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From the Editor

This penultimate issue of *Taoist Resources* in printed format is enriched by the contributions of several authors who have not published with us heretofore. In his article on the Lü Dongbin cult centered around the Yongle gong, Paul R. Katz makes use of a resource little exploited in Taoist studies, stele inscriptions dedicated to the god, and suggests prudent methodologies by which such material evidence might be employed in our studies. Another new avenue of exploration is suggested by Liu Xun, who treats the theme of "travel" in inner alchemic poetry drawn from journals published in Shanghai in the 1930's and 40's. Finally, Harold D. Roth draws new insight from an old source, the *Zhuangzi*, through the application of a methodology that he calls "narrative analysis."

In all three cases, we have what might be styled "old wine in new goblets." Old wine, as those who appreciate the beverage know, is the best and the new goblets serve to present it to advantage so that it might be properly appreciated.

The book reviews in this issue, by Russell Kirkland and Livia Kohn, equally deserve the name "essay," in that both present their own thoughts on future avenues of research while introducing newly-published works in the field of Taoist studies.

Following issue 7.2, *Taoist Resources* will cease publication in paper format. Those subscribers who have paid in advance will have their money refunded to them and all subscribers will have the opportunity to view free of charge my next editorial venture, the *Journal of Chinese Religions*, which I will co-edit with Robert Campany. As for *Taoist Resources* itself, steps have already been taken toward archiving past issues in a web site and paper copies will also be available through the East Asian Studies Center of Indiana University. Further details will be forthcoming in 7.2. Meanwhile, I would like to take this opportunity to ask those of our readers who might be interested in continuing the journal in online format to contact me through the East Asian Studies Center, either to forward ideas and suggestions or simply to express interest. Given enough support on your part, *Taoist Resources* may well undergo a process we might, with a nod to the tradition, describe as "liberation from the corpse."

I wish to thank all contributors to this issue, as well as those who have worked to bring it about.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Temple Inscriptions And The Study Of Taoist Cults: A Case Study of Inscriptions at the Palace of Eternal Joy

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Introduction

Among the various source materials involved in the study of cults to Taoist deities, temple inscriptions carved on stone inside the grounds of local temples, Buddhist monasteries, and Taoist belvederes have proved to be both of immense value yet also highly problematic. The fact that these texts were carved on stone often enabled them to survive the ravages of time in much better condition than many other relevant sources. Furthermore, the data they preserve on a temple's history, as well as the identities of its leading supporters, can be extremely useful in attempting to reconstruct the history of a particular cult. At the same time, however, some scholars have cautioned that temple inscriptions tend to furnish an incomplete and at times even biased record of a cult's growth, and that they also obscure the presence of divergent representations of a deity among cult supporters.

Given the complex nature of such sources, how may they be used most effectively in the study of Taoist cults?[1] The following paper represents a preliminary effort to come to grips with this problem. I attempt to do so by studying how temple inscriptions may be employed in the study of a specific Taoist cult, in this case that of the immortal Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 at the Palace of Eternal Joy (Yongle Gong 永樂宮) in Yongle (Shanxi province). This temple, originally a shrine for Lü built during the late Tang dynasty at the reputed site of his birth, was transformed into a massive Taoist belvedere during the Yuan dynasty.[2] Many of the buildings in the Palace of Eternal Joy temple complex have survived the ravages of various natural calamities, as well as war and revolution. The Chinese government recognized this temple's importance as a national treasure, and arranged for the entire complex to be moved to Ruicheng in 1959 during a major dam building project. Today, it is currently undergoing a revival as a cult center and pilgrimage site, attracting worshippers from throughout China and even Taiwan.

The inscriptions to be discussed below are of course not the only sources for the history of the Palace of Eternal Joy. Entries in the "Treatise on Buddhist Monasteries and Taoist Belvederes" (*Siguan zhi* 寺觀志) section of local gazetteers also provide important data on the history of this and other temples. However, in the case of the Palace of Eternal Joy, Shanxi gazetteers supply only the most basic information on this temple's development, and because the editors of later gazetteers often copied entries directly from earlier ones, the

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[1] The term "Taoist cult" as used in this essay refers to cults of Taoist deities worshipped by that religion's specialists and enshrined in sacred sites owned and controlled by such individuals. At the same time, worshippers at Taoist cult sites also include members of the local populace and lay pilgrims from other regions. In contrast, the term "local cult" refers to cults of both Taoist and non-Taoist deities worshipped at sacred sites belonging to the local community or certain members of such communities.

[2] The history of this temple is described in detail in (Katz 1994,1996) and (Jing 1993).

information is rarely updated. In addition, no Shanxi gazetteer I have seen contains the texts of any of the nearly 40 stelae[3] erected in and around the Palace.[4]

The three editions of the Shanxi provincial gazetteer I have consulted all contain the identical passage that the Palace of Eternal Joy was located 120 *li* (one *li* is approximately one-third of a mile) southeast of the county seat (at Yongji). This temple was reputed to have been the site of Lü Dongbin's residence, but was rebuilt as a Taoist palace during the Yuan dynasty. The text also notes that during the Ming dynasty Taoists from a number of nearby temples were required to reside at the Palace of Eternal Joy under regulations to control religious activities issued by the Hongwu emperor (r. 1368-1398) (Yü 1982: 144-155, Ren 1990: 582-588; Taylor 1990). The 1734 edition of the gazetteer claims that two Yuan scholars, Yu Que 余闕 (1303-1358) and Chen Fu 陳孚 (1259-1309), had written poems about the temple,[5] and that two huge trees at the site had been planted there by Lü Dongbin (*Shanxi tongzhi* (1629), 14: 20a; (1734), 59: 28a; (1892), 57: 27b). The account in the Puzhou prefectural gazetteer is roughly the same, although it adds that Lü's Tang-dynasty shrine had been transformed into a Taoist belvedere at an unspecified point in time following his death (*Puzhou fuzhi* (1754), 3: 41a-b). As for the Yongji county gazetteer, its description of the temple differs little from those mentioned above, although it does mention the 1222 inscription on the temple's history written by Yuan Congyi 袁從義 (1159-1224) (see below),[6] as well as the existence of another temple to Lü located near the city of Yongji (*Yongji xianzhi* (1886), 3: 41a; see also 12: 28a & 20: 19a-20b).

Inasmuch as the Shanxi gazetteers mentioned above contain so little data on the history of the Palace of Eternal Joy, we are forced to rely almost exclusively on the inscriptions at this temple for information concerning both its history and the identities of those people who supported it, be they Taoist specialists or lay worshippers. Fortunately, Su Bai has quoted extensively from these stelae in his studies of the Palace of Eternal Joy (Su 1962, 1963), while the texts of 21 inscriptions have been preserved in Chen Yuan's collection of Taoist epigraphy (Chen 1988) (regrettably, the lists of donors are not always complete). Su Bai once mentioned having a complete collection of rubbings made at the Palace of Eternal Joy (Su 1962: 86), but now claims to have lost it! Therefore, our record of the temple's history is far from complete. However, the fruits of the efforts made by Chen Yuan and Su Bai have

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[3] Su Bai summarizes the texts of 35 stelae at the Palace of Eternal Joy, while also mentioning that some stelae had been destroyed (Su 1963). However, he fails to mention two stelae erected at a shrine to Lü Dongbin situated atop Nine Peaks Mountain (Jiufeng Shan 九峰山), situated to the north of the Palace of Eternal Joy (see below). Engraved with poems attributed to Lü, both have been preserved in Chen Yuan's collection and will be discussed below.

[4] For reasons I have yet to comprehend, not one single inscription from the Palace of Eternal Joy has been preserved in any collection of Shanxi epigraphy I have seen. This temple's Mongolian vernacular inscriptions have also not been included in (Cai 1955) and (Feng 1931).

[5] I have not found any poems about the Palace of Eternal Joy in these men's collected works. One poem about a temple to Lü is in Yu Que's *Qingyang xiansheng wenji* (*Sibu congkan* edition), but it concerns a shrine in Yueyang (Hunan) (1:8b). Two poems about temples to Lü may be found in Chen Fu's *Chen Gangzhong shiji* (*Tuobachan congke* edition (1928)), but these concern shrines in Yueyang and Handan (Shandong) (1:16b; 2:8b-9a).

[6] The text of this inscription is not preserved in the "Treatise on Belles-Lettres" (*Yiwen zhi* 藝文志) of this gazetteer.

provided us with sufficient material to undertake a preliminary study of the epigraphic sources related to the history of this temple.

Methodological Problems

Before proceeding to the Palace of Eternal Joy and its numerous inscriptions, I first briefly discuss the essential characteristics of these sources, as well as the ways in which scholars in the field of Chinese religion have dealt with the complex issues surrounding their use. Temple inscriptions like the ones to be discussed below played a number of important roles in late imperial society. First and foremost, they recorded the history of a sacred site while also serving as symbols of power, both of the temple itself as well as those patrons who supported it (Baldrian-Hussein 1986: 140; Brook 1993: 174, 176-178; Dudbridge 1978: 17-18; Faure 1992: 158; Naquin 1992: 363). As such, these texts constituted an integral part of what Prasenjit Duara terms "the cultural nexus of power" (Duara 1988b: 24-26).[7] Temple inscriptions were also "public" documents (Duara 1988b: 144-146; Dudbridge 1990: 37; Hansen 1987: 17; Hansen 1990: 14,73,125), and appear to have made up part of a Chinese-style "public sphere" (Brook 1993: 23-29,338 (notes 53 & 54); Katz 1995). As a result, temple inscriptions also played an important role in advertising the numinous powers of a sacred site and attracting worshippers (Baldrian-Hussein 1986: 138-139,146,160; Faure 1992: 158; Dudbridge 1978: 17-18,20; Hansen 1990: 73; Naquin 1992: 342). Their importance is attested by the fact that people of all classes and backgrounds were willing to make contributions towards their completion (Hansen 1987: 17-18), perhaps as one means of attaining what Pierre Bourdieu refers to as "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 1977; Brook 1993: xiii,19; Duara 1988b: 144-146). The contents of important temple stelae could even be transferred from one site to another (as in the case of the hagiographic stele about Miaoshan (Dudbridge 1982: 590-593)), while some unscrupulous worshippers would not hesitate to plagiarize those inscriptions deemed important enough to further their interests (Hansen 1990: 125).

A second important characteristic of temple inscriptions involves their overlap with other sources, particularly local gazetteers, dynastic histories, private writings (*wenji* 文集), and even miscellaneous notes (*biji* 筆記). The clearest link between temple inscriptions and these sources may be found in local gazetteers which preserve such inscriptions, albeit frequently in abbreviated forms and without the names of donors (Brook 1993: 178; Dudbridge 1990: 34; Hansen 1987: 20; Yu 1992: 208). In addition, the texts of some biographical (funerary) inscriptions closely resemble and in some cases even served as the basis for the biographies preserved in dynastic histories and private writings (Ten Broeck & Yiu 1950: 86-87; Twitchett 1961). Valerie Hansen has also shown that some miscellaneous notes were based on temple inscriptions (and *vice versa*?) (Hansen 1990: 22-23).

Temple inscriptions also featured a rather narrow range of authors and intended/actual audiences (or in this case readers).[8] Although authors of temple inscriptions could include the

[7] For more on issues of power in Chinese religion, as well as a critique of Foucault's work on power, see (Sangren 1993,n.d.). For more on the role of Chinese religion in resisting hegemony or domination, see (Weller 1994).

[8] For more on the problem of intended vs. actual audiences, see (Johnson 1985).

gods themselves (Baldrian-Hussein 1986: 138-139) and emperors (Faure 1992: 158; Lagerwey 1992: 326 (note 2); Naquin 1992: 351-352), most were composed by scholar-officials (Dudbridge 1978: 10-15; Hansen 1987:17-18; Hansen 1990:15; Reiter 1990), members of the gentry and elite classes who didn't serve as officials (Duara 1988b: 145; Naquin 1992: 337), pilgrims (often including members of the gentry and elite classes) (Lagerwey 1992: 311-319; Naquin 1992: 338-339,346; Yu 1992: 208), and classically-educated religious specialists (Dean 1993: 38). As for these texts' intended audience, while some works were clearly addressed to a temple's deities (Dudbridge 1978: 12; Dudbridge 1990: 35; Hansen 1990: 14-16; Tsien 1962: 74), most appear to have been written for the same people mentioned above. These men (and a small minority of women) constituted the actual audiences or readers of these texts, as only they possessed the knowledge of classical Chinese required to read such works, providing that they could stand high enough off the ground to read the upper parts of an inscription (many stelae were placed on the backs of great stone tortoises and tower over their readers).

Inasmuch as most of the inscriptions at the Palace of Eternal Joy discussed below were written by (and also written for and read by) scholar-officials and/or members of the gentry and elite classes, the extent to which these texts could reflect the mentalities, values, and beliefs of people from other social classes is highly problematic, especially because scholar-officials and other learned men would not hesitate to change texts they considered "vulgar" (Dudbridge 1978: 14; Hansen 1990: 15). Although Hansen maintains that most inscriptions "were commissioned by and reflect the interests of local residents" (Hansen 1987: 18), the issue of these texts' "reception" is much more complicated than she indicates. For example, we shall see below that the representations of popular deities like Lü Dongbin contained in temple inscriptions often differed significantly from those held by people who did not share their authors' backgrounds.

Turning to previous studies of temple inscriptions, we find that until recently most have focused on their use in the study of Buddhism (Dudbridge 1978,1990; Faure 1992; Liu 1993; Yü 1992) and local cults (Dean 1993; Hansen 1990; Katz 1995; Kleeman 1993,1994; Li 1979; Naquin 1992). Although scholars such as Edouard Chavannes and Chen Yuan used Taoist stelae extensively in their work on Taoist movements on the Jin-Yuan era (Chavannes 1904; Chen 1962 (1941)), only a small body of research on Taoism involving such texts had been undertaken prior to the 1990's (with the notable exceptions of Chavannes 1910; Seidel 1969, 1987; and Ten Broeck & Yiu 1950). This state of affairs prompted the late Anna Seidel (1938-1991) to point out that, "Another, strangely neglected source for the study of Taoism is epigraphy" (Seidel 1989-1990: 235). However, as she also noted, the recent publication hundreds of Taoist inscriptions collected by Chen Yuan and completed by his grandson Chen Zhichao (Chen 1988) has provided an invaluable asset to those interested in researching Taoist epigraphy. In the past few years, scholars such as Ken Dean, John Lagerwey, Florian Reiter have used temple inscriptions to great advantage in their work on the history of Taoism (Dean 1993; Lagerwey 1993; Reiter 1990).

Despite the fact that so much important research concerning the history of Chinese religion has been based on temple inscriptions, the fact that some scholars tend to accept the contents of these texts as authoritative has occasionally led to some problems of

interpretation. For example, Prasenjit Duara assumes that inscriptions representing Guandi 關帝 in a manner conforming to state norms prove the existence of superscription and standardization at the local level (Duara 1988b: 144-149).[9] I would argue that these texts merely represent a concerted effort by the state to superscribe local cults, and that the state's actual success in achieving this goal can only be fully ascertained after examining other representations of Guandi held by people living near temples housing such stelae. Similarly, Ken Dean claims that certain Song dynasty inscriptions attest to the standardization of local cults occurring "within the framework of the Taoist liturgical tradition" (Dean 1993: 37). Again, I maintain that such texts simply reveal attempts to standardize local cults by scholar-officials and Taoist priests, a process which James Watson has shown was often of limited success (Watson 1985).

The above-mentioned issues involving the interpretation of temple inscriptions have prompted some scholars to view these sources with a strong degree of suspicion. They point out that many inscriptions have been badly damaged over time and are therefore fragmentary and incomplete. In addition, temple inscriptions were often written using a stylized language full of clichés (Hansen 1990: 111), and tended to focus solely on what the authors perceived as the more positive aspects of a particular cult. As Glen Dudbridge points, these factors result in many temple inscriptions presenting "no more than an opaque surface through which we see little of [the] underlying motivation (of cult worship)" (Dudbridge 1990: 37). Temple inscriptions also tend to gloss over or ignore any social tensions or conflicts surrounding a particular cult, reflecting instead what Dudbridge terms an "official mythology" (Dudbridge 1990: 37; see also Hansen 1990: 16; Ten Broeck & Yiu 1950: 87). Perhaps most importantly, the problems of author and audience discussed above mean that the ideas, values, and beliefs expressed therein tend to be those of a small group of classically-educated men who occupied positions of power in local society (Naquin 1992: 346).

Perhaps the strongest criticism of the value of inscriptions (and government documents) describing local cults is that of Terry Kleeman, who argues that because such texts were written by (and for) literati, their main goal involves demonstrating the "orthodoxy" of the deity in question. As a result, expressions of religious sentiment as well as accounts of supernatural occurrences were frowned upon, while certain aspects of a given cult were emphasized to the exclusion of others (Kleeman 1993: 46). Some of Kleeman's arguments appear to be a bit wide of the mark. Many inscriptions did contain accounts of miracles performed by deities, while poetic inscriptions as well as hagiographic inscriptions like the one about Miaoshan allowed some expression of religious sentiments. Be that as it may, Kleeman is correct in reminding us that such sources can only be used with the utmost caution. How, then, can we hope to make the most effective use of these sources? I believe that this must be grounded in an understanding of the terms mentioned in the title of this paper: text and textuality. Temple inscriptions are texts, a rather vague term frequently used to designate any configuration of signs coherently interpretable to a community of users. At the same time however, texts like temple inscriptions must be studied in terms of their textuality, that is, the ways in which they were produced, spread, and understood. In

[9] I have analyzed and critiqued both concepts in (Katz 1990, 1995).

analyzing temple inscriptions, I have been influenced by scholars like W. F. Hanks, who argue that, "textuality cannot be treated merely as a property of a limited array of symbolic objects but must be seen instead as an instrument, a product, and a mode of social action" (Hanks 1989: 103). In other words, it is essential that we not reify those texts carved on temple inscriptions but instead examine them as works formed amidst specific social contexts, and whose interpretation occurred as the result of complex sociocultural interaction between text and readers (or author and audience). These ideas are discussed in greater detail in the Conclusion.

The Palace of Eternal Joy

The Palace of Eternal Joy at its original site in Yongle lay in an ideal geomantic position, with the Zhongtiao mountains behind it to the north and the Yellow River in front of it to the south. A drainage canal also flowed from west to east across the temple's northern boundary, and a branch of this canal flowed from north to south inside the temple complex. The entire complex was protected by an outer wall, which had fallen into a state of disrepair by the time the site was discovered during the 1950's, while a second wall surrounded the main Taoist halls and the other temples to their west.

The pilgrim or visitor to the site approached the Palace via one of three roads: one heading north to the temple from the Yellow River, one heading east from the town of Yongle, and one heading west from Yuantou village. People approaching the temple from the south or east could see the reputed site of Lü Dongbin's grave, which lay about 175 meters to the southeast of the Palace. This grave was excavated by Chinese archaeologists before the Palace was moved to its new home in Ruicheng. Inside they found the skeletons of a man and a woman (*Li* 1960). The significance of this discovery in terms of understanding local representations of Lü is treated below. To the west of the temple's main gate lay rows of shops, part of a periodic market (*ji* 集) which used to be held outside the temple's grounds until the end of the Qing dynasty.

One first entered the Palace through the main gate, constructed during the Qing dynasty. From there, one passed along a path nearly eighty meters long before reaching the Gate of the Limitless Ultimate (Wuji Men 無極門), which was completed in the year 1294. Here one's entry into the temple's sacred space was made apparent through the presence of the first murals in the complex, depicting divine soldiers and generals. The northern side of the Gate also served as a stage for the performance of operas during festivals held at the temple (Li 1983).

From the Gate of the Limitless Ultimate one walked a further eighty meters past trees and two huge stelae dating from 1262 and 1689 (see below) to ascend a flight of stairs and enter a more exalted plane of sacred space, the Hall of the Three Pure Ones (Sanqing Dian 三清殿), which was completed by 1262. This is the largest hall of the entire complex. It covers an area of over 430 square meters, standing seven bays (28.44 meters) across by four bays (15.28 meters) deep and supporting a single eave-hipped roof. Upon entering the Hall of the Three Pure Ones, one saw statues of the Three Pure Ones inside,[10] surrounded by murals

[10] All statues referred to were destroyed during the Japanese occupation of North China, but have

depicting 286 members of the Taoist pantheon engaged in an audience ceremony with them. This massive work, known as the *Audience with the [Three] Primordials* (*Chaoyuan Tu* 朝元圖) covers an area of over 402 square meters, the deities featured standing as tall as two meters and the murals covering four meters from top to bottom. These murals were completed in 1325 by the artisan (*huagong* 畫工) Ma Junxiang 馬君祥 (a native of Lüoyang) and his students. I have argued in an earlier article that the 360 deities featured in the murals adorning these two halls may well have been the objects of worship at Taoist rituals regularly held at the temple (Katz 1993). However, Jing Anning claims that they represent a new "Quanzhen pantheon" featuring patriarchs of the movement like Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin (Jing 1993,1995).

From the Hall of the Three Pure Ones, the pilgrim or visitor proceeded forty meters along an elevated walkway to the Hall of Purified Yang (Chunyang Dian 純陽殿),[11] in which a statue of Lü Dongbin was worshipped. This hall was also completed by 1262, but built on a much smaller scale, covering just over 300 square meters (20.35 m. x 14.35 m.). The murals depicting Lü's life, entitled *The Divine Travels and Immortal Transformations of the Lord Emperor of Purified Yang* (*Chunyang dijun shenyou xianhua tu* 純陽帝君神遊仙化圖), are also smaller than those in the Hall of the Three Pure Ones, being only 3.6 meters high and covering just over 200 square meters of wall space. Completed in 1358, they were painted by students of the Yuan dynasty mural painter Zhu Haogu 朱好古 (a native of Xiangling, in Shanxi). Most of the 52 scenes from Lü's hagiography presented in the murals are accompanied by a cartouche (*tiji* 題記) describing the story portrayed. Nearly two-thirds of these cartouches (37 in all) are direct quotations from a work in the *Taoist Canon* entitled *An Account of the Divine Transformations and Wondrous Communications of the Sovereign Lord of Purified Yang* (*Chunyang dijun shenhua miaotong ji* 純陽帝君神化妙通紀; *TT* 159; *CT* 305), a hagiographic text composed by the Perfect Realization master Miao Shanshi 苗善時 (fl. 1288-1324), a native of Nanjing. Many of these stories can also be found in later Taoist compilations such as the late sixteenth century *Record of Patriarch Lü* (*Lüzu zhi* 呂祖志) (*TT* 1112-1113; *CT* 1484), and the *Complete Works of the Patriarch Lü* (*Lüzu quanshu* 呂祖全書) (1846).

Walking a further 20 meters along the elevated walkway, which continues from the back of the Hall of Purified Yang, one came to the Hall of Redoubled Yang (Chongyang Dian 重陽殿), in which were enshrined statues of Wang Zhe 王嘉 (1112-1170), the founder of the Perfect Realization movement, and six of his seven main disciples, the Seven Perfected (Qizhen 七眞).[12] A total of 49 murals depicting scenes from Wang's life adorn the walls of

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been rebuilt in recent years.

[11] Lü Dongbin's Taoist name (*daohao* 道號) was Purified Yang.

[12] The Seven Perfected included: 1) Ma Yu 馬鈺 (Danyangzi 丹陽子; 1123-1183); 2) Tan Chuduan 譚處端 (Changzhenzi 長眞子; 1123-1185); 3) Liu Chuxuan 劉處玄 (Changshengzi 長生子; 1147-1203); 4) Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (Changchunzi 長春子; 1148-1227); 5) Wang Chuyi 王處一 (Yuyangzi 玉陽子; 1142-1217); 6) Hao Datong 郝大通 (Guangningzi 廣寧子; 1140-1212); and 7) Sun Buer 孫不二 (Chingjing sanren 清靜散人; 1119-1183). According to a different classification system, Wang Chongyang is counted among the Seven Perfected while the only woman, Sun Buer, is omitted (Boltz 1987:64-65). The latter system appears to have been used inside the Hall of Redoubled Yang, as no statue of Sun Buer was worshipped there.

this temple, but unfortunately over one-third of these have been partially or totally destroyed. It is not clear who painted the murals, but they appear to have been completed around 1368. Two smaller halls used to flank the Hall of Redoubled Yang, and behind it once lay a hall dedicated to the Perfect Realization leader Qiu Chuji (1148-1227). These buildings were destroyed during the War of Resistance against Japan.

The main halls described above, while architecturally impressive, only occupied about half of the area of the Palace of Eternal Joy. Like most Taoist belvederes, the Palace of Eternal Joy was a huge compound in which various Taoist (and local) activities were concentrated in separate buildings (Reiter 1983: 367). To the northwest of the main halls lay two Taoist abbeys (*daoyuan* 道院) built a few hundred meters south of the graves of the Perfect Realization Taoists responsible for the construction of the Palace: Song Defang 宋德方 (1183-1247) and Pan Dechong 潘德沖 (1191-1256).[13] The area directly west of the main Taoist halls constituted a second temple complex in its own right, containing other temples in which both Taoist and popular deities were worshipped. The dates most of these temples were founded are unknown. Almost all of these temples appear in a diagram of the Palace of Eternal Joy first published in the 1754 edition of the Puzhou prefectural gazetteer, which means they must have been built before that date. We know something of the history of the Pavilion to the Jade Emperor (Yuhuang Ge 玉皇閣), which was completed in 1617 following a large-scale ritual for chanting the *Scripture of the Jade Emperor* (*Yuhuang jing* 玉皇經)[14] held from 1614 to 1616 (Chen 1988: 1301-1302). Other sacred places included a hall to the City God, a temple for the Three Officials (*sanguan* 三官), and a Shrine for Repaying Merit (Baogong Ci 報功祠), the deity of which is unknown. Two venerable ginko trees supposedly planted by Lü Dongbin stood near the eastern wall of the temple complex.

The Palace of Eternal Joy also contained an academy, the Puyang Shuyuan 蒲陽書院, which was founded in 1821 by the Vice-Prefect Chen Shichang 陳士昌.[15] A total of 3,900 *liang* (approx. 1.3 ounces) of silver was raised to build this academy, but construction costs were only 1,900 *liang*. The remaining 2,000 *liang* was deposited in a local pawnshop where it could earn interest (*Yongji xianzhi* (1886), 4: 34a). The Palace also featured buildings designed for more mundane matters, such as kitchens and a pilgrim's hostel.

The most intriguing site in the western portion of the Palace of Eternal Joy is the Shrine to Patriarch Lü (Lüzu Ci 呂祖祠).[16] Taoists and officials residing at the Palace today claim that it was built during the reign of the Jiaqing emperor (1796-1821), but this must be an error as this shrine is clearly shown in the diagram of the Palace published in the 1754 edition

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[13] These buildings no longer stand, but the coffins for Pan and Song, decorated with stories of the twenty-four exemplars of filial piety, are currently preserved in a museum inside the Palace at its new location in Ruicheng.

[14] The text referred to in the inscription is in all likelihood the *Gaoshang yuhuang benxing jijing* 高上玉皇本行集經 (*TT* 23; *CT* 10), composed during the Song dynasty (Li 1989:363-365). For more on the growth of the cult of the Jade Emperor, see (Feng 1936; Lü & Lüan 1990 (1986):31-44; Sun 1965).

[15] Chen's biography may be found in (*Yongji xianzhi* (1886), 6:48a-b).

[16] Chinese scholars working at the Palace during the 1950's referred to this site as the Shrine of Lord Lü (Lügong Ci 呂公祠), and the name has continued to be used today. I have not determined the circumstances behind this shrine's name change.

of the Puzhou prefectural gazetteer. In addition, the fact that the Pavilion of the Jade Emperor was built on top of this shrine in 1617 indicates that this site must have been founded before then. It is quite possible that this shrine is in fact the original shrine built at the reputed site of Lü's grave, although it must have undergone numerous restorations to survive today. Whatever the case may be, it appears that this shrine served as a site for popular worship of Lü Dongbin, a role it continues to play to the present day.

Images of Lü Dongbin in Palace of Eternal Joy Inscriptions

There are two hagiographic accounts of Lü Dongbin preserved in inscriptions at the Palace of Eternal Joy. The first, carved on a stele itself originally located in front of the Hall of Purified Yang.[17] is entitled "A Record of the Tang Dynasty Shrine of Perfected Man Lü of Purified Yang" (*You Tang Chunyang Lü zhenren citangji* 有唐純陽呂眞人祠堂記). This is the oldest inscription at the entire temple complex, composed in 1222 and first carved on stone in 1228. The text of this inscription was written by the late Jin literatus Yuan Congyi,[18] while the calligraphy for this inscription was done by a local *jinshi* (presented scholar) named Duan Yuanheng 段元亨.[19] The stone was badly damaged by a fire which ravaged the temple in 1244, and subsequently recarved in 1252 (the date the bulk of contruction on the Palace of Eternal Joy was completed). A final recarving was undertaken in 1324. Those Taoists residing at the temple who sponsored the final recarving of Yuan's work added an additional inscription describing the history of this stele and its various recarvings. Most of Yuan's text is a hagiography of Lü Dongbin which I translate below. However, it also furnishes a vivid description of the temple's setting, as well as its early history. Following a brief description of Lü's original shrine in Yongle, the text goes on to describe Yuan's interest in Lü and attempt to locate writings about him. The hagiographical portion of Yuan's inscription reads as follows:

> The perfected man [Lü] was named Yan. He later took the style name Dongbin and the Taoist name Chunyang. The Vice-minister of Rites (*libu shilang* 禮部侍郎) Lü Wei 呂渭 was his grandfather. In the year 825 he passed the highest level of the *jinshi* exams. Before being assigned a post he spent the spring wandering near the Feng River (in Shaanxi) where he encountered the Han hermit Lord Zhongli [Quan]. Lord Zhongli perceived that Lü was of uncommon make,[20] and enticed him to study the way of immortals....He orally transmitted to Lü secret instructions for internal alchemy (*neidan bizhi* 內丹秘旨) as well as the Heaven-Concealing Sword

[17] Unless otherwise noted, all stelae were moved to two "halls of stelae" (*beilang* 碑廊) inside the temple complex following its move to Ruicheng.

[18] For biographical data on Yuan, see *Shanxi tongzhi* (1892), 161:2a-b.

[19] Biographical data on Duan may be found in (*Shanxi tongzhi* (1734), 124:69b; *Shanxi tongzhi* (1892), 136:9a; and *Yongji xianzhi* (1886), 7:32a, 17:12a-13a). Duan was a native of Yongle who served as a Marshal in the Jin dynasty army, and died defending his home against the Mongols in 1230.

[20] Literally "of uncommon bearing and bones" (*fenggu bufan* 風骨不凡). In order to serve as a Taoist priest, one must have "the bones," that is, the skeleton of an immortal (Schipper 1993 (1982):58).

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> Technique (*tiandun jianfa* 天遁劍法). Lord Lü thereupon broke off all ties with the mortal world, building a hut of grass on Lu Shan, where he became fast friends with Wei Ziming and Liang Bozhen.[21] All three later became immortals (Chen 1988: 448)

The text concludes with an autobiographical account of how Yuan came to visit Lü's shrine, and was asked by one of the Taoists residing there to write an inscription for it.

The second hagiographic work on Lü preserved at the Palace of Eternal Joy takes up most of a temple inscription composed in the winter of 1636 by two students in the local prefectural school (*junxiangsheng*), Yan Guangda 嚴光大 and Zheng Wufu 鄭伍甫. This text, entitled "A Record of Repairs to the Walls of the Palace of Purified Yang, Limitless Longevity, and Eternal Joy" (*Chunyang Wanshou Yongle Gong chongxiu qiangyuan ji* 純陽萬壽宮修牆垣記), was carved on a stele located outside the Gate of the Limitless Ultimate. The calligraphy was done by a Taoist residing at the temple named Guo Zhengzhong 郭正忠, while the carving was undertaken by the artisan Hao Mei 郝梅 (nicknamed "Iron Pen" (*tiebi* 鐵筆). While this inscription was ostensibly composed to commemorate the completion of repairs to the walls of the temple, it is mainly an account of Lü's life. Like Yuan Congyi's inscription, it also claims that Lü had passed the exams, and had subsequently encountered Zhongli Quan. The inscription details Lü's achievements in internal alchemy and his attainment of immortality, while also praising Lü for having extended his protection throughout the region (Chen 1988: 1308-1309).

Both these inscriptions are important in that they inform us of the representations of Lü Dongbin held by some members of the gentry, as well as many Perfect Realization Taoists. These men viewed Lü as a successful scholar who had also mastered the essence of internal alchemy and could use his powers to protect others. As I have shown in another paper (Katz 1994), many of these men also worshipped Lü as a potential master who would instruct worthy disciples in the secrets of attaining immortality through internal alchemy. However, I shall demonstrate in the Conclusion that while these representations of Lü were popular among members of the above-mentioned groups, they do not appear to have gained widespread acceptance among other members of the local populace.

Images of Lü Dongbin are also contained in a number of poetic inscriptions preserved at the Palace of Eternal Joy. While those Taoists who lived at and those literati who visited the Palace surely wrote numerous poems about this sacred site, only a small percentage of these works were carved on stelae erected inside the temple (others are preserved in local gazetteers and the collected writings of famous literati).[22] Six poems carved on stone have survived at this temple, five of which describe the author's feelings and one of which is more didactic in nature. The earliest surviving poetic inscription, originally carved on a stele erected outside the Upper Palace on Nine Peaks Mountain, is a poem attributed to Lü Dongbin. Written in seal calligraphy (*zhuan* 篆) by a lecturer (*jiangshi* 講師) at the temple

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[21] I have been unable to identify these men.

[22] For example, of the seven poems about the Palace of Eternal Joy preserved in the 1886 edition of the Yongji county gazetteer, only one appears to have been carved on a stele (see below).

named Zhu Xiangxian 朱象仙 (fl. 1290s-1310s),[23] it purports to represent Lü's feelings while at this site:

> Shining weapon[24] in hand, I dance on the steps of Heaven,
> Coming and going at will, atop a dragon I fly;
> Lying high atop the white clouds, I gaze upon the sun's home,
> Sleeping under the autumn moon, I hold up the entire sky.
>
> Heaven and Earth produce the distant scattered flowers,
> Nature the rippling buds along the slopes so fine;
> In the evening, drunk atop nine peaks,[25] I turn my head and gaze,
> Beneath Beimang Mountain,[26] white bones brightly shine.
>
> (Chen 1988: 766)

This poem exalts the carefree life enjoyed by immortals like Lü, yet also explores the more serious thoughts he has while gazing down on the human world from atop one of his favorite mountain abodes. It seems to have been written with the intent of inspiring the reader to pursue the path to immortality, while also suggesting that this site could be an ideal place for engaging in such a pursuit.

Four other poems composed by mortals during the Ming and Qing dynasties have also been preserved on temple stelae (Su 1963: 56, 59). Unfortunately, neither Chen Yuan nor Su Bai saw fit to record their contents. The only one whose text I have been able to locate to date records a visit to the Palace of Eternal Joy by the Prefectural Magistrate Zhang Jiayin 張佳胤 (1527-1588) in 1564.[27] The stele itself was originally located in front of the Hall of the Three Pure Ones. In this work, Zhang describes the temple as being a beautiful site in a peaceful location, and also expresses his desire to encounter immortal beings while residing there (*Yongji xianzhi* (1886), 22: 31a-b).

One poetic inscription at the Palace of Eternal Joy appears to be more didactic in nature: the "Hundred-character Stele by Old Immortal Lü" (*Lü xianweng baizi bei* 呂仙翁百字碑), a text attributed to Lü Dongbin. The stele itself, originally located atop Nine Peaks Mountain outside the Upper Palace, now stands outside the Shrine to Patriarch Lü. The inscription reads as follows:

> By nature I enjoy peace and quiet,
> In order to care for and stabilize the monkey of the mind (*xinyuan* 心猿).
> I have no need of wine,
> My sexual desires have ceased.

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[23] For more on Zhu, see (Chen 1988:679,682,702,708,746 & 765).

[24] An allusion to Lü's sword.

[25] The term *yan* 巖 here is probably a play on Lü's given name.

[26] Among other things, a famous burial site.

[27] Zhang was later appointed Minister of War (*bingbu shangshu* 兵部尚書) in 1583 (Goodrich & Fang 1976:45-46).

I no longer covet wealth,
Nor do I rage in anger.[28]
Seeing and yet not seeing,
Hearing and yet not hearing.
I criticize not others' errors,
Just search for my own faults.
I need not serve as an official,
For I can survive on my own credit.
During good times I am not frivolous,
In bad times I stick to my task.[29]
[My mind] cares not for the world of mortals,
Transcending all worries and cares.
Softening [my?] glare and settling in the dust,[30]
And mingle with ordinary people.[31]
Because I do not strive for fame,
I have conversed with the exalted ones.[32]
(Chen 1988: 766-767)

This poem may not be didactic in the sense of exhorting readers to pursue a particular course of action. However, it does differ from the other poems mentioned above in that its main concern does not center on describing the Palace of Eternal Joy or Lü's emotional reaction at being there. Instead, it emphasizes the qualities which have enabled Lü to attain immortality, most likely as a means to inspire and instruct other individuals pursuing Taoist self-cultivation.

Conclusion

Based on the evidence presented above, we can see how temple inscriptions provide important information about the history of Taoist cults such as Lü Dongbin's at the Palace of Eternal Joy, particularly when they are used in tandem with local gazetteers, scriptural and liturgical works in the *Taoist Canon* and other collections of Taoist writings, dynastic histories, and collected writings of the literati. In the case of the Palace of Eternal Joy, its many inscriptions describe the main events marking its construction and reconstruction, the identities of cult supporters (including both religious specialists and lay worshippers), the interaction between temple and the state, and the representations of the temple's main deity in

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[28] The first characters of the above four lines are *jiu* 酒 (wine), *se* 色 (sexual pleasure), *cai* 財 (wealth), and *qi* 氣 (anger). These allude to the desires the adept should eliminate through self-cultivation.

[29] Of self-cultivation and the conversion of people to Taoism.

[30] An allusion to one line of Chapter 4 in Laozi's *Daode jing* (*The Classic of the Way and its Power*). My translation is based on (Henricks 1989:56). James Legge translates this line as "attemper brightness, bring self into agreement with obscurity of others" (Legge 1956 (1891):98).

[31] A reference to the many stories describing Lü as descending to the mortal realm in disguise to test potential disciples and help people in need (Baldrian-Hussein 1986; Katz 1994).

[32] A reference to immortals such as his master Zhongli Quan.