CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The common view of Daoism is that it encourages people to live with detachment and calm, resting in nonaction and smiling at the vicissitudes of the world. Most people assume that Daoists are separate from the human community, not antisocial or asocial but rather supra-social and often simply different. Daoists neither criticize society nor support it by working for social change, but go along with the flow of the cosmos as it moves through them. They are not much concerned with rules and the proprieties of conduct, which they leave to the Confucians in the Chinese tradition.

Contrary to this common view, Daoists through the ages have developed various forms of community and proposed numerous sets of behavioral guidelines and texts on ethical considerations. Beyond the ancient philosophers, who are well-known for the moral dimension of their teachings,[1] religious Daoist rules cover both ethics, i.e., the personal values of the individual, and morality, i.e., the communal norms and social values of the organization (Trauzettel 2002, 137). They range from basic moral rules against killing, stealing, lying, and sexual misconduct through suggestions for altruistic thinking and models of social interaction to behavioral details on how to bow, eat, and wash, as well as to the unfolding of universal ethics that teach people to think like the Dao itself. About eighty texts in the Daoist canon and its supplements describe such guidelines and present the ethical and communal principles of the Daoist religion.[2] They document just to what degree Daoist realization is based on how one lives one's life in interaction with the community—family, religious group, monastery, state, and cosmos. Ethics and morality, as well as the creation of community, emerge as central in the Daoist religion.

In this regard Daoism does not stand alone. Rules and community structures play an important role in all religious traditions. They are often placed at the very foundation of religious aspiration and practice, formulating the proper way of conducting oneself in daily life and in relation to others, prohibiting destructive and disruptive behaviors, while encouraging practitioners to develop a positive and helpful outlook toward themselves and the world. Only on this basis of essentially moral conduct and a functioning human community can true inner cultivation grow and can higher levels of spirituality be attained.

Daoism shares with other religions the emphasis on ethical guidelines requisite to serious attainment and its support of three fundamentally different types of community: lay organizations, monastic institutions, and the closed communities of millenarian or utopian groups. It is unique in that its rules, which make use of both traditional Chinese values and Buddhist precepts, are highly varied and specific not only to these communities as they change over time but also to different levels of ordination and types of rituals. Furthermore, the rules are manifold, there are numerous different terms for them, and they appear in different grammatical formats.

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[1] On ethics in early philosophical Daoist texts, see Graham 1983; Girardot 1985; Peerenboom 1991; Ames 1992; Kjellberg and Ivanhoe 1996; Kirkland 2001; and Vankeerberghen 2001

[2] Only two studies discuss religious Daoist ethics: Kleeman 1991; Liu 1990, 133-46. For a complete list of precepts texts in the Daoist canon and its supplements, see "The Texts" below.

On the basis of their terminology and grammar, four types can be distinguished: prohibitions formulated as "do not" (*bude* 不得); admonitions including the term "should" (*dang*當) or "should always" (*changdang* 常當); injunctions that deal with concrete daily behavior; and resolutions that focus on a specific mindset, are phrased in the first person, and usually contain expressions like "pray" (*yuan* 願), "be mindful" (*nian* 念), or "bring forth [the good] intention" (*faxin* 發心).

The presentation in this volume, after a general description of the cosmic dimension of Daoist rules in chapter 1, follows the order of these four types, studying their appearance and role in the three different kinds of communities. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with prohibitions, first with the five great moral rules, then with specific guidelines regarding the use of food, wine, and sex. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on admonitions, beginning with a general survey of the ten precepts, then moving on to the use of positive encouragement in community building and organization. Chapter 6 explores monastic injunctions and the transformation of daily behavior, and chapter 7 concentrates on mental resolutions and other guidelines that create a cosmic mind.

In all cases, the communities are predominantly medieval (3rd through 9th centuries), mainly because that is where the sources emerged. But materials from Song ritual collections as well as from the monastic school of Complete Perfection are also included. Since the discussion is organized thematically, it does not follow a chronological order, and information on certain communities appears in different chapters, depending on the type of rules studied. For a chronological overview of the tradition, as well as a detailed outline of the textual resources, the reader is directed to the chapter on "The Texts" and the subsequent translation of sources.

KINDS OF PRECEPTS

The most general word for rule in China is *jie* 戒, commonly translated "precept." It follows the radical *ge* 戈, "spear" or "lance," to which it adds *gong* 共, the image of joined hands. The picture of the entire graph shows a phalanx of people with spears in hand who guard something or warn someone off. More psychologically, the word means to be prepared for unforeseen dangers, to guard against unwholesome influences, and to abstain from harmful actions. It occurs in the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記) to denote a sense of preparedness against the dangers lurking in the workings of the cosmos. In the *Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語), the recorded sayings of Confucius, it is seen more in a social context:

> The Master said: The gentleman has three things to be cautious about [*jie*; abstain from]: In his youth, when his blood and energy are not yet settled, he must be cautious about sex. In his middle years, when his blood and energy are just strong, he must be cautious about fighting. In his old age, when his blood and energy already weak, he must be cautious about greed [gain]. (16.7)

Jie can be described as occurring on three levels in Chinese culture. Most fundamentally, they match the basic moral rules against killing, stealing, lying, and sexual misconduct that are also found in other religions. Studied cross-culturally by moral philosophers and scholars of religion, they are considered great and universal, essentially rational, non-religious, geared to the individual, essential to civilization, and beyond the limitations of particular societies or cosmologies (Gert 1970, 60-69). In addition to being punished by the society and various cosmic forces or deities, their central agency for judgment is internal: the individual's conscience, sense of guilt, and awareness of what is right. These moral rules are so basic that, even if formulated in a spe-

cific social and historical context, they are not primarily social or cultural, but should be followed for their own sake, for the pure dictates of reason and humaneness (Green 1987, 94-96; Kant 1960). They appeal to the innate goodness in people and are monitored internally by their conscience, allowing the creation of an absolute morality that is valid for all and based on being essentially human (Bergson 1933, 22).

Beyond this, *jie* in China also include prohibitions (*jin* 禁) of certain socially disruptive behaviors and detailed taboos (*ji* 忌) of time and space. Unlike the universal rules, prohibitions focus on specific social actions and attitudes that are considered detrimental to the group and may lead to the disruption of social bonds and the destruction of integration and harmony. Represented by the ancient Confucian tradition, they are geared toward the upholding of propriety and social order, controlling sex, aggression, greed, and so on. Violations are punished by preventing people from attaining the established social goals of long life, prosperity, respect, and well-being.

Taboos, in contrast, are cosmically defined and center on space and time, prohibiting people from stepping on certain areas or committing specific acts at defined times, such as not eating crab on days associated with this animal (see Wagner 1987). Their violation creates a form of cosmic impurity and is punished by temporary exile from the tribe. If severe, their violation can lead to natural catastrophes and epidemics sent by the gods.

As described in the *Book of Rites,* taboos were wide-spread in ancient China. They hoped to create cosmic harmony through correct seasonal behavior (Emmrich 1992, 52-68). They prohibited not only the commission but even the watching of impure activities and prevented all close contact among unrelated members of the opposite sex (Emmrich 1992, 72-75). They also guarded against the taking of improper foods that would violate the harmony of yin and yang, the balance among the food groups, and the law of moderation (Emmrich 1992, 93-99; Chang 1977, 10).

Western scholars see distinct differences in kind, social context, and human consciousness among moral rules, prohibitions, and taboos. Paul Ricoeur, in his pioneering study of the symbolism of evil (1967) on the basis of Western religions, presents an evolution of ethical thinking from taboos through prohibitions to moral rules. Their violation causes different forms of the awareness of evil, which he calls defilement, sin, and guilt.

Defilement is characterized by the relation between the individual and the cosmos, and its practice consists of "a dread of the impure and rites of purification" (Ricoeur 1967, 25). Evil is externalized. Heaven and the gods cause natural catastrophes, fires, droughts, famines, and diseases. Purity, moral good, and good fortune are one and the same. To prevent evil, people create a detailed system of interdictions, "minute prescriptions in domains that for us are ethically neutral" (Ricoeur 1967, 27).

Sin, second, is the "violation of a personal bond" (1967, 52). It signifies the development of greater individual awareness yet still defines people as predominantly social beings. During the stage of sin sets of prohibitions emerge, which "elaborated ritual, penal, civil, and political codes to regulate conduct" (Ricoeur 1967, 53). People at this stage recognize their personal involvement in events but do not fully separate the independent self from nature and others and accordingly make no distinction between sickness and fault. What they experience within is linked with events without; sickness is the punishment for sin and misfortune is the result of evil intentions.

Only at the stage of guilt does the individual come fully into his own. Guilt means the emergence of a delicate and scrupulous conscience, the recognition of personal responsibility for one's own intentions and actions and the acceptance of an inner rather than a cosmic or a social control of evil impulses (Ricoeur 1967, 100). Punishment, too, is internalized as pure guilt—the unadulterated feeling that one deserves punishment and the powerful anxiety that comes with its anticipation. In its fully developed and conscious form, guilt is the eternal strife for altruistic perfection, the never-ending fight against egoistic impulses. It can be expiated through penance, confessions, and altruistic good deeds.

From cosmos to society to the individual, the punishment framework is narrowed successively as evil is increasingly internalized. While a similar development also took place in China and it is possible to apply Ricoeur's stages here (see Lai 1984; Kohn 1995a; 2002a), it is important to understand that Daoist rules intermingle all three and see violations in cosmic as well as social and personal terms. The universal moral rules, joined by specific social prohibitions and cosmic taboos, thus create a fundamental level of Daoist morality, which can be called ordinary morality or conventional morality. It reflects values also found in Chinese society in general and supported by Confucian doctrine. This kind of morality serves to define a clear sense of reciprocity within the community and provides limitations on specific modes of behavior. It is practiced in a tight hierarchical setting, where both individuals and groups interact in a given pattern, striving for the realization of socially defined moral goodness.

ADMONITIONS, INJUNCTIONS, AND RESOLUTIONS

Beyond *jie*, a second form of Daoist rules is found in positively formulated guidelines, encouraging followers to develop virtues of kindness and compassion and to become considerate toward others. Often called admonitions (*quan*勸), they are the Daoist equivalent of what moral philosophers call supererogatory rules. Supererogation literally means "paying out more than required" and involves acts that are not obligatory but go beyond the call of duty and are thus of special value. They can be acts of heroism, beneficence, kindness, or forgiveness and always carry a special extra level of goodness (Heyd 1982, 115, 144-64). Supererogation creates merit and enhances virtue as a moral quality (Kant 1948, 57-58).

Rules of this type are formulated as "should," indicating a preferred course of action, "what one should do if one desires to achieve moral perfection" (Heyd 1982, 182). In Daoism, they include precepts such as: "Always create fields of blessedness," or "Always be careful where you take lodging," as well as detailed instructions on how to behave in certain situations. For example: "When walking with others, always let them go first," or "Every time you receive food from someone, cast a spell of good wishes to the effect that the donor may attain good fortune and be always full and satisfied."

Admonitions both limit certain physical actions and encourage others. They focus increasingly on the mind of the practitioner and serve to create a different level of moral awareness that could be called altruistic morality. Not unlike the bodhisattva ideal in Buddhism (see Kawamura 1981), it includes a non-ego-centered approach to the world, encompassing positive attitudes that are not reciprocal but one-sided in that they teach one to do good without expecting anything in return. Virtues include compassion, love, generosity, and an openness toward all beings that realizes an ideal within the person rather than in society. The practitioner of this level of

morality is envisioned as standing outside society's hierarchical structures, yet his or her actions, undertaken in pure unselfish goodness, have a strong impact on the harmony and well-being of all. The basic pattern is impulse and response (*ganying* 感應): the practitioner giving pure love as an impulse, while society and the universe respond by becoming better and more harmonious.

A third type of Daoist rules appears as practical injunctions or rules (*ke* 科; *gui* 規 after the Song), dignified observances (*weiyi* 威儀), and statutes (*lü* 律). They prescribe in detail how and when to perform a certain action. Injunctions regulate every aspect of life and physical activity, causing the submission of the individual to the communal pattern and enabling the complete transformation of personal reality toward a celestial level.

Injunctions create a system of "ordered, authorized, tested actions," a *habitus* sanctioned by the group that shapes the reality and identity of its members (Mauss 1979, 102). Ranging from body movements (walking, squatting) through ways of caring for the body (washing, grooming) to consumption techniques (Mauss 1979, 98-100, 117-18), injunctions cover everything: attitudes to food, authority, sexual relations, nakedness, pleasure and pain, medicine and healing, and the use of 'body' metaphors (Coakley 1997, 8; see also Bourdieu 1977; 1990). Daoist examples include: "To bow, stand upright with palms joined at chest level;" "At meals, always first rinse your mouth and chant a blessing;" and "After use carefully fold your ritual vestments." They provide instructions on body techniques that constitute a sense of culturally and communally determined personhood realized in ordinary, daily life. Similarly, dignified observances prescribe proper ritual behavior, while statutes detail the administrative proprieties of the priestly hierarchy.

The ethics encapsulated in these rules serve the submission of ordinary bodily and social modes of behavior under the discipline of the institution (see Reinders 1997). Creating a new celestial way of being on the fundamental level of everyday activities, this transformative ethics is inward-focused and complements socially-centered prohibitions and admonitions. It takes Daoists further toward the goal of cosmic oneness in that it helps them to create a concrete basis of Dao-life in their bodily, personal, and ritual interactions.

Beyond all this is the fourth and highest level of Daoist rules representing the moral position of the perfected Daoist, fully at one with the cosmos and intimately perceptive of the cosmic flow. The dominant form of rules at this level is the resolution (*yuan* 願) or remembrance (*nian* 念). Unlike the other rules which are formulated as imperatives, these are phrased in the first person. They are declarations of positive intent and personal guidelines for developing a cosmic attitude and mindset. They go beyond even supererogatory rules in that they focus on the welfare of all beings and engage practitioners in universal ethics. Creating a culture of pure altruism, resolutions guide adepts to feel benevolence, sympathy, love, and compassion; to regard themselves as merely one person among others; and to find identity as part of the larger universe (see Nagel 1970; Munroe 1996).

Resolutions include specific prayers or good wishes, such as: "When I encounter clouds and rain, I pray that all may be soaked with kindness and be full to overflowing, so there is nothing that does not grow;" or "I will constantly practice a compassionate mind and pray and be mindful that all beings equally get to see the divine law." They may also create a mindset conducive

to meditation and advanced Daoist practice. An example is: "May I wander to the Golden Towers in Highest Clarity, to pay my respects to the perfected and the Highest Lord."

Then again, resolutions can appear as strong declarations of determination, as in "I'd rather be harmed by wild tigers and poisonous snakes than ever harm the rules and prohibitions of the Heavenly Worthies." Developing a mind of such resolutions and remembrances, Daoists spontaneously avoid violating any rules and step in harmony with all. They no longer have an impact on the running of the universe, but flow along with the larger pattern, rejoicing in the inner harmony of the world and finding total freedom in it.

Taken together, these four kinds of rules present a comprehensive guide to the Daoist enterprise in this world. They are formulated and activated in different communities and change in expression and scope over the centuries of Daoist history. Their first appearance is among the millenarian community of the Celestial Masters.

EARLY MILLENARIAN COMMUNITIES

The earliest Daoist communities were the Celestial Masters (Tianshi 天師) and Great Peace (Taiping 太平) movements in the second century C.E., located in Sichuan and Shandong respectively. They focused on preparing their members for the coming end of the world and were essentially millenarian in nature (see Seidel 1969; 1984).

Millenarian organizations are a form of liminal communities or *communitas* as described by Victor Turner (1969); they resemble utopian communes as studied by Rosabeth Kanter (1972). Such groups tend to insist on a high degree of order and control, coordinating all activities and planning every aspect of life, however personal. Labor, property, personal items, kin, food, and sex—the core values and markers of rank in normative society—are shared and managed by the group. This leads to the practice of communal kitchens, dormitories, and childcare, as well as to the control of sexuality through either celibacy, communal sex, or arranged marriages (Kanter 1972, 44). Internally more open than conventional society in that they cut across ethnic, caste, and national divisions, such groups define themselves through being on the margins of ordinary social structure, whose existence they need as a counterpoint to their own place (Turner 1969, 127).

Like millenarian or utopian groups in general, early Daoist communities defined their organizational structures in religious terms and disregarded common social distinctions such as class, gender, and ethnicity. They also used ritual to determine their calendar and communal activities; they valued the community above individual needs and desires; they required strict humility and obedience as well as sexual control; and they demanded their members to accept pain, suffering, and humiliation as part of community life.

More specifically, among the Celestial Masters and to a lesser degree in the Great Peace movement,[3] followers were ranked hierarchically on the basis of ritual attainments, with the so-called

[3] On the history of both movements, see Hendrischke 2000; Robinet 1997. On the Celestial Masters, see Levy 1956; Stein 1963; Schipper 1984; Kleeman 1998;. Ōfuchi 1991; 1997. On Great Peace, see Kaltenmark 1979; Petersen 1989-90. For contemporary Daoist community as practiced among the Yao in northern Thailand, see Strickmann 1982; Lemoine 1982; Höllmann and Friedrich 1999.

libationers (*jijiu* 祭酒) at the top. They served as leaders of the twenty-four districts established by their founder Zhang Daoling 張道陵 and reported directly to the Celestial Master himself.

Beneath them were meritorious household leaders who represented smaller units in the organization and who guided the demon soldiers (*guizu* 鬼卒), the lowest level of initiates. Members came from all walks of life and included many non-Chinese—notably Ba and Banshun Man (Kleeman 1998, 74; 2002, 27)—and leadership positions could be filled by either men or women, Han Chinese, or ethnic minorities. Ranks were attained through ritual initiations, at which followers received lists of spirit generals for protection against demons. The earliest initiations were given to children at age seven, then continued at regular intervals, depending on the follower's devotion and community service. The list of spirit generals was called a register (*lu* 籙 and was carried, together with protective talismans, in a piece of silk around the waist.

Each household paid a rice tax or its equivalent in silk, paper, brushes, ceramics, or handicrafts. Its exact amount varied according to the number of productive members in each family. The tax was assigned and collected on the three major festival days of the year: the fifteenth day of the first, seventh, and tenth months. These days were called the Three Primes (*sanyuan* 三元). They were celebrated in honor of the celestial administration, the Three Bureaus (*sanguan* 三官) of Heaven, Earth, and Water, which kept records of life and death. Festivities involved large community assemblies and banquets known as kitchen-feasts (*chu* 廚), when the consumption of meat and wine was allowed. In addition, each smaller unit or village had a community or parish hall, where members would assemble weekly to perform rituals, confess sins, and discuss local affairs.[4]

Everybody had to participate in these events and perform community service on a regular basis, repairing roads and bridges and maintaining so-called lodges of righteousness where travelers could stay on their journeys (Stein 1963, 56). In addition, community life dominated the individual through sets of rules. Prohibitive in nature, they controlled various kinds of disruptive behavior while encouraging simplicity and obedience. The earliest code of twenty-seven precepts is found in a commentary to Laozi's 老子 *Daode jing* 道德經, followed later by a set of twenty-two statutes against demons and a code of 180 precepts revealed by Lord Lao. Punishments for transgressions were executed by demons who would invade members' bodies and cause sickness and disease (see Harper 1985).

While the precepts demanded humility and obedience and generally encourage submission of the senses, sexual control among the Celestial Masters was exerted in an initiatory practice known as the "harmonization of *qi*" (*heqi* 合氣), a form of choreographed intercourse between selected couples in an elaborate ritual. Practitioners underwent this rite when they were promoted from one level of ritual standing to the next, enacting the matching of yin and yang in their bodies and contributing to greater cosmic harmony (Stein 1963, 57-68).[5]

The acceptance of suffering and pain, moreover, appears in the Celestial Masters' understanding of sickness and sin. Sickness was seen strictly in supernatural terms as an attack by a demon,

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[4] On the festivals of the Three Primes and other community events, see Ōfuchi 1991, 367-77, 396-400; Kleeman 1998, 72; Stein 1963, 70-71; Schipper 1984, 206.

[5] On the sexual practices, see also Kobayashi 1992, 27-31; Schipper 1994, 205; Ōfuchi 1991, 330-34; Kleeman 1998, 73; Yan 2001.

who could only gain entry into a person's body if the latter was weakened by moral failure. As a result, all healing of the early Celestial Masters was undertaken through ritual and magic; acupuncture, herbs, and other medical treatments were expressly prohibited. First the sick person was isolated in a so-called chamber of tranquility or oratory (*jingshi* 靜室; see Yoshikawa 1987), an adaptation of a Han institution for punishing wayward officials involving solitary confinement. There they had to think of their sins going all the way back to their birth to try and find an explanation for the illness.

Once certain sins had been identified, a senior master would come to write them down in triplicate, joined by a formal petition for their eradication from the person's divine record. Next, the three copies would be transmitted ceremonially to the Bureaus of Heaven (by burning), Earth (by burying), and Water (by casting into a river). The divine officials would then set the record straight, expel the demons, and restore the person's good health. Additional measures of purification involved the ingestion of "talisman water" (the ashes of a talisman dissolved in water), gymnastic exercises patterned on cosmic energy movements, and meditations.

The early organization of the Celestial Masters did not survive untroubled for very long. In 215, their leader Zhang Lu 張魯 got involved in the battles at the end of the Han dynasty and had to submit to the warlord Cao Cao 曹操, who in due course decided not to tolerate a separate organization in his territory (see Mather 1979; Kobayashi 1992). As a result, large numbers of Celestial Masters followers were forced to migrate to different parts of the empire, spreading their cult as they went and creating a different, more open form of their religion. Over time their community structures declined, giving rise to reform movements and new revelations which increasingly changed the nature of the religious Daoist organization.

One such reform was undertaken by Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之(365-448), a son of a Celestial Masters family in north China. In 415 and 423, he received revelations from Lord Lao that appointed him the new Celestial Master and provided him with both longevity methods and community rules. The latter consisted of twenty *juan* 卷 (scrolls) and were known as the *New Code*, today partially extant in the Daoist canon. Taking his new vision and community organization to court, Kou found the support of the prime minister Cui Hao 崔浩 and became head of a state-sponsored Daoism, the so-called Daoist theocracy, which was geared to expand the Celestial Masters community to a national level and bring peace and harmony to the Toba-Wei empire. After establishing Daoist institutions widely, the emperor himself accepted Daoist initiation in 440, but the theocracy declined soon after Kou's death in 448 (see Mather 1979; Yang 1956; Tang and Tang 1961). Despite its early end, the theocracy laid the foundation for the earliest monastic community at Louguan 樓觀 and Kou's rules continued to be influential in later Daoist codes (see Kohn 1997b; 2000a).

While Kou Qianzhi took the millenarian organization of the Celestial Masters and expanded it to encompass the empire as a whole, creating a political as well as religious vision, other reforms of the group changed its character completely, so that from millenarian *communitas* it became one among several lay Daoist organizations in the fifth century.

LAY ORGANIZATIONS

Lay organizations differ from millenarian or utopian communities in that their followers join a specific school or group for devotional purposes while remaining the subjects of the worldly ruler and obeying the laws of the state. Their rank in civil society, their economic status, and their social connections are not predominantly defined through the religious organization. Their community is not total as in a cult or monastic situation (see Goffman 1961), they do not pay taxes to religiously appointed officials, and there are no civil sanctions for failure to attend assemblies or ceremonies. Rather, members join voluntarily as their schedule permits, they give donations as they can, and they come back only if services prove efficacious and worthwhile.

Rules in lay Daoist organizations of the middle ages were not normative for the whole social order but consisted of specific pledges which included both prohibitions and admonitions. Besides controlling disruptive behavior, they also encouraged a positive, supportive attitude toward the organization. People took these precepts in order to undergo minor ordinations; to join an elite group; and to participate in a ritual, retreat, or festival. They also used them to enhance their purity, religious dedication, and spiritual progress.

Tailoring rules to the individual member's capacity, situation, and ambitions, different lay organizations created various sets of precepts and ethical guidelines. One such group is the Celestial Masters as reformed in south China under the guidance of the Daoist master and ritualist Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477). As described in his *Abbreviated Rules for Daoist Followers*, he exhorted members to obey community rules, pay taxes, attend assemblies, and honor the libationers (Nickerson 1996). His work in turn inspired new guidelines, such as the sixth-century *Statutes of Mystery Metropolis*, which also continues Kou Qianzhi's *New Code*. By the late sixth century, the Celestial Masters had created a strong lay organization that has remained the foundation of Daoism to the present day.

The Celestial Masters were not the only Daoist group that created lay organizations in the middle ages. Other major schools of the fourth century, based on traditional methods and new revelations, similarly sponsored lay communities of dedicated seekers and lineages of self-cultivation. Among self-cultivation lineages, especially alchemical practitioners have left behind a set of rules, listed by Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343) in his *Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity*. His outline of fifteen admonitions to prepare for the great work begins with: "Accumulate goodness and establish merit, be compassionate to other beings, maintain reciprocity between self and others, be benevolent even to the wriggling worms" (6.5a). It is followed by a set of seventy prohibitions that strongly discourage socially and cosmically harmful actions.

Another self-cultivation group was the school of Highest Clarity (Shangqing 上清). It began in 364-70 with the efforts of several southern aristocratic clans to contact their ancestors so they could find causes for unexplained illnesses and misfortunes and learn about the otherworld. The medium Yang Xi 楊羲was particularly skilled and established contact with underworld rulers, spirit masters, divine officers of the dead, denizens of local grottoes, and past leaders of the Celestial Masters. They provided him with a detailed description of the organization and population of the otherworld, especially the heaven of Highest Clarity. They also revealed specific methods of soul travels or ecstatic excursions, visualizations, and alchemical concoctions; gave thorough instructions on how to transmit texts and methods; and provided prophecies about the golden age to come (see Strickmann 1978; 1981; Robinet 1984; 2000; Kamitsuka 1999). Moral and

ethical rules play a secondary role in the revelations. They only appear in Highest Clarity materials of the sixth century when the school rose to central prominence in the integrated system of the Three Caverns.

The most popular lay organization in medieval Daoism was the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao靈寶) school. It began in the 390s with the inspiration of Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫, a descendant of the alchemist Ge Hong and practicing member of the Highest Clarity group. His vision of the universe adopted the ideas of multiple layers of heaven, celestial administration, and an extensive host of divine beings from Highest Clarity, while also integrating Han-dynasty cosmology of the five phases and Celestial Masters ritual. In his seminal first work he emphasized spells, talismans, cosmic sounds, and mysterious signs as key sto creation and empowerment. He also stressed the importance of political stability and social harmony, and he established communal rituals that involved formal purifications and the sending of petitions to the otherworld. Over time, these rituals grew to be splendid, large-scale affairs with music, wine, and drama, led by professional masters and geared to move the cosmos in its roots. Known as purgations (*zhai* 齋), they aimed to create harmony and immortality not only for individuals but for entire clans and society as a whole, and they became highly attractive to large numbers of people (see Ōfuchi 1974; Bokenkamp 1983; Yamada 2000).

As it began to grow, the Numinous Treasure school integrated large segments of Buddhist worldview and practices. Buddhism had entered China already in the first century C.E., but it did not come fully into its own until around the year 400, when a group of aristocratic monks in the south asserted the independence of the Buddhist community, and the Toba-Wei dynasty in the north invited the Central Asian scholar Kumārajīva from Kucha to head a translation institute in their capital (see Zürcher 1959; Tsukamoto and Hurvitz 1985). As a result, Chinese Buddhists were able to rely on texts that represented accurate presentations of Buddhist doctrine, and the religion began to develop greater autonomy.

The increased translation of the *Vinaya*, or collection of Buddhist rules, inspired monks to standardize their practice and greatly contributed to the improved quality of both monastic and lay discipline. Daoists of the Numinous Treasure school looked to Buddhism as a model and integrated its doctrines and practices into their system, especially in the areas of rebirth, karma, and precepts (see Zürcher 1980). Texts arose that contained sets of ten precepts and ten items of goodness, bodhisattva-like vows, guidelines toward selflessness and compassion, rules for proper ritual preparation, as well as a new version of *The 180 Precepts of Lord Lao*, now called *Precepts of the Three Primes*. The first examples of universal ethics appear in this school. Followers joined by becoming members of dedicatory societies who organized regular worship of the Dao, special purgation ceremonies, and the sponsorship of sacred images (see Yamada 2000; Liu 2003, 59).

Similar activities were also undertaken by another lay Daoist organization, the school of the Three Sovereigns (Sanhuang 三皇). Followers believed that the talismans and teachings of these sage monarchs of antiquity guaranteed the perfect harmony of the universe and strove to make them accessible and applicable in the world. With a vision toward creating a state-wide community of Great Peace, their followers obeyed the five great moral rules and a set of eight precepts based on ancient Chinese rulership guidelines. Not well-known since their sources survive only in fragments, it appears that members of the Three Sovereigns school emphasized personal

integrity and the correct ritual writing and activation of talismans (see Ōfuchi 1964, 277-343; Chen 1975, 71-78; Kobayashi 1990).

MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS

In the late sixth century the different Daoist schools began to integrate themselves into one organization under the system of the Three Caverns (*sandong* 三洞) which placed Highest Clarity first, Numinous Treasure second, the Three Sovereigns third, and included the Celestial Masters as the underlying foundation of all (see Ōfuchi 1979b). At this time a full-fledged monastic institution arose that served to train priests and religious specialists of the higher schools. Daoist monasteries followed Buddhist structural models, integrated the lay guidelines of the medieval schools, and continued the organization and buildings of Celestial Masters communities (see Kohn 2003a).

In general, monasteries can be described as institutions that allow religious seekers "to undertake an intense personal spiritual activity which separates them from ordinary society and binds them together in same-sex kindred fellowships that provide ideal alternatives to the ordinary world" (Juergensmeyer 1990, 556; Kohn 2003a, 3). Monasticism as a cross-cultural phenomenon represents a "purer, more lonely vision of the religious life" (1990, 558) and can be found in various expressions in different areas, cultures, and periods. Another form of *communitas*, it has four main characteristics.

First, it is the active expression of an inherently individual impulse that leads men or women to dedicate their lives to a quest of higher truth, an attainment of holiness, and a search for the perfect life. Second, it requires the separation from ordinary life: a need to die to the old and be reborn to a new, divinely-based identity. Consciously and actively choosing the divine over the mundane, the seeker moves away from society to a state of separateness and isolation, where traditional values count for nothing and emptiness and purity are the highest good.

Third, monasticism involves "the evolution of a same-sex kindred community," which Juergensmeyer describes as a kind of "spiritual factory" or "project," a "Los Alamos of spiritual technology" (1990, 550). As organized community, monasticism rejects and transforms the social patterns of the ordinary world, yet in certain ways also maintains and develops them. Monks and nuns are not sexless, homeless, or kinless beings, but people who have redirected their inherent needs toward a spiritual goal and the community of the divine. Fourth and finally, monasticism provides an alternative to ordinary society through its creation of specific religious rules, patterns, schedules, and hierarchies that hold up a mirror to society at large and show the way to an ideal, perfect form of the communal life (Kohn 2003, 4-5).

Following their monastic urge, Daoist monks and nuns in the middle ages joined communities to practice meditation and self-cultivation. Segregated from society and bound by detailed injunctions of propriety, these communities allowed them to worship and work together in a Daoist life on earth. Monastic rules are guidelines for daily conduct and dignified observances, as well as mental prescriptions for a universal mind. They appear in a group of texts from the seventh and eighth centuries (Kohn 2003a, 203-26). Concrete daily behavior and proper interaction with the community were essential to the Daoist enterprise in this setting, which dominated the religious scene in the Tang dynasty (618-907).

After the Tang, in the tenth century, a general collapse of political and organizational structures occurred, and court subsidies for religious institutions ceased. Temples declined, the ordination system broke down, and techniques and doctrines were suspended. Individual practitioners of Daoist training no longer had key places to go or officially recognized masters to follow. They were on their own, wandering to sacred mountains, occasionally connecting with isolated hermits or discovering efficacious techniques by trial and error. These practitioners had no financial cushion on which to fall back, and thus had to find ways of serving communities for a fee so they could continue their quest. Serving villages and towns whose citizens increasingly joined devotional groups in worship of local gods and saints, Daoists began to offer practical rites of veneration, healing, exorcism, and protection. They issued spells and talismans for concrete goals and undertook funerals and communication with ancestors to set people's minds at rest.

Daoists of this type became common in the Song (960-1260) and were known both as Daoists (*daoshi* 道士) and ritual masters (*fashi* 法師) (see Davis 2001; Kohn 2001a; Hymes 2002). They did not take a standardized set of precepts once at a formal ordination but instead made specifically tailored vows for specific rituals. Rules from this time accordingly focus on the proper moral attitude in preparation of rituals and self-cultivation practices, as well as on the salvation of the dead. They are most commonly found in ritual collections, often appearing in newly created sets of ten but also recapturing lists from the middle ages.

Monasticism did not survive as an active institution in the Song and only rose again in the late twelfth century with the school of Complete Perfection (Quanzhen 全真) (see Yao 1980; 2000; Tsui 1991). Founded by the ascetic Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1112-1170), it encouraged followers to leave society, become celibate, and dedicate themselves fully to the Dao, thus living either in thatched huts on lonely mountain sides or in larger communities structured in imitation of Chan Buddhism.

As common in all monasticism, Complete Perfection communities had a systematic hierarchy and followed a tight schedule that kept everyone busy meditating, worshiping, and working from 3:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. (Yao 2000, 589). With such strict organization, the school developed many rules, laid out from its earliest texts. Its monastic ordination and precepts system is still in place today. It was created in the mid-seventeenth century under the guidance of Wang Kunyang 王崑陽 (d.1680), leader of the Longmen subsect and abbot of the White Cloud Monastery (Baiyun guan 白雲觀) (Esposito 2000, 629). Three texts are attributed to him, which match three levels of ordination and outline behavioral patterns for beginners, intermediate practitioners, and celestial immortals.

Still observed today, these texts are important also because they contain the culmination of all guidelines developed in the Daoist tradition, integrating many different strands and patterns into one systematic whole. In many ways, they close the circle to the earliest communities of the Celestial Masters. Thus, from its earliest organization to the present day, concrete behavior and community interaction have been at the heart of Daoist practice and have formed the basis for the successful attainment of personal cultivation and celestial realization.