

# The Institution of Daoism in the Central Region (Xiangzhong) of Hunan<sup>\*</sup>

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## 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

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<sup>\*</sup> 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

## 湖南湘中地區道教的成長歷史

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### 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