men who served both church and state in that capacity (p. 87). These are, of course, rough and ready distinctions, and numerous exceptions could be cited; they are, nonetheless, a useful way of thinking about centre and locality and state and society during the middle period of the Chinese empire, and a good example of how comparison can help specialists in both China and Europe specify what is and is not distinctive about the places they study. We are still a long way from being able to make confident generalizations about the issues covered in this book, but the essays here can help to chart various promising paths forward.

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A Library of Clouds: The Scripture of the Immaculate Numen *and the Rewriting of Daoist Texts.* By J. E. E. Pettit and Chao-jan Chang. New Daoist Studies Series. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2020. Pp. xx + 355. $65.00.

This book, written collaboratively by two representatives of the younger generation of Daoist scholars (one a Chinese from Taiwan and the other an American) inaugurates a major renewal of the textual study and analysis of the canon of Daoist literature. The focus is on the Shangqing 上清 tradition, which originated in southern China in the mid-fourth century C.E., through the revelation of texts and instructions from the deities and immortalized humans of this tradition, and the continued transmission and reworking of this material, based on the ongoing communication between the divine and the human worlds—as well as on the creative input from the individuals through whose hands the texts were passed down. This process continued over the centuries until the beginning of the modern era, generally thought to be represented by a number of economic, social, and cultural shifts that took place during the Song dynasty (960–1278).

The book places itself in the context of Daoist studies, and it builds, of course, on the wide-ranging literature on the textual history of the Shangqing tradition produced within this field over the last five decades—in French, English, Japanese, and Chinese. The most important in Western languages is without question the work of Isabelle Robinet (1932–2000), the leading Western scholar on this tradition,

whose contributions began to appear in the late 1970s and included, most notably, her magnum opus, *La révélation du Shangqing dans l'histoire du taoïsme*,[1] and her many entries in the collective work of the European Daozang Project (1979–1985), which was published only much later (and long after Robinet's untimely death), in 2004–2005 by the University of Chicago Press, as *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the* Daozang, edited by Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen. It would be amiss not to mention in this connection the equally groundbreaking work by Michel Strickmann (1942–1994), who focused on reconstructing the social history of the Maoshan 茅山 tradition (which was the standard designation among scholars for the tradition until it was redubbed the Shangqing tradition—exactly by Robinet), whereas Robinet was committed entirely to the *literature,* that is, the texts of the tradition and their contents.

The present book follows in Robinet's footsteps by being focused entirely on the *textual* analysis of one major work of the Shangqing tradition, namely, DZ1314: *Dongzhen taishang suling dongyuan dayou miaojing* 洞真太上素靈洞元大有妙經, referred to by the authors of the present book with the abbreviated title, *The Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* (*Suling jing* 素靈經) (see also Robinet's entry on this scripture in *The Taoist Canon,* pp. 187–88).

I write this review with some trepidation because there is a significant overlap between the central section of the *Suling jing* and another text in the *Daozang*, namely *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* 金闕帝君三元真一經 (DZ253), which I translated into Danish in 1975 as part of my MA thesis at the University of Copenhagen. I subsequently retranslated this work into English and had it published under the title *The Method of Holding the Three Ones: A Daoist Manual of Meditation of the Fourth Century A.D.*, in 1980.[2] This little book was my first contribution to Daoist studies. It was well received among what was generally perceived as "the New Age audience," and it thus played a certain role in the formation of what is now more commonly referred to as "American Daoism." However, in the more "academic," university context, it was soon basically overshadowed by the much more comprehensive and ambitious project of Isabelle Robinet, discussed above.

Jonathan Pettit and Chang Chao-jan are obviously fully aware of this pre-history to their own work. They refer to Robinet's work respectfully and sometimes critically, and I shall return to this below. With my own book, it is a little trickier

[1]   Isabelle Robinet, *La révélation du Shangqing dans l'histoire du taoïsme* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1984).
[2]   Poul Andersen, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones: A Daoist Manual of Meditation of the Fourth Century A.D.* (London: Curzon Press, 1980).

because the *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* translated by me constitutes such a crucial part of the clearly later *Suling jing* (probably compiled during the sixth century C.E.), which they translate in full. The two authors wisely avoid all comparison of the two translations, except for noting that for their own translation of this section of the *Suling jing* (DZ1314, pp. 27a–28b; pp. 188–210 in the present book) they have, at least for some part, "consulted Andersen's translation in *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*" (p. 298, n. 29). Other than that, and concerning the early revelation of the method described in the text, they assert that, in this regard, "We follow Poul Andersen's hypothesis that this description of the ritual was likely appended to the end of 'Su's Hagiography.' See his *The Method of Holding the Three Ones,* 10–11" (p. 291, n. 22). "Su's Hagiography" refers to the hagiography of Su Lin 蘇林, the True Being, *zhenren* 真人, thought to have played a significant role in the chain of transmission of the method into this world.

A great contribution of the present book is to move beyond all petty quarrels about prerogatives in terms of dating of the texts and notions of being "the original text" and about how to restore it by means of analysing, first of all, the confusing and mutually contradictory wealth of materials found in the *Daozang*. It does this by introducing a whole new concept of a Daoist text. They are quite successful in doing this, and, in this way, the book constitutes a groundbreaking step forward in the history of the study of the *textual history* of Daoism. Another great move by Pettit and Chang is to initiate a—perhaps less successful but nonetheless important—discussion of the whole *concept of a text* from a more philosophical perspective. I shall return to this below.

What Pettit and Chang offer is a new way of reading a corpus of Daoist texts like that of the Shangqing tradition. They build, of course, on Robinet's very comprehensive and meticulous work on this corpus, yet they find flaws in some of the underlying assumptions that most of us took for granted back then, when the study of the texts of Daoism took off in a new way, largely thanks to the impact of Kristofer Schipper and Robinet. A main assumption was that of an "original text" predating the versions we had access to in the *Daozang*, and that we might try to recover through analysis of the many versions that were circulating during the Six Dynasties. The problem with this was, first of all, another assumption that all the players at the time of the revelations subscribed to the idea that the only *true* versions of the scriptures of the Shangqing tradition were those originally circulated among the deities in heaven. What was revealed down on earth were only secondary versions, translated from the originals into the worldly languages of human beings. Thus, to modern scholars, restoring the original came to mean, rather than getting hold of the templates found in heaven, to recover the original

version revealed to the mediums who worked for the Xu 許 family living near Mt. Mao in Jiangsu. The main mediums were first Hua Qiao 華僑 (who seems to have been employed by the Xus around the mid-fourth century) and then Yang Xi 楊羲, who lived on Mt. Mao and in the period 364–370 received the major part of the Shangqing scriptures, through the dictation of deities of Shangqing heaven who descended on him in nightly visions.

It was this corpus revealed to Yang Xi, and passed on to the Xus below the mountain, that came to set the standard of authentic Shangqing scriptures. In fact, one of the major criteria of the authenticity of a manuscript adopted by the later organizer of the movement, Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536 C.E.) was that it was written in the hand of Yang Xi or one of the Xus. Another assumption of modern scholars has been that it makes sense to study each version individually and to pay attention to what may have been adopted from other versions or introduced by the editor of the text, in such a way that some versions might be dismissed as "forgeries." Passing judgements like this was very much within the range of options that constituted Robinet's methodology. This does not detract from the value of her lifelong effort, and it is not to say that she was not right in many of her judgements. Her main predicament was, in my view, that she was *obsessed* with proving that certain versions, which might conceivably have been established at a later point in time, were in fact part of the original corpus transmitted to Yang Xi and not later "forgeries."

The approach of Pettit and Chang rejects this methodology and suggests instead to treat each text as part of a totality of texts that were constantly reworked through time—by different actors, in different historical contexts. Any version, like the *Suling jing* which seems to have been established in the sixth century C.E., was a reflection of the interests of a certain group of people who could draw on a multitude of sources available to them, including their own conversations with the gods and their own subjective understandings. This perspective on the tradition would explain how a text like the *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* translated by me would be used as the core of the much expanded *Suling jing* established some two centuries later. What it does not do is justify the claim that the latter text was somehow a less legitimate part of the Shangqing corpus. The claim of Pettit and Chang asserts that all the texts of the tradition were in a state of flux and change, so that treating later versions as somehow less worthy of attention than the allegedly earlier versions was a mistake. In fact, I would like to suggest that any version of a text of the tradition is, in itself, an *original,* the original of itself.

With this in mind, one may view the text and the translation of the *Suling jing* offered by the two authors as a beautiful totality which gives access to the method

transmitted in the *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* and elsewhere, in a much more complete and efficacious way than the earlier, more piecemeal revelations. In this way, they further demonstrate that the question of authenticity is not a matter of right or wrong in terms of the priority of certain versions ascertained through philological methods of dating, but rather a question of *authentically appropriating* the method shared by all versions by a given subject at a certain point in time.

As mentioned above, the second major contribution of the present book is to initiate a discussion of the fundamental *concept* of a text. For this, the authors rely, for instance, on the book by Wilfred Cantwell Smith entitled *What Is a Scripture?*,[3] which focuses on the *human response* to a sacred text (pp. 11–12). In the same vein, they quote the works of D. F. McKenzie, and they use excerpts from two of his works as epigraphs in two chapters of the present book (chapters 1 and 5). The first of these epigraphs goes as follows:

> [The book] is not in any sense "finished" until it is read. And since it is re-creatively read in different ways by different people at different times, its so-called objectively [*sic*], its simple physicality, is really an illusion. (p. 11)[4]

However, the authors are not primarily concerned with the process of the appropriation of the text by the reader, and the notion that a text does not really *exist* before it is brought to life by the reader. For this more philosophical issue, they would have found great support in the works of Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), who in many of his prefaces makes it clear that the one who in the end is responsible for the text's *coming to be* is not he himself, the author of the text, but the single one whom he affectionately calls "his reader."

The main concern of the authors of the present book is not this question of the *being* of a text, but rather the question of how additional layers are added to the text through consecutive readings by different readers: how the text evolves and is expanded through time in this way. Had they wished to talk about the *being* of a text, they might have wished to quote Kierkegaard, who gives the

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3   Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What Is a Scripture? A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

4   D. F. McKenzie, "The Sociology of a Text: Orality, Literacy and Print in Early New Zealand," in *The Book History Reader*, edited by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 190: "The book . . . is not even in any sense 'finished' until it is read. And since it is re-creatively read in different ways by different people at different times, its so-called objectivity, its simple physicality, is really an illusion."

most beautiful account of the role of *his* reader. In the prefaces to his works, he commonly personifies his text while at the same time denigrating it as something quite insignificant, that is, *until it finds its one reader.* In the preface to one of his *Edifying Speeches* (1843), he confidently speaks as follows about the fate of the text as he lets it out of his door into a mostly hostile world:

> Small as it is, it probably will slip through, as it looks after itself and takes its course and fulfils its task and knows its mysterious path—until it finds that single one whom with joy and gratitude I call *my* reader—until it finds what it seeks, that benevolent person who reads aloud to himself what I write in silence, who with his voice dissolves the spell of the written signs, with his voice calls forth what the mute letters have as if on the tip of the tongue, but are incapable of uttering without much difficulty, stuttering and interrupted, who in his sentiment liberates the captured thoughts that long to be released—that benevolent person whom with joy and gratitude I call *my* refuge, *who by making mine his own does more for me than I do for him.* (my emphasis)[5]

This is, of course, in good accord with the statement of McKenzie as quoted above, which Pettit and Chang clearly wish to be at the back of our minds when we read their book, but which they somewhat leave behind as they focus on the "objectivity" of the text and discuss the text in terms of its many layers as it evolves over time—admittedly in a never ending process, but nonetheless as part of an objectifying, textual approach to Shangqing Daoism. Kirkegaard's world is focused entirely on the subjective moment of "*the one whom I call my reader,*" the one who with his whole being appropriates the text. This is not to say that there can be only one true reader of the text, but that the *true being* of the text is in this moment. We find very similar thoughts in Daoist texts, especially in commentaries on the

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[5] Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter: http://www.sks.dk/3T43/txt.xml, accessed 12 December 2021: "Lille, som den er, smutter den vel igjennem, da den skjøtter sig selv og gaaer sin Gang og passer sit Ærinde og kjender sin gaadefulde Vei – til den finder hiin Enkelte, som jeg med Glæde og Taknemmelighed kalder *min* Læser – til den finder, hvad den søger, hiint velvillige Menneske, der læser høit for sig selv, hvad jeg skriver i Stilhed, der med sin Stemme løser Skrifttegnenes Fortryllelse, med sin Røst kalder frem, hvad de stumme Bogstaver vel ligesom have paa Munden, men ikke formaae at udsige uden megen Møie, stammende og afbrudt, i sin Stemning frelser de fangne Tanker, der længes efter Befrielse – hiint velvillige Menneske, som jeg med Glæde og Taknemmelighed kalder *min* Tilflugt, der ved at gjøre Mit til Sit gjør meer for mig end jeg gjør for ham."

true recitation of a scripture, which may happen in a single instant—without a word being actually spoken.[6]

The full translation of the *Suling jing*, which takes up the larger part of the present book (Part II, pp. 131–279) is highly satisfying, to say the least. There are, of course, typos and errors, but this is not the place for me to list such minutiae, except to say that the two authors have done a beautiful and highly competent job. The more important discussion concerns the continuity of conventions and the basic interpretations of some key terms of Daoism.

I have personally waged a "war" against certain translations of Daoist terms, imposed on the field by some of its leading authorities such as Edward H. Schafer (1913–1991) and Kristofer M. Schipper (1934–2021), who took their seats at the top of the academic hierarchy about half a generation before I entered the fray. We obviously owe these authorities a lot, and I will not deny that in some respects in my earliest work, I "went with the programme" and obeyed the dictates of my immediate predecessors, even as I now denounce some of those dictates. This is true in particular in my first publication cited above because of its relevance to the present book, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*.

The most important technical Daoist term, second only to that of the Dao, no doubt is the term *zhen* 真, which means "true" and "real," "true reality," etc. It seems to be generally agreed among scholars that *zhen* denotes a quality of the Dao. However, and as I discuss at length in *The Paradox of Being*,[7] in the mid-1960s the translation of *zhen* as "Perfected" was introduced—in a reversal of its meaning of "true" or "real" upheld by the founders of *Daozang* studies in the first half of the century, especially Edouard Chavannes and Henri Maspero. The problem with this reversal is not so much that the word "Perfected" does not capture some of the meaning of the word *zhen*, but rather that it misses the important *dynamic* aspect of the term. The transformation into a true being, *zhenren*, should not be understood as a *static* achievement, but rather as a constant process of *becoming*.

To illustrate this, let me give an example from the other end of the world, a description of someone who, though not a scholar of Daoism, or even a scholar at all, understood himself to be a Daoist, namely Henry Miller (1891–1980), the author of books like *Tropic of Cancer* and *Sexus*.[8] In a correspondence from

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6   See Poul Andersen, *The Paradox of Being: Truth, Identity, and Images in Daoism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2019), p. 49.

7   Andersen, *The Paradox of Being*, pp. 110–12.

8   Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* (Paris: Obelisk, 1934); idem, *Sexus*, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions de la Terre de Feu, 1949).

1959 between his two close friends Lawrence Durrell and Alfred Perlès, the two were struggling together to define the essence of the man, though not entirely agreeing and, of course, not reaching a conclusion that could be put into words. Here is what Miller said about himself in one of several ongoing responses to the correspondence between Durrell and Perlès (included in the publication of the letters in the book, *Art and Outrage*):

> But to return for one moment to the master-disciple business. Each of us is both at once, is he not? Even Jesus and Buddha were disciples—of whom or what we do not know. The only master is life. To be just a master is to be static, dead. As long as we are alive we are growing, stretching out our hands towards God . . . any God. And God is reaching down to us. No end, no conclusion, no completion. Perpetual becoming.[9]

To me, Henry Miller was a "true being," a *zhenren*, that is, a true *human* being, as he clearly was to Durrell and Perlès, but assertions of this kind are, of course, for anybody to choose to believe in, or not. The issue at hand is a matter of translation, and the question remains pertinent because the rendering of *zhen* as "Perfected" has become an established convention which has continued to be dominant to the present day and is adopted without reservations in the present book.

Another important convention adopted by the two authors, likewise pervasive in current scholarship, is that of translating the term *gang* 綱, which refers to the leading thread for a ritual walk through the cosmos and the stars, as "Mainstay." In my research on the practice of *bugang* 不綱, i.e., the mentioned ritual walk (also the title of my most widely read article about the topic from 1989–1990), I argue strongly against Schafer's nautical interpretation of the term *gang* as metaphorically referring to the mainstay—a stay that extends from the maintop to the foot of the foremast of a sailing boat—and choose instead to render the term as "Guideline," once again as a way of honouring the important *active* content of the term: its reference to movement. Even so, and even in the publication of my contributions to the European *Daozang* (which included practically all of the texts in the Canon devoted specifically to the practice of *bugang*), the editors of *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the* Daozang, Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, chose to replace all instances of my rendering of *gang* as "Guideline" with the

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[9] "From Henry Miller to Alfred Perlès," in *Art and Outrage: A Correspondence about Henry Miller between Lawrence Durrell and Alfred Perlès* (New York: Dutton, 1961), p. 39.

translation "Mainstay." They did this in spite of my strong protests and arguments to the contrary.

In their translation of the *Suling jing*, the authors of the present book, seem to wish to have it both ways, since on p. 245, they translate the term *feibu tiangang* 飛步天綱 as "*Ascent for Pacing the Celestial <u>Guideline</u>*," whereas on p. 271, they render the term *Xuangang* 玄綱 as "Dark <u>Mainstay</u>." Translation is, of course, always a matter of interpretation, but this understanding, in my opinion, does not absolve the translator from aiming to be *consistent*—whenever this is possible.

Other than that, I salute the authors of the present book for their great effort. It is a great book, and a timely one—especially as it offers a revision of our basic concept of a Daoist text.

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Iconographies of Occupation: Visual Cultures in Wang Jingwei's China, 1939–1945. By Jeremy E. Taylor. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2021. Pp. x + 229. $68.00 hardback, $28.00 paperback.

Wang Jingwei's Reorganized National Government (RNG), founded in Nanjing in March 1940, faced long odds as it sought to establish its credibility as China's government. It was handicapped by the existence of two rival claimants who had long mastered the art of propaganda warfare: the Nationalists based in Chongqing and the Communists in Yan'an. The RNG certainly could and did draw on the expertise of Japanese propagandists, but only at the cost of highlighting its dependency on Japan.

In this interesting analysis of the RNG's efforts to create a national brand, Taylor argues that the regime demonstrated considerable initiative in crafting images intended to bolster its legitimacy. He shows in convincing detail that RNG propagandists made use of techniques and allusions that had emerged in China before the war, as well as newer practices that circulated globally. Given the relatively narrow range of political action available to Wang Jingwei's regime, Taylor suggests that it sensibly devoted much of its energy and resources to symbolism, in effect creating a "theater state." He aims to show how its symbolic