

Accordingly, a translation of 2.23 based on Zheng's interpretation would be:

Zizhang asked, "Can the changes in ritual that occur over a period of ten dynasties be known?"

The Master said, "The Yin built on the ritual of Xia. What was lost and added can be known. The Zhou built on the rites of the Yin. What has been lost and added can be known. Should there be successors to the Zhou, then even for a period of one hundred dynasties, these changes can be known."

The point to notice is the importance Zheng Xuan attached to the written word rather than to any of the Han theories about the patterns of dynastic succession. Thus rather than advancing some notion of ritual continuity being underpinned by a cyclical cosmological order, Zheng Xuan stressed the role played by human transmission, via the written record, in the continuity of ritual. Watson's translation seems to follow the interpretation favoured by Zhu Xi, but unfortunately Watson provides no hint of the existence of significant alternative interpretations of this important passage.

Many similar examples might be adduced from *Lunyu Zheng shi zhu*. It is not, however, only material found in archaeologically-recovered texts that affords us significant alternative interpretations, accepted as standard for many centuries. A similar exercise could equally be conducted with many of Zhu Xi's annotations on the *Analects*. The point, however, is that in not alerting his reader to significant alternative interpretations—standard or otherwise—Watson robs the *Analects* of the plurivocity it has garnered over time. In sum, Watson has presented us with a new, concise translation but provides little new insight into what the text might mean.

JOHN MAKEHAM

*The Australian National University*

*Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China.* By Christine Mollier. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. Pp. xi + 241. \$55.00.

Christine Mollier's claim in the introduction to this volume, that the interaction of Buddhism with the other great religious tradition of China, Daoism, has been "neglected," is arguably false (p. 1). The problem is rather, I believe, the monumental difficulties confronting any scholar who would attempt to study *both* Buddhism *and* Daoism and then would be so bold as to attempt to plumb the historical relationships between them,

relationships that involve a variety of other vectors—Chinese history, society, popular or common religion, customs, folkways and the like. That so few have undertaken the task, and fewer yet succeeded, is likely due not to “neglect” but to even more shameful emotions, including perhaps fear.

In *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, Christine Mollier proves herself fearless. In addition to providing us with fascinating case studies of Buddho-Daoist interaction on the levels of scripture and praxis, she also models the analytical and exegetical skills vital to this sort of undertaking. It proves to be no easy task, but the results are all the more compelling for the care taken. In this book, Mollier closely analyses five cases of Buddho-Daoist interaction, as outlined by chapter below. She is particularly interested in textual “doubles”—scriptures and manuals of practice that have counterparts in both Buddhism and Daoism. While she limits herself to five cases here, her researches have turned up other similar cases that she might have pursued (pp. 13–15). The reason she did not pursue more than five cases is soon apparent to the reader—a chapter is scarcely long enough to record the findings in each case.

Following a chapter by chapter account of the five cases Mollier presents, I would like to point out a few of the aspects that make this judiciously reasoned work of scholarship so valuable.

The first chapter deals with the fascinating case of the Buddhist *Sūtra of the Three Kitchens Spoken by the Buddha* 佛說三廚經, which is found in both Dunhuang manuscript and in manuscript collections preserved in Japan and proves at base to be an elaboration of a basic method for quelling hunger taken from the Daoist *Scripture of the Five Kitchens Spoken by Laozi* 老子說五廚經.<sup>1</sup> While the Daoist scripture, like the Buddhist version, dates only to the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth centuries, it is based on earlier Daoist methods for abstinence from food. The first to notice this Buddhist plagiary was Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850–933). Through a careful analysis of the Buddhist and Daoist versions of the scripture, Mollier lends credence to Du’s claims, while at the same time exploring possible reasons why Chinese Buddhist practitioners, who certainly had their own methods of fasting and dietary proscriptions, might want to adopt this method as their own.

Chapter two treats a very different sort of exchange between the two religions. The Buddhist *Sūtra for the Conjuration of Bewitchments, Preached by the Buddha* 佛說咒媚經 is not based directly on the Daoist *Scripture for Unbinding Curses, Revealed by the Most High Lord Lao* 太上老君說解釋咒詛經. Mollier shows, however, that the Buddhist text does invoke elements drawn from early medieval Daoist texts in its ritual battle

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<sup>1</sup> Because Mollier cites all known editions of each work she treats, I will here and below not give references to the sources of these scriptures. The interested reader is invited to consult Mollier’s work.

against sorcery. She concludes that “one may reasonably speculate” that the Daoist text is a response to the Buddhist *stra* which itself draws some materials from earlier Daoist sources.

Chapter three returns to the theme of Buddhist appropriations of Daoist practice. In this, the most egregious case of plagiarism, some Buddhist author has rewritten the *Marvelous Scripture for Prolonging Life and Increasing the Account, Revealed by the Most High Lord Lao* 太上老君說長生益算妙經 to create the *S tra of the Divine Talismans of the Seven Thousand Buddhas to Increase the Account, Spoken by the Buddha* 佛說七千佛神符益算經. In this case the transformation was accomplished by the simple expedient of deleting names and terms that sounded too “Daoist” and replacing them with Buddhist titles and terms.

Chapter four takes on the most difficult task of all. Here Mollier undertakes to trace the Daoist and popular sources of the late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century *S tra on Prolonging Life through Worship of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper, Preached by the Buddha* 佛說北斗七星延命經, a text that has long puzzled researchers. Through a meticulous examination of sources spanning over a thousand years, she traces Dipper worship in a wide variety of sources—Daoist, Buddhist, hemerological and popular apotropaic texts. On the basis of this research, she concludes that Dipper worship entered Daoism from common religious practice dating back at least to the Han. Buddhist practice adopted Dipper rites in the eighth century, through the medium of Tantric Buddhism. Thus, while no canonical text can be directly linked to the *S tra on Prolonging Life*, she concludes, “it is nevertheless plausible” that it was based on a Tang-period model (p. 173).

The final chapter returns to a more unidirectional model of emulation, the Daoist creation of the Heavenly Venerable Savior from Suffering 救苦天尊 on the basis of the still male Avalokite vara (Guanyin 觀音). This is a transformation long suspected by Daoist scholars, but Mollier’s careful analysis of the question removes any doubt there might have been, both concerning the remake and the possible motives for it. Of particular value is her exploration of the Tang-period *Marvelous Scripture of the Great Unity, the Savior from Suffering and the Protector of Life* 太一救苦〔天尊〕護身妙經. This work, a Daoist adaptation of the widely known *Pumen pin* 普門品 of the *Lotus S tra*, provides the iconography of the Heavenly Venerable Savior from Suffering which Mollier subsequently traces through the ages.

I have outlined the chapters of this work in some detail in order to highlight what might first strike the reader as a lack of narrative direction. We move from a Buddhist remake of a Daoist scripture, to a Daoist “response” to a Buddhist text, back to a Buddhist reworking of a Daoist practice, and so on. I am not certain what the original intent of this ordering might be, but it does tend to accomplish several things in the reader’s mind. First of all, the reader is repeatedly reminded that this was never a one-way traffic. Second, the arrangement helps demonstrate both that the plagiarists of both religions adopted similar tactics in co-opting the texts and practices of others and that a close comparison of these tactics rewards the effort.

In describing the methods of the plagiarists, Mollier employs a refreshing richness

of vocabulary. The plagiarists “repackage,” “add coloration,” “reinscribe,” “hybridize,” “cut-and-paste,” “transpose” from one context to another, and, of course, simply “steal.” Confronting such activities forthrightly yields some important findings. On the principle that no thief bothers to make off with the everyday cutlery, such thievery helps us modern researchers to isolate what was important and attractive in otherwise dense ritual texts (p. 22). The reframing, elaboration, and simplification that plagiarists work on their source material are also invaluable aids to the understanding of the modern researcher (p. 52). The ubiquity and numerous manuscript copies of such apocrypha reveal their popularity and point to the fact that rewriting as a mode of scriptural production was, contrary to what we might expect, highly valued in medieval Chinese society (p. 39), perhaps because Chinese audiences had the same need for understanding evinced by modern researchers. And finally, as evidenced throughout the work, the reinscription of salvific methods was undertaken not just by Buddhist and Daoist priests, but by lay specialists in divination, astrology, medicine, and other technologies.

Finally, as mentioned throughout the work and enunciated more forcefully in the conclusion, the existence of these scriptural “twins” says something very important about religious identity in medieval China. Modern scholars have tended to think that such crossover texts testify to a lack of understanding of the boundaries between Buddhism and Daoism, especially on the part of practitioners at the lower levels of society. But the evidence Mollier presents proves otherwise. “How” she asks pointedly, “can one suppose that a practitioner, uneducated though he may have been, could have had no sense of involvement in Buddhism when he was expressly asked, in order to receive the teaching of the *Stra of the Three Kitchens*, to ‘take refuge in the Three Jewels’ and to observe the basic precepts of Buddhist lay initiation?” (p. 210) And, of course, the same can be observed of the sectarian pointers in Daoist copies of Buddhist works.

In sum, this volume, handsomely produced by the University of Hawai‘i Press, significantly advances our understandings of the complex and shifting interfaces between medieval Buddhism and Daoism and provides a standard against which future research will be judged.

STEPHEN R. BOKENKAMP  
*Arizona State University*