

Exorcism in Daoism

A Berlin Symposium

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Foreword

The international symposium Foundations of Daoist Ritual at Humboldt University in Berlin (09. – 11.12.2007) brought together fourteen scholars from China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Taiwan and USA. Their common platform is Daoist studies that focus on the historic development of Daoist religion and liturgy. They all take a great interest in the present situation of the religious culture in China and Taiwan. The lectures at the symposium dealt with the general theme, Foundations of Daoist Ritual, taking greatly differing approaches. The lectures were then elaborated by the participants to be proper articles, and now we are glad to present them in volume AAS 33. The sequence of the articles differs slightly from the original program of the symposium and attempts to regroup the contributions following their contents. Religious Daoism is a phenomenon that is well embedded in Chinese culture as a whole, and therefore we start out with considerations from the Confucian point of view (Tsai Yenzen, T.H. Barrett). The next and larger group of articles deals with components of Daoist rituals that matter on a more popular level, involving exorcism, the realities of minor rituals and movements in Taiwan and China (Sichuan) up to the present time. The considerations also focus on the relevant canonical traditions, on orthodox rituals (*Lingbao pai*) and some generally known literary themes of religious importance (F.C. Reiter, Lee Fengmao, Hsieh Tsunghui, Ph. Clart, V. Olles). The third and largest group concentrates on aspects of medieval Daoist ritual, its canonical sources and historic performance. Religious and pious Daoist designs of care surface in the realm of medical help that was a strong asset of Daoist culture, and this aspect was also studied (G. Raz, J. Lagerwey, Lü Pengzhi, Liu Yi, Wang Zongyu, S. Bokenkamp, T. Kleman). We hope that the articles in this volume contribute to the general knowledge of Daoist religious culture and offer new insights concerning the many and very different scientific approaches that all may help to research the foundations of Daoist ritual, which surely is a still ongoing effort. We thank all the contributors who took their time and labour to write for the book Foundations of Daoist Ritual. We thank very much indeed the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) in Bonn for the financial support that was granted for the symposium in Berlin. I especially thank my secretary Mrs. Elisabeth Schulze for all her patience and efforts to prepare the layout of the book and making it ready for publication. We also thank very much the publisher, Harrassowitz Verlag in Wiesbaden, for its unceasing support.

Florian C. Reiter
Humboldt University, February 2009