

Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism

A Cross-Cultural Perspective



Livia Kohn

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Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective:

Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism Livia Kohn, 2003-06-30 In *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism* a senior scholar of Daoist studies presents for the first time a detailed description and analysis of the organization and practices of medieval Daoist monasteries Following an introduction to the wider comparative issues involved in the study of monasticism Livia Kohn outlines the origin history conceptual understanding and social position of the monasteries which came into their own early in the Tang dynasty She examines texts from this period along with the architectural layout of Daoist monasteries the daily discipline and interpersonal etiquette of monks and nuns their implements and vestments as well as the liturgical dimension regular services annual festivals and special rites such as funerals of monastic life Throughout Professor Kohn maintains a high comparative level linking the Daoist situation and practices not only with Chinese popular Confucian Buddhist and lay Daoist traditions but also with relevant examples from Indian Buddhism and medieval Christianity *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism* breaks new ground in Daoist studies the understanding of Chinese religion and medieval society and the theoretical understanding and interpretation of the comparative phenomenon of monasticism It will be required reading for scholars of Daoist studies and Chinese religion and medieval history and illuminating to experts in comparative religion and religious studies in general as well as to the wider public interested in questions of monastic life **China Between Empires** Mark

Edward Lewis, 2011-04-30 After the collapse of the Han dynasty in the third century CE China divided along a north south line Mark Lewis traces the changes that both underlay and resulted from this split in a period that saw the geographic redefinition of China more engagement with the outside world significant changes to family life developments in the literary and social arenas and the introduction of new religions The Yangzi River valley arose as the rice producing center of the country Literature moved beyond the court and capital to depict local culture and newly emerging social spaces included the garden temple salon and country villa The growth of self defined genteel families expanded the notion of the elite moving it away from the traditional great Han families identified mostly by material wealth Trailing the rebel movements that toppled the Han the new faiths of Daoism and Buddhism altered every aspect of life including the state kinship structures and the economy By the time China was reunited by the Sui dynasty in 589 ce the elite had been drawn into the state order and imperial power had assumed a more transcendent nature The Chinese were incorporated into a new world system in which they exchanged goods and ideas with states that shared a common Buddhist religion The centuries between the Han and the Tang thus had a profound and permanent impact on the Chinese world A Source Book in Chinese Longevity Livia

Kohn, 2012 People today live longer than in any time in history and they want to stay young and active for many years to come The Chinese have successfully practiced longevity techniques for millennia working with process oriented and energy based methods Their literature is full of essential insights and practical guidelines to longer healthier and happier lives This is the first comprehensive collection of traditional longevity sources in English translation Arranged chronologically it

presents materials from ancient medical manuscripts through medieval manuals and Daoist scriptures to late imperial works that specifically focus on women Well organized and illustrated it provides easy access to a treasure trove of information fascinating to scholars practitioners and lay readers alike

Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia James A. Benn, Lori Meeks, James Robson, 2009-09-10 Taking into account the diverse religious historical social and cultural contexts within which they have existed this book provides a multifaceted examination of Buddhist monasteries Written by specialists in the study of monasteries and monastic practice in East Asia it is a timely contribution on this aspect of Buddhist religious practice

Gender, Power, and Talent Jinhua Jia, 2018-03-13 During the Tang dynasty 618 907 changes in political policies the religious landscape and gender relations opened the possibility for Daoist women to play an unprecedented role in religious and public life Women from imperial princesses to the daughters of commoner families could be ordained as Daoist priestesses and become religious leaders teachers and practitioners in their own right Some achieved remarkable accomplishments one wrote and transmitted texts on meditation and inner cultivation another a physician authored a treatise on therapeutic methods medical theory and longevity techniques Priestess poets composed major works and talented priestess artists produced stunning calligraphy In *Gender Power and Talent* Jinhua Jia draws on a wealth of previously untapped sources to explain how Daoist priestesses distinguished themselves as a distinct gendered religious and social group She describes the life journey of priestesses from palace women to abbesses and ordinary practitioners touching on their varied reasons for entering the Daoist orders the role of social and religious institutions forms of spiritual experience and the relationships between gendered identities and cultural representations Jia takes the reader inside convents and cloisters demonstrating how they functioned both as a female space for self determination and as a public platform for both religious and social spheres The first comprehensive study of the lives and roles of Daoist priestesses in Tang China *Gender Power and Talent* restores women to the landscape of Chinese religion and literature and proposes new methodologies for the growing field of gender and religion

Women in Early Medieval China Bret Hinsch, 2018-10-05 This important study provides the only comprehensive survey of Chinese women during the early medieval period of disunion which lasted from the fall of the Eastern Han dynasty in 220 AD to the reunification of China by the Sui dynasty in 581 AD also known as the Six Dynasties Bret Hinsch offers rich descriptions of the most important aspects of female life in this era including family and marriage motherhood political power work inheritance education and religious roles He traces women's lived experiences as well as the emotional life and the ideals they pursued Building on the best Western and Japanese scholarship Hinsch also draws heavily on Chinese primary sources and scholarship most of which is unknown outside China As the first study in English about women in the early medieval era this groundbreaking book will open a new window into Chinese history for Western readers

Teaching Mysticism William B. Parsons, 2011-12-16 The term mysticism has never been consistently defined or employed either in religious traditions or in academic discourse The essays in this volume offer ways of defining

what mysticism is as well as methods for grappling with its complexity in a classroom This volume addresses the diverse literature surrounding mysticism in four interrelated parts The first part includes essays on the tradition and context of mysticism devoted to drawing out and examining the mystical element in many religious traditions The second part engages traditions and religious cultural strands in which mysticism is linked to other terms such as shamanism esotericism and Gnosticism The volume's third part focuses on methodological strategies for defining mysticism with respect to varying social spaces The final essays show how contemporary social issues and movements have impacted the meaning study and pedagogy of mysticism Teaching Mysticism presents pedagogical reflections on how best to communicate mysticism from a variety of institutional spaces It surveys the broad range of meanings of mysticism its utilization in the traditions the theories and methods that have been used to understand it and provides critical insight into the resulting controversies

Making Religion, Making the State Yoshiko Ashiwa, David L. Wank, 2009-03-24 Making Religion Making the State combines cutting edge perspectives on religion with rich empirical data to offer a challenging new argument about the politics of religion in modern China The volume goes beyond extant portrayals of the opposition of state and religion to emphasize their mutual constitution It examines how the modern category of religion is enacted and implemented in specific locales and contexts by a variety of actors from the late nineteenth century until the present With chapters written by experts on Buddhism Protestantism Catholicism Daoism Islam and more this volume will appeal across the social sciences and humanities to those interested in politics religion and modernity in China

Chuang-tzu, 2011-02-01 The timeless wisdom of this classic Taoist text can become a companion on your own spiritual journey The Chuang tzu is the second major text of the Taoist tradition It was compiled in the third century BCE and follows the lead of the best known and oldest of all Taoist texts the Tao te ching Book of the Tao and Its Potency Representing the philosophy of its main author Chuang Chou along with several other early Taoist strands the text has inspired spiritual seekers for over two thousand years Using parable anecdote allegory and paradox the Chuang tzu presents the central message of what was to become the Taoist school a reverence for the Tao the Way of the natural world and the belief that you are not truly virtuous until you are free from the burden of circumstance personal attachments tradition and the desire to reform the world In this special SkyLight Illuminations edition leading Taoist scholar Livia Kohn PhD provides a fresh modern translation of key selections from this timeless text to open up classic Taoist beliefs and practices She provides insightful accessible commentary that highlights the Chuang tzu's call to reject artificially imposed boundaries and distinctions and illustrates how you can live a more balanced authentic and joyful life at ease in perfect happiness by following Taoist principles

Call to Compassion , Ascetic Practices in Japanese Religion Tullio Federico Lobetti, 2013-09-11 Ascetic practices are a common feature of religion in Japan practiced by different religious traditions This book looks at these ascetic practices in an inter sectarian and inter doctrinal fashion in order to highlight the underlying themes common to all forms of asceticism It does so by employing a multidisciplinary

methodology which integrates participant fieldwork the author himself engaged extensively in ascetic practices with a hermeneutical interpretation of the body as the primary locus of transmission of the ascetic embodied tradition By unlocking this bodily data the book unveils the human body as the main tool and text of ascetic practice This book includes discussion of the many extraordinary rituals practiced by Japanese ascetics **The Land of the Five Flavors** Thomas O.

H[?]llmann,2013-11-26 Translation of Schlafender Lotos trunkenes Huhn Religion and Spirituality Martin Dowson,Stuart Devenish,2010-06-01 Religion and spirituality make critical contributions to an inclusive vision for the welfare of minorities the marginalized and other disadvantaged groups in societies and cultures around the globe Religious movements and spiritual traditions work to improve social outcomes for disenfranchised groups by enriching educational political and social agendas and by providing a wide variety of justice driven programs and services Values underpinning these services include the dignity of the human person the sanctity of human life the foundational role of families and communities the transformative power of learning and the advancement of shared personal and social rights and responsibilities These values act as a counter balance to other attitudes and values that may impede pro social cohesion and development Drawing on diverse religious and spiritual perspectives and traditions this new volume provides exciting and enriching examples of theory research and practice that directly contribute to our understanding of how religion and spirituality promote and facilitate social justice and equity in diverse social and cultural contexts with a particular focus on educational settings contexts processes and outcomes Religious communities invest heavily in schools colleges and universities in the belief that these educational institutions enable them to inculcate into their membership the kinds of moral values and qualities that lie at the heart of their spiritual teachings Looking beyond the sacred secular impasse religious organisations attempt to provide a education for life which draws from both the scientia of science and the sapientia of religion and spirituality These depth dimensions provide the pool of values which enable citizens to enact equity mercy and justice in society in the name of God and for the sake of humanity The chapters which comprise this volume demonstrate the possibility of a healthy integration between religion and education from a truly global transdisciplinary and ecumenical perspective From contexts within Asia Africa the USA and Australia and from disciplines ranging from ethics to social work from health to educational curriculum from personal identity to community consciousness this volume makes a unique contribution to the theory and practice of the educational and religious inter face It is a contribution which holds a great deal of promise for being pro humanitas **The Way of Complete Perfection** ,2013-06-05 Originating about 1163 CE Quanzhen Complete Perfection Daoism is one of the most important Daoist movements in Chinese history It remains the dominant form of monastic Daoism in the modern world especially in its Longmen Dragon Gate lineage This landmark anthology provides complete or partial translations of twenty one Quanzhen texts Most have never been translated or even discussed in scholarly literature Louis Komjathy gives particular attention to work completed by the Quanzhen movement s founder Wang Chongyang 1113 1170 CE and his first

generation disciples Translations include representative works from every major genre of Quanzhen literature from poetry and discourse records to didactic texts commentaries and hagiographies Three monastic manuals from the late medieval and late imperial periods of Quanzhen history are also included An introduction to Quanzhen Daoism begins the work and each chapter provides discussions of the history and topics relevant to each translation

Pure Lands in Asian Texts and Contexts Georgios T. Halkias, Richard K. Payne, 2019-03-31 This diverse anthology of original Buddhist texts in translation provides a historical and conceptual framework that will transform contemporary scholarship on Pure Land Buddhism and instigate its recognition as an essential field of Buddhist studies Traditional and contemporary primary sources carefully selected from Buddhist cultures across historical geopolitical and literary boundaries are organized by genre rather than chronologically geographically or by religious lineage a novel juxtaposition that reveals their wider importance in fresh contexts Together these fundamental texts from different Asian traditions expertly translated by eminent and up and coming scholars illustrate that the Buddhism of pure lands is not just an East Asian cult or a marginal type of Buddhism but a pan Asian and deeply entrenched religious phenomenon The volume is organized into six parts Ritual Practices Contemplative Visualizations Doctrinal Expositions Life Writing and Poetry Ethical and Aesthetic Explications and Worlds beyond Sukh vat Each part is introduced and summarized and each translated piece is prefaced by its translator to supply historical and sectarian context as well as insight into the significance of the work Common and less common issues of practice doctrine and intra religious transfer are explored and deeper understandings of the meaning of pure lands are gained through the study of the celestial cosmological internal and earthly pure lands associated with various buddhas bodhisattvas and devotional figures The introduction by the volume editors ties the diverse themes of the book together and provides a historical background to Pure Land Buddhist studies Scholars of Buddhism and Asian religion including graduate and post graduate students as well as Buddhist practitioners will appreciate the range of translated materials and accompanied discussions made accessible in one essential collection the first of its kind to center on the formerly neglected topic of Buddhist pure lands

The Taoists of Peking, 1800-1949 Vincent Goossaert, 2020-03-23 By looking at the activities of Taoist clerics in Peking this book explores the workings of religion as a profession in one Chinese city during a period of dramatic modernization The author focuses on ordinary religious professionals most of whom remained obscure temple employees Although almost forgotten they were all major actors in urban religious and cultural life The clerics at the heart of this study spent their time training disciples practicing and teaching self cultivation performing rituals and managing temples Vincent Goossaert shows that these Taoists were neither the socially despised illiterates dismissed in so many studies nor otherworldly ascetics but active participants in the religious economy of the city In exploring exactly what their crucial role was he addresses the day to day life of modern Chinese religion from the perspective of ordinary religious specialists This approach highlights the social processes institutions and networks that transmit religious knowledge and mediate between

prestigious religious traditions and the people in the street In modern Chinese religion the Taoists are such key actors Without them Taoist ritual and Taoist self cultivation are just empty words Tea in China James A. Benn, 2015-04-23 Tea in China explores the contours of religious and cultural transformation in traditional China from the point of view of an everyday commodity and popular beverage The work traces the development of tea drinking from its mythical origins to the nineteenth century and examines the changes in aesthetics ritual science health and knowledge that tea brought with it The shift in drinking habits that occurred in late medieval China cannot be understood without an appreciation of the fact that Buddhist monks were responsible for not only changing people's attitudes toward the intoxicating substance but also the proliferation of tea drinking Monks had enjoyed a long association with tea in South China but it was not until Lu Yu's compilation of the Chajing The Classic of Tea and the spread of tea drinking by itinerant Chan monastics that tea culture became popular throughout the empire and beyond Tea was important for maintaining long periods of meditation it also provided inspiration for poets and profoundly affected the ways in which ideas were exchanged Prior to the eighth century the aristocratic drinking party had excluded monks from participating in elite culture Over cups of tea however monks and literati could meet on equal footing and share in the same aesthetic values Monks and scholars thus found common ground in the popular stimulant one with few side effects that was easily obtainable and provided inspiration and energy for composing poetry and meditating In addition rituals associated with tea drinking were developed in Chan monasteries aiding in the transformation of China's sacred landscape at the popular and elite level Pilgrimages to monasteries that grew their own tea were essential in the spread of tea culture and some monasteries owned vast tea plantations By the end of the ninth century tea was a vital component in the Chinese economy and in everyday life Tea in China transcends the boundaries of religious studies and cultural history as it draws on a broad range of materials poetry histories liturgical texts monastic regulations many translated or analyzed for the first time The book will be of interest to scholars of East Asia and all those concerned with the religious dimensions of commodity culture in the premodern world Making Transcendents Robert Ford Campany, 2009-02-18 Honorable Mention Joseph Levenson Prize pre 1900 category Association for Asian Studies By the middle of the third century B C E in China there were individuals who sought to become transcendents xian deathless godlike beings endowed with supernormal powers This quest for transcendence became a major form of religious expression and helped lay the foundation on which the first Daoist religion was built Both xian and those who aspired to this exalted status in the centuries leading up to 350 C E have traditionally been portrayed as secretive and hermit like figures This groundbreaking study offers a very different view of xian seekers in late classical and early medieval China It suggests that transcendence did not involve a withdrawal from society but rather should be seen as a religious role situated among other social roles and conceived in contrast to them Robert Campany argues that the much discussed secrecy surrounding ascetic disciplines was actually one important way in which practitioners presented themselves to others He contends moreover that

many adepts were not socially isolated at all but were much sought after for their power to heal the sick divine the future and narrate their exotic experiences The book moves from a description of the roles of xian and xian seekers to an account of how individuals filled these roles whether by their own agency or by others or often by both Campany summarizes the repertoire of features that constituted xian roles and presents a detailed example of what analyses of those cultural repertoires look like He charts the functions of a basic dialectic in the self presentations of adepts and examines their narratives and relations with others including family members and officials Finally he looks at hagiographies as attempts to persuade readers as to the identities and reputations of past individuals His interpretation of these stories allows us to see how reputations were shaped and even co opted sometimes quite surprisingly into the ranks of xian Making Transcendents provides a nuanced discussion that draws on a sophisticated grasp of diverse theoretical sources while being thoroughly grounded in traditional Chinese hagiographical historiographical and scriptural texts The picture it presents of the quest for transcendence as a social phenomenon in early medieval China is original and provocative as is the paradigm it offers for understanding the roles of holy persons in other societies Illusory Abiding Natasha Heller,2020-05-11 A groundbreaking monograph on Yuan dynasty Buddhism Illusory Abiding offers a cultural history of Buddhism through a case study of the eminent Chan master Zhongfeng Mingben Natasha Heller demonstrates that Mingben and other monks of his stature developed a range of cultural competencies through which they navigated social and intellectual relationships They mastered repertoires internal to their tradition for example guidelines for monastic life as well as those that allowed them to interact with broader elite audiences such as the ability to compose verses on plum blossoms These cultural exchanges took place within local religious and social networks and at the same time they comprised some of the very forces that formed these networks in the first place This monograph contributes to a more robust account of Chinese Buddhism in late imperial China and demonstrates the importance of situating monks as actors within broader sociocultural fields of practice and exchange **Debt** David Graeber,2014-12-09 Now in paperback the updated and expanded edition David Graeber s fresh fascinating thought provoking and exceedingly timely Financial Times history of debt Here anthropologist David Graeber presents a stunning reversal of conventional wisdom he shows that before there was money there was debt For more than 5 000 years since the beginnings of the first agrarian empires humans have used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods that is long before the invention of coins or cash It is in this era Graeber argues that we also first encounter a society divided into debtors and creditors Graeber shows that arguments about debt and debt forgiveness have been at the center of political debates from Italy to China as well as sparking innumerable insurrections He also brilliantly demonstrates that the language of the ancient works of law and religion words like guilt sin and redemption derive in large part from ancient debates about debt and shape even our most basic ideas of right and wrong We are still fighting these battles today without knowing it

many adepts were not socially isolated at all but were much sought after for their power to heal the sick divine the future and narrate their exotic experiences The book moves from a description of the roles of xian and xian seekers to an account of how individuals filled these roles whether by their own agency or by others or often by both Campany summarizes the repertoire of features that constituted xian roles and presents a detailed example of what analyses of those cultural repertoires look like He charts the functions of a basic dialectic in the self presentations of adepts and examines their narratives and relations with others including family members and officials Finally he looks at hagiographies as attempts to persuade readers as to the identities and reputations of past individuals His interpretation of these stories allows us to see how reputations were shaped and even co opted sometimes quite surprisingly into the ranks of xian Making Transcendents provides a nuanced discussion that draws on a sophisticated grasp of diverse theoretical sources while being thoroughly grounded in traditional Chinese hagiographical historiographical and scriptural texts The picture it presents of the quest for transcendence as a social phenomenon in early medieval China is original and provocative as is the paradigm it offers for understanding the roles of holy persons in other societies Illusory Abiding Natasha Heller,2020-05-11 A groundbreaking monograph on Yuan dynasty Buddhism Illusory Abiding offers a cultural history of Buddhism through a case study of the eminent Chan master Zhongfeng Mingben Natasha Heller demonstrates that Mingben and other monks of his stature developed a range of cultural competencies through which they navigated social and intellectual relationships They mastered repertoires internal to their tradition for example guidelines for monastic life as well as those that allowed them to interact with broader elite audiences such as the ability to compose verses on plum blossoms These cultural exchanges took place within local religious and social networks and at the same time they comprised some of the very forces that formed these networks in the first place This monograph contributes to a more robust account of Chinese Buddhism in late imperial China and demonstrates the importance of situating monks as actors within broader sociocultural fields of practice and exchange **Debt** David Graeber,2014-12-09 Now in paperback the updated and expanded edition David Graeber s fresh fascinating thought provoking and exceedingly timely Financial Times history of debt Here anthropologist David Graeber presents a stunning reversal of conventional wisdom he shows that before there was money there was debt For more than 5 000 years since the beginnings of the first agrarian empires humans have used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods that is long before the invention of coins or cash It is in this era Graeber argues that we also first encounter a society divided into debtors and creditors Graeber shows that arguments about debt and debt forgiveness have been at the center of political debates from Italy to China as well as sparking innumerable insurrections He also brilliantly demonstrates that the language of the ancient works of law and religion words like guilt sin and redemption derive in large part from ancient debates about debt and shape even our most basic ideas of right and wrong We are still fighting these battles today without knowing it

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Table of Contents Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective

1. Understanding the eBook Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective User Reviews and Ratings
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective Free and Paid eBooks
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective Public Domain eBooks
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective eBook Subscription Services
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective Budget-Friendly Options

6. Navigating Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective Compatibility with Devices
 - Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Interactive Elements Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
8. Staying Engaged with Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Setting Reading Goals Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Monastic Life In Medieval Daoism A Cross Cultural Perspective
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements

- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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