

HANDBOOKS FOR DAOIST PRACTICE

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Louis Komjathy

⊗ 圓玄學院

THE YUEN YUEN INSTITUTE

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Fax: +852 2493 8240

E-mail: adm@yuenyuen.org.hk

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REDOUBLED YANG'S FIFTEEN DISCOURSES

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TRANSLATED BY LOUIS KOMJATHY

INTRODUCTION

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REDOUBLED YANG'S FIFTEEN DISCOURSES

The *Chongyang lijiao shiwu lun* 重陽立教十五論 (Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses to Establish the Teachings; DZ 1233), abbreviated as *Chongyang shiwu lun* 重陽十五論 (Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses) or *Shiwu lun* 十五論 (Fifteen Discourses), is part of the early Quanzhen 全真 (Ch'üan-chen; Complete Perfection) textual corpus. It is generally regarded as one of the clearest and most succinct manuals on the fundamentals of early Complete Perfection practice.

Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses is attributed to Wang Zhe 王勰 (1113-1170), the founder of Complete Perfection Daoism. Wang's Daoist name (*hao* 號) was Chongyang 重陽 (Redoubled Yang); thus, within the tradition, he is referred to respectfully as either Wang Chongyang or Perfected Chongyang (Chongyang zhenren 重陽真人). According to traditional hagiographies (biographies of saints), Wang Chongyang was born in the village of Dawei in Xianyang (near present-day Xi'an, Shaanxi). After fairly unsuccessful attempts at careers in the imperial bureaucracy and then in the military, Wang Chongyang decided to abandon the mundane world. In the summer of 1159, at the age of 48. Wang is believed to have encountered two supernatural beings in a tavern in Ganhe township, near Huxian, Shaanxi. These beings are sometimes identified as Zhongli Quan 鍾離權 (Zhengyang 正陽 [Aligned Yang]; 2nd c. C.E.?) and Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 (Chunyang 純陽 [Purified Yang]; b. 798 C.E.). The latter is traditionally venerated as the patriarch of internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹) lineages more generally. In 1160, at Liqian (northwest of

Xianyang), Wang Chongyang again encountered an immortal (*xian* 仙), usually identified as Lu Dongbin, who transmitted “secret formula in five sections” (*wupian miyu* 五篇秘語; *wupian xuanmi* 五篇玄密) (*Jinlian zhengzong ji* 金蓮正宗記; DZ 173, 2.2a-3b). Following these mystical experiences, Wang moved to the town of Nanshicun near Ganhe (Shaanxi). There he dug a grave mound called the “Tomb for Reviving the Dead” (*huo siren mu* 活死人墓), conventionally rendered as “Tomb of the Living Dead.”¹ He spent three years in this enclosure, most likely engaging in ascetic practices, practicing internal alchemy, and exchanging poetry with those who came to visit him. After this period he filled in the grave and moved to the village of Liujiang, about three miles away from Nanshicun. There Wang built a meditation hut (*an* 庵), which he lived in for the next four years. Then, in the summer of 1167, at the age of 54, he burned down the hut, dancing while he watched it burn to the ground. Thereupon, Wang Chongyang moved from Shaanxi province to Shandong province, located in northeast China.

It was in Shandong that Wang began to attract his most important disciples. One of his earliest disciples was Ma Yu 馬鈺 (Danyang 丹陽 [Elixir Yang]; 1123-1183). At Ma Danyang's residence in Ninghai (Shandong), Wang built another meditation hut, which he called the Quanzhen an 全真庵 (Hermitage of Complete Perfection). The name of this hermitage is the earliest usage of the phrase *quanzhen*, and it was within this and similar meditation enclosures (*huandu* 環堵;

¹ The Tomb for Reviving the Dead was grave mound, a cave-like enclosure. It consisted of a mound of dirt several feet high, with an additional vault ten feet deep underneath.

huanqiang 環牆) that Wang and early Complete Perfection adepts engaged in ascetic and alchemical training, commonly referred to as “cultivating perfection” (*xiuzhen* 修真). Thus, “complete perfection” may be understood as a reference to the completion of alchemical practice, resulting in alchemical transformation, a shift in ontological condition from ordinary human being (*ren* 人) to “immortal” or “transcendent” (*xian* 仙). Extant hagiographies inform us that many people gathered around Wang while he was living in Ninghai, but his increasing demands for ascetic discipline and religious commitment, including the requirement of sexual abstinence, alienated many potential adherents. Nonetheless, with the assistance of both formal disciples and lay patrons, Wang's emerging religious movement began to establish meeting halls or associations (*hui* 會/*she* 社/*tang* 堂), sometimes translated as “congregations.” Some of these included the following, all located in Shandong: Jinlian hui 金蓮會 (Association of the Golden Lotus), Pingdeng hui 平等會 (Association of Equal Rank), Qibao hui 七寶會 (Association of the Seven Treasures), Sanguang hui 三光會 (Association of the Three Radiances), and Yuhua hui 玉華會 (Association of Jade Florescence). It is unclear who initiated such establishments, how many people participated, what types of activities occurred, and what, if any, lasting influence they had on the later development of Complete Perfection as a formal monastic order. However, these meeting halls did provide a communal context for the early Complete Perfection adepts.

The Complete Perfection tradition identifies seven early adepts as the most important, and at times the only, disciples of Wang Chongyang.² These seven disciples are known as the Seven Perfected (*qizhen* 七真). The so-called Seven Perfected are as follows:

1. Ma Yu 馬鈺 (1123-1184), *zi* Xuanbao 玄寶 (Mysterious Treasure), *hao* Danyang 丹陽 (Elixir Yang).
2. Tan Chuduan 譚處端 (1123-1185), *zi* Tongzheng 通正 (Pervasive Alignment), *hao* Changzhen 長真 (Perpetual Perfection).
3. Liu Chuxuan 劉處玄 (1147-1203), *zi* Tongmiao 通妙 (Pervasive Subtlety), *hao* Changsheng 長生 (Perpetual Life).
4. Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148-1127), *zi* Tongmi 通密 (Pervasive Obscurity), *hao* Changchun 長春 (Perpetual Spring)

² This is partially a reflection of later Complete Perfection historiographical concerns and partially an accurate representation of the early adepts who played the most vital roles in ensuring the social and institutional success of Complete Perfection as a Daoist religious movement. It should also be mentioned that three of Wang Chongyang's earliest disciples, Shi Chuhou 史處厚 (1102-1174), Yan Chuchang 嚴處常 (1111-1183), and Liu Tongwei 劉通微 (d. 1196) are often excluded from many standard accounts. Nonetheless, each of Seven Perfected receives a place of veneration in the contemporary Complete Perfection monastic order, as expressed in the *Taishang xuanmen zaotan gongke jing* 太上玄門早壇功課經 (Scriptures of the Great High Mysterious Gate for Morning Altar Recitation; ZW 936) and *Taishang xuanmen wantan gongke jing* 太上玄門晚壇功課經 (Scriptures of the Great High Mysterious Gate for Evening Altar Recitation; ZW 937). These are the primary liturgical texts of the contemporary monastic order, wherein one also finds the well-known "Eight Great Invocations" (*ba da shenzhou* 八大神咒).

5. Wang Chuyi 王處一(1142-1217), *zi* Yuyang 玉陽 (Jade Yang), *hao* Sanyang 傘陽 (Shaded Yang).
6. Hao Datong 郝大通 (1140-1213), *zi* Taigu 太古 (Great Antiquity), *hao* Guangning 廣寧 (Expansive Tranquility)
7. Sun Buer 孫不二 (1119-1183), *hao* Qingjing 清靜 (Clear Stillness).³

Through the work of these seven early practitioners, as well as the support of their own disciples, Complete Perfection began the transition from a grass-roots religious community to one of the most widespread religious institutions in northern China. After the death of Wang Chongyang in 1170, leadership of the movement passed to Ma Danyang, Wang's closest friend and most trusted disciple. Ma Danyang, with the assistance of the other early adepts, was instrumental in transforming the movement from a small community to a regional religious movement. He engaged in extensive

³ Traditionally speaking, Chinese people in general and Daoists in particular have a variety of names, both given and self-selected. These include one's given surname (*xing* 姓) and personal name (*ming* 名). In addition, one has a “style-name” (*zi* 字), which is usually self-selected. Next, there is one's secondary style-name (*hao* 號), which is sometimes self-selected and sometimes given. The French *sobriquet* (“nickname”) is sometimes used to refer to style-names. Finally, in the case of religious adherents, a religious name (*faming* 法名/*daohao* 道號) may be given, usually upon formal initiation or ordination and as a sign of lineage standing. In the case of early Complete Perfection, Wang Chongyang often gave his disciples religious names (*faming*) beginning with *chu* 處 (“abiding”) and style-names (*zi*) beginning with *tong* 通 (“pervasive”). Note also the frequent appearance of *yang* 陽 (“bright”) and *chang* 長 (“perpetual”).

missionary activity, especially in Shaanxi province, where he had contact with over 700 people of various socio-economic backgrounds. After the death of Ma, Qiu Changchun assumed leadership. It was under the direction of Qiu that Complete Perfection moved from regional movement to national monastic institution. This transformation of the tradition was greatly facilitated by Qiu's meeting with Chinggis Qan (Genghis Khan; r. 1206-1227) in 1220, during which Complete Perfection became imperially recognized and given *de facto* control of northern China's religious communities. This led to followers of Complete Perfection building new monasteries and seizing control of many existing Chan 禪 (Zen) Buddhist monasteries. Tax-exempt status also attracted many individuals, who sought to avoid the financial oppression of supporting Mongol aspirations for world domination.

Drawing upon the work of Russell Kirkland and Livia Kohn on the Daoist tradition more generally (Kirkland 1997; 2002; Kohn 1998; 2000b), the history of the Complete Perfection movement may, in turn, be divided into at least five major phases: (1) formative, (2) incipient organized, (3) organized, (4) resurgent, and (5) modern. The formative phase includes the seclusion and spiritual determination of Wang Chongyang, the founder, and his subsequent attempts to communicate his vision of religious vocation to others. As certain individuals became convinced of its relevance and efficacy, a group of dedicated disciples began forming around Wang Zhe, the so-called Seven Perfected in particular. This marks the beginning of the “incipient organized” phase, and it included the establishment of the various meeting halls or associations. One may say that Complete

Perfection as an identifiable religious movement, with a distinct sense of religious identity (see Kohn and Roth 2002; Goossaert and Katz 2001), commences at this point. The “organized” phase involved the expansion of Complete Perfection throughout different geographical regions in northern China, especially under the leadership of Ma Danyang and Qiu Changchun; this simultaneously included both a more inclusive stance concerning the requirement of an “ascetic” or “renunciant orientation” and a commitment to establishing and/or inhabiting formal monasteries. That is, at this point there was both a recognition of lay participation and a movement toward monasticism. In the organized phase, Complete Perfection leaders and proponents also had increasing contact with imperial households and courts, culminating in Qiu Changchun's meeting with Chinggis Qan (Genghis Khan; ca. 1162-1227; r. 1206-1227) in 1222 and the Qan's granting Qiu *de facto* control of the whole of north China's organized religious communities. Complete Perfection continued to gain power and increase in membership during the years of 1222 to 1280, partially due to its attraction as the primary tax-exempt religious institution during the Mongol-Yuan (1260-1368). However, much like the Mongolian control of China more generally, Complete Perfection's superior status was fairly short-lived. Under Qubilai Qan (Khubilai Khan; Emperor Shizu; 1215-1294; r. 1260-1294), a number of anti-Daoist edicts were issued, culminating in the burning and destruction of Daoist texts, textual collections, and printing blocks in 1281. In my interpretation of Complete Perfection history, this marks the end of the organized phase.⁴ Although Complete Perfection

⁴ Here it should be noted that Complete Perfection did not cease to be “organized” at this point, and so this interpretive framework has a certain

continued to exist, its place of supremacy was replaced by the Zhengyi 正一(Orthodox Unity) tradition, associated with the earlier Tianshi 天時(Celestial Masters) movement, during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). The period of “resurgence” begins in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), when the Longmen 龍門 (Dragon Gate) branch of Complete Perfection was formally established by Wang Changyue 王常月 (Kunyang 崑陽; 1622-1680).⁵ During the resurgent phase, we encounter such influential figures as Min Yide 閔一得 (Lanyun 懶雲 [Lazy Cloud]; 1758-1836) and Liu Yiming 劉一明 (Wuyuan 悟元 [Awakening to the Origin]; 1734-1821).⁶ The “modern” phase in turn parallels the end of Chinese imperial rule in 1911. It includes the near-catastrophic devastation inflicted on the tradition during the so-

heuristic deficiency. One may, in turn, think of the “resurgent phase” as a period of reorganization.

⁵ The Dragon Gate branch is traditionally associated with Qiu Changchun. During the resurgent phase, as documented in such texts as the *Qinggui xuanmiao*, 清規玄妙 (Pure Regulations of the Mysterious and Wondrous; ZW 361), each of the Seven Perfected was identified with particular sub-lineages. These were as follows: Longmen pai 龍門派 (Dragon Gate Lineage)/Qiu Changchun; Suishan pai 隨山派 (Mount Sui Lineage)/Liu Changsheng; Nanwu pai 南無派 (Nanwu Lineage)/Tan Changzhen; Yushan pai 遇山派 (Mount Yu Lineage)/Ma Danyang; Huashan pai 華山派 (Mount Hua Lineage)/Hao Taigu; Yushan pai 嶽山派 (Mount Yu Lineage)/Wang Yuyang; and Qingjing pai 清靜爭派 (Clarity and Stillness Lineage)/Sun Buer (Koyanagi 1934). While Dragon Gate Daoists hold a place of veneration for Qiu Changchun as founder, recent research suggests that the formal lineage of Dragon Gate goes back to Wang Changyue (Esposito 1993; 2000; 2001). The name Longmen refers to the mountain range in western Shaanxi province, where Qiu Changchun spent time engaging in solitary practice.

⁶ Liu Yiming remains an influential figure in contemporary Dragon Gate, especially through his *Daoshu shier zhong* 道書十二種 (Ten Daoist Texts). Much of this work has been translated in Thomas Cleary's various publications.

called Cultural Revolution (1967-1977), also known as the Ten Years of Chaos. However, Complete Perfection's place in the modern world, primarily through the recognition of the Dragon Gate branch by the Chinese Communist government as the official form of organized Daoism in mainland China, has become more stable since the loosening of governmental control since 1978 (see Pas 1989). Complete Perfection temples and monasteries are currently being built or restored throughout mainland China. The current headquarters of Dragon Gate is Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery) in Beijing, which also houses the Chinese Daoist Association (Zhongguo daojiao xiehui 中國道教協會).⁷ In addition, the Dragon Gate lineage, at least in name, has spread to not only Hong Kong and Taiwan, but also Canada, England, Italy, and the United States.

With regard to early Complete Perfection beliefs and practices, Wang Chongyang and his immediate disciples clearly advocated and followed a religious way of life centering on self-cultivation, and on ascetic and alchemical practice in particular. For instance, we know that Wang Chongyang and his early disciples often spent extended periods in seclusion. Many of the early Complete Perfection adepts engaged in solitary training in meditation enclosures (*huandu* 環堵; *huanqiang* 環牆), which were rooms walled in on all sides.⁸ The

⁷ Daoist restoration and revitalization efforts received a set back with the Chinese government's suppression of Falun gong 法輪功 (Dharma Wheel Exercises), a Qigong cult, in 1999.

⁸ *Huandu* 環堵 literally refers to a small square hut measuring four *du* 堵 on each side, with one *du* equaling one *zhang* 丈 (approx. 3 meters). The earliest occurrences of the term appear in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Book of Master

adept walled himself or herself in for a fixed period of time, in order to meditate continuously and to complete a given stage of internal alchemy practice. Wang Chongyang popularized the 3-year (1000-day) and 100-day enclosure, and Ma Danyang, who practiced both kinds of retreat, built *huandu* in various places along his travels. As mentioned, Wang Chongyang spent extended periods of time in seclusion in various hermitages (*an* 庵), which may have been a precursor to or substitute for the meditation enclosure.⁹ The commitment to solitary ascetic training was a hallmark of early Complete Perfection.

Returning to the life of Wang Chongyang, there are a variety of texts in the Ming-dynasty (1368-1644) Daoist Canon attributed to him. Wang was, first and foremost, a prolific and competent poet, often employing poetry as an opportunity to transmit his religious vision. There are three extant poetry collections. These are the following: *Chongyang quanzhen ji* 重陽全真集 (Redoubled Yang's Anthology of Complete Perfection; DZ 1153); *Chongyang jiaohua ji* 重陽教化集 (Redoubled Yang's Anthology on Teaching and Conversion; DZ 1154); and *Chongyang fenli shihua ji* 重陽分梨十化集 (Redoubled Yang's Anthology on Ten Conversions through Dividing Pears; DZ 1155). These collections provide important information on Wang's life, teaching methods, cultivation guidelines and techniques, as well as mystical experiences. We also have the *Chongyang shou Danyang ershisi jue* 重陽授丹陽二十四訣 (Twenty-Four Instructions

Zhuang) and *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites), where it is the dwelling-place of a hermit.

⁹ These meditation enclosures also recall the earlier Daoist pure rooms or chambers of quiescence (*jingshi* 靜室).

Transmitted from Redoubled Yang to Elixir Yang; DZ 1158). This text consists of a series of definitions about twenty-four technical terms employed in early Complete Perfection. It is written in the form of a dialogue between Wang Chongyang and Ma Danyang. Next, there is the *Chongyang zhenren jinguan yusuo jue* 重陽真人金關玉 闕玉鎖訣 (Perfected Redoubled Yang's Instructions on the Gold Pass and Jade Lock; DZ 1156). This is one of the most technical manuals on early Complete Perfection practice. It covers a wide range of cultivation techniques, including detailed instructions on alchemical transformation.¹⁰ The final text attributed to Wang Chongyang is the *Chongyang lijiao shiwu lun* 重陽立教十五論 (Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses to Establish the Teachings; DZ 1233), which is translated in the present handbook.

As the title indicates, *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* consists of fifteen sections.

1. Living in Hermitages (*zhu'an* 住庵)
2. Cloud Wandering (*yunyou* 雲遊)
3. Studying Texts (*xueshu* 學書)
4. Preparing Medicinal Herbs (*heyao* 合藥)
5. On Construction (*gaizao* 蓋造)
6. Companions in the Dao (*he daoban* 合道伴)
7. Sitting in Meditation (*dazuo* 打坐)
8. Controlling the Heart-mind (*jiangxin* 降心)

¹⁰ For a complete, annotated translation of this text see my book *Cultivating Perfection: Mysticism and Self-Transformation in Early Quanzhen Daoism* (Brill, 2007).

9. Refining Innate Nature (*lianxing* 鍊性)
10. Pairing the Five Qi (*pipei wuqi* 匹配五氣)
11. Merging Innate Nature and Life-destiny (*hun xingming*; 昆性命)
12. The Way of Sages (*shengdao* 聖道)
13. Going Beyond the Three Realms (*chao sanjie* 超三界)
14. Methods for Nourishing the Body (*yangshen zhi fa* 養身之法)
15. Leaving the Mundane World (*lifanshi* 離凡世)

From these discourse titles alone, one gains a glimpse into the religious worldview, spiritual orientation, and training regimens of the early Complete Perfection movement.

When compared with a text such as *Redoubled Yang's Instructions on the Gold Pass and Jade Lock*, the *Fifteen Discourses* clearly provides less technical details about advanced Daoist practice. The overall tone and general accessibility of the *Fifteen Discourses* inspires certain questions. What was its context of composition? Who was its intended audience? One possibility is that the text was intended as a succinct summation of basic Complete Perfection beliefs and practices. As the text does seem to have this type of orientation, it could have been composed to orient and introduce prospective adherents, such as individuals who attended the various meeting halls in search of deeper religious training. Another possibility is that it was intended to provide novices and beginning-level practitioners with a guidebook or manual on the fundamentals of Complete Perfection training.

In this respect, it is also noteworthy that the text begins with a section entitled “Living in Hermitages” (*zhu'an* 住庵). After being confirmed of a sincere interest and religious commitment, the aspiring Complete Perfection adept was required to go into seclusion.

All renunciants (*chujia* 出家) must first retreat to a hermitage (*an* 庵). A hermitage is an enclosure (*she* 舍), a place where the body (*shen* 身) may be attuned and entrusted. When the body is attuned and entrusted, the heart-mind (*xin* 心) gradually realizes (*jiande* 漸得) serenity (*an* 安). Qi and spirit (*shen* 神) become harmonious and expansive. Then you may enter the Way of Perfection (*ru zhendao* 入真道). (DZ 1233, la)¹¹

This passage suggests more complete dedication to a Daoist religious path through abandoning the mundane world and embracing intensive spiritual training. The text presupposes that the adept has already decided to leave behind the life of a householder; one has already decided to become a monk or nun by leaving the family (*chujia* 出家), that is, severing ties to parents, spouses, and children.¹² The Way of Perfection is a path of asceticism and renunciation. This initial commitment is followed by solitary meditation practice, during which

¹¹ Interestingly, this last phrase *ru zhendao* 入真道 (lit., “enter the perfect Dao”) may refer to complete dedication to the Dao as perfection or be taken as shorthand for *ru quanzhen dao* 入全真道, that is, formally joining the religious movement of Quanzhen (Complete Perfection) as a renunciant.

¹² *Chujia* is the Chinese rendering of the Sanskrit *pravrajya*, a Buddhist technical term. It means not only that one has left the family and taken up residence in a monastery, but also that one has vowed to abstain from any sexual relations.

one becomes purified of distractions, entanglements, and desires. It is only after this period of seclusion that one receives more complete training. Thus, the text assumes that such preliminary requirements have been taken before additional instructions are given.

Of the various sections, two in particular deserve some introductory comments. First, “cloud wandering” (*yunyou* 雲遊) refers to pilgrimage or travels to distant temples and sacred places in search of deeper training. In its alternative form, “wandering cloud” (*youyun* 遊雲), it refers to wandering Daoist adepts. Like clouds drifting over mountain peaks, the aspiring practitioner travels from sacred site to sacred site. In the process, one may come in contact with higher-level teachers and receive more advanced training. “Crossing over distant waters of turbulent and roiling waves, one inquires into the Dao without becoming wearied. Then even a single phrase exchanged between teacher and disciple initiates complete illumination (*yuanguang* 圓光). Internally one realizes the great issue of life and death and comes to stand as an elder (*zhang* 丈) of Quanzhen (Complete Perfection)” (1b). “Companions in the Dao” (*daoban* 道伴 / *daoyou* 道友) expresses the central importance of friendship in Daoist cultivation. Such friendship is spiritual friendship, an easy and natural relationship based on mutual respect and reciprocal flourishing. Companions in the Dao are adepts with natural affinities and parallel aspirations who recognize their own practice-realization in each other. *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* provides two primary criteria. First, one must examine the character of people before becoming friends with them. Some important qualities include humaneness, respect, reverence, honesty, reliability, discernment,

insight, generosity, and wisdom. Such qualities as honesty, integrity, and genuineness are vital. Character, including intentions and motivations, is especially important with regard to spiritual matters. Second, there are three types of people who will nourish and advance one's practice and three types who will harm and hinder one's training.

Join those with an illuminated heart-mind (*mingxin* 明心), wisdom (*hui* 慧), or strong determination (*zhi* 志). Avoid those who are ignorant concerning external projections of the heart-mind, who lack wisdom and are turbid in innate nature, or who lack determination and are inclined to quarrel. (3a)

The emphasis here on the necessity of spiritual companionship recalls a similar concern in chapter six of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Book of Master Zhuang).

Master Si 祀, Master Yu 輿, Master Li 犁, and Master Lai 來 were talking together. “Who can regard non-action (*wu-wei* 無爲) as his head, life (*sheng* 生) as his back, and death (*si* 死) as his rump? Who knows that death and life, existence (*cun* 存) and annihilation (*wang* 亡), are a single body (*yiti* 一體)? I will be his friend.” The four looked at each other and smiled. There was no obstruction in their heart-minds (*mo ni yu xin* 莫逆於心) and so they became friends.

And later on in the same chapter we find the following:

Master Sanghu 桑戶, Master Mengfan 孟反, and Master Qinzhang 琴張 addressed each other: “Who can join with others without joining with others (*xiangyu yu wu xiangyu* 相與於無相與)? Who can act with others without acting with others (*xiangwei yu wu xiangwei* 相爲方令無相爲)? Who can ascend to the heavens (*dengtian* 登天) and wander in the mists (*youwu* 遊霧), roam among the Limitless (*qiaotiao wuji* 曉跳無極),¹³ and forget life (*wangsheng* 忘生) forever?” The three looked at each and smiled. There was no obstruction in their heart-minds (*mo ni yu xin* 莫逆於心) and so they became friends.

These passages provide another insight concerning friendship: authentic friendship is natural and spirit-based. The heart-mind of each individual involved forms one half of a talisman. When such heart-minds are joined in relationship, a feeling of wholeness and integrity pervades. Authentic friendship is simple, supportive, and nourishing. It involves unconditional positive regard and a recognition of possibility and capacity.

Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses also contains some technical terminology that deserves mention. First, the text understands the body-self (*shen* 身) as consisting of various aspects. First, there are the so-called Three Treasures (*sanbao* 三寶), namely, vital essence (*jing* 精), subtle breath (*qi* 氣), and spirit (*shen* 神). In the most conventional terms, vital essence, qi, and spirit are understood along a spectrum, from the most substantial to the most subtle or refined. The

¹³ Reading *qiaotiao* 曉跳 (“wander”) for *naotiao* (“grasp”).

character *jing* 精 consists of *mi* 米 (“rice”) and *qing* 青 (“azure,” but also “pure”). Etymologically, it refers to young or unprocessed rice. By extension, it refers to the essence of things. Vital essence is understood as a more substantial aspect of *qi*, and *qi* is understood as a more subtle aspect of vital essence. Here vital essence relates to the actual physical foundation of health and vitality: seminal fluids (*jing* 精) in men and blood (*xue* 血) in women. The connection between vital essence and *qi* may also be understood etymologically: *qi* 氣 consists of *mi* 米 (“rice”) with *qi* 气 (“vapor” or “steam”). Both the characters for vital essence and *qi* contain the component for “rice.” As vital essence is rice in grain form, *qi* is rice in vapor form. Through the “cooking” (refining) of rice grain, steam is produced; through the cooking of vital essence, *qi* is produced. Finally, *shen* 神 relates to “spiritual dimensions” (*shi* 示), omens and similar divine manifestations, and the establishment and attendance to such a connection (*shen* 申). Spirit relates to consciousness and “divine” capacities more generally.

The text also mentions other terms designating aspects of the body-self. First, various dimensions of the heart-mind (*xin* 心) are centrally important in Complete Perfection practice. Traditionally speaking, the heart-mind is a focal point of Daoist training. Particular emphasis is placed on the ability of the heart-mind (*xin* 心) either to attain complete enlightenment (*yuanguang* 圆光) or to separate the adept from the Dao as Source. Here the heart-mind is understood both as a physical location in the chest (the heart [*xin* 心] as “organ” [*zang* 臟]) and as relating to thoughts (*nian* 念) and emotions (*qing* 情) (the heart as “consciousness” [*shi* 識]). Intellectual and emotional activity is a

possible source of dissipation and disruption. However, it is also the abode of spirit (*shen* 神), the sacred capacity within human beings. In a technical sense, the heart-mind also relates to intention (*yi* 意) and aspiration (*zhi* 志). The character *yi* 意 consists of *yin* 音 (“sound”) over *xin* 心 (“heart-mind”). Intention is the sound of the heart-mind, the core condition of the heart-mind made manifest. As concentrated consciousness, intention is used in Daoist cultivation specifically to guide the circulation of qi. Closely associated with intention, *zhi* 志 is usually translated as “will,” but is here rendered as “determination” and “aspiration.”¹⁴ Read etymologically, *zhi* 志 consists of *shi* 士 (“adept”) over *xin* 心 (“heart-mind”). The *shi* component is usually read as a phonetic, but may also be taken as a meaning-carrier. In this reading, aspiration or determination is the heart-mind manifested in the sincerity and commitment of a Daoist adept.

Redoubled Yang 's Fifteen Discourses also continually refers to innate nature (*xing* 性) and life-destiny (*ming* 命). The character *xing* 性 consists of *xin* 心 (“heart-mind”) and *sheng* 生 (“to be born”); innate nature is the heart-mind with which was born. The character *ming* 命 may be associated with *ling* 令 (“mandate”); life-destiny is a decree

¹⁴ In classical Chinese medicine, *yi*, usually rendered as “intention,” is associated with the Earth phase and the spleen. It relates to both one’s guiding direction and thinking/planning (*si* 思) the field (*dan* 田) of the heart-mind (*xin* 心), more generally. *Zhi*, usually rendered as “will,” is associated with the Water phase and the kidneys. It relates to sustained follow-through.

from the cosmos made manifest as one's corporeality.¹⁵ Generally speaking, innate nature relates to consciousness and the heart-mind (*xin* 心), while life-destiny relates to physicality and the body (*shen* 身). In *Redoubled Yang Fifteen Discourses*, we are informed that innate nature relates to spirit, while life-destiny relates to qi (4b). Complete Perfection practice involves the dual cultivation of innate nature and life-destiny, a commitment to both stillness (*jing* 靜) and movement (*dong* 動) practices.

As mentioned, certain intellectual, emotional, and behavioral patterns disrupt the inherent enlightened condition of the heart-mind. On the most general level, we find reference to the “world of dust” (*chenshi* 塵世), the mundane world as limiting human possibility. Such limitations include personal desire, familial expectations, and societal obligations. *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* in turn emphasizes severing ties to the Three Realms (*sanjie* 三界), sometimes translated as the Three Worlds. The Three Realms are the Realm of Desire (*yujie* 欲界), Realm of Form (*sejie* 色界), and the Realm of Formlessness (*wuse jie* 無色界). The process of becoming unconditioned by these realms is a three-fold forgetting (*wang* 忘) and a corresponding three-fold liberation (*jie* 解). First, one forgets (*wang* 忘) planning and thinking. This is liberation from the Realm of Desire. Then one forgets mental projects (*jing* 境), that is, residual images of the external world. This is liberation from the Realm of

¹⁵ In a more esoteric interpretation, the character *ming* 命 depicts the two kidneys viewed from the back. This recalls an alternative name for the kidneys, Mingmen 命門 (Gate of Life), and their association with vital essence (*jing* 精).

Form. Finally, one no longer clings to the idea of “forgetting” or “emptiness” (*kong* 空). This is liberation from the Realm of Formlessness. This process of becoming unconditioned by external concerns and influences and returning to one's original nature, one's inherent enlightenment, involves refraining from various patterns of dissipation. One source of dissipation is the external world. Disruption of personal harmony and spiritual alignment occurs when the senses are engaged. *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* recommends sealing the Four Gates (*simen* 四門), namely, the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. By directing awareness and attentiveness inward, one increases vitality and energetic aliveness. There is a movement from the external to the internal: one cultivates internal practice (*neixing* 內行) over external accomplishment (*waigong* 外功) (2b). The text also identifies greed (*tan* 貪) as a primary source of disruption.¹⁶ This parallels the emphasis in early Complete Perfection on abandoning certain ontological tendencies, including ignorance (*wuming* 無明), vexation (*fannao* 煩惱), greed (*tan* 貪), craving (*luan/lian* 戀), intoxicants (*jiu* 酉), sex (*se* 色), wealth (*cai* 財) and

¹⁶ Here one may recall the Buddhist emphasis on desire as the source of suffering. Classical Buddhism emphasizes the Four Noble Truths: (1) Suffering/unsatisfactoriness; (2) The origin or arising of suffering; (3) The end of suffering; (4) The path leading to the end of suffering. That is, the nature of existence is suffering/impermanence. The source of suffering is desire. Eliminate desire and you eliminate suffering. The path to the end of suffering is the so-called Eightfold Path: (1) Right Understanding; (2) Right Thought; (3) Right Speech; (4) Right Action; (5) Right Livelihood; (6) Right Effort; (7) Right Mindfulness; and (8) Right Concentration.

anger (*qi* 氣).¹⁷ The way of rectifying such patterns of dissipation involve dedication to practice (*xiuxing* 修行) and cultivating perfection (*xiuzhen* 修真).

Drawing upon earlier Tang-dynasty (618-907) Clarity-and-Stillness literature and observation (*guan* 觀) manuals,¹⁸ *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* emphasizes the importance of meditation. When discussing “sitting in meditation” (*dazuo* 打坐) and “quiet sitting” (*jingzuo* 靜坐), a three-stage process is identified: calmness (*an* 安), stillness (*jing* 靜), and stability (*ding* 定). The adept begins by cultivating relaxation and calmness, specifically serenity throughout the body. As this relaxation deepens, the intellectual and emotional turmoil of the habituated heart-mind begins to become stilled. By cultivating stillness, clarity (*qing* 清) and illumination (*ming* 明) also come to develop. One moves from a state of agitation, referred to as the “chaotic heart-mind” (*luanxin* 亂心), to a state of serenity, referred to as the “stabilized heart-mind” (*dingxin* 定心). As stillness deepens, the heart-mind and spirit become stabilized and concentrated. In this condition of stability, one realizes one's innate nature and becomes completely immersed in the Dao.

¹⁷ In this case, it is interesting to note that *qi* 氣, subtle breath or “energy” when used in a positive sense, refers to “anger” when referring to a negative condition. Anger is the dispersing or harmful manifestation of *qi*.

¹⁸ A wide variety of earlier Daoist texts are cited and identified as important in the early Complete Perfection tradition. Some of these include the *Daode jing* 道德經 (Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power), *Yinfu jing* 陰符經 (Scripture on the Hidden Talisman; DZ 31), and *Qingjing jing* 清靜經 (Scripture on Clarity and Stillness; DZ 620). *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* cites the *Scripture on the Hidden Talisman* in section 4b.

The text also emphasizes the relationship between practice (*xing* 行), also referred to as cultivation (*xiu* 修), and accomplishment (*gong* 功). In the Buddhist tradition, which exerted a certain degree of influence on Complete Perfection, *xing* most often refers to specific types of “deeds” or “activities,” while *gong* refers to “merit.” These terms in turn relate to “karma” (*yuan* 緣). One way of rectifying one's karma is to perform beneficial and virtuous deeds. Such deeds lead to the accumulation of merits, which ensure that one's negative karma becomes neutralized and that one will acquire a more positive rebirth. While this Buddhist perspective does pervade certain Complete Perfection discussions, *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* uses the terms to discuss Daoist cultivation in particular. Through practice, which includes various methods (*fa* 法), exercises (*gong* 功), and techniques (*shu* 術), one's level of cultivation increases. Internal practice (*neixing* 內行) takes precedence over external accomplishment (*waigong* 外功). Internal realization is primary. Nonetheless, certain “accomplishments” necessarily occur during the course of Daoist training. The important thing is to accept these as signs of successful training, rather than opportunities to inflate one's ego or assert one's superiority.

An additional level of Complete Perfection practice involves internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹). In the course of internal alchemy, the adept focuses on exploring and activating the Daoist subtle body, the energetic body within the body. This type of training regimen involves specific elixir fields (*dantian* 丹田) and precious palaces (*baodian* 寶殿). The alchemical process in turn requires refinement

(*lian* 鍊/煉). In the most general terms, it involves the following three stages: (1) refining vital essence and transmuting it into qi (*lianjing huaqi* 煉精化氣); (2) refining qi and transmuting it into spirit (*lianqi huashen*, 煉氣化神); and (3) refining spirit and returning to emptiness (*lianshen huanxu* 諫神還虛). Through this process, one comes to complete the elixir (*chengdan* 成丹) and become alchemically transformed (*bianhua* 變化).

In this respect, Discourse Ten, “Pairing the Five Qi” (*pipei wuqi* 匹配五氣), is especially technical. The Five Qi (*wuqi* 五氣) refer to the qi of the five yin-orbs (*zang* 藏/臟), which are the liver (*gan* 肝), heart (*xin* 心), spleen (*pi* 脾), lungs (*fei* 肺), and kidneys (*shen* 腎). The Central Palace (*zhonggong* 中宮) here probably refers to the Ocean of Qi (*qihai* 氣海), the lower abdomen. The Three Primes (*sanyuan* 三元) are usually synonymous with the three elixir fields and/or their corresponding “constituents”, “corresponding to the perineum (vital essence), lower abdomen (qi), and center of head (spirit). The Azure Dragon (*qinglong* 清龍) and White Tiger (*baihu* 白虎) are two of the four directional spirits, with the other two being the Vermilion Bird (*zhuque* 朱雀) and Mysterious Warrior (*xuanwu* 玄武). The Azure Dragon corresponds to the liver, while the White Tiger corresponds to the lungs. In Complete Perfection, the Azure Dragon most often designates spirit, while the White Tiger designates qi. Similarly, lead (*qian* 鉛) relates to original spirit (*yuanshen* 元神), while mercury (*hong* 衆) relates to original qi (*yuanyi* 元氣). The cinnabar sand (*dansha* 丹砂) is another designation for the elixir (*dan* 丹), the compounding of which is the culmination of alchemical practice.

One way of mapping the completion of such training regimens centers on perfection (*zhen* 真) and immortality (*xian* 仙). Perfection refers to the Dao in its original completeness as well as to the adept in his or her fully refined condition. One etymological reading of the character *zhen* 真 suggests that it depicts an alchemical stove; in this sense, it resembles other characters utilized in Chinese alchemy traditions, with one example being *ding* 鼎 (“tripod”). In addition to advocating the process of cultivating perfection (*xiuzhen* 修真) and completing the elixir (*chengdan* 成丹), *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* makes frequent reference to “immortality” or “transcendence” (*xian* 仙/僊). Etymologically speaking, the character *xian* 仙 contains the *ren* 人 (“person”) radical with *shan* (山 “mountain”). A variant (權) consists of *ren* 人 with *xian* (“flying”). Etymologically, then, a *xian* is a mountain recluse and/or an ecstatic traveler. At certain times, *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* seems to suggest that becoming an immortal involves ascending to the heavens (*dengtian* 登天) and joining the ranked immortals (*liexian* 列仙). In this respect, we find references to two Daoist celestial locations: *Zigong* 紫宮(Purple Palace) and *Yuqing* 玉清 (Jade Clarity). The latter refers to one of three heavens that occupied a central place in the early Shangqing 上清(Highest Clarity) tradition. These three heavens were as follows: *Taiqing* 太清(Great Clarity), *Shangqing* 上清(Highest Clarity), and *Yuqing* 玉清(Jade Clarity). Jade Clarity was the highest, or most refined, of the three. In these terms, immortality seems to involve the spirit becoming liberated (*shenjie* 神解) from the body, with the spirit being some type of personal entity. In contrast, other passages in *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* suggest that immortality is transpersonal; it

involves some type of mystical unification or disappearance in the cosmos. In this way, immortality or transcendence relates to consciousness in a more purified state, in a condition of complete merging with the Dao. That is, here emptiness (*xu* 虛/*kong* 空) is primary.

As mentioned, *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* has been identified as the most concise and clearest expression of early Complete Perfection worldview and practice. The text's overall place in the later Complete Perfection monastic order remains unclear at the present time. However, *Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses* has received increasing attention among contemporary Complete Perfection adherents and monastic communities. It has been included in various mainland Chinese Daoist anthologies and published in pamphlet form to be circulated at Daoist temples and monasteries to visitors and patrons. In addition, the Complete Perfection monastic community of Yuquan yuan 玉泉院 at Huashan 華山(Mount Hua; Huayin, Shaanxi) commissioned the engraving of the text on a stele which was erected in front of the Qizhen dian 七真殿(Shrine of the Seven Perfected).

Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses has been translated numerous times. The earliest translation appeared in Yao Tao-chung's Ph.D. dissertation, entitled "Ch'uan-chen: A New Taoist Sect in North China during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries" (1980). An alternative translation was prepared by Patricia Ebrey for *Chinese Civilization and Society: A Sourcebook* (1981). This translation was reprinted in *Chinese Religion: An Anthology of Sources* (1995), edited

by Deborah Sommer. Additional translations may be found in Florian Reiter's article "Ch'ung-yang Sets Forth His Teachings in Fifteen Discourses" (1985), Thomas Cleary's *Vitality, Energy, Spirit: A Taoist Sourcebook* (1991), and Livia Kohn's *The Taoist Experience* (1993). For a readily accessible English introduction to early Complete Perfection Daoism see Stephen Eskildsen's *The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters* and my forthcoming books *Cultivating Perfection* and *The Way of Complete Perfection*.

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TRANSLATION

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**REDOUBLED YANG'S
FIFTEEN DISCOURSES TO ESTABLISH THE TEACHINGS**

— Discourse 1: Living in Hermitages —

All renunciants must first retreat to a hermitage. A hermitage is an enclosure, a place where the body may be attuned and entrusted. When the body is attuned and entrusted, the heart-mind gradually realizes serenity. Qi and spirit become harmonious and expansive. Then you may enter the Way of Perfection.

Now, when movement and activity become necessary, you must not overdo things and exhaust yourself. If you overdo things and become exhausted, you will dissipate your qi. And yet, you cannot remain entirely inactive either. If you do not move, your qi and blood will become obstructed and weakened.

You should, therefore, find a middle way between movement and stillness. Only then can you guard constancy and be at peace with your endowments. This is the method of residing in serenity.

— Discourse 2: Cloud Wandering —

There are two kinds of wandering.

The first involves viewing the brilliant scenery of mountains and rivers, the splendid colors of flowers and trees. Some people engaging in this kind of wandering delight in the variety and splendor of provinces or prefectures. Others enjoy the towers and pavilions of temples and monasteries. Some seek out friends to forget their concerns. Others indulge the heart-mind with fine clothing and food. People like this, even if they travel roads measuring ten thousand miles, exhaust their bodies and squander their strength. Regarding the sights of the world, their heart-minds become confused and their qi declines. Such people are engaging in empty cloud wandering.

The second kind of wandering involves investigating innate nature and life-destiny and inquiring into the subtle and mysterious. Ascending high summits beyond peaks and gorges, such a person visits enlightened teachers without becoming exhausted. Crossing over distant waters of turbulent and roiling waves, one inquires into the Dao without becoming wearied. Then even a single phrase exchanged between teacher and disciple initiates complete illumination. Internally one realizes the great issue of life and death and comes to stand as an elder of Quanzhen (Complete Perfection). Such people are engaging in authentic cloud wandering.

— Discourse 3: Studying Texts —

The way to study texts is not to strive after literary accomplishments, and thereby confuse your eyes. Instead, you must extract the meaning as it harmonizes with the heart-mind. Abandon texts after you have extracted their meaning and grasped their principle. Abandon principle after you have realized the fundamental ground. After you realize the fundamental ground, then attend to it until it completely enters the heart-mind.

Keep it in the heart-mind for a long time, and its essence and inner truth will become naturally present. The radiance of the heart-mind will be vast and abundant; wisdom and spirit will take flight and soar. There is no place that they will not pervade, nothing that you will not understand.

When you reach this stage, you should practice storing and nourishing such a condition. And yet, do not be overly enthusiastic or rush to accomplish this. Rather, simply fear losing innate nature and life-destiny.

There are also people who do not understand the root meaning of texts, but merely desire to memorize many concepts and become widely read. Such people converse and babble on in front of others, bragging about their outstanding talents. This is of no benefit to cultivation and practice. Instead, it injures spirit and qi. Although one reads more and more, what is the benefit in relation to the Dao?

Only by attaining the meaning of texts can you store them deep within.

— Discourse 4: Preparing Medicinal Herbs —

Medicinal herbs are the flourishing emanations of mountains and waterways, the essential florescence of plants and trees. One type is warming, while another is cooling. They can tonify or disperse. One type is thick, while another is thin. They can be applied externally or taken internally.

If one is willing to study them as essences, one can enliven the innate nature and life-destiny of people. However, if one is a deluded healer, one will injure the body and the physical constitution of people. All those who study the Dao must fully understand this. If you do not understand herbal preparation, you will have no way to support the Dao.

You should also not develop attachments, because they will injure your hidden accomplishment [from past lives]. Externally, you may become greedy for wealth and expensive goods; internally, you may waste the ability to cultivate perfection. This not only leads to transgressions and errors in this life, but will also cause retribution in future lives. Elevated disciples within my gate, take care and be attentive.

— Discourse 5: On Construction —

Reed-thatched huts and grass-thatched shelters are essential for protecting the body. To sleep in the open air or in the open fields offends the sun and moon.

On the other hand, living beneath carved beams and high eaves is also not the action of a superior adept. Great palaces and elevated halls—how can these be part of the living plan for followers of the Dao?

Felling trees severs the precious fluids of the earth's meridians; begging for goods and money, while performing religious activities, takes away the life-blood of the people. Such people merely cultivate external accomplishment; they do not cultivate internal practice. This is like using painted cakes to satisfy hunger or storing snow for provisions—one vainly expends great effort and in the end gains nothing.

Someone with strong determination must early on search for the precious palaces within his own body. Vermilion towers outside the body, no matter how unceasingly they are restored, will collapse and crumble. Perceptive and illuminated worthies should carefully examine this.

— Discourse 6: Companions in the Dao —

Followers of the Dao join together as companions because they can assist each other in sickness and disease. “If you die, I'll bury you; if I die, you'll bury me.”

Therefore, you must first choose the right person and only then join with that person as a companion. Do not join with someone first and then consider him as a person.

Once this is accomplished, do not become overly attached to each other. Attachment between people ensnares the heart-mind.

At the same time, do not remain completely without attachment. A complete lack of attachment will cause your feelings to diverge. You should find a middle way between attachment and non-attachment.

There are three kinds of people with whom you should join and three whom you should avoid. Join those with an illuminated heart-mind, wisdom, or strong determination. Avoid those who are ignorant concerning external projections of the heart-mind, who lack wisdom and are turbid in innate nature, or who lack determination and are inclined to quarrel.

When establishing yourself in a monastery, completely accord with your own heart-mind and aspirations. Do not just follow your emotions or trust the outer appearance of others. Only choose the elevated and illumined. This is the supreme method.

“Sitting in meditation” does not simply mean to sit with the body erect and the eyes closed. This is superficial sitting. To sit authentically, you must maintain a heart-mind like Mount Tai, remaining unmovable and unshakable throughout the entire day. [Maintain this practice] whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, whether in movement or stillness. Restrain and seal the Four Gates, namely, the eyes, ears, mouth and nose. Do not allow the external world to enter in. If there is even the slightest trace of a thought about movement and stillness, this cannot be called quiet sitting. If you can practice like this, although your body resides in the world of dust, your name will already be listed in the ranks of the immortals.

Then there is no need to travel great distances and consult others. Rather, worthiness and sagehood resides within this very body. After one hundred years, with accomplishment completed, you will cast off the husk and ascend to perfection. With a single pellet of elixir completed, spirit wanders through the eight outer realms.

— Discourse 8: Controlling the Heart-Mind —

Let me explain the way of the heart-mind. If the heart-mind is constantly deep, then it remains unmoving. Obscure and dark, it does not give attention to the ten thousand beings. Profound and vague, there is no such thing as internal or external. Not even the slightest trace of thought remains. This is the stabilized heart-mind. It needs no control.

However, if the heart-mind is generated by pursuing external appearances, it becomes upset and overturned, searching for the head and chasing after the tail. This is called the chaotic heart-mind. You must urgently extract and expel it. Do not let it become unrestrained. Such a heart-mind ruins and spoils the Dao and inner power. It harms and diminishes innate nature and life-destiny.

Whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, [if the heart-mind] is constantly exhausted by hearing and seeing, knowing and perceiving, then there will only be sickness and suffering.

— Discourse 9: Refining Innate Nature —

Regulating innate nature is like harmonizing the strings of a zither. If they are too tight, they will snap. If they are too loose, they will not resonate. Find the middle place between taut and slack, and the zither will be harmonized.

This is also like casting a sword. If there is too much steel, it will break. If there is too much tin, it will bend. Find the harmonious mixture of steel and tin, and the sword will be useful.

To harmonize and refine innate nature, embrace these two methods. Then you yourself will become wondrous.

The Five Qi gather in the Central Palace; the Three Primes collect at the top.

The Azure Dragon breathes out crimson mist; the White Tiger exhales black smoke.

The myriad spirits array themselves in rows; the hundred meridians flow and become infused.

The cinnabar sand is radiant and becomes brilliant; the lead and mercury congeal and become purified.

The body may still reside in the human realm, but the spirit already wanders among the heavens.

— **Discourse 11: Merging Innate Nature and Life-Destiny** —

Innate nature is spirit; life-destiny is qi. Innate nature meeting life-destiny is like wild birds obtaining the wind. They use it to float and soar, rising lightly. Saving their strength, they complete their flight with ease.

Thus the *Yinfu jing* (Scripture on the Hidden Talisman) says, “The regulation of all beings resides with their qi.” This is exactly it.

The adept cultivating perfection must rely on this, never allowing it to be disseminated to lesser adepts. One should fear that the spirits and luminaries will send down censure. Innate nature and life-destiny are the roots of cultivation and practice. You should attentively forge and refine them.

— **Discourse 12: The Way of Sages** —

To enter the way of sages, you must develop determination for many years, amassing accomplishments and binding yourself to practice. Only an adept of elevated illumination, an individual with excelling realization, can enter the way of sages.

Your body may reside in a single room, but innate nature will fill the heavens, earth, and whole cosmos. The multitude of sages silently protects and supports you. Immortal lords in limitless numbers invisibly encircle and surround you. Your name becomes recorded in Zigong (Purple Palace) and established among the ranked immortals. Your physical form may remain in the world of dust, but your heart-mind is already illuminated beyond all beings.

— **Discourse 13: Going Beyond the Three Realms** —

The Three Realms are the realm of desire, the realm of form, and the realm of formlessness.

When the heart-mind forgets planning and thinking, one goes beyond the realm of desire. When the heart-mind forgets mental projections, one goes beyond the realm of form. When the heart-mind does not manifest even a vision of emptiness, one goes beyond the realm of formlessness.

Abandoning these Three Realms, the spirit dwells in the country of immortals and sages. Innate nature resides in the region of Yuqing (Jade Clarity).

— **Discourse 14: Methods for Nourishing the Body** —

The Dharma Body is a representation of the formless. It is neither emptiness nor existence, has neither after nor before. It is neither low nor high, neither long nor short.

When applied, there is nowhere that it does not pervade. When stored, it is dark and obscure without residual traces.

If you realize this way, you can appropriately nourish this body. The more you nourish it, the more accomplishments you attain. The less you nourish it, the less accomplishments you attain.

Do not desire to go back; do not yearn for the mundane world. Then you will depart and dwell in suchness.

— **Discourse 15: Leaving the Mundane World** —

Leaving the mundane world does not mean that the body departs. Instead, it refers to a condition of the heart-mind. The body is like the lotus root; the heart-mind is like the lotus blossom. The root is in mud, but the blossom is in the empty void.

For the person in realization of the Dao, the body may reside in the mundane world, but the heart-mind rests in the realm of sages. People of today desire to be eternally undying, and so “leaving the ordinary world” seems like a great absurdity. Such people have not fully understood the principle of the Dao.

I have spoken these “Fifteen Discourses” to admonish those within these gates with strong determination and sincere aspirations. Examine these principles profoundly and in detail so that you may know them.

CHINESE TEXT

中

文

重陽立教十五論

第一論住庵

凡出家者，先須投庵。庵者舍也，一身依倚。身有依倚，心漸得安，氣神和暢，入真道矣。凡有動作，不可過勞，過勞則損氣。不可不動，不動則氣血凝滯。須要動靜得其中，然後可以守常安分，此是住安之法。

第二論雲遊

凡遊歷之道有二：一者看山水明秀，花木之紅翠，或翫州府之繁華，或賞寺觀之樓閣，或尋朋友以縱意，或爲衣食而留心。如此之人，雖行萬里之途，勞形費力，遍覽天下之景，心亂氣衰，此乃虛雲遊之人。二者參尋性命，求問妙玄，登巖嶮之高山，訪明師之不倦，渡喧轟之遠水，問道無厭，若一句相投，便有圓光內發，了生死之大事，作全真之丈夫。如此之人，乃真雲遊也。

第三論學書

學書之道，不可尋文而亂目，當宜採意以合心。捨書探意，採理捨理，採趣採得趣，則可以收之入心。久久精誠，自然心光洋溢，智神踴躍，無所不通，無所不解。若到此則可以收養，不可馳騁耳，恐失於性命。若不窮書之本意，只欲記多念廣，人前談說，誇訝才俊，無益於修行，有傷於神氣，雖多看書，與道何益。既得書意，可深藏之。

第四論合藥

藥者，乃山川之秀氣，草木之精華。一溫一寒，可補可泄，一厚一薄，可表可托。肯精學者，活人之性命，若盲翳者，損人之形體。學道之人不可不通，若不通者，無以助道。不可執著，則有損於陰功。外貪財貨，內費修真，不足今生招愆，切忌來生之報。吾門高弟仔細參詳。

第五論蓋造

茅庵草舍，須要遮形，露宿野眠，觸犯日月。苟或雕梁峻宇，亦非上士之作為，大殿高堂，豈是道人之活計。斫伐樹木，斷地脈之津液，化道貨財，取人家之血脈。只修外功，不修內行，如畫餅充飢，積雪為糧，虛勞眾力，到了成空。有志之人，早當覓身中寶殿，體外朱樓，不解修完看看倒塌。聰明君細細察詳。

第六論合道伴

道人合伴，本欲疾病相扶，你死我埋，我死你埋。然先擇人而後合伴，不可先合伴而後擇人。不可相戀，相戀則繫其心，不可不戀，不戀則情相離。戀欲不戀，得其中道可矣。有三合三不合：明心，有慧，有志，此三合也。不明、著外境，無智慧、性愚濁，無志氣、乾打闕，此三不合也。立身之本在叢林，全憑心志，不可順人情，不可取相貌，唯擇高明者，是上法也。

第七論打坐

凡打坐者，非言形體端然，瞑目合眼，此是假坐也。真坐者，須十二時辰，住行坐臥，一切動靜中間，心如泰山，不動不搖，把斷四門，眼耳口鼻，不令外景入內。但有絲毫動靜思念，即不名靜坐。能如此者，雖身處於塵世，名已列於仙位，不須遠參他人，便是身內聖賢。百年功滿，脫殼登真，一粒丹成，神遊八表。

第八論降心

凡論〔降〕人之道，若常湛然，其心不動，昏昏默默，不見萬物，冥冥杳杳，不內不外，無絲毫念想，此是定心，不可降也。若隨境生心，顛顛倒倒，尋頭覓尾，此名亂心也。速當剪除，不可縱放則壞道德，損失性命。住行坐臥，常勤降，聞見知覺為病患矣。

第九論鍊性

理性如調琴弦，緊則有斷，慢則不應，緊慢得中，琴可調矣。則又如鑄劍，鋼多則折，錫多則捲，鋼錫得中，則劍可矣；調鍊性者，體此二法，則自妙也。

第十論匹配五氣

五氣聚於中宮，三元攢於頂上。青龍噴赤霧，白虎吐烏煙。萬神羅列，百脈流沖，丹砂晃朗，鉛汞凝澄。身且寄向人間，神已遊於天上。

第十一論混性命

性者，神也。命者，氣也。性若見命，如禽得風，飄飄輕舉，省力易成。《陰符經》云：禽之制在氣是也。修真之士不可不參，不可泄漏於下士，恐有神明降責。性命是修行之根本，謹緊鍛鍊矣。

第十二論聖道

人聖之道，須是苦志多年，積功累行，高明之士，賢達之流，方可人聖之道也。身居一室之中，性滿乾坤，普天聖眾，默默護持，無極仙君，冥冥圍遶，名集紫府，位列仙階，形且寄於塵中，心已明於物外矣。

第十三論超三界

欲界，色界，無色界，此乃三界也。心忘慮念即超欲界，心忘諸境即超色界，不著空見即超無色界，離此三界，神居仙聖之鄉，性在玉清之境矣。

第十四論養身之法

法身者，無形之相也。不空不有，無後無前，不下不高，非短非長，用則無所不通，藏之則昏默無跡，若得此道正可養之。養之多則功多，養之少則功少，不可願歸，不可戀世，去住自然矣。

第十五論離凡世

離凡世者，非身離也，言心地也。身如藕根，心似蓮花，根在泥而花在虛空矣。得道之人，身在凡而心在聖境矣。今之人欲永不死而離凡世者，大愚不達道理也。言十五論者，警門中有志之人，深可詳察知之。