Creative Daoism, by Monica Esposito. UniversityMedia, 2013. 392 pp. US$44.90, €42.64 (cloth).

Facets of Qing Daoism, by Monica Esposito. UniversityMedia, 2014. 387 pp. US$42.83, €53.39 (cloth).

These two volumes gather together the impressive work of Monica Esposito (1962–2011), pre-eminent scholar of Qing Daoism. Esposito devoted her too short life to the study of Qing Daoism, and published a large number of definitive articles on the subject, but passed away unexpectedly and too soon to bring it together in book form. Her husband and fellow scholar Urs App curated these two posthumous volumes.

Facets of Qing Daoism (hereafter *Facets*), published in 2014, is a collection of articles previously published in different venues and languages between 2000 and 2005. They take up different themes, but all originate in Esposito's 1993 Ph.D. dissertation, *La Porte du Dragon: L'école Longmen du Mont Jin'gai et ses pratiques alchimiques d'après le Daozang Xubian*, which is centered on the nineteenth-century Daoist master Min Yide 閔一得 (1748/58–1836) and his fundamental corpus of writing. *Creative Daoism*, published in 2013, is a book Esposito was finishing when she passed away, and brings together research arising both from her dissertation and from more recent research articles published between 2007 and 2011. Specifically, this book expands on the fundamental questions of lineage, ordination, canon, and salvation in Qing Daoism.

Even though most of these materials have been previously published in article form, having them coherently brought together in two volumes gives the reader an overview of Esposito's groundbreaking research, as well as of her impressive command of the sources. Furthermore, they allow us to observe the growth of a scholar whose vision became wider, deeper, and more precise with time.

The two books were not meant to be two volumes of a single work, but they put forth Esposito's scholarship more or less chronologically (*Facets* covering the earlier publications; *Creative Daoism* covering the later years), and they do complement each other very well. I will treat each book separately, starting with *Facets*.

Facets is more of a collection of articles than a coherent book, as Urs App, who includes footnotes and bibliographies in their original form for each article, clearly acknowledges in the preface. Because of this format, several ideas, sections of translations, and arguments, as well as footnotes and bibliographic items, are repeated in different articles.

The book brings together articles dealing generally with Qing Daoism and specifically with the life and work of Min Yide, the eleventh generation patriarch of the Daoist Longmen 龍門 lineage. Min compiled a definitive genealogy of the Longmen, the *Jin'gai xindeng* 金蓋心燈 ([*Transmission of the*] *Mind-Lamp of Mount Jin'gai*), dated 1821, as well as a collection of scriptures thought to be central for the Longmen school, the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu* 古書隱樓藏書 (*Collection from the Ancient Hidden Pavilion of Books*). Both works were compiled by Min on Mount Jin'gai in Zhejiang.

Chapter 1 reproduces the first English language work published on the history of Qing Daoism, in which Esposito gives a general historical overview and goes on to describe the main schools and texts, as well as the worldview and practices of Qing Daoism. While this chapter, originally published in 2000, seems today to be not detailed enough, its appearance was an indication to many scholars that this was an avenue of study that had previously been neglected and was worth pursuing. It helped open the way for the large amount of research that has been published since in Chinese, Japanese and Western languages. Only fifteen years later, we now have a wealth of primary sources and secondary studies, which have allowed us to expand inquiry on many issues pointed out by Esposito in this short study, most importantly on the complex interaction between local communities and local cults, but also on spirit writing and on the doctrine of the unity of the three teachings (*sanjiao heyi* 三教合一).[1]

[1] For a recent state of the field, written in the wake of Esposito's passing, see Vincent Goossaert, "L'histoire moderne du taoïsme: État des lieux et perspective," *Études chinoises* 32, no. 2 (2013): 7–40. For an overview of Qing Daoism, see Goossaert, "Taoism, 1644–1850," in *The Cambridge History of China Volume 9, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on different elements of the same topic: the Longmen school and Longmen doctrine. Chapter 2 presents the contents of the *Jin'gai xindeng*, the principal lineage document for the Longmen school. Esposito's main contribution in her dissertation and subsequent works prior to these articles was to explore this fundamental document and to reveal its importance in the construction of Longmen identity. In this chapter, Esposito tries to define when the Longmen lineage actually arose, and she translates large sections of the biographies of several of its central figures. She argues that, while the Longmen tradition probably arose around the end of the Ming dynasty and was initially linked to the Zhengyi 正一 tradition, a well-defined, patriarchal Longmen lineage developed only from the mid-seventeenth century around the figure of Wang Changyue 王常月 (?–1680). For the first time, Esposito shows Min Yide's clear intent in creating an orthodox lineage identity for the Longmen by following the example of *chan* 禪 Buddhist lamp-histories and their redefinitions of lineage identity. Esposito writes, "Min Yide portrayed the Longmen not only as the Longmen institutionalized order at the capital with a standardized ordination system and monastic rules, codes of behavior, and liturgy, but also as an intellectual and doctrinal tradition, capable of producing specific inner-alchemical theories on cosmology, self-cultivation, and ethics" (*Facets*, 60). Esposito explains through a detailed analysis of several biographies that Min Yide clearly wanted to prove the Longmen had direct ties to the Quanzhen 全真 order in the Yuan dynasty by positioning the Quanzhen patriarch Qiu Chuji 邱處機 (1148–1227) at the head of the Longmen lineage. At the same time, her close analysis reveals the importance given to the seventh Longmen patriarch, Wang Changyue, who is defined as the "great reformer" due to a series of actions: setting up a Longmen ordination platform at the White Cloud Temple (Baiyunguan 白雲觀) in Beijing; writing a new set of ordination precepts; and spreading the Longmen lineage by means of ordinations throughout China.

However, Esposito argues that Min Yide's very structured ordination system for the Longmen lineage, with its multiple sub-branches and "a system of ramifying generational names" following

a lineage poem, was in fact very different from the original Quanzhen ordination system, and instead closer to the older Daoist Zhengyi system. In this way, Esposito brings to the fore discrepancies between southern and northern Daoist legacies—the Zhengyi and Quanzhen schools—and reveals the complexity of Longmen history underneath the streamlining that Min Yide applied to the reconstructed lineage structure. Local traditions, the competition between official and marginal discourses, and the will to orthodoxy are also briefly discussed here, and would be taken up in more depth in *Creative Daoism*.

Chapter 3 repeats some of the introductory materials presented in Chapter 2 on Min Yide, the Longmen lineage, and the central figure of Wang Changyue in the nationwide spread of the Longmen school, but moves on to analyze the doctrinal elements of the Longmen, specifically as described in the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu*. Esposito highlights the differences between the doctrine developed by Wang Changyue in the seventeenth century, which was heavily influenced by Confucian self-education and Buddhist soteriology, and the doctrine developed in the nineteenth century by Min Yinde, which was much more based on inner alchemical (*neidan* 內丹) practices as expressed in the *Jinhua zongzhi* 金華宗旨 (usually translated as *The Secret of the Golden Flower*), one of the most representative (and widely disseminated) texts collected in the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu*. For Wang Changyue, self-cultivation meant respecting Confucian ethics (*sangang wuchang* 三綱五常) and following the *rendao* 人道 (path of men). The path of the immortals (*xiandao* 仙道) simply meant to purify the mind in the Buddhist sense. From Wang's perspective "differences between Confucianism and Daoism vanished; both the path of men and of immortals focus on the same original nature or genuine mind" (*Facets*, 154). Wang also tried to harmonize lay and monastic statuses by opening lay ordination to a larger number of people. Two centuries later, the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu* gives evidence that the meaning of *rendao* shifted from the practice of Confucian principles to psycho-physiological (*neidan*) techniques. In *neidan* terms, then, *rendao* becomes the "micro-cosmic orbit" (*xiao zhoutian* 小周天) and *xiandao* becomes the "macro-cosmic orbit" (*da zhoutian* 大周天).

These ideas, described in the *Jinghua zongzhi* and in other scriptures received from the immortal Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 through spirit writing, reveal elements typical of Qing Daoism but absent in Wang Changyue's doctrine: the importance of spirit writing, the rise of the cult of Lü Dongbin, and a strong influence from contemporary messianic and millenarian movements like the doctrine of healing the world (*yishi* 醫世).

Chapter 4 is a short introduction to female alchemical practices (*nüdan* 女丹), based on an analysis of two texts collected in the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu*, originally studied by Esposito in her Ph.D. dissertation. This article, previously published only in Japanese, summarizes the main tenets of these practices.

Chapter 5 deals with another topic that Esposito raised in her dissertation: the relationship between tantric and Daoist teachings in the Qing, specifically in the work of Min Yide. Min is said to have met the mysterious, "foreign" master Jizu daozhe 雞足道者 (Daoist of Chicken-foot Mountain) during his time as a civil servant in Yunnan. There, Jizu daozhe, who was possibly of Tibetan origin, introduced Min to tantric practices, which influenced Min's doctrines and feature in the *Gu Shuyinlou cangshu*. Min also integrated Jizu into the Longmen lineage. Esposito raises the possibility that this integration was politically motivated, given the Qing rulers' leanings toward Tibetan Buddhism, but she gives very little support for this theory. Whatever the case, Esposito does bring to our attention the widespread integration of tantric practices and scriptures in Qing Daoist collections, indicating a line of research in need of more investigation.

Many of the themes highlighted in the 2014 *Facets of Qing Daoism* also feature in Esposito's 2013 book, *Creative Daoism*, which weaves them together into a more coherent narrative aimed at understanding the roots of Qing Daoism.

This book is divided into four parts: (1) Creation of a Lineage; (2) Creation of Ordination; (3) Creation of a Canon; and (4) Creation of Salvation. Part 1, divided into 4 sections, utilizes the central arguments of Chapter 2 of *Facets*, but discusses in more detail and more coherently how Min Yide consciously created the Longmen lineage by tying it to the Yuan dynasty Quanzhen tradition in his appropriation of the figure of Qiu Chuji. To this

end, Min molds the biographies of important Daoist figures to fit the Longmen identity he wants to portray. Again, most important is the central figure of the seventh patriarch, Wang Changyue, generally described as the "great reformer" who was able to restructure the Longmen ordination and spread it throughout the country from his platform at the Baiyungun in Beijing. As she did in *Facets*, but here in more depth and with more clarity, Esposito compares this retrospective reconstruction of the Longmen lineage with the construction of the *chan* lineage in the Song dynasty. Min Yide's reconstruction "reflects the twentieth-century orthodox Longmen view that its line constitutes a movement within Quanzhen inaugurated in the thirteenth century by Patriarch Qiu under the auspices of emperor Taizu with the aim of pacifying the whole country" (*Creative Daoism*, 40).

Part 2 focuses more specifically on the creation of the "new" Longmen ordination and its precepts, attributed to Wang Changyue: the *Chuzhen jielü* 初真戒律 (Precepts of Initial Perfection), which are divided into a tripartite structure: the *chuzhen jie* 初真戒 (Precepts of Initial Perfection), the *zhongzhen jie* 中真戒 (Precepts of Intermediate Perfection) and the *tianxian jie* 天仙戒 (Precepts of Celestial Immortals). This is the first time that the complex issue of the creation of the Longmen ordination and its precepts, which are still in use in Daoist monasteries today, has been studied in such detail. Working from previous scholarship, Esposito convincingly and painstakingly shows that the precepts, traditionally attributed to Wang Changyue and affording him the epithet of reformer and innovator, are in fact based on medieval Daoist precepts, and that they do not have any strong links to the "Quanzhen identity" to which Min Yide strove to relate the Longmen lineage. Esposito shows that the *chuzhen jie* "appears to rely on earlier systems of ordination that follow the general line of the seventh-century Lingbao text *Qianzhenke* 千真科" (*Creative Daoism*, 112). This Tang dynasty text, the full title of which is *Dongxuan Lingbao qianzhenke* 洞玄靈寶千真科 (*Code of the Thousand Real Men, from the Dongxuan Lingbao Canon*, DZ 1410) discusses regulations for both married and celibate priests within the Lingbao tradition. The *zhongzhen jie*, on the other hand, derives from the sixth-century

Shangqing dongzhen zhihui guanshen dajie wen 上清洞真智慧觀身大戒文 (*Shangqing Great Rules of Wisdom in Self-Examination*, DZ 1364: 1a–b). Finally, the *tianxian jie* does not derive from earlier sources; no early guidelines for this last stage of ordination exist. According to Esposito's research, it was instead the fruit of spirit-writing sessions around the community of Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (*zi* 字 Yuanting 元庭, 1755–1819), and connected to the cult of Lü Dongbin. The history of this spirit-writing transmission is complex and, despite Esposito's command of the textual sources, remains somewhat nebulous in this chapter. Again, however, Esposito casts doubt as to the widely accepted attribution of the *Chuzhen jielü* to Wang Changyue.

While the issues of the ordination and the origin of its precepts need more in-depth research, and while Esposito's explication of it is sometimes unclear, what is clear is Esposito's desire to look at Quanzhen with fresh eyes. She reaffirms "the necessity of re-examining Quanzhen history and its sources from new angles," and criticizes "the ease with which we modern Quanzhen scholars tend to read Quanzhen history the way Quanzhen apologists want us to read it." "We are seduced into believing in a stable Quanzhen clerical identity from the Yuan until the present time thanks to the uninterrupted transmission and preservation of Quanzhen ascetic methods of cultivation, Quanzhen lineages, Quanzhen monastic institutional systems, and specific Quanzhen ordination procedures" (*Creative Daoism*, 163). At the end of the chapter, Esposito reiterates the need for "the adoption of a new perspective free of Quanzhen institutional propaganda, pseudo-historicity and fixed ideas of 'Wang' as protagonist" (*Creative Daoism*, 172). These are very valuable insights, and Esposito shows the way for a new interpretation of Quanzhen; she also indicates that newly discovered epigraphic materials as well as other textual sources can point us to earlier Longmen epicenters with no direct relation to Quanzhen.[2]

[2] There is now a multiplicity of studies on local Daoist communities, too many to list here.

Part 3 is devoted to the *Daozang Jiyao* 道藏輯要 (*Essence of the Daoist Canon*), which Esposito indicates is the most important collection of Qing Daoism. This chapter and its several sections are based on a number of recent articles Esposito wrote on the history of this collection, and on her work as director of the International *Daozang Jiyao* Project, to which she dedicated the last part of her life, and which is still ongoing under the leadership of Lai Chi Tim of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Esposito's contribution to the understanding of this collection and its history is invaluable. Her command of the primary sources and her search for different editions of this collection led her, following the indications of a few previous researchers, to doubt the accepted attribution of this collection to Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645–1719), and to prove beyond doubt that it was in fact published by Jiang Yuanting. Two-thirds of the texts in this collection are reprints of texts already present in the Ming *Daozang* 道藏, and one-third is from other sources, generally from the late Ming to the Qing. However, these "extra-canonical" texts amount to 40% of the collection and therefore constitute an important corpus for the study of late imperial Daoism. Through her analyses of the texts and their provenances, Esposito is able to show convincingly that this collection was not tied to Quanzhen or Longmen clerical figures, but was instead the fruit of the widespread cult of Lü Dongbin in the Qing dynasty and the lay spirit-writing communities receiving texts from him. She continues her investigation of the history of this collection by discussing in detail the differences between the first edition by Jiang Yuanting and the second edition, published in 1906 at the Er'xian an 二仙庵 (Hermitage of the Two Immortals) in Chengdu 成都 under the direction of abbot Yan Yonghe 閻永和, local donor Peng Hanran 彭翰然, and local Confucian scholar and Daoist practitioner He Longxiang 賀龍襄. Esposito compares these two editions and shows the different intellectual milieus surrounding them. Even though the second edition adds to the first only 17 texts (mainly having to do with local ritual and *neidan* traditions), Esposito's study of the prefaces and of the para-textual materials indicates that the nature of this second printing was tied to the necessity to enhance the prestige of the clerical institution of

the Longmen Er'xian an, and was therefore very different from the situation in which the first *Daozang Jiyao* was created and published. More work on understanding the local Sichuanese Daoist community is needed, and has already started.[3]

Part 4 deals with the issue of salvation. Esposito discusses this central issue from the point of view of one of the *Daozang Jiyao* scriptures, the *Jinhua zongzhi,* which she studied in her dissertation as well as in a number of articles. Here again she describes the contents and major editions of this scripture, its main soteriological ideas, its appropriation by the Longmen tradition through the efforts of Min Yide, and its history through the twentieth century. This last chapter, shorter than all the others, suffers the most from Esposito's passing. The *Jinhua zongzhi*, while a central and influential scripture of Qing Daoism, cannot be the sole representative of the many soteriological ideas and practices present in the scriptures collected in the *Daozang Jiyao*. We can only imagine that Esposito's discussion of this topic would have been much more wide-ranging if she had had the opportunity to incorporate more research based on the large number of textual sources on which she was working.

Throughout the entire book, Esposito introduces a comparison between the formation of Longmen Daoism and Catholicism, which did not appear in her previous articles. She describes Wang Changyue's Baiyun guan as the Vatican; the second patriarch after Qiu Chuji, Zhao Daojian 趙道堅 (1163–1221), as the apostle Peter; the *Daozang Jiyao* as the "New Testament" in comparison with the "Old Testament" of the *Daozang*; and Lü Dongbin as a "Saint." Even though this is a suggestive comparison, Esposito does not really go beyond a very brief explanation of her reasoning behind the adoption of these appellations, and her previous comparison between the formations of the *chan* and Longmen lineages still seems more cogent and fit.

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[3] See Mori Yuria, "Being Local through Ritual: Quanzhen Appropriation of Zhengyi Liturgy in the *Chongkan Daozang jiyao*," in *Quanzhen Daoists in Chinese Society and Culture, 1500–2010*, ed. Xun Liu and Vincent Goossaert (Berkeley: University of California, 2013), 171–208.

In conclusion, these two books show without doubt Esposito's central role in defining Qing Daoism. She was a pioneer who took seriously a field that had, with few exceptions, been neglected by Chinese, Japanese and Western scholars. In her dissertation, in her early articles, in her later work, and in the International *Daozang Jiyao* Project, she articulated many important themes, and even though she was not always able to explicate them all in detail, she indicated a path for further scholarship, which is now made easier by her work. Some of the essential issues to which she pointed are:

> The question of the decline or revival of Qing Daoism;
> The question of the creation of the Longmen lineage and its ties to the Quanzhen tradition;
> The creation of the Longmen ordination precepts, and their attribution to the "reformer" Wang Changyue;
> The nature and importance of spirit-writing groups around the cult of Lü Dongbin and their relation to the Longmen tradition;
> The importance of local traditions (particularly evident in her exploration of the Jin'gai shan tradition of Min Yide);
> The investigation of the *Daozang Jiyao*, its history, the milieu in which it arose, and the tension between lay and monastic communities to which it points;
> The doctrine of the unity of the three teachings (*sanjiao heyi*) and its utilization by different communities for different purposes.

Many of these issues will be addressed in the volumes of essays forthcoming from the International *Daozang Jiyao* Project, a publication to which Esposito devoted much effort and energy, and which has now been turned over to a number of international editors and scholars; its final publication will be a further testament to her work, as well as to the growth of this field.

At times in these two volumes, Esposito's research is clearly still in search of answers to the questions she raised. However, as Esposito herself wrote, "Due to the dearth of previous research on this complicated topic and the abundance of sources, the present investigation should be regarded as a sort of architectural sketch of an edifice that is largely unexplored" (*Facets*, 61). Despite the unfinished nature of some of this work, sadly cut short, Esposito's efforts to map out the priorities, methodologies, sources, and

directions for the study of Qing Daoism have given all of us the ability to further explore, outline and define this edifice.

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