

The Institution of Daoism in the Central Region (Xiangzhong) of Hunan^{*}

James Robson

Abstract

In recent years there has been an outpouring of studies on local religious traditions found in different regions of China. That scholarship—which has uncovered new religious traditions and lineages—invites us to revise many earlier narratives about the contours of Chinese religious history and has helped to challenge problematic

James Robson is an Associate Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. He specializes in the history of Medieval Chinese Buddhism and Daoism and is particularly interested in issues of sacred geography, local religious history, talismans, religious art, and the historical development of Chan/Zen Buddhism. He is the author of *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Harvard University Asia Center, East Asia Monograph Series [Harvard University Press] 2009), which received the Stanislas Julien Prize for 2010 from the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres [Prix Stanislas Julien from the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres (Institut de France)]. He is also the co-editor of *Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice* (London: Routledge, 2010). His publications include: “Signs of Power: Talismanic Writing in Chinese Buddhism” (in *History of Religions*, 2008), “Buddhism and the Chinese Marchmount System [Wuyue]: A Case Study of the Southern Marchmount (Mt. Nanyue),” “A Tang Dynasty Chan Mummy [roushen] and a Modern Case of Furta Sacra? Investigating the Contested Bones of Shitou Xiqian,” “Faith in Museums: On the Confluence of Museums and Religious Sites in Asia” (PMLA, 2010), and “Buddhist Sacred Geography in China.” He is presently engaged in a long-term collaborative research project with Alain Arrault of the École française d’Extrême-Orient studying a large collection of local religious statuary from Hunan province and their place within the local religious history and traditional culture of that region.

^{*} This article is extracted, with minor modifications and additions, from a more comprehensive article on the Daoist and Buddhist history of the Central Hunan region that will appear in a forthcoming special edition of the *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* on the religion and culture of Hunan edited by Alain Arrault.

earlier assumptions of Chinese Religions as monolithic entities that were largely the same across the length and breadth of China. One of the areas for which there remains a paucity of local studies, however, is the Hunan 湖南 region. This essay aims to provide a local geographical study of the Daoist history in the Hunan region, from its inception up to the present day. While I attempt to provide a history of general contours, the focus is primarily on early developments and what can be gleaned from the textual record. The earliest phase of Daoist history in the central Hunan region is difficult to assess, but it appears that Buddhism and Daoism both developed and took root in this region from the third century to the fourth century. The initial center of Daoist activity in Hunan was at Nanyue 南嶽, and Daoism is found at the Qingxia guan 青霞觀 (originally called the Dongzhen guan 洞真觀) in Baling 巴陵, which was built in the Liang dynasty (535–546), and the Dengzhen guan 登真觀 in Liling 醴陵. During the Tang dynasty many new abbeys were built in the central Hunan region (including Nanyue, Chenzhou 郴州, Ningyuan 寧遠, Changde 常德, Liuyang 瀏陽, Chaling 茶陵, Xiangyang 向陽, Wuling 武陵, Shaoyang 邵陽, Xinhua 新化, and Yueyang 岳陽). Since it is not plausible in the confines of this essay to attend to the history of each of those sites I have focused my attention on the Daoist history of Wenxian shan 文仙山, one of the significant early Daoist sites in the Xinhua region which some have described as being the birthplace of Daoism in the central Hunan region. By the Ming dynasty Zhengyi Daoism had become particularly influential in the Xiangtan 湘潭 region. Although Zhengyi 正一 Daoists became dispersed throughout the villages of Hunan, from the Ming into the Qing dynasty, it was, however, Quanzhen 全真 Daoism that came to assert its influence at the major Daoist institutions in the central Hunan region—including those in Changsha, Nanyue, Yueyang 岳陽, Liuyang 瀏陽, Taoyuan 桃源, Taojiang 桃江, and Liling 醴陵. The present focus here on the largely institutional history of Daoism in central Hunan is not meant to preclude, however, the importance of local vernacular and exorcistic traditions, but in attempting to establish the early history of Daoism in Hunan—at least prior to the Ming dynasty—it is very difficult to say anything for certain about those local vernacular traditions. In order to begin to fill in some of the history that might be missed due to an emphasis on institutional history, the final section of this paper discusses the value of a rich body of material that comes from the interiors of statues 神像 from the Hunan region relating the history of the main deity of Nanyue and his transformation into a popular god named Nanyue shengdi 南嶽聖帝.

Keywords: Hunan, Daoism, local religion, local history, Nanyue shengdi

In recent years there has been an outpouring of studies on local religious traditions found in different regions of China. That scholarship—which has uncovered new religious traditions and lineages—invites us to revise many earlier narratives about the contours of Chinese religious history and has helped to challenge problematic earlier assumptions of Chinese Religions as monolithic entities that were largely the same across the length and breadth of China.¹ One of the areas for which there remains a paucity of local studies, however, is the Hunan region. Despite an increasing awareness of the importance of that region in the development of various facets of Chinese religious history, there are few studies in any European language of the historical development of religion there.² This essay aims to redress that gap and provide a local geographical study of the Daoist history in the Hunan region, from its inception up to the present day. While I attempt to provide a history of general contours, the focus is primarily on early developments and what can be gleaned from the textual record. In this essay I also attempt to take stock of the accruing scholarship in Chinese by local scholars on the historical development of Daoism and local religion in the Xiangzhong 湘中

¹ Literature on this topic is now immense, but see, among others, John Lagerwey, *Traditional Hakka Society Series* (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Studies Association and École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1996–2002); Wang Ch'iu-kuei 王秋桂, ed., *Min-su ch'ü-i ts'ung-shu* 民俗曲藝叢書 [Studies in Chinese Ritual, Theatre and Folklore], 80 vols. (Taipei: Shi Ho-cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1993); Daniel Overmyer, ed., *Ethnography in China Today: A Critical Assessment of Methods and Results* (Taipei: Yuan-Liou, 2002); Kenneth Dean, *Taoist Ritual and Popular Cults of Southeast China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Paul Katz, *Demon Hordes and Burning Boats: The Cult of Marshal Wen in Late Imperial Chekiang* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); Terry Kleeman, *Great Perfection: Religion and Ethnicity in a Chinese Millennial Kingdom* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998); Adam Yuet Chau, *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006); and Thomas David DuBois, *The Sacred Village: Social Change and Religious Life in Rural North China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005).

² The forthcoming issue of the *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* on the religion and culture of Hunan edited by Alain Arrault will go a long way in helping to address that deficiency.

region to see if we can begin to capture something of the overall trajectory of that development.

The area referred to in this essay as Xiangzhong (which I also refer to generally as the “central Hunan region”) corresponds to an area delineated by the Xiang River 湘江 in the east, the Zi 資水 and Yuan Rivers 沅水 in the west, and the Li River 澧水 in the north. My reason for focusing on this particular region was determined on the basis of the frequency of place names mentioned on the consecration certificates found within the Hunan statuette collections and the fact that this region is now also the subject of a rich collection of essays on local religion and culture.³

Since the geographic parameters of this study encompass a rather large area we therefore have to sacrifice some of the finer-grained analysis that would be involved with the study of a single site or single village, but it is clear that a more focused approach will reveal the existence and significance of local ritual traditions and the even more diffused local communal religion.⁴ Therefore, this initial survey of

³ See Alain Arrault, “Analytic Essay on the Domestic Statuary of Central Hunan: The Cult to Divinities, Parents, and Masters,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 36 (2008): 1–53; Alain Arrault and Michela Bussotti, “Statuettes religieuses et certificates de consecration en Chine du Sud (xvii–xx siècle),” *Arts Asiatiques* 63 (2008): 36–60; and Chen Zi’ai and Hua Lan (Arrault Alain), eds., *Xiangzhong zongjiao yu xiangtu shehui diaocha baogao ji* 湘中宗教與鄉土社會調查報告集, 2 vols (papers from a colloquium of the same name held in Loudi and Shuiche, June 24–29, 2006). For brief general overviews of the Hunan statues see also Fu Juliang 傅聚良, “Hunan minjian mudiao shenxiang” 湖南民間木雕神像, *Zhongguo wenwu shijie* 中國文物世界 150 (1998): 54–68; Keith Stevens, “Altar Images from Hunan and Kiangsi,” *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18 (1978): 41–48, and plates on 217–222; and James Robson, *Inside Asian Images: An Exhibition of Religious Statuary from the ArtAsia Gallery Collection* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Institute for Humanities, 2007).

⁴ On the distinctions between Daoism, local Daoist ritual traditions, and local communal religion see Kenneth Dean, “Further Partings of the Way: The Chinese State and Daoist Ritual Traditions in Contemporary China,” in *Making Religion, Making the State: The Politics of Religion in Modern China*, ed. Yoshiko Ashiwa and David L. Wank (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 179–210.

materials will have less to say about the local iterations of the important movements related to Thunder rites 雷法, the local traditions identified as Meishan jiao 梅山教, and the intriguing history of Yuanhuang jiao 元皇教 than might be desirable.⁵ I trust the critical reader will, however, become aware of how the different types of sources used in the study of local religion (standard histories, canonical text, local histories, ritual manuals) determine the views we are afforded of the religious landscape. Writing a general history of religion in this region is further complicated by the fact that there is as yet no comprehensive regional history of Hunan province, and there are few Western language studies concerning the Xiangzhong region.⁶

In order to provide some sense of the geographical and historical features of this area, I begin with a brief discussion of the mountains and

⁵ Aspects of the history and nature of those traditions can be found in some of the research reports collected in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao*, in the film by Patrice Fava titled *Han Xin's Revenge: A Daoist Mystery* (France: CNRS Images, 2005), in a recent dissertation by David John Mozina, "Quelling the Divine: The Performance of a Talisman in Contemporary Thunder Ritual" (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 2009), and in Sun Wenhui 孫文輝, *Wunuo zhi ji: wenhua renleixue de zhongguo wenben* 巫儺之祭：文化人類學的中國文本 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2006), 201–217. On Song exorcistic traditions related to Leifa, see Judith Magee Boltz, "Not by the Seal of Office Alone: New Weapons in Battles with the Supernatural," in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 241–305. On the Lüshan tradition, see Brigitte Bapandier, *The Lady of Linshui: A Chinese Female Cult* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), esp. 222–241, and the large body of work by Ye Mingsheng 葉明生, which is introduced and commented on in a number of essays found in Overmyer, *Ethnography in China Today*.

⁶ Western Hunan has been the object of a series of studies by Donald Sutton. See Donald S. Sutton, "Ethnicity and the Miao Frontier in the Eighteenth Century," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 190–228; and Donald S. Sutton, "Myth-Making on an Ethnic Frontier: The Cult of the Three Kings of West Hunan, 1715–1996," *Modern China* 26 (2000): 448–500.

ivers that delineate the Xiangzhong region.⁷ The Xiang River is one of the most prominent geographic features marking the Hunan landscape. The river originates in Guangxi and passes through the rather mountainous southern region, before spreading out and flowing through Hengyang 衡陽 and Changsha 長沙 and eventually dumping into Dongting Lake 洞庭湖. Due to the nature of soil erosion caused by recent increases in deforestation, silting and the creation of sandbars can be a problem the closer the river gets to Changsha and Dongting Lake. Prior to a rather marked increase in deforestation in the mid-late Qing dynasty (1644–1911), the Xiang River was navigable and was a major transportation route for people and goods flowing north.

The upper reaches of the Zi River 資江 has broad banks, but it then narrows through the steep terrain between Shaoyang 邵陽 and Anhua 安化. From Anhua down to Yiyang 益陽 it broadens again, eventually emptying into Dongting Lake. The area east of the Zi River is inhabited primarily by native peoples—including the Yao (徭, 瑤, 瑶, 徭) and Miao 苗—in an area usually referred to as the Meishan 梅山 region.⁸ We still have much to learn about the precise history of the Yao and Miao groups in

⁷ The following discussion was aided through the consultation of the following: Richard von Glahn, “The Country of Streams and Grottoes: Geography, Settlement, and the Civilizing of China’s Southwestern Frontier, 1000–1250” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1983); Peter Perdue, *Exhausting the Earth: State and Peasant in Hunan 1500–1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); Suzuki Tetsuo 鈴木哲雄, *Tō Godai no zenshū: Konan, Kōsei hen* 唐五代之禪宗：湖南江西篇 (Chan in the Tang and Five Dynasties period: Hunan and Jiangxi) (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1984); Wu Xinfu 伍新福, ed., *Hunan tongshi: Gudai juan* 湖南通史：古代卷 (Changsha: Hunan chubanshe, 1994); Guo Zhaoxiang 郭兆祥, *Zhongguo Meishan wenhua* 中國梅山文化 (Xianggang: Tianma tushu youxian chuban gongsi, 2002); and Zhang Weiran 張偉然, *Hunan lishi wenhua dili yanjiu* 湖南歷史文化地理研究 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 1995).

⁸ For a review of previous scholarship on the Yao in relation to Daoist history see Michel Strickmann, “The Tao among the Yao: Taoism and the Sinification of the South,” in *Rekishī ni okeru minshu to bunka: Sakai Tadao sensei koki shukuga kinen ronshū* 歴史における民衆と文化：酒井忠夫先生古稀祝賀紀念論集 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankokai, 1982), 23–30; Jacques Lemoine, *Yao Ceremonial Paintings* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1982); Eli Alberts, *A History of Daoism and the Yao People of South China* (New York: Cambria Press, 2006); and Zhang

the central Hunan region, but up until now they have been known to historians for their strong resistance to Han incursions into their domain during the early Song dynasty (960–1279).⁹ After numerous petitions to the court this area gradually came under more direct Han control during the latter part of the Song. It was not until the 1070s, however, that the local Yao capitulated to imperial control, and in 1073 the Meishan area was officially divided into the two counties of Anhua 安化 “Peacefully Transformed,” which fell under the jurisdiction of Tanzhou 潭州, and Xinhua 新化 “Newly Transformed,” which fell under the jurisdiction of Shaozhou 邵州.¹⁰ This history is significant for us here since it is from these two counties that the majority of the statues in the Hunan collections originated.

Significant new uprisings gripped this area between 1795 and 1806. Those uprisings were instigated by the new immigration spawned by the Qing (1720s) policy of “tribal incorporation” (*gaitu guiliu* 改土歸流), which placed garrisons in the area “to enforce state power and protect Han settlers and merchants.”¹¹ The early 1700s was a period of land realignment, with the Qing administrators trying to bring land back into cultivation and allowing people to settle land as long as it was cultivated. By the mid-1700s there was a drastic increase in the cultivation of land to the extent that mountains were being denuded of trees and other

Zehong 張澤洪, “Daojiao chuanru yaozu diqu de shidai xinkao” 道教傳入瑤族地區的時代新考 [Taoism’s Spread into Yao Areas Re-Studied], *Sixiang zhanxian* 思想戰線 28, no. 14 (2002): 67–70. For studies on the religion of the Meishan region see Guo Zhaoxiang, *Zhongguo Meishan wenhua*, the many articles collected in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao* and Sun Wenhui, *Wunuo zhi ji*, and David Crockett Graham, *Songs and Stories of the Ch’uan Miao* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1954). On the Yao and Miao in Hunan see You Jun 游俊 and Li Hanlin 李漢林, *Hunan shaoshu minzu shi* 湖南少數民族史 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2001), 51–58; and on the Yao in general see Jess G. Pourret, *The Yao, the Mien and Mun Yao in China, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand* (Bangkok: River Books, 2002).

⁹ Von Glahn, *Country of Streams and Grottoes*, 315 and Herold J. Wiens, *China’s March Toward the Tropics* (Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press, 1954), 186–200.

¹⁰ Von Glahn, *Country of Streams and Grottoes*, 318.

¹¹ Perdue, *Exhausting the Earth*, 33, and von Glahn, *Country of Streams and Grottoes*, 295.

natural resources.¹² One area of inquiry that will not be possible to pursue here with the attention and rigor that it deserves to be treated in the future is the way that the archive (read Han materials) dealing with the indigenous populations has led these peoples to be regarded as particular objects of inquiry and knowledge and conditioned the scholarship about them down to the present day.¹³

Daoism in the Xiangzhong Region

The earliest phase of Daoist history in the central Hunan region is difficult to assess due to the thorough admixture of mythology and hagiography into historical accounts. From what we can reconstruct of the historical record, however, it appears that Buddhism and Daoism both developed and took root in this region from the third century to the fourth century. There is evidence that Daoist ideas and practices had already infiltrated the Hunan region by the fourth century. A number of “land contract (*diquan* 地券) texts dating to the Southern Dynasties period (317–589) excavated in Changsha and Zixing 資興 contain Daoist vocabulary—such as the name of Taishang Laojun 太上老君—and are replete with intricate talismans.¹⁴ Kleeman has already noted that these documents are perhaps “one indicator of the degree of diffusion of these belief systems (i.e. Daoism and Buddhism) among common Chinese, and they can also serve as a useful tool in tracking the penetration of Daoism into specific geographic areas.”¹⁵

¹² Perdue, *Exhausting the Earth*, 87.

¹³ For an inspiring set of articles that raise similar methodological questions see Brian Keith Axel, ed., *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); and on the Yao in particular see Ralph A. Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ On the archaeological reports see Wu Xinfu, *Hunan tongshi*, 275. On “land contracts (*diquan* 地券) see Terry Kleeman, “Land Contracts and Related Documents,” in *Makio Ryōkai hakase shōju kinen ronshū: Chūgoku no shūkyō shisō to kagaku* 牧尾良海博士頌寿記念論集：中国の宗教思想と科学 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1984), 1–34, 8.

¹⁵ Kleeman, “Land Contracts,” 20.

The initial center of Daoist activity in Hunan, and the site with the longest and best documented textual history, is the mountain fastness of Nanyue, located along the Xiang River south of Changsha.¹⁶ Nanyue's Daoist history is captured in a variety of sources that range from local geographies to detailed hagiographies. Three texts within the Daoist canon are devoted to Nanyue's Daoist history, including the Tang dynasty *Nanyue xiaolu* 南嶽小錄 (Short Record of Nanyue, hereafter *Short Record*), the Song dynasty *Nanyue jiu zhenren zhuan* 南嶽九真人傳 (Biographies of the Nine Perfected of Nanyue), and the *Nanyue zongsheng ji* 南嶽總勝集 (Record of the Collected Highlights of the Southern Sacred Peak, hereafter *Collected Highlights*).¹⁷ Those texts reveal that Nanyue was a significant site for Daoists from as early as

¹⁶ This section on the history of Nanyue draws largely upon the research in James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2009), chaps. 4–6. See also the related articles in *Hunan sheng daojiao wenhua yanjiu zhongxin* 湖南省道教文化研究中心, ed. *Daojiao yu Nanyue* 道教與南嶽 [Daoism and Nanyue] (Hunan: Yuelu shushe, 2002); and *Hunan sheng daojiao wenhua yanjiu zhongxin* 湖南省道家道教文化研究中心, ed. *Daojiao yu Hunan* 道家道教與湖南 [Daoism and Hunan] (Hunan: Yuelu shushe, 2000), which both contain essays of widely varying quality.

¹⁷ *Nanyue xiaolu* 南嶽小錄 [Short record of Nanyue], by Li Chongzhao 李冲昭, HY 453, in Weng Dujian 翁獨健, *Daozang zimu yinde* 道藏子目引得 (Combined Indexes to the Authors and Titles of Books in Two Collections of Taoist Literature) (Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series No. 25) (Beijing: Yenching University, 1935; repr., Taipei: Chengwen, 1966). Reference numbers are to the *Zhengtong Daozang* 正統道藏, 1445, 60 vols. (repr., Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1962). All citations from the *Daozang* are cited as follows: HY number, *juan* 卷 and section number, register (a or b), and line number(s). *Nanyue jiu zhenren zhuan* 南嶽九真人傳 (Biographies of the Nine Perfected of Nanyue), attrib. Liao Shen 廖恂 (mid-eleventh century), HY 452; *Nanyue zongsheng ji* 南嶽總勝集 (Record of the Collected Highlights of Nanyue), by Chen Tianfu 陳田夫 (fl. mid-twelfth century), T. 51, #2097; HY 606, in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, 100 vols., ed. Takakusu Junjir 高楠順次郎 et al. (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–1932). All citations from the *Taishō* canon are cited as follows: T., *Taishō* volume number, page number and register (a, b, or c), and line number(s) (e.g., T. 51.1070a.10–15).

perhaps the third century C.E., thus contemporary with the dating of the archaeological evidence.

The pre-Tang Daoist history of Nanyue provides insight into the local Daoist history of a geographic region that has heretofore received little or no contemporary scholarly attention. Nanyue came to be perceived by Daoists as a place to escape from the world and refine one's practice, a particularly potent site for meeting with Daoist perfected (*zhenren* 真人) and divine beings (*shenren* 神人) and for ascending along with them to the heavens above. It is difficult to say precisely when Daoists first began to arrive at Nanyue, but many sources trace that event to China's hazy mythical past.¹⁸ It was the accrued traces of ancient sages and other significant early Daoist figures that imbued the mountain with a layer of sanctity and a special sense of religious possibility. The first section of the *Collected Highlights*, for instance, contains a long section titled "Emperors, Perfected, and Transcendents Who Attained the Way Throughout the Generations" ("Xu lidai diwang zhenxian shoudao" 敍歷代帝王真仙受道).¹⁹ That section begins with a string of accounts of Laozi's transformations under the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (Sanhuang wudi 三皇五帝) and his tutelage of each of those emperors.²⁰ These accounts depict Laozi as teaching the fundamentals of culture to the sovereigns and emperors of the ancient past and emphasize that he chose to alight at Nanyue during several of those transformations.²¹

The first Celestial Master, Zhang Daoling, a key figure in Daoist self-definition, deserves special mention in connection with attempts to bolster Nanyue's early Daoist pedigree. The *Collected Highlights* cites a lost work titled *Dongzhen ji* 洞真集 (Cavern Perfected Record) that says

¹⁸ For a general overview see Liu Guoqiang 劉國強, "Hunan daojiao yuanliu ji lidai mingdao" 湖南道教源流及歷代名道, in *Daojia daojiao yu Hunan*, 69–87.

¹⁹ T. 51.1064c.22.

²⁰ For the background of this topic, see Anna Seidel, *La divinisation de Lao Tseu dans le taoïsme des Han* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1992 [1969]).

²¹ The accounts of the transformations in the *Collected Highlights* follow those that were systematized in the explanations of the *Santian neijie jing* 三天內解經 (HY 1196) during the fifth century. I have adopted the translations of Laozi's titles and text names from Livia Kohn, *God of the Dao: Lord Lao in History and Myth* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1998), 217–227.

that during the reign of the Eastern Han emperor Mingdi 漢明帝 (r. 58–76), Zhang Daoling traveled to Nanyue in order to search out the illustrious Green Jade Altar (Qingyu tan 青玉壇) and the Lustrous Heaven Altar (Guangtian tan 光天壇) and to pay his respects at the shrine to Lord Zhurong.²² Despite the clearly anachronistic nature of this account, he allegedly traveled around the mountain and commented on the special nature of the site, which he said would have a profound impact on those who practiced there. He also predicted that after ten or more years this site would be a place where feathered transcendents would ascend to heaven. This reference to “feathered transcendents” was most likely intended to be an allusion to the successful religious pursuits of the Nine Perfected (jiu zhenren 九真人) of Nanyue, each of whom ascended to heaven one after another.

The Nine Perfected of Nanyue included Chen Xingming 陳興明 (?–265), Shi Cun 施存 (?–300), Yin Daoquan 尹道全 (?–315), Xu Lingqi 徐靈期 (?–474), Chen Huidu 陳慧度 (?–484), Zhang Tanyao 張曇要 (?–494), Zhang Shizhen 張始珍 (?–504), Wang Lingyu 王靈輿 (?–512), and Deng Yuzhi 鄧郁之 (?–512).²³ These perfected ones received many forms of recognition down through the ages, from imperial inscriptions and posthumous names to pledges of economic support for their institutions. The Nine Perfected were recognized and granted support by Liang Wudi 梁武帝 (r. 502–549), and during the Kaiyuan reign period (713–742) the Tang emperor Xuanzong 唐玄宗 bequeathed an imperial seal identifying the site of their ascent as the Stone Altar of the Nine Transcendents Palace at Zigai Peak (Zigai feng shitan jiuxian gong 紫蓋峰石壇九仙宮). In the Xiantong 咸通 reign of the Tang (860), the prefect of Hengzhou 衡州, a certain Zhang Diju 張飴具, requested that the site where all Nine Perfected ascended be given an official name plaque. His request was granted by the emperor.²⁴ These imperial

²² See T. 51.1066a.1–7.

²³ See Robson, *Power of Place*, chap. 4; Li Shenglong 李生龍, “Song yiqian Nanyue ming daoshi kaolüe” 宋以前南嶽名道士考略, in *Daojia daojiao yu Hunan*, 116–119 and Huang Shouhong 黃守紅, “Nanyue jiuzhenren yu jiuxian guan 南嶽九真人與九仙觀, in *Daojiao yu Nanyue*, 52–57.

²⁴ See T.51.1075c.16 and *Nanyue xiaolu*, 7b.9.

observances demonstrate that the memory of the Nine Perfected—and their precise connection with sites on Nanyue—remained alive well into the Tang dynasty.

During the Song dynasty, Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1101–1126) bestowed posthumous honors on the Nine Perfected, and the famous southern Daoist Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 (1194–1227?) wrote an ode in their honor.²⁵ At about this time in the Song dynasty, the Nine Perfected listed in the *Short Record* became the subject of a longer set of biographies in the *Nanyue jiu zhenren zhuan* 南嶽九真人傳 (Biographies of the Nine Perfected of Nanyue).²⁶ Although the Nine Perfected were an important local group of Daoist objects of veneration that attracted imperium-wide attention, there is surprisingly little evidence that they were known or venerated in other parts of Hunan.

Following a list of the Nine Perfected of Nanyue in the *Short Record* is a list of fourteen Daoists who attained the Way there during the Tang dynasty. That section, titled *Those Who Attained the Way [at Nanyue] in the Tang Dynasty* (*Tangchao dedao ren* 唐朝得道人),

²⁵ On Bai Yuchan's poem, see the *Nanyue jiu zhenren geti shouning chonghe ge* 南嶽九真人歌題壽寧沖和閣 (The Song of the Nine Perfected of Nanyue Inscribed at the Chonghe Pavilion in the Shouning [Abbey]), in *Xiuzhen shishu* 修真十書, *juan* 32. On Bai Yuchan in general, see Fabrizio Pregadio and Lowell Skar, "Inner Alchemy (*Neidan*)," in *Daoism Handbook*, ed. Livia Kohn (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 471, and Judith A. Berling, "Channels of Connection in Sung Religion: The Case of Pai Yü-ch'an," in Ebrey and Gregory, *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, 307–33.

²⁶ HY 452. The *Biographies of the Nine Perfected* is attributed to Liao Shen 廖恂 (eleventh century). Based on internal textual evidence, it appears that Liao compiled this work during the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127). In his preface to the *Biographies of the Nine Perfected*, Liao mentioned that the contemporary military affairs commissioner (*shumi shi* 樞密使) was Sun Mian 孫沔 (eleventh century), who obtained the *jinshi* 進士 degree during the Tianxi 天禧 reign period (1017–1021) of the Song emperor Zhenzong 真宗 (r. 997–1022). Since the *Biographies of the Nine Perfected* is listed in Zheng Qiao's 鄭樵 (1104–1162) *Tongzhi* 通志, it must therefore have been in circulation prior to 1162; see Piet van der Loon, *Taoist Books in the Libraries of the Song Period: A Critical Study and Index* (London: Ithaca Press, 1984), 121.

includes (1) Master Yin Jingtong (Yin xiansheng Jingtong 殷先生景童),²⁷ (2) Master Xiao Linghu (Xiao xiansheng Linghu 簫先生靈護), (3) Celestial Master Li Simu (Li tianshi Simu 李天師思慕), (4) Venerable Master He Yinqi, (He zunshi Yinqi 何尊師隱其), (5) Celestial Master Xue Jichang (Xue tianshi Jichang 薛天師季昌), (6) Celestial Master Wang Xianqiao (Wang tianshi Xianqiao 王天師仙嶠), (7) Celestial Master Fu Fuxian (Fu tianshi Fuxian 傅天師符仙), (8) Master Dong Qinxian (Dong xiansheng Qinxian 董先生秦仙),²⁸ (9) Master Xuanhe Zhang Taikong (Xuanhe Zhang xiansheng Taikong 玄和張先生太空),²⁹ (10) Master Li Delin (Li xiansheng Delin 李先生得林), (11) Master Tian Liangyi (Tian xiansheng Liangyi 田先生良逸), (12) Master Guangcheng Liu Xuanjing (Guangcheng Liu xiansheng Xuanjing 廣成劉先生玄靜),³⁰ (13) Venerable Teacher Zhou Hunyu (Zhou zunshi Hunyu 周尊師混汙), and (14) Han Weiyi 韓威儀. All of the figures on this list attained the Way at Nanyue over a hundred-year period during the Tang dynasty.³¹ This list is not exhaustive, nor does it constitute a discrete lineage. Some of the figures are well attested in local sources; others are hardly known.³² Due to limitations of space I cannot discuss their individual biographies here, but among them one finds significant connections to the imperial house and an important Shangqing lineage based at Nanyue—referred to as the “Masters of Hengshan”—that paralleled the better known lineage traced through Li Hanguang 李含光 (683–769).³³

²⁷ The first character is difficult to read, and my transcription is tentative.

²⁸ The *Collected Highlights* (e.g., T. 51.1072c.8, 1082b.16) usually writes his name as Dong Fengxian 董奉仙 or Dong Lianshi 董鍊師.

²⁹ One version of the text has Yuanhe Zhang xiansheng 元和張先生.

³⁰ One version of the text has Yuanjing 元靜.

³¹ This is a term used for a lesser Daoist priest, of which there were four ranks: (1) *lianshi* 鍊師 (highest class, most exalted, devoted to meditation), (2) *fashi* 法師, (3) *weiyi shi* 威儀師, and (4) *lushi* 律師. On their distinctive titles, see Edward H. Schafer, *Maoshan in Tang Times* (Boulder, CO: Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, 1989), 79; all were important status markers.

³² This is a situation similar to that encountered by Schafer in his study of Tang Maoshan Daoists; see Schafer, *Maoshan in Tang Times*, 78.

³³ On that lineage see Robson, *Power of Place*, chap. 5; Franciscus Verellen, *Du Guangting (850–933): Taoiste de cour à la fin de la Chine médiévale* (Paris:

In addition to the importance of Daoist practitioners at Nanyue during the Tang, it was also at this time that the mountain's status was elevated by the emperor.³⁴ As Daoism took on a more prominent role at court, especially in connection with rituals for the Five Sacred Peaks, the changes were also felt at Nanyue, which received repeated rank promotions.³⁵ The important role of Daoism at the sacred peaks was solidified and formalized in 731, after the successful lobbying efforts of the court Daoist Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎.³⁶ Following his counsel, Xuanzong declared that:

At present the divine bethels of the Five Sacred Peaks are in all cases for [the propitiation of] the divinities of mountains and grove; but these are not the true and real divinities [of those peaks]. Every one of the Five Sacred Peaks has a Grotto Archive (*dongfu* 洞府), within each of which are Realized Persons of Highest Clarity who have come down to discharge their responsibilities.³⁷

Institut des hautes études chinoises, 1989), 20; Sunayama Minoru 砂山稔, *Zui Tō Dōkyō shisōshi kenkyū* 隋唐道教思想史研究 [A Study of the History of Daoist Thought in the Sui and Tang Dynasties] (Tokyo: Hirakawa, 1990), 411. On Li Hanguang, see Russell Kirkland, "The Last Grand Master at the T'ang Imperial Court: Li Han-kuang and T'ang Hsüan-tung," *T'ang Studies* 4 (1986): 43–67.

³⁴ The most complete study of these events and the new institutions is Lei Wen 雷聞, "Wuyue zhenjun ci yu Tangdai guojia jisi" 五岳真君祠與唐代國家祭祀 [Shrines to the True Lords of the Five Sacred Peaks and State Veneration During the Tang Dynasty], in *Tangdai zongjiao xinyang yu shehui* 唐代宗教信仰與社會 [Tang Dynasty Religious Beliefs and Society], ed. Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2003), 35–83.

³⁵ See Yoshikawa Tadao 吉川忠夫, "Gogaku to saishi" 五岳と祭祀 [The Five Sacred Peaks and Ritual], in *Zero bitto no sekai* ゼロ・ビットの世界 [The World of Zero Bytes], ed. Shimizu Tetsurō 清水哲郎 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991), 276.

³⁶ *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 [Old Standard History of the Tang], comp. Liu Xu 劉煦 (887–946) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962–1975), 24.934; *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 [Assembled Essentials of the Tang] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956), 47.834–835. See also the useful surveys of the evidence in Yoshikawa, "Gogaku to saishi," and Paul Kroll, "Verses from on High: The Ascent of T'ai Shan," *T'oung-Pao* 69 (1983): 236–237.

³⁷ The translation of this passage from the *Zhenxi* 真系, which is preserved in the

Sima Chengzhen's influence at court is corroborated by the granting in 746 of further rank promotions to the Central Sacred Peak, Northern Sacred Peak, and Southern Sacred Peak. In addition to assuming responsibility for the general veneration of the sacred peaks, Daoists also took charge of another important imperial ritual commonly referred to as the Throwing of the Dragon Slips (*tou longjian* 投龍簡).³⁸

Ritual changes were necessitated when the deities of the Five Sacred Peaks were deposed and replaced by gods from the Daoist pantheon. One striking manifestation of the particularly low regard that the Daoists had for the previous deities of the sacred peaks is found in the *Collected Highlights*. The entry for the Sacred Peak Temple (*yuemiao* 嶽廟) says, for example, that Sima Chengzhen declared that the deity of the sacred peak (*yueshen* 嶽神) was merely an “underworld governor” (*dixiaozhu* 地下主) and not a “Heavenly Perfected” (*tianzhen* 天真).³⁹ Within the Daoist hierarchy of spirits, the category of “underworld governor” was considered to be staffed by transcendents of inferior rank. Along with the changes to the pantheon came the establishment of new temples—called shrines to the Perfected Lords (*zhenjun ci* 真君祠, or temples to the Perfected Lords, *zhenjun miao* 真君廟)—which were described as “pure temples” (*qingmiao* 清廟) since the new deities received only vegetarian offerings.⁴⁰

Nanyue's early Daoist history is filled with references to significant female figures. The presence of female Daoists on Nanyue is often traced back to Wei Huacun 魏華存 (252–334)—also known as Lady Wei (Wei furen 魏夫人)—who is best known for transmitting the Shangqing 上清 manuscript corpus to her disciple Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–386) in a series of nocturnal revelations. Lady Wei's association with the site was, however, established much later than most commentators have suggested.⁴¹ What is clear is that during the Tang dynasty female Daoist cults were active at Nanyue and they were based on the veneration of

Yunji qiqian 雲笈七籤 (HY 1026), 5.15b, is by Kroll, “Verses from on High,” 237n53.

³⁸ This rite has been the object of a masterful study by Edouard Chavannes, “Le jet des dragons,” *Mémoires concernant l'Asie Orientale* 3 (1919): 55–220.

³⁹ T. 51.1063b.28–29.

⁴⁰ See T. 51.1068a–b and *Nanyue xiaolu*, 3b–4a.

⁴¹ See Robson, *Power of Place*, chap. 6.

the memory of Lady Wei. During the Tang, for example, the Huangting guan 黃庭觀 was a famous abbey for female Daoists established in 618. During the Five Dynasties period it received the patronage of the influential Ma 馬 family and the name was changed to the Wei Pavilion (Wei ge 魏閣), where Lady Wei was the main object of veneration. During the Song dynasty it was renamed Pavilion of the Grand Sovereign of the Purple Vacuity (Zixu yuanjun zhi ge 紫虛元君之閣), and during the reign of emperor Huizong it received Daoists texts and was once again given the name Huangting guan. The important role played by female Daoists at Nanyue has carried on into the present to such an extent that now the President of the Hunan Daoist Association (Daojiao xiehui 道教協會) is a woman named Huang Zhi'an 黃至安.⁴²

The earliest evidence I have thus far been able to find for the establishment of Daoist institutions away from the center at Nanyue concerns the Qingxia guan 青霞觀 (originally called the Dongzhen guan 洞真觀) in Baling 巴陵 (near modern Yueyang 岳陽), which was built in the Liang dynasty (535–546), and the Dengzhen guan 登真觀 in Liling 醴陵, allegedly the site of Wang Qiao's 王橋 alchemical furnace, which during the Tang received a gift of books from the emperor.⁴³

During the Tang dynasty, while Daoism was receiving unprecedented imperial support in the capital, a number of Daoist abbeys were established throughout the imperium. At this time many new abbeys were also built in the central Hunan region. The sites of those new Daoist institutions included Nanyue, Chenzhou 郴州, Ningyuan 寧遠, Changde 常德, Liuyang 瀏陽, Chaling 茶陵, Xiangyang 向陽, Wuling 武陵, Shaoyang 邵陽, Xinhua 新化, and Yueyang 岳陽.⁴⁴ During the Song dynasty approximately twenty-five new Daoist abbeys were added to the religious landscape of Hunan.⁴⁵

Despite occasional references in traditional historical sources to Daoist activity in the central Hunan region, it remains difficult to provide a clear overall history of the nature and development of that

⁴² See Robin Wang, "Daoists of the Southern Marchmount," *Journal of Daoist Studies* 1 (2008): 177–180.

⁴³ Wu Xinfu, *Hunan tongshi*, 275.

⁴⁴ See Liu Guoqiang, "Hunan daojiao," 70 and Wu Xinfu, *Hunan tongshi*, 363.

⁴⁵ Wu Xinfu, *Hunan tongshi*, 472 and Zeng Guoquan 曾國荃, *Hunan tongzhi* 湖南通志 (Taibei: Huawen shuju, 1885), *juan* 238–240.

history solely on the basis of those sources. There are plenty of sites in central Hunan that deserve sustained attention, but due to limitations of space I am forced to limit my comments here to one area. Thanks to the detailed studies of local historians in Hunan, we can identify one area where there exists a comparably rich record of Daoist history: Xinhua county, part of an area inhabited by Miao 苗 and Yao 瑶 ethnicities that local historians refer to as the Meishan 梅山 region. There remains much to be written about the native popular religious tradition of this area (referred to as Meishan jiao 梅山教), but I will be unable to explore that topic within the confines of this essay.⁴⁶ The local historians Zeng Di 曾迪 and Liu Weishun 劉偉順 have provided the richest accounts of the Daoist history of the Xinhua region, which may also reflect larger trends in the development of Daoism in the wider Hunan region.⁴⁷

After a critical analysis of a series of local gazetteers and manuscripts, Zeng Di—like many of the other local historians who contributed essays to the *Xiangzhong zongjiao yu xiangtu shehui diaocha baogao ji*—noted the difficulty of tracing the precise history of Quanzhen and Zhengyi Daoism in the Xinhua and Anhua regions.⁴⁸ The present focus here on the largely institutional history of Daoism in central Hunan is not meant to preclude, however, the importance of local vernacular and exorcistic traditions, which I have already mentioned above, but in attempting to establish the early history of Daoism in Hunan—at least prior to the Ming dynasty—it is very difficult to say anything for certain about those local vernacular traditions. Therefore, rather than try to generalize about that history (or propose premature conclusions), I will merely point to some of the evidence that we now have about the institutional history of Daoism in this region.

⁴⁶ There are a number of articles in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao* that address this issue.

⁴⁷ Zeng Di 曾迪, “Xinhua xian daojiao yuanliu ji julan gong leijiao chanshi” 新化縣道教源流暨聚嵐宮雷醮闡事, in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao*, and Liu Weishun 劉偉順, “Xinshao xian Wenxianguan diaocha baogao 新邵縣文仙觀調查報告, in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao*.

⁴⁸ Zeng Di, “Xinhua xian daojiao,” and Zhang Shihong 張式弘, “Anhua daojiao de diaocha baogao” 安化道教的調查報告, in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao*.

One of the significant early Daoist sites in the Xinhua region is Wenxian shan 文仙山, also known as Wenjin shan 文斤山—the location of the Wenxian guan 文仙觀—which some have described as the birthplace of Daoism in the central Hunan region. The traditional history of the Wenxian guan is traced back to the veneration of Wen Jin 文斤, who lived during the Western Jin dynasty (265–316). When Wen Jin took up office in the Hunan region he traveled around to many famous places and was particularly attracted to Wenjin shan.⁴⁹ When his term of office expired he decided to relinquish his official position and began to live a life of seclusion in a cave where he devoted himself to alchemy, attempting to refine an elixir of immortality. Tradition has it that he succeeded in his alchemical efforts and in 375 he mounted a crane and ascended to heaven as a transcendent.

Although the “history” of the Wenxian guan is tethered to Wen Jin—who is considered the founding ancestor—it was only in the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127) that this institution became an important local and regional center of Daoism that attracted the attention of the Song emperor Huizong. Emperor Huizong held Wen Jin in high esteem and honored him with many posthumous entitlements. The actual founder of the Wenxian guan was Zhang Jinghua 張景華 (d.u.), allegedly a figure in the lineage of the Celestial Masters with connections back to Zhang Daoling. When Zhang arrived at Wenjin shan and realized it was an efficacious place to practice and a good place to escape political turmoil, he resolved to stay. He had a great influence on the Wenxian guan through his propagation of new protocols. Although local tradition claims he was an heir to the Zhengyi tradition, he wanted the abbots of the abbey to remain unmarried and any transgressions met with expulsion from the community. As Liu Weishun has averred, this communal form of Zhengyi Daoism predated the advent of Quanzhen Daoism by about two hundred years.⁵⁰

There are problems, however, with claims that celebrate Zhang Jinghua as a key node in the orthodox transmission of the Celestial Masters teachings. A research trip made by local historians to Longhu shan 龍虎山 to corroborate those claims failed to find any evidence of Zhang Jinghua’s name on any registers. If he was indeed a descendent

⁴⁹ Liu Weishun, “Xinshao xian Wenxian guan.”

⁵⁰ Ibid. Much of this history is also covered in Zeng Di, “Xinhua xian daojiao.”

of the Celestial Masters then his name would have to have been noted. Regardless of the veracity of Zhang Jinghua's connection to the orthodox establishment on Longhu shan, his influence on the local religion of central Hunan is undeniable. Zhang had many disciples who went on to spread Daoism through the central region and to establish up to as many as 108 new institutions, including the important Yuxu gong 玉虛宮.⁵¹ One should not underestimate the significance of this moment in central Hunan's Daoist history, since these developments established this region as one of the most important centers of Daoism in Hunan.

Based on the research by Zeng Di and Liu Weishun, we can therefore summarize that the Wenxian guan was established in the Eastern Jin dynasty, underwent substantial development in the Song dynasty, reached full maturity under the Yuan dynasty when it adopted Quanzhen practices, and then suddenly shifted to Zhengyi Daoism in the Ming dynasty. After 1949 the Daoists of the Wenxian guan were forced to return to lay life and the site has never regained its earlier status and influence.

The development of Zhengyi Daoism in the Xiangtan 湘潭 region shares a similar trajectory to that of events at Wenxian shan.⁵² The beginnings of Daoist history in Xiangtan are also traced, as in the case of the Wenxian guan, to a single official. The Taogong ci 陶公祠 was built to venerate Tao Kan 陶侃 (259–334), formerly the governor of Tanzhou. When he died local Daoists built a tomb housing some articles related to him and built the Wangheng ting 望衡亭 (Viewing Heng[shan] from Afar Pavilion) and an ancestral temple.

There is evidence that Quanzhen Daoism spread to Xiangtan during the Southern Song dynasty (1126–1279), though it never seems to have attained a large following there.⁵³ Rather, it was Zhengyi Daoism that spread through Xiangtan as part of its more general movement into the villages of Hunan. Although the dates for its arrival and development have not yet been precisely identified, by the Jin dynasty 金代 (1115–1234) various forms of Buddhism and Zhengyi Daoism were well established in the Xiangtan region. The Qizhen guan 栖真觀 was, for instance, built during the Jin dynasty and became a site connected with

⁵¹ See Liu Weishun, "Xinshao xian Wenxian guan."

⁵² Guo Zhaoxiang, 2006, and Yan Guangrun, 2006.

⁵³ Guo Zhaoxiang, 2006.

two figures who attained the Way there and achieved transcendence. By the Ming dynasty Zhengyi Daoism had become particularly influential in the Xiangtan area.⁵⁴ Liu Guoqiang has pointed out that among the places where Zhengyi Daoism spread in central Hunan during the Ming dynasty, Xiangtan was particularly noteworthy since it registered some seventy altars.⁵⁵

It is perhaps most important at this stage of research on the Daoist history of the central Hunan region to keep the focus on local developments, but in order to understand that local history we should not lose sight of larger developments. Considering local Daoist history in Hunan from the context of imperium-wide developments in Zhengyi Daoism, Vincent Goossaert has written how during the Qing dynasty

the state maintained the special status given to the Zhang Tianshi by the Ming. He was nominal head of the Taoist administration, and his residence on the Longhu shan (Jiangxi) as well as a number of institutions on this mountain benefited from a sort of extraterritoriality. There the Heavenly Master reigned as a sort of small-scale emperor. Around the time of the census, the acting Heavenly Master, Zhang Zhaolin, took his role as the head of a nation-wide ordination system seriously. He himself visited the various provinces to hold ordination platforms, or selected other Taoists to do so in his name and gave them licenses bearing his seal. One such license (*zhaopiao* 照票), issued in 1704, has recently been found in possession of a Taoist family from Hunan. In classical administrative style, it quotes the early Qing imperial edict trusting the Heavenly Master with maintaining orthodoxy within Taoism, and confers on the recipient the quality of a practitioner of pure Taoist liturgy, uncontaminated by local shamanistic traditions.⁵⁶

The license (*zhaopiao*) mentioned above is a reference to Liu Jingfeng's 劉勁峰 chance discovery of a document from a Hunan altar that had been issued under the authority of the Celestial Master's office on Longhu shan. That document stated that a certain Daoist from Hunan

⁵⁴ Yan Guangrun, 2006.

⁵⁵ Liu Guoqiang, "Hunan daojiao," 70–71.

⁵⁶ Vincent Goossaert, "Counting the Monks: The 1736–1739 Census of the Chinese Clergy," *Late Imperial China* 21, no. 2 (2000): 40–85.

named Kang Sheng Yilang 康勝一郎 practiced pure, orthodox, forms of Daoism.⁵⁷ The document, which has been published in full by Liu Jingfeng, goes on to say that those who claim to be Daoists, but do not hold in their possession such a license, are nothing more than unorthodox shamans. It also issues a stern warning that says that if he dares to go on practicing unorthodox rituals and arousing confusion in the people's hearts, causing injury to the region, you should report him to the provincial authorities for investigation and punishment.⁵⁸ This document demonstrates the reach of Zhengyi ordinations into the Hunan region during the mid-eighteenth century and, as Lagerwey has also noted, it "is the oldest concrete evidence that being 'in charge of Taoism throughout the empire,' as the document puts it, involved control of Taoists even in such remote regions as the Hunan-Jiangxi border."⁵⁹ Further research on the nature of Zhengyi Daoism in the Hunan region is needed to assess just how far that reach extended.

Although Zhengyi Daoists were dispersed throughout the villages of Hunan, from the Ming into the Qing dynasty it was, however, Quanzhen Daoism that came to assert its influence at the major Daoist institutions in the central Hunan region—including those in Changsha, Nanyue, Yueyang, Liuyang, Taoyuan, Taojiang, and Liling. At this time many Daoists from the Quanzhen center on Wudang shan also arrived and helped to revive or expand those institutions. The local evidence for these trends appears to be borne out when viewed in relation to the larger scale developments of the Quanzhen tradition. Goossaert has demonstrated, for instance, that the Quanzhen order appeared

in North China and spread throughout the territory of the Jin 金 empire ... during the Yuan its spread to southern regions seems to have been quantitatively modest. Its expansion southwards must have continued

⁵⁷ Liu Jingfeng 劉勁峰, *Gannan zongzu shehui yu daojiao wenhua yanjiu* 贛南宗族社會與道教文化研究 [Research on Taoism and religious organization in Southern Jiangxi], *Kejia chuantong shehui congshu* 客家傳統社會叢書, 8 (Guoji kejia xuehui, École française d'Extrême Orient and Haiwai huaren ziliao yanjiu zhongxin, 2000), 263.

⁵⁸ The translation here is from John Lagerwey, "Introduction," in *Gannan zongzu shehui yu daojiao wenhua yanjiu*, 15.

⁵⁹ Lagerwey, 2000, 15.

during the Ming and was given a boost during the Longmen renaissance. The best source for defining the density of Quanzhen presence in late imperial times is the 1736–1739 census data. Although they document only a part of the country, these data give a rather precise idea of the distribution of the Quanzhen clergy at that time. The highest numbers were still in the north, where all counties had at least several tens of clerics. *In the South, there were important centers (around Hanzhou, Hengshan [Hunan], Luofu shan) which supplied Quanzhen clerics in the surrounding area, but no regular network of Quanzhen-staffed temples in all counties.*⁶⁰

He has also stated that “the only Taoist center with a nation-wide appeal included in a registered county is the Southern Peak, Hengshan (Hunan). In Hengshan xian, there were 100 Quanzhen *daoshi* registered and none belonging to the other orders (it is very unlikely but not absolutely impossible that some Qingwei Lingbao *daoshi* were registered during the first year). This would suggest that this sacred peak had been successfully taken over by Quanzhen institutions. However, 100 monks is not a very large number when compared with the 343 Quanzhen *daoshi* registered for Hengyang xian, the county encompassing the prefectural city not far from there.”⁶¹

There were, however, many other smaller areas within the central Hunan region with a strong Quanzhen presence. Future research will have to investigate further the evidence for that local history and try to sort out some of the thorny historiographical issues related to what Monica Esposito has called a “Longmen fashion,” whereby many places affirmed, or merely claimed, connections to that lineage and where the local Daoists have tended to use—from as early as the Ming dynasty—Longmen lineage generational characters in their names.⁶²

In order to move forward and begin to fill in some of the history that might be missed due to an emphasis on institutional history—at the

⁶⁰ Vincent Goossaert, “The Quanzhen Clergy, 1700–1950,” in *Religion and Chinese Society: Vol. II—Taoism and Local Religion in Modern China*, ed. John Lagerwey (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2004), 699–771, emphasis added.

⁶¹ Goossaert, “Counting the Monks,” 71.

⁶² Monica Esposito, “The Longmen School and Its Controversial History during the Qing Dynasty,” in Lagerwey, *Religion and Chinese Society*, 621–698.

expense of the local vernacular traditions—Professor Michael Szonyi and I co-organized a project which was awarded funding by the Harvard China Fund in 2009 that is focused on local history, culture and religion. That project aims to develop the infrastructure and lay the foundations for a digital archive for China’s local history that will preserve extant historical materials. The establishment of a digital archive is intended to add stature and legitimacy to the practice of carrying out local historical work. The archive will bring together the collection work currently being done in different regions of China, and encourage further collection, digitization, and analysis of local history materials. The archive will consist of a wide range of media, including scanned or photographed documents (ranging from land deeds to genealogies); photographs of objects; audio files (such as oral history interviews, folklore, and religious recitations); and video files (such as rituals). The data will be tagged with a common vocabulary and metadata so as to permit the creation of village level data assemblies and enable comparative queries. The long-term goal is to establish multiple interoperable databases that will together comprise a permanent archive of digital versions of unique historical documents and materials.

One of the main substantive research projects in the first phase of this program is the collection, research, and analysis of a rich body of material from the Hunan region (which I am presently co-directing along with Alain Arrault). The starting point of this work is the continued investigation of the extant collections of religious statues, each of which has a small cavity in its back filled with a variety of objects (medicinal herbs, paper money, and desiccated insects)—with the primary object of scholarly importance being the “consecration certificate” (*yizhi* 意旨).⁶³ The documents from these statues provide detailed information such as

⁶³ For previous research on these statues see note 3 above. On the collections in China that have been catalogued see Alain Arrault, ed., in collaboration with Michela Bussotti, Patrice Fava, Li Feng, Zhang Yao et al. *Les statuettes religieuses du Hunan. 1. La collection Patrice Fava* (restricted access), http://www.shenxianghunan.com/bdd_web_barbara/index.html, EFEO, 2006; and Alain Arrault, ed., in collaboration with Michela Bussotti, Deng Zhaohui, Li Feng, Shen Jinxian, Zhang Yao et al. *Les statuettes religieuses du Hunan. 2. La collection du musée du Hunan* (restricted access), http://www.shenxianghunan.com/bdd_web_barbara/index.html, EFEO-Musée du Hunan, 2006.

names of the donors—as well as wives, sons, daughters, and other relations—the address where the statue was enshrined, the identity of the statue, the reason for the consecration, and the date. During the tenure of this project we will continue cataloguing these materials, supplement the data with new information from family genealogies (*jiapu* 家譜) and other local manuscripts, and archive new material based on carefully focused fieldwork into areas that we have identified from the “consecration certificates” as being of utmost significance. These statues and their contents provide unprecedented new vantage points on the study of local Chinese religion (Daoism, Buddhism and local religion), history, culture, and society.

In order to show some of the possibilities that these materials offer for helping to bridge the past and the present and age-old religious sites with newer religious developments, let me draw this discussion to a close by relating the history of the main Nanyue deity and his transformation into a popular god named Nanyue shengdi 南嶽聖帝. This will allow us to witness how new religious institutions dedicated to that deity spread throughout the central Hunan region and how people from those regions began to participate in pilgrimages to Nanyue to venerate that deity.

Recent research on the various Hunan statue collections, fieldwork in central Hunan, and archival sources all demonstrate that cults centered on Nanyue existed throughout the central Hunan region. In the various statue collections, Nanyue shengdi is one of the most commonly represented deities, and the consecration certificates and gazetteers mention many temples and shrines dedicated to Nanyue shengdi that are given the name Nanyue miao 南嶽廟. Yet, it is still unclear precisely when Nanyue shengdi appeared on the religious landscape and when temples dedicated to this deity began to spread throughout the Xiangzhong region. I hope to draw together here the conclusions of recent research on Nanyue shengdi to see if it is possible to add some precision to our present understanding of Nanyue shengdi’s history.

The Nanyue deity who eventually came to be referred to as Nanyue shengdi defies easy classification since at different times he was perceived to be a local god, was turned into a Daoist deity, later underwent a conversion to Buddhism, and eventually transformed into a popular deity with multiple traits that transcend our normative religious categories. Nanyue shengdi’s popularity in this region is such that veneration of this all-powerful deity surpasses that of all bodhisattvas

(*pusa* 菩薩) and it has been reported that more than 80 percent of the families in the Xinhua region send at least one family member on pilgrimage to Nanyue each year.⁶⁴

The first question that needs to be addressed is the nature of the name Nanyue shengdi itself. The name Nanyue shengdi is not attested in early sources, where the Nanyue deity is identified as Zhurong 祝融, one of the “Three High Gods of Chu.”⁶⁵ During the Tang dynasty Zhurong was enfeoffed as Sitian wang 司天王, and there is textual evidence for the existence of a Sitian huowang miao 司天霍王廟 (Temple of King Huo, the Royal Administrator of Heaven) from that same period. The Tang dynasty *Nanyue xiaolu* reports, for instance, that

[t]he Sitian Huowang miao is located some 100 paces from the front of the Yueguan 嶽觀 (Marchmount abbey). Originally because the south corresponded to fire, its deity was named Zhurong. [Tang] Xuanzong [r. 713–55] enfeoffed Zhurong as Sitian wang (Royal Administrator of Heaven), and in order to carry out the summer sacrifices, an attendant was appointed to the temple. The temple was located on the top of Zhurong Peak. But, during the Sui dynasty, it was moved.... At present on the summit of Zhurong Peak the old foundation remains.⁶⁶

This source, therefore, records one of the changes to the name of the deity during the Tang. According to other sources, in the thirteenth year of the Kaiyuan reign (725) Zhurong was given the title Nanyue zhenjun 南嶽真君 and in the fifth year of the Tianbao reign (746) he was bestowed the title Sitian wang, which must be the same title change mentioned in the *Nanyue xiaolu*. Later, Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850–933) noted in his *Dongtian fudi yuedu mingshan ji* 洞天福地嶽瀆名山記 (Record of Grotto Heavens, Holy Spots, Sacred Peaks, Rivers, and Famous Mountains) that “the title of the deity at Nanyue Hengshan is Royal Administrator of Heaven (*sitian wang* 司天王). He commands

⁶⁴ Xie Wuba 謝五八, “Meishan ren jinxiang minsu tanyuan” 梅山人進香民俗探源, in Chen and Arrault, *Xiangzhong zongjiao*.

⁶⁵ Constance Cook, “Three High Gods of Chu,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 22 (1994): 1–22.

⁶⁶ *Nanyue xiaolu*, 3a.9ff.

30,000 transcendent officers and jade ladies.”⁶⁷ It was not until the fourth year of the Dazhong xiangfu 大中祥符 reign of the Song dynasty (1011) that the Nanyue deity received the full title “Nanyue sitian zhaosheng di” 南嶽司天昭聖帝, and although there were some later changes to the name in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it has been the Song dynasty name that people have used to refer to the Nanyue deity down to the present day.⁶⁸

Given that it was during the Song that the popular name for the Nanyue deity became solidified, it is not surprising that it is also from that time that we find textual evidence about pilgrimages to Nanyue to venerate that deity. It is difficult to date the *terminus post quem* for the development of this pilgrimage tradition, but by the Song the practice had already spread to the hinterlands of Hunan. The Song poet Dai Fugu 戴復古 (1167–ca. 1245), who traveled to Hunan in the twelfth century, provides our earliest evidence about the nature of the pilgrimage to Nanyue—noting the religious behaviors of the pilgrims—though it is not possible to know precisely where Dai made these observations.⁶⁹

The historical research of Zhang Weiran 張偉然 and the contemporary ethnographic report compiled by Xie Wuba 謝五八 for numerous places in the Xinhua region inform us that there were various types of pilgrimage to Nanyue (or other local Nanyue branch temples/shrines for those who could not complete the lengthier version) based on varying degrees of asceticism. Some pilgrims vowed to do prostrations every three or seven steps, and others regulated their diets. Pilgrimage to Nanyue has been designated with a number of different terms, such as “Nanyue chaoxiang” 南嶽朝香, “jinxiang” 進香, “chaoyue” 朝嶽, and “Nanyue chaosheng” 南嶽朝聖.⁷⁰ The most important date in the pilgrimage cycle is the first day of the eighth lunar month (*bayue chuyi* 八月初一 or *bayue shuo* 八月朔), but pilgrimages to Nanyue were also undertaken in the seventh, ninth and eleventh lunar months.⁷¹ Based on the geographic spread of popular songs

⁶⁷ *Dongtian fudi yuedu mingshan ji*, HY 599.

⁶⁸ Tan Yuesheng 譚岳生, *Nanyue damiao* 南嶽大廟 (Hunan: Hainan chubanshe, 1995), 38.

⁶⁹ Dai Fugu 戴復古, *Shiping shiji* 石屏詩集 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934), *juan* 9, cited in Zhang Weiran, *Hunan lishi wenhua*, 98.

⁷⁰ Zhang Weiran, *Hunan lishi wenhua*, 97 and Xie Wuba, “Meishan ren jinxiang.”

⁷¹ See the evidence for the historical precedent for the first day of the eighth lunar

about going on pilgrimage to Nanyue, it is clear just how widespread the practice has been in the central Hunan region.⁷² During the pilgrimage season devotees from all over Hunan set out for Nanyue (in the past on foot, but today in rented cars and buses) to make supplication (*xuyuan* 許願) to Nanyue shengdi or to offer thanks (*huanyuan* 還願) for the granting of a boon (health, wealth, office, etc.). Along the pilgrimage route devotees sing and chant verses from a pilgrimage handbook that has over one hundred different verses. Those verses are chanted at different junctures of the journey for everything from seeing a well (“edge of the well verse” *jingbian gao* 井遍誥) and crossing a bridge (“crossing a bridge verse” *guoqiao gao* 過橋誥) to the all-important “Nanyue verse” 南嶽誥 that is chanted throughout the pilgrimage and on the journey back home.

Concluding Remarks

I have attempted to paint a rough picture, using rather broad strokes, of the historical development of Daoism in the central Hunan region. The historical and geographical coverage of this essay is not in perfect balance, and my choices to shine a brighter light on this or that period, place, or issue were based largely on the sources available to me and to my own areas of expertise. Other scholars would doubtlessly have made other choices, such as writing a detailed history of Daoism and Meishan jiao from the Ming dynasty to the present (an important task that we are in dire need of). This study does, however, reveal some of the historiographical issues that must be faced when attempting to write the Daoist religious history of this region over time (including the immediate necessity to widen our sources of data beyond standard histories to include unprinted local manuscripts and, for the contemporary period, ethnography). Most importantly, perhaps, the limitations of this essay point to how significant the Hunan statues and their contents—in conjunction with other local historical and religious manuscripts—will be to the writing of the next chapters in the religious history of central Hunan from the Qing dynasty to the present. That history will surely tell a rather different story than those that have been written solely on the

month that is collected in Zhang Weiran, *Hunan lishi wenhua*, 98, which he collected from various gazetteer records.

⁷² Zhang Weiran, *Hunan lishi wenhua*, 99.

basis of official histories and other printed sources, and it will also help to add some finer clarity to the sketchy picture provided here.

湖南湘中地區道教的成長歷史

羅柏松 (James Robson)

摘要

近年來，學術界出現了一股研究中國地方宗教傳統的熱潮。這些新發現的宗教傳統和傳承，令改寫此前對中國宗教歷史輪廓之描述成為可能，而早前對中國宗教不甚準確的假設，即無論從歷時性還是共時性上中國的宗教都是性質均一的實體，也開始受到挑戰。當前，學界對湖南地區的地方宗教研究還有相當大的空白，儘管西方學者們越來越意識到這個地區對中國宗教歷史發展方方面面的重大影響，但西方語言對該地區地方宗教發展歷史的相關研究仍可謂鳳毛麟角。本論文旨在彌補這方面的不足，並將對湖南地區的道教從產生到現在的成長歷史作一個全面的地方性的考察。在盡量還原歷史全貌的同時，本文的重點在於道教在湘中地區的早期發展，以及現有歷史文獻所提供的訊息。

鑒於神話和傳奇故事已經深入交織於歷史文獻之中，早期湘中地區的道教歷史已經很難還原。但是，從目前現有歷史資料來看，佛教和道教都是在公元三世紀到四世紀之間在湘中地區扎根發展的。有證據表明道教思想和實踐在四世紀的時候已經滲透於湖南地區。據現存最早、最權威的歷史資料顯示，道教在湖南地區最初活動中心是位於湘江邊上、長沙南面的南嶽山麓。在南嶽之外，我目前所能發現的最早道教場所是在巴陵（鄰近現在的岳陽地區）的始建於梁代的青霞觀（早先又名洞真觀），以及醴陵的登真觀。唐朝的時候，道教受到了前所未有的來自皇家的支持，帝國境內建造了一大批道教宮觀，很多新的宮觀在湘中地區也應運而生。這些地方包括南嶽、郴州、寧遠、常德、瀏陽、茶陵、向陽、武陵、邵陽、新化和岳陽。本文重點介紹新化縣的道教歷史和新化縣早期道教活躍地點文仙山（又名文斤山）以及山上的文仙觀。文仙山被很多人認為是道教在湘中地區的發源地。到了明朝，正一派道教在湘潭地區尤其流行。雖然正一派信徒遍布湖南的鄉村地區，但是明清交際之時，全真派道教漸漸主導了長沙、南嶽、岳陽、瀏陽、桃源、桃江和醴陵的主要道院。我們這裏強調道教在湘中地區的成長歷史，並非要忽略地方上有關鄉土鬼神傳統的重要性，而是試圖構建道教在湘中地區的至少早於明代的早期歷史。

為了進一步充實研究，以及補充因過度注重道教成長歷史等宏觀問題而可能忽略的微觀歷史細節，論文的最後一個章節將討論來自湖南地區的一個神像內部的一系列物品及其代表的珍貴價值。這些倖存的神像背部有一個小洞，裏面裝了各種物品（藥包、紙錢、以及脫水的昆蟲），以及有着重要學術意義的首要物件——意旨。這些意旨為研究地區性的中國宗教（道教、佛教和地方宗教）、歷史、文化和社會提供了前所未有的有利視角。論文將以南嶽之神及其如何轉變為廣受尊崇的南嶽聖帝的歷史收尾，以此來展示上述材料在聯繫歷史與現狀、以及為有新宗教發展的古老宗教場所確認年代等問題上發揮作用的可能性。在這一部分，我還將介紹該地區歷史上這些新的機構如何致力在湖南民間推廣南嶽聖帝，使之聲名遠播；以及當地百姓如何進香朝拜南嶽聖帝。最重要的也許是，這篇論文的局限性指明了湖南神像及其內部物品、當地歷史與宗教手稿對今後研究從清朝到現代湘中地區宗教歷史的重要作用。這個歷史將絕對不同於在官方記錄以及其它文獻的基礎上總結出來的歷史，也會使本文所描畫的歷史更為清晰。

關鍵詞：湖南道教、地區宗教、地方歷史、南嶽聖帝