

DAOISM IN MODERN CHINA:
HISTORIAL REALITIES AND 20th-CENTURY MISCONCEPTIONS

by

XUEWEN LIU

(Under the Direction of Russell Kirkland)

ABSTRACT

The facts regarding Daoism in modern China remain poorly understood even among scholars around the world. Until the early 21st century, Daoism in modern China was imagined to be moribund. And even some leading Western scholars, like Livia Kohn, portrayed the Daoist priests and priestesses of China today as comfort-seekers, “with little religious motivation and less understanding of the tradition, they just want to be comfortable and enjoy their state stipend.” Such distorted images are still prevalent among academics around the world. The purpose of this research is to rectify those misguided images by studying the White Cloud Abbey in Beijing, the Chinese Daoist Association, and the Chinese Daoist College. Through analysis of the monks in residence, their religious practices, monastic leadership, the complex relationship between the Chinese Daoist Association and the State, the education and training programs held at the College, a more-rounded picture of the true realities of Daoism in modern China can emerge.

INDEX WORDS: Modern Daoism, Chinese Religion, The White Cloud Abbey, The Chinese Daoist Association and College.

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M.A., Trinity International University, Chicago, USA, 2009

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2012

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After three years of painstaking and constant struggles, what I want to say at the very moment of completing my M.A. thesis is that without my family and Daoist *shifu*'s unceasing encouragement, I would have never completed my graduate education here in the States and thus none of my accomplishments could have been possible. Nor could my academic dream have been realized without the generous support from the Chinese Daoist Association and the Fung Ying Seen Koon—one of the largest *Quanzhen* Daoist temples in Hong Kong.

But my deepest gratitude goes to Russell Kirkland, my *laoshi*. Without his unfailing enlightenment and inspiration, I would remain an ignorant man finding his way in the maze of the American academic scholarship, falling into countless pitfalls. Dr. Kirkland has walked me through all the stages of the writing of this thesis. I still remember vividly that, after being accepted by UGA's Religion Department, he began to think about the most appropriate thesis topic for me based on my previous religious training and monastic life at the White Cloud Abbey. Not only had he lent me all relevant academic materials, which enabled me to study more efficiently, but also took me to attend 2010's AAR meeting held in Atlanta, which greatly expanded my intellectual vision. No more beautiful words can be found to describe what Dr. Kirkland has done for me. To him I owe a great debt of gratitude which I am afraid that I will never be able to repay.

My gratitude must also be extended to the other two *laoshi* of my thesis committee: Dr. Carolyn Jones Medine and Dr. Ari Daniel Levine. Both inspired me during the process of composition, particularly the revision stage, and made my thesis well-rounded and my argument

clearer. The faculty and staff in UGA's Religion Department also have shown great commitment and support. Dr. David S. Williams, Dr. Jace Waver, Dr. Alan Godlas and Dr. Kenneth Honerkamp, with whom I took four RELI 8700 seminars, all kindly allowed me to do the research topics that I was interested in. There are many other Daoist friends and former teachers at the Chinese Daoist College who have helped me in one way or another. To them, I owe my thanks, and I am more than happy to express my gratitude in this acknowledgements.

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CHAPTER 1

THE STATE OF MODERN DAOISM STUDIES

An Overview of the Late 20th and Early 21st Century Scholarship

It is true that the 20th century witnessed a great progress and development of Daoist studies in the Western world, however, little attention has been paid to the study of Daoism in modern mainland China (after 1949).¹ Its religious practices, communities, people, as well as its relationship with the state and society, were still shrouded in mystery. Few scholars have showed interest in the study of Daoism in mainland China since 1949.²

The reason for this situation is quite simple. Because few Western countries established diplomatic relationship with P.R.C before 1970s, foreign scholars were seldom allowed to enter mainland China. The only place for them to do field research was Taiwan Island. After the Chinese Civil War (1949), the 63rd Celestial Master, Zhang Enfu 張恩溥 (1904-1969), fled from mainland China and brought *Zhengyi* 正一 (Orthodox Unity) Daoism to Taiwan. It then flourished in that island. However the other major living form of Daoism—the *Ch'uan chen* / *Quanzhen* 全真 or Complete Perfection Daoism was not introduced to Taiwan.³ So some

¹ For more detailed information about the history of Daoist studies in North America and other western countries, see Livia Kohn's on-line article: *Daoist Studies in North America: A Survey of Scholars and Recent Trends*, Submitted on Fri, 02/13/2009 - 10:30 and can be accessed at: <http://www.daoiststudies.org/dao/content/daoist-studies-north-america-survey-scholars-and-recent-trends>. For Chinese source, see Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, page 371-538.

² In *Facets of Taoism: essays in Chinese religion* edited by Holmes H. Welch Jr and Seidel Anna K, there's one article entitled "Taoist Monastic Life" written by a Japanese scholar named Yoshitoyo Yoshioka, he described the operation of the White Cloud Abbey (one of the most important Monasteries for *Quanzhen* Daoism) in 1940s. In the introduction of Welch's book, he offered some further outsiders' information about its history in 1950s and 1960s.

³ There are two major living forms of Daoism in China today, one is called "*Zhengyi* Daoism or Orthodox Unity Daoism" (Some scholars also refer it as "southern Daoism" because it mainly survives in southern part of China, including in Taiwan Island.) It is traditionally regarded as the descendant of the first Daoist religious movement—the "*Tianshi* 天師" or "Heavenly Master Daoism." The organization of this tradition is hierarchical and the leadership is hereditary. Another living form of Daoism is called *Ch'uan chen* / *Quanzhen* 全真 or Complete Perfection Daoism, founded by the 12th-century literatus, Wang Che/Wang Zhe 王嘉 (also known as Wang Ch'ung-

Western scholars, like Michael Saso and Kristofer Schipper, privileged the *Zhengyi* tradition. They both underwent *Zhengyi* ordination and began publishing what they learned from such experiences. As a result, the educated public came to believe that Daoism had all but died completely in the mainland, and that Taiwan's *Zhengyi* tradition was all that remained today.

This situation, as Russell Kirkland points out, resulted from the fact that from late 1950s to 1978, Daoists in mainland China suffered from various degrees of oppression, and had no opportunity to present their tradition to the outside world. But as more scholars were able to train in Japan and Taiwan, and as China gradually opened itself to foreign visitors in 1980s, students of Chinese culture began to learn firsthand about the Daoism that lives there today. Also, due to the increased cultural communication between Chinese and Western scholars, as well as the growing crisis the Daoists felt to promote their tradition to outsiders⁴, the early 21st century saw three pioneering works of breathtaking importance to our understanding of Daoism in (pre)modern China.

The first pioneering work is *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, by Vincent Goossaert.⁵ Though Goossaert is a specialist in the study of Daoism in late imperial China, I strongly believe that scholars who study premodern China also have something real and meaningful to contribute to our understanding of Daoism in modern China. That is because regardless of period on which they concentrate, the angles and approaches of their studies make valuable contributions to the understanding of Daoism as a whole.

yang/Wang Chongyang 王重陽). (Some scholars refer it as “Northern Daoism” because it mainly activates in northern part of China.) It is a monastic tradition that stresses individual moral and spiritual discipline, and preserves self-cultivation practices that can be traced back to the classical *Nei-yeh* / *Neiye* or *Inner Cultivation*.

⁴ So far seven International Conferences on Daoist Studies have been held and the 8th will be held in Germany from June 6-10, 2012. The 5th and 7th Conferences were held in Hubei Wudang Mountain and Hunan Heng Shan Mountain in 2009 and 2011 respectively. For more information please see Ding Huang's article: The Study of Daoism in China Today contained in *Daoism Handbook*, edited by Livia Kohn, Brill, 2000, chapter twenty-six.

⁵ This book was published by Harvard University East Asia Center, 2007.

In a review of Goossaert's book, I analyzed two reasons why studies of late-imperial Daoism (particularly Daoist monastic and lay communities) have not received much attention from either domestic scholars or their Western counterparts. The first reason, quoted from Kirkland, is "partly because of Confucian and modern antipathy toward monasticism, and partly because of the paucity of pertinent sources."⁶ The second reason, as I emphasized in my review, is the false dichotomy between "classical Daoism" and "religious" Daoism that has long clouded the perspective of modern scholars. That biased view towards Daoism grew, in part, out of the impact of the early Jesuits as well as that of the Protestant missionaries of the 19th century.

Further, the roots of this misunderstanding lie deep in the perceptions of the Chinese themselves, especially those Confucian scholars who studied in Europe and America during the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Through the influence of those Christian missionaries and secular scholars, Western and Chinese people alike began to attribute validity only to the Confucian educational system in imperial China. Meanwhile, Daoists were increasingly characterized as a superstitious and uneducated mass who worshiped idols, practiced spirit-writing and engaged in fortune-telling. This bias eventually grew into the sweeping assertion that this group of people had not produced any benefit for the welfare of the common people, whether in Chinese political, economic or cultural life.

Goossaert rectifies all those stereotypes by providing a de-tailed, unbiased study of the living community of literate Daoist clerics in modern China's capital, from late-imperial times (1800) to the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949). At the very beginning, Goossaert asserts that the primary focus of his research is on the "ordinary" clerics of the Daoist communities and that he approaches the subject-matter from a social-historical perspective. His

⁶ Russell Kirkland, "*Dimensions of Tang Daoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium*" *T'ang Studies* 15-16 (1997-98), Page 91.

stated objective is that, “by looking at the lives and activities of Peking Daoists like Wang Junfeng 王峻峰, I want to explore how Daoists lived, thriving or surviving in the tumultuous times of pre-Communist China.”⁷ According to the author, there were two principal ideas that gave shape to this area of focus: first, he suggests that Daoism is an important part of Chinese history and claims that, without giving attention to the role and contributions of Daoist clerics, it is difficult to obtain an accurate account of historical Daoism and, by extension, China itself. Second, he aims to rectify the long-running biases against Daoist clerics among not only scholarly circles (Western and Chinese), but also within “popular conception.” Goossaert strives to accomplish these goals by adopting a new scientific research method – a social-historical approach to religion as a profession in China.

This new method, too, can be seen in Xun Liu’s equally eye-opening new study, *Daoist Modern, Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Continuity of Inner Alchemy in Re-publican Shanghai*. Liu also challenges contemporary scholars’ stereotyped view of late-imperial Daoism as a declined and decayed phase which contributed little to modern Chinese civilization. He does that by examining the life and work of Chen Yingning 陳撓寧(1880-1969), a renowned lay Daoist practitioner and active advocate of “Immortals’ Learning” (*xianxue* 僊學), as well as a variety of other interesting figures with whom Chen interacted. Liu demonstrates that Daoist men and women maintained and practiced “Inner Alchemy” over the centuries, and shows the continuities between modern Daoists’ practice of self-cultivation and that of their premodern predecessors.

The only specialist, to my best knowledge, who wrote a book on Daoism in modern China is Li Yangzheng 李養正(1925--), a protégé of Chen Yingning and secretary of the Chinese Daoist Association administrative office in 1950s and 60s. He is qualified to do this

⁷ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800—1949 A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Harvard University Asia Center, 2007, Page 3.

project not only because he has served at the Chinese Daoist Association for more than forty years, but he personally witnessed the rise and fall of Daoism through the past fifty years. In 2000, he edited a book entitled *Contemporary Daoism* (*Dangdai Daojiao* 當代道教). This is a path-breaking work for our understanding of modern China, and of a long neglected subject—the “Daoist clerics” who lived and practiced from the founding of the People’s Republic of China through the end of twentieth century.

In extremely documented detail, Li first tentatively defines what Daoism is and outlines the basic religious teachings and practices. He also tries to identify six distinctive characteristics of Daoism that differ from other world religious traditions. He then delves into the major activities and important events of Daoist communities in mainland China, Taiwan Island, and the Hong Kong and Macau special administrative regions during the past fifty years. The third section is written by Zheng Tianxin 鄭天星, a researcher at Chinese Academy of Social Science and an expert in Daoist studies overseas; it mainly deals with the spread of Daoism in foreign lands and Daoist studies in major European countries, North America, Russia, Australia, Japan and South Korea.

Like many Chinese scholars’ writings, *Dangdai Daojiao* lacks critical thought. The reader is presented with a great deal of data and information that the author has not explained in detail. It is not easy for us to interpret the meaning of all that data. Furthermore, as one of the older generation of Chinese Daoist scholars, Li’s methodology is naturally influenced by the interpretive claims of Marx and Chairman Mao. Despite these short-comings, Li’s work makes excellent use of all the pertinent original resources, including his personal interviews with a number of renowned Daoist priests as well as early government official documents. Another major breakthrough is that this book devotes three pages to describe the catastrophic impact that

the Chinese Culture Revolution (1966-1976) caused to Daoism. The volume is therefore a great achievement considering the sensitivity of the topic in today's China and limited resources for conducting this research.

CHAPTER 2

THE WHITE CLOUD ABBEY AND ITS MONKS: 1950-2012

Brief Introduction of the History of the Abbey

The *Baiyun guan* 白雲觀, better known in English as the White Cloud Abbey, was and still is one of the most important *Quanzhen* Daoist monastic communities in China. Its history can be traced back to the eighth century when emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 713-756 CE) of the Tang 唐 dynasty (618-907 CE) issued an imperial edict to build a temple to be named the Tianchang guan 天長觀 or the “Abbey of Heavenly Eternity”. He bestowed a stone statue of Lao-tzu / Laozi 老子, which was enshrined in the abbey.⁸ The following centuries witnessed several destructions and reconstructions of the abbey due to years of warfare. In 1224 CE, the Zhenren 真人 or the Perfect Man⁹ Qiu Chuji 邱處機 (1148-1227 CE) went by way of the snow mountains to meet Genghis Khan (r. 1206-1227CE), the first emperor of the Yuan 元 dynasty (1271-1368 CE), and then returned to the east where he inhabited at the abbey by imperial order. Three years later, Master Qiu passed away and the abbey was renamed the Eternal Spring Palace (*Changchun Gong* 長春宮) to commemorate Zhenren’s death. His disciples set a lower court in the east of the Eternal Spring Palace to bury his remains, on which they built up the *Chushun tang* 處順堂 or the “Hall of Mildness”.¹⁰ In the eighth year of Zhengtong 正統 of the Ming

⁸ Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 713-756 CE), real name Li Longji 李隆基, was a dedicated student of Daoist texts who wrote a commentary to the *Daode jing*. See Russell Kirkland, “Dimensions of Tang Daoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium,” *T'ANG STUDIES* 15-16 (1997-98), Page 86. For detailed early history of the White Cloud Abbey, see Koyanagi Shikita, *Baiyun Gaun Zhi* 《白雲觀志》; Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》.

⁹ The ideal human being of Daoism, a term often appears in the text of *Zhuangzi*.

¹⁰ Today’s Qiu zu dian 邱祖殿 Hall of Patriarch Qiu.

dynasty (1443 CE), a horizontal tablet was bestowed, formally naming the temple the *Baiyun guan*.¹¹

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government initially carried out a policy of freedom of religious belief and protected cultural relics and historical interests. In 1956, it financially aided the repairing of the abbey, to restore the structure of the halls and the appearance of ancient buildings.¹² In 1957, the whole Daoist community of China convened its first representative conference at the abbey, which then became the headquarters of the Chinese Daoist Association, a national Daoist organization. During the Culture Revolution (1966-1976), the Association stopped functioning.¹³ In 1979, it began its activities again. The Chinese government appropriated money again in 1981 to aid the maintenance of the abbey financially and ranked it as a key national Daoist temple and a protected cultural relic of the city of Beijing.¹⁴

Today, the abbey is where the Chinese Daoist Association, the Chinese Daoist College and the Institute of Chinese Daoist Culture are situated.

The Abbey under Chairman Mao (Mao Zedong 毛澤東) 1950-1976

Tough Adjustment in the New Era (1950-1957)

The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, as often presented in Chinese schools' history textbooks, is an important event because it marked the end of semi-feudal and semi-colonial institution and the establishment of a new political and economic system. The whole country witnessed a tremendous change in every sector and Daoism, the indigenous

¹¹ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page 5-20.

¹² Ibid., Page 55.

¹³ For more information about Chinese Daoist Association, see third chapter.

¹⁴ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page 55.

tradition to China, was no exception. The Abbey, due to its geographic location, simultaneously reflected this change.

The first change was its finances. In order to curb the economic strength of Daoist and other religious communities, the Chinese government passed the Agrarian Reform Law, promulgated on June 30th, 1950, promoting the confiscation of all land that traditionally belonged to Buddhist temples, Daoist abbeys and Christian churches.¹⁵ Obviously, the *Baiyun Guan* was a large institution that had to feed and supply all the material needs of a community of between one and two hundred monks before 1949.¹⁶ Hence the Abbey mainly lived off its landed endowments. According to Li Yangzheng's record, the Abbey owned 5800 mu 畝 (about 155 acres) lands in the 1930s, but after the land reform, the Beijing municipal government allocated only 30 mu 畝 of land (less than 0.8 acre) to the *Baiyun guan* monks to grow grain and vegetables in order to feed themselves.¹⁷

The second change was the traditional management system of the Abbey. As one of the major monasteries of the *Quanzhen* tradition, it was traditionally organized in a hierarchical order of precedence, headed by an abbot or a *zhuchi* 住持 (the temple manager).¹⁸ The most important position after the abbot was called *jianyuan* 監院 or prior, who oversaw all affairs, and in reality had the most power. The *douguan* 都管 was the main assistant of the *jianyuan*, and

¹⁵ Article 3 reads: "Levying lands that belonged to ancestral halls, temples, monasteries, churches, schools, and (social) groups in the rural areas and other public lands. But to the public utilities such as schools, orphanages, nursing homes, hospitals that rely on the land revenue to support their daily costs, the local government should find the proper way to raise funds instead of levying their lands."

¹⁶ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 163.

¹⁷ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page 35. Also see Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 163.

¹⁸ The abbot, as in both Buddhist and Daoist monasteries, was called *fangzhang* 方丈. The title of manger or *zhuchi* 住持 is responsible for the monastery toward the outside world, went with that of *fangzhang* and the two terms were used interchangeably.

managed the finances and property of the monastery.¹⁹ This traditional management system was replaced by the called “democratic management team” (*Minzhu guanli xiaozu* 民主管理小組) in the early 1950s, supervised by the management team of Buddhist and Daoist temples in Beijing (*Beijing shimiao guanli zu* 北京寺廟管理組).

Meanwhile, in order to strengthen “patriotic education” and raise awareness about socialism, a number of Buddhist and Daoist temples in Beijing under the leadership of the Civil Affairs jointly formed the study committees (*xuexi weiyuanhui* 學習委員會) to remold Buddhist and Daoist monks. The progressive Daoist monk, Liu Zhiwei 劉之維 (1919-1989), served as the vice director of the study committee.

One might be curious as to the following questions: how many Daoist monks took part? How many hours did they spend on this political study per week? What did they study? Who taught them? And finally, to what extent were they actually “remolded”? I have been unable to get clear answers to these obvious questions. In Li Yangzheng’s record—the only Chinese publication about Daoism after 1949—he only says that Buddhist and Daoist Monks at Beijing were organized at certain times to study. As to what was studied, that varied year by year. For example, in 1949-1950, there seems to be more effort to study the basic concepts of Communism and the works of Chairman Mao. Later, attention was increasingly paid to ideological campaigns in which the Daoist monks were expected to participate: land reform, the suppression of “counterrevolutionaries,” and in 1950-53 opposition to American “imperialism” in the Korean War. As to the identity of the teacher, it was usually the cadre from the Civil Affairs Bureau or (later) from the Religious Affairs Bureau. At times the teacher came from the United Front

¹⁹ For more information about the traditional management system of the Abbey, see Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 137-140. Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, page 334-344, provides a text of chart called *Zhishi bang* 執事榜 in use at *Baiyun guan* between 1856 and the 1930s. Li also explains the attributions of the various monastic officers.

Department or the CPPCC (The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference). Through this spasmodic pattern of effort, Li writes, the monks at the Abbey now “opened” their minds and knew the current affairs of the world in contrast with their previous life characterized by chanting scriptures with oil lamps.

The third change occurred in the year 1957 when the Chinese Daoist Association was established and made the Abbey as its premise. As mentioned earlier, the traditional management system of the *Baiyun guan* headed by an abbot was changed to the so called democratic management team, supervised by the management team of Buddhist and Daoist temples in Beijing in the early 1950s. From 1957 on, the abbey was under the supervision of the Chinese Daoist Association.

This change showed that the Chinese government was becoming shrewder in terms of controlling Daoism for its domestic and foreign policy and interest. Instead of being accused of violating the policy of freedom of religious belief, the Chinese government learned from the past history and sought the help of those well respected and “progressive” Daoist monks and priests govern Daoism. That was because the Communist cadres believed that widely respected Daoist monks and priests could be more effective in persuading their followers to accept government policy than the cadres themselves.

Greater Suffering of the Abbey during “The Great Leap Forward” (1958-1961) Campaign

Shortly after the founding of the Chinese Daoist Association, an economic and social movement called “The Great Leap Forward” (Da Yuejin 大躍進 1958-1961) caused a greater

destruction to the Abbey.²⁰ The destruction was characterized by a sharp decrease of monks in residence, a reduction of religious practice, and a transformation of Daoist traditional monastic life.

Before describing these destructions, it is necessary to briefly explain the primary types of Daoist temples in China. Generally speaking, there are two types: one, called *shifang conglin* 十方叢林 (literally translated as “comprehensive forest of the ten directions”), is a “public” Daoist temple; and the other type is *zisun* 子孫 or “hereditary” temples. The former are large Daoist centers which are open equally to all Daoist monks / nuns or priests / priestesses of any school. Such public temples do not take novices, but are allowed to perform ordination ceremonies. The *daoshi* who live there are itinerant monks who come from all parts of China to pursue their *Tao / dao*, i.e. their religious practice. The “hereditary temples” are those in which the leadership is handed down from generation after generation by members of the same sub-tradition or sub-sect. The hereditary temples take novices but are not allowed to perform ordination ceremonies.

Before 1949, the *Baiyun guan* attracted a large number of itinerant monks who went there to train for a fixed period of time or to receive consecration each year. Generally speaking, there were three main factors determined the fluctuation of the population of the Abbey over time, including the personal charisma of the abbot and other dignitaries, and the level of collective discipline. But the most important factor was the economic situation, which dictated the number of monks it could support. According to an 1811 inscription and Vincent Goossaert’s statistics, the *Baiyun guan* had 5800 mu 畝 (about 155 acres) lands in the 1930s and the Abbey could

²⁰ The aim of this movement, as many modern scholars claim, is to use China's vast population to rapidly transform the country from an agrarian economy into a modern communist society through the process of rapid industrialization, and collectivization.

house up to three hundred monks at maximum. During the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century the numbers at residence were stable at between one and two hundred.²¹ This made the *Baiyun guan* the largest *Quanzhen* community in Beijing. However, during the three years of the “Great Leap Forward” movement, the *Baiyun guan* was “transformed” into a people’s commune (*renmin gongshe* 人民公社) and the monks at the Abbey were turned into productive laborers. The meager 30 mu 畝 (less than 0.8 acre) of land allocated by the Beijing municipal government to the *Baiyun guan* in 1952—which used to feed the monks in residence—now belonged to the people’s commune.

In that social and economic context, fewer people went to the *Baiyun guan* to request the monks in residence to perform rituals for them. That is because people during that period were pressed to devote themselves to transforming their motherland from an agrarian economy into a “modern” communist society. Thus, the donations and the revenue gained from performing rituals automatically decreased. As a result, the population of monks in long-term residence (*changzhu* 常住), as Li reports, dropped to 20.²²

As more and more time was spent in productive labor, it was inevitable that there would be less and less time left over for religious practice. According to Yoshitoyo Yoshioka’s “*Taoist Monastic Life*”, the daily routine of life in the *Baiyun guan* before 1949 was governed by a complex system of sound signals, given with morning bells and evening drums. “When light touched the eastern sky, at 5:30 A.M. in the summer, the morning stillness at the White Cloud Monastery was broken sharply by the striking of a large plank (*pang-tzu* 梆子). It was struck five

²¹ Inscription 1811 *Baiyun guan juanchan beiji*; Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 142.

²² Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page 528.

times, three slow then two quick. This marked the beginning of the Tao-shih's day."²³ Each monk at the Abbey had a specific duty: some weeded the garden, some cleaned the halls, and others prepared the breakfast in the kitchens. But the most important collective activity of the day was the morning and evening prayers. Normally, as Yoshitoyo Yoshioka writes, the morning and evening prayers were attended by the prior and seven *daoshi*. The entire process usually lasted half *shichen* 时辰 or one hour. On holidays, the first and fifteenth day of each lunar month, and on the birthdays of the various deities, the morning and evening rituals lasted longer because in addition to morning and evening scriptures, the monks recited the Yü-huang ching 玉皇經, San-kuan ching 三官經 and other scriptures.

During the three years of the "Great Leap Forward" Movement, the monks were turned into productive laborers and, since every activity was planned in the people's commune, they had to make some changes. As a result, the daily morning and evening prayers were only held on the first and fifteenth day of each lunar month. Though a number of devoted monks, including the prior, tried to maintain a balance between their spiritual lives and productive labor, it was impossible to achieve that goal especially during the busy farming seasons.

Also in the people's commune, since everything was shared, private kitchens became redundant. The tradition of a dietary rule called *Guotang* 過堂 observed at the Abbey in the past was not practiced during the Movement. The monks in residence had to eat with other members in the communal dining hall, and no religious ceremony was held before serving food. The Daoist traditional monastic life marked by morning bells and evening drums was only in their memories.

²³ Yoshitoyo Yoshioka, *Daoist Monastic Life*, contained in *Facets of Daoism: essays in Chinese religion*, edited by Holmes H. Welch Jr and Seidel Anna K, Page 244.

These changes to the Abbey were extremely deep, and to the minds of some old and devoted monks, very “harmful.” That is because they thought that now the Abbey looked like an Abbey in appearance, but in reality, it had ceased to function as a religious center.

Short Revival of Monastic Tradition (1962-1965)

Having realized the mistakes it had made during the three-years Great Leap Forward Movement, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party began to set things right; that is to “correct” the ultra-Left trend of thought. It stressed that it must properly deal with the relationship between different religious groups and the government, so that the unity of all walks of life could be strengthened. In this new political context, the *Baiyun guan* regained its land and revived part of its religious tradition.

One of the most important endeavors undertaken by *Baiyun guan* under the leadership of the Chinese Daoist Association was to revive the traditional management system by inviting Jiang Zonghan 蔣宗瀚 (1901-1979) as the abbot of the Abbey in the middle of October 1962.²⁴ As Goossaert says “in times of perceived decline or crisis, eminent masters from other provinces were invited to help restore the spiritual and material fortunes of the monastery.”²⁵ After the three-year destructive Great Leap Forward Movement, the *Baiyun guan* truly encountered a crisis: no well-respected and competent monk at the Abbey could fill the vacant position of the abbot. As a result, Master Jiang was invited from Mt. Tiantai 天台 to the *Baiyun guan* to stay on as the abbot.²⁶

²⁴ For the complete description of the ceremony, please see Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi*, Page 290-291.

²⁵ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 139.

²⁶ Jiang Zonghang (1901-1979) was a renowned Daoist *Quanzhen* monk. He was elected as the vice president of the CDA at the second national congress and served as the abbot of the White Cloud Abbey from 1962 to 1966. For a

Another great achievement the *Baiyun guan* saw was the opening of the first Training Class for Daoists (*Daojiaotu jinxiu ban* 道教徒進修班).²⁷ As the site of this class, *Baiyun guan* provided all necessary assistance, and conversely, one monk from the Abbey was selected to study there. The number of monks in residence, including those Daoist students, now increased from twenty to nearly sixty. As a result, it was easy to select the minimum number of monks (usually 6 to 8) to perform Daoist rituals and the daily ceremony of morning and evening prayers were resumed.

The revival of the *Baiyun guan*'s traditional management system and some of its religious practice did not indicate, however, that the Chinese government had loosened its control over the Daoist communities. The main reason, as I claim, was that the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party thought that by allowing the *Baiyun Guan*, one of the most important temples of *Quanzhen* Daoism, to have its traditional autonomy and to allow its monks to practice their religious tradition, it could serve as a "showplace" for both domestic and foreign visitors, so that the government's policy of freedom of religious belief could be exemplified.

For example, in October 1962, under the invitation of Kuo Mo-jo / Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978), the then president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the renowned British sinologist and scientist Joseph Needham along with his second wife Lu Gwei-djen / Lu Guizhen 魯桂珍 (1904-1991), paid a visit to the *Baiyun guan* and were welcomed by the monks at the Abbey. They were received by Chen Yingning, who was the president and secretary-general of the association. Li Yangzheng also participated in that meeting.

complete biography of Jiang Zonghang, see Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, page 253-255.

²⁷ For more information about this class, see fourth chapter.

According to Li's recall, he and the vice president of the CDA met Needham at the entrance gate of the Abbey. Needham was awed by the quietness and peacefulness of the Abbey when he was walking in. The meeting took place at the east conference room. At the very beginning, Needham was eager to know the general situation of Daoism in mainland China and the mechanism of the CDA. Then he shared his idea about the future of Daoism: Needham claimed that Daoism, the indigenous tradition of China, is the only mystical belief system that does not conflict with modern science. He argued that any belief system would change according to the evolution of social, cultural and political contexts. Daoism was no exception. Though things like the monastic rule or traditional dress might change in the future, the Daoist tradition would continue to exist.²⁸ Chen Yingning shared his idea about the future of Daoism. He thought that the spirit of Daoism is anchored in its profound teachings, such as inner alchemy, outer alchemy, and Lao-Zhuang philosophy, etc. As long as those profound teachings received attention, the Daoist spirit would have its grounding. Cheng told Needham that all sections in his works that concerned Daoism had been translated from English to Chinese by Yu Zhongyu 余仲鈺, who served at the research department of the Chinese Daoist Association.²⁹

After the meeting, Chen Yingning showed Needham and his wife some collections in the Abbey's exhibition hall and the CDA's library. He briefly introduced a number of publishing projects initiated by CDA, including the re-editing the index of the *Daozang*, etc. Joseph Needham's visit was one of many choreographed events by the Chinese government. The leadership of the Communist Party thought that by allowing Needham, an internationally renowned sinologist, to visit some Chinese religious centers, such as the *Baiyun guan*, he could

²⁸ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page 475.

²⁹ Ibid.

“see” that the Chinese people are “enjoying” the government’s policy of freedom of religious belief.

Objectively speaking, in the beginning of 1960s, the political environment of China was relatively stable. There was no large-scale political movement. Daoist dignitaries, such as Master Jiang, the abbot of the Abbey; and Chen Yingning, the then second president of the Chinese Daoist Association, “grasped” this opportunity and made great efforts to adapt Daoist practices to the changed political, economic, and intellectual environments in the early 1960s China. But their efforts and enthusiasm for the continuation and transmission of Daoist tradition would become stifled as an unprecedented political crisis was impending. This political turbulence was the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Because of the limited scope of this study, the following paragraphs seek to answer one question—that is, what happened to the Abbey during the Cultural Revolution.

The Catastrophic Damage to the *Baiyun guan* in the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)

According to the record of Li Yangzheng, the secretary of the Chinese Daoist Association’s administrative office throughout the 1950s and 60s, in early June, 1966, a number of groups of Red Guards (*Hongwei bing* 紅衛兵) rushed into the White Cloud Abbey with sticks in their hands and shouted slogans of “smashing the Four Olds (old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits)”, “sweeping away the representative of ox-headed devils and serpent gods (*Niugui sheshen* 牛鬼蛇神, that is the enemies of the Communist Party), and “eliminating reactionary religion(s)”.³⁰ They smashed the sacrificial vessels and paintings, and destroyed the statues enshrined at the five main halls. They sealed up the filing cabinet that used to store nearly

³⁰ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page38.

one thousand scattered texts and scriptures during the Ming and Qing dynasties at the Pavilion of the Three Pure Ones (second floor). And they burned morning and evening ritual prayer books placed at the sacrificial desk of the Seven Masters Hall.³¹ Meng Minghui 孟明慧 (the vice president of the CDA) and Liu Zhiwei (the manager of the *Baiyun Guan*) were verbally criticized at a public meeting (*pidou* 批斗) and beaten. The monks at residence were concentrated together and ordered to cut their long hairs and to disrobe their Daoist vestments. Zhang Chengzhen 張誠楨, a middle-aged monk, could not bear such an insult and committed suicide by swallowing pesticide in the cellar of the Abbey's vegetable garden.³² The first Training Class for Daoists was commanded to dismiss and the Abbey was forced to be locked and its doors sealed.³³

It is worthy to mention one monk who risked his life to protect the most valuable relics of the Abbey. His name was Chen Lüqing 陳旅清 (?-1982). Master Chen was born in Beijing during the late Qing dynasty. Before becoming a *Quanzhen* Daoist monk he studied Peking Opera and performed in a troupe. All his colleagues thought he would have a bright future. However, when he was sixteen years old he suffered a serious infectious disease called “smallpox” which left deep marks on his beautiful skin. That was a great disaster for a professional Peking Opera performer like him, and he could not continue his role in the troupe as a *qingyi* (usually a faithful wife role, or a lover or maiden in distress). Thus, he determined to enter the Daoist religious life and became a *Quanzhen* monk. Due to his previous Peking Opera training he soon made himself known as one of the most famous ritualists known as *Gaogong* 高

³¹ Luckily, the Ming version of the *Daoist Canon* was handed in, approved by the Bureau of the Civil Affairs of the Beijing Municipal Government, to the Beijing Library (now National Library of China) in the early 1950s.

³² Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page39.

³³ Ibid.

功 (a high Daoist priest or monk who holds the leading position in rituals) in Beijing Daoist communities.³⁴

As I mentioned earlier, in June, 1966, a number of groups of Red Guards rushed into the White Cloud Abbey to beat the monks in residence. Master Chen was no exception. He was greatly confused about this change and thought that the Abbey was about to be destroyed, and he was deeply upset and weeping. At midnight, he was suddenly “awakened” and secretly knocked the door of the Abbey manager’s room to discuss how to protect the monastery’s most valuable cultural relics. There is a secret transmitted rule which requires monks at residence first to save the stone statue of “Laozi” bestowed by Emperor Xuanzong in the year 722 CE enshrined at the Pavilion of the Three Pure Ones (second floor) and then several cabinets of ancient painting, calligraphy works, and dozens of elegant embroidered Daoist robes granted by Ming and Qing royal houses. They are stored at one hidden place at the back of the Shrine Hall of the *Si-yü* (first floor) 四御殿. And for the security of those relics, the mission was only carried out by a number of monks who must swear to keep this information confidential, even in the danger of losing one’s life. Master Chen told the manager that this mission must be carried out tonight. He thought that the Cultural Revolution would not last long and those treasures would once more “see” the light of the day. The manager was beaten during the day and could not move. He summoned another monk of integrity, Sun Xinzheng 孫心正, to assist him in completing this mission. In this way, the most valuable treasures of the Abbey avoided further destruction in the following years. After the ending of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1970s, these treasures

³⁴ For a complete biography about Master Chen, see Li Yangzheng, *New Edited Records of the White Cloud Abbey in Beijing (Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi 新編北京白雲觀志)* Chapter Nine: Recalling the Great Daoist Dignitary Chen Lüqing 陈旅清.

were re-exhibited to the public when Master Chen, the manager and Sun Xinzheng reported the hidden place to the officials of the National Bureau for Religious Affairs.

Shortly after this disaster, numerous “rebellious groups” and “fighting teams” rushed into the *Baiyun guan* and claimed that they would eliminate and eradicate Daoism calling a “reactionary and spiritual opium to the people”. Some of them were clamoring for occupying the Abbey and transforming it to the “headquarters for rebellious groups”; others were taking advantage of this general confusion to loot and steal.³⁵ Luckily, as Li reports, Premier Zhou Enlai and some other leaders of the Chinese government (particularly departments like the National Bureau for Religious Affairs and the United Front Work Department of CPC Central Committee) tried to safeguard the government’s policy towards religion and to protect those “patriotic” religious leaders.³⁶ Due to those men’s efforts, no further destructions occurred to the Abbey in the following half year.

Another factor also, to some extent, prevented Red Guards’ demolishes. In the autumn of 1966, the Finance Bureau of the Xicheng district of the Beijing Municipal Government “borrowed” several enshrined halls of the Abbey and transformed them as its warehouse to store those confiscated cultural relics, clothing, etc. by the revolutionary Red Guards. This prevented different groups of the Red Guards from fighting over the control of the *Baiyun guan* as they were all shipping and transporting their “trophy” to the storehouse.³⁷

However, in spring 1967, the Cultural Revolution movement was stepped up as the Red Guards seized and controlled more and more government departments’ leaderships. The National Religious Bureau was no exception. The CDA and the *Baiyun Guan*, under the direct leadership

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ For more details, see Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Chapter Nine: Premier Zhou Enlai and the *Baiyun guan*, Page 464-467.

³⁷ Ibid. Page 40.

of the National Religious Bureau, was also controlled by the Red Guards. They launched violent attacks (both physically and verbally) on some renowned Daoist leaders. For example, they accused Chen Yingning of being a “representative of ox-headed devils and serpent gods” and as a spy who allegedly wanted to utilize religion (Daoism) to restore Capitalism. As a result, Master Chen was so disheartened and terrified that he fell sick and died on May 25th 1969. Jiang Zonghan, the vice present of the CDA and the abbot of the Abbey, was ordered to return to his original temple and forced to marry.³⁸ In 1969, most of the enshrined halls of the White Cloud Abbey were occupied by the engineering military corps, who were commissioned to construct the Beijing subway system. They sealed up the statues and locked the doors. The ancient Daoist *Quanzhen* temple was turned into a military barracks till the early 1980s.³⁹

The Abbey under Deng’s Reforms and Opening Up (1978—Present)

The Returning of the Abbey and Its Old Monks

After the ending of the ten-year “Cultural Revolution” in 1976, the Abbey was not reopened to the public till 1984. But the preparation work can be traced back to 1979. The CDA’s former researchers (like Wang Weiye 王偉業 who served as the vice director of the research department of the CDA before 1976, as well as Li Yangzheng, etc.) who had scattered over the country during the Cultural Revolution were recalled back to their original working place, the *Baiyun guan*, and Wang was tasked, under the leadership of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, to make preparations for the setting up of a Daoist research team. The base of the team was at the *Baiyun guan*. At that time, the Abbey was still occupied by the engineering military corps, and they only returned two rooms for the research team. It was in this difficult

³⁸ Ibid. Page 41.

³⁹ Ibid.

working condition that the members of the research team began to initiate the reestablishment of the CDA and the reopening of the Abbey.

One may wonder why the Chinese government required setting up this research team. Li (was one of the early members) reveals that two reasons contributed to this: international and domestic. Internationally, late 1960s and 70s witnessed a research boom about Daoism in the West and three major international conferences on Daoist studies were held during this period.⁴⁰ There were no Chinese Daoists or scholars in attendance at the first two conferences. The absence of Chinese participant was mainly due to politics. It was not until 1979, when the third international conference on Daoist studies held in Switzerland, that this situation began to change. Two Chinese scholars attended that conference.⁴¹ After this conference, the Chinese government thought a civil organization should be set up to represent Daoism in communicating with its Western counterpart. Domestically, a number of renowned Daoist scholars and leaders pleaded with the government to establish a Daoist research team so that the learning of Daoism could be carried out.

The Daoist research team was formally set up in 1980 and six renowned scholars and lay practitioners formed the core of the team.⁴² Under strong support from the State Administration for Religious Affairs, the research team achieved a great progress in terms of reviving and reopening of the *Baiyun guan*. For example, it requested the local religious bureaus to examine the current situation of Daoist monks in residence who were dismissed forcefully during the

⁴⁰ The first international conference on Daoist studies was held in Bellagio, Italy from September 7-14, 1968. It was sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies. Sixteen scholars from eight countries attended this conference. The second conference sessions were held during the first week of September 1972, in Tateshina, Nagano prefecture, Japan. During this conference, there was an empty chair reserved for Chinese scholar Ch'en Kuo-fu / Chen Guofu 陳國符(1914-2000)—the then leading authority on Daoism in mainland China.

⁴¹ They were: Wang ming 王明 from Beijing Academy of Social Science and Ch'en Kuo-fu / Chen Guofu from the University of Tientsin / Tianjin.

⁴² They were: Wang Weiye 王偉業, Zhou Weihua 周蔚華, Li Yangzheng 李養正, Liu Houhu 劉厚祜, Wang Yie 王宜峨, and Wang Mu 王沐.

Cultural Revolution. Master Li Yuhang 黎遇航 (elected as the vice president and secretary-general of the CDA during its second national congress in 1961) and Master Liu Zhiwei (the manager of the Abbey before 1976) were invited from their original homes to Beijing to preside over the CDA and the *Baiyun guan*. Most importantly, the CDA requested the Chinese central government to press the troops to move out of the Abbey, and successfully lobbied the government to demand a renovation of it.

On May 7th, 1980, the third national congress of CDA was held in Beijing. During the congress Wang Weiye was “elected” as the secretary-general of the Chinese Daoist Association and Liu Zhiwei was appointed as the manager of the *Baiyun guan*. At the end of this congress, delegates of the standing committee of the CDA were determined to transform the Abbey into the Daoist education, training, and research center. Consequently, a renovation project was initiated in the following year to improve the “hardware” of the Abbey. The project lasted two years and it was on March 17th 1984 that the *Baiyun guan* was officially re-opened to the public. Daoist believers and tourists could now re-enjoy the freedom of religious practice at this government sanctioned temple. Nearly thirty old and young Daoist monks stayed there to serve Chinese people’s spiritual and cultural needs.

At the same time, improving the “software” of the temple, that is to train young talented and qualified monks and priests to serve as the leaders of Chinese most important Daoist communities, became the most pressing task of the CDA. In this context, a half-year program called “the higher educational class for Daoists” (*Daojiao zhishi zhuanxiuban* 道教知識專修班) was opened in Beijing at the *Baiyun guan* on December first, 1982. Thirty candidates from

eleven provinces applied but only seventeen male students were admitted.⁴³ As one of the biggest sponsors of this training class, three students were from the *Baiyun guan*. This half-year program continued in 1984, 1986, 1987 and 1988. It is reported that, by the end of 1988, two hundred and six Daoists participated in this half-yearly program.

Opening to the Outside World

In the early 1980s the Chinese government, under Deng's leadership, began to plan the issue of assuming sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao, and striving for the re-unification of Taiwan with its motherland. In this environment, the leadership of the Communist Party realized that Daoism, an indigenous religion to China, has a deep root and huge influence among the populace of these three regions and that if Daoism were properly utilized, it could play a constructive role in China's re-unification cause. Thus the CDA, for the first time, issued *A Letter to Daoist Communities in Taiwan Province* (*Zhi Taiwan Sheng Daojiaojie Shu* 致臺灣省道教界書) at its third National Congress. This marked the beginning of the official communication between Chinese mainland's Daoist communities and its Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan counterparts.⁴⁴ On August 30th 1985, the *Baiyun guan* received the first Daoist pilgrimage group of 35 from one of the biggest Daoist temples in Hong Kong named "Shun Shin Chee Kit Yin Koon" (*Zique Xuanguan* 紫闕玄觀) led by Master Luo zhiyan 羅紫彥. On August 13th 1987 organized by the manager Liu Zhiwei, the *Baiyun guan*, for the first time, sent a delegation of its monks. They paid a visit to some renowned Daoist communities (including Chee Kit Yin Koon) in Hong Kong. From its official re-opening to the public in March 1984 to

⁴³ For more information about this training class, see author's another Reli 8700 project, *Daoist Education in Modern China: A Historical Survey the Chinese Daoist College*.

⁴⁴ For the full content of the *Letter to Daoist Communities in Taiwan Province*, See Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 74-75.

Sept. 1986, *Baiyun Guan* attracted more than 200,000 domestic and international visitors; among them were many renowned dignitaries, such as British scholar Joseph Needham, and the former American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.⁴⁵

The Revival of Daoist Tradition

One of the most important functions of the *Baiyun guan*, I maintain, was and still is to organize the *Quanzhen* ordination procedure (*Chuanjie* 傳戒) ceremony. According to Li Yangzheng and Goossaert's sources: from 1800 to 1927, there were 31 *Quanzhen* ordination procedure ceremonies, (that is about one consecration every four years) held at the *Baiyun guan*, with a total of 5,465 Daoist monks and nuns participating (an average of 176 Daoists each ceremony).⁴⁶ No ordination ceremony was held at the *Baiyun guan* between 1927 and 1989. Few other large *Quanzhen* monasteries continued this ceremony during the 1930s and 1940s.⁴⁷ The reasons why the ordination ceremony stopped relatively early at the *Baiyun guan* largely lies with the rapid deterioration of financial situation of the monastery, and most importantly, the social and political disturbance.

The 1989 *Quanzhen* ordination procedure ceremony held at the *Baiyun guan* was not only an important event in the history of the Abbey but also it played a significant role in the continuation and transmission of Daoist learning and lineage. According to an editorial published in the *China Daoism*, the most eminent monks in mainland China who were "qualified" to act as

⁴⁵ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 86.

⁴⁶ Li Yangzheng, New edited records of the White Cloud Abbey in Beijing (*Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 新編北京白雲觀志). Page 235-236. Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 145.

⁴⁷ According to Goossaert, there was one large consecration, with 930 Daoists, at the Taiqing gong in 1944. Erxian An, an important *Quanzhen* monastery in Southwest part of China, witnessed more than 60 ordination ceremonies with total 6,000 Daoists between 1887 and 1947. See *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 *China Daoism*, No. 6 (2006), Page 53-54.

auxiliary masters were only seven and they were all above eighty years old. According to a liturgical manual, the *Xuandu lütan weiyi jieke quanbu* 玄都律壇威儀戒科全部 (a manuscript that dated 1874 and laid out a clear outline of the consecration procedure), a *Quanzhen* ordination requires at least eight auxiliary masters besides the *lüshi* 律師, each with a specific title and role. As a result, master Huang Xinyang 黃信陽 (the then manager of the *Baiyun guan*) was later added so that the ceremony could be held on time.

There were seventy five Daoists who participated in the 1989 ordination ceremony, thirty of whom were female Daoists. They received the so-called Great Precepts of the Threefold Altar (*santan daje* 三壇大戒): the Initial Precepts of Perfection (*chuzhen jie* 初真戒), the Intermediate Precepts (*zhongji jie* 中極戒), and the Great Precepts of the Celestial Immortals (*tianxian daje* 天仙大戒).⁴⁸ The oldest ordained was seventy-five and the youngest was twenty-one.

But who were qualified to participate in the *Quanzhen* ordination procedure ceremony and what did they study during the training period (*jieqi* 戒期)? According to “Rules about the transmission of precepts for the *Quanzhen* order” (*Guanyu Quanzhenpai chuanjie de guiding* 關於全真道傳戒的規定) in 1989 (revised and passed at the Seventh National Daoist Congress held on June 24th, 2005), article six says that candidates must have stayed at a Daoist community for at least three years and they must adhere to the tradition of loving their home country and religions (Daoism) (*Aiguo aijiao* 愛國愛教). So male and female Daoists must keep long hair and exhibit a proper deportment. In addition, they should be able to recite the morning and evening prayer scriptures. Candidates participated on a volunteer basis and were recommended

⁴⁸ Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, Page 122. For more contents of these three sets of precepts, see Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 150.

by their original temples. Once accepted, candidates were given a bowl and a consecration robe (*yibo* 衣鉢) and settled in the common dormitory. When all applicants had been screened, the training period began.

At the beginning of Qing dynasty, the whole duration was 100 days, though for reasons of cost, this was sometimes cut down to 53 days.⁴⁹ From the surviving records we are informed that the cost of an ordination procedure ceremony in the past was very high. For example, two stone inscriptions at the Abbey mention amounts ranging up to several thousand silver dollars.⁵⁰ The money mostly went toward housing, transportation and feeding candidates, and invited masters during the training period and producing ritual items and texts given to them. The 1989 consecration was further shortened to twenty days due to limited financial sources and for the sake of “not affecting” the Abbey’s other religious activities.

The contents of the 1989 consecration were similar to those held at the Abbey before 1949 but with slight changes. Generally speaking, the daily regimen of the candidates during 1989 consecration training period was extremely strict. Besides joining the daily services, they studied the precepts and discipline texts as well as other important texts and scriptures.⁵¹ The first four days’ training was largely focused on ritual practice. Jiang Chenglin 江誠霖, one of the eight auxiliary masters, demonstrated and taught the candidates the use of the *gui* 規, (a rectangular piece of cloth to sit and kneel on), and the audience tablet (*jian* 簡), as well as proper deportment with the robe and bowl. In the middle of the training period (on November 20th) an examination, called the *kaoji* 考偈, was organized. Three questions were presented by three

⁴⁹ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 195.

⁵⁰ Figures in inscriptions 1811 *Baiyun guan juanchan beiji* and 1866 *Liu Suyun daoxing bei*, contents of both stone inscriptions are contained in Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, page 707-708 and page 714 respectively.

⁵¹ Li Yangzhen’s records, page 245-248, lists over 5 important texts that candidates had to study during consecration held at the *Baiyun guan* in 1989.

auxiliary masters respectively. The first question required all candidates to write a paragraph of any Daoist scripture from their memories. Though the form of the remaining two questions were the same as that of previous exams (i.e., a quatrain to be composed on the basis of two given rhyme characters), the topic of 1989's exam was relatively narrowed. Examinees were required to compose a poem and a short essay on the topic of *aiguo aijiao* 愛國愛教 (loving their home country and religion). The auxiliary masters ranked all candidates according to the quality of their writings, and they were listed in the consecration register (*dengzhen lu* 登真錄) according to rank and numbered following the characters of the *Qianziwen* 千字文, (In the past, it was a primer for Chinese children learning to read and write, in one thousand characters, none of which is repeated.)⁵² This procedure, as Goossaert argues, is in clear imitation of civil service examinations, and the lore surrounding the first laureate, the *zhuangyuan* 狀元, in Confucian circles had its equivalent for the Daoist candidate ranked first with the *tian* 天 character.⁵³ Many candidates for this 1989 consecration have subsequently achieved high positions in major Daoist temples, or in local and national Daoist associations.⁵⁴

The most important religious activity during the consecration period was the ritual of conferring the precepts. It began at night with a litany (*chan* 懺) whereby the candidates repented from past wrong-doings and presented future determinations; and requested instruction in the precepts (*shenjie* 審戒).⁵⁵ One auxiliary master read the sins that candidates wrote down, and the candidates asked “may I have your master’s forgiveness?” The master then burned their written

⁵² Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 245.

⁵³ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 149.

⁵⁴ The current and late two presidents of the Chinese Daoist Association were all participants of 1989's consecration. For 1989's consecration register (*dengzhen lu* 登真錄, it provides all 75 participants' name and surname, date of birth, lineage, place of origin, place of entry into the clergy, and the name of his / her master.), please see Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 255-264.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Page 246-247.

pledge to Wang lingguan 王靈官 and plead the deity for mercy.⁵⁶ Then followed in sequence three ceremonies and in each ceremony, the consecration master wore specific ritual vestments, chanted hymns, recited one by one the precepts, and asked all candidates “can you observe this precept?” to which they answered “yes!”. Finally, all candidates thanked the consecration master and the various auxiliary masters and received their consecration certificate (*jiedie* 戒牒) along with a copy of the text of the precepts and the consecration register.⁵⁷

After consecration, the newly consecrated Daoist who ranked first with the *tian* 天 character usually was invited to stay at the *Baiyun guan* for further advanced training and was “legitimate” to serve as the alternate auxiliary master if there’s a vacant position in the future consecration. But most newly consecrated clerics either returned to their original temples or went on to visit pilgrimage sites and famous monasteries.

While the just described ritual was “designed” purely for Daoists, the monks at the *Baiyun guan* also provided a variety of liturgical programs to satisfy the laity and local people’s spiritual and cultural needs. Generally speaking, rituals performed by the *Baiyun guan* monks can be divided into two categories: those according to monastery’s regular liturgical calendar (usually collective) and those performed on demand (usually individual). The former can be further divided into the purely monastic rituals (i.e. daily liturgical service, celebration of Daoist saints’ birthdays, consecrations, etc.), with minimal participation of laypeople on the one hand; and on the other hand the large *zhai* and *jiao* offering rituals performed for monastic festivals, which were attended by large members of laypersons.

⁵⁶ Wang Lingguan is a major Daoist deity who is in charge of monitoring the consecrated clerics and also served as the guardian deity of all Daoist monasteries.

⁵⁷ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 246-247.

Since the daily liturgical service was discussed above, here I will mainly discuss the celebration of certain Daoist saints' birthdays. Today we know the *Baiyun guan* liturgical calendar before 1949 through Koyanagi Shikita's observations and Li's records which documented sixty eight and seventy birthdays respectively every year.⁵⁸ Among them the twelve most important are still celebrated today at the Abbey. They are the birthdays of: *Yuhuang* 玉皇 (1/9), *Shangyuan* 上元 (1/15), *Qiuzu* or Patriarch Qiu 邱祖(1/19), *Laozi* 老子(2/15), *Qingming* 清明 or Tomb-sweeping Day (varies each year according to Chinese lunar calendar), *Lvzu* 吕祖 (4/14), *Shangqing* 上清(summer solstice day), *Zhongyuan* 中元(7/15), *Jiuhuang* 九皇 or Nine Emperors (9/9), *Xiayuan* 下元(10/15), *Yuqing* 玉清(winter solstice day), and *Jiuku tianzun* 救苦天尊 or Heavenly Worthy of Salvation (11/11).⁵⁹ On these days, the daily services were supplemented with more elaborate rituals in homage to the saint / deity, and sacrificial offerings (usually fruit, candle, incense, and flower) were made in his hall. The laypeople were also invited to participate in the rituals known as *jiao* 醮 (offering ritual), *Qixiang* 祈祥 (a ritual for the blessing of the living people performed at day) and *Liandu* 炼度 (a ritual for the salvation of suffering souls performed at night) by making a monetary contribution, attending the whole performance, and having tablets with their names put on the altar of the beneficiaries of the ritual.

The largest *jiao* offering ritual that the *Baiyun guan* ever witnessed after 1949 was the Great Ritual Offerings to the All-Embracing Heaven (*Luotian Dajiao* 羅天大醮) held in the year 1993. It lasted ten days (from Sept 17th to Sept 26th). Daoist monks and priests from twelve most influential temples (in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and overseas) joined with their

⁵⁸ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 162.

Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 278-280.

⁵⁹ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 286.

counterparts at the Abbey to pray for world peace and blessings for the people.⁶⁰ All monetary contribution from this *jiao* offering ritual was donated to a mainland charitable organization.⁶¹ Though there is no reason to doubt the monks' pure good motivation, to make a good impression on the Chinese government was probably another purpose, because they knew pretty well that their own future depended on it.

The Finances of the *Baiyun guan*

Since there were no big social and political movements from mid 1990s to present and also due to China's booming economy in the past two decades, the *Baiyun guan* too benefited from this peaceful social context and rapid economic development. Consequently, the finance of the Abbey has been increased, as it can be seen from the number of the monks at residence. At present (2012), there are sixty-four monks, seventy-six CDA staff and dozens of contracted and temporary employees who stay and serve at the Abbey.⁶² As mentioned earlier, the major source of income of *Baiyun guan* before 1949 was rent from lands it owned. But the large land endowments were seized by government in the early 1950s. In order to cover many expenditures (such as supporting all material needs of the monks; maintaining and repairing the buildings; holding a yearly intense liturgical program of rituals that consumed large quantities of oil, incense, etc; and so forth), these expenditures must be balanced by various sources of income. The most important of those sources, at present, are revenues from entrance tickets, monetary

⁶⁰ Ibid. Page 294-309.

⁶¹ One million RMB (Chinese currency, roughly 175,000 US dollars in 1993) was donated to Chinese Project Hope (is a Chinese public service project organized by the China Youth Development Foundation and the Communist Youth League Central Committee. Started on October 30, 1989, it aims to bring schools into poverty-stricken rural areas of China, to help children whose families are too poor to afford it to complete elementary school education. Through Project Hope, the CYDF has also sought to improve educational facilities and improve teaching quality in poorer regions.)

⁶² These numbers are from members of the CDA and the management team of the *Baiyun guan*.

contributions from laypeople or tourists, liturgical fees, and incomes from shops that sell Daoist books and objects.

Due to its geographic location and reputation, *Baiyun guan* attracts a large number of tourists and pilgrims every year. Each person must pay ten RMB (equal \$1.6) entrance fee⁶³. Though this policy (whether religious centers should charge entrance fee) is hotly debated in China, it still practiced today.⁶⁴ Each Spring Festival (the most important traditional holiday in mainland China, during which people legally enjoy seven days off) brings at least 200,000 Daoist pilgrims and tourists to *Baiyun guan*. On birthdays of Daoist saints, thousands of pilgrims pour into the Abbey to attend the ritual performance and receive the blessings from the monks. In return, they make a monetary contribution (varies from person to person) to the temple.

In endeavoring to broaden the income structures, a Daoist bookstore (close to the “mountain gate”), a vegetarian restaurant, a small hotel, and a parking deck (located at the left side of the Abbey) were all opened in the early 1990s to serve the public. These measures not only increased the income of the Abbey but also in the broadest sense, it could express “Daoist culture” (often understood as being one of three “pillars” of Chinese traditional culture) particularly through the shop selling Daoist books and objects; through vegetarian restaurant where a Daoist aesthetic is deployed.

On some festivals, such as the birthdays of Qiu Changchun (1/19) or Laozi 老子(2/15), laity joined with the monks at residence to celebrate. However, they have to pay a special admission fee (fifty RMB or eight US dollars) so that they could attend the ritual performance

⁶³ Many religious centers (particularly Buddhism and Daoism) in mainland China charge entrance fee. For example, the Lama temple in Beijing charges twenty five RMB entrance fee.

⁶⁴ As far as I know, most *Baiyun guan* monks tend to abolish the entrance fee, but the leaders of CDA are afraid that it might set an example to other important temples (Buddhism as well) dotting China’s most celebrated mountains which entrance fee is a sizable source of local governments’ revenue.

held at the *Laoliu tang* 老律堂 (the largest hall of the Abbey) and receive blessings from Daoist ritual specialists.

Besides the above mentioned major festivals, the monks at the *Baiyun guan* also offered a variety of liturgical programs to satisfy those people's spiritual and cultural needs (usually requested from individual). According to article eight of the latest rule of the *Baiyun guan*'s Daoist Traditional Choir and Ensemble (*baiyun guan jingtan guanli zhidu* 白雲觀經壇管理制度) the fees for individual rituals are listed as follows: three *Qixiang* 祈祥 (a ritual for the blessing of the living people performed at day) rituals per day is three thousand RMB (475 US dollars); half-day ritual is one thousand and five hundred (227.5 US dollars); and each *Liandu* 煉度 (a ritual for the salvation of suffering souls performed at night) ritual is four thousand RMB (635 US dollars).⁶⁵ And the money generated from this ritual service is another important source of the Abbey's income.

A new religious service, which constitutes a sizeable source of income for the *Baiyun guan*, is that of electric lamps inscribed with the donator's name and lit for a year.⁶⁶ These lamps can be lit for the dead, or, more and more frequently, for the living. This model of service developed comparably to the major Daoist temples in southern part of China (particularly Hong Kong), which have found a niche in a competitive market for religious services for individuals (funeral services and blessings for individual), and which also justify themselves by the promotion of "Daoist culture."

⁶⁵ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page287.

⁶⁶ These tiny electric lamps form a pagoda shape and within each lamp there is a Daoist deity and the donator's name is inscribed in a piece of paper and put in front of the deity.

The Monks in Residence

With the increase in finances, the *Baiyun guan* now could house more monks. At present, there are sixty-four Daoists in residence. A list of these monks in 2012 (see table 1), provided by Song Shihong 宋士洪 (the current vice manager of the Abbey), shows that the geographical origin of monks in permanent residence was a little different from that of Goossaert's statistics of 1882.⁶⁷ This difference reflects the growing influence of *Quanzhen* Daoism in south China. Today, specialists around the world know the *Quanzhen* tradition was established by Master Wang Ch'ung-yang / Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1113-1170) in northern China under Jurchen dynasty (1115-1234). For centuries, its members were largely from north, as can be proven from another publication by Goossaert.⁶⁸ His 1882 statistics shows that the percentage of Daoists from north China was nearly 97 percent and this figure appears very stable over the whole period from 1800 to 1949.⁶⁹ Today, the percentage of Abbey's Daoists from North China (including the North East called Manchuria in Goossaert's reading pre-1949; and the North West [Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Xinjiang, etc.] and Middle East (Shandong, Henan, and Hebei) is 65.62 percent. Meanwhile, the percentage of monks from the Southwest (Sichuan and Chongqing), middle South (Hunan and Hubei), and Southeast (Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi and Guangdong) accounts for 34.38 percent of monks today.

At present, the oldest monk at the *Baiyun guan* is eighty-four and the youngest is twenty-four. More than 81 percent of the monks were born after the 1960s. Table 1 also shows that all monks came or returned to the Abbey after the 1980s and more than half of them have stayed and trained there for ten years. In terms of their educational background, 50 percent of the monks

⁶⁷ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 142-143.

⁶⁸ Vincent Goossaert, "The *Quanzhen* Clergy 1700-1950," in *Religion and Chinese Society*, ed. By John Lagerwey. The Chinese University Press, 2004, page 699-772.

⁶⁹ Ibid. Page 734-741.

have had middle school education, 23.44 percent high school education and 26.56 have studied either at the Chinese Daoist College or achieved an equivalent college degree.

Monastic Leadership

The history of the *Baiyun guan* during the nineteenth century, as Goossaert claims, is marked by a succession of charismatic leaders.⁷⁰ If so, the strong individualities among today's monastic leaders are hardly found, and the power of the *Baiyun guan* has been gradually institutionalized since the 1980s. The history of this change can be traced back to the early 1950s and at least two major reasons contributed to this change.

As I mentioned in the very beginning of this work, the traditional management system of the *Baiyun guan* headed by an abbot was replaced by the so called “democratic management team” in the early 1950s, supervised by the management team of Buddhist and Daoist temples in Beijing. This reorganization of the Daoist clergy and leadership forced by twentieth-century political revolutions reflected the government's desire to directly control all religious communities. But from 1957 on, the abbey was gradually under the supervision of the Chinese Daoist Association. And since then, a subtle tension between the two continued to present day.

It should be pointed out that the main function of the CDA is to serve as an intermediary between Daoists and the government. It passes government instructions down to Daoists and reports upwards what Daoists are doing and thinking. As the only nationwide Daoist organization, sanctioned and supported by Chinese government, the leaders of the most important Daoist temples usually are the members of the standing committee of the Chinese Daoist Association. But unlike the other influential Daoist communities that often under the

⁷⁰ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 169.

supervision of their local Daoist Association, the *Baiyun guan* is directly controlled by the Chinese Daoist Association. This is best reflected in the regulations of the management committee of the *Baiyun guan* or *Baiyun guan guanli weiyuanhui zhangcheng* 白雲觀管理委員會章程.

Article one expresses its mission: “the Abbey is a *Quanzhen* public community and composed of male Daoist clergy. Monks in residence must observe the regulations and precepts of the *Quanzhen* tradition. The Abbey exercises democratic management leadership. Under the supervision of the Chinese Daoist Association, the management committee of the *Baiyun guan* should unite all Daoist monks in residence to inherit and carry forward the fine tradition of Daoism.”⁷¹ Article three mentions the election of the members of the management committee of the *Baiyun guan*: “the prior is elected once every three years; [His term], if necessary, can be prolonged or shifted to an earlier date. The prior is elected by all monks at residence and is subject to the Chinese Daoist Association’s examination and approval.”⁷²

In reality, the Chinese Daoist Association, on the one hand, does not want a monk with a strong personality and charisma to be elected as the head of the Abbey. That is because a relative “soft” and “weak” leader can serve best of its interest. On the other hand, the prior should not be too submissive. Otherwise, he will likely be accused of not protecting the interests of the monastery and its members. Also the CDA does not want to give outsiders an impression that it interferes in the internal affairs of the monastery.

The current *Baiyun guan* leader and his two immediate predecessors have just provided us with the source material for a chronicle of not very sharply drawn personalities and charisma. But before viewing such a chronicle, let us quickly analyze two essential elements that construct

⁷¹ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 353.

⁷² Ibid. Page 354.

the effective leadership of a traditional Daoist community. Those two elements are religious authority and personal charisma.

Unlike most major world religions that can exert many kinds of authority over their believers, the Daoist clergy has no power to impose rules or punishments over lay communities since they are totally autonomous and self-governed. The only such authority enjoyed by the abbot of a Daoist monastery is his authority over the monks in residence. The abbot enjoys the moral authority (which defined as proper guides to one's moral judgments and conduct) but only through persuasion.

What is left for aspiring Daoist leaders is the authority of experience. As I argued earlier, large Daoist institutions, like the *Baiyun guan*, always pay the greatest attention to the proper transmission of lineages and monastic practice. The authority of Daoist monastic leaders rests with their capacity to transmit the knowledge embodied in *Quanzhen* tradition, and this requires that the leader experience it himself. A close examination of the previous two and the current prior of the Abbey reveals that neither of them have had such experience.⁷³

Besides authority, a leader needs charisma to stand out from the ranks of other authoritative clerics and to convince the ordinary monks to recognize him as leader. There are numerous extant hagiographies and other Daoist sources today to help us to see how those prestigious monks and priests exerted their charisma in different styles (i.e. through performing miracles, ascetic life, etc.) in order to transform their charismatic power into an institutionalized form of authority.⁷⁴ Due to the changes in today's monastic system and the institutionalization of

⁷³ Though prior Huang Xinyang 黄信阳 (1962-) did participate in 1989's *Quanzhen* consecration ceremony and served as one of the eight auxiliary masters, the one who acted as the consecration master was Wang Lixian 王理僊 (1913-1995). For more information, see Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》, Page387-388.

⁷⁴ For example: Russell Kirkland wrote a number of articles corning this topic, see his 1986 paper. "The Last Taoist Grand Master at the T'ang Imperial Court: Li Han kuang and T'ang Hsüan tsung." *T'ang Studies* 4: 43 67. In 1989 he

the power, however, there are fewer ways for today's leaders to display their spiritual and moral powers to attract or convince the ordinary and lay adepts.

wrote: "From Imperial Tutor to Taoist Priest: Ho Chih chang at the T'ang Court." *Journal of Asian History* 23: 101-133. In 1992 he published: "Tales of Thaumaturgy: T'ang Accounts of the Wonder Worker Yeh Fa shan." *Monumenta Serica* 40: 47-86. And his 1997's paper: "Ssu-ma Ch'eng-chen and the Role of Taoism in the Medieval Chinese Polity." *Journal of Asian History* 31.2 (1997), 105-138.

CHAPTER 3

THE CHINESE DAOIST ASSOCIATION

The Origin of the Founding of the Chinese Daoist Association

It was both the Chinese government and the Daoist themselves who felt the need to establish a new national Daoist association as late as 1956. From the point of view of the Chinese government, a new National Daoist Association could better justify or exemplify its policy of freedom of religious belief. Since the first years after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party realized that religion—symbol of feudal superstition and the opium of people in many cadres' psyche inculcated by Marxist doctrine—could not be destroyed by coercive action.⁷⁵ Thus, the Chinese Communist Party adopted a practical way to treat religions in China. It provided protection for them, while, at the same time, keeping them under control and utilizing them in both domestic and international policy and interests.

Historically speaking, the Chinese Communist Party's attitude towards religion (Daoism) was nothing new compared to that of its predecessors in imperial times. For centuries, rulers of different dynasties often utilized Daoism for various reasons. For example, as Anna Seidel showed, fifth-century rulers often utilized certain Daoist messianic ideas to legitimate their regimes, and Daoist ordination rituals were used as the model for their own enthronement ceremonies.⁷⁶ In the T'ang Dynasty (618-907), as scholars like Barrett, Benn, and Kirkland point

⁷⁵ For more information about why Communists advocate permitting freedom of religious belief, see an editorial on the Christian patriotic movement, printed in the *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao* 人民日報) on September 23th, 1950 and Holmes Welch's book: *Buddhism under Mao*, page 4.

⁷⁶ Isabelle, Robinet *Taoism Growth of a Religion*, page 162-163.

out, not only the T'ang ruling house—which sought legitimation in the idea that they were descendents of “Lao-tzu”—but even the “usurper” empress Wu filled their courts with Taoists of every description.⁷⁷ Likewise, Lowell Skar maintains that Sung (960-1276) rulers, as like their Tang predecessors, continued to turn to Daoism for state legitimization and looked to powerful deities for spiritual protection.⁷⁸

Non-Chinese dynasts—such as the Jurchen rulers of the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) and the Mongol rulers of the Yuan (1271-1368) —were also involved and found much of value in Daoism. For example, two Jurchen emperors summoned Wang Chuyi 王處一(1142-1217)—one of Wang Chongyang's seven most famous disciples—to court four times, because they desired “to receive instructions on ‘methods of preserving life’ and ‘ruling (the country).”⁷⁹ In 1188 and 1216, another famous *Quanzhen* monk, Qiu Chuji 邱處機 (1148-1227), was summoned twice by Jurchen emperors to oversee an imperial *jiao* ceremony. Though the Mongol ruler Khubilai (r. 1260-1294) is best known in the history of Daoism for his order for the burning of all Daoist texts except the *Daode jing*, an astute ruler like him could also find much of value in Daoism. As Morris Rossabi presents:

“Yet both Khubilai and the Taoists needed each other....Khubilai offered inducements to the various Taoist sects in return for their support. He supplied funds for the construction of temples, in particular to those belonging to the Ch'uan-ch'en sect, the Taoist order favored by the Mongols since Chingghis Khan's time....The Taoists responded to these favors by providing ideological

⁷⁷ Please see Russell Kirkland. 1998. “Dimensions of Tang Taoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium,” *T'ang Studies* 15-16: 79-123. Also see Barrett, T.H. 1996. *Taoism Under the T'ang*; Benn, Charles. 1987. “Religious Aspects of Emperor Hsüan-tsung's Taoist Ideology.” In *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society*. Ed. D. W. Chappell. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.127-46; and Guisso, Richard. 1978. *Wu Tse t'ien and the Politics of Legitimation in T'ang China*. Bellingham: Western Washington University.

⁷⁸ Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook*, page 420.

⁷⁹ See Yao Tao-chung, *Ch'uan-Chen: A New Taoist Sect in North China during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, page 111-114. Also see Russell Kirkland. 2002. “The History of Taoism: A New Outline.” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 30: 177-193 and his 2004 book “*Daoism: The Enduring Tradition*”, Routledge; New Ed edition.

justification for Khubilai and by helping him to perform certain duties expected of a Chinese emperor. One of these tasks was the worship of T'ai-shan, one of the sacred mountains of China, which was a vital responsibility for a Chinese emperor....Khubilai annually would dispatch Taoist leaders to perform the T'ai-shan ceremonies....Their willingness to conduct these ceremonies signaled a kind of support that was transmitted to ordinary believers of Taoism.”⁸⁰

While dynasts in imperial China supported Daoism, they also worked hard to monitor its activities, to make sure that their imperia would not be challenged. For example, when Taizu (r. 1368-1398), the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, overthrew the Mongols, he soon established the “Court of the Mystery Teaching” (*xuanjiao yuan* 玄教院) to oversee and control all Daoists in the empire, even though he is also believed to have summoned some renowned Daoists and holy hermits, like Zhang Sanfeng 張三丰, to his court.⁸¹ Of course, Taizu was not the first ruler to seek to manage Daoist institutions: his Tang predecessors, like Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 713-756) who was known as one of the most ardent patrons of Daoism, established the office of Commissioner of Daoist Ritual (*daomen weiyi shi* 道門威儀使) around 733, in order to regulate and control Daoist abbeys.⁸²

The Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) strove to establish tight state regulation over religions, due both to their own religion's connection with the Buddhist traditions of Tibet and for control of their Chinese subjects. Though Qing clerical administration continued the Ming model called Central Daoist Registry (*Daolu si* 道錄司, a government agency responsible for certifying and disciplining Daoist religious practitioners through the empire), in

⁸⁰ Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*, page 146.

⁸¹ Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook*, page 596. Also see Berling, Judith. 1998. "Taoism in Ming Culture." In *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty*, Part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 953-986.

⁸² Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook*, page 346. Also see Russell Kirkland. 1998. "Dimensions of Tang Taoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium," *T'ang Studies* 15-16: 79-123.

Qing times that agency broadened the level of its control. As Monica Esposito states, “it controlled appropriate boards and officers on the provincial, departmental, prefectural and county levels.”⁸³ As Goossaert points out, during the Qing period the *Daolu si* officials were also asked to control the behavior of Peking clerics (each being assigned one section of the city).⁸⁴

After the overthrow of the Manchus and the abolishment of the imperial state itself in 1911, the Qing model of state management of clerics and religious communities was discarded by the newly established Republic of China (1911-1949). Though the constitution of the Republic, proclaimed in 1912, recognized freedom of religious belief, it emphasized the distinction between “recognized religions” and “superstition.” The Republic’s list of “recognized religions” consisted of the same five that remains in use today: Buddhism, Catholicism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestantism.

Yet Daoists, more than any other religious specialists, found themselves uncomfortably straddling this dividing line, and they suffered the most from state “anti-superstition” propaganda. Among the many effects of the Republican government religious policies, the most important for Peking Taoist, Goossaert claims, were the temple census and control.⁸⁵ It was first managed by police, then an agency called Office of Social Organization (*Shehui ju* 社會局) took control, until that new census campaign came to be managed in 1947 by the Office of Civil Affairs (*Minzheng ju* 民政局).⁸⁶

The first indication that religion might now be protected in Mao’s China came in the Common Program, passed by the CPPCC (the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference) or the *Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi gongtong gangling* 中國人民政治

⁸³ Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook*, page 623.

⁸⁴ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, page 61.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, page 67.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, page 68.

協商會議共同綱領 on September 29th, 1949. Article Five provided for freedom of religious belief along with freedom of thought, speech, assembly, and so on.⁸⁷ Though the Chinese government tolerated the continued existence of Daoism and other religions, it did take a number of measures to control them.

The first step adopted by Chinese government was to curb the economic strength of Daoist communities. For example, the Agrarian Reform Law of the People's Republic of China, promulgated on June 30th, 1950, promoted the confiscation of the land that belonged to Buddhist temples, Daoist abbeys, and Christian churches. This law greatly weakened both *Quanzhen* and *Zhengyi* Daoist major temples' economy. For example, the *Baiyun guan* in Beijing had 58 *qing* 頃 (about 155 acres of land) in the 1930s, but after the land reform, Beijing municipal government only allocated 30 *mu* 畝 (less than 0.8 acres of land) to *Baiyun guan* monks to grow grain and vegetables so that they could feed themselves. *Tianshi fu* 天師府 (Hall of Daoist Celestial Master) in Jiangxi 江西 province received 9,000 *dan* 石 (about 1,200,000 pounds) of rent from lands annually before 1950 in comparison with zero rent after land reform.⁸⁸

The second step was to reform the traditional management system of Daoist temples and to strengthen the “patriotic education” of Daoist leadership. After 1949, the power structure in most major Daoist temples was recast to meet the requirement of democratic reformation initiated by the Chinese government. The traditional management system—headed by an abbot / abbess or a *zhuchi* 住持 (the temple manager)—was changed either to a democratic management committee (*Minzhu guanli weiyuanhui* 民主管理委員會) or to a so-called “democratic

⁸⁷ Article five reads: “The people of the People's Republic of China shall have freedom of thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, moving from one place to another, religious belief, and freedom of holding processions and demonstrations.”

⁸⁸ Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 163. Li Yangzheng 李養正, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 45.

management team” (*Minzhu guanli xiaozu* 民主管理小組).⁸⁹ Meanwhile, a number of temples in big cities jointly formed the Study Committee/Society (*Xuexi weiyuanhui* 學習委員會) to remold monks and priests and to “raise their level of political awareness.”⁹⁰

The last but most important measure adopted by the Chinese government was to force Daoism to distance itself from the *Huidao men* 會道門 (secret/redemptive religious societies/groups) and to abolish some “feudal and superstitious activities.” During the late nineteenth century and the period of the Republic of China (1911-1949), there were a number of secret religious groups, among which two Daoist-oriented redemptive societies, the *Wanguo daode hui* 萬國道德會 and the *Yiguan dao* 一貫道, were particularly active in north China.⁹¹ Although widely tolerated, the Nationalist government regarded redemptive societies as “superstitious” and launched “antisuperstition movements” against them. But that did not succeed, partly due to the social and political turbulence during the Republican period and partly due to the strong networks of these groups. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party realized that these redemptive societies could compose a great threat to its power and social stability; therefore, they were again labeled “superstitious” and strongly persecuted by the Chinese government. Daoists were also required to draw a clear line of demarcation between Daoism and “superstitions” and to “wipe out” all kinds of “superstitious” activities, such as spirit-writing (*fuluan* 扶鸞 or *fuji* 扶乩), fortune-telling, palm reading, etc, which had been practiced by both *Quanzhen* and *Zhengyi* Daoists. This

⁸⁹ For more information about Daoist traditional management system, see Vincent Goossaert’s book: *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 107—118; 137—140. Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 334-344.

⁹⁰ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 49.

⁹¹ Zhang Yuanxu 張元旭 (the 62nd Celestial Master of Zhang clan) was elected as the honorary president of the Wanguo daode hui in 1919. See Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 48. For more information about the redemptive societies in Republican period, see Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800—1949 A Social History of Urban Clerics*, page 308-315.

measure greatly weakened Daoism, especially *Zhengyi* Daoism. Its members were drastically decreased and became more loosely organized.⁹² Therefore, in the eyes of the leadership of the Communist Party, Daoism could no longer pose any threat to its power.

Daoist priests and monks ideally thought that a new national Daoist organization could better serve their interests and preserve Daoist culture. During the Republic of China (1911-1949), a number of renowned Daoist priests and monks attempted to establish a national Daoist association to protect Daoist monastic property. For example: in 1912, the *Baiyun guan* abbot Chen Mingbin 陳明霖 (1854-1936), Zhao Zhizhong 趙至中 (the abbot of the White Cloud Abbey in Shanghai), and representatives of other eighteen major Daoist *Quanzhen* temples launched a campaign to form the *Zhongyan daojiao hui* 中央道教會 (The Central Daoist Association). Three months later, leaders of *Zhengyi* priests in southern part of China, led by Zhang Yuanxu 張元旭 (the 62nd Celestial Master of Zhang clan), established the General Assembly of Daoism in the Republic of China (*Zhonghua minguo daojiao zonghui* 中華民國道教總會) in Shanghai. In March 1947, Zhang Enfu 張恩溥 (the 63rd Celestial Master of Zhang clan) and the *Quanzhen* monk Li Lishan 李理山 (the *zhuchi* of Jade Emperor Mountain in Hangzhou) jointly formed the Shanghai Daoist Association. The purposes of having a national or regional Daoist association, as the author mentioned earlier, were to protect monastic property and to revitalize Daoist tradition, but their efforts were not acknowledged by the *Kuomintang* / *Guomindang* 國民黨 government and the operation of these organizations was only short lived.⁹³

⁹² Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 48.

⁹³ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 35-37. Vincent Goossaert, *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949, A Social History of Urban Clerics*, Page 74-80.

Nearly seven years since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, this period witnessed the establishment of three other religious national associations.⁹⁴ Some renowned Daoist monks and priests thought that Daoism, the indigenous religion to China, should have its own national association too and that this was the right time to strive for this project. The leadership of Chinese government also thought that Daoist monks and priests, after seven years' ideological remolding, could not pose any threat to its political power and that, if the new national Daoist association would be properly utilized, it could serve the government interest. Therefore, on November 26th, 1956, twenty-three representatives—including eighteen *Quanzhen* monks, four *Zhengyi* priests, and one Daoist scholar—met in Beijing and held a preparatory conference to discuss the issue of forming the preparatory committee for the Chinese Daoist Association (CDA). At that meeting, Yue Chongdai 嶽崇岱 (1888—1958), the abbot of the Taiqing gong 太清宮 in Shenyang, was “elected” as the president of the preparatory committee for the CDA.⁹⁵ It published *the Initiation Manifesto of the Chinese Daoist Association* (*Zhongguo daojiao xiehui faqi shu* 中國道教協會發起書). It reads in full:

"Daoism, the indigenous religion to China, has had a far-reaching influence on our country's cultural and social life. (However), since 19th century, due to the imperialist invasion and the rule of the reactionary (*Guomindang*) government, Daoism and the Chinese people have suffered from being humiliated, and Daoist culture and other Chinese national cultures have experienced discriminative treatment. (Fortunately), the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 ended the history of oppression and humiliation of

⁹⁴ The Chinese Buddhist Association was founded in 1953; The Islamic Association of China held its inaugural meeting on May 11, 1953 in Beijing. The Three-Self Patriotic Movement (Officially called 中國基督教三自愛國運動委員會, National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China) was founded in August of 1954.

⁹⁵ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 51-52.

the Chinese people. (We) Daoists also obtained good conditions to study the doctrine and teachings of Daoism so that we could carry forward its fine tradition. Seven years since (the founding of the People's Republic of China), we have witnessed the rapid development of our country's economy, the gradual improvement of people's living standard, and the increasing freedom of people's religious belief. Meanwhile, (we) Daoists, joined with people throughout the country, have participated in the patriotic movement and the defense of world peace, with which we are delighted to make a contribution to the great mission of loving our motherland and the safeguarding world peace. In order to unite all Daoists of the country, and to make a further contribution to our motherland, the socialist construction of the country, and the defense of world peace, we regard it as necessary to establish a national organization of Daoism so that we can assist the People's Government to carry out its policy of freedom of religious belief and carry forward the fine traditions of Daoism. For this reason, we prepared to establish the Chinese Daoist Association and held a preparatory meeting in Beijing in late November 1956. An organizing committee was formed to take charge (all necessary things). We planned to invite Daoist dignitaries from across the country to attend the inaugural meeting, so that the Chinese Daoist Association could be officially established. We know well the limitations of our virtue and abilities. We are short of staff and money too. Therefore, it is our sincere hope that all Daoists of the country can sponsor and support our mission."⁹⁶

On April 8th, 1957, CDA held its first inaugural meeting in Beijing's *Qianmen* 前門 Hotel. It was attended by ninety-two representatives, from twenty provinces and autonomous

⁹⁶ See Chinese Daoist official website: http://www.Daoist.org.cn/webfront/webfront_viewContents.cgi?id=1176

regions throughout China.⁹⁷ During the meeting, He Chengxiang 何成湘, the director of the Religious Affairs Division (the predecessor of today's State Administration for Religious Affairs of P.R.C) was invited to make a report about the religious policy of the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Government. He said:

“Communists always believe that religion is a historically inevitable phenomenon and a collective belief issue, therefore (we) do not propose to resolve it with coercive measures like administrative orders. As to ideological problems, (including religion), one can not resort to suppression and forbiddance: one can only adopt rational and persuasive methods.” He also said: “The government adopts the policy of freedom of religious belief also because this policy is conducive to national solidarity and positivity of the religious group, and to the lofty socialist construction cause. As is known to all, the starting point of all governmental work is the interest of the country and its people. Since the policy of freedom of religious belief is conducive to the country and people, the government is naturally going to implement this policy.”⁹⁸

The CDA's inaugural meeting discussed and adopted a constitution that set the course for the next four years. During the meeting, sixty-one council members were elected at the national conference of ninety-two delegates from Daoist communities within China.⁹⁹ Generally speaking, the council was quite representative. A careful analysis of the names of sixty-one council members reveals that there was a fair proportion of elder Daoist monks and well-known priests. The leadership of the Chinese Communist Party thought that the CDA could serve the

⁹⁷ It is noteworthy to point out that the 92 delegates to the first inaugural meeting were not elected from each locality, they were actually selected by local Party's religious affairs apparatus in consultation with Daoist leaders.

⁹⁸ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 52-53.

⁹⁹ Six were Zhengyi priests and fifty-six were *Quanzhen* monks among which two were female.

government best only if it was representative. That is because widely respected Daoist monks and priests could presumably be more effective in persuading their followers to accept government policy.

The goals of the CDA were set forth in its constitution: “to unite all Daoists of the country so that they will inherit and carry forward the fine traditions of Daoism and, under the leadership of the People’s Government, they will love their motherland and participate in movements for the socialist construction of the country and the defense of world peace, to help the People’s Government fully carry out its policy of freedom of religious belief.”¹⁰⁰ In reality, the main function of the CDA was that it served as an intermediary between Daoists and the government. It passed government instructions down to Daoists, and reported to the government what Daoists were doing and thinking. The goal of “defending the world peace” actually meant support for the Korean War and the goal of “carrying out the policy of freedom of religious belief” actually meant renouncing the freedom to preach Daoism in public places.¹⁰¹

The premises of the CDA were in the White Cloud Abbey in Beijing. Although Yue Chongdai was elected as the president of the CDA, the person who was really in charge of its day-to-day work was Chen Yingning 陳撓寧 (1880-1969), who was the vice president and secretary-general of the association.¹⁰² Under his initiative, the association set up a special research unit to study the culture and history of Daoism. The establishment of the CDA, as many members of the council thought, was the first time in the history of Daoism that all major Daoist sects were united so that they could have a strong voice in Chinese political and cultural arenas.

¹⁰⁰ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 53.

¹⁰¹ With regard to preaching in public places, the policy was that just as atheists should not conduct anti-religious propaganda inside churches and temples, so believers should not conduct religious propaganda outside churches and temples.

¹⁰² For more information about Chen Yingning, please see Liu Xun’s new book, *Daoist Modern: Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Community of Inner Alchemy in Republican Shanghai*, by the Harvard University Asia Center, 2009.

However, their dreams were dashed as China entered twenty years of political disturbance under Mao's rule.

The Chinese Daoist Association under Chairman Mao

Shortly after the founding of the Chinese Daoist Association, a political campaign called the Anti-Rightist Movement got underway in June, 1957.¹⁰³ Its pace increased throughout the country the next spring. All walks of life were involved in this political struggle, Daoism being no exception. On March 17th, 1958, the second council meeting of the CDA was held in Beijing. It lasted forty days, which was the longest meeting ever held in the history of CDA. At the beginning of the conference, government cadres enticed Daoist representatives to point out “the mistakes they had made” so that their “services” could be improved. Some Daoists, without any knowledge about politics, did complain about the difficulties they had experienced. The most problematic issues, they grumbled, were seized temples, restricted ordinations, and discouraged religious activities (i.e. the tradition of wandering *Quanzhen* monks, printing and distribution of Daoist scriptures, etc.).¹⁰⁴

However, government cadres who moderated the meeting considered those Daoists as attacking the Party's leadership and the Chinese socialist system and decided that such activities had to be suppressed. Therefore, another panel, named the “group for studying socialism,” was formed to disclose and to denounce those Daoists who dared to complain about government

¹⁰³ The major reason why Chairman Mao launched this movement is, as Chinese scholar Sun Qiming 孫其明 claims, that it should be attributed to the sharp criticism from all walks of life to the Communist Party owing to its defects and mistakes during the period of Rectification Movement (*Zhengfeng* 整風), the democratic desire of the intelligentsia and the young students, and the requirements of the activists from those democratic parties to participate in the government and political affairs. All these were completely beyond the expectation of Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, which urged Mao and other CCP leaders to give up the original intention of the Rectification Movement. Consequently, they made such a judgment that the bourgeois intellectual tried to rebel against CPC which finally led to the Anti-rightist Struggle.

¹⁰⁴ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 56-57.

religious policy and “services” provided by government cadres. At the end of this conference, Yue Chongdai, the president of the CDA, and other three Daoist dignitaries were labeled as “rightists” and ordered to return to their original temples to take part in farm work and political education.¹⁰⁵ When Yue returned to his original temple (the *Taiqing gong* in Shenyang city), he was criticized at a public meeting (*pidou* 批鬥) by local government cadres again and again. As the abbot of the *Taiqing gong* and a respected Daoist leader, Yue could not bear such insults. As a result, he committed suicide.¹⁰⁶ Ordinary Daoist monks and priests were shocked by his death and troubled by doubt about government religious policy.

In fact, Yue’s death was one of many tragedies that happened among the Daoist upper class and intellectuals during that particular political turbulence in China. The next movement, called the “Great Leap Forward” (*Da Yuejin* 大躍進), caused a greater destruction to the Chinese Daoist Association and Daoist tradition as a whole. The destruction was characterized by the overturning of Daoist traditional monastic life.

As I mentioned earlier, the traditional management system of Daoist temples was headed by the abbot / abbess or the temple manager (*zhuchi*), and under his/her leadership, there was a systematic division of labor for each Daoist according to his/her abilities. However, during the three years of the “Great Leap Forward” movement, Daoist temples were “transformed” into people’s communes and Daoist monks and priests were turned into productive laborers. For example, the staff of the CDA and the Daoist monks of the *Baiyun Guan* supported themselves by growing vegetables and fruit.¹⁰⁷ It was inevitable that, as more time was spent to productive

¹⁰⁵ The three Daoist dignitaries were: Li Jingchen 李淨塵, Wang Xinan 王信安, and Xiang Yuanli 向元理.

¹⁰⁶ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 58.

¹⁰⁷ Li Yangzheng, *Xinbian Beijing Baiyun Guan Zhi* 《新編北京白雲觀志》. Page 528-530.

labor, there would be less time left over for religious practice. The Daoist traditional monastic life, marked by morning bells and evening drums, was only in monks' memories.

A few years later, having realized the mistakes it had made during the Anti-Rightist and the three-years Great Leap Forward movements, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party began to set things right, that is to "correct" the ultra-Left trend of thought. It stressed that it must properly deal with the relationship between different religious groups and government so that the unity of all walks of life could be strengthened. In this new political context, the Chinese Daoist Association re-started to function and held its second national congress on November 1st, 1961. Ninety nine representatives including eighty-five *Quanzhen* monks (among them, twelve female) and fourteen *Zhengyi* priests attended the meeting.¹⁰⁸

Chen Yingning, then acting president and secretary-general of the Chinese Daoist Association, presented a working report at the congress, reviewing several major tasks that the CDA had accomplished during the past four years. The first task, said Chen, was helping the People's government to carry out its policy of freedom of religious belief. He said:

"In the past, there were many reactionary *Huidao men* (secret religious societies/groups) and illegal entities who, under the guise of Daoism, created stories to confuse the crowd, destroy production and harm social security. We in order to help the government to correctly implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, have in the past revealed some bad influences disguised as Daoists so as to make good Daoists live a proper religious life peacefully under the auspices of the government. He also said that "there are a small number of Daoist friends who lack of understanding of religious policy, and are dissatisfied with those who abandoned their belief or ask the government to renovate some

¹⁰⁸ See Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 62.

unnecessary Daoist temples. We have offered explanation and persuasion under the religious policy separately.”¹⁰⁹

The second major task, Chen claimed, was to preserve Daoist culture. Under the direction of the CDA, researchers in the special research unit finished five academic works. They wrote an entry about Daoism for the Editorial Committee for the new *Cihai* 辭海 (“Encyclopedic Dictionary”) housed in Shanghai Zhonghua Shuju 上海中華書局 and proofread the manuscript of *The Collected Collation of the Book of Supreme Peace* (*Taipingjing hejiao* 太平經合校).¹¹⁰ They re-checked the volumes of *Daozang* 道藏 (Daoist Canon) and re-edited the *Index of Daozang*. They also compiled a book entitled *The Record of Major Events about Daoism in Each Dynasty* (*Daojiao lidai dashiji* 道教歷代大事記) and assisted some “related” government organs in composing and revising the record of religion(s) in different localities (*Difang zongjiao zhi* 地方宗教志).¹¹¹

During the meeting, Chen Yingning was elected as the president of the CDA and five other Daoist monks and priests were elected vice presidents.¹¹² Although the number of council members had slightly grown from sixty-one to sixty-five, the leadership of the CDA realized that they must solve one impending problem—the successors of the old Daoist generation.¹¹³ Thus, the issue of nurturing and training young Daoist talents received special attention at the conference. A drafted *Plan of Nurturing and Training Daoist Intellectuals* (*Peiyang daojiao*

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Edited by Wangming 王明 and published by Beijing Zhonghua Shuju 北京中華書局 in 1960.

¹¹¹ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Modern Daoism*, Page 63.

¹¹² They were: Yi Xinyin 易心瑩, Meng Minghui 孟明慧, Qiao Qingxin 喬清心, Jiang Zonghan 蔣宗翰, and Li Yuhang 黎遇航.

¹¹³ For the full names of 65 council members, please see Chinese Daoist Association’s official website: http://www.Daoist.org.cn/webfront/webfront_viewContents.cgi?id=1178. A careful calculation by Li Yanzheng reveals that the average age of these 65 council members was over 60.

zhishi fenzi jihua 培養道教知識份子計畫) was adopted at the congress. This plan was carried out at the CDA and under Chen's initiative, the first Training Class for Daoists (*Daojiaotu jinxiu ban* 道教徒進修班) was opened on September 29th 1962.

The purpose of this class, as Chen Yingning stated in the speech at the opening ceremony, was twofold: First, to educate Daoist specialists to engage in academic research work, and second, to educate Daoist generalists to take part in management business of Daoist Mountains, temples and ecclesiastical activities.¹¹⁴ The class offered intensive courses in the Daoist classics and scriptures as well as modern science and politics. But it lasted only four years and was forced to close during the "Cultural Revolution." (1966-1976).

Another achievement under Chen's direction was the publication of *Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association* (*Daoxie huikan* 道協會刊).¹¹⁵ It is an internal publication and the content of the journal was mainly about Daoist academic studies, among which were several of Chen's personal research projects. However, with only a little over three hundred copies were available to the Daoists of China, the influence of *Daoxie huikan* was very limited at that time.

It is noteworthy to point out that under Chen's leadership, the CDA revived Abbey's traditional management system by inviting Jiang Zonghan 蔣宗瀚 (1901-1979) as the abbot of the Abbey in the autumn of 1962.¹¹⁶ This did not indicate, however, that the Chinese government had loosened its control over the Daoist communities and its efforts to reform Daoist "Sangha"

¹¹⁴ For the full content of his speech, see *Daoxie huikan* (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962-86. Issue 2 (September, 1962). Page 100.

¹¹⁵ The first issue of *Daoxie huikan* was published on August 1962 and from then on four issues had been published till October 1964. The publication of *Daoxie huikan* was suspended during 1965 to 1979 and was re-published in 1980. There were twenty issues had been published in all from 1962 to 1986. The name of *Daoxie huikan* was changed to *Zhongguo daojiao* 《中國道教》 China Daoism in 1987 and became a quarterly publication. In 1999 it became bi-monthly magazine.

¹¹⁶ Jiang Zonghang (1901-1979) was a renowned Daoist *Quanzhen* monk. He was elected as the vice president of the CTA at the second national congress and invited to assist Chen's work and served as the abbot of the White Cloud Abbey. For a complete biography of Jiang Zonghang, see Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, page 253-255.

system. The main reason was, as I think, that the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party thought that by allowing *Baiyun Guan*, one of the most important temples of *Quanzhen* Daoism, to have its traditional autonomy, it could serve as a “showplace” both for domestic and foreign visitors, so the government’s policy of “freedom of religious belief” could be exemplified.

It is also noteworthy to point out that the above mentioned achievements accomplished by the Chinese Daoist Association in the early 1960s should be accredited to the leadership’s ability to adapt itself to the changes of the external environment (i.e. the political, economic, etc.). Objectively speaking, the political environment in the beginning of 1960s China was relatively stable. There was no large-scale political movement. Chen Yingning, the then second president of the CDA and a renowned Daoist scholar in Chinese traditional medicine and meditation, grasped this opportunity and made great efforts to adapt Daoist practices to the changed political, economic, and intellectual environments in the early 1960s China. Chen thought that the key to the survival of Daoism in the new society was to strip away what he perceived as magically based liturgical elements and preserve what he saw as the “spirit of Daoism” (*Daojiao de jingshen* 道教的精神). In a speech given at the annual meeting of the National Political Consultative Congress in Beijing in 1962, Chen spoke hopefully about the future of Daoism:

“Will our nation’s Daoism with its 2,500 years of history (counting from Laozi of the Eastern Zhou dynasty) be doomed to perish? We have to look at two things to answer this question: one is the form of Daoism (*daojiao de xingshi* 道教的形式), and the other is the spirit of Daoism. Such things as leaving home for practice vs. at-home practice, keeping one’s hair as opposed to cutting it, vegetarianism vs. meat eating, wearing the Daoist regalia vs. civilian clothes, rituals, prayers, scriptural recitation, and other liturgical elements are nothing but the forms of Daoism. But the *qigong* healing practices (such as

the Inhaling and Exhaling Exercise, Regulating Qi, Circulating Qi, Manipulating Qi, Concentrating Qi, Dispersing Qi, the Six Character Secrets of Qi Exercise, and the Sixteen-Character Secrets of Qi Exercise); the gymnastic regimens (such as *anqiao* 按蹻 and *daoyin* 導引), the Five Animal Play exercise, the Tiger and Dragon practice, the Eight-sectioned Exercise (*baduan jing* 八段錦) and *Taiji quan* 太極拳, the quiet meditative practices (such as Pausing the Thought, Holding the Consciousness, Keeping to the Center, Hugging the One, Stilling the Gaze, and the Forgetful Sitting), drug ingestion practices (such as preparing various alchemic potions and elixirs and taking various herbs and drugs); and other more profound teachings such as inner alchemy, outer alchemy, and Lao-Zhuang philosophy—all these are the learning of Daoism (*daojiao de xueshu* 道教的學術). The spirit of Daoism is anchored in its learning. As the times change, there is no guarantee that the form of Daoism will remain unchanged forever. But Daoist learning will not only continue and be transmitted forever. It will even gradually thrive and develop, because it is what people need. As long as Daoist learning exists, the Daoist spirit will have its grounding. We will have no worry about it.”¹¹⁷

Generally speaking, Chen’s understanding of the key dynamics of Daoist religious model is very accurate. Throughout history, as Kirkland points out: “Daoism has always adjusted, and is still adjusting itself to the changes of the society so that it can provide the spiritual, cultural, and political needs of the elite group as well as the general public.”¹¹⁸ In reality, Chen and his CDA’s colleagues’ enthusiasm for the continuation and transmission of Daoist learning was

¹¹⁷ Chen Yingning: “An analysis of present and past conditions among Daoist circles” (*Fenxi Daojiao jie jinxi butong de qingkuang* 分析道教界今昔不同的情況), *Daoxie huikan*, Issue 1 (Aug.1962), Page 80. The quotation was translated by Xun Liu, see his book, *Daoist Modern, Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Community of Inner Alchemy in Republican Shanghai*, Harvard University Press, 2009. Page 280.

¹¹⁸ Russell Kirkland: “*The Relevance of Taoism in the 21st-Century World*,” a paper presented at the 4th Torchinov Conference on the Philosophy, Religion and Culture of Asian Countries, Saint-Petersburg State University, 2007.

stifled as an unprecedented political crisis was impending. This political turbulence was the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).¹¹⁹

The Chinese Daoist Association under Deng's Reforms and Opening Up

After the ten-year “Cultural Revolution,” the Chinese Daoist Association was re-established in September 1979, and held its third National Congress on May 7th 1980. Wang Weiye 王偉業, then secretary-general of the Chinese Daoist Association, presented a working report laying out six major tasks for the Chinese Daoist Association to be accomplished over the next five years. The first task was to unite and mobilize all the country's Daoists so that they could make contributions to the three ambitious goals that the Chinese government wanted to accomplish in 1980s.¹²⁰ The second was to help the Chinese government carries out its policy of freedom of religious belief; and third, to make further efforts to launch Daoist academic research project(s) and prepare for the re-publication of *Daoxie huikan*. The fourth goal was to preserve renowned Daoist temples, abbeys and historical relics scattered throughout China. Fifth, the CAD wanted to expand friendly exchanges with its international counterparts and sixth, to train young Daoist talent.¹²¹

The task of “carrying out the policy of freedom of religious belief” mainly contained three levels of meaning in the early 1980s: first, to clarify any doubt and distrust which haunted many Daoist monks and priests' minds about government religious policy which was

¹¹⁹ Since detailed information about what happened to the CDA and its premises (the White Cloud Abbey) in the Cultural Revolution is already given in the second chapter of this thesis, page 17-21. I will not simply repeat that in this chapter.

¹²⁰ The three great goals were: to step up the economic development so that the four modernizations can be achieved (modernization of agriculture, industry, national defense and science and technology); to against hegemonism and defend world peace (here it meant against Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.); to strive for the re-unification of Taiwan with its motherland.

¹²¹ *Daoxie huikan* (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962—86. No. 5 (1980). Page 9.

indiscriminately violated in the Cultural Revolution. Second, to intercede with government so that the legitimate appeals, such as rehabilitation of those who were persecuted in the past political movements and returning of Daoist temples occupied by non-religious organizations, could be promptly and rationally solved or fulfilled. Third, to assist the government in strengthening the management of Daoist legal religious activities (preaching Daoism in government sanctioned temples) and preventing anyone who intended to utilize religion (Daoism) from conducting illegal activities (preaching Daoism in public places) so that a stable and unified political situation/environment could be realized for China's economic development.

The task of "preserving Daoist renowned temples and abbeys" meant that it was mainly Daoists' responsibility to raise money to repair those renowned temples which had been destroyed or damaged in the Cultural Revolution so that not only could they provide "historical materials" for both domestic and international academic researchers but also could support China's tourism industry. According to Li Yangzheng's statistics, there were 673 well-known Daoist temples and abbeys dotting China's most celebrated mountains before the Cultural Revolution.¹²² But this number was drastically diminished after the ten-years of destructive annihilation. On October 6th, 1981, the second meeting of CDA's standing committee was held in Beijing to discuss the issue of returning those undamaged temples, and a list of twenty one of the best-known were reported to the government, with the hope that they could be classified as nationally protected religious centers.¹²³ The Chinese government, under Deng's leadership, was eager to show the outside world that Chinese people were now re-enjoying freedom of religious belief. So, the Religious Affairs Bureau soon approved this report and assisted the

¹²² Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 68.

¹²³ For more information about these Daoist temples, See Lai Chi-Tim's article "*Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002*" Contained in "*Religion in China Today*", edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page109.

CDA in reclaiming these temples which had been occupied by non-religious organizations during the Cultural Revolution. However, this was not an easy job, because it would definitely run counter to the interest of those occupying organizations. For example, it took nearly two years' of hard work to press the engineering military corps to leave the *Baiyun Guan*.¹²⁴ Finally, it was re-opened to the public on March 17th, 1984 and nearly thirty old and young Daoist monks gradually returned to *Baiyun Guan* and stayed there to serve Daoist believers and tourists' spiritual and cultural needs.

Expanding and strengthening the friendly exchanges with Daoist ecclesiastic communities and academic institutions mainly from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and other Southeast Asian countries was another major goal on which the CDA was to spend more and more of its time. In the early 1980s the Chinese government, under Deng's leadership, began to plan the issue of assuming sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao, and striving for the re-unification of Taiwan with its motherland. In this environment, the leadership of the Communist Party realized that Daoism, an indigenous religion to China, has a deep root and huge influence among the populace of these three regions, and that if Daoism were properly utilized, it could play a constructive role in China's re-unification cause. Thus the CDA, for the first time, issued *A Letter to Daoist Communities in Taiwan Province (Zhi Taiwan Sheng Daojiaojie Shu 致臺灣省道教界書)* at its third National Congress, which marked the beginning of the official communication between Chinese mainland's Daoist communities and its Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan's counterparts.¹²⁵

If the initial phase of "Daoist recovery" (from 1980 to 1986) could be characterized by the revival of destroyed Daoist Temples and the return of old Daoist priests nation-wide, as

¹²⁴ Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 79.

¹²⁵ For the full content of the *Letter to Daoist Communities in Taiwan Province*, See Li Yangzheng, *Dangdai Daojiao / Contemporary Daoism*, Page 74-75.

Thomas Hahn's fieldwork reports, then the second phase (from 1987 to present) could be seen as a period of rapid resurgence of Daoist traditions. This resurgence is not only reflected in the growing number of Daoist temples and priests, but also it manifests itself in the renewal of Daoist ordination practices. Consequently, the tasks and concerns of the Chinese Daoist Association have gradually changed during the years since the revival of Daoism in the early 1980s.

It should be pointed out that the speed of restoration and reconstruction of Daoist temples has been accelerated dramatically since the 1990s. According to "official" statistics issued by the Chinese Daoist Association, the number of re-opened or new Daoist temples has quadrupled from 400 in 1992 to 1,600 in 1998, with roughly 25,000 male and female Daoists living at the temples.¹²⁶ Another "official" statistic from the Chinese government states that the number of re-opened or new Daoist temples has doubled from 1,500 in 1997 to 3,000 in 2009. More than 50,000 male and female Daoists now live at these temples.¹²⁷ This phenomenon of rapid growth of restored temples is not only because of the spiritual and religious needs of many Daoist believers, but also because of the boom of China's economic growth during the past two decades.

In order to assist the Chinese government's need for effective management and control of Daoist temples and their members, the CDA has adopted two principal methods to fulfill that goal. The first method adopted was to issue and enforce seven influential policy documents concerning temple management; rules for the ordination of *Quanzhen* and *Zhengyi* (both home

¹²⁶ *China Daoism (Zhongguo daojiao)*, No. 3 (1992) Page 10; No.5 (1999), Page 4.

¹²⁷ Xinhua news agency, the Chinese state-run media, published an editorial on September 4, 2009 before the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's republic of China. It is about the overview of Chinese religions during the past sixty years under the religious freedom policy promised by the Chinese Communist Party. For more information, please access to this website: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2009-09/04/content_11997424_2.htm

and abroad) priests; and a definition of the “corrected” religious activities of “Daoist living at home (*Sanju daoshi* 散居道士).” The seven paper documents are:

1. “Methods for administering Daoist temples” (*Guanyu daojiao gongguan guanli banfa* 關於道教宮觀管理辦法) in 1992 (revised and passed at the Sixth National Daoist Congress held on August 24th, 1998)
2. “Tentative methods related to the administration of the *Zhengyi* priests who live at home” (*Guanyu daojiao sanju zhengyipai daoshi guanli zhanxing banfa* 關於道教散居正一派道士管理暫行辦法) in 1992 (revised and passed at the Sixth National Daoist Congress held on August 24th, 1998)
3. “Rules about the transmission of precepts for the *Quanzhen* order” (*Guanyu Quanzhenpai chuanjie de guiding* 關於全真派傳戒的規定) in 1994 (revised and passed at the Seventh National Daoist Congress held on June 24th, 2005)
4. “Rules related to conferring registers of ordination for the *Zhengyi* priests” (*Guanyu zhengyi pai daoshi shoulu guiding* 關於正一派道士授籙規定) in 1994 (revised and passed at the Seventh National Daoist Congress held on June 24th, 2005)
5. “Tentative methods related to conferring registers of ordination for the overseas *Zhengyi* priests” (*Guanyu dui guowai zhengyi pai daoshi shoulu shixing banfa* 關於對國外正一派道士授籙試行辦法) (revised and passed at the Seventh National Daoist Congress held on June 24th, 2005)
6. “Methods related to the issue of taking and leaving office of *Quanzhen* Daoist abbots and *Zhenyi* temple managers” (*Daojiao gongguan fangzhang zhuchi renzhi lizhi banfa* “道教宮觀方丈住持任職離職辦法 (passed at the second council meeting of

the Seventh Daoist National Congress held on September 20th, 2007 and promulgated on March 4th, 2008.)

7. “Methods for identifying Daoist clerics” (*Daojiao jiaozhi ren yuan rending banfa* 道教教職人員認定辦法) (passed at the second council meeting of the Seventh Daoist National Congress held on September 20th, 2007 and promulgated on March 4th, 2008.)¹²⁸

However, because Daoism has always been loosely organized throughout its history and also due to the “elasticity” (*linghuo xing* 靈活性) of these rules, the operational impact on Daoist communities, which the seven documents want to achieve, remains unclear.

The second method by which the CDA sought to assist the Chinese government’s need for effective management and control of Daoist temples and their members was to train more competent temple administrators who adhere to the tradition of loving their country and religions (Daoism) (*Aiguo aijiao* 愛國愛教) by establishing the Chinese Daoist College. The College officially opened its doors on May 5th, 1990 and is located at the east side of the *Baiyun Guan*. The aim and mission of the Chinese Daoist College, according to its constitution, is to “nurture and train intermediate and advanced Daoist young talents who master relatively high Daoist knowledge and cultivate right morality, devote themselves to the contact of the Daoist believers and to the service of Daoist ecclesiastic activities.” In addition, the students are expected to “love their motherland, uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, adhere to the road of socialism, and maintain the unity of China and ethnic harmony.” In addition, “they must, in rotation, take charge of the training and continuing education of the backbone of the local Daoist

¹²⁸ Zhongguo daojiao, No 4 (1992) Page 4-6; No. 4 (1994) Page 14-15. Also see Lai Chi-Tim’s article “*Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002*” Contained in “*Religion in China Today*”, edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page 111.

organizations, inherit and carry forward the good traditions of Daoism, and promote the fine culture of Daoism.”¹²⁹

At present, there are three different courses of study available at the Chinese Daoist College. These classes are: Specialized Training Class (*Zhuanxiu Ban* 專修班); Advanced Training Class (*Jinxiu Ban* 進修班), and Graduate Class (*Yanjiusheng Ban* 研究生班).¹³⁰ Courses offered at the college vary from one program to another, but every admitted student must take a certain number of political and cultural courses. Article Six of the College constitution regulates that religious courses must occupy seventy percent of total curriculum, with the remainder constituted of political and cultural courses.¹³¹ According to *China Daoism*, nearly five hundred Daoist priests have been trained at the Chinese Daoist College since its founding up to 2005, among which many have achieved high positions in Daoist temples or local Associations.¹³²

Except for assisting the Chinese government to effectively manage and control Daoist temples and their members, the CDA did put great efforts into the renewal of Daoist ordination practices and the continuation and transmission of Daoist learning. In November, 1989, under the direction of CDA, the first *Quanzhen* ordination procedure (*Chuanjie* 傳戒) ceremony since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 was held at the *Baiyun Guan*.¹³³ There were seventy-five Daoists who participated in ordination ceremony, thirty of whom were female

¹²⁹ The Constitution was enacted in 1990 and revised in 2002. The above quotation is 2002 version.

¹³⁰ The name of Specialized Training Class (*Zhuanxiu Ban*) was changed to Daoist Ritual and Temple Management in 2002; the name of Advanced Training Class (*Jinxiu Ban*) was changed to Daoist Theology in 2002 and the length of schooling was prolonged to four years. The author was a graduate in 1998 4th Specialized Training Class and 2003 2nd Advanced Training Class. It was until 2003 did the graduate programme was offered.

¹³¹ For more information about the specific courses taught at the Chinese Daoist College, See author's another paper: *Daoist Education in China Today—A Historical Survey of the Chinese Daoist College*

¹³² *China Daoism (Zhongguo daojiao)*, No. 5 (2005) Page 18.

¹³³ *China Daoism (Zhongguo daojiao)*, No. 4 (1994) Page 14-15. According to Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, page 123, the last ordination of *Quanzhen* order was held in the Erxian An 二仙庵, Chengdu 成都, in 1947.

Daoists. They received the so-called Great Precepts of the Threefold Altar (*santan dajie* 三壇大戒): the Initial Precepts of Perfection (*chuzhen jie* 初真戒), the Intermediate Precepts (*zhongji jie* 中極戒), and the Great Precepts of the Celestial Immortals (*tianxian dajie* 天仙大戒).¹³⁴ This ceremony was repeated in 1995, 2002, and 2005. The 2005 ceremony was also held, for the first time, in Malaysia, with thirty-nine Malay-Chinese receiving the ordination certificate.¹³⁵

However, compared to the *Quanzhen* ordination ceremony, the re-establishment of the *Zhengyi* “transferal of register” (*shoulu*) ceremony seems to have been more complicated. According to Lai Chi-Tim, that is mainly due to the difficulty of identifying who are the “correct” and “recognized” *sanju daoshi* (Daoist living at home) of the *Zhengyi* order.¹³⁶ The CDA has “successfully” solved this problem by issuing a “Daoist certificate belonging to the *Zhengyi* sect” (*Zhengyipai daoshizheng* 正一派道士證). It regulates that only those who have obtained such *Zhengyi* Daoist certificates can perform liturgical services and ceremonies at the Daoist temples or officially endorsed religious centers without advance approval from the regional Daoist Association.¹³⁷

In this context, the first modern *Zhengyi shoulu* ceremony took place at the highest doctrinal altar (*zongtan* 宗壇) of the Halls of Celestial Master (*Tianshi Fu* 天師府), at Mount Longhu 龍虎 on December 5th, 1995.¹³⁸ There were around 200 “students of the registers”

¹³⁴ Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, Page 122.

¹³⁵ The 1995 ceremony was held at the Changdao Guan 常道觀, at the Qingcheng shan 青城山 with some 400 *Quanzhen* monks and nuns being conferred the ordination certificate. The 2002 ceremony was held at the Wulong Gong 五龍宮, at the Qian shan 千山 with 200 *Quanzhen* monks and nuns being conferred the ordination certificate. See Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, Page 123. China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No.1 (1996) Page 7; No. 5 (2002) Page 4; No. 3 (2005), Page 62.

¹³⁶ Lai Chi-Tim, “*Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002*” Contained in “*Religion in China Today*”, edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page 109.

¹³⁷ China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No.4 (1992) Page 6-7.

¹³⁸ Mount Longhu (literally means “Dragon Tiger Mountain”), is one of the most sacred mountains of Daoism in China. It is said that Zhang Daoling 張道陵 (34-156 CE), the founder of the Way of the Celestial Master, came originally from that mountain. Later it became the base of *Zhengyi* Daoism since the Ming (1368-1644CE) dynasty.

(*lusheng* 籙生) who took part in this ceremony and received a “Zhengyi registration certificate” (*Zhengyi zhidie* 正一職牒) and a volume of “collected essays on the scriptures and instructions [given] for the ordination in the Zhengyi sect of Daoism” (*daojiao zhengyipai shoulu chuandu jingjiaoji* 道教正一派授籙傳度經教集).¹³⁹ The Zhengyi shoulu ceremony was repeated in 2007 with 263 *lusheng* from twenty-one provinces being conferred the registration certificate.¹⁴⁰ The restoration of *Quanzhen Chuanjie* and Zhengyi shoulu ceremony, to some extent, has played an important role in ensuring the continuation and transmission of these long established Daoist traditions.

The greatest achievement in terms of Daoist learning in late 20th century China, I believe, should be accredited to the publication of the *Chinese Daoist Canon* (*Zhonghua Daozang* 中華道藏). This project was officially launched in 1996, and it took nearly one hundred Chinese scholars seven years of hard work to accomplish this great mission.¹⁴¹ The *Chinese Daoist Canon* was based, mainly, on the Daoist Canon of the Zhengtong Reign Period (1436-1449) (*Zhengtong daozaang* 正統道藏) and the Supplementary Daoist Canon of the Wanli Reign Period (1573-1620) (*Wanli xu daozaang* 萬曆續道藏). It retained the basic classification of the Three Grottoes (*Sandong* 三洞) and the Four Complements (*Sifu* 四輔), but re-organized the scriptures which are not listed in those collections. The *Chinese Daoist Canon* is divided into seven sections. They are: *sandong* scriptures, *sifu* scriptures, collected essays on Daoism, (magic) arts

Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, Page 125. China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No.1 (1996) Page 11.

¹³⁹ Li Yangzhen, *Dangdai daojiao*, Page 126. Lai Chi-Tim, “*Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002*” Contained in “*Religion in China Today*”, edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page 116.

¹⁴⁰ China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No.1 (2008) Page 11.

¹⁴¹ Compiled by Chinese Daoist Association. Edited by Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹 (1962-), Wang Ka 王卡 (1956-), and others. In 2003, a reorganized, punctuated edition (49 volumes) was finally published by Huaxia chubanshe. See China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No. 3 (2003) Page 61; No.5 (2004) Page 10-12.

of Daoism, Daoist rituals, biography of transcendent beings and history of Daoism, and, finally, the index.¹⁴²

The CDA, like other Chinese national religious organizations, is mainly dependent on donations from local Daoist Association / Temple and on government subsidies. According to the constitution of CDA (revised and passed at the Seventh National Daoist Congress held on June 24th, 2005), Article Thirty states that the sources of CDA's funding are: first, donations from local Daoist organizations, temples, and believers; second, self-supporting earnings; third, donations from society; fourth, government subsidies; and, fifth, other legal revenues.¹⁴³ Although the exact number of government subsidies is unclear, it is worth noting that in order to improve the working condition of the CDA, and to modernize its national higher learning center, seventy seven million RMB (eleven million US dollars) were appropriated to these two projects in 2003.¹⁴⁴

The CDA staff grew to seventy-six by 2009, and it seemed to become more and more “bureaucratic”. At present, there are seven institutions within CDA. They are the: Administrative Office, Department of Daoist Affairs, Department of Liaison, Chinese Daoist College, Institute of Chinese Daoist Culture, Editorial Committee of *China Daoism*, and Department of Service. It should be pointed out that more than half of CDA's staffs are not Daoists: they are Party members.¹⁴⁵ In addition, the rampant practice of cronyism and nepotism exists within the CDA.

¹⁴² China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No. 3 (2003) Page 61.

¹⁴³ China Daoism (*Zhongguo daojiao*), No. 3 (2005) Page 11.

¹⁴⁴ Xinhua news agency, the Chinese state-run media, published an editorial on September 4, 2009 before the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. It is about the overview of Chinese religions during the past sixty years under the religious freedom policy promised by the Chinese Communist party. For more information, please access to this website: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2009-09/04/content_11997424_3.htm

¹⁴⁵ For example, one of the former vice presidents, Yang Tongxiang 楊同祥, used to be the vice president of the National Administration for Religious Affairs of P.R.C. The former secretary-general, Yuan Bingdong 袁柄棟, was also a Party member.

CHAPTER 4

CHINESE DAOIST COLLEGE

The Predecessor of the Chinese Daoist College

The Chinese Daoist College was officially established on May fifth 1990. But as early as the 1960s, the issue of “nurturing and training young Daoist talents” received special attention from the elder Daoist elites. On November 1961, Chen Yingning (1880-1969)¹⁴⁶, the then second president of the Chinese Daoist Association, put forward and drafted the “Plan of Nurturing and Training Daoist Intellectuals” (*Peiyang daojiao zhishi fenzi jihua* 培養道教知識份子計畫) at the second National Congress of Daoism. Ten months later, in September 1962, the first “Training Class for Daoists” (*Daojiaotu jinxiu ban* 道教徒進修班) was opened. The purpose of this class, as Chen Yingning stated in the speech of the opening ceremony, was twofold: first, to educate Daoist specialists to engage in academic research work and second, to educate Daoist general intellectuals to take part in management business of Daoist Mountains, temples and ecclesiastic activities.¹⁴⁷

The teaching methods adopted by the Daoist training class were different from those of public colleges and schools. Oral transmission of knowledge from master to disciple was retained, as inherited from the Daoist traditional teaching method. Given the different conditions and needs of each student, a self-study group was established under the guidance of a designated teacher who specialized in these students’ research interests.

¹⁴⁶ For more information about Cheng Yingning, see Liu Xun, *Daoist Modern, Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Community of Inner Alchemy in Republican Shanghai*, Harvard University Asia Center, 2009.

¹⁴⁷ *Daoxie huikan* 道協會刊 (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962—86. No. 2 (1963).

Classes offered in this class can be divided into three categories. First, general religious courses were offered, such as Daoist doctrines, history of Daoist sects, main Daoist texts, rules of *Shifang conglin* 十方叢林 (public temples) of *Quanzhen* Daoism, Daoist conduct, attire and rules, etc. Second, advanced courses were offered, such as history of Daoism, hagiography of renowned Daoists, philosophy of Laozi and Zhuangzi, essential readings of the Pre-Qin Dynasty Scholars' Thought. Third, there are specialized courses, such as: Qigong, Daoist medicine, Daoist inner and external alchemy and methods of cultivating and prolonging lives. In addition, cultural and political classes were offered. Each student was also required to take part in agricultural and horticultural work. The length of schooling was temporarily set to five years.¹⁴⁸ However, the class was forced to close during the “Cultural Revolution.” (1966—1976) and few students survived to return to their traditional Daoist temples in the 1980s.

Daoist Education in the 1980s

After the ten-year “Cultural Revolution,” the Chinese Daoist Association was re-established in 1979, and held its third National Congress in 1980. Wang Weiye, the then secretary general of the Chinese Daoist Association, presented a report identifying six major tasks of the Chinese Daoist Association, to be accomplished over the next five years.¹⁴⁹ The last, but most important task was said to be to train young Daoists.

Two main factors contributed to this sense of urgency and importance. First, during the ten-year “Cultural Revolution,” eminent senior Daoists, such as Chen Yingning and Yi Xinying 易心瑩 (1896-1976) were all persecuted. Few of the old Daoists survived to return to their

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ *Daoxie huikan* 道協會刊 (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962—86. No. 5 (1980).

traditional Daoist institutions. Thus, it was extremely pressing to pass down the lineage and traditions to qualified young Daoists. Second, following those years of destructive annihilation, Daoist temples have been rebuilt one by one, and have been opened to the public again since 1980. 1982 witnessed the re-opening of twenty one of the best-known Daoist temples in seventeen provinces, some on famous, revered mountains.¹⁵⁰ They were classified as nationally protected religious centers. Young students of Daoism capable of eventually qualifying as leaders of these Daoist monasteries were desperately needed.

In this political and religious context, a half-year program called “The Higher Educational Class for Daoists” (*Daojiao zhishi zhuanxiuban* 道教知識專修班) was opened at the White Cloud Abbey in December, 1982. According to Wang Weiye’s report for the third National Congress, thirty candidates from eleven provinces applied but only seventeen male students were admitted.¹⁵¹ Unlike the first “Training Class for Daoists” in 1962, this half-year program did not offer systematic courses, only a series of lectures on ten special topics.¹⁵² Scholars from outside of the Daoist community and officials from the State Administration for Religious Affairs (*Guojia zongjiao shiwuju* 國家宗教事務局) were invited to teach religious policies, Chinese modern history, and the new Chinese Constitution, enacted in 1982.¹⁵³ What characterized this half-yearly program was that all students participated with Daoist monks at the White Cloud Abbey, taking part in daily religious practice. They chanted morning and evening

¹⁵⁰ For more information about these Daoist temples, please refer to Lai Chi-Tim’s article “*Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002*” Contained in “*Religion in China Today*”, edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page 109.

¹⁵¹ *Daoxie huikan* 道協會刊 (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962—86. No. 5 (1980).

¹⁵² They are: Daoist doctrines, Daoist sects, Daoist figures, Daoist texts, Daoist rituals, Daoist practice and *fangshu* 方術 ‘methods and arts’, Daoist conduct, attire and rules, Daoist transcendents, Daoist sacred mountains and temples, Daoism in new China.

¹⁵³ *Daoxie huikan* 道協會刊 (*Journal of the Chinese Daoist Association*). Internal publication. Beijing, 1962—86. No. 5 (1980).

prayers together, and the students helped the monks organize the ceremonial activities of Daoist festivals, and assisted with some reception work. Through these activities, the students' ability to manage temples was enhanced and strengthened.

The first higher educational class for Daoists commenced in 1983. This half-year program continued in 1984, 1986, 1987 and 1988.¹⁵⁴ The 1988 class was designed especially for female Daoists; sixty-two students from twelve provinces were admitted. The oldest student was thirty-nine, and the youngest was nineteen. Fifty-one graduated from junior high school, eleven with senior high school diploma. It is reported that, by the end of 1988, two hundred and six Daoists participated in this half-year program. Many graduates, especially from the first two classes and the fifth class, have achieved high positions in major Daoist temples, or in local and national Daoist associations.¹⁵⁵

However, with the increasing number of newly opened Daoist temples, and the more frequent communication between mainland Daoist communities and religious groups from Hong Kong, Taiwan and other countries,¹⁵⁶ the half-year program did not prove capable of providing enough young qualified Daoists to meet the need for effective management of Daoist temples and other ecclesiastic works. So in November 1988, the Chinese Daoist Association summoned its annual council meeting and its forty-one attendants unanimously agreed to establish a national higher education center for Daoism.¹⁵⁷ After nearly one and a half year preparation work, on

¹⁵⁴ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 *China Daoism*, No. 1 (1987), Page 53-54, No. 3 (1987), Page 63.64.

¹⁵⁵ Among the current twelve vice presidents (Eleven are Daoists and one is a retired official from the State Administration for religious affairs of P.R.C) of the Chinese Daoist Association, 8 were graduated from the first two classes. Huang Zhian 黃至安, the only female Daoist vice president, was a graduate in 1988 class.

¹⁵⁶ For "official" number of opened Daoist temples in 1980s and 1990s, please refer to Lai Chi-Tim's article "Daoism in China Today, 1980-2002" Contained in "Religion in China Today", edited by Daniel L. Overmyer, published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Page 111.

¹⁵⁷ Chinese Daoist Association held its 4th national congress on Sept 8th 1986 and fifty five Daoists were elected as the members of the council.

May fifth, 1990, the first national higher education center for Daoism, the Chinese Daoist College, was officially opened at the White Cloud Abbey, Beijing.

Mission, Leadership and Finances of the College

In the constitution of the Chinese Daoist College, articles two and three state that the Chinese Daoist College is sponsored and directed by the Chinese Daoist Association.¹⁵⁸ “Under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and government, adhering to the principle of ‘love your country and your religion’ to carry on the education and teaching in accordance with Chinese Constitution and Daoist doctrines.” The aim and mission of the Chinese Daoist College is identified as “nurture and train intermediate and advanced Daoist young talents who master relatively high Daoist knowledge and cultivate right morality, devote themselves to the service of Daoist ecclesiastic activities, inherit and carry forward the good traditions of Daoism, promote the fine culture of Daoism.”¹⁵⁹ However, in 2002, some slight revisions were made regarding the aim and mission of the Chinese Daoist College. The mission is now said to be to “nurture and train intermediate and advanced Daoist young talents who master relatively high Daoist knowledge and cultivate right morality, devote themselves to the contact of the Daoist believers and the service of Daoist ecclesiastic activities.” In addition, the students are now expected to “love their motherland, uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, adhere to the road of socialism, and maintain the unity of China and ethnic harmony.” In addition, “they must, in rotation, take charge of the training and continuing education of the backbone of the local

¹⁵⁸ The constitution was enacted in 1990 and revised in 2002.

¹⁵⁹ 1990 version.

Daoist organizations, inherit and carry forward the good traditions of Daoism, and promote the fine culture of Daoism.”¹⁶⁰

Article four states that the Chinese Daoist College is sponsored by the Chinese Daoist Association. As it is under the direct leadership of the Daoist Association, its president has overall responsibility of the Daoist College. At present, Ren Farong 任法融 (1936-) and Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹 (1962-) serves as the president and vice president of the Chinese Daoist College respectively.

Unlike the White Cloud Abbey and the other Daoist temples which have their own various sources of income, the Chinese Daoist College is mainly dependent on outside donations. The Chinese government subsidizes it annually, either by allocating a certain amount of money, or by donating teaching materials such as computers, projection machines and digital cameras.¹⁶¹ Though the exact number of subsidies is unclear, it is worth noting that in order to improve the working condition of the five “official” Chinese religious national organizations, and to modernize their national higher learning centers, seven hundred million RMB (one hundred million US dollars) were appropriated to eleven construction projects. As one of these projects, the Chinese Daoist College received seventy seven million RMB (eleven million US dollars) for reconstruction in 2003.

As stated before, the Chinese Daoist College is under the direct leadership of the Chinese Daoist Association, which is responsible for all its expenditures. But the question still stands regarding where the Chinese Daoist Association’s income comes from. It should be pointed out that the Association, located at the White Cloud Abbey, has complete control over its host resources. Naturally, the White Cloud Abbey has always been a generous donor for the Chinese

¹⁶⁰ The italic lines are added in 2002.

¹⁶¹ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 2 (2005) Page 62.

Daoist College. Overseas donors, mainly from Hong Kong, and domestically, wealthy Daoist temples (such as the twenty one national protected temples), also stand as patrons. Eminent alumni and alumnae, such as Zhang Jiyu, Huang Zhian 黃至安 (female), etc., have also supported their “mother school” in many ways.

Curriculum, Admission Requirements and Composition of the Faculty

At present, there are three different courses of study available at the Chinese Daoist College. These classes are specialized training class (*Zhuanxiu ban* 專修班), advanced training class (*Jinxiu ban* 進修班)¹⁶² and graduate class (*Yanjiusheng ban* 研究生班).¹⁶³ The schooling length of the specialized and advanced programs both are two years. The graduate program lasts three years.

Courses offered at the college vary from one program to another, but every admitted student must take a certain number of political and cultural courses. Article Six regulates that religious courses must occupy seventy percent of total curriculum, the remainder being constituted of political and cultural courses. The specific courses taught at the Chinese Daoist College are listed at the end of this thesis (see table 2 and 3).

One might wonder who qualifies for study at the Chinese Daoist College. What are the specific requirements and admission procedures for applicants of specialized training class? Article Seven of the constitution of the Chinese Daoist College states that applicants, first, must love their motherland, uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and adhere to the road of socialism. Second, they must have pious beliefs, and have undergone one year of life at a

¹⁶² The name of specialized training class was changed to Daoist ritual and temple management in 2002; the name of advanced training class was changed to Daoist theology in 2002 and the length of schooling was prolonged to four years. The author was a graduate in 1998 4th specialized training class and 2003 2nd advanced training class.

¹⁶³ It was until 2003 did the graduate program was offered.

Daoist monastery (for *Quanzhen* Daoists), or one year of initiation (for *Zhengyi* Daoist priests). Beyond this, they must devote themselves to the service of Daoist ecclesiastic activities. Third, applicants must abide by the laws, regulations and policies of China. They must have right ethical and spiritual conduct, be in good health, be of an age between eighteen to thirty, and have passed beyond a middle high school education. Fourth, applicants must be recommended by local Daoist organizations and temples. They must take the entrance examination; only the best examinees will be admitted.

However, in reality, except for the first political cliché regarding adherence to Communist tenets, there is a certain amount of flexibility among the remaining requirements. For example, if a certain applicant was recommended by a newly-established local Daoist association or newly-opened Daoist temple, and qualified and capable Daoists were eagerly needed, then that applicant's monastic living experience, age and educational background requirements could be reconsidered. Additionally, if the local Daoist association or Daoist temple either has a good relationship with the Chinese Daoist Association or is a generous donor to the Chinese Daoist College, more applicants might be recommended, with a greater chance of admission for those applying.

In general, after two years of training at the specialized training class, half of the graduates return to their original temples, and take on the responsibilities of managing them in a modern way. The rest continue to pursue their education at the advanced training class. By the beginning of 2003, four specialized training classes and two advanced training classes have been held, and a total of one hundred and ninety eight Daoists trained at the Chinese Daoist College. The third specialized training class (1994—1996) was designed especially for female Daoists, from which forty eight students graduated.

On June tenth, 1992, a special half-year program called “specialized training class for high Daoist priests who hold the leading position in rituals” (*Jingchan keyi gaogong zhuanxiuban* 經懺科儀高功專修班) matriculated. The class consisted of thirty-three students, selected from twenty-five temples in fifteen provinces.¹⁶⁴ Min Zhiting 閔智亭 (1924—2004), vice president of the Chinese Daoist Association and College, emphasized the importance and urgency of arranging this class. He stated that,

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, a number of old high Daoist priests, influenced by the ideology of “the left”, were returned to secular life. Daoist *Zhai* 齋 “retreat/purification” and *Jiao* 醮 “offering” ceremonial rituals were nearly lost due to the ten years’ destructive annihilation of the “Cultural Revolution,” and the passing away of old high Daoist priests. Today, existing Daoist rituals and *Yun* 韻 “vocal music chanting” have been memorized and handed down from a few old high Daoist priests. Thus it’s natural that some mistakes were unavoidable. This class consisted of Daoists who have some basic knowledge of rituals and *Yun*, and were selected from a number of major *Quanzhen* temples of different parts of China. Thus, on the one hand, it provided a good opportunity for them to communicate and learn from each other. On the other hand, a unification and standardization of *Quanzhen* rituals and *Yun* could be reached.”¹⁶⁵

One of the achievements of this class was a book entitled *Music score of proper melodies of Complete Perfection* (*Quanzhen zhengyun puji* 全真正韻譜輯).¹⁶⁶ A tape of these melodies was released in 1992. This book has exerted a great influence upon the uniformity of Complete Perfection music throughout the country.

¹⁶⁴ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 3 (1992) Page 60.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ It is an unprecedented collection which contains 56 pieces of Daoist music.

In May 1997, another short-term program called “reading class for leaders of Daoist temples and local Daoist associations” (*Gongguan / difang daoxie fuzeren dushu ban* 宮觀 / 地方道協負責人讀書班) began. This class consisted of twenty-seven Daoists (ten of whom were female) selected from twenty-six temples in twenty provinces.¹⁶⁷ This program aimed at improving the leadership of these advanced Daoists, and their understanding of government religious policies.

It was not until 2003 that the first three-year graduate program was offered. The aim of this program was to train teachers for the Chinese Daoist College, and for academic research. Its admission requirements are very strict. Applicants must have five years monastic living experience, with a diploma issued from the Chinese Daoist College or an equivalent bachelor degree from a secular university. The first class, constituting of seven male students, matriculated in September, 2003, and graduated in July, 2006. The second class of thirteen male students matriculated in November, 2008, and graduated in December 2011.

Based on the original sources from the Chinese Daoist College, the following paragraphs will carefully examine what specialized courses or texts these students are currently studying, and who is qualified to teach them.¹⁶⁸

According to “the educational plan for the second graduate class”, there are three major differences between this program and the former two programs, i.e., the *Zhuanxiu ban* and the *Jinxiu ban*. First, each student has a major professor, and under his or her guidance must write a thesis regarding an aspect of Daoism on which he or she is focused. Second, each student must spend at least one month per academic year participating in the local Daoist College’s teaching activities, and must give five lectures to students enrolled at those schools. Third, the College

¹⁶⁷ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 2 (1997) Page 10.

¹⁶⁸ It is “the education plan for the second graduate class”, xeroxed and sent from the Chinese Daoist College.

organizes two field research trips each academic semester for these students. During their third year, students are also required to attend a three-week program called “summer training class for Daoist culture and temple management” (*Daojiao wenhua ji guanli shuqi yanxiu ban* 道教文化及管理暑期研修班), which is held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and sponsored by the Fung Ying Seen Koon—one of the largest *Quanzhen* Daoist temples in Hong Kong.

Though the names of some courses taught at this class are identical to those taught in the advanced training class (such as the history of Chinese Daoism), the required textbooks and reading materials differ (See Table 4).¹⁶⁹

The teachers of the College primarily consist of two groups. One is the “insiders” which means that they are all Daoists. At present, there are seven full-time Daoist teachers, six of whom have studied at the first graduate class.¹⁷⁰ However, well-read Daoists who specialize in a specific field are often invited to give lectures to students. The other type of teachers is the “outsiders” whom come from secular universities and academic research institutes. They are all part-time teachers and mostly from the Institute of World Religions of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Currently, there are five teachers who serve as the major professors for the second graduate class.¹⁷¹ In general, these part-time teachers respect their students’ faith and have good relationships with them. Students also respect their teachers and often have a sincere discussion and even debate when their views differ.

¹⁶⁹ The main required textbook of “History of Chinese Daoism” for the second *Jinxiu ban* 進修班 advanced training class is 李養正 Li Yangzheng’s one volume book, *zhongguo daojiaoshi luejiang* 中國道教史略講 *brief lectures on the hisotry of Chinese Daoism*, published by the Chinese Daoist College in 1997. The main required textbook of “History of Chinese Daoism” for the graduate class is 任繼愈 Ren Jiyu’s *zhongguo daojiaoshi* 中國道教史 *history of Chinese Daoism*, published by Shanghai renmin chubanshe 上海人民出版社 in 1989.

¹⁷⁰ They are Meng Zhiling 孟至嶺, Zhou Gaode 周高德, Zhou Yongshen 周永慎, Cui Liming 崔理明, Lin Yongfeng 林永峰, Yu Mingliang 于明亮, and Liu Qingzhang 劉清章.

¹⁷¹ They are Wang Ka 王卡 (Researcher of the Institute of World Religions), Wang Zongyu 王宗昱 (Professor of the Beijing University), Lu Guolong 盧國龍 (Researcher of the Institute of World Religions), Qiang Yu 強昱 (Professor of the Beijing Normal University), and Wang Guiping 汪桂平 (Researcher of the Institute of World Religions).

Daoist Life at the College

The Chinese Daoist College is a national higher learning center for both *Quanzhen* and *Zhengyi* Daoists. The major differences between these two groups' costumes are characterized by hairstyle and headdress. Today's *Quanzhen* Daoists maintain the tradition of wearing their hair long; thus, their headdress is much more complex than that of their *Zhengyi* counterparts. The most common hat worn is called Scarf of Original Chaos (*Hunyuan jin* 混元巾). It has a round hard brim of black silk and a hole in the top. When wearing this scarf, the *Quanzhen* Daoist wears a coiffure with a topknot through the hole in the top of the hat. To differentiate themselves from *Quanzhen* Daoists, contemporary *Zhengyi* Daoists wear a hat named the Nine-Fold Scarf (*Jiuliang jin* 九梁巾).

Unlike Daoists living at an abbey or temple, students at the college seldom perform *Zhai* 齋, *Jiao* 醮 and other Daoist rituals for believers. Mainly, their task is to study. However, they are required to participate in daily religious practice called *Zaowan gongke* 早晚功課 or “morning and evening rites.” When performing these rites, they wear Daoist robe (*Daopao* 道袍) and ritual dress (*Fayi* 法衣).¹⁷² Generally, there are two different colors of *Daopao*, one is blue, and the other white. Blue in Daoist cosmology represents east and symbolizes life. White (mentioned in the Book of *Zhuang Zi*, Chapter one) is particularly for Daoist “transcendent or *xian* 僊) which is the ultimate goal for Daoist believers and practitioners. The shoes worn by *Gaogong* 高功 (“officiant”, a high priest who leads the ritual) and *Jingshi* 經師 are called “Cloud

¹⁷² For a detailed description of Daoist ritual dress, please refer to *Daojiao liyi*, chapter six, edited by Chen Yaoting 陳濯庭, published by Religious Culture Publishing House in 2003. *Daoism and the arts of China*, page 194-199, edited by Stephen Little, published by University of California Press 2000.

Shoes” (*Yunxie* 雲鞋).¹⁷³ The everyday shoes students wear are called “Ten-direction Shoes” (*Shifang xie* 十方鞋). Students are also required to wear boot-shaped long socks when they perform morning and evening rites. Proper Daoist dress not only reflects a student’s identity, but is also regarded as an important criterion for judging students’ spiritual cultivation and outlook (*Daofeng daomao* 道風道貌).

Daoist daily life at the college begins with the morning rite which is performed at the *Lǚzu* 呂祖 Ancestor Lǚ (Dongbin) Hall. There is a strict time for performing *Zaowan gongke* 早晚功課 morning and evening rites. Usually, morning rite is held between 05:00-07:00 (*maoshi zaoke* 卯時早課), and evening rite 17:00-19:00 (*youshi wanke* 酉時晚課).¹⁷⁴ Daoists believe that performing morning and evening rites at those time periods help their biospiritual practices. This is due not only to the fact that five o’clock in the morning is the time when the sun rises and pure *Qi* 炁 (“breath”, “pneuma”, or “energy”) ascends. But also, it is believed that chanting scriptures in the morning help Daoists in cultivating their inner nature (*xing* 性) and vital force (*ming* 命).¹⁷⁵

The entire process of the morning rite usually lasts forty-five minutes. Every ten days, students can take one day off from practicing this rite, because, according to Daoist tradition,

¹⁷³ *Jingshi* 經師: literally translated as “scripture teacher”, is a member of Daoist traditional Choir and Ensemble who perform different ritual instrument. Usually, there are eight *Jingshi* and three key leaders of a ritual: the *Dujiang* 都講(cantor), the *Biaobai* 表白(presenter) and the *Gaogong* 高功(officiant).

¹⁷⁴ Daoists today still use Chinese animal zodiac signs to label times of day. The twelve Zodiac animal signs (生肖 *shengxiao*) are, in order, the rat, ox (or cow), tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep (ram or goat), monkey, rooster, dog, and pig (or boar). With each sign corresponding to a “large-hour” or *shichen* (時辰), which is a two-hour period (24 divided by 12 animals). The first animal, rat, represents 23:00 – 01:00 period. Mao 卯 is rabbit and represents 05:00 – 07:00 period. You 酉 is rooster and represents 17:00–19:00 period.

¹⁷⁵ Scriptures chanted at the morning and evening rites are: The Scripture of the Supreme Venerable Sovereign’s Teachings on Eternal Purity and Tranquility (*Taishang laojun shuo chang qingjing jing* 太上老君說常清靜經) and The Lofty Jade Emperor’s Sublime Book of the Mind Seal (*Gaoshang yuhuang xinyin miaojing* 高上玉皇心印妙經), etc.

chanting scriptures and burning incense are strictly forbidden on the day called *Wuri* 戊日¹⁷⁶.

After the morning rite, students take the short time period before breakfast is served at 7:30 to develop their personal Daoist interests. Many of them practice the so-called “four traditional arts” which an elite Daoist should master.¹⁷⁷ However, *Taiji* is also very popular among today students.

A dining hall located on the west side of the Abbey provides three vegetarian meals a day. For their food, students pay one hundred and fifty RMB, while the school subsidizes fifty RMB for each student, per month.¹⁷⁸ Chefs at the school are no longer Daoists, but are hired from outside. However, they are carefully selected in order to observe Daoist dietary rules and cater to the tastes of students from different regions. The *Quanzhen* dietary rule called *Guotang* 過堂 which every public Daoist temple (*Shifang conglin* 十方叢林) observed in the past is not seen here at the college dining hall.

After breakfast, students trickle into the classroom for the first class, which begins at 8:15. Usually, each lecture lasts forty-five minutes. Students then rest fifteen minutes, so that they can refresh themselves for the second lecture. Classrooms are located at the east side of the Abbey.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ In ancient China, each day was named using one of ten characters known as the *tiangan* 天干 or Celestial Stems. They are: *jia* 甲, *yi* 乙, *bing* 丙, *ding* 丁, *wu* 戊, *ji* 己, *geng* 庚, *xin* 辛, *ren* 壬, *gui* 癸. By systematic pairing of the ten Stems with another set of twelve cyclical characters, the *dizhi* 地支 or Earthly Branches (They are: *zi* 子, *chou* 醜, *yin* 寅, *mao* 卯, *chen* 辰, *si* 巳, *wu* 午, *wei* 未, *shen* 申, *you* 酉, *xu* 戌, *hai* 亥), a long cycle of sixty day-names was generated. The first decade of the sexagesimal cycle begins with the Stem-Branch pair *jiazi* 甲子 as no. 1, and ends with *guiyou* 癸酉 as no. 10. The next decade begins with no. 11, *jiayu* 甲戌 and continues with an offset of two in the Stems relative to the Branches. This process is continued, the offset increasing by two each decade, until we reach *guihai* 癸亥 as no. 60, and the cycle then repeats. Thus, there are six *Wuri* 戊日 in a cycle. They are *wuchen* 戊辰, *wuyin* 戊寅, *wuzi* 戊子, *wuxu* 戊戌, *wushen* 戊申, *wuwu* 戊午.

¹⁷⁷ They are *Qin* 琴 (zither, a seven-stringed plucked instrument), *Qi* 棋 (Chinese traditional chess), *Shu* 書 (calligraphy) and *Hua* 畫 (Chinese painting).

¹⁷⁸ That number was in 1998 when I studied at the fourth specialized training class. Two hundred RMB equals around twenty-five USA dollars.

¹⁷⁹ From 1990 to 2002, Daoist students studied at the *Yunhua xianguan* 雲華仙館 which located at the backyard of the White Cloud Abbey because there was lack of permanent teaching complex building. In 2003, a transitory teaching building was put into service. In 2005 part of the Chinese Daoist College was relocated to Nanyue 南嶽 the

They are now equipped with computing facilities and other modern technologies. Normally, there are three lectures in the morning and two in the afternoon, which end at four o'clock. At five, students perform the evening rite.

At seven o'clock, every student is required to watch CCTV1's (China Central Television, Channel one) half-hour long news program which, serves as part of their political education. Few Daoist students are interested in this propaganda work, and take this time for their personal reading or writing assignments. Between 19:30 to 21:00, it is the time for individuals' solitary meditation or homework. However, teachers frequently come to the classroom to check students' attendance.

Living conditions at the college are much better than those in many overcrowded Chinese secular universities. Each dorm room is shared only by two students and graduate students' living conditions are even better, as each graduate student has his or her own room. Staying out at night without asking leave is considered a serious offence; punishments (such as a warning, the recording of a demerit, or even dismissal) will be given to those students who do so. Daoists, unlike Buddhists, do not practice "sitting meditation" (*Zuochan* 坐禪) in the meditation hall (*chantang* 禪堂). Rather, they practice meditation individually, and usually at night at *Zishi* 子時 (23:00—01:00). Unfortunately, another ancient *Quanzhen* meditation practice called "meditation with the bowl" (*zuobo* 坐鉢) is not seen at the Daoist College.¹⁸⁰

Southern Marchmount in Hunan province and an academy of female Daoists was opened in the same year.. In 2007, another part of the Chinese Daoist College was relocated to 青城山 Qingcheng Mountain in Sichuan province. The following year, the transitory teaching building in Beijing was demolished and a new, modern teaching complex building was under construction and planned to put into service in 2012.

¹⁸⁰ *zuobo* 坐鉢 or meditation with the bowl is an ancient *Quanzhen* group religious practice. According to *Quanzhen qinggui* 全真清規, a collection of regulations and rules, *Quanzhen* monks gathered together on the first day of the tenth month each year to perform the *zuobo* 坐鉢 (or meditation with the bowl) which usually lasted one-hundred days. During that one-hundred days, one would meditate twenty-four hours a day. For a complete description of this religious practice, see Yao Tao-chung, Ch'uan-Chen: *A New Taoist Sect in North China during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, PhD dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1980, page 90-91.

Cooperation Programs

The past twenty years have also witnessed a surge of Daoist training programs sponsored by local Daoist associations, such as in Sha'anxi, Shanghai, Hunan, Sichuang, Guangdong, etc. One reason for this phenomenon is that the speed of restoration and reconstruction of Daoist temples has been accelerated dramatically since the 1990s. According to "official" statistics issued by the Daoist Association, the number of re-opened or new Daoist temples has tripled from 400 in 1992 to 1,600 in 1998, with roughly 25,000 male and female Daoists living at the temples.¹⁸¹ Another "official" statistic from the Chinese government states that the number of re-opened or new Daoist temples has doubled from 1,500 in 1997 to 3,000 in 2009. More than 50,000 male and female Daoists now live at these temples. Thus, a growing concern exists among the Daoist associations, at all levels, regarding how to ensure the effective management and administration of the temple activities, Daoist education and the fostering of Daoist faith.

Though nearly five hundred Daoists have been trained at the Chinese Daoist College since its founding up to 2005,¹⁸² this number does not meet the spiritual, cultural and political needs of the entire Chinese society. Realizing its limited resources, the Chinese Daoist College has adopted a policy of utilizing outside resources to train its people. Since 2005, it has established a number of cooperative programs with several top Chinese universities, such as Beijing/Peking University, Reming University, Minzu University of China, and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Here I will analyze one of those regional cooperation programs—"the summer training class for Daoist culture and temple management" (*Daojiao wenhua ji guanli*

¹⁸¹ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 3 (1992) Page 10; No.5 (1999), Page 4.

¹⁸² *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 5 (2005), Page 18.

shuqi yanxiu ban 道教文化及管理暑期研修班), held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and sponsored by the Fung Ying Seen Koon.

In July 2006, the Chinese Daoist College co-joined with Centre for the Studies of Daoist Culture, CUHK (Chinese University of Hong Kong) and the Fung Ying Seen Koon to start a three-week program, called the summer training class for Daoist culture and temple management. Twenty-nine students participated in this program.¹⁸³ The aim of this class was to learn the effective management methods of Hong Kong Daoist temples.¹⁸⁴ The curriculum of this class can be divided into several parts: methodology in the study of religion; seminars on the successful experiences of the Fung Ying Seen Koon administration affairs, financial management, social work and Daoist culture promotion; and a field research class which includes visiting major religious institutions in Hong Kong. At the end of the program, each student was required to write a paper about how to effectively manage temple and promote Daoist tradition.¹⁸⁵ This program continued annually from 2007 to 2011, and will become an annual event.

¹⁸³ Including twenty former graduates of the Chinese Daoist College, seven students of the Yanjiusheng ban 研究生班 graduate class, one teacher of the Chinese Daoist College and one official from the State Administration for Religious Affairs of P.R.C.

¹⁸⁴ *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 China Daoism, No. 4 (2006) Page 61.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis does not attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of Daoism in modern China. It focuses on the *Baiyun guan*, one of the most important Daoist communities in mainland China examining its monks, monastic leadership, religious practice, finances, and the relationship with its governing body—the Chinese Daoist Association. The Abbey provides a perfect introduction to Daoism in modern China. It is not exaggerated that the past sixty years history of the *Baiyun guan*, to some extent, constitutes a miniature version of Daoism in modern China as a whole.

By sketching the main outline of the Chinese Daoist Association—the only national Daoist organization acknowledged and sanctioned by the Chinese government—readers may gain a better understanding of how the Chinese government utilized, and is still utilizing, the CDA to control Daoism and to serve its interests. On the one hand, the leadership of the CDA, under the Chinese government's tent, has to satisfy its authority because the Party holds the purse string. On the other hand, the Association has to protect its members' legal interests by interceding with the government. From a historical perspective, one can see that the CDA played the same role of intermediary between Daoists and the government as had been played by the Daoist officials of earlier dynastic times, from the Tang 唐 to the Ming 明 and Qing 清 dynasties. Like those Daoist officials in pre-modern times, the CDA was and still is essentially a servant of the government.

Chapter four of this thesis provides vivid images of the academic training and religious practice of today's young Daoist students in China. By investigating the curriculum of the

training class for Daoists in 1960s, the higher educational class for Daoists in 1980s, and today's Chinese Daoist College, readers may understand better how Daoism, the indigenous and enduring faith of China, has been transformed, and is currently adapting itself to satisfy the spiritual, cultural and political needs of Chinese society.

This presentation also proves that Daoists in modern China, at least in the College, are not truly as they have been portrayed by some Western scholars, i.e., as comfort-seekers, “with little religious motivation and less understanding of the tradition, they just want to be comfortable and enjoy their state stipend. They do their duty manning the entrance gate or selling souvenirs, but most of the time they play games, watch TV, chat or otherwise hang out.”¹⁸⁶ Quite to the contrary, students in the Daoist College today are active learners of their faith and a vigorous force for preserving and promoting their tradition.

Last but not least, the modern history of Daoism, as I mentioned at the very beginning, has remained profoundly neglected in both Western and Chinese scholarship. It was not until the very end of 20th century, that situation began to change. Several milestone works have been done on this topic.¹⁸⁷ To facilitate and enrich this young research area, I shall tentatively offer four major angles for future studies:

First, scholars should record and publish the oral history—the study of historical information among the living individual Daoist priests and priestesses who survived the Cultural Revolution. This can be accomplished using audiotapes, videotapes, or transcriptions of planned interviews. This type of research is important because that these individuals participated in or observed many important events, and the memories and perceptions of these individuals can be

¹⁸⁶ Livia Kohn, *Introducing Daoism*, London & New York: Routledge, 2009, page 193.

¹⁸⁷ In my first chapter, I listed three important publications about Daoism in (pre)-modern China. They are: *The Daoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics*, by Vincent Goossaert; *Daoist Modern, Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Continuity of Inner Alchemy in Re-publican Shanghai* by Xun Liu; *Contemporary Daoism (Dangdai Daojiao 當代道教)* by Li Yangzheng 李養正.

preserved as an aural record for future generations. In addition, oral history strives to obtain information from different perspectives, and most of these cannot be found in written sources.

Second, there is a saying among Daoists: “where there is a Daoist, there is a temple. (*xian you daoshi hou you miao* 先有道士後有廟).” Indeed, the modern history of Chinese temples, and that of the Daoists, seems to go hand in hand. Yet, while both temples and Daoists serve urban society, the relationship between the two has yet to be thoroughly analyzed. Most temples operate without a Daoist priest or monk in attendance, and many Daoists do not work in temples. So, are temples and Daoists two independent aspects of modern Chinese religion, or are they indissolubly linked?

Third, future studies need to illuminate the relationship between different living strands of Daoism (e.g. between *Quanzhen* and *Zhengyi* Daoist, between *Longmeng* or “Dragon Gate” and *Huashan* Daoism; etc.,) as well as the relationship between the *Zhengyi* Daoist clergy and the practices of geomancy, astrology, and divination, etc.

Fourth, more research can and should be produced and published concerning the living forms of Daoist religious practices and techniques (e.g. sitting meditation, longevity techniques, Taiji, etc.) How have modern Daoists understood and explained those practices as Chinese society has changed? How have those models of practice adapted to current conditions, and in what ways they can satisfy today’s educated men and women? To what extent, and in what ways, are these living forms of practice consistent with the Daoist models of spiritual cultivation understood and explained by their earlier precursors, as Sima Chengzhen, Wang Chongyang, and others.

In conclusion, the status of current academic studies regarding Daoism in modern China cannot be changed or improved in a single day. As I presented earlier, misunderstandings and

even prejudices still can be noticed even among scholars around the world. A Chinese saying “*bing dong san chi, fei yi ri zhi han* 冰凍三尺，非一日之寒” is like the English saying “Rome was not built in a day.” This misconception and misunderstanding of Daoism in modern China has a discernable root in modern history—a history embedded in the social, intellectual, and political conflicts within Chinese and Western cultures alike. But as the traditional perspective (that divided Daoism into so called *daojia* and *daojiao*) is gradually replaced by a more accurate understanding of the diverse but interrelated forms of Daoism that evolved over the long history of China, so likewise there can, and needs to be, a change of our understanding of Daoism in modern China.

Table 1:

Geographical origin and educational status of the *Baiyun guan* monks, 2012

Total: 64					
Location	place of origin	place of <i>chujia</i>	date of		educational status
			birth	arriving at the Abbey	
NE (黑, 辽, 吉)	4 (6.25%)	5 (7.81%)	1920s 1 (1.56%)	1950s 0	Elementary 0
BJ & TJ	1 (1.56%)	3 (4.69%)	1930s 1 (1.56%)	1960s 0	Middle School 32 (50%)
ME (冀, 豫, 鲁)	19 (29.69%)	16 (25%)	1940s 5 (7.81%)	1970s 0	High School 15 (23.44%)
NW (陕, 宁, 甘, 疆)	18 (28.12%)	17 (26.56%)	1950s 5 (7.81%)	1980s 8 (12.5%)	College or equivalent 17 (26.56%)
SW (川, 重)	6 (9.38%)	7 (10.94%)	1960s 24 (37.5%)	1990s 17 (26.56%)	Graduate 0
MS (湘, 鄂)	8 (12.5%)	5 (7.81%)	1970s 18 (28.13%)	2000s 37 (57.81%)	
SE (闽, 赣, 浙, 粤)	8 (12.5%)	11 (17.19%)	1980s 10 (15.63%)	2010s 2 (3.13%)	
Total	64 (100%)				

Note: NE stands for northeast, including Heilongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin provinces; BJ & TJ stand for Beijing and Tianjin; ME stands for Mideast of China, including Hebei, Henan and Shandong provinces; NW stands for northwest, including Shaanxi, Ninxia, Gansu, and Xinjiang; SW stands for southwest, including Sichuan and Chongqing; MS here stands for mid-south, including Hunan and Hubei; SE stands for southeast, including Fujian, Jiangxi, Zhejiang and Guangdong provinces.

Table 2:

Courses offered the specialized training class (*Zhuanxiu ban* 專修班)

Religious courses	Brief history of Daoism	Daoist principle and doctrine	Daoist ritual	Daoist precepts	Daoist texts ¹⁸⁸	
	Daoist music	Daoist main sects and renowned figures	Daoist transcendent	Methods of cultivation	Management of the temple	
Cultural courses	History and geography		Elementary English		Classical Chinese	Calligraphy
Political courses	Patriotic and socialistic education	Chinese religious policies	Chinese Constitution and laws		Current domestic and international affairs	
Physical education course	Daoist martial art and sword					

¹⁸⁸ They are: *Quanzhen zaowang gongke jing* 全真早晚功課經 The Book of Morning and Evening Rites of the Complete Perfection, *Yuhuang jing* 玉皇經 The Book of Jade Emperor, *Sanguan Jing* 三官經 The Book of Three Officials, *Beidou Jing* 北斗經 The Book of the Big Dipper, *Taishang Ganying Pian* 太上感應篇 Folios of the Most High on Retribution

Table 3:

Courses offered at the advanced training class (*Jinxiu ban* 進修班)

Religious courses	History of Chinese Daoism	History of Daoist thoughts	History of World religions	Daoist major texts ¹⁸⁹	Neidan and Waidan (Inner and external alchemy)
	Daoist music	<i>Daozang jinghua</i> 道藏精華 Essential splendors of the Daoist Canon		Methods of nourishing life	
Cultural courses	History of Chinese philosophy	Brief world history	Classical Chinese	Intermediate English	Calligraphy
Political courses	Chinese modern history		Chinese religious policies		Current domestic and international affairs

¹⁸⁹ They are *Daode Jing* 道德經 Laozi, *Nanhua Zhenjing* 南華真經 Zhuangzi, *Yinfu jing* 陰符經 Scripture of the hidden accord, *Zhouyi cantong qi* 周易參同契 Token for the agreement of the three according to the book of changes, *Wuzhen pian* 悟真篇 Folios on awakening to perfection

Table 4:

Specialized courses for students of the Graduate program at the College

Daoist texts and literature	Chen Guofu <i>Daoang yuanliu kao</i> 《道藏源流考》 Studies on the evolution of the Daoist Canon	Wang ming <i>Taiping jing hejiao</i> 《太平經合校》 Editing and translating the Scripture of Great Peace,	Wang ming <i>Baopuzi jiaoshi</i> 《抱樸子校釋》 Editing and commenting on the Master who Embraces Simplicity,	Yoshioka Yoshitoyo <i>Dokyo kyoten shiron</i> 《道教經典史 論》 Historical Studies on Daoist Scriptures,	Wang Ka <i>Xinyi daomen guanxin jing</i> 《新譯道門 觀心經》 New translation on the Scripture of Observing Mind
	<i>Daode Jing</i> 道德經 Laozi	<i>Yinfu jing</i> 陰符經 Scripture of the hidden accordance,	<i>Huangting Jing</i> 黃庭經 Scripture of the Yellow Court	<i>Qingjing jing</i> 清靜經 Scripture of Clarity and Quiescence	<i>Yuhuang jing</i> 玉皇經 The Book of Jade Emperor
Selected readings of Daoist texts	<i>Zhouyi cantong qi</i> 周易參同契 Token for the agreement of the three according to the book of changes,	<i>Wuzhen pian</i> 悟真篇 Folios on awakening to perfection	<i>Yinfu jing sanhuang yujue</i> 陰符經三皇玉訣	<i>Duren jing</i> 度人經 Scripture on Salvation	<i>Qidao yi</i> 祈禱儀

	<i>Qianjin fang</i> 千金方 Prescriptions Worth a Thousand	<i>Sanguan Jing</i> 三官經 The Book of Three Officials,	<i>Beidou Jing</i> 北斗經 The Book of the Big Dipper,	<i>Yushu Jing</i> 玉樞經 Scripture of the Jade Pivot	<i>Shengshen jing</i> 生神經 Scripture of the Life- Giving Spirits
	<i>Taiji lingbao jilian keyi</i> 太極靈寶祭煉科儀	<i>Guwen longhu jing</i> 古文龍虎經 Ancient Text of the Scripture of the Dragon and Tiger	<i>Yuqing jinsi Qinghua biwen jinbao neilian danjue</i> 玉清金笥青華秘文金寶內煉丹訣 Alchemical Instructions on the Inner Refinement of the Golden Treasure		

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