modernization, globalization, and changes in cultural constructions of gender

¹³⁹ This article is a revised version of a presentation I gave at the International Conference on Daoist Studies held at Qingcheng shan 青城山 in 2004. I am grateful to Louis Komjathy, John and Sean McNeece, Marco L. Moskowitz, and Audrey Spiro for reading the paper and making numerous useful suggestions.

and social class (see Moskowitz 2004). And an article by Terrence Rafferty in *The New York Times* of June 8, 2003, entitled "Why Asian Ghost Stories are the Best," argues that the East Asian horror movie is becoming a significant player in global popular culture precisely because it resonates to global insecurities and anxieties.¹⁴⁰ Taking *A Chinese Ghost Story* as its main example, this article investigates the expression and mediation of anxieties in Hong Kong horror movies through elements associated with Daoism, the native higher religion of China.

The rich store of beliefs and practices found in Daoism provides a means for the Hong Kong filmmaker to harmonize social contradictions. Daoism tells both filmmaker and viewer what is terrifying, dangerous, and chaotic, as well as who or what can save us. While Hong Kong filmmakers may not be Daoists, Daoism provides building blocks they can use to construct character and plot. The viewer can watch and enjoy scary movies from Hong Kong without recognizing these Daoist elements, but awareness of such elements can deepen the viewer's response to the experience, heighten our pleasure in the resolving of tensions, and cause us to reflect on our own beliefs about relations between the living and the dead as well as mortals and immortals. As a case study, this article examines recognizably Daoist elements in just one recent horror movie. Several other good movies could be analyzed in a similar fashion (see Tao 1997, ch. 14). Below, I list the main roles played by the actors in *A Chinese Ghost Story*, summarize the plot, and finally comment on specific Daoist beliefs, practices, assumptions, and character types in the movie.

Roles

Two Heroes: Ning Caichen 寧采臣, played by Leslie Cheung, is an itinerant tax collector, an innocent and naive young man with the pure heart of a child. The movie opens with him on his rounds. The other hero is the old Daoist Master Yan Dajiao 燕大倏, played by Wu Ma, a wise and powerful expert in martial arts and protective magic, currently hiding

¹⁴⁰ I define popular culture following Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson as "the beliefs and practices and objects through which they are organized, that are widely shared in a population" (1991, 3).

out in a haunted Buddhist temple while preparing to save the world from the forces of evil. Mixing of Buddhist and Daoist materials, beliefs, and practices is a sub-theme of this movie and genre.

One Damsel in Distress: Played by Joey Wang, she is the ghost of a beautiful, wronged girl, Nie Qiaoqing 攝小倩. An ancient demon controls her ashes, forcing her to seduce young men to feed it.

Two Villains: The first is the ancient tree sprit/old woman who needs fresh human flesh from which she extracts *qi* 氣 or “vital breath” and *jing* 精 or “essence” to thrive. A male actor plays this female-tree character, placing transformation at the heart of the characterization. The other bad guy is the Old Lord of Black Mountain, to whom our damsel in distress is soon to be married against her will, making it impossible for her to escape hell and achieve reincarnation in human form.¹⁴¹

Plot Summary

The story derives from various tales in the *Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊齋誌異, “Strange Tales from the Liaozhai Studio,” a Qing-dynasty collection of ghost stories by the author Pusong Ling 蒲松齡 (1640-1715). It bears the closest resemblance to a story named after the heroine.¹⁴²

The movie opens with a seduction scene in which a scholar studying in a temple succumbs to the beautiful ghost who then rings her ankle

¹⁴¹ There are a host of demons and monsters in the Daoist universe, and it is the job of the priest or exorcist to control them and protect the faithful from their destructive forces. Many of these demons are gods of proscribed cults. Others are natural forces or entities, such as the tree monster, that achieved great powers through extreme longevity. The Lord of Black Mountain may be some angry form of Heisha 黑殺 “Black Killer” or Xuanwu 玄武 “Dark Warrior,” fierce demon-slaying deities in the service of Beidi 北帝, “the Emperor of the North.”

¹⁴² Edited by Chang Yuhou (Beijing, 1962). Moskowitz (2004) discusses how the plot and character of the movie diverge from those of Pu Songling’s short story, especially in matters of social class, but concludes that both ghost story and movie address similar concerns in different social milieux. The *Liaozhai zhiyi* has become so closely associated in Chinese popular culture with ghost stories and horror movies that a common Chinese phrase used to describe such tales and films is “very *Liaozhai*.”

bells to summon a monster who comes and ingests him off-screen. Then, behind the credits, we see the young, bumbling, and handsome tax collector traveling into a town while a song tells us that the path of human life is like a dream. He encounters a skilled sword-fighter whose violence terrifies the gentle Ning.¹⁴³ Ning's crazily spinning compass warns us that the area is subject to uncanny influences. A sudden downpour ruins Ning Caichen's tax registers. As he enters town, buffoonish bounty hunters shove him against some freshly written Daoist talismans that stick to his back, imprinting on his clothing. Unbeknownst to him, they will protect him from harmful spirits as events unfold.

Since his tax rolls are destroyed, he cannot collect taxes and as a result has no money. Thrown out of town, he is advised to go to the deserted Lanruo 蘭若 (lit. "Hermitage," from Skt. *aranya*, "forest") Buddhist Temple in the suburbs that everyone else knows is haunted. Townspeople tremble at the very mention of the place and warn him about wolves en route, while a coffin-maker measures him for his coffin. Daoist Master Yan, who happens to look like the wanted criminal Liu 劉, is living in retreat there. On his way out of town, the young man passes a painting shop where he sees the picture of a beautiful woman washing her hair. She later turns out to be the ghost heroine of the tale.

Ning races through the woods chanting a poem, to the accompaniment of howling wolves. At last he reaches the Lanruo Temple. There he runs right into the middle of a fight between Daoist Master Yan and the swordsmen Ning encountered before, who are old rivals. The tax collector attempts to make peace. To save his life, Yan tries to scare him away. Ning nonetheless enters the temple compound to find shelter. Inside, vampire-zombies wake up and smell his living blood. Nie watches him enter. Meanwhile, as the swordsman bathes in a stream to wash off the blood of combat, Nie seduces him. After she rings her ankle bells for the ancient tree monster, the camera races towards the swordsman (seeing him from the monster's point of view), enters his mouth, and descends

¹⁴³ Daoists had a strong interest in swords as ritual and exorcistic implements. The sword could be misused as a tool of unregulated violence, or properly used by a priest to protect the faithful and quell demonic forces. See Little and Eichman 2000, 189-226.

his digestive tract. His body shrivels as the demon sucks the life force (breath and fluids) from him. The girl ghost, an unwilling accomplice, cries in remorse. The old Daoist hermit cremates his former rival.

Meanwhile back at the temple, the tax collector rolls out a mat with a bloodstain from a previous victim of the monster, hears the girl ghost playing a table zither (*qin* 琴), and follows her enchanting music to an idyllic waterside pavilion where she tries to seduce him.¹⁴⁴ Her body and breath are cold. Although attracted, the virtuous young man rebuffs her. The talismans on his back protect him, causing her to recoil in terror. Afraid of the Daoist priest Yan, a queller of ghosts, she tells Ning that the old man is a killer. She flies away, leaving her instrument behind. He returns it, then tries to protect her from a snake, which she freezes with her breath. Ning then diverts the Daoist priest's attention so that she can escape. The old tree spirit tries to convince the Daoist to cooperate with her, but they are ancient enemies. The Daoist chases Nie; the tree monster intervenes, and they have a screaming contest. The master lights and then extinguishes fire with his breath.

Ning returns to the temple, hides from the Daoist who is amazed to see him alive, then retires. Ning decides to fill out the tax register by himself, while the comic vampire-zombies try to catch him. He accidentally and quite obliviously dissolves them by exposing them to light so that just a sticky residue of slime remains. When Ning goes back to town the next day with his new tax rolls, he scares everyone (to have survived, he must be even more powerful than the ghosts that haunt the temple) and they pay. The picture-seller tries to find the scroll Ning showed interest in earlier, only to find it missing. A ghost funeral procession passes through the marketplace, Nie walking in the center holding the scroll with her portrait. Carrying three lanterns and chanting a poem, Ning returns to the temple while Nie teases him by imitating howling wolves. She has already killed the real wolves and hung their corpses in the trees.

¹⁴⁴ The *qin* is a stringed instrument symbolic of the refinement of the *wenren* 文人 or literary gentleman. Many of the most famous *qin* compositions allude to Daoist stories and values and many were composed or performed by Daoists. They have been excavated in tombs going back to the Warring States period. On the connection between literati, Daoism, and the *qin*, see Cahill 1994.

Later Ning goes once more to her pavilion by the water although she has warned him never to return. We catch our first glimpse of a huge tongue as it races around outside. When Nie's ghost sisters and the old tree spirit enter suddenly, Nie hides Ning in her bath. The monster smells a human, whips Nie, threatens to destroy her ashes, and reveals that she is to marry the Old Lord of Black Mountain in three days. Ning sees all this from the bath in a scene full of teasing sexual innuendo. Nie tries on her red wedding dress. She gives Ning her picture, telling him her father had ordered it a year ago. Nie tries to help Ning escape, promising the old monster some human meat tonight. When she informs Ning of her forthcoming marriage to the Old Lord, he tells her not to go through with it. Unable to convince him to leave, Nie insults Ning. He tosses the scroll on the floor and stomps out.

Ning returns to town, where the shopkeeper informs him that the subject of the picture has been dead for a year. Seeing a wanted poster for the murderer Liu, who looks identical to Master Yan, Ning steals a horse and races back to save the girl. Meanwhile Daoist Master Yan does a sword dance at the deserted temple, chanting the first lines of the *Daode jing* (see Chan 2000) and continuing with his own misanthropic commentary. He ends with the line: "I just seek my own Dao" 我只求我道. Elsewhere the old monster's giant tongue seizes another man the ghost girl has seduced.

As Ning goes to rescue the girl, she comes to him and they spend their first romantic night together in her beautiful mirage of a water pavilion. He sees her anklet and, before she can stop him, he rings its bells and summons the old tree monster. Nie confesses that she is not human and sends him off in the nick of time. But he runs into her sister who tries to catch him for the old monster. Daoist Master Yan fights both the sister and the monster, appearing to kill the sister. He draws a yin/yang symbol with his own blood on the palm of his hand, wards off the tree demon temporarily, and escapes on horseback.

Meanwhile, court convenes in town in the middle of the night. Ning claims that Daoist Master Yan of the Lanruo Buddhist Temple is a wanted murderer. When it turns out that the murderer, Liu, is already in prison, the magistrate has Ning beaten. Master Yan arrives and saves Ning, only to have Ning accuse him of the murder of Nie's sister. Yan,

finally confirmed in public as a famous martial artist, explains that he killed a ghost, not a human. When Ning retorts that the girls live behind the Lanruo Temple in their family's grand mansion, the Daoist Master explains that behind the temple lies a cemetery. The mansion is a ghostly illusion.

The next day Ning and Master Yan visit the graveyard and find Nie's tomb, with her name engraved on the tombstone. Master Yan decides he must once and for all rid the area of the old evil abiding there. Reassuring Ning that "evil cannot conquer good," he instructs Ning to ring a bell to summon him when ghosts or monsters come. Yan also gives Ning a copy of the *Prajnaparamita sutra*,¹⁴⁵ telling him to flash it to ward off danger. He explains that ghosts are evil but some humans are even worse. Then the Daoist Master tells Ning that the old woman is a thousand-year-old tree monster who has been forcing Nie to kill for her. When Nie died a year ago, her father had buried her under the monster's tree, but died himself before completing her death rituals. The tree monster has been forcing her to entice men so that it can absorb their yang essence. And now the monster has sold her as bride to the Old Lord of Black Mountain.

Suddenly the tree monster grabs Daoist Master Yan. Meanwhile, our hero decides to save the ghost girl from the awful old woman and promises to dig up her ashes and restore them to their proper place so that she can be reincarnated. Here comes the huge tongue covered with slimy saliva: long, snaky, and phallic. Nie warns Ning not to let it enter his mouth or the monster will suck him dry. Nie saves him by binding the monster's tongue with her veils. She stays behind, telling Ning to run

¹⁴⁵ *Prajnaparamita* is actually the name of a class of sutras rather than of one text. These are called in English the "wisdom" sutras, after the Sanskrit term *prajnaparamita*, meaning "the wisdom that ferries us over [from ignorance to enlightenment]." They include such important scriptures as the *Heart Sutra*, *Diamond Sutra*, and *Sutra in Eight Thousand Verses*. Later in the movie, when it unfolds, we see that the specific text in question is the *Diamond Sutra*. Clearly specificity and accuracy regarding Buddhist texts were not important to the movie-makers. Daoist master Yan declares that he cannot read Sanskrit, the language in which the sutra is written; the text is effective even if one cannot read or understand it.

along the magical cloth path she throws ahead of him. But when he glances back at her the path vanishes. The old woman appears and entangles him in her branches.

Daoist Master Yan arrives in a ball of flames and burns Ning free. The old woman roars; "How dare you take my meat?" The Daoist replies: "You can't kill a scholar who is pure, but he's weak and good for nothing anyway, so who needs him?" They have a contest in sticking out tongues; she wins handily. He hurls his divine sword at her but only hits her coat. Writing the yin/yang talisman on his palm, he hurls fire at her. Her tongue encircles him. Ning seizes a numinous stake the Daoist Master has used to impale the ghost girl to a tree and enters the fray.

Trying to free Yan, Ning first stabs the Daoist Master in the buttock, but finally succeeds in jabbing the monster's tongue. Master Yan, now free, slashes her tongue with his magic sword and clear fluids pour out. A snout with teeth emerges from the severed tongue, and tentacles fly out of its jaw to catch the two heroes. As the Daoist Master hacks away at the tentacles, the ghost girl is sucked underground.

Daoist Master Yan explains to Ning that humans and ghosts are separate, and humans should avoid ghosts. The relationship of Ning and Nie, by mixing the two realms, has caused apocalyptic disorder. Ning Caichen reveals that he has promised the ghost girl he would take care of her remains and asks Yan to help. Yan accepts this request. Next Yan and Ning visit Nie's tomb, dig up five urns (hoping one is hers), and flee on horseback through the forest, carrying all the urns as well as the *Prajnaparamita sutra*. At first, they ride in circles, bewitched by the trees. After Daoist Master Yan shoots the trees with his magic arrows, they escape.

Arriving at a spooky inn, they find an innkeeper who shows them to a dark room. Four ghost girls emerge from four of the urn; none is Nie Xiaoqing. They hear a male voice repeating "Master," and despair, believing the voice belongs to the inhabitant of the last urn. But it is only the innkeeper. Finally Nie herself emerges from the last funerary jar. Daoist Master Yan, who has warmed to the relationship, departs to do some reconnaissance, and the couple writes romantic poetry on her portrait.

When Master Yan enters the dining room, he senses something evil in the air. The room is a hell mouth. Pots bubbling on the stove contain severed human heads; the kitchen wall is a stack of skulls. Yan races

back to the room, shouting that this is a haunted inn where a ghost wedding is underway. The ghost girl is sucked into the underworld and the two heroes storm the gates of hell to retrieve her.

Once inside, they encounter the ghost wedding procession. Nie passes right through them in her wedding carriage. She calls out to them but cannot see them. Master Yan puts a flaming amulet into Ning's mouth as they face a vast underworld army headed by the enormous, bristling silhouette of the Old Lord. Master Yan fights the army while Ning flies on the master's sword to free Nie from where the Old Lord has chained her to a mountain of skulls. Ghost girl and hero cling together to the flying sword to escape, but run into a cliff face of grabbing hands. The Daoist master fights a shape-shifting armed warrior who keeps vanishing. Lightning strikes and thunder rumbles. Master Yan spits blood and shoots a talisman at the warrior who, on contact, becomes visible and explodes.

Just as they despair, believing they are no match for the forces of chaos and will never escape, and just as the ghost girl is about to smash her own burial urn and submit to the marriage, our heroes recite the name of the sutra. Nie grabs the magic sword and perseveres, even though it burns her, until she stabs the Old Lord. Heads tumble from beneath the Old Lord's cloak, biting everyone. Nie loses the sword and falls down. As tentacles reach to grab them and all seems lost, the sutra flies open onto the Old Lord. The tentacles retract, and the Old Lord disappears.

The three exit the hellmouth. Daybreak has arrived, and the sun rises. Nie Xianqing quickly climbs back into her jar, Ning tells her to be born as a good person, and she disappears. At dawn the two heroes return her urn to her grave, perform ceremonies to release her, and depart with her portrait. They ride horseback into a rainbow.

Daoist Elements

Daoists hold writing to be sacred in itself.¹⁴⁶ Examples in the film include protective talismans and canonical texts such as the Daoist *Daode jing* and Buddhist *Prajnaparamita sutra*. Written talismans, brushed by Daoist priests using special characters known only to the initiated, protect the wearer. Early in the movie, paper talismans for sale in the market accidentally imprint on Ning's back; later they scare away ghosts. Master Yan draws a yin-yang talisman in blood on the palm of his hand in preparation for battle. One talisman helps kill a demon warrior. Master Yan thrusts a flaming talisman in Ning's mouth before a crucial fight. Such protective charms, part of the services the Daoist clergy offers the faithful, go back to legends about divine talismans provided by the Queen Mother of the West to the Yellow Emperor that protected him and insured his victory over Chiyao in primordial struggle between order and chaos.

To Daoists, the *Daode jing* is a sacred canonical text as well as a written account of true teachings. The text itself was believed to ward off harmful influences and strengthen anyone who held it. Master Yan chants the opening lines of the text as he practices meditative martial arts and readies himself for the great battle.¹⁴⁷ Chanting the title of the *Pra-*

¹⁴⁶ Through the centuries, since the first organized school of Daoism, that of the Tianshi 天師 "Celestial Masters" that formed during the Han dynasty, one of the duties of the Daoist priests has been to write talismans for their followers. The talismans were designed to cure or protect the faithful, along with their houses, crops, and livestock, from a host of ailments and dangers.

The two major schools of the Northern and Southern Dynasties period, the Shangqing 上清 "Supreme Clarity" and Lingbao 靈寶 "Numinous Treasure" traditions, claimed, as did many schools that arose thereafter, that their holy scriptures had descended through revelation from the highest heavens and were sacred in themselves. Revelation often took place through automatic writing believed to be guided by deities.

¹⁴⁷ Physical and breathing exercises linked to longevity as well as martial arts have a long and varied history in Daoism. Legend tells us that the Yellow Emperor learned the arts of war from a goddess and used them to save the universe from descent into chaos. Priests battle demons in exorcistic rituals to protect the faithful on a regular basis.

jnaparamita sutra, a scripture so powerful that the speaker does not even have to understand what he is saying for it to work, scares away evil spirits. In the movie, pages of the *Diamond Sutra*, one of the best-known *Prajnaparamita* texts, provide the ultimate weapon that finally kills the dreaded Old Lord of Black Mountain. The mixing of Buddhist and Daoist texts as well as deities, beliefs, and practices has been a common feature of Chinese religious life from the fourth century onwards.

An official government text also figures in the tale: Ning's disappearing tax register. Rain erases the names on the register, allowing the whole adventure to take place. In contrast to Daoist texts, official bureaucratic documents receive no respect. They must not be powerful or numinous, as they are impermanent and may be replaced inaccurately without harm.

Daoists believe that deities exist throughout nature and within each individual. They represent cosmic forces that may be helpful or harmful to humans. Their ranks include entities as diverse as holy mountains, cosmic rulers, and body gods. Age increases their power. Daoist thinkers try to understand them and arrange them in hierarchies that resemble and function very much like the imperial bureaucracy on earth. Daoist priests claim to contact and control them. Both benevolent and malevolent spirits and ghosts inhabit our realm. For example, supernatural man-eating wolves live in the forest between the town and the Buddhist temple. The deserted temple is even more frightening; the wolves dare not enter it. Spooky and inauspicious creatures dwell there. The ground around an ancient tree belongs to the tree monster, and so does anything or anyone buried there. A haunted inn contains a gateway to hell. Hell itself is full of powerful dark forces and their hapless victims.

Daoists also accepted the old and unshakable Chinese belief in the practice of revering the ancestors. This practice assumes that our ancestors remain present in this world as beings that can help or harm us, as we can help or harm them. One task of the heroes in the movie is to free the ghost girl so she can join her ancestral lineage and become free to reincarnate. (Belief in reincarnation enters China with Buddhism, but is soon absorbed into Daoism as well.)

In Chinese religious practice, rituals performed by Daoist clergy provide means for the living to communicate with spirits and the dead. Music forms an important part of such rituals. In *A Chinese Ghost Story*, ringing bells (anklets, small hand bells, and temple bells) summon spirits good and bad. The movie contains both funeral and wedding processions, both accompanied by music. And the beautiful ghost girl employs her *qin* as an instrument of seduction.

Using ritual and other means, Daoist priests mediate between humans and spirits, between the living and the dead. Priests both cross and maintain the boundaries between the quick and the dead. Many believe that Daoist priests can control spirits the way a puppet master controls his puppets (see Schipper 1993, 44-71).

Daoism also influences Chinese horror film physiology. To Daoists, *qi*, both physical breath and subtle energy, is a force that can act positively or negatively upon life. The ghost girl freezes things with her breath. The priest can burn things or extinguish flames with his. Life is also in the reproductive body fluids (*jing*: associated with semen in men and menstrual blood in women). Victims of the old tree spirit have their life force, in the form of bodily fluids, sucked out of them. The vampire-zombies expire in a translucent, gooey mess. The monster's tongue gets saliva all over everyone it touches, and other characters try to avoid it. The slimy tongue is clearly intended to gross out the audience. Compare the physiology of Western horror movies, where blood equals life and its loss equals death. Here the blood of the master, used to write a talisman on his hand or on paper, has power to protect himself and others, and to reveal demons.

Daoists further believe that improperly disciplined sexual activity drains the life force. The male characters eaten by the old monster had licentious or excessive sexual relations with the girl ghost. Daoist sexual practices for laypeople are intended to harmonize the *qi* of a couple, make both partners healthy, and lay the foundation for further religious pursuits. In contrast, many Daoist monastics practiced sexual abstinence and redirected their sexual energies toward achieving perfection. Some predatory practices, called "sexual vampirism" by van Gulik, exploit one member of the couple. One person, usually the male, absorbs the essence of the other (female) by absorbing her *qi* when she reaches orgasm while he does not (Gulik 1961, 158; see also Wile 1992). Daoists denounced

such practices. The old tree monster engages in a sort of sexual-dietary predation.

In a sectarian context, Daoists argue that their practices constitute a more effective path to perfection and liberation than does Buddhism. In *A Chinese Ghost Story*, the Buddhist temple is a dangerous place. On the other hand, Daoism incorporates Buddhist beliefs such as reincarnation, Buddhist sutras such as the Diamond Sutra, and Buddhist practices such as chanting the scriptures. The *Prajnaparamita* texts are particularly suitable for Daoist adaptation as they teach that everything is empty and that emptiness resolves all contradictions.

Daoist Master Yan practices martial arts and meditation to gain strength before battle. His ascetic religious discipline leads to superpowers, such as the ability to fly through space, perceive hidden identities, and communicate with deities. Practice results in magical skill in martial arts and talismanic writing, as much as Daoist saints, or transcendents, gained paranormal powers through their religious practices (see Cahill 2006). Thus the priest wields a powerful magic sword and magic arrows to protect believers.

Daoism teaches that change is constant, and things are often not what they seem. The opening song warns that life is like a dream; ordinary humans cannot tell what is real and what is not. Everything is relative, not absolute. (Some of the most famous Daoist stories, such as Zhuangzi's dream of a butterfly and the millet dream involve the relative nature of perceived reality.) Things transform. Land that is a cemetery by day is a ghost family's lavish mansion by night. A tree demon can appear as an old woman (played by a male actor).

Daoist Character Types

The itinerant tax collector represents the innocent fool who gets things right in the end because of his purity, like that of a baby or uncarved block. He embodies the classic Daoist/Primitivist ideal of potential vs. differentiation, illustrated in multiple passages of the *Daode jing*. This character type can include humor and even farce. He is honorable and authentic, the "true love" who can save the dead girl.

Daoist Master Yan is a sage or perfected person, like the skilled craftsmen in Zhuangzi's stories who possess a knack that allows them to

become supremely effective in their work (see Graham 1989, 170-211). Becoming one with the Dao through long years of discipline and practice, Yan has gained superhuman abilities. Rough and reclusive, he is both Daoist hermit and swordsman. He resembles an immortal in disguise, like the transcendent Lü Dongbin. Master Yan acts as a Daoist priest with his sword and talismans, protecting himself and saving others through his special arts.

Government officials and their minions are corrupt or idiotic or both. They are totally ineffective in combating the powers of darkness. Buddhist monks as potent saviors are absent, although the presence of Buddhism is all around. Only the Daoist master and the innocent, gullible young man—embodiments of the Daoist sage and the undifferentiated potential of the Dao—can save the wronged ghost and preserve the order of human society.

The evil tree spirit exemplifies old things that possess great power that they can use for good or ill. (Compare the old tree in *Zhuangzi*.) Nature is neutral, indifferent to whether it helps or hinders humans. The violent and destructive tree spirit, sucking the life out of her victims with her snake-like tongue, embodies the negative forces aligned against the Daoist leaders and the broader community. The monster needs blood sacrifice, like spirits worshipped by the bloodthirsty ancient "cults" that institutional Daoism, starting with the Celestial Masters, was continuously trying to restrict. Such spirits and their cults, difficult for Daoist priests to control, threatened priests, society, and the cosmos.

The vampire-zombies illustrate the dangers posed to the living by the improperly buried dead. They are embodied ghosts who can harm living people. Stiff and slow moving, they have cravings but no intelligence. Light dissolves and destroys them.

Nie Xiaoqing and her sisters are unmarried ghosts who were buried in a dangerous space (according to *fengshui*) without the proper ritual send-off. Unmarried girls make especially dangerous ghosts and only special rituals, such as posthumous marriage to a deceased unmarried young man, could bring them back into an orderly patriline where they could receive veneration as ancestors. Lack of any kind of burial rituals made them even more vulnerable to capture and exploitation by the evil old tree spirit. Nie must be released from bondage before she can be born

again. The Daoist priest, together with her innocent true lover, saves her and the world from the forces of chaos.

The Medium

Popular film is an excellent medium to convey Daoist teachings. Aside from words, which Daoists notoriously distrust, film uses visual, musical, and kinesthetic means to make an impression and tell a story. Movies are as accessible to a broad audience today as Daoist murals in temples and popular sermons in the marketplace were in earlier ages. And movies can serve the same dual purpose as religious wall paintings and lively sermons: to entertain and to teach. You need not be educated or even literate to take away the messages intended by the filmmakers, muralists, or public preachers. They operate in the dual realms of popular culture and religious teaching.

In addition, special effects—one of the great charms of *A Chinese Ghost Story*—have been part of the Daoist priest's bag of tricks since the "recipe masters" (*fangshi* 方士) of the Han dynasty. During the Song dynasty, for example, priests performing the Thunder Rites used the prototype of gunpowder to create dramatic fireworks. The *son et lumière* of these explosions must have amazed audiences, demonstrating the power of the deities these priests could summon (see Boltz 1993).

Conclusion

Popular film is a medium that provides a wonderful repository of information about contemporary people's beliefs and practices, hopes and fears. Modern Chinese historians and literary critics have recognized the value of more artistically ambitious movies from China as primary sources for their studies. We have been slower to discover the special pleasures and scholarly uses of Hong Kong horror movies. For the student of Chinese religions, they are an incomparable treasure-house of images and library of knowledge.

This article discusses only one aspect of one popular Hong Kong movie, but the example of *A Chinese Ghost Story* illustrates the important presence of Daoism in contemporary Chinese popular culture. Assuming that horror is a cultural construction, it stands to reason that Chinese

horror films would reveal traces of the culture that gives rise to them. Daoism is about accepting change and harmonizing conflict. So it can sooth the fears of Hong Kong viewers about returning to the PRC and of blending diverse groups in a small space; it can help the Taiwanese audience face changing gender and class roles; and it can help all of us deal with the shock of modernity and globalization. Finally, readers should find Hong Kong horror movies even more enjoyable when they consider the Daoist roots of the thrills.

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Conferences

Chinese Daoist Salon

Zhengzhou, March 22-26, 2010

Sponsored by the Henan Xinshan Daoist Culture Company and the Henan Xinshan Industrial Company under the leadership of entrepreneur Zhu Tieyu 朱鐵玉, this meeting was held in Zhengzhou, since 1954 the capital of Henan, major railway cross point, and a bustling commercial center. The location was a specially built conference center on the roof of the five-story Phoenix City Mall, complete with log cabins, offices, meeting halls, and exercise facilities.

Ninety scholars participated, from both China and overseas, including also a number of non-Daoists, some of whom were visiting China for the first time. The theme was the potential role of Daoist thought in the contemporary world and ways of adaptating and reconceptualizing Daoist philosophy. The organizers—Robin Wang, Hans-Georg Moeller, and Franklin Perkins—successfully combined the various papers into panels, presented either at the plenary session in the mornings (with simultaneous translation) or at English and Chinese sessions in the afternoons.

The talks focused heavily on the *Zhuangzi* (11), followed by about 7 each on the *Laozi*, later Daoist thought (Chongxuan, Quanzhen), general features of Daoist thought, and comparative perspectives (Greeks, Spinoza, Heidegger). Some also spoke on Daoism and psychotherapy, as well as on the postmodern reception of ancient Daoist thinkers. Lee Yearley and Hartmut Walravens gave stimulating key note speeches. Discussions were vivid and engaged, continuing through meals and free time. A day of excursions allowed participants to visit Luoyang, Kaifeng, or Huangdi's birthplace.

—Livia Kohn

Daoism Today: Science, Health, Ecology

Loyola Marymount University, June 2-6, 2010

The 6th International Conference on Daoist Studies was held in Los Angeles in early June. About 140 people attended, mostly from the U.S., but also from Canada, Europe, South America, China, and Japan. Four parallel sessions opened in panel and workshop formats, allowing both theoretical discussion and practical learning.

Livia Kohn gave the keynote speech on "A Win-Win World: Where Science, Politics, and Daoism Meet," finding new developments in the West that reflect Daoist ideas and practices and emphasizing the need for a more Daoist approach to life in the world today. Paul Humphreys organized a Daoist concert with the help of local musicians, and participants enjoyed both the spectacular scenery of the LMU campus and two al-fresco dinners in a lovely nature setting. A good time was had by all.

—Robin Wang

Southeast Early China Roundtable

Lexington, Kentucky, November 12-14, 2010

The 14th annual meeting of the SEECR took place at the Gaines Center for the Humanities on the campus of the University of Kentucky. The meeting was sponsored by UKY College of Arts and Sciences, Asia Center, and various academic departments. It was organized by Matthew Wells.

The keynote speech, open to the public, was delivered by Donald Harper on "Finding Religion in an Ancient Chinese Occult Miscellany." Presentation related to Daoism included Ronnie Littlejohn on "Cave Experiences of Early Daoist Masters," Shawn Arthur on "Daoist Dietary Ingredients," and Stephen Eskildsen on "Isolated Contemplation" in medieval Daoist practice."

Other talks included Robert Foster on "The Classic of Go (碁經);" Jeffrey Richey on "Early Chinese Roots of Shintō;" Keith Knapp on "Early Medieval Accounts of Unfilial Children;" Cynthia Chennault on "Expectations of Local Governors during the Southern Dynasties;" N. Harry Rothschild on "Normative Patriarchal Confucian Values" under

Tang Xuanzong; Jim Peterman on issues surrounding Confucius; and Hongjie Wang on the "Etymological History of *Wudai shiguo*."

The meeting was well attended, participants representing a wide range of disciplines, including religious studies, history, literature, philosophy, and art history. For the complete program, please see <http://faculty.berea.edu/richeyj/seecr.html>.

—Matthew Wells

American Academy of Religion

Annual Meeting, Atlanta, October 30-November 1, 2010

The Daoist Studies Group hosted two complete panels with four speakers each and shared one panel with the Chinese Religions Group. The first panel, chaired by David Mozina with Gil Raz as respondent focused on Daoist material culture. It included presentations by David Boyd on "The Embodiment of Immortality," Suzanne Cahill on Daoist themes in mirrors, Jonathan Pettit on medieval efforts at "Resurrecting Maoshan," and Neil McGee on the transformations of Lord Lao under Song Gaozong."

The second panel, chaired by Liu Xun and discussed by Livia Kohn, was generally on representations of Daoism. Here we had Shin-yi Chao on Zhenwu-related liturgies in the Song, Paul Amato on the Zhang lineage Mount Longhu, Helen Hwang on "Visual Representations of Magu" in East Asia, and Clarke Hudson on contemporary "Online Chinese Discussions of Non-Contact 'Sexual' Alchemy."

The shared panel was on "Topics in Medieval Chinese Religion," with Clarke Hudson as chair. It included Yan Liu, "Healing by Incantation in Medieval China;" Thomas Michael, "Ge Hong and the Formation of the Medieval Daoist *Xian*;" and Terry Kleeman, "State and Religion in Early Celestial Master Daoism." In addition, Joshua Capitanio gave a presentation on "Tantric Elements and Paradigms in Daoist Ritual" as part of a Chinese Religions Group panel that focused mainly on Buddhism and was chaired by James Benn.

All panels were well attended, and some had standing room only. Discussions were lively and raised numerous fascinating new issues,

especially regarding Daoism since the Song, in the contemporary world, and in comparison to other Chinese traditions.

—Livia Kohn

Upcoming Conferences

NEH Summer Seminar

University of Colorado, Boulder, July 18-August 5, 2011

In summer 2011, Terry Kleeman and Stephen Bokenkamp will direct an NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers on the topic, "An Introduction to Daoist Literature and History." An advanced language training seminar, it is intended for Sinologists who would like to incorporate Daoism into their research and teaching. We will read a wide variety of Daoist texts from all periods, starting with the early Celestial Masters and concluding with modern Daoist manuscripts used by the Yao minority. There will also be an opportunity to contribute to an anthology of translations. Participants are limited to sixteen, including two advanced graduate students, and must be teaching at an American institution. Participants receive a stipend of \$2,700 to help with travel and lodging costs. Anyone interested, contact Terry.Kleeman@colorado.edu.

Women and the Feminine/Yin: Theory, Society, and Practice

Nanyue (Changsha), June 24-28, 2011

The seventh in a series of international conferences on Daoist studies, this congress will be held on the southern marchmount, Mt. Heng near Changsha in Hunan, with its great peaks and temples and, most importantly, the site of the Kundao Training School for Daoist nuns.

The theme is women: concepts of the feminine, visions of yin and yang, position of women in Daoist history, practices associated with

women traditionally, the social and religious roles of women today, as well as traditional women's internal alchemy and modern forms of qigong and other Daoist-inspired health practices.

The meeting, which coincides with the graduation ceremony of the third class of Daoist nuns, is sponsored by the Religious Research Center of Central South University and the Hunan Taoist Association. The registration fee is very low, since the abbess of the Kundao Academy, Master Huang Zhi'an, provides free room and board to all foreign participants. For more details and to register, go to www.daoiststudies.org (Events—Conferences) or write to the organizers at daoconf@gmail.com.

Research Project

Daoism and Chinese Science

Funded by China's National Office of Philosophy and Social Science, the John Templeton Foundation, and the Yuen Yuen Institute of Hong Kong, "Daoism and Chinese Science" is a monumental research project under the direction of Dr. Jiang Sheng 姜生, Taishan Scholar of History and Director of the Institute of Religion, Science and Social Studies at Shandong University. It aims to provide a comprehensive and wide-ranging account of the connections between Daoism and scientific discovery in Chinese history, responding to the challenges by the late Joseph Needham (1900-1995) and documenting *specific* examples of Daoist contributions to "Chinese science." At the same time, the project also complexifies Nathan Sivin's contention that there are in fact no connections.

Through meticulous research, Jiang Sheng and his colleagues demonstrate that there is substantial historical evidence of such a connection. Daoists have made major contributions to Chinese science, assuming that one is willing to allow for the use of such a modern concept. The project is published in three volumes, all edited by Jiang Sheng, entitled *Zhongguo daojiao kexue jishu shi* 中國道教科學技術史 (The History of Science and Technology in Taoism) and published by Kexue chubanshe in Beijing. The first came out in 2002 and covers the topic from the Han (202

BCE-220 CE) through the Six Dynasties (220-581) in 862 pages plus four illustrations. Volume 2 just appeared (2010), moving on through the Five Dynasties (902-979) in 1207 pages plus 16 illustrations.

It covers nine major topics with corresponding sections: (1) Theoretical and interpretive issues; (2) Daoism during the late Period of Disunion to the Five Dynasties; (3) Scientific thought; (4) Alchemical methods and chemistry; (5) Medicine; (6) Health and longevity (*yangsheng*); (7) Astronomy and geology; (8) Physics and technology; and (9) Biology. As such, this work makes a major contribution to the emerging subfield and research topic of Daoism and science. It opens a new vista for future research in Daoist Studies. The third volume is scheduled to appear in two years; it will cover Song (960-1279) through Qing (1644-1911).

—Louis Komjathy

Science on Qi

Reviews

Bohlmeijer, E., Prenger, R., Taal, E., & Cuipers, P. 2010. The effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction therapy on mental health of adults with chronic medical disease: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 68:539-44. — — A quantitative review, this examines the effectiveness of mindfulness-based meditation in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and psychological stress across populations with different chronic somatic diseases (heart disease, fibromyalgia, cancer, back pain, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue syndrome) in 8 randomized, controlled-outcome studies 1966-2008. It had small-to-medium effect sizes demonstrating its effectiveness as a complementary therapy.

Jahnke, R., Larkey, L., Rogers, C., Ethier, J., & Fang, L. 2010, July/August). A comprehensive review of health benefits of qigong and tai chi. *Health Promotion* 24(6), e1-e25. — — A qualitative review of 77 randomized studies, this examines the psychological and physiological effects of taiji quan and qigong in studies 1993-2007. Interventions were examined within 9 outcome categories. Results revealed favorable effects for: 1) bone density and bone loss; 2) cardiopulmonary health; 3) enhanced

physical function; 4) reduction in falls and improvement in balance and gait, but findings were difficult to interpret because many studies examined frail elderly adults; 5) improvements in quality of life indicators—social relationships, psychological states, and personal beliefs; 6) improvement in self-efficacy (walking without falling; managing chronic conditions); 7) patient self-reported symptoms of neck pain, arthritis, fibromyalgia, and others; 8) decrease in psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression and improved positive mood; 9) improvement in immune function and inflammation. An important contribution of this review is recognition of the shared features of taiji quan and qigong with emphasis on meditation, breathing, and body movement. Suggestions for studying equivalence in controlled research studies are provided.

Logghe, I.H.J., Verhagen, A.P., Rademaker, A.C.H.J., Bierma-Zeinstra, S.M.A., van Rossum, E., Faber, M.J., & Koes, B.W. 2010. The effects of tai chi on fall prevention, fear of falling and balance in older people: A meta-analysis. *Preventive Medicine* 51: 222-27. — — A quantitative review, this examines 9 randomized controlled trials 1988-2009. Compared to exercise controls, taiji quan participants over 50 showed significant improvement in fall rates and static balance. Compared with non-exercise controls there was a significant improvement for fear of falling.

Research Studies

Eberhard, B., Kipman, U., Schätz, S., & Langguth, B. 2010. Qigong for the treatment of tinnitus: A prospective randomized controlled study. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 69, 299-304. — — 80 patients with tinnitus, anxiety, and insomnia participated in twice-weekly qigong sessions for 5 weeks. Compared to no-treatment, wait-listed control patients, tinnitus patients experienced improvement in tinnitus severity. Qigong effects were stronger in a subgroup of patients with somatosensoric tinnitus, a result attributed to the relaxation benefits of qigong training.

MacLean, K.A., Ferrer, E., Aichele, S.R., Bridwell, D.A., Zanesco, A.P., Jacobs, T.L., King, B.G., Rosenberg, E.L., Sahdra, B.K., Shaver, P.R., Wallace, B.A., Mangun, G.R., & Saron, C.D. 2010. Intensive meditation training improves perceptual discrimination and sustained attention. *Psychological Science* 21:829-39. — — 30 participants were randomly assigned to

an intervention group to receive meditation training (5 hours/day for 3 months) using attention to the breath. Compared to controls, training produced significant improvements in visual discrimination that was linked to increases in perceptual sensitivity and improved vigilance.

Perlman, D.M., Salomans, T.V., Davidson, R.J., & Lutz, A. 2010). Differential effects on pain intensity and unpleasantness of two meditation practices. *Emotion* 10:65-71. — — The effects of two forms of meditation practice (focused attention and relaxed open awareness) were examined among 10 novices and 9 long-term practitioners matched for age and gender. Long-term practitioners had at least 10,000 hours of formal meditation experience; one practitioner had 45,000. Novices were taught the practices and told to sit 30 minutes a day for 7 days prior to the experiment. During trials, participants were presented with a cue to employ one of the forms of meditation, then were briefly exposed to a painful temperature. Long-term meditators, compared to novices, reported a significant reduction of unpleasantness, but not intensity, of the painful stimulus while practicing open awareness. No significant effects were found for focused attention. Results illustrate a possible mechanism of clinical interventions such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.

Wang, C., Schmid, C.H., Rones, R., Kalish, R., Vinh, J., Goldenberg, D.L., Lee, Y., & Mcalindon, T. 2010. A randomized trial of tai chi for fibromyalgia. *New England Journal of Medicine* 363:743-54. — — A single-blind randomized trial examined 66 patients with fibromyalgia, a chronic condition with musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, sleep disturbance, and physical and psychological impairment. Half of the patients were randomly assigned to a group trained in Yang-style taiji quan; the others to a control group that received wellness education and stretching. Taiji quan sessions lasted 60 minutes, twice weekly for 12 weeks. Participants were also asked to practice at home for at least 20 minutes daily. Assessments of physical symptoms, sleep quality, psychological depression, pain self-efficacy, and quality of life were taken after 12 and again after 24 weeks. Participants in the taiji quan group experienced significant improvement in most outcomes, maintaining effects 24 weeks later.

—Donald D. Davis

Notes on Contributors

Imke Bock-Möbius holds a Ph. D. in physics, worked in China and began active qigong training; back home she studied Chinese language and philosophy. Experienced in other forms of energy and light work, she resides in southern Germany where she teaches qigong, practices shiatsu, and gives lectures at both academic and popular venues.

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True Form: Daoist Visual Culture in Traditional China is due to come out from Harvard University Asia Center Press. Email: sh6@rice.edu

Bill Hulet (aka Cloudwalking Owl) was initiated into Daoism in the 1970s. Not happy with any group he has seen so far, he has bumbled along trying to learn what he can as a hermit. His blog about his daily life is called "Diary of a Daoist Hermit." E-mail bill.hulet@sympatico.ca

Stephen Jackowicz received his Ph. D. from Boston University in 2003 and is now both a practicing acupuncturist and adjunct faculty at Adelphi University, Garden City, NY. He is currently involved in a translation project of the *Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion* (*Zhenjiu dacheng*) with The Chinese Medicine Database Project.

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Mary Kay Ryan received academic degrees in medical anthropology and the history of medicine, then trained in the practice of Chinese medicine, including at the Chengdu College of TCM. Active in its social application, she is co-author of *Treating AIDS with Chinese Medicine* (Pacific Press, 1994). She currently practices Chinese medicine in Chicago and teaches there at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine.

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Jeongsoo Shin is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Washington in Seattle. His dissertation explores the literary tradition of an allegorical kingdom of flowers in Sino-Korean Literature. He plans to work next on intellectual exchanges between Tang China and Silla Korea.

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