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Buddho–Daoism in medieval and early pre-modern China: a report on recent findings concerning influences and shared religious practices

Henrik H. Sørensen
Käte Hamburg Kolleg, Ruhr-Universität Bochum

Introduction

In the past year and more I was a research fellow at the Ruhr University, Bochum (hereafter RUB) working on the interrelationship and exchanges between China's two major religious traditions, Buddhism and Daoism, during the medieval and early pre-modern periods. While the departure for my research was primarily concerned with the mutual exchanges of ritual techniques and technology, i.e. ritual practices in general, concepts of ritual, ritual implements, ritual language, rituals in specific cultic contexts etc., I gradually expanded my interest to include a wider range of topics relating to the exchanges between Buddhism and Daoism in China including the appropriation of divinities and saints, integrated beliefs and practices involving elements from both religions, apocryphal writings, conceptualizations concerning specific religious themes in which ideas and beliefs from both Buddhism and Daoism were brought together. Among other issues, I dealt with how such concepts of "secrecy" and "the netherworld" were formulated and constructed in the Buddho–Daoist exchanges, as outlined by Jörg Plassen his introduction to the workshop.[1]

1. Jörg Plassen, "Methodological and Conceptual Considerations Relating to Buddho-Daoism", unpublished paper given at the workshop, "On the Exchange of beliefs and Practices between Esoteric Buddhism and Daoism in Medieval China", 21–22 June 2012 at the RUB.

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An important aspect of the work I did while at KHK, with the gracious help of many of my colleagues here, had to do with the development and use of certain theoretical and conceptual frameworks, something to which I admittedly had not paid too much attention previously. Both in closed sessions with several participants and through discussions with Jörg Plassen in particular, we sought to deal with and identify those factors that were at work in the the Buddho–Daoist exchanges, and how to deal with them scientifically. Namely how to understand and deal with the "finer mechanics" of inter-religious processes, the whens, the hows and the whys, with special focus on those conceptualizations and ideas which allowed the inter-religious transfer(s) to take place.[2] This led us onto a lengthy excursion into various conceptual and theoretical frameworks including transfer processes, the much debated concept of what "sinicization" is and whether it is useful as a signifier,[3] Juri Lotman's semiosphere,[4] which we "translated" into a cultural semiosphere with special attention to inter-religious and intra-religious processes, including the underlying workings of signs and symbols, exemplified by talismans and diagrams. These musings also sought to understand what happens when religious phenomena originating in one specific setting shift to a new religious context.[5] Finally we touched upon the transfer and transmission of schemata,[6] within a given cultural setting.

You are quite right in wondering how it was possible within the short duration of a single academic year to accomplish all this. Therefore I will allay your doubts by reassuring you that as I see it we merely scratched the proverbial surface, and only in a few select cases went a little bit beneath it. However, I feel confident to say that we are now considerably more knowledgable as regards Buddho–Daoist exchanges and the transfer of religious practices and beliefs in the context of Chinese and sinitic cultures, than we were when we started. In the following I will present you with the gist of what was found, but of course as seen from my perspective.

2. On transfer processes, see Itamar Even-Zohar, *Papers in Culture Research*, Tel Aviv: Unit of Culture Research, Tel Aviv University, 2010, pp. 52–77.

3. This theme was discussed and explored in the workshop entitled "Between Borrowing and Taking Over: The Problem of "Sinification" and Its Implications for a Theory of Religious Contact", at the RUB, 5–6 August 2011.

4. For a practical outline of this model, see Juri Lotman, "On the semiosphere", trans. Wilma Clark, *Sign Systems Studies* 33/1 (2005), pp. 205–29.

5. This issue was among those discussed in the workshop entitled "Social and Hermeneutic Constraints for and Related Strategies of Inter Religious Reception and Adaption", at the RUB, 13 December 2011. See also Henrik H. Sørensen, "Conceptualizing Symbols in the Process of Religious Transfer: The View from China", unpublished paper presented during this workshop.

6. For the formulation, appropriation and utilization of the theoretical framework underlying this concept in relation to traditional Chinese society I am indebted to the work of Roy G. D'Andrade, including his, "Schemas and Motivation", in *Human Motives and Cultural Models*, ed. R. G. D'Andrade and C. Strauss, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 23–44. Also of importance to ideas of schemata as carriers of cultural knowledge is Bradd Shore, *Culture in Mind: Cognition, Culture, and the Problem of Meaning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Thanks to Jörg Plassen for alerting me to this material.

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Ritual practices: of spells and pseudo-spells

One of the areas in the Buddho–Daoist exchange on which I spent much labour was that regarding magical language and spells in particular. On the basis of a previous survey of ritual manuals of both Daoism and Esoteric Buddhism, mainly canonical material, I figured that by concentrating on this major aspect of ritual practice, which played and still plays central roles in both religions, I would most likely encounter many cases reflecting their interaction. In other words I imagined that would be able to see the workings of primary, inter-religious practices at close hand through this kind of material. Sure enough, I was not disappointed by what I found. It goes without saying that prior to my immersion into this topic, I was not totally uninformed as regards this aspect of Buddho–Daoist exchange. However, I had not anticipated just how much material there actually is, and its degree of complexity.

First I began to look at the lore and conceptualizations which were developed within Daoist ritual practices for appropriating Sanskrit, through the construction of the so-called "Brahma language (*fanyu* 梵語)", an imagined language which eventually appeared as fully fledged pseudo-Sanskrit, i.e. as an imitation of the type of Sanskrit sounds constituting most standard Buddhist *dhāraṇī*s or spells. As graphic rendering, the Brahma language is anticipated and indeed formulated in early Daoist hermetic writing.[7] However, the magical and divine sounds represented by this artificial "language" are chiefly found as part of Daoist spells or as a sort of added-on *mantra* similar to those we know from the *dhāraṇī*s of Esoteric Buddhism (*mijiao* 密教) of the Tang and in later Esoteric Buddhist texts.[8] The relationship between the Sounds of Brahma and the magic spells are described in the chapter on the *Shimo jinghua pin* 十魔境化品 [Chapter on the Ten Demonic Transformations] of the extensive ritual compendium, the *Lingbao wuliang duren shangjing dafa* 靈寶無量度人上經大法 [Great [Ritual] Methods of the Scripture for the Limitless Salvation of Men; hereafter *Great Ritual Methods*][9] as follows:

> The Supreme Person (*huangren* 皇人) said: "As regards the great method of Lingbao, it is the root teaching of heaven and earth. It is the wondrous *qi* of the original commencement, [wherein] the phoenix registers and dragon sections combine to become the true writ, [after which] the numinous sounds of the Brahmā Hymns (*fanpai* 梵唄) divided and became spells. The Supreme Emperor of the Original Commencement beholding the principle of formlessness,

7. Such as in the *Taiping jing* 太平經 [Scripture of Great Peace]. For the standard edition, see *Taiping jing hejiao* [The *Taiping jing*, with Punctuation], ed. Wang Ming, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960.

8. I have addressed this issue in some detail in, "On the Appropriation and Borrowing of Spells in the Inter-religious Meeting Between Daoism and Esoteric Buddhism", unpublished paper presented at the workshop, "Between Borrowing and Taking Over: The problem of 'Sinification' and Its Implications for a Theory of Religious Contact", at the RUB, 5–6 August 2011.

9. *DZ* 219.3. The text, which dates from around 1200CE, is discussed in *The Taoist Canon*, vol. 2, pp. 1028–29. A list of abbreviations for works consulted may be found on page 133.

> transmitted the essential skills [for using them (i.e. the spells)] to Lord Lao, for relieving the deluded multitudes making them widely known [so that they may] reach the Way. They are not the common speech of the world above, but are all the secret names (*yinhao* 隱諱) of the gods. The practitioners of the highest stage cultivate them, so that they may ascend up into the Jade Capital [in heaven]. Those of middling stage cultivate them, so that they may take up their dwelling in the chambers of the immortals. Those of the lowest stage cultivate them, so that they may dwell in the world for an extended number of years.[10]

This passage is illuminating for providing us with a series of hermeneutical arguments for the origin and purpose of the use of spells in Daoism. We learn here that it is the Brahmā sounds which constitute the spells, which in turn are the secret names of the gods. Although the text is not explicit in this regard, we may well take this statement as a direct pointer to the use of spells made up in imitation of Sanskrit. Incidentally, and perhaps not entirely surprisingly, many of the words of which Buddhist *dhāraṇī*s consist, are also the names of divinities and guardian-spirits. I therefore find it a rather attractive, if not a logical solution to the question of the Daoist appropriation of Sanskrit-sounds in their spells, to understand the argument as a reflection of some degree of insight by the compiler of the *Great Ritual Methods*, and similar such works, into the inner workings of the Buddhist spells. Of cause it does not explain why the Daoists began their massive imitation of Buddhist *dhāraṇī*s, but it would seem to reveal that the idea behind the "secret" encoding of divine names they perceived in the Buddhist spells, was such an attractive feature that they could not pass it over. However, the idea of a secret language associated with the divine was of course an invention of their own based on a misperception and misreading of the Buddhist spells. The attractiveness of divine sounds and language was simply so great that they felt compelled to create what they believed to be a corresponding system of their own. Let me present you with an example of this as a starter.

It is rather characteristic that many of the spells featuring pseudo-Sanskrit are salvific and exorcistic in nature. As an example of this we have from the Lingbao yujian 靈寶玉鑑 [The Jade Speculum of the Lingbao [Tradition]],[11] a comprehensive ritual compendium, the *Jing Fengdu poyu fu* 淨酆都破獄符 [Talisman for Purifying Fengdu by Breaking the Hells], supposedly a Song talisman including a spell text, which forms part of the extensive ritual arsenal for liberating the souls of those destined to the tortures in the hellish underworld prisons of Mt. Fengdu. The spell goes:

> In boundless Fengdu, [behind] row after row of Diamond Mountains,
> The limitless light of Numinous Treasure,
> In the caverns, the fiery pools of vexation illuminate.

10. *DZ* 219.3, p. 861c.
11. *DZ* 547.10.

> [Whereby] the gloomy souls of seven generations of ancestors,
> Their bodies/persons accompanied by fragrant clouds and streamers,
> With concentration and wisdom [on] a pure lotus flower,
> Reborn above their spirits eternally reside.
> Chant: *An*, *ju*, *zhi*, *qi*, *di*, *a*, *lei*, *sa*, *tan*, *po*, *qie*, *lou*, *dai*, *ye*, *po*, *chi*, *cha*, *hong*, *he*.[12]

The logic behind the use of the parts of the spell in pseudo-Sanskrit would appear to be that they were thought of as a sort of magical effectuation after the more straightforward parts in Chinese verse. However, other spells in the collection are dominated by pseudo-Sanskrit, such as the lengthy *Bianshi zhou* 變食咒 [Spell for Transforming the Food], which together with its additional, "secret spell" (*mizhou* 密咒), are used for food offering in the the ritual for feeding the hungry ghosts.[13] Through the power of this spell, the Heavenly Worthy Taiyi transforms the offered food into "sweet dew" (*ganlu* 甘露), a Chinese version of the Sanskrit *amṛta* (ambrosia) so that the hungry ghosts/lost souls may be fed.[14]

Not only did the Daoists develop these Sanskrit-like pseudo-spells to a considerable extent as evident in the abundant material from the Song dynasty, especially evident in the large ritual manuals, they also appropriated actual Sanskrit spells from Esoteric Buddhism and inserted them into their own ritual contexts. One of the earliest examples of a Daoist ritual text with properly integrated spells written in pseudo-Sanskrit is the *Taishang chiwen dongshen sanlu* 太上赤文洞神三籙 [The Three Registers of the Highest Red Writ of the Cavern Spirits],[15] a ritual work which may date as far back as the middle of the Five Dynasties period (906–978).[16] This ritual work is significant for featuring many spells in transcribed Sanskrit in conjunction with the use of talismans and hand-gestures (Skt. *mudrā*), another obvious loan from the Esoteric Buddhist arsenal of ritual technology.[17]

12. *DZ* 547.10, p. 388b–c.

13. *DZ* 547.10, p. 391b.

14. The rite for feeding the hungry ghosts is of course originally a Buddhist ritual endorsed in scriptures such as the *Shi zhu egui yinji shuifa* 施諸餓鬼飲及水法 [Method for Feeding All the Pretas together with Water], *T.* 1315.21; the *Pretamukhāgnijvālayaśarakāra-dhāraṇī*, *T.* 1313.21, etc. For more information, see Charles D. Orzech, "Esoteric Buddhism and the *Shishi* in China", in *The Esoteric Buddhist Tradition*, Selected Papers from the 1989 SBS Conference, ed.. H. Sørensen, SBS Monographs 2, Copenhagen and Aarhus: Seminar for Buddhist Studies, 1994, pp. 51–72; "Fang Yankou and Pudu: Translation, Metaphor, and Religious Identity", in *Daoist Identity: History, Lineage and Ritual*, eds. Livia Kohn and Harold D. Roth, Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2002, pp. 213–34.

15. *DZ* 589.10. This scripture contains several elements which point to influence from Esoteric Buddhism in addition to some of the spells it endorses, including the use of *mudrās* (*jieyin* 結印); see *ibid.*, p. 797bc. For further discussion of this scripture, see *The Taoist Canon*, vol. 2, pp. 979–80. See also *Tiyao*, p. 424.

16. On the basis of his analysis of the contents of this work, Poul Andersen considers it to date from the 930s CE at the earliest. Cf. *The Taoist Canon*, vol. 2, pp. 979–80. The traditional attribution of the work to the saint Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 and the Tang Daoist master Li Chunfeng 李淳風 (stated as author of the comments and the preface dated 632CE) is—needless to say—spurious.

17. *DZ* 589.10, p. 797b. These Sanskritized spells are to be used in conjunction with five corresponding

One of the most illuminating and interesting features of this work is the manner in which the text utilizes Indian Buddhist spells. The section in question is entitled *Wufang zhu shengzhou* 五方諸聖呪 [All the Holy Spells of the Five Directions], of course meant to invoke or call on the Spirits of the Five Directions together with the five elements (*wuxing* 五行), cardinal gods in Daoist ritual practice. In Chinese the text reads:

> Spell for the Element of Wood: *Nawo sanmanduo, putanan, sheluo, ai sabahe*.
> Spell for the Element of Fire: *Nawo sanmanduo, putanan, ai, sabahe*.
> Spell for the Element of Metal: *Nawo sanmanduo, putanan, baluwan, ai, sabahe*.
> Spell for the Element of Earth: *Nawo sanmanduo, putanan, boluo, boni, ai, sabahe*.
> Spell for the Element of Water: *Nawo sanmanduo, putanan, hong, ai, saba*[18]*he*.[19]

What is striking here to someone with even a modicum of familiarity with Buddhist Sanskrit, is the fact that this is precisely what we have here. A text or rather invocations in more or less fully, readable Sanskrit inside a Daoist ritual scripture! Not pseudo-Sanskrit or Sanskrit imitation, but bona fide Sanskrit. In fact virtually all the transcriptions of Sanskrit into Chinese as found in this Daoist work were lifted from texts such as the *Da foding rulai fangguang xidanduobodanluo tuoluoni* 大佛頂如來放光悉怛多鉢怛囉陀羅尼 [Great Buddhoṣṇīṣa-tathāgata Exorcising and Bright Siddhantabhadra[20] Dhāraṇī],[21] a work attributed to Amoghavajra (704–74), the great eighth century master of Esoteric Buddhism. Armed with this knowledge, we may now proceed to a proper reading of the *Wufang zhu shengzhou* as follows:

> Spell for the Element of Wood: *Namo samanta Buddhanam sarva svahā*.
> Spell for the Element of Fire: *Namo samanta Buddhanam a svahā*.
> Spell for the Element of Metal: *Namo samanta Buddhanam, bhagavan, svahā*.
> Spell for the Element of Earth: *Namo samanta Buddhanam para pari a svahā*.
> Spell for the Element of Water: *Namo samanta Buddhanam huṃ a svahā*.

This case is quite extraordinary, although not unique. What we have here is a clear-cut example of full-scale appropriation of Sanskrit *mantra*s, lifted out of their original Esoteric Buddhist context, both as regards their intended meaning as well their ritual usage. They have in this case been transposed onto a Daoist ritual frame fashioned around the Spirits of the Five Directions/Five Agents complex, but without any attempt at altering or redacting their original meaning. This is significant, as it shows how appropriated or borrowed text, in this case magical spells, were taken over, entered into new ritual contexts and provided with entirely new meanings that were not part of the original text. In

talismanic seals.

18. Here the text reads 嘢, which must be a mistake for 嚩 given the structure of the rest of the spells.
19. *DZ* 589.10, p. 797b.
20. This rendering is admittedly tentative.
21. *T.* 944A.19.

this case something was clearly "lost in translation", or rather lost in transliteration and reconfigured in displacement.[22] Nevertheless and irregardless of its being subjected to a total inversion and a completely new, ritual environment, belief in the spell's power was undoubtedly not diminished in the least.

Interestingly, within the field of spells, the Daoists were not alone in their appropriation of Buddhist *dhāraṇī*s: the Buddhists too, especially the followers of Esoteric Buddhism, borrowed freely from the Daoist spell-literature. This borrowing, which at times took on the shape of appropriation of both text passages and textual structures, resulted in a curious amalgamation of concepts and beliefs which more than anything reflects a sort of religious cross-over even to the point of constituting hybrid religion. In this material we find that although much of it retains an overall Buddhist structure as well as primary Buddhist features, many of the concepts and beliefs they contain, were taken more or less directly from Daoism and by extension the conceptual world of traditional Chinese society. Moreover, the versification appearing in these spells was copied directly or indirectly from Daoist spells. Hence, the Buddhist borrowings of Daoist spell-literature took place both on the conceptual level as well as through adopting its special literary genre. It is therefore a case of wholesale appropriation, rather than one of simple re-creation or inspired writing. While this aspect of Buddho–Daoism is to some extent present in the canonical Buddhist material, it comes to the fore in the Dunhuang manuscripts and as such may be seen as representing Buddhist cum Daoist practice on-the-ground.

Even though the Dunhuang hoard of manuscripts is unique, and the location of their discovery far removed from the central provinces of the empire, I consider the material which reflects Buddho–Daoist borrowings and exchanges as representative of a situation that was current in many other areas of the Chinese empire during the late medieval period. The main reasons for this are that many of the texts and practices found here are reflected, to greater or lesser extent, in the mainstream Buddhist and Daoist traditions. In other words, as far as Buddho–Daoism is concerned, the Dunhuang material should in my view not be considered a local phenomenon, but on the contrary be seen as reflecting a much more common and general situation than we have been wont to accept hitherto. Although we do not have fully comparable material from elsewhere in China covering the same period, it does not seriously undermine this view, which it must be admitted, is at this point more hypothetical than factual. Nevertheless, if we allow cultic sites and religious sculptures to represent the missing textual material, we are greatly as-

22. While my use of the term "displacement", originally a geographical term, does owe some credit to Foucault, whose use mainly reflected his interest in the politics of power, I employ it more abstractly in the meaning of removing something out of one context, such as an original position, i.e. an intended and defined meaning or function, and into a new frame of reference with a new or altered meaning or function. One may argue that during such process the object or phenomenon that is being displaced, loses its significance and thereby its intrinsic value due to the shift in context. In other words, it is no longer the same. While this may be so, the transition also affects the coming into being of something that was not there before. This means that a thing in displacement may lose its former significance, and in many cases does so, but regains meaning, a new significance as it were, in its new context.

sisted in our endeavour when we turn to the religious art of a region such as central and eastern Sichuan province. Here several sites feature images of divinities from both Buddhism and Daoism, some even revealing that followers of both religions were practising and worshipping at the same sites, even worshipping the same divinities and sometimes worshipping together.[23]

The example from Dunhuang I would like to share with you here is part of a ritual text featuring the *Poyang zhou* 破傷咒 [Spell against Tetanus].[24] It reads as follows:

> The sun rises in the East,[25]
> first red then gradually turning yellow,
> above it announces to Our Heaven,
> below it announces to the Yellow Earth (i.e. China).
> Teach us, Men of the Yellow Earth, the commandments against boils.
> Immortals, bring forth the water, Jade Maiden, wipe away the boils.
> One commandment brings treasures,
> Two commandments control and suppress as always.
> Ass braying, horse neighing [remove] the boils![26]
> So that I will not be in fear of heaven's lightning and the increasing of boils on earth. Make me fearless my Vaiśravaṇa by controlling the snakes of the earth. Quickly, quickly in accordance with the command of the law. Effectuate!
> Method to be used if one suffers from tetanus: Intone this spell forty-nine times, first puff three puffs, then intone the spell seventeen times, while spitting thrice.

23. Sichuan province is the home of countless cultic sites featuring Buddhist and Daoist sculptures. One such site, Niujuezhai 牛角砦 in Renshou county 仁壽縣, has been discussed by Christine Mollier, "Buddho-Daoist Cliff Sculptures in Sichuan during the Reign of Emperor Tang Xuanzong (712–756)", paper read at the workshop "On the Exchange of beliefs and Practices between Esoteric Buddhism and Daoism in Medieval China", 21–22 June 2012 at the RUB. See also Tom Suchan, "The Cliff-sculpture of Stone-Gate Mountain: A Mirror of Religious Eclecticism in the Art of Twelfth-Century Sichuan", *Archives of Asian Art* (2007), pp. 51–94. A cave-niche at Yuanjuedong 圓覺洞 in Anyue 安岳 containing images of Buddhist and Daoist divinities side by side, has been reported in Henrik H. Sørensen, *The Buddhist Sculptures at Yuanjuedong in Anyue: The History and Art of a Buddhist Sanctuary in Central Sichuan Province*, SBS Monographs 5, Copenhagen: The Seminar for Buddhist Studies, 1999, pp. 48–51.

24. Cf. Gao Guofan, *Zhongguo minsu tanwei: Dunhuang gusu yu minsu liubian* [Investigating Chinese Folk Customs: Ancient Customs in Dunhuang and the Transformation of Folk Customs], Nanjing: Hehai Daxue Chubanshe, 1990, pp. 158–73.

25. The *Qu sanshi fufa* 去三尸符法 [Talismanic Method for Rejecting the Three Corpses] of the *Yunji qian* 雲笈七籤 [Seven Tallies in the Cloud Satchel] contains a spell-prayer which opens with the same phrase. Cf. *Yunji qiqian* (hereafter *YJQQ*), vol. 4, annotated and punctuated by Li Yongsheng, Daojiao Dianji Xuankan, Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2003, p. 1856: 敕符咒曰：日出東方，赫赫堂堂。某服神符，符衛四方。神符入腹，換胃蕩腸。百病除愈，骨體康强。千鬼萬邪，無有敢當。知符為神，知道為真。吾服此符，九蟲離身。攝錄萬毒，上升真人。急急如律令!

26. The exact meaning of this couplet eludes me.

This spell reads as a prayer-text or invocation similar to countless texts known from Daoist literature. Only in a few instances, such as the inclusion of Vaiśravaṇa, the Buddhist king of the northern direction, do we have an actual element.

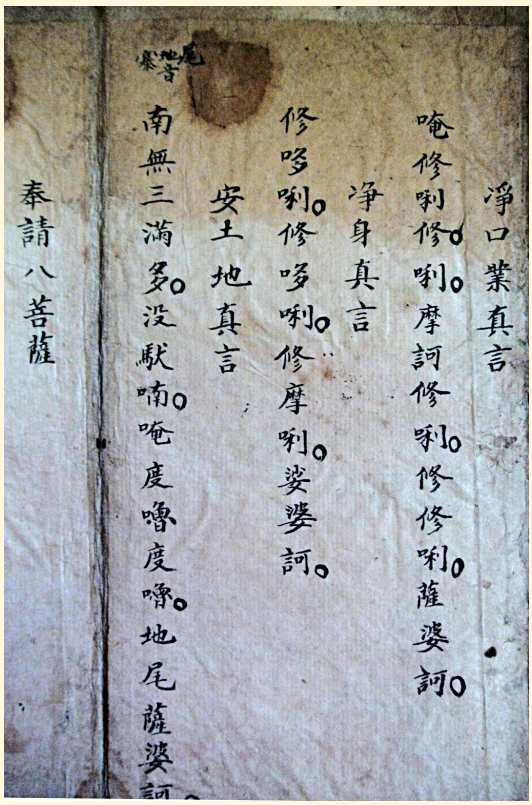

Figure 1: Mantras of purification; page from a handwritten Buddhist manual, Qing period.

In regard to the exchanges and copying of spells in the Buddho–Daoist cross-field I would also want to point out an interesting case of typological take-over. The case concerns the Daoist appropriation of a set of Buddhist spells for purification. In Chinese Buddhism the spells for purifying body, speech and mind reflect the most essential tenet of the Esoteric Buddhist tradition (*mijiao* 密教), namely that of the Three Mysteries (*sanmi* 三密), and as such stand centrally in the developments which we are wont to associate with the Tang of the eighth century. Even so, the origin of these spells is undoubtedly older, and perhaps dates as far back as the sixth century in its originally Indian context.[27] By the early Kaiyuan period (713–41) the spells, or rather mantras, for the purification of the Three Kinds of Karma had become fixed points in Esoteric Buddhist ritual. This de-

27. The origin of the concept behind the purification of the Three Karmas, i.e. those of body, speech and mind, is of course an old and established practice in traditional Buddhism long before its arrival in China. After the introduction of Buddhism in China we find it prominently discussed in the *Madhyamāgama* translated at the end of the 4th century; cf. *T.* 26.1, p. 507b.

velopment is borne out in a variety of scriptures that include a whole range of important ritual texts.[28] In Daoism spells for purification begin to appear during the second half of the Tang, even though the concept of the Three Karmas as a doctrinal unit in Daoism is most probably of an earlier date.[29] We find it discussed as a major tenet in the early Tang work, the *Daomen jing faxiang chengci xu* 道門經法相承次序 [Characteristics of the Teaching of Daoist Scriptures [arranged] in Successive Order].[30] In any case, as a religious concept it was obviously developed on the basis of Buddhist doctrine and as such may have entered Daoism sometime during the middle of the Nanbeizhao period. While the spells or mantras for purification in Buddhism consist of transcribed Sanskrit, in their Daoist format they read as proper incantations. I provide you here with illustrations of these spells lifted from a Buddhist ritual manual from the early Qing and a Daoist printed text of the *Beidou zhen jing* 北斗真經 (figs. 1 and 2). In this case we are not dealing with direct textual copying or appropriation of doctrinal contents *per se*, but rather with the appropriation of a conceptual aspect of ritual practice. As such, this form of appropriation reminds us of what comes next, namely the Buddhist copying and adoption of Daoist talismanic practice.

Talismans and talismanic lore

Talismans (*fu* 符) and talismanic seals (*fuyin* 符印) was another important field that captured my interest. Both talismans and seals featuring talismanic characters and signs, especially those used for ritual purposes, of course originated in the Chinese cultural sphere.[31] Hence, their occurrence in any Buddhist material immediately alerts us to the presence of Daoist concepts and practices.[32] There are several ways to deal with this

28. See *T.* 1224.21, p. 133b; *T.* 1085.20, p. 204a; *T.* 1257.21, p. 276c; *T.* 930.19, p. 67b; *T.* 1146.20, p. 603a, etc.

29. The three karmas can be found in the early work, *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* 洞真太上太霄琅書 [Jade Book of Cavern Truth of the Highest and Supreme Empyrian], among other scriptures; see *Daozang jiyao* 道藏輯要, [Collected Essentials of the Daoist Canon], vol. 3, ed. Chen Dali 陳大利, Chengdu: Ba Shu Shuhui, 1995, pp. 349–474. For concepts of karma and retribution in Daoism, see Livia Kohn, *Cosmos and Community: The Ethical Dimension of Daoism*, Cambridge, MA: Three Pines Press, 2004.

30. *DZ* 1128.24. This work was compiled by the Daoist master Pan Shizheng 潘師正 (584–682) around 680 CE. For a brief discussion of its contents, see *The Taoist Canon*, vol. 1, p. 454.

31. For a discussion of this material, see Wang Yucheng, "Wenwu suojian Zhongguo gudai daofu shu lun [A Detailed Discussion of the Cultural Relics Evidencing Daoist Talismans from China's Past]", *DWY* 9 (1996), pp. 267–301.

32. A recent study of the use of talismans in the Chinese Buddhist context can be found in James Robson, "Signs of Power: Talismanic Writing in Chinese Buddhism", *History of Religions* 48.2 (2008), pp. 130–69. For talismanic seals in Chinese Buddhism, see Michel Strickmann, *Chinese Magical Medicine*, ed. Bernard Faure, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002, pp. 123–93; Paul Copp, "Manuscript Culture as Ritual Culture in Late Medieval Dunhuang: Buddhist Talisman-Seals and their Manuals", (*Cahiers d'Extrême Asie*, forthcoming 2013); and Tom Suchan and Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Talismanic Seal Incorporated: An Iconographic Note on Seal-Bearing Bodhisattvas in the Sculptural Art of Sichuan and the Significance of Seals within the Chinese Esoteric Buddhist Tradition", *Artibus Asiae* vol. 73, no. 2 (forthcoming 2013).

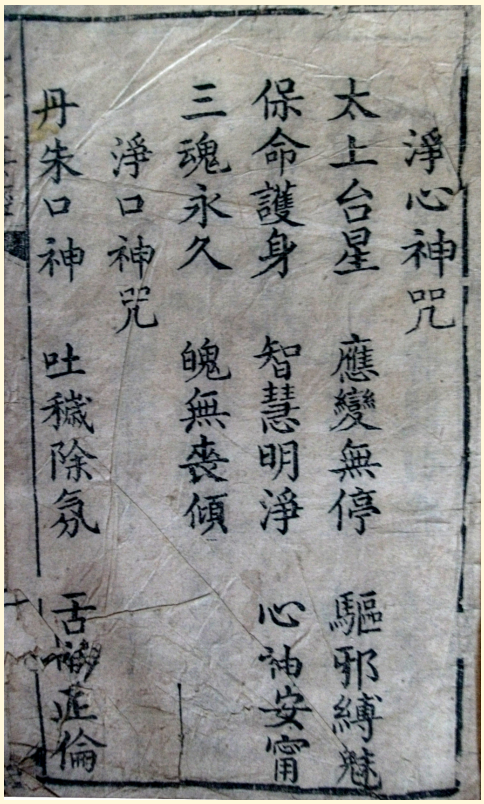

Figure 2: Spells of purification; page from a printed text of the *Daoist Beidou zhen jing*, Qing period.

phenomenon. One is to see the Daoist input as an example of influence from popular as opposed to so-called "high" culture, a perspective which I am not particularly fond of, the main reason being that such a view is based on the idea that the cultural elite had a vastly different spirituality than that of so-called ordinary people. The abundant primary material which shows that popular beliefs were shared by high and low, invalidates this distinction as a meaningful parameter. Another way is to consider talismanic practices too important for the Buddhists to leave out due to popular demand, a view based on the "competitive model", i.e. "so ein Ding müssen wir auch haben". Yet another way of conceptualizing the presence of talismans in Buddhist contexts is to consider the text(s) in which they are found as a sort of apocrypha, i.e. as cases of textual—even ritual—pollution or contamination from Daoism. Indeed, there are several examples of this, such as the *Guanshiyin pusa ruyilun tuoluoni bing bie xing fa* 觀世音菩薩如意輪陀羅尼並別行法 [The Dhāraṇī of Cintāmaṇicakra Bodhisattva with Alternative Method of Practice][33] and related texts from Dunhuang which allow for this type of argumentation. The apocrypha-perspective is both useful and meaningful, as it is certainly correct that the integration

33. Found in various states of completion among the Dunhuang manuscripts including *P.* 3835V° (11), *P.* 2153, *P.* 3874, etc.

Figure 3: Talismanic seal for attaining rebirth in the Pure Land; *P.* 2153, third seal.

and adaptations of many Daoist practices by Buddhism took the route via precisely this type of religious literature. That being said—and without ruling out the above modes of understanding the Buddhist talismans—I would propose another angle to the problem as follows.

Firstly I would want to identify the textual and spiritual context in which the talismans and seals occur, as both are likely to provide us with direct understanding of how and why they were used. The way in which talismans and talismanic seals appear in the Buddhist sources is primarily as objects of power, or rather as "power writ". We do not actually have talismans used for the transfer of documents to heaven, i.e. similar to the petitions and memorials common to Daoist ritual practice.[34] Therefore they do not generally occur in mainstream Buddhist rituals, but rather serve as a kind of additional empowerment, an extra ritual device or augmentation as it were.[35] Secondly, there are talismanic practices in Chinese Buddhism which are similar to those of Daoism, such as the ingestion of talismans for purposes of healing, for wearing as protection like an amulet, for purposes of exorcism, and for spiritual purposes such as attaining rebirth in the Pure Land of Amitābha (fig. 3).[36] In this sense the talismans used in Buddhism and the talismanic seals overlap in both function and purpose, something which is evident in many of the pertinent sources.[37] Hence, I would tend to see the presence of talismans and talismanic

34. For a detailed account of talismans and talisman-related practices in ancient and medieval China, see Stephan Peter Bumbacher, *Empowered Writing: Exorcistic and Apotropaic Rituals in Medieval China*, St. Petersburg, FL.: Three Pines Press, 2012.

35. We see a classic example of talismanic seals as an accessory to Esoteric Buddhist ritual practice in the *Weiji jingang jin bai bianfa jing* 穢跡金剛禁百變法經 [Scripture on the Prohibitive One Hundred Transformative Methods of Ucchuṣma Vajrapāla], *T.* 1229.21. For additional discussion of this scripture, see Strickmann, *Chinese Magical Medicine*, pp. 156–61; and James Robson, "Signs of Power: Talismanic Writing in Chinese Buddhism", *History of Religions* 48/2 (2008), pp. 130–69.

36. *P.* 2153, third seal; cf. *Dunhuang mizong wenxian jicheng* [Complete Collection of Texts Pertaining to the Esoteric Buddhist School in Dunhuang], vol. 3, comp. Lin Shitian and Shen Guomei, Zhongguo Foxue Wenxian Congkan, Beijing: Zhonghua Quanguo Tushuguan Wenxian Shuweifuzhi Zhongxin, 2000, p. 328.

37. Cf., e.g., *Guanshiyin pusa fuyin* 觀世音菩薩符印 [Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva's Talismanic Seals], *S.* 2498.

seals in chiefly Esoteric Buddhist contexts, and as serving as a sort of "ritual extension" to or enhancement of practices which already existed in the tradition. Certainly the talismans and seals used in Chinese Esoteric Buddhism are essentially objects of power and the texts they convey are virtual "writs of power". Armed with this borrowed "tool", Buddhist ritual specialists were thereby not only able to compete with the Daoists on equal terms, but when used in conjunction with their own rather formidable arsenal of ritual technologies such as *homa*, ritual tools, hand gestures (Skt. *mudrā*) and their powerful spells in real "Brahma" language, i.e. transcribed Sanskrit, they could even be seen as superseding their competitors in the ability to command the unseen forces.

The appropriation of gods and saints

In the area of study relating to the cults of Buddhist and Daoist divinities, we encounter a highly fascinating situation. Here we see direct examples of the appropriation of the "gods of the other", in effect a mode of practice in which both religions excelled. Wholesale appropriation and adoption of foreign gods is not a common phenomenon in the inter-play between most major religious traditions; nevertheless in medieval and late pre-modern China both the Buddhists and the Daoists engaged in this practice. I will not enter into a lengthy exploration of this topic here, but concern myself with two examples, one representative of each religion.

Appropriation and adoption of Buddhist saints in the Daoist context can be found in the *Lingjianzi yindaozi wuji* 靈劍子引導子午記 [Record of the Master of the Magic Sword Notes on the Induction of Qi from Zi to Wu],[38] a Northern Song text. In this scripture we encounter Nāgārjuna and Aśvaghoṣa as *neidan* 內丹 masters.[39] Other Daoist scriptures cast the purported founder of Chan Buddhism, Bodhidharma (fl. first half of the sixth century) in the role of a Daoist immortal and even make him the author of Daoist treatises.[40]

Obviously there are many other examples of appropriation of divinities on both sides, including important ones such as Vairocana, the Cosmic Buddha[41] or Avalokiteśvara,[42] both of whom appear in Daoist contexts; and on the Buddhist side the borrowing of the

38. Attributed to Xu Xun, *zi* Jinyang, *DZ* 571.10. For a synopsis of this interesting scripture, see *The Taoist Canon*, vol. 2, p. 788.

39. See *DZ* 571.10, p. 674b.

40. We see this in the *Yunji qiqian*, where a full section is devoted to him and his reputed works; see *YJQQ*, vol. 3, pp. 1310–14, 1556.

41. See *DZ* 42.1, p. 867b.

42. See the *Yuqing shanggong ke taizhen wen* 玉清上宮科太真文 (The Highest, True Writ Classified in the High Palaces in Jade Purity), *DZ* 1408.34, p. 357a. See also the *neidan* 內丹 work, the *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨 [Tablet for Pointing Out Nature and Mandate], as contained in the *Daozang jinghua lu* 道藏精華錄 [Flowery Record of the Essence of the Daoist Canon].

Gods of the Great Dipper[43] and Taishan Fujun 泰山府君, the god of Mt. Tai.[44] It is also interesting to note that the *Baiyi Guanyin chanhui* 白衣觀音懺悔 [Repentance Ritual of the White Robed Avalokiteśvara] was incorporated into the rites of the *Daofa huiyuan* 道法會元 [Daoist [Ritual] Methods Meeting at the Source],[45] albeit as a minor rite. Given that the soteriological implications of this rite reflect primary salient features of Chinese Mahāyāna and Esoteric Buddhism in particular, the endorsement of this ritual within the Daoist context indicates doctrinal "contamination" on a deeper level than mere ornamental grafting.

I have not discussed those Buddhist or Daoist gods which developed as copies of a divinity from the other side, such as the Daoist creation of the Heavenly Worthy Jiuku 救苦天尊, obviously modelled on Avalokiteśvara, or the Buddhist re-casting of Daoist astral deities,[46] or the rise of the Buddhist astral deity Sudṛṣṭi, whom we encounter during the late Tang in the guise of Zhenwu 真武, the Daoist god of the North.[47] The material which underlies this phenomenon is both rich and variegated, and has, at least partly, been dealt with others on the project already. On the surface it would appear that the adoption and take-over of "foreign" gods such as briefly outlined here took place regularly throughout Chinese history with a tendency towards densification of the phenomena, i.e. the forming of a critical mass beginning during the early pre-modern period. Here we see the mutual appropriations of gods and their cults coalesce into structured pantheons as well as giving rise to mutual iconographies such as those we find associated with the Shuilu 水陸 and Pudu-type 普度齋 rites.[48]

43. See *T.* 1307.21. Discussed in Molier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, pp. 138–40.

44. Taishan Fujun, the Lord of the Netherworld, is featured in several standard Buddhist works such as *T.* 2068.51, p. 74b; *T.* 2037.49, p. 818a; *T.* 2061.50, p. 862ab, etc.

45. *DZ* 1220.28, p. 861b.

46. A comparison between Avalokiteśvara and Jiuku can be found in Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, pp. 174–208.

47. See Henrik H. Sørensen, "Concerning the Role of the Astral Deity Sudṛṣṭi in Esoteric Buddhism," in *Cultural Crossings: China and Beyond in the Medieval Period*, ed. Dorothy Wong and Gustav Heldt, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Series, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (forthcoming 2014), pp. 403–420.

48. This is more than evident when studying the iconography of the ritual paintings pertaining to both traditions; see *Baoning si Ming dai shuilu hua* 寶寧寺明代水陸畫 [The Shuilu Paintings from the Ming Dynasty in the Baoning Temple], comp. Shanxi Sheng Bowuguan, Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1988. For a discussion of these paintings, see *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism 850–1850*, ed. Marsha Weidner, Spencer Museum of Art/The University of Kansas and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994, pp. 280–82. While the more formal conflation of the pantheons of Buddhism and Daoism is well documented in religious art from the Ming dynasty, it is likely to have begun as early as the late Northern Song, when the first Shuilu manuals were being compiled. On the Shuilu manuals, see Daniel P. Stevenson, "Text, Image, and Transformation in the History of the Shuilu fahui, the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land", *ibid.*, pp. 30–70. For a recent discussion of the *shuilu* and its hybrid iconography, see Dai Xiaoyun, *Fojiao shuilu hua yanjiu* [A Study of the Buddhist Shuilu Paintings], Zhenru Congshu, Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 2009.

Of apocrypha and pseudo-scriptures

When discussing the mutual influences evident in many Daoist and Buddhist scriptures, we must distinguish between works which (i) show evidence of inspiration or influence, i.e. which contain certain salient, foreign elements; (ii) those which were written in imitation, i.e. using a similar structure as well as various doctrinal elements found in the source, but not necessarily featuring similar contents; and (iii) those books which were simply copies, i.e. plagiarized texts or pseudo-scriptures. These three categories are not meant to represent self-contained and truly separate units, but indicate primarily a way of organizing the material in question. On the practical level we find many works with passages in which the three categories are mixed, or scriptures which exemplify more than one of them. Nevertheless, when discussing the topic of exchanges and appropriations in the Buddho–Daoist cross-field, I will maintain that the three categories constitute a meaningful way of distinguishing between various levels of appropriation and take-over.

Since the ground-breaking work of Makita Tairyō 牧田諦亮 in the late 1970s, the importance of apocryphal Buddhist literature in China has been receiving growing attention from the scholarly community.[49] In many ways this development has greatly assisted our efforts in understanding what was at play during Buddhism's inculturation process in China. I shall not go into a discussion of the parameters delineating this material as it has already been done on several occasions before, but simply re-state that when we talk about Chinese Buddhist apocrypha, we are chiefly dealing with a type of Buddhist scripture that masquerades as a *bona fide* translation of an Indian Buddhist text.[50] However, we must not be too narrow in our definition of apocrypha. I believe there are several good reasons for extending this term to include texts which reflect editorial tampering with or re-arrangement of authentic Indian texts. Nor should we be blind to the large amount of Buddhist scriptures, which although most likely composed or compiled in China, nevertheless contain extensive passages of translated text. In the case of Esoteric Buddhist literature, we must be particularly alert to this kind of material, as such scriptures occur with considerable frequency here.[51]

As is commonly known today, a great many of the Buddhist apocryphal scriptures either contain—or are otherwise informed by—Daoist beliefs and practices. Most would undoubtedly agree that it is one of the primary indicators of the apocryphal nature of a given Buddhist text if it contains material that can be readily identified as reflecting Daoist belief.[52] However, Chinese Buddhist apocrypha need not always reflect Daoism *per*

49. See Makita Tairyō, *Gikyō kenkyū* [A Study of Apocryphal Scriptures], Kyoto: Jinbun Kagaku Kenkyūsho, 1976.

50. The primary collection of articles in any Western language concerning this topic can be found in *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.

51. See Sørensen, "The Apocrypha and Esoteric Buddhism in China", in *EBTEA*, pp. 181–96.

52. A good number of these scriptures have been listed and commented upon in Xiao Dengfu, *Daojiao*

se. In fact the scriptures which do not do so, far outnumber those that do.

In Daoism the situation is of course somewhat different. There are no apocrypha here, as all its scriptures were composed in China and moreover were directly or indirectly under influence from Buddhist texts and ideas from early on. Nevertheless, there is a large number of Daoist scriptures, several with canonical pedigree, which were directly copied from Buddhist *sūtras*, some were even copied from or otherwise greatly influenced by Buddhist apocryphal texts.[53] Such scriptures do not qualify as *bona fide* Daoist compositions, but are best understood as constituting a class of their own, what I would here refer to as "Daoist pseudo-scriptures", in other words forgeries. Scriptures and texts belonging to this category differ from those Daoist scriptures which have borrowed more or less liberally from Buddhist sources, but by integrating and transforming the appropriated material. Scriptures of the latter category include the *Taishang dongxuan lingbao jingtu sheng shen jing* 太上洞玄靈寶淨土生神經 [Divine Scripture on the Rebirth in the Pure Land of the Lingbao Highest Cave Mystery; hereafter *Jingtu sheng shen jing*],[54] the *Taishang dongxuan lingbao shengxuan neijiao jing* 太上洞玄靈寶昇玄內教經 [Scripture of the Inner Teaching for Ascending the Abstruse][55] and the celebrated *Benji jing* 本際經 [Scripture on the Fundamental Boundary][56] just to mention a few important examples. In contrast, the Daoist pseudo-scriptures do not generally integrate the Buddhist material on a deeper level, nor do they alter significantly the structure or even the narrative, should there be one. They are essentially copies of Buddhist texts with superficial changes and adaptations. I could cite the titles of several such scriptures, but for practical purposes let me limit myself to three examples: the early *Shenren suoshuo sanyuan weiyi guanxing jing* 神人所說三元威儀觀行經 [Scripture on the Majestic Deportments of the Three Origins with Practice of Contemplation Spoken by a Divine Person],[57] the *Taishang xuanling Doumu ben-*

shuyi yu mijiao dian ji [Daoist Ritual Arts in Esoteric Buddhist Texts], Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1994. Note that his criteria for determining Daoist influence on Buddhism in this work are in many cases lop-sided and often without proper historical and cultural perspectives.

53. A collection of this material may be found in *Dōzō nai butsu shisō shiryō shūsei* [A Compilation of Material on Buddhist Thought in the Daozang], ed. Kamata Shigeo, Tokyo: Taizō Shuppan, 1986.

54. Cf. *P.* 2383, *P.* 2401V, *P.* 4730. A fascimile reproduction of *P.* 2383 can be found in Ōfuchi Ninji, *Tonkō Dōkyō zuroku hen* [A Collation of the Daoist Scriptures from Dunhuang with Plates], 2 vols., Tokyo: Kokubu Shoten, 1979, pp. 104–16.

55. Originally a work in ten *juan*; cf. *P.* 2990, 2560, 3341, 2326, 2750, *S.* 6310, 3722, 4561 etc. Additional information may be found in Liu Yi, "Dunhuang ben *Shengxuan jing* jinglu chuanshou yishi yanjiu [A Study of the Ritual Proceedings of the Transmission of Scripture and Registers According to the Dunhuang Version of the Shengxuan Scripture]", *Dunhuang xue* 25 (2004), pp. 465–82.

56. Numerous Dunhuang manuscripts containing parts of this important scripture have been identified. For the most authoritative compilation of these manuscripts, see Ye Guiliang, *Dunhuang ben Taixuan zhenyi benji jing: jixiao* [The Dunhuang Version of the *Taixuan zhenyi benji jing*: Punctuated and Annotated], Chengdu: Sichuan Chuban Jituan Bashu Shushe, 2010. The *Benji jing* also exists in a greatly abbreviated and redacted version in the Daoist canon; see *DZ* 1111.24.

57. Cf. *S.* 5308 etc. Contained in *Zangwai daoshu*, vol. 21, pp. 260–69. For the primary study of this text, see Akizuki Kan'ei, "Tonkō shutsudo Dokyō to Butten [Daoist Scriptures found at Dunhuang and Buddhist Texts]", in *Tonkō to Chūgoku Dokyō* [Dunhuang and Chinese Daoism], eds. Kanaoka Shōko et al. *Kōza Tonkō*

Figure 4: Double-page from Buddhist manual featuring the Great Dipper scripture with the Buddha, astral lord and talismans. See also fig. 5.

ming yansheng xin jing 太上玄靈斗母大乘元君本命延生心經 [The Heart Scripture on the Fundamental Extension of Life [spoken by] the Highest, Mysterious and Divine Doumu, Original Lord of the Great Vehicle],[58] and the *Taishang zhenyi bao fumu enchong jing* 太上真一報父母恩重經 [Scripture on Protecting and Recompensing the Kindness of Parents [Spoken by] Taishang Zhenyi].[59] Although these texts address rather different religious concerns and therefore also different areas of Daoist practice, in their adoption of the Buddhist conceptual universe they nevertheless end up sharing a number of salient features such as karma, transmigration, demonology, etc.

Thus the Daoist pseudo-scriptures are similar to some of the apocryphal Buddhist *sūtras*, which were themselves informed by or copied from Daoist sources. Christine Mollier has shown us a few examples of such apocrypha (or forgeries) including the *Foshuo sanchu*

[Lectures on Dunhuang] 4, Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1983, pp. 207–37.

58. *DZ* 621.11. It belongs to the Cavern Spirits Section of the *Daozang*. According to the *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian* [Great Dictionary of Chinese Daoism; hereafter *ZDDC*], the *Doumu Heart Scripture* was composed some time during the Song dynasty. See *ibid.*, p. 404b. For a synopsis of the contents of the scripture, see *Daozang tiyao*, p. 448.

59. *DZ* 65.2. This a Daoist copy of the Buddhist apocryphal scripture, *Foshuo fumu enchong jing* 佛説父母恩重經 [Scripture on Recompensating the Kindness of Parents]; cf. *T*. 2887.85.

jing 佛說三廚經 [Buddha Speaks the Scripture on the Three Kitchens],[60] *Foshuo beidou qixing yanming jing* 佛說北斗七星延命經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on [the Worship of] Seven Stars of the Great Dipper for the Prolonging of Life], referred to previously, and the *Foshuo anzha shenzhou jing* 佛說安宅神咒經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on the Divine Spell for Calming Dwellings].[61] To these we may add such scriptures as the *Foshuo qiqian fo shenfu jing* 佛說七千佛神符經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on the Divine Talismans of the Seven Thousand Buddhas],[62] the *Foshuo zhoumei jing* 佛說咒魅經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on the Spells against Mei [Demons]][63] and the *Foshuo zhoutu jing* 佛說咒土經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on how to Empower the Ground] just to mention a few noteworthy ones.[64] Common to all of them is that they are copies of Daoist texts rather than independent compositions. This of course sets them apart from those apocryphal works which were composed on the basis of Buddhist doctrine and to which were added elements of Daoist belief and practice such as the *Guanding jing* 灌頂經 [Scripture of Anointment],[65] the early *Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī*,[66] the *Foshuo yuxiu shiwang shengqi jing* 佛說預修十王生七經 [Scripture in which Buddha Speaks about the Judgement of the Ten Kings for Rebirth [after] Seven [Days]],[67] etc.

My exploration of the Buddho–Daoist intersections also occasioned me to look at religious scriptures from both sides which in the course of history entered into normative acceptance. I cannot claim to have delved deeply into this area, but nevertheless came

60. *T.* 2894.85. Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, pp. 23–54.

61. *T.* 1394.21. Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, pp. 14–17.

62. *T.* 2904.85. This is a copy of, or rather is partially copied from, the *Taishang Laojun shuo yisuan shenfu miao jing* 太上老君說益算神符妙經 [Wonderful Scripture of the Divine Talismans for Increasing the Life Span, Spoken by the Most High Lord Lao], *DZ* 672.11. See Xiao Dengfu, "Lun fojiao shou zhongtu daojiao de yingxing ji fojing zhen wei [A Discussion of the Influence on Buddhism from Chinese Daoism as well as Real and Apocryphal Buddhist Scriptures], *Zhonghua foxue xuebao* 9 (1996), p. 84. Although this article contains several important and useful observations regarding Daoist influence on certain Buddhist scriptures, it has many equally silly ones; in particular, Xiao's view that Indian Buddhism was influenced by Chinese religious beliefs is hard to accept given the nature of the sources he uses.

63. *S.* 4524, *S.* 418 (cf. *T.* 2883.85).

64. As contained in the *Tuoluonizaji* 陀羅尼雜集 [Collated Miscellaneous Spells), *T.* 1336.21, pp. 609c–10a. The exact source for this short spell scripture is not known, but it would appear to have been a Daoist ritual text. It shares certain similarities with *T.* 1394.21. See Liu Yongming, "Lun Dunhuang fojiao xinyang zhong de fo dao rongshe [A Discussion of the Fusion of Buddhism and Daoism in Buddhist Beliefs in Dunhuang], *Dunhuang xue jikan* 1 (2005), pp. 45–55.

65. *T.* 1331.21. See Michel Strickmann, "The *Consecration Sūtra*: A Buddhist Book of Spells", in *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr., Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990, pp. 75–118.

66. *T.* 988.19. For a discussion of this composite scripture and related texts, see Sørensen, "The Spell of the Great Golden Peacock Queen: The Origin, Practices and Lore of an Early Esoteric Buddhist Tradition in China", *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute for Buddhist Studies* (Special Issue: Honoring James H. Sanford) 3/8 (2006), pp. 89–123.

67. *ZZ* 21.1. For a discussion of this interesting scripture, see Michel Strickmann, *Chinese Magical Medicine*, pp. 156–61. A full study of it can be found in Stephen Teiser, *The Scripture of the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 9, Honolulu: Kuroda Institute and University of Hawai'i Press, 1994.

across a number of texts which evidently made this inter-religious transition. Again for the sake of brevity let me provide you with an example of such texts, one from each side of the religious divide.

The first example from the Buddhist side is the take-over and acceptance of the Daoist *Taishang lingbao beidou benming yansheng zhen jing* 太上靈寶北斗本命延生真經 [True Scripture of the Northern Dipper for Extending the Span of Life of the Highest Lingbao],[68] as printed and transmitted within a Buddhist context.[69] The illustrated edition referred to here dates from 1639 and was printed at Songgwang Temple 松廣寺 in South Chŏlla province in Korea.[70] It is not clear to what extent this example reflects developments in Ming China, but we do know that in the wake of the Imjin War of 1592–8 Korea saw a massive influx of Chinese printed books, including many Buddhist and Daoist works. It is evident that the Korean Buddhists incorporated some of those Daoist books, even re-carving and printing them for circulation. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the scripture in question had by the time of its printing replaced the older Buddhist *Great Dipper Scripture* even though it continued to worship the Seven Buddhas as lords of the Great Dipper.

The Daoist example of an appropriated Buddhist scripture is that of the important *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya sūtra*[71] which appears in the *Guanyin xin jing bijue* 觀音心經秘解 [Secret Elucidation of the Heart Scripture of Avalokiteśvara] combined with a purely Daoist commentary.[72] In this case it is noteworthy that the *prajñāpāramitā*-style discourse of the Buddhist text has been utterly subverted and re-oriented by the Daoist *neidan* 内丹 interpretation of the commentary. It may be significant that both of these examples are from the pre-modern period and not pre-Song, thereby indicating that a certain degree of obfuscation and blurring of orthodox religious boundaries had begun to appear with increasing frequency in the post-Song period. Even so, I am relatively certain that we might be able to find earlier examples of such trans-religious scriptures once we being to look for them in earnest, an endeavour I heartily suggest we begin to undertake.

68. Identical with the *DZ* 622.11.

69. See figs. 4 and 5, pp. 125, 128. The Buddhist context is evident in the accompanying illustrations which feature a Buddha for each of the personified gods of the seven stars.

70. The Buddhist context is evident in the accompanying illustrations which feature a Buddha for each of the personified gods of the seven stars.

71. *T.* 251.8.

72. Authored by the Daoist master Yushan Laoren 玉山老人 from Hangzhou; see *Daozang jinghua* 道藏精華 [Epitome of the Daozang], ed. Xiao Tianshi, Series 11, vol. 3, no. 76, Taibei: Ziyou Chubanshe, 1979. It also exists as an independent text that was circulated widely during the late Qing. Interestingly, but perhaps less surprisingly, it was in some cases printed at Buddhist temple presses; see also the online version; accessed 2013–12–10.

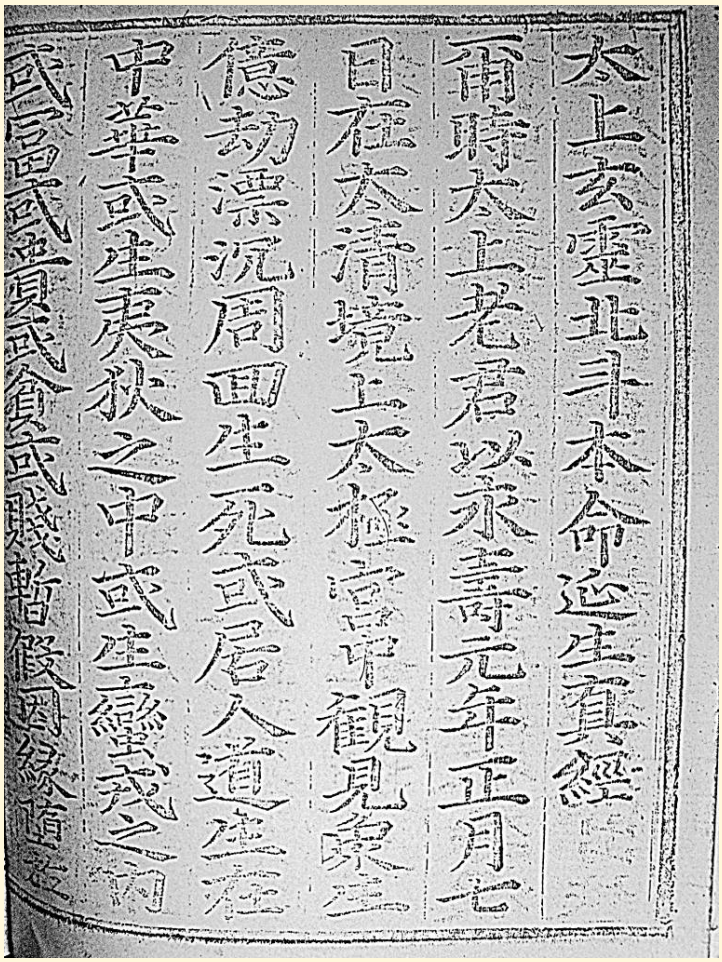

Figure 5: Page from the Daoist Great Dipper scripture inserted into a Buddhist ritual manual; Songgwang Temple, Chosŏn, 1639. See also fig. 4.

The creation of a common ground

What has been shown so far is a variety of examples of mutual exchanges between Buddhism and Daoism resulting in new conceptual and structural formations in Chinese religion, exchanges which I would argue in most cases significantly altered the receiving religious tradition. By appropriating the doctrines and teachings of each other, Buddhism and Daoism, consciously as well as unconsciously, allowed those "foreign" elements to enter their respective systems of belief, sometimes with dramatic results. We may conceptualize such appropriations variously as "borrowing", "influence", "theft", "take-over", "copying", etc., with each case carefully analyzed in order to assess the degree and nature of the foreign element's impact on the religion in question. Undoubtedly, we shall now be able to identify cases appropriate for all of those signifying terms on both sides of

the religious divide. What is perhaps most important here, is the fact that the appropriated elements effected certain shifts in the religious structures of Buddhism and Daoism, shifts which I refer to as "displacements", since in the majority of cases they took on new meaning(s) and functions in their respective, new religious settings. Two representative areas where such displacements can be readily identified, concern Daoist longevity practices, which as we have seen were infected by Buddhist *prajñā*-thinking, and on the Buddhist side Daoist astral lore and beliefs contributed greatly to the elaborate rites and manipulations regarding astrology.

Yet another area where the mutual impact effected considerable changes was in the beliefs concerning the after-life. Here we may observe how mutual displacements in the respective belief-systems of both Daoism and Buddhism occasioned the rise of shared destinies for the dead, not only the bureaucratized netherworld but also the heavens eventually took on a form shaped by concerns and beliefs relating to both religions.

The mutual and prolonged exchanges that took place between Buddhism and Daoism in China, including the convoluted process of repeated cross-transmissions of practices and beliefs, resulted in the formation of a series of new religious phenomena which were not originally part of either religion. There are too many aspects related to these developments to deal with here, hence I shall limit myself to a few of the more noteworthy, well knowing that I have not exhausted the issue by far. What must be borne in mind, however, is that these phenomena reflect to a high degree the cultural milieu that served as the basis for both religions, and that on the basis of this we may begin to understand the processes which led to the exchanges we see with both Buddhism and Daoism.

1. The significant concept of the sharing of "holy space" or "sacred geography". Under this rubric I would consider the existence of concrete physical spaces, places where both Buddhists and Daoists not only worshipped their respective gods separately, but actual cultic sites where they worshipped the same gods.[73]

2. Shared, imagined spaces exemplified in the construction of a mutual netherworld, or hell if you like.

3. There is the shared ritual concern as exemplified in the Shuilu 水陸/Pudu 普度 types of ritual. In both of these rites we can observe a certain "blend-over" or "cross-over" of imagery and conceptualizations concerning the liberation of the suffering souls of those who had died violent deaths.

4. There is the question of shared cosmology including shared astrology.

73. For a study of one such site of which China has several major ones, see James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 316, Cambridge, Mass.: East Asian Harvard University Asia Center, 2009. Other shared sites included Mt. Tiantai 天台山 and Mt. Tai 泰山.

5. A shared pantheon. Although I would agree that a more crystallized or mature form should be considered a product of the early pre-modern period, we certainly do see numerous cases of Buddhist and Daoist divinities in displacement processes much earlier. The case of Zhenwu in the Esoteric Buddhist context is one example, and that of Bodhidharma recast as a Daoist saint another.

6. This leads to a shared iconography or shared imagery. This does not mean that we are dealing with a conflated, fully developped iconography, but rather a case of partial, yet mutual integration of images and symbols. In practice it means that Daoist divinities were being inserted into Buddhist pictorial or sculptural contexts and *vice versa*. This trend is of considerable age, as documented in the stele material from Shaanxi, and may in fact have originated when Daoists began to copy Buddhist iconography for the depiction of their own gods.

7. Integrated doctrines and beliefs, e.g. the conflation of *dhyāna*-related practices and *neidan* belief. Or it may be formulated as aspects of Buddhist *abhidharma* appearing as Daoist cosmogony.

8. Shared narratives. These may both be of the more specific nature, such as supernatural stories with similar/shared motifs, or certain local traditions associated with specific temples or sites. It is possible that such narratives facilitated the transfer of saints.

9. Shared texts: This aspect of Buddho–Daoist relations signals more than just mutual conceptual and structural borrowings. "Shared texts" means texts, Buddhist and Daoist, which were used by adherents of both traditions. This phenomenon may have been more pronounced during the late medieval and early pre-modern periods, but surely have antecedents in the early Tang material if not earlier.

Taken together, all of these aspects reflect a type of religious integration on a deeper level than one based on mere borrowing or take-over. We are here seeing changes taking place at the receiving end which altered certain fundamental parameters concerning doctrine and basic beliefs.

Conclusion

When dealing with the interchanges between two religious traditions such as Buddhism and Daoism within Chinese culture and history, we must be careful not to commit that grave mistake which sees them as two, pre-existing monolithic and distinct traditions which at some point in time began to interrelate. I am stressing this rather banal observation, because it appears to be at the core of many of the misconceptions and misunderstandings that have marred a better understanding of both Chinese Buddhism as well as

of Daoism on the part of modern scholarship. We must not forget that both traditions developed in China side by side, not only within the same historical periods, but also within the same locations and largely within the same social contexts. Buddhism was only a foreign religion and remained such until it was accepted by the Chinese at large. Once it was accepted, something which was afforded by the process of becoming a fully fledged Chinese religion, a development which did not take more than two to three centuries to accomplish at most, Buddhism was to all purposes and intents a Chinese religion. The process through which Buddhism became Chinese of course took place through lengthy and concerted influence from the local religious and philosophical traditions, not the least from Daoism, as well as through conscious adaptations from the Buddhist side. In the case of Daoism, there are few scholars today who would seriously argue for the existence of Daoist religion in the Nanbeichao period (381–581) as a phenomenon completely apart and aloof from Buddhist influence, with the possible exception of certain practices found in the early Heavenly Masters and Shangqing 上清 traditions. It remains a fact that both Buddhism and Daoism arose and developped in tandem and through close contact and with considerable impact as a consequence, as a variety of recent studies have shown. This is something which cannot only be observed in the formative stages of the two religions in China but down through history as well.

Is Daoism then Buddhist, and is Chinese Buddhism Daoist? No, but neither is free of the other in the sense of being without certain imprints of the other. Both carry solid evidence of influence from the other on a number of levels. This is partly because both have influenced each other and partly because both have been shaped by and in return shaped the same culture in which they thrived. Does this then make Daoism and Chinese Buddhism hybrid religions? The answer to this must be yes to the extent that each contain salient elements of the other, but no if we talk about religious identity *per se*. Both religions retained certain demarcations, not the least of which pertains to distinct hermeneutics regarding the definitions of eschatology and spiritual liberation.

This leads me to a key issue of the Buddho–Daoist exchange, namely, those cases where special factors were at play to foster and stimulate their interaction. First of all we must acknowledge the great importance played by the Chinese language in the transformation of Buddhism from an Indian religion to a Chinese one. The fact that Buddhism did not meet with noteworthy resistance from either government or the local population initially, meant that it could spread and take root in China without fear of persecution. It was only after centuries of domestication and in periods when Buddhism had become a formidable economic and spiritual factor in Chinese society, that serious attempts at curtailing its influence took place. Another important factor that also has to do with the introduction of Buddhism in China, concerns the issue of the meeting of cultures. Buddhism did not arrive as a representative of a superior culture in an underdeveloped or uncivilized culture. The meeting between Indian Buddhism and Chinese society was a meeting of two "high cultures". This meant that Buddhism could not push aside or ignore the local traditions, at least not directly, but had to accommodate and adapt. It goes

without saying that the language issue was significant in this situation. Adapting to local religious and spiritual traditions primarily meant adapting to a conceptual world that was largely, if not predominantly Daoist.

It has struck me that the fact that both Buddhism and Daoism are polytheistic, may go some way in explaining the seemingly easy and unproblematic manner in which they were able to co-opt each other's gods. Incidentally we see the same with regard to Buddhism and Hinduism in India, in Japan in the Buddhist-Shinto exchange and in Korea that of Buddhism and Shamanism. Is it a special Indian and East Asian pragmatism, perhaps a result- or response-driven approach to religious worship that made these mutual exchanges possible, or could it be something else? Maybe there is a particular cultural factor at play? Certainly the bureaucratization of the divine is a shared factor, so is medicine, literature and writing, and science broadly speaking.

It is my personal opinion that while a lot of energy has been spent on Buddho–Daoist polemics, especially those that took place during the early Tang, but also those surrounding the *huahu* 化胡 complex of Daoist scriptures, these discussions have tended to overshadow the fact that real conflict between the two traditions was fairly minimal over long stretches of Chinese history and that examples of harmonious co-existence, even co-practice within the same cultic and ritual spaces were much more common than we have been wont to accept. The shared cultic sites, mutually conflated pantheons as well as similar socio-religious concerns are strong arguments for this view.

Let me end this report by acknowledging one issue among others that have not been dealt with here, in other words what we still need to address. While there are several outstanding themes and textual formations that have been neglected or partly ignored in previous studies on Buddhist and Daoist interrelations, medicine is one important such area which is virtually unexplored. I am not talking about pseudo-medicine as discussed by Strickmann in his now classic study on spells, seals and talismans, but about actual medicine and medical prescriptions as well as hygienic practices in the cross-field between Buddhism and Daoism. Having only surveyed parts of the relevant sources, and superficially at that, I nevertheless consider myself to be in a position to insist that the relevant material—which is rather abundant—holds much promise as regards the Buddhist and Daoist interchange. On the surface it would appear that in this field it was the Buddhists who were at the receiving end. However, a perusal of the relevant sources, especially those belonging to the Esoteric Buddhist tradition, contain material which documents that the Buddhist contribution to Chinese medicine, and thereby indirectly to Daoism, was by no means insignificant either.

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Abbreviations

AA	*Acta Asiatica: Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture*
CEA	*Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*
DWY	*Daojia wenhua yanjiu*
DXJ	*Dunhuang xuelun ji*
DZ	*Zhengtong Daozang*
EBTEA	*Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*
P.	*Collection Pelliot. Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.*
S.	*Stein Collection.* British Library, London.
T.	*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*
ZZ	*Dainihon zokuzōkyō*
YJQQ	*Yunji qiqian*

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Daofa huiyuan 道法會元. *DZ* 1220.28.

Daomen jing faxiang chengci xu 道門經法相承次序. *DZ* 1128.24.

Foshuo anzha shenzhou jing 佛説安宅神咒經. *T.* 1394.21.

Foshuo beidou qixing yanming jing 佛説北斗七星延命經. *T.* 1307.21.

Foshuo fumu enchong jing 佛説父母恩重經. *T.* 2887.85.

Foshuo qiqian fo shenfu jing 佛説七千佛神符經. *T.* 2904.85.

Foshuo sanchu jing 佛説三廚經. *T.* 2894.85.

Foshuo yuxiu shiwang shengqi jing 佛説預修十王生七經. *ZZ* 31.1.

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Foshuo zhoutu jing 佛説咒土經. In *T.* 1336.21, pp. 609c–10a.

Guanding jing 灌頂經. *T.* 1331.21.

Guanshiyin pusa fuyin 觀世音菩薩符印. *S.* 2498.

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Guanyin xin jing bijue 觀音心經秘解.

Huahu jing 化胡經. *T.* 2139.54.

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Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī. *T*. 988.19.

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